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Sri Venkateswara College
(University of Delhi)



WE WITNESS

ANNUAL MAGAZINE
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY
2022-23



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प्रधानाचार्य

Prof. C. Sheela Reddy

Principal

Principal's Message

With great pleasure, I welcome the 2022-23 edition of 'We Witness', the Annual Magazine of the Department of Sociology. As always, this edition showcases the best of the students' talents in writing and various other expressions of creativity. Besides, this Magazine represents how young minds 'witness', reflect and react to their social environment and negotiate their roles and responsibilities within it.

It is also commendable that Alumni of the Department from across the years, has also made contributions to this edition, infusing it with rich and varied experience in different fields and professions. The interface between alumni and current students further enriches the sociological experience through the medium of the Magazine.

I congratulate the Department once again and look forward to future issues of 'We Witness'.

C. Sheela Reddy
PRINCIPAL

FROM THE EDITORS' DESK

We all create fake scenarios about college and tightly hold on to the hope of turning them into reality. However, for the 3rd years, these dreams met with a hurdle in COVID. Yes, we loved attending classes from the comfort of our blankets or logging into MS Teams and going back to sleep, but nothing beats the feeling of dozing off in a physical classroom!

This year, however, was not as sad as the opening remarks of this note. College campuses reopened, bringing a silver lining - or rather a golden lining - to the doomed lives of DU students. On the morning of February 17, 2022, Mahesh bhaiya was delighted to see students relishing dosa during the break, and our guards were glad to let their guard down and let students enter with makeshift identity cards. As we continued our sociological journey, this was another year of flipping through Durkheim, Marx, and Malinowski. Another year of learning about many distant tribes, their religious practices, modes of political organization and even why they eat certain foods (all of this is to fetch you marks, of course). But with college finally shifting offline, the glory of student life returned to the campus of Sri Venkateswara College, filling the year with multiple cultural events and the first offline exam in years!

The 2nd years watched helplessly as all their dreams of sliding in some marks under the shadow of online exams were dashed, but hey, what can be better than getting the chance to create a college life resembling those Dharma or Yash Raj productions? (minus SRK) It has been the most dynamic year for students in all three batches. The 3rd years got blessed with only a year in college; the following batch was able to gain a mixed experience; and the fresh harvest of NEP students struggled with exams, books, and assignments heavier than their emotional baggage! This year was no less than an American sitcom—fun, exciting, intriguing, yet so comforting!

This edition of We Witness is a small attempt at condensing this whirlwind of experiences into a small volume. As you turn the pages, you will see ideas, thoughts, insight and creativity that only budding sociologists can display! We would like to thank our Principal, Professor C. Sheela Reddy, for supporting our efforts as well as the student body for their significant contributions to the magazine. Special thanks to our faculty advisors Dr. Geeta J. Sodhi and Dr. Niharika Jaiswal, without whom this endeavor would not have been possible. We also extend our heartfelt gratitude to Dr. Usha Panini for her kind contribution to this edition of We Witness. A word of gratitude also, to our dear alumni, for sharing their experiences.

We hope you enjoy reading this copy, just as much as we enjoyed putting it together!

Happy reading!

Editorial Team: Jahnvi, Shefali, Sneha, Tanvi, Adarsh, Ishita

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Disclaimer: Most of the above statements are made in good humor. We do sometimes take our education seriously! The views and opinions expressed in the magazine are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official policy, stand or position of the Department of Sociology or Sri Venkateswara College

THE YEAR THAT WAS

Compiled by: Manasi Verma and Arushi Sharma

With the beginning of the new academic year on campus came many exciting new experiences, from lectures in T1, to workshops in the seminar hall, to fests in the auditorium lobby.

The department organised a Photography Workshop on 'The Role of Photography in Building Consciousness' on 27th October 2022. The event was held in collaboration with PhotoCommune along with the College's Principal Professor Sheela Reddy as the Chief Patron. The speaker of the event was Idris Ahmed who made a presentation on the contribution of photographic content in society through several examples, such as the photograph 'The vulture and the little girl' by Kevin Carter. He illustrated that while photography has the capability of inducing feelings of happiness, humour and joy, it is heartbreak-inducing images such as these, that can create exposure and political change and validate tragedy and reality for what it is.

It was the turn of our department this year, to host the prestigious M.N. Srinivas Declamation contest held annually for the first-year students of Sociology of Delhi University. It was held on 20th January 2023 on the theme 'Rethinking Prisons and Punishments in Modern Democracies'. The judges for the event were Dr Namita Pandey, Associate Professor, Political Science, Dr S. Krishnakumar, Associate Professor, Economics of our college and Dr Asheesh Kumar, Assistant Professor, Centre for the Study of Social Systems, SSS, JNU. The contestants emphasized on the need for a humanistic approach towards prisoners which offered them moral and psychological support and facilitated their rehabilitation. Ekdashi Kaushal and Suruchi Gupta Ghosh of Miranda House won the contest and took home the prestigious M N Srinivas Declamation Shield. Ekdashi Kaushal was also adjudged as the best speaker.

The department welcomed the 1st years' with the Fresher's Party, themed "MET GALA'23: seasons of style" on 6th February, 2023. The freshers were in their red carpet-looks and enjoyed a fabulous evening filled with excitement and fun. Finally, Runshika Rathore and Anshuman Sahni were named Mr and Ms Fresher.

The prestigious Annual Lecture of the department of Sociology was delivered on 13th March by the distinguished scholar Prof. Roma Chatterji, retired Professor, Department of Sociology, Delhi School of Economics, University of Delhi, on the topic 'The Superhero Image and the Ravana Mythology'. Prof. Chatterji discussed the various ways in which superhero narratives can be understood from a sociological lens by using an example of Ravana mythology. She demonstrated how different features in the images play a function to portray a complete message to the readers. The Annual lecture was followed by a special lecture on 'Cinema and Fandom' on 20th March 2023 by our alumnus Mr Abir Mishra, currently a Ph.D scholar at the department of Sociology, Delhi School of Economics, University of Delhi. Mr Mishra introduced his media sociology study with light humour and Bollywood references. He used Sharukh Khan's signature T-pose to analyse it sociologically and discussed image analysis and Chitralakshana and Vishnudharmottara Puranas.

The Sociology Association was elated to present the Annual Fest - Conscience Collective. The day was packed with engaging competitions and activities that prompted us to use our sociological imagination. Students were able to interact with sociology in new ways by participating in "Socio-Shot," a case study competition in the spirit of social entrepreneurship, and "Sociology of Pop Culture," an attempt to look deeper into the cultural significance of some of our most beloved fictional characters. From "hunga tonga" to "Twitter takeover" to "tech layoffs" and "chatgpt," fifteen major events of the year 2022 were debated in "Feud of the Great Houses," which pitted four schools of thought (Functionalism, Marxism, Interactionism, and Feminism) against one another. A General Knowledge quiz show called "Simone de Quizhour" covered not only the social and political events of the day but also their broader historical and political background. The exciting festival marked the closure of the activities for the year 2022-23.

अतुलनीय माँ

Anurag Kumar, 1st year

उस माँ की तो तुलना ही नहीं,
संसार की किसी भी वस्तु से।
उसके दुःख का एक हिस्सा भी,
मुश्किल होगा सहना हमसे।

वो हँसियां उसके चेहरे की,
बतलाती ना, जो गम है उसे।
हम कहाँ सहेंगे एक बाद,
जो सेहती है वो पल-पल में।

वो घर का सारा काम करे,
वो दुसरो का दुःख बांटती है।
लेकिन उसके मन को क्यों ना,
हम देते छोटी आश भी है?

उसकी खुशियां तो इसमें है,
परिवार रहे सुखद ढंग से।
उस माँ की तो तुलना ही नहीं,
संसार की किसी भी वस्तु से।

तुम डाटों, मारो, तंग करो,
वो सोचेंगी तेरे ही लिए।
पर तुमको थोड़ी दर्द भी हो,
वो चाहेंगी वो खुद सेह ले।

वो खाती भले हो आधी पेट,
पर भर-भर पेट खिलाती है।
जब पूछो तुमने खाया क्या?
वो हाँ कह के झुठलाती है।

जो माँ ने हमको खुशियां दी,
ना एक खुशी भी हम दे सकें।
उस माँ की तो तुलना ही नहीं,
संसार की किसी भी वस्तु से।

ITINERARY OF A LONE LECTURER OF SOCIOLOGY IN SVC

Dr. Usha Panini, Retired Faculty

I joined Sri Venkateswara college as a Lecturer in Sociology in 1974. The college had re-opened after the summer vacation, and I had to begin teaching the subject for B.A.Pass students. At that time, the BA (Pass) programme offered only three papers in Sociology - one per each year of the 3 year programme - and was supposed to be a lighter programme than the Honours course with eight papers. However, the Pass course broadened the intellectual horizon of the student and familiarised her to other social science disciplines. I always thought that a BA pass graduate was better equipped than an honours graduate, to locate herself in the world and was better prepared to branch out into higher studies in any of the social sciences if the course curriculum was tweaked a bit to allow students to go beyond the introductory level. But let me digress. When I joined SVC, I became the first head and member of the department of Sociology in the college. This meant that I had to do more additional administrative work. This was a good thing in a way because even though I was a lone member of the department I had to interact with my colleagues from different departments. I also had to share faculty room with Telugu and Tamil teachers in the college. As I had no departmental colleagues to interact with, I became friends with other colleagues in the social sciences and humanities. I now realise that all of them were among the best in the university. They were young, enthusiastic, hardworking, dedicated and brilliant teachers as well as scholars. Interacting with them was intellectually stimulating.

I enjoyed teaching the BA students. The classes used to be large ones and the young students, especially the boys, were boisterous and spirited. But they were respectful and friendly with me. I used to organise informal field work with them. I remember taking them to the Museum of Natural History in Delhi once and on another occasion, for fieldwork in the village Kapashera in Haryana.



As the official in charge of the department of Sociology, it became my responsibility to organise extramural lectures. I invited Amitav Ghosh who at such a young age had attained an international reputation, to lecture on Sociology and Social Anthropology. I also got Kiran Bedi to deliver a talk on crime. Patricia Uberoi gave an absorbing lecture on calendar art by interpreting images of divinities portrayed in lithographic calendars.

As Honours courses were much sought after and involved more intense teaching, both students and teachers tended to take Pass course rather casually. In my experience Pass course students have falsified this notion. I can think of Ms. Jaya who is now a distinguished IAS officer and Bhuvan Lal who has written several books on historical personalities, who is now a much sought after author.

I am particularly proud of the fact that I was able to do what it takes to get the UGC and Delhi University permission to start the Honours programme in Sociology at Sri Venkateswara College in 1987. I had to visit the parent department of Sociology in Delhi University several times to support my effort. Professor B.S.Baviskar who was then the Head of the Department, backed me fully in preparing the documents and the proposal to set up the Honours programme. Professor Munis Raza, who was then the Vice Chancellor of DU was very kind and generous and exerted himself in his official and personal capacity to persuade the UGC to grant the Honours status. When I showed the letter of approval from the UGC to the then Principal, he was quite surprised. I look back with pride that over the years, the department has grown into one of the best in Delhi University.



Dr. Usha Panini superannuated in 2006, after a long and distinguished tenure at the department of Sociology, SVC. She was responsible for initiating the B.A.(H) Sociology programme at the college, at a time when there were only three colleges in DU which offered Sociology at the Honours level. We take this opportunity to express our gratitude and regards to her.

ऐसा क्यों हैं?

Lovely Dayma, 3rd year

औरत के जज़्बात नहीं है क्या
फिर उसका ही बलात्कार क्यों
क्यों समाज मे औरत को
आदमी के नाम से जाना जाता है
ऐसा क्यों है?

क्यों औरत को ही सब सुनकर
चुप होना पढता है
आदमी को क्यों नहीं
ऐसा क्यों है?

आदमी के जज़्बात है
औरत के जज़्बात बेकार है
ऐसा क्यों है?

आदमी को ही सब घर का
मुख्या क्यों कहते है
औरत को क्यों नहीं
ऐसा क्यों है?

YOUTH: THE VOICE OF THE UNHEARD

Zaara Sharma, 1st year

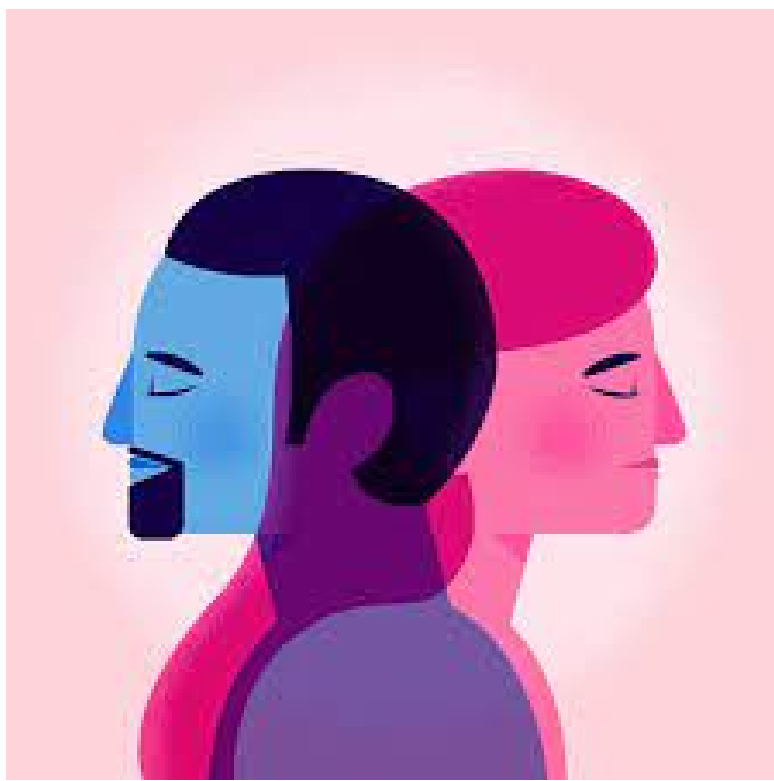
India is home to one fifth of the entire youth population in the world. Almost half of its population of 1.3 billion is below the age of 24 and a quarter is below the age of 14. So many powerful voices yet to be heard! The youth of India is the most powerful weapon of its country. Almost everyday, we come across news headlines showing us how the youth is speaking up for the country and those doing wrong to it.

It makes me sit back and wonder at the amount of power we hold! Enough to change the entire future of a nation! Since ages, we have seen that the kind of ideology and thinking that young people seem to hold, express and act upon, has given a lot of vulnerable people the voice they needed. However, not all of us have felt the need to speak up.

Why? Why are we so afraid to rebel against injustice in this world? Merely posting “black lives matter” on your social media handles solely because a large part of the growing youth population is doing the same, does not and will never make a difference. Showing your support to people in times of need is what will make a change. Doing something to help them get out of it and fight, is what will make a change.

So the next time you see any form of racism or any social injustice to anyone at any level and you speak up about it, is when you will have made a difference. So start speaking up if you don't. Your voice is the most powerful tool you have. It can travel across countries and start a chain. A chain which will undoubtedly make a positive change and help more people to speak up for the better because we need answers.....answers to so many questions lingering on our minds while we watch the horrific news of the state of this world every single day. Answers for all those people who have been stopped while doing something better for this world.

But most importantly, we need these answers for ourselves to bring about a change, a revolution, and to break free from all the burdens our nation has been carrying.



A WALK THROUGH DARGAH NIZAMUDDIN AULIYA

Compiled By: Sneha Alexander, 2nd Year

To enter the lanes leading to Dargah Nizamuddin Auliya is to enter a different world altogether. Cocooned within rows of shops, some selling religious books and others mouth-watering food, the dargah complex provides intriguing insights into the world of faith and how individuals experience religion.

"Sacred things are things protected and isolated by prohibitions; profane things are those things to which the prohibitions are applied and that must keep at a distance from what is sacred" (Durkheim, 1912, p. 38).

Emile Durkheim, in his seminal work, 'The Elementary Forms of Religious Life', extrapolates that all known religious beliefs presuppose a classification of the world into two domains; one containing all that is sacred and the other all that is profane. They are to be kept strictly separate from each other. At the entrance of the Dargah, the separation of the sacred and the profane is evident through the removal of shoes and washing of hands and feet. Women are not permitted entry to the inner sanctum unlike the males. The shrine itself is discerned as highly sacred; therefore women, who are viewed as profane are restricted from entering that space.

Various rites are carried out inside the dargah, including the spreading of 'chaddar' (cloth), 'chaddar ko chumna' (kissing the cloth) for a mannat (wish), and offering of flowers by the devotees. People pray together in unison, representing solidarity and collective will. These practices bring the community together. Through the common acts of praying and singing qawwali together, society becomes conscious of itself and continuously re-affirms itself.



"Religion works in the individual and through forces of the individual mind. It is, therefore, neither exclusively social nor individual, but a mixture of both." (Malinowski, 1925, p. 39).

Bronislaw Malinowski contradicts Durkheim in 'Magic, Science and Religion' and argues that religion is not solely social. In fact, the strongest moments of religious expression come forth in solitude. Despite the community making its presence seen through collective representations, one can observe various individual manifestations of religious faith at the dargah.

A few metres away from the central shrine, an old man sits by himself, enjoying the hymns being sung. Inside the dargah complex, a lady tightly holds on to the sacred wall as she mutters her prayers in solitude. To the right of the dargah is a table manned by an old man who provides water to the visitors. In pleasing the faithful, he pleases God. Some offer flowers, others tie red threads to the dargah wall, while a few write their prayers down, but every person, in their own way, expresses their belief in the divine.

In front of the dargah a group of faithful sit together, singing hymns and chanting praises of Allah. A man with a microphone in hand, leads the prayers, becoming the voice of the community. Society is seen to be acting as a tool of publicity and the community, in wholeheartedly performing the rituals collectively, creates an atmosphere of homogenous belief. One voice rings loud and clear and the message of faith is uniformly spread to all people inhabiting the religious space.

"For everyone without exception God's Providence has prepared a calling, which he should profess and in which he should labour." (Weber, 1904, p.106).

Max Weber believed that religion - specifically Protestantism - gave rise to the spread of modern capitalism, as he asserted in 'The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism'. Weber analysed how social institutions impacted each other, especially focusing on the domains of religion and economy. Looking at the religious activities in the dargah from a Weberian perspective, one can see that there are various economic activities surrounding Dargah Nizamuddin Auliya. There are flower sellers, food corners, people selling sacred clothes and the red thread (mauli) to those who enter the Dargah. They work hard to achieve their means of survival and thus, to please Allah. Here we observe the link between religious activities and economic activities like Weber did.

Religion truly paves the way for economic activity to flourish here. Many institutions such as administration, a small health centre, and a wide range of markets function together. These institutions and the dargah are interdependent.

It is because of the Dargah that thousands of people gather here. All their actions have a distinct meaning. They join and raise their hands to worship and pray, tie sacred threads for mannat, gather together for qawwalis, showing submission, trust and respect for Allah and also in effect strengthen their religious ties and unity.

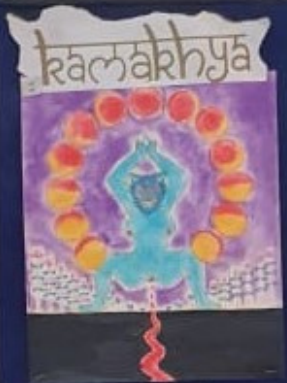


This article is based on a field visit to Dargah Nizamuddin Auliya, undertaken by Sem. III students under the guidance of Dr. Niharika Jaiswal. They were tasked with viewing the dargah complex through the theoretical perspective of three sociologists: Emile Durkheim, Bronislaw Malinowski and Max Weber. This visit was aimed at equipping the students with the skills required for the practice of sociology, enabling them to apply the theories taught in the core course, 'Sociology of Religion'.

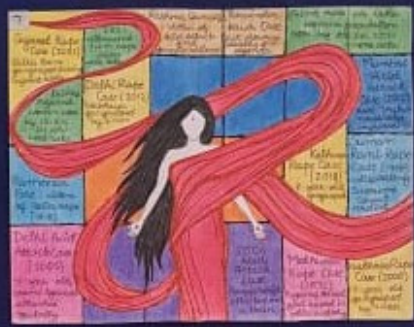
WALL

Edition 1

Her Reality? EDITION 1



दुनिया के सबसे बड़े दुश्मन
 हैं हमारे ही अंदर के दुश्मन
 जो हमें अपने ही नाम पर
 दुख देते हैं।
 दुनिया के सबसे बड़े दुश्मन
 हैं हमारे ही अंदर के दुश्मन
 जो हमें अपने ही नाम पर
 दुख देते हैं।



संसार हमें और बंद गंधा है
 लेकिन हम भी जैसे
 बंद-बंदी बन रहे हैं
 सब रहे हो बंधे
 भी के गंधा है
 मुझे सब पर दो-आली
 रहे हैं गुण का रहे दो-आली
 गुण पर बंधन है
 सब भी ले रहे दो
 बंधन को भेदने को जरा
 को बंधे संधा इतने

*Domestic violence
 is the familiar of the
 war against women*



जी रोने का वो देवा दिया
 मुझे ब्रह्म बनने बना दिया
 मुझ को तुम्हीं ही रोने

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हिस्से में मेरे कोरा कागज़

Saransh Yadav, 3rd year

किसी को किताब, किसी को उसका ज्ञान मिला।
हिस्से में मेरे कोरा कागज़ था, वो भी मुझे बेजान मिला।।

जो अपनी सोच लिखी मैंने उस पर, उसे न कोई ध्यान मिला।
मैं अपनों की तारीफ़ करता रहा, मुझे न कोई अंजान मिला।।

जो नज़रे उठाई, तो सिर्फ़ ख़ाली आसमान मिला।
लोगों ने बस सूरत देखी, मेरी सोच को न कोई नाम मिला।।

जो हां मिलाई उनकी सोच से, मुझसे उनको आराम मिला।
जो सवाल उठाया उनकी सोच पर, तो मेरा ही नाम बदनाम मिला।।

ठुकराए वो साथ सारे, और जो भी एहसान मिला।
मेरी खुदारी मैंने देखी, और अपनाया जो भी अंजाम मिला।।

WHAT IS SANITY?

Sree Parthasarathy, 2nd Year

Who is a psychopath? Seriously, a fine line separates sanity from insanity. Transcending the existing order asks of us to make a new one. If people don't smile enough, they are considered mentally ill. If they laugh too much too, they are considered mentally ill! Sanity works well if people run with the flock of sheep. The definition of sanity according to introvert 'sane' humans – "Be a puppet! "Knock ! Knock ! Who's there? A sane puppet! When people talk to themselves....are they insane? But when walking down the street with ear pods plugged in and talking to themselves...then are they sane?

Young people need to act according to their age. Why do grandfathers say, "Young blood still boils in me"? It is not because youth is the best time for humans but because of the wanting to be looked upon by other humans as sane. Talk to youth, grandpa after creating a hibernation device, ha! At 1, learn to pee; at 10, be naughty; at 20, try finding a partner and get married eventually according to others' wishes, looking at caste, class etc.; at 50, just retire, don't talk; at 80, dig a grave, put cotton in your nostrils and go inside for eternal slumber! Are atheists insane? What should they do? Light camphor and chant to a human made statue or picture? If someone asks, 'Why are you gay?', can't the return question be asked, 'Why are you not?' People may be unable to control their anger but does that make them insane?

We must thank ourselves for being the humans we wish to be. The day we lose confidence in ourselves is the day we should sing 'Bella Ciao'.



Artist: Ria Yadav, 3rd year

क्या है तू दिखा उन्हें

Saransh Yadav, 3rd year

छोड़ साथ उनका जो तुझे कमज़ोर बनाते है,
बात बात पर जो दुःखद कथा सुनाते है।

कमज़ोर है वो, गीदड़ों का शोर है वो।
गंभीर समय में भी तू मौन है, पहचान खुदको तू कौन है।

इससे बड़ा क्या संकेत दूं तुझे?
तू तू नहीं मैं हूं, नज़रे उठा और देख मुझे।

व्याकुलता को दोष देता है,
देख खुदको तेरा ध्यान कहां रहता है।
लहरों को दोष देता है,
उनके साथ तो तू खुद बहता है।

रूकना नहीं जहां लगे सब सही।
कभी सुना है?
ये ब्रह्माण्ड तुझसे क्या कहता है?
वही तूझे उभारेंगे संग जिनके तू रहता है।

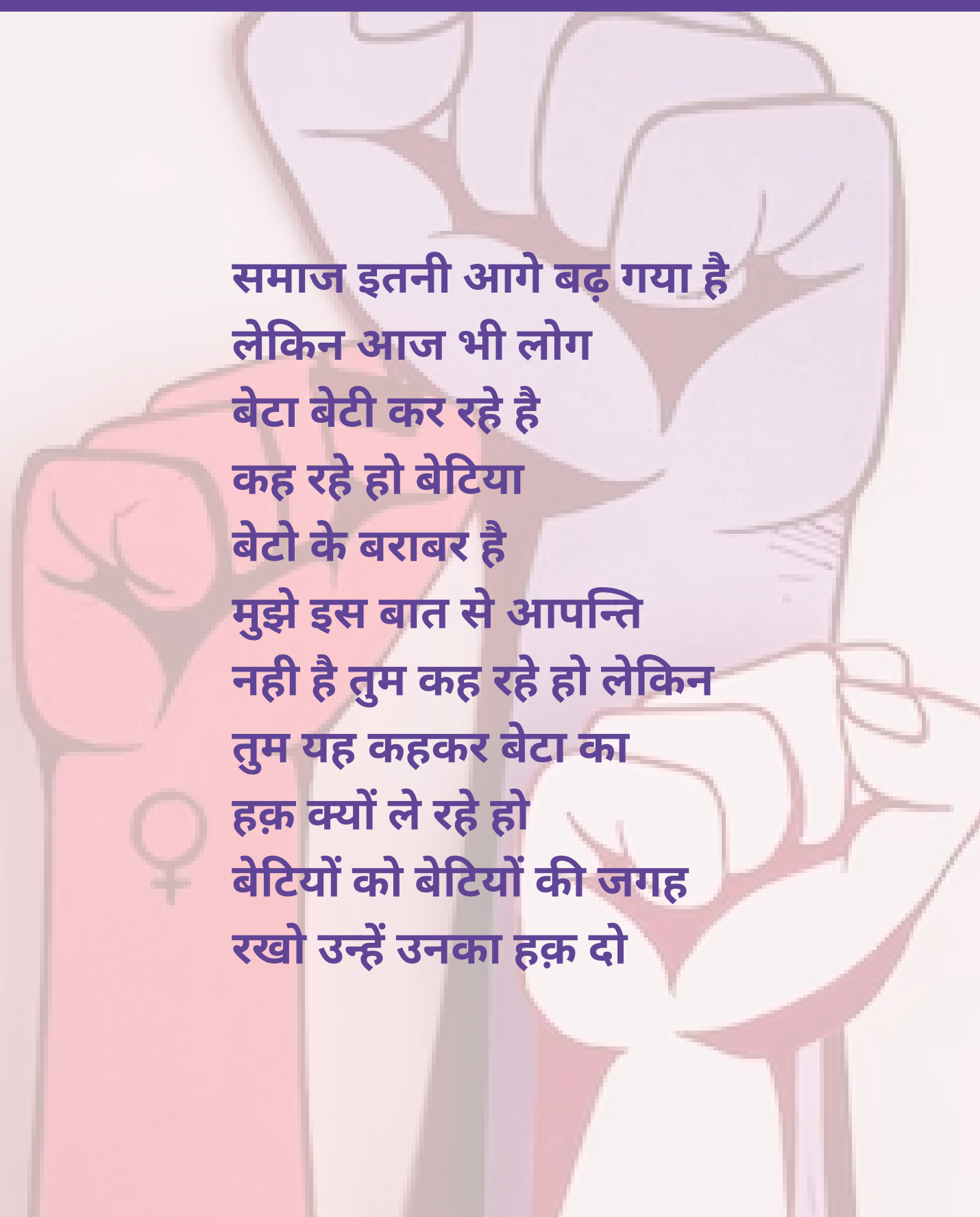
महसूस किया क्या कभी?
तेरी रंगों में किसका रक्त बहता है,
योद्धा है तू चीख-चीख कर वो कहता है।

बाहर भले शमशान है,
मत भूल अंदर तेरे तूफान है।
समझ वक्त की गहराईयों को,
उखाड़ फेंक समस्त बुराईयों को ।

उठ खड़ा हो!
सामने से हटा उन्हें, क्या है तू दिखा उन्हें ।

हक़ मत लो

Lovely Dayma, 3rd year



समाज इतनी आगे बढ़ गया है
लेकिन आज भी लोग
बेटा बेटी कर रहे है
कह रहे हो बेटिया
बेटो के बराबर है
मुझे इस बात से आपन्ति
नही है तुम कह रहे हो लेकिन
तुम यह कहकर बेटा का
हक़ क्यों ले रहे हो
बेटियों को बेटियों की जगह
रखो उन्हें उनका हक़ दो

GENDER SENSITIZATION THROUGH A SOCIOLOGICAL LENS

Rohitkrishna A., 2nd Year

Gender sensitization is the process of becoming aware of and addressing gender issues and inequalities. It is a crucial aspect of promoting gender equality and combating discrimination. Sociology provides a lens through which to analyse and understand gender dynamics in society. Gender roles and expectations are socially constructed and vary across cultures and historical periods. Gender identity is an individual's sense of self as male, female, or non-binary. Gender expression is the way in which an individual presents their gender identity through behaviour, clothing, hairstyles, etc. Societal norms and expectations play a significant role in shaping gender identity and expression.

Gender discrimination can take many forms, including sexual harassment, domestic violence, and wage inequality. Gender sensitization must involve challenging and changing societal norms and structures that perpetuate inequality. It also involves raising awareness of the experiences and perspectives of marginalized genders. Intersectionality, which considers the interconnectedness of different identities and experiences, is an important aspect of gender sensitization.

Gender sensitization is not just the responsibility of women and marginalized genders, but of everyone in society. It must be incorporated into education, workplace policies, and all aspects of social life. Gender sensitization is a lifelong process, as individuals and society continue to evolve and change. Gender sensitization can be a part of our everyday lives.

Gender sensitization in the workplace is essential for creating a safe and inclusive environment for all employees. It is also important for preventing discrimination and harassment and promoting equal opportunities. In education can help to challenge gender stereotypes and promote equal opportunities for all students. In media and advertising, gender sensitization is important for challenging harmful representations of gender. In healthcare, it is essential for ensuring that all individuals receive appropriate and respectful care. In legal systems it is important for ensuring that laws and policies protect the rights of all genders. In politics, it is essential for achieving gender equality and representation. In religious institutions, it is important for challenging patriarchal interpretations and promoting equality.

Gender sensitization in communities is essential for creating safe and inclusive environments for all genders. In families, it is important for challenging patriarchal dynamics and promoting healthy relationships. In relationships, it is important for promoting mutual respect and consent and in language, is important for respecting individuals' gender identities and avoiding harmful stereotypes. In technology, it is important for preventing bias and promoting accessibility for all genders. In sports, it is important for promoting equal opportunities and challenging gender stereotypes. In arts, it is important for challenging gender stereotypes and promoting representation of diverse genders. In sciences, it is important for challenging gender bias and promoting equal opportunities. In the military is important for promoting equal opportunities and preventing discrimination and harassment. In the government, it is important for promoting equal representation and policies that protect the rights of all genders. In the global community, it is essential for promoting gender equality and combating discrimination on a global scale.

Gender sensitization is an ongoing process that requires constant reflection, education, and action. It is crucial for creating a more just and equitable society for all genders. It is not just about promoting the rights of women and marginalized genders, but also about challenging the societal structures that benefit. It should begin from a young age. Parents and teachers should pay special attention to ensure that children do not follow the gender biases that are generally followed in the community or society. Raising awareness about sexual harassment is crucial for gender sensitization. Society often tries to normalise sexual harassment (for example, sexual jokes) and rationalize subordination of women and other communities that doesn't fall under the binary system of gender.

Gender sensitization is a need of the hour. With the changing times and changing gender roles, it is important to spread awareness about gender issues and take effective steps to create an enabling environment that is considerate towards the sentiments and choices of all human beings. Breaking gender stereotypes will help both men and women to live a dignified life. It is a long-term process, which requires consistent efforts.



Artist: Jahnvi Chawla, 3rd year

Alumni Interface



NAVIN VASUDEV

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Batch of 1990

"A career path is rarely a path at all. A more interesting life is usually a more crooked, winding path of missteps, luck, and vigorous work. It is almost always a clumsy balance between the things you try to make happen and the things that do happen to you."

– Tom Freston (Media Proprietor, businessman and financier)

The above quote cannot be truer for me! I stumbled into the BA (Hons) Sociology programme in 1987. I still remember that rainy day in July. Timid, uncertain but excited about my newfound freedom to be at university. I felt grownup. I had a cursory understanding of Sociology but more so, I felt the course would not only help me understand my world better, but more importantly my sexuality, which I was grappling to come to terms with at that time. In a strange way, I felt I would find at least some answers to my questions and confusion.

Fast forward this to 36 years later – I live in South Africa where I work on higher education matters for the South African Government. My passion is working on education issues for migrants and displaced persons, helping them in the recognition of their qualifications. So much has happened in my life, most of which I embrace happily. I often did reflect as to how my qualification in Sociology helped me traverse the ‘crooked, winding path of missteps, luck and vigorous work’. To me, the answer lies not in the content of the discipline per se, but that it taught me how to think and organize my thoughts, constructively and critically.

I never considered myself bright or hard working. But I was inquisitive and highly reflective, mulling every new theory or idea that was thrown at me in classes or tutorials. I have fond memories of running after class, to the library to be the first to get hold of the scarce reading materials recommended by our lecturers. I recall being awe struck by the theories of Durkheim and his definition of social facts, the Pareto principles, and the works of Futurist, Alvin Toffler.

More recently I mentioned his quote at a presentation in Berlin on lifelong learning. It is a profound statement he made on learning when he said: “The illiterate of the 21st century will not be those who cannot read and write, but [people] who cannot learn, unlearn and relearn.” These were indeed some of the profound learnings that shaped my thinking to a great deal. Today, I am so thankful for that exposure I was fortunate enough to receive.

Navin Vasudev is from the 1st batch of BA (Hons) Sociology at Venkateswara College. He topped the programme and went on to complete his Masters in Sociology at the Delhi School of Economics and subsequently completed an MSc in Development Management in the UK at the University of Wales. He has over 20 years’ experience in programme development and management in the gender, education, and social development sectors having worked extensively in countries in Southern and West Africa, South Asia, and North America. Currently, he lives in Pretoria with his partner and their ‘fur kids’ – 4 cats, 1 dog and 3 ducks.



LAKSHMI JOSYULA

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Batch of 1990

As we begin and traverse our professional journeys after student life, some experiences leave a lasting mark and get etched in memory. Meeting awe inspiring tall leaders, unassuming bosses, competitive yet supportive teams all of this make the journey worthwhile. A chance meeting with Prof M N Srinivas, facilitated by our teacher (Dr.Usha Panini) at the main entrance in the SV College, was perhaps a professional stepping stone for me. Though a short one, that meeting with the doyen of Sociology was memorable and paved the way for the later steps in my academic and professional journey.

As professionals, there are occasions that can leave one overawed by peoples' simplicity. Two incidents of significance that I recollect frequently, are the down to earth and humane behaviour of superiors in office.

One such superior came over to our state office in Hyderabad. Heading the state office, I offered him my 'state boss chair' and wished to sit in front of him, much like my other teammates were doing. He refused, saying, "This is your office. You are the boss here. Don't expect me to give you my chair when you come to Delhi. I won't". Smiling all the way, but firmly conveying that this is what is expected of a professional, this inspired me and drove the message across to all of us.

Another superior and another inspiration, showed utmost respect to all the staff even though they were all his subordinates. He never addressed anyone in singular terms. It is the ethics and values that such superiors follow and demonstrate that inspires and gives one the confidence to put in their best and aspire to do more and better.

Lakshmi is from the 1st batch of BA (Hons) Sociology at Venkateswara College. After working for the NGO sector in Delhi and Hyderabad for a decade since 1998, Lakshmi gained expertise in Action Research in areas of networking, advocating for issues such as womens' political empowerment and child rights and building collaborations in these areas. Subsequently, she joined a policy think-tank and interacted with officials in various govt. departments on matters such as education, health, welfare, transparency and accountability in governance. She presently works as a freelance consultant and evaluates the social impact of organizations through their interventions including projects under CSR. Her current focus is on the 'social' in ESG.



KAYONAAZ KALYANWALA

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Batch of 2009

A few years ago, in the midst of a pandemic and a major life change, I found myself taking stock and of imagining a different future for myself. It might strike you as odd that a 30-something year old is still trying to make life plans but I promise you that our journeys aren't necessarily linear. For the past seven years or so I had worked very closely with a community media organisation in Goa. When I started this job as a bright-eyed 23-year-old, it completely blew my mind and changed forever how I saw India and her people. It was a culmination of everything I had learnt so far from sociology and an MA in media in development. For the first time in my life, theories about power and voice started to make sense to me in more than abstract ways. So of course, when I had to quit because the organisation's leadership was appalling at acknowledging sexual harassment by the Director, it was a major blow. This job was my identity and passion; who was I going to be without it? I was also jaded by the community media and development sector in India because while we talked about equality and social justice, there was so much patriarchy and lack of accountability within our own movements. In that case, how could we bring wider impact?

While I took time to emotionally recuperate, I continued research work as a consultant with feminist movements. However, I had a wider question brewing in my mind about how the media represents social justice movements, about who makes media, and importantly about power asymmetries that women specifically face in using media to amplify their voice. I increasingly felt that I wanted to dedicate time to my own research and wanted to do a PhD (something I had always dismissed, because 'itni padahi kaun karega?'). I'm now in the second year of my PhD which examines how Adivasi and Dalit women use media in environmental justice movements. Going back to academia after a 12-year gap is the most amazing gift I have given myself.

Kayonaaz is currently a PhD candidate at University of East Anglia.



RAGHAV PASRICHA

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Batch of 2010

A petite, bespectacled, sari-clad lady walked into the long, narrow classroom that felt a bit like a train compartment. She extracted a deck of hand-written cards from her bag, smiled, and proceeded to deliver a lecture that revealed how common sense varies across cultures and communities, how the illusion of individual freedom is maintained through an elaborate process of socialisation which begins from the moment we are born and how so much of what I assumed to be basic facts were once hypotheses proposed by scholars from the disciplines of sociology and social anthropology. Perhaps the only way I can describe this lecture is a magic trick so perfect that it makes you begin to doubt the world as you see it. I was and am fascinated by the possibility of revealing a subterranean logic to the world and in the process, changing forever how it is seen. I chased the magic to which the professor introduced me as an undergraduate student into my M.Phil. dissertation on visuality and framing, and at the International Center of Photography as a fellow of the documentary programme. Whether it is with a pen or with a camera, my attempt is always to scratch the surface of social fabric to reveal a little more of the human condition. I share a selection of images from walking the Wari in Maharashtra for my work on syncretic traditions of India.



Raghav Pasricha is a Delhi-based freelance photographer who works across multiple genres including, documentary, portraiture, architecture and advertising. He attended the Documentary Practice and Visual Journalism Program (2020-21) of the International Center of Photography, New York as the recipient of the Director's Fellowship and participated in the Eddie Adams Workshop XXXIV. He was awarded an MPhil in 2015 by the Department of Sociology, Delhi School of Economics, Delhi University. In 2022, he was awarded the Nazar Foundation Artist Assist Grant to document the Wari in Maharashtra from the lens of resistance and resilience to social inequality. Since 2020, he has documented the redevelopment of Central Vista in New Delhi with the aim of building an archive that explores the relationship between the erasure of democratic ideals and the destruction of public space. In 2019-2020, he designed and implemented a curriculum to teach mobile phone photography in schools across New Delhi to students of all ages and economic strata. He has explored symbolism and poetry in his long-term photographic project 'My Truth Lay in the Shadows'. From 2008-2012, he interned with development sector organisations, including the India Alliance for Child Rights and CREA, a feminist human rights organization. Combining pedagogy and practice, he has attempted to create a more inclusive practice of photography.



GARIMA RATH

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Batch of 2014

To say this has been an exhilarating experience will be an understatement. I never wanted to go into teaching in the first place; it was never my dream. But in my academic career, I met such amazing teachers that my perspective towards teaching changed completely. And that started from this college. Not to sound nerdy, but coming to college and attending classes was the best time of my graduation; in those three years, I hardly ever missed classes. Sociology as a subject, can be read on one's own, but it becomes extremely interesting to listen to someone who talks about interesting perspectives about society and encourages pleasant discussions in the class as well. Coming from a small town, I always wanted to pursue humanities in Delhi and Sri Venkateswara College provided me with that experience as a student. Now, in the last few months, this college has provided me an experience as a teacher as well.

The transition from being a student to a teacher has been a shaky one but the senior teachers have been extremely supportive. I remember, on my first day, I sat down to give a lecture because my legs were shaking as I was extremely nervous. Moreover, to come to a place and address teachers and seniors as your colleagues is a very weird feeling. You can never reach a stage where you see them as anything other than teachers, who literally helped you keep your attention in the discipline and moulded you as a sociologist, both professionally and personally. I still remember reading Gouldner's work on reflexivity during my graduation, which explained how sociology as a discipline cut across both professional and personal lives and I till date, try to incorporate it in my life.

My wish here is to shape and inspire at least one student's life, the same way my teachers here did for me. My biggest learning is that teaching is mostly fun but sometimes frustrating as well; however, it is an interesting and noble experience!

After graduation, Garima Rath pursued her Masters and M.Phil in Sociology from JNU. Her M.Phil dissertation was in the area of sociology of education, where she did a qualitative content analysis of social science textbooks of CBSE and the State Board. During this time, she also worked as a field investigator with CORD India. She is presently pursuing her Ph.D from JNU on the topic of schooling practices, where she is comparing curriculum and pedagogy of two private schools in the state of Odisha. In the last few years, she has also worked as a Research Associate with CORD and Dream a Dream which work mainly in the field of education. Currently, she is Guest Faculty in Sociology at Sri Venkateswara College.



ABHAI SINGH TANWAR

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Batch of 2022

If I am being really honest, you can never figure it out on your own so early if you are not a student anymore. Last year, I ceased pursuing higher studies to figure out the ideal work life. This reminded me of my high school years when I was made to give up my choice of becoming a martial artist for life! Things aren't childhood fantasies anymore once you hit adulthood, and with that realization, I picked something worthwhile and realistic to the best of my affordability - writing. Writing is something that I fell in love with in the form of poetry by the end of my time as a sportsperson. Eventually, I moved on to writing more and more creative pieces until I realized that my work can be recognized, thanks to my introduction to the creative writing society of this wonderful college. During my three years as an undergraduate student, I volunteered to write for a couple of non-profits and finally landed in an internship as a sports news writer for more than a year. After I got done with that, I jumped into freelance writing, and now, occasionally, write for a digital education firm. You see, I have failed to settle in one place because every time I was done with the number of days I could keep enjoying the work, I wanted to explore new niches again and again. But I think as long as I am failing, it means that I am trying. In the bigger scheme of things, my ultimate goal is to make a career out of writing, but this is the only time that I can scour the more specialized streets and take risks.



CHIRAG BEHL

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Batch of 2022

When I initially joined the college as a student of Sociology, I literally had no clue about my future with this degree. As time progressed, I started liking my course and especially the faculty. At first, I was really anxious about engaging with them as I had this preconception that college professors usually don't bother about the students. But my actual experience with them was absolutely different from my earlier judgment. The department welcomed me with open arms and embraced me the way I am.

The faculty's ethics of hard work and its empathy, is something that taught me a lot in life as a person. Despite being so well read and such qualified scholars, they never had any airs and were always available to help the students with their doubts, even outside the textbooks! My classmates and I never felt alone around our professors. They always made sure we were treated as adults with respect, empathy and love. They made sure our ideas and opinions were valued and taken seriously and not simply brushed off as most of society does, treating the youth of today as unstable and unworthy. Sociology was a field I used to find intimidating, but nevertheless liked, because it made me think outside the box. Thanks to my professors, my gurus- I now identify fondly with the discipline. They gave me something that I could not have gotten anywhere else - the experience of a lifetime. The lessons they imparted and the values they passed on to us, are something I cherish and hold close to my heart. I was so greatly inspired by them that I decided to pursue Sociology as a profession. I desire to be an academician myself just like my professors - someone who values knowledge and respects it without a tinge of arrogance.

I'm currently pursuing my Masters in Sociology at the Delhi School of Economics and wish to take forward the legacy of sociology through academic teaching. It was my teachers' relentless encouragement which made me realize my true potential and calling in life. I'm fortunate to have been taught by such talented people.



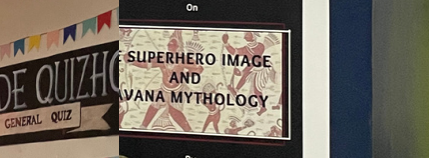
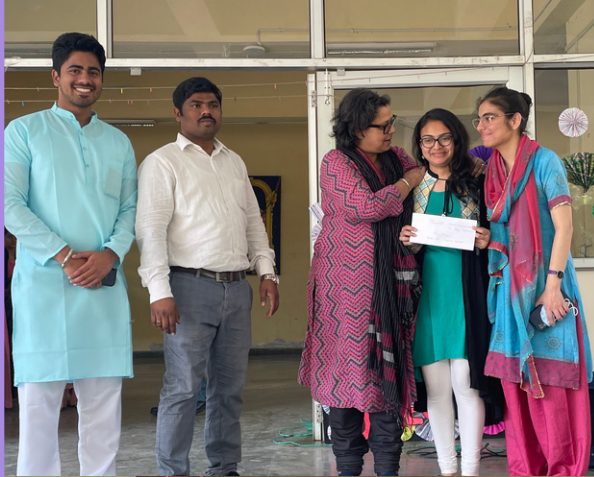
Standing, left to right:

Khushi Khandelwal, Aatrishnu Halder, Bharat, Lovely Dayma, Sivabhanu Sahasra, Tanica Ngangbam, Jahnavi Chawla, Vansh Gupta, Ayush Chauhan, Arushi Sharma, Saransh Yadav, Karunesh Kori, Anmol Gupta, Ridham Dev, Ria Yadav

Sitting, left to right:

Jessica Bhallay, Divya Vibhuti Sharma, Shrishti Agarwal, Ngamsin Longmei, Mohit Kumar, Shambhavi Pandey, Shefali Sharma, Aarju Verma, Jasmine Mehta, Udhey Singh, Vatsala Zarabi

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Department of Sociology
Sri Venkateswara College
University of Delhi
presents
CONSCIENCE COLLECTIVE
The Annual Department Fest
PATRON - PROF. C. SHEELA REDDY
CONVENOR - DR. SATHEESH PERUMALLA

SCAN TO REGISTER

Date - 24th March 2023
Venue - Sri Venkateswara College
Time - 10 am onwards

For queries
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