

Established in 1936



The Doon School WEEKLY



September 23, 2017 | Issue No. 2480

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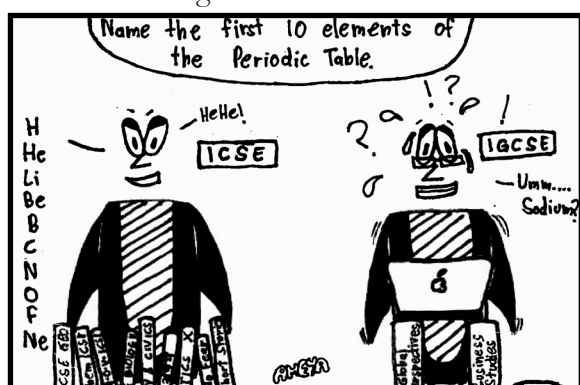
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Memoriae-phobia

Kanishkh Kanodia *deconstructs the rote learning phobia prevalent in School.*

The adoption of the IGCSE and IB curricula in School signaled a shift in our style of learning. From the abhorred “rutting” system of Indian Boards such as ISC and ICSE, Doscocs would now learn to be inquisitive and research-based under international curricula. The problem always arose with the fact that Indian curricula test our bookish knowledge rather than our thinking skills; the whining that “we have to rutt too much” was, and is still prevalent in School. This perpetual complaining about memorizing has created rote learning phobia on Chandbagh, which is evident from the ready acceptance of the IGCSE and IB within our community. With this article, I don’t seek to critique these curricula, but discuss something we’ve been distanced from, in this frenzy for internationalist education: the importance and reasons for rutting.

The primary argument against memorisation is that it promotes ‘cramming’ of knowledge for purely passing an examination - resulting in an inability to apply and use such knowledge in the real world. Instead of creating students who are learners and thinkers, as some argue, rutting turns them into bookworms who can religiously chant text in its entirety: page-by-page and word-for-word. However, the problem with this argument is its myopia, and lack of context employed. Apart from mere convenience, the fact remains that students, are often compelled to rutt in the first place. This can perhaps be blamed on the style of testing. For instance, if an ICSE Literature Paper asks: “What did Antonio say at the end of the scene?” a student has no choice but to cram the entire play in chronological order to answer such a direct and specific question. It is clear that this is wrong. Rutting will neither test our ability to comprehend nor enhance our critical analyses skills, both of which are essential while learning anything. Yet, the student cannot be solely blamed, as he must resort to following the ICSE’s learning pattern out of pure pragmatism for marks – making rote learning important. Another reason for rote learning is that students are unable to comprehend information being taught in class. While thinking



about this piece, I asked a junior, “When do you rutt?” He promptly replied, “Whenever I don’t understand anything in class, I rutt it.” Evidently, the problem lies with the instruction that these students receive, for if pedagogy was more lucid – plus lively and engaging – students would be more inclined towards real learning, making rutting unnecessary. Having said this, one must consider the benefits of memorising in certain cases, without just looking at the issue in the context of examinations.

It’s important to note that while rutting may be a necessary evil in Indian systems, it should no way suggest that memorisation is an intrinsically flawed concept. I agree that when it becomes the sole tool of learning and teaching, it does hinder our growth as learners. Yet, what many fail to understand is that foundational knowledge (that forms the base of all future learning) has to be acquired by memorisation for its long-term remembrance and effective usage. In our younger years, we are taught to learn colour names, shapes, alphabets, spellings and even grammar rules by heart! Only after we stop thinking about the right preposition to use, can we try to decipher the author’s use of metaphors or similes. Even in sciences, one cannot get past without memorising the foundational facts. Imagine having to solve chemical equations without even knowing the valencies of basic elements. Clearly, the ‘higher order thinking’ and skills of analysis we use in daily life arrives only after this information has been regimented in our minds

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Regulars

Deadshot

The School was represented by Akshat Jha, Varad Mann and Shourya Aggarwal at the **14th Uttarakhand State Inter-School Shooting Championship, 2017** held at **R.I.I.S. Shooting Range, Dehradun**. They were awarded the **silver medal** in the **10m Air Pistol** category.

Congratulations!

The Immortal Game

The results of the **Individual Chess Championship, 2017** are as follows:

Juniors

1st: Aryan Kasera

2nd: Yuvraj Sarda

Seniors

1st: Raghav Bagri

2nd: Devansh Sharma

Well done!

Errata

In Issue No. 2479, the Divij Mullick was erroneously omitted as a Goalkeeper with the Most Clean Sheets in the recent Inter-House Football Competition. The *Weekly* regrets this error.

THE WHO?

Who was EJ Simeon?

Samar Mundi: A marine biologist

Amal Bansode: An American politician

Aayush Chowdhry: A writer

Yashmit Sutodia: A comedian

Raghav Kediya: A cartoonist

Aryaman Sharma: An astronaut

EJ Simeon was the fourth Headmaster of our School between 1971 and 1979.

Dosco Doodle



One Way or Another...

Pratham Bansal

"The further society drifts from the truth, the more it will detest those who speak it." - George Orwell

UNQUOTABLE QUOTES

He's writing a cartoon.

Vir Bhatia, can't write.

The courts are wetted.

Jaisal Nath, slippery tongue.

Is your mom an architecture?

Kanishkh Kanodia, borderline.

Expand yourself!

Arjun Singh, growing daft.

He speaks in written English.

Yuvan Jaidka, please do neither.

Does anyone has a pen?

Shantam Gilra, written off.

I'll not marrying her!

Aviral Kumar, noble stallion.

I not do it!

Stanzin Namgyal, caught red handed.

Duke of Edinburgh

The following were awarded various standards of

The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award:

Silver: Ahaan Gupta and Raghav Dalmia

Bronze: Anay Shah

Kudos!

Around the World in 80 Words

A 7.1 magnitude earthquake hit central Mexico, killing over 200 people. The annual U.N. General Assembly session began, with U.S. President Donald Trump delivering a controversial speech. 'The Handmaids Tale' won the Emmy Award for the Best Drama Series. Prime Minister Modi and Japanese Prime Minister Shinzō Abe held a bilateral meet at Gandhinagar and made plans to introduce a bullet train in India by 2022. India beat Australia by 26 runs in the first ODI series match.

(Continued from Page 1)

through rote memorising the concept. Only with the basics, we can move on to more complex areas of knowledge with greater intellectual vigour.

Our definition of learning should, therefore, not entirely exclude one technique we on deem unfit based the false perception that memorisation is counterproductive. Looking at matters from a practical perspective (and not in mere theory) is what counts. Our constant striving towards becoming “critical thinkers” has blinded us to the real benefits of memorising (after all, education is only fruitful if a variety of techniques are used). It is imperative that the current memorisation phobia prevalent amongst masters, students and parents should subside. If not, it won't be long before we have ‘thinkers’ who're dependent on technology, and lack the fodder for their minds to think.



Under the Scanner

The Rohingya Crisis | **Aryan Bhattacharjee**

The Rohingya are an ethnic group that has lived historically in the Rakhine State on Myanmar's west coast, and always been subject to systemic discrimination on ethnic and religious grounds. However, as international newswires would suggest, recent developments have turned the issue into what the U.N. describes as a “textbook example of ethnic cleansing”. The immediate cause for the widespread violence against these people can be speculated to be the Arakan Rohingya Salvation Army (ASRA): an armed group of militants that seeks to establish a separate state for the Rohingya, being declared a terrorist group by the Myanmar government. In late August this year, the ASRA launched a series of attacks against security personnel that led to a full-scale clearance operation. However, this has evolved into an expression of racial resentment and brutal punishment of the Rohingya by Myanmar's military for the actions of the ASRA – leading to a humanitarian crisis of ethnic cleansing.

Looking from a historical perspective, the Rohingya have been living in Myanmar since the twelfth century.



However, since independence in 1948, they have not been recognized as an ethnic group within Myanmar. The plight of the Rohingya has attracted the sympathy of many world-wide. Operations conducted by the military against the Rohingya have left approximately 400,000 fearing for their lives without any clean water, food or even basic medical attention. The Rohingya have also faced more severe treatment, including rape, extortion, mutilation and other violations of human rights. Consequentially, a mass of refugees has flown out of the nation into neighbouring states. Bangladesh, being in close proximity, has been entrusted with the responsibility to house refugees and promote better

standards of living for them – a difficult task for the nation to bear. Many have also landed on the shores of West Bengal and Odisha in India. However, the efforts of the Myanmar government have largely been focused on the wrong set of people. A majority of those displaced by the clearance operations have absolutely no hand in the ARSA and have been caused irreparable harm for no fault of their own.

Out of the many voices condemning the actions in Myanmar, the statements of de facto President Aung San SuuKyi have aroused much contention. The Nobel Peace Prize Laureate is known to be ‘Myanmar's voice of morality’ and has been a global icon surrounding human rights and democracy. However, her recent remarks have not condemned the brutal behavior of the military towards the Rohingya, leaving many in doubt over the future of Myanmar. While India saw its Prime Minister silent on the matter, Rajnath Singh, the Home Minister, called the Rohingya in India “a threat to national security”.

The presence of a Buddhist Right Wing movement has also gained momentum in the Myanmar with monks like U Wirathu at its helm. Such conservatives fear that if Buddhism is not protected ferociously, it will soon be replaced by Islam. In a philosophical context, it is ironic to note that traditional Buddhism is centered on the values of peace and forgiveness, all while Buddhist officers in Myanmar launch repressive policies.

It thus is left to see how organizations like S.A.A.R.C. and the U.N, who are already in an effort to improve humanitarian conditions, execute their plans. It will also be imperative for other state actors to step in and take a stand in this matter. Bangladesh's limited international leverage does not permit it to rally much support, and other global actors much step forward. At the end of the day, it may be deduced that the crisis is a combination of religious resentment towards the Muslims and an impetus to act given in form of the ASRA. At the end of the day, it is in such times of peril that we must evolve most as humans.

Experimenting with Education

The Doon School Weekly recently interviewed **Dr Patrick Prendergast**, the President of Trinity College, Dublin.

The Doon School Weekly (DSW): Before being elected as Provost, you were a Professor in Bioengineering. What is bioengineering?

Dr Patrick Prendergast (PPR): Bio-engineering is the use of the principles of engineering to design and develop biological systems. It is the application of the principles of engineering to Biology. In the past principles of engineering mainly constituted Physics and Chemistry, but now even biological principals can be applied to engineering. So bio-engineers design and develop medical devices. For example, the knee implants your grandparents might have are made by bio-engineers. They develop cardio-muscular devices and neurological devices. Of course, the amount of medical devices is increasing due to an aging population so there will always be room for improvements in bio-medical technologies. Many companies are also bio-medical companies, so bio-engineers have great career prospects in those businesses.

DSW: In the IB, a student is not allowed to do any form of experimentation on any life form. Does this apply ethically in a broader perspective?

PPR: Leonardo Da Vinci, one of the great thinkers of the world, had a perception so far into the future that it seemed as if he had a time machine. He said that a time would come when doing animal experiments or eating an animal would be seen as killing a human being or eating one. That is potentially possible, but at the moment we need to do animal experimentation in a limited way to develop medicines for human health. Maybe in the future we could test them in a computer simulation, but at the moment we can't do that. I'm in favour of a practical solution that minimises animal experimentation so that researchers don't have to kill animals doing experiments. To summarise, I think animal experiments should be allowed but they should be highly regulated, should follow the proper procedures, and should only be conducted by people who are trained so that the scientific output is statistically sound.

DSW: How do you think education will be in the future, and what will the role of an educator be?

PPR: I think it'll be similar to what we have now: there will be teachers, and there will be volumes of material and facts being imparted from the teacher to the student. What will change is the mode of delivery: we won't be doing so much in the classroom, probably more experimental learning. However, there will not be a radical change. Even two thousand years ago, Socrates sat around with his students in a room like this and debated with them. There was student-teacher interaction, which is a mental concept that will continue, but it'll be more technology mediated.

DSW: There is a constant fear that artificial intelligence will take over humans one day. Are you also afraid of this idea? If yes, do you think it can be countered somehow?

PPR: Frankly, I'm not afraid about this issue. To be afraid of artificial intelligence is like when people back in the days were afraid of flying faster than the speed of sound. Technology is going to give machines the ability to mimic human beings. I remember when Garry Kasparov, the famous chess player, was beaten by IBM. It was seen as a threshold time for the human race, but nothing happened and we are all here. I think we should take positive approach towards artificial intelligence and see them as something that will supplement human beings rather than compete with them. However, the challenge will come when artificial intelligence merges with biology and machines will connect to the human brain. This is probably fifty to a hundred years from now. We are not ready for compensation about how technology will interfere with biology. This is the phenomenon we should be worried about.

DSW: What is your view on the process of rote learning prevalent in a subject, especially like Biology?

PPR: I would say that some amount of rote learning is important, even necessary. For example, if you want to learn the periodic table, well then you have to learn it by heart. However, it shouldn't be everything. It should be a base upon which you should be able to learn how to think, to be able to discern between good and bad ideas and to learn how to discuss them with like-minded people. The examination system is also extremely important in such cases and really determines the flow of one's learning. My daughter, for example, is doing a course in Irish languages where she knows she will be asked to write a particular essay. So, one day, I found that she had memorized the entire essay by heart and even practiced writing it. I asked her why she was doing and she replied that the teacher had asked her to do it. Now, not all of rote-learning is good, especially not whole essays, but a certain amount of learning definitely does take place.



Dr Prendergast received his PhD from Trinity in 1991.

| Point-Counterpoint |

In the Driver's Seat

Should Driver's Education be introduced in School?

Point

Mr Philip Burrett

When I was in school in the late 60's, all of us seniors drove the school van and the Headmaster's car. The former was a dilapidated Vauxhall that looked like a German halftrack left over from the war and the car was an old Hillman Minx. I was taught to drive, not by my father but by my Housemaster, who owned a 1943 Citroen with poor breaks and unfocused lights. The masters and boys drove the van on weekends; the needed risks were taken and bonds were established between adolescents and adults. In fact, most seniors had some hours of campus driving before they left school. It was a different world then: less traffic, less rules, less parental fear but no less risky all the same.

Driving is a necessity, just as learning to cook, making a bed and doing laundry. It's just one of those adult skills that may be used in emergencies. For that, what better place than school to learn to drive and be licensed?

At Doon, in years gone by, the SC's in the Motor Mechanics Squad would drive the Junko and the school tractor on campus, accompanied by the Master-in-Charge. I know for sure Zafar Baig, Dhruv Chaudhary, Karam Krishan Puri (1995), Aditya Zutshi (1997) Prakul Pandit (1998) were almost the official tractor drivers of School; and on roads without speed breakers as we have today. Why can't boys drive the mechanical roller or the lawn mower? They drove carefully and we just accepted that they were doing what they did best.

I do feel that in today's world, with an over emphasis on safety and caution, allowing boys into a man's world with a mentor is sadly missing and a great educational opportunity is slipping away. Midterms are risky; going into town in a Vikram is risky, so how is driving on campus any more a risk? One of the main advantages of the Motor Mechanics squad, apart from fixing radiator leaks and cleaning plugs, was that the boys got to drive the Junko; especially at Founders Day when they drove the Chief Guest around School.

Most adolescents are eager to drive and the first car they get is usually their father's - sometimes on the sly. Some wait for college and drive a friend's car late at night after a few beers with girls cheering them on; the rest is well known. Early driving at School with learner's licenses will not only give the boy those basic skills but also remove from him that desire to do something prohibited. That impulsive urge to get behind the wheel and speed off would be contained and somewhat appeased by allowing them to drive in School.

Driving with adults' supervision builds trust, develops skills and helps the master- boy bonds to strengthen. Good fathers (and masters) grew boys up by fishing, camping and driving with them.

Counterpoint

Kushagra Kar

At the very outset of this counter-point, let it be known that Learner's Licenses in India cannot be issued to anyone below the age of eighteen, ruling out most - if not all - students of the School. For argument's sake, though, I'll consider the age of sixteen to be an apt age to learn driving to widen the scope and relevance of this matter. Another clarification is that if School chooses to deny Driver's Education to its students, it is authorized to do so by the Motor Vehicles Act of 1988. Thus, the School should maintain status quo, and for the following reasons, deny Driver's Education.

Being able to drive embodies the ultimate form of freedom - being wherever you want without having to rely on someone else. At the end of the day though, the legal guardian of the child takes the decision to allow (or not allow) a person under eighteen to drive. The issue isn't about trust, or capability, but accountability and ownership of action and consequences.

A popular model to provide driver's education is well executed in places like Singapore or the United States. While broadly successful, the same can't be applied to Doscos, since road safety in those countries has reached a stage where any disregard for rules is actually penalized. Roads are lined by pedestrian walks, zebra crossings that are clearly marked and traffic lights that are fully functional (year round). Dehradun, for a fact, doesn't meet any of those standards, making it just about the worst place to learn how to drive. Moreover, the utter disregard for pedestrian responsibilities which Doscos have on private outings - that is, jaywalking and carelessly crossing roads - stands testament to the chaos on the streets. We can't have people driving cars on public roads if they don't know how to walk on them.

One may argue that School itself could be used as a venue to teach boys to drive, but for enough reasons, this too would be counter-productive. The School has a very limited road network, and virtually no traffic to simulate the real world. When learning how to drive, an amount of reality is required to properly train students before throwing them directly into the flames. Additionally, the roads around campus are normal student walkways, and to have an inexperienced driver on them would put others at risk.

It is clear there is no manner in which School could safely and effectively provide for Driver's Education. It's idealistic to want to teach everyone, but isn't feasible in any way given the current situation. Maybe a day will come where circumstances change - allowing for a safer environment in which to learn. But for the time being, we must make do with what we must make do with what we have, and what we have isn't nearly enough to work with.

Marching to the Future

Ameya Shawak proposes the reintroduction of The National Cadet Corps Training Program in School.

In the past, the School has had the National Cadet Corps (NCC) Training programme as an important part of the curriculum for the boys. The 'NCC' is a youth development program associated with the Indian Military for students in schools and colleges across India; being a tri-services program, it offers courses related to the Indian Navy, Army and the Air Force.

The NCC in India is very similar to the National Service (NS) programme of Singapore: cadets have no liability for active military service but are prepared for it and can step up to serve the nation when needed. For our School, students could be enrolled in a certificate programme for a two year course, which



Headmaster C.J. Miller inspects the School's NCC Company in formation. Circa 1970s.

would demand approximately four to six hours a week for training and all other components. In my opinion, such a programme is crucial for students in order to train and make them physically strong, healthy and well-prepared for any emergency situation.

The NCC aims to infuse a spirit of patriotism and train young people in military techniques - with the aim of creating individuals who are committed, dedicated and responsible citizens. The programme includes training in military protocol as well as in small arms and basic combat – which are important skills of self-defence. While

voluntary, cadets of the NCC are considered as the third line of defense in the country (after the military itself and the Territorial Army), and may engage in combat if given a choice. During wars, the cadets are asked to help the army and other security forces to control regions, regulate and help civilians. Having a working knowledge of rifles, small arms, aircraft flight, swimming and basic military procedures, the cadets not only provide assistance to the army but also help in emergency situations in our day-to-day lives. The training becomes an asset to our experiential education.

For our school, NCC training can be helpful in various aspects. Primarily, the training ensures that cadets would be morally responsible towards juniors and seniors, apart from being honest, upright and straightforward – improving the discipline on campus. The programme also includes substantial social service to help civilians in distress and war-like situations, which aligns with our founding vision of serving society and our community. This principle is also maintained in the adventure training aspect – being similar to Midterms in our school, except with a focus on helping people in tough and inaccessible remote situations. Such is the uniqueness of the NCC, which perfectly complements an institution like our own.

The advantages of the NCC aren't limited to our early years, for cadets are often given great respect in wider society, as well as preference within job selections, especially for government posts (e.g. the Civil Services). In the case of the armed forces, these cadets are directly qualified for a Services Selection Board (SSB) interview which provides a path to becoming a commissioned officer in various branches of the Armed Forces.

However, above all else, the NCC is important for the core values that it instils among all ranks of cadets. These include a sense of patriotism, respect for diversity, language, the value of a just and impartial exercise of authority and a healthy lifestyle free of substance abuse, among others. In a world where concerns have arisen regarding teenage ethics and discipline, this programme offers a viable solution.

When it comes to introducing the NCC in School, this would not be a very difficult task. The School would only have to provide the field area required for training, with an area as big as the Tata House Field being apt; and a store room for equipment. The ranges and venues for shooting and other arms training could be provided by the Military and RIMC within the Cantonment Area. While the School would also need a Regional NCC Officer (RNO) to supervise the programme, such a requirement has already been met. Mr Hemant Chaudhary (HCY) has, in the past, been a veteran NCC cadet with multiple decorations (including 'Best Shooter' at a high level) – and would be an obvious choice to lead the programme.

Given its advantages, and the relative ease of implementation, I think that introducing the NCC as an optional activity in School will be a rewarding idea. While optional, the programme would be valuable for any and all students, who even without joining the armed forces, can partake in their noble work and be a more responsible citizen of India.

Above the Crowd

Moulik Seth writes on the need of standing out.

A few days ago, I had a conversation with a senior regarding an activity in School I was confused about. The senior was experienced in that activity and so, I wished to learn from him; I wanted to get a rock-solid foundation. The senior's face was calm, and slowly he told me one simple thing: "Imagine school as a crowd, bustling with noise, everyone busy with their own work, their own priorities, and then imagine yourself in that crowd, an iota, confined to your own boundaries, your own area. As of now, you are in the ordinary, among the normal, but if you just stretch a bit, push yourself up and thrust your head 'above the crowd', the entire crowd turns around to stare at you. You stand out, you are unique and you are recognised." Listening carefully to every word, I was fascinated by this belief and thought about the term 'above the crowd'.

However, what exactly does this mean? Often, we are told about the importance of standing out, but it is just a mere statement? Something meant to be told for the sake of it? The statement holds a lot of significance and is why I wish to fully project this theory to every reader.

Let's start with the example of a team sport, say soccer. There are eleven players comprising defenders, attackers, midfielders and a goalkeeper. If a team wins, the first question that pops up in the mind of a person who hasn't seen the game is, "Who scored the goals?" Immediately, the names of the people who scored are registered in the mind of that person and slowly in everyone's minds, thereby starting a process where a group of individuals and their talents are recognised by all. This is because they stand out; they have an edge over the people who might have played 'well' but failed to get the recognition because of their inability to score goals or play well or even because of their position on the field, such as a defender.

I feel that one should try out different activities early in School life and then as he or she journeys through School should be able to narrow their choices and focus on honing their skills in one activity and play a sport with that much dedication. What I have seen is that people are late in making their decisions and end up trying their hand at too many things, unable to excel in any one area. Often this leads to mediocrity and this is seen in the many choices we make – we settle for anything just to be part of an event, cause, sport. Ever so often, we decide to do get into sport of extra curriculars just so that we could be noticed or gain popularity with our seniors or just simple acceptance by our form mates or

house mates. Attaining such a position is a waste of both time and energy and to my mind, it falls short of giving one full satisfaction.

Moreover, it is must be mentioned here that within School we term certain activities to be of more important than others. If ten people want to pursue an activity that is "of less importance", six would not want to continue even if they have a knack for it for that activity and is not "popular" and "prestigious". The remaining four are demotivated to the extent that they think they should leave the activity and it is in a very rare case that a person is so attached and interested that he doesn't leave. Such activities should be encouraged and treated at the same level as the more popular ones.

Through the course of this article, I do not intend to convey that one shouldn't try out new things or that we are born into the world knowing exactly what we want to do. One cannot excel at something without trying, but attaining a mediocre position for a long time without any success or excellence, seems to my mind (and I hope to yours as well), pointless. Struggling with a million things is always worse than succeeding with one thing. So, go ahead, try and stretch yourself and see if you can rise *above the crowd*.

| Poetry |

Remember

Aryaman Kakkar

In the end, we all are left with memories. Recollections of happiness. Faint scents of the oils your love used to wear. The sound of carefree laughter that remind us of joyous times. But also of the silent, copious tears that rolled down the rosy cheeks in our youth. Of the sadness that gripped you like a starving basilisk when your heart broke into millions of shards of ice.

Do you remember? Do you want to?

They are the only remnants of the past that truly stay with you. We carry them everywhere like the heaviness of our souls. These storehouses of mutating emotion can be whatever you need them to be. They can be keys to the things your mind chose to hide or locks to the things your heart chose to keep.

Can you remember? Do you want to?

Move and immerse yourself in all those embarrassments and mistakes. Look at them and remember. Hear and listen to yourself at your worst.

Can you remember? Do you want to?

Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,

This not-so-well written letter is in response to the well-crafted, unbiased, and extremely objective Editorial titled “Conspicuous Contempt”. Mr Singh’s Editorial, as I understand, was written to remind the Dosco community of how contemptuous we have become, and how our mindset “reveals the apathy of seniors towards our juniors”. This is just my take on this issue, so I request readers to not consider this anything else. I say this as I realise that in recent times, it is indeed tough to differentiate between propaganda and articles in the Weekly.

The Chief Editor stated that “favours”, or “orders”, as he prefers to call them, are “exploitative and unjustified”. I, given my limited understanding and narrow mindset, fail to understand how a Senior who has just played a 60-minute football match, asking a C-Former who has been sitting on the sideline for a bottle of water or should I say “fagging water”, is exploitative. Instead of looking at the context of a favour, we tend to look at it as an entity devoid of context. Looking at a change-in-break as a punitive measure, without considering the background to why it has been given, is simply looking at things with blinds on. Devoid of context, even soldiers are murderers.

Similarly, degrading House Spirit, which has very conveniently been termed as “a facade of loyalty”, has made me think whether we really do need a House, or any identity for that matter. Since something like this should be a matter of “free will”, I think attending School events and talks should also be a matter of “free will”, wherein a student should be allowed to attend these talks on their own whims and fancies.

“...erodes the rights of younger students to their own autonomy.” This statement has compelled me to redefine autonomy. It is everyone’s fundamental right to do whatever they want to and yes we need to preserve it. We need to preserve the freedom of a Junior to choose to idle around in the House while his Seniors sweat it out on the field. We need to preserve the freedom of a student to choose not to attend classes as that is what autonomy is. Letting people do whatever they want to. We definitely need to preserve this “autonomy”.

Finally, talking about the know-all and end-all, the School Council. I feel “norms derived by consensus” are not derived by consensus. Decisions taken in the School Council have not always been based on consensus, for even on this body of “elected representatives of this School”, all representatives are equal, but some are more equal than others. In spite of not having unanimity on a matter, many decisions are taken on the basis of ‘unanimity among the members of the Council’.

Concluding this not-so-important letter, I would only like to say that yes, we are contemptuous. We are contemptuous of the authorities that have been appointed by the School, of the Seniors who hold differing opinions, and everyone who tries writing against the flow of ‘original’ ideas in the *Weekly*.

Warm Regards,

Shikhar Trivedi

(Another Contemptuous Senior)

Dear Editor,

This letter addresses the article ‘A Web of Lies’ by Karan Sampath, published in Issue Number 2479 of *the Weekly*.

The author responds to the issue of fake news and its consequences, but he does not explain why fake news on the internet is as rampant as it is. I write to explain the “why” of the fake news phenomenon.

Fake news is not a coincidence; rather, it is a full-blown business. Headlines, subtitles and accompanying images are engineered to guarantee maximum engagement from viewers. The fake news articles may be those that cause anger, happiness, shock or sadness (Facebook’s reaction buttons! Clever way to evaluate if a targeting strategy was successful, right?). Additionally, the information that your social media platform (take note that I’m not accusing any platform in particular) collects from the user is used to show the user highly targeted headlines to drive encouragement. For instance, if some user is a Manchester City fan and US politics enthusiast, that user’s news feed will have a disposition to show things that will either enrage or support existing beliefs. How do the Gods of social media know this about the said user? The user had liked seven ‘Manchester City Fan Club’ pages and had consistently reacted with an ‘angry face’ to posts about the Trump administration. Don’t take my word for it. Your social media platform of choice is bound by privacy laws to allow you to download all the data that it collects about you. For instance, on Facebook, you can find a ‘Download a copy of your Facebook data’ option under ‘General Account Settings’. Go check out

what Facebook knows about you.

Now that we know this, we have another question to answer: “Why does my social media network wish to increase my engagement with posts?” Let’s turn to Facebook again for a second. Facebook’s investor news press release mentions that from March 2017 to June 2017, Facebook earned 9.16 billion dollars from advertising alone. That number is a whopping 98% of their total revenue for that period. That’s right. Here’s the hard-hitting truth: you’re not the customer, advertisers are. Most, if not all social media networking platforms have adopted similar business models. Advertisers pay social media platforms a sum to promote their posts in the feeds of their target users. The news feed then shows these posts to the specified target audience.

This is not to discourage from using social media. However, it does help to be aware that what your news feed tells you might not be an accurate representation of the truth. That each time you log-in to your social media platform, a competition to grab your attention and engagement is set in motion. Citizens of social media, our news feed has failed us.

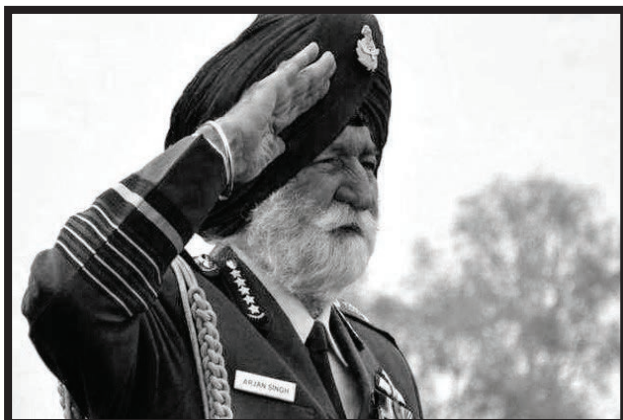
Warm Regards,
Shreyas Minocha

The Finest Officer

Ranvijay Singh *remembers the life and legacy of Late Marshall of the Indian Air Force Arjan Singh.*

With the demise of the Marshal of the Indian Air Force Arjan Singh on the 16th of this month, India has lost not only one of its finest officers, but also a true patriot. Known for his strategic thinking, decisiveness and bravery in the sky, Marshal Arjan Singh was an exemplary officer.

Born and brought up in West Punjab (modern day Pakistan), he was commissioned in 1938 in the British Indian Air Force as a pilot officer. Arjan Singh took active part in the Arakan Campaign during World War II. He led the No. 1 Squadron with exceptional bravery and for his services during the war,



he received the Distinguished Flying Cross in 1944. With the independence of India, Arjan Singh, along with a number of other officers, was instrumental in the establishment of the Indian Air Force. He also had the privilege of leading the 100 aircraft fly past over Red Fort on August 15, 1947, when India was declared independent.

After being appointed to a number of important posts, which included the Command of the Western Air Force and Vice Chief of Air Staff, he took over as the Chief of Air Staff in the rank of Air Marshall.

He was just 44 years old at that time. It was during his tenure as the Chief, that the Armed Forces of Pakistan launched a massive counter-attack during the 1965 war, codenamed Operation Grand Slam. The Pakistani Army was virtually steamrolling through Jammu, when the Air Force, under the command of Arjan Singh, played a vital role in stopping the Pakistani Army, thus ensuring the failure of the operation. A famous anecdote from the war goes to describe how, when asked by the defence minister how long will the Air Force take to mobilise against Pakistan, Arjan Singh, in a nonchalant manner, replied ‘60 minutes’. Indeed, Indian fighter aircrafts were up in the air within an hour. For his successful leadership of the Air Force during the war, he was awarded the Padma Vibhushan.

His service to the nation did not end with his military career, as he went on to serve in various official capacities even after his retirement. This included being the Ambassador to Switzerland, High Commissioner to Kenya and, for a short period of time, the Lieutenant Governor of Delhi. For the recognition for these services, in addition to his glorious career in the Air Force, Arjan Singh was conferred the rank of the Marshall of the Air Force, an equivalent to being the Field Marshall in the Army. Arjan Singh was the first officer from the Air Force, and third among all the three wings of the Armed Forces, to be given this rank of a Five Star officer.

He shall always be remembered as a man who, in the true spirit of the Armed Forces, kept the nation’s interest above everything. It is individuals like Marshall Arjan Singh, who have shaped India’s destiny.

The Week Gone By

Devang Laddha

The week began with most Doscos choosing to give their sleep deprived minds a rest, while some dedicated SCs continued to burn the midnight oil. In what was expected to be a quiet week, the monotony was broken by a 'nocturnal presence' in Kashmir House. Many were left speculating about those involved in this enigmatic night tryst.

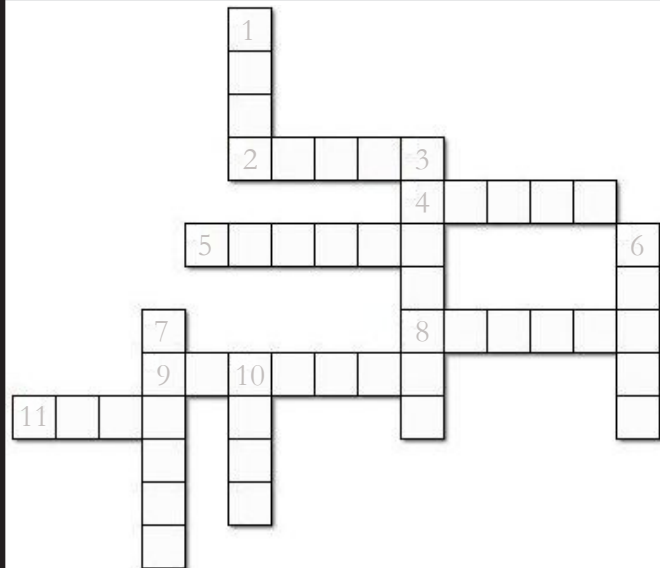
Heading into the final leg of exams, Assembly saw *record* attendance and several new faces on stage, who sought to convey their 'divine' guidance for exams. Particular attention was paid to D-Form's astrophysics-heavy syllabus. Meanwhile, classrooms in the Main Building saw the rolling of chairs and innovative silent gestures, fruits of previous sign language classes. SC-Formers could be seen bargaining/begging for marks to raise their predicted grades, especially after their Math examination. While they feared for their results, Tuesday night confirmed the fears of others with the abolishment of traditional pasta.

Excitement for the upcoming midterms continues to rise, with SC-Form – having finished their exams the earliest – being ecstatic at the thought of going back home to Delhi for their 'study' break. We wish them the best and hope they are the *best versions of themselves*. While they celebrate, S-Form continues to plan their second private midterms with many excited to share their stories (Snapchat and otherwise) from the picturesque scenes bustling with life and flying squads (beware). The group off for cycling midterms has been working hard (considering their esteemed company) to prove their *leadership* capabilities. Meanwhile, B Form could be seen heartbroken having not been allowed to experience the *culinary* delights of Delhi and Agra, while A-Formers shared their sorrows, being under supervision for another midterm.

Many used Friday to get catch up on sleep but a dedicated few were seen getting ahead of work, with S-Form seeming to be back in business. While the weekend gives most an opportunity to get much needed rest, as School resumes after midterms, desks shall soon become beds, with "the gift of sleep" being a luxury only a few can afford.

Crossword

Famous Personalities



Note: All answers related to persons in this crossword refer to their surnames.

Across

- This previous owner of The Plaza Hotel also made an appearance in Home Alone 2.
- He is the ninth cousin of Brad Pitt, who also has a beer company named after him in Kenya.
- Canadian singer who sold his hair for \$40,000.
- This investment banker married his former high school drama teacher who is 25 years older to him.
- This famous popstar has an animal named after her.
- This leader recently took a three month course on International Relations in the United States.

Down

- This rapper recently received an honorary doctorate from the University of Chicago.
- This Academy Award winner has authored two scientific research papers.
- The cousin of Abraham Lincoln; an actor and producer well known for movies like Sully.
- He holds the Guinness World Record for 'Most Number of Words in a Song'.
- This rapper is one of the voice options for 'TomTom' GPS and cameoed in 'Entourage'.

5. Bieber	11. Modi	6. Hanks
4. Obama	9. Madonna	3. Portman
2. Trump	8. Macron	1. West
Down		
Answers to This Week's Crossword		
7. Eminem	10. Dogs	

Source: <http://worksheets.theteacherscorner.net/make-your-own/crossword/>

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Online Edition: www.doonschool.com/co-curricular/clubs-societies/publications/past-weeklies/ weekly@doonschool.com



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