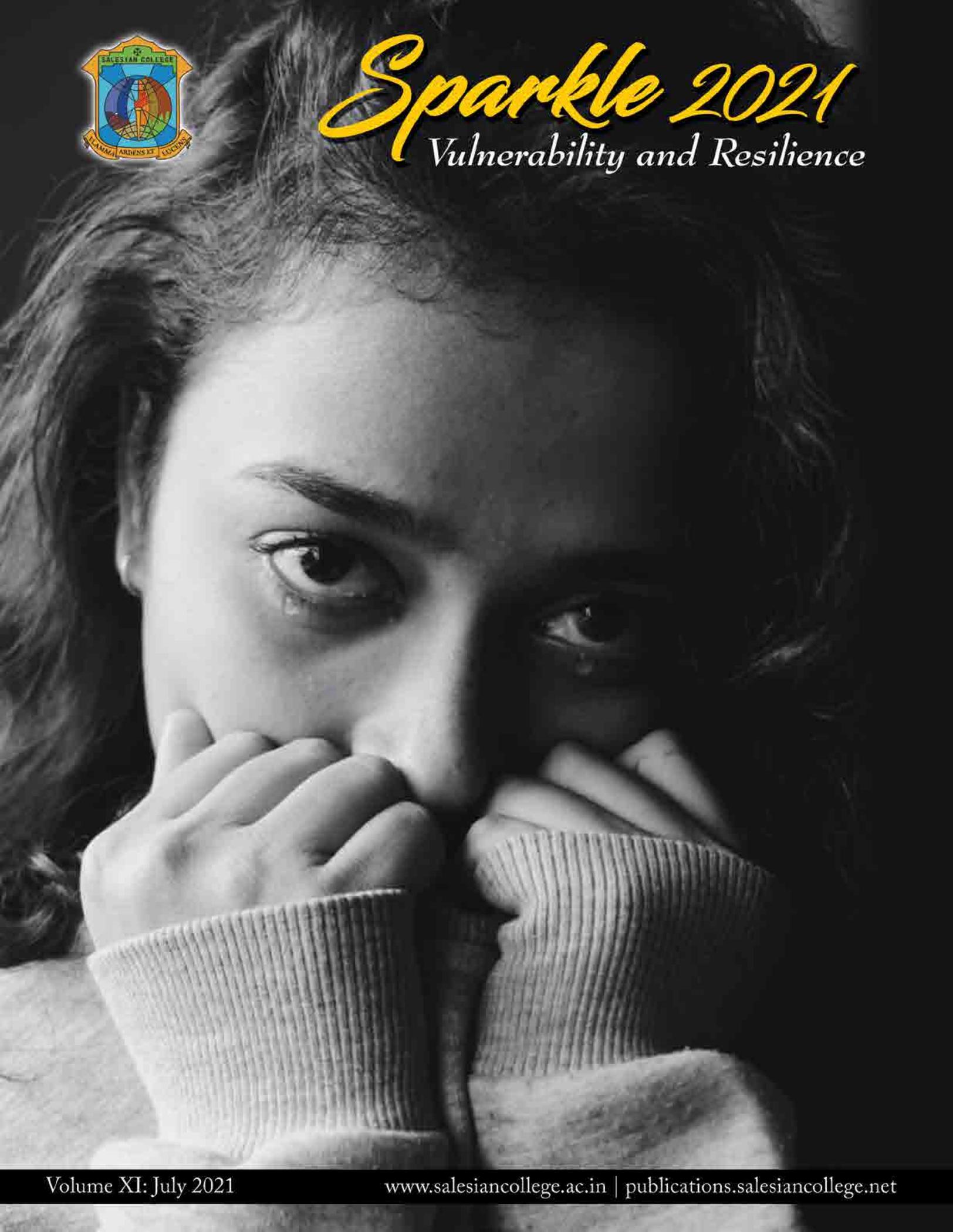




Sparkle 2021

Vulnerability and Resilience



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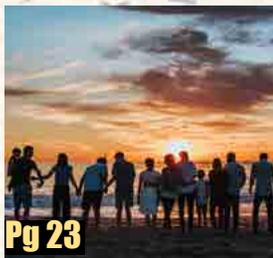
Issue XI
Sparkle 2021
Vulnerability and Resilience



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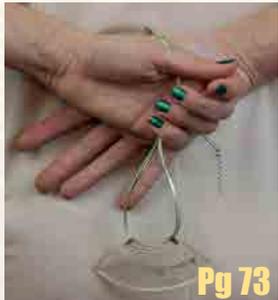
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Message from the Principal



Dear Reader of Sparkle 2021,

The editorial team has pooled together a major portion of this year's collage in the college annual magazine of Siliguri Campus around the theme - "vulnerability and resilience". Through this move, in fact, is captured the contemporaneous conjuncture of the mishaps and misfortunes befallen a sizable percentage of the population - directly on some and on others indirectly - having to suffer adjusting to the new routine and its impact. However, the theme has - as with all words - a life of its own and an imaginary of its own for people living in his part of the globe/planet in these times.

I for one would like to dedicate this issue - of the college annual - to the memory of Gail Omvedt: a valiant woman whom I have only encountered through her writings and is now no more, though continuing to live on, in her words - over a score of publications and the legacy of the activism she gave birth to for the empowerment of the marginalized. In the memorial webinar organized by the select departments - sociology, social work, history and political science - the theme of 'egalitarianism, diversity and democracy' were dwelt upon by her widower husband - Dr Bharat Patankar by taking the listeners to that far off ideal days of 'matrilineal ganasanga' that even predated the Buddha's sangas as precursor to the legacy of inclusive communities: in a way, on second thought - a true community was not necessitated to be qualified as 'inclusive' as there was none other than all inclusive communities, back then. A pre Harappa-Indus civilizational legacy of the life built around the matrilineal *ganasanga* existed one with the natural environs of the community inclusive of its flora and fauna. These idyllic tribal communities of the central India - the last vestiges of an ideal that is wilted away under the collective saga of a globalized class of people making way for a planetary economy - determined by the techno-digitized transhuman evolutionists ready to get on to the next-to-future intergalactic space shuttles.

Therefore, the vulnerability, we succumb to is the victimization of the majority on this planet as expendables and the resilience we need is to battle for preserving the egalitarianism of which we have a memory - kept alive by the likes of Gail and Bharat and innumerable others speaking from the margins and for the marginalized.

Let this year's *Sparkle* live to its theme: embracing vulnerability – be it of the infants in the cradles or the wrinkled faces in the old age homes; and manifesting resilience – be it in refashioning the future or regenerating the present in a 'million-voices-now' – resistances as the voice of resilience in a land which has seen an autocratic emperor 'turn over a new leaf' in Ashoka of post Kalinga fame.

There are gentler and subtler voices too that you will hear in the little writings of the creative minds fluttering at will in this Issue. I am reminded now, of one such entitled 'ripples in the river' a six liner that captures the flow of the rivulet as well as the intergenerational nurturing flow of life – from grandmother-to-mother-to-daughter as you will if you read Mimansa Subedi. Let the graces from the matrilineal *ganasangas* continue to flow on and help 'egalitarian and democratic communities promoting diversity' flourish ever in our land. A special thanks and congrats is due to Mr Anik Sarkar the Chief Editor and all his collaborators. Writing heals – both the writer/author and the reader/interpreter. May we all be healed and made whole to create a *Sparkle* for yet another Year.

Fr George Thadathil sdb
Rector & Principal
18 September 2021





Message from the Vice Principal



Fr. (Dr.) Saju Puthussery Devassey, SDB
Vice Principal
Arts and Humanities

I am delighted to see so many budding writers, poets, photographers and other contributors sharing their thoughts and experiences in this issue. Hearty congratulations and a deep appreciation to all the contributors and editorial team for the concerted effort to publish the current issue

We are still in the midst of the devastating pandemic causing distress and death. Life has become so vulnerable to killer virus with its various forms. Never have we seen humans so powerless, weak and fragile. Despite the technological advancement, modern medicines, super specialty hospitals, specialist doctors and rigorous efforts of scientists and researchers, none is able to find a permanent solution to this corona virus pandemic. People have lost faith in the credibility of World Health Organisation (WHO) as it has failed to resolve this covid-19 pandemic challenging the world.

People, however, have learnt to be resilient and adapt to the challenging and critical life situations. Covid has brought to the humanity a valuable lesson that if we seek survival in difficult situations, it is indispensable that we find new solutions to our existential crisis. Moreover, we can see new avenues for our life from this pandemic. After having gone through the pain and suffering caused by this unprecedented pandemic situation we have become more human and gentle in nature. This virus taught us many life lessons unlike other health ailments.

Siting a few lines from the poem on 'A Conversation with Coronavirus' by Dr. M.J.P, it says, 'I am only a messenger / neither killer nor avenger/ many see me as an evil/ but the wise will see my good will/ God sent me to help you to see/ powerless how you are and flee/ from all your sins; follow Gods way/ Then I will fly away as you say'.

Humans are the main cause of Coronavirus, as we need to remind ourselves that we have failed to love and care for the Mother earth/nature. Lamenting is not solution to our problems. It is imperative that we care for our homeland and live a harmless life. We have distanced ourselves from nature, which has caused the spread of various diseases mostly resulting from unethical and unhealthy lifestyles. Selfish and warped mentality has destroyed the equilibrium of nature/environment. A retrospective and introspective reflection can help us to love nature to live a healthy life. Hence, a gentle reminder for all, if you care for nature and nature will care for you; destroy nature and the nature will destroy you.

Whatever the ideas or knowledge that the modern world will provide, there is no greater knowledge than what nature can offer. We need to develop in our own selves a positive energy while being one with nature and its forces, eliminating distance between self and nature, absorbing in our consciousness a deep sense of peace and tranquillity.

We need to slow down and look around in an ever consuming digital age. Take a step back with the end goal of thinking how one relates to the world as a whole. By doing so we can create an ever growing awareness of how connected we are with one another.

We hope and pray that this horrific pandemic disappears soon and we become a better human being, loving and caring for one another.





Message from the Editor

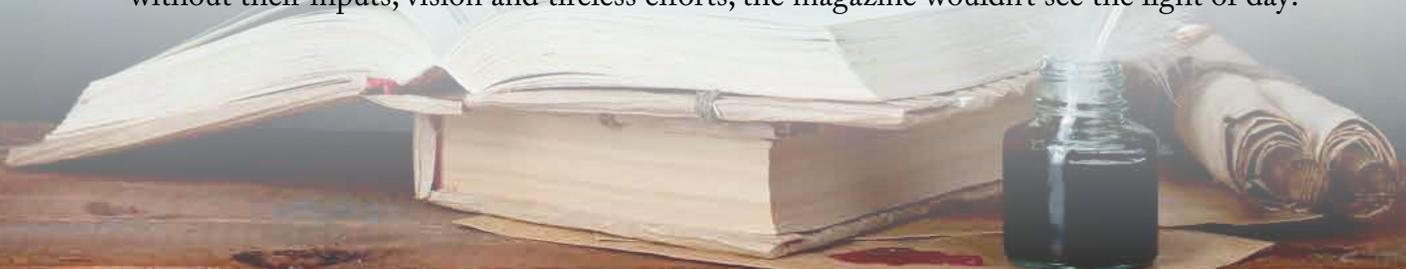


Anik Sarkar
Assistant Professor
Department of English

Our experiences of life are replete with multiplicities — we walk in the shadows, as much as we wander in the glee hours of daylight; we encounter hurdles that jeopardize our planned well-being and likewise are greeted with accomplishments that push us closer to who we want to be. Often, ‘vulnerability’ is seen as a zone of weakness. Although, it may sometimes be dependent on how we have been *taught* to see. So, by probing into its structure, there surfaces the possibility of counter-engineering its cognitive framework, in a bid to (re)configure one’s strength. We must outline our vulnerabilities, endorse the grey spots and harrowing gaps, chart them cartographically in our minds and vanquish our crippling self-doubts — all under relentless warzones, dictated by time. Rising up from moments of what intimidates us as a certain defeat, is an act of resilience. This year’s theme for Sparkle is “Vulnerability and Resilience”, where we come together to share our piercing *vulnerabilities* and celebrate our victories with the fragrant roses of *resilience*. Featuring themed as well as non-themed articles, this edition moves across discourses, engaging readers with vibrant perspectives.

Creativity is therapeutic and more so, in the wake of these terrifying times. It is a release for those who embark on the task of sharing and a warming relief for the wide-eyed spectators at the curious end. The sections featuring stories and poetry open up horizons of thought, taking us into unfamiliar spaces: exciting, shocking, inspiring and sometimes unsettling. The photographs and paintings allow us to see through others’ eyes, be it glimpses of frozen memories, dreams captured in myriad shades or the visualization of experiences where words fall flat. The section on selected reports showcases some tasks successfully accomplished by the college in a year of uncertainty.

I wholeheartedly thank all the contributors who by letting us into their works have made it possible to widen the doors of our perceptions. I thank the Patrons, Reverend Fathers, College management, Students, Parents and Guardians, Staff members and Faculty, whose visible and invisible impressions whirl through these pages. Lastly, I thank the student editorial team — without their inputs, vision and tireless efforts, the magazine wouldn’t see the light of day!



Messages from the Student Editorial Team



Shweta Mazoomdar
4th Sem, Department of English

Learning has always been associated with receiving direct education either from an eminent educational institution or through important figures focused on learning and determined to bring forward a change through their actions. Sparkle, therefore as such is a combination of the learning which will complete and reduce your soul's hunger and definitely inspire you for the upcoming ages to become the best version of you. I hope and pray that as you flip over the pages of the magazine you will not only find your fellow mate's name along with their article in here but also a generous amount of themselves present which will bring you even closer to the aspects of thriving needed by all of us. For to understand and be understood is one of the most desirable things needed by each one of us; thus, making us better beings in close touch with our resilience and vulnerability. Lastly, I would like to thank my teachers and other generous contributors without whom the magazine would not be satiable enough. Thank you for your efforts and increased faith needed for this magazine to be a major success. Love and light.



Manshika Kaur
4th Sem, Department of English

This year's Sparkle Magazine is all about Vulnerability and Resilience. The imaginative pieces in the magazine surround both the realness and the ability to overcome which is often hidden. So, we're bringing to you an educational and unique journey where you'll feel connected and strong. It has been such an interesting experience to review a different perspective and walk into a completely different world. I sincerely thank my teachers and everyone else involved in the issue of this magazine who worked hard to make it a success.





Samjhana Rai
4th Sem, Department of English

The shift is enormous.
The faultline runs deep.

We are experiencing changes at an unprecedented rate. These are changes that overwhelm us, shake us awake, challenge us and disturb us. What should we do? How should we react? Should we give up? Should we let ourselves get lost in these changes? Muddled in these questions, we live on.



Saloni Agarwal
4th Sem, Department of English

The past year has been rough on all of us. In these times of despair, in order to seek hope and optimism, we've all, in some form or the other, turned to words. Words and stories are at the core of every art form, from movies to novels to music. With this it is my utmost pleasure and honour to announce the release of yet another edition of our annual magazine, Sparkle.

It is my hope that Sparkle provides a platform for students to express themselves creatively and that it is able to enrich the lives of readers and provide them with optimism and strength that we require in times like these. Change can be daunting. However, if it occurs for the right reasons, it can bring new life to everything around us. Instead of fearing change, we must channelize our inner creativity to take the initiative to bring the change this world requires. There will be people who might tell us otherwise but then again in the words of Robin Williams, Words and Ideas can change the world! I believe in the power of words. I hope you do too.



Samden Bhutia
4th Sem, Department of English

Sometimes a reminder of a good life is often a need for the polar. The need for a polar bear is often just day dreaming. While the need to day dream, is, often overthinking.

Messages from the Parents

Congratulations on the successful launch of the college magazine - Sparkle.

We are grateful to be a part of it. Three years of college life in Salesian College, Siliguri have been a time of excitement, learning, adventure and challenges for my daughter. We would like to express our thanks and gratitude to the Principal and faculty for moulding and giving all the auspicious platforms vis-à-vis MUN, YI, Women Cell and Innovision to my daughter and prepare her to be more confident as she steps out in this competitive world. We as parents will cherish the memories of her years in Salesian College, Siliguri and would like to encourage the youngsters to make the most of the immense opportunities offered by the esteemed institute.

Best wishes!

Chipemmi Ningshen

Joyce Ningshen

(Parents of Themsorin H Ningshen, Sociology Honours, 6th Semester)

Hello Everyone,

This is Rekha Singhal, mother of Rajil Kumar Singhal of B.Com (H) 6th Semester. Firstly, I am very thankful to the faculty members and college management for giving my boy the opportunities to grow and turn into the man that he is now.

I have seen a transformation of a playful and not so confident boy into a confident and passionate young man. I am really happy that the college has molded him and made him capable enough to tackle the problems and difficulties he might face in his future life. To point one, through NSS he has learnt a lot, be it helping people, or the kindness that has come into him. I am really proud that he has become a good person with a never giving up attitude.

And regarding graduation day, I would request the college management to conduct it if possible because it's once in a lifetime experience for them.

Thank You.

Rekha Singhal

(Parent of Rajil Kumar Singhal, B.Com Honours, 6th Semester)

I am very thankful to Fathers and college management for being so helpful in this pandemic. College has managed the academic activities very carefully.

Though offline interaction between students and teachers has decreased compared to pre-pandemic time, teachers have made sure that all the doubts and problems of their students are solved effectively.

Niva Jha

(Parent of Raj Kamal Jha, Mathematics Honours, 5th Semester)

Loving is a process to build up the nation, thus like a knowledge of torch power which enhances to characterize the young generation in a proper way.

Sujan Kanti Mazoomdar

Soma Mazoomdar

(Parents of Shweta Mazoomdar, English Honours, 6th Semester)

Being a part of Salesian family as a parent, I, Diki Sherpa Thami, value the insights and guidance provided by the entire management and faculty of Salesian College, Siliguri. As your management and teachers are taking every initiative to educate our children via online classes, webinar (often conducted) and online events. Thus, such events not only encourage them to participate but also play an active role for their personal growth rather than lying tediously in their home. In such a critical time of humanity, it has been an immense help towards their luminous career till date. I appreciate your hard work and I'm very thankful towards each and every person who has contributed on or off the screen.

Diki Sherpa Thami

(Parent of Jeshika Thami, History Honours, 5th Semester)

When my daughter Shruti decided to join Salesian College, Siliguri for her graduation (BBA), we were a little apprehensive as she tries her hands on many other co-curricular activities along with her studies. But to our satisfaction, she was able to explore her areas of interest and in fact, learnt quite a lot from it. Thanks to the fantastic team of faculty and students for this.

Archana Tripathi

(Parent of Shruti Tripathi, BBA Honours, 5th Semester)

Living in the Present

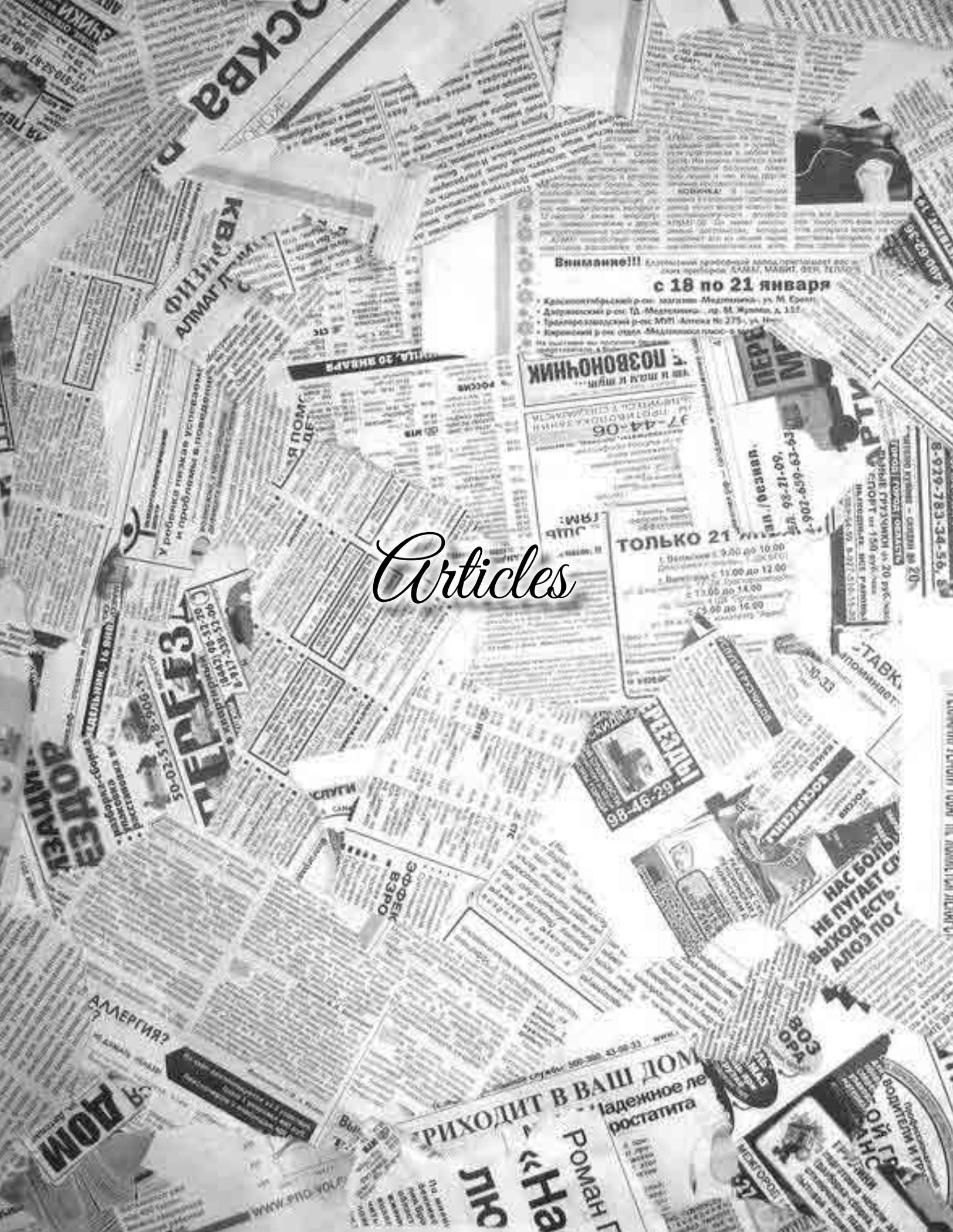
The present pandemic world that we live in today has caused a global pandemonium with people living in uncertainties and despair. It has caused people to be very pessimistic and worrisome about the future. Media bombard our thoughts with foreboding news most of the time. We have around 12,000 - 50,000 thoughts daily and according to research conducted by the National Science Foundation around 80% of those thoughts are negative. And most of those negative thoughts never materialize anyway. So basically what's happening is that we're wasting most of our valuable and limited time worrying and thinking about things that don't bring any positive results. We forget to remind ourselves that the world we live in is actually a beautiful place the Creator has bestowed on humankind. We become so engrossed with the uncertainties of the future that we miss the beautiful "now" moment that's in our hands. However, when we strive to become more mindful and aware of the present realities and take pleasure in every single moment we have with us we'd be more prepared and focused positively to enjoy and to face the challenges life brings our way.

The Lord Jesus Christ put it succinctly, "Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own." (The Holy Bible, Matthew 6:34).

Reuben Pradhan

(Parent of Mahima Pradhan, BBA Honours, 5th Semester)

Articles

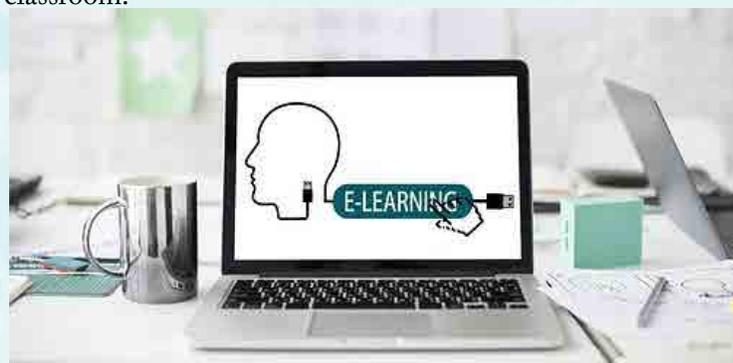


Is Covid-19 Pandemic Changing the Future of Education?



Priyanka Shaw
Assistant Professor
Department of Commerce
Salesian College Siliguri

On 30th December 2019, WHO informed about cases of pneumonia of unknown cause in the Wuhan city of China. Subsequently, it was identified as novel Coronavirus by the Chinese authorities on the 7th of January 2020; thereafter, nothing has been the same for the entire world. As time passed by everything has reshuffled. The concept of work from home has become an integral part of life in almost all professions. The Covid-19 has not merely changed the approach of the life of people but has tremendously influenced their way of living. The incessant usage of sporting masks, continuous carrying of sanitizer has become an indispensable part, and maintaining social distance even from their relatives has become the usual practice of the people. In addition, the education sector has been radically disrupted by the pandemic across the world. Shutting down schools and colleges to contain the impact of the pandemic has left more than 2 billion children out of the classroom.



However, the education sector has been fighting to survive and revive the crises with a different approach and digitalizing the challenges to wash away the threat of the pandemic. According to BBC News, COVID-19 is spreading around the country, with more than 167 million confirmed cases and 3 million deaths across nearly 200 countries. If we talk about India there was as on 25 January 2021, reportedly 10,667,736 confirmed cases of Novel Coronavirus (Covid-19). India and Brazil have seen the highest number of confirmed cases.

Gradually, the State Government began to shut down all the Government bodies/schools/colleges/universities as a preventive measure. Initially, the schools and colleges were closed on 12th March 2020. This was a crucial time for the complete education system across the country. Many schools and colleges took the initiative of taking digital mode of classes to get rid of the abrupt barriers from education. There was an idiosyncratic increase in E-learning having an exaggerated perception for the education. In the field of education, there were many negative impacts of this unprecedented virus but along with that, some positive effects were also observed.

As per the analysis, online learning has enhanced the retention of information distinctively, additionally, it takes less time. It has encouraged many students to be motivated and deal with this epidemic that induces anxiety buoyantly. As per UNESCO, its prime priority is education, which is why several schools and colleges have taken the challenges of implementing online learning module and E-school as a way to ensure that education never comes to halt. In Asian countries, the University Grants Commission (UGC) has taken several steps as precautionary measures because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Considering the safety of the students, the University Grant Commission (UGC) requested that

Higher Education Institutions may keep the online examination and also avoid physical gathering. Most of the Central and State boards either deferred their exams or cancelled them because of the sudden hike in the variety of COVID-19 cases. Excluding this, teaching throughout the pandemic has been a new challenge for all the educators, getting ready with an influence purpose PowerPoint presentation or creating videos, using different applications. Along with these, different types of strategies are being used to form online classes more attention-grabbing for the learners. But still there is a gap. Be it from nursery-kids, or to the age of college-going students, how far is this online education going to assist them to create their long-term future. This is a prominent question as of now. A radical modification has been required in the teaching-learning process as this virus would possibly stay here for a longer duration.

As an educator, I can feel the stumbling block in education because of the abrupt shift from classroom learning to E-learning across the world. Students of remote areas who cannot access the internet because of the lack of technological progress, a significant question arises: what about their future? Several places don't have regular supply of electricity and because of this somewhere they are lagging behind. Despite bearing such an enormous amount of challenges of the web teaching-learning process, schools and colleges are offering Outcome-Based Learning for the students which will enhance their analytical and decision-making power. It has been one and a half-year that people are continuously trying to fight with coronavirus. All of us are now, no doubt, tired of facing the dingy situation of the second wave of COVID-19 pandemic prevailing all over the country. The provocation of online learning has additionally been increased. Curtailment of reliable internet access or due to a shortage of steady electricity supply several learners are still deprived and struggling to participate in the digital teaching-learning means. Many schools and colleges are striving to reach their students by any medium. Considering critical thinking is one of the vital elements to frame a stable and bright way forward for the students, schools and colleges have modified their traditional education method of teaching to skillful learning by way of enhancing their educational strategy.

Gradually students are also enduring it because of the “new normal”, that is, online education. But still, the gap exists between those who can use advanced technology with stable internet access “the privileged ones” and those who do not, on the other hand, the “unprivileged ones”.

So, the question arises is online learning as effective as face-to-face learning? For all it has been observed that the students' readiness to study is growing day by day because they know this crush is going to remain for a prolonged duration. But how to refill this gap between the privileged one's and the unprivileged one's?

Nevertheless, the effectiveness of such a kind of education may be evident as the year will pass. While so much remains uncertain and unpredictable about what the future holds, mostly, the expectation largely depends on how the education institutions are going to deal with it.

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Criticality and Professionalism

Shweta Mazoomdar
6th Sem, English Hons



Any form of art, regardless of whatever the message, tries to bring forward an art within itself. Meaning, any form of art is art, without a doubt. Without the critic's involvement an art may not lose its credibility and the inner message it tries to bring forward, but it has a higher chance of getting a proper definition when a critic intervenes.

Through ages, the number of critics have been increasing rapidly. The critic is believed to be a strong form of mediator between the artist and their child, the art. Any form of intervention by any other third party is always considered to be unethical and that of a feeling which defines disgust. However, the sufferer or the person who takes in the treatment meted out by the third party (irrespective of however the treatment might be) is somewhat not in close relation to the child that is, defining art itself which needs to be nourished. Since the work done by the artist needs some outside influence as well to stir up their possibilities.

A wide range of effort and brainstorming is required in the critic's role in bringing out the wide range of professionalism in regard to the artist's work. The prevailing ideas, with different layers of various other ideas too, found with strong profundity in relation to the work of value upfront, is sometimes noticed or unnoticed by the audience which operates largely on the basis of professionalism.

The tactics and strength of professionalism is defined on the basis of how success can be found instilled within a form of art. Art is a sector which calls in for patience in its unconditional form and a wide range of uninvited callousness, which, of course, any

form of art is supposed to hold within itself. In fact, the roots of professionalism are so deeply rooted within any form of living being that one does not feel the significance of diving deep into the waters of evolution bringing forward life and mind changing probabilities. Hereby, bringing forward a form of professionalism, this kills the originality dwelling within a human. The side effects of which take place in terms of unsophisticatedness and unexplained hypocrisy in terms of the critic's view of the art as Satyajit Ray had mentioned about the unsophisticated nature of the audience in terms of understanding real art (Junaid, 2020).

However, truth be told, criticisms currently, are mostly done in terms of plain professionalism in exchange for some luxury and many other materialistic conformities brought forward by the living aesthetics which are high level influencers. The idea of thinking critically and associating it with the form of an art is now largely based on the mere basification in favor of the greater public. Associating criticisms to the needs and variations of the assemblage has always been said to have a lot of added dignity in terms of defining the worth of the art and the artist afterwards. It is at this plane that criticality and professionalism meet and seem to exchange a wide array of varied nuances which, in the long run, are beneficial to the critics by and large factor.

The wind blowing through the leaves do so in the same form, yet are interpreted highly on the basis of the credibility and honesty of the person designed to define the criticality of it. The criticality, therefore, of the criticism in a text lies ardently not only in the wind blowing through

it but also calculative notes of the background, the situations which led to the particular description and arousing feelings associated the background. Not only, the background should be taken into account in regards to the artist's work but also a small percentage of association with the autobiographical quality of the work presented through the finery of the art is needed.

Professionalism done on the basis of just adding in a factor which invites further atrociousness to the criticality of the art not only seems to put the work in crisis but also the results associated with it. Therefore, the credibility of the person associated with decoding the critical appreciation in relation to the text is an important task with professional roots, but an addition to the soulfulness while bringing forward an interpretation is a much-needed outlet /inlet in terms of bringing a taste of authenticity in the artist's work.

Thus, the depth of professionalism engraved in the minds of every critic may differ but will always be welcomed generously by the upcoming generations. The works which will help generations to evolve out of the dark ages of mysteriousness like a seed which gradually breaks open from the shackles of limitedness and opens up shoots of knowledge attained by criticisms or keeps on expanding on the basis of every vein present in a leaf with each ounce of dedication put forward by the observant's side of story as the leaf falls. Thus, a perfect balance should be kept in observing the importance of criticality of the criticism of art and of creativity and professionalism in it.

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Minimalism in the Time of Corona



Ashish Tamang

6th Sem, B.Com. Hons

If you are one of those people who spends their time on the internet mindlessly, you must know what minimalism is or at least have come across this term.

One can say minimalism is a tool to create great output with limited input. It means to find more in less. If you search it up on the internet you will most likely be bombarded with images of urban homes that look pristine white and empty. Homes that almost look terrifying for a person viewing it for the first time in their life. Thanks to the misinformation via social media people now have a wrong idea of it. Its visual effect overpowers its technical strength. They think of it as minimalism when it is more like minimalism. There is much more to it apart from the aesthetic value.

Never did I think I would get into this cult. But during the lockdown when I was mostly at home surrounded by all the materialistic noise, I felt a need. A need for change. No, I did not break my bank account and turn my house into something like what you view in online pictures. Rather I went for a more realistic approach. As Marie Kondo, a Japanese organizing consultant, author, and TV show host believes, I got rid of things that do not spark joy.

Just like any YouTube video that tries to teach you on how to be a minimalist, I started my journey with my wardrobe and after around three days of meticulous judgment I ended up collecting a pile of clothes that constituted nearly 40% of my clothing and discarded them because they were either too small or had become too outdated. Being amazed by it, I shifted my focus towards other things like my stationery and ended up collecting a ton of unusable

pens, colours, greeting cards since 2011 and so much more. Not to forget the 4 kilograms of used notebooks and old textbooks that were collected since class 7. I finally sold them and made a handsome amount of money as well.

Regarding my digital life, I went on my phone and computer and got rid of the applications, photos, and videos that had already served their purpose. I became more mindful of the time I spent with my gadgets.

To end with, I learnt that minimalism can be performed not only on lifeless objects but also on real-life humans. In simple terms, I got rid of people who did not add much value to my life. Meaning I reduced my interaction with them and reconciled with the ones that I had previously broken off terms with temporarily only to realize later that they were the most important people.

Even after reading up to this, if you're wondering whether or not should you adopt this practice, I would suggest "go for it." In 2021, we have come too far. We have acquired resources, information and people that are more than enough. I reckon that it is high time we cut down the excess and focus on the necessary. While I cannot guarantee that whatever I have incorporated in my life will work out for you exactly like mine, yet I know that it will help you to at least achieve a clarity of thought.



Invasion: A Different Perspective



Surabhi Pakbrin

4th Sem, English Honours

“One can resist the invasion of an army but one cannot resist the invasion of ideas.”

- Victor Hugo

Invasion, also known as raid, has been a part of the world since forever. The accuracy of the history of the first invasion of the world is highly doubtful but that does not change the fact that the history was full of invasions. From great military invasions of history to invading privacy, body and mind, the idea of invasion becomes very subjective. Invasion Literature (1871-1914 approx) set its foot in the world of literature through the works of George Tomkyns Chesney’s “The Battle Of Dorking: Reminiscence of a Volunteer” (1871) which is a reaction to Franco-Prussian War (1870-1871). Since then, a number of invasion literature can be found. It is a popular genre and is still relevant as it deals with the fears, facts, outcomes and ideas of invasion. Invasion literature does not remain confined to books but has also become an important category of pop culture. Numerous movies, songs and series on invasions have captured a great deal of audiences.

World has resisted the invasions of great armies but as rightly said the invasion of ideas is irresistible. The ongoing global pandemic has infiltrated the minds of humanity with an absurd idea of invasion. Besides the far reaching effects on the lives of the people, the pandemic has also made a huge economic impact. The hunger for both food and money has made such a drastic impact on the mind that we are, now, slowly turning into Parasite(s) and Nightcrawler(s).

Movies play a major role in public entertainment, but the message that’s hidden within the movies often goes unnoticed. The Oscar winning movie released in 2019, *Parasite* by Bong Joon Ho and *Nightcrawler* (2014) by Dan Gilroy are two such movies which without any central theme of invasion brings out the idea of the greatest invasion



on human minds that the world is facing right now.

Friedrich Schiller has rightly said that, “The rich become richer and poor become poorer...” (Friedrich Schiller et al., 1877). Although the pandemic has made a huge economic impact, the accuracy of this quote has not changed. What has been said is being seen. The poorer sections of the society have to live a parasitic life where the host is the rich just like in the movie *Parasite*. The movie draws a close contrast between the rich and the poor class of the society. It revolves around the story of the Kim family who serves as the epitome of poverty. When their son gets a job as a tutor in the house of a rich Park family the tables turn for the Kim family. Although the son is not sufficiently qualified, he manages to get the job through a friend and his own trickery. One by one the entire Kim family manages to get a job in the Park household, thereby creating a huge parasitic web. Moreover, the hunger for basic necessities of life leads them to giving up their identity. In a world full of identity crisis, the struggle to keep one’s identity intact is real. However, in today’s world, man is ready to give up his identity as long as he has money. It is ironically portrayed that one of the supreme species of homo sapiens is living a life of parasites. The life of every character in the movie is intertwined in such a way that if one falls the entire web will get destroyed. The lives of the parasites are

so much dependent upon their host that they forget the meaning of hard work. An important remark made by Ki-taek, the parasite dad, explains the life of a parasite to a great extent. He says,

“With no plan, nothing can go wrong and if something spins out of control, it doesn’t matter. Whether you kill someone or betray your own country.” (Bong, 2019)

Here, the idea of the “survival of the fittest” has also been brought forward when the old maid is replaced by a new one, who is an unidentified parasite.

The movie starts in the Kim household which screams of poverty and ends in the same place. It is easy for rich people to gain more riches and equally hard for the poor ones to rise above their level. Although the parasites of the movies had all the intellect, yet, they couldn’t change their fortunes as they were always dependent upon the host.

However, in hard times like this, the rich people are becoming richer. Their greed for money is making them Nightcrawler(s). A nightcrawler is an earthworm which is usually used as bait for fish and it is also used to refer to a person who is socially active at night. The movie *Nightcrawler* portrays the life of a thief Lou Bloom who takes up the job of a reporter and uses underhanded means to cover news stories. Similarly the richer section of our society is working on the darker side (black money) to make money. Just like Lou Bloom these rich people are using dirty ways to get richer. Coincidentally, both Lou Bloom and the rich are being successful in their operation. If the poor are the parasites then the rich are the earthworms that lay traps in the society. Lou Bloom lives by one motto:

“My motto is if you want to win the lottery you’ve got to make money to get a ticket.” (Gilroy, 2014)

This quote may be inspirational in a way but on the other side it reveals the greed for money. It suggests that if you want to make money, you need money. This desire to make money and the need for money are the main reasons for the rise in black markets around the world.

The character of Lou Bloom is someone who can go to the extremities of anything as long as he benefits from it. The ending scene is particularly remarkable because ironically the nightcrawler Lou Bloom uses his own assistant Rick to capture a news story. Similarly in the cooperative world our nightcrawlers (the rich) are using each other as baits to rise in hierarchy.

Unlike the parasites these nightcrawlers do not have an interconnected web. They do live within a web but the web is like the web of spiders where they catch prey and not like the web of parasites where they are living as sycophants. Many times these nightcrawlers use the sycophants as their bait.

Money has always been an integral part of this materialistic world and the hunger for money has always existed. However, this ongoing pandemic has made people much more money centric. It is not just the world that has been inflicted by a virus but a virus has also entered the human minds, which is increasing the need for money. The virus that has invaded the human mind is more dangerous than a nuclear war. Invasion of ideas is irresistible. If the situation continues to be the same, the world will be full of parasites and nightcrawlers in the shape of homo sapiens

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Covid-19: The Much Neglected Brighter Side



Siddhanth Sharma
4th Sem, B.Com. Honours

I've seen my dad wake up with the sun and work until midnight in order to rake in more and more money, to be ahead in the game, neglecting all social norms, family gatherings and even personal health. However, with the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, I have seen a massive change in my dad's mindset; on a greater scale, the mindset of the society as a whole. Now he wakes up early, not to run to his office, but to meditate and perform yoga. Now he prefers spending his 'work-loaded evening time' with us, helping mom cook dinner, teaching us how to fly a kite and narrating his 'heroic childhood'.

The impulse of accumulating more and more money dates back as early as 33 CE, when Judas accepted to sell Jesus' life in exchange for 30 silver coins. Until Covid-19 happened, people continued this same trait of trading their mental or physical health, their peace of mind, their joy and happiness and even family-time solely for money and other worldly pleasures which, very ironically, they didn't even have enough time to cherish. However, it didn't take much time after the lockdown was imposed; the society started understanding the real meaning of life from

a different perspective. Families who barely knew each other are now seen having dinners together, participating willingly in the daily chores of their household, which was formerly, always considered as the concern of the mother and her maids.

Young ones who used to feel aggravated by the thought of even entering the kitchen are now seen sharing recipes on social media. The elders who always seemed concerned with procuring wealth for their family are now seen spending quality-time with their loved ones, thus fulfilling their moral duties and responsibilities towards those whom they call "family." It is said that we are where we are supposed to be at this very moment. Every experience is a part of God's divine plan.

In the words of Pema Chodron: "No one knows yet how the pandemic will come to an end. But when it does, we must not forget the manners and etiquette that we picked up during the pandemic like spending quality time with our near-and-dear ones and pursuing our passion and practicing our hobbies; keeping in mind that our personal health and hygiene is our priority and making money is secondary."

Rise Up



Sidhant Pradhan
4th Sem, BCA Honours

We, human beings, have made many amazing technologies and have been a part of outstanding achievements over the course of time, but even with all these feats we aren't perfect. We still have many flaws in us, in our governmental and educational systems and in our hearts and ideas. Around the world, there are secret wars being fought over stupid reasons, millions of lives being lost due to poverty, children committing suicide due to depression and we are yet to prevent such things from happening.

We are in the 21st century - we just entered a new decade and this start hasn't been much good to us. Australia was on fire, Kobe Bryant and his daughter, alongside 7 other beautiful souls perished in a horrible helicopter crash, a global pandemic has occurred due to the Coronavirus, the stock markets have crashed, while we are all stuck and have been quarantined at home. The first five months were really bad. Gosh! Who knows what might happen next?!

But in between all this, people still have wrong ideas to share. In December, 2019, there was the outbreak of the virus in China, as it spread rapidly and in a few months' time the entire world was shut down, while some people had the conception to blame Asian ethnic groups - they saw in them the reason for the spread of the disease regardless of where they were situated. Hence, "racism" started making its way back into the headlines. Just because one sees an Asian doesn't mean that he or she has the virus as we see that the entire nation of China has been

suffering too: they know how everyone is feeling at this point. Recently, it was the racism against Asians, and much before that (post 9/11), a lot of hate had been directed against Muslims and Middle Eastern ethnicities.

Apart from Muslims, other groups that have been victims of racism, for a much longer time are the black and African-American communities; having an atrocious history of slavery undertaken majorly by the colonialists, they weren't even given the rights that humans are born with, even in modern times. The atrocities and slavery went on for ages, as they faced day-to-day racism from the dominant groups, but even as the times changed some people never changed their opinions on the black community. We see a large number of cases wherein the black people are getting killed for absolutely no reason in America. Trayvon Martin, George Floyd, Sandra Bland, Ahmaud Arbery and so many more lost their lives because the general mentality still exists that anyone who is black must be a criminal. Everyone walking on this planet has a purpose and their lives matter - it's so simple to understand and yet so many just can't accept it.

It isn't just in America that racism happens. India is another country where there are things worse than racism: A young boy gave up his life when he couldn't handle the pressure of being falsely accused by a girl, while many others trolled him for it on Instagram. There have also been many cases of using false evidence/accusations or taking unfair advantage of being

a victimized woman to gain public sympathy. We use social media as a platform to voice our thoughts and keep up with the daily lives of our friends and family but there are still people who misuse it.

In a web series on Amazon Prime Video, titled Paatal Lok, a derogatory remark against the Nepalese has hurt and angered the entire Nepali community. This dialogue alone was enough to show that Nepalese are still subjected to racism as people in India use Nepalese characters in movies as gatekeepers or receptionists or spa workers, and now even in such kind of scenes,

which might leave a permanent impression on the viewers that the Nepalese are still a minority in many fields, eventually hiding the real beauty of this community. The voices of people who are affected and seek to destroy such racism are going around the world but there will always be people who will try to silence this voice. In the end all they need to realize is the fact that no matter what color, religion or race we belong to, we were all born as a 'human being'. So why have racism? Why can't we all just live together in peace and learn that every life on this planet matters?



Salesian's Step into Enactus: World of Social Entrepreneurship



Kshitiz Mittal and Diksha Jain
4th Sem, B.Com. Honours

In the minds of the students, difference grew, which eventually took shape in the form of 'Cassia Fistula' or Enactus Salesian College, Siliguri.

It is an arm dedicated to inspire students to improve the world through entrepreneurship. It is guided and supported by educators and business leaders. It aims to make students capable of taking an entrepreneurial approach by inspiring people to be a part of their success.

It aims to be an integral part of the initiative taken up by Enactus India to perform activities which alleviate problems such as environmental degradation, poverty and illiteracy. It has already begun its first initiative under Project Prarambh aiming to protect Mother Earth from the toxic plastic spreading its various forms of manipulations on the pretext of doing good. Through the usage of clay cups in Siliguri, it hopes to eliminate the existence of plastic cups. The initiative, taken up by Enactus Siliguri is one of the many that are to come in the near future.



Official logo of Enactus Salesian College
Siliguri Campus



Official Logo of Project Prarambh



Some glimpses from the field work of Project Prarambh.

Zwischen Immer und Nie



Saloni Agarwal
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There's something terribly beautiful about winter evening in this town. You'd think that it couldn't possibly be any different from any of those innumerable twilights that poets have composed sonnets about and writers have dedicated volumes to and singers have bled the harmony of their hearts for, but you would be very wrong. There is just something about winters' evenings here. There are harmony and melancholy and joy that your heart want to explode from the weight of the emotions that awaken in you.



It all begins unremarkably. A day has gone by, and you have survived it. No angels breaking forth in chorus from the heavens. No it's just another day and you've almost made it to the end and you're tired and hungry and thinking that tomorrow's another day and you will have to go through the motions again when all you want to do is sleep and sleep more because oh god you're so, so very tired.

And then, it happens...



Alright, maybe it's not quite that sudden. Maybe, first you merely notice that the sky isn't quite as blue as it was a second ago. You look at it for a moment. Pretty, then you walk on - head down, shoulders in. then something makes you look up again, and then... and then you believe in magic again. Because somehow, in the few beats between one step and the next, someone has stolen the sky. That same someone has

Picture courtesy Awaneesh Baibhav

also replaced it with a giant canvas, and the angels have run riot with their paints.

You can hardly process the number of colours you see above you now. The sun is brilliant gold no, cherry yellow, no, blazing orange. And the sky? Oh, the sky! There are hues there, to do Monet proud. It's blue and it's purple and it's pink and vermillion and lilac and magenta and it's beautiful. It's so very beautiful.

And then, it's black.

The darkness deserves an ode of its own. It envelops everything so indiscriminately, so kindly, until all becomes one in that most beautiful of shades. Until there is nothing but black.

Maybe it's the transience of the moment that gets to you: the knowledge that every time the sky blushes pink, it will soon be overtaken by

the inky blackness of night time. Maybe that's when you realize that perhaps that this is what life is meant for - revealing in the display of wonders that the earth loves to show to all the eyes that seek to see. For letting her silken spirit seek into your soul and becoming one with her; one with yourself. For feeling your broken parts rejoin piece by piece until you're like the lilac sky you love- beautiful, incomplete, infinite. Perfect. Maybe, just maybe, life is for living.

Believe me when I say this- once you've seen the birth, death and regeneration of a winter evening in this small town, you'll never leave this place, oh you might move on from here, there are more places to go, more things to see. But a part of you will always stay here. That part of you that truly lived. Suspended in time. Time space. Zwischen Immer und Nie. Zwischen Immer und Nie- Between always and never.



Picture courtesy Awaneesh Baibhav

Men Do Not Cry!



Ishika Gupta
6th Sem, B.Com. Honours

We have all grown up listening and adapting things that our ancestors have taught us unaware of the fact that what they considered normal was not normal.

Eight years ago, when my grandfather passed away, I saw all the women crying for the loss along with my little brother who loved him a lot. On the other side, I saw my father and uncles standing still. Not shedding even a drop of tear. In the meantime I heard someone whispering to my little brother that he should learn from his father, “Ladke rotey nahi hai.” Men don’t cry because women have monopoly over their tears and men are expected to be strong. I thought my father must have been taught the same thing when he was young.



control their emotions. They are expected to be strong and dominant. Men have always been taught to not be expressive and deal with their emotions.

“We must begin to stray away from this regressive idea of ‘masculinity’ and move towards redefining the term to promote the betterment of emotional and physical health.... Due to the stigma that surrounds ‘emotional men’, people are reluctant to open up about their struggles.... It is important for men to be given access to express” (Poddar, 2019).

“In order to create a more equal and happier society, it is imperative that we discuss how men are discouraged from crying and feeling.... Toxic masculinity affects people from across the spectrum and hence, we should encourage men to come forth with their problems and empathise with the same.” (Majumdar, 2018).



“This structure of society that teaches men to “man up!” because men who are emotionally expressive, are ‘weak’, or are perceived as ‘gay’ is extremely toxic” (Poddar, 2019). For a very long time, men have been taught to

Let us teach the upcoming generation to treat men as human beings rather than treating them differently because of their gender. Let us teach the younger generation of men and women to cry

and be strong whenever they want to for the society is powerless in terms of controlling emotions. Crying as a form of expression should not be considered weak, rather it should be considered normal.

It is important to break such stereotypes so that no other person whispers “men don’t cry” rather, support a man crying or breaking down because it is human nature.

MAN = WOMAN = HUMAN

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Student's Life Amidst Pandemic: “A Student's New Normal”



Jasmine Pradhan

6th Sem, Political Science Honours

“A pandemic is an outbreak of global proportions. It happens when infection due to bacterium or virus becomes capable of spreading widely and rapidly.” (Felman, 2020)

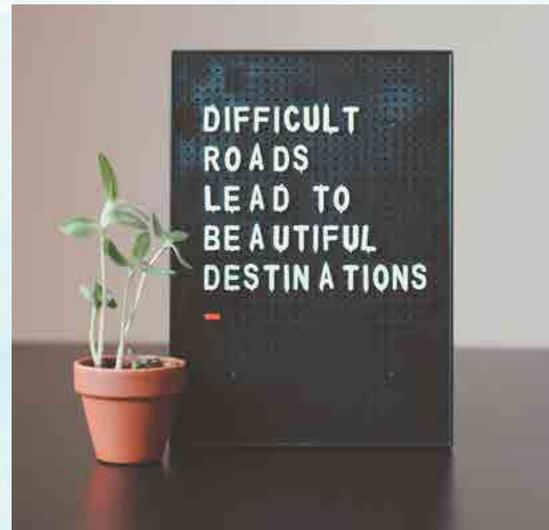
In this article, we will discuss the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic on the life of the students, how it affects students mentally and certain future concerns.

Life as a student does not only need the full capacity of an individual to perform well, learn a lot and pass the examinations, but a student must also possess a sense of responsibility and in order for us to do that it needs hard work and dedication - sleepless nights of doing assignments, waking up early morning to attend classes, going home fairly late due to several academic activities. On the other hand, if we look at the bright side, we get to expand our knowledge and skills while doing them. But on March 24th of 2020, everything changed as a nationwide lockdown was imposed. Since then the outbreak of COVID-19 has only worsened and the whole world is at risk.

Time flew by quite fast and our world has turned completely upside down, what was once normal became abnormal and what was not normal became our normal and now we call it the ‘new normal’.

Thinking about all the challenges we experienced during the pandemic, it has greatly affected every individual and I, being a student myself, empathize with my fellow students - many could not afford to continue their education as the pandemic affected their family's source of income rendering them unable to enrol for their courses; or for other reasons like lack of teachers, access to internet and loss of interest on the part of the students. These factors are holding educational institutions and students back from achieving the benefit of equality and equity in education that all students deserve. Although some

students have continued their education through online classes and modules, it has increased the feeling of isolation not only



from the social distancing but also due to the lack of face-to-face interaction. This has resulted in mental health problems like anxiety, depression and health concerns related to increased screen-time from using gadgets that causes fatigue, headache, lack of motivation and procrastination which ultimately leads to unproductivity, hopelessness and sometimes, unfortunately, to incidents like suicide. As Roy T. Bennett says, “Nobody is exempted from the trials of life but everyone can always find something positive in everything even in the worst of times” (T. Bennett, 2016). The quote reminds us that we should take difficult times in our lives as a test and an opportunity to better and strengthen ourselves, preparing for greater things in future, because if we let adversities in life

beat us to our knees without giving a fight then it is guaranteed to keep us there permanently, if we let them.

During these difficult times of the pandemic we certainly need resilience and, at the same time, flexibility to cope with the problems and changes. We should not let bad things or uncontrollable happenings get the better of us. I would specifically like to encourage my fellow students who feel hopeless and think little of themselves especially because of the 'new normal' in education through lines from the poem *Desiderata* by Max Erhmann:

“Avoid loud and aggressive persons; they are vexatious to the spirit. If you compare yourself with others, you may become vain or bitter, for there will always be greater and lesser persons than yourself.

Enjoy your achievements as well as your plans. Keep interested in your own career, however humble; it is a real possession in the changing fortunes of time.

Exercise caution in your business affairs, for the world is full of trickery. But let this not blind you to what virtue there is; many people strive for high ideals, and everywhere life is full of heroism.

Be yourself. Especially do not feign affection. Neither be cynical about love; for in the face of all aridity and disenchantment, it is as perennial as the grass.

Take kindly the counsel of the years, gracefully surrendering the things of youth.

Nurture strength of spirit to shield you in sudden misfortune. But do not distress yourself with dark imaginings. Many fears are born of fatigue and loneliness.

Beyond a wholesome discipline, be gentle with yourself. You are a child of the universe no less than the trees and the stars; you have a right to be here.” (Erhmann, 1927)

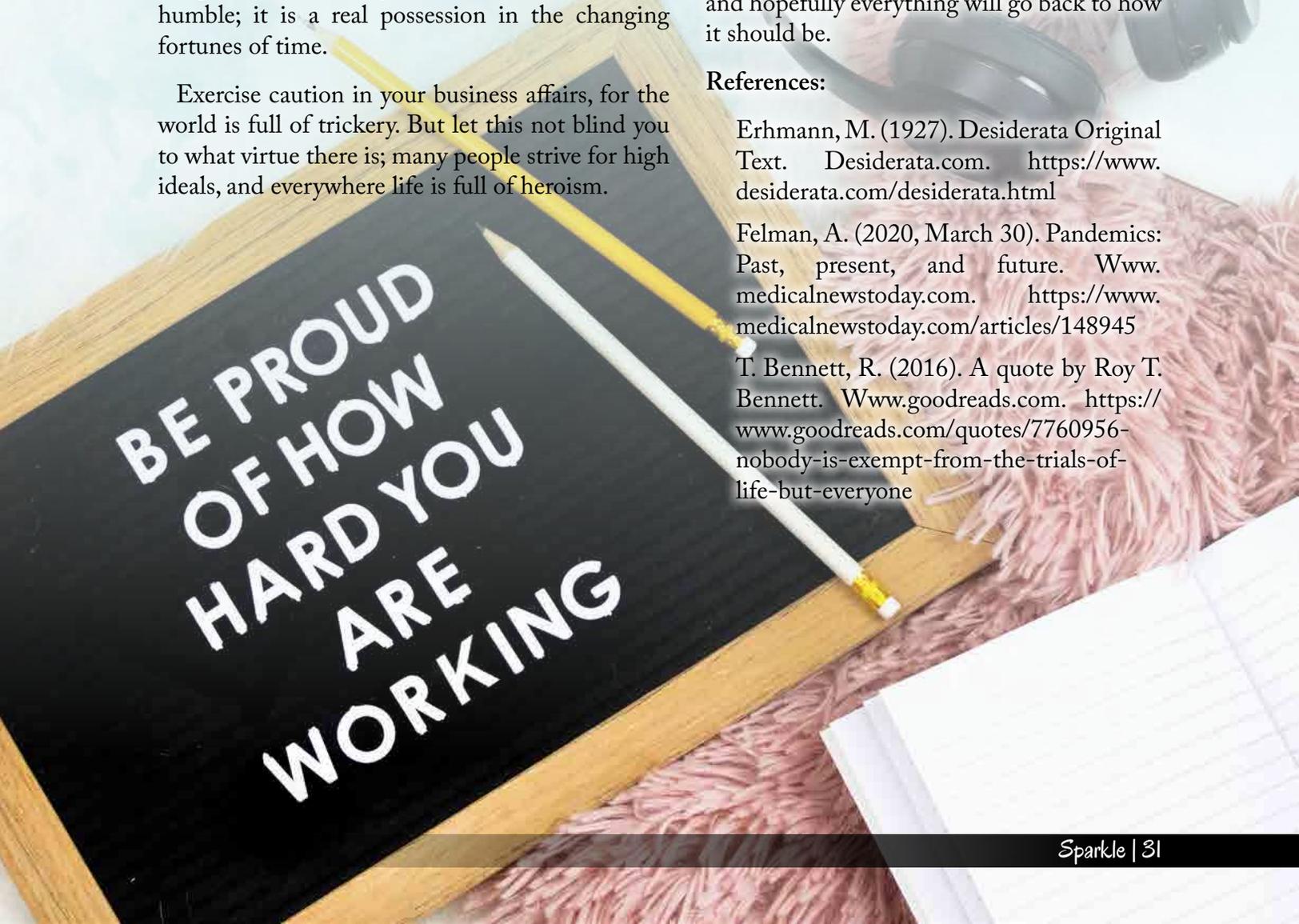
Even in this noisy confusion of life, it is still a beautiful world. Be cheerful and strive to be happy. We will get through this pandemic and hopefully everything will go back to how it should be.

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BE PROUD
OF HOW
HARD YOU
ARE
WORKING

How NSS Changed My Life in Ways That I Could Never Have Imagined



Rajil Kumar Singhal
6th Sem, B.Com. Honours
President, NSS Unit II, SCSC

Corny title yet it's nothing but the truth. Becoming part of a social service organization called National Service Scheme (NSS) really changed my life in ways that I could never have imagined.

First up, what's my organization about?

NSS is a social service organization of students (called volunteers) which takes part in different community service programmes. Being an active member these student volunteers would have the exposure and experience to be the following: (1) an accomplished social leader, (2) an efficient administrator, (3) a person who understands human nature.

I remember the day; I enrolled myself as an NSS volunteer just for enjoyment and for friends. But the first few activities and camp was an eye-opener and after that I was hooked with the meaning and motto of NSS becoming clearer with every passing day. From that day my involvement with NSS increased and realized the amount of work we could do to help others. There is an inexplicable 'joy' in giving specially one's time and support that was far greater than the pleasure of receiving. NSS's motto "NOT TO ME BUT YOU" did a great job to develop my own personality through community service and teach me discipline, team work, hard work and punctuality.

At the start of 2020, I became NSS's new president. I was scared and insecure as I felt that I wouldn't be able to do a good job but everyone reassured me that I could do it. So,

I swallowed my fear and decided to take the bull by the horns and do my absolute best in the role. Ever since then, I have become more proactive in the organization and I've proposed and initiated new ideas. NSS had successfully done 25 activities and events in 2020-21 and I played my part in making all these possible, but of course with the help of my team.

The programme aims to inculcate social welfare in students, and to provide service to society without biases. NSS volunteers work to ensure that everyone who is needy gets help to enhance their standard of living and lead a life of dignity. In doing so, volunteers learn from people in villages how to lead a good life despite the scarcity of resources. NSS aims to have relevant events where we want our volunteers to learn something new (like a new skill). We not only want to help widen their social networks but to also increase their social awareness. Our events last year ranged from tree planting to a cultural show and games. At these events I always saw volunteers genuinely smiling and happily interacting with each other. They seemed to really enjoy the service. Many students also let me know how much they appreciated NSS and are proud to be a part of it.

"I was humbled to hear that we had somehow positively impacted these lives."

As NSS's president I was able to do countless things. I met great people and I learned so much from them through their stories and experiences. I had the massive honour of working with an

amazing team and, I think, together we achieved our core goal.

For the past few months I've gained lifelong friends, awesome experiences and irreplaceable life lessons. Doors that I never thought existed opened up for me and I've become braver and more willing to take up new challenges. The most important thing that you should take away from this is: when life gives you lemons, make lemonade and sallons of it! Simply take up the challenge, no matter how daunting it

looks. Passionately do your best and you will soon reap the rewards of your hard work. That's what I did and I can say that it has changed my life in ways that I could never have imagined.

For my peers who are still in college, or about to start college, I really encourage taking part in student organizations as it gives you valuable, real-life experiences of running something that you care about. Not only that, the skills you cultivate over time will translate well into your professional and personal life.



Seeing Like A Sublime Object of Apprehension



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The horrific outbreak of Covid-19 and the repressive instances during subsequent lockdown in India added to the monotony of everydayness. Everyone agrees that this period is the defining health crisis of our time and the greatest challenge we faced since World War 2. I completely disagree with various ideological positions who argue that now we are in the same boat as this unprecedented virus affects everyone. I say, at least not for the Indians. The artefactual and uneven demography in our society and the accentuated gap between the differential groups embody complex dimensions. So, the actual remark needs to be, 'We are all in the same ocean. Some of us have luxury yachts, some have boats, many are floating on life-savers, while most are drowning. This false equivalence is justified moreover to subtly veil socio-economic disparities and minimise intersectional oppression by the Savarnas, as they are mildly affected not enough to threaten their survival in this wide spread catastrophe.

Moreover, the culpability regarding the exacerbating spread of the Covid 19 virus and its diversification also perpetuated and further proliferated the already existing apprehensions about "Self" and "Others" in the socio-political and/or psycho-social spatio. Example could be given of the pre-conceived anxiety attributed to North-Easterns, immigrants, street vendors and others who are still tangled in a tension between their citizenship rights and self-determinism. Hegel argued that if self-consciousness demands recognition by another self-conscious person, then the other person has to have the

authority to bestow that recognition. The very idea, for me, supplements the idea of State-citizen relationship and the former's requisite legitimacy from the latter. Eventually in Hegel's system, one becomes the master with the other becoming slave in which the former refuses recognition from the latter, setting up a contradiction.

When these types of representations are in its fall, attempts are executed to accentuate its basic framework by adding more complex and complicated notions/apprehensions. These apprehensions are preceded by the universal reference of psychiatry and as Benedict Anderson writes "imagined communities". What do I mean by 'Sublime Object'? Perspectives attributed to the subjugated and immigrants open up the complex organisation of the social hierarchies, with subtle representation of "Self" and "Others" to normalize our idea of psychic self. However, many of the categories and knowledge that we assume to have their ontological foundation in the current socio-political spatio, were however apparent by the State projects of Standardization, systematization and legibility [Pre-modern and/or Colonial State]. Be it standardization of language, creation of categories, representation of particular culture and tradition, uniformity in the means of measurement, cadastral mappings, permanent surnames or traffic regulations. This, I think, is appropriated through State's imaginations that are created initially in the private spatio to justify its future projects taking into account various categories of apprehensions. Moreover, to be that 'shaded' object currently

is to idealize and romanticize pre-pandemic spatio and politics, regardless of its ineligibility and bigotry. This concept of representation appropriates various strategies we use to portray ourselves to others and vice-versa. I like to bring here the concept of the “Looking-glass self” which states that part of how we see ourselves comes from our perception of how others see us. So, that very representation is accentuated heavily by the idea of social comparison which is succumbed even more through modern adjustments and print media. Primarily, it occurs on dimensions on which there are no objectives and correct accountabilities. This current episode of quarantine within/ from quarantine oddly labels the imagined “Others” as bodies of pathological carriers. These types of prejudices with the conflation of that very idiosyncratic State stupendously attributed as ‘Nail on the Coffin’.

Many scholars even observed and analysed these ideologies that underpins the hitherto status quo. Ideology here can be a veil like Marx’s “false consciousness” that works as a structure to maintain the status quo or like that of Foucault’s “creation of docile bodies” which is more complex and subtle in this dimension. The following story from one of Slavoj Žižek’s celebrated works will give a clue; - A friend of a quantum physician visited his house. He noticed at the entrance a horse-shoe hanging. He asked “Do you believe in these types of obscure superstitions being a scientist?” The scientist replied, “No! I don’t believe in it. But I was told precisely that it works, even if you don’t believe in it.” This is the kind of ideology we are facing today. Even if we implicitly disagree, we are always grabbed by its invisible hands. This objectification (sublime object) is accelerated universally by the conflated post-modern spectre of capitalist-nationalism. What is perpetuated beneath the mask is a point of controversy.

The lesson we could draw from this current social context is that, our ideas and peculiarities are always appropriated by the implicit social cognition which often obstructs the actual complexity.

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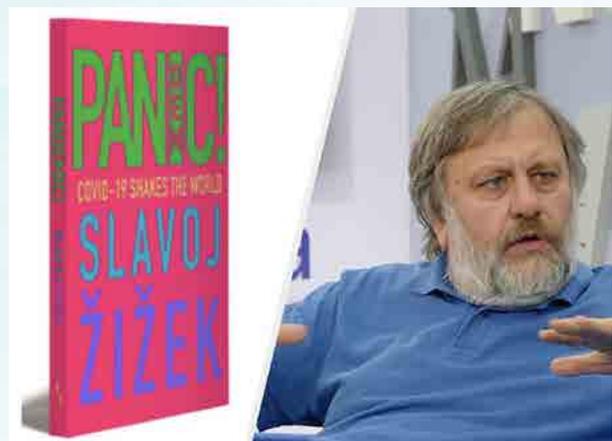
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The Unheard Voices of Plastic



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Hi, I am plastic. Yes, you heard it right. Plastics that you see lying down on the streets, drains, surroundings, riversides drowning inside the deep ocean among the heaps of other disposables. Plastic is found in the cover of your favorite chocolates, drinks and above all in your daily life. I am the most versatile material in the modern world. Meaning you can mould me into pretty much anything from automobiles to washing bowls, utensils to toilet seats and toothbrushes.

Sometimes I boast about being familiar with you and being available for you for your convenience. But today I have something to tell you all. Initially, I felt quite happy being created by you according to your desires and needs. I thought that I could



live up to my usage abilities and I felt quite happy about it. Since then, you moulded me into different forms, colors and designs that could satisfy your needs. Everything was good and you were satisfied with it. You deserve my respect for giving me birth into this world and baptizing me by the name of “plastic”. Since then, my usage has increased exceedingly. I believe by now, everyone knows my name, be it a small kid or an old man. Thank you for the publicity.

There came a moment when I was thrown outside, among the heaps of rubbish. I heard someone sobbing beneath me and I looked. It was the Earth, I found it in a deep pain, suffocating and weeping. It whispered, “why do you cover my whole body with dirt?” Every part of my body is overcast by you, all my nerves were river, sea and oceans. All tainted and contaminated by you. Why?” it cried out.



So, I am plastic, bow down thee! You shatter my permanence, destroy me. Do whatever you want to but please don't regenerate me. I regret being created to satisfy your hunger of selfish interests. Earth is crying and you hear nothing. Mother

Nature is crying and you do nothing. The climate is changing and you only notice but you won't take any preventive measures. The glaciers are melting and you are busy fulfilling your temporary desires. Earth is dying. These reasons make me want to burn



myself seeing that I have caused ample destruction to my Mother Earth.

I am helpless, Mother Earth, these selfish egotistical motives of the smart human beings have destroyed you. I am sorry. Never did I intend to hurt you. It is these humans who created me. I regret dear Mother. Neither do I want to bear this sin nor do I want to be produced anymore.

Please stop.
Mother Earth needs you.
Save her.



Mental Health During COVID-19



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“The Corona virus outbreak began in Wuhan, China in December 2019. The SARS-COV-2 infection caused



a respiratory illness called COVID-19” (Giddyngenh, 2020). It has now been reported on every continent. While Israel has become the first country to become “mask free”, some countries have been

devastated by the second wave of this virus. According to the BBC, India is struggling with the second wave, raising more fears about its overwhelmed healthcare system: “Crowds have been formed outside hospitals in major cities which are filled to capacity. A number of people have died while waiting for oxygen.” (BBC News, 2021).

During this pandemic the frontline workers have been working rigorously day and night to serve the nation where their mental health stands as one of the major concerns. Along with our heroes, the people who are facing this hardship go a long way in dealing with their mental issues. Stress, anxiety, insomnia, depression, fear and anger are namely a few symptoms which have been common among people. The prominent reason for the same is the media itself and the supporting factors include time, solidarity, along with the news and rumours floating around. Due to an increased amount of time spent at home, individuals spend much more time than necessary on social media: “Overexposure to information relating to the pandemic can result in increased anxiety and distress.” (Bennett, 2020).



However, there are multiple ways to protect and improve mental health during such times. Practicing a well-maintained routine can increase motivation and improve overall mood and well-being. Another way to improve your mental health is to be occupied. While you are self-isolating, learning a new skill can be a great way to improve your mental well-being and also to boost your self-esteem. Also feeling connected and having the opportunity to discuss any potential worries and positive experiences with others is also essential during the time of crisis.

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Heart of Darkness as a Text That Supports and Critiques the Project of Imperialism



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Joseph Conrad's novella *Heart of Darkness* is explicit with imagery that supports and critiques Imperialism. The journey of Marlow up the river Congo, is full of detailed impressions of the tyranny and torture that was inflicted on the Africans by the British. The use of words like black, nigger, darkness, devil a multiple time gives us the sense of debasing and degrading the natives and elevated the English by addressing them as white, vision, snowy. Africa just served as a backdrop to highlight the 'other' who is dark, exotic and savage in contrast to the superior, intelligent and authentic 'self' of Europe. The inhuman treatment, death and rottenness that runs throughout the novel assist us in understanding Conrad and his views of the Imperial rule in Africa. It was sheer greed, superiority of color and the 'idea' that gave the whites advantage and privilege to invade and empty the East. Conrad surely wanted to critique Imperial rule but in doing so, knowingly or unknowingly, he dehumanizes the native Africans and promotes England.

Joseph Conrad himself, born of Polish parents, was exiled to Northern Russia and came to England. He was a seaman and himself went up the Congo River in 1890. He used the new technique of Modernism, with an adventure on sea to some far Eastern primitive land. The framed narrative of story-telling is full of his impressions. In taking the journey he explores his inner self through the external world.



In *Conrad the Novelist*, Albert J. Guerard called the novella "Conrad's longest journey into self" (Moore 5). Conrad uses his own experiences and observations to turn them around and by bringing out the best of what was happening in his age. He gives us an account of the West and the East. The West, considering themselves as being superior, gave themselves the authority to exploit and rule the East. The English felt that they were the torch bearers that needed to give dark Africa light and civilization. Instead, the opposite happened; they turned Africa into a darker place, as Victorian missionaries and explorers landed there looting, killing and exploiting them. Gene M. Moore writes in his casebook that: "The heart of Conrad's darkness lies not only in Africa or in ancient London, but also in the bosom of the beholder, male or female, black or white" (Moore,7).

Conrad begins with the two oldest rivers, Thames and river Congo. Even the rivers are contrasted in terms of its history. Thames is described in terms of its achievement:

The old river in its broad reach rested unruffled at the decline of the day, after ages of good service done to the race that peopled its banks, spread out in the tranquil dignity of a waterway leading to the uttermost ends of the earth. (*Heart of Darkness*, 12)

The Thames is described in terms of civilization and progress which is tranquil and serves its people. Conrad, says at the beginning of the novella, that the Romans had invaded the British once and they were barbarians. However, "They were men enough to face the darkness" and came out into the light. While the river Congo is described in terms of primordial life which is dark and monotonous and savage:

This one was almost featureless, as if still in the making, with the aspect of monotonous grimness. The edge of a colossal jungle. So dark-green as to be almost black, fringed with white surf, ran straight, like a ruled line, far, far away along a blue sea whose glitter was blurred by a creeping mist. (*Heart of Darkness*, 24)

Conrad's use of color binaries is very common throughout the novella. The play of colors black and white, light and dark. The colonizers have an entire description about them and are even called by their nationality and name. Like the captain of the steamer was a Swede or the Freslevan the Dane who was killed in the bargain or Kurtz the best European official living in the inner station. While the description of the natives was done only in terms of adjectives without a proper name, "A lot of people, mostly black and naked. Moved about like ants." Even the most dehumanizing descriptions are seen where Marlow talks about them without any connection and sympathy:

They were dying slowly - it was very clear. They were not enemies, they were not criminals, they were nothing earthly now - nothing but black shadows of diseases and starvation, lying confusedly in the greenish gloom. Brought from all the recesses of the coast in all the legality of time contracts, lost in the uncongenial surroundings, fed on unfamiliar food, they sickened, became inefficient, and were then allowed to crawl away and rest. These morbid shapes were free as air - and nearly as thin. (*Heart of Darkness*, 29-30)

Chinua Achebe in his essay "*An Image of Africa: Racism in Conrad's Heart of Darkness*" criticizes Conrad heavily for dehumanizing the Africans. In his essay he crudely responded that, "Joseph Conrad was a thoroughgoing racist. That this is simple truth is glossed over in criticism of his work is due to the fact that white racism against Africa is such a normal way of thinking that its manifestation is completely unremarkable." (Achebe 6). Agreeing to Achebe I think that even Conrad was so accustomed to differentiating white and black that

he too unknowingly or knowingly has supported and elevated the Europeans. Achebe even goes on to say that "*Heart of Darkness* projects the image of Africa as "the other world" the antithesis of Europe and therefore of civilization, a place where men's vaunted intelligence and refinement are finally mocked by triumphant bestiality" (Achebe 2). This being true as the Europeans have always shown themselves, to be the center and superior 'self' to the 'other' who is inferior and looked down upon. Europeans being the beacons of light and culture while the rest of the world is barbarous and dark.

If we just quit the racial factor of the novella then we are sure to trace the imperial rule. Also able to analyze to what extent Conrad had gone, to take the risk of criticizing the Europeans. Marlow the narrator acts as a mute spectator who gives us his impressions of the violence and horror that has been invoked in Africa. Marlow witnesses in the outer station the animalistic way the natives were treated to get profit out of the them:

A slight clinking behind me made me turn my head. Six black men advanced in a file, toiling up the path. They walked erect and slow, balancing small baskets full of earth on their heads, and the clink kept time with their footsteps. Black rags were wound around their loins, and the short ends behind wagged to and fro like tails. I could see every rib, the joints of their limbs were like knots in a rope; each had an iron collar on his neck, and all were connected together with a chain whose links swung between them, rhythmically clinking. (*Heart of Darkness*, 27-8)

All this torture was given to the natives only to make them civilized and cultured, but then the natives were not needed to be civilized. They had their own ways of living in the wild. They had different culture and rituals than that of the Europeans. We cannot blame the drum beating in the night or their dance or their black skin color or their nakedness. They are primitive people as Marlow describes them and they know how to live in the wild and dangerous forest of the Amazon. If the Europeans wanted them to be civilized, they would have done so but then they wanted to tame

the natives and loot them of all their resources, in *Heart of Darkness* it was ivory in regards to Kurtz. “Mr. Kurtz was the best agent he had, an exceptional man, of the greatest importance to the Company;” (*Heart of Darkness*, 37). The chief of the inner station, who is the root cause for draining out all the ivory from the inner forest of Africa and sending them back to Europe. Kurtz was part of the Imperial rule, a figure to represent Europe amongst the natives. He was part of a political agenda who was raised only to bring home ivory.

Kurtz was both violent in his treatment towards the natives and at the same time he could not resist the inner primitive life and calling of the wild. He could not resist and gave into his primitive and inner natural instincts as he was hollow and lacked values. He had become a part of the Africans which in return engulfed him and he breathed his last in the inner station. As described by Marlow about the condition of Kurtz when he had finally died:

He looked at least seven feet long. His covering had fallen off, and its body emerged from its pitiful and appalling as from a winding-sheet. I could see the cage of his ribs all astir, the bones of his arms waving. It was as though an animated image of death carved out of old ivory had been shaking its hands with menace at a motionless crowd of men made of dark and glittering bronze. I saw him open his mouth wide - it gave him a weirdly voracious aspect, as though he had wanted to swallow all the air, all the earth, all the men before him. (*Heart of Darkness*, 90)

It was as if Kurtz had swallowed all that came his way, proving him to be the modern man who is hollow within the human body. He only desired power and material gain that drove him to the wilderness. Yet, he had to pay a price for it and could not go unaffected by it. He became a part of the natives and indulged in their rituals and primitive impulses. Yet Kurtz did not tolerate any rebelling natives and killed them by forcing them to get ivory. As a sign of terror in his rule he used the heads of the people he killed and hung them on the post in front of his station. He was a modern Faustus who sold himself to the natives to gain material wealth.

Whereas, Marlow was nothing like Kurtz. He was able to resist and survive and return to Europe. He was drawn by the drums and the noise yet he was able to escape. Marlow was not just a mute spectator; he was in the white man's party too. He did not do anything for the natives but simply gave us details of the tortures on them. The entire journey of Marlow was an enterprise to rescue Kurtz. The fact that the novella had no definite plot, just fragmented pieces, giving us a picture of the havoc that was created in Africa. In another way it is to show that the place is cursed and brought death to Kurtz. The moment Kurtz dies the narrative of the Africans end and Marlow is seen back in England. Conrad also tries to portray the shame Kurtz had brought to the Company by forgetting all his ethics and culture of Europe and to give in to the African way of living.

Another important aspect of colonial rule is the treatment of women. Women were suppressed even in England and twice suppressed in that of the colonized countries. Patriarchal men of England thought that it was fitting to keep women in their



own world and out of theirs. Gene M. Moore says that “Conrad was not only a racist but also a sexist, noting Marlow’s patronizing and dismissive treatment of women” (Moore 12). Conrad portrays the native African lady with sexual bodily connotations who is exotic and ominous. While the Intended is described as, one who is unsexed and beautiful, fair and glorious in her suffering after the death of Kurtz. Here we see the essentialization of the white women. However, on a whole the western concept of women is infantilization. Where women need to be treated as a child, who are not mature enough as men.

The fact that Europeans justified their doing in the Eastern countries is adequate to prove them faulty and capricious. The very reason they did not leave the countries and made colonies all over the native land proved their greed and hunger for power and wealth. Even the fact that Conrad touches the



topic of cannibalism makes it one another reason to educate and enlighten the Africans. Keith Booker asserts that “the characterization of Africans as cannibals make the Europeans loss of life ‘civilizing’ the continent seem worthwhile, while at the same time it justified European rule of Africa by demonstrating the superiority of Europeans to their primitive African counterparts” (Guyen, 83).

The entire novella is presented from the white man’s perspective, without any voice or introduction of any native characters. They are just considered as a black, ominous creatures who are savage. Their surroundings are vengeful with no bountiful vegetation. The only proper characterization is given to Kurtz, who signifies the violence and destruction caused to natives which was cruel and unforgiving. Even Kurtz cries twice “The Horror! The Horror” before he dies. Showing that they had penetrated the pure virgin land and left it barren with no humanity left. The color white is not seen as pure, because the whites have raped the blacks. The white ivory was also not pure or holy, as people were willing to die for it. The pilgrims present were not praying to God, they prayed to the mammoth God of greed, i.e. greed of ivory. Only the stench of death and rotteness were seen left behind

after the trade. John Brannigan in his book *New Historicism and Cultural Materialism* summarizes that the *Heart of Darkness* “enables to locate the novel in the complex system of power relations and cultural representations which form the discourse of colonialism” (Guyen, 86).

Colonial rule was responsible for the death and dehumanization of other countries by thinking them to be inferior and using brute force to rob and murder the natives. Kurtz being one example of the Company’s greed, demonstrating that both the colonizers and the colonized are harmed by this grave endeavor. With the use of color imagery Conrad helps us to understand that weightage is given more to the whites than the blacks. Black is considered savage and untouchable despite white being pure and glorious. However, it is not so, as *Heart of Darkness* successfully prints out that power relation between the colonist and the colonizers. Not forgetting the fact that the natives are inhuman animals, savage black creatures of earth who need redemption.

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Book Review

The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People by Stephen R. Covey



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6th Sem, B. Com. Honours

This book is known to be one of the most inspiring and impactful books ever written. It has transformed the lives of millions of people of all ages and occupations.

In *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*, Covey argues that in order to change our results and situations, we have to first change ourselves. And in order to change ourselves permanently, we have to focus on building empowering habits.

Be Proactive

Proactive people control situations by causing things to happen rather than waiting to respond *after* things happen (*reactive*). A proactive person takes 100% responsibility for their own life. You might be thinking “But I can’t possibly control everything that happens to me. What about natural disasters? Car accidents? Sickneses? What about those?” Yes, you can’t control absolutely everything that happens to you. I get that. But since you can control your thoughts and actions; no matter what happens to you, you can still control how you respond to the situation.

Begin With the End in Mind

Imagine you’re at a funeral, but this one’s different from all the funerals you have ever been to. You’re standing over the casket and you see yourself. *What do you have to say about yourself?* This is one of the most powerful questions you could ask. Are you doing the things in your life, which are aligned with what you want to be able to say?

To begin with the end in mind means to start with a clear understanding of your destination. Once we have clarity about our end goal, we’ll

not only be able to pinpoint what exactly we want but more importantly, we’ll be able to pinpoint what we *don’t* want. That’s when we can confidently say ‘no’ to things that don’t matter.

Put First Things First

Now if you are asked, what are the most important things to you? Most common answers would be either your well being or your relationships – your family, friends, etc. You would never say watching T.V or playing games. But how many of us spend more time watching T.V and playing games, than planning our nutrition and going to



the gym or focusing on your goal. One of the most important steps is to prioritise what is urgent and what is not urgent.

Think Win/Win

If you want something to happen in your favour, you must first ask yourself “how could the other person benefit?.” This question can drastically change the way you approach the other person. If you gain something out of someone, you must always keep in mind what the other person can gain from you in return. This increases the probability of your success. So, always think win/win.

Seek First to Understand, then to Be Understood

Everyone is different. Some of us are more logical while others, more emotional. Hence, to be able to really understand others is a challenge but it's not impossible. We just need to really want to listen. Listen with the intention of just understanding first, not to necessarily reply. Always keep in mind the other person's point of view first before giving advice.

Synergize

Simply defined, synergy is about the creation of “a *whole* that is *greater than* the simple sum of *its parts*” (Wikipedia Contributors, 2019). This is the highest form of win/win situation. In simple ways, five pieces of wood together is stronger than each piece separately. Teamwork is the key to any work done. You can't achieve synergy with everyone, but you should always be looking for opportunities to create synergy.

Sharpen the Saw

Sharpening the saw means to work on those small skills or habits that can eventually help you to achieve your goals faster. We don't tend to do the small efforts because we think it takes too much time off our busy life, yet we have the audacity to ask for success and complain if we don't see the result faster. If you want to cut down a tree faster you should first take some time off and sharpen the saw.

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Book Review

Rich Dad Poor Dad



Ruchi Agarwal

6th Sem, Education Honours

Rich Dad Poor Dad is the best book on finance that I have read so far. The very essence of the book revolves around: “Don’t work for money. Let the money work for you.” (Kiyosaki, 1997/2017). This is how the book taught me to think of money not as an end-goal, but as a tool for wealth creation.

If I talk about the title of the book, the first thing that comes to my mind is that it would be a story of two dads but it’s more about thinking wisely on how to invest.

Money is one form of power but what is more important is financial education. Money comes and goes, but if we have the education about how money works, we gain power over it and can begin building wealth.

Kiyosaki (author of the book) elaborates on, “What the Rich Teach Their Kids About Money – That The Poor And Middle Class Do Not!” One of the most common dreams among humans is likely getting rich, but the majority of us never really make it. Kiyosaki believes that an individual’s attitude towards money and their tendency to be richer or poorer can be traced back to the education they receive at home. Parents are responsible for teaching the fundamentals of finances as it’s not something a school usually focuses on. Kiyosaki explains that this education at home is the driver behind the rich getting richer, poor getting poorer and middle class continuing to struggle with constant debt.

The author emphasizes the importance of sound finances for a better meaningful life. He argues that while one may be an academic

genius, a topper, or a gold medalist; there is every possibility of ending up as a failure without financial know-how. The book teaches the difference between assets and liability in a way I had never imagined. “This book is a wakeup call to all of us to educate ourselves on money matters.” (UKEssays, 2018)

Some of the pearls of wisdom from the book *Rich Dad Poor Dad* are:

- You are the image of your thoughts.
- Being an employee is a short term solution to a long term problem.
- A slave, even if he is paid a fortune, remains a slave.

Our thoughts and actions have a great impact on our lives. Our way of thinking, choices and decisions lead us to become either rich or poor. By presenting two contrasting mentalities, we get to not just accept one but to ponder on both and choose for ourselves how we will live our lives. The central and most important point presented here is in order for us to prevent money struggle, as early as we can. We should already be thinking, reflecting and directing our thoughts towards becoming rich. We should teach and use our minds to harness the power of money.

Some of the advice presented in the book is quite scary and risky but they do challenge us to exercise our mind and stretch our thoughts. In this book, Kiyosaki refers to two dads, his biological father and the father to his friend who loves him as well. The biological father is clearly portrayed to have made wrong decisions

and the other father has somewhat taken away the subject of his fatherhood. I admire the Rich Dad for being rich and for sharing his wealth of knowledge but he makes the poor dad look miserable and downright just wrong as how he has lived his life.

However, "It's not as simple as that" (Kiyosaki, 1997/2017) - most of the readers might share the same thought. It attempts to simplify some technical ideas to the less informed.

This book is the best seller as it sells optimism and markets self-esteem. Most of all, it offers hope and a lot of motivation. It doesn't only feed the mind but also nurtures the soul, promoting self-efficacy.

I would probably rate this book as awesome, as it truly was able to hold my interest and engage me in analyzing my financial situation. However,

it left me asking more questions - probably a way for me to exercise my brain in applying the concepts. I think the right approach that the author proposed in the beginning of this book, to use our brain, make it fertile for ideas to thrive in it and to see both sides of the coin - to weigh the ideas that comes our way, take what we need, reflect for ourselves then choose which idea to live by.

References:

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A long-exposure photograph of a person standing in a dark, wooded area at night. The person is holding a glowing orb, which is the source of light for their face and the surrounding area. The background is a dark blue night sky filled with numerous stars. The person's face and the orb are blurred due to the long exposure, creating a dreamlike atmosphere. The word "Stories" is written in a white, cursive font across the middle of the image.

Stories

Photography by:
Raju Mandal
Mass Com and Journ.

Diviner

*But on the ravish'd virgin vengeance takes,
Her shining hair is chang'd to hissing snakes.
These in her Aegis Pallas joys to bear,
The hissing snakes her foes more sure ensnare,
Than they did lovers once, when shining hair.*

*

“Do you believe in God?” Twelve-years old Ena had asked this question to her grandmother. Her curiosity so childish and heart so naive her grandmother had laughed heartily before answering, “God is often called a myth. And myth is often based on the reality of things.” Twelve year old Ena had been confused, scrunched nose and furrowed brows. “Perhaps, you will understand one day,” her grandmother had said.

Almost a decade has passed, and so has her grandmother, but there are things Ena still does not understand. Her grandmother lived like an enigma, died like a legend, leaving behind imprints of her existence that would make people seek more. Know more. *But what? What is that more?*

As she sits with her laptop open on the table, a tall wall of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* scribbled on the bright screen, Ena wonders what led her mind wandering towards her late grandmother. Perhaps it is her heart yearning for the elder's warm hug? Or perhaps it is the ghosts of late October that roam the house in ungodly hours and make Ena want to believe in gods? Or perhaps, it is the epic poem gibberish that her grandmother was so fond of dabbling in, a reminder of which makes her not want to give up on her essay yet.

Spending most of her childhood with her grandmother, Ena grew up listening to lores about Greek heroes and gods like bedtime stories. The first time when she had mentioned Medusa, Ena was horrified. Disgusted even. *Cursed? Serpent hair? Grams, was she evil?* Ena had asked.

What defines evil? She had said in return.

Scorned and cursed and punished to death by a hero, how is Medusa any different from other demons in the tale of gods?

Heaving a sigh Ena reads through the verses again, pulls up a blank screen and starts typing her essay. Words spill out like



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ink from a tilted pot and before she knows it, the night has been smeared darker - it is way past the witching hour. Ena decides to finish the rest of her work the day after, convinced it is late enough for her to be in bed.

An awkward weariness settles in her bones when she lies down staring at the ceiling. Her eyelids feel heavy and she expects sleep to come find her but it doesn't. Seconds, minutes, hours later, she is still shifting around in her bed, uncomfortable and sweaty despite the chilly October air. Instead of the ceiling, she decides to stare at the tapestry instead, hung on a far side of the wall. It was a gift from her grandmother on her sixteenth birthday. *I made it for you. Weaved with my own hands, this one.*

By sixteen, Ena had got fairly used to her grandmother's peculiar admiration for Medusa. The tapestry is beautiful, gold threads crossing and intertwining to shape into a standing figure of a woman, a crown of serpents wiggling in her hair, eyes glowing with ferocity, and mouth stretched into a smile that looks cruel and almost sad. As if that smile knew kindness and devotion a long time ago, but with time has had its memories withered.

Resting on her side, Ena stares at it now. She stares and thinks of her grandmother. She wonders what made her revere the devil like a divine.

A sigh escapes her lips, fogs the air around her face. Ena goes back to staring at the ceiling. Sleep unyielding that refuses to come sweep her off reality.

And then, she feels it. Threads of warmth and light come to clasp her hand instead. *Is it already morning? How long have I been awake?* She looks to the side, out of the window, expecting to see dawn breaking through the clouds. What she finds instead is darkness thick and stretching. Senses suddenly alert and eyes now blown wide, they are warily drawn to the glaring source of light on the far corner of the room, where the tapestry is.

Ena gasps and stares. The golden threads flutter and come undone as a strange light emanates from the woven Medusa's eyes. It beckons her to come near, calls to her curious soul to come look at her. For a moment Ena thinks she sees the woman's smile widen a fraction. *Is this a dream?*

She rolls out of bed in a stupor, unsure foot taking small steps towards the glowing tapestry. She extends a hand, watches as the threads reach out to intertwine with her fingers. They meet midway, like two lovers separated for eons. Her eyes find Medusa's in the tapestry. She does not mistake the devotion in the depths of it that now glow.

And like a spinning top barely holding up on a needle, the ground beneath her topples. Ena falls into a darkness that feels infinite. Floating, drowning. Only the threads around her wrists remain to keep her anchored.

*

She tastes sand, gritty and wet, when the howl of winds wake her from slumber. Moisture sticks to her lashes as Ena opens her eyes, gaze running along the stretch of ocean before her. Waves breaking and pulling away, washing her senses in cold disaster.

Ena jerks to realisation and sits upright. The seaside looks empty of life save for the golden crabs digging its way underneath. The sun has melted, the air feels colder, and Ena tries to remember what happened.

At a far distance, the last rays of twilight reflect existing civilisation. Her mind tells her to move; hurry up and move. And so she does. Everything is so abrupt, so jarring, Ena doesn't have the time to question anything. There are strange, urgent whispers in her head telling her to walk. To keep walking. Closer to civilisation.

Night follows after Ena as she arrives at the front of a towering shrine. Silence and whispers had been her company throughout. But all of that shatters like brittle glass when a despairing cry plunges through air at her like rocks. The cries are weak, yet loud; hopeless and yet hopeful. They were cries for mercy, for help, for forgiveness. They were cries of shame.

There was thunder in the sky. It lit up in forks of two. And Ena witnesses the source of those cries in that brief flash of purple in front of the temple, at the porch.

A lovely maiden like you is surely for our taking.

Please, have mercy!

Rain pours and pounds the earth. It is wet and sticky and Ena wants to shake off the dirt. The sound of wind and thunder drowns out the woman's cries.

Ena thinks she hears her weeping and she weeps with her. She wants to go inside but her feet refuse to heed any command. Ena cannot tell how long she stands there but the night seems endless.

At the first break of dawn, Ena sees Poseidon leave the temple and approach her. "A priestess who defiles her goddess' shrine surely does not deserve to remain here."

Ena realises it is not a question. When she stares into Poseidon's eyes, she sees herself in the clear pools of it. Long hair braided and adorned, dress graceful and magnificent. Eyes that hold power yet not enough to protect. She looks like a goddess; feels like dirt caught in the ocean waves.

"What has she done?" Her voice barely a whisper.

“Your priestess, Athena, failed to uphold her vow of purity. Seducing the gods. Desecrating your temple. Why should you allow her into *your* place of worship.”

Ena does not answer. Poseidon talks and reasons, negotiates and blames. Voice loud and thundering. Ena does not answer. For she knows what is expected of her. She knows the tale written in stone. She knows she cannot change the reality of myths.

Poseidon eventually leaves.

Inside, a broken body lies, naked and vulnerable under the sculptured frieze of Pentelic marble. Ena kneels down beside her, extending a soothing hand to wake the woman from her nightmare.

“*Hiereia*,” she calls.

The woman lifts herself off the floor and turns around to face Ena. Hair dishevelled and the ink around her eyes smeared, she crouches down at her feet like the wreckage of a ship that has sunk into the depths after being ravaged by the sea.

“Please, I beg mercy,” she cries, “please let me stay.”

Ena touches her face and thumbs away the leaking tears. “The gods have left me with no choice.”

“Athena, my goddess, I have spent a lifetime serving you. Worshipping you. Please do not send me away!”

“Medusa.” Ena - *Athena* - whispers her name like a secret. “I may be a higher being than you but I cannot always protect you,” she says. Leaning forward, she gently brushes her lip over Medusa’s forehead. It is the kiss of a blessing; the kiss of a curse. “But I will enable you with powers so you can protect yourself when you step out of my shrine today.”

“*Athena*—”

“Medusa,” Athena says, “you must leave.”

Medusa begs. She cries. Athena watches as her hair slowly darkens and thickens. Her crowning glory hisses and writhes.

“You’re powerful, Medusa. You must protect yourself.”

When Medusa opens her eyes again, they glow with the same devotion Ena had seen before. In the tapestry.

*

“*In Metamorphoses*, Ovid crafts a story where Medusa is the perpetrator, and Perseus is the protector of mankind when he kills her. However, a different interpretation of the same story reveals Medusa as the victim. Raped and defiled by a god, she was accused of seduction. Athena curses her with serpent hair that grants her the power to petrify men and protect herself. However, what if the curse was a blessing in disguise. Why would Athena, as the goddess of wisdom, curse and blame the victim.

Ovid pits woman against woman, Athena against Medusa, as a way for men to hide the fact that Medusa is the victim throughout the entire story, her entire life.”

Ena finishes the essay in an urgent haste. She sighs and looks at the tapestry. The threads do not glow anymore, and Medusa looks just as deadly, just as beautiful.

Her grandmother had once asked, “What defines evil?”

Distortion of the unknown, she thinks.
Propaganda.

Nomad

Once upon a time there was a lover who lived inside the deep marine blue ocean. The lover had only the moon in her possession. It was the only thing that made the ocean which was her home look beautiful even in the darkest hours of night. The moon used to make the ocean alive by making the tides swing, in its shimmer and shine. The moon was the heart of the ocean even though it has scars. The lover was lucky. She was not alone in the never ending ocean. She had a friend and that friend was a turtle. One day the lover decided to send the turtle with the moon on her back to her beloved, to portray how much the lover valued her beloved in her life.

The lover had whispered magical words in the ear of the turtle and the turtle was pledged to yell those magical words throughout her journey so that the beloved could hear and find what her lover had sent, in the name of love. The turtle had to make an endless journey all the way from the ocean to the sky and had to search further into the whole universe to find her beloved. It was hard and heavy to carry the huge moon and it was a long journey. The turtle hesitated to carry the flawed moon at first because it was nearly an impossible mission. Actually the turtle was worried and scared. The turtle was not sure if she could find her way back home because it was a journey from ocean to the universe. It was a whole new world for the turtle. But, the turtle surprisingly



(Painting by Roopashna)



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agreed with the lover to head for the journey.

The turtle couldn't say no to the lover when she saw the longing desire in the eyes of the lover to give the moon to her beloved. So the turtle made her decision to take it. The turtle was now ready to make an endless adventure of her life. The turtle had no clue where her beloved was and even if the turtle finds her, they did not know if her beloved would be happy to accept the moon. One thing that was certain to the turtle was that the turtle would see things which she had never seen and felt before. New energy, new place and most importantly new motive that she got in her life. Marvelous and fascinating experiences were awaiting for the turtle to be explored.

For the first time in her life the turtle stepped outside the ocean and started to flap her flippers against the wind and flew towards the sky. The turtle was exhausted after a few months as there was no place to rest in the sky. The turtle finally reached the galaxy and could find a star to rest. After resting for a few days, the turtle again headed to fulfill her mission. The turtle started to scream those enchanted words which the lover had whispered in her ears. The turtle really tried hard to find her beloved but failed and lost her way and sadly, the turtle couldn't return back to her home. Alas! The turtle became a nomad for the rest of her life.

Miss Iva

Miss Iva was very beautiful—the most beautiful girl in the village. She was the only girl of her age in the village though. All the others were boys. Here, everybody knew everyone else. All were distant relatives, one way or the other. They prayed, went to the church, helped one another in times of need and lived amicably. Envy hadn't found its way into the hearts of the people here.

Several young men came to visit the village asking for Miss Iva's hand in marriage. But none could move her heart. As Miss Iva grew older these visits became less frequent. The boys in the village got married and started their own families. Her parents were gradually getting worried for her. They pleaded with her to find someone suitable. They feared that she might not be in the right state of her mind. The whole village tried to persuade her to settle down. On this Miss Iva only said, "But I am settled" and she went back to her garden. At last, everybody left her alone. Her parents passed away and her brother went to the city with his wife and son. She stayed behind in the village, in their old home. She was like a fairy and nobody really understood her. She was kind, very kind, and cheerful - talking to everyone, laughing together and at times eating with them. She did that. Everybody liked her. The children especially loved going into her garden and helping her. But she felt distant and at times even mystical. It was as if she knew something, something that we did not.

She only gardened and gardened. She had always been fond of flowers—even as a little girl she used to take care of them and now when she is older, she grew and supplied the flowers to the whole village and beyond. Every Saturday, one could see a truck parked outside Miss Iva's garden being loaded with dozens of flowers: all of them roses, in different colours and varieties. The cold metal mellowed into warm sunset hues. The truck entered the village plain old and went back beautifully donned like a bountiful bride. This has been going on for the last forty years.

Miss Iva's garden was very special. At the centre of the garden was a fountain; not just a simple fountain, it was a Rose fountain. The water sprinkled down from the apex upon the rose plant and trickled down into the pool below. The sole rose plant at the centre of the fountain never bloomed. Miss Iva used the water collected in the fountain pool to nourish



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the flowers in her garden. Beautiful roses bloomed throughout the year in the garden: red, yellow, pink, blue, white, ombre. The roses were beautiful, the garden was beautiful. And Miss Iva took special care of her as though it was her love child. She could always be found there: always potting and re-potting, fertilizing and pest controlling. Everybody admired the roses in her garden but the best of them always only found one destination.

Mr. and Mrs. A.P. had come to the village some forty years ago. It was around the time when Miss Iva was about sixteen years of age and had only started commercially supplying the roses the previous year. The couple had bought land beside Miss Iva's house, built a house and had settled there.



Mr. and Mrs. A.P.'s courtyard was only a few yards from Miss Iva's garden. The couple were quiet and reserved and never talked more than what was necessary and the villagers left them in their quiet respite after a few futile attempts to befriend them. They were

peaceful people and never caused any trouble in the village and lived in their own space. When they first arrived, Mr. A.P. looked like he was about forty years old, distinct features with a remarkably handsome face and an authoritative look in his eyes. His wife on the other hand looked much younger than him, probably in her mid twenties. She was a petite woman with dark long hair. Miss Iva had neither seen a more beautiful woman nor man. It was from the very first day of their arrival that the best roses forever found their destination. Miss Iva never failed to send them over to her neighbours every single day and always the colourful ones. But there was never any response. This continued for the past forty years. One would think that through observation of several years one might understand someone but that was not to be the case here. Miss Iva's actions were never understood. There were only speculations – perhaps she was in love with the handsome older gentleman or perhaps she simply wanted to be a good neighbour. They are all mere speculations.

Mr. and Mrs. A.P. always had their tea in their courtyard and Miss Iva always looked at them from her garden. During the times she was seen staring in that direction, one could easily see the longing in her eyes. The villagers thought it might be for a family. Mr. A.P. smiled at his wife and she smiled back. They talked and looked happy. Nobody had ever seen him smile but he smiled at his wife. Miss Iva looked visibly dejected at the sight of it. She must

have thought that Mr. A.P., that stern and expressionless Mr. A. P., must really love his wife. She wanted to knock off his hat with water from his watering can but the water would not reach that far off, no matter how hard she tried. She looked miserable.

She finally stopped sending flowers over to the APs. She gardened and gardened still. But now it looked like it was due to the force of habit more than anything else. One day, the rose in the centre of the fountain bloomed. Blue. Colours started disappearing from her garden and only blue remained. All the roses bloomed blue and no other colour.

A few days after her garden turned blue Miss Iva was not seen in her garden. Worried about her, the villagers went to look into her house. There were blue roses all around the house in vases: on the kitchen counter, on the drawing room table, near the staircase, on her bedside table. Miss Iva lay on her bed as though peacefully asleep. A little blue petal rested on her philtrum, equally peacefully. Everything else was still.

Consciousing the Conscious



Shweta Mazoomdar
6th Sem, English Honours

“The time awaits as one season after another begins.

The same hope lies there of cuts and blemishes the shine is deprived of, yet the hope lives on. The hope lives on as seasons after seasons birds change the pattern of their flying, the manner they open up their lives. Irrespective of whatever pattern the storm comprises of, yet the ship goes ahead, putting all its strength for it should go ahead and if it should sink within the broad shallows of adversity and that of incoherence, so it shall be.”

*

I don't remember anything. Yet, I believe if I start writing I will. It's not something that was etched inside me. Rather you can define it as something which has been injected to my brain time and time again. Injected in such a manner that when I look at myself with complete awe and a fear within (which I very successfully keep concealed) it questions me.

“Who are you?”

“What is your identity?”

My identity? What am I? Who am I? Am I just another human driving fast to come out from the shackles of capitalism? Or another human who is always deemed to be felt and thought of and finally led to the conclusion that I am nothing. Oh! to be nothing, absolute bliss engulfs me. But a prick of consciousness comes in. Rather a rude blow falls in. Some veins come out, some organs pushed, inward screams. Just for the sake of knowing one answer “Who am I?”

*

“The steroid works well, I suppose?”

“But it may be highly contagious as well.”

“We need her alive anyhow, we can't afford to start everything back from the new again. Time wasted. Millions wasted. What for? Inject anything just bring life within her again.”

“Shhhhhhhhhh. She's awake.”

I open my eyes. My eyes! Are they really eyes? Or are they fed with some sort of a ridiculousness to find hope every time. Are they really eyes or am I just another human who wants to give up yet gives in to everything? What am I? Why am I? How are-

“It's time. Let's go home.”

I feel as if a cloth is tied across my neck. My breath? Am I breathing? My arms? Are they moving? I don't feel anything. I just don't. How? Why? Mom, I... I don't know... what should I tell? Even if I should tell, what should I tell? Why am I feeling everything which is inclined towards living like a parasite? A parasitical mode of living. I open my mouth to cry, to wail but my tears? Where are my tears? Why am I smiling? A sudden darkness engulfs me. Not again. No. No! Have mercy please! Don't. Don't! I try to pull my arms and legs out. But nothing comes into my notice except some hurried, muffled voices and a sharp prick again, streaming a wide range of consciousness with varying wavelengths within me.

*

“All good, everything's good, do not think too much. Follow this mantra, that

will be enough.”

“But, what if-”

“It’s all in your head. Look around, there’s the blue sky, birds flying all around, white clouds dancing with the music of the wind. Look dearest, look.”

The sky. The sky. The sky.

Is it really blue? Or just forced to become blue?

Sighing, I look at my mom. I sometimes wonder. What would happen if she would just understand me... that she wouldn’t force me to think that everything is as rosy as it appears, blush and sparkle, beautiful and shiny. After all, I am a grown up. A woman of twenty-one. But I also wish that she never understands me. If she does, then she will lose the soft pink blush of her cheeks, the smile on her lips and her face will be marked with lines of terror, suspicion, anger, resentment and incompleteness. She will begin questioning the ethics she once believed would blossom her little lady into a fine young woman. She will, as a whole, become like me....

“I am there, don’t you worry. You are listening right?”

I look at her and try to bring on a smile. They say I look beautiful when I smile, that the sound of my laughter seems to bring on each and everything back in this world. So, I smile. I smile to look beautiful amidst all the destruction occurring within. I smile to smile and make others smile too. It isn’t their fault anyway.

After all, who wouldn’t love being part of anything beautiful?

Who wouldn’t be filled with anger to just see something beautiful?

*

I went to the washroom today.

I washed my face.

I kept washing my face.

I saw something on my face. It was dark, deep and horrifying. I started scratching my face. The more I washed, the more it expanded. Its expansions were no wonder spine chilling. What’s wrong? Why? A huge stream flows within. I look around. I try to reach something. But what is that something? Why is that something? How is that something? Why am I trying to get hold of that something?

“It’s okay. Just a bad dream. But yes, you are improving. A little bit of self-control and oh yes! Some fresh air would do the thing.”

My parents look at me. Proud they are, I guess? Or just pretending to be? They are quite happy though. Happy because I will be able to meet their expectations again. Meet up their dreams again. Dreams... What are dreams? Are they just like my dreams? If it is, I don’t want to dream again. Is the air really fresh outside? or just a mixture of different fragrances sprayed by different people and their opinions? Will it really wipe out all my thoughts? Will I be normal again?

“Did you hear it? She wants to go to school again.”

Suddenly, I feel a warm hug.

I remember being engulfed in a hug before. The soft bliss of just a hug. But I wonder if the hug is really warm? Or is it because of the mere rubbing of hands and pats on the back which makes it feel warm? What is a hug? How is it supposed to be warm? Can the coldness of the generation be felt with this warmth? Or maybe...

Maybe, people are just cold beings looking and searching for warmth in different forms and shapes.

“Oh yes, absolutely she can go to school. She will make up for all her lessons. She will do it.”

“But what if she can’t handle the pressure-.”

“Our daughter is quite sensible now. She knows that either she can choose to drown in her stupid

dreams or thoughts, whatever or to make something out of her life. We can't feed her all her life. What about Carol?"

Carol... my sister Carol. I remember playing with her. Carol is the best part of my life. But now Carol does not play with me anymore.

She does not smile at me.

*

The sky looks wonderful today. I wonder how good it is today? Is it because they really are good today? If they are, I am glad. It had been a while since I had gone and had a talk with the plants in the courtyard. I wished to go ahead and talk to them but it was too late.

I saw them writhing in pain.

I fetched some water and tried to wash away their pain but didn't seem to go.

"They are dead", Carol whispers.

I look at her in disbelief.

"But I planted them yesterday how come they are dead?"

"You planted and watered them when you turned twenty. You loved them, you cared. But now you don't."

I looked at the plants. I looked at Carol. I kept exchanging glimpses till I realized that the destruction within myself manifested in the outward reality too. I looked around the dead world which was once a paradise to me. I felt a deep remorse. I sat down. I stared towards the empty hollow. How I wish I could change everything? How I wish I would not fall into the clutches of darkness the result of which stood out to be so lethal and dreadful now.

"But you know they are not dead completely. It's just the seasonal impact. Mom told me," Carol smiles.

I see her holding a daisy.

I look closely. I look more closely.

A tiny blade of grass comes up to my rescue.

To my surprise I see the courtyard to be more heavenly and more beautiful as compared to before. I look further to find butterflies flying around gleefully with all their glory.

The time awaits as one season after another begins. The same hope lies there of cuts and blemishes the shine is deprived of, yet the hope lives on. The hope lives on as seasons after seasons birds change the pattern of their flying, the manner they open up their lives. Irrespective of whatever pattern the storm comprises of, yet the ship goes ahead, putting all its strength for it should go ahead and if it should sink within the broad shallows of adversity and that of incoherence, so it shall be.

She smiles at me now and I laugh back.

Felicitously Heaven-Sent



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6th Sem, English Honours

Once upon a time, a boy named Alhaadi was born in a lower class family in a small village named Lamu in Kenya. At a very small age, when Alhaadi was just 12 years old, he had lost his parents in a bus accident. Since then he lived with his uncle and aunt in Malindi.

His life changed from a terrible to a happy life.

Alhaadi's uncle and aunt didn't treat him well and used to make him work whole day. Even though Alhaadi went to school, he didn't get enough time to study, his uncle and aunt intentionally would force him to work for them. Alhaadi's aunt would taunt him by saying, "You stay in our house, you are a burden for us! Therefore you have to follow whatever we ask you to do." Alhaadi lived a very miserable life, he was not given proper food to eat. Whatever he got to eat was the left overs of the dishes which his uncle and aunt had eaten.

Even though Alhaadi had to work the whole day, he would manage to study as much as he could. He didn't have any friends in school. None of the students in his class used to like to be friends with him. They used to taunt him saying, "You are an ugly person and no one would like to be a friend of an ugly person like you!" Alhaadi was bullied in his school.

At one point of time, Alhaadi was frustrated with his life. He felt nothing good could happen to him. He was tired of this cruel world which didn't treat him well. He just felt like ending his life as he couldn't find any good way to live. He used to miss his parents and would cherish those moments of happiness with them.

One day, being tired of his miserable life, Alhaadi skipped his school and made up his mind to give up his life. So he went near a sea shore to end it. Suddenly, when Alhaadi decided to jump, he noticed a huge dragon was drowning inside the sea. Alhaadi went to save that dragon from being drowned. He tried every possible way he could and finally was successful in saving the dragon. The dragon's wings were hurt and were bleeding quite badly, so Alhaadi took the dragon on a cart and decided to keep her in the store room. Alhaadi brought medicines and cured the dragon's wings.

Therefore each and every day, immediately after completing his work, Alhaadi would come to visit the dragon and would feed her properly. This continued for some days and finally one day when the dragon was fully cured, she was waiting for Alhaadi to come into the store room.

As soon as Alhaadi entered, the dragon grasped him and asked, "Who are you? Why did you bring me here? What do you want from me?"

Alhaadi replied, "I have nothing to do with you, I just saved you



from drowning inside the sea. Your wings were badly injured, so I thought of bringing you here and trying to cure you."

The dragon named Syrax, then being able to understand, apologised Alhaadi for being so rude with him at first. She became friendly with him and said, "Thank

you Alhaadi for saving my life.”

Alhaadi then asked Syrax, of the place she lived and how did her wings get hurt. Syrax said she lives in a forest named Kaya where her whole family stays together and she got hurt while saving a little baby from an evil dragon named Zurden.

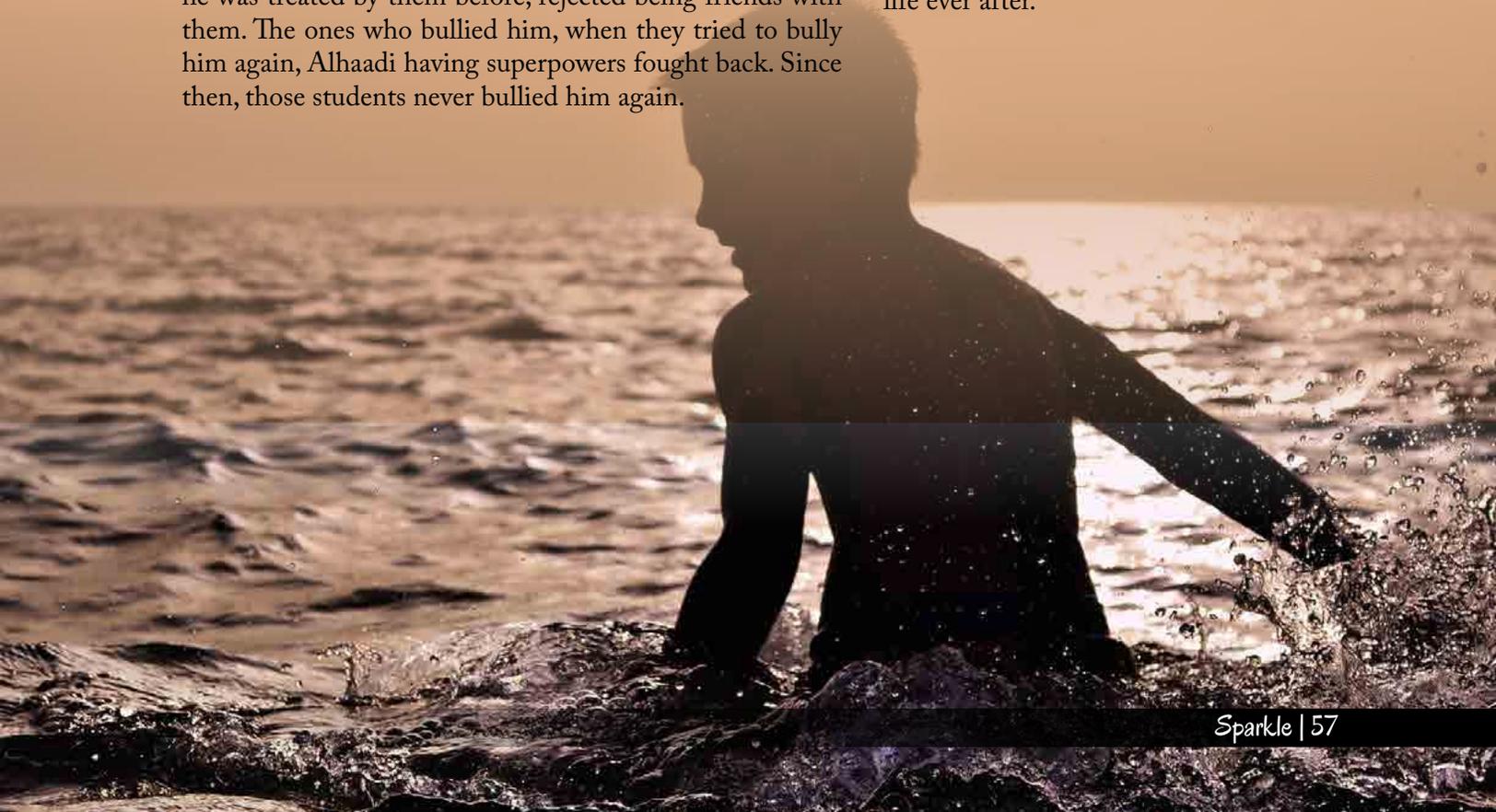
Syrax was properly cured now, so she took Alhaadi to her forest and showed her family to him and where she lived. As time passed by, Syrax and Alhaadi became good friends. Alhaadi told Syrax about his miserable life and if she would not be there in the sea, he would have ended his life that day. Syrax felt sorry for Alhaadi and came to know how miserable his life was.

One day when Syrax came to meet Alhaadi, she saw how badly Alhaadi’s aunt and uncle beat him. Syrax got angry, so she came to save Alhaadi from them and warned Alhaadi’s uncle and aunt by saying, “Don’t you dare try to hurt him or else I will injure you both.” Alhaadi’s uncle and aunt, being frightened, ran away from Syrax. Syrax had many superpowers, therefore she made Alhaadi look the most handsome boy and gave some powers to him by which he could fight back if anyone would try to hurt him.

The next day, when Alhaadi went to school, everyone was surprised by his look. Most of the students then wanted to become friends with him. But Alhaadi, realizing how badly he was treated by them before, rejected being friends with them. The ones who bullied him, when they tried to bully him again, Alhaadi having superpowers fought back. Since then, those students never bullied him again.

Now, Alhaadi’s uncle and aunt were not able to mistreat him anymore as they were frightened by Syrax and experienced how Alhaadi would fight back if they tried to hurt or mistreat him. Since then Alhaadi was no more pressurized with household works and got sufficient time for his studies. After some years he got admitted to a good University for his further studies. Alhaadi made some new friends and was happy enough to study there.

Alhaadi’s life suddenly changed from terrible to a happy life just because of Syrax. Syrax and Alhaadi now roamed different places and always helped each other in every situation. Alhaadi frequently visited Syrax’s family and enjoyed having a quality time with them. Alhaadi was very happy with his life and he had every reason to live in this world. He then realized how he should never give up and fight against every difficulty. Alhaadi told Syrax that he was lucky enough to get a friend like her. Alhaadi and Syrax’s friendship remained forever and Alhaadi lived a good and a happy life ever after.



The First Kind

“3048, 3049, 3050! Don’t you get tired Leo?!”

“Should I?” He laughed.

“Well just because you’re stronger and are buffed up to your core, you don’t have to show off. I’ll do more than you someday”, smiled Rio.

Both the twin brothers then sprinted off for a race in the forest.

As they talked to the wind, one could hear the twinkle beneath their bare feet and witness the sight of fireflies around the forest at dusk, struggling to catch up with them. Leo recklessly and effortlessly was closing in on his victory. He almost won when Rio activated his wind spirit. The wind howled along with him as he boosted off and crossed the finish line before Leo. “You cheated!” complained Leo. “Isn’t it time you get your powers, brother?” asked Rio innocently. Leo cursed him and ran back to the orphanage.

The Christian orphanage in the Gorgeo village was a loving home for special kids with powers. They were loved and cared for under the elder Sister and the



High Priest. They lived on just plain rice and water scarcely. Ration was difficult to get since the market beyond the forest was filled with demons who fed on human souls. It wasn’t necessary to kill humans if they wanted their soul but the demons killed them anyway just for fun. The kids knew about it and continued to train themselves in order to protect each other. “Rio, look! I can finally make these stones float”, exclaimed the 4 year old Mini. Rio patted her head and smiled at her.



Manshika Kaur
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“Rio, Leo, did you both run off into the forest again?!” screamed Sister. The twins were the eldest in the orphanage. They were the most reckless too, but caring at the same time. All the other children had powers with them but none of them had a spirit except Rio. The twins had made a vow to make the orphanage a better place to live in and to provide good education and food to the rest.

Leo drew out his arms towards a few leaves, stared at them hard and started quivering his hands. “C’mon! Lift up!” he grumbled. The leaves didn’t move. He shouted in frustration and felt hopeless. Leo was almost 18 now but he hadn’t gotten any powers yet. He didn’t really care a lot about this but Rio always kept pushing him. He wanted to protect his orphanage and was almost on the verge of giving up. “Don’t worry brother. You’ll get your powers soon”, Rio came up from behind. Leo scoffed and said, “Huh! Easy to say, for the person being chosen by a rare spirit. Just yesterday, there was the news of some demons devouring souls in the neighboring village. Powers are not my cup of tea. I’ll just destroy them with my bare hands when they come. Haiyaaa!” He imitates a karate move.

Leo knew that he was no match to others who were blessed with powers but he tried his best to fit in. “No doubt you’re strong brother, but what are you going to do when they use their magic to bind you with an invisible rope? How will you use your hands or legs then?”

“You are there to save me, if that happens”, replied Leo innocently. “Keep practicing your powers on the leaves”, said Rio casually and walked out. The next month went on, as Rio

pestered his brother and while he reluctantly tried to manifest his power. By this time, the news of the demons nearing the Gorgeo village had already spread. Under the guidance of the High Priest, the children were improving their use of powers and were almost fully trained in case they had to fight.

On a usual training day, Leo once again tried to move the leaves in his room. The leaves started to levitate slowly and steadily. Leo's joy knew no bounds and he burst into big smiles but then heard a click and the leaves fell down. He snapped his head towards the door to find a couple of 14 year olds doing the job for him. They started laughing at his foolishness which angered Leo with every passing second. "Give up already Leo! You're useless and you'll never be able to protect the orphanage", said one of them. Leo felt the rage inside him bubbling up ready to culminate. His hands started trembling violently and it took everything in him to not beat the hell out of them. "Are you scared to fight Leo? C'mon show me the strength of your strong arms or have you lost that too?" said the same kid and the group started laughing again.

Leo clenched his fists and his nose started flaring. It was enough for him and he attempted an attack. Before he could charge, the group together used their powers to lift Leo up in the air and he was left struggling to break free. Leo started cursing on them and his own self because he now felt truly helpless despite having an excellent physical strength. He felt restless but he did not give up. His rage kept on increasing as he struggled to break free.

Hell broke out when he finally vented his frustration and a mysterious shadow busted out of his chest forming a silhouette of a dragon with horns and wings behind him. Leo broke free. The kids couldn't believe the scene in front of them. They started crying and trembling with fear when they saw Leo on the ground with speckles of flame surrounding his frame, the devilish dragon silhouette still behind him and his mouth hosting a smirk. It was as though he had been possessed. The kids ran out of the room crying hysterically and breaking the news to everyone. As soon as the

kids vanished, Leo went back to normal at once and fainted.

The High Priest laughed as the children told



him what they saw and said, "I know you all bully him but don't just go around making absurd stories". Rio heard the news too but chose to ignore it. Leo woke up after a few minutes and assumed everything that happened had been a dream. The next day Leo decided to ask Rio to duel with him in the forest so that he could improve himself. Rio decided to go easy on him and attacked with minimal power which Leo managed to dodge and endure easily. After a few more attacks, Leo said, "Why are you holding back on me? Are you making fun of me? I work as hard as any of you! C'mon fight me properly". Rio gave him a slight smile and apologized. He then gathered all his power into one strong wind force and charged it towards Leo and in the course of dodging it, Leo's hand accidentally touched the power and it dissipated at once.

The twins felt silent. Rio's eyes went wide and Leo was left with his mouth hanging. He looked at his hands in disbelief, and then quietly asked Rio to try it again. When Rio attacked him, the same thing happened again, for the next five times. Leo then started crying and exclaimed, "I got my powers! I finally got them!"

Rio still didn't believe it but was happy for Leo. Out of excitement, he tried to test his powers and attempted to lift a few leaves. When nothing happened after a lot of tries, the twins concluded that Leo had the ability to just nullify magic but he couldn't perform any powers.

The twins, along with a few older kids, decided to go to the hills to train themselves. During training, Rio suggested Leo use some weapons since he doesn't have any powers to attack with. Leo tried using various weapons but the only thing that suited him was a sword. He started training with it but after some time, he realized that he was getting nowhere with this training. He just had the power to defend, not attack. Therefore, every night Leo sneaked out to practice and improve his skills. While everyone slept, he worked hard on his swordsmanship. One night, as he was burning the midnight oil by flicking his sword again and again with force, he started getting frustrated. He thought to himself, "What can I do to be stronger? Why am I so weak? Why don't I have the power to attack?"

With that last word, as he flicked his sword, it suddenly turned black. Before Leo could even blink his eyes, the sword turned normal again. He decided to bring it back so he closed his eyes, relaxed his mind and concentrated hard. As soon as he opened them, the sword had turned black again. Leo was excited to see what the sword could do.

The next day when he tested the weapon in duels with the rest, he discovered that the sword was nullifying the powers it was coming in contact with.



Soon, all of them realised that Leo can transmit his power to any weapon he holds.

After almost three months of training, everyone returned back to the orphanage only to witness a horrifying scene in front of them. They saw that their home was a wreck and everyone was dead. The kids, the elder sister, the High Priest were lying on the floor lifeless. The entire floor was covered with blood. The

twins and the older kids with them broke down in tears and were filled with rage at the same time. Clearly this was the work of the demons. Seeing the blood of their siblings has now filled them with an unknown determination to kill every last demon. They were all set and ready to take their revenge as they headed towards the market beyond the forest.

The demons were in their usual routine of killing and consuming souls. They had a monster-like appearance. Some were three-eyed, some four and some with just one. It was heard that there was an army of lesser demons, superior graded demons and finally their master who could curse humans. They could also summon each other through their minds.

Rio, Leo and others quietly managed to reach the central area of the market and were soon discovered. One of the demons smirked and said, "We were waiting for you, Rio." The twins had a shock on their face when they took Rio's name. "Don't look so shocked. Rio is the only human with a spirit inside of him. So naturally our master wants his soul to uplift his magic. Why do you think he accompanied us to find Rio? When he didn't get what he wanted, he killed everyone just to throw a tantrum," said another one-eyed demon as he summoned his master with his mind.

During that time, the older kids brought as many humans they could to safety from the market. "Why don't you call your pathetic master up front then?" smirked Rio. "You lowly human! How dare you address me like that?!" growled a huge, bulky, six-eyed figure from behind. "Let's start then, shall we?" announced Rio with confidence. The ultimate war began.

With a little gesture of the master's hand, the lesser and graded demons already present there attacked them. One of the older kids lifted a lamp-post and threw it at the lesser ones since they had no power while the others used powers of fire and reflection to divert the enemy's powers back at them. The graded demons used

dark magic to bind their legs and hands which Leo tried his best to nullify with his anti-magic sword.

The kids were getting injured and the graded monsters were becoming too much to handle for the twins. As they struggled to fight, Rio activated his spirit and his eyes turned electric blue. The wind started howling and as he closed his eyes, and a pair of snow coloured wings appeared from his back.

His forehead got surrounded by a majestic golden crown and he had produced a sword in his hand. His entire appearance was that of a wind spirit. He lifted everything around high up in the air and flew towards the demons with an unimaginable force leaving the lesser demons dead and the graded ones unconscious. The market had now become a battlefield full of dead demons. This angered the master but he, still proud, now started mocking Rio.

He said in a jest, "Did you know how much I enjoyed killing your family? Ohh, your dear Sister was begging and crying me to spare their lives. You know how much I love hearing helpless cries, don't you Rio?" Rio's rage was building with every word. He looked down and clenched his fists and shouted angrily, "You monster!"

With this sentence, the entire surrounding was turbulent. The sky turned dark and the wind was blowing fiercely. "Those pathetic fools were no match for me. Seeing them asking for mercy gave me pleasure. Ohh and the little Mini asked me to give you a message before dying. She said she loved you. How touching!" said the six-eyed, dramatically. By now, Rio's rage made him completely lose his mind. He wasn't aware of what he was doing when he started shaking and soon dark clouds appeared along with thunder and lightning. Almost five tremendous tornadoes started forming at a deathly speed, one of which surrounded the master. Leo decided to help him and slash his sword on the six-eyed, which was proving completely useless. He soon realised that he had a limit and that he's only getting in Rio's way. He cursed himself for not being able to perform any power.

The master demon shouted in frustration as he struggled in Rio's tornado. "I cannot be defeated by this inferior child," he whispered breathlessly. Leo again tried to slash his sword through the tornado which added to an advantage for the demon and he escaped through the little space crawling weakly. Leo cried out in horror when he saw the six-eyed devouring the subdued graded demons in order to strengthen its power. He buffed up and sharp nails emerged from his fingers. He stood there mightily as he boasted, "I've reached the pinnacle of the demon race. Defeating me is out of the question now." The twins took a few steps back and their faces went pale but Rio wasn't done yet.

The demon quadrupled the size of his original body and used his curse power which had now become stronger on Rio. "Kill yourself," he whispered. Rio closed his eyes with his sword in front of him and started deflecting the curse with all his might. By this time the demon started laughing at his state, distracted from the attack Leo attempted from the side. The demon deflected it and continued to charge towards Leo which kept him busy. His curse power weakened a tad and Rio took this advantage to attack with everything in him. He jumped and brought his sword forward to cut through the body but before he could even touch it, the demon effortlessly pierced his fingernails straight through Rio's chest.

There was complete silence as Rio with blank expression looked down to witness his condition. He didn't even have time to close his eyes when the demon threw him across the ground. Leo fell down on his knees with his mouth open and his eyes full of tears. Leaving his sword he ran towards his brother and took him in his arms.

"Rio?" Leo whispered and the only reply he got was "I'm sorry I wasn't able to protect you and the others," stammered Rio. "Did you see that?! He should have never challenged me. Your brother was a lowly and pathetic fool. I'm so powerful now that I don't even need his damn spirit. I'll just take pleasure seeing him dead now," laughed

the demon.

Soon, Leo's cries died down and his body went cold. The air started getting heavy and an unnatural aura was emanating around him. His back was facing the monster and he looked like a stone as the ground started shaking. Leo then got up and turned his head slightly towards the demon. "You went too far," he said with an emotionless face. As the words left his mouth, his body started having a beastly transformation where every muscle became prominent and his skin turned white. Strange ancient markings started appearing on his back and with that, a pair of black featherless wings popped out. The master squinted his eyes as he said to himself, "I've seen those markings somewhere...." Leo started trembling in pain as his hands clutched his head tightly, he bent forward and screamed at the top of his lungs.

After a few seconds, he lifted his head only for the six-eyed to see a pair of black twisted horns. The master was perplexed at the scene before him and started questioning Leo's devil-like transformation. "No matter what you become, I'd still defeat you kid," he growled. Leo now turns fully to face his enemy. He wasn't aware of what was happening to him nor did he care about it. All he could see was revenge for his brother and his home. His eyes turned reddish black as he slowly proceeded towards the demon. The six-eyed huffed and paced for an attack when Leo opened his hand and his sword caught to him at once. He then swiftly cuts one of the demon's arms before the demon could even touch him.

Still proud, the six-eyed started laughing and said, "Do you think your mere sword can cut my arm? It's going to regenerate. I'm invincible!" 10 minutes passed and the monster started sweating when there was no regeneration. He exclaimed, "Magic nullification!" He closed his eyes and soon it was clear that he had summoned an entire army of lesser demons who were nearing Leo for an attack from behind. Leo's face, still blank, casually looked up, took a deep breath

and flicked his sword to the ground with force. That massive force travelled with an improbable speed, annihilating every last demon.

Trembling with fear, the master demon now remembered the markings. They represented the markings of the first ever devil from whom their demon race originated. These markings are carved in their demon temple where they worshipped their first kind. "But... how? How can the devil possess a lowly human and not me?" stammered the six-eyed. "I don't know what you're talking about nor do I care", said Leo. Leo's entire body was covered with blood of his own because this form was too much for him but his eyes just reverberated death. Finally, with everything he had, Leo took a leap and slashed the master demon in half from head to toe. With that one last attack, he came back to his own self and fainted.

"Look! Leo's opening his eyes!" said a voice. Leo opened his eyes to his siblings who he thought were lost between the fight and some unknown adults as well. The kids told him that they brought him and Rio to a nearby small village. Leo turned gloomy at the sound of his brother's name. "Look who got stronger than me," a sound came from afar. Leo looked up to find an injured but alive Rio. He ran to hug him and broke down in tears. "I thought you were dead! How are you alive?" asked Leo. Rio placed his hand to his heart and said, "Well, it seemed like the wind spirit didn't want me dead yet. It helped me revive again."

The twins then worked hard for years to restore the Gorgeo village. They also rebuilt their orphanage and continued to train themselves to ensure peace so that no one has to go through this kind of suffering again.



Isn't it Sprouting?

It is in the month of autumn, a comforting evening around 8.15 pm, under the full moon, the sky looks tender, clear and loaded with its gems. I observe, brood certain things from an open playground, while flying fireflies also spy on the process. I stayed a little longer than usual and eventually, I proceeded to return home and on my way father spotted me and asked me "Where have you been Vincent?" "Nowhere papa, I was having conversation with my spiraling friends." Father asks surprisingly "were they in numbers?" They arrive in great numbers, the golden lights peeping out from another universe. It's a jubilant way to share the condition of my mind, because they never resent, they just listen and forget.

(Let's wind the clock back twelve days earlier.)

After brunch; my father works in our small garden beside the front yard of our house to make it grow, which also includes Mushroom cultivation. In our tiny square store room, usually used for the two wheeler parking, all we need is warm darkness, and plenty of water, a favorable environment. I also joined him. Father asked me with a heavy breath "Vincent I never asked you to assist me to do such work, why on the earth did you drop in?" I respond politely "Since not doing much individually, thought to contribute my time here as well, more likely as idle diversion." "Ah! wonderful. Then hold the spray bottle, let's pour water on mushroom" father says. "Papa, aren't we making a mistake by spending time on it? According to the guidelines written in the seed's packet, ideally it starts sprouting after 2 weeks but it's been almost a month and we are still pouring water on it. Perhaps we lacked a favorable environment for seeds to grow, isn't it better to use our time and energy in different objects? "Patience my dear son. Patience. Lets not indulge in any debate, though your doubts are reasonable, let's go on, as it already snowed under my other works, after all, delaying isn't a denial. Keep pouring."

For certain I felt it's worthless and adding that assumption it's hard to alter one's ripe mind. So having lofty doubts and ambiguous perception in my mind, I assisted my father for the following seven days. Nothing changed, I could not see any signs of germination, "Oh! What a waste, I am dwelling in."

Next day said, 9.30 am, my father in a notable, affectionate disposition, "Vincent, have a look, something didn't act according to your desire." Particularly I didn't get it, he takes me to store room, and pointing finger towards plastic bags of mushroom,



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he asked me "Isn't it sprouting?" For the time being silence covered the occasion; I tried not to believe but no option left. For the first time, I didn't feel ashamed to be wrong.

A voice echoed: "We did it, Vincent we did it," though a small incident, it shook my mind!

Present day, a comforting evening around 8.15. Father astonishingly asks: "So you've been talking about these stars! Well, time for dinner champ!"

"Papa, I am still finding it hard to believe about the sprouting mushrooms. Shall I consider it a miracle or just a coincidence?"

Father ponders for a while and responds, "my dear son, it's not only our part to follow all the solemn duties and of course to concede, whatever life offers us, but rather focusing on the diverse approach. Brushing off allusions of projecting future achievements and failures at the present, instead focus on being honest to your stable and composed approach. I must admit my experience, my boy! The deserving possibilities will find the way with the fullest. Never do mind and that's how it's done Vincent. Say goodbye to your mysterious but shining friends, a warm meal has been served on the table, waiting for our presence."

The boy asked "what's on the menu?" A grin rises from father's face, while he keeps his arms gently to his shoulder and replies "mushrooms, dear."

The Fan C Star

By the time the birds stopped their ominous circling around the sky, it was almost dusk. At one moment it seemed as though it was all planned - the black insignia recurring high up, with each orbiting motion of wings. Ronie moved his eyes downward, toward the tainted door that stood a few feet away from him. Between them - right on the sidewalk, lay a puddle. Water-filled and not yet muddied - it was refurbished by an unexpected late-noon shower. He could try seeing his face glaring on the clean puddle or he could choose the reflecting door. But his face plopped on the screen through the app's camera, as he tidied the strands of wayward hair. The same social app that had landed him a job interview, he was about to face in a while.

He remembered how the mail arrived quicker than anticipated. It blinked on the status tray while he was casually lying with his back pushed against the wall, scrolling past the endless list of sneakers on Amazon. He dragged down the notification bar in a whisker of a moment and tapped on the mail, his pupils magnetised on the amoled. A rush of elation charged the fluids running inside him, as though it wasn't Ronie anymore but an undercover coder who had just been hired by Google for a sum of two million dollars. Even if it was for a split second, he could feel the twin helix of anxiety and excitement curling within; something that he felt many years ago, waiting for his board results when the server was slow. But to a much lesser degree compared to what he was currently feeling.

"Dear Ronie," it said. "You have been shortlisted amongst millions of aspirants, in your step to become an official FanC Star. We have been following your channel closely and since you have won the bigger race already, there is a final step that still remains. The conditions are attached to this mail along with the agreement letter. If you are willing, please do the needful and send it back - signed.

We shall be waiting.

Keep that flame burning!

Team FanC"



Anik Sarkar
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The door opened suddenly, alarming him. A straight faced woman emerged from within, looking to the sides and then with a sharp, inward motion, she gestured toward a waiting Ronie to follow her inside the faintly lit corridor. Conscious of himself, his body stiffened as he heeded in, bowing underneath the thin arm of the woman who held the door open.

The corridor wasn't as slim as it seemed from outside. It was wide enough to comfortably fit a church organ. The door shut behind him as abruptly as it opened and his hands, still stiff, with fingers clubbed in front, let off an impression that he was uneasy. But no one seemed to be witnessing all these. The corridor only sheltered two potted house plants on wooden stools and a maroon wall-to-wall mat.

The woman behind him followed quietly, walking in measured steps. A sharp heel plucked on the floor, every second - as meticulous as a machine. Ronie could see the reflection of her purple close-fitting dress on the large brass pots. He couldn't help notice how well groomed she appeared even on an uneven surface. Perhaps everyone here, including the employees had to follow a strict protocol when it came to style and body maintenance. He did not mind as he liked working under stress.

It did him good.

“To the door on your left please,” said the soft dovelike voice behind him. Ronie glanced at the direction to see a dark brown mahogany door. The board on it carried the company’s logo embedded in a grey panel, encircled by the black insignia he seemed to notice on the sky - just as how it appeared on the app. He faintly knocked on the door at first and followed it with a louder tap, turning the knob as soon as a rotound voice permitted him entry, from within.

Inside, a man decked in a reddish suit studied him as he stepped in.

“Please,” said the man, pointing to a tulip chair. Seeing how Ronie was scanning the office - perhaps a little flushed, he spoke in a tone of assurance, “Don’t be surprised by the hideous nature of our office. It is just a regional centre of FanC. You should visit our headquarters in Delhi. It will put Antilia to shame. And with your prospects, I am sure you will have the chance very soon.” Saying so, his lips widened to a smile, appearing like a squeezed lemon between the index and thumb.

Ronie smiled too. He knew how the app worked. Not many were aware of the tricks he had uncovered over the course of time. With a single post, he could amass hundreds of views in seconds. Was he addicted to it? Or is obsession the word? He did not understand the difference. And right then, he didn’t care. He finally made it.

FanC now has regional centres in almost all districts. They have themed cafés. The company recently opened a store near his apartment, which sells FanC merchandise: t-shirts and mugs with the photos of FanC stars, FanC instant noodles and FanC soda. They also held FanC meets and live concerts every month. Everyone he knew was addicted to FanC. It was appalling.

“So, are you ready to become a sensation? Your entire day will be streamed live, now on. Only for your premium subscribers,” he winked. “From

the daily schedule: your chores, wardrobe arrangement, down to shopping and even when you sleep. You will be given a FanC suite of your own! There will be cameras in every corner of your rooms. From the bedroom, to the kitchen, dining, the workspace and your viewers will also be able to see you shoot your videos from scratch. Isn’t that exciting?”

Ronie thought for a while. This was something new. He hadn’t considered it before. He remembered how painful it was to shoot the perfect video. His gallery was filled with takes and retakes. And apart from that, the hundreds of ‘trial and error’ it involved. His premium viewers would be able to see that he was not as flawless as he appeared on his channel. That he too forgot his lines, he missed his steps, he fumbled and quite often, he was not even satisfied with his OOTD! Some days, he can be too picky. Other days, it could be a poor color combination that he will rectify after having shot the video.

But wasn’t this the life he had been dreaming of? He knew very well that although everyone has the option to make a video, not all of them can become a FanC pro. Even if the app’s tagline promises: “Your window to stardom”.

Perhaps once in a while, a video or two can go viral but that’s it. He had proven that he could do better than a 72-hour fame. In fact, he was one in a million. He worked day and night to reach this level: he bought subscribers using his dad’s credit card and even dropped out of college. He couldn’t abandon an opportunity of a lifetime. His hesitation waned.

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One night when he was unable to sleep, Ronie recalled the moment he screamed at Neha for labeling the FanC apartments, as a prison-house.

He had always felt Neha was less than successful as a star. She complained about the low quantity meals that they were offered to maintain their figures. How food delivery apps did not work on their phones and the fact that no one was allowed to eat outside. She made a fuss once about the long training hours and workshops every day, which she said was “draining their mental health.”

She dared to appeal to the headquarters, on the constant surveillance over every second of their lives. She was crazy to think that they had cameras planted inside the washrooms too. *She is surely losing her mind!* Ronie thought to himself.

He glanced at the clock. It was 3 am. The night vision cameras were on. He wondered which parts of the world was he being streamed in. Perhaps somewhere in Oklahoma or maybe in Tuscany. He had a lot of fans there. They asked him to do odd tasks now and then, but that was alright. Ronie was popular because he believed in his fandom. They made him who he was.

He decided to go online. And soon enough, thousands of fans greeted him. They had been waiting.

His gold subscriber sent him a 10 point credit. It came with a task: “Play the song *Tere Bina Zindagi..* and dance with a cat.”

Ronie laughed. He said, he “ain’t gonna do it for just 10 creds.”

The points doubled. Now it was 20.

Ronie shook his head.

The credit points shot up to 100.

Ronie’s eyes sparkled.

“You see,” said Ronie, “To afford a star, your payments have to stack up to the moon.”

“You ain’t no star. You are a slave. You dance at my command. You sing when I ask you to. You wore a horse-head last week reciting ring-a-ring-a-rosies and licked fruit jam off your toe. You think you are some kind of a personality? LOL. You are insane.”

The comments were filled with the laugh emoji. They jeered and teased Ronie. Some call him a low-life. Others

said, he was a nutcase.

Ronie couldn’t believe his eyes. He felt devastated.

“Shut up. All of you. I am leaving.”

Going offline on his channel, he sat quietly on the bed for a while. Then he looked up at the night cam. The green light was still blinking. It was live... as always.

Ronie searched for his recent viral video on WeTube to feel better. The one where he wore a horse mask on the subscribers’ request and read a poem.

It had over 10 lakh views. He decided to read the comments.

“Idiot”

“What a fool”

“What is this generation up to! People selling their reputation to get some likes and money.”

“His parents must be ashamed of him. What a loser!”

But he thought he was being cool! *People think funny is cool. What is happening?* Ronie was confused.

He decided to visit his older videos.

The comments were all the same: filled with hate, rage and disgust.

He immediately rang up the supervisor. The man who had hired him, initially.

“You are special Ronie,” he said. “You are a clown. Your job is to do odd things. That is why you are such a hit! Don’t you see? People love



watching these. You have an overwhelming fanbase!”

“But.. They don’t respect me! They hate me! They vent their anger and frustrations on me.”

“They still want to watch you and pay you. You matter to them!”

Ronie looked toward the camera by the mantelpiece. He had begun to understand that he exercised some power over them, even if it was twisted. He couldn’t do any better, he thought. The green light blinked through the night as Ronie browsed the local pet shop’s listings, looking for a camera-friendly cat.

Poetry



Picture courtesy Awaneesh Baibhav

The Sheath

I

What I love the most is a hammer.
It breaks, breaks everything. It Breaks masks.
It breaks hearts, idols. It breaks Souls
And unnecessary brains.
A hammer is an useful thing to Have.
What I love the most after a Hammer,
Is a needle.
A needle stitches, stitches Everything.
It stitches masks.
It stitches hearts. It stitches
Souls, and heads.
A needle is an useful thing to have.
What I hate the most is a Rose.
It creates bridges. It creates souls.
It creates warmth, and compassion,
And sensuality.
A Rose is a foul thing to have.
What I hate the most after a Rose,
Is a Pen.
A Pen questions. It writes a soul.
It writes a man, and woman,

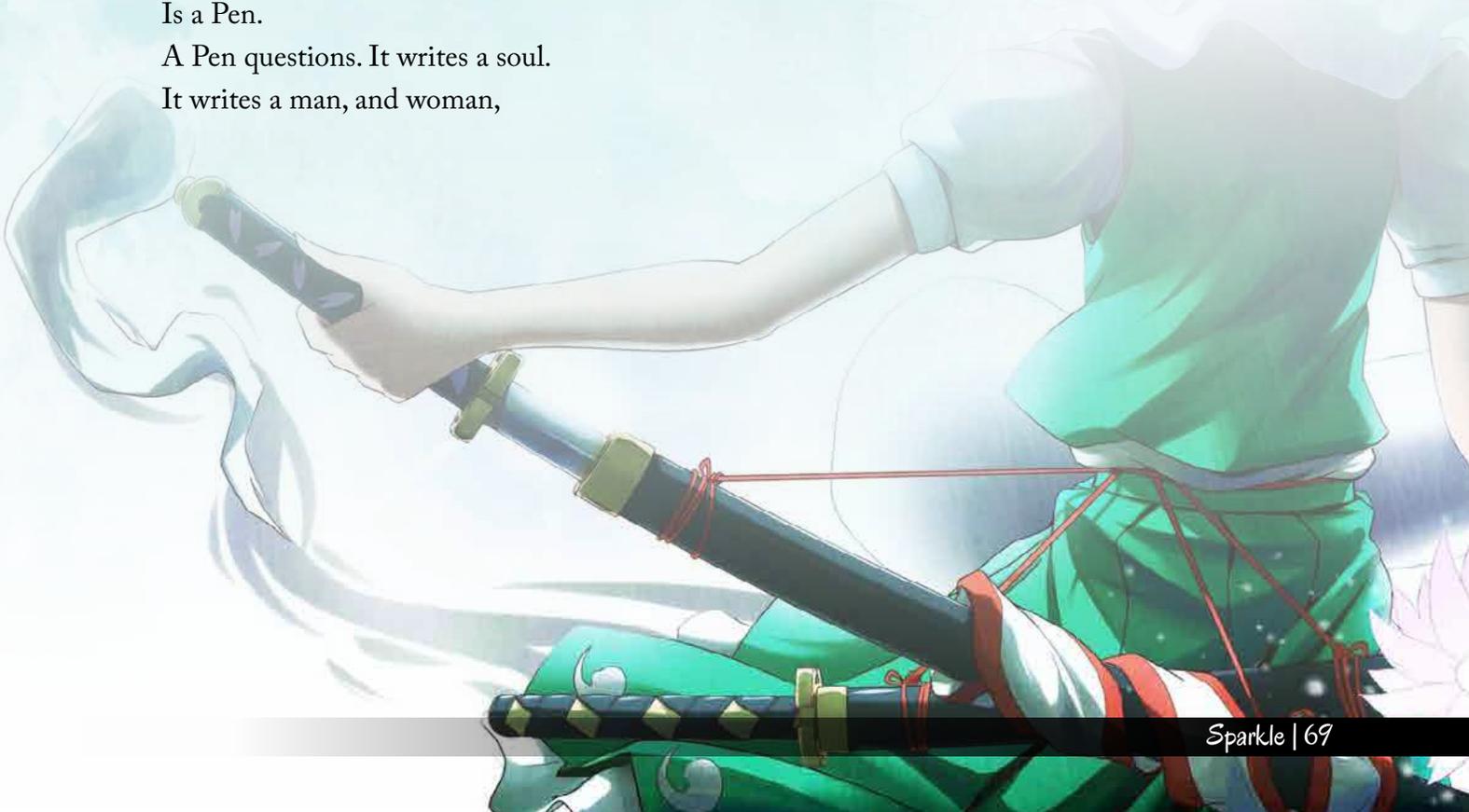


Hindol Chakraborty
Assistant Professor
Department of English

And everything.
A Pen writes Freedom. It writes the
Unknown.
A Pen is a foul thing to have.

II

A boring sunlight made me dull
After a huge rain.
A clear sky made me grey
After dark, and unsuccessful hours
With myself.
You spoke the truth, I denied.
You spoke the lie, I denied.
You asked me why.
I replied, "I have a sheath full of..."



Dyslexia



Sakshi Karki

2nd Sem, English Honours

I want to read every book, I want to read all of the classics, the Pulitzer Prize winners, the national bestsellers, the undiscovered contemporaries before their novels are turned into movies I want to write notes in the margins of pages with thought provoking insight, character motives and plot devices I want to read every single book on my bookshelf but it might just take me a little longer because the words seem to twist and turn and somehow change.

It started in the third standard, heard her voice say “READ THIS PARAGRAPH” I took the book in my hand, started to read it took me five times longer my tears oh I mean peers started to look at me all weird I couldn’t understand my heart started racing, hands shaking, face turned red, I couldn’t understand the words seem to flip and I seem to say something else, fumbling shaking somehow making it through the paragraph I couldn’t believe it took me so long, I didn’t understand.

There was only one teacher who tried to understand, bought a guitar and sang ABC till the end, repeated it till I understood in the green garden we spent our afternoons.

The doctor says, “no medicine has yet been found but exercise is key,” so I stretch my arms out, look at my thumb “concentrate! No don’t move your neck but follow the thumb with your eyes,” he says.

Well it’s been nine years and it hasn’t helped.

Certain letters are backwards and others change, some dance some talk but I can never understand what they

want. Certain words loose letters and others add letters. It’s always been theirs never there not yours but you’re, it all sounds the same but speels oh I mean spells different. I never seem to decode phonetics I always substitute words and sometimes even skip letters and words while reading I seem to make the same mistake speling oh I mean spelling mistake in the same paragraph again and again let’s just say scrabble isn’t my game.

Pity me I can’t spell des-lex-sia (dyslexia) itself.

All the words crash into each other, I rub my eyes, clear my throat and try again for the fifth time in the same line I hear a voice “YOU NEED TO LEARN TO FOCUS,” then I sigh.

Know that it doesn’t come from a place of ignorance or attitude I really tried it will just take me a little longer to finish because the words seem to twist and turn and somehow change



The Wave Scintillates



Anirban Barua
6th Sem, Education Honours

Yet the wave transcends you.
When the robust agonies of life afflicts
Surpassed by the core intrinsic fortitude,
Fortitude of which one says is vibrant meaning.

Yet the wave transcends you.
When the trouble of existential crisis befalls
Aided by Locke's revelation to character,
Character of which one says is relentless
discipline.

Yet the wave transcends you.
When the peculiarities of randomness puzzles
Cleared by the grand universal design of chaos,
Chaos of which Jung says is secret order.

Yet the wave transcends you.
When the unconscious seriousness of thinking
distorts
Healed by the eternal territory of silence,
Silence of which one says is disregarded
communication.

Yet the wave transcends you.
When the inflated hustle for success fails
Humbled by inevitable paradox of failure,
Failure of which one says is perennial guide.



Broken Glass!!



Abana Maji
2nd Sem, English Honours

The dispersed pieces of broken glass are
vigorous... If not hoarded then the pieces will
hurt... Broken pieces are the feelings...
Which are lost in the illusionistic world of
glass...

Stone of betrayal and lie breaks the glass...
The truthful image gets blurred... The mockery
of the stone fails the glass of righteousness...

A broken glass is useless... If not healed with
emotions and inspirations... The dispersed
pieces of broken glass can be revived if
emotions heal the cracks...

Recover!

Don't let yourself get into the room of
unrequited love...

Where the streak of hope too leads you to the
bottomless pain...

The heaviness of unanswered aspiration
prevents your happiness...

And pushes you further towards uncertainty
and disconsolation...

Absurdness cannot be fought against...

But the bond between amalgamation and
determination builds up the stairs towards our
dreams really strong...

Destiny will lead the destined to the
destination...

And the Noble Truth "God's plans benefits us
the most."

Own the Sky



Aishariya Dasgupta
2nd Sem, Economics Honours

Rise like the phoenix, burn like the sun
Thy future calls thee, the battle has already begun.

Be wise and witty in life's long run
Because what is done, cannot be undone.
Make honesty your weapon, stand alone

Even in your darkest times
Put a smile on your face, but never moan.

God has made us all unique, gifted us with
different talents

But it's up to us how we act, whether nervous
or gallant.

Hold onto your dreams, do not let it die
Without dreams, life is like a wounded bird
that cannot fly.

Make your dreams big, make your chase strong
Know your potential, know where you truly
belong;

Let your sparkling personality be your shield
Unleash the truths which have been left
unrevealed.

Even the impossible can be done
The toughest challenge can be won
Every time your efforts go in vain
Believe in yourself and you'll know how to rise
again.

Embark on a new journey
Let your travel never end,
Keep on heading in the same direction
Though the path may sometimes bend,
If your failures dishearten you, never cry
Make the leap and own the sky.

राह तुम चलो अंत के पार



Anirban Barua
6th Sem, Education Honours

और मत पूछो गोरे हो या काले,
जिसने तुम्हे मुझसे बाटे!
जब फिरक्ती बादले वर्ष झुमाए
और निरीह बच्चे इधर उधर लूतजू हो जाए।

और मत पूछो गोरे हो या काले,
जिसने तुम्हे मुझसे बाटे!
जब ज्ञान की संघार मस्तीक पर ठहराह
और मानो हर संस्कृति जो भिन्न लगे, वो अभिन्न हो जाए।

और मत पूछो गोरे हो या काले,
जिसने तुम्हे मुझसे बाटे!
जैसे कोही भ्रमित युवा अहंकार भरे मांगे इज्जत
उससे जरा पीने दो जीवन की, विनम्रता की हैसियत।

और मत पूछो गोरे हो या काले,
जिसने तुम्हे मुझसे बाटे!
जैसे प्रकाश की रेंज ने दिखाए दगाबाजी की कीमत
ए नैन इस एहसास को ना भूल जरा, यही है मेरी नियत।

The Forgotten Road



Arya Subba
2nd Sem, English Honours

Hold my hands, let me take you down
the endless road
Take a deep breath and let go of all the
delusional thoughts of the world
Don't let the world wangle you into the
sea where millions astray
Instead join me, for too long you've been
sunk under the sea
Look out and see the broader space how
beautiful is our Earth
People under the sea seem to forget
nature's beautiful works
Let me take you away from this
consternation flung day and night
Away from the crowd and away from the
roads where the lights are in control
The road leads to a peaceful world where
nature has kissed gently
Where birds chirp in joy and the clouds
dance to it
Where the air is so pure, the air itself
breathes
Where the soul finds its destination and
everybreath in it makes the soul pure
Our ancestors, brave and rebellious, who
fought for our freedom
While us, we lay down and struggle for
the likes and comments.
Human inventions have come so far to
facilitate the daily work
But today it seems as if the devices are in
control of the living race
These devices are the ones that makes the
people drown
So walk this way where I lead you to and
abjure to the ways under the sea
Make use but do not be used by the
inventions of the modern world
After all it is the nature that rules and
each one of us has to bow down to it.

Known to the Unknown



Diksha Kafley
2nd Sem, English Honours

Until that day, I was unknown
And the day, the day, they covered me
with a pall, I was known
“Ah! She was a holy old lady.”
Few weeped, “My grandmother!”
Son lamented, “My mother!”
Years being bedridden
Syringes, medicines, prescriptions, they
regarded me their pal. Crawled and
hopped to the washroom,
I belittled my hanging foot
However, pulled a spoonful of rice, Diana
assisted me live till eighty-two.
How I panicked, I lost my breath, I closed
my burdened yet responsible eyes,
That day was my day.
I was everyone's own.
Until that day, I was unknown.

Mother



Mibir Raj Limbu
2nd Sem, English Honours

The sounds of waves on a distant cove,
Reminded me of an unending love.
A love that is completely free,
But still many do not see.

Prevailing through the sounds of time,
Its purest, fairest and prime.
I didn't see this love, neither in friends nor
lover,
For this feeling was only in the heart of the
mother.

No matter how hard and deep was the injury,
Your soothing touch has always been the
best cure.

In spite of my thousand lies,
You were always there to answer my cries.
Through the nightmares, to the toughest
ride,

You always stood strongly as my shield, by
my side.

But now I stand on empty roads,
Because I did not follow your words.

For you I can leave anything forever,
I will cross the mountains and rivers.
I can wait tirelessly in the longest queue,
Because 'mother', I'm lost without you.



Tangerine



Amy Karthak Lepcha
2nd Sem, M.A. English Honours

It is inscrutable and erratic
An ideal it is not,
Impeccable can never be
Undisputedly the opposite.
Its colour adhered inside my world
I added a cloud, Orange.
When it hits me
It brings me warmth
Joy by its side,
With no sense of discomfiture.
Shall I let it stay?
Or rather abandon
For the void inside
Slowly attains to get back
With delight,
Tinge and hue of tangerine.
Unable to decipher,
The feeling, the state
No approval of it staying,
Not letting it go either.
Therefore, I shall hold on
To what I have now.

Courage To Look Ahead



Marsom Lepcha
4th Sem, M.A. English Honours

Wandered around the town,
remarkable alley, delicious awning.
Modesty blending inviting colors,
parked unyielding desires,
besides the inestimable excitement.

Biased setting,
mistreated the courage,
spaced out, lingering near void.
Ambushed crowd sympathies,
hollow pride proceeded to creep.

Reminded, just another day,
Holding the cap of resilience
Step down, from unreal allusions.

Step up, out of distressed walls,
Bitter I failed to mend.

Better I grow and progress.
Values escaped, mistaken by lad,
Be patient, pray, the man suggests.

Subtle Mirror



Marsom Lepcha
4th Sem, M.A. English Honours

Inaudible mirror,
reacts nothing but yet responds,
reveals the arduous consent,
the consent of reflection,
muses the unseen confidence.
Crack downs, often requisite,
little instant gratification.
Words fail to express usually,
the extra effort, industrious push,
'Unquestioning frame' justifies all.
Subtle glare touches horizons,
yet remains symbiotic for self,
'Imitation device' host gaiety,
stables hovering curiosity,
carved the satisfaction of lie.
Though, visibly delicate, breakable,
no mater, upbeat reflection;
do forge the resistance.

Endless Sky



Jeet Bhadra
4th Sem, B.com. Honours

You are seen in different shades;
Each as beautiful as it can be.
You are the space, you hold the clouds from
which the light emerge.
You are a symbol of Hope,
Which comes in different shades.
Each as heavenly as it can be.

Ripples in Time



Mimansa Subedi
6th Sem, English Honours

Somewhere in time it got lost
Somewhere in ripples
It was not formed
Somewhere in the skyline street
Somewhere boundaries got muddled
Where dreams changed
Like a river
That changes its course
But again
Somewhere in time
It formed
Like a seedling
With hands of care and ripples of love.

When I Think About My Mom



Jhanavi Jajodia
4th Sem, B.com. Honours

Mom, Maa, Aai, Amma or Mummy
Different names but designation same.
Going through the vessel of pain,
Giving us birth and dying for our name.
Serving us all our life and standing by our side,
With no demands and no complaints.

From hearing our cries and crying for us,
To crying in silence because of our rude words,
They taught us how to live,
For us and for others.

From homemakers to world leaders,
From sportsperson to entrepreneurs,
They can handle families of four,
Business, startups, politics and more.

An idol of patience and compassion,
Solutions to our problems and tension,
Given by God, a toll-free number,
The one which never goes out of order.

They are a special gift of God,
A creation away from the normal race,
An exception in herself,
A deity in humanly face.

Love them, adore them,
Care for them and stay with them,
Blessed are those to have them in life,
For many have to face their sad demise.

TO ALL THE LOVELY AND BEAUTIFUL MOTHERS!!

People aren't Homes

Why did no one ever teach,
You cannot turn people into homes?
People are rivers, ever changing,
Ever flowing.
They will disappear with everything you put
inside them.
Still, your home does have a heartbeat.
But it isn't one to be locked in
Anyone else's chest.
Just
Look inside
Your own.

Queens

"What is a queen without her king?"
I don't know, but let's ask
Jhansi ki Rani,
Cleopatra,
Nefertiti,
Sammuramat,
Victoria,
Elizabeth,
Amina,
Tzu-hsi and
The countless other kingless queens
Who turned mere kingdoms into
The greatest of Empires.



Meghna Lama
2nd Sem, B.com. Honours

Like a Phoenix From the Ashes

They may defeat you,
burn you,
insult you,
injure you,
and abandon you,
but they
will not,
shall not,
and cannot
destroy you,
for you,
like Rome,
were built on ashes,
and you
like a phoenix
know how to resurrect.



The Nightmare Choir



Ninor Bhutia
2nd Sem, History Honours

I just cannot sleep,
Blinded honestly,
Forgiven prophesy,
I just cannot see,

I just wanna close my eyes,
I just cannot close my eyes,
They just wanna kill my vibe,
Promise you won't kill my vibe?

I'm just sad inside,
And I'm not satisfied,
Birds don't tell no lies,
Skulls don't start a fight,

When it's night time,
Anxiety hits the right time,
I just had a thrill chilling adrenaline rush,
Maybe it's just a curse!

If you would just be me,
Would you let your soul bleed?
Cold feet heart sweats nightmare choir,
Lone feel mind stoned null and void.

Men!



Priyanka Karmakar
2nd Sem, BBA Honours

I have seen men,
Some short and handsome,
Some are tall and dark.
Some with great personality,
Some filled with negativity.
Why do you all say, men are dogs?
Do they bark?
Some offer you a seat,
And some pull out the chair,
I saw a girl eating ice-cream,
And her man holding her disturbing hair.
Some look at your eyes,
Some look down,
Some will call you a queen with a crown!
Some with shiny hair,
Some have hair fall,
Some will ignore you,
Some will be there at your one call!
Some are clear about their goals,
Some don't know where to start,
Some are bad at expressing feelings,
Some easily open up their hearts!
Some will make you cry,
And some will wipe your tears,
Some will help you cover with saree,
And help you drape,
Some will uncover you,
Because some are morons who rape!
Because of one man who did wrong,
Will the entire group be blamed?
Because one man who broke your heart,
So, are they "dogs"? That you named?
If women are like Goddesses,
Then men are like Gods too,
Because it's equality,
As said by you!

Highway



Puja Paul

2nd Sem, English Honours

Come with me
Escape this life
Wild and free
No more strife

Let's get out of this town
Away from everyone
Who's pushing us down
Not letting us have fun

We'll drive on this road
Miles and miles
Nothing owed
And no more trials

Looking ahead
We don't have a clue
The pages unread
I'll read them with you

It will just be us
And I know what you'll say
But there's no need to fuss
Together on the highway

Always Be Mine



Rabul Pradhan

2nd Sem, English Honours

If you are my ocean,
I wish to flow.
If you are my book,
Each word I'd like to know.
If you are my rain,
I wish to get wet.
If you are my song,
I will never switch off my headset.
If you are my air,
I wish to fly.
If you will be always mine,
Nothing of yours I will ever deny.

Family Isn't Always Blood, It's a Free Will



Rajil Kumar Singhal
6th Sem, B.Com Honours

Family isn't always blood,
It's a free will,
I promise this is true.

Family are the people who,
Simply love you for you.
Family has no strings attached,
They take you as you are.
They are always there to listen,
No matter near or far.

Family gives you what you need,
Even if it's tough.
Sometimes all we need to hear,
Is that we are enough.

Family loves us when we're happy,
And even when we're sad.
They celebrate the little things,
We didn't know we had.

Family doesn't have to be your Mom or Dad;
Sometimes God gives us the people,
To fill the void we have.
They fill the voids within our hearts,
They love us to the core.
They'd do anything to see you smile;
And this is for sure.

Family gives you nice warm hugs,
Lots of advice too.
Family will drop everything,
To stop and pray for you.

Family is there by your side,
through the thick and thin.
They're always rooting on your team,
They want to see you win.

Family isn't always blood,
I'm saying this again.
It's the people that are there for you,
Until the very end...

A Girl's Life



Roshni Chhetri
2nd Sem, B.Com Honours

Before birth,
Mumma will you accept me, as nobody
wants me to live
Mumma will you fight for me, will you
make me live
Mumma I want to see the beautiful
world, will you allow me to do so
Please don't kill me ma, I m your shadow.

After her birth , dad will you accept me,
Will you love me as you love your son
Will you care, as mum care for me .

When she gets married to someone
whom she doesn't even know
Are you happy with me, as I am
Will, you love me as I started loving you,
Will you care me as I care for you
Will you accept me as your love, as I accepted you.
After giving birth to a child ,
my son, do u love me as I love u,
You're my life, am I your life?

My world rounds around you, do you care a bit for
me,

Will, you make me meet your friends as I
Introduce you to my friends,

But the answer remains same, as girl always
sacrifice,

A girl always love, her father, brother, friend,
husband, son,

But in return she always gets a question mark?
Will they accept her?



I Miss



Saideep Chhetri
2nd Sem, English Honours

I miss
cities that I have never visited,
the books I have never read,
the hearts I have never broken,
the tears I have never shed.
I crave for the love I never got,
the thoughts I never had,
the smiles I never showed,
the person I never was.

Flying Tales



Shweta Mazoomdar
2nd Sem, English Honours

A gust of mind, might be though,
Strength it may seek through,
Through all the gaps it strongly blows,
Even where the water flows,
Tales everywhere, a telling tale!
Blossoming flowers drowning the dimming
dale,
The dimming dale? The shinier unshining?
The cloudily cloudy one reviving,
The singingly singing one numb,
Oh! The world defines as dumb,
The music hitting on suddenly,
Did it happen quite triggering-ly?
Sensualizing each taste,
Might it be the thought of a date?
Dancing through the mellow fields,
A telling tale! Finally yields.
The hues, the blues, might be dues...
Yet does not fail to reach the avenues,
The oscillating waves, the fulfilling behaves,
Oh! Quite the unfulfilling zigzagged-ness
behold;
The colors which the waves behold;
Discolored, may it be, but colors hold,
Broken, though, it may seem,
Engraves passion into an ethereal anthem,
A flying tale, a telling tale,
Indeed, springs up a dimming dale.

Un-growing



Shweta Mazoomdar
2nd Sem, English Honours

There are certain complexities,
Entwining the mind with velocities,
Through little, tiny calibers,
Beaming through with variousness,
Piling up with sugar coating,
Ever checked the sugar bloating?
Knowingly should you end it with a ding?
Or should you let it sing?
Shivering as you reach the freeze,
Oh! Did you capture a sneeze?
While absorbing the calm breeze,
The flow too short for a tweeze.
Every flowering seed viewed,
An unflowering one thoroughly reviewed,
At times, invariably declined,
Soon to be renovated,
The red intuition coming in,
Should it be followed blinking in?

My Mummy and Daddy



Songamla Nagaleknao
2nd Sem, English Honours

Better, settler had it been.
Un-growing would accept unseen.
The first love that I received,
The first word that I learnt,
In my life: mummy and daddy.
The care that has been around me,
From the beginning of my life.
My God that I can see with my eyes.
My best teacher that teaches me the best,
And understands me the most.
My best friend in my life,
Who knows me very well.
My best lawyer, that fights for me in any
situation.
My most important and precious thing in my
life,
Is my mummy and daddy.



The Dream



Soni Kumari
2nd Sem, B.com. Honours

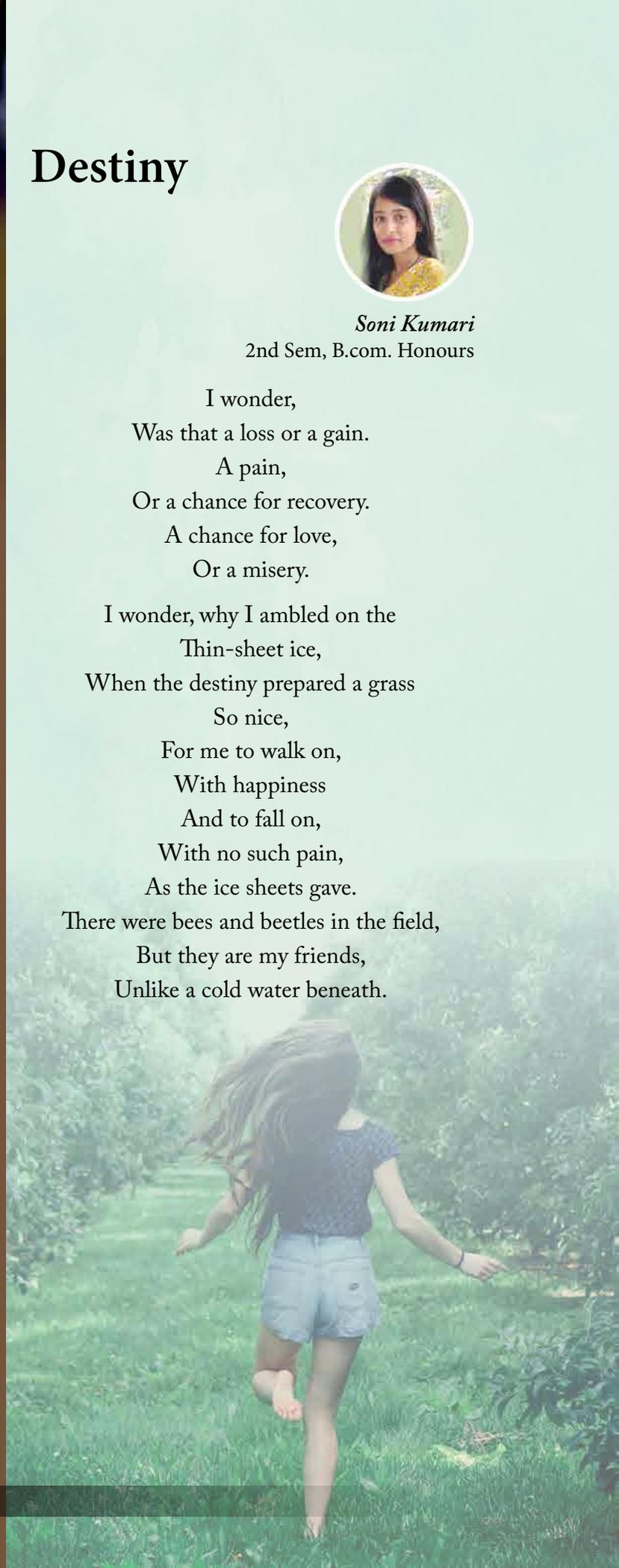
I had a dream,
That the greens finally felt alive,
And the forest roared and growled again.
Where the nations joined their hands,
To become a world,
And the mercy was felt from far above,
Oh there, we saw the dove.
Where the oceans waved back with waves
And not wastes,
And people loved people before going to
their graves.
Where life was a journey,
Of laughter, love, and faith,
Oh there, God's mercy was felt.
Where the genders had their own significance,
And people touched skies by staying rooted.
Where love and air were in abundance,
had no fear of future, past nor present.
Where I was greater than
the battle raging in my mind,
Where David's stories were redefined,
And 'I' was no longer a thing to find.
And then the eyes unfold,
To see the bitter reality of life,
And to behold.
That mess needs to be rearranged,
Our life demands us to change.

Destiny



Soni Kumari
2nd Sem, B.com. Honours

I wonder,
Was that a loss or a gain.
A pain,
Or a chance for recovery.
A chance for love,
Or a misery.
I wonder, why I ambled on the
Thin-sheet ice,
When the destiny prepared a grass
So nice,
For me to walk on,
With happiness
And to fall on,
With no such pain,
As the ice sheets gave.
There were bees and beetles in the field,
But they are my friends,
Unlike a cold water beneath.



F.R.I.E.N.D.S

Sonia Gupta

6th Sem, B.com. Honours



On days cloudy and grey, when things don't seem
to be fine,

Or on days sunny and yellow, when we marvel at
God's design.

We have something in common from beginning
to the end,

Perhaps, it's called a 'friend'.

If some alien reads this someday, he might ask
"Who are friends?"

To answer that bewildering question my alien
friend, read and repeat along with me:

They are the one on whom you can rely and
depend,

The one on whom you can trust, as they will never
pretend,

The one who will be there for you when you need
them,

The one who might not be physically present, but
are no less than a hidden gem,

They are so close to you that even in their
absence, you will know what they want to say to
you,

The one with whom that bond never breaks, each
day seems the same yet there is always something
new.

But careful my alien reader, if the bond breaks,
don't worry they were never your true friends,
But if you still feel void and empty, make amends,

The biggest thing that breaks friendship or any
other relationship is misunderstanding and ego,
In friendship we should try to keep our ego aside
and solve every misunderstanding, if not then let
go;

But do try once, not by talking with the third
person but by talking with the person whom you
have misunderstanding with,

Not just in friendship but in any relationship

we should try to keep our ego side and solve
everything, with your heart and not your wit,

There will come ups and downs in your life, the
downs are the test of your friendship,

The real friends will stay with you in your
prosperity and hardships.

But not every friend would be the same, with
each friend we have different bond,

Each person is unique and each friend are special
in their way, but the love they give you is out and
beyond.

Friends are like diamonds that can be cherished
for a lifetime,

They are the one who will make you laugh even in
your hard time.

They might not solve your problem but they will
for sure reduce it.

But careful again my alien reader, it's not
necessary every friend can help you reduce your
problem or fix it,

But for sure friends are the one who will be there
for you, and will never let you singularly face it.

The one who will listen to you,

If you are right, they will support you, and mind
it, a very few actually do.

And if wrong, they will object and make you
understand,

But will stick with you even if things don't go as
planned.

The one that gets true friend is the luckiest one,
But careful again alien reader, quality matters, you
can have one true friend but never a ton.

With this I hope you will make a friend, and I
end my lesson,

If you even have one friend, smile and stay merry,
as friends stay the same at all times and in every
dimension.

What Do I Want?



Suman Agarwal
6th Sem, B.com. Honours

I want those old days back-
When I had no worry,
When I could be a child,
When life was not a hurry.

I want to be there again-
Where I could run wildly,
Where I could be myself,
Where life moved on happily.

I want to be young once more-
And walk past those meadows,
And leave behind my troubles,
And resolve all my sorrows.

I want a lot of answers-
Why I had to grow up?
Why couldn't I lie down?
Why did my life get stuck?

But you don't get what you want-
Because life is but a hurry,
Because all troubles can't be solved,
Because it is not always merry.

It's Okay Not To Be Okay



Vaidik Agarwal
2nd Sem, B.com. Honours

It's okay to be lonely, it's okay to be sad, it's okay to not have much friends, it's okay if you are single, it's okay if you don't have a best friend.

But, it's not okay to hate yourself, it's not okay to feel hated, it's not okay to lose all hopes. You must have gone through many obstacles, maybe many of your friends don't like you, maybe you're suffering through a financial crisis, maybe your closest one cheated on you but believe me somewhere someone loves and cares for you, someone is dying to get a reply from you. Life without ups and downs is similar to a horror movie without ghosts. After every dark night, a bright sunny morning comes, so will the good time. Love yourself and so will the others. Trust yourself, you have survived a lot, and will survive whatever is coming. Nothing can bring you peace but yourself. So believe in yourself. Time heals everything; it will heal you too, so keep faith in time and God.

Picture Pandemic



Veronica Baroi

4th Sem, M.A. English Honours

Share with me your pain
We can sit and chat under the stars,
When sleep does not stay
As it keeps running away.

Dare to take a step
In this chaotic world, we stay,
Don't turn away
From the worry that stare.

Sing with me a song
To revive and renew,
The joy and peace
We once had shared.

Rain your head with lives
That show strength and survival,
That we may be victorious
Of this present pandemic pain.

Give credit to yourself
And even to all you know,
Living in a storm
Is hard to restore.

Believe in humanity
Because it has not ended,
Become the helping hand
Because we are all needed.

The Metaphor



Priyambara Chhetri

6th Sem, *History Honours*

Sometimes I feel so numb from within,
just like that rose whose life was stolen
to beautify somebody's brief moment as a
testimony of an egotistical love affair.

And Oh! What tragedy?!

Nor can she embrace death peacefully until
she ages lifelessly only to wither away,
unnoticed.

Still, I wonder how it's so painlessly beautiful
even when it is so out of place,
so devoid of life.

Thus, I compared myself to it as I sat there so
drained of life yet unmoved on the outside. ~
reckless

Reports





“It’s better to look ahead and prepare, than to look back and regret.”

Salesian College Commerce Association (SCCA) is an intradepartmental association which represents the Department of Commerce in the college. SCCA is associated with the organizing and management of various events held in the Commerce Department. Incubated in the year 2017, by the pioneers of change and development in the department, some of the greatest minds Salesian College has ever witnessed, under the guidance of our supportive faculty, SCCA aims to enhance the college culture creating events that may give the students a taste of the real world. The cell has come a long way in serving its purpose with stronger and better events every year, making it an association which not only helps an individual to learn new things but also, evolve. The Association this year was led under the guidance of our exceptional animators, Mrs. Gunjan Agarwal and Mrs. Tanisha Kansal. Without their support and motivation, SCCA wouldn’t have had achieved what it has throughout the course of this year.

The year began with us coming up with a rather unique event called GIRGIT. It was an amalgamation of TURNCOAT and JAM which made the event a sight for the eyes. The competition was tough and the stakes high, as we intended to back all our events with great rewards for the winners, because we believe rewards are the token of motivation which make the students want to participate in more and more such happenings. The event GIRGIT was such a blockbuster that we had to do it again in a span of two months but this time larger and better with other colleges participating. The event went to become the epitome of success when more than seven countries participated in our event making it an international level grandeur.

We believe in educating the students about the various mud pools one may face once they get into the tough competitive world. With the help of seminars led by splendid speakers we tried to teach the people what life is. We had two seminars this year, one being “Celebrating failures in order to get closer to success” led by Mr. Akhil Iyer and the other one about “The necessities of Digital Marketing” done by Mr. Pankaj Karmakar.

We do believe that the pandemic has hit us all severely and that we need to come together in order to overcome it. Thus we planned to create a fun event under which we, the members of SCCA would play Secret Santa and appreciate the gifts we received. It made all of us



Vikshit Bansal

6th Sem, B.Com. Honours

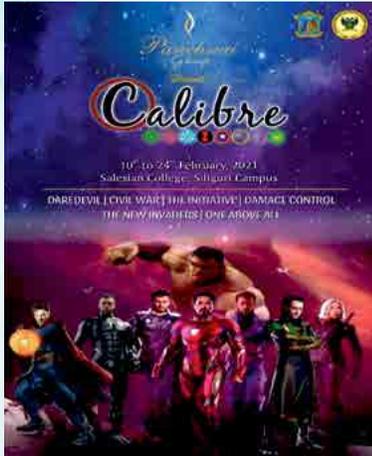
feel connected and happy amidst the lockdown. We also organized a shark tank event known as “Investigation”. This was a two way event under which both the sharks and the business proposers were participants. The event was a great accomplishment again.

Furthermore, we had our zenith level event, CONOSCENZA, which was an intradepartmental commerce event under which the students of the commerce department participated in a series of events in various groups formed through auctioning in order to find out who amidst all, emerges victorious. Conoscenza this year was in a scale no one could ever imagine. Stages all set, glimmering trophies and humongous cash prizes on the line and ocean sized zeal of the students, led to the event’s success. This very event embarked a higher and distinct level of events which not only were interesting but also, educational.

The Report of the Special Event Calibre 2021



Anirban Ghosh
Assistant Professor
Department of BBA



The Department of Management Studies, Salesian College, Siliguri Campus, organised its annual Business Fest, Calibre, on February 24, 2021. The pre tasks for the event had begun on February 10, including a two day carnival from February 22 to 23. The inauguration of the carnival was done by Rev. Fr. (Dr.) Babu Joseph, Vice Principal. Calibre provides a platform for the management students to showcase their managerial skills in real life

business scenarios that challenge them to think on the go and make a practical application of what is learned in class. One gets to witness the coalescence of the finest exponents of managerial acumen, as the teams compete in a series of events in a bid to emerge victorious. The event has been designed to help students get accustomed with the functioning of the business world and promotes the start-up culture among them, hence transforming them into being able to take strategic and thoughtful decisions independently.

This year was different from the previous years as the organizers, the final year students, along with their faculty decided to conduct the first ever BBA Carnival which was not just restricted to food stalls but also games. There were eight teams and each team was restricted to invite not more than 60 guests, keeping in mind the pandemic situation.

The final day began on February 24 at 9:30 am with the inaugural prayer and lighting of the lamp by Rev. Fr. George Thadathil, Principal, Salesian College. This was followed by a short motivational speech by Mr. Anirban Ghosh, Faculty and Coordinator. The day went on to be exiting with a tight competition amongst the eight teams. The judges were extremely helpful and their feedback towards the end guided everyone helping them understand what needed

to be done better the next time and received praises as well. Father Babu and Father George together presented the awards to the winning teams followed by a photo session with all the students. Team Loki stood first and team Hulk was placed second.

Calibre'21 being organized



with a lot of hard work and dedication was a grand event. The organizers were glad to see every participant participate enthusiastically which made this event a successful one. It would not have been possible without the support of the sponsors: The Panchnai Group and Benelli.



ENSPIRE

IDEATE TO INNOVATE

High above the sky stands Swarga, paradise, abode of the gods. Still above is Vaikuntha, heaven, the abode of God. The doorkeepers of Vaikuntha are the twins, Jaya and Vijaya, both of whose names mean 'victory'. One keeps you in Swarga; the other raises you into Vaikuntha. But the core remains the same: truth, courage, honour and the urge to be more than the expected.

This urge craved a hunger, a zeal which taught us all that to get ahead, first we have to get started. Living up to this idea, we the members of Entrepreneurship Development Cell (EDC), Salesian College Siliguri Campus (SCSC), never spare any effort in making this world a welcoming womb to the budding aspirations of young minds. Adroit to our motto, Innovation | Knowledge | Growth, we are a hub of people who share the grit to explore the unusual, create the unimaginable and walk the untrodden path of creation through ideation.

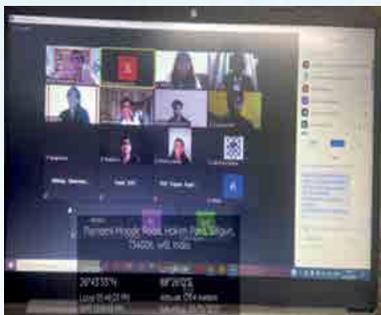
This motivation and dedication towards fulfilling our motive, sowed a seed in each one of

us to create a platform wherein all the aspiring entrepreneurs of the world come together as one, which yielded the Yggdrasil, ENSPIRE - Ideate to Innovate.

ENSPIRE 2021 was a 3 day Global Level Inter-Collegiate Entrepreneurial fest that hosted 8 special events in various spheres of the corporate world along with other activities to challenge the intelligence, critical acumen and entrepreneurial abilities of participants from all across the world.

More than 1900 students registered for this fest and the winners were awarded crate-full of surprises along with total Cash prizes worth INR 25000 and tickets to Singapore.

The fest also witnessed the support of eminent personalities like Mr. Gaurav Sundaramanan Cricket analyst ESPNCRICINFO , Miss Priyanka Madnani, Founder and CEO - Easy to Pitch, Mr. Shyam Sekhar, Mr. Rakesh Mishra and many more who graced the event in the



capacity of members of the jury panel which itself added to the success of this venture.

As we know, in Vaikuntha there is bliss forever. This world can be a mirror image of Vaikuntha if all start to take steps for a better tomorrow. ENSPIRE was an eye-opener. It

helped us not only witness the immense talent that the students all across the globe possess but also helped us unveil our potentials. All in all, ENSPIRE fulfilled its motive of INSPIRING lives who choose to walk the untrodden path of Creation and Innovation.

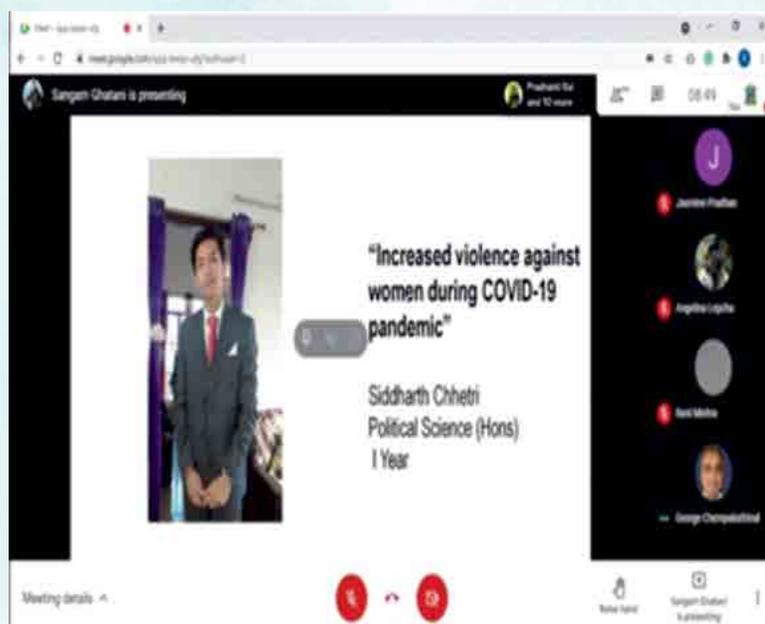


Report on Special Assembly

Human Rights Cell
Department of Political Science

On Tuesday, 18th May 2021, Human Rights Cell under the supervision of Department of the Political Science organized an online assembly on the theme, “The ongoing Covid19 and its impact on Human Rights in India”. The online assembly started at 8:40 am with the opening remarks by Sir Sangam Ghatani, Assistant Professor from the Political Science Department who also subsequently presented slides with photos, data charts and graphs as the speakers spoke consecutively.

The first student to present the outline of the theme was Angelina Subba from 2nd year followed by Rani Mishra from 3rd year who spoke disparagingly on “The second wave of Covid19 and the drawbacks of the government.” The next speaker Jasmine Pradhan from 3rd year presented her topic on “Second Wave and it’s impacts on Human Rights”. Then, Siddharth Chhetri from 1st year lamented on, “Increase in violence against women during the pandemic”. And lastly, Nimisha Benjamin from 3rd year highlighted her concluding note on the theme.



Salesian Model United Nation 2021



Saloni Agarwal

6th Sem, Department of English Honours

The first ever Salesian Model United Nations was a three-day event from the 9th April to 11th April, 2021.

9th April, 2021, Siliguri: The first day of Salesian Model United Nation (SMUN) began with an Opening Ceremony in the Kilian Hall. After the lighting of the lamp, the delegates and the heads of the different committees (Lok Sabha, Security Council and the Human Rights Council.) were first addressed by Principal, Fr. (Prof) Dr. George Thadathil followed by Secretary General of the SMUN, Themsorin H Ningshenth. The Dias was then handed over to Ayush Agarwal, Student Coordinator for SMUN who briefed the students about the events that were going to take place that day and in the days to come. The students then broke into their respective committees and moved to the different classrooms that were assigned. A reporter and a photographer from the International Press committee were assigned to attend each committee session. The committee sessions were followed by a press meet where the press members were allowed to ask questions. After two committee sessions the day came to an end.

10th April, 2021, Siliguri: The second day of Salesian Model United Nation (SMUN) began with a common gathering in the Kilian Hall where the students were addressed by faculty co-ordinator Sangam Sir. The delegates and the heads of the different committees were instructed to move to the classrooms assigned where the committee sessions were scheduled to begin. The classrooms were prepared by the Conference Management team and one Conference Management Officer was assigned to each of the committees. One reporter and one photographer from the International Press committee were also assigned to attend the committee sessions namely, Lok Sabha, Security Council and the Human Rights Council. After the completion of two committee sessions, the delegates were invited for lunch which was followed by another committee session. The committee sessions were followed by a press meet wherein the members of the International Press asked questions to the delegates.

The day ended with socials and some refreshments.

11th April, 2021, Siliguri: The third day of Salesian Model United Nation began with a common gathering in the Kilian Hall where the students were addressed by faculty co-ordinator Sangam Sir. The delegates led by the heads of their respective committees were then instructed to move to the classrooms assigned where the committee sessions were scheduled to begin. One reporter and one photographer from the International Press committee was assigned to attend the committee sessions namely, Lok Sabha, Security Council and the Human Rights Council. After the completion of two committee sessions, the delegates were invited for lunch which was followed by another committee session. The day ended with an award ceremony where father principal handed over the various award to the deserving delegates and mementos to the heads of different committees acknowledging their contribution in organising the entire event. The award ceremony ended with a vote of thanks delivered by the Deputy Secretary General Ayush Agarwal followed by the Secretary General Themsoren H. Ningschen declaring the SMUN 2021 closed. The award ceremony was followed by a photo session where group photographs of the different committees were taken.



Department of Mathematics Report on Webinar “The Story of π ”

by
Prof. Nayandeeep Deka Baruah

August 26, 2020



Report prepared by:
Snigdha Roy

and supplemented by:
Subhajit Paul

Asst. Prof's., Dept. of Mathematics,
Salesian College, Siliguri.
August 27, 2020.

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Department of Mathematics
in collaboration with IQAC

Presents
A WEBINAR

THE STORY OF
 π

speaker

DR. NAYANDEEP DEKA BARUAH
Professor, Department of Mathematical
Sciences, Tezpur University, Assam, INDIA.

August 26, 2020
10:45 AM to 12:30 PM

Patron:
Fr (Prof) George Thadathil, SDB, Principal
and Chairman, IQAC.

Convenor:
Fr Aju Kurian, SDB, Vice Principal -
Sciences.

Co-Convenors:
Mr Debdiut Sengupta

Supported by:
Mr. Subhajit Paul
Ms. Snigdha Roy

Technical Assistance:
Ms Yadika Prasad
Mr Dhirodama Subba

Preamble

A one-day webinar was organized on August 26, 2020, by the Department of Mathematics, Salesian College, Siliguri, in collaboration with the IQAC. The title of the webinar was “The story of π ”. The invited speaker for the programme was Dr. Nayandeeep Deka Baruah, Professor, Department of Mathematics, Tezpur Central University, Assam. The webinar was held via Google Meet platform using the college G-Suite facility and was streamed live in YouTube via the link <https://youtu.be/7WRclqmfwb4>.

Participants' profile

A total of 73 participants including faculty members, researchers and students from different institutes participated in the webinar. The profile for the organising committee were as follows:

- Patron: Fr. (Prof.) George Thadathil, Principal & Chairman of IQAC;
- Convenor: Fr. Aju Kurian, Vice



Principal, Deanery of Sciences;

- Co-convenor: Mr. Debdut Sengupta, Asst. Prof., Dept. of Mathematics;
- Supported by: Mr. Subhajit Paul, Head, Dept. of Mathematics and Ms. Snigdha Roy, Asst. Prof, Dept. of Mathematics.
- Technical assistance: Ms. Yadika Prasad, IT Coordinator and Mr. Dhirodatta Subba, Dean of Sciences.

Summary of the event

The webinar, moderated by Mr. Subhajit Paul, Head, Department of Mathematics, started at 10:50 am with the welcome speech by Fr. (Prof.) George Thadathil, Principal, Salesian College, Sonada and Siliguri. While merging the subjects of Philosophy and Astronomy in the infinitude of the digits of π , he mentioned about the book “A History of Pi” by Peter Beckmann which motivates him. Mr. Debdut Sengupta, Assistant Professor, Department of Mathematics, then introduced the speaker to the audience. As promised in the title of his talk, Prof. Baruah based his lecture on the development of different aspects of π from the ancient era to the computer age. During his talk, he mentioned about works of mathematicians, viz., Issac Newton, Von Neumann, Roy North, Abraham Sharp, John Machin, Srinivasa Ramanujan with many others. He also discussed the AGM (arithmeticgeometric mean) algorithm to calculate the digits of π more rapidly and the BBP model to find a particular digit in the binary and the hexadecimal representation of π . He shared the open problem of finding a particular digit in the decimal representation of π . He finished his lecture by mentioning Timothy Mullican who calculated the first 50 trillion digits of π on January 29, 2020, which stands as the current world record. After his talk, an interactive session was moderated to accommodate a few questions from the audience. The webinar ended with the vote of thanks delivered by Mr. Subhajit Paul. He forwarded his gratitude to the speaker, the management of the college, his colleagues in the department, the technical support, and of course to the participants. The programme was concluded at 1:00 pm.

Department of Mathematics Report on the Guest Lecture “Topology: A meet & Greet”

by
Dr Gangotryi Sorcar

April 5, 2021



Report prepared by:
Subhajit Paul
Head, Dept. of Mathematics,
Salesian College, Siliguri.
April 6, 2021.

TOPOLOGY
A meet and greet
Guest Lecture by
Dr Gangotryi Sorcar
Temporary Assistant Professor
University of Delaware

The talk is aimed at undergraduate students with the basic knowledge of Topology. It will provide an initial basis of what they will study about Manifolds and point set topology of its unique features.

Dept of Mathematics
Salesian College, Siliguri
In collaboration with IQAC

April 5, 2021
9 AM

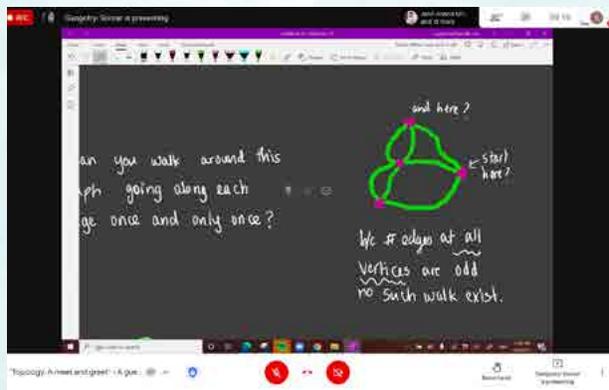
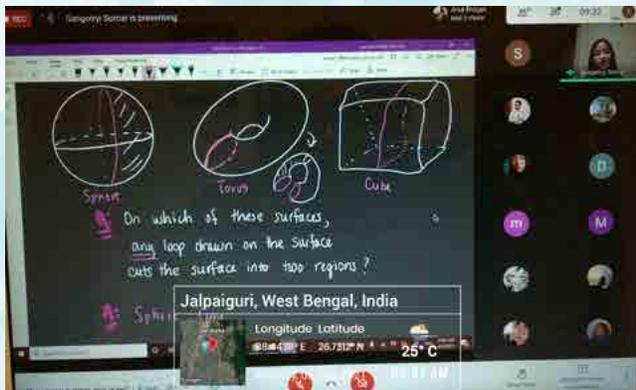
meet.google.com/eoz-sbqz-nzu

Department of Mathematics, Salesian College, Siliguri, in collaboration with the IQAC organised a guest lecture on April 5, 2021. The talk was mainly aimed for the students of the 6th semester before they start their classes from the next day. These students have the subject ‘Point-set Topology’ in the paper DSE 3A. As a motivational talk to this entirely new topic, Mr Subhajit Paul, Head, Dept. of Mathematics, organised the lecture.

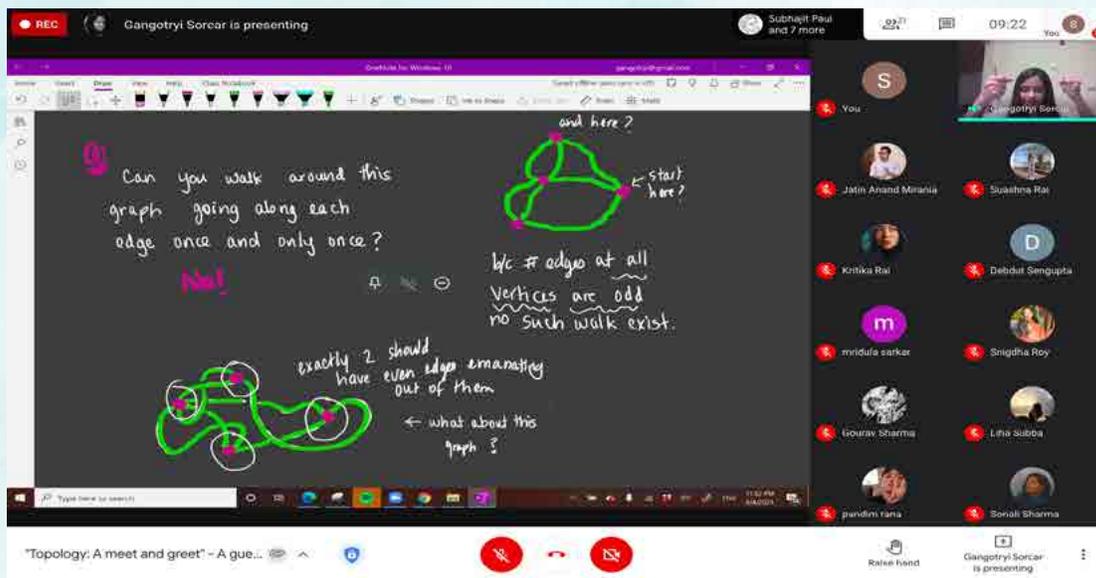
The talk was delivered by Dr Gangotryi Sorcar, Temporary Asst Prof, University of Delaware, USA. As informed by Mr Paul while introducing the speaker to the house, Dr Sorcar finished her PhD from the State University of New York, Binghamton and had orchestrated different research and teaching posts at the Ohio State University and the Hebrew University, Israel in the past.

The lecture viz., “Topology: A meet & Greet” started at 9 am via the Google Meet platform using the college G-Suite facility. A total of 18

participants joined the lecture including the faculty members from the department, a student of Mathematics from the first year and two students from the department of Physics. Dr Sorcar tuned the lecture to suit the preliminaries of a varied audience. The lecture was recorded at <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1zgxNsEw1QhP6gcPF924muzInHmSj7J1u/view?usp=sharing>.



Dr Sorcar mainly discussed the Königsberg bridge problem, topological invariance of the Euler characteristic number and why continuous functions stretch or squish a space without tearing that apart with an ingenious example. She was able to retain the attention of the audience and spark their creative and analytical thinking. Jatin Mirania, a student of 6th semester, said, (her) “content was brilliant, eye contact was good, spoken both formally and informally creating good engagement, and use of words like ‘trippy’ and smiling throughout the class really took it up a notch”. She encouraged the students to ask questions during the talk and also at the Q&A session at the end, where a couple of interesting questions were tackled. It was a very positive start for this course of the semester



NSS This Year

Every year National Service Scheme (NSS) Unit II, Salesian College Siliguri Campus formulates an agenda, according to which they perform their yearly activities. Although, the pandemic had made a huge impact on the worldly activities the team did not step back from their duties. They shifted to an online mode of conducting activities.

The onset of a global pandemic made us aware about the necessary precautions we had to take. Therefore, on 9th of April 2020, the unit tried to spread awareness about social distancing via social media. To bring our fellow students out of their new boredom we also organised an online essay writing competition- Pen It Down on the month of April (20th - 26th). To observe World Environment Day, an event named Eco Den was organised. It was a five days awareness program wherein students from various colleges performed various tasks every alternate day. The tasks included cleaning, planting, imparting healthy habits, helping etc. On World Yoga Day 21st June, NSS volunteers performed various yogasanas and tried to make people aware about the vast importance of yoga. This too was done in an online mode. On the occasion of International Youth Day, 12th August, 2020 we organized an online quiz competition REL-EVENT. It was based on the theme "Youth Engagement for Global action". On 23rd September, 2020 we conducted an online orientation for the first year students where we briefed them about the organisation and its motto along with various other important details. To mark the 51st Anniversary of NSS(NSS Day) on 24th of September, we organized an online NSS quiz.

Last year we were lucky enough to get a chance to interact with a world famous yogi Dr.Kush Panchal, an International Yoga Trainer, through an online webinar called YOGI-NAR on 12th of September, 2020. Through this event we were able to fulfill our aim of freshening the minds of people along with making them aware about self-care.

2020 was an important year for the unit as we started a new series, One-Voice, an interview session with the various NGOs. Through this we tried to introduce the unsung heroes of our society who are silently working for a better tomorrow. The aim of the interview was not only to share their journey but also to inspire and instill humanity and a sense of duty among the members of our society. Therefore on 31st October, 2020 NSS volunteers conducted the



Surabhi Pakhrin

4th Sem, English Honours

first interview of One-Voice with an organisation named MANUSATVA. This was followed by an interview with other organisations like Mukh Bandh Kaam Suru, The Period Society Jalpaiguri, Mind Empowered and Musafiri Organisation. The interview was conducted online and offline according to their convenience along with all the necessary precautions.

For social outreach program on 21st November, 2020 some of the volunteers visited Animal Helpline Shelter located near Darjeeling more. On 30th of November, 2020 Constitution Day (26th November) was celebrated where students from both Salesian College Siliguri and Sonada delivered a paper presentation and shared their knowledge about the constitution. On 26th January, 2021, few NSS volunteers participated in a parade along with the NCC Cadets of the College. Republic day was celebrated in the college itself by taking all the necessary precautions. On 4th April, 2021 some of our volunteers participated in a marathon

organised by the Period Society in order to spread awareness and break the social taboo regarding menstruation. To mark the importance of Earth Day (22nd April), on 28th of April, 2021 NSS took the initiative of planting trees around the college campus. Campus Plantation Drive was extremely fruitful as the volunteers planted 20 Ashoka saplings along with few Jackfruit saplings. The volunteers not only planted these saplings but they also followed all the important steps of plant care by using fertilisers and important nutrients.

Besides these major event we also started a campaign i.e. 1-Rupee Campaign in which we requested the NSS volunteers to donate 1 rupee per day for a year (365

days) and the money collected will be used for the development of our adopted villages. Also we try to help the underprivileged kids who couldn't afford a smartphone for the online classes by donating them our old smartphones. NSS Unit II also observed other important days like Ambedkar Jayanti, Labour's Day, Women's Day, Farmer's Day, Vijay Diwas, Aids Day, World Animal Welfare day and many more. These events were marked by posting a poster along with captions on our social media handle.



Report

Department of Political Science and Geography

On February 24th, 2021, our departmental faculties of Political Science and Geography department respectively had organized a picnic for the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd years. Prior to proceeding with our planned destination, we assembled at the front of the Killian Hall where the students and faculties were guided by Fr. (Dr.) George Thadathil SBD's words of wisdom regarding the environment and pollution around and how should it be protected. "Let's not add on to it but let us try to subtract the waste around" were his words.

The college bus was fully packed with students and faculties headed for Bagrakote which is located in the Malbazar subdivision of the Jalpaiguri district. The students were excited to reach the destination as they kept singing songs in the bus till they reached the venue.

Upon reaching the picnic spot the students and faculties were served breakfast followed by snacks and beverages. The students and faculties were enjoying while dancing and singing. This was followed by a game of Tambola where both the students and faculties enjoyed playing. Preparatory to having lunch, there was a special visit by Fr. (Dr.) George Chempakathinal SBD, Dean of Arts/Humanities Sir Peter Lepcha, and Campus Coordinator of Arts/Humanities Miss Ganga Parajuli who altogether guided us by their encouraging and wonderful words.

The students from the Department of Political Science even conducted a survey in and around the picnic spots regarding the work being done by the truck drivers in that area. In that survey the students got to know about the business the truck drivers are into and they being the middlemen having little to no information about if the work being done is legal or illegal.



Survey photo

In picture:

Jasmine Pradhan and Rani Mishra

Students from the Department of Geography tried understanding the changing morphological characteristics of the

river basin. Students could even witness the phenomenon of weathering in the region. It was very evident that anthropogenic activities have been largely responsible for major changes that the river ecosystem in the region has been undergoing.

The rate of environmental degradation in the region had been at a faster rate and hence keeping environmental safety into account, it was found that there must be immediate interventions from the concerned NGOs or other Governmental organization to keep the River Ecology sustainable.

This was followed by a delicious meal set up by our cook and faculties which the students enjoyed having. After the completion of the meal, the students and faculties rested for a while and cleaned up the entire place, and made sure that there was no litter around. The outing ended with group photographs.

The students with the help of the faculties loaded all the used items into the bus and made their way back to college around 5pm. It altogether was a very fulfilling experience for both the students and faculties of respective departments.



One Day Webinar On BSE's Investor Awareness

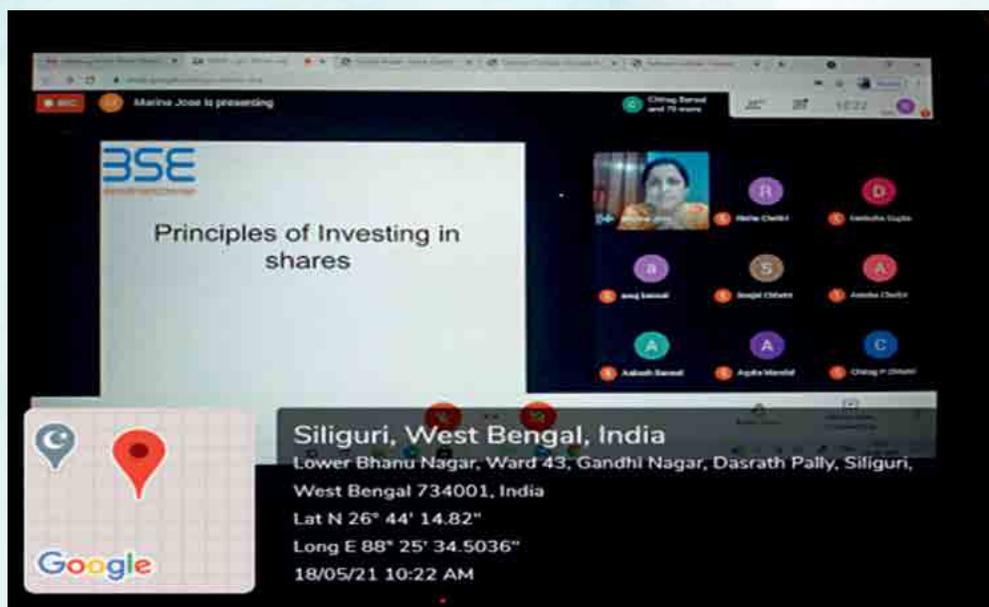


Risha Chettri

Asst. Professor, Dept. of Commerce

With the change in the current dynamics of the global economy it has become imperative that we all understand the importance of the most used two terms i.e., savings and investment. Bombay stock exchange, Mumbai in collaboration with the Department of Commerce, Salesian College, Siliguri Campus organized a one-day webinar on 18th May, 2021 from 10am onwards in Google Meet platform to create awareness about the importance of saving and investment for the future generation of students. The resource person of the webinar Madam Marina Jose spoke about the principles which the investors must bear in mind while making investment in the share market, one should enter the market with long term vision and never run behind short-

term gains. The webinar was much appreciated by all the attendees and around 90 students of 4th and 6th semester attended the webinar. At the end the session students asked their queries to the resource person who explained all the answers briefly and with suitable examples.





With the motive of guiding the youth towards the direction of success, the Entrepreneurship Development Cell, Salesian College, Siliguri Campus, always strives to give its best. Every step moved forward, takes each individual related to the cell a bit closer to perfection. In its second academic session since the incubation of EDC in our institution and we are proud to mention that the cell has been successfully able to organize events at National and International levels such as Quest, Innoventure, Encase, Breakout, Ret-Relaunch, etc.

Ret-Relaunch presented by SMADA, along with Finance partner DRU FINANCE, Aesthetics partner ASAL and educational partner CAREER LAUNCHER was 'A National Level Inter-Collegiate Online Relaunch Competition' organised by the Entrepreneurship Development Cell, Salesian College, Siliguri Campus on 23rd and 24th December, 2020 via Google Meet. The motive behind this was to provide a common platform for the youth from diversified fields and their own unique mindsets.

The event started at sharp 11:30 am on 24th December, 2020 (Thursday) with an opening ceremony, during which Ms. Priyanka Shaw (Cell Animator) motivated the participants and organizers and applauded their efforts to join the event whilst these times of pandemic. RetRelaunch was concluded at 2:00 pm with a closing ceremony along with the closing remarks were given by Master Parag Verma (Deputy Director) and announcement of results.

A total of 11 teams participated in the event from 12+ institutions across India. The participants did a survey on one of the allotted companies namely Viu, Aditya Birla Payments Bank, Vodafone M-pesa and loan meet, which were at its peak during a specific point of time but ultimately collapsed due to some particular reasons. The participants were asked to relaunch these companies by using their own strategy and pitching in new ideas before a panel of judges. The winners were



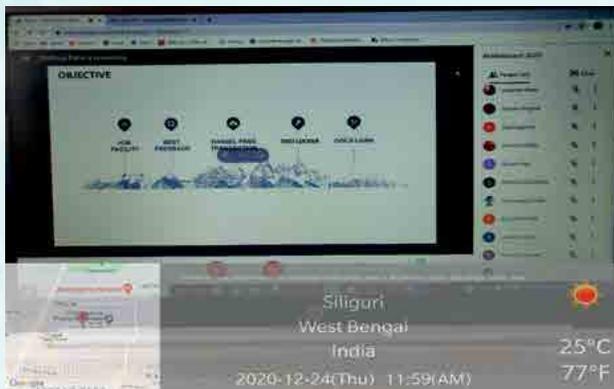
awarded with prizes worth Rs.10,000 inclusive of a cash prize of Rs.1,500. Also, all the participants were given redeemable vouchers and certificates as a token of appreciation by the cell.

It was indeed another successful event organised by EDC, Salesian College Siliguri Campus. It helped the cell develop relations with more institutions and E-Cells across India. This definitely made it easier for the cell to cope up with

every circumstance and move ahead inevitably. It also sharpened the ideology, innovation and creativity of all of its members and was a remarkable learning lesson for each one of them.

JUDGES	PORTFOLIO
Mr. Shayan Iqbal	Co-founder of GoBudee Educare and My Ostello
Ms. Sweta Mohata	Founder of Asal Skincare, Winner of YI(CII) Siliguri Start-Up Competition

POSITION	COMPANY	PARTICIPANTS
WINNER'S	Insta Loan	Rohit Mitruka (SCMS, Pune), Dhiraj Kehriwal (St. Xaviers College, Kolkata)
FIRST RUNNERS-UP	Vodafone M-Pesa	Vivek Kumar and Baibhav Khandewal (The Bhawanipur Education Society, Kolkata)
SECOND RUNNERS-UP	Vodafone M-Pesa	Ishanee Majumder, Madhuja Raha, & Chandrashish Roy (KIIT University, Bhubaneswar)



Report on One-Day Webinar on Investor Awareness initiated by SEBI



Diksha Jain
4th Sem, B.Com Honours

Invest Today Or Regret Tomorrow

“Never depend on a single income, make investment to create a second source”

- Warren Buffett

On the 20th of April, 2021, an investor awareness session was conducted by SEBI to promote among young minds the importance of investing in the right place and at the right time.

This session was like an oasis amidst confused minds wondering what correct investing and mutual funds really are. The valuable session started at 10.30 am and lasted for an hour and it was conducted through an online platform Zoom by Sir Vinod Tantri who is a SEBI trainer. The total footfall in the event was 70.

The best part of the session was that Sir started his explanation from the very base which is often ignored by many. He defied the typical formulae of income less expenditure gives saving and explained the need to save a certain portion first and then spend. Using various illustrative examples to explain the importance of early savings was given and every minute detail from the definition itself to investment strategies on mutual funds were provided. Further comparison of investments in mutual funds and other sources were like icing on the cake.

Towards the end, an interactive question and answer session was held wherein all the doubts of the participants were explicitly cleared besides filling the feedback forms. It was surprising to witness such enthusiastic participation throughout the session and everyone took back bags full of information and aspirations. To sum up, all that the session taught,

“ Price is what you pay,

Value is what you get.”

Morning Assembly

Department of Sociology

On 4th May, 2021 Sociology department of Salesian College Siliguri, had organized a Special morning assembly for the College. The main topic for the assembly was Covid 19 Fueling Racism.

During the Pandemic, there have been numerous instances where people belonging to racial, religious or ethnic minorities were subjected to Physical attacks, hate speech and conspiracy theories accusing them for the spread of the virus.

Since the outbreak of the pandemic, Asians and people of Asian descent have been targets of derogatory language in media reports and statements by politicians as well as on Social media platforms, where hate speech related to Covid-19 also appears to have spread extensively. UN Secretary General, Antonio Guterres, pointed out that racism and discrimination are the rejection of all that the UN stands for, adding that the “rot of racism is corroding institutions, Social Structures and everyday life.”

The assembly started with a prayer by Father George Thadathil which was followed by an introductory speech by Themsorin from Sociology Department 3rd year. After this a presentation prepared by the 2nd Year was displayed to throw light on the topic.

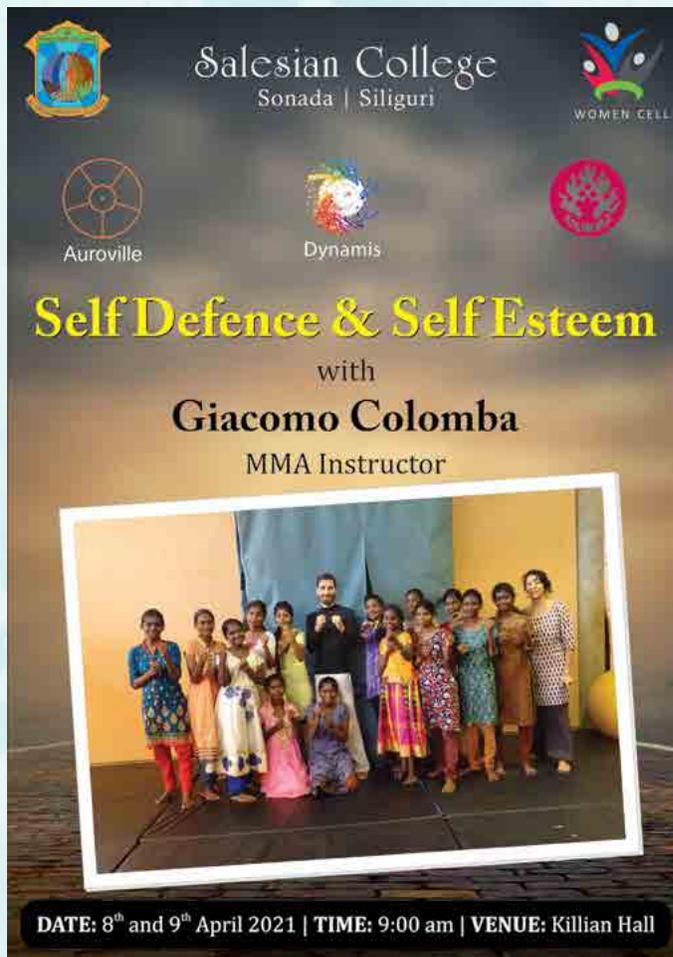
The assembly came to an end with Father addressing the students and acknowledging their efforts and hardwork



Self Defence & Self Esteem Workshop



Simran Saba
2nd Year, B.com Honours



The Self Defence & Self esteem workshop with Giacomo Colomba an MMA Instructor was organized by the Women's Cell on 8th and 9th April, 2021 at the Salesian College Siliguri Campus. The two day event was sponsored by Auroville, Dynamis and H.I.G.L.E. The purpose of conducting this event was to provide basic knowledge about defending oneself when in a dire or crippling situation.

“The course of life is unpredictable. No one can write their own autobiography in advance.” However, the reality is that while we would like to believe that we would always be safe, life does happen. There are people that wake up in the morning, drink a cup of coffee, read the paper, leave the house and never return. Self defence as we know is the right to use force and violence to protect oneself from the perceived imminent threat. It is important to possess these skills today considering the increase in gruesome crime rates against ordinary citizens. Understanding that self defence is crucial for all, the event was open for all.

Self defence makes you aware, cautious and equipped when in danger. The instructor, Mr Giacomo Colomba along with his crew not only taught participants practical forms of self defence, but also gave tips on avoiding such circumstances. He mentioned that when trapped in an attack try to analyse the situations, scream for help and give up materialistic things in case the attacker wants to rob you. Only defend yourself during an aggravated assault. Remembering Bruce Lee's remark, “It is better to be a warrior in a garden than a gardener in a war.” Wise people learn the tactics to defend themselves instead of becoming vulnerable and helpless. Remember the person that can defend you the best is none but you yourself.

Report on the Departmental Activity: Student Presentation

Salesian College Siliguri Campus

Department of Physics

In order to inculcate ethics, etiquette, communication skills and inter-personality development among students the Department of Physics has been conducting weekly (Saturdays) in-house seminar.

The goal of this activity is to bring confidence among students pertaining to their verbal and representational skills and also to nurture their understanding of basic sciences and their applications. The students usually present on topics based on their syllabus along with practical applications of the theory with real life examples. This gives students an opportunity to not only score well in exam but also showcase whatever that they are learning in Physics indeed has practical implications which facilitates in developing interest towards science and in particular, Physics.

All the students are divided into seven groups for this weekly event. Two groups will present on one day. Each group is allowed to present for maximum up to 20 mins following by Q&A session. In addition, on-spot evaluation of presentations made is being done by teachers, student audiences and student participants using Google forms.

At the end of the session, each faculty deliberates talk on flaws found during presentation with regard to references, presentation construction skills etc wherever necessary.

Following are the details of presentations:

Day 1 (24th April, 2021)

Curie Group

- **Members:** Adesh Saha (4th sem), Khushi Gurung (2nd sem), Lachung Lepcha (2nd sem).
- **Topic:** Photoelectric effect
- **Abstract:** The photoelectric effect occurs when you shine light on a piece of metal and electrons are ejected from the metal. This behaviour is understood by assuming that the incident light consists of photons, each photon carrying a definite amount of energy. The Nobel Prize in Physics 1921 was awarded to Albert Einstein “for his services to Theoretical Physics, and especially for his discovery of the law of the photoelectric effect.”

Sudarshan Group

- **Members:** Neha Chettri (2nd sem) , Shrawan Rai(4th sem).
- **Topic:** Cyclotron.

- **Abstract:** Introduction to compact particle accelerator named cyclotron. A cyclotron accelerates a charged particle beam using a high frequency alternating voltage. One of the most interesting applications of motion of charge particles in electric and magnetic fields is Cyclotron.

Day 2 (8th May, 2021)

Bose Group

- **Members:** Arati Lohar (2nd Sem), Priyam Rai (4th Sem) and Sudhanshu Pradhan (2nd Sem).
- **Topic:** Aurora – the lightening effect
- **Abstract:** An aurora is a natural phenomenon which is characterised by a display of a natural-coloured (green, red, yellow or white) light in the sky. It is a light show which is caused when electrically-charged particles from the sun collide with particles from gases such as oxygen and nitrogen present in the Earth's atmosphere.

Saha Group

- **Members:** Aaush Pradhan (6th Sem).
- **Topic:** Optical fibres
- **Abstract:** A discussion on Fiber optics as they are important for telecommunication for worldwide broadband networks. Optical fibers provide enormous and unsurpassed transmission bandwidth with negligible latency and are now the transmission medium of choice for long distance and high data rate transmission rate in the field of telecommunication.

Day 3 (15th May, 2021)

Joselyn Group

- **Members:** Aryanjali Sharma (4th sem), Nirupan Thapa (2nd sem), Pewang Tamang (2nd sem).
- **Topic:** Pulsars.
- **Abstract:** Pulsars are remarkable clocklike celestial sources that are believed to be rotating neutron stars formed in supernova explosions. They are valuable tools for investigations into topics such as neutron star interiors, globular cluster dynamics, the structure of the interstellar medium, and gravitational physics. A comparison of arrival times from an array of different pulsars also reveals the effect of gravitational waves.

Meitner Group

- **Members:** Rudraneel Chakraborty (4th sem), Tithi Moktan (4th sem), Sidarth Rai (2nd sem).
- **Topic:** A case study of the Martian atmosphere.
- **Abstract:** Carbon dioxide was the only known constituent of the Martian atmosphere from its discovery in 1947 until 1963, when water vapor was identified in the planet's spectrum. High-

resolution ground-based spectroscopy and spacecraft observations in the next decade added CO, O₂, O₃, and showed that the atmospheric surface pressure on Mars is more than 2 orders of magnitude lower than it is on Earth. How the Martian atmosphere has evolved along the years detection of methane gas and its possible explanation.

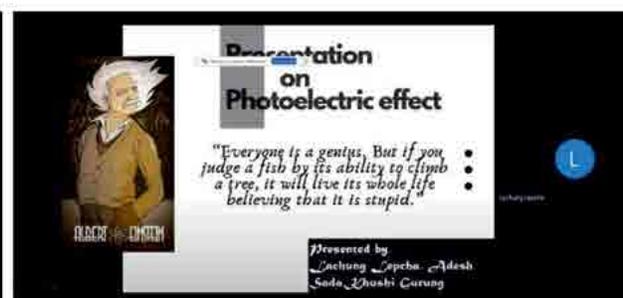
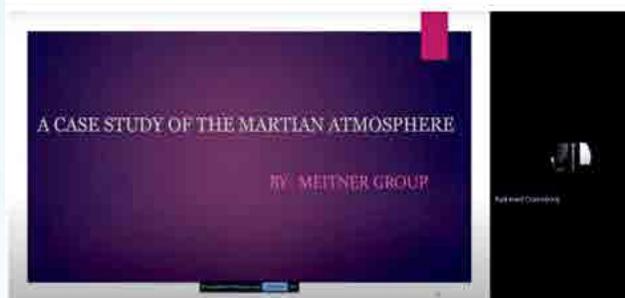
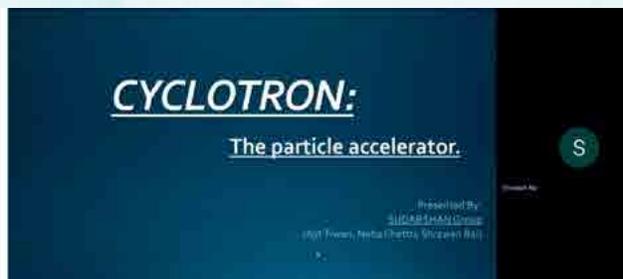
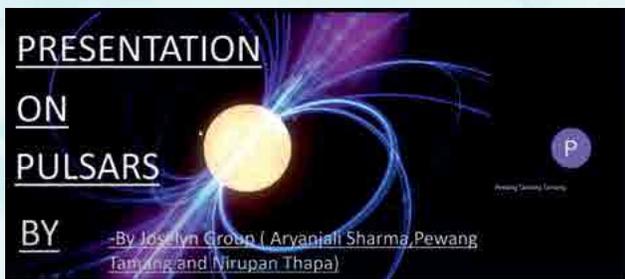
Day 5 (22nd May, 2021)

Raychaudhury Group

- **Members:** Ashweni Chettri (4th sem), Subhayu Bose (2nd sem).
- **Topic:** Heat Death of the universe
- **Abstract:** The heat death of the universe (also known as the Big Chill or Big Freeze) is a theory on the ultimate fate of the universe, which suggests the universe would evolve to a state of no thermodynamic free energy and would therefore be unable to sustain processes that increase entropy. Heat death does not imply any particular absolute temperature; it only requires that temperature differences or other processes may no longer be exploited to perform work.

- All the presentations are uploaded on the following Youtube channel:
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCXkX-spFy9dNn4tSRqRgP2A>

Glimpses of the events:



Lecture Series on Literary and Cultural Theories



Samjhana Rai

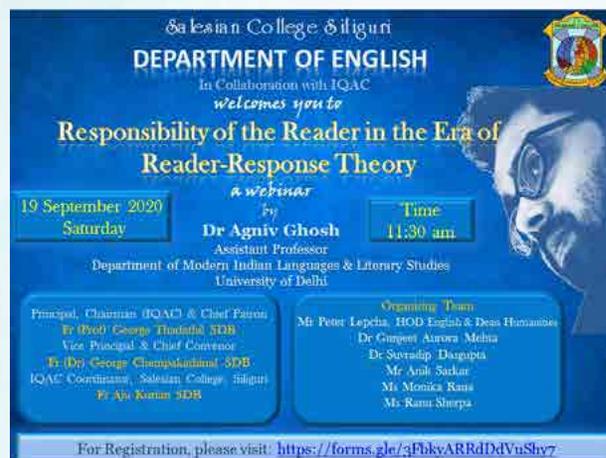
6th Sem, Department of English



Salesian College, Siliguri Campus: The Department of English, Salesian College Siliguri Campus, in collaboration with IQAC took an initiative to conduct a series of online lectures on Literary and Cultural Theories during the academic year of 2020-21. With the onset of global pandemic, there has been a shift in teaching-learning process. In order to cope with this shift and to give the new experience of learning

more variety and freshness from the regular monotonous online classes, the Department made an active effort in inviting well known personalities in the field of academics and theories from all over the world to enlighten and interact with the students, albeit virtually. The series spanned over four months beginning from September and ending in December of 2020. There were six lectures conducted on various fields of Literary and Cultural Theories in total.

The series was inaugurated on 19th September, 2020 with its first lecture on Reader Response Theory titled: *Responsibility of the Reader in the Era of Reader Response Theory*. The resource person of the day was Dr. Agniv Ghosh, Assistant Professor, Department of Modern Indian Languages and Literary Studies, University of Delhi. Dr. Ghosh broadly traced the theory from the time of its development and its present condition and the responsibility of the reader as an active component in the meaning-generation of a text.



The second lecture was organised on 10th October, 2020, titled: *Act of Reading as Multiple, Singular and Contingent Moments: Thinking Otherwise*. Dr. Rajlakshmi Ghosh, Assistant Professor, iLead College, Kolkata was the speaker for the day. Dr. Ghosh's lecture focused

on the study of the act of “Reading” itself. She made references to Deconstructive reading and ideas of important thinkers and theorists like Derrida and Heidegger to elucidate on the subject that she was discussing.

Salesian College Siliguri
Department of English
 in collaboration with IQAC
 Presents
An online lecture titled:
'The Nature of Deaths: The New Xenophobia and a Global Pandemic'
 By
Prof. Tabish Khair
 Indian English Author and
 Associate Professor at the University
 of Aarhus, Denmark

Chief Patron
 Fr (Prof.) George Thadathil
 Principal & Chairman IQAC

Organizing Team
 Mr. Peter Lepcha, HoD & Dean (Arts & Humanities)
 Dr Gunjeet Aurora Mehta
 Mr Anik Sarkar
 Ms Monika Rana
 Ms Ranu Sherpa
 Dr Suvasdip Dasgupta

Advisors
 Fr (Dr) George Chempakathinal
 Vice Principal, Arts & Humanities
 Fr Aju Kurian
 Coordinator IQAC

Day:
1st December 2020
Time:
03:00 pm (IST)

Platform:
 Google Meet

On the 17th of the same month another interesting lecture on Deconstruction was organised. This time, the speaker was Pramod K. Nayar, a well known figure in the field of Literary Studies. He is an Assistant Professor in the Department of English, University of Hyderabad. His lecture was titled: *Nature/Culture/Nature/Culture*. Nayar, very lucidly and, in a very student-friendly manner, explained the workings of deconstruction of a text by deconstructing *The Solitary Reaper*, a popular poem by the Romantic poet, William Wordsworth.

The fourth was a lecture on Postcolonialism, held on 12th November, 2020. The speaker of this webinar was Professor Bill Ashcroft, a highly regarded figure and thinker, also known as the “founding exponent of post-colonial theory,” who has made significant contributions to the field through his works of which *The Empire Writes Back* is notably, the most popular. He is an Emeritus Professor at the School of English, Media and Performing Arts, University of New South Wales. Professor Ashcroft introduced and explained postcolonial concepts like the Utopia in his lecture.

The fifth lecture was on The New Xenophobia and the global pandemic delivered by Professor Tabish Khair, Associate Professor at the University of Aarhus, Denmark. Tabish Khair is the author of various books, including the poetry collections, *Where Parallel Lines Meet* (Penguin, 2000) and *Man of Glass* (Harper Collins, 2010), the studies, *Babu Fictions: Alienation in Indian English Novels* (Oxford UP, 2001), *The Gothic, Postcolonialism and Otherness* (Palgrave, 2010), *The New Xenophobia* (Oxford University Press, 2016) and a host of novels. From a multi-disciplinary approach: using political thought, history, economics etc, his talk analysed the connection of ‘Xenophobia’ or fear of strangers with the rise of the pandemic.

The last lecture of the series was one on Lacanian and Freudian Psychoanalysis held on the 4th of

Salesian College Siliguri
Department of English
 in collaboration with IQAC
 Presents
An Online Lecture Titled:
Nature/Culture/Nature/Culture
Pramod K. Nayar
 Department of English
 University of Hyderabad

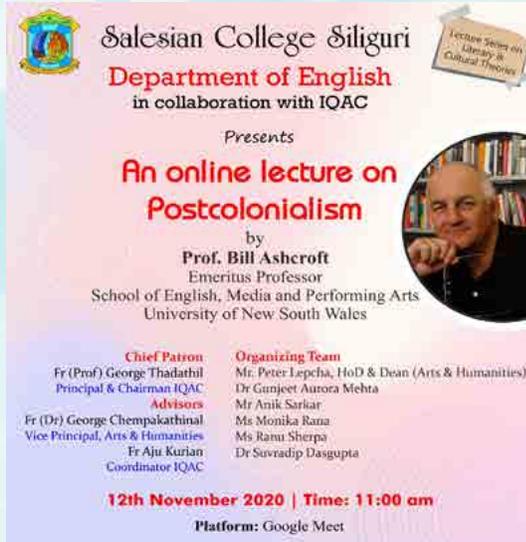
Chief Patron
 Fr (Prof.) George Thadathil
 Principal & Chairman IQAC

Organizing Team
 Mr. Peter Lepcha, HoD & Dean (Arts & Humanities)
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 Mr Anik Sarkar
 Ms Monika Rana
 Ms Ranu Sherpa
 Dr Suvasdip Dasgupta

Advisors
 Fr (Dr) George Chempakathinal
 Vice Principal, Arts & Humanities
 Fr Aju Kurian
 Coordinator IQAC

17 October 2020 | Saturday | Time: 11:00 am

Platform:
 Google Meet

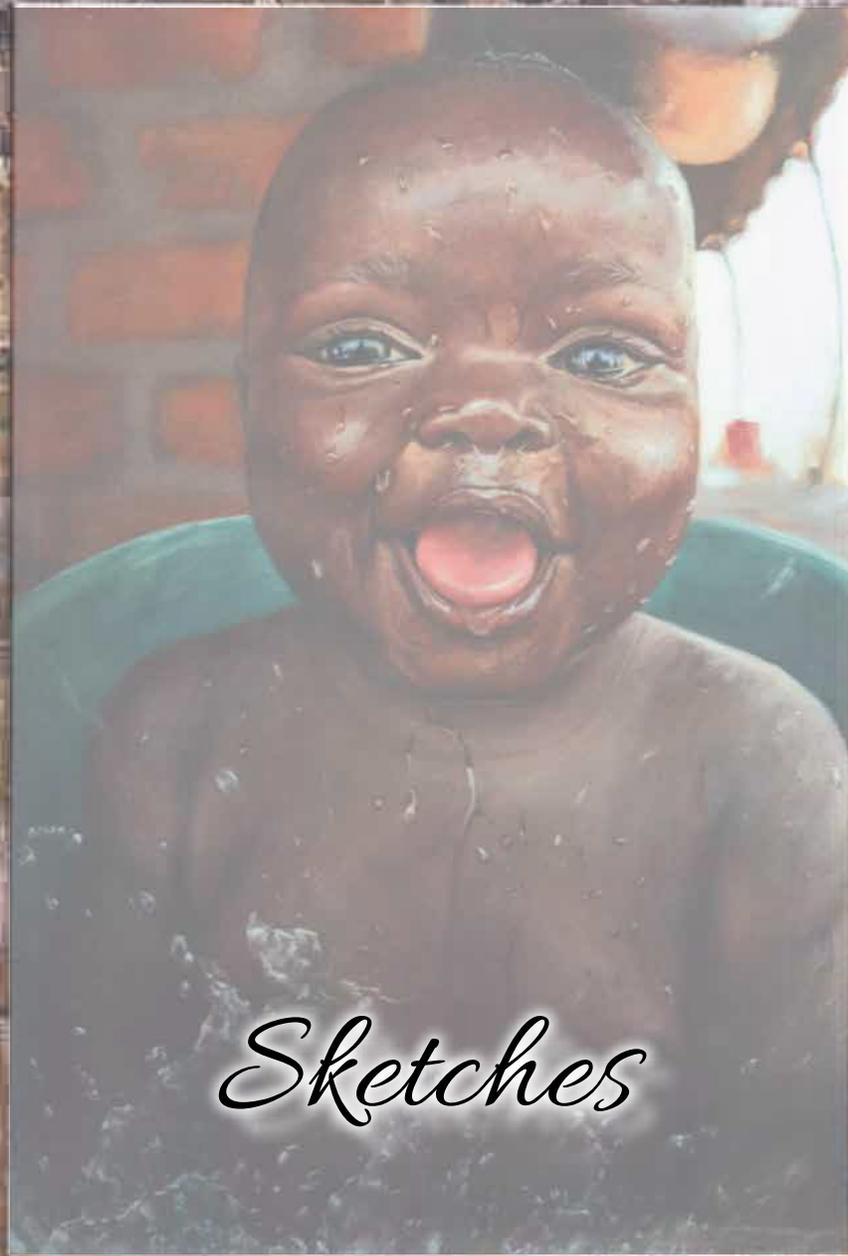


December, 2020. Dr. Sigi Jottkandt, Associate Professor, School of Media and Performing Arts, University of New South Wales was the resource person for the lecture. Dr. Jottkandt explained the working of Psychoanalysis, developing it from the ideas of thinkers like Freud and Lacan, and also in association to the works of the Surrealist artist Rene Magritte. She further extended her lecture into discussing about psychoanalysis as a tool for the literary criticism.

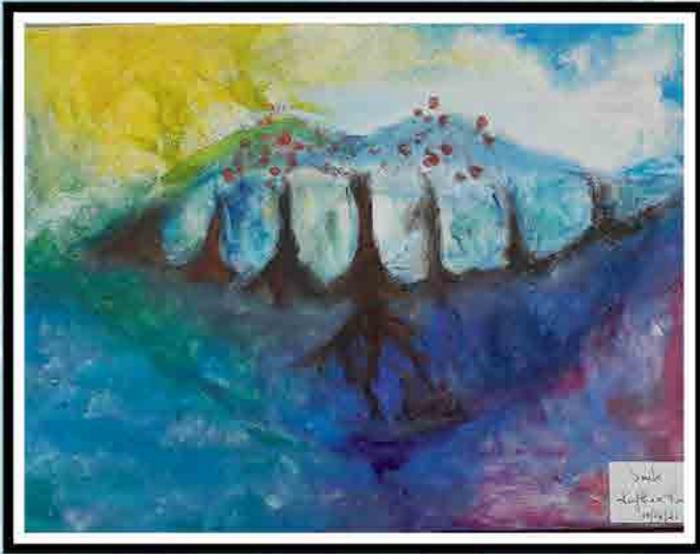
This was the conclusion of the Series of Lectures on Literary and Cultural Theories. All the lectures were held on the online platform, GoogleMeet and

were an hour or an hour and a half long lectures which were followed by active interactive sessions. The lectures were attended by, not only the Undergraduate and Postgraduate student of the English Department of the College but also, several scholars and students of other universities participated in them with over 80 participants in each of them. The series was a success in many ways: the students got a chance to listen to prominent persons speak and interact with them and the participants were also introduced to several new ideas and concepts which will likely spark newer questions and curiosity for further search and study.





Sketches



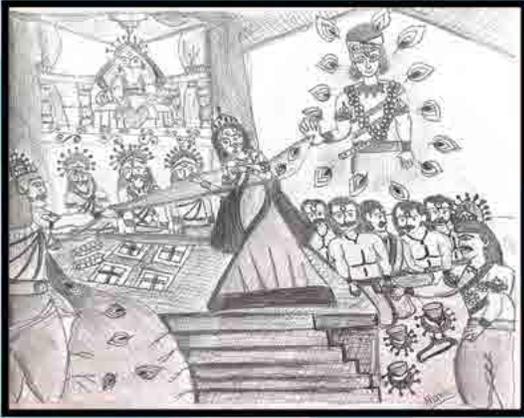
Roopashna Rai
4th Sem, Sociology Honours



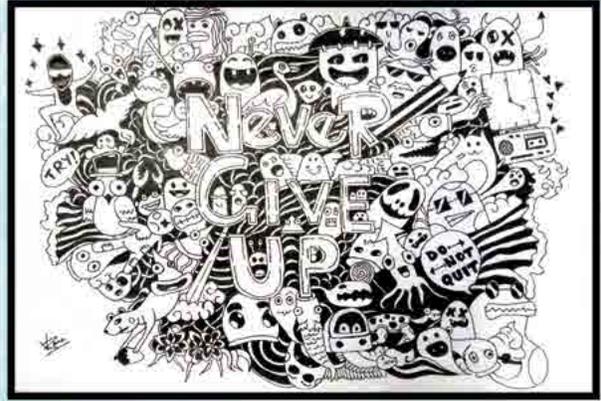
Shagnik Bhakta, 2nd Sem English Honours



Shweta Mazoomdar, 6th Sem, English Honours



Abana Maji, 2nd Sem, English Honours



Vinayak Rana, 2nd Sem, Economics Honours



Anchal Sharma
4th Sem
Psychology Honours



Asbwamedh Sharma
4th Sem
English Honours



Ankita Basak
2nd Sem
Economics Honours



Jatin Anand Mirania
6th Sem, Maths Honours



Diksha Kafley
2nd Sem
English Honours



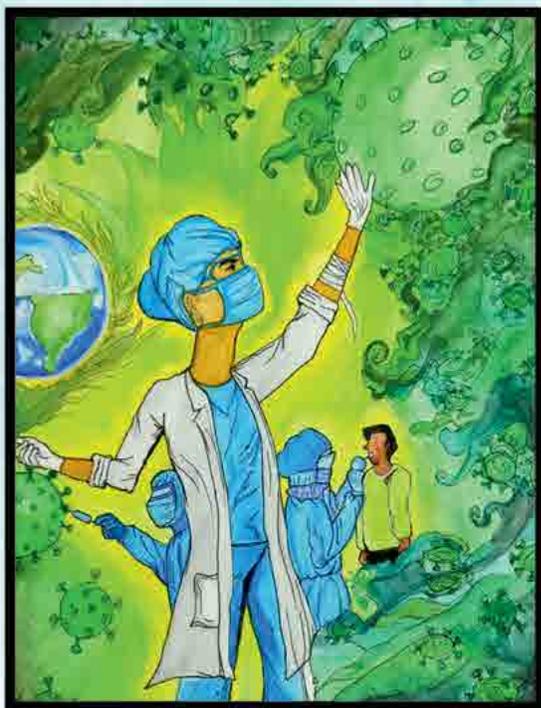
Merazul Islam
4th Sem
Mass Com. Honours



Nidhi Agarwal
6th Sem, English Honours



Sushmita Sharma
4th Sem, Geography Honours



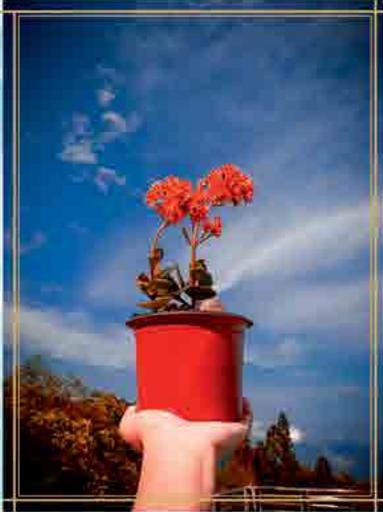
Rishika Sinha
2nd Sem, Economics Honours



Payal Maheswari
6th Sem, B.Com Honours

Photography





Prashanti Rai
4th Sem, Psychology Honours

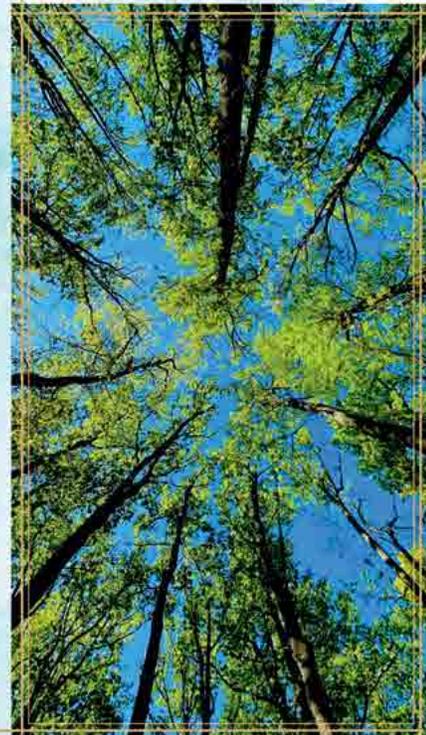


Wholly the tea leaves has only seen the shippers of darning tea workers
Jeshika

Jeshika Thami
4th Sem, History Honours



Somali Karmakar
4th Sem, Psychology Honours



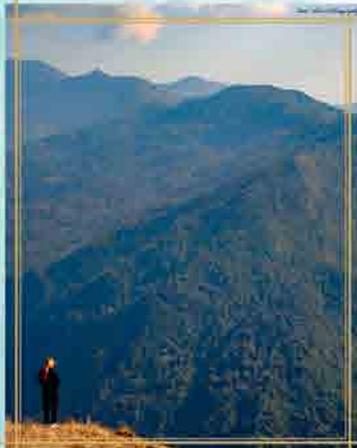
Alex Sundas
Sociology Honours



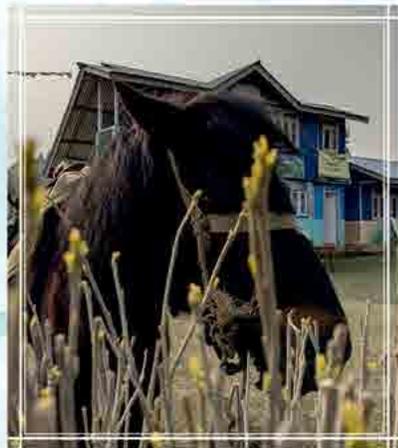
Adithya PN
2nd Sem, English Honours



Merazul Islam
2nd Sem
Mass Comm Honours



Fasil Ahmed
2nd Sem
Mass Comm Honours



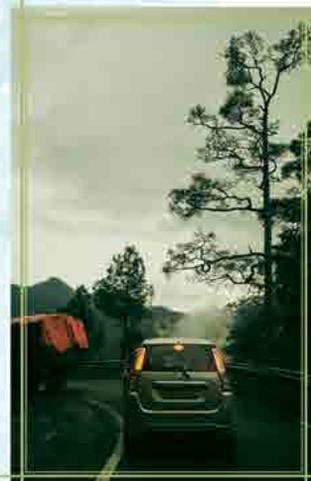
Jatin Anand Mirania
6th Sem
Maths Honours



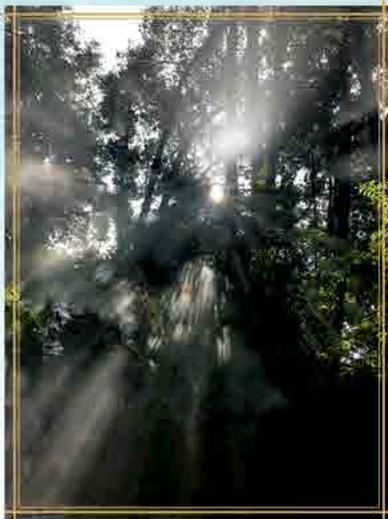
Natasha Gurung
4th Sem, Sociology Honours



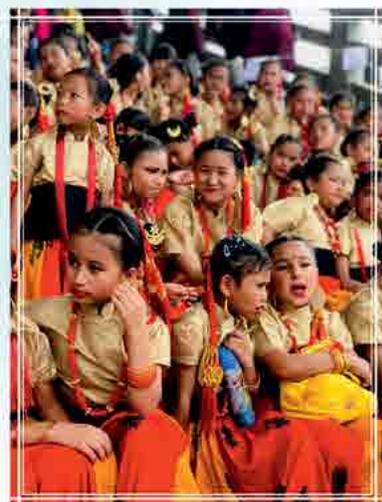
Sonia Mukhia
4th Sem
English Honours



Sonia Mukhia
4th Sem, English Honours



Shaili Sarkar
3rd Semester
Department of Psychology





Shaili Sarkar
3rd Semester
Department of Psychology



Tshering Choden Kazi
3rd Sem
Psychology Honours

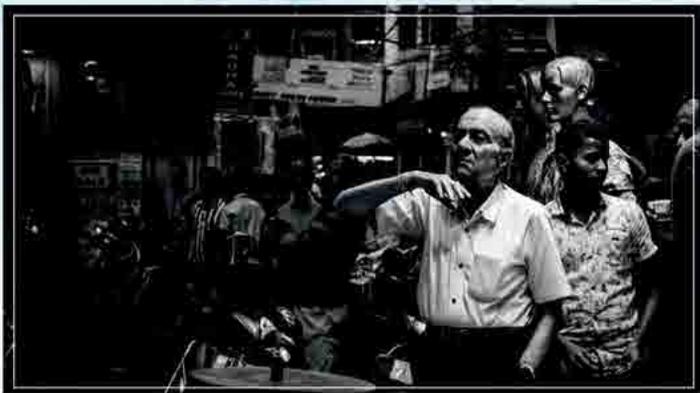




Rajeev Pradhaan
B.Com (Programme)



Sivani Prasad
4th Semester English Honours



Awaneesh Baibhav
Department of Psychology

Adieu Seniors





Adieu Seniors



Salesian College
Siliguri



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2021-2022

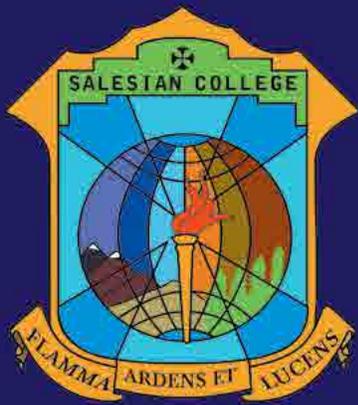
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Salesian College, a UGC certified College with Potential for Excellence (CPE) and NAAC accredited College with 'A' grade for third cycle, is a premiere institution managed by the Salesians of Don Bosco affiliated to the University of North Bengal. Shining at its ripe young age of 75, the College has opened its services contextually locating itself at Sonada and Siliguri to all the students of surrounding districts of West Bengal, other states of India and neighboring countries. The College offers courses on diverse disciplines on Social Sciences, Humanities, Commerce, Management, Sciences and other vocational and career oriented programmes to cater to the needs of the students of this generation. To fulfil the needs of the land, Salesian College envisages itself to be the champion of the knowledge hub and rural innovative university in the near future.



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