Of Dreams and Colleges

As SC’s reach their last stretch in School, our conversations with them have increasingly begun to revolve around one subject: college. After all, for many, admission into a ‘good’ college is the primary motivation for having studied in Doon- which is totally acceptable. However, what I do have an issue with is how the idea of higher education is mooted to us. Yes, we are more or less independent in deciding our college preferences, and the Careers Department is always supportive of our decisions. Yes, colleges abroad do, in most aspects, dispense a better-quality education than the ones in India do. Yet, there are a few anomalies inherently embedded in School’s perception around college that must be questioned if we are to truly seek a future built on our decisions.

In the discipline of Economics, one of the most basic concepts taught to us is how consumption-related decisions revolve around the utility possessed by a good or service which is demanded. Using this lens to examine our own education, it’s easy to identify a glaring variable that is disturbing the balance of our life’s equation. As pointed by one of the masters, the monetary investment made by our parents only in our formative schooling years amounts to upwards of Rs 50 lacs. The return on this investment is a polished broad-minded individual who possesses remarkable attributes. Sadly though, the monetary return on this investment, at the point of graduating high school, will not amount to much. Perhaps, this is the tipping point for many. In such a hyper competitive world, even people endowed with the best skills find it hard to find a lucrative job. With so much uncertainty ahead, students opt for the best (often confused with the most expensive) universities. Lamentably, many Indian universities do not score too well in global rankings. However, what many fail to realise is that by doing so, they are just being trapped in a vicious cycle. Exempting those few cases where extraordinary scholarships are offered, most boys, on average, spend about Rs. 30 lacs annually on a foreign undergraduate degree. While a bachelor’s degree is necessary to secure an employment opportunity, it most certainly is not sufficient. A post-graduate degree from a reputed university is a vital prerequisite for climbing up the ladder.

The reader at this point may raise an objection: “Why compromise on quality education when the parents and the boy are willing to meet the monetary requirements?” Willing is a tricky word; our choices can be heavily influenced by the ‘trends’ that happen to be creating an illusion of choice, as a capitalism critic may argue. It will be a safe generalisation to claim that many boys began looking abroad as their first preference for higher education only once they entered the gates of Chandbagh. However,

Opinion Poll

Is your first college preference abroad?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes 66%</th>
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<tr>
<td>24% No</td>
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<td>10% Can’t Say</td>
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(336 members of the School community were polled)

(Continued on Page 3)
Around the World in 80 Words

Twelve people died as the mid-western region of the United States was hit with dangerously low temperatures. 43 were found dead after migrant boats sank off the coast of Djibouti. India finalised a 5700 crore deal for two Phalcon AWAC airplanes from Israel. Suman Kumari became the first Hindu judge in Pakistan. India lost by 8 wickets to New Zealand in the 4th One Day International. Chelsea faced their biggest defeat after 22 years as they lost to Bournemouth 4-0.

Old is Gold

Anant Ganapathy

Which language are you from?

LRG, going places.

The hospital is not a place for sickness.

Dr. Amar Lanka, “cough”.

One blows oneself up.

Rishit Thakur, keeping warm.

It always seems impossible until it's done.

Nelson Mandela

Unquotable Quotes

Kudos!

Trailblazers

Following are the appointments for the year 2019-20:

Stage committee: Bhai Meer Singh
Hindi Public Speaking: Paras Gupta
The Doon School Poets Society: Bhavya Rajgarhia
RLSS: Mehrab Pannu
Boys Bank and Tuckshop SUPW: Mehrab Pannu
Cooking STA: Amol Singh
Quiz Society: Shaurya Agarwal
Editor-in-Chief (Yuv Arpan): Raghav Singhal
Business Club: Shreyas Banka

Congratulations!

Starlight Sportsmen

Following are the Sports Captains for the year 2019-20:

School P.T. Leader: Sanjum Dhaliwal
Cricket: Harshit Agarwal
Hockey: Anant Kuriyal
Swimming: Karan Sampath
Football: Manan Agarwal
Athletics: Adhiraj Singh
Basketball: Mehtab Singh
Table Tennis: Harshvardhan Agarwal
Badminton: Krish Agarwal
Squash: Rishi Shrishrimal
Tennis: Nikunj Bansal
Boxing: Arjun Singh
Shooting: Shaurya Agarwal
Golf: Vijayaditya Singh

Saturday, February 2 | Issue No. 2524
an undergraduate college course “of quality education” being glorified as the be all and end all in Doon is rather disconcerting. I have a qualm against this trend.

Belonging to a class of public schools with a grand legacy, Doon is, or at least should be, distinguished by features which truly make it remarkable. The focus should not be to prepare boys for the best colleges in the world, but rather nurture able students who can take the challenges of the world with the grace of a principled human. Such humans don’t necessarily have to carry an undergraduate Harvard degree to prove their mettle; what they should proudly possess is the characteristically Indian spirit to strive for greatness in any arena.

Every year boys apply to this school with hopes of becoming part of a legacy which includes many men who went on to serve India and the world. But what they often forget to see is that these men didn’t set on a rosy path to greatness immediately as they left school. The seeds of the great Indian spirit had been planted in them in their formative schooling years, but they came to fruition after treading the thorny path of failures, disappointments and resilience.

Let’s not spend our faculties only on preparing for college. Next time you see an SC, how about starting a conversation with “Are you excited to cast your first vote in the upcoming general elections?”

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Ending a Rivalry

Aryan Dutta Baruah gives an account of the Foot vs Martyn cricket match.

It isn’t exactly the usual idea of “fun” when you miss brunch on a Sunday, to burn calories while playing a cricket match. Around 30 students experienced the experience of real hunger, for the first time on Sunday the 27th. All thanks to the annual Foot vs Martyn match that kicked off with a delay of two hours, due to dew.

Before the dismal news that Mother Nature would fail to be so motherly to us that morning, there were cheers being practiced by both sides. While Foot House decided to stick to the “world famous” Naagin dance, the lead dancer of Martyn House, Tarun Matthew Doss went with the “Hype” and “Orange Justice”, two dances widely popularized by online MMO, Fortnite.

At around 10:30 AM, the first innings commenced with Team Martyn’s captain Yuval Kundu winning the toss and choosing to bat. There are two types of openers. The Virat Kohli ones that play calmly and get runs later and the Chris Gayle ones who get runs and play calmly later. Both types were found at the match that day.

After the first maiden over of the match, which was also happened to be the first over, Martyn House spectators began to pressurise the opening batsman, doing Foot House’s job for them. The first wicket fell, and then all hell broke loose. Yuval Kundu began to smash the bowlers, like Chris Gayle smashes spinners. After a few overs the match looked like the innings would be over immediately. As the third wicket fell, the tiger of the pack began to feel the pressure, and got out in the 18th over. The Martynis ended with a target of 150 to win.

The damage was already done and the Footies had a humongous task ahead of them, even though 150 runs might seem like an easy target. But Foot House still had to face the dreaded pace of Yuval Kundu. A long wait built up nerves, as is the case with the most important things.

At 12:45 P.M, Foot House began the chase. The first wicket was picked up by Yuval Kundu, when his pace left heavy hitting batsman Aryan Dutta quite hapless, as Vivaan got him caught out. The pressure piled up and the batsmen began to make careless mistakes. Arin Modi was run out due to a bad call by Haardik Gupta. Vidit Verma displayed class, before being caught out by a tricky spinner. As the wickets toppled like dominoes, a long tenure by Raghuraj Singh Sodhi gave some hope, but in the end, the bowler outsmarted him. The final wicket was Mohak Jain’s, the wicket that ended the game, the wicket that meant submission to the Martinis. The Footies lost by 67 Runs, with a score of 73 all out.

Left in a dismal mood and with hungry stomachs, Footies sauntered back to their House, leaving the Martinis’ cheers of victory behind them.
Should Chromebooks be Mandated by the School?

Introducing Chromebooks promotes our school's ethos, and ensures that we can better allow A formers to access their curriculum. Initially, it is a vital that we realize we are all still teenagers, not wanting to be regulated, and hence it is highly unlikely we will do it ourselves. The recent decisions to have designated lockers for laptops was a step to strengthen the regulations in School. The A Form, being younger, needs constant and better monitoring, and therefore Chromebooks best serve that purpose.

Surveillance is particularly important in a school environment, as your guardians and teachers need to know how you are interacting with your friends and peers, so that they can guide you effectively. This already happens with the close monitoring of our internet through the portal system, as well as the screening of our laptops to ensure that it does not carry objectionable content. Chromebooks are merely an extension of that principle, where juniors need to be a part of a system which ensures that they are treading the right path and learn to become responsible students. More importantly, though, this allows for A formers to be able to access and work on assignments while not being involved in any transgression.

The second reason why this policy should be adopted is because it promotes egalitarianism in School. The Doon School is based on an ethos of egalitarianism, where it does not matter who you are outside the walls of Chandbagh, inside it, you are equal. We wear the same clothes, eat on the same dining table, and sleep on the same bed after an exhausting day. Having different types of laptops promotes distinction and difference based on wealth, which is not what our School stands for. To be able to truly interact and learn in a free manner, we need to be for all intents and purposes, equal. The introduction of Chromebooks further promotes this long standing ethos, and therefore will work towards serving everyone's interest.

Finally, Chromebooks are likely to be an extremely cost-effective option as well, as they can be passed from batch to batch. This means that work can now be completed to one's satisfaction and in a controlled environment. Through Chromebooks, we can successfully ensure that the demands of the IGCSE curriculum are aligned with the ethos of The Doon School, and hence they should be mandated.

In recognition of A form students’ curriculum requirements, School has been considering the possibility of granting A form students laptops of their own. Specifically, the school has decided to experiment with the use School-issued Chromebook laptops. While how necessary laptops are to the curriculum is still contentious, we shall assume (and we as a school have assumed) that the students, indeed, would benefit academically from the introduction of laptops. However, the specific choice of mandatory Chromebooks must be deliberated upon.

Different users have different needs. This is especially valid of choice of technology. For instance, one user may prefer the simplified user-interface of iOS but another may prefer the greater control offered by Android and variants. Also, naturally a user who uses their laptop more heavily and for more memory-intensive tasks would have different requirements than the natural user. Within this context, perhaps a student who runs intensive simulations out of their interest in physics might need a laptop more powerful than one who just needs an electronic copy of their textbooks. Some might need more local storage, some might need a stronger graphics card… The number of possible configurations is vast.

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The Technology Council (of which I happen to be a member of) was informed in a meeting last year that a certain Chromebook model came with certain advanced features that allow monitoring and remotely controlling a student's Chromebook. Although from what I hear the School does not plan to utilize these, such monitoring and control feels rather invasive. According to Google’s page about Chromebooks, “If a student takes home a school-owned device, the same security settings apply on campus and off.”

Laptops are typically personal devices. However, with such an arrangement, there is just an illusion of the device being personal. Even if the laptops are meant only for academic use, there is something unsettling, something “violating” about the “full control administrators have in the admin console” (according to Google). In any system, implicit trust is necessary at a certain level. Where do we draw the line?

If the school plans to permit A form students to use
their laptops for activities such as school publications or video editing (to name a few) in addition to strictly academic work, we may find that many pieces of software typically used in those domains, are not available for ChromeOS (Chromebooks’ operating system). Although alternatives to those may exist, they might not be ideal. Many Chromebooks come with very limited local storage, instead encouraging users to store their files on the cloud. While I am aware that @doonschool.com accounts come with unlimited Google Drive storage, I do not necessarily want to store my data there out of concerns over Google’s privacy policy. I understand that this is a rather specific concern and one that (unfortunately) not many people share with me but the almost “forced” conversion to cloud storage with certain Chromebook models (not necessarily the ones school opts for) has implications for our freedom as users.

It’s great to see that the school is taking steps to fulfill A form students’ academic needs, but we must also attempt to ensure that we fulfill the legitimate special requirements that certain students may have.

The Doon School Weekly (DSW): As the School Captain, whom do you think you represent first and why?

Nandil Sarma (NLS): I represent the boys because firstly, they constitute the majority of the Electoral College. However, that does not mean that I do not understand the role of the teachers. As I said in my speech, my aim is to be a bridge connecting the masters and boys; a plan I will work towards in the future. I say the boys because in my eyes, they are the ones who need representation. The masters are mature enough to know what things need to be said to get work done. However, the boys do not. Right now, it’s just a cluster of varying opinions that are floating around school with no one to channelize them in the right direction. I can be the point of contact for the boys to direct their opinions, relaying their message to the teachers and representing them in relevant forums.

DSW: Punishments serve to effectively enforce long term self-discipline. In that vein, why do we still find boys who, after reaching their senior years, start showing little regard for rules?

NLS: Some people by the virtue of wearing home shoes consider themselves SC formers whereas they don’t do anything substantial to support the school community. And over the years, a hierarchy of fear has been established. The punishments that were meted out were incentives for the boys to start doing the right things; a way of commanding discipline. But that is not how it works. The source of discipline should always be internal, and it should always be derived from the fact that we study in a school like Doon. I think that is what we should be mindful of.

DSW: In your speech, you highlighted the problem of how even though 21 boys entered the office of prefect in the beginning of the year, only 10 would be effectively dispensing responsibilities. What steps will you be taking in this direction?

NLS: I am not a person who shies away from expressing their opinion and this is why I have been making a conscious effort to hold regular meetings with the Prefectorial body; either at the gazebo or the occasional treats with Mr. Makhija. I have always found a forum to talk to them regularly and made a point of taking individual feedback from the House Captains as well. As of now, I make sure that I am kept in the loop, so that if any Prefect gets complacent by any chance, I can talk to them personally. Only time will demonstrate the effectiveness of these steps. I have been clear about conveying my thoughts to all the House Captains and Prefects. I think I am very lucky to have such an efficient and accommodating Prefectorial body.

DSW: The outgoing School Captain stressed on certain things that every Dosco should practice, like speaking English. What is your stance on this?

NLS: I remember that dinner when Viksit gave his speech about how our school is like Eton and we should always speak in English. I think where we confused ourselves is when we started glorifying English as a language. I want to take that in its larger sense, rather than the narrow meaning we interpreted it to be. Instead of glorifying English, just because its expected of us due to our diverse backgrounds, we should take his speech as something more meaningful. The message was to represent ourselves with dignity, to know and understand where we come from. I think we missed out on this when we started glorifying English as a language instead.

Rapid Fire

Favorite film?

When did you start scoping for School Captain?
Ans: In D form, when I got inspired by Ishan Sandhu speaking at Founder’s.

The Flag Bearer
Fear

Aryaveer Agarwal and Aryan Dutta Baruah

Many years ago, there was a boy who was born into a family of lords and kings, a time of witches and wizards. This boy lived a very fortunate and luxurious life. But, there was one unfortunate thing about him, he was blind. His eyes were unaffected by the bright lights, all the colours and what brought life to the world, the beauty of nature. His parents, who were now very concerned started an extensive search for a fair and powerful sorcerer who could cure him.

After a tireless search for thirteen years, they found a sorcerer who could cure the boy. He was promised a reward of ten thousand bonems (approximately a million dollars). The boy was elated and very keen to open his eyes and look around the world.

As instructed, he slowly opened his eyes. He was delighted; the world had brought a new aspect into his life. He decided to explore his kingdom thoroughly and meet his subjects. He set out with his parents on a magnificent chariot. He had a glance at the various spots in the kingdom like the city bazaar. But what he saw next changed his opinion of the world. He passed by the poor settlements of the kingdom where he saw death and poverty. As soon as he saw it he was forced to close his eyes. He couldn't resist it: The pain and the suffering. He had a sudden and chilling fear.

That night, when everyone was fast asleep, he quietly sneaked out of the city limits and went into the forest in hope of finding the darkness again. He wandered around eyes closed, expertly navigating the forest. He reached a cliff. He knew that he had reached a cliff. He could hear the water rushing below him, as loud as the thunder. The boy couldn't stand it anymore. He thought about all the people who cared about him but he just couldn't bear it. He felt a soft touch from the behind, but he could not feel anything. An unknown force was telling him, tempting him. So he did. He jumped off the edge, falling to the bottom of the chasm, his silent screams echoing around death itself. He anticipated his return to darkness.

Storytellers in the Pink City

Aryaman Kakkar reports on the recently concluded Jaipur Literature Festival.

It is any bibliophile's dream to meet their authors, the people who gave them entire worlds to dream of, histories to watch unfold, words to see flit off the page. So went a delegation of six boys and a teacher to Jaipur to attend the 14th year of the Jaipur Literature Festival. A congregation of literary geniuses unlike anywhere else on Earth, the Festival took place over five days from the 24th to the 28th January, 2019. Departing the campus on the 23rd, we faced an entire day of hectic travel followed by an exceptionally turbulent night, a time of many words, phrases, and laughter. The next day, we arrived at the shores of Hotel Diggi Palace at 10am, just in time for the inaugural ceremony.

The festival was declared open by the Sanjay K Roy and Namita Gokhale, two of the three founding members of the Festival. The third, William Dalrymple was unable to attend due to a recent death in the family. The opening ceremony itself was a phenomenal event. With the sensational poet Ruth Padel reading her work, and an inaugural speech by Venkatraman Ramakrishnan, author of “Gene Machine”, the festival was guaranteed to be an exciting one. The festivities lasted each day from 10 in the morning till dusk at six, with talks happening simultaneously at six different venues, interspersed with books launches. The delegation had the opportunity to meet some of the best authors of our time, including Markus Zusak, Shashi Tharoor, and Jeffery Archer. Each day, we attended talks by, and conversations amongst authors, discussing their experiences and books. In the process, we also got our coveted copies of their books signed by Namita Gokhale, Noviolet Bulawayo, Andre Aciman - a treasure trove for any bookworm worth their ink.

The Festival had organized a full-fledged bookstore at the venue, a Festival Bazaar stuffed with clothes and shops, and every Dosco's paradise: A Food Court that provided its famished diners with every dessert and cuisine possible. With so many temptations
Ice Age Returns

Ansh Raj

“We now know why the Weekly shows Doscos as penguins. The North Pole has come to Doon”

- A revelation of the Yearbook team (Dear Yearbook, there are no penguins at the North Pole.)

At the risk of stating the obvious, it must be reiterated that the last few days have been absolutely chilly. The temperature has plummeted to levels previously unknown, and everyone in our serene campus seems to be trapped in its icy clutches. While our neighbouring hill station has been engulfed in snow, our own skies have been oozing icicles that easily pierce the School-issued black umbrellas. Another, literal pain in the bottom turns out to be the requirement of seated Assemblies in the Rose Bowl. Meanwhile, among the many things our newly-appointed prefects are enthusiastically performing, roaring “mufflers and caps off” looks like the most satisfying one. Even in this freeze-wave, our School has firmly stood by its “Early bird catches the worm” maxim, insisting that the penguins waddle into their classes by 7:20 every morning. While the stock of worms is under dispute, many have definitely caught colds (thankfully, the numbness argument has failed to make any successful case for delaying corrections. In any case, it goes without saying that mornings are the most unpopular part of the day. Slipping out of the warm embrace of our quilts as the house bearer dutifully rings the morning bell, presents an ethical dilemma, while walking out of the room to stare into the pitch-black darkness of the heavens feels like journeying to Hell, as all the cold winds of the world come under question). Cases in point are many, but retard everyone’s efficiency. Icy fingers, rendered highly prone to injury, was cited as the number one reason by Masters for mis-fielding, and therefore losing, to the School team. A rematch is in demand, although rumour has it that NTC (who was missing in this fixture) has fingers that don’t freeze. Not far from the sports field is the Multi-Purpose Hall, where winter appears to be at cross-purposes with our Transition comrades. Icy numb fingers have taken the brunt again, this time for being the primarily culprits behind disappointing pre-Board results. A few ill-timed convulsions have also caused a jumble of irregular lines criss-crossing answer booklets, adding more of a throb to our examiner’s pulsating heads. Unfortunately for the examiners though, the numbness argument has failed to make any successful case for delaying corrections.

But, if there is one section is our closely-knit (and paradoxically chill-inviting) community whose efficiency has remained largely unaffected, it is our support staff. Reaching the campus at a time when the mercury is at its highest point of contraction, they ensure that my Chota Hazari cup is able to compensate for missing heaters. In the dining hall, the staff diligently begin work in the wee hours to serve warm food on our plates (the toasts might still come under question). Cases in point are many, but recognised are only few (if at all they are). As the cold thaws away and our School turns brighter, perhaps gratitude might be another warm food for thought to serve ourselves.
The Week
Gone By
Divyansh Nautiyal

The week began with a midnight earthquake which suspiciously spanned only across the H and K quadrangle. Only the inhabitants know whether it was real or brought to life by super excited, testosterone charged individuals. The constant throughout the week though was the merciless weather.

Arising from a cozy bed on a chilly morning is excruciating. The reluctance of masters and students when they sit on the icy steps of the Rose Bowl is evident. But the cries for excusing the first two schools still seem to be falling on deaf ears.

On looking upon the Main Field, one is still not sure whether it is the Cricket or the Hockey Season. However, the one thing which stands positive is the zeal and dedication with which both the teams practice. The last set of appointments also flew in with their complimentary share of speculation. They did evoke a mixed response. Without any doubt, the show stopper for this week was our fellow Editor who, with an astounding talk, reminded everyone of what it means to be a true Dosco and the spirit of service that our School embodies.

In striking contrast, one would notice the SC-Ls and the AT formers slogging their way through the Pre-Boards. While the IB students look relatively relaxed, the impending Board examinations have many ISC students on tenter hooks. As they also proceed with their ‘practicals’ and ‘viva’s, one cannot help but notice the palpable anxiety. Talking of anxiety, the submission of laptops for the S formers has engendered a fierce debate in Chandbagh with IB students specially disgruntled.

The Exchange offers too flew in for the AT form with its own set of surprises and disappointments. As for the weekend ahead, do remember that our Prefectorial body works in Maldevta and the Monitors in the Houses have all sorts of ideas to exploit the opportunity. Trust me, you won’t get this time again. Be sure to make the most out of it.