

The Doon School WEEKLY

"I sketch your world exactly as it goes." -Arthur Foot
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FRIENDSHIP IN THE TIME OF COVID-19

A reflection on the effect online school has had on friendships.

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Should Junior Forms Return to School First?

I think not. Firstly, at present, only 30% of the population has had the first dose of the vaccine and only 9% is fully vaccinated. On top of that, the Pfizer vaccine (the vaccine that is most effective against the Delta variant) isn't even available in India. School has 600 boys, plus teachers and staff living on one campus, in their own little micro ecosystem. Although this is amazing and constitutes the essence of Doon, it will be problematic if even one student has Covid-19 without knowing it, thereby releasing a very contagious virus onto 600 other students. I think this possibility remains even if around 100 students return to campus. Hopefully, there will come a time when the junior batches will be able to go to School and experience the life of a Dosco, but now is not the time.

- Zubin Dhar

There have been many arguments and questions raised regarding whether the junior forms should return to School. Personally, I think that students in the junior forms should return as soon as possible because statistics show that Covid-19 cases have been going down and we should take this opportunity to experience life at Doon while it lasts, for who knows when cases might rise again? I know that there was a minor Covid-19 outbreak in School in April but I am sure that School's preventive measures will keep everyone safe. Furthermore, I think the benefits School presents outweigh the drawbacks. For instance, though some of us may be participating in sports outside School, I am certain that nobody has better sports facilities than those available at School. Also, offline classes are much better than online classes, and STAs and SUPWs will be much easier to conduct in person. Lastly, the D Formers will finally be able to meet the classmates they have been studying with online from Day 1.

- Veer Babaycon

I do not believe that Juniors should come back to School first. This is mostly because of the immense impact that physical classes have on education. A, S and SC Forms are vital years in one's education and we all know that virtual learning is not ideal for a student. Physical classes are far more engaging and energetic and are more important for the senior forms since the Seniors are the ones who will be sitting for crucial exams. These forms have also missed out on several co-curricular events and with little time left to graduate, they should get the chance to do these again, while the juniors still have a few years left on the clock. Calling the seniors first will help them get the opportunity to be with their Masters and fellow batchmates again, as well as give them a chance to learn in a 'real' classroom again.

- Avi Bansode

I feel that the junior forms shouldn't come back as things stand, because the situation at the moment is still quite unpredictable. As we saw in April, regulations and protocols are almost impossible to enforce with the junior forms who are not as responsible or mature as seniors. This is especially so as they would be eager to meet their batchmates in person and interact with them normally. I

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feel that, with the mode of online learning, the D and C Forms can manage to keep up with their curriculum. The B, A, S and SC Forms on the other hand require more face to face learning and a hands-on experience to get the most from their classes.

- Vivasvat Devanampriya

I think that the junior forms should go back to School. For starters, Juniors do not have much to lose if they go back to School. The Seniors - the SC's and A Formers in particular - can perhaps focus on academics better while at home. Secondly, Juniors have much to gain from going back apart from academics. The D Form will be able to properly explore a school none of them has ever visited, and the C and B Forms will be able to adjust to the Main House before the Seniors arrive. Moreover, the fact that most of us have not been to School in almost two years is all the more reason for us to come back. Essentially, the Juniors need to be exposed to the 'Doon Shool' way of life before they lose any more time.

- Vivaan Sood

Friendship in the Time of Covid-19

Abhay Jain writes about how online schooling has affected his relationships.

Online school has taken over every sphere of our lives. Every day, I wake up at 7:00 AM, get ready for class and grudgingly attend school till 1:40 PM. Now, if this was a normal day of offline School, I would spend some of my time chatting about what that crazy form-mate of ours just did a day ago, or how we were planning to celebrate a friend's birthday. The hours and seconds would go by quickly. However, online School does not allow for the stimulus the human brain needs and gets from human interaction. We only unmute our mic to answer the teacher or ask a question, and then return to our isolation.

In the past month, I have felt so frustrated about not being able to talk to my friends and have late-night gossip parties because it just doesn't have the same feel to it. The often long and secretive sessions with our voices kept low are something neither Discord nor Zoom can recreate. FaceTime cannot put into words the thrill we feel while being on the lookout for masters or prefects on their rounds at midnight.

Watching my friends become little boxes on my screen is not an experience I particularly enjoyed. However, being online has given me new opportunities to make 'friends' and connections through the world of social media and gaming. These days, the only way to talk to your friends is to chat on social media or through video games. I spend a few hours a week playing games with my friends, not for the game itself, but for the time I spend with them.

However, even after all my talking about how online interactions are so much more different than offline

interactions in the most fundamental ways, the weight of all the things we have expressed and talked about is still the same. I am a firm believer that you can be friends with someone you have never met but have spent over 100 hours talking to. A friend doesn't have to be someone you can meet face to face, but someone who knows you and someone you can confide in. It is someone who stays with you no matter how tough the situation is.

In the beginning, I thought that I would not be spending much time with my online friends during the lockdown. I had thought that my life would go on normally, just without as much interaction with my friends as before. What I did not know was that I would often be staying up late at night every other day to watch movies and TV shows with my friends on a Discord call, munching on popcorn or a warm plate of Maggi.

Online School has been a truly interesting and complex experience that has taught me to interact with people on social media and other platforms. I have taught myself many other skills out of pure necessity that I would not have learnt in School. For example, I realised how to organise myself to make sure all my assignments are submitted on time and further improve my communication skills online with people I had to work with.

On the other hand, everything going online caused me to drift away from many of my friends that I was closer to in the previously normal offline School. As I

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FRESH FACES

On behalf of the School community, *The Weekly* would like to welcome the following members of the staff who joined us in the Autumn Term:

- Career Counsellor:** Ms. Shalini Sharma
- School Counsellor:** Dr. Shivangi Saxena
- Coordinator Special Educational Needs:** Ms Deepika Hopf
- English Department:** Ms. Moulee Goswami
- Humanities Department:** Mr. Dwayne Jude Savio D’Costa
- Science Department:** Mr. Vratik Upadhyay
- Mathematics Department:** Mr. Anup Gupta

We wish them a fruitful tenure.

KAMLA JEEVAN

The Doon School organised the **Kamla Jeevan Debates** from **12-14 August**. The team comprising Agam Bhatia, Keshav Tiwari and Aadi Jain emerged as the **Runners-up** of the tournament.

Congratulations!

SCHOLARLY SUCCESS

The **Scholar’s Blazer** has been awarded to Agam Bhatia.

Kudos!

THE WHO?

Who is Charlton Kenneth Jeffrey Howard?

- Aaryan Kayal:** Actor
- Aryaveer Agrawal:** Author
- Avi Bansode:** Politician

Charlton Kenneth Jeffrey Howard, better known as **The Kid Laroi**, is an **Australian rapper, singer and songwriter**. Born in Waterloo, New South Wales. He originally gained recognition from his association and friendship with Juice Wrld, and is known for songs such as ‘Let Her Go’ and ‘Without You’.

Around the World in 80 Words

New Zealand was shut down after a single case of the coronavirus was reported. President Ashraf Ghani fled the state as the Taliban took over Afghanistan’s capital, Kabul for the first time since 2001. A 7.2 magnitude earthquake in Haiti left almost 2,000 people dead and thousands injured, and the country is now battling the aftermath of a devastating storm. The Indian cricket team won the second test versus England, giving Virat Kohli the fifth most number of test wins as a Captain.

“

A man who says ‘I have learnt enough and will learn no further’ should be considered as knowing nothing at all.

—
Haile Selassie



Excited to be back?

Roban Taneja



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watched people post pictures of themselves and their friends hanging out at their house, I once again began to feel that emptiness and frustration of being cooped up at home. The growing gap between my friends and I was starting to concern me. As I realised that, I also felt hope bloom inside me. Hope, that when I finally return to School, things will finally go back to the way that they once were.

Despite the mental toll online education has taken on us, the new opportunities and situations forced me to evolve and adapt like it has compelled many of my friends. Even though the new skills and connections we have formed may not be worth the frustration and disconnection caused, I do believe that it is time for us to go back to the “good old days.”

Guilty

Rohan Taneja

Security guard Nicolás Morales had never felt the way he did on the morning of 7th May 2065. Every day, he would stand in the narrow hallways of the INTERPOL station HQ thinking about everything, from his children to the Superbowl, occasionally sinking his teeth into the doughnuts he managed to smuggle in, waiting for his shift to end. That strange morning, however, the familiar hallway felt different. Despite the perfectly set temperature of 25°C, the coldness of the tiles stung his fingers while beads of sweat formed on his temple. Worst of all, he didn't have an appetite. It was as if he felt guilty of a crime he had not committed. *Guilty*. Somehow, that was how everyone felt that day.

The slim glass doors of the lobby slid open letting in a swarm of agents with ranks much higher than that of Nicolás. He usually felt an unconscious admiration for them. Their stiff stature, straight mouth, and confident gait stood in stark contrast to his meek self. And yet, that morning, they lacked everything he admired them for. They seemed just as meek as him. Following them, a man in his 60s cautiously stepped into the room, taking each step with utmost caution, much like a child taking his first steps. Physically, he was like any of them, but there was something different about him. His body, frail like a chicken's, shivered in the cool air. His eyes were dim and filled with emotions that words could not describe. It was a mix of anger, pain, betrayal, but somewhere in there was a rather surprising sense of awe. Awe for what we as a species had come to achieve.

While in the room, the old man never moved his lips, his eyes and body spoke volumes about his past. An hour had passed, and the silence had evaporated. The old man was escorted out of the room and normality was re-established. It was only later that the people in the room would be told that the man had spent the last 30 years of his life on Earth. Earth: It had been ages since Nicolás had last heard the word. No one spoke about, or even remembered, the blue

planet anymore.

“The man used to send hundred signals out to us every day, in the hope that we would respond,” said the Head Agent, “in the hope that we would fly down like God to save him from the deadly grasp of nature.”

“Why didn't we save him then?”, asked Nicolas, bravely disregarding his position in the room.

“We couldn't. We received the first signal the day before yesterday.”

The room fell into silence. It is not that people did not have things to say, their minds were exploding with questions. They just didn't know how to ask them. Like everyone else, Nicolas found it hard to believe that the quiet old man who stood amongst them had spent his entire life living among the remains of their civilisation on a planet so ruined that they were forced to leave it. While Nicolas and his employers maintained their stature as the most advanced beings of the cosmos, living in tori and cylinders suspended among the stars, the old-man had lived in a God-forsaken land destined for oblivion, with technology long declared obsolete. The temperatures on Earth are soaring high, water is frighteningly scarce, the few satellites still left are broken debris falling to Earth like meteors, yet here among them was a living exception of human progression. It pained them to think that with a little bit of attention, this man could have lived a happy life with his own kind in a place no less than paradise.

However, the guilt they felt was not just for this old man. It was for the thousands, hundreds of thousands of humans trying to make a life for themselves in the scattered footprints of human advancement. As the ‘lucky’ forged ahead, they forgot about those behind them, people who would look up to the stars each day, sending messages out to the cosmos, hoping for a response, a sign that someone is out there, a sign that all hope is not lost.

CLARIFIED

► Taliban takeover of Afghanistan

Although the pandemic is currently the predominant matter of concern in the majority of the world's countries, Afghanistan is going through something far more worrisome: a volatile "party" of 200,000 fighters, who have now seized power in the country. This, however, is not the first time the Taliban have terrorised Afghanistan. Several pieces of historical literature demonstrate that the Afghans still carry the scars of the Taliban's actions in 1996, when they conquered Kabul and overthrew President Burhanuddin Rabbani's authority. More than two decades later, history is repeating itself as the Taliban are now conquering wide swaths of territory, after having successfully toppled a government in the wake of the retreat of American forces. Deaths and gunshots have been reported at Kabul airport as thousands of Afghans attempt to escape, fearful that their country would devolve into chaos, or that the Taliban will retaliate against individuals who had worked against them with the US or the government.

The catalyst for these events is none other than the United States' withdrawal from Afghanistan. The country is now seeing the Taliban's return to power, and if history repeats itself, will result in a decline of civil liberties, notably for women and girls, who had been granted many, previously non-existent, basic liberties. Over the last two decades, the United States and its NATO allies have spent billions of dollars training and equipping Afghan security personnel. This Western-backed regime, however, was riddled with corruption. As Taliban forces approached Kabul, Afghanistan's President Ashraf Ghani abandoned the country on Sunday. He later claimed in a Facebook post that he left to "prevent further bloodshed". On Sunday, just hours after he fled the nation, Taliban forces stormed Afghanistan's Presidential Palace, marking a pivotal moment in the insurgent group's occupation of Kabul and their assumption of control. The majority of the population fears the increasingly probable theory that the Taliban will reimpose the harsh interpretation of Islamic law that they relied on when they ran Afghanistan from 1996 to 2001, where women were not allowed to go to school or work, or leave the house without a male companion, and they were required to wear the all-encompassing burqa. Despite their attempts to portray themselves as a more moderate party in recent years and claiming that they will not exact revenge, many Afghans are distrustful of those pledges. One sign that people are concerned about is that the Taliban want to rename the country the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, conjuring cold and horrific flashbacks.

The Taliban has been in conversation with Afghanistan's government, attempting to arrive at a conclusion on who is to govern the country. President Ghani's abrupt departure is likely to have upended those talks. The Taliban now appear to have little incentive to compromise given that they control such vast stretches of territory. According to *Al Jazeera*, the Taliban claimed the palace in an apparent "handover" ceremony in the presence of three Afghan officials. The ceremony was broadcast live to social media and other platforms. In a Facebook post following his departure from the country, Ghani wrote that the Taliban now face "a new historical test," he also said that "Either they will protect the name and honour of Afghanistan or they will prioritise other places and networks. In order to win legitimacy and the hearts of the people, it is necessary for the Taliban to give assurance to all the people, tribes, different segments, sisters and women of Afghanistan and to make clear plans and share them with the public," he wrote. On the other hand, in a brief tweet on Sunday, Afghanistan's current defence minister, General Bismillah Mohammadi, chastised the fleeing president, writing: "They tied our hands behind our backs and sold the homeland, damn the rich man and his gang."

Although it looks pretty grim, the future of the state and of the people will be decided in the upcoming days. The US and the UK are making attempts to bring their citizens back before the state descends into total anarchy, but unfortunately, nobody knows what is in store for the Afghans themselves.

Sources

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2. <https://edition.cnn.com/2021/08/15/asia/afghanistan-taliban-advances-kabul-intl/index.html>

Problem of the Week

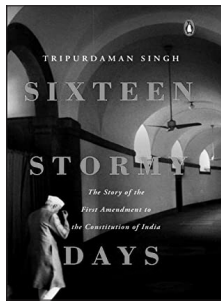
Rudolff's book, called Coss, written in 1525, was the first German algebra book. The reason for the title is that cosa is a 'thing', a term used for the unknown. Algebraists were called cossists, and algebra the cossic art, for many years. Here is the problem:

A group of 20 people pay a total of £20 to see an exhibition. The admission price is £3 for men, £ 2 for women and 50p for children. How many men, women and children are there in the group?

Source: *nrich resources*

What Have You Been Reading During The Lockdown

Sixteen Stormy Days
Author: Tripurdaman Singh

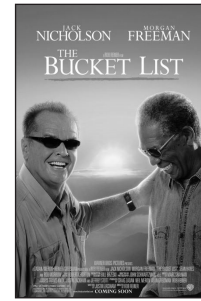


This book narrates the story of India's First Amendment which proved to be the most drastic alteration our Constitution has ever witnessed. It delves into the struggle between the insistence of the INC to deliver on its promises to the people and a judiciary determined to abide by the newly-framed Constitution of our land. It talks about how Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru pushed for the Amendment which curtailed our freedom of speech and restricted our right to property, consequently, transforming what it meant to be an Indian forever. The book encouraged me to delve deeper into the nature of the liberties which Indians enjoyed for a brief period of time and offered an unconventional perspective on our past leaders.

- Gurmehar Bedi

What Have You Been Watching During The Lockdown

The Bucket List
Director: Rob Reiner



The Bucket List is the story of two elderly people who are suffering from terminal cancer. The movie is a phenomenal representation of how different circumstances we experience could change our lives, but we must not let that limit or come in the way of our aspirations and goals. As the title of the movie suggests, Carter (Morgan Freeman) and Edward (Jack Nicholson) make a bucket list of things to do before one of them "kicks the bucket." This movie encourages its viewers to achieve their goals in life and not let limitations get the best of them. It expresses that true satisfaction can only be attained when one is content and fulfilled. The movie was released in 2007, and can be watched on YouTube TV.

- Veer Nigam

The views expressed in articles printed are their authors' own and do not necessarily reflect those of the Weekly or its editorial policy.

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