

Established in 1936

The Doon School WEEKLY

"I sketch your world exactly as it goes." -Arthur Foot
September 26, 2020 | Issue No. 2582



UNDER THE SCANNER

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'Lit' Verses

Sai Arjun discusses the literary potential of the rap genre.

*"Hail Mary, Jesus and Joseph
The great American flag is wrapped in
drag with explosives
Compulsive disorder, sons and daughters
Barricaded blocks and borders
Look what you taught us!
It's murder on my street, your street, back
streets
Wall Street, corporate offices
Banks, employees, and bosses with
Homicidal thoughts; Donald Trump's in
office
We lost Barack and promised to never
doubt him again
But is America honest, or do we bask in
sin?"*

What meets the eye in this verse, is merely another verse in just another rap.

Does it look Pulitzer worthy? A majority of you might not think so. I ask you to think again.

In 2018, the Pulitzer Prize for Music was awarded to Kendrick Lamar for the surreal depth in the lyrics of his recent album, "DAMN." Another interesting fact is the recent addition of Hip Hop as an abstract topic under the genre of artistic music in the Oxford Syllabus. It is the depth of the lyrics above that prove the worthiness of this addition. It is seldom thought that an array of harmonics that plays in our eardrums could be considered as a form of literature.

The lyrics above have multiple references to the shortcomings and failures of the United States and its socio-economic problems, among

other issues. The use of 'Hail Mary' was Lamar's plea to alter the unfair and rather controversial American Foreign Policy. Another reference of the same phrase was to the late Hip Hop artist Tupac's song 'Hail Mary' about the Cambodian Killing Fields, a horrific site of genocide. The lyrics also refer to common mental health issues affecting American children, such as compulsive disorders. The line about murder refers to the extremely liberal gun laws, which cost many lives. The office placements refer to the overworking of the middle class and point out the impetuous handling of the country by the hands of Donald Trump. It addresses the regret most Americans had after losing Obama from the White House. And the last line sums it up, depicting the turmoil of a supposedly great country, and questioning whether it is as great as it once was. In his acceptance speech Kendrick Lamar said "It's an honour, I've been writing my whole life," indicating the amount of effort that went into this album. Hence it is only fair to regard it as a profound piece of literature, in the form of a rap.

In light of the recent events of the Black Lives Matter protests, multiple American rappers have written about racial discrimination in their songs, and gone on to express it in a bold and candid manner. Rappers talk to people

in a manner they relate to, or one can say that they talk 'in the tongue of the people.' American rapper J Cole recently released a single called 'Snow on tha Bluff.' In it, he highlights these protests and talks about the duties of every citizen, regardless of their skin colour. The background of this rap is a battle on Twitter between the artist and a BLM protest supporter saying how J Cole 'is not doing everything in his power to terminate police brutality.' This rap starts off with the sentence 'N***** be thinking I'm deep, fooled by my college degree.' With this, he mocks the educational system, implying that a college degree is incapable of defining a person's intelligence. Then goes on to address the tweets, rapping,

*"It's a reason it took like two hundred
years for our ancestors just to get freed
These shackles be lockin' the mental way
more than the physical
I look at freedom like trees, can't grow a
forest like overnight."*

He addresses the fact that the African-Americans were mentally shackled, that there was a psychological barrier that stopped them from protesting. He holds this responsible for the long period of Apartheid, and also mentions how freedom is only attained after constant struggle. Freedom took 200 years, but the racist mentality will take longer to eradicate. In

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another verse he raps:
“Feel like a slave that somehow done saved enough coins to buy
his way up outta slavery.
Thinkin’ just maybe, in my pursuit to make life so much better
for me and my babies.
I done betrayed the very same people that look at me like I’m
some kind of a hero.”

He talks about the racist mentality, its link to police brutality, and how it is still damaging for people of colour, who can’t buy their way out of it. J Cole addresses the fact that despite his face value and popularity, he didn’t take big enough steps to support the protest due to his insecurity and worry for his

future. He feels that Black people look up to him, as an idol, an icon, and despite all this adulation, all he did was post a mere tweet.

Thus, in the modern world, alongside highbrow forms of art and music, popular modes of expression like Hip-Hop co-exist, and thrive. Rappers of this genre not only spread awareness; their lyrics are far more profound than what they appear at first glance. They might not be Elizabethan playwrights, but they walk on the same bridge as common people. Rap might not be the most sublime genre of all literature, but it is the language of the people. It does hold up a mirror to life.

THE WHO?

Who is Onika Maraj?

- Krishnav Sachdev: A singer
- Keshaw Singhania: An artist
- Agam Bhatia: A rapper
- Raghav Periwal: A scientist

Onika Maraj, known professionally as **Nicki Minaj**, is a Trinidadian-American **rapper, singer** and **songwriter**. She gained public recognition after releasing the mixtapes **Playtime Is Over**, **Sucka Free** and **Beam Me Up Scotty**.

THIS WEEK IN HISTORY

1980 CE: Solidarity, the Polish trade union and political party that became a hotbed of resistance to Soviet control, is founded.

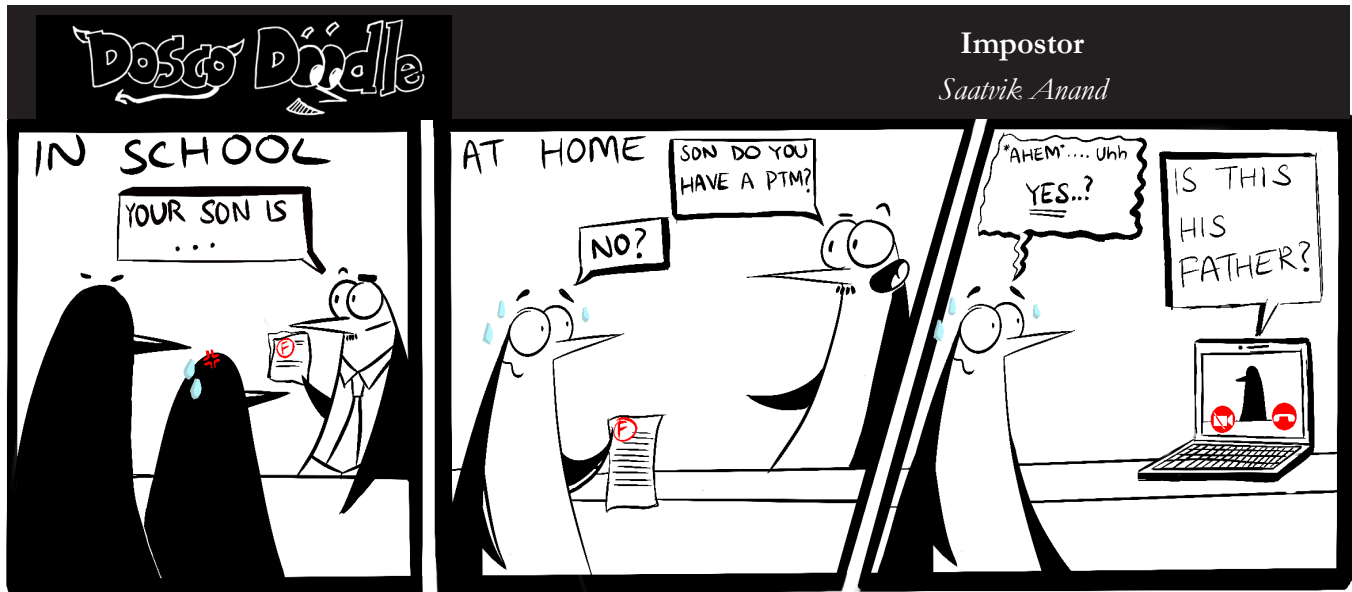
“

To every man is given the key to the gates
of heaven; the same key opens the gates of
hell.

Richard Feynman

Around the World in 80 Words

A bill for farmers was passed as part of the Prime Minister’s agricultural reforms, leading to nationwide protests. A verdict that charged an officer with wanton endangerment in the Breonna Taylor case further aggravated the Black Lives Matter demonstrators in Louisville, where two police officers were shot at. The Indian Premier League kicked off on Saturday with the Chennai Super Kings defeating the Mumbai Indians by five wickets. Liverpool FC defeated Chelsea FC 2-0 in the Premier League on Sunday.





UNDER THE SCANNER

The Sport 'Bubbles' | Ahan Jaykumar

2020 will always be remembered as the year when everything was disrupted. Schools were shut and 'Working from Home' became an all-pervasive reality. The sports industry too was deeply affected by these peculiar circumstances. For the first time since the 2011-12 lockdown, the NBA was stopped midway through the season; for the first time since 2014, an IPL match was played outside India. Even football and tennis matches were played in empty stadiums. In such challenging conditions, a lot goes into ensuring the safety of players and coaching staff and even the media responsible for covering the event. This is all done with the help of something called a bio-secure bubble, like the ones being used for the NBA and the IPL.

The main aim of this bubble is to prevent all parties from contracting the coronavirus. This is done not

only by prohibiting the public from entering stadiums, but also by creating separate living zones for franchise members, support staff, and other concerned entities. Apart from that, there are some basic guidelines mandatory for everyone to follow. Upon landing, everyone must get tested for the coronavirus and undergo a mandatory self-quarantine for about 14 days, just like other international travellers. Another measure taken is to heavily restrict movement in and out of the bubble. This means no outings, no contact with visitors or with family for the duration of the tournament. (However, this doesn't hold true for all competitions – after a two month period, family members were allowed to go inside the NBA Bubble in Orlando). All this is done to restrict further spread of the virus to the largest possible extent. Apart from this, medical teams,

including the physiotherapy team and the masseurs units, are required to wear PPE kits while coming in contact with players. Players are also advised to order food from their rooms, and come in minimum contact with others.

To maintain 'no transmission risks' within the bubble, technology has played a pivotal role. Various softwares are used to help organisers monitor people working in specific zones, and check whether they are adhering to social distancing and capacity limits norms. Apart from that, there are devices like the Oura Ring, which monitor vitals such as one's heart rate, heart rate variability, respiratory rate, and temperature. Similarly, an oximeter is also used to check for exposure to the virus.

It is clear that although the safety of the players is ensured, the process will require them to possess a lot of mental and physical strength. Despite all this, the games will no doubt seem incomplete without the presence of the fans.

Plugged in

Katyayan Kanodia *comments on the documentary 'The Social Dilemma'.*

A guilty hand moved to close every social media tab while I commenced typing down this review. Along with numerous other tech moguls, American ethicist Tristan Harris shed light on the severity and the gravity of the deep-rooted ignorance of privacy invasion in the social media industry. Bombarded with countless facts and figures, one sees how the exponential growth in social media usage especially among teens and pre-teens is almost frightening. A plethora of striking quotes thrown in the mix alongside omnipresent eerie, gothic sound effects help portray how the big guns have been brought out by Netflix to address the enormity of this situation. An instance of minor manipulation is played alongside the documentary, helping the audience to visualize how social media knows an unfathomable amount about every single one of its users.

Throughout the documentary, there is a careful equilibrium that is maintained between the informative and the narrative aspects of the documentary. This

balance ensures a maximum transmission of data to the viewers and simultaneously keeps them hooked on to the documentary. Moving on to the flip side of the coin, a gruesomely dystopic and almost unreal image of the cyber world is presented to viewers resulting in one doubting the gravity of the threat social media imposes to the globe at large, and significantly denting (if not completely destroying) the foreboding image built in the viewers' minds.

The topic of fake news was comprehensively examined by this one and half hour Netflix documentary. The starkness of disturbing video clips and images born of fake and illicit information led us straight to the bestial side of Social Media, once again highlighting the urgency and criticalness of the situation. While spreading awareness and drawing attention to the evils of social media, the documentary further feeds the disbelief and suspicion already gestating somewhere in the viewer. Simultaneously,

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the influence which social media exerts over an individual (especially ones in lower age groups), is portrayed by the short, crisp film presented alongside the short doses of information by each speaker one after another.

On the whole, the significant irony which the documentary is battling with after its release is how the multitude of both statistical, pictorial and visual data and media actually intend to influence perception. It is, however, definitely worth a watch.

How Was Your Experience of the Recently Conducted Online Examinations?

The Doon School Weekly asked members of the School community about their experience of online testing.

The absence of being able to scurry towards the main building after our 'last few minutes' of revision has created a void that online examinations will never be able to fill; however, successfully conducting examinations on a digital platform has certainly been a commendable feat. The implementation of software such as Exam.net and Kami to adapt to current requirements allowed this process to become smoother. However, one issue that no software can resolve is the nature of our environment back here at home. A problem that I faced was the lack of concentration, as the focus that one attains in an examination hall cannot be compared to that of our homes. Furthermore, values such as trust and ethics have become more important than ever before, as the examinations are certainly not foolproof. I feel that our community should strive towards making them more effective not only via the implementation of new software but also by understanding the value of the trust that has been reposed in us. Personally, the online examinations were a unique learning experience for me and I enjoyed this new aspect of digital learning. In retrospect, I did find them to be quite effective, although there is always scope for improvement.

- Varyam Gupta

While Exam.net seems to be arguably the best option available to us at the moment, the website is uniquely susceptible to dishonest actions that would otherwise not be accessible in a physical exam environment. Given that School had to place a certain amount of trust and responsibility in every Dosco who took an online exam, which was an intriguing experience in and of itself. Particularly in the online environment, the small things started to matter a whole lot more: making sure your laptop doesn't go off to sleep (and so don't you), your internet connection is stable, your answer script is legible, and that you don't forget to submit it in the Google Classroom as well. For Doscos in different time zones, the examinations were undoubtedly harder to take, and with future examinations, this could be something we could take a closer look at. Fundamentally though, I feel that the lack of an examination atmosphere made online examinations an imperfect substitute whose underlying elements need to be looked into in the long run.

- Agam Bhatia

The pandemic has forced us all to adapt to new ways to be a part of Chandbagh. We had already been familiarized with the online exam system and after a few tries in each subject we had understood what was required of us. So, when the online tests were finally conducted, they were met with preparedness, enthusiasm and excitement from our side, needless to say, along with various computer and network related problems. The after-paper activities- discussing and critiquing the paper, discussing that one question that was 'out of syllabus' took their normal online course. The online feedback system, with the introduction of various softwares such as Kami, also seemed efficient. Though the online exam was nothing like the ones conducted in School, and we missed quite a lot of the unique experiences that we would have had at School during this time, online exams were a new experience and according to me, a good one.

- Aditya Saraff

As hard as it hit most of us, conducting examinations on an online platform was truly an enlightening experience. In these ‘unprecedented times’, it has become really important for us to get accustomed to the online platform which would be used for our academic journey till things get back to normal. These exams allowed us to know just where we stood and this knowledge stands really important in light of the upcoming board exams for the A and SC forms. Even though it wasn’t really that obvious, all of us could feel the pressure as well as the excitement for the exams. The online platform allowed us to be monitored throughout the duration of the exam- allowing an environment similar to the exam hall to be modelled. However, there existed ways around the system but it was our integrity that prevented most of us from using them. Kami allowed feedback to be given out as efficiently as ever. Masters were able to attach voice notes as well as write their comments on the digital answer scripts without the hassle of printing, and returned our scripts almost immediately. The break which followed was a much-needed and relieving one as it allowed most of us to catch up with one another once again!

- Keshaw Singhania

Times have been testing for all of us and for me a transition into an all new board with an online initiation was indeed tough. Classes were still manageable but online exams went a step ahead. I agree that exams were necessary, but my experience was not so great. Right after the first test I tested positive for COVID-19 and writing tests for an hour and a half with antibiotics flooding through my system wasn’t easy. The virtual invigilator in place of a physical one also took time to adapt to. The screen was the icing on the cake, getting me glasses after just the first three tests! School tried its best to make the process as smooth as possible but the endless process of clicking pictures was indeed cumbersome. On top of all of this, we know that ensuring the students stuck to fair means was a task in itself for the teachers. When you get to know that people who barely used to pass are getting tremendous scores, the only thought that comes to my mind is of lessons on morality that we were taught in School. I know this might be the best we can do right now but I am confident that School will soon be able to find solutions to these issues as well.

- Abhisar Sudhakar

I find it imperative to begin by congratulating the School on its conduct of online exams. It’s a daunting task, and I did not encounter as many technological issues as I would’ve expected. That exams went by without numerous major ‘jamups’ is commendable. However, these exams have made me realize more than ever, how central honour code is to testing. The fact is, whether or not your camera is on, or exam. net locks you out, cheating is not exceptionally difficult. The same did apply to physical examinations, but cheating when at home is particularly easy. Personally, I believe that this is actually beneficial, because it is another element of effective education. Allow me to explain: Were I to cheat in an exam and get marks skies above what I deserve, then those marks become empty and, to a large extent, meaningless. They are not my marks. I think that this being the sole consequence, combined with the fact that it is now our choice, transfers the authoritative responsibility to us, the students. Thus, online exams may perhaps result in elevated marks, however, whether or not cheating becomes our conscious choice is a learning in and of itself.

- Kabir Subbiah

As an S former, I had one exam a day and classes right after. In my opinion, online examinations are not the ideal examination scenario for anyone. There are many distractions – looking up at a question every five seconds, your computer going to sleep, a sudden loud doubt breaking the off-putting silence, or the exam. net site freezing when you try to scroll. Students cannot focus properly and are always under suspicion, even for glancing away from the screen for a second. On the other hand, online examinations do bring in some accountability that is inherently missing from the majority of our online learning. Having a sibling in another school system, I also feel that the school has done well to ensure that these tests are not strenuous while testing S form. However, I do still doubt the effectiveness of these exams, especially because of their role in deciding my batch’s predicted results. I do not believe they give an accurate representation of the student’s intellect and hard work and so, I other avenues should be explored.

- Mayank Agarwal

The Problem of the Week

A machine has 2020 lights and 1 button. Each button press changes the state of exactly 3 lights. This means if the light is currently on, it turns off, and if the light is currently off, it turns on. Before each button press, the user selects which 3 lights will change their state.

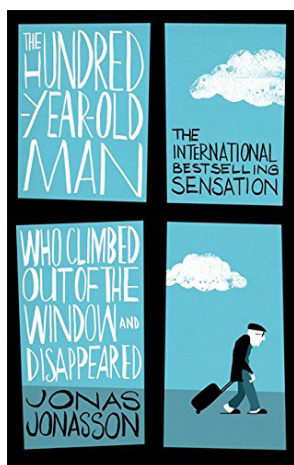
To begin with, all the lights on the machine are off.

What is the fewest number of button presses required in order for all the lights to be on?

Hint: Start by thinking about a machine with fewer lights.

Courtesy: CEMC Waterloo

What Have You Been Reading During The Lockdown?



Book: The One Hundred Year Old Man Who Climbed Out the Window and Disappeared

Author: Jonas Jonasson

Jonas Jonasson delves into the political history of the 20th century, depicting various events such as the Spanish Civil War and the Manhattan Project through the escapades of a centenarian. Although the ingenious plot makes the novel far-fetched, the book never ceases to amuse the reader. Apart from fascinating a History buff, the book is a true cure for gerascophobia, the fear of aging!

- Gurmehar Bedi

What Have You Been Watching During The Lockdown?



The Man in the High Castle

Cast: Alexa Davalos, Rufus Sewell

The Man in the High Castle is a dystopian alternate series where the events of the Second World War turn out to favour the Axis powers. The series is meticulously detailed, and provides a wealth of information in its conception of the harsh reality of the alternative world. The theme includes everything from espionage to sci-fi, extending the motive of the series. In addition to that the complex plot is sure to keep the viewers engaged.

- Veraj Goel

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



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Editor-in-Chief: Varen Talwar **Editor:** Adit Chatterjee **Senior Editors:** Aviral Kumar, Keshav Raj Singhal, Sriman Goel **Associate Editors:** Aditya Jain, Advaita Sood, Aryan Agarwal, Kabir Singh Bhai, Samarth Kapila **Special Correspondents:** Ahan Jayakumar, Armaan Rathi, Saatvik Anand, Shreyan Mittal, Vihan Ranka **Cartoonists:** Anant Ganapathy, Paras Agrawal **Webmaster:** Kritika Jugran **Assistant Managers:** Arvindanabha Shukla, Priyanka Bhattacharya, Purnima Dutta **Technical Assistant:** KC Maurya **Picture Credits:** Prime Video, Amazon (Page 6)