

— T H E —

carpe diem

C H R O N I C L E S



FIRST ISSUE!

Welcome to Carpe Diem Chronicles – Inventure Academy’s very own student-run publication. Acting as a ‘voice of the students’, CDC showcases a miscellany of submissions from across the student body. It is a space for Inventurers to express their creativity, share important ideas and stay connected to the Inventure community. Enjoy the very first issue, hot off the press.

— J U L Y I S S U E —



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editors' note

dear readers,

Students, teachers, faculty, and parents alike have been awaiting a new and updated student-run school magazine for a long time now. And now, it's finally here.

Welcome, to the first edition of the student-run Inventure Academy Publication – 'Carpe Diem Chronicles!'

Filled with contributions from skilled students and talented teachers, this is a collection of poetry, prose, artwork, photography, articles, reviews, reports and so much more! Our aim was to create a space where students can express their creativity and opinions, not only regarding the events at school but also on current affairs, science, pop culture and social issues.

Along with the contributions, this publication contains reports about the happenings at school, a calendar of upcoming events, and highlights of student achievements.

We believe this school publication can help us show the love we students hold towards our school. And after months of ideating, compiling, and editing (with tons of help from the teachers and faculty of course), we are proud to present this publication; a stage for us all to display our ideas and talent. The 'Voice of the students.'

So flip the page and dive into the fruit of our work.
We hope you like it!

happy reading!

Best,
The Editors

(P.S.: If you would like to submit anything to be featured in the next issues, reach out to us on our website (carpediemchronicles.com) or e-mail us at carpediemchroniclesinv@gmail.com)

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🔍 Online Class Etiquette



An Article By

Arya Murthy

Ah, school. The place where therapy dogs strut the hallways with more self importance than students, where navigating Biryani queues is an unofficial sport and where students take naps on bean-bags in the library between classes. But alas; instead of riding school buses 'fuelled by creativity' or faking injuries to sneak into elevators, Inventurers all around Bangalore are dragging themselves out of bed at 8:55 am and staring blearily at Google Classroom conference calls. Yep... welcome to online class season.

As frustrating as this current situation is – eye strain and back aches abound – it's up to us to make the best of this situation and ensure that we're still covering the syllabus. In conjunction with a few teachers, we've compiled a list of rules and guidelines that can help make the online experience as smooth as possible.

- 1) Join calls using your designated G suite IDs, and open assignments and slides using the same.
- 2) Join calls on time, which means opening the desired Google Classroom's 'Classwork' section at least two minutes before the call starts. Click on the call button as soon as the class is designated to start, and keep clicking until the teacher starts the call.
- 3) Wear your Inventure uniform, or at the very least your Inventure shirt, during online classes.
- 4) Keep your camera on. It wastes less time when teachers don't have to monitor the classroom to ensure everyone's video is on. It's also interesting to note that keeping your camera on might actually help you focus and perform better in class – several studies seem to indicate a positive correlation between performance in various tasks and the knowledge of being watched.
- 5) Keep your mics off – less background noise. Nobody wants to hear your neighbors yelling at each other from



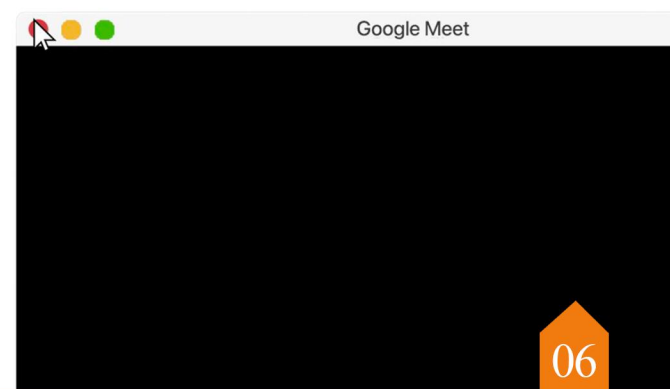
across the street, or the pigeon that's nesting under your window. Unless it's a specific teacher with a small classroom who encourages the class to maintain back-and-forth discussion, muting your mics unless you have something specific to say is a good general guideline.

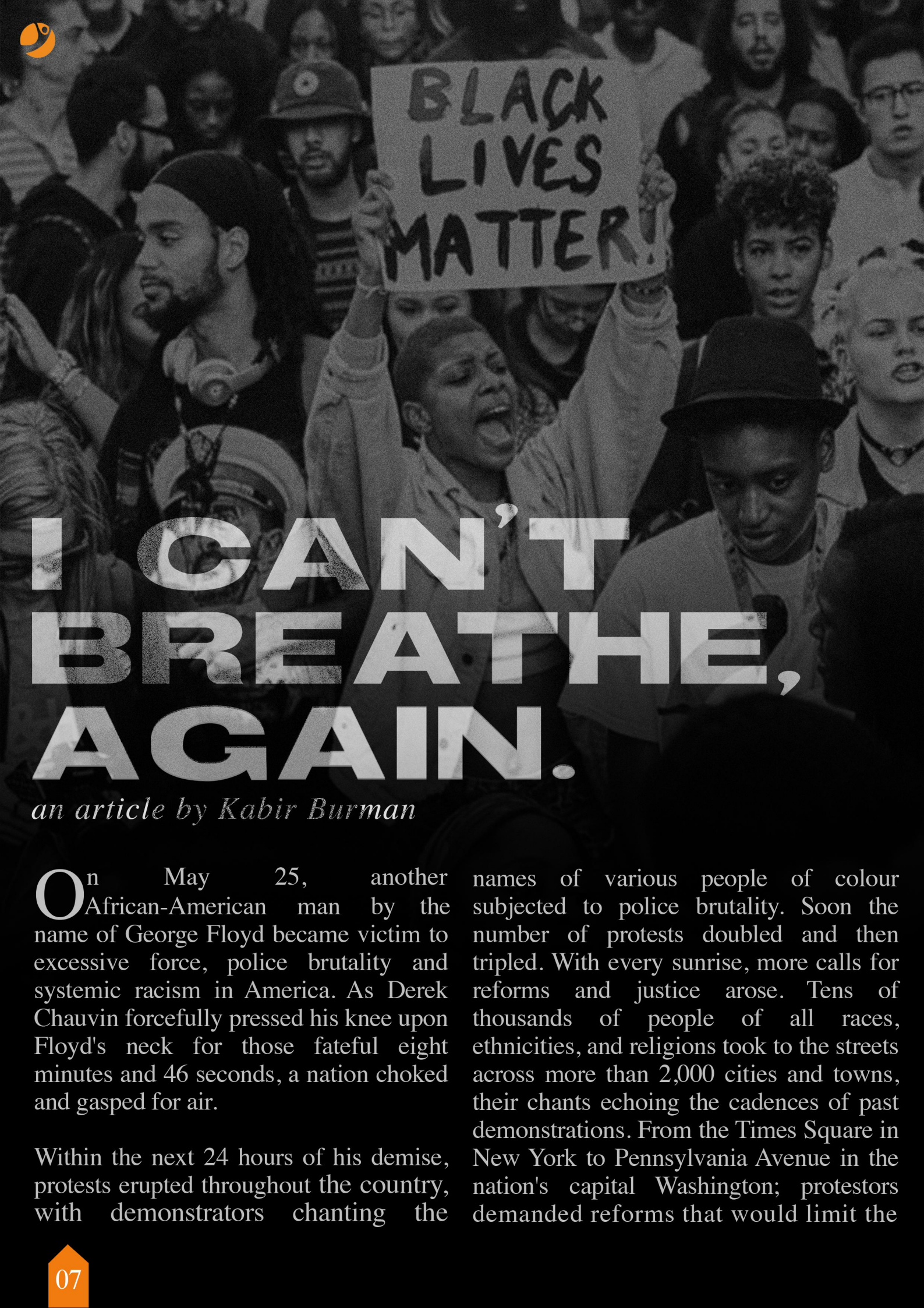
- 6) Raise hands to speak, or only interject during pauses in the lessons or when a teacher asks the class for doubts. This minimizes interruptions and overlapping voices, which can be confusing for other listeners. After questions are answered by teachers, it might be a good idea to remain silent unless there's a very specific follow up.
- 7) Try to avoid one on one back-and-forth discussions with the teacher, as these can carry on far past their welcome and waste valuable class time. In a conference call, it's easy for both the teacher and the student to wax eloquent for ages and forget that there's an entire class with muted mics waiting for them to finish and resume the lesson. This is more of a guideline than a rule – there are certain teachers and classes, usually small classrooms, where such discussion is allowed and encouraged. Go with your gut and by the expressions on your classmates' faces.
- 8) Make use of office hours. You may find yourself with a doubt that requires a lot of time and individual attention from the teacher to clarify. Arrange a meeting with your subject teacher, either right after class ends before the video call is switched off, or by email. Meet the teacher during the designated time and clarify your doubts.
- 9) Don't use the chat-box unless asked by the teacher or your mic is malfunctioning. Remember that Google Classroom doesn't have a private messaging feature like Zoom, so if you're roasting your

classmate's new haircut on the chat, be aware that the entire classroom is reading it.

- 10) Avoid crosstalk between students during conference calls.
- 11) It's probably a good idea not to have any other tabs open while in class. It's hard to focus in online classes as it is, and having krunker.io open in the next tab won't help.
- 12) Avoid snacking during class as most teachers don't appreciate it. Avoid all other obvious no-nos, like joining two classrooms at once, connecting your computer audio to a Bluetooth speaker in another room, or changing your clothes with your webcam on.
- 13) Making notes during class is helpful. Several studies have shown that taking notes while learning dramatically improves information retention. You can use a notebook and pen, or type out your notes onto a word doc, google doc or google keep.

Unfortunately, we seem to be in this current situation for the long haul. Inventurers will probably remain restricted to learning through online classes for the next few months, at least. But while we may never be able to download Friday Biryani through Google Classrooms, we might be able to make these online sessions a workable substitute for physical classrooms until the day that Inventure opens up again.





I CAN'T BREATHE, AGAIN.

an article by Kabir Burman

On May 25, another African-American man by the name of George Floyd became victim to excessive force, police brutality and systemic racism in America. As Derek Chauvin forcefully pressed his knee upon Floyd's neck for those fateful eight minutes and 46 seconds, a nation choked and gasped for air.

Within the next 24 hours of his demise, protests erupted throughout the country, with demonstrators chanting the

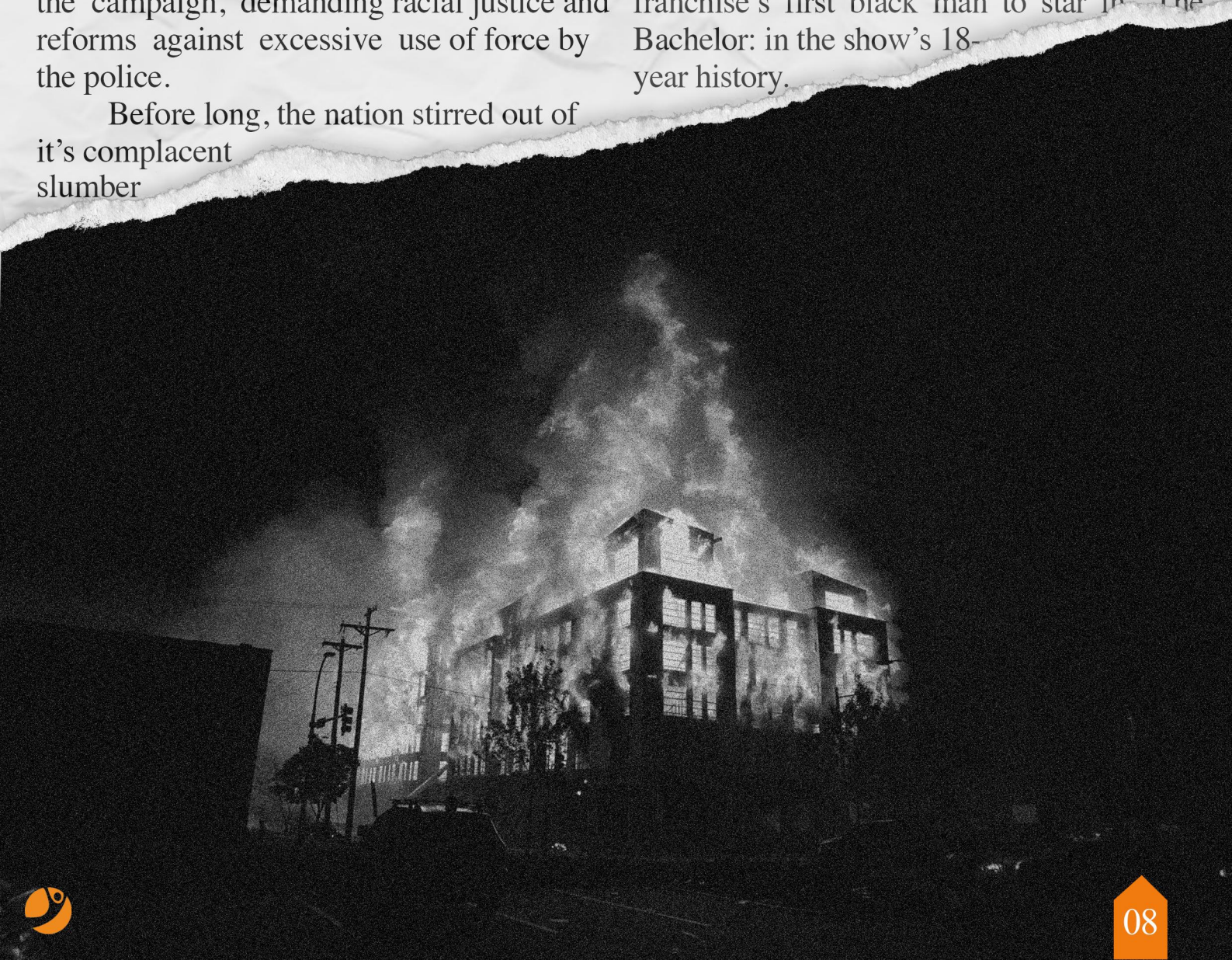
names of various people of colour subjected to police brutality. Soon the number of protests doubled and then tripled. With every sunrise, more calls for reforms and justice arose. Tens of thousands of people of all races, ethnicities, and religions took to the streets across more than 2,000 cities and towns, their chants echoing the cadences of past demonstrations. From the Times Square in New York to Pennsylvania Avenue in the nation's capital Washington; protestors demanded reforms that would limit the

privilege enjoyed by the police.

And what were they met with? Teargas, pepper spray, flashbangs, unwarranted arrests and more bullets. If the goal of the police was to reassure and convince the public that they were not guilty, it was probably not the best idea to suppress protestors using excessive force on live television. Videos soon emerged of officers using batons to assault demonstrators and police cars driving directly into crowds, and the world watched in repugnance as peaceful protestors rightfully exercising their First Amendment right to free speech were brutally struck down by those who were meant to serve and protect. This fuelled widespread international reactions. From Europe to Africa, people around the globe began marching in solidarity with the campaign, demanding racial justice and reforms against excessive use of force by the police.

Before long, the nation stirred out of its complacent slumber

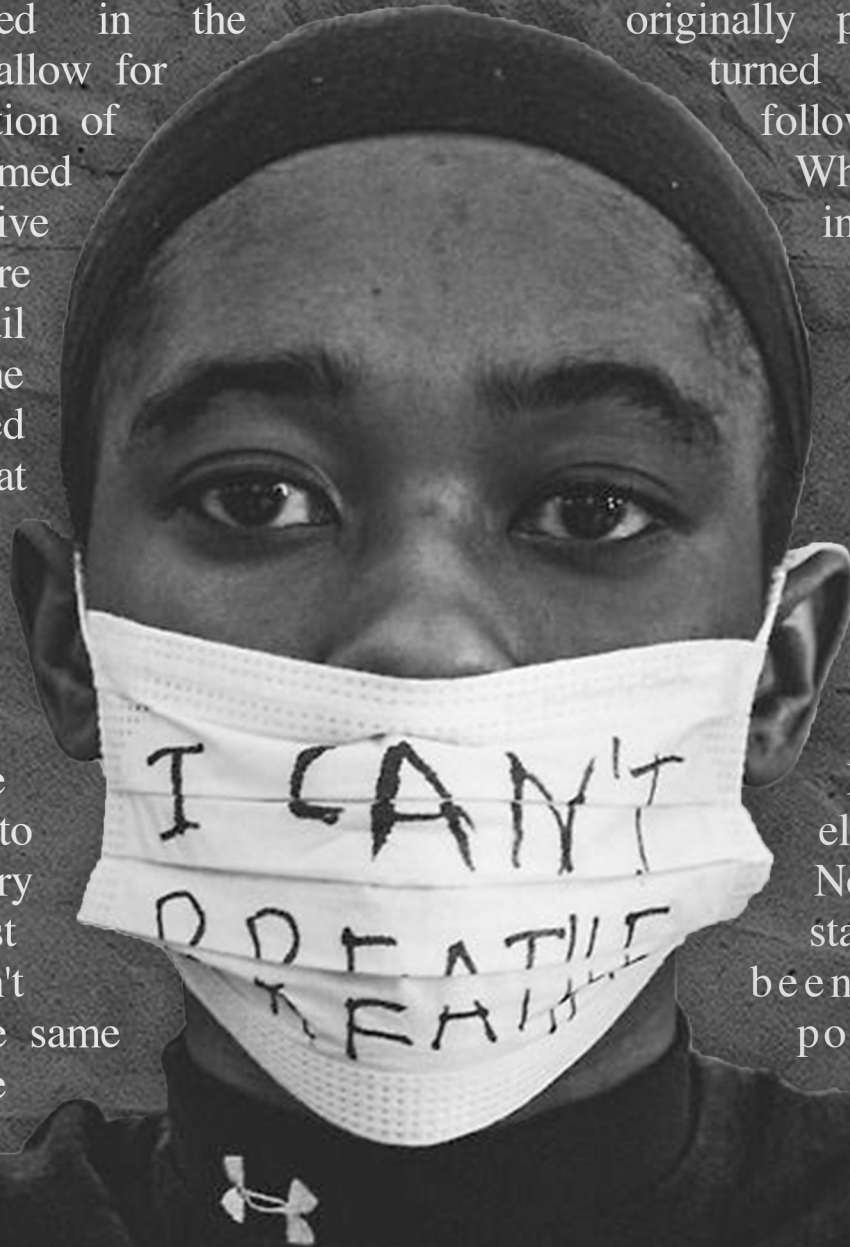
Throughout the week, the reckonings were swift and dizzying. Monday, the Merriam-Webster dictionary stated that they would be revising their entry on racism in order to better illustrate how it can be systemic in nature. The University of Washington, on Tuesday, removed its dance team coach after the only two black members of the group were laid off. The two women were invited to rejoin again. On Wednesday, the Confederate flag was banned from all NASCAR events after a black race car driver called out the organization. Thursday saw Nike join a wave of businesses that have made Juneteenth, which celebrates the end of slavery in America, an official paid holiday. And after long standing demands from fans, on Friday, ABC Entertainment named the franchise's first black man to star in "The Bachelor: in the show's 18-year history.



Meanwhile, as the movement on the streets had been building up steam, Democrats on the hill had been scrambling for an adequate response. Thus, the weekend witnessed lawmakers introduce a series of legislation for police reform. The changes included the banning of no-knock warrants in drug cases, hopefully avoiding circumstances such as those leading to the death of Breonna Taylor. It would also make chokeholds and carotid holds, like those used in the case of Eric Garner, a civil rights violation. Under it, a national database of police records is also to be established. However, one of the biggest proposals included in the legislation would allow for the easier prosecution of police officers blamed for using excessive force. This measure would finally curtail some of the privileges enjoyed by officers that allowed them to operate outside the ambit of established law. Yet, while Democrats have finally begun to introduce necessary changes, most Republicans don't seem to be on the same page. And as for the

President: when he isn't brutally clearing out peaceful protestors for photoshoots at the local church, Donald Trump has doubled down on his support for the current system. He has repeatedly stated that these violations were the acts of a "few bad apples", and that this does not represent the need for significant changes. Due to these statements and the overall complete lack and failure of leadership by the President, Trump's approval ratings plummeted to 38% and a large scale demonstration was observed outside the gates of the White House. The originally peaceful protest turned violent, following which the White House went into lockdown.

While we witness history being created in front of our very eyes, we must remember the context behind it. With the upcoming Presidential election in November, the stakes have never been higher. The political tension



election in November, the stakes have never been higher. The political tension between Republicans and Democrats has reached boiling point, while the Covid-19 pandemic wreaks havoc on the economy, world order and people's faith in their government. It is clear that there is, in fact, a growing deficit of confidence between people and political institutions, and rising threats to the societal contract. Whether it's spoken or unspoken, society is a contract that we sign as human beings amongst one another. And, as with usual contracts, the contract itself is only as strong as the people who abide by it. Put yourselves in the shoes of an African-American in America, and as you watch time and time again, the contract that you have signed with society is not being honoured by those who forced you to sign it. Now, do you still have any interest in maintaining those obligations? When you witness Tamir Rice, a 12-year-old, be shot for holding a toy gun, and Eric Garner

being choked to death, or when you hear that Latino and Black communities are being disproportionately affected by the virus; what vested interest do you have in maintaining the contract?

Martin Luther King Jr. famously once said-

"Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere."

We, as individuals, as communities and as societies are not immune to the viruses of hate, of fear and of others. We never have been. But we can try to do better than those before us. We each hold great power in our thoughts, our words and our actions. The solution to our difficulties lies in a simple concept, that is not bound by domestic borders, that isn't based on ethnicity, power base or even forms of governance.

The answer lies in our humanity.



My Eulogy To High School

an article by Apurva Kanagal

I'm still processing the fact that I'll never be a high school student again. Throughout my whole life I've loved the idea of being a high schooler; movies and TV shows definitely built up this vision of what high school would be like. Quickly did I realize, though, that with all its ups and downs, and slaps on the face, and sharp right turns, high school was really something else.

Being in high school was one of the hardest things I've ever done: with the never-ending exams, the immense pressure from absolutely everyone, and the stress I put on myself to always do the right thing for my future. Of course, you want to have fun, and embrace this

time in your life as well. Sometimes, it all feels like it's crushing you from the inside out. Yet now, I'm still finding it immensely difficult to imagine all of it coming to an end.

No more eating way too many cheese toasts way too early in the morning. No more getting kicked out of the library for our uncontrollable laughter. No more SAT prep during free periods. No more endless walks around the hub during other free periods. No more pacer tests, no more monthly tests. No more outbound trip campfires. No more class assemblies, no more sports days, no more productions. It's all over. Even though it was only four years, I feel like a life I lived





**“Life isn’t a
movie, and neither
is high school.”**

for so long has just been taken away from me, regardless of how much I didn't want it to happen.

When I was in high school, all I wanted was to not be in high school. Only during the hard parts though: only while trying to memorize bond angles, only while being stuck in traffic on the bus for way too long, and only while spending hours into the night trying to understand normal distribution. But while staring up at the star-scattered sky during outbound trips, during those hysterical laughing sessions during lunch, and during the most insightful conversations with a teacher, I wanted high school to be eternal. I could be a high schooler forever, just to live those moments again.

I leave high school with a learning and a thought. I hope that everyone doesn't expect high school to be this glamorous, problem-free life, because it's not. Life isn't a movie, and neither is high school. I learned that high school is what you make of it, whatever that may be; become the captain of the football team, be the star of the production, or go off the rails and be someone completely different. The opportunities are all there, and you are confined to only what your own mind dictates.

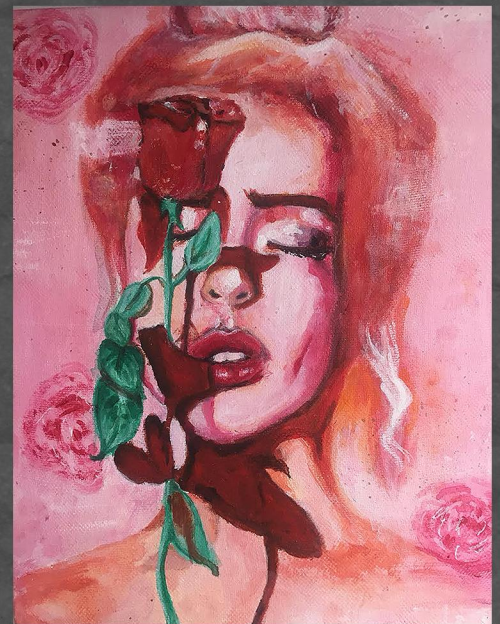
Dear High School,

Thank you for the lifelong friendships. Thank you for the laughs, the tears, and everything in between. Thank you for teaching me the lessons no one else could teach me. Thank you for all the memories made, cherished, and loved. Thank you high school, for the experience of a lifetime.

*Forever yours,
Apurva*



Untitled
Watercolour on Paper
by Anusha Kumar
Class 12-B



Rose
by Dhaani Agarwal
Class 9-D



Bangalore Today
Oil on Canvas, 2016
by Jino K Kurian
Faculty



Untitled
by Advit Gupta
Class 12-C



World's Economy
Acrylics on Canvas, 2014
by Jino K. Kurian
Faculty



An Informed World Trapped In Oblivion

Words are only as powerful as what they mean to you. Love isn't magical until you're in it. Escape isn't liberating until you've felt it. The stars won't take your breath away until you see them.

Just like that, a loaded gun isn't threatening until there's one pointed at you. You don't understand what life under a dictatorship is like until you get your fundamental rights taken away.

I'm a pessimist when it comes to humanity. I think we're all doomed. It's really hard to hope when the world seems to be filled with so much suffering, that keeps getting worse with every passing day. But why are we, as an entire species, so inept at countering suffering?

I think we as humans are the greatest resource we have, and if we rallied together, we really could make the world a better place. The issue is that we live sheltered in the cycle of our daily lives. This makes it difficult to wrap our minds around types of suffering we haven't experienced.

As a history student I've studied dictatorships, the oppression of peoples, and other dark events that scar humanity's past in great detail. It never fails to amaze me how hard it is to capture and convey this darkness. Words and images don't do justice to what people went through.

I think most of us live lives insulated from the world. You can read about the Syrian refugee crisis, or hear about human trafficking in Central America, but that is not going to leave you with the urge to do something about it. We lack the empathy for the suffering of others because we're isolated, and things like cyclones, war, poverty, just become words. Words that tell you people are suffering but don't help you understand what that suffering truly feels like. Maybe the only way to get people to really care about an issue, be invested in solving it, is by getting them to feel what those people are feeling. The terror, the fear, the hopelessness.

It's hard for us to feel the impact of many issues. And it's not our fault. It's just that we're so far removed from them, we don't truly understand how real they are, how real people are suffering. In the cycle of our daily routines, whatever they may be, we fail to realise that despite being informed, we are still oblivious. Do stories of suffering mean anything more to us than words we react to in the superficial way we're expected to.

It's not that we have the inability to empathise or understand suffering. It's just that you learn the most from personal experience. And no matter how much research you do, how many testimonies you read, how many documentaries you watch, you will never completely understand the true suffering of the people, unless you find yourself actually in the midst of that suffering.

Our world is vast in so many aspects. But each one of us live in our own worlds, small worlds. Collectively as a race we aren't rallied to help each other beyond the enclosures of our own isolated world. Today you may not be watching war destroy your home. But someone else is. And of course you'll feel bad for them, frown upon what the world has come to. But you will not truly understand their suffering unless you've seen your town annihilated by a missile. And without truly understanding their suffering it is unlikely that you will invest yourself into helping them.

That is why not enough is being done to stop all the suffering in our world. Because words are only as powerful as what they mean to you.

an anonymous submission



Almost Daylight

poetry by Anjali Mallampooty

*And in the depths of the night, at the darkest hour
Hope bloomed like a magic flower*

*I trembled and wailed and screamed and cried
Up at the tenebrous, endless sky*

*And when I was done, fallen, wounded and scarred
I opened my eyes and saw nothing, but the brightest stars*



The Recipe For Crime

an article by Sahana Athreya

What is the recipe for crime?

A measure of mental illness.

American serial killer Ted Bundy kidnapped, raped and murdered a number of young women in the 1970s. Could one possible explanation for his behaviour be his alleged Antisocial Personality Disorder?

Two pinches of power lust.

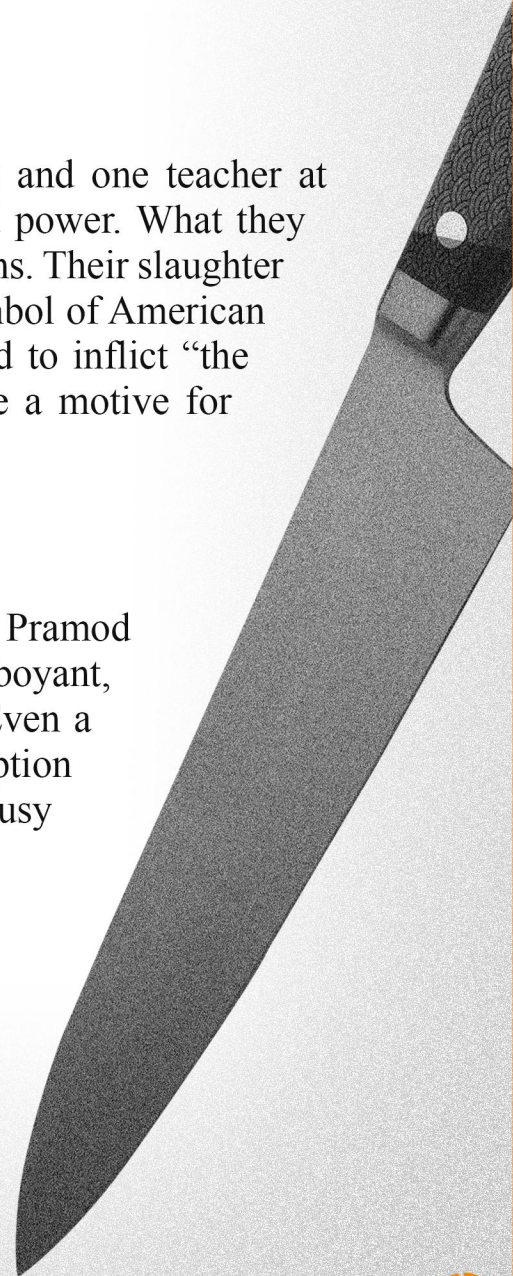
Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold murdered twelve students and one teacher at Columbine High School in 1999 in the name of fame and power. What they wanted was to go down in history, albeit for the wrong reasons. Their slaughter served as a means to terrorize the nation by attacking a symbol of American life. As Klebold proudly proclaimed on video, they wanted to inflict “the most deaths in U.S. history.” Could power and infamy be a motive for present-day criminals?

A slice of envy.

Pravin Mahajan killed his brother Pramod in April 2006. Pramod was constantly in the limelight, having been a flamboyant, well-loved BJP politician, much to his brother’s dismay. Even a quick Google search of Pravin Mahajan gives you the description of “Pramod Mahajan’s Brother”. Could bitterness and jealousy fuel murder?

Two teaspoons of a terrible childhood.

Sometimes referred to- inaccurately - as America’s first female serial killer, Aileen Wuornos admitted to murdering seven men in central Florida in the 1990s. Many speculate that her early childhood played an integral role in shaping who she later became. Her father

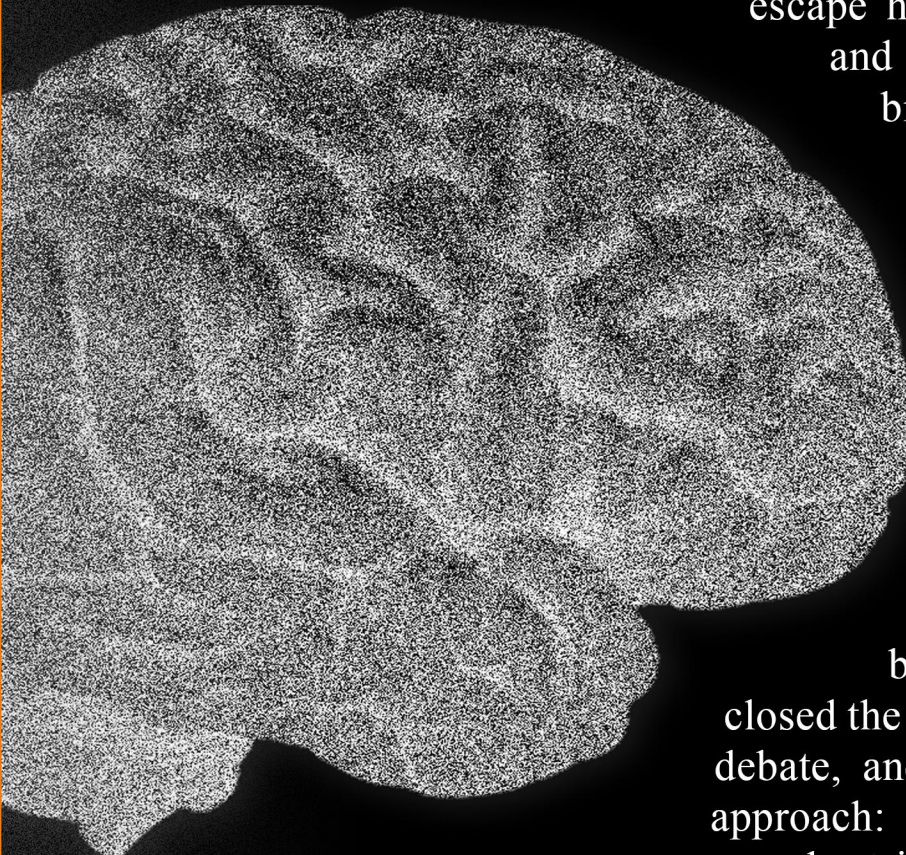




was arrested for child molestation, her mother abandoned her at a young age, and she was raised by abusive grandparents. She gave birth at age fourteen, and was thereafter kicked out of the house. Could a criminal's past set the stage for a gory future?

Four cups of poverty.

Griselda Blanco Restrepo, also known as the Cocaine Godmother, was a Colombian drug lord from the 1980s all the way to the early 2000s. It has been estimated that she was responsible for up to 2000 murders while transporting cocaine from Colombia to New York, Miami and South California. At the tender age of 16, Blanco ran away from home to escape her mother's abusive boyfriend, and resorted to looting to pay the bills. Could poverty push even the purest hearts to do the unthinkable?



Tracing back to the question, what makes a criminal? Is there a set list of ingredients to help us formulate the whys and hows of a felony? Criminologists have finally buried the hatchet and have closed the antiquated nature versus nurture debate, and have replaced it with a new approach: biosocial criminology. This approach strives to find the middle ground

between nature and nurture by looking into the genetic composition and biology, as well as the experiences and development throughout the course of life as factors for moulding a criminal. For instance, under the biosocial approach, criminologists may look into amygdala deformations causing the lack of empathy and remorse in individuals (nature), as well as the effect of an abusive childhood (nurture) as equally important factors in constituting criminal behaviour.

There are a number of other theories that can help in explaining the motives

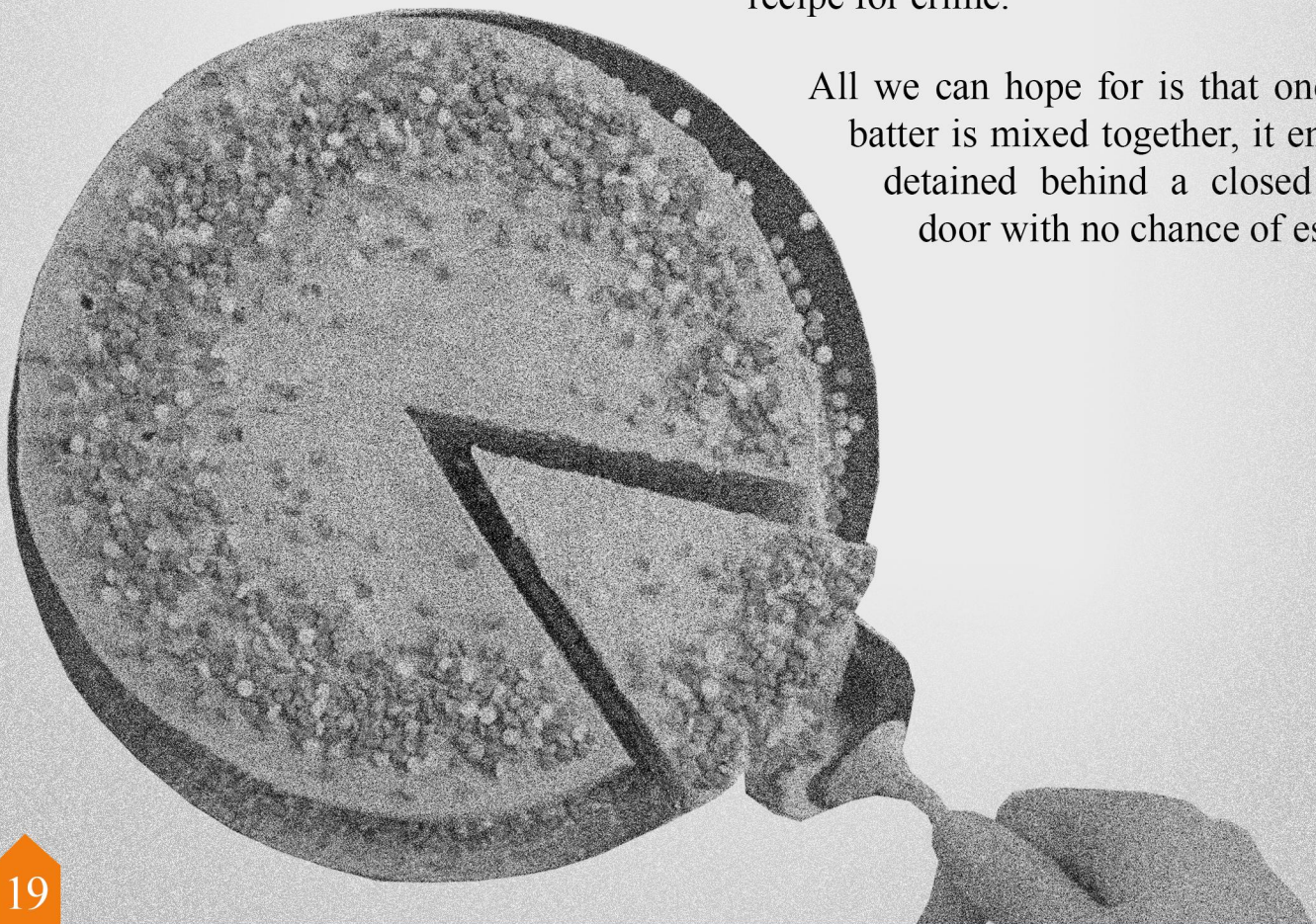


behind crime, such as the Anomie Theory, which addresses the link between poor economic conditions and crime rates, the Differential Association Theory, which states that an individual's behaviour is primarily influenced by social interactions, and the Social Disorganization Theory, which focuses on the effect of weak social institutions on criminal behaviour. Research today confirms that there is a positive correlation between troubled communities that are often plagued with high population density, poverty and single-parent families, and crime rates.

One of the most influential theories in criminology today is Travis Hirschi's Social Bonding Theory. It is distinguishable from its counterparts in that it questions not what prompts an individual to commit a crime, but rather what keeps an individual from committing a crime. This theory adopts the viewpoint that humans are restless and it is society's duty to tame this restlessness in the form of social bonds, like family and school, which will keep an adolescent from breaking the law. The closer adolescents feel to their family and teachers, the more they value their parents' culture and belief systems, and the more time they spend on bonding and on school activities, the less likely they are to go astray. Hirschi's theory appears to have been modeled on the old proverb "an idle brain is a devil's workshop."

The mind of a criminal is a complex amalgamation of factors. Apart from his ASPD, Ted Bundy also grew up in a fatherless household with a rocky relationship with his mother. Apart from their thirst for power, Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold were respectively diagnosed with psychopathy and depression. Aileen Wuornos met the criteria for both ASPD and Borderline Personality Disorder. There are no fixed ingredients. There is no recipe for crime.

All we can hope for is that once the batter is mixed together, it ends up detained behind a closed oven door with no chance of escape.





The Sad Truth About Girls In India

an article by Riti Agarwal

Sidelined at home, discouraged from school, undermined at work, girls in India seem to have no choice but to bear the brunt of our unchanging patriarchal society.

From the start, gender roles have been deeply ingrained in our mindset, determining the fate of the girl child. From the day she is conceived, she lives her life under scrutiny, afraid of speaking her mind or doing what her heart desires, and in fear of how society will perceive her.

A girl child is considered an economic liability in child care costs, dowry costs, and marriage support. She is expected to do housework and remain subservient to her male counterparts. She spends her time cooking, cleaning, fetching wood and water, caring for children, and working in the fields sowing and weeding. The girl child contributes to over 20% of total work at home. The most appalling part is that her mother, who faced neglect herself, discriminates against her.

The girl child is an embarrassment to the family, while the son is rewarded and encouraged to follow his dreams. If you were in this position- ill treated on the sole basis of something as fickle as gender-how would you feel? Would you put up with it?

This is all girl children have ever known. They are unaware of their own ambitions and talent, and unaware of the change they can bring about in the world.

Not only are they unsafe at home where they are victims of stereotypical attitudes, but also in learning environments. Ill-equipped schools that lack separate toilets for girls are one of the major deterrents for parents not willing to send their girls to study.

The few who manage to attend school, risk violence and abuse.

According to India's 2011 census, 53% households and 11% schools had no toilets. This lack of safety deprives young girls of an opportunity to educate themselves and better their lives.

Being home to more than one third of the 10 million child brides in the world, India has one of the highest numbers of girls forced into marriage before the legal age of 18. In every 3 child brides in the world is a girl in India (UNICEF). India has more than 45 lakh girls under 15 years of age who are married with children. Out of these, 70% of the girls have 2 children.

Since the 1970s, dowry demands have increased. Daughters must meet the demands of prospective in-laws for education and dowry even after marriage. The attitudes of parents, families, and society encourage sex-selective abortion, infanticide, abuse in childhood, and domestic violence in adulthood.

It was reported in 1994 that a woman is molested every 26 minutes and raped every 52 minutes.

Why is this still the case in India? Why does this topic not get enough attention from people?

Why are females in India told how to live their life? Why can they not decide for themselves?

It is true that there are NGOs working towards this, but this is not enough. We need to raise more awareness, and start fixing some of these problems. These so-called "traditional values" have been part of our "culture" for so many generations. Don't you think it's time we change that? If this was your daughter, sister, or mother, would you want her to be treated this way?





COVID-19: What Has It Done to Our Mental Health?

During these months spent in lockdown, we've all been riding emotional rollercoasters. Staying at home all day, being unable to meet our friends, and not going to school has really taken a toll on our mental health. Meghna Kishore from Grade 12 interviews our school counsellor, Ms. Sanaaz Doust, on various issues surrounding the students' mental health, owing to the lockdown.



Since when have you wanted to work in the field of mental health?

I'm not really sure about mental health in particular, but I took up psychology in Grade 11 and 12. I loved the subject, but I was terrible at it; my grades were very poor because I was never a science - oriented student; but something about it intrigued me and I pursued it for my undergraduation. I really enjoyed it. I did an internship in it to get some hands-on experience in the field, and that's when I realised that psychology was for me. I really enjoy understanding human behaviour and delving into the human mind.

Have you always wanted to work with students?

Not really! I was interested in the areas of relationships and research initially, but over a period of time, working with young adults grew over me as I realised that that is where I could make the most impact. Children are young, impressionable and vulnerable and that's where I could make a difference.

What do you think are the various reasons surrounding the stigma around mental health in India? How do you think we can go about changing mindsets to remove this stigma?

It stems from the idea that most Indians come from joint families. There's a common belief that families deal with a problem amongst themselves - they don't want to talk to somebody else about it.

The whole concept of psychology is that something has to be 'wrong' with you. Because it's about the human mind, it's believed that you need to have a mental problem to seek help from a mental health professional.

That being said, I think we've come a long way. When I finished my Masters in psychology, there were only

around 2000 mental health professionals all over India. So we've definitely picked up from there. We should continue to create awareness, through occasions like World Mental Health Day.

The media has begun asking psychologists for their values and opinions of late and our society is beginning to see and understand the importance of this industry. People are slowly seeing value in this. That being said, we have to account for the fact that the urban population of India is only around 10-15%. The rest is a rural population. We have only catered to the urban population. The issue is catering to the rest.

The mental health situation in India demands active policy interventions and resource allocation by the government. To reduce the stigma around mental health, we need measures to train and sensitize the community/society. This can happen only when we have persistent nationwide effort to educate the society about mental diseases.

How important do you value the mental health of an individual? Is it as important as physical health or more important in any particular cases? Are students aware of how important their mental health is and that anything could be affecting them emotionally at any point of time?

I've always said that mental health is priority. Let's take an example of someone who has a fever. You can't afford to ignore it. The symptoms would only get worse. That's exactly the same with a mental health concern. You cannot ignore the symptoms. I have often seen that people would tell others to just 'let it go', and that things will settle down. People fail to understand that it doesn't just become okay, there's a chemical imbalance in the brain that's leading to this.



Let's take another example of a child that's in school, battling depression or anxiety. It would be a challenge for them to be able to study, have a stable friend group and do things that their normal peer group is doing. So, the mental health of an individual is priority.

In the current COVID situation, mental health has been given a lot more emphasis and importance, which is a good thing.

The youth is definitely aware, due to their access to media. They know what to look out for amongst themselves and their peer group. However, if we go back to the stigma, if I had to tell my parents as a child that I felt low and anxious, they would mock me and tell me that I am making a big deal out of it.

Has the lockdown led to mental health in youngsters come to an all time low?

I'm not sure about an all time low, but the lockdown has definitely impacted teenagers and adults alike. Human beings are social beings - we need to interact. We can't just rely on virtual conversations. The idea of going to school, hugging each other, giving each other a pat on the back are things that are very critical and crucial to us human beings.

Owing to the lockdown, we can't do any of that. With the older children, relationships are such an integral part of their lives. There's also the issue of the amount of time they've been spending on social media. Because there's nothing else to do and that they're bored at home, the easiest thing to do is to turn to a gadget and spend time on social media. That has its own set of complications and health risks. Gaming, viewing restricted content, and cyber bullying have gone up.

Do you have any tips on how to deal with stress and anxiety during the lockdown?

It's the best time to do the things that you enjoy doing and don't usually have the time to do. Most of us lead busy lives; we travel long distances to work and we don't have the time to pursue our hobbies and interests. We have so much in the current situation to be grateful for. Every morning, I've made it a point to put down one thing that I'm grateful for. Keeping a gratitude journal is extremely crucial, the world out there is suffering and we've got nothing to worry about. We've got so much to be appreciative of. I also try to do a little bit of exercise because it's really helpful if there's some physical activity, fresh air, and sunlight. Balance is the key here.

The school has started counselling for students online, and it's a first for all of us. How different is it from counselling at school?

It's very different. I like to physically engage with the person in front of me, read body language, understand hand gestures, their movements, and eye contact. It's quite challenging online, honestly.

What I can usually do in ten minutes in a session, takes me twenty minutes online. But we're working around it. I'm hopeful that we get back to school in the next couple of months so that we can pick up on that intensity again.

Do you have experience dealing with adults too? How different is the scenario?

Yes, I have worked with adults. I think that adults are more fixed with their ideas and thinking patterns. They're not very open to change. The most important step in working with an adult is that he or she has to be ready to change or modify something in their life. It's easier with a teenager, because their minds are still developing, so I've observed that they're more open to change. At the end of the day, we're all human beings and we all have emotions. If you break down all the constructs and expectations of society, we're just a handful of sensitive emotions. Irrespective of age, we feel the same things.

Are students comfortable coming to talk to a counsellor? Or are they

hesitant until there's an external intervention?

Today many youngsters have opened up to the idea of talking to a counsellor- this is someone whom they need to feel a connection with and trust. Once that has been established, they talk about their concerns.

I am happy that our society is reaching that point. When I was in school, I had never heard of a counsellor on campus.

How important of a role do therapy dogs play in the counselling process?

The therapy dogs provide therapy not only to students, but to everyone around them. They can identify an emotion in a human being before one is aware that they are going through that particular emotion themselves. If I'm feeling sad, before I realise that, the dog has already picked up on what I'm feeling and is probably already sitting next

to me. What I love about them is that they provide a very non-judgemental environment. One can talk to the dog about absolutely anything, and there's no way the dog is going to judge you or stop you. They're also just great for cuddle therapy. If you're feeling stressed out, angry, or anxious, the best thing to do is to cuddle with them.

Are there any other methods that you use in counselling other than talking to students?

Along with talking come a lot of strategies; with some kids we do a basic psychometric assessment. We use art therapy, music, and play therapy. We do a lot of mindfulness activities too. It's quite a mix!

How important do you think is the visual display of your room in providing a safe space for the client? Seeing that this cannot be done via online sessions, are there other ways in which you ease the client into talking in these sessions?

It's extremely important. Two years ago we shared a room with the career counsellor, and that was a huge challenge because kids wouldn't want to talk in the presence of someone

else. Now that we have our own cubicles, the kids know that it's a safe space. It's either one of the counsellors or the dogs that are there. The environment plays a huge role. To use soothing colours and a soothing theme is important. I have a lot of greenery in my room which really helps the client calm down and encourages them to talk. I sometimes play music as well to help calm the child down and that works like magic.

Although online sessions have been a challenge, it's been pretty alright. Most of the kids that I've been talking to are the ones that already know me and have worked with me in the past, which makes the process easier. If it's a new child, I just spend the first few minutes getting to know them. I make them understand that they can talk to me, and that they can trust me. Once the ice is broken, it's easier for them to talk.

Our school has started peer counselling recently. How do they help in dealing with the problems of primary and middle school students? Do they feel more comfortable talking to a student rather than an adult?

There are a handful of students that prefer talking to a peer rather than an adult. The peer counsellors have also been in their shoes in the past, so they can understand what and how they feel. They usually deal with issues concerning friendship and bullying. They've also connected with the new students this year, to understand how they've been settling into Inventure. They've helped ease things for a lot of kids.

We're all riding emotional rollercoasters in these unprecedented times. Given the uncertainty of the current situation, it is normal for people to feel low. Because of this, friends have to stick together and help each other through this. Could you give me a few tips on how to show support and be there for a friend?

It's important to stay connected with each other. You can't see each other every day and you should reach out to the ones you value on a regular basis. There are many things you can do - watch a movie together, come back and share your thoughts, read books together, do WhatsApp video calls, and do so much more. I know a group of kids who each cooked a dish and then got together on a call; it was like a virtual dinner! These are things to do to keep busy, and stay connected.

Some counsellors are more comfortable addressing the immediate problem, while others want to focus on the deeper issue. Which helps students more?

It depends on the issue. Let's say two kids are in a fight. That doesn't need too much to delve into. It's just understanding the problem and what one can do to not land up in the same situation again. However, there are other deeper issues like anxiety, issues on the homefront, a low self-esteem, a lack of confidence and various other ones, which need to be delved into further. Depending on the child's concern, we decide on how we would like to deal with the case.

Coming to our last question, do you have anything to say to all of us whose future is extremely uncertain and unplanned?

Stay positive! Large parts of the uncertainty will settle down eventually, maybe not immediately, but over the next year or so. Try and make the most out of all the resources you have, and practice gratitude every single day!

You shouldn't look back on this time and wish that you had used it more effectively. This time will never come back. You'll never get to stay at home for four months straight again. So, utilise this time well and like I said before, balance is the key!





The Dragon

an original short story by Nandika Mishra

All the dragons in the kingdom had been either captured or killed. At least, that's what I thought. In all my travels, I had never seen one. But then, as fate would have it, I was lucky enough to happen upon one that still roamed the land, free as the wind.

It was a rare one too, an *Adroli fiwar*. That was the name of the dragon I saw. I had only ever heard about them in stories and read that they were endangered in books. Although they had been a part of my life, I had never imagined, even in my wildest dreams, that I would actually get the opportunity to behold one's beauty with my own eyes.

I didn't dare to move closer than I already was, so I hid behind a nearby spruce tree and watched as it reared its head and let out a great roar. It was majestic. The dragon was truly a gorgeous specimen.

It was as if someone had turned the sunset into a creature. Its body was painted in a brilliant gradient of reds and oranges and yellows. Its tail, long and limber, was adorned with ornate swirls and patterns in different hues of blue, making it look as though someone had drawn *mehndi* on it.

The wings of the dragon had a plain, yet vibrant coat of crimson red fading into a deep indigo, with thin veins woven in between, dividing each wing into multiple parts.

I know a description of it sounds odd on paper, but anyone who has witnessed this beauty for themselves would know that words could not do it justice. As I gazed upon its figure, the creature reared its great head and snorted impressively, shaking side to side and letting off magnificent sparks the colour of burnt amber. It truly lived up to its legend.

I was actually extremely lucky to have stumbled across it in the first place because the dragon was not in its natural habitat. Normally, *Adroli fiwars* are found in snowy places, but this one seemed to have made a home in the forest. The ground was covered with leaves and twigs, so no matter where you walked, you would hear a soft crunch every time. A glittering river trickled smoothly a few feet away, the calm and gentle rushing of the water pleasant enough to put anyone into the calmest state of mind. Leaves gently floated down to the ground, sometimes landing on your head. The trees

swayed gently in the cool breeze, almost as if they were dancing. It was a dignified and stately place, perfectly fitting for a creature known as the “king of kings”.

Despite their title, though, Adroli fiwars have a long, and frankly, tragic history. They are one of the few species of dragons that can control things other than fire. They have power over water too, which is where the name “*fiwar*” comes from. That’s why they’re considered so valuable, and why they are usually captured upon discovery.

However, *Adroli fiwars* are notoriously known for their vicious and short temper. As soon as they spot a human, they attack. That’s the way it’s been for centuries, and no one has ever seen any evidence to the contrary. So if worse comes to worst, soldiers are ordered to kill these beautiful beasts on sight.

The last attack was almost 20 years ago. I was still a little kid back then, but I remember it clear as day. The horrified screams, the crumbling of buildings to the ground, the mobs of people desperately crawling past one another in an effort to survive. It was all I could do to cling to my dad while he frantically tried to free my mom from underneath the fallen cabinet. Ash and soot clung to our skin and blinded us as the fires raged and roared around us. It was so ironic; this creature could control water, too, but it did not use even a single droplet to free us of our misery. I never did end up seeing the dragon itself during the attack, but its presence was unmistakable.

It still is.

Back then, I thought they were heartless animals. Beings incapable of feeling anything. That is what led me to specialize in the study of dragons. I craved knowledge about these beasts. I wanted to learn why they did what they did. I wanted to explore every single piece of existing information we had on dragons, until there was nothing more to read. So I did. And the moment I began, I fell irrevocably in love. For years, I pored over every single book and every single scripture that there was. I studied whenever I had the time, sometimes staying up well into the witching hours because it was so fascinating. To me, nothing was more exciting than obtaining information about these majestic things. It filled my heart right up, almost making it burst.

The dragon seemed perfectly content where it was, and I did not fancy my chances of going closer. After drawing a rough sketch of it, I quietly turned and slipped away, being careful not to step on any fallen branches or sticks. This would make a good journal entry. Perhaps I could even enter this information into the archives of my town library. It would certainly provide a new view of this old-as-time specimen.



Important and Notable Developments Under the Modi Government

an informative article by Aaroh Bhargava



Railways:

In the last six years, Indian Railways has been drastically transformed under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The development of the country's fastest train, Vande Bharat Express, is just one amongst several firsts involving the Indian railways. It is India's first semi-high speed train and first indigenously built engineless train, and was flagged off by Prime Minister Narendra Modi recently.

Indian Railways, in collaboration with Alstom SA from France, manufactured 12,000 HP electric locomotives at its Madhepura factory.

Railway stations are being equipped with 100% LED lighting, which is eco friendly and saves about 200 crore rupees in electricity expenditure. Google and Indian Railways have joined hands and came up with Project Niligiri. The project aims to set up WiFi hotspots at around 400 railway stations across India.

Indian Railways has recorded zero passenger deaths by rail accident in 2019-20, making it the national transporter's safest year in history, which is great progress from the 16 deaths in 2018-19, 28 deaths in 2017-2018 and 195 deaths during 2016-2017.

Indian Railways launched the first solar-powered DEMU (Diesel Electrical Multiple Units) trains from the Safdarjung railway station in Delhi. The train will run from Sarai Rohilla in Delhi to Farukh Nagar in Haryana. A total of 16 solar panels, each producing 300 Wp, were fitted in six coaches. The train has a power back-up and can run on battery for at least 72 hours. The cost of these solar panels, manufactured under the 'Make in India' initiative, is only Rs 54 lakh.



Make In India:

PM Narendra Modi launched the 'Make in India' campaign to facilitate investment, foster innovation, enhance skill development, protect intellectual property and build top-quality manufacturing infrastructure.

'Make in India' targets 25 sectors in manufacturing, infrastructure, and service activities, and detailed information is being shared through interactive web-portal and professionally developed brochures. FDI has been opened up in Defence Production, Construction, and Railway infrastructure in a big way. Total FDI equity inflow received in the three years since the launch of the Make in India initiative is \$ 99.72 billion, which is an increase of 62% compared to the previous three years (April 2012 to September 2014, \$ 61.41 billion).

According to the data shared by ICA, the annual production of mobile phones in India increased from 3 million units in 2014 to 11 million units in 2017. India replaced Vietnam to become the second-largest producer of mobile phones in 2017.

The 'Make In India', due to its attractive schemes and benefits towards foreign investment, now paves way for the manufacturing firms exiting China after the COVID-19 pandemic.

Swachh Bharat Mission:

Under the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, over 9 crore toilets have been constructed. It is the outcome of this mass movement that rural sanitation coverage, less than 40 percent in 2014, has increased to 98 percent. With 38.70 percent rural sanitation coverage in 2014 before the Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM) began, India had one of the highest numbers of people in the world defecating in the open (53 crores). In four years of the mission, the number of people defecating in the open has come down to 25 crores, as per a survey conducted by the Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation.

Jan Dhan Yojna:

Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana is a National Mission on financial Inclusion which uses an integrated approach to bring about comprehensive financial inclusion and provide banking services to all households in the country. The scheme ensures access to a range of financial services, such as availability of basic savings bank accounts, access to need-based credit, remittances facility, insurance, and pension. These bank accounts are now being used to transfer emergency relief funds to the poor during this pandemic. In the month of April, as many as 20.05 crore female Jan Dhan account holders received Rs 500 each in their accounts as the first instalment. The total disbursement under the head was Rs 10,025 crore as of April 22.





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