

The Doon School WEEKLY

"I sketch your world exactly as it goes." -Arthur Foot
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A Necessary Change

Vinesh Uniyal and Vivaan Sood *comment on the relevance of politics in students' lives.*

India has seen the youth population increase rapidly, with predictions claiming that such a boom will lead to socio-economic growth for the country. Yet, due to the widening skill and literacy gap among the youth, this view has given way to a kind of disillusionment now. We understand that politics is a field that requires participation from all demographics, especially young people, since their involvement would seemingly look to benefit them the most. However, politics is often seen as a distasteful and unattractive career option by many young people today. The question of why this problem exists, and its implications have become an increasingly prevalent issue for us, and for the world.

There is often a rhetoric of politicians being seen as objectionable people. They are often given epithets such as 'corrupt' or 'greedy'. The prevalence of such rhetoric can perhaps explain why there is a divide between youth and politics. This is not to say that we completely dismiss these ideas, but rather that it can be seen as one reason among many that contribute to the youth's apathy towards politics.

In India, our democracy is often plagued by various social, religious, or geopolitical conflicts but our politicians seem more interested in consolidating vote banks by pandering to the majority. An

instance of the success of such pandering can be found if one only looks at some of our leaders – though they have been accused of pressuring human rights groups and intimidating journalists, they continue to be adored by a dominant religious community as many believe that it actively pushes the interests of this dominant group, though others feel it does so at the cost of the wellbeing of other communities. This puts our claims to be a secular country under question. As students, we tend to refrain from discussing political issues especially as many believe that their voice or vote will not actually contribute in any substantial way. Further, watching elderly men rant on television creates a sense of detachment among the youth, and creates the perception that politics is mature talk, more suitable for adults.

Although we live in the information age, since much of the information we get is from social media, people often find themselves in ideological echo chambers where one's social peculiarities like religion, caste, and region affect the way we consume certain information. Another source of information we usually have is our environment, mainly the households we live in. Living in a house where everyone talks in favour of one political party can create in us an unconscious bias

towards or against certain parties. Choosing to be neutral or apolitical is something that we have seen evolve and turn into a social stance in an increasing number of youths and students who opt to stay away from a rather delicate subject. It seems easier, or less hazardous this way.

Yet, disengaging from politics and its ramifications is a luxury that not everyone can enjoy. We can choose to ignore societal class systems because we benefit from them, and more often than not, it is apathy rather than political neutrality that is to blame. We are often silent in the first place perhaps because our willingness to express our opinions on controversial public issues is based on our largely unconscious awareness or perception of those opinions as being either popular or unpopular. Our silence can be interpreted as indifference or avoidance even, and can then lead to forgetting. In the context of politics, this forgetfulness of the public allows the same policy missteps to be repeated over and over again, with the silence on such issues only growing each time.

Therefore, it is critical to remember that politicians are leaders, not rulers, and that they are in a position of power as our representatives. Being apolitical may take us to a place where our view of democracy collapses,

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This Week in History

1526 CE: Central Asian conqueror Babur defeats Sultan Ibrahim Lodi in the first battle of Panipat, establishing the Mughal Empire in India.

1564 CE: William Shakespeare, one of the most influential playwrights of the English language, is born in Stratford-upon-Avon, England.

1800 CE: America's oldest federal cultural institution 'The Library of Congress' is established in Washington, D.C.

2016 CE: The Paris Agreement on climate change is signed in New York binding 195 nations to an increase in the global average temperature to less than two degrees celsius above pre-industrial levels.

LISTENERS CHECKLIST

What members of the School community have been listening to this week:

Kabir Gandhi: *Ophelia* by The Lumineers

Sangcho Rijiju: *Yeh Fitoor Mera* by Arijit Singh

Udathveer Pasricha: *Scrawny* by Wallows

RDG: *Shape of You* by Ed Sheeran

Krishiv Jaiswal: *Earquake* by Tyler the Creator

Jaiveer Saran: *Chasing Cars* by Snow Patrol

“

Until they become conscious they will never rebel, and until after they have rebelled they cannot become conscious.

—
George Orwell
from '1984'

UNQUOTABLE QUOTES

States don't have capitals.

Vir Marwah, making ARD proud.

He is in the swimming court.

Samvit Singh, technologically advanced.

Name all the 21 prefectorial bodies.

Aviman Singh, fulfilling his duties.

Let's give me more.

Headmaster, selfish.

Guys can you just stop watching your screens and watch it?

AKS, taking control.

Close your eyes and watch.

PKS, doing the impossible.

Have you guys heard the newspaper?

RSL, inquisitive.

DYNAMIC DEBATERS

A team comprising Aryaveer Agarwal, Sai Arjun and Karan Agarwal represented the School in the **Daly College Virtual Invitational Debates** held from April 15-17. After emerging as the top team in the Qualifying Rounds, the team reached the Finals with Karan Agarwal winning **Best Speaker in the Quarter-Finals and Semi-Finals**.

Congratulations!

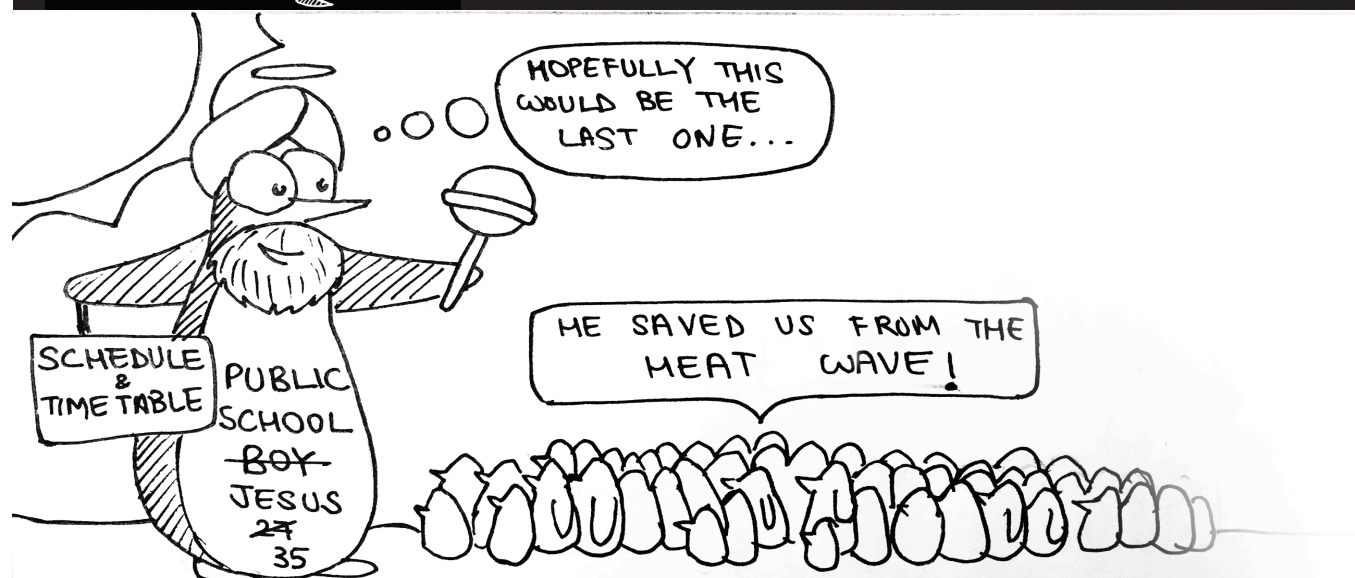
Around the World in 80 Words

Wimbledon banned Russian and Belarusian players from this year's tournament over the war in Ukraine. A Russian flagship sank in the Black Sea after being hit by Ukrainian missiles. South Africa's floods have killed more than three hundred people. The Supreme Court halted the demolition in Jahangirpuri, a predominantly Muslim neighbourhood, that was hit by religious violence. For the first time in a month, COVID-19 cases reached two thousand for two days. Arsenal beat Chelsea 4-2 in the Premier League.

Dosco Doodle

The Redeemer

Roban Tanjea



(Continued from Page 1)

where we see ourselves as merely voters.

It is critical to recognise that our leaders as individuals, are part of a broader group and that their actions should be scrutinised when they influence a wider group, even if that group does not include you.

Exposing yourself to the political system and the general consensus is one way to become more aware of current events, and though taking a position on your political beliefs can lead to isolation or even

abuse, both online and offline, it is necessary to educate yourself and others. By allowing ourselves to express our views, political or not, we fill in the void created by others who do not have the liberty to do so. It's too early to predict how this new generation's perspectives will change. We have not all reached voting age, and altering national circumstances, global events, or technological advancements might have a significant impact on our views. Yet, being politically active entails

educating oneself, turning up for a cause one believes in, amplifying a vital petition, or confronting a troublesome family. There are no guidelines to follow. And, when we choose to turn a blind eye to the political misdemeanours of our leaders, we are directly contributing to the continued propagation of world problems. Therefore, asking simple questions and making simple decisions are the foundations of being politically active and it is something we can all do, regardless of age.

Set in Stone?

Tarun Doss *reflects on the School's architectural practices.*

Architecture is the most profound and important way that art affects our lives. We see it every day, certainly most frequently at School, where the thoughts that went into producing the buildings that we see around the campus are obvious to the eye, where each building has its own bespoke authority. However, there remains a catch. Our School's culture is rooted in the heritage that the previous boys left behind for future generations. The School stands on the ground bought from the FRI and retains the look of colonial India. The buildings from that time are now retrofitted for modern purposes. The Main Building and the Kashmir, Hyderabad, and Tata houses represent those tumultuous times and the chaos in which our nation - and this aristocracy of service we call Doon - were born.

On the same note of breathtaking architectural marvels, our School is certainly no stranger to such a list. The latest addition to the Dosco architectural family is the newly-constructed contemporary and lush auditorium that stands tall and proud in place of what used to be the aged MPH that many of us may vaguely remember. As it inevitably gave in to the test of time, with its creaky stage threatening to give way any second,

or the washrooms etched with the fading bathroom-thoughts of many generations of Doscos, there was a pressing need to have the building renovated. School's MPH was home to the first speeches from a multitude of Headmasters - since the Eighties when it was built - with most recently being Mr Ragett's. It accommodated not only the speeches of the boys and masters, but memories and souls accumulated over time and the blood, sweat, and tears that went into each event presented there. The building itself was a treasure, and the boys were its treasure spirit.

The "Auditorium" built where the MPH once stood should have paid homage to the old building in some way, such as borrowing some aspects of design from the structure itself, letting Old Boys reminisce about times past and allowing new boys to connect to our shared heritage. However well recognised the need for modernization may be, one of the core precepts of the School's ethos is to remember; to remember one's history, to remember one's culture, and to remember one's struggle. The old MPH was created to serve a multitude of purposes for the boys, one that the boys will continue to find useful, and one that will remain truly multi-

purpose.

The present structure is contextual in terms of its orientation and materiality as it tries its very best to interface with the iconic 100-year-old English Renaissance-inspired Main Building and the rest of the brick architecture of the campus. However, we are yet to get accustomed to the structure as it appears to menacingly tower over the Main Field, failing to seamlessly blend in with the majestic trees of the erstwhile Forest Research Institute. The east-west orientation of the built form and landscape reinforce the direction of the old aqueduct and Main Building. The building mass is bold, contemporary, and abstract. An exciting use of materials - exposed brick tiles juxtaposed with maroon-coloured corrugated metal beams and glass is set against an omnipresent spine of exposed concrete. In an attempt to infuse the spirit of creativity into the heart of the campus, the newly-constructed auditorium tries its best to take our School forward into the next decade of modern art. One hopes that the bold, contemporary design of the new Auditorium will be able to sensitively weave the past with the present and, dynamically lead the School into the future while remaining rooted in our past.

Winds of Change

Sai Arjun examines the rising popularity of 'cancel culture' in our society.

Similar to how the Pandavas were banished from their kingdoms, or Shri Ram was exiled from his, Generation Z has managed to contrive its very own updated version of this orthodox form of punishment— banishment from the internet. News of such banishments reaches a wide demographic, especially in this day and age where one seldom sees a child above the age of seven or eight without a TikTok or Instagram account having their souls sucked in by these dementor-like platforms (ironically, the creator of dementors herself has been exiled quite recently).

This toxic 'cancel culture' was first seen in 2015 but went on to gain mass attention in 2017. In the words of Demetria Slyt, it refers to "the mass withdrawal of support from public figures or celebrities who have done things that are not socially accepted today. This practice of "cancelling" or mass shaming often occurs on social media platforms such as Twitter, Instagram, or Facebook."

Should one commit the sin of exercising their right to speech, to express opinions that go against those of a fifteen-year-old on Twitter, the internet takes it upon itself to decide to banish the speaker, preventing them from expressing their opinions any further. This, in essence, is the summarization of what cancel culture really is. I am sure such a definition makes apparent how deeply problematic the practice is.

There are many reasons why this culture can be labelled problematic, the first one being that it completely ignores each person's fundamental right to freedom of expression and speech. People are perpetually apprehensive about sharing their thoughts on the internet, which defeats the purpose of social media platforms where everyone can safely express themselves. Since there are these new 'passionate' and 'society-conscious' cancellers out there, it is hard to publicly express your opinion as there is always the fear of being exiled from the internet! This is especially dangerous for some bigger stakeholders, such as celebrities who have huge followings and hence are at high risk of getting cancelled. While most followers are people who are fond of celebrities' thoughts and opinions, a small portion are also critics waiting for an opportunity to cancel them. Again, this defeats the purpose of the internet— a place for people to post content they want to and read the content they like.

Many popular celebrities who have faced immense backlash due to this culture include J.K Rowling, Ellen DeGeneres, Eminem, Dr. Seuss, Jimmy Fallon, and many others. This brings me to the central problem of cancel culture. It destroys the premise

of social media platforms such as Twitter, Facebook, and Reddit, all digital spaces for people to speak their hearts and minds, which then creates spaces that foster fruitful discussions and lively debate. When people start censoring thoughts and start labelling personal opinions as offensive and extremist, they undercut the premise of these applications. I believe that it is important to make sure that these platforms remain true to the purpose they were originally intended for.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, many mental health experts have enough evidence to believe that cancel culture is one of the leading causes for depression and poor mental health among adolescents today. Getting cancelled is possibly the worst experience a teenager can go through — being isolated from their own friend group and excluded from other social groups can be really harmful for sensitive teenagers and it could directly cause them to lose confidence, and lead to depression.

Despite its many flaws, I understand that cancel culture has certain positive aspects. Callout culture allows those who may not traditionally have had a voice to present their side of the story, or battle stereotypes and prejudiced narratives. People can now confront social media users for any offensive content that they might have posted, increasing accountability on the internet. Further, it allows content creators to see what content others might find offensive and remove the same from the internet. Therefore, cancel culture serves as a trend that permits the marginalised to seek accountability. It can, thus, go a long way in making the internet a safe space for all kinds of users by calling out extremely offensive and extremist ones who misuse the internet.

It serves as a trend permitting marginalised people to seek accountability where the justice system fails.

Therefore, it seems safe to say that cancel culture has its advantages and disadvantages. Although I feel that the cons outweigh the pros, the benefits of cancel culture must not be ignored as they help safeguard people's freedom of expression while keeping the internet free from extremist and offensive content. In conclusion, I believe it is necessary to turn the cancelling of people posting harmless Twitter posts down a notch.



UNDER THE SCANNER

Sri Lankan Crisis | Karan Agarwal

Watching the Sri Lankan economy deteriorate over the past two years has certainly been alarming. The country faces its worst economic crisis since 1948 and its impact is brutal: power outages, food shortages and rapid inflation. Unable to pay for foreign imports, President Gotabaya Rajapaksa and his administration face massive public backlash. Residents are finding it very difficult to source day-to-day items, including cooking gas and kerosene. Fuel is in short supply and is now being rationed to customers after long waits in queues. Costs of all basic commodities have drastically increased making them unaffordable for most. Colombo is sourcing fuel and food supplies for the month using external help, including credit lines from India.

China has enjoyed liberal duty exemptions for the huge imports from China for infrastructural projects. The quantum of duty exemptions granted to China for years since the construction of Hambantota port (Nov 2010), to the reclamation of land (2020) for the Colombo Port City project can no way match the benefits accrued to the common people of Sri Lanka. 'Sri Lanka is a classic twin deficits economy,' said a 2019 Asian Development Bank working paper. Twin deficits indicate that a country's national

expenditure exceeds its national income and that its production of goods and services is insufficient. This, in combination with years of government mismanagement and sustained twin deficits have led to Sri Lanka being backed into the corner, it is in now. With the general public questioning the Rajapaksa's government's ability to handle such a crisis, protesters and rioters gather outside the President's private residence each day to demand his resignation.

Protests against the government have turned violent and the public is in unrest as the country approaches the International Monetary Fund for an urgent bailout. Sri Lanka is urgently in need of a bailout programme due to their inability to pay their \$51 Billion of foreign debt and talks between Sri Lanka and the IMF are ongoing, however Sri Lanka must restructure its debt before moving forth. While Sri Lanka's financial issues have been slowly growing in severity over the past two years, the tipping point of the ongoing economic collapse is the fall in income that the country used to receive from its bustling tourist sector as well as foreign remittances prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Rajapaksa government's decision on banning chemical fertilisers (an action that was later reversed) has also, hit the farming sector and has

stunted economic growth.

In terms of international support, Sri Lanka has received some much needed relief in the form of financial aid from China and India. India has been extending help to Sri Lanka in the form of a diesel shipment and an added \$1 billion credit line for importing essential goods. China has been systematically providing billions in credit to Sri Lanka in a move that many experts believe to be a debt-trap, by loaning Sri Lanka large amounts of money that will be hard to pay back, creating a strong point of leverage. However, at a time when Sri Lanka might be defaulting on foreign debt, this will be China's moment to let the debt-trap label stick or to destroy that notion by providing further aid despite being aware that Sri Lanka is unable to repay it.

Despite the foreign support though, Sri Lanka still borders on what could be a devastating humanitarian crisis. Signs of civilian distress are visible during the long hours spent waiting to procure gas, and the difficulty faced in buying basic amenities. Queues for obtaining oil and gas have been reported to be over four hours long in many places and people can be seen lining up at the break of dawn. As prices of products like tea increase rapidly, consumers find it difficult to keep them due to little to no income and a drain on savings because of the last two years of the pandemic.

Sri Lanka's population now stands to suffer for the decisions made by many successive governments over the years, decisions that have culminated in a country that faces broader issues like poverty and starvation on a massive scale today. As the situation worsens, one can only hope that Sri Lanka gets the resources needed to avoid the national catastrophe that they are rapidly approaching.



The Week Gone By

Vihan Ranka

April bears with it a cornucopia of gifts, including the unwanted flurry of winged bugs and mosquitoes lurking behind every nook and cranny in the walls of Chandbagh. The School now bustles with unprecedented levels of activity, as my newly appointed comrades, eager to prove themselves, work with a short-lived vigour.

The new academic year brought with it several surprises to students

and masters alike, including the new timetable, and the newer timetable following the previous one. The word in the air is that another new timetable is in the works already. Some say the *third school* lasted longer than some of our Headmaster’s carefully curated WhatsApp stories. The latest addition of PT to the timetable, however, brings back fond memories of waking up early to practice for the PT competition. The re-introduction of PT has reinvigorated the PE Department, much to the horror of the Sc Form.

The Senior boys are now discovering the mammoth task that their Seniors undertook while

leading the House in various positions, as they practice late at night for the different Inter-House Competitions this term. The House bands, dance troupes and play practices fight viciously for the much-needed space within the confines of the Houses. All the while, the preparations for the Inter-House Hockey Competition seems to have begun, as we approach that time of the year.

Through these turbulent times, my fellow Doscos, we are missing out on a vital aspect of our Dosco lives: sleep. My only word of advice to you would be to sleep as much as you can now, because come May, sleep will only be a fleeting dream.

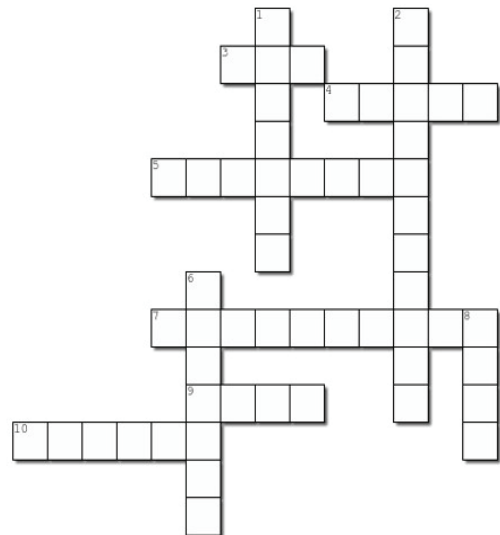
Crossword | Authors and Their Lesser-known Works

Across

- 3. The Cormoran Strike is a detective series and its author is the richest author on Earth.
- 4. This author also wrote The Last Tycoon, an unfinished piece that was published posthumously.
- 5. This author wrote The American Claimant which was the first book to use gramophonic dictation.
- 7. The Secret Adversary is the second published fiction novel by this famous British detective writer.
- 9. He was the author of Cymbeline and has also been featured in the Weekly crossword for his famous plays.
- 10. The Gardener, was written by this famous Indian author who won the Nobel Prize for Literature.

Down

- 1. Little Dorrit, a piece that attacks the injustices of the contemporary legal system, was written by this author in 1857.
- 2. Berenice is a fascinating tale of destructive obsession and its author is one of the best authors in gothic literature.
- 6. Different Seasons is a collection of four of his novellas, rather than the horror fiction for which he is famous.
- 8. This author has a collection of short stories, Someone Like You, published by someone else.



Across	3. Rowling	4. Fitzgerald	5. Twain
Down	7. Christie	1. Dickens	2. Poe
	9. Shakespeare	10. Tagore	6. Stephen King
	8. Dahl		

Answers of this Weekly's Crossword

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

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