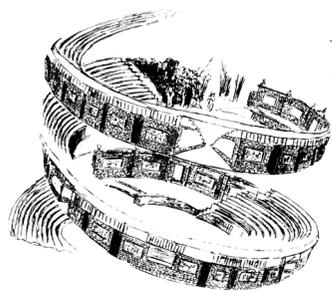


## WEEKLY



October 13, 2018

"I sketch your world exactly as it goes."

Issue No. 2517 | Founder's Day Special Edition

## A Swansong, of Sorts



Kushagra Kar pens his parting thoughts for the Weekly.

The clear night sky twinkles away, minding its own cosmic business. The moon pierces the fabric of reality to reveal an unbelievably beautiful expanse of nature. Nearby, the earliest *namaaz* sounds in sync with the morning song birds of Chandbagh. The cool autumn breeze blows through my hair as I sit, staring out at a deserted Main Field. A bittersweet pang gnaws at me, charging me to a challenge I do not yet understand. Maybe it's the fear of an ending, or the early signs of serious sleep deprivation, but one thing is certain, my story is drawing to a close.

To bid farewell; to handover what has felt like *my* own for these last four years will be excruciating. Suddenly, Friday breaks could be spent having *samosas* and juices with the rest of the School, while the *Weekly* is handed off to the crotchety, yet endearing, old man from EBD. The Publications' Room will no longer be my home, for the story will be someone else's to tell. Few experiences in life are as humbling to the reality of inevitability as where I sit now, dreading the fortnight in which I must part with the *Weekly*. So, in this first of lasts – a swansong, of sorts – I bid farewell to everything that has contributed to giving me a sense of gratitude for the profound; for the *Weekly* has been nothing short of it.

What, really, must I part with in these coming weeks? A family. A love. Mentors and all their terrible jokes, loveable eccentricities, and invaluable support. Arnaav, my original Chief-Editor, who instilled in me an indomitable spirit, long after he stopped

being Chief-Editor. He gave me his trust, wisdom and study (I essentially lived there through B-Form). Kediyaal, the benevolent. Compassion and direction remain synonymous with his time. He led me to maturity with his perpetually clear mind and occasional adult humour. Arjun, to be honest, was brutal. He burnt and bruised me into a Chief-Editor. He taught me to fight my mind, and gave me the strength to bear all the criticism and struggle that comes with the job. My teachers, PDT, IHS, AGS, SNA, UDV, ASH, PKN and KLA have trained me in the art of professionalism, and journalism. They taught and trained me to become the person I needed to be to lead the *Weekly* through what has been an incredible year for the publication.

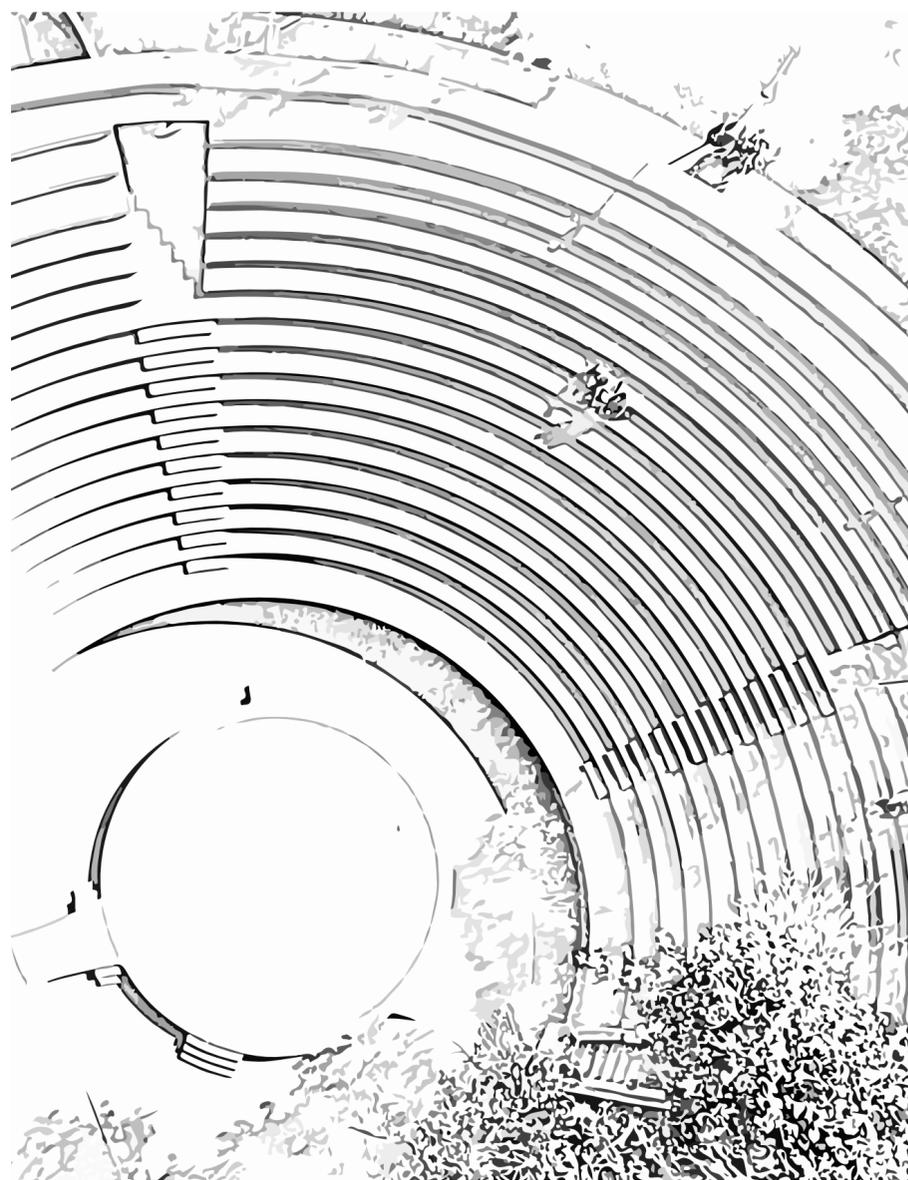
The culmination of this has been the relationships I have nurtured with my Board. The kindly naïve B-Formers, hungry to learn and quick to err taught me the virtue of patience. The reliable A-Formers, with an undying sense of loyalty and faith instilled a sense of security in me, that all will turn out for the best. The S-Form, now as able to lead as I ever was, with every bit of creativity, passion and confidence I lacked to boost them in their journey. Then, my friends, comrades, and constant companions through the travails of the *Weekly*, Kanishkh, Devang, Aayush and Zoraver. I wish I could emote your importance in my life but, for the second time since we were appointed, I am at a loss for words. Simply put, thank you.

For all my attempts at a neat closure to this tale, the truth is, I am bitter about the end. You see, bitterness comes from knowing that my time has come. I will miss these things. At the same time, there is sweetness in knowing that this institution has the opportunity to gain from the creativity of other members of our fraternity. While the chapter

shall be a new one, the beauty of this ever-growing publication is that the story will not change. The narrative has been, and always will be, the same; the *Weekly* serves the School as a voice for the student community. There are no limitations, as there should be no inhibitions in expression. It is these words that have guided me to realise that any edition of the *Weekly* is only as daring as the ambition of the Chief-Editor and his Board. Ambition to create the best *Weekly* possible. The *Weekly* has always endeavoured to cover the widest range of topics, in the deepest possible manner, representing the greatest number of Doscos, teachers and students, we can. Kanishkh put it best when he called it a, 'labour of love'. Love drives our ambition, and the pride felt at achieving it is not our own, but for the *Weekly* itself.

I am an excessively emotional human being, with a predisposition for drama. It seemed necessary then to precede the final words of this piece with a rendition of Frank Sinatra's *My Way*. The morning light has begun to flood the sky. A bright warm glow to filter the day and a fresh page to be constructed for my final *Weekly*. I've seen Chief-Editors give the *Weekly* a likeness to a machine, to be hammered into shape and bolted in place, or even a puzzle to be completed. The metaphor works for any single issue, which is indeed a highly mechanical process. But take the *Weekly* as a whole, with its heartbeat reflection of the School, evolving consciousness with each Editorial Board, and conscience to uphold our belief in serving a meritocratic India. No longer is the *Weekly* a thing to be constructed. It is an entity to be awoken, to build with, to carve a School alongside. The sun is peeking through the trees above the CDH now. It's time to get up.

Good morning.



## On Mentorship and Mettle



Armaan Verma writes on leadership and its place in School.

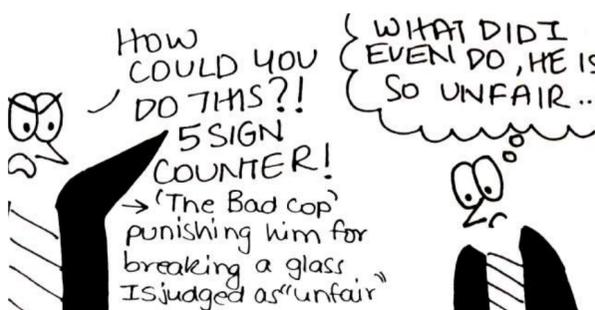
Many readers who have taken the pain of reading the title and byline of this article would have let out an audible groan, and understandably so. After all, the very fabric of our lives have been dyed with the acute awareness that almost all facets of School life have been infiltrated by 'leadership'. However, this piece is not intended to be a pedagogy on the definition of a good leader in the real world or the present day or the corporate sector—it would be useful to remember here that this definition is also molded by subjective opinions. Rather, it is merely a counterintuitive enquiry into the nature of leadership, especially the kind required in School.

Let us begin with the subject mentioned above: the now-pervasive presence of leadership. While one of School's fundamental principles is and always has been to train good leaders, forcing such a thing would be counterproductive. A D-Former newly enlisted in the ranks of Doscos should ideally be exposed to the various pursuits and opportunities that the School offers. To go beyond that and drill it into the minds of each one of them that being a leader is imperative leaves them neatly lined up for a rat race

that will continue for the remainder of their School years. Lady Macbeth chides her husband in Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, "To be more than what you were, you would be so much more the man," but as Shakespeare himself grimly reveals, she is hugely mistaken.

The thought that every boy is meant to leave the gates of Chandbagh as a seasoned leader is as romantic as it is anarchic. Not everyone is meant to lead and those who, in the past, wrongfully assumed they were, have been the most dangerous breed to ever hold an office. Such mistaken mentality only intensifies the scoping that not only ruins any potential for good management but also leaves School authorities baffled as to why some prefects are negligent of their duties. Leadership is a quality that may be inherent or learned. Either way, it can never be forced. On the other hand, let us presume that one strongly feels that one is cut out for a leadership role. The path to be trodden then would reveal much more than simple altruism. But before we delve into that notion, let us consider this: who exactly is a leader?

A leader, one could say—though I'm certain that many may disagree with me—is not an individual tasked with serving or appeasing those being led. Yes, these elements are very important facets of any kind of management, but I think the clue as to the purpose of a leader, and perhaps the linguist reading will agree with me, lies in the word itself: it is simply to lead. Leading, being neither an act of valor nor philanthropy, often involves taking unpopular decision, which are still in the best interests of a community.



Bearing this in mind, it is critical that we consider School as a platform for practising this leadership. A School, unlike a government, is charged not only with child welfare but also character development and in my experience, it is often the case that the latter supercedes the former. Resilience in the face of adversity and the ability to properly handle aggression are also qualities that allow Doscos to be successful in an increasingly competitive and expanding world. Therefore, the argument that leadership in School is best practiced when keeping in mind the short-term interests of others is flawed; as leaders, prefects—and certainly SC Formers as well, who should be as much a part of leading the School community—often make decisions that are in the best interests of those affected by these decisions. Perhaps these interests are not immediately visible.

Reflecting on it now, a majority of SC Formers look back at the much harsher form of seniority in our own junior years as something to learn from rather than something to fear. Although

there are those who would say that Doscos who lead in such a manner do not learn to be kind or supportive, I beg to differ. The principle that one must reprimand another for a wrongdoing, sometimes severely, demands that one must care about that other person enough to make that decision. Contrary to prevalent belief, it is far easier to continuously overlook mistakes of other boys in the name of 'compassion' than it is to discipline them for the same.

To conclude, kindness and compassion, though noble attributes, can easily translate into comfort and convenience, which are fundamentally opposite to the mettle required to be on the giving or receiving end of a tough decision. I think that the form of leadership we have observed in earlier years has its own merits and has taught generations of Doscos a fair deal, and these merits should not be overlooked at a time when changes are taking place rapidly and can very easily make us blind to the very aims we wish to achieve.

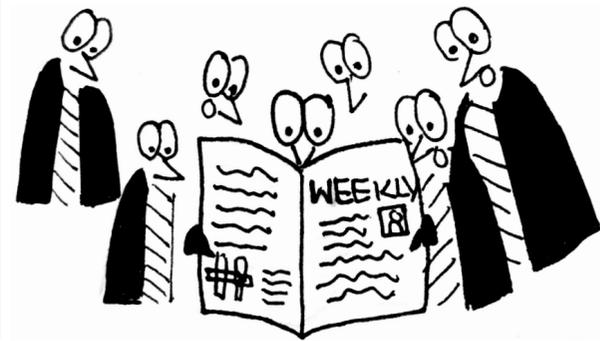
## A Note on the Issue

Although producing the *Weekly* in itself is a daunting task, coming out with two 'big' issues in one year (as opposed to just one) required us, as a Board, to brace ourselves for a rougher ride. After successfully slogging through the first half of the year with the release of Issue 2500, we did not aim for anything less for this Founder's Issue.

We believe that the *Weekly* acts as a School newspaper, and this time we have ventured to portray this trait through our design too. We have taken inspiration for our design from global publications like *The New York Times*, and have incorporated digital portraits of certain writers, inspired by *The New Yorker*. The addition of colour has in turn hopefully amplified the effect of these elements.

As for the content aspect of the issue, this Founder's Issue has placed significant importance to the whirlwind of changes that the School is caught in, through the *Vox Populi*. An attempt to increase the richness of the content has also been made by increasing the diversity of the writers. This Founder's Issue has not left any stone unturned to display the writing flair of Old Boys and Masters, who have not only written on their experiences in School, but have also shared life lessons. Simultaneously, we have not left students outside the Board, throwing open the opportunity to voice their views on this special annual occasion. From D to SC Form, boys have painted this issue's canvas with their own colours. The articles, which range from creative compositions to commentaries on School as well as world affairs, have been visually complemented with pictures and cartoons.

We hope that you like the product of the many sleepless nights we have spent over the past few weeks, and that you are able to enrich yourself through this Issue, and enjoy while you're at it.



### OPINION

#### Forget Me Not

It is tough to lose a loved one, but it is even tougher to let their memories fade away. Does Social Media make this path even tougher?

Priyanka Bhattacharya | PAGE 8



#### Profanity in Action

Discover an issue that is often ignored in our formative years but is necessary to be dealt with.

Ansh Raj | PAGE 8

### A Culture of Outrage

A wave of intolerance has swept across the world, and outrage has become pervasive than ever. It is time we discuss this culture, and put an end to it.

Karan Sampath | PAGE 9

### CHANDBAGH

#### The Coexistence of Cultures

For a society to sustain itself, belief systems of opposing nature need to exist in a symbiotic relationship.

Vidhukesh Vimal | PAGE 7

### Barefoot Pursuit

Books, notebooks, a classroom and a lecturer form our image of education. However, the Barefoot College uses another approach.

Rajesh Majumdar | PAGE 7

### ARTS & CREATIVITY

#### Love Unbounded

The daughter-in-law has given birth to two girls. But what happens when the grandparents see a business opportunity even there?

Keshav Raj Singhal | PAGE 2

#### Sympathetic Strings

His love for Patru is unparalleled. Despite this true feeling of affection, what turn will their relationship take, as he discovers the truth.

Arnaav Bhavanani | PAGE 5

#### Broken

We all have that window in our heart that we want to open for someone, discover the one who opens that window in this world of broken hearts.

Aryaman Kakkur | PAGE 4

### Defining Design

Explore a key aesthetic of your life that is overlooked many a times, but actually impacts it greatly.

Sriman Goel | PAGE 5



### REFLECTIONS

#### Looking Back, Wistfully

A mistake for one could be a lesson for another. Sometimes we must look in the past to guide us in the future.

Abhinandan Sekhri | PAGE 11

### FEATURED



The *Weekly* has in many cases acted as a perfect training ground for many writers. Although one might consider writing to be an insecure career, writing offers new unpredictable opportunities. Explore the inspiring story of an ex-Dosco who after editing the *Weekly* is now a screenwriter for Sacred Games.

Vasant Nath | PAGE 11

## Love Unbounded

Keshav Singhal

The grandmother had ruthlessly ordered their mother to clean the septic tank. This was quite in line with the way their grandmother had tolerated their existence. It was not a questionable act for her anymore. Although their neighbours had hired *safai karamcharis* to complete the task, there was no hope of mercy for these four. "Why be empathetic towards those scoundrels, when they didn't bother to ask for permission to get married?" she grumbled. She had never let go of any opportunity to disparage them in front of the whole society.

Coming from two disparate backgrounds, Krishna and Smitha were hopeful about the prospects of their future. However, to their chagrin, they were an absolutely unwelcomed pair back at Krishna's home in Jalandhar. This was because Smitha could not bring any gifts of financial value to her in-laws. The couple had been disgraced with a small room in the house and were always held accountable for the problems the family was in. After the division of their prosperous business, Krishna's brother devised a plan and had left Krishna with the house and the burden of their parents. Since then, a dour spirit had permeated the house of Mr. Pandit. Then, after a long time, the house of Mr. Pandit saw some joy when Smitha broke the news of being pregnant. For the very first time, Smitha felt like she was acknowledged as a member of the Pandit family. But that was, of course, until this feeling was obliterated by the news that the child was a girl. Divya Pandit was the apple of Smitha's eye, but just another regretful bone house for her grandparents. To their dismay, they had to see another granddaughter two years later at the birth of Janhvi Pandit.

Divya and Janhvi were brought up imbibing the views of their mother. They were highly sceptical, if not dismissive of their grandparents' beliefs, growing up to be strongly contemptuous of them- so much so that if push came to shove, they were ready to quarrel with their grandparents. Although aggressive with their grandparents,

they were benevolent in their general attitude towards others. They were also determined to pull their parents out of that cesspit to lead a new life. Divya was highly ambitious and sensationally beautiful. An army of boys from within the town could not get their eyes off her. Aware of these two innate qualities, she desired to use them to her advantage and move to Delhi to become a model. But under no circumstances she going to leave her parents in Jalandhar. She still recalled the incident when she was caught off guard with a boy in a theatre by her grandfather which was followed by a ferocious beating of her father and her. "Fleeing to Delhi would be met by dire consequences," she thought resentfully as she lay on her bed. She was wondering about her future with Varun, the one whom she had been seeing for quite some while now. That is precisely when her grandmother barged in staring at Divya with blazing eyes.

Her grandmother behaved surprisingly well for the very first time because of which Divya had ominous thoughts. Her hunch turned out to be right. It was the promiscuous Nandan, the son of the filthy rich merchants of Jalandhar who was a serious peril to Divya's already disturbed life. He was

an impudent, arrogant boy who was involved in all kinds of shady affairs and whom the people of the town called a 'spoil brat'. At one point of their college years, Divya had been indifferent towards Nandan who was ready to do anything to get her. After failing on various occasions, Nandan decided to get rid of her. Thereon, Nandan had destroyed her life; getting her expelled from college by paying off the authorities. Whenever she was seen by his gang, they would scream obscenities at her. She remained under her father's tutelage but had to take a sojourn at his friend's house in Amritsar.

She knew exactly why her grandparents wanted this marriage. Nandan led an opulent life and was ready to give as much money as her grandparents wanted. This was just about the 'profit' her grandparents could make out of her existence. But Divya didn't want to reject Nandan only because of his nature, but also because she was seeing someone else. She had made a rather bold move when she had entered into a relationship with Varun. Varun had an innate intelligence to him, but was stranded by his inadequate social standing. Divya's father had raised a volley of

questions when they were told about Divya's marriage to Nandan. Divya did not have the courage to even mention Varun's name when she was asked about the marriage, so, the marriage was finalised. Nandan's family took the initiative of managing all events of the wedding. During the period before marriage, Varun and Divya met even more frequently. The evil intentions behind her grandparents' interest in marrying her to Nandan drew Varun and Divya closer. Nandan had already left his men to pry about Divya's social life. They suspected that Divya and Varun perhaps had a relation. Nandan gave Varun a nice beating, bashing his brains right in as a warning not to see Divya again.

But it was even worse when Nandan caught Divya and Varun a week later, together at a cafe.

'Menacing Murder' was the headline of a newspaper on Divya's and Nandan's wedding day with a small portrait of Varun staring into the reader's eyes, which were, even in death, still full of love.

## Walking Home

Ansh Raj

Having finally completed a seemingly endless journey, I heaved a sigh of relief as I stood by the foyer of what should have been my ancestral village house. Of course, there was hardly a house left: poorly cemented walls and pillars had been swallowed by encroaching creepers and devouring moss. The front door had been battered by repeated rodent raids. Spiders had woven thick cobwebs in corners that hadn't seen light for ages. But there was another aspect which was disconcerting. After having spent only a minute at the door, I was consumed by pang of anxiety. A sinister feeling overwhelmed me. Clearly, I had not heeded to the warnings which were repeatedly given to me.

As part of my anthropological study, I had decided to visit my ancestral village. Having been brought up in the city, I had never had the opportunity to experience rural life, especially after the untimely demise of my parents. They had met with an unfortunate car accident while they were coming back from the village. I was still at university at that time. Since then, I had begun to experience a deep, mysterious yearning for the village, and in particular, the house. So, when the opportunity presented itself, I didn't hesitate to choose my ancestral village as the focus of my survey. Originally, I had a colleague and friend, Jessica, coming along too; however, an unforeseen illness had spoiled our plans, and I was compelled to undertake this task all by myself. Even then, a sense of foreboding had begun to stir in me.

I stood in front of the door with a bewildered expression. It must have been around three hours past noon, but my phone was low on battery, so I didn't know the precise time. Although it had been a long and tedious task to find the house, I could now feel that it wasn't in vain. I had to reach out to my distant relatives for the initial directions, but they were very reluctant in providing any assistance. Instead, they would go on to rant about how the building was inhabited by evil entities. Rather than feeling apprehensive, these rants only fostered a sense of curiosity in me. I knew that paranormal creatures were just a figment of our imaginations.

The door appeared to be locked with a thick rusted chain when I looked at it from a distance. However, as I approached it, I could see that the chain had been clearly cut from the middle. The partition was so fine that it was almost unrecognisable. Unable to contain my emotions, I pushed the door. It didn't budge. I tried again; this time with additional effort. The door remained obstinate. I began to feel uneasy; not so much because my efforts would not come to fruition, but more so because it appeared as if the door was not attached to anything. It stood there firmly like a wall. I mustered all my physical strength and gave a big push. The door opened, quietly. And then, a realisation soon sank my heart. The door had opened too sharply- almost as if someone, undoubtedly

more powerful than I was, had pulled the door from inside.

After having told myself that I was unnecessarily freaking, I stared at what lay in front of me. The house was dark, though the creepers were not to blame for this. In some other world, the house may have appeared as an architectural wonder. It wasn't oddly built, but the foundation had been laid in such a manner that it was impossible for sunlight to penetrate the house- at least around this time. The moss over the pillars and the walls had become so hideously thick that they concealed the original varnish on the walls. The lack of sunshine had dampened the vitality in the house. I almost started having second thoughts about this visit.

After stepping inside, I turned around to shut the door, when something made me change my mind.

I continued walking into nothingness, all the while squinting to get my sense of direction in place. Only after walking endlessly into what presumably was the courtyard did it dawn on me that I hadn't heard a single sound since I had set foot in the house. My footsteps, my breathing, my heartbeat- all had become inaudible and could only be felt as a faint sensation in my head. I tried to stop walking and looked around, but after a moment, I couldn't assure myself if my legs had stopped or if my pace had slowed. I turned around to see a cloud of darkness. I tried turning back- except my body wouldn't move. My body had become fixed to whatever I had been walking on.

An irritation had begun to creep down my body. My mind felt heavy as a whirlwind of thoughts continued to storm in.

And suddenly, my eyes open.

My heartbeat had become uncontrollably fast. I try to look forward- I do not know whether I am actually seeing, or just looking at images in my head. The main door was in front of me, shut. There was a mirror on the door. In it, my parents peer at me. With empty faces and hollow eye sockets. I find myself being dragged to the mirror, until I stand just an inch away from it. I feel a faint touch on my hands. My parents, in flesh and blood, were holding my hands. A stream-of blood- has begun flowing from my eyes.

The mirror shatters.

I wake up with a blistering headache, as if someone had driven a wedge through my head. I try to see straight, and realise that I am sitting outside my ancestral house, staring at the main door. I inhale deeply and look around. The sun must have set hours ago. The sky seems to be studded with stars.

As I turn back, the hair on my skin shoot up.

For a moment, I am lost; until I see her. I see Jessica. Lying there. In front of me. Smiling. Her cheeks are stained with blood. It appeared to come from her eyes. Eyes? Not eyes. Just two hollow sockets.



## A Reconciliation With Fate

Divyansh Nautiyal

Standing on the seashore with a light, chilly wind travelling across the sea, Arya's experience replayed before him in flashes. A labelled war hero by the country, Arya alone was witness to the story behind the decorated badges and medals.

With beads of sweat on his brow, only he knew the courage it took to pull the trigger and shoot an unknown man. With every dead shot kill, the guilt always crept higher and groped him stronger than ever. Behind the strong built lay a person who was still naïve and afraid. Every battle fought with courage and ferocity was also always fought with the memory of home and family looming ahead. War did not only bleed out the hatred and violence of the perpetrators but also the love and affection of those who lost their dear ones.

The trip back home finally came in the form of their warship approaching the shore. As he looked back, the alien bloodied lands where they had fought were soon to become his past. Reminiscing home after living two years abroad, his war beaten conscience finally melted as he broke down into tears. As the captain of the ship walked ashore, a smile spread across his face as he embraced his brothers and found his long lost peace in knowing that his return had finally come.

## On Top of the World

Bhai Kabir Singh

"The air grew thinner and thinner. My head was aching, little bit at first- the usual kind. But it grew worse; louder and louder till I could hear it resonate in my bones."

Out of all true stories about my life, this one, by far, is the best.

We didn't even realise when it all happened. The hail storm came down on us. The first pellets of snow were gentle and soft, like the petals of a flower. But it was not long before that changed. It was as if the snow had caught fire. They were like bullets piercing through our Kevlar jackets. We really did wear quite a few jackets. I think four.

As the winds picked up pace, they began tearing my skin, like bleach at stains. The weight of my rucksack was the only thing keeping me grounded. I may have cursed it throughout the trip, but right now I worshipped it. As the wind kept picking up pace it grew cooler and cooler till

My blood froze. Toes turned numb and hands raw.

I thought they had caught frostbite. Frostbite. Just the sound of it playing in my head gave made me shudder where I stood. A toe less. I don't want that. Don't be frostbite. Please lord, spare my toe.

Tears were running down my cheek. Not a slow trickle, but in short, quick bursts.

Our visibility fell. From almost a kilometer, all the way, to 50 meters. I could see the ground beneath me and the person ahead of me - that's it. The rest was a haze. The air grew thinner and thinner. My head was aching, little bit at first - the usual kind. But it grew worse; louder and louder till I could hear it resonate in my bones. Is it worth it? I stopped walking, I needed a break.

"What doesn't kill you only makes you stronger"

I wiped a tear off my cheek, took a

few deep breaths and started walking again. With every pulsing beat of my heart, I took a step. I would lift my foot, and then let gravity do the work. We were only 300 meters away. I used the number of steps to measure the distance I had travelled.

2 steps to 1 meter.  
2000 to 1 kilometer.  
I counted my steps backward from 600 to 0.  
599 left,  
598 left,  
597 left.

I took deep breaths and found my flow. One breath in, 2 steps forward.

One breath out, 2 more.

I had reached the last stretch - an icy, curved foot-wide path. I bent my legs, lowered my center of gravity and put one foot in front of the other. I kept my head straight and refused to look down, at the hundred foot drop. I would occasionally have short bursts of fear. These were the worst. Once we cleared the slope we could see the camp again, just 50 meters ahead of us. All the tricky part was over; the terrain was now lifeless, barren and most importantly, simple.

The storm slowly subsided. With a sigh of relief, I took my first

step into our cozy cabin.

Removed my shoes, gloves, jackets, and lay down.

Through the window, I could see the snow glimmer as if polished by the rays of sunlight. It was beautiful, like the foam of coffee. Fluffy and soft. I had answered my question. It was worth it.

Now that it was all over, I would love to claim I wasn't scared but brave and valiant through the experience, but that would not be true. At the top, when I lay on my bed, I no longer felt fear, but rather: victory. I was proud of myself. What a feeling! The once in a lifetime kind.

## Philistine

Armaan Verma

Dave. Nice to meet you. My iPhone's ringing. Excuse me. Brass tacks, then? I was thinking Releasing the next IPO on the floor Could treble the yield, perhaps even more.

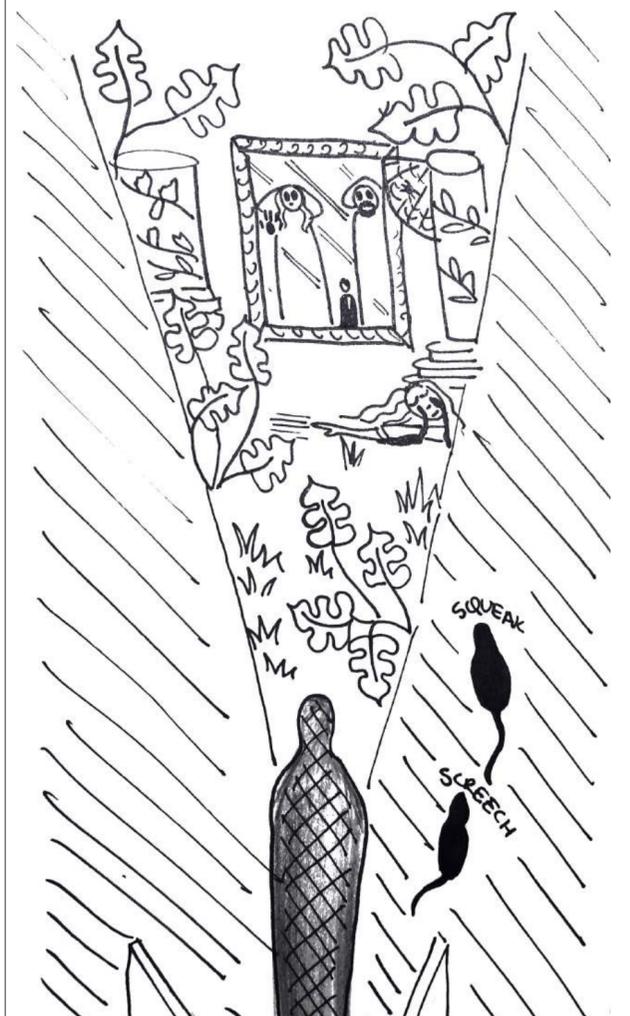
Oh, but I'm not one for small talk, you see, Rather, a man of focus and clarity. Now, then, treble the yield, double the share... What's that? Monet? Is Monet a software? Why does my favorite song matter? Please, let's steer clear of such trivial chatter.

Who are these fellows whose names you take? Dalí, Neruda, Chopin, and Blake? What use are they to a fellow like me? Let's leave the artists in the museum, shall we? I'm afraid I came to talk business here This can't work if we don't make that clear.

You're my client, not my friend, my friend. Will your books and plays yield a dividend? We both know the answer, so leave me be, I'm quite content being just a fish in the sea. I've no patience for this strangeness you call art Is it even selling on the shelves in K-Mart?

What skills does such knowledge give one, what scope? I mean, yes, I do a bit of cocaine to cope But I own a suit just because it's the trend While working in cubicles eight hours on end. So, you see, it's quite the life I lead. And you? You paint, write, compose, and read?

Right. Please look away while I count to ten, I need to jump off this building— You see, the market's crashed. Again.



## The 'Good', The 'Bad' and The 'Ugly'

Varen Talwar

Harry Selznick was sixteen years old when he first heard those voices. I remember seeing him standing in front of the cupboard in the lobby well past midnight. The house was silent as everybody but he was asleep.

The cupboard had a chest of drawers at the bottom, and four shelves above, enclosed in glass panes within wooden frames. The first shelf had cups and saucers; the second had the plates and bowls; the third had the glasses; and the fourth had the liquor bottles. I can vividly recall him looking fixedly at the fourth shelf.

I remember looking silently, letting things go with the flow. I was nearly asleep when Harry finally moved. He took his hand to his pocket, and retrieved a key. Of course, I thought, his parents wouldn't have left the liquor bottles in the open, so this boy had stolen the keys!

He then opened the cupboard, stretched up to the top shelf, and took out a bottle. Very meticulously, he kept it on the table, retrieved a glass from the third shelf, set it on the table, and opened the bottle. He had almost poured it into the glass, when the bottle stopped right as the liquid reached the mouth of the bottle.

I remember looking at him, not knowing what had happened. I looked at his scared face, and saw a saintly look in his eyes. He was facing me, but his eyes were moving, as if following a mobile object. I looked around, and found that everything was stationary. When I looked back at Harry, he had set the bottle back on the table, but this time, his eyes reflected the devil, and his neck was tilted to his side, as if he were trying to decipher a whisper.

Next thing I knew, he had picked up the bottle, but once again, his hand had stopped in mid air. The saintly look reappeared in his eyes, and he apparently was listening to



some invisible thing beside him. A few moments later, Harry had closed the bottle and placed it, and the glass back onto their shelves, locked the cupboard, and tiptoed into his parents' room to return the keys.

This event left me in awe and surprise, so my curiosity forced me to recall what Harry did and said about his experience later. The next day at school, during recess, while he was talking with his friends Sam and Danny, he mentioned this and explained what had happened in great detail.

He told them that as he was about to pour the liquor, he had heard a voice. It had come from a haloed figure in a bright white costume, just in front of him. It had advised him not to drink, and as he realised his folly, he put down the bottle. However, there was another voice, this time a rather harsh one, from behind him. He looked back to find a man dressed in a dark, red suit with a face 'as devilish as he had ever seen'. He had persuaded him against the other voice, with his loud authoritative voice slowly transforming into a sinister whisper. So, he had picked the bottle back up, and heard the saint's voice yet again. This time, it spoke about him betraying his parents, and destroying his promising future, and had finally compelled him to keep the bottle back.

"So," Harry had then concluded, "there was a good guy, and there was a bad guy, and the good guy won."

"Hah," Sam had then jested, "I wonder where the ugly guy had been sleeping away!"

They had laughed at this remark, but it had started a train of thought in my mind. I wondered - who was the ugly guy in this situation? After all, my world was anything but binary.

The answer came to me through Harry a few days later. He and his friends too had had some passing discussions on the 'ugly' personality, but no conclusive answer had been reached. It was his History exam that day. Although he had studied pretty hard for it, he was stuck at one question. I remember him swinging his head from side to side - not prying into his partners' scripts, but listening to the two voices. I remember how the look on his face changed rapidly from the 'Good' to the 'Bad', as they had been named by him and his friends.

He had a 'Bad' look in his eyes when he stopped swinging his head. It worried me. A few moments later, he whispered to his partner, who whispered back the answer.

I was shocked. Harry had never been that kind of a person. However, after the exam, when he went to the bathroom and was looking into the mirror, somewhat hypnotised by his own reflection, a revelation occurred to both of us.

Harry heard the 'Good' and the 'Bad' both and then did the right or wrong. However, after all, whatever it was, it was he who actually did it. It was he who was responsible for the consequences of all his actions - not the voices. They merely tempted him. He was the 'Ugly'.

## Sympathetic Strings



Arnaav Bhavanani

Sarod lived in the apartment above ours. It would be more accurate to say he haunted it; however, as he was still alive at the time, that would also be a little rude.

When he was home, Mr. Sarod would lounge around in a thin white vest that looked too tired to cover him properly. His bear hair stuck out in tufts from frayed armholes, and his thick beard often shone with a few stray drops of beer when he greeted me at the front door. I never dared look at him directly in case he growled.

Despite this, Mr. Sarod fascinated me, for he rarely spoke. I lived in a third-floor apartment with Mama, who had the ears of a bat, Maasi, who had the quiet velvet feet of a cat, and Nani, whose paper skin scratched the air when she smiled. Every evening, they would make tea and tell stories as we sat on the balcony and watched the crows, but one floor up, Mr. Sarod's strange silence wove the wildest tales.

My best friend Patru lived with him, mainly because she was his daughter, but I always got the feeling that she lived there only because her mother and sister did too. If she could have, she would have spent her life outside, chasing squirrels and eating questionable berries, living off the everywhere that was her home.

Despite the thin-walled beehive packing of our tenement, the Sarod women were active people, and their household was often noisy: Patru struggled with the mandolin in the afternoons, and in the evening, her sister Fyra serenaded twilight with the violin. Mrs. Sarod shouted at the neighbours and unwitting insurance salesmen.

Amidst the noise, Quiet Mr. Sarod was the incidental roommate in Apartment 402. When I visited, the most I heard from him was a grunt as he acknowledged Patru's voice from the front door, telling him we were headed to the park.

I loved Patru to bits. She was the most positive person in my life, always cracking jokes and laughing at herself. She could run faster than most of the boys in the park and take the swings so high I was always scared she would fly off into the clouds. The Sarod women all had frizzy hair that refused to stay in any kind of form, so Patru would keep hers short enough to maintain, but never short enough to look boyish. My mum would say, "Roo, take care of her," and I always nodded my head in quiet assent. If it was dark on the way back home, I would reach for her hand and feel safe.

For both of us, seven o'clock was the absolute deadline to be home. A minute later, and I knew to walk into the house sheepishly, head bowed, hoping that Mama was nowhere in sight of the beeline from the front door to my room. Patru told me she would crawl past her parents' room, but the two times I tried that I was caught, trapped under the bell jar of Mama's gaze and whacked on the bum with a ladle.

Sometimes, we would sit on the



swings, count down the seconds, and only start running home at the stroke of the hour. I loved the way she counted on three fingers and a thumb, how five was the peace sign in place of an open palm.

One year the Sarods trooped down to our home for Diwali. It was a beautiful night; we were hosting a lively party, and everyone was dressed in their finest kurtas and saris. Firecrackers opened up the sky every few minutes, old Bollywood music played over small stereo speakers. Patru and Fyra had reluctantly let their mother fit them into sequined ankle-length skirts, and their arms were occupied with a glittering of bangles. Patru's hair was a stubborn disaster. Mrs. Sarod, a woman I had never seen out of her nightgown, wore a simple blue sari. She looked like a Morpho butterfly, subdued and quite out of place. I didn't bother asking where Mr. Sarod was.

The world buzzed, hours passed. Food was brought out, finished, brought out again. The fireworks, music, voices, and laughter fused into unintelligible energy. Lying down on a couch with my head resting on Maasi's lap, I felt drowsy. Our neighbours from 303 were talking to the neighbours from 305, and 104 was complaining about something to 501. The lights sparkled softly. Mama came over and stroked my hair, telling me I could go to bed. The bell rang.

The sound splashed me awake, and I ran to open the door. As the lock clicked and I pulled at the handle, I got a glimpse of a large dark animal outside. I slammed the door shut, reasoned with myself, took a deep breath, and opened it again. It was Mr. Sarod. He seemed to have lost his vest.

After years of knowing the man in exactly one frame of being, I was shocked by what I saw. The only hair I could see on the Hairy Mr. Sarod was on his head and face. His thick arms were covered by the long sleeves of his

black kurta, and his beard was dry and combed.

"Arnaav," he nodded gravely. He was holding a beautiful red box of sweets.

"H-Hi," I stammered sheepishly. Clean Mr. Sarod cut an imposing figure; I stood aside to let him in, head bowed. As he walked in, he handed me the box and I got a glimpse of his hands.

I stood rooted to the spot, right foot holding the door open. I did not dare turn to look at them again, but I was sure of what I had seen. Mr. Sarod had three fingers. Three fingers and a thumb.

They weren't the kind you see on a person who once had that finger; no, there was no sudden absence. They were fully formed hairy, veined hands. Patru and I watched a lot of Cartoon Network, and they looked like they could grab onto something with suckers. A large claw unfurled out of the sleeve of his kurta to shake hands with Nani. Why had I not noticed it before? The front door slammed shut behind me as I made a beeline for my room.

Patru was sitting on the floor, playing cards with the twins from 104. She didn't notice me; I stood there with words stuck to the tip of my tongue. Should I say something? Would it be rude?

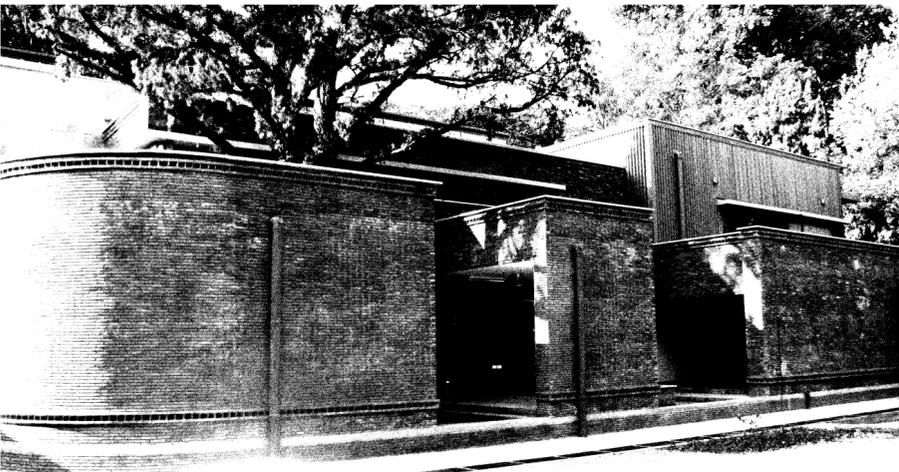
"Patru your dad has four fingers," I blurted out. I could hear my mother at the back of my mind, saying, "Roo, take care of her." I imagined Patru running toward the swings, arms reaching for chains, for berries and clouds.

"Yeah, I know," she giggled. "Did you just notice?" I smiled and laughed; one of the twins was staring distrustfully at her hair. I was about to reply when Mrs. Sarod walked into the room.

"Patru, Papa is here. Come."  
"Can I come in fiive minutes, mama?" She scrunched up her eyes as she said five, holding up two fingers.

## Defining Design

Sriman Goel examines design and aesthetics as an integral component of our daily lives.



What is Design?

I've heard many answers from people around School. "A design is a pattern". "In our School, design means carpentry and woodwork". "Interior design, you know". However, these close attempts at the definition of design do not do justice to the essence it truly holds.

The term 'design' is so broad that its attributes can't be restricted to one specific definition. According to some dictionaries, it means planning or drawing to create something. Some say it is a broad umbrella term encompassing everything from graphic design to industrial product design.

In the hope that it will give some insight to all branches of design, I must first attempt to answer the broad question that brought us here - What is design, in its entirety? Well, in my experience, design is a solution. It is an intelligent response to the needs of a person and his situation, and is meant to be effective. It usually provides this solution in a functional yet aesthetic manner. Design infuses efficiency into a cluster of things to form a well-working whole. Let's take an example to put this into perspective - the Art and Media Centre. In concept it is bricks, metal, pipes and stone; like any building could be. It is material, light and paint, gathered around empty space. These parts could have been thrown together in countless ways. But it goes without saying that our entire experience changes as these parts are assembled in a purely artistic manner. It becomes an intelligent way for light to appear, a way for people to move and for shapes and heights to influence us. It becomes an event, an exploration that is more than

just another building. It works! And it works as an art building, its function being different from any other building. It is successful at being functional and aesthetic - good design.

But this definition of design is not important as long as things work, right? Then why understand the meaning of design? Is it important? We need to understand design because it becomes key when one creates. Any creation needs to be designed well - its primary aim being the comfort or effect on the user. Any piece of artwork, a track of music, a living space or even a neat publication to be read needs to be designed in a manner that conveys an emotion or idea to users - confirming function aesthetically. This is the final goal and job of a designer.

"Wait, but what is a 'designer'?" You need to specify - is the designer an architect, or a fashion designer or a product designer? There's no such thing as just a designer." Yes, there are specialisations that you must choose if you pursue design because of the sheer vastness of the field. But there must be something common to all 'designers' in the field of design, mustn't there? What is common to all the branches of design? It's the core concept of design - known as 'design thinking'. It is the process of designing - a tool for crafting the intelligent solution. Design thinking binds all scopes of design together. It is the thinking process all 'designers' must use to create anything. It is a series of innovative steps - empathise, define, ideate, prototype, test. Although this is a brief outline - when used over and over in any aspect of thought or creation, it leads to great design. Design thinking is what makes

design design.

Why have I written this? Why does one need to know about this? It's not like everyone needs to know how to design, do they? No, but design is misunderstood. Few people know what it is in the first place. Another few know its importance today and fewer still know how to design well. Why is design so important, then? Again, is it important at all? Yes, design impacts us more than we notice. Everything you see around you is designed. The building you are in - designed by an architect. The room you see - decorated by an interior designer. Any and all objects - designed. Except for anything made by *jugaad* (and that is a level of design too), *everything* you see is designed. Design creates balance. Anything designed or customised makes you as a consumer feel better and make your consumption feel more valuable. It is because of these aspects of design that design is what sells. If a company employs better designers, it is bound to sell more. An example of this would be Apple. Apple's design is primarily what tempts the common man and contributes to its impressive sales. The sleek finish, minimalist feels and clean features of the Mac are precisely why you might see many peeking from S and SC Formers' bags around School. In conclusion, know that design is a very varied field and is vital to create anything. Design influences us every day.

Design sensitivity is vital to the changing face of our planet and our way of life. A well designed software, a smarter designed phone, a more efficient car - can all lead towards a better, beautiful life that works.

## Family Tradition

Anant Kakkar

I woke up at a quarter past eight hearing a strange sound, I didn't realise what it was at the time being. I went downstairs to find that my babysitter had arrived. She was nice, and I liked her because she would read to me before I went to sleep. That night my parents had left for a dinner party at nine p.m. and had instructed that I should be in bed by ten. I was about to doze off when I heard a loud scream from the house across the street. Being the curious cat that I am, I made sure my babysitter was passed out on the couch in the living room and then sneaked over to the house via the fire escape. I saw a bright pink and white ice-cream van parked outside with its happy jingle playing on the speakers. Puzzled, I peeked into the house on tiptoe. I saw something horrible - two looming figures wearing twisted masks with blood curdling smiles. With blood dripping from their clown costumes, they stood over the members of the Manson family, Mr. Manson was already dead with a jagged, crimson gash decorating his throat and Mrs. Manson with her daughter Amelia, were begging for mercy.

Suddenly, something brushed against my leg, causing me to shriek in fear. I looked down to find a cat and sighed in relief. On returning my gaze to the window, I was aghast to find the clown in the red mask looking at me with a twisted smile. Frozen in fear, the clown noticed my startled expression and waned at me. In a voice very much like my dad's he said, "Go back to your room, son. Mummy and I are almost done here." The other clown at this turned around and added, "Go back home sweetie - we'll be right home," sounding suspiciously like my mom from behind the unnerving plastic smile. Terrified, I obeyed and sprinted home like a mad dog, ignoring the anguished, pleading screams of mother and daughter.

When they came home, they asked me what I thought of

what they were doing with the Mansons. Mute from horror, I said nothing. My parents then asked, "What if we let you come with us the next time?" Fearful but curious, I asked, "Are there others?" They nodded and said, "We work to wipe this world of sin by indulging in sin ourselves. Would you like to help our cause son? Would you like to be a true part of the family?"

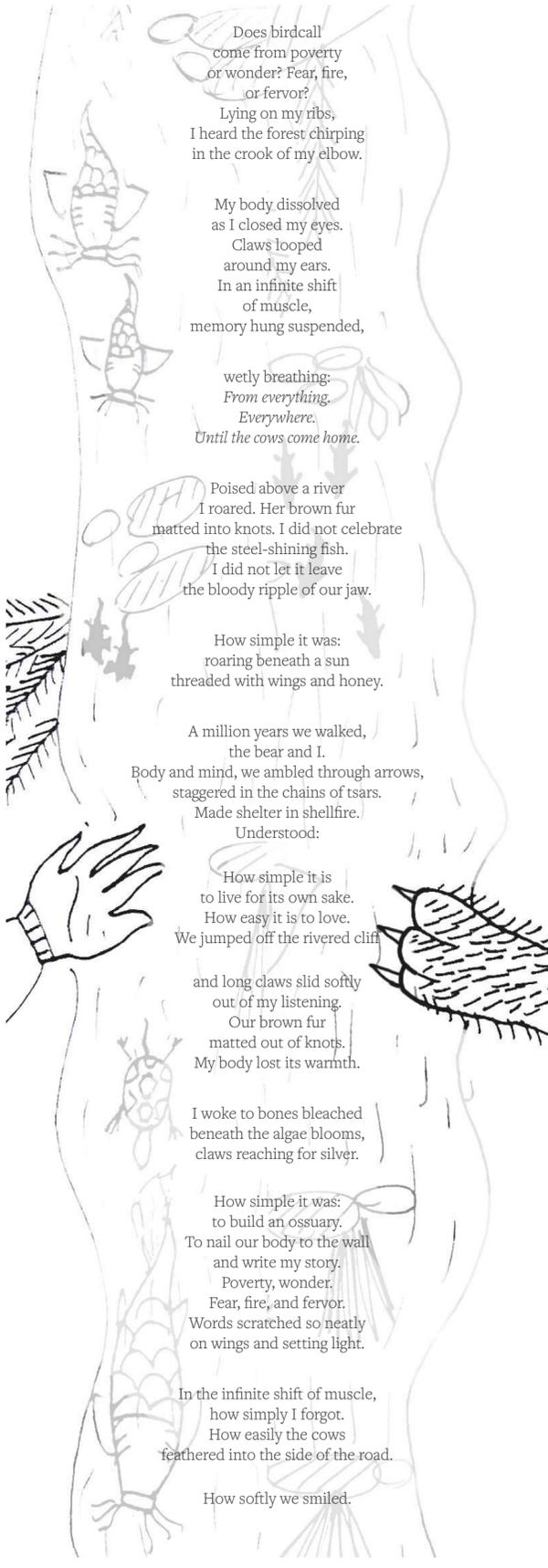
But why tell you my backstory? That was thirty years ago, and right now I'm here with you at my knees. I can see my daughter standing at the window, horrified by what she is seeing. I can see you with your children begging for mercy, bathed in the blood of your husband's corpse. "Go back home honey, we will be right there," I tell my daughter, bemused at how she runs back to our home. I'll deal with her later. Right now, I am here with my loving wife and we are taking part in a virtuous sin for the good of this world. As far as your husband goes, you too will be joining him soon in the heavens along with the Almighty, and my dear parents. Every family has their own special traditions, and this is ours. This is our tradition and we do it with a smile, and so will the coming generations. As my father said to his victims, "God bless your souls."

"So, daughter, what you saw is part of an old family tradition. I know that this may seem strange, but we work to wipe this world of sin by indulging in sin ourselves. Since you saw Mummy and I doing something that will get us grounded for a long time, you have a decision to make; do you want to be a true member of the family?"

Her glistening eyes shone back at me; dead stare and speechless. Honour, has a funny way of rhyming with horror. Silence reigns supreme, as the family sits - tradition grips our attention.

### The Animist

Arnaav Bhavanani



Does birdcall  
come from poverty  
or wonder? Fear, fire,  
or fervor?  
Lying on my ribs,  
I heard the forest chirping  
in the crook of my elbow.

My body dissolved  
as I closed my eyes.  
Claws looped  
around my ears.  
In an infinite shift  
of muscle,  
memory hung suspended,

wetly breathing:  
From everything.  
Everywhere.  
Until the cows come home.

Poised above a river  
I roared. Her brown fur  
matted into knots. I did not celebrate  
the steel-shining fish.  
I did not let it leave  
the bloody ripple of our jaw.

How simple it was:  
roaring beneath a sun  
threaded with wings and honey.

A million years we walked,  
the bear and I.  
Body and mind, we ambled through arrows,  
staggered in the chains of tsars.  
Made shelter in shellfire.  
Understood:

How simple it is  
to live for its own sake.  
How easy it is to love.  
We jumped off the rivered cliff

and long claws slid softly  
out of my listening.  
Our brown fur  
matted out of knots.  
My body lost its warmth.

I woke to bones bleached  
beneath the algae blooms,  
claws reaching for silver.

How simple it was:  
to build an ossuary.  
To nail our body to the wall  
and write my story.  
Poverty, wonder,  
Fear, fire, and fervor.  
Words scratched so neatly  
on wings and setting light.

In the infinite shift of muscle,  
how simply I forgot.  
How easily the cows  
feathered into the side of the road.

How softly we smiled.

### The Voice of The Voiceless

Divyansh Nautiyal reviews the 2013 Bollywood courtroom drama, Shahid.

"I'm as opposed as you are to terrorism, but that doesn't mean that we can put innocent people in jail without any evidence." - Shahid.

The Judiciary plays a pivotal role in a democratic nation like India where it serves to distinguish between the right and the wrong; the innocent and the guilty. A grave miscarriage of justice or even delayed deliverance can make all the difference for the ones waiting to be delivered at its hands. The biopic 'Shahid' directed by Hansal Mehta, with Rajkumar Rao in the lead, revolves around the life of Shahid Azmi, the man who fought for the voiceless in the muddled up judicial system of India.

The movie begins on a strong note with the depiction of the Bombay Riots of 1992. The opening scenes begin with an encounter between Shahid and a man set ablaze during the riots. As the city is engulfed by riots and the Muslims get massacred mercilessly, Shahid takes it upon himself to join a militant group (which he soon leaves) in Pakistan-occupied-Kashmir. Shahid is subsequently put behind bars for conspiring against the state and held responsible for the assassinations of Bal Thackeray and Farooq Abdullah. Despite being innocent, Shahid spends seven years in jail until he finally receives acquittal. Henceforth, Shahid vows to protect the innocent in a Judiciary with numerous loopholes and unchecked inefficiency. Only by being a part of the system could he hope to change it.

The movie proceeds to show Shahid working zealously to fight for the innocent people accused of terror attacks merely on the basis of unreliable evidences, unfounded suspicion and biased witnesses. He even goes on to win an impressive seventeen acquittals for his innocent clients. Throughout the film, Mehta successfully depicts the stereotypes that riddle our society



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and the time taking proceedings which delay the deliverance of justice in our courts. The movie highlights the widespread misbelief that Muslims are terrorists and the way they are taken into custody as scapegoats by the state. Shahid reaches the peak of his career as he fights for the innocent accused in the 26/11 bomb blasts in Mumbai. Even while striving for justice, he was labelled as 'Jihadiyon ka Gandhi' and his face was smeared black merely for driving his point in a court by using Shivaji's example. Such instances show us the ugly truth of a society deeply entrenched in misbeliefs and the irrational mindset that still entrenched within its citizens. The court battles between Shahid and the lawyers depict the conniving ways used by them to cut their way through in cases along with the numerous bureaucratic formalities that need fulfilment for any progress. It is said that justice delayed is justice denied, something which was a core aspect of this film and an issue that needs immediate attention. The film traces how throughout his career, Shahid receives numerous death threats to give up cases, however, he is undeterred and never wavers from the path to justice.

I must admit that while other movies like Jolly LLB have attempted to deal with the same issues, Shahid was unique, and stands out as a movie.

Unlike numerous other Bollywood films, this one wasn't over-dramatised or made into a sob story. The plot was simplistic and backed with a light background score coming naturally from the surroundings. The characters of Mariam (Shahid's wife) and Shahid's brother, were played convincingly and the movie was extremely accurate in its settings. Rajkumar Rao's acting did complete justice to what the film intended out of his character. Shahid's storyline taught us about the life of a man whose fight for justice mirrored his own struggles which he had managed to overcome. The other sub-plots in the film submerge the viewer into the narrative. Shahid struggling to give time to his family, his brother Arif who is a tired man but ever ready to support his family and then the poverty that strangles their family. All of these mirror the problems of a common man struggling to establish his identity in modern day society.

On the surface, the movie might seem plain and straightforward, but it has deeper and darker connotations in it. Based on the man who became a shaheed (martyr) for his country and a shaahid (witness) to the prejudices of his society, the movie is one with a lot in store to offer!

### Broken

Aryaman Kakkar

People are broken. We all carry the bleeding shards of our secrets, our fears, our hidden reflections. All of us wear happy faces dominated by mourning eyes because they are spectators to the violence inside. We always make the mistake of believing that the eyes are a one-way street.

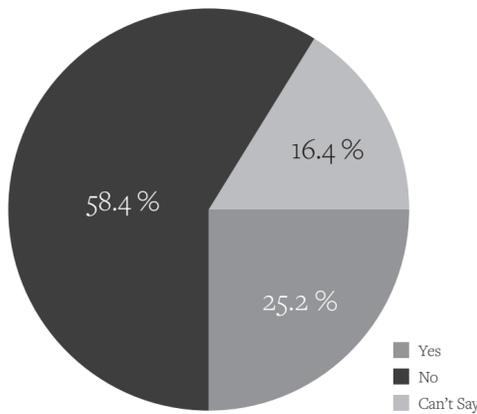
There is a reason we look into someone's eyes and dive deep to know the truth, the love, the pain they feel. There is a reason tears flow from our beautiful irises, whether of joy or sadness. We are all broken people inside. We are afraid to show it in a world where it's survival of the strongest. And in the end, for most of us, that's the only thing that matters. We forget that we feel and instead stow them away like unclaimed baggage in an airport. Only this time, you know what's inside, and leave it behind still.

We are all crumbling inside. We put up walls so we can get through this life if not unscathed, at least uninjured. We let in one, maybe two people inside our borders through that single gate for our entire lifetime. And we hope, they do the same, establish trade, make love, make trust, and take us further than we have ever been before.

We are not the only ones who are broken. Everyone is, one way or the other. So look into their eyes, their irises, the windows to their souls, and you will find someone who is as finely ground powder as you are. If you find that person, you are lucky, for the simple reason that you can fix each other without words. You can turn from powder to fractured glass with a look, a smile, a sticky note on the fridge, it doesn't matter! The small things you do matter, and that is all you need if you love another enough to let them in. Give them a guided tour of your destruction, rage, and tornadoes. Let them see how exquisite you are. Show them that you understand their inexplicable pain.

We are all broken souls here. And if you do this, I will do the same for you.

### Should Toy Time be increased?



### Suspended

Samarvir Mundi

I balance on the flip side of consciousness, vacillating to and fro  
Dithering,  
I contain an ever fragmenting sense of self, held hostage by space and time  
Impervious,  
I restrain an impending implosion of the imagination into the void  
A void of proportions unknown - an interminable liminal space.

### A Handshake Could Have Done it all

Tanmay Gupta and Tejas Sharma

A handshake could have done it all; but now it was too late. If offered now, the hand might as well get chopped off.

Holding an assault rifle in my arms and carrying a 56 lbs. rucksack filled with food, I am disguised as a Pathan wearing a long kurta and a turban; ready to chant the cries of war: "Allah hu Akbar" and "naare-takbeer". The love for my country has provoked me to do all this against my will. Yes, we were at war with Pakistan, in the hope to reconquer Peak 5875. Within the few minutes which seemed like hours, the rifle had done its job; in front of my eyes lay 30 Pakistani dead militants and the Indian Flag waving on the peak. Our so called mission was accomplished but cost us thirteen of our friends.

It all started two years ago...

I was recruited as a Paratrooper to serve the nation on an undercover mission, but I never knew my life would go through so much turmoil. I was transferred to Kashmir due to the growing tension near the LoC. Being a newly recruited officer, I was placed under the field commander. The Field Marshal was impressed by my grit and promoted me to the position of Captain of one of the groups which had been tasked with reconquering peak 5875. We were not aware about the purpose of this mission or what peak 5875 was but the Marshal's tone made it sound like something of grave importance.

"Peak 5875", shouted the Marshal, "is a peak that had been under the control of India for many years, but now it is no more. Pakistan had always had an eye on that peak, and using their old strategy of guerrilla warfare, they attacked us while we were resting.

Pakistan, now having established control over that peak, could see the movement of the Indian army 10 kilometres inland of India even during times when vision is obscured by fog. We have already lost men in an attempt to reconquer the peak as they detected our movements and riddled us down with bullets and boulders. So here is our plan....."

Two groups were made. One group would travel to the top in night and the second would stay back and wait for the signal to travel up. They will engage the Pakistani militants who were guarding the road in a gunfight. Meanwhile, the second group would prevent any Pakistani reinforcement from travelling further up, and guard the first group.

Night drew as we were ready. Holding an assault rifle in my arms and carrying a 56 lbs. rucksack filled with food, I am disguised as a Pathan wearing a long kurta and a turban; ready to chant the cries of war: "Allahu Akbar" and "naare-takbeer". I had a lot of trouble getting used to the tone of the Pakistanis. I was raised in a Hindu family so I never wanted to be disguised as a Muslim, but the love for my country was supreme, and I willingly put on the garb. The Pakistanis would think that we are their men and won't fire. We took five long hours to climb to the top and finished our final steep ascent of Peak 5875, all the while wearing an evil grin on our faces.

As soon as we climbed up we began firing blindly, but our adversaries were cleverer than we expected. Some of them had their rifles in their hands and responded immediately. At this moment we were focused on shooting down our opponents, with little time to think about the condition of our team mates. Some were injured, while some were already dead. In this whole mission we lost 13 lives, and were able to kill all Pakistani militants. In the end, tears swelled up in my eyes as I saw the Indian flag waving in the rising sun.



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### Freedom

Yuvraj Sarada

This is the season,  
Of the long-awaited freedom;  
The cries have vanished,  
The cruel all banished.

The fire is glowing,  
The river is flowing.

They made us pull the rope.  
And run on the uphill slope.

They gave us very little tit-bits,  
So we used our wits,  
And gave them fits!

Yes, we're back into the open sky,  
All set to fly!!



### A Brief History of Stupidity

Varen Talwar

Alright, I confess that it was my fault that the poor girl freaked out. I now know that a girl feels pretty uncomfortable when a boy whom she knows for barely half an hour says romantic stuff to her; because that is exactly what I did.

It was actually not my fault entirely, because I obviously wouldn't have been so stupid unless it was urgent; which, just by the way, it was. (Apparently, their spoilsport teacher had called them early from the party - the one place I could talk to her.)

So, there I am, watching her go, thinking that if I didn't do something, I was probably going to plunge myself into really, really bad depression. I think that was the only thing I thought before I ran after her and asked her if

she would have danced with me had she stayed. I wish something sensible had flashed my mind too. I would at least not have looked like a desperate, demented, hopelessly romantic, stupid boy in front of total strangers.

Of course, I got an affirmative answer for formality's sake and because she was way too sweet to say 'no' to my face. However, when I went to her the next day, thinking that we will have a good time, I finally realised that she did not like me, from the same expression I had seen the previous night but was too hopelessly optimistic to realise it. So, when God finally bestowed some intelligence on me at this profound moment, I apologised to her. I told her that I honestly didn't mean any harm and gave a far-fetched (albeit true) explanation for my social awkwardness; and then I went on my way like a proper gentleman. *The End.*

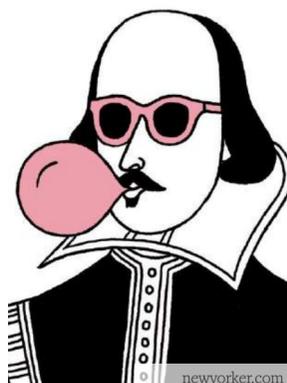
You know, in History class we had this discussion about how the Treaty of Versailles is seen as the root of disaster

in hindsight, but it was actually pretty much acceptable at the time. That is the same case here. I thought that the type of romance you see in movies and read in Shakespeare actually works - you know, "Shall I compare thee to a summer's day or, a summer's day to thee" type of things. Now I know that Shakespeare is a scam. I mean, what is the use of studying 500-year old English (which goes over the top of your head by a couple of miles) if it doesn't even make for good pick-up lines?! I don't know what you feel about Shakespeare, but let me tell you a fact - if you try to pull off a balcony scene ten minutes after you see a girl - you are definitely going to end up in a mess. You might be spared the slap if you get lucky.

But you know what my main regret is? It is that unfavourable circumstances spoil a perfectly good chance. Had I had more time, I could certainly have gotten somewhere. But no! Life has to beat you left, right and centre because letting someone live in peace for once

hurts its enormous ego!

So, that is a brief history of my stupidity. I strongly recommend that you don't repeat it, although it is a bit too irresistible not to do so, as you will have learnt from the history of your own stupidity. After all, we all have one.



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## यही है बंधुत्व?

#### सुधीर चौधरी

कुछ दिवस पूर्व सभी विद्यार्थियों से “प्रिफेक्ट्स” फ़ीडबैक फॉर्म” भरवाया गया और उसमें एक ऐसा सवाल था जिसने मुझे कई दिनों के लिए चिंतन करने पर विवश कर दिया। सवाल था कि आपके अनुसार विद्यालय में वरिष्ठ-कनिष्ठ छात्रों का आपसी रिश्ता कैसा है?

सवाल को देखते ही तक्ररीबन दस लोगों की छवियों ने मेरे मस्तिष्क में घूमना प्रारम्भ कर दिया। अगले कुछ मिनटों के लिए मैं केवल उनके साथ बिताये समय की स्मृति पर ध्यान देता रहा। वे खड़ी-मीठी यादें कई मनमोहक अनुभवों और दुखद घटनाओं का विशेष मिश्रण थीं। मुझे याद है कि आज से एक वर्ष पूर्व अपने एक वरिष्ठ छात्र ने मुझे दण्डित किया जबकी मेरी कोई गलती भी नहीं थी। मेरा एक सहपाठी शोर मचा रहा था और मुझे केवल गलतफहमी की वजह से दंड का पात्र बनना पड़ा। ऐसे में उसके क्रोध को देखते हुए मैं और मेरा मित्र चाह कर भी उसे सत्य का आभास कराने का सहस नहीं जुटा पाए। यही बात जब हमने एक अन्य वरिष्ठ छात्र को बताई तो वह मुझे बचाने हेतु स्वयं के मित्र से लड़ पड़ा। अंत में उसने अपने मित्र को उसकी गलती का अहसास करवाया। इसी के साथ हम दोनों के बीच आपसी विश्वास की भावना उत्पन्न हुई और कुछ ही

महीनों में हमारा आपसी रिश्ता इस हद तक गहरा हो गया कि प्रत्येक रात में जाकर उससे अपने दिन के अनुभव बाँटता और उनपर विचार करता। यहीं समय मेरे लिए दिन का वह समय बन गया जब सर्वाधिक संतुष्टि प्राप्त होती। वहीं मुझे परेशान करने वाले छात्रों से भी मैंने बात करने का प्रयास किया और उन्होंने मेरे दृष्टिकोण को समझते हुए मित्रता कि ओर कदम बढ़ाये। हाँ, ऐसे कई लोग अवश्य थे जिन्होंने ने मेरे सभी प्रयसों को ठुकरा

कर दूरी बांये रखने का फैसला किया। कुछ नहीं तो केवल मुझे संतुष्टि रहती कि मैंने प्रयास तो किया और मेरे मित्रों कि संख्या हमेशा इन लोगों से अधिक थी।

वरिष्ठ छात्रों के साथ कई बार मुझे एक खास अपनापन महसूस हुआ, यहाँ तक कि मुझे अनेक लोगों से किसी भी प्रकार की बात करने में कोई हिचकिचाहट न होती। इस सब में मुझे एक अनोखी स्वतंत्रा का आभास भी हुआ। समय के साथ, अनेक लोगों

से एक ऐसा रिश्ता बन गया कि उन्होंने स्वयं स्वीकार किया कि अपने अत्याधिक सहपाठियों से अधिक उन्हें मुझसे लगाव था।

मोटे तौर पर देखा जायें तो विद्यालय में एक विद्यार्थी के रूप में हम तीन प्रकार के रिश्तों में बंधते हैं: सहपाठी से हमारा रिश्ता, वरिष्ठ-कनिष्ठ छात्रों का आपसी रिश्ता और अपने अध्यापकों से हमारा रिश्ता। अध्यापकों के साथ हमेशा एक औपचारिकता का भाव जुड़ा रहता है

## कौन हूँ!

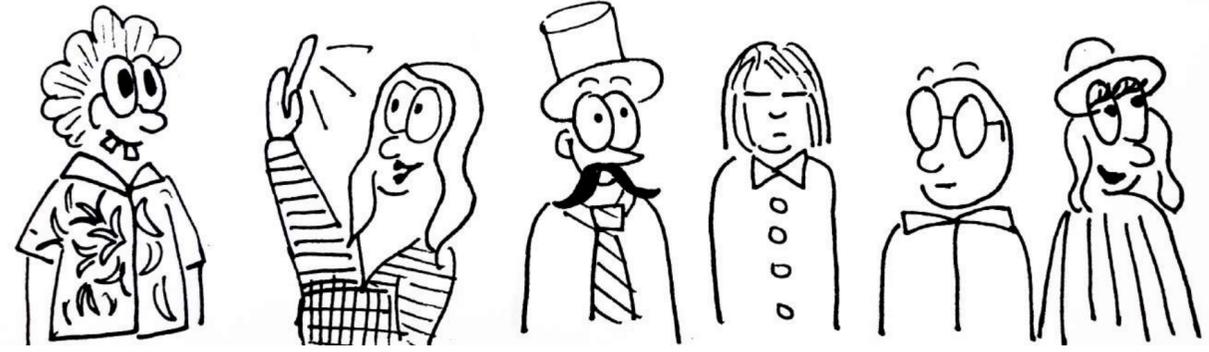
#### कार्तिक राठौड़

हर पन्ना सच टटोरता है,
हर स्याही खून उगलती है।

मेरी आँखें कुछ गुमराह सी हैं।
मैं दिशाभ्रमित हूँ?
या रक्त रहित हूँ?
मैं वह सत्य हूँ जो अप्रासंगिक है?
या वह झूठ जो प्रासंगिक है?
मैं कौन हूँ?
मैं शोर हूँ?
मैं मौन हूँ?
मैं कौन हूँ?
मैं भाव हूँ?
या झूठ पर चलती,
सत्ता की नाव हूँ?
मैं कौन हूँ?
मैं शोर हूँ?
मैं मौन हूँ?

## पिघलती बर्फ

अरविन्दनाभ शुक्ल



आज दोस्तों के साथ बैठ ही लिए। धरती का घूमता गोला सदियों को हर साल अपनी परिधि में घेर लाता है। सदियाँ आती हैं और साथ लाती हैं हर दिल में जागती हुई गरमाहट पाने की उत्कट इच्छा। आँगन के किसी भी कोने में धूप का कतरा उतरता है, तो मन उसके पास जाकर अपनी बाहों में समेट लेने के लिए बैचैन हो उठता है।

हर वर्ष की तरह एक बार फिर गरमाहट के खोजी तीन दोस्त घर के छोटे से लॉन में मिले, बैठे। मतलब की बातें शुरू हुई, फिर धीरे-धीरे बातों के मतलब भी निकलने लगे। परिवार भी आस-पास ही थे। कितनी ही बचपन की बातें सुनी-सुनाई गयीं। यह बात दीगर है कि उन यादों का पुलिंदा पहले भी न जाने कितनी बार खोला जा चुका है, ऐसे ही किसी मौके पर। फिर भी, हर बात नई सी लगी।

सब ने मिल कर लकड़ियाँ जमाईं और उसके चारों ओर घेरा बना कर बैठे। रामलीला की बातें हुई। बुन्दराम मास्टर जी को याद किया जो मरते दम तक रामलीला के स्वयंभू डायरेक्टर बने रहे। लाला रामचरण का जिक्र हुआ जो जिनके नाम से लड़के रामलीला के सारे कलाकारों के लिए मात्र एक रुपये का इनाम घोषित करा देते थे। इसके बाद तमतमाए हुए लाला लड़कों को मन भर गालियाया करते थे। हराँ हलवाई की जलेबियाँ, किसना के समोसे, गोवर्धन की गजक और चुन्नीलाल की चाट-पापड़ी का स्वाद एक बार फिर जवान पर छा गया। अब इनमें से कोई नहीं है। शायद इनके लड़कों ने अपने धंधे भी बदल दिए हैं, लेकिन स्वाद आज भी जीवित है, पुरानी यादों में, बचपन की बातों में। बच्चे मुँह बाए सारी कहानियाँ सुनते रहे और अपने परिवेश में उन सभी को पहचानने की कोशिश में लगे रहे। आग जलने लगी थी, चिंगारियाँ छिटकने लगीं थी।

लकड़ियों के चटखने की आवाजों में से किस्से फूटने लगे थे। फूफा जी की शादी का वृत्तान्त, हाथी के भड़क कर दुल्हे को ले भागने का हादसा, दुल्हे के पेड़ पर लटकने की कथा, दुल्हन के आँचल से बंधी वर की धोती की लॉग खुलने का प्रकरण, मास्टर जी के हाथों मार खाने का उपाख्यान, हरिया की लड़की और तेलू पंसारी के लड़के की प्रेम कथा, ज़रुरत से ज़यादा रुई भरने से कड़ी और खड़ी हो गई रिजाई पर उपजा झंझट, भाषा सीखने के लिए गालियों से शुरुआत करने वाले आयरिश की जीवनी, कपड़ों की छीना झपटी और खाने को लेकर मची अफरातफरी का फ़साना, नवदुर्गा पर कन्याओं को जिमाने का कथानक; सर्दी से थरथराती अंधेरी रात में उजाला कर गए। आँच की तपिश भीतर तक गरमाने लगी थी।

घर परिवार से लेकर आस-पड़ौस तक के लोग कहानियों में सिमटकर साथ आ बैठे। जिनसे न कोई जान न पहचान, न कोई मिलना न जुलना वे सब अपने से लगने लगे। कितनी ही बार लगा कि कल ही तो मिला था उनसे कहीं नुक्कड़ पर, पान की दूकान पर, चाय के खोखे पर, किसी की शादी में, किसी की गर्मी में, नामकरण पर, जनेऊ पर या यूँ ही सफ़र करते हुए रेल के डिब्बे में। कितनी सारी बातचीत हुई थीं उनसे! एक दूसरे के रिश्तेदार अपने रिश्तेदारों जैसे लगने लगे। कितनी ही बार मन हुआ कि किस्सा सुनाने वाले से कह दूँ कि इस बार जब भी उनसे मिलो तो मेरी राम राम कह देना। किरदार को जानने के लिए नाम-पता जानने की ज़रुरत नहीं होती, आज समझ में आ गया। आग की लपटों में छवियाँ बनने लगी थीं।

जिसे हम काम की बात कहते हैं, ऐसी कोई भी बात नहीं हुई। फिर भी सब खुश थे। बच्चे चाव से कहानियाँ सुन रहे थे, सवाल कर रहे

थे। कोई बीच में बोलता तो “सुनो, सुनो” कह कर चुप करा देते थे। उनके दिल के भीतर दुबकी जान लेने की इच्छा आज आँखों में दिखाई देने लगी थी। चिंगारियाँ उचटने लगी थीं और जहाँ-तहाँ गिरकर छोटे-छोटे अलाव जलाने लगी थीं।

सुनते हैं कि आज के बच्चे आत्मकेंद्रित होते जा रहे हैं। वे परिवार को जानना नहीं चाहते। हो सकता है, लेकिन हम उन्हें परिवार से, अपनों से जोड़ने के लिए कहानियाँ भी कहाँ सुनाते हैं। हम उन्हें दूर के रिश्ते के उन दादा जी के बारे में कहाँ बताते हैं, जिन्हें शादियों में मंडप बाँधने का शौक था, जो शहर के हर परिचित अपरिचित के यहाँ शादी का मंडप बाँधने पहुँच जाते थे, जिन्होंने इस काम के लिए अपने चेले तैयार कर लिए थे ताकि उनके बाद भी यह प्रथा चलती रहे। हम उस बल्लू के बारे में कहाँ बताते हैं, जो किसी भी घर में मौत की खबर सुनते ही अपने आप बिना बुलाये अर्थाँ बाँधने पहुँच जाता था और जिसे मंजूर न था कि एक गाँठ भी गलत लग जाए। हम कहाँ बताते हैं कि गाँव में कोई भी पर्व-त्यौहार होने पर आँगन और सड़क को सजाने के लिए रंगीन कागज़ की झंडियाँ बनायी जाती थीं। गाँव में उत्सव किसी के यहाँ भी हो अनाज का पिसान सबके यहाँ होता था। दही हर घर में जमाया जाता था। शाक-भाजी आदत से नहीं लाई जाती थी बल्कि घर-घर से उसका संग्रह किया जाता था। मिठाइयों की तश्तरियाँ हुआ करती थीं और उन तश्तरियों को खाने की प्रतियोगिताएँ चलती थीं। सुख्खू कुबड़ा सौ रसगुल्ले खा जाता था। वो चहलपहल, धूमधाम, रसिकता, रंग, आमोद-प्रमोद! हम कहाँ बताते हैं उन्हें यह सब? उस पर तुराँ यह कि शिकायत भी करते हैं कि आज के बच्चे इकलखोर होते जा रहे हैं। हम परेशान रहते हैं कि बच्चे

टीवी से चिपके रहते है। परेशान तो रहते है, लेकिन यह नहीं बताते कि टीवी का आना हमारे बचपन में एक सामाजिक घटना थी। रविवार की शाम जब दूरदर्शन पर पिक्चर आती थी तो सारा मौहल्ला टीवी के सामने इकट्ठा हो जाता था। दरियाँ बिछाई जाती थीं, चाय बनती थी, गाना आने पर बच्चे नृत्य करने के लिए खड़े हो जाया करते थे, टीवी को रंगीन बनाने के लिए उसके सामने रंगीन स्क्रीन लगाई जाती थी और पूरा मौहल्ला एकाग्रचित्त होकर एक परिवार बनकर आनंद लेता था। मूंगफली के छिलके तोड़ने की आवाज़ लगातार आती रहती थी। बूढ़े काका वैजयंती माला को स्क्रीन पर देखकर भावविभोर हो जाया करते थे। किसी ने बताया कि नेहरू जी वैजयंती माला के बड़े प्रशंसक थे। सुनकर काका, जो स्वयं नेहरू जी के अनन्य भक्त थे, नेहरू जी के प्रति शंक्ति हो जाते थे। उनके चेहरे पर अनायास ही ईर्ष्या का भाव जाग उठता था। दोनों एक ही भावभूमि पर स्थापित हो जाया करते थे। कृषि-दर्शन का कार्यक्रम पूरे चाव के साथ देखा जाता था। पूरा समाज मासूमियत की डोर से बंधा था।

जो काम हज़ारों-लाखों वैज्ञानिक नहीं कर नहीं कर सकते, यादें आपस में मिल-मिला कर एक यंत्र बनाती हैं, जिसे टाइम-मशीन या समय-यंत्र कहते हैं। आज उस समय-यंत्र की सबने सवारी की और घूम आये दशकों पीछे की दुनिया में जब बिनाका गीत माला बजा करती थी, हाँकी के टैस्ट मैच होते थे जिनका आँखों देखा हाल सुना जाता था, शास्त्री जी रेडियों पर देश में अन्न की कमी की बात करते थे तो उनकी एक पुकार पर लाखों लोग सप्ताह में एक दिन उपवास करना आरम्भ कर देते थे, प्रेशर कुकर को स्वाद का हत्यारा कहा जाता था, गैस पर खाना पकाने में गृहणियाँ डटती थीं, आधा हिन्दुस्तान रात में लालटेन और

और इसकी वजह से ही रिश्ते की गहराई एक निश्चित सीमा पार नहीं कर सकती। वहीं, माना तो यही जाता है कि सहपाठियों का आपसी रिश्ता मजबूत होता है किन्तु इर्ष्या जैसी भावनाओं कि वजह से कई बार रिश्तों में दरारें आ जाती हैं। वहीं व्यक्तिगत अनुभवों की वजह से में एक वरिष्ठ-कनिष्ठ छात्र के रिश्ते के गहरे होने की सम्भावना को कभी कम नहीं आँकता। समय के साथ, मेरे कुछ वरिष्ठ छात्रों के साथ ऐसे रिश्ते बने हैं जो जीवनभर

बने रहेंगे। इसी के साथ, मैं कई कनिष्ठ छात्रों के साथ भी ऐसे रिश्ते स्थापित होते देख सकता हूँ जहाँ में एक वरिष्ठ छात्र कि भूमिका निभा रहा हूँ।

अब इतने चिंतन के पश्चात् उस ‘फीडबैक फॉर्म’ के उत्तर में मैंने लिखा कि इस रिश्ते में एक व्यक्ति के विद्यार्थी जीवन का सर्वाधिक अनमोल रिश्ता बनने का सामर्थ्य है, केवल इसे सही ढंग से विकसित करने की आवश्यकता है।

## मेरी परछाई

भव्य राजगढ़िया

वह शाम सुनहरी थी, रात गहरी थी। चाँद का प्रभाव था, तारों का अभाव था।

पूरा मोहल्ला नीरव था, इसी बीच एक भैरव था।

वह भैरव था भगवान, या था एक हैवान।
बस इसी बात का पता लगाने, चले मैं और मेरी परछाई।
पर यह भैरव था एक सौदागर, शर्तें भी उसकी और नियम भी;
बस इसी बात की थी झिंझक।
मैं पहुँचा वहाँ आधी रात को,
थे वहाँ सिर्फ मैं और मेरी परछाई।
सड़क किनारे बैठा दिखा एक प्राणी,
मैंने उससे पूछा कि भाई,
क्या देखा आपने किसी भैरव को?
उसने मुझे देखा और बोला -
यहाँ रहते है सिर्फ मैं और मेरी परछाई।

उत्सुकता की भावना मर सी गयी।
लौटने ही लगे थे कि आवाज़ आयी-
इस अंधेरे में देख तो नहीं पाता उसे
अगर रोशनी होती तो -
यहाँ रहते है मैं और मेरी परछाई।
बात कुछ समझ नहीं आयी,
और तभी रौंगटे खड़े से हो गए।
भैरव हमारे बीच ही मौजूद था।

अंधेरे में लापता, या फिर साथ हमेशा।
बताता हमें कौन मानव, और कौन दानव।

मेरे साथ यह भैरव, उसके साथ वह भैरव।

तुम्हारे साथ भी रहता है यह भैरव,
पर तुम ही हुक्म करते हो,
है वह भगवान या है हैवान।
ज़िंदगी की करती भरपाई, यह है हमारी परछाई।

तेल की टिबरियाँ जलाता था, भाप के इंजन से चलने वाली रेलगाडियों की सवारी की जाती थी और कभी-कभार अखबार में कम्प्यूटर नामक खोज के बारे में छपता था जिसके बारे में सुना जाता था कि वह इंसान की इच्छा से भी तेज़ दौड़ जाता है। आग के नीचे रेत में कुछ शकरकंदियाँ दबा दी थीं। उनके भुनने की गंध फैलने लगी थी।

किसी ने मज़ाक में पूछा कि पेंसिल और कैसेट का क्या सम्बन्ध है। लगभग सभी बड़ों को ध्यान था कि कैसेट लपेटने के लिए उसमें पेंसिल घुमाई जाती थी। याद आया कि कैसेट खराब होने पर कूड़े के ढेर पर फेंक दी जाती थी और शरारती बच्चे उसे खोल कर फीता कुत्ते की पूँछ में बाँध देते थे। हवा में लहराता हुआ फीता गली के एक सिरे से दूसरे सिरे तक पहुँच जाता था। अब बच्चे स्कूल जाते हैं। ट्यूशन जाते हैं। होमवर्क करते हैं। बचे हुए समय में विडियो गेम खेलते हैं या बड़े शहरों की सोसाइटियों में बने पार्कों में झूला झूलते हैं। अब हम उन्हें गली में खेलने ही नहीं देते।

एक दोस्त की पत्नी ने बड़ी हसरत से याद दिलाया जब गली की औरतें दोपहरियों में काम निपटाकर साथ बैठती थीं। पापड़ बेलती थीं, कचरियाँ तोड़ती थीं, जवे उतारती थीं, फंदे गिनते हुए सलाइयाँ चलाती थीं और पास में खेलते किसी के भी बच्चे को भी बुलाकर नाप का अंदाजा लेती थीं, छोटी छोटी लड़कियों को क्रोशिया चलाना सिखाती थीं, फ्रेम में कपड़ा कस कर फूलों और बेलबूटों की कढ़ाई करती थीं या झुण्ड में बैठी सबसे बूढ़ी औरत से जानकारी लेती थीं कि बीस किलो आम के अचार में कितनी कलौंजी और कितना तेल डालना चाहिए। आग के चारों तरफ वे ही बूढ़ी, जवान जानकार औरतें बैठी दिखाई देने लगीं जिनके संचित ज्ञान का हस्तांतरण पीढ़ी दर पीढ़ी मौहल्ले

के किसी घर के दालान में ऐसी ही होता आया है। जो पहले कलाएँ थी, अब झंझट हो गए हैं। अब तो सब बाज़ार में मिल जाता है। सच है, सारा सामान बाज़ार में मिल जाता है लेकिन भावनाएँ अभी भी किसी दूकान पर नहीं मिलतीं।

भागती-दौड़ती ज़िंदगी में रिश्ते-नाते जमते से जा रहे हैं। मिलना नहीं होता किसी से भी। सिर्फ मिलने के लिए घंटों सफ़र करके लोग किसी दोस्त-रिश्तेदार के घर नहीं जाते। बतकहियाँ नहीं होती। कहकहे नहीं होते। किस्सों की बेरोकटोक धाराएँ नहीं बहतीं। बेलाग बातें नहीं होतीं। धौल-धप्पा नहीं होता। फ़िज़ूल की गप्पें नहीं होतीं। कुछ ठंडे से दो-चार लफ़्ज़ इधर से और कुछ जमे से दो-चार फ़िकरे उधर से और बात खत्म। फिर काम की बात पर आ जाते हैं। कितनी काम की होती हैं, इसका किसी को कोई अंदाजा नहीं। माना जाता है, काम की बातें होती हैं। हर दिल डरा सा रहता है कि कहीं किसी को कोई बात बुरी न लग जाए। फ़ि़र रहती है कि अगर किसी ने कोई तीखी बात कह दी तो उसका जवाब क्या होगा। हम बातों को मज़ाक में उड़ाना भूल रहे हैं।

आज माहौल कुछ बदला सा लगा। घंटों तक लकड़ियाँ दहकती रहीं, अग्नि की जीभ लपलपाती रही, परछाइयाँ अँधेरे में नाचती रहीं और फिर धीरे धीरे आग ठंडी पड़ने लगी। लकड़ियाँ कोयले में और कोयला राख में बदलने लगा। धीरे धीरे सब उठे, चलने का उपक्रम हुआ, विदा ली गयी, नमस्कार-प्रणाम-बाय-गुडनाइट का दौर चला और सब अपने अपने घर की ओर रुखसत हुए। सर्दी बहुत थी, कोहरा और ठिठुरन भी, लेकिन आज कोई कॉप नहीं रहा था। सब अचछी तरह तपे हुए थे। खासतौर पर बच्चों के गाल तो मारे गर्मी के बिल्कुल सुखे हो गए थे।

## A World of Difference

Matthew Raggett

I'm writing this in the Ashbury College library following the opening ceremony of the Round Square International Conference. The ceremony was opened this morning by His Majesty, King Constantine of Greece and Her Majesty, Queen Anne-Marie. In the opening speech that the Queen gave, she talked about the ways in which the pillars of the Round Square are helping our students become the people that the world needs, to solve some of the more difficult problems that have been growing over the years and that seem to be manifesting themselves in nationalistic certainty, isolationism and extremism. The Round Square IDEALS of Internationalism, Democracy, Environmentalism, Adventure, Leadership and Service are also written into The Doon School's DNA. This is not at all by accident, and it is because of this that our School's membership of the RS organisation has been so important through the years.

The Round Square, named after the circular courtyard at Gordonstoun School in Scotland, was founded by Kurt Hahn, a German educator who, in the years preceding the establishment of the School in 1934, struck up a friendship with an Englishman who had volunteered to drive him around the country to look for the place to start the school. Hahn had left Germany because of the political climate in the 1930s after opening Schloss Salem School in 1920. The Englishman in question was J.A.K. Martyn, and the rest, as they say, is history.

So, here we are at an event with 1140 delegates from 170 schools around the world, united by a shared system of beliefs and values and challenged by the theme of the conference to 'Bring Our Difference'.

Something that Queen Anne-Marie said in the opening speech was that in a world where our news-feeds are full of half truth, innuendo and such negative news, it is more important than ever to know people from other cultures and communities and to know how to check our facts and be able to recognise and utilise the strengths and the talents of others.

I have read quite a few articles this year about living in a post-truth world, and all the problems that brings for our children. There have been some shocking examples over the year, most notably from the White House, of demonstrable lies and text-book propagandist techniques being used to shut down conversation and public discourse around issues as important to democracy as a free press. The fake news, as President Trump calls them, are



Mrs. Trudeau addressing the conference.

the newspapers and media outlets that challenge him and his administration to live up to their responsibility of governance for, and on behalf of, the people. By attacking a free press, the alt-right and the administration are gradually wearing down the public by the repetition of whatever alternative facts or narrative they choose to say, over and over again. Repeated 1000 times, a lie does not become the truth, but enough people will believe it, and this is something that a well educated population needs to push back against. I have the unsettling feeling that the White House side-show is a distraction while something more sinister is at work that the free press needs to be looking into... appointments to the judiciary being one, environmental protection another.

In '21 Lessons for the 21st Century', Yuval Harari reminds us that our world is no more post-truth today than it has been for thousands of years. The winners have always rewritten history and narratives have changed to suit the need of the day. One of the major tools for this utilitarian approach to history has been education and that's what the second speaker of the day talked about for a part of his time.

Wade Davis is a professor of Anthropology at UBC and has, over the years, worked with National Geographic as their explorer in residence. As an ethnobiologist and a traveller, he has lived, often for years at a time, with indigenous populations around the world, and have learnt from them the truths and the science that have been long lost to some in the developed world. Education in these communities looks different and is often based on an apprenticeship or novice model of vocational or religious teaching. What he asked the delegates to remember is that science has shown us that we are, on a genetic spectrum, all brothers and sisters.

The key realisation from this has to be that all of our differences are then the result of some choice or choices that were made by our ancestors as a result of their environment, and what follows from this is that no culture on the planet is a failed attempt at

becoming some other culture. Each culture is the solution to the question of what it means to be human and each solution is correct for the place in which a particular tribe found itself and then grew. Indigenous Australians have no concept of time because it must have been important for them to preserve the world as it was. Indigenous Amazonians can hear the key in which the bark of the trees sing when the light of the full moon shines on them and this tells them the other plants in the forest they will work with medicinally. Indigenous communities in the Sahara will share the last drop of water they have with a stranger because they know that their lives will depend on a stranger one day. These, and many more examples of profound difference, were shared by Davis as he led us to the point of seeing that culture is not decorative, but it is the manifestation of the ethics and values that prevent the barbaric human heart from boiling above the surface; wherever cultures are being threatened, we find points of pain and human suffering.

Davis' message matters to us as we look beyond ourselves to the world outside our bubble. It struck me a few weeks ago when a relatively new colleague remarked that he had never worked with so many children before who thought they were right, or that they knew better. This worried me because this is the sort of certainty that shuts off learning. We have to approach everything as a question, whether it be feedback, defeat, disappointment or victory. Without being able to recognise the question in everything we close our opportunity to learn and head down the path of certainty that feeds the isolating nationalism and extremism we see in the world. What I think it feeds within the walls of Chandbagh is anger, temper and entitlement, and these are things that have a profound effect on the lives and experience of others. So let's question that and recognise that in diversity, in difference and in the desire to not all be the same, we are laying the foundation of a road that leads to a better place.

## The Harbinger of Progress

Zoraver Mehta | Senior Editor

"Doon will not be able to stand the test of time."

One often hears that our once great institution has reached the end of the line, reveling in its last few moments of glory before being rendered insignificant. We hear passionate harangues made clear in dormitories late at night, with many a Dosco jeering that School does nothing but bask in the glory of old successes, now dead and buried. There is a freakish bloodlust to the doom-mongering of School, quite like an autopsy were being conducted on a living body.

Living and learning here for five years, and reading about School through this special publication, I have noted that the phenomena 'Decline of Doon' is perhaps one of our institution's oldest and strongest continuing traditions. Today, with Machine Gun Kelly blaring on teenager speaker systems across the globe, we live in an era of 'four-letter -word the system', a strong culture which has somewhat reverberated even through the red-brick wall of Doon. I would like to affirm that this piece is no bluster against criticism, the importance of which I elucidated in my last editorial (Issue no. 2500)

## A Forum For All

Devang Laddha | Editor

"Words have power."

They have the power to influence, to mould opinion, to convince and to inspire action. It is due to this power that the freedom to express is one of the fundamental rights afforded to us by our Constitution. Simultaneously, it makes this right one of the first ones to come under fire when someone's conduct threatens an authority. In the first civilisations, this right was granted to a handful of people – predominantly upper-caste men. Since then, this power has been projected and in the twentieth century there has been a discernible explosion in terms of who has access to such power. Exercising this right is one part of keeping authorities from abusing power. However, another critical part is to preserve the right to exercise one's freedom. For years, the *Weekly* has attempted not only to preserve this right but also to inspire people to exercise it. In our current world this exercise has become increasingly important, making the *Weekly* a critical institution at Doon.

beginning the piece with a line of Bob Dylan; but it is imperative that our community recognises the difference between a good critique and a hot-blooded rant. Anybody can deliver a tirade lying half asleep under a fan but how many of us actually embody any of the reforms we plead? For example, it is certain that 90% of the people who castigate School for being out of touch with tradition will not bend over to pick up a wrapper on their way around campus. We also have a stylish variety which likes ponder over 'How will being a Dosco help me outside School?' and 'Who outside Chandbagh cares about Doon anymore?'. It's ironic because our School affirms that we should strive to be members of an aristocracy of service, not the beau monde of the second strongest alumni relations fraternity in the world. Surely, there are changes enveloping our community faster than we imagined, and there is also talk of less boys applying to get into School, but these are all the reasons why it is important to preserve our legacy and values today, more than ever, instead of throwing them under the water.

Who knew we would've had our first 'openly gay' present Dosco come out recently? What does this mean for our community? Understanding that though ethical convictions are fluid over time, do we have to rethink or loosen/tighten the reins on the senior-junior relationship in School? Is it necessary to sacrifice Dosco tradition for college-oriented purposes? Is our

community's largely liberal mindset (with a few notable exceptions!) a by-product of comfort and privilege or a thoughtful understanding of Indian society and ideals? These are all important questions for Doon, ones we must think hard over, and debate week after week through the pages of *Weekly*, sketching a unique society "exactly as it goes". That said, it was fascinating to have a conversation with an Old Boy and Editor-in-Chief from 1981 regarding the independence of the Editorial Board in his time. He explained how masters and students worked together to protect it, giving an example of a 'Crime & Punishment' themed issue against a School decision. This would surely be impossible today!

We have developed dialogue with the 'Newsletter' of our sister school, the Chandbagh School in Muridke, Pakistan, and hope to continue this over the years. Given the political state of affairs, discourse amongst the educated youth is something special, as we together celebrate our shared history.

On the last leg of service on the Editorial Board, I will never forget the wild and vivid discourse that often takes meetings by storm, the (sometimes) egregious junior poetry, and of course, the friends over the years who I am now privileged to call family.

Have a good read and thank you very much!

At Doon, we all are taught how to read and write. While these skills are indispensable, they are gateways to accessing something deeper: ideas. The act of reading a piece of writing does not merely require comprehending a text's meaning, but also entails a deep engagement with the ideas it embodies. It is this engagement that provokes new thoughts and educates a person. Being ignorant of ideas renders one intellectually daft. It could easily make you vulnerable to accept someone else's thoughts. George Orwell portrays this in his dystopic novel '1984', where the ability to think for oneself is taken away by a repressive government, forcing people to subscribe to notions that enslave themselves. To break this chain, we must construct our own meanings. To express oneself, one cannot be bound by someone else's perceptions and outlook. Engaging in this practice is self-defeating. The *Weekly*, since its inception, has aimed to give this form of expression an outlet.

We are all leading changes across the globe. This means that at several occasions there are major changes in School, which have led to some problems. Be it whether we should have adopted an international curriculum to whether the post-founders break should exist, we all have discussed these problems. We all have certainly complained about them, but many instances we have not taken the actions necessary to mitigate them. A lot of times this is due to our belief that some problems are so deeply entrenched that they cannot be rectified. This is a very problematic approach. Change is by no means an easy or simple process. It is one that takes years, or even decades to come into existence. However, what it does require is an impetus. No change can occur without someone desperately waiting for it to

unleash. Shining light on any topic is the first step to creating the possibility for change. Passively sitting around and complaining does not help anyone. It is only when we talk about problems and their solutions that we acknowledge their existence and are over time make corrections. It is important to write about these in fora like the *Weekly*.

While I do understand people's fear for censorship, we need to realise that not talking is definitely worse than talking to a certain extent. We must remember that our words have power. They have the power to attract action and a hopeful resolution. Critical to this is the support of many voices; one person cannot change everything. We must work together to engage and deliberate proactive solutions. Over the past year, we have had our shortcomings in addressing important issues, but frankly, we have been disappointed in the lack of engagement from the School community.

The *Weekly* is not our personal project; it is the School's principal forum for a fruitful discussion. It is not our personal space to address issues, but a platform where everyone can effectively contribute. Over the next year, I urge you to realise the power each one of you has, and exercise the right we are so fortunate to possess.

## Lost in the Echo?

Kanishk Kanodia | Editor

As my inbox is being cluttered by alarming mails from the Editor-in-Chief, the deadline for the Founders' issue is closing in. The thought of this being the last chance to write as a Member of the Editorial Board of the *Weekly* rushed in a gush of memories, memories of the Publications' Room, the *Weekly* tree, the lunch and dinner meetings, the feedback sessions; the flow is ceaseless. Yet, the drought of words to articulate these memories has rendered my screen empty for the past two hours.

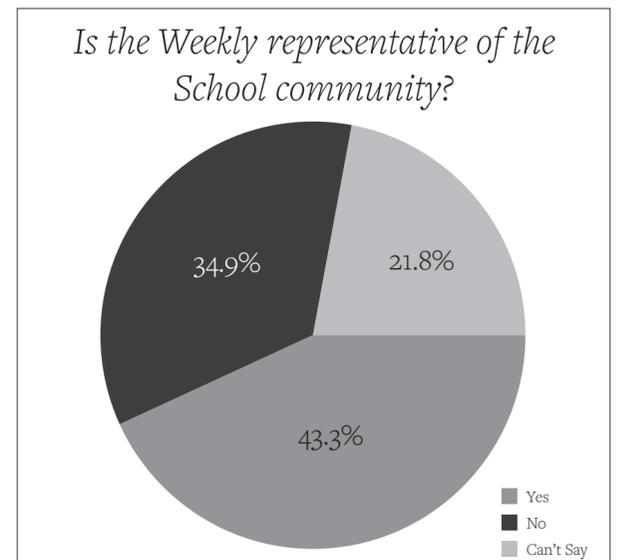
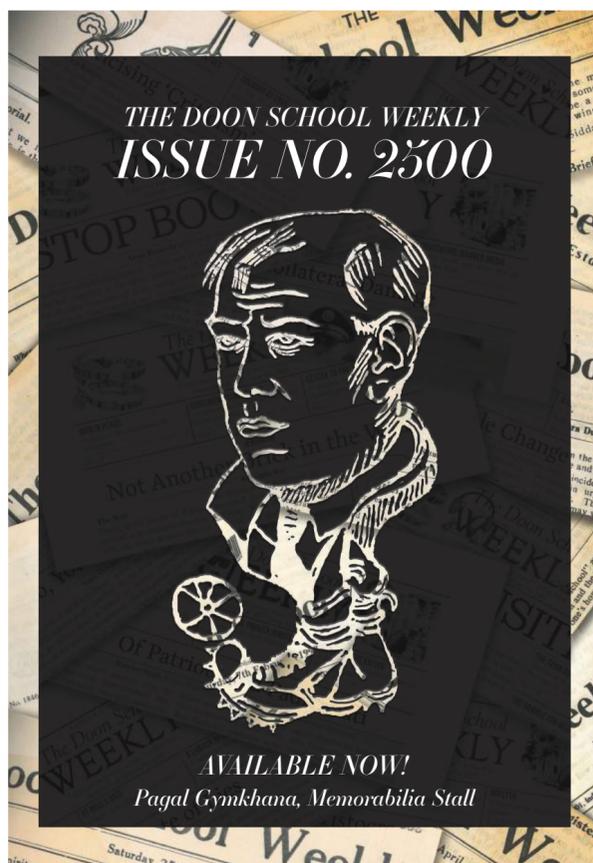
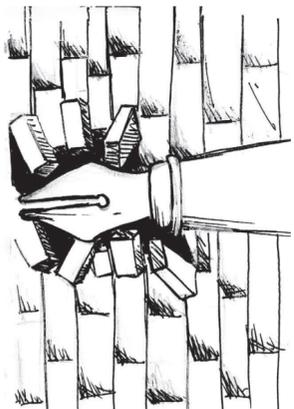
It was then I realised the irony of being a writer. Words are our best friends, yet our worst enemies. There is something mysterious about this art of joining letters and words to generate meaning. Cracking this enigma to get the perfect melange of adjectives, metaphors, and anecdotes, while still retaining your individuality as an artist, is has perhaps been the biggest challenge for me as a writer, always leaving the screen blank.

Since the day of my induction, the *Weekly* has made me fall in love with this elegant art as much as it has made me loathe my own writing for all its faults, for its inability to get the perfect blend.

I have often succumbed to the inadequacy, yet the writing never

stopped. It is the cyclic, ceaseless nature of this publication that deems in high regard its quality over everything else, that compelled me to keep writing, even if that meant being at a loss of words for hours at a stretch. The *Weekly* became my motivation to not just write, but write till the time the most harmonious rendition of letters is achieved, till the "standards of the *Weekly*" are not upheld. And, I daresay that this interaction has produced some of my most cherished pieces.

So while words might have been clouded by reeking imperfections or lost in the echo of memories- they were always there. And, it was the *Weekly* that always helped me translate them- and I cannot ever thank the *Weekly* enough for it.



**I WANT YOU  
TO STAND FOR YOURSELF**

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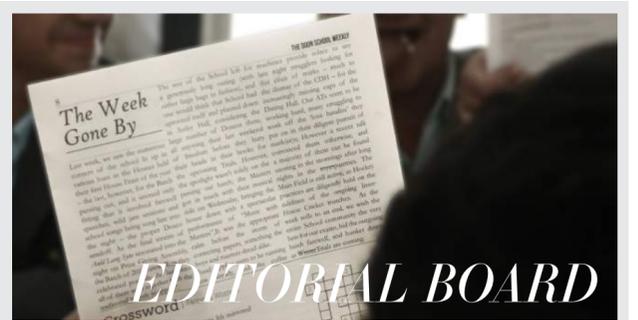
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### Special Thanks

Matthew Raggett  
Stuti Kuthiala  
Debasish Chakrabarty  
Govind Dhar  
Arjun Barthwal  
Jayanti Chatterjee  
Sterling Preferred Printing

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## Barefoot Pursuit

Rajesh Majumdar compares the systems of education in the Barefoot College and our perception of the same.

In the process of finding the meaning of true education, we took a long journey in July to Barefoot College, Tiloniya, Rajasthan which is world famous for making a transformational change through skill development and providing equal accessibility to technical education to the lives of innumerable villagers. This was more of an expedition taken intentionally to compound our beliefs on 'education', which was previously articulated in two articles - 'The New Order' and 'Transformational Change' published in Issue No. 2475 & 2492 respectively. The views expressed in the articles emphasised the urgency for systemic changes in the entire concept of learning environments in schools by questioning the relevance of present systems. Our belief got further consolidation by the visit to this unique institution nestled in the heart of semi-arid zone of the country.

Arriving early in the morning at the newly built Kishangarh railway station, closest to Tilonia, was in itself a surprise. It was one of the cleanest and most beautifully designed railway stations that we have ever seen. An auto-rickshaw ride took us through the expressway and then on the winding village roads to the Barefoot College. On reaching the new campus we met Brijesh Ji, who helped us to settle in a small clean room but with a common washroom area. In the village this certainly was a privilege and we happily settled there for the next two days.

Our interaction with the inhabitants started after the breakfast with Ram Niwas Ji, who was one of the many inspirational stories that Barefoot had to offer. He is a sixth standard school dropout who became an accountant at Barefoot rising from a very poor, oppressed and marginalised section of the society. Later, he became a puppeteer and is now a script writer and a story teller. Ram Niwas Ji told that even today he is barred from entering some temples though he is well respected in his village. The only reason behind his decision to join the mission of transformation with the legendary Sanjib (Bunkar) Roy at Barefoot was in anticipation to a truly egalitarian society emerging at Tilonia.

The next two days and nights completely shattered our hardened notions of education. We met scores of so called formally uneducated people who were experts in their field of study and were teacher trainers, electronic, solar and telecom engineers, architects, radio-jockey, doctors and dentist, wood-work designers, mini-truck drivers, farmers and what not. What surprised us was the fact that many of them were ladies from villages all over the place. It is also to be reminded that these ladies were not only working at Barefoot but were trainers too. At the 'Enrich Section' we also found two village ladies learning English through online platform. Guruji, one of the founding members of Barefoot, with utmost patience shared the history of the entire mission and how it has successfully made a deep impact in changing the perception of education through 'skill revolution'. We read quite a lot these days about universities and schools converting to solar energy, but it was heartening to know that the

two campuses of Barefoot use 116kW and 145 kW solar grids for many years now. These grids not just take the load of the campuses but also feed back to the main grid during excess generation of power.

The story of Barefoot will remain incomplete if we don't share the successful journey of the 'Solar Mamas'. The institution trains around 90-100 village ladies, each year, from different countries turning them into 'solar & electronics' engineers. These 'trainees' set-up solar micro-grids in their native village once they are back to in their home countries. Till date more than 2000 'Solar Mamas' have been trained from more than 90 countries. This silent revolution, providing accessibility to clean energy to all, has received multiple United Nation awards and huge support and appreciation from scores of developing countries. The entire project works under the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India.

Another striking observation was that apart from village folk at Barefoot, a large number of young graduates/post-graduates were either doing internship or researching on their chosen topics. We met a graduate from National Institute of Fashion Technology (NIFT) working at the Textile and Craft Designing section alongside a village trainer and a graduate from Cornell doing research on 'women and technology', just to name a few apart from several others from many top universities of the country.

The conditioned mind that we are, with hard and structured notions of pedagogy, classrooms, teachers, students, time schedules and flow of largely redundant unidirectional information, Barefoot shook us to

the core. Standing inside the campus we searched for the college itself and vehemently tried to find professors, students and classrooms. Later we realised that the institution is a centre of informal education and 'things' just happen here solely due to heightened sense of responsibility and keen interest rather than made to happen through forced discourses. The concept of 'learning by doing' is just not a talking topic but happens without much use of 'language', compelling us to reflect on the usefulness of language itself in deep learning. The absence of barriers of age, position, status and the urge to learn more than to teach mesmerised us and we started pitying on ourselves and our established systems.

One of the stark contrasts that emerged from our observation of the people at Barefoot was 'humility'. We wondered the purpose of education if we are not able to culture humans with humility? We cannot deny the fact that the present urbanised culture of education is producing more 'arrogant' and 'know all' kind who are detached from their own culture and value system than any point of time in the history of the country. Our interactions and long chats with one and all at Barefoot made us realise that real education is nothing but 'going back to the roots and remain humble'. The fundamental questions which kept pounding our minds after the visit were the usefulness of rigid structures for broadcasting knowledge, redundant assessment system, which complicates the matter more using comparison as a yardstick for growth, and the hollow feedback mechanism which addresses the systemic needs more than nurturing the learner.

## Scientist – Where Art Thou?

Gyaneshwaran Gomathinayagam recognises the need for more analytical and practical based learning to achieve success in the field of science.

I still remember that when I was in grade four, my uncle gifted me a science encyclopedia called 'Lots of Things to Know'. It answered a lot of interesting questions about our world and was very colourfully illustrated. Learning about how the scientists spent entire lifetimes pursuing the answers to their questions fascinated me and made me want to become a scientist too.

However, there is many a slip between the cup and the lip when it comes to wanting to become a scientist and actually becoming one. Nothing comes easy in life, and to achieve any ambitious goal, one needs loads of grit, a growth-mindset and the right strategies. I lacked all three back then, when I was a school student, mainly due to lack of awareness. I am a visual thinker and like to visualise everything in my mind while I try to understand it. So when it came to Mathematics the way it was presented in the math textbooks back then in the Indian Curriculum, I was all at sea. There were only hundreds of apparently purposeless problems which had to be solved by remembering and applying apparently arbitrary sequence of rules. Since I could not make any sense of it or see the applications of the math concepts, I never learned the math properly in school. It greatly hindered my attempts to learn physics. So when it was time to apply for college and embark on a research career of my dreams, I felt awfully unprepared and fearful.

I ended up becoming a physics teacher instead since that was the next best option that allowed me to exercise my passion to learn and think about the mysteries of nature. It has also given me time to continue to learn and progress towards my dream of becoming a scientist. Now, in 'The Doon School', I'm getting a lot of opportunities to even practice my dream thanks to the IB curriculum which has Internal Assessment (IA) and Extended Essay (EE) as important components of its curriculum to promote Inquiry Based Learning in the students.

Over the years, research at Doon has picked up and is growing exponentially. We are doing a lot of exciting original research and making surprising discoveries that are getting published in peer-reviewed journals. For instance, Shrey Aryan discovered that the effect of wind velocity on the cooling rate of hot water (or soup or tea) attains a limit at a particular speed. Tejit Pabari established by meticulous data collection over an entire day from sunrise to sunset that the Liter of Light bottle does indeed provide better illumination than just a hole in the ceiling by scattering the light over a larger area. His work got worldwide recognition when it was selected as one of the top 100 projects in the Google Science Fair.

This year, we have witnessed many students doing research in collaboration. Tarush Bansal and Aayush Chowdhry have discovered that no matter how hard a young adult presses and crumples paper of different

sizes into paper balls, they all attain virtually the same effective density. They also discovered that the rate at which a cold drink will drain through a hole in the bottom of the bottle, can be modelled accurately by treating the cold drink bottle as a cylinder of identical height and volume. Yash Gupta has collaborated with me and we have made a simulation in Vpython to model the motion of a magnet falling through an aluminium pipe. We will be presenting this paper in the National Competition on Innovation in Computer for Physics (NCICP 2018). Raghav Grover and Aneesh Agarwal have come up with a model to describe the jerky rolling motion of a weighted hollow cylinder and will be doing an oral presentation in the 6th IAPT National Student Symposium on Physics which is actually open only for undergraduate and graduate students.

So I'm delighted that I'm inching towards my dream of becoming a scientist slowly but steadily and also pulling along quite a few like-minded youngsters for company!

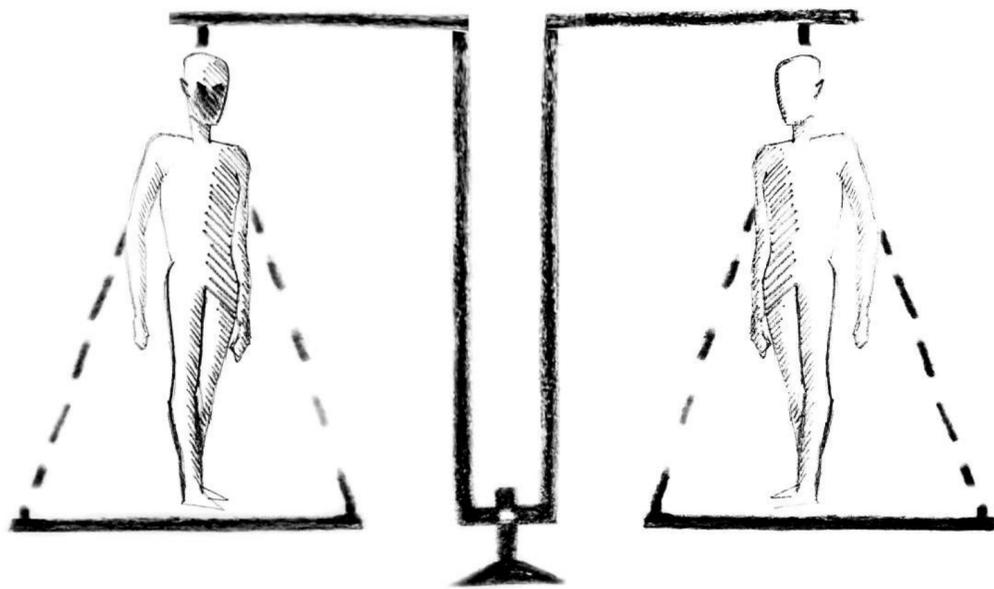
I believe that inquiry-based learning through student-led research is the way forward for teaching and learning science in the future. The teachers need to forget the pressures of 'finishing the syllabus' and stop worrying about how to make the students 'ace the exams' and instead focus on how to make the student enjoy the subject and get hooked to the subject. Teachers need to plan 'experiences' for the students which will make the student think and wonder and become curious about the subject. This can be done best in grades 7 to 9 when the exam-pressure is minimal on the teachers. Once the student curiosity and interest in the subject has been ignited, the teacher will then only have to guide the student in their voyage of discovery by helping them plan their journey by identifying the milestones and strategies. Teachers will have to be coaches and facilitators rather than content-deliverers. Teachers will have to model the skills that the students need to pick up in order to interpret, analyse and create new information rather than just storing it and regurgitating it in the exams.

Only then, will The Doon School start producing world-class scientists who will address the numerous problems plaguing the Earth and find scientific solutions to them once and for all.



## The Coexistence of Cultures

Vidhukesh Vimal



The religious and social lines of thought of Indian society can be deeply explored if they are bifurcated into the two epics - *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata*. The epics also happen to represent the two ends of the spectrum of beliefs and values that our society enshrines. *Ramayana* is a tale of sacrifice in which brothers are willing to put others before themselves. In sharp contrast, the *Mahabharata* is a tale of brothers who viciously fight each other to death in order to claim the coveted throne. No one consents to sacrificing even an inch of his land. Thus, the *Mahabharata* becomes a tale of selfishness and predation. What must be understood here is that both parties in the great battle of Kurukshetra subscribed to their own moral systems and perceived themselves to be on the side of truth in the conflict. Thus, one understand the ideals of blinding brotherly passion and strict self-service.

These lines have not been written in an attempt to espouse or oppose any particular value. Both values coexist in society - the fact that both epics are widely read and accepted bears testimony to this reality.

The same coexistence becomes more apparent when set against the backdrop of our own school. The mission statement of school illustrates this: 'an aristocracy of service'. Boys are tailored to be gentlemanly, selfless, and most importantly, kind individuals. This culture of kindness governs the basic ethos of our closely-knit community. However, within this organisational culture too, there exist different subcultures of power, position, and privilege- which, appear to contradict our mission statement. There is no denying too, that these subcultures have often been the cause of conflict. The structure of the subcultures is responsible for any form of suppression and ill-treatment that may be perceived in the society. This, to me, is a manifestation of unkindness

something that, as mentioned earlier, our boys (as well as masters) are trained to stand against.

An important feature of these values is that one has to make a choice. Just as the society chooses between *Rama-Bharata* and *Yudhisthira-Duryodhana*, the students in our School can (with greater freedom, in fact) choose between the culture kindness and unkindness.

But choices have consequences. In *Ramayana*, Rama and Bharata made the choice of sacrifice. Their choices had been made in hope of tangible consequences; and since these choices prove to be correct, Rama was hailed as *Maryada Purushottam*, or the ideal man. Bharata too, for his choice of being the selfless sibling, serves as a model for many.

In the *Mahabharata* too, there are several choices made by *Yudhisthira* and *Duryodhana*. Moreover, both the characters view their own decisions to be legitimate and have support their reasoning with irrefutable reasoning. For *Duryodhana*, his own father was next in the patriarchy to become the king, but couldn't as he was blind and thus, *Pandu* was merely a custodian of the throne till he came of age. To the *Pandavas*, they were the descendants of *King Pandu*, and were thus the natural heirs to the throne. Their own strength of ideals fosters a sense of rightness among these two key figures. While the *Pandavas* did emerge as winners, their victory came with a big cost. After their victory, they stood alone in *Kurushetra*, while everybody else lay dead. Isn't it ironic that they could hear their laughter as they celebrated their win?

Drawing parallels to our own School- almost every boy in his S-Form has a similar sense of righteousness in seeing himself worthy of a leadership position. It would be wrong to pass a moral judgment on this matter. This belief gives rise to a desire to hold key positions. This invariably leads to a conflict between form-mates. At the

end of the year, some emerge victorious in their pursuit, while others do not get what they aspired to become. To those that fail, a sense of conflict with one's own self descends. Why? Because the world didn't do 'justice' in recognising their potential. It reflects indiscipline, in some kind of retaliation against the establishment. It looks like bullying, in the hopes of asserting one's authority. And such attitudes trickle down, form by form, until they stagnate in D-Form, boys who don't have the tools to impose authority over others.

To most of those who achieved the desired result, the world seems suddenly devoid of purpose. Like the *Pandava*, they invested so much energy on the acquisition of authority that little time was spent contemplating the changes that the tool of power could be put to use to. It is here that predicament arises - authority is given to a leader in lieu of three things: guidance, protection and maintenance of order. Because order itself is not maintained, the attempts to establish the same creates a culture of unkindness which similarly trickles down the hierarchy. What both segments must understand is that conflict is detrimental for all parties. The ones who assume the mantle of leadership are ineffective in their administration. Those who weren't chosen have a sense of dissatisfaction. What happens in this entire process is that a culture of unkindness finds itself deeply rooted in our world.

The culture of kindness in School is valued and this is the reason we are widely regarded as a very respectable institution. The Doon School has nurtured numerous pioneers and leaders. There is no doubt that the School has been able to live up to its glorious vision of serving a meritocratic India. Simultaneously, many feel that the subculture of unkindness that exists has undesirable consequences. If a student resorts to a different path and reports deviant behaviour to the higher

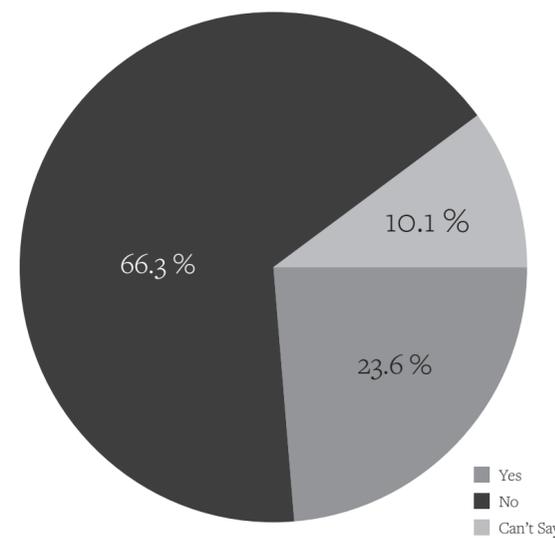
authorities, he will be labelled a sneak. This will only add more suffering to his life in School. And as this individual moves up the hierarchy, he may subject his juniors to the same suffering.

To the custodians of the system, seniors are seen as the very root of the problem. I beg to differ. What we must realise is that seniors aren't the problem. The issue lies in the lack of understanding of the subcultures of unkindness. A subculture can't be addressed by dealing with the individuals. We have only addressed this at an individual level. This has not yielded any fruitful results. We need to put deeper thought into this and deliberate alternative solutions.

For that to happen, the first step would be to have our fundamentals in place. Rather than worrying about the coexistence, we should equip people with values to create a conducive environment in School. Such problems can't be addressed by tweaking a policy in the hope that it would rectify the problem. Such personal and adaptive measures will be more effective in solving such a problem. But before anything, the acknowledgement that such ill-will exists in our institution would go a long way.

To conclude, both kindness and unkindness, lust for power and selflessness, manifest themselves our two great epics - *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata*. The choices and consequences made by these protagonists bear testimony to the kind of world we would like to envision. At the end of the day, the majority would decide whether we move in a direction of maturity - where one's own point of view is not absolute - or let an environment be created which breeds conflict and disaster. However, will we remain passive critics of our system while making no concrete effort to address the subculture of unkindness, or will we actively work to promote a culture of kindness?

## Should the Dosco Cup be abolished?



The Dosco Cup has been a topic of controversy in the School community these past few weeks. Established a decade ago, the Dosco Cup serves as an overall award for the House which has won the most Inter-House Competitions and the highest academic average across all forms in the past year. A glorious achievement in the eyes of many, the Cup has been brought into the spotlight after various School and Academic Council Meetings. The challenge posed against the Dosco Cup was first raised when academics were being given less weightage in the marking scheme for the Dosco Cup. This eventually led to the discussion on the relevance Dosco Cup or 'the award for awards'. The council felt that enough competition was already being generated by the Inter-House Competitions and the continuation of the Dosco Cup would only yield unhealthy competition. As a result, the School Council decided to remove the Dosco Cup. This has caused quite a stir amongst the boys, shown clearly by the majority who would retain the 'Cup of Cups', these past few weeks as everyone awaits the strike of the gavel that seals the fate of the Dosco Cup.

## Profanity in Action

Ansh Raj discovers an issue that is often ignored in our formative years but is necessary to be dealt with.

Our attitude towards profanity is highly complex; it often escapes my understanding. A classic illustration that showcases my confusion is the reaction elicited among the students when an adult inadvertently swears in an angry outburst. The reaction is either raised eyebrows and a stifled gasp, or in some daring cases, a sly giggle. The general conclusion is that the student audience has witnessed an aberration. This audience, ironically, is the same group of people who exercise an extensive vocabulary of profanities while conversing 'casually' amongst each other. Now, before accusations are hurled at me, I would like to clarify that the case I am trying to make here is not on profanity per se. My case stems from the fact that profanity has acquired an extensive usage, which is not conducive to ethos of the community and its standards.

Our usage of expletives is heading towards an undesirable direction. Traditionally, swearing has been reserved only to splenetic rants or strong outbursts of emotion. However, what can almost fully be attested by empirical evidence is that our usage of profanity has far surpassed the 'outburst of strong' barrier. We have certainly become accustomed to abusing far more often now. What this has eventually led to is a perversion of our language - we have become habituated with profanity. At this point, the illustration given earlier appears to be contradictory: regular producers of profanity wouldn't flinch if they found adults swearing. To counter this, we can argue that our depravity hasn't fallen to such depths. Having said so, the environment around us warrants that we curb our swearing - and there is more than just one reason. The

study of the human behaviour shows that it becomes incredibly difficult to shed off the mannerisms which we adopt unchecked in our formative years. However, we must introspect and reflect on our swearing patterns, because there are wider implications at play.

The first implication is that of cultural imitation. Here, the scope of the claim is confined to the English expletives, with an iota of native profanities. With the media seamlessly connecting everyone with almost everything, it is not surprising that most of us gravitate to something that's doing 'successfully', even if that something belongs to another corner of the world. What I refer to is, in very broad terms, the western entertainment. American music is dictated by hip-hop and pop, the two genres which happen to occupy many of our iPod shuffles. Similarly, we have also grown to become consumers of western movies and TV shows. Another form of entertainment we rely on is Vine, which had (in its prime) many a pair of eyes glued to it. A common denominator that unites all these types of entertainment is the use of profanity that is prevalent in them. And while one may argue that profanity has always been present in western entertainment, the point still remains that teenagers, thanks to the unmitigated rise in media, are more vulnerable to such influences. What this consumption has led to is a case of vicarious living. Swearing is the new 'cool', and in the process of being exposed to them, we have unfortunately overlooked many important considerations. To explain this, let us look at the word 'nigger'. It is an offensive term that was used extensively during the days of slave economy, and now its usage is only confined to the African-Americans themselves. As such, we as a people who are ethnically distant, should not use the swear under any circumstance - simply because we have no connection with the history of suppression that is at the backdrop of this word. To put this in perspective, it is completely



"Relax, I was about to shout 'FORE.'"

incorrect on our part to use such words while rapping a Kendrick Lamar verse, because we fail to understand its pretext, which in turn could invariably hurt sentiments.

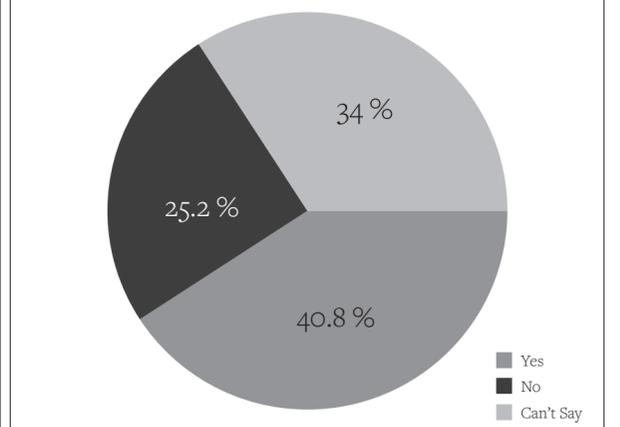
At the same time, this ignorant cultural imitation culminates into a bigger problem of our cultural identity being eroded. While using a language of foreign origin does not strengthen its influence, its extensive use seems to have corroded our cultural identity.

The dominance of political correctness in today's society has also put the use of profanity in a precarious position. Most of the words that we conveniently and ignorantly blurt are either sexist or racist (mostly the former). With all the movements that have mushroomed as a strong response to sexism and sexual objectification, these abuses have come to occupy a special place. The word 'bitch' perfectly illustrates this point. While 'bitch' may have originated as a derogatory term for women, many women who are

strenuously fighting for their rights today have proudly adopted this term to assert themselves as independent and iron-willed individuals. Concurrently, many women still continue to view 'bitch', along with many other words, as verbal expression of the sexual repression that women endure. Amidst this, our job, as progressive males who are going to serve a meritocratic future, is to use these words with the same amount of sensitivity as the females who are fighting for their rights. Or else, there would be no distinction between us and the advocates of intolerance and oppression.

Profanity is more significant than it is perceived to be; it is time we start acting upon it. This may require a conscious effort - some may even accuse me of making a mountain out of a molehill. However, for us to be addressed as progressive, we must be progressive not only in thought, but also in action.

Is the paradigm shift towards academics in line with the School's ethos?



**Doosco Doodle** The Tragedy of Genius  
Pratham Bansal



## Circadian Rhythms of the Old School Bell

Mohit Sinha writes on the importance of relations in public schools. He has spent 20 of his present 36 years in Boarding Schools.

The great Johnny Mercer, had this to say, Inspired by the weather in September, in his inimitable poetic way...

"When an early autumn walks the land and chills the breeze; and touches with her hand, the summer breezes..." (Ralph Burns and Woody Herman; lyrics by Johnny Mercer, 1949)

While the mellowed sunlight of autumn inspired Johnny Mercer's beautifully lyrical description, Founder's season in Chandbagh for most of us - is characterised by the all-pervading smell of paint and turpentine, interminable days of rehearsals and meetings, and a fatigue that seeps into our bones and into our souls.

The frenetic pace of life, generally at School and specifically during Founder's, doesn't really allow for introspection or random romanticised reminiscing. But the change of weather, or the sights and smells of this season have all come together to form a potent cocktail to write, to remember and to share.

Undoubtedly, Founder's time is special and magical for all of us. My own memories of Founder's 'pracs' at School are some of the most special. The gentle chill which descended upon us as play rehearsals continued on till late hours into the night, the tepid cups of tea and scattered conversations while waiting for our scenes, even the ravings and ranting of the (now) nearly demented Master-in-Charge - have all acquired, after 20 odd years - a sheen of bitter-sweet nostalgia, of happiness... and most of all, of loss; a loss of those magical times.

Here in School, while the time and place is different, I observe that these emotions are still abiding. This is an apt theme to develop upon - the inherently abiding and enduring nature of the Public School. What is it exactly, that evokes this nostalgia, generation upon generation? Is it the bricks, mortar and ivy of our buildings? Is it the School songs, sung assembly upon assembly by generation upon generation? The colours of blue and white, interspersed with the green and red of campus? Or is it something more intangible? To my mind, it is the unique relationships that are fostered here. Our boys today, while so immersed in the exams, practices, competitions, applications, deadlines, submissions, appointments and all the other innumerable tasks that take up their time here, tend to lose sight of something crucial - 'time is fleeting, time is fast... you have to make the moment last'

Many years from now, you will not remember your grades or the prizes you won. In bars, restaurants and homes around the world, you will gather to laugh about the most inane of memories. Every conversation you will have, will start with "Remember when..." and end with much raucous laughter! Your respective partners of course, will sigh and roll their eyes, in the background. I can't think of a single occasion when my get-togethers have had conversations starting with "remember when I got 97% in my S form Mid Term trials.?" It is always memories of Mid Terms, of abortive relationships, of late night walk the talks about seniors, heartbreak, Housemasters, etc.

What makes these memories unique and special is that they are based on the most pristine of relationships - those forged of fraternal brotherhood in the most transformative years of our lives. These relationships are not based on what our parents do, where we live or what our surnames are. But determined by sweating and bleeding for our House together, of celebrating a victory after weeks of toil or consoling ourselves for defeat or heartbreak. These bonds are built upon what we as individuals brought to the table, where our friends saw us at our proudest best or vulnerable and low - and responded to us with the same unconditional love and support.

The only other organisation I can think of which fosters similar relationships is the Armed Forces. Admittedly, there - the stakes are higher - life or death in the defence of one's motherland. However, the intensity of this relationship develops amongst adults (age 18 onwards), while the Public School boy starts to experience these bonds from the ages of 11 or 12.

So to conclude, I would urge all you young Dooscos to take a breath, step back and recognise what you have - here and now. What is banal and everyday, will grow to be some of the most precious memories you will have, later in life. This is the single most important piece of advise I can give you. Of course, the future is important, but don't lose sight of the present.

Another Johnny Mercer lyric comes to mind as an apt conclusion: - "Songs were meant to sing while we're young Ev'ry day is Spring, while we're young None can refuse, time flies so fast

Too dear to lose and too sweet to last" (While We're Young, 1943)

## Forget Me Not

Priyanka Bhattacharya ruminates on the recurring reflections caused by Social Media on our lost loved ones.

There was a time when only the affluent had portraits made in their likeness, one or two, that outlived them. These portraits would be formal, deliberately posed, carefully composed versions of their best avatars. When they died, people could actually 'rest' in peace. More importantly, those that they left behind could rest likewise - the dear who departed would gently glide down the hallways of their memories, and perhaps fade away slowly, like all memories do. Parents, siblings, spouses, pets, friends.... Eventually, they would all just fade away.

Today, they keep re-appearing in your news feed, as 'memories', or OTD's years after they've moved on. You're browsing your wall, and suddenly, a dear aunt or a friend appears like a ghost, though doing something perfectly mundane on your timeline - cutting a birthday cake, posing at a wedding for a family picture, serving martinis in her gladrags, throwing back her head and laughing after she's pranked you (you can't recall, though) or even, perhaps making a ridiculous attempt at a selfie that distorts the elegant planes and sweeps of her face out of recognition.

You want to let her go. There are many others - friends and family who have moved on to the gala re-unions in the great beyond. While they lived, they vigorously commented, liked, shared and disagreed with your virtual self. But they won't sit still now. They won't be silenced. They refuse to move on. They won't let you let go.

You wish them happy birthday on their timeline. You share and re-share their memories, their images, and their footfalls in your past. Others like, share and comment...

Memory becomes a hall of mirrors.  
Oblivion becomes impossible.  
Healing remains a mirage.

Technology has re-invented the 'ghost',  
taken away its erstwhile eeriness,  
dressed it in the casual wear of the daily grind,  
and set it loose upon those that survive,

It is a new kind of horror,  
it is a wound you keep picking the,  
scabs off, eternally. You draw fresh,  
blood all the time.

Who says there are no such things as ghosts?  
Oblivion, that sacred right of the dead  
has been rendered impossible in  
our wretched world.  
Forget. Me. Not.

## A Digital Disorder

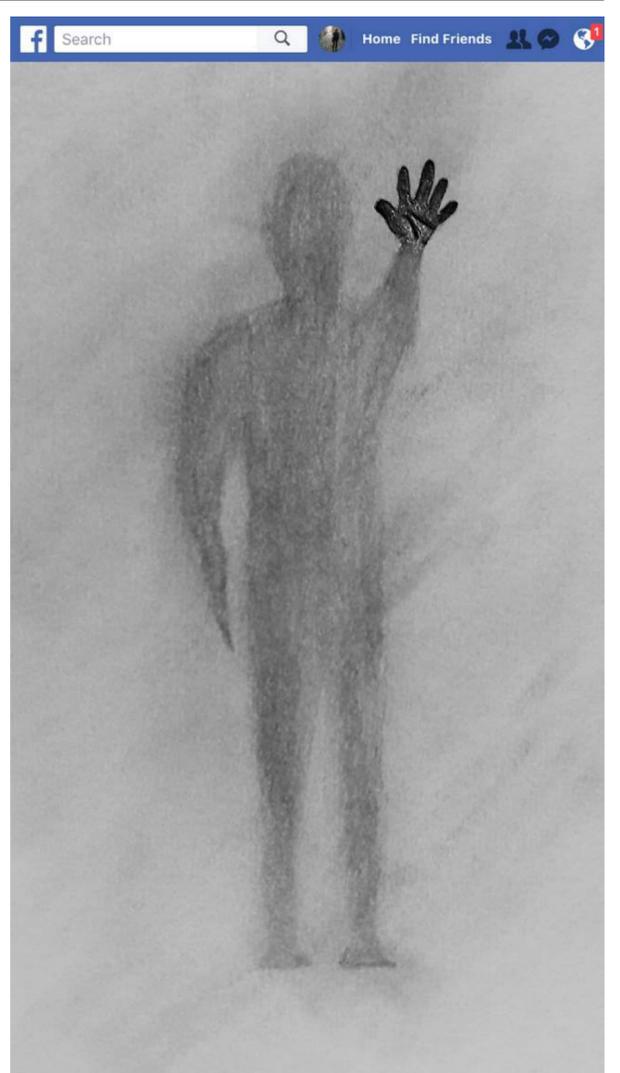
Abhay Jain comments on the implications of digital media on our thought processes.

Human beings are, and have been going through various evolutionary processes ever since the appearance of their ancestors the Homo Erectus. Various processes like encephalisation and bipedalism have changed our lifestyle and the way we live. Yet, the greatest advantage for the average human in their repertoire is literacy. We are the only species that are literate in terms of producing literature and practising a written language. We have been sharing the written word for centuries, going back to the coastal Library of Alexandria to the Gutenberg printing press that produced the first printed Bible. Reading has been, and always will be continually affecting the way we think.

I, for one can usually feel a change when I try to immerse into that favourite book of mine, I don't feel that

same immersive feeling of sitting down and just reading the beautiful narrative that the book holds. After the first few pages, my mind starts to drift off and eventually I lose track of what I am reading. I am one of the many examples of this generation of teenagers who instead of reading books, has been growing up looking at videos and reading blogs. Our minds are becoming used to looking at short, digital content instead of bound paperbacks and long, fantastic tales. For many of us, the net has become the universal medium through which we obtain information. Now you might ask, "But, isn't using the web for information and limiting its use correct?" Even in that context, every page on the net is so heavily saturated with hyperlinks that not clicking them would be impossible.

Nicholas Carr, author of "The



Shallows and The Glass Cage: Automation and Us' is one of the blogging community's most experienced writers. "I can feel it, too" writes Carr. "Over the past few years I've had an uncomfortable sense that someone, or something, has been tinkering with my brain, remapping the neural circuitry, reprogramming the memory. My mind isn't going — so far as I can tell — but it's changing. I'm not thinking the way I used to think. I can feel it most strongly when I'm reading. Immersing myself in a book or a lengthy article used to be easy. My mind would get caught up in the narrative or the turns of the argument, and I'd spend hours strolling through long stretches of prose. That's rarely the case anymore. Now my concentration often starts to drift after two or three pages. I get fidgety, lose the thread, and begin looking for something else to do. I feel as if I'm always dragging my wayward brain back to the text. The deep reading that used to come

naturally has become a struggle." Thus, in our near complete transition to digital culture, we have been changing in ways we had never imagined. This is much cause for excitement and caution. So, the question really is: How has digitalised reading and writing changing the way we think? What research scientists all over the world are worried about is whether digitalised reading and writing will impede the growth of youth's brains? Scientists from Europe, Israel, and the United States are coming up with worrying results on children and adults and how digitalised reading is affecting them. The ability to read and to be able to absorb what you are reading is one of the most important capabilities present in our large repertoire, one of the main defining characteristics of civilisation. We would be fools to let go of it.

## The Truth Behind Millennial Narcissism

Advaita Sood examines some of the reasons behind the self-obsession among millennials.

When I was dining at a restaurant one night, I was seated next to a woman in her mid-twenties. Much to my astonishment, she spent over an hour speaking with unflinching exuberance about her aspirations, her house, her job, her social life and her personal life. Her companion was a silent spectator. Moreover, she would skillfully divert every conversation back to herself, and then break into a monologue. It was difficult to avoid the impression that she thought herself 'to be the center of the universe'.

Is this what all millennials (people born between the early 1980's and the late 90's) are like these days? Brittle social media charades are propelled by ideas of self-promotion. The importance is placed on self-regard rather than true learning.

Although psychologists diverge in their opinions on this topic, the general view is that rather than an entire generation that is inherently 'malfunctioned', the narcissistic personalities of millennials is most likely a result of the environment they grew up in. The issue isn't personal narcissism, but rather a widespread social epidemic, which can be attributed to the exponential growth of consumerism in today's world. Popular culture these days promotes such values; entire industries are established to feed our seemingly insatiable need for physical perfection, from plastic surgery to social media. Millennials grew up when trends like "selfies" were emerging. These simply highlight our longing for attention, and they show that narcissistic behaviour is not only accepted but is in fact celebrated. We spend our lives filling our heads with flawless images of ourselves, things that we aspire to be, but many these goals are nearly impossible to achieve.

Another factor linked to narcissism is our constant emphasis on materialism. Proof of this is showcased through increasing levels of depression, suicidal thoughts and even eating disorders. This cultural fixation on material wealth penetrates through numerous social institutions. In these places, students are segregated, categorised and ranked by peers and co-workers. The most pressing issues, however, arises when people perform poorly. Modern society dictates that this showcases an inadequacy, a personal weakness or a flaw. The inflated value of wealth and materialism undermines personal worth in comparison to



tangible external achievements and credentials. Therefore, students feel the need to safeguard their image so that their shortcomings are not revealed.

However, another theory is that the personalities of millennials can be traced back to what has been called the 'self-esteem' movement. It suggests that many of society's prominent problems, like drug addiction and violence occur because people have low self-esteem. Although this has never been proved, and studies have shown that low self-esteem is a result of various psychological problems, the 80's and 90's saw parents trying to protect their children from negative feedback, using positive reinforcements instead. Children were shielded from things such as criticism for receiving poor grades, due to fears that it might damage their self-esteem. Feelings like self-appreciation were encouraged and parents were advised to make their child feel 'special'. For example, children were presented with a trophy for simply participating in a competition. Given such cultural trends, it seems plausible that millennials crave admiration and to see themselves as gifted.

Nevertheless, before the millennials, their parents or the Baby Boomers (people born between 1946 and 1964) were said to be the most self-obsessed generation of all time. Arguably, every generation seems more narcissistic than the last. This could simply be an outcome of the trajectory of the world. The extra arrogance and over confidence could simply be the traits of a person entering the demands of adulthood. As teenagers, even us, school students will endure the tenacious impact of our changing world, and we might even be the next to be dubbed as "the most narcissistic generation of all time".

Whatever happens, one thing is for sure: we need to stop clubbing everyone in a generation into one diagnostic category. In the end, it's how you perceive someone; whether you see an arrogant narcissist or a confident, outgoing person- it may say a great deal more about you than it does about them.

## The Solidity of Soft Power

Divyansh Nautiyal examines USA's soft power and the cultural force backing it.

Following the Wall Street Crash and the Great Recession in 2008, financial markets in the United States of America (USA), and world over, plunged. People lost their cars, homes, employment and even their dear ones under immense financial burden. With dissidence and betrayal felt across the nation and around the world, it was evident that the US was beginning to lose its grip over the global order.

However, the rise of US in and of itself can be traced back to the remnants of World War two. Having officially brought an end to the War by the nuclear devastation of Japan, the military might of the US was unparalleled. The NATO and the Warsaw Pact plunged the world into a Cold War. Along with this hard power of economic and military might, came USA's soft. It was instrumental in gravitating public opinion in favour of America. The Marshall plan implemented by the US to extend the wings capitalism. Probably, even if nations have caught up on economic and military might, it is the cultural soft power of the US which becomes a crucial element of the country's influence over the world.

Soft power is essentially the impact that a country superposes on the other countries through its ideals, cultures and policies. It excludes the military and financial strength which also largely falls under the hard, direct power of a country. However, the dynamics of soft power work largely differently as it is non-coercive in nature. Moreover, factors within the country which might not be under the State's control also add to the country's soft power. An appropriate example is the one of ubiquitous multinational companies like Apple, Oracle, Coca Cola etc. which have contributed significantly to

USA's soft power.

Probably the reason why everyone craves to go and live in the US is because the country sells an idea which people readily buy: one can be prosperous without facing many barriers and enjoy a good lifestyle. What also lends the country its superior soft power is the thriving Hollywood industry with participation and recognition pouring from across the world. When an American TV show like the Game of Thrones is screened with actors from across the world, one can easily see how deep the US culture has penetrated into almost every country. Hollywood receives a lot of attention from global audience. Indeed, Hollywood generates admiration and appeal because of its lifestyle, culture and ethos.

Even educational institutions like the Ivy League colleges, Stanford, MIT etc. play a similar role. With extremely high standards of educational facilities, it becomes everyone's dream to get educated in the US. Hence, more than the State promoting soft power actively, it is the non-state actors within the US, that are responsible for its soft power.

These are what keep the legend of the US alive. One notices the psychological power of attraction that soft power promotes. On drawing a parallel, even China has immense military and financial power and even soft power. However, America's superiority in a wide array of spectrums gives it the edge. With sixty-two million tourists pouring into the country annually, over a million applications for permanent residency, the point cannot be more firmly expressed.

However, with the Trump administration running strongly under the slogan of 'America First', the geopolitics have shifted. With the sole focus turning to the country itself and not the multi ethnicities coexisting in the country, hostilities seem to have increased. With the importance of soft power well established, countries are pro-actively promoting themselves. Be it through setting common economic zones or helping countries deal with

As a member of the board of the Weekly, I have often thought about the reaction of the School community to most articles well before we print them. This is primarily motivated not by an interest in predicting reactions, but by a fear: a fear of reprisal. This fear exists because our School, much like the world around us, is quickly given to anger, and is outraged easily. This is no generalisation, as we now live in a culture where intolerance, and the consequent outrage, has become our inherent second nature, and it is time we understood it.

The Urban Dictionary aptly defines this culture:

"When people play the victim card to be as offended as possible when they really aren't. Using hissy fits, political correctness, character assassination, and a false sense of moral authority, the outrager hopes to gain power and public recognition for their brave act of justice as well as a sense of control over their meaningless existence."

However obnoxious it may seem, this is a succinct summation of what an outrage culture looks like: people using the collective power of them being angry to achieve desired consequences. What has caused its rise? In my opinion, there are three main reasons for it. Firstly, a general dissatisfaction in society. Following the 2008 economic crisis, people forced out of jobs began to blame the high unemployment rate on increasingly high rates of immigration. They were opposed by many liberals, who believed in keeping borders open. This led to a deep polarisation in society, with both sides at each other's necks most of the time. This fostered an atmosphere where any comment can easily be misinterpreted by the other side, leading to a fiery

response. Secondly, the rise of the internet and social networking websites. The internet has allowed for information dissemination to happen at a much faster rate, ensuring that support can be gathered exponentially faster and can be expressed through channels which directly connect them to their target audience. The nature of the dissemination means that people often consume tainted and biased information from unregulated sources, allowing for support to be galvanised even faster and in a more virulent manner. Finally, the decentralisation of power. The rise of the Internet has allowed people access to channels where they collectivise their power. When people get angry, they feel powerful. This power, being irresistible and corruptive, makes the wielder harmful to others and themselves.

Before I enumerate the various harms of this culture, it is vital to understand the benefits-which, unsurprisingly, are not many. The most unique benefit of this culture is that it makes people feel unhindered, and fearless. All the emotions we bottle up are unleashed in a rage. The #MeToo movement was a prominent example of this: women who were bottling up their emotions for years finally felt empowered enough to unleash them. They were only able to do so because of this culture which allowed for such strong expression. On a broader level, people are becoming more aware, not just politically, but also socially. We now are more careful with the words we use, because we recognise the undertones and connotations and the repercussions of each of them. Casual racism and sexism plagues every society, and this culture has made it clear that it is not acceptable anymore.

Outrage culture, for all its bright

spots, has an overwhelmingly large number of problems. When everyone is incensed by the mention of anything slightly contradictory to their beliefs, the concept of a middle ground ceases to exist. As a community, we refuse to accept that there is any truth in any differing belief, and this does not allow us to even have a simple conversation with anyone whose views are not homogenous with ours. This conversation is important: it ensures that we arrive at a more complete truth, which in the vast majority of cases is an amalgamation of the two opinions, as almost every opinion has some truth in it- and it is only when we recognise them, that can we come closer to the truth. More perniciously, the worst excesses of this culture labels all disagreement problematic, pushing towards close-mindedness. This causes us to reject differing views as blasphemous, rather than what they are: simply another opinion. It also means that we try and interpret each other's words in the worst possible manner, in an effort to rally a joint dissent against the speaker.

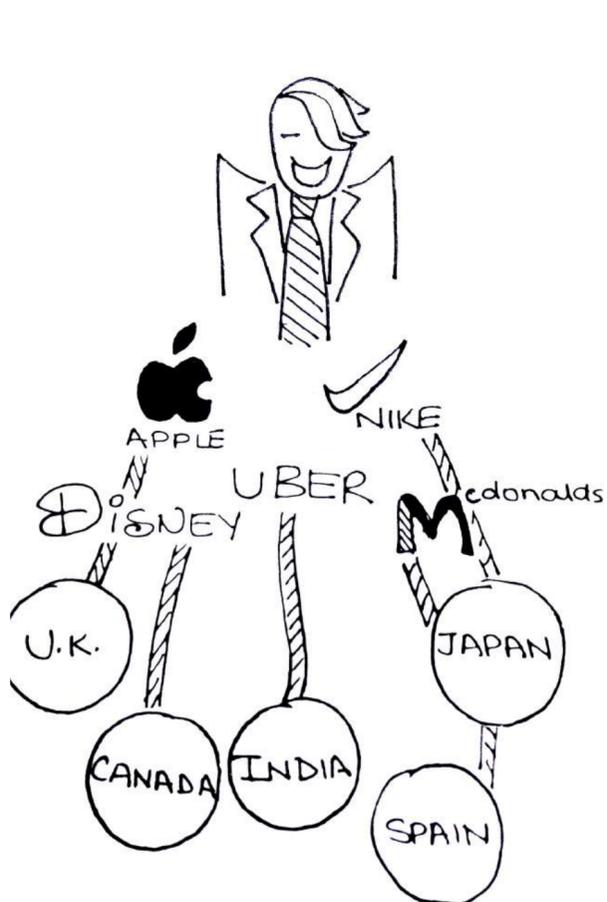
On a national level, this culture has led to greater political divisions and polarisation. Gone are the days where there was multi-party support for a bill, with one-sided, skewed solutions becoming the norm. When politicians are afraid of reaching across the aisle, the result will be worse policy decisions. This is particularly problematic because it hurts democratic roots, which are based on deliberation and discussion. Citizens themselves are unable to scrutinise policies, being forced to defend them based on party affiliation, whether they agree with it or not.

On an individual level, it makes us much more guarded, and afraid. If

we are the subject of this outrage, we will often face a response far more disproportionate to the crime we may have committed. This is the fatal flaw of this culture. Due to its brazen nature, it disregards the several benefits of a measured discussion- namely a due process which establishes guilt, and secondly a method for determining scale of punishment. Rather, we often see people being forced to resign, and being shunned from society for a crime they might have never committed. Even if innocence is established later, their careers will never be established again, causing irrevocable damage.

A culture is established based on consensus: if enough people agree to it, it exists, with the vice versa also being true. If enough people reject this culture, its deleterious effects will be nullified. Perhaps it is time we remember Voltaire's archetypal quote "With great power comes great responsibility". As our words have power, that too when particularly driven by singular emotions like anger, it is time we understood how to responsibly use that power. Outrage, on its own, is not a bad thing, but should always be a last resort, as it was with the #MeToo movement. The moment we all use it, it becomes a norm, and normalisation is the reason for all these harms. Hence, we should actively resist becoming angry, and only yielding when there is no other option.

Anger is more than an emotion; rather, it is a temptation, because it makes us feel powerful. Having the ability to resist this anger is a tough goal, but marks out the truly great from the others. Ultimately, it is only when society resists this temptation will this culture of outrage be destroyed.

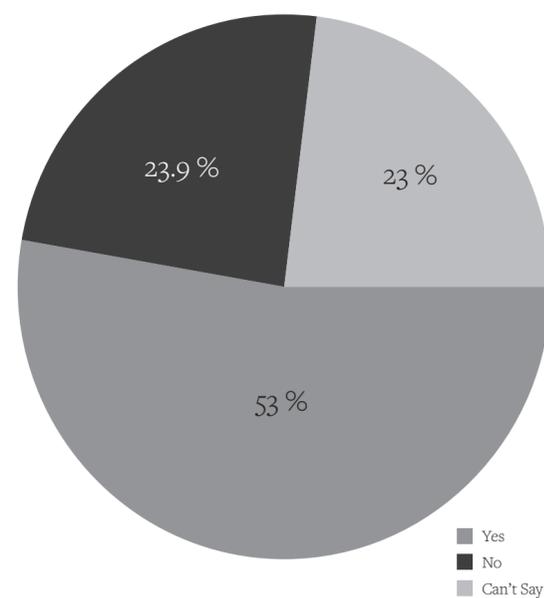


natural disasters, every nation is trying to establish itself through soft influence in the geopolitical scenario. When India promotes Yoga and the UN accepts the proposal for an International Yoga Day, India's influence certainly grows deeper over the countries and hence, it gives a boost to India's soft power.

If you probably desire to live in a Scandinavian country, or spend your summers in the Hamptons, it surely is because of what these places offer.

Undoubtedly, the soft power of these countries plays a role in the decision. While the strength of the country's defence and economy is certainly paramount, international relations are dynamically shifting towards diplomacy and sophistication. With such changes in the global order, the soft power of a nation becomes the quintessential element that gives it an edge over the others.

## Is the School Council doing its job?



The School Council is the only major decision-making body which students have the ability to influence. Therefore, it is uniquely placed to represent student views and opinions in an open, moderated gathering which can take action. This year the council passed a number of proposals, ranging from the replacement of the current floaters to the removal of the Dosco Cup. Moreover, the Council this year was also seen to be willing to experiment, and had the patience to wait for results. This was particularly noticeable in the case of the movement of Tea Time from 4:00pm to during break time. Not only was the time experimented with, but the place as well, with Houses also tried out as an alternative to the CDH. The majority of School seems to be supporting this attitude, and this includes not only the results, but the method as well. What is noticeable is that despite the efforts of the Council to maintain transparency with the sending of minutes to all, around a quarter of School felt that it simply did not have the information required to answer the question. On the contrary, a similarly sizeable minority wanted the Council to be more proactive, and hence voted in the negative to the question.

## Humans of Doon



Vivek Singh shares a few learnings from his life.

With the exception of the nurse measuring my temperature when I was sick in hospital with Chikungunya; nobody has ever called me hot – so it was gratifying to learn that I had been named by the Economic Times as one of the 40 under 40 hottest business leaders of India for 2018. After receiving the award, I was asked by ET to define what success means to me, and I must confess it was a harder question than I had thought it to be. With a friend circle almost exclusively comprising Doscos, who miss no opportunity to point out my every single shortcoming, it is rather hard to think of myself as spectacularly successful. However, after certain reflection I could come up with this: “Success is the distance travelled from where one begins life’s journey; and the stories created and collected along the way”. Putting modesty aside, I truly do believe that the scintilla of success I have achieved in my professional life is due to the various lessons embedded in the stories that life dictated.

**Lesson 1: “Every crisis is an opportunity in disguise.”**

After School, where I spent most of my time being an affable and largely unremarkable nerd, I gained admission in an engineering college. At the time, I was quite keen to get into the Indian Police Service like my father. Life had other plans though and these plans literally crashed into me in the shape of a large Tata truck that hit our car on the highway. After seven surgeries over eleven months, I had to confront the reality. My right arm would never

fully recover again, and amongst other things that would need changing, so too would my career aspirations. I was medically disqualified from being considered for a police career. I was predictably depressed and my father counseled that “every crisis should be seen as an opportunity – something good is hidden in this too”. His words and the one year of hospitalisation gave me the time and motivation to force myself to find some inner strength and nurture a personal system of belief. I successfully trained myself over the next few years to become a left handed. I also changed my career goals to business management and appeared for the CAT examinations in my final year of engineering in 2003 and qualified for a chance to study at IIM Ahmedabad. A physical disability is an obvious hindrance. However, it teaches one not to take life’s gifts for granted and stay focused on larger goals. I will be forever grateful for this accident early in my life, as it prepared me for all professional and personal trials that I would face in the future.

**Lesson 2: “Make yourself be there at the right time and the right place.”**

A lot of success in life is about being in the right time at the right place. While Lady Fortune does play a main role, I find that one has to be bold enough to roll the dice whenever offered a chance at the table (and sometimes even uninvited). Two years after business school, I found myself at KPMG, where I was doing reasonably well and could see the next ten years of my career shaping up predictably and respectably. I got a call from Grant Thornton, a global consulting giant, which was then looking to establish their business advisory practice in India. The partner in charge wanted some young blood to establish this new practice. The problem was that the budget was limited, and I would have to take a pay cut. Everyone was convinced

that I was insane to even consider a smaller brand with an uncertain future. My wife however, had a different perspective. She told me that very few people would get the opportunity to start leading projects, interacting with senior partners and handling clients independently at such an early stage of their career. “What is the worst case,” she said, “if you fail, you can always go back to your old job – and you would have only lost a couple of years.” I took to her advice, and the next eight years at Grant Thornton were exceptionally rewarding. In a growing firm, in a burgeoning economy, being at the frontier early made all the difference between what could have been a good career trajectory and a superlative one in which I got the opportunity to head the Industrials & Automotive practice for GT’s advisory business only 9 years out of business school. After a decade in the advisory business, I was

again offered to take a leap of faith completely outside of my comfort zone by another Dosco.

**Lesson 3: “Believe in yourself – you really are a superstar.”**

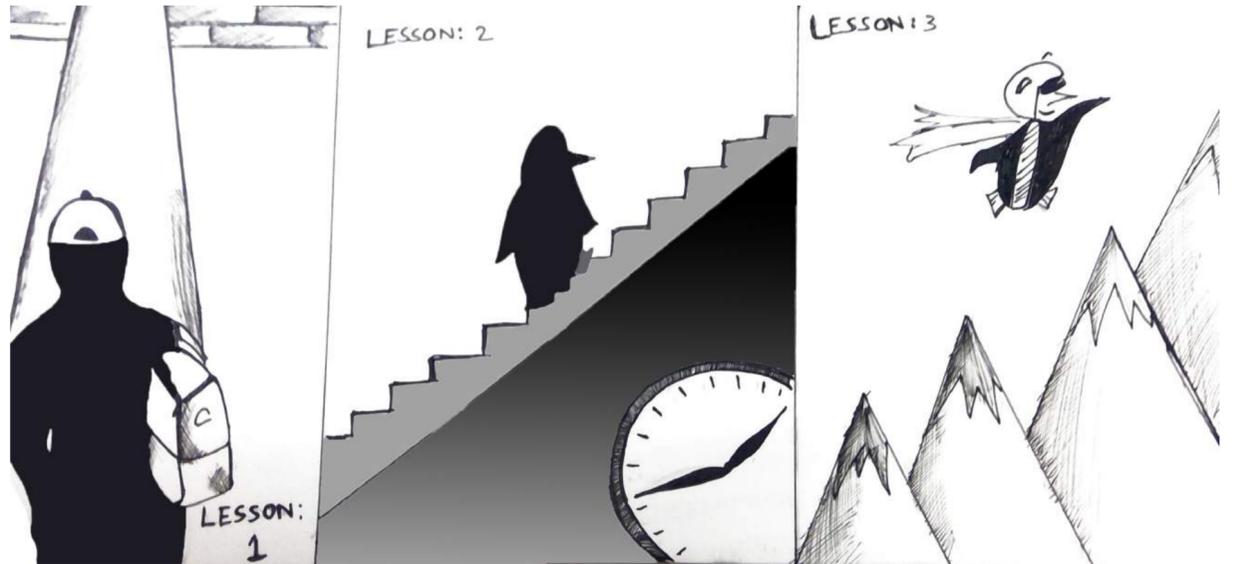
At the relatively early age of 35, I accepted the position of Group CFO and Head of Strategy at the Sona Group which had INR 4,800 crore turnover at the time. Just three months into my job, the Founder and leading light of the group, Dr. Surinder Kapur, suddenly passed away. The Group CEO, Sunjay Kapur and I, as the senior most group resources, were suddenly left to lead a group with fragile financials and escalated pressure from lenders, customers, joint venture partners and investors. To make matters worse, our US operation faced imminent bankruptcy, and the contagion would cost us hundreds of crores. It seemed as if we were staring directly at the abyss and one particularly

bleak evening in February 2016, in a Dusseldorf hotel, I told Sunjay that I did not know if I had it in me to help him turn everything around; that my shoulders were not strong enough. What Sunjay said then will always stay with me. “I have absolute belief in you, if anybody can do this – you can. Now stop being a wimp and start believing in yourself. You are a superstar, even if you can’t see it.” My star status is still uncertain, but in hindsight, confronting challenges was the best thing I could have done. In the last three years, we have together turned the company a full 180 degrees. The forging group Sona BLW is now the global market leader in differential gears with 11 per cent of the world’s market share, industry leading profitability and the faith of lenders and customers – none of whom suffered a single cent of loss due to us. Our business in India is now growing at 25 per cent year;

our European business has for the first time crossed 250 million Euro in revenue; and we have added four new manufacturing plants in the last year alone. This entire endeavor would have meant nothing if shareholder value had not increased. I am extremely pleased that our equity value has soared 9 times since March 2016.

All of the above examples are obviously just my attempt to distil important lessons, and share how I have viewed the two impostors – victory and defeat through my lenses. I hope I am far from having completed my personal journey and if I am lucky enough I will gather more stories, both firsthand and borrowed, to recount to my own children, and anybody else willing to lend an ear.

*The author is the Group COO and President of the Sona Group.*



## Are Punishments Losing Their Effectiveness Every Year?

Punishments in School, more than anything else, serve the purpose of making the Dosco realise his mistake. Ranging from ‘changes’ to writing essays, the punishments aim to make the Dosco reflect upon where he went wrong. These punishments maintain a check and balance system in School and consequently enforce discipline. However, it is largely held that these punishments do not serve this purpose of reflection. Hence, it is likely that the person will repeat the mistake. The effectiveness of the punishments is also questioned as they are exploitative at times. The Dosco is made to go through a harsh and tedious process which is also fruitless as no lesson is learnt by the end of it. At times, punishments tend to be given arbitrarily and at the whims and fancies of the senior which can and does counteract as the person is punished for no reason. In the end, the effectiveness and relevance of punishments is still a much debated topic in the School community.

make great teachers are not easy to inculcate or duplicate, understanding these qualities can give all teachers a standard of excellence to strive for, and guide schools in their efforts to recruit and retain the best teachers.”

You may not always find the real teacher in the classroom, as the walls often box the learning process. The teacher has the burden of the curriculum, the challenge of living up to expectations, the need to work for a livelihood and finally key responsibility areas (KRAs) to meet! A teacher will be one who will be part of your life’s journey, whom you will love, adore and even try to emulate. For me, the classroom is a mere brick and mortar description of a location and not a place of real-life learning. When you start limiting the learning to hours, books and time, you will have a challenge at hand.

In our journey, we will have the opportunity to travel with many co-travellers. Dr Mary Kay Whitaker says, “Think back to a great teacher you’ve had in your life. Maybe there was an exceptional teacher who encouraged you and helped you explore future career opportunities that would incorporate your talents. Maybe you had a coach who not only taught you how to do a perfect lay-up but also reminded you of the importance of getting good grades in addition to high scores. How about your friends or parents and all the lessons they may have taught you: to push yourself to succeed, to do the things you love, to believe that you can be or do anything that you set your mind to.”

The teachers who have been a part of my life taught me how to appreciate others, care for nature and play the game to find the joy within. When climbing mountains, doing a cross country, cooking at home, standing up and speaking... all they said was follow your heart, be true to yourself and you will find the leader within. Being a person with no particular religious beliefs, I am sure when you hold someone in high esteem and carry

that person in your heart, it will be your teacher. Some may say you are a follower but remember you are simply travelling with your teacher and doing it at your own comfort and pace too.

Teachers have a deep sense of faith in you. This is why you never get lost! In my school days, as a group of boys we went trekking. In those days there were no mobile phones and we lost our way in the meandering mountains. After a day’s delay when parents and the community would have gone wild, my real teacher was very comfortable and simply assured all that “they will find their way”. The great teacher had an intuition and tremendous faith in the ability of his pupils, and when we finally trooped in a day late, he was ready to welcome us with a plum cake and very eager to hear our experience and exploits. He smiled warmly and with a heart full of compassion and care stood by the boys for their efforts. Note that there was no panic, no chastising, no questioning; just celebrating the spirit of exploration and faith in the *shishya* (student).

Stories and fond memories are treasures we all share, and this is where the teacher must be the most prolific artist. Your favourite teacher will be able to correlate ‘real life’ with real life and make every moment a moment of learning. It is very important for us to understand that learning has to precede teaching. While teaching may be a process, the outcome has to be learning and that too learning for life. Find the teacher you cherish and will travel with you for life. Let your teacher reside in your heart, and you will be able to overcome any major challenge or obstacle in the journey of life.

“You have to grow from the inside out. None can teach you, none can make you spiritual. There is no other teacher but your own soul.”

– Swami Vivekananda

*The author is the Chairman of ‘Learning Forward India’, an organisation which works for the improvement of learning and teaching in institutions.*

## Of Founders’ and Plays



Aftab Seth recounts his experience writing and directing the Founder’s Play.

When I returned to School in August 1959, which was to be my last term, I was summoned by the Headmaster John Martyn one afternoon; I was to meet him at home and not his office. That was a relief! Martyn said to me, “You have been making a fool of me and the other masters in your Saturday night entertainment skits over the last couple of years! Now go the whole hog and write a full play on those lines. We want that to be the entertainment for Founder’s Day this year!” Martyn was making a reference to a series of skits I had written and enacted at our Saturday entertainments which we had occasionally, as a break from the weekly film, put on by the film society.

In any event, the HM had given me two months to write the play and find the actors and produce it! This was a tall order indeed. However, I wrote the play called: “They Have Got To Get Used To It.” The play is about the life of a new boy on his first day at School. The play starts with scenes at first bell, PT, Dining Room, Chemistry class, Hospital at break, HM’s Bill, Chambers, Games (Football), Toy time and finally lights out. The bewilderment of the new boy at the number of bells rung in the day, the rushing from houses to School, then on to games and study, gave ample scope to me for sketching hilarious scenes, poking good humoured fun at many aspects of our School life. My younger brother Kabir (199-J) took the lead as Majid, the new boy. He and the rest of the cast did an excellent job judging from the peals of laughter in the Rose Bowl on Founder’s Day. Helping me direct the play was Surinder (Charlie) Kandhari, an Old Boy who had returned to teach; he later went on to head Welham Boys’ School. Charlie had a wry sense of humour which helped greatly in keeping the boys in good cheer all through our rehearsals and during the performance.

The brochure for the play had the following blurb: “Life in The Doon School is like life anywhere else, save for one difference, that being its tempo.

I have tried in this play, or a collection of scenes as it were, to bring out this outstanding feature of The Doon School. Things move fast here and so does this play. Despite the fact that I have completely ignored the three unities of Aristotle, I hope I will be able to show you our life in its true form. We laugh a lot here, at our masters, our doctor, our administrative staff and not without a certain pleasure at ourselves! “They have got to get used to it” is a play about a new boy who, it seems, enjoys being in trouble. He laughs at others and everyone laughs at him. We hope you will laugh a little too.”

The brochure had two amusing cartoons by our leading cartoonist Subarna Sanyal who was aged thirteen at the time. I had just turned sixteen at the time the play was performed. However, the story of the play did not quite end there.

While I was in India during the summer of 1984, on leave from my post in Jakarta where I was Deputy Chief of Mission, I had a meeting with Gulab Ramchandani who was heading the School back then. At Gulab’s request, I sent him the script of the play as he wanted to explore the possibility of resurrecting the play for our Golden Jubilee, which was due in October 1985. He was trying to get Naseeruddin Shah and his wife Ratna Pathak Shah to do the play.

As events turned out, Naseer and Ratna were at Founder’s in October 1985 but they did another piece. From August 1985, I was appointed as the Indian Consul General in Karachi, Pakistan. I was asked by our Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi to bring as large a contingent of Pakistani Old Boys as possible to the Golden Jubilee. I am glad we were able to get almost 30 Old Boys who were entertained to tea by the PM, who was our Chief Guest, in HM’s garden. One of the Pakistani Old Boys, who made a most moving speech at the Rose Bowl, was the late Bobby Farooqui. He has his statue along with two other boys near the library as far as I recall.

Hence, I have recounted events from two Founder’s - 1959 and 1985. I was glad to have been able to speak to the School on August 15 this year.

I wish you a successful Founder’s Day.

*The author is a retired Indian diplomat who has served as ambassador to Greece, Vietnam and Japan.*



## Teachers Travel With You All Your Life



Sandeep Dutt talks about the pivotal nature of teachers in a student’s life.

Learning is a lifelong process; it is imperative we have the best teacher accompany us on the journey of life. We may grow up to follow a guru or a mentor. Whoever we follow, the teacher’s leadership is supreme. The teacher travels with us for life. The empathy and care our teachers bestow on us will be etched in our memory for life. No matter where you go, you will always carry your teacher in you.

**What Makes Teachers Great?**  
There are characteristics that can predict whether a teacher will be a great teacher even before they get into the classroom. Studies show the teacher is one of the most crucial factors in your child’s school success. A poor teacher can set your child back forever; a great teacher inspires them forever.

I discovered some great poetry in Pat Kozzra’s book on “Tips and Tidbits for Parents and Teachers”:

- I am a counsellor and psychologist to a problem-filled child,*
- I am a police officer that controls a child gone wild,*
- I am a travel agent scheduling our trips for the year,*
- I am a confidante that wipes a crying child’s tear,*
- I am a banker collecting money for a ton of different things,*
- I am a librarian showing adventures that a storybook brings,*
- I am a custodian that has to clean certain little messes,*
- I am a psychic that learns to know all that everybody only guesses,*
- I am a photographer keeping pictures of a child’s yearly growth,*
- When mother and father are gone for the*

*day, I become both.*

*I am a doctor that detects when a child is feeling sick,*

*I am a politician that must know those laws and recognise a trick.*

*I am a party planner for holidays to celebrate with all,*

*I am a decorator of a room, filling every wall.*

*I am a news reporter updating on our nation’s current events,*

*I am a detective solving small mysteries and ending all suspense.*

*I am a clown and comedian that makes the children laugh,*

*I am a direction ensuring they have lunch or from mine, I give them half.*

*When we seem to stray from values, I become a preacher,*

*I’m proud to say, “I am a teacher.”*

Children require guidance and sympathy and not mere instructions. The degree and certificates a teacher carries will not be of any use if there is no empathy and concern for the child in the teacher. You do not need a classroom to teach- what you need is a heart with all the room. Look back and recollect the best teacher who touched your heart, who made you feel very special and who had full faith in your ability. A teacher is with you all your life. Even today, I remember my first teacher in Kindergarten, my special teacher in Class I and others who have helped me find myself. Their love and care, irrespective of domain knowledge, will always carry me for life.

As we grow up, we strike a chord with a guru or a mentor and sometimes the person is even a colleague. Learning is from the heart; the mind is a mere knowledge bank. For effective learning the teacher must become an integral part of your life- only then will you have the teacher in your heart.

Mark F. Goldberg states, “Greatness in teaching is just as rare as greatness in medicine, dance, law, or any other profession. Although the qualities that

## Too Few Good Men



**Chaitanya Kediyal** reflects on his greatest concern with School, two years after graduating.

There are few events in School that are as memorable and yet haunting as Founder's Day. As I reflect on my six years in School, that one week every year would be a bundle of some of my highest and lowest moments. The buildings look pristine after their fresh coats of paint and hours spent by the support staff painfully removing the moss that grows over the monsoon. The manicured lawns and gardens around School look resplendent in the warm glow of the October Sun. Everything seems a little too perfect. In many ways this week is a microcosm of life at Doon, a well-oiled machine on the surface but with deep-seated issues that continue to remain unacknowledged and unaddressed. Founder's Day is certainly a time for celebration, but it must also be a time for introspection. This is the time when the wider Doon community returns back to Chandbagh and this provides us with an opportunity to engage in some level of discourse. In that light I wanted to take this opportunity to throw light on some of these underlying problems that I felt existed while I was in School, but which have become clearer to me two years after having graduated.

I think it's important to clarify that this is not a rant targeted at a group of people; rather this is an attempt to discuss the paradigm that operates in School. Addressing this does not entail holding someone culpable. The

motive is to recognise certain aspects of the value system which may not be in consonance with the predominant norms today. Similarly, this is not merely my experience. Our ability to critique the School and hope for its change should not be rooted in the notion of sentimentality or personal experience. A normative approach to examining School first requires one to be able to step away from resorting to the response 'that was not how it was done in my time' or 'I did not experience the problem you are claiming exists'. Having laid out some of these caveats, the broad theme under which I want to address these underlying problems is toxic masculinity. Toxic masculinity refers to a basket of stereotypically masculine gender roles, ranging from expectations that boys do not cry to values that the biggest stud is the guy who is the biggest womaniser. Obviously, this is a simplistic working definition, but brings focus on the types of behaviour that this article is attempting to address.

The most important issue to address under this theme would be the perception of women in School. The nature of an all-boys boarding school is one that re-enforces monolithic masculine values without creating crucial spaces for feminine values. This often means that even before boys have hit puberty their view of women is shaped by seniors and their own batch mates. Instead of recognising the humanity in women, they are objectified, as testosterone filled teenagers find any and every way possible to procure pornographic material or discuss the women in their lives. This behaviour is not unique to Doon but is compounded by an absence of an equal number of women. Instead of these perceptions of women being challenged they are exacerbated

due to the circumstances. By the time boys actually interact with girls of their age, their expectations of potential relationships are not only skewed but also deeply misogynistic. What makes this worse is that discussing such issues or talking about feminism is either dismissed as highbrow conversation or a failure on your own part to be a 'man'. There is a lack of sensitivity which continues to remain unaddressed, and this misogyny often manifests itself in the form of trolling girls online or talking about them in derogatory language. Addressing this problem requires us as a community to reflect on the values that are spawning such reactions.

There is something deeply troubling about a community where it is an insult to play like a girl or be subjected to belittling abuses in the vernacular for being slightly effeminate. I argue that the use of queer language to humiliate other boys within School is one of the sources of this toxic masculinity and misogyny. A question that I distinctly remember asking the current Headmaster when I was in School was what would the School's response be to a boy who comes out? Unfortunately, even in an era when section 377 has been scrapped, I suspect there will not be that many boys who would come out in School and face the homophobia, whether institutional or societal. Roughly 8-10 per cent of any population is usually queer. Just adding up the numbers reveals a horrifying statistic. Since that would mean since I joined School over a 100 queer men had to go through one of the toughest periods in anyone's life; more confused and afraid than everyone else because of the environment that currently exists. The mere accusation that one is gay brings instant embarrassment. Now some people may dismiss this as a young western liberal in me talking, but nothing could be further from the truth. The fact of the matter is that queerness has long been part of this society's history and to suppress it does nothing more than traumatise innocent children.

As I pen this article, I am not sure of how many people who read this will actually agree with me. At this point, I can hope to strike a chord with the broader audience. I don't wish to merely point out a problem, though I would count it a success if we at least agree there is a problem. I think there are direct steps that we can take as a student body, School, and a community to change this paradigm. This change can start from calling out peers for behavior that is clearly out of line whether that is directed to a girl, a batch mate or a junior. Solutions are available but what is lacking is a firm will to implement them. For far too long we have been apathetic to some of the darker aspects of our legacy, and it is time to shine some light on them.

*Note: Data from studies have different methods of data collection.*

## Looking Back, Wistfully

**Abhinandan Sekhri** introspects his biggest regrets during his school life and how it affected him after school.

It's always tricky to write something for the flagship publication of one's alma mater because of the inclination to romanticise everything as if things were the best in our time and our experiences were the finest, as Hariwansh Rai Bachchan said:

*Apne yug mein sab ko anupam gyat hui apni hala*

*Apne yug mein sab ko adbhut gyat hua apna pyala*

*Phir bhi vridhlon se jab poochha ek ye hi uttar paya,*

*Ab na rahe wo peene wale ab na rahi wo madhushala.*

So let me try and side step that problem by telling you what my greatest regrets were as a young Dosco and what would have made my otherwise blissfully happy and enriching life here even richer. Maybe your generation can add even more value to the enviable privilege attached to being a DOSCO.

### Regret 1:

Being rude or nasty when I didn't have to be. An all boy environment is one where one feels the need to establish one's significance to earn the respect or even friendship of peers. This happens in several ways. Some kids are amazing at sports or academics or extracurricular activities or intellectually outstanding in some way. Such brilliance is rare and only a few will be such. Distributing tuck was also attempted by those with the resources; it never worked (I'm guessing that's not tried anymore considering the food in the CDH is better than what tuck used to be). The majority will be a combination of the things above with some charm, humour and other attractive attributes thrown in. At times, in order to establish one's authority, one had to undermine someone else. It could be a seemingly harmless laugh, but engaging in disparaging things is never a good option. It's tempting and giving into that temptation is a regret one can

carry into adulthood. It is diminishing. I would strongly advise against it.

### Regret 2:

Not speaking up when I should have. Often one tends to comply with the majority view even when every instinct in your body tells you what you are witnessing is wrong. The urge to speak out when confronted with situations where an obvious injustice is being committed is often snuffed out by the fear of unpopularity within the batch. This is more about preserving vanity than preserving dignity or an ideal worth protecting. Try to speak up politely but firmly for what is clearly right. It will make you stronger.

### Regret 3:

Not being 'woke'. That wasn't even a word back in the nineties and if it was we weren't aware of it. In my view an all boy environment is robust and nourishing for your minds and for the development of many strengths and virtues. However, among others the one thing that this environment and the world outside is wholly inadequate to inculcate in us is a complete and evolved gender dynamic. Be aware of that shortcoming so you can compensate for it and correct it as you get older. Make no mistake. Doscos are amongst the most gentlemanly and charming in their conduct in colleges and I have seen this when I 'passed out' (do we still call it that?) from School even though we had limited female interaction unlike other co-educational schools. Doscos did display a certain dignified etiquette while dealing with young ladies. However, that does not mean that there wasn't the possibility of an inherent sexism. What used to pass off as harmless jokes or 'locker room talk' is in fact the seed for a warped and stunted mindset. and the earlier one kills that propensity the bigger a favour we do to ourselves. Do not hesitate in pointing out misogyny and sexism among your peers. If you think it makes you unpopular refer to paragraph above. This is a deeply problematic area in a world that has changed in many ways but has been extremely slow in creating a healthy gender understanding. By the time you realise the damage such a mindset and conduct can do, much has been

done already. I am hoping this is less relevant for your generation than it was for mine. But just in case.

And finally not appreciating the privilege it was to be at The Doon School. We often took for granted and whined incessantly about how bad things were. These fields, buildings, faculty, staff, helpers, sport and coaches that the campus offers are amongst the finest. And that unquantifiable and abstract, but very real Dosco spirit, that this mix creates is special. Play a sport - you will be surprised how much it prepares you for life. Expose yourself to different ideas through the various talks, debates, lectures and workshops that are held after lunch or after dinner. Challenge those ideas if you disagree - politely and as an intellectual exercise. This was one thing I did often and it was the best thing I got from School.

### No regrets on this one:

Most importantly don't forget to have a lot of fun and hold close the friends you make here. This is the most valuable treasure Chandbagh will give you. It will be your biggest strength. They will be your harshest critics and your most dependable rocks. Don't hesitate to tell them when they are wrong. If they are friends they will take it. I won't lie to you by saying that these are the most enjoyable years of your life. You will have way more fun as you get older in many more ways than you can imagine. But these years will be special in a way that will make them appear to be the best. You can never recreate them. You will be able to revisit any other experience in life if you have the wherewithal. Not this. That's why it is so special. And that's why it's kind of the best.

You may not succeed at any or all of the attempts above but do try. It will make you a stronger and better person who is more equipped to be a leader which is the promise that Doon holds. It is a crucible for character and it will continue to create an aristocracy of service.

*The author is the CEO of NewsLaundry, an online news medium dedicated to media critique.*



## Emerging From Experience

**Vasant Nath** writes about his journey as a screenwriter.

The *Weekly* put me in awe of writing, mostly because suddenly good writing was emerging at such close quarters. Young people, only a few years older were producing material that I not only enjoyed reading and wished to emulate. So I would say that my time reading and editing the *Weekly* had a lot to do with my eventual engagement as a professional screenwriter.

After Doon, I went on to pursue English Literature at St. Stephen's college, New Delhi. Writing took a back seat during these three years where I concentrated more on reading and dramatics. I remember watching a play - 'Othello in Black and White' in which the actor Adil Hussein did a *kalaripayattu* interpretation of the Moor - which set the bar for me in terms of artistic expression. I asked myself - how does one achieve this level of creative expression in anything? Unconsciously, my internal compass had chosen a direction that would take me towards writing, directing actors, conceiving and creating short films and an aim to direct feature films.

I went to read Social and Political Sciences for my second BA, that eventually transformed into an MA, at Cambridge. I aspired to direct a play and showcase it in the Edinburgh Fringe festival, where Othello in Black and White had once travelled and won many awards. For me, taking a play to Edinburgh was a challenge, which, if surmounted, could prove to me my own aptitude for a life in the arts. A very generous ex-Dosco in London stepped forward and forwarded a cheque that allowed me to produce Kiran Nagarkar's Bedtime Story. This was a bold reinterpretation of the Mahabharata as a commentary on

Emergency era fascism.

Post Cambridge, I arrived to Mumbai after having to failed to secure a place in film school. I did arrive there after working as director's assistant to Deepa Mehta where she filmed the then Oscar nominee 'Water in Sri Lanka'. I expected to have an easy path ahead, thinking that nobody would deny my educational pedigree and my recent work experience on an international film. I was very wrong. Nobody cared. Everyone was tired of seeing one hotshot after another coming to Mumbai to stake their claim. My first boss was quick to cut me down to size and wouldn't even consider me worth promoting until I had struggled as an assistant director for a few years.

This life was tiring, underpaid with long periods of boredom in between. However, I spent those low work intensity hours inside an office full of DVDs, books and production equipment. One night, I had a profound human encounter in a Mumbai kaali-peeli taxi, and decided that it was time to write again. I wrote a screenplay about my experience and then determined to make it into a film. I found that the means to do what I wanted was only a few enquiries away. I developed the confidence to ask favours - camera, equipment, manpower, funds - not knowing when and how I'll repay them. Failure for me was not making the film; quality was immaterial at that point. I succeeded, and my film Shanu Taxi got made.

A big failure at work prompted me to take a sabbatical from this life and diligently work on a script for a feature film. Giving myself two months to come up with something, I started rising early and savouring the luxury to spend each day writing just for myself. I dug deep - making a list of things I was sure I had some expertise in to be able to reflect and write on. One of



Vasant (back row), sitting with the writers of Sacred Games.

the things at the top of the list was 'old age' because somehow I was always the youngest person in the room, and was always very close to my grandparents. I completed a screenplay about an ageing photographer who loses his memory, calling it 'Sebastian Wants to Remember'. When I finished it, I was sure I didn't want to go back to being a director again.

By then - in 2010 - a young man called Datta Dave was starting a company called Tulsea in Mumbai, which would represent and manage writers. I became one of Tulsea's first clients, because I knew that I would need someone in my corner if I was aiming for an independent career. We gradually built trust, and soon, Tulsea was bringing me work on commission as a writer and was making sure my terms were fair and I was paid on time. It was a tough call, agreeing to give away a chunk of your earnings as commission, but very soon I knew that these were the best cheques. Gradually,

it became possible for me to be a working writer in Mumbai and navigate a career on my own terms. This was a long journey which was fraught with - but it finally felt like I was working with a group of people I will share an exciting adventure with. It began to feel like we were moving in the right direction and would eventually arrive at a place where we all would enjoy the benefits.

My manager Datta knew as early as 2014 that writers will be in high demand in the coming years when the global wave of premium TV hit India. For years, nobody heeded his words. When Netflix came to gauge our accomplishment, we were startled. When they came, I was one of the first writers through the door who met their executives. Also, an old friend - Vikramaditya Motwane - with whom I had collaborated as early as my Shanu Taxi days and in my capacity as a cinematographer, had risen exponentially in his career. When

Netflix announced that they wanted Scared Games to be their first original, they were keen to have me on board.

Crime was never my genre, but Vikram Chandra's novel was so well written that it simply gripped me. This would be my biggest assignment to date, and the pressure to succeed was tremendous. With Sebastian Wants to Remember, I had missed the wave of success enjoyed by Independent films in India, but this seems to me a new wave rising, and I was right at the foot of its crest.

What followed was collaboration, with challenges I never anticipated. Three writers working on a single story is often a writer's worst nightmare. It took many months to negotiate egos and find common ground, but I think everyone knew that the success of the show was more important than our individual comfort as writers. We all worked hard to find our own ways to transcend differences and find a way forward. We all had strengths and

weaknesses. Slowly, I came to both the teams strengths and just like in a sport where you can trust your teammate to be there when you pass a ball, I began to trust my co-writers with my ideas.

Somehow, we got through one year of work on the show, and the rest is history. None of us expected the unprecedented success Sacred Games was showered with, but we are glad it has opened up avenues I have never known. I am grateful for each step of my journey that led up to it, and I look forward now to all the exciting opportunities that are ahead. It's a great time to be a writer in film and TV, and I urge young Doscos to consider this as a viable career where they can express original ideas and articulate themselves.

*The author is one of the three writers credited for writing the hit Hindi Netflix series 'Sacred Games'.*

# The Weekly Gone By

**Kushagra Kar**

Many know the value of working hard, but few actually live up to it, and even fewer inspire others to follow their example. From Correspondent to Editor-in-Chief, Kushagra Kar has always been a stellar example of the latter. From my C-Form spent in awe of the camaraderie of this group I just entered, to my S-Form trying to emulate that, my constant friend, mentor and role model was Kar, as many in School fondly call him. What he may have lacked in other spheres, he more than compensated for in the *Weekly*. Whether it was staying awake for 48 hours in one go or calling the entire School for a special assembly, if it was for the *Weekly*, Kar would do it. It is for that naked love, and so much more, that Kushagra Kar's name will be inseparable from the *Weekly*'s for many years to come.

**by Karan Sampath**

**Devang Laddha**

With a dexterity that is hard to match,

Devang Laddha has always been an active participant in *Weekly* matters. A voice of reason with strong opinions, he has always spoken his mind and written what he firmly believes in. A mentor for all on the board, he has had an indelible impression on us. In his tenure as editor, he has made sure to leave behind a legacy that reflects a passion for the *Weekly*. Both as an editor and debater, he taught me all that I know. Laddha has always been a dear friend of mine and everyone on the board. In the end, I am certain that his inspiration and indomitable spirit will guide us.

**by Aryaman Kakkar**

**Kanishkh Kanodia**

If there is one thing that I will truly remember Kanodia for, then it shall be his constant commitment and love for the *Weekly*. As an Editor, he truly understood the dynamics of the publication which also strongly reflected in his work for the same. However, more than anything else, he will be remembered as a friend and mentor and someone whose guidance was invaluable to the entire Board. Behind the firmness was always a soft person who was frank, trustworthy and

someone who could be counted upon.

**by Divyansh Nautiyal**

**Aayush Chowdhry**

"Who is a Dosco?" A question I remember the former Headmaster asking his audience one Prize Giving Day. What he found most important in a Dosco was the ability to put others before himself, something I felt Aayush Chowdhry lacked when I first saw him. He was rather outspoken, and appeared to live in his own little world in School. As I grew more mature, I began to pierce through the veils of sensibility people clad themselves with, viewing them for what they truly were: full of ambition and lust for power. Even through those matured filters, however, Aayush remained his own unchanged self. And, while others may mask themselves in selflessness, I've seen Aayush live altruistically in his unassuming nature. What's more, I've seen that behind that outspokenness there lies concern. Behind that seeming nonchalance lies a love for this institution, which is unparalleled.

**by Aryan Bhattacharjee**

**Zoraver Mehta**

Among the many senior editors that

I have worked under, Zoraver has perhaps been the most intriguing. While he may not have been physically present, his valuable contribution to the *Weekly* was always appreciated. He was admitted to the board primarily for his writing prowess, and managed to live up to everyone's expectations. His knowledge of music, too, was unquestionable- his word on anything that was even remotely connected to music used to be the final one! While Zoraver may have had a different view on the role of a Senior Editor, he leaves us with some great ideas and even greater memories!

**by Ansh Raj**

4	8	2	1	4	3	5	6	9
6	5	7	9	8	4	1	3	2
9	3	1	2	6	5	4	7	8
2	6	9	5	4	7	8	1	3
1	4	5	8	3	2	6	9	7
8	7	3	6	1	9	2	4	5
3	2	4	7	5	6	9	8	1
7	9	8	4	2	1	3	5	6
5	1	6	3	9	8	7	2	4

# Sudoku

			8					
9	5						6	
		6		5	7	4	2	
	4		6			3		8
	6		2		8			
3	1					6		
8				9	2			
	3		4			7	5	9
6				7				

## THE VERY BEST OF UNQUOTABLE QUOTES

I am applying to States with AIDS.  
**Ganvir Paintal, planning ahead.**

You are so knowledgeable!  
**HCY, witnessing yourself.**

I don't want to hear your face again!  
**Aarnav Sethy, speaking for himself.**

Padmavati got died.  
**Advait Ganapathy, the next RSS target.**

We are all publication!  
**Ranvijay Singh, not so soon.**

We won an individual team bronze.  
**Shourya Agarwal, a selfless captain.**

You are an irritating!  
**Aayush Chowdhry, being short.**

Cut the scissors.  
**Lorcan Conlon, crafty.**

Open the keys.  
**Samarth Kapila, to lock your mind.**

Stop eavesdropping my conversation.  
**Advaita Sood, insecure.**

How long is you?  
**Kushagra Kar, inquisitive.**

They have earphones in their eyes.  
**Ishaan Mauli Mishra, wake up!**

I'll come out RATS!  
**Mahip Agarwal, controversial.**

A famous guy who nobody knows.  
**Bhai Kabir Singh, not likely.**

Mens don't needs rights.  
**Adit Chatterjee, an extremist.**

I will do a suicide.  
**Kartik Singh Rathore, please do.**

Ronaldo gets older every year.  
**Ram Attri, stating the obvious.**

My legs between my head.  
**Vedansh Kokra, upside down.**

A bowling alley is his sprinting track.  
**Milind Khemka, yours?**

I am a massacre.  
**Mohd. Ali Hussain, killing grammar.**

When all of you parents coming?  
**Dhairyajit Singh, hopefully soon.**

I haven't leaded anything.  
**Rushil Choudhary, disappointed.**

Money is too expensive these days!  
**Pranav Lohia, pricey.**

Your face was hiding.  
**Kanishkh Kanodia, "hides in shame".**

Go wear someone else!  
**KLK, imaginative.**

The fatal blow was actually fatal.  
**SPB, reclarifying facts.**

Penguins are supposed to be humans!  
**Varen Talwar, dreaming of Dosco Doodles.**

The Earth is the centre of the Earth.  
**Ameya Bansal, spaced out.**

I don't haven't unquote.  
**Bhai Kabir Singh, ironic.**

You both falled out.  
**SDA, out of sync.**

What's the colour of zinc... it's hot and cold.  
**AKM, infrared googles.**

He will meet with Juliet.  
**Rushil Choudhary, romantic Romeo.**

Have a fantastic Friday full of feedbacks.  
**Divyansh Pandey, poetic license**

I only make spelling mistakes when I speak.  
**Siddhant Agarwal, and stutter when you write?**

Don't you know something called full stops?!  
**Varen Talwar, editing himself.**

The name's Ganapuppy. Anant Ganapuppy.  
**Anant Ganapathy, Agent 008.**

I don't have chest.  
**Sushmit Das, nor a brain.**

The glass broke into one piece.  
**Krishmeet Singh, are you sure?**



# Crossword

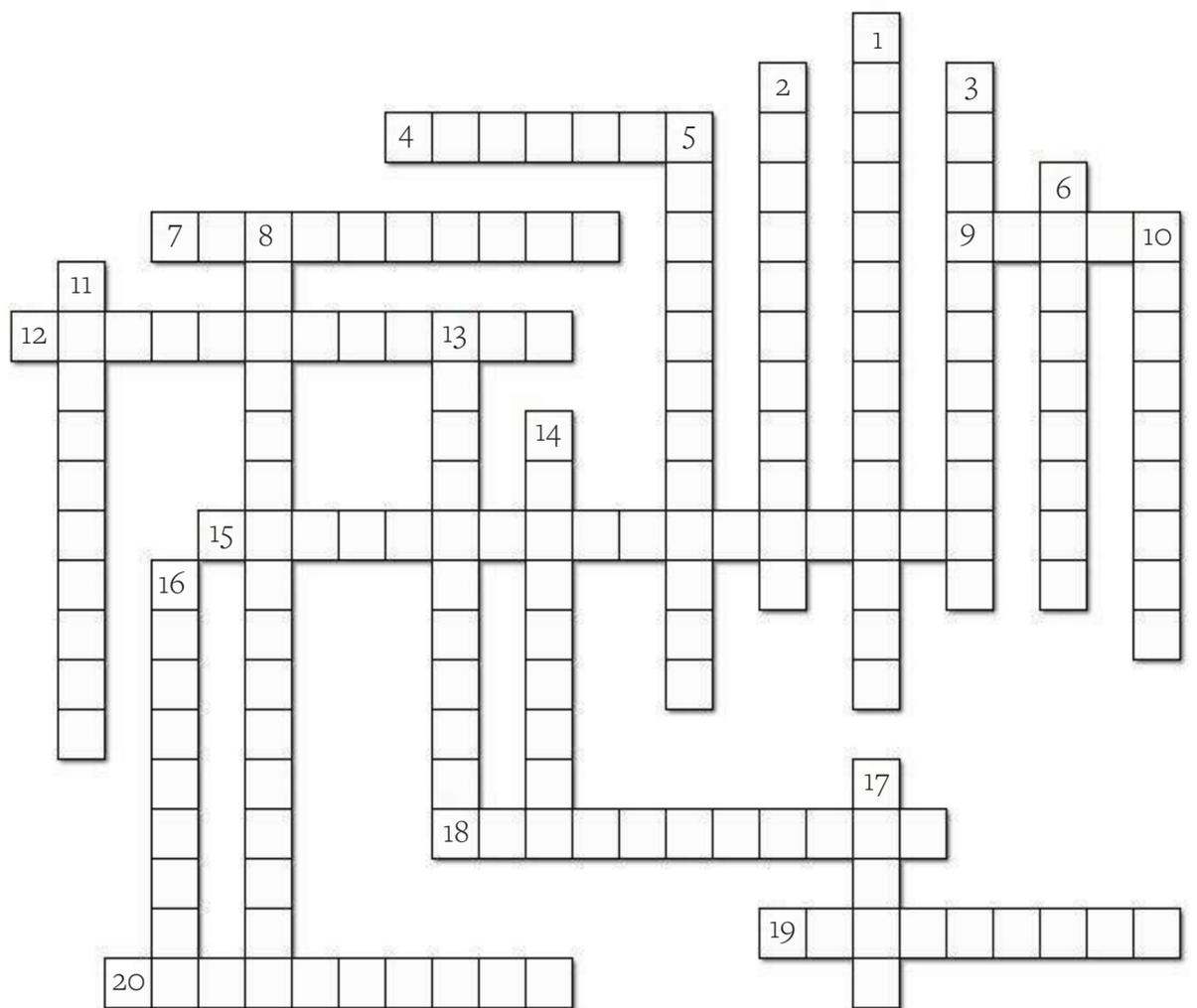
## The Cruciverbalists' Corner

### Across

- The stupidest of stupidities.
- A significant cultural, political, or social change arising from the actions or influence of young people.
- To talk excessively and pointlessly.
- A government by the least qualified, most stupid members.
- The urge to secretly look through windows of homes as one passes by.
- An inability to describe emotions in a verbal manner.
- The love of beauty.
- A romantic mood inspired by spring.

### Down

- A person who overuses long words to appear smart.
- Beautiful writing on a subject of little or no importance.
- Eternal and unchanging; everlasting.
- The pleasure of being able to say, "to hell with it".
- The sentimental feeling you have about someone you once loved but no longer do.
- Someone who gives opinions on matters far beyond his or her knowledge.
- To denounce or berate severely; flay verbally.
- Delusions of happiness.
- The fear of imperfection, of never being good enough.
- To find healing by the process of forming scars.
- An excessive and abnormal love of music and melody.
- The irresistible urge to squeeze someone because you love them.



1. Sezquipedalian	2. Adoxography	3. Semphernal	4. Morosis	5. Strikhedonia	6. Ratzluto	7. Youthquake	8. Ultracrepidarian	9. Prate	10. Excoriate	11. Habromania	12. Kakistocracy	13. Cicalatise	14. Cacatrise	15. Cyprioscophilla	16. Melomanie	17. Gtigi	18. Alexthymia	19. Philocally	20. Vernorexia
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**Answers to the Crossword**