

WE WITNESS

Annual Magazine

Department of Sociology

(Special Edition)

2021-22

SRI VENKATESWARA COLLEGE
UNIVERSITY OF DELHI

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The views and opinions expressed in this magazine are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official policy, stand, or position of either the Department of Sociology or Sri Venkateswara College.



Prof. C. Sheela Reddy
Principal

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(University of Delhi)
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Principal's Message

It gives me immense pleasure to welcome this edition of 'We Witness', the Annual Magazine of the Department of Sociology, in the Diamond Jubilee year of the college. This magazine presents a microcosmic reflection of society in its various events, transformations, triumphs, trials and tribulations. It has consistently served as an effective platform for the free expression of students' observations, views and opinions on various themes, in a most creative manner.

It is very pertinent and gratifying that the present issue of the magazine is focused on the theme of the pandemic, especially in its social dimensions. This has been the biggest challenge faced by society over the last many months, affecting our entire way of life. Most of all, the fragility of our existence despite immense technological advancement has been brought home to us like never before!

I congratulate the Department on this special edition and look forward to more issues on such meaningful themes in the coming years!

C. Sheela Reddy
PRINCIPAL

Proud History.....Promising Future

FROM THE EDITORIAL TEAM

Dear Reader,

2020, the first year of Covid-19, had accustomed us to the rituals of Dalgona, Ludo, Instagram, reel trends, Money Heist, and binge-watching. However, the year 2021 not only returned with another season of Money Heist but also Covid-19! This second wave indeed turned our lives into a low-key episode of Squid Games! The second wave was no more fun and anticipation- it was a testing time for us all. There was again an uncertainty around the board exams, under-graduate exams, entrances for post-graduation, etc. Grappling with the stress, we all learned from the fear, evolved with time, and improved with the circumstances. All of us undertook new hobbies to keep our minds calm. Some sought refuge in reading and watching movies while others turned to baking, painting, or writing. Nevertheless, we tried to continue with the 'new normal' as much as possible - online classes, online department festivals, elections and online farewell. We never took a back seat and continued in full swing!

In an effort to combine elements of Bill Murray and Max Weber, an eclectic blend of humour and learning, we present in this special edition, the pandemic in all its hues and above all, our lived experiences negotiating the same. While 'Penned Expressions' introduces distinct perspectives and reflections of our budding sociologists on salient sociological themes, in 'Lockdown Learnings' one shares the everyday adaptations needed to overcome the stillness that lockdowns had brought in our lives. 'In Our Opinion' presents intriguing arguments on questions relevant to the Covid times, whereas the features on 'Pandemic Pictorials' and 'Picture Narratives' take us on a visual journey representing a motley of emotions we all lived through. An important highlight of this edition is, 'Alumni Interface' which strengthens the bonds between past and present students of the department. The recollections, lessons and experiences of the alumni show the path to newer possibilities instilling hope of a promising future!

We gratefully acknowledge Prof. C. Sheela Reddy, our Principal, for her unwavering support. It is because of the constant guidance and support of our faculty advisors, Dr Geeta Sodhi, Dr Padma Priyadarshini, and Dr Niharika Jaiswal, that we were able to make this magazine a reality. We would also like to thank the students for their invaluable contributions.

We hope you enjoy reading this magazine as much as we did preparing it!
Happy reading!

THE YEAR THAT WAS

As a result of the pandemic, the academic session 2021-22 commenced online. Amidst the uncertainty, the Department witnessed many moments of joy and togetherness, sharing knowledge and smiles. The year began with the Association Elections on 23rd August 2021, held online for the second and third years. This was followed by Teacher's Day celebration on 5th September, commemorating the dedication and hard work of teachers of the department. On 4th October, the department organized an activity-based outreach workshop titled 'khairiyat' for healthier mind, emotions and body, hosted by Ms. Jasmine Dua and Ms. Bhavika Mehta. It consisted of brainstorming and art exercises, aiding us in identifying emotions, finding coping mechanisms and so on. On 23rd November, the department organized an Orientation Programme to welcome the batch of 2021-24. This was followed by department elections for the first years on 27th December, 2021.

We welcomed in the New Year and the new semester with the Freshers' Welcome on 15th January 2022, organized virtually over Google meet platform. This was followed by the Diamond Jubilee Annual Lecture on 'Rationality and Exchange at the India-Bangladesh Borderlands' on 10th February on Google Meet delivered by Dr. Malini Sur, Senior Lecturer at the Department of Anthropology, Western Sydney University, Australia. Dr. Sur began the lecture with three stories to explain the larger issues of border exchange, before moving on to talking about her book *Jungle Passports*, which focuses on the moral contours and social complexities in border migration. The event ended with a series of interesting questions and interactions between students, guests and the speaker. On 11th February, the Annual Festival 'Conscience Collective' was organized virtually on MS Teams. The event involved participation from various colleges and departments. It began with a set of mesmerizing cultural performances by the students of our department, followed by four competitive events: 'Tasavvur' (slam poetry) on the theme of mental health; 'Mun(day)ne Shots' (photo story) on the theme of finding something special in one's daily life; 'Reelistic' (reel making) on the theme of expectations of students on joining college; and 'Kalakriti- Myriad Perspectives' (Art Making) on the theme of 'Out of Darkness: Supporting the PRIDE of Yours and Others'. The festival was followed by a webinar on 17 February on 'Health, Fitness and Wellbeing: Social Science Perspectives on the Body', by Prof. V. Sujatha, CSSS, JNU, on the idea of health, its inward and outward dimensions, going beyond the scientific arena and discussions of medicine. The talk was followed by interaction with students.

The Magazine Committee brought out a vibrant 'Digital Wall' in lieu of the conventional Wall Magazine which was a six-page digital visual treat on the theme of 'Pandemic Apps'. It was a proud moment for the department to have this digital wall prominently featured on the college website!

An important occasion this year was the NAAC peer team visit which saw the department put its best foot forward with attractive and informative display boards and active participation of faculty and students in presentations and discussions. All in all, it was an eventful hybrid year.

- Compiled by Abhai Singh Tanwar and Neha Konwar

Emotions, thoughts and reflections...

3

Emotions, thoughts and reflections...

HOW GENDER ROLES REDEFINED THEMSELVES DURING THE LOCKDOWN

BHAVNA PRATIHARI

The pandemic had an impact on all sections of the society. While the larger scapes of economic, health and political chaos may have drawn the attention of the majority population, the pandemic simultaneously provoked the social hierarchies too like that of gender and gender roles on an everyday basis.

The Webster's dictionary defines a housewife as 'a married woman in charge of a household'. It's difficult to comprehend a housewife as the authority within the household and at the same time her work being appreciated so poorly. The label of a 'housewife' or a 'homemaker' is often not used to represent productive or valuable work by the masses. However, with the lockdowns and the absence of any regular domestic helps and increased workload, the housework was no longer seen as an 'easy job' by many.

One must not assume that in all families, housework was now shared between all residents. It was perhaps the case in a few privileged homes, however for majority it was still the women who had to bear the brunt of the increased working housework without much resistance. Women were always expected to naturally be the caretakers of children, attend to the elderly and cook and clean all day. It only reaffirms the idea that gender roles are different to contest or to imagine any change in them. Even a two year long pandemic that managed to topple societies and its practices over, could not challenge the archaic practices of women being home managers and men being breadwinners.

However, it would be unfair to not emphasize the few instances that reinforce one's hope to rewrite the rules of gendered division of labour. Amidst Covid 19, the Mission Shakti department led by Sujata Kartikeyan had initiated women 'Self Help Groups' (SHG) across Odisha to start a mass production of masks. As a result, around 605 SHGs have made 15 lakh cotton masks. It not only supported the community but also empowered its members economically. In addition, the Secretary of the Ministry of Science and Technology's Department of Biotechnology, Renu Swarup performed a pivotal role in the research of Coronavirus vaccine. She worked on scaling capacities of start-ups to manufacture low-cost ventilators and testing kits. Adding to that, 83 percent of the nurses fighting on the frontlines in India are women.

The informal sector also adapted to the needs of the time. Many workers of the shadow economy, especially women had lost their livelihood during the lockdown. As a measure of survival, workers had set up as many as over 10,000 community kitchens across the country to feed these stranded migrant laborers.

Internationally as well, if one looked at other countries like New Zealand, President Jacinda Arden's government made monumental strides to flatten the curve of COVID-19, leading to an almost eradication of cases in the country. While, all citizens worked to overcome the crisis, the women especially displayed leadership and courage to break free from the shackles of patriarchal value systems and face the challenge COVID-19 brought with it. Michelle Obama rightfully said 'No country can ever truly flourish if it stifles the potential of its women and deprives itself of the contribution of half its citizens'.

This pandemic has shared many important lessons for the population with respect to the environment, health, relationships or even everyday needs. Moreover, it has resulted in a positive valuation of household chores and the effort required to complete them by both sexes.

Thus, one can say with reasonable confidence that the pandemic and its aftermath has initiated a variation in people's lifestyle with its redefinition of the 'normal'. It is certainly about time that the society's perception of a feminine and masculine work and gender roles be rewritten to establish a truly inclusive and equal society at large.

COROLLARIES OF WEBISM

ABHAI SINGH TANWAR

Webism, unofficially referring to Internet and its element of websites, and corollaries meaning outcome or effects, has brought a different significance into present times. Starting as a result of an American military project in the late 1960s, internet now safely claims to connect all the possible lives in humanity with just one step i.e., accessing it. Its leap was better realised from 1990s onwards and finally felt in the onset of 21st century with the breaking points of new websites that brought lives onto the platform known as social media. Today, Internet is an added and upcoming replacement of television medium of entertainment. As in using websites, internet is advancing into accessing more of people's lives with the help of applications or 'Apps'. Lately however, we all have lived a hell of a trip on the net - we've seen people spreading roaring hate messages and stereotypical reactions behind the curtains of boredom and emptiness. While those people and more were still out there figuring the purpose of the time of lockdown and how to make the most of it, many have been successful in using the arsenal of time spending it on internet. Artists have been more reflective, activists have become more innovative, entrepreneurs got a reach and the introvert people found their speech. The lockdown has shown accountability to stay real even on the online platforms because you can forget your roots but not get rid of it. Lately, it has been okay to stay at home and be in no hurry to visit new places for subjectively beautiful pictures. It has been bliss to watch people exploring the latent side of their talent and sharing these works of art forms or taking opportunities for internships and online courses rather than in tangible pleasurable things that people expect to see. Some have gone beyond social media to start a new YouTube/SoundCloud/Spotify channel or an online start-up through a website. The internet that was once known to give a hope to resolve limitations of technology and opportunities, was later staunchly criticised for destroying the spectrum of human values and emotions, narrowing it down to only few as per the approval social media gave, plus introducing us to a whole new vicious community of trolls and unsuitable content. However, it has now gained attention again in these times, but quite interestingly, for both the reasons. To conclude, Internet is never going to end on that note. Rather, we can say that we realise more and more about the blessings and the curses more adequately now, and as the Internet expands with its effects in both positive and negative directions, so does human consciousness expand with knowledge about not just what we can do with internet but how to do it with net and its corollaries.



SOURCE: SHUTTERSTOCK IMAGE

TURNING GRIEF INTO BELIEF

ADITI KAR

Experience is the first-person influence of an event gained through involvement or exposure. Every one of us at some stage of life goes through a certain breakdown or starts struggling on numerous things. I was a little girl of 6 years when this phase hit me but it couldn't stop me from living life. I always believed from a very early age that every problem has a solution. I faced negligence, bullying and loud reactions for silly things throughout my childhood and emotionally exhausted myself by being completely confined about my sufferings till I realized that bottling up my emotions for years and being strong all the time will cost me so much. There was always a pressure that I have to stand first in studies and I was made to feel bound to leave my hobbies behind. In 2019, I was diagnosed with depression, anxiety disorder, sleeping disorder and bipolar disorder. I often fainted, went breathless and sometimes couldn't eat and sleep for days. I felt happy for a few minutes and in the next period extremely sad. I had no friends or family who could give me comfort as they never really understood me & even I couldn't seek therapy due to financial issues. I failed to vent out as I never found someone non-judgemental to talk to and even if I did, I was driven by my insecurities & traumas. In that phase I wasn't the one who had strength to create space for others as by the time, I had given up on my interests, self-confidence & every skill I had developed. It was a more difficult phase because that was the first time I moved to the capital city from a village named Jorai. Somehow I came across different learnings from different people in my surroundings. Soon, I realized how important it is to implement ethics. When I practically followed some, I found myself giving people a space to talk to me without any fear of judgment, be it people of any age group. I was always approachable to people around me in times of their need but Sociology as a subject, helped me to recognize my own potential. That was the very time I decided to invest time on my skills, without being ashamed to learn from others. On this note came up with the idea of Axiom, (Mental Health Awareness Club).

In 2020, Axiom was started by me with the help of some of my seniors and friends. It was an online platform through which we wanted to reach people who were failing to seek help. Nothing in the start is easy and I too thought of stopping as it wasn't working out. But soon, after 4 months, we started getting mails, calls or registrations. With the help of some profound psychologists we could give few people free counselling and also conducted numerous workshops, events and competitions to enhance self-confidence, communication skills, interpersonal relationship skills and to promote correct information about mental health issues. We targeted some village areas where we conducted workshops with some students of Coochbehar district where we could for the first time analyse the reasons why mental stigma arises. I, at a personal level, tried to talk to people and know their thinking patterns. For the very first time, I realised deeply that people of our country think that a person who is struggling with mental health issues, is mad. I didn't give up, and tried helping them to recognise the pattern of their thoughts and then be aware of the real reasons and relevance of mental health. After the workshop period was over, I thought it was a complete failure but after 3 months, we got calls that we had been able to help them lead a better life and show an optimistic way to deal with problems in life.

On a personal level, I tried to address every aspect of life - be it physical, mental, spiritual or emotional, and this helped me to give people a space to share their dilemmas, problems and struggles and also provide a peer support group where weaknesses were turned into strengths. I invested my time in learning more about mental health, its impact, ways to deal with it and other aspects, by studying or by engaging more with people in this field. This helped me to become a confident person and also develop my leadership skills and teamwork capabilities. Presently there are 16 members in Axiom from different regions of India from different age-groups.

After helping a couple of people, I got the courage to stop saying "I am fine" when asked "How are you"? That was the first time I addressed my own traumas, fears and insecurities and sought professional help. I realized it takes a lot of courage to do so and it's not shameful. This process was difficult and also insightful for me as I got many lessons for living a better life by exploring and understanding others' way of dealing with things. Life is too short to learn from your own experiences, so don't stop yourself from seeking help or learning from others to develop yourself as a real person. I understand we can't change someone's mentality but can try to change our way of dealing with things.

Lastly, I'm not a professional nor am I someone who has a great knowledge about such things but I am that person who has faced many backlashes, negligence, challenges, failures etc. and have found that ray of light which can not only help me grow but help the people around me as well to make this earth a better place for people by spreading kindness, love and warmth.

The problem we face in life is never bigger than ourselves, and we all have capabilities to cope with challenges. We are much stronger than we think and crying is not a sign of weakness, it's a strength to pour out the pain we hold inside us. So we should join hands and together find the magic within us and create a non-judgemental world for people who are struggling.

Today in 2021, I am still struggling with my mental health issues but I can assure I am someone better today who is strong enough to deal with problems



ARTWORK BY: ALFIA GAURI

IS A WOMAN ANOTHER WOMAN'S WORST ENEMY?

ARUSHI SHARMA

One is not born but instead becomes a woman - being a woman is a social phenomenon. The civilisation mediates the definition of woman through various contours of biological, psychological, economic, and social destinies.

In her book *The Second Sex*, Simone de Beauvoir quotes Jules Michelet, a French historian, "Humanity is male, and man defines woman, not in herself, but in relation to himself; she is not considered an autonomous being. Woman, the relative being."

Thus, Monsieur Benda declares in *Uriel's Report*: 'A man's body has meaning by itself, disregarding the woman's body, whereas the woman's body seems devoid of meaning without reference to the male. Man thinks of himself without a woman. A woman does not think of herself without a man.' And she is nothing other than what man decides. She determines and differentiates herself in relation to man. He does not exist in relation to her; she is the inessential in front of the essential. He is the Subject; he is the Absolute. She is the Other.

When the entire existence of women is based on 'the man' — as a subsidiary to the main, discrimination and inequality become inherent.

With time we have had progress, women are now 'allowed' to pursue their careers. When most families have working parents, rather than sharing the household load, a so-called 'good woman' is a glorified superhuman who tackles both home and office by overworking herself. Again, I don't want to talk about the ongoing debates under the purview of feminism and gender roles. I wish to delve deep as to why and how this submission exists — women are not a minority, nor are they biologically weak, so why this unequal status?

Our dependence is not a result of an event. It is not something that happened. It is a historical, internalised systemic oppression that has survived as long as the human population. Women's actions have never been more than symbolic agitation, they have won only what men have been willing to concede to them. It is because we, women, are not united enough to present a united stance to bring about real change. Living dispersed among men, tied to men by home, work, economic interests and social conditions, more closely than women. A bourgeois woman is in solidarity with bourgeois men and not proletariat women; as an upper caste woman she is in solidarity with upper caste men and not Dalit women.

This is a system where the oppressed is conditioned to stand in solidarity with their oppressor, further deepening the oppression.

It's a clever power play to ensure that women do not come together and hence are conditioned to fight and compete for male admiration. A girl's presence in a boy's life is a part of his life. In contrast, the boy's presence in a girl's is vital, even existentially significant. This is very well portrayed in the northern kinship system, where, in some communities, a woman must be married after dying to be cremated with honours. A married woman to die 'childless' is to miss the entry to heaven. The sharp divisions and rivalry between daughters and brides are another patriarchal ploy to place woman against each other to weaken the gender. The sister-in-law and the mother-in-law are shown as natural enemies of the daughter in law, where they are all competing for the son's attention.

As women, the most sexist and misogynistic behaviours we face are often from other women, whether at school, office, or home.

Women take the role of 'proxy patriarchs' whereby they reiterate the norms of patriarchy to assume the power next to the patriarch. To oversimplify, it's like when the class teacher appoints the class monitor to enforce the proper code of conduct on her behalf. This does not mean that the monitor has any power of his/her own.

The actual controller is still the teacher, but the monitor enjoys power as long as he/she acts accordingly. Similarly, the proxy patriarchs want that sweet taste of control and hegemony which they get by acting according to the 'man.' Thus, the women who follow the norms become the admirable ones. Women need to subdue this conditioning to compete for masculine appreciation to take down patriarchy from its roots.

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The patriarchal system is now at odds with the wave of feminism more than ever before. The typical stereotypes for women are so widely known that even mentioning them would be redundant. This system is so internalised and accepted that our religious scripts, beliefs, norms, narratives, chronicles and even our founding fathers (we did not have founding mothers, of course) mention the same. A significant overlap between Gandhi's Hind Swaraj and Ambedkar's Annihilation of Caste is in their perception of women in society. Gandhi writes that women should be the Queens of households and not wander in the streets or work in factories. He calls this the awful fact that causes the daily growth of the suffragette movement. While criticising the chaturvarna system, Ambedkar claims that only a 'congenital idiot' would apply the system to women. It will lead to women taking positions like priests, soldiers, butchers, which would be unacceptable. When demeaning the British parliament by saying it is a sterile woman, Gandhi reiterates the stereotypical gender role of a woman to give birth as an infertile woman was of no use.

When the whole 'feminine reality' has been aggregated by freezing women as an object and assuming them as the 'other', a woman to choose herself and her sovereign consciousness often seem unnatural.

Contemporary feminism is about choice, this very choice — for a girl to have the ability to choose her life as she deems fit. It is not a fight between men and women. It is between those who are with this choice versus those who wish to choose for her. Therefore a notional change is the only way for every woman to stand together and choose themselves to find independence.



ART WORK BY: ALFIA GAURI

ALONE AT A FUNERAL PYRE

BHOOMI BOHARA

Thomas Wilder, an American author, has rightly said, "It's hard to turn the page when you know someone won't be in the next chapter, but the story must go on" and it is even harder when you are deprived of the opportunity to wave a final goodbye to your loved ones. Such a misfortune was experienced by those who lost their loved ones due to the Coronavirus. No one can imagine or begin to explain the pain of a daughter who lost her father, the helplessness of a wife and the silence of a mother whose hope probably died with her son, and yet they missed the last chance to even touch the corpse of their fallen hero as it could lead in the spread of the virus. In most cases, the last rites were performed by the Hospital Authorities which otherwise would have been performed by family members with elaborate rituals. Lockdown following a hike in coronavirus cases reduced the number of people to be invited in the obituary ceremony to a minimal. All of this had a significant negative impact on the mental state of the people.

The hardships faced before lying on the death bed were also immense. The infected person was not very well received by the society especially in the initial instances. The patient and his/ her family suffered from not so 'clinically advised isolation'. Fearing the 'alienation' from neighbourhood, some people suffering from the symptoms of Corona virus abstained from seeking doctors advice and following the necessary protocol.

The unknown risks associated with the Corona virus due to lack of medical knowledge made the situation even worse but gradually, the factor of anonymity faded, and the virus became a 'way of life'. It would be unjust to not mention those who came forward and helped in this appalling time. As Martin Luther, an American minister, once said, "Out of the mountain of despair, a stone of hope", these warriors acted as a ray of hope in the lives of millions.



ARTWORK BY: NEHA KONWAR

From frontline workers to every individual who even cared to buy groceries for the infected neighbour can all be considered as the epitome of bravery. The virus attacked us when we were unprepared and left us with endless lessons to learn such as the importance of communal life, physical fitness, and mental health. All these elements were in existence before, but the pandemic indeed made them more visible. Most importantly, we learned to never give up even if stranded in the middle of an ocean and the shore is beyond sight. It is even more difficult to keep fighting for those who lost their loved ones during the pandemic but as Charles Dickens, an English Writer, said, "There is prodigious strength in sorrow and despair", so, they must keep finding the strength in pain to heal their wounds and they will triumph in doing so. We will definitely carry forward every lesson and learn to live with the 'new normal'.

THE TRUE MASK OF SOCIETY

SREE PARTHASARATHY A.

At the start of this discussion, I would request all of you to remember when you have heard the word 'mask' in recent times. Right, the Coronavirus pandemic has 'ordered' us to wear these multi-colored eclipses on our face for an approximate number of two and a half years. But the mask that I want to bring to all of your attention has been there on almost every persons' face on this world, knowingly or unknowingly, in an invisible form from time immemorial. This mask has no physical presence. But it takes the form each individual decides to put on or to put it in more sociological terms, the way society has manipulated every individual to wear it. Be it any place, at any time, we are all bound to follow the rules that are imposed upon us by the 'society' that each one of us is a part of. But I now ask you to take a minute to ponder upon the question - have you ever lived your life the way you intended it to be?

Just think about it.

Indeed, social control is an aspect that is necessary for all societies-be it traditional or industrial societies. But there is a saying that goes, 'Even nectar in large quantities is harmful to health.' Every form of control that is exerted upon you is either pure dominance or impure perfection.

Every sane human on 'this' earth has pre-conceived and hidden notion/s behind every decision that he takes for himself or for any person in this world. The mask which is 'worn' right now has taken a concrete form due to the living beings around you. It is almost unshakeable. But there is nothing that will not change unless you decide it's over or you decide it's static. Even though you may remain static, society is dynamic. It will try to influence you one way or the other. I could give some very common examples and truths —

1) Whatever you do to make yourself beautiful, I can assure you, that you will see yourself less than the number of times the people around you see you. [Contradictory to this statement, you cannot carry a mirror with you all the time when you are around humans].

2) How much ever you try to gain a person's attention or make a person happy, a moment where it is his/her life or your life, it is only human to save one's own life. This is not an advice essay but a discussion that you need to make with yourself whenever you get an opportunity. The masks that are worn on all of our faces have stuck on us for so long that even adhesives will look down upon you and laugh at your plight. I would like to take this moment to say — Dogs are faithful. Cranes are patient. Please do complete this sentence for me - 'Humans are ____ '. The word 'humanity' is a complete myth. Sociology attempts to make generalizations, but human life is specific, there is no general character among any humans. Most of you might now be against my ideologies and the pessimistic view that I have of society. Truth is always bitter. It is not an advice but a food for thought to at least live one hour of your entire life without thinking about what others think you are. I strongly believe that this attitude of individual selfishness will indirectly make this earth an even better place to live, even if it is not the best place.

"Live and let Live "



ARTWORK BY:ALFIA GAURI

PANDEMIC AND PORNOGRAPHY: THE TWO-FOLD DETERIORATION OF HUMAN PSYCHE

ABHAI SINGH TANWAR

March 25, 2020, India adapted to the phase of lockdown, sitting in the confines of our homes to avoid the spread of the then frightening Covid-19. People began to get unemployed. The education system, especially at the elementary level, got completely washed away. More importantly, social relations including the familial ones, started facing difficulties in sustaining themselves, leading to social isolation. All of these rapid, arbitrary changes in society started affecting individual behaviour. Individuals in every age group were profoundly affected mentally. This included teenagers as well as young adults, particularly those in their early twenties. People resisted accepting reality and began to find a mechanism to cope with whatever was going on by submerging themselves in an altered state of sensation. In simple words, this can be summarized as taking recourse to or increasing the consumption of pornography.

We never saw sex education as the major product of information dissemination in India anyway. So, at this point, it made sense to consume the related knowledge from peers and the internet. Despite its already established consumption pattern on large scale, India saw the highest spike in the growth rate of consuming porn within 2 days after lockdown. It was also proved in general studies that when people, usually teenagers and those of working-age, are sitting in front of the screens and have nothing to do, they turned to watch porn in the pandemic. The patterns of addiction to pornography are associated with conventional addictions such as that to psychotic substances. This invites a basic understanding of addiction, and the release of a hormone called dopamine. Dopamine usually releases and lifts the mood of any individual after fulfilling a pleasure-seeking activity, in this case, covering up for the sexual pleasures via pornography.

The purpose of visiting a porn site in the first place has been different amongst males and females.

For example, males use internet pornography for sexual curiosity and excitement while females use internet pornography for emotional avoidance and sexual pleasure.

As normal as it sounds for it to be pervasive, problematic online pornography use (POPU) is diagnosed as addictive behaviour in medical parlance that can lead to compulsive sexual behaviour, which in turn can convert into a disorder. Commonly known side-effects of porn consumption are agitation, restlessness, increased heart rate, etc. Increased sexual permissiveness engendered by pornography may increase the risk of having unprotected sex often, leading to a high probability of sexually transmitted diseases. By the same cause, this can also lead to becoming an unwitting parent because of out-of-wedlock pregnancy. Married men involved in pornography feel less satisfied with their marital relations. On that note, we need to understand that sex education is an all-time need of the hour and sex education for emerging adults should be imparted in the school curriculum. Furthermore, school counsellors should be appointed to guide in dealing with these situations in the post- pandemic scenario. If we don't look at it now, we will see another wave of pornography consumption taking over in another such critical scenario like the pandemic. Therefore, it is important to make India's sexual health the epicenter of medical attention in the coming future.



ARTWORK BY:ALFIA GAURI

THE PLIGHT OF THE INDIAN HIJRA COMMUNITY DURING THE PANDEMIC

AHANA BASU ROY

India's hijra population has remained marginalized despite some recent progressive laws in favor of the community. The situation has aggravated in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. "Hijra" refers to a socio-religious group largely comprises of transgender, asexual and intersex persons. The 'hijra' community has been a part of India's history and culture which perhaps the modern, globalized concepts of transgenderism cannot appreciate in its entirety. In India, the community has been particularly vulnerable and hard-hit by the pandemic. The third gender often are involved as daily wage worker, beggars, sex workers etc. Their livelihood was negatively impacted during the lockdowns.

One of their many struggles is with regard to housing. Due to the lack of accommodation made available to their community, they are forced to cohabitate in densely crowded urban areas. They rely on the spiritual tutelage of a 'hijra guru', to protect themselves from the violence they encounter outside of their communities. During India's first COVID-19 wave, a housing community in Hyderabad posted signs such as "Do not let Kojja and Hijras near you," outside its entrance. One of the posters in Telugu, blatantly stated that, "You will be infected with Corona Virus if you converse with them or engage sexually with them. Beat them and drive them away, or dial 100 right away. Save individuals from the Hijra's Corona Virus."

During the pandemic, the predicament of the 'Hijra' community has received scanty attention, despite its serious repercussions. They have lost their daily earnings due to the immobility and the indefinite prohibition on ceremonial activities. Even the beggars suffered in cities during the various waves of COVID. Many found themselves in a situation where they had no food, no money, and no place to live. Many members of the community were trained as beauticians, but the pandemic ended marriage ceremonies, rendering their abilities obsolete.

Their daily survival was at risk throughout. However, their challenges and suffering was unnoticed by the mainstream media or public discussions. The personal narratives highlights the gravity of their pitiable situation. A member of the Hijra community, Sunita lived near Muzaffarpur - Samastipur border on National Highway 28. She described the lockdown as a nightmare that her community had not experienced in the last two decades. She used to get paid Rs 200 per day, but after the lockdown, she was paid nothing. "I was forcibly ejected from my rented room and forced to seek refuge in my parents' home, which was somewhat of a relief," Sunita lamented.

In March 2021, the Union Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment published an advisory. It stated that the National Backward Classes Finance and Development Corporation (NBCFDC) would deposit a Rs.1,500 sustenance grant into the bank accounts of 5,711 transgender people who had lost their jobs due to the lockdown. However, rarely have any of them got this award. Furthermore, majority of transgenders who qualify for government assistance lack basic identification, like as Aadhaar, ration cards, and voter ID cards. They also lack bank accounts under their self-identified names. Thus, they are systematically barred from government social security programmes. They will be unable to benefit from direct benefit transfer programmes unless this gap is addressed.

The government and society's apathy are responsible for transgenders' Despite their difficult circumstances, some have managed to stay afloat. The social media floated videos of them delivering food and face masks to the general population. As a community that survived on donations and gifts from others, they believed that it was their moral duty to look after their caretakers. Thus the Covid-19 outbreak destabilized conceptions of the community's inwardness and lack of interest to assimilate, it is not the society's responsibility to ensure inclusive practices for a more harmonious and ethical living.

HIKIKOMORI IN A POST-PANDEMIC WORLD

MUSKAAN KAPOOR

Coined in 1998 by Japanese psychologist Tamaki Saitō, Hikikomori (essentially meaning to 'pull back' or 'shut oneself in') refers jointly to the people and condition wherein "individuals are withdrawn from society and stay in their homes over a prolonged period of time". The primary motive to hide from public view due to an inability to relate to and fit in with conventional society and its taxing norms, has been contributing to the rise of more than a million hikikomori cases on a global scale. Some obvious tell-tale signs displayed by the affected person(s) are as follows: s/he has physically isolated themselves at home for upto atleast 6 months, has cut themselves off themselves from most meaningful social relationships causing significant normal functional impairment and distress.

Controversially believed to be a culture-bound syndrome primarily restricted to the Asian societal context, hikikomori's emergence can be credited to social and psychological pressures of the modern world- wherein burdened young adults (already disadvantaged by a grossly unfair demographical divide) are slogging within the bounds of a lifelong systematic and ultra-competitive "rat race" that begins from childhood education in the pursuit of status-enhancing employment prospects. Failure to succeed in these endeavors breeds feelings of shame and non-conformity within a person in the society's eyes. Unequal social hierarchies, close-knit and softly judgmental family structures also trigger this problem for they leave no sense of personal space forcing the individual to retreat in a shell for apparently maintaining their already fragile sanity and peace of mind.



ARTWORK BY: NEHA KONWAR

In a similar vein, accelerated and pre-mature learning to rise above competition during a child's formative growth years may cause social withdrawal and other despairing psycho-social ailments later in life. Specifically in the pandemic's context, isolated peerless children deprived of their basic growth and developmental needs, requisite social nurturing and life-skill lessons are prospective hikikomoris in the making. One can simply assume that hikikomoris are just some people who voluntarily choose not to venture out and interact with their environment in a socially meaningful way. But the lockdown-imposed isolation and subsequent Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder enters the picture to complicate the matter for now, a section of people, notwithstanding their cultural background, are armed with the 'wealth of their experience', subscribing to the notion that social withdrawal is a feasibly logical and appealing lifestyle choice potentially beyond the pandemic lockdowns. The ongoing economic slump, closure and restrictions on communal meeting places, art venues, restaurants and cinemas has only served to strengthen the resolve of these 'modern-day hermits'.

The contemporary digital generation has after all been prepared for indirect transmissions by the globalised world order. Technology ensuring sustenance within the walls of our homes- from entertainment, shopping and whatnot to work-from-homes facilities providing stable incomes- a shut-in lifestyle does evoke a certain kind of odd charm, does it not? But still doubts and regrets of what-if and FOMO (fear of missing out), as subtle or nonchalant as they may be, are bound to plague any veteran hikikomori's conscience.

As most efforts are being diverted towards bringing the pandemic under control, we must take care to not neglect the other related challenges faced by our most precious resource, the human capital as well- prolonged social isolation just being one of these issues. Recently Japan and UK have taken a lead in tackling this situation by announcing distinct portfolios of "Minister for Loneliness".

Is it not ironic that a form of social reclusion, currently with no standardized criteria for determining its onset, types or severity harbors a deadly capacity to transform the nature of social ecosystems as we know them? Now more than ever, empathetic values and effective support directed towards the hikikomoris' benefit is the need of the hour.

THE NEW NORMAL

BALINDA CHANGMAI

Doing normal and regular things in normal situations is a way of life but doing normal things in unusual and strange situations is the new normal way of life. The covid -19 has become a big curse to the humankind as it brought massive changes to the daily lives and activities of millions of people affecting them psychologically, financially and in terms of health. No industry has been spared from the destructions of covid-19. It has affected the educational system and businesses worldwide, leading to near total closures of schools, colleges, Universities and offices by imposing restrictions on travelling, gatherings etc. The earlier 'normal' way of life has completely changed. Many people therefore have marked 2020 as the worst year of the 21st century.

The term 'new normal' was first used during 2008 financial crisis which caused great social unrest to the people worldwide and in 2020 this term was used again during the covid times to depict the transformation and new adjustment in people's lives. In India, many changes came about and it took some time for everyone to adapt to the new normal.

Social distancing and lockdown rules were implemented. Though it impacted the economy in a negative way, it had positive impacts on human living and the environment. Due to the covid-19 outbreak in India, people adopted a new way of life as it was not the same as earlier. The educational system started utilizing other modes of teaching mainly online mode of teaching through online platforms like Zoom, Google Meet, Google Class, Microsoft Teams etc. People started enrolling into free online courses provided by various universities and government. The knowledge seekers found a new way to enhance their learning skills and many universities encouraged and provided them with the opportunities. Recently an Indian named Shafi Vikraman aged 50 yrs hailing from Kerala hogged the limelight as he had earned over 145 certificates virtually from prestigious universities like Yale, Stanford, Princeton and many others spanning across 16 countries for free, via online mode of learning.

Government is also trying to implement new health-care facilities. Many modular hospitals were built near existing hospitals to attend to covid related patients. Businesses have embraced the new normal and adopted digitalization to keep up with their clients. Most people have moved into the digital mode to catch up with family and business meetings. Many people also got married via the online mode. People who lost their formal jobs owing to covid-19 started doing home-based businesses.

In conclusion while individuals, businesses and economies continue to feel the effects of pandemic, more and more effort is being made by people to adapt to the new normal by incorporating behavioural changes. Covid-19 also made people become self-reliant and face the worst situations of life courageously. Though the situation is both uncertain and temporary and adjustment is a difficult process people must not lose their faith and have patience and positivity which is most important.



ARTWORK BY: ALFIA GAURI

THE A-WORD

UPASHA

In contrast to the Medical Termination of Pregnancy (MTP) Act of 1971, the MTP Amendment Act, 2021 is viewed as a hallmark of liberalisation of abortion regulations in India. The law should be applauded for making a number of progressive changes. These include raising the upper limit of Medical Termination of Pregnancy (MTP) from 20 weeks to 24 weeks with the consultation of two doctors, acknowledging the failure of contraception regardless of marital status, and removing the upper gestation limit for disabled fetuses.

However, the law is not without its loopholes. First, the law fails to take into account the shortage of doctors in India. According to Dr Suchitra Dalvie, co-founder of Asia Safe Abortion Partnership, India has between 50,000 and 70,000 Obstetrician-Gynaecologists (OB-GYNs). As a result, the requirement for two consultations is cumbersome. This is made more difficult by the stigma associated with abortion and mental health, particularly among unmarried women. Doctors are reported to refuse abortion on moral grounds when there are no physical reasons for seeking MTP, frequently neglecting the mental concerns. Abortion thus, becomes entirely contingent on the practitioner's decision rather than the woman's, especially when there is no mechanism to hold the practitioner accountable for rejection. The new law also mandates a panel of doctors to vote on pregnancy termination beyond 24 weeks, but according to the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare's Rural Health Survey, 82 per cent of these positions are unfilled. As a result, not only are these criteria unrealistic, but they may also underestimate the capabilities of the Indian medical framework.

Furthermore, in nations where abortion may be obtained after 20 weeks, it entails a procedure that Indian practitioners are not trained in, and because abortions have never been performed after 20 weeks, Dalvie believes that this may induce further prejudice.

According to the Head of an OB-GYN Department at a governmental medical college in Assam, the weight of the foetus grows significantly by the 24th week, which might have serious consequences when MTP operations are performed. Ironically, more liberal MTP rules are a suitable approach to this. Abortion restrictions have been linked to increased rates of maternal mortality. As per WHO, the average maternal mortality ratio in countries with more stringent abortion laws is three times greater than in countries with less restrictive regulations. According to trends, more access to abortion promotes women to seek abortion in the first few weeks of pregnancy. As a result, MTP operations are safer. These trends have been seen in Sweden and Canada. Although MTP 2021 is a positive step forward, the truth is that maternal mortality in India has shown alarming trends. According to UNICEF, India and Nigeria were responsible for one-third of all maternal fatalities worldwide in 2017. Numbers aren't required to demonstrate a lack of gender equity. We have a long way in the path of legislation before we claim to have made a safe passage for women in India to practice their reproductive rights.



ARTWORK BY: ALFIA GAURI

कोविड काल का अनुभव

लवली दायमा

मैं आप सबके सामने 2019 में आई बीमारी के बारे में अपने कुछ बिताए हुए दिन और किस तरह का वातावरण मैंने अनुभव किया उसके बारे में बताऊंगी। मैं उम्मीद करती हूँ आपको मेरा यह अनुभव पसंद आएगा। 2019 में जब यह कोरोना वायरस की बीमारी आई थी, उस समय हमारी 12वीं कक्षा की अंतिम परीक्षा चल रही थी। तभी अचानक एक दिन यह घोषणा की गई कि 12वीं की बची हुई बोर्ड की परीक्षा, कोरोना को मध्य नजर रखते हुए कुछ समय के लिए स्थगित कर दी गई।

यह खबर सुनकर मुझे बहुत बुरा लगा क्योंकि मैंने परीक्षाओं के लिए जो भी तैयारी की थी वह अब व्यर्थ हो गई। लॉकडाउन के समय, मन में यही विचार आता कि अब समय कैसे व्यतीत करें। ना किसी दोस्त से मिल पा रहे थे ना बाहर जाना हो पा रहा था। पूरा दिन घर पर ही रहते। पर दूसरी तरफ मन को यह संतुष्टि भी थी कि लॉकडाउन केवल 2 हफ्तों का ही है। परंतु यह खुशी भी ज्यादा दिन नहीं टिकी और धीरे-धीरे लॉकडाउन, कोरोना की बीमारी की तरह बढ़ता ही चला गया। बीते वक्त के साथ बीमारी और गंभीर रूप ले रही थी और शायद आपको यह सोचकर हंसी आए परंतु दिल में कहीं ना कहीं यह डर भी था कि कहीं दुनिया खत्म ना हो जाए? जिस प्रकार से यह बीमारी पूरी दुनिया के कोने कोने को अपनी चपेट में ले रही थी, हमारे दिलों में यह डर और गहरा होता जा रहा था।

इस बीमारी से लड़ने के लिए लोगों ने ना जाने क्या-क्या किया। कभी दिये जलाए, तो कभी तालियां बजाई, परंतु कोरोना काबू में नहीं आ रहा था। यह सब तो मानो बस दिल को बहलाने के लिए और ध्यान बटाने की एक कोशिश थी।

कुछ समय बाद टीवी पर महाभारत भी आने लगा। ना जाने कितने लोगों ने महाभारत देखना शुरू कर दिया क्योंकि यह उन्हें अपने बीते हुए दिनों की याद दिलाता था। वह दिन जब ना ही कोरोना था और ना ही इतनी दौड़ भाग। मेरी मां ने मुझे यह बताया कि उनके समय में हर घर में टीवी नहीं होता था। इस कारण जब महाभारत या रामायण जैसे टीवी शो आते, तो लोग अक्सर किसी एक ही घर में एकत्रित होकर साथ में यह देखते थे। मेरी मां को पढ़ने का बहुत शौक था परंतु उन्हें रामायण देखना भी बहुत पसंद था। जब भी रामायण का समय होता तो मेरी मां किसी और के घर में जाकर रामायण देखा करती थीं। जब रामायण अब टीवी पर आने लगा तो वह सभी पुरानी मीठी-मीठी यादें ताज़ा हो गईं। परंतु एक तरफ जहां कुछ लोग इन पलों का लुप्त उठा रहे थे उधर दूसरी तरफ ना जाने कितने लोग परेशान भी थे। पूरे देश में कोरोनावायरस का हाहाकार मचा हुआ था। जिसे याद कर आज भी मन बेचैन हो जाता है और एक किस्म का डर शरीर को घेर लेता है। उस समय ना जाने कितने लोगों की मृत्यु हो गई। हर दिन किसी के गुज़र जाने की खबर आती और दिल में यह डर और गहरा हो जाता। ना जाने कितने ही घर कोरोनावायरस की वजह से उजड़ गए या गरीबी के दलदल में डूब गए। जाने कितने ही मजदूरों ने शहर में अपना घर छोड़ गांव की ओर प्रस्थान कर दिया था। अपने घर लौटने के लिए भी उन्हें अन्य समस्याओं का सामना करना पड़ा क्योंकि उस समय ना कोई बसें थी, ना रेलगाड़ी, और ना कोई और वाहन। जो वाहन चल रहे थे उनके आसपास इतनी भीड़ एकत्रित हो जाती कि कोरोना वायरस फैलने का सबसे ज्यादा खतरा तो वही होता। जाने कितने ही लोगों की, धूप और गर्मी के कारण बीच में ही मृत्यु भी हो गई। सही इलाज ना मिल पाने के कारण, ना जाने कितने लोग एक आखिरी बार अपना घर भी नहीं देख पाए। इतनी भारी मात्रा में मृत्यु का कारण यह भी था कि हमने ऐसी बीमारी पहले कभी देखी ही नहीं थी। मनुष्य और वैज्ञानिक, यह समझ ही नहीं पा रहे थे कि भला इसका तोड़ निकाले, तो निकाले कैसे। परंतु विज्ञान और हमारे मनोबल ने मिलकर इसका सामना किया और वैक्सीन तैयार कर इस पर जीत भी हासिल की। अब जो वैक्सीन हम सबके लिए उपलब्ध है, तो हमें जल्द से जल्द वैक्सीन लगाकर खुद को सुरक्षित कर लेना चाहिए।



SOURCE: CANVA

IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON TEENAGERS DURING THE PANDEMIC PERIOD

ROHITKRISHNA A

As you all know, we are witnessing the deadliest pandemic of the decade. The COVID-19 pandemic has led to a dramatic loss of human life worldwide and presents an unprecedented challenge to public health, food systems and the world of work. Teens may be especially vulnerable to the impact because they are in a developmental stage that is particularly sensitive to environmental stress. They are characterized by depression and anxiety and are at a high risk of committing suicide. The pandemic has elevated those risks. One outcome of the pandemic situation has been the extensive use of social media.

How does it impact the teenagers? Positively or negatively? Though several studies connect heavy social media use to mental health issues and limiting this social media use leading to decreased feelings of loneliness and anxiety, there are other studies which revealed that young people may use social media to cope with negativity. Given the social isolation and anxiety during the COVID-19 lockdown, adolescents self-regulated their emotions using social media. This is in line with mechanisms of mood management theory, which postulates that individuals (subconsciously) use specific media to regulate their emotional states and obtain a more positive mood. As the social isolation and health threats caused by the COVID-19 situation may lead to feelings of anxiety and loneliness, social media use may be a valuable strategy to cope with these feelings. Specifically, we expect that anxiety and loneliness will activate different social media coping strategies, which may influence their happiness.

More specific, research has also shown that young adults who are reporting positive social relations on social media feel less depressed. It is expected that contact with friends and family on social media might be a coping strategy to relieve fear, and thus has a positive effect on happiness.

Moreover researchers suggest that the teens with mental health concerns are more likely to reveal



ARTWORK BY:ALFIA GAURI

their emotions on specialized mental health platforms like 'Subreddits' rather than the general ones.

In addition, the findings indicated that teens with mental health concerns had a strong social interaction desire that various barriers in the real world may inhibit. Specialized social media platforms provide them with that sacred space.

In conclusion, during the COVID-19 pandemic, it is evident that excessive social media use has had both positive and negative impacts. Although social media has been a life-saver during the pandemic when it comes to being updated with health-related information and other news from reliable sources, killing boredom, loneliness or taking a break by consuming light and humorous content, spending too much time on it can have a deleterious effect on the mental health and wellbeing of teenagers. There can be other harmful consequences of over-use including poor sleep, irritability, stress, anxiety, depression, low self-esteem and difficulty in concentration. Therefore, it becomes important to unplug from time to time and engage in productive and recreational activities in order to maintain a balance.

THE END OF RESISTANCE

SNEHA ALEXANDER

On 24th March 2020, a national lockdown was announced due to COVID-19 which paved the way for a completely new normal for all of us. On the same 24th March 2020, the protesters at the Shaheen Bagh protest site were dismissed removing all traces of a revolution in the making. Our new normal, spelt an abrupt end to what had been a remarkable show of courage in a small, almost-insignificant, South Delhi ghetto.

The anti-CAA protests began in the early weeks of December and intensified after people realized that there were certain provisions in the citizenship bill that required further deliberations. The protest was against the seemingly communal, newly proposed amendments to the Citizenship laws of India but the bill was passed anyway on December 9, 2019. In all of this, Shaheen Bagh emerged as the centre and symbol of the resistance.

Shaheen Bagh is a small neighbourhood in South Delhi district, situated very close to the Delhi-UP border. I have lived a mere 2 kilometres away from Shaheen Bagh my entire life, but I hadn't heard its name till 2020. The anti-CAA protests were what put Shaheen Bagh on the map. Never had I imagined walking to protests and shouting 'Inquilab Zindabad' on the streets would become a 'new normal', but it did, and I took pride in it. Life right before the pandemic felt very different. It felt like hushed whispers in school corridors recounting the slogans we raised yesterday. It felt like fear rushing down your veins when you spotted buses filled with policemen near Shaheen Bagh on your way home. It felt like denial on seeing the Dilli of your childhood expressing dissent aggressively. It felt like the warmth of sitting with hundreds of women in solidarity and feeling like you finally belonged.

Most of us spent the last two years cooped up in our homes, struggling with death, disease and terrible mental health. Over the course of two years, masks and sanitisers have made their way into all bags; Omicron and Delta are common vocabulary and waves don't refer to beaches anymore.

But in all of this, the memories of life right before the pandemic have begun to fade away. The CAA still stands, waiting to be implemented. But those protests seem like a lifetime ago. For this Act, Covid seems to have been a buffer period. It led to the ending of the resistance and a resurgence doesn't seem likely.

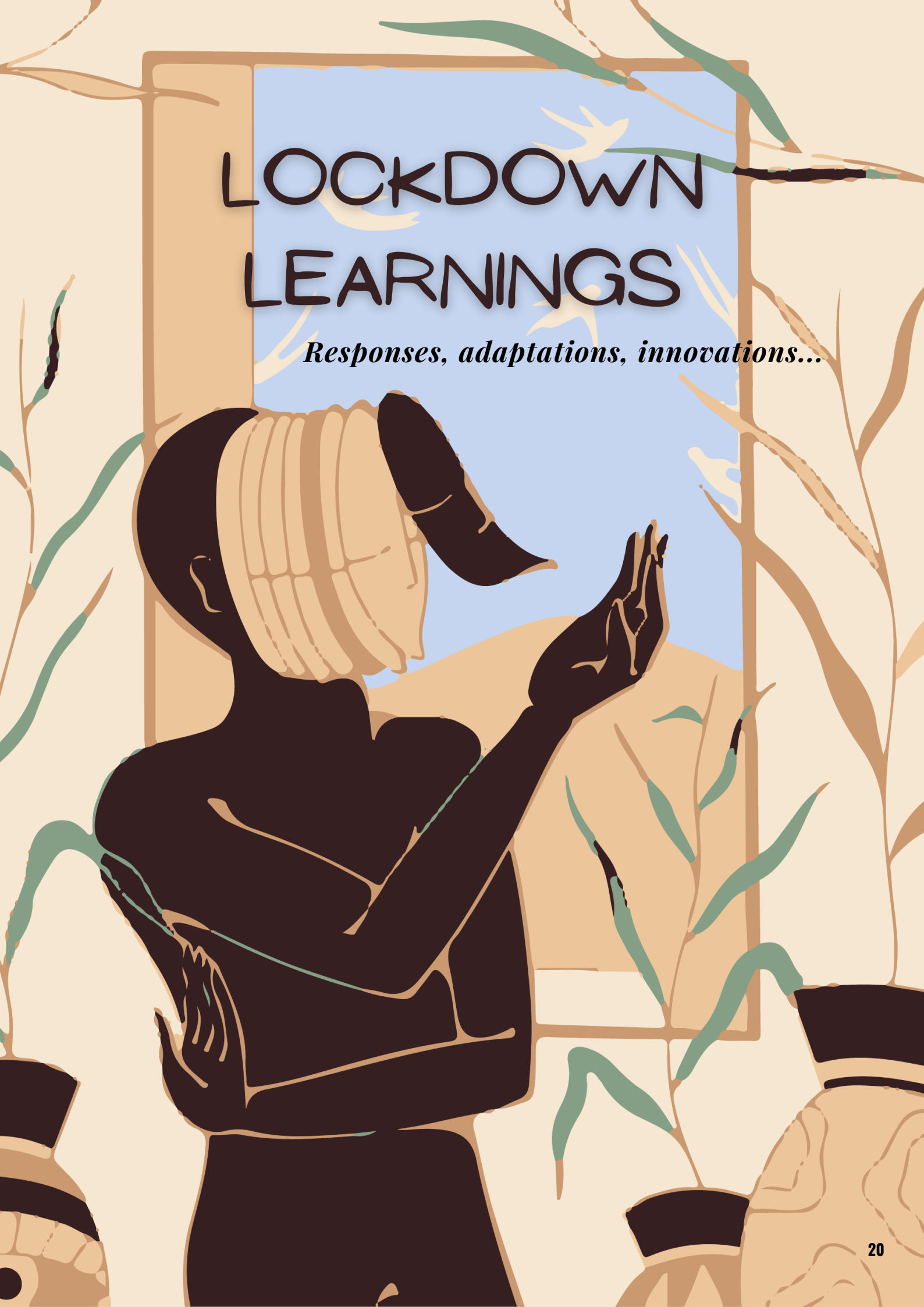
Today, as I walk the roads of Shaheen Bagh, with a mask on my face and a sanitiser in hand, all that remains of that life-changing movement, is a road sign which originally read Faridabad, but was sprayed over. It now reads 'Zindabad'.



ARTWORK BY: ALFIA GAURI

LOCKDOWN LEARNINGS

Responses, adaptations, innovations...





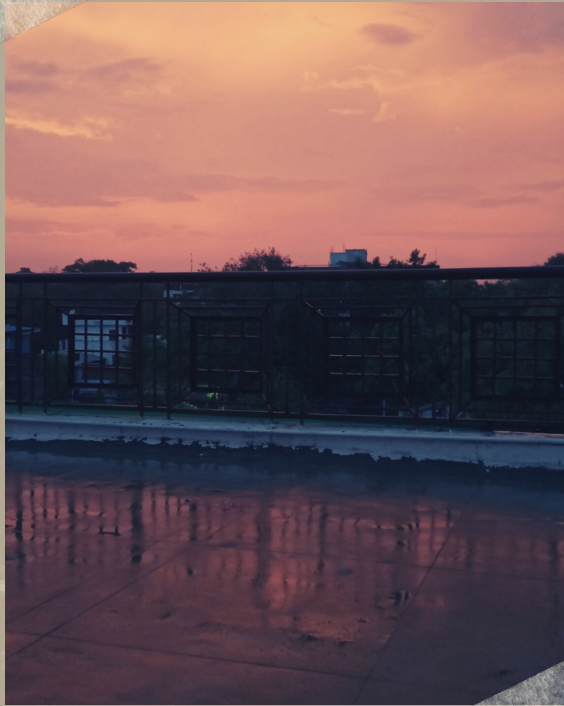
Amid the strict lockdown and anxieties, feeding strays around my area was a therapy for me. Lockdown was not just a grim experience for humans but for animals, it presented a more devilish side. Strays, being dependent on food leftovers, had no source to kill their hunger. I watched people helping them and it pushed me too, to aid them. I tried my best to help and feed animals roaming in scorching heat around my area, by providing them with essentials. I feel lockdown developed greater compassion and a sense of responsibility in me. It feels very overwhelming to see how few of them still come by my house, for me to feed them.

- Divya Vibhuti Sharma

During the pandemic, I really focused on improving the quality of my hobby of clicking pictures as well as editing them and writing upon them. Photography poetry is something new I have discovered but more than that, I love clicking pictures with no humans more often and it is something that gives me peace and makes me feel a little more than just an avid writer!

-Abhaz Singh Tanwar





'SPENDING TIME WITH NATURE' was my key to happiness in those tough times. I enjoyed the serenity of spending time with nature as a way to escape the stress and tensions of everyday life. It is so very good for the mind, body, soul, and the planet. It is most definitely something worth making time for.

- Dharini Mishra

One thing that I started doing during the lockdown, is yoga. Even though I would not term it as a skill, or a hobby specifically, I would say that I started doing yoga on a daily basis only during the lockdown and continued doing it. This has, to some extent, helped me attain inner peace, taught me to be calmer, reduced my body aches, and has helped me stay more positive. Even though I have not attained anywhere near perfection, I do it because I enjoy doing it.

- Bhagyashree Bhattacharjee





At the beginning of the 2020 lockdown, I completely isolated myself and was not doing good mentally and emotionally. A lot of activities were trending during the lockdown, from making Dalgona coffees to creating fun reels on Instagram. I also learnt some new things. One day while scrolling through Instagram, I came across some really interesting cake recipes and I tried to recreate one; the whole procedure was so fun! This is where I realised that it's high time and I have to do something for myself which makes me happy. I started to paint and bake; these two activities were really therapeutic. I remember spending hours recreating a painting from Pinterest and trying to bake cakes and cookies! Even if the final outcome was not beautiful or appetizing but the whole process of painting and baking was really calming. Whenever I was sad or bored, I used to either rush to the kitchen to bake a cake or pick up my art supplies and start painting something fun. Besides learning how to bake and paint during this pandemic, I also learnt how I can help myself through these difficult times!

— Fahnavi Chawla

During the lockdown, I started cooking regularly again because I was at home during lunch. The dishes mostly consisted of soup, rice, pasta, salad, etc. I usually made lunch for my brother and me. And, our favourite was the chicken salad.

— Chinnunnem Touthang





During the lockdown, I had plenty of time so I tried my hands on sketching which became a new hobby of mine. It not only helped me in being productive but also in enhancing my hidden skills. I followed various tutorials and did it step by step so that I can pull it well. This hidden hobby was amazing to discover and I am glad that I learnt something new in lockdown.

- Ashna Aggarwal

what I learnt and picked up as my hobby in lockdown, was graphic designing. During the first lockdown, when there were strict restrictions on moving out of our houses, I did not really have anything productive to do and pass my time. But what I did have was my phone and my laptop. So, I decided to learn graphic designing! what started as a mere pass time, became a learning experience and hobby for me. I started with basic designs and techniques using templates and gradually learnt more. Canva, which is an editing app, became my favourite. In this pandemic situation, when we could not really meet physically, this knowledge of mine became an interesting, colourful and virtual way to connect. It helped turn my imagination into visuals.

- Pratibha Kumari





During the lockdown, I learnt something that is so basic and something that I always wanted to learn but never had time to invest in it. During this period, I spent a lot of time in the kitchen, learning cooking from my mom. I started by learning basic and my favourite dishes. And, now I can cook a lot of difficult recipes as well. I realised that cooking became a stress buster for me in this hard phase, as cooking for my family and seeing them appreciating it made me feel nice.

- Shagun Mishra

Everyone is a thief.
stealing sadness and planting it into the star studded
sky making it even darker
or stealing words from the stars to look at,
trying to illuminate the soul
or, stealing moon's infinite beauty and wear it in front
of the world
so how does the inky sky still look beautiful?
does the moon blow glitter over the stars or does the
sky keep getting darker?

- Tanushree Singh Balagan





IN OUR OPINION

Opinions, analysis, comments...

Has the internet become better at mediating change through its various forms of digital activism during the pandemic?

Working in a students' organization that keeps student activism at the core of its manifesto, it is absurd to presume that a tool as exclusive as the internet gives the depressed classes and castes a platform to express their justified responses. In the recent "Reopen Delhi University" Campaign, a majority of students who needed an urgent reopening of the campus due to lack of access to various facilities over the internet, have no means to actually be present in a battle that's waged for them. The non-tangibility of online activism does not wipe away the echo chambers that have sprung up simultaneously during the rise of online platforms. The platforms do little to challenge these ideologies through discourse, considering that lived experiences and struggles largely translate to qualitatively superior debates. Online amplification is a solid political tool, but it is not a substitute for on-ground activism that encompasses the most vulnerable. Any attempts to posit this as an alternative must be frustrated, in the best interests of a people's democracy.

Eshitva Prakash
2nd Year



Internet consumption goes hand in hand with the behaviours we have adapted to or would adapt to. This is because of the impact the Internet has on the lives of individuals across all ages. However, digital activism has been most evident on social media and it targets rather specific and sensitive consumers in what we know as the millennials and Gen Zs. This immediately puts in mind the number and diversity of opinions expanding across digital platforms on various issues that brought major inferences by the youth which is willing to accept change for the betterment. Even when it comes at a cost of radical outrage, we have come a long way in making people talk about issues that need to be discussed from the beginning, including those from the marginalised sections.

Abhai singh tanwar
3rd Year

Should online classes continue even when Covid is gone?

Online classes should continue after COVID but as an option only. Online education makes education more accessible to a wide range of people, especially the working classes, who can't afford the lifestyle of big cities but still want to attend reputed universities, etc. Hence, it can be tested as a good alternative to physical classes for those who require it.

Upasha
3rd Year

Online classes were certainly a blessing in disguise for us during the pandemic, but in no way it's the ideal mode of learning. It has several drawbacks. Firstly, the lack of interpersonal communication has increased the sense of alienation among the students leading to depression. Further, apart from completing the syllabus, there are various co-curricular activities for the holistic development of students, which cannot be fulfilled online. Also, due to the digital divide, not all students equally benefit from this mode. Moreover, the screen time of the students has risen significantly, which gives birth to several health issues. Above all, the physical distance has made it difficult for students to be able to connect with their teachers and understand the concepts clearly. So, even if online classes were beneficial, it was a mere adjustment during the pandemic and must not continue in normal circumstances.

Shrishti Agarwal
2nd Year



The pandemic caused all institutions to shut down and then migrate to laptop and mobile screens. While the positivity rate moves down and the universities open doors to welcome back their students, an important decision with respect to the mode of classes remains a major choice. While online classes add to the flexibility of learning, attention capacity and physical health deteriorate due to continued exposure to screens and act as a financial constraint on many students who are not equipped with proper resources. The best option would be to take the best of both worlds, i.e., combining offline classes with an option to be able to record those lectures. The pandemic has forced us, willingly or unwillingly, to become technologically more advanced. Technological infrastructure has also seen massive improvements, making it easier to come up with a hybrid model of knowledge transfer.

Dharini
3rd year

Has family life become more meaningful in pandemic times?

Social distancing distanced the elderly from the young because of their vulnerability to the virus. The lack of physical proximity caused neglect within households and in wider society. Because of this, while the younger generation was able to sustain itself by filling the void with digital means of interaction, most elderly people were struggling to interact using online platforms, leave alone entertainment. It's hard to talk about meaningful family life because of social distancing between the young and the old. For me, family life has lost its significance from the perspective of the elderly and joint families.

Abhai Singh Tanwar
3rd Year



The pandemic has laid bare the farcical notions of family life in a rapidly exploitative capitalist environment. Domestic abuses sky-rocketed all over the world during this time due to two factors- the human condition to deal with the loss of immediate finances through wage labour and the domination of patriarchal ideology as the hegemonic power within the family unit. The decay of family cohesion owing to this condition highlights three issues- the dominant narrative of the Indian 'sanskari' family is problematic; the material aspects dominate family relationships negatively impacting its well-being and the patriarchal tool of violence isn't limited to both physical and ideological and must be challenged by transformative, revolutionary counter-ideology.

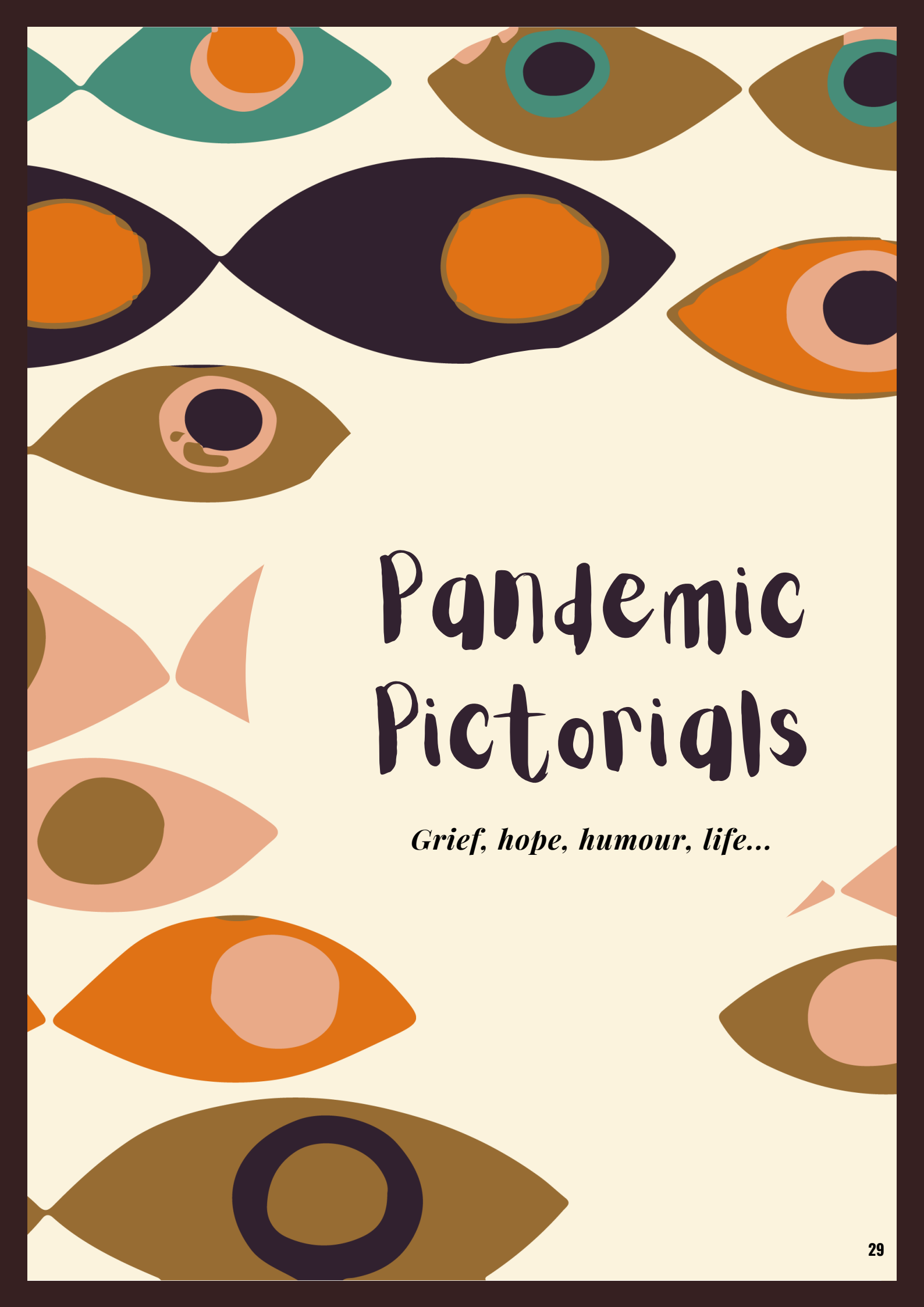
Eshitva Prakash
2nd Year

Does the digital divide broaden the existing class divisions?

The plight of the students, amongst all possible stakeholders, has been most heart-wrenching. Lockdown might have opened up the doors for many sectors to flourish - twirling on the lines of 'Aapda Mein Awsar' - the education system, though, has been on the other side of the accolade. As I write this to voice my opinion, I'm reminded of many incidents that are bound to remain bookmarked for all possible journeys I undertake in the future to talk about my lockdown days. The haphazard announcement of putting the nation on hold surprisingly brought joy to me because this meant nothing but a prolonged vacation post-intermediate examination. Little aware of the possible devastation Covid was to bring with it, I passed my initial days counting the events I would take part in, seminars I would attend, and societies I would join - all, of course, once college would reopen. The reopening of college will help in transcending the existing digital divide and help us overcome the trauma it causes.



Sanjay Kumar
2nd Year



Pandemic Pictorials

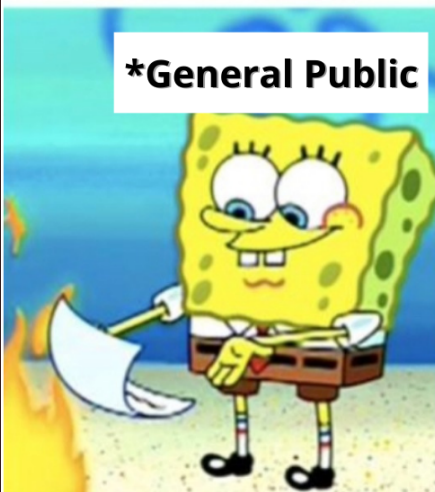
Grief, hope, humour, life...

When wearing
a mask, cover
your nose
AND mouth
properly

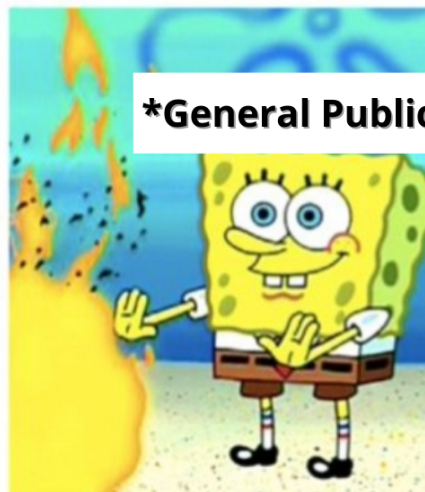
***General Public**



***General Public**



***General Public**



Meme by:
Sneha Alexander

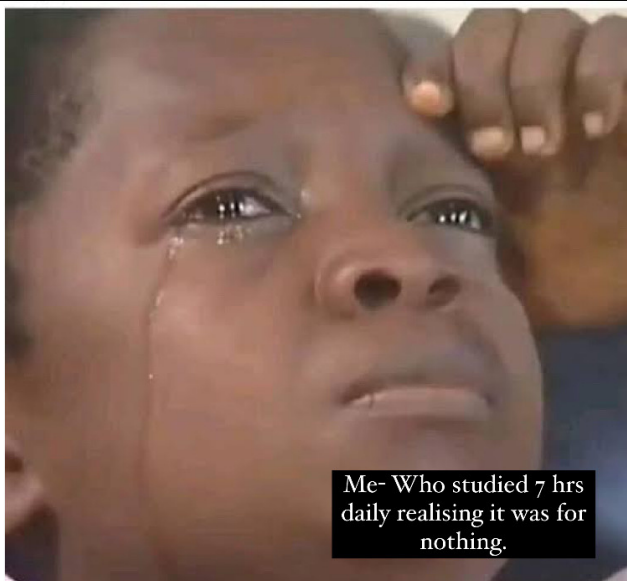
Art Work by:
Tannu Shreya



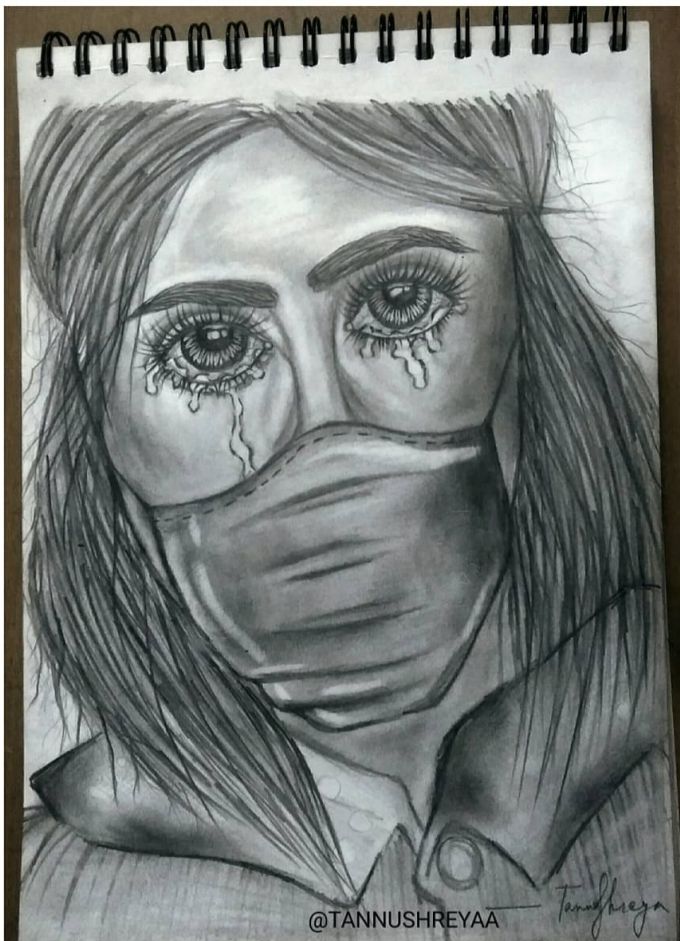


Memes by:
Anmol Srivastava

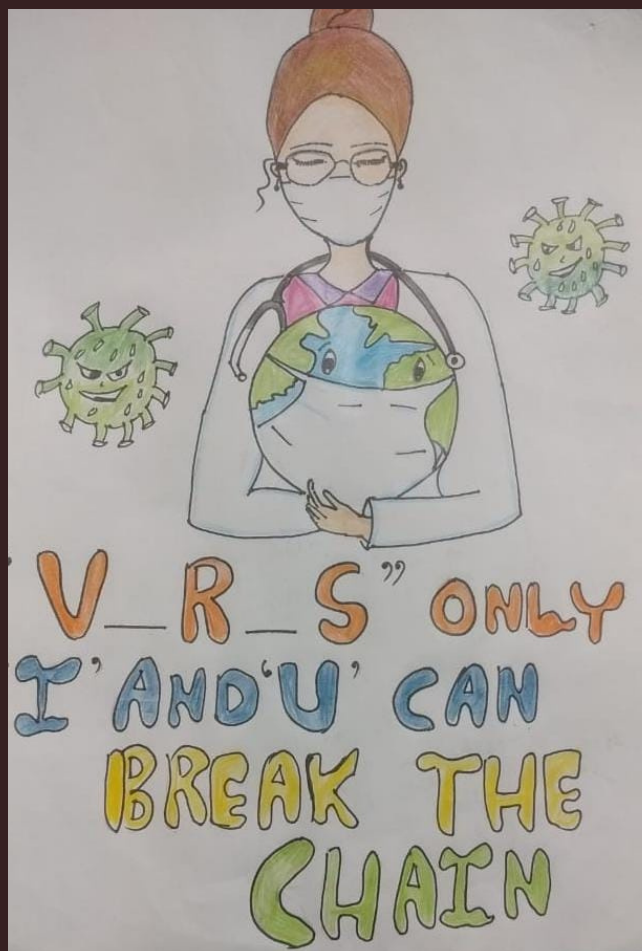
When people who didn't even study the
entire year got remarkable marks due to
covid-



Meme by:
Lakshita Gera



Art Work by:
Tannu Shreya



Art Work by:
Ankita Saha

SRI VENKATESWARA COLLEGE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY

presents

DIGITAL WALL ON *Pandemic Apps*

The pandemic has established the 'screen' as a great influence on our everyday. While it has aided the transition to the 'new normal' for some, it has also disrupted the established social practices and relationships. This year the digital wall in lieu of the wall magazine, will present a sociological analysis of the struggles and support ensued by the growth of internet applications during the pandemic.



An illustration of a person in a black long-sleeved shirt holding a black camera up to their face. The camera's lens is replaced by a detailed human eye. The background is a solid blue color. On the right side of the image, there is a vertical strip of film with several frames, each containing a blue-tinted image. The title 'Picture Narratives' is written in a white, stylized, handwritten font across the person's chest.

Picture Narratives

*Representation, interpretation,
projection, imagination...*

FAMILIES IN LOCKDOWN

SHRISTI
AGARWAL
2ND YEAR



In the general run of things, we fail to cherish our environment. By good fortune, the pandemic provided us with enough time to tie up the loose ends with nature and family members. We watched the sunset from our terrace and walked to nearby deserted places.

FLOOD-WATCHING IN CHATNAG (1)

ABHAY
MISHRA
1ST YEAR



Death shows its ugly face at Chatnag Ghat. 'Namami Gange' is littered with solid sewage as a man looks down upon it from a floating platform while the others grieve the death of their beloved family members by the funeral pyre. A reflective golden foil-like cloth used to cover the dead lies half burnt on the banks of river Ganga.

FLOOD-WATCHING IN CHATNAG (2)



Covid was unkind to all indiscriminately. Traditionally, only dead children were buried by the river, but during the second wave of the pandemic, the young and the old, all were buried in shallow graves. The buffaloes graze on the leftover grass between the bumps of the same. Brightly coloured tea stalls await grieving customers, and grief takes a break when men pause to watch the surge in the Ganga and Yamuna

ALUMNI INTERFACE



*Memories, experiences,
connections, relationships...*



BATCH OF 1990

BEENA VINOD

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Stepping into the college building (34 years back) has been a great experience for me. Being the first batch in Sociology (Hons) in the year 1987, the entire teaching faculty walked an extra mile to help the students settle in the new environment. My friends here always brought a smile – the samosa-eating sessions in the canteen, the run to the library to get hold of the books, the occasional fights etc will be cherished forever. Sociology helped me to understand society better. I then took up Social Work for my master's degree. After post-graduation, my journey into the world of humanity started - working in various NGOs such as CASP-PLAN International and then in Brotherhood Society, I was able to bring about a small change in the lives of people, especially women and children. I went on to do my B. Ed from Bombay University and have been teaching in a school for a decade now. I absolutely enjoy my profession where I am now in the same shoes as my teachers were – a small sincere effort in shaping the future citizens of our great nation. Vibrant memories are attached to this esteemed institution and I will be ever grateful to my college and teachers for grooming me to be a better human being.



BATCH OF 1990

JOSYULA LAKSHMI

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At the outset, I must confess that I was not aware that a subject called 'Sociology' existed. To be on the safe side to join SVC, however, I applied for Sociology (Honours) which was to begin in 1987 at SVC. With a small team of teachers and an eclectic group of classmates (from diverse academic backgrounds) began my sociological journey. We soon graduated to find that a wide variety of possible career choices- Higher studies, Research, Teaching, Administrative jobs - awaited us. I pursued a master's from Delhi School of Economics, M Phil from JNU and tried a few shots at the ICS examinations. I first joined an NGO called MARG in Delhi. Shortly thereafter, I moved to Hyderabad in 2000 to join 'Society for Participatory Research in Asia' (PRIA). I later joined CWS in Hyderabad as in-charge of the Child Rights Programme and then joined a policy think tank, Centre for Good Governance. In essence, a degree in Sociology provided me with the opportunity to work on social audits, innovative projects to engage with community/people, train officers on matters of transparency and accountability and for multiple clients, including the Govt of India, State Govts, World Bank, DFID, ILO etc. Now, I freelance and engage with organisations as a Consultant.



BATCH OF 1990

MADHURI SURESH

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A small and disparate group of students gathered in one of the corridors of Sri Venkateswara College, watching nervously at Dr Usha Panini reeling out instructions to the first batch of Sociology students, is my first memory of my journey in academic Sociology. The year was 1987. Our theoretical foundations were set at that time with Social Anthropology, Sociological Thinkers both Western and Indian and papers on various Social Institutions. A good grounding in the History of the Origins of Sociology and the works of the pioneering Sociological Thinkers still helps me to speak, edit, research, analyze and draw comparisons on diverse issues on a daily basis. The academic rigour of my undergraduate years helped me gain admission into the postgraduate program at JNU, which further streamlined my sociological thinking. My doctoral thesis explored the Job Satisfaction levels of Women Scientists of Bangalore. As Sociology encompasses the study of all 'social behaviour' exhibited by human beings, in a global society, then logic dictates that all aspects of this 'social behaviour' is fair fodder for 'research in Sociology'. All Data Analysis and Data Mining is SOCIOLOGY, nothing else! My humble obeisance to Dr Usha Panini, Dr Geeta, Dr Mohapatra, Late. Dr Ranjit Dwivedi and Dr Abhijit Kundu who taught us 'Sociology'!!!



BATCH OF 1990

LAKSHMI P. MENON

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It is as if it happened yesterday. I remember Panini Ma'am taking admissions. Being from a science background and never having studied Sociology in school I was not fully sure of the course or the content but I am happy that I decided to take Socio honours at Venkateswara. I have fond memories of my college life. Ours was the first batch. Usha Panini Ma'am, Geeta Ma'am, Mohapatra Sir, Ranjeet Dwivedi Sir and Kundu Sir were our teachers. I remember our team members and teachers set up a departmental library as all the reference books were not available. We had a nice time beautifying the Sociology department with the Collages. We had regular classes with systematic notes being given to us by our teachers which helped us learn the subject understand its importance and also its relation to Society. That has helped me immensely in tutoring my daughter which has been a self-fulfilling journey in itself. I am an artist by passion and currently a homemaker by profession. I have been associated with some Visual art forms- handprint, (block printing), cushion cover painting, glass paintings etc. Currently, I have an Instagram page: <https://www.instagram.com/theartdeck14?r=nametag>. Wishing the department the very best,



BATCH OF 1991

SHIVRAM

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A dear friend recently lost his job due to the Covid pandemic and remarked, "You are lucky you are an independent Advocate. Nobody can fire you from service". That is where the principles of Sociology which I had internalized, came handy. I asked myself - am I really independent? You see, nobody on this world is wholly independent. We all are actually interdependent. A lawyer is dependent on clients for fees and the client on the lawyer for successful litigation. Both are dependent on the Judges for a sound verdict. Judges in turn depend on the Judges of the higher appellate Courts to uphold their verdict. Even the Hon'ble Supreme Court decisions change as per the new challenges thrown up by the society. Thus, nobody is independent in the true sense. The world would be a better place to live in if the individual yields to the collective. We are a team, and if the team wins, each of us wins - this interdependence leads to cohesion in the society. I am proud to have belonged to the department of Sociology SVC, and thank all the Professors who shaped me in my formative years.



BATCH OF 1991

S. SHAILAJA

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Due to Covid, everyone has had negative experiences. I, as a Special Educator in a prominent public school of Delhi, discovered that every negativity has a hidden positivity. We just need special eyes to recognize it. Sociology taught us the importance of the family. Pre-Covid life was mechanical with the kids leaving for school early to return by afternoon and working parents leaving after their children to return by late evening. The family as a social unit was crumbling, as I witnessed school kids affected by lack of familial ties, conflicts/violence between parents, etc. The Pandemic made work from home compulsory as the new normal. Consequently, I found that one or both parents started working from home with complete family bliss. This tremendously improved family ties. The special needs children were more in harmony with themselves, feeling more secure and looking peaceful. Even the aggressive parents now looked more poised, satisfied and peaceful during the PTMs. The Pandemic has made everyone more introspective with both parents and kids experiencing more quality of life. In short, only when the basic structure of family is strong, will society emerge stronger. Now parents are convinced that they need to spend more time at home for both each other and their kids. I am glad that I could be part of the Sociology Department of the highly acclaimed and esteemed Sri Venkateswara College.



BATCH OF 1998

MEERA MOHANTY

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I am an Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer of 2005 batch borne on the Himachal Pradesh cadre. Sociology has been very important, professionally. Sociological concepts and methods like 'empathy', 'rapport building' and 'participant observation' methods assist in public dealing. Moreover, sociology has made us aware of the grassroots. The discipline not only introduced concepts associated to culture and society but also made one more tolerant towards differences. Further, the familiarity with the social fabric of our society and the prevalent caste, gender, communal and class hierarchies enabled me to handle the actual situations with greater sensitivity and efficacy. The classical thinkers and their theories were relevant as well in performing my duties. Durkheim had stated, "the whole is greater than the sum of its parts", which works as a reminder to value ones team irrespective of government or private sector. Similarly, Max Weber's concept of ideal types and its application to Bureaucracy and Marx's notion of capitalism and its problems is relevant in today's context. Administration is a stressful and a demanding job which tests ones leadership qualities and emotional strength. Organizational behaviour had taught us the importance of it as a leader to ensure a productive work environment. Friends, Sociology helps one make sense of the world around us and how to live and let live. And to me this is its biggest contribution!



BATCH OF 2009

KHYATI DOGRA

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Sociology is a word that has been with me for nearly 17 years. From the time I opened the first chapter as a student to the day, I became a Sociology teacher myself, the subject has kept me hooked. Even now when, I am a full-time housewife and a mother, and planning to pursue a career in the medical field, I feel my knowledge of the subject helps me cope with changing career paths, especially in today's time. Sociology is what I call a liquid subject. It can let you pursue a broad range of careers- MBA, Law, Civil Services, Management, Education, Hospitality Industry, Medical Administration, Community Services, etc. I find immense pride when I see my students settled in various careers. I happen to be based in a country where the unsettling present times have left people high and dry, desperately looking for any life-saving avenues. Community services are a means to help people come out the precarious situation. Sociology is a basis for the same. I still feel like a Sociology student learning something new every day and growing as a person. Feel free to get in touch with me via email- khyati.dogra@gmail.com



BATCH OF 2010

KARTIK VISWANATH

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I began my time at SVC with a vague notion that sociology involved studying how societies are formed, how they thrive, and that maybe I would get clues about my place in it. Questions of power and freedom, and how humans relate to each other, stayed with me because they didn't seem to have any answers we all agreed on. I spent a short time as a journalist. I was curious about how the world I lived in compared to the worlds described in sociological texts. However, the media painted a grim picture, and I chose to seek answers elsewhere. I began looking into my own education. How had I learned to understand who I was in the world? I now work with children as a school teacher. Being around 10-year-olds brings up many memories of myself as a child. It's surprising how many of the ideas I had back then, about life and my future, I continue to carry with me in hidden ways. I am realizing that there is very little I truly understand about myself. But I'm learning, through the time I spend with children. It is like looking into a mirror to my past. Thanks and all the best.



BATCH OF 2011

CHAYANIKA PRIYAM

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I'm where I thought I'd never be: straddling two seemingly disparate job-worlds, one as a Ph.D. scholar, and the other as a core team member at a habit-building start-up called Atom. As someone writing a dissertation, I'm expected to read, write, manage my own timelines, and keep myself motivated enough to go the full haul. And as a core team member at Atom, I am tasked with writing content, creative brainstorming on the product and marketing, interviewing users, and managing organizational culture and morale. Both my roles emphasize the richness of lived experience, the need for frameworks to make sense of that experience: processes that require tapping into the world with a good degree of reflexivity. And while both the roles come with their own set of responsibilities, and their own ways of doing the needed, there is a good measure of cross-pollination of skills that take place. Take for instance, research skills that I picked up during my Ph.D. training, something as basic as formulating a questionnaire, or as engaging as learning to interview people; these skills are also highly valued in people-oriented organizations, especially in the field of user research. On the other hand, working at Atom has taught me managerial skills which have most definitely come handy when I am trying to meet my own deadlines for the thesis, or streamlining my fieldwork notes. And while I'll admit that at times it may be challenging to work on two jobs, however, if you're someone who enjoys dynamic roles, and exploring your own limits and potentials, then this path might be something you're not just "managing" but thriving in.



BATCH OF 2011

ABIR MISRA

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I joined the Department of Sociology, SVC a decade ago, with a poor scholarly record throughout school and a distaste for reading. By the time I graduated, I had confidently adopted research and teaching as my career. Clearly, something changed in the three years I spent there. Of the various wonderful experiences I accumulated there, the most significant is the prized company of close friends. Their collective brilliance brushed off on me, manifesting in my academic performance. In the end it is these experiences – house parties, movies, dates, college fests etc - that I am able to vividly recount – not the assignments, the grades, the readings. This is where the pandemic's impact has perhaps been the harshest. The only positive thing about pandemics is that they pass. If you think you have missed out on the fun of college life, you will get another chance. As I continued in academia, it just got better. But to absorb the fantastic experiences of academic life, one has to first manage Mental Health. All of us developed anxieties or more severe mental health issues in the last 2 years. There are thankfully, affordable avenues of psychotherapy/counselling, good books, Instagram pages and podcasts that will aid you in ensuring that the profound internal effects of the pandemic Do Not become your 'new normal'. Please feel free to reach out for any advice or help. All the best.



BATCH OF 2011

ABHA SHARMA

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Who could have imagined that after a decade, I would still get a chance to write for "We Witness"? Though my sociological thoughts have become dimmer, the subject has helped me wrap my head around a lot of worldly things, and to understand the significance of differences and similarities. I am practising law for the last five years and Sociology has helped me both professionally and in forming my opinions. It made me re-define my principles and escape my own dogmas. For example, the Indian legal system is marked by a stark absence of senior women lawyers. It can be very demoralizing and over a period of time, we lose confidence and heart to work hard. We cannot believe that women can excel in a man's world. Sociology taught me about patriarchy where women rule, their way. If we could teach people that it is normal in some cultures for women to take the most important decisions for the whole society, maybe we would be able to instil hope and courage in women. We now see more freedom given to daughters at home, still way too less in society. In a nutshell, Sociology helped me understand my non-conformist thoughts, accept them and cherish them. Isn't this the purpose of real education?



BATCH OF 2011

DEVLEENA CHATTERJI

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Having graduated from Venky Sociology, I felt comfortable writing the DSE exam for a Master's in Sociology without much extra preparation. However, after my Master's, I had spent 5 years studying Sociological theories and I thought at that point that this was it. I made some switches and pursued a Liberal Arts Fellowship. Guess what my favourite subject turned out to be there? "Sociological Thinking" by Prof. Andre Beteille. Not only did I tutor my batchmates through what I believed was a cakewalk for coursework, but I also continued as a Teaching Assistant working along with Prof. Beteille for the next 2 years. For my PhD, I decided to specialize in education, but my topic as well as my orientation and approach to studying gender and education remained largely sociological. You see, it wasn't that I was unable to think outside of sociological theories. Rather, I realized what I had studied at Venky and DSE was impossible to ignore because caste and class along with gender and social structures were everywhere. Over the years, I have come to realize that the way I see the world, my values and opinions as well as my politics have a deep foundation in Sociological theories and I am ever so grateful for that. The best part about this subject is that nothing we studied ever becomes irrelevant. You'll see what I mean in a few years' time.



BATCH OF 2011

AAKRITI KAPOOR

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I distinctly remember the day I got enrolled in the Sociology course offered at Sri Venkateswara College, hardly realising the impact it would have on my life. Most people would beg to differ based on the professional choices I have made so far. However, it was Sociology that opened my mind to the various elements in our surroundings that we are generally oblivious to. Right from the socialisation process that defines gender roles to the impact that society has on our collective consciousness. As a result of Sociology, I have become the curious learner that I am today, and I am grateful that I got through the admission process.



BATCH OF 2012

PRATICHI MAJUMDAR

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It is always difficult to write your own love story. And as I sit down to pen one more piece for 'We Witness' after a gap of nine years, that is what I am trying to do, recall how I fell for my one true love - Sociology. I entered the department in 2009, fresh out of having studied physics and chemistry in school, an absolute newcomer to the discipline. I remember sitting wide-eyed in room no. 10, attending my first ever introduction to Sociology lecture, when I felt absolutely charmed and overawed by the subject. Every day, I would sit on the first bench, scribble down everything the teachers would say, and think about it all day long - I was in! Since then, Sociology has been a constant companion, not only in my career but in life. It has become a way of doing and being, a lens through which I view the world. From conversations with friends and family, to walking down a street, to watching a movie - a sociological perspective and imagination ala C.W. Mills has become a part of my everyday. It wasn't that Sociology gave me answers I was looking for. It gave me questions, and the ability to question. It helped me gain a perspective, impassionedly debate and question my own privileges, empathise and understand when I didn't agree. Today, as I try to build a career in research and teaching, the early years of sociological training have been foundational. My doctoral thesis on Storytelling on the Internet was born out of early conversations I had with my professors. Similarly, in my present research on gender and urban transformations, those early lessons in the sociology of gender have been pivotal. My time at the department in SVC, the discussions in and beyond classrooms continue to inspire and enable me to 'Do Sociology' at work and in life. And this is a love story that continues.



BATCH OF 2012

ATISH THUKRAL

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Just after passing his board exams with respectable enough marks, a fresh-faced boy was left wondering what he should do in the future. He needed options - Delhi University provided him time. Time to find his 'calling' - you'll learn about that term from Weber. What I do now as a profession, may not necessarily seem linked with the Sociology Department at Venky. But that's a statement that can be made only by those who scratch the surface. Delve deeper and you find, sociology is not just about theories and principles. It helps you understand society, emotions, reactions, people's wants, their needs. Sports is an intrinsic part of society; it represents the collective in many ways. It is part of one's identity. And I probably would never have understood that had I not indulged in meaty debates with my professors, tried to understand various cultures, and gotten sensitized to other belief systems. So while I was looking for time, I found out later, it was time well spent because of the fantastic teachers in the department, the lessons to be learnt, and the world it opened up. The entire experience is one that I cherish to this day.



BATCH OF 2013

ASHIMA SHARMA

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Lights, Camera, Dramaturgy! Ever experienced Erving Goffman's Dramaturgical theory real hand? How life is like a never-ending play in which people are actors/ artists? I do it every day! Goffman believed that when we are born, we are thrust onto a stage called everyday life. When you select performing arts as a career path, your life's each moment is divided into two fragments- frontstage & backstage. Frontstage, as a performer, is probably the easier out of the two, since you mostly get to manifest your exhaustively rehearsed performance (if you are not a substantial procrastinator like me). However, I also agree with Goffman, with frontstage being a home itself on certain occasions. The moment when you immerse yourself into the zone that your performance becomes more about an act of expression in relation to being an act of impression management. We get to play 'our assigned role' on the 'stage' that we've been preparing for with our well-recited sign vehicles. The backstage is probably the most difficult aspect when it comes to an artist. The constant struggle to develop your social identity, retreating to the looking glass self, introspecting creativity, deconstructing our success and failure, reflecting on our social practice and preparing for our return to the front stage. Also agreeing with Goffman, here we are our true self where we are not involved in an act of impression management. The social setting here is just you and your thoughts which can be more complex and laborious to comprehend. Nonetheless, this endeavour of social role between identity and reality is a riveting and congenial sociological concept I get to experience everyday.



BATCH OF 2014

SHIVANGI KHANKA

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The discipline gave a foundation to my career and personality. I did an internship in two NGOs and completed my post-graduation from Delhi School of Economics, in Sociology. Just after completing my master's, I decided to apply to different organisations, but little I knew where to head forward. I googled many options like NGOs in Delhi, Think Tanks in Delhi, consultants positions in Government organizations etc. etc. Finally, my present organization in the development sector suited my needs the most. It's a Consultancy that takes up development projects of the Government, funded by bilateral and multilateral organizations like World Bank, Asian Development Bank, JICA etc. Consultancies also take up development projects outside India. For example, Baseline Study and Impact Assessment of Kivu Road Belt, Rwanda, Africa, aims to present the situation of a particular region (Kivu road) before construction of the road (how people were residing) and the impact of the construction of the road (access to education and health facilities, prevention of gender-based violence and harassment etc. I am presently a 5 years experienced woman in the industry and looking forward to many more opportunities that the development sector has to offer. The subject teaches you to empathize, and if you are able to do so you will understand what to do in your projects. The subject has taught me how to freely talk to my project-affected people, to conduct consultations, focus group discussions, coordinate with clients and conduct analysis and assessing impacts.



BATCH OF 2014

SMRITI RAO

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My journey with this ever fascinating discipline started early on in school and was aided by some of the finest lecturers in Sri Venkateswara college, whom I happened to be lucky enough to study under. I stepped along a cobbled path, sharing an on again-off again relationship with a career rooted in Sociology, ranging from academic to freelance gig work. I ventured into the ed-tech space and carved a niche in Sociology dependent roles, where I worked as an academic curriculum developer, mentor, tutor, evaluator, freelance journalist, and content writer. I won't say I have arrived at my destination, but in the present context, I have donned the role of an 'Infopreneur', put in simple terms, a person who garners relevant information from multiple sources and packages them into a comprehensive unit for consumers. Sociology is a budding subject in the present times, and the need for creative channelizing is at its pinnacle. I travelled the road lesser taken, and as predicted, each day is an adventure, with its own set of challenges.



BATCH OF 2015

AYU TRIPATHI

ayutripathi@aahanaresort.com

After graduation in 2015 I joined my father in Jim Corbett where he had just started running a Eco-Luxury resort. My role to begin with was to engage with the village outside and create an able team for smooth operations. I feel as sociologists we study all things human, from the interaction between two people to the complex relationships between multinational corporations and even nations. I feel having a good understanding of human behaviour and all those classes on understanding the complex realities and dynamics of the Indian village did help me become a part of the village outside, to the extent that the older people in the village trusted me with their daughters and son who went through rigorous training classes in-house. Today 98% of our staff is local and belong to the region. In addition to this I also run a cleanliness program with the village children and have been successful in motivating local girls to work with us in different capacities. Today after being in business for over 6 years I have realised how sociology has helped so much. Being the head of an organisation my employees are the most important to me and sociology has helped me understand the cultural and social aspects that shape each member of our team. We have been able to create policies which do not alienate staff members and create loyalty towards the company. I can truly say that sociology changes the way you look at the world around you, you begin to understand it and it's people so much better. I hope all of you studying sociology right now can truly embrace it as a way of life!



BATCH OF 2019

MALLIKA ANAND

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"The last thing a fish would ever notice is water" is a quote I've often come across during my journey with Sociology. Having done my Bachelor's in Sociology from Sri Venkateswara and then Master's in Social Anthropology from the London School of Economics and Political Science, I've realized it is very unsettling when that fish begins to notice that water - however murky it may be - is crucial to its survival. On a personal level, studying sociology has imbued me with an obsessive curiosity. On the professional front, that obsessive curiosity translated into encouraging me to take the research route. I am currently working at the Centre for Social and Economic Progress (formerly Brookings India Institution) as a Research Analyst in the Economic Growth and Development Vertical. Being in a room full of economists for the past year has made me increasingly value our discipline for its humanity and empathy. Though my next step would be to search for a line of work that allows me to engage with people more often, my M.Sc and work experience at a think tank has opened up my mind to even pursuing a PhD in the near future.



BATCH OF 2020

NIKHIL GOYAL

nikhilgoyalatnow@gmail.com

Pursuing sociology was a life-changing experience for me as it helped me explore my deeper self and things I am passionate about. While I am pursuing a master's in Law, Diplomacy, and Business from O.P Jindal, my research continues to be informed by sociology and sociological training. I feel proud to be associated with SVC and the vibrant Department of Sociology, as it helped me be a better researcher. The support and guidance from the faculty have been beneficial, helping me make informed decisions. The academic training that I received continues to help me distinguish myself amongst my peers and excel in life. Many times in and during my classes, I go back to my memories at SVC, cherishing the memories of learning from the finest and the most dedicated practitioners in life. I am proud to be an alumnus of this department and look forward to contributing to the same in any way.



BATCH OF 2020

ARJUN SHARMA

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In the interest of full disclosure, sociology at Venky was my top pick for subjects I wanted post 12th. I was not particularly interested in sociology in school. However, ever since my first class, there has never been a dull uninteresting moment when it comes to sociology. In my interactions with the plethora of subjects that sociology studies, I have always walked away with fresh, interesting and well-informed perspectives. More than the number of issues, sociology opened my mind up to newer, unconventional, and often ignored narratives and ways of thinking. It gave me the ability to understand why things are the way they are. The skills that I developed during my three years in sociology have influenced how I currently study law. I would be dishonest in saying that sociology has given me answers to all my questions, it hasn't. But what sociology has given me is the temperament to seek answers in a way that is not devoid of clarity, but also is not obsessed with finding out the "objective truth". Sociology has equipped me to deal with life that exists more in shades of grey than in black-and-white. I would be remiss if I didn't thank the fantastic Department of Sociology for their guidance.



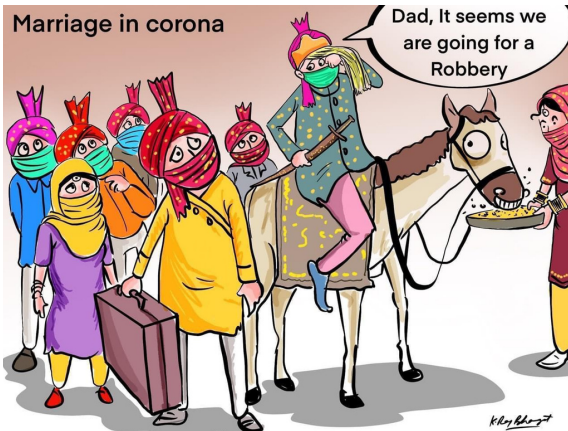
BATCH OF 2021

SHAMBHAVI VERMA

shambhavi24.verma@gmail.com

My experience of undertaking Sociology Majors has been both, enriching as well as enlightening. The discipline has changed my life in multifarious ways. I was someone who didn't really believe in questioning pre-established perspectives or structures and inherently accepted them as it is. It is after learning and experiencing the countless domains of Sociology, that I now reflect upon and analyse situations from multiple angles instead of reverting back to a simpler inspection. Now, I experience reality more sociologically. The very intersectionality of the subject is what makes it special. My case papers on Gender, Religion, Work, Social Stratification and Environmental Sociology have enormously driven my passion for pursuing a master's in Gender, Policy and Inequalities. The theoretical and the real-time application of the knowledge acquired, I believe, will definitely provide me with a strong foundation to further develop and enhance my concepts, and will contribute to my growth as both an individual and a societal being. I see myself working with the UN Women in the coming years. With the utmost faith in my professors' teachings and my strong willpower of representing my alma mater on a global platform, it's just a matter of time and hard work that I will justify my 'sociological' education and will earn my place among the UN Women global representatives.

PANDEMIC HUMOUR



Bro,
Do You Know Newton's Second Law ?

2:17 pm

I'm a Science Student 🎓 Bro
Not a Law Student 🤔

2:17 pm ✓✓

Oh 🎓 Covid Batch 🎓

2:18 pm



2:24 pm ✓✓



2020 is REALLY the Year of the Rat

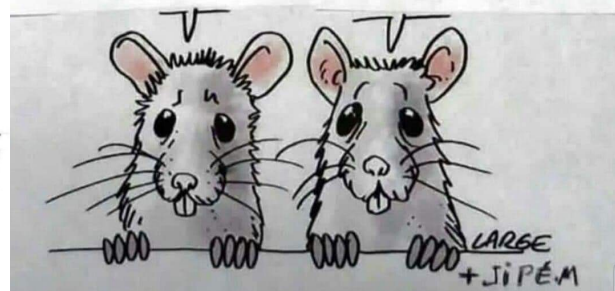


1. We are all in hiding.
2. We only go out to get food.
3. We store food to eat later.
4. When people come close to us, we run away



"This is your third peg. Stop now." "Hey, you don't understand. Previous two won't work if I don't take this BOOSTER dose!" 😊

Are you going to get vaccinated? You're crazy!, they haven't finished human trials!

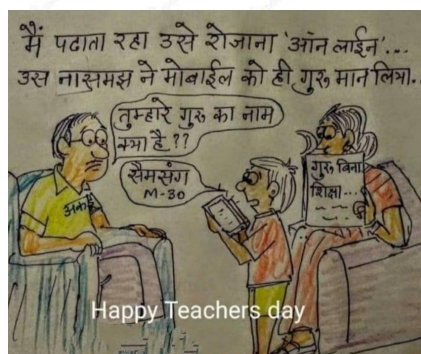


"When I'm back in a real classroom how do I mute my teacher?"

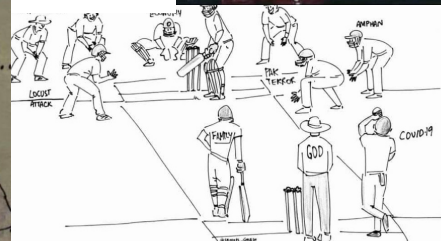
Simply awesome and love this beautiful post .



Is saal shayad school trip mei students ko school dikhane le jayenge.



Happy Teachers day



Keep playing, It's just a Game...



AU REVOIR!

Batch of 2022



Standing, left to right:

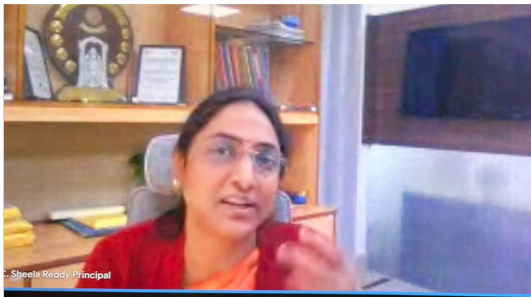
Aniruddh Bali, Harsh Chawla, Bhanu Yadav, Chirag Behl, Satish Maddila, Sureshjyoti Parameswar, Anmol Kumar Srivastava, Abhai Singh Tanwar, Jeevak Kumar

Sitting first row, left to right:

Falak Syed, Nidhi Gajraj, Damini Vats, Prachi Gautam, Sonam Lazes, Chinnunnnem Touthang, Bhagyashree Bhattacharjee, Shagun Mishra, Muskaan Kapoor, Alfia, Upasha

Sitting second row, left to right:

Ashna Aggarwal, Sneha Gupta, Swati, Tanushree Singh Balayan, Sakshi Sachdeva, Aditi Kar, Noureen Perwez, Mahima Dixit, Manvi Singh, Jyotismita Khataniar, Rudranshi Thapliyal, Nandini Chichra, Dharini Mishra



**THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY
SRI VENKATESWARA COLLEGE**

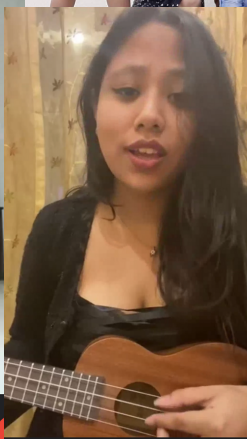
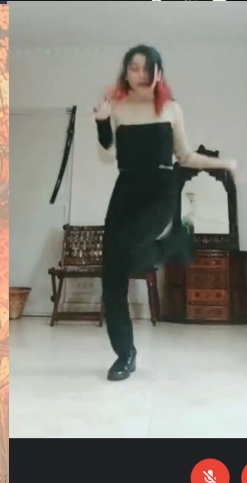
presents

CONSCIENCE COLLECTIVE'22

MUNDAYNE SHOTS: Photo Story Event	KALAKRITI: The Myriad Perspectives
TASAVVUR: Slam Poetry Event	REELISTIC: Reel making Event

11 FEBRUARY, 2022 | 11 AM | MS TEAMS

I Dharini Mishra (President) : 6307633100 |
I Ashna Aggarwal (Vice President) : 880963480 |



**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY
SRI VENKATESWARA COLLEGE
UNIVERSITY OF DELHI**

PRESENTS

THE DIAMOND JUBILEE ANNUAL LECTURE ON

**RELATIONSHIP
AND EXCHANGE AT THE
INDIA-BANGLADESH
BORDERLANDS**

By
DR. MALINI SUR

SENIOR LECTURER,
DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY,
WESTERN SYDNEY UNIVERSITY, AUSTRALIA

DATE: 10TH FEBRUARY, 2022
TIME: 11 AM (IST)
ONLINE PORTAL: GOOGLE MEET

Google Meet link:
<https://meet.google.com/gvo-thej-hq>

Registration link:
<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1K0rgeDJA7m3QeORBA/b0zvmQ-hslM0J2LFG4qVvZQ/edit?usp=sharing>

For queries write to:
nabanipab@svcc.ac.in
dharinimishra7620001@gmail.com

PROGRAMME CONVENOR:
NABANIPA BHATTACHARJEE



**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY
SRI VENKATESWARA COLLEGE**

PRESENTS

**HEALTH, FITNESS AND WELLBEING.
SOCIAL SCIENCE PERSPECTIVES ON THE BODY.**

RESEARCH METHOD SEMINAR

**Prof. V Sujatha
CSSS, JNU**

Date : 17th February 2022
Time : 3:00 pm onwards
Platform : Google Meet



**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY
SRI VENKATESWARA COLLEGE**

PRESENTS

"KHAIRIYAT"

An activity based outreach workshop for healthier
mind, emotions and body.

Jasmine Dua
Bhavika Mehta

Date : 4th October, 2021
Time : 4 pm onwards
Venue : Google Meet

Chief Patron : Principal, Prof. Sheela Reddy

Chief Patron : Principal, Prof. Sheela Reddy

For queries contact-
Dharini Mishra (President)
+91 6307 633 100

Program convenors:
Dr. Nupurima Yadav
Dr. Abhijit Kundu

Meet - bas-vcwv-tkj

meet.google.com/bas-vcwv-tkj?pli=1&authuser=1

Apps Weave iCloud

Participants in the Google Meet session include: Ayush Chauhan, Dharini Mishra, Sneha Alexander, Ashna Aggarwal, Siddhi Rupa, Neha Konwar, Jyoti Vaidyanathan, ROHITKRISHNA, Shubha Gupta, Divyanshi Malhotra, Manasi Verma, Pratibha Kulkarni, Parvina Sajid, Kristy Kakoty, Khushi Khandelwal, Divya Vibhuti Sharma, Abha Jain, Aman Shekhar, Rohit Kumar, Ashna Aggarwal, Tanvi Sharma, Dhanshika Jaisankar, Harsh Raghuvanshi, and 8 others.