



The Oliphant / Edition 390 / 2020 / Issue 7 / December / Online



# The Oliphant

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WELHAM BOYS' SCHOOL

Think about it “To thine own self be true and it must follow as the night the day thou canst not be false to any man.” -William Shakespeare

## EDITORIAL

It’s time that passes, but we are the ones who age.

We wake up every morning and dream about the next before our head even hits the pillow. We see ourselves holding the stars but don’t reach out for them. So is the story of life; it is a rollercoaster ride of irony. Our dreams are big, but we forget to grasp their surface because we let time pass while we are trapped in the infiniteness of our dreams. But know that things will only become better if you wake up one day and say, “Maybe, I should stop dreaming and start thinking ‘HOW?’”

As I write this editorial, I dream that I am back, below the misty mountains. I see the lights twinkle as they brighten the valley from their perch on the hills of Mussoorie. Each of them is vividly bright. They look like camera flashes, illuminating the different memories twirling in the kaleidoscope my head has become. I never imagined I would miss a bus trip or a stop at McDonald’s, but I long for those trips now even though they made my legs stiff in the past. While I reminisce, I also think that I could wake up every day with a dream of what could be, but what am I doing with ‘now’? Each of us needs to answer this question as we count the days down to 2021.

Time has always been a commodity too cheap to save but too expensive to find when most needed. We continue to ruminate but seldom act. We have all the time to envisage the top of the mountain but can find none to map the hike. With time, our nascent dreams die and we

continue with our puerile endeavours. Most of us stop before we actualize our dreams and then we imagine ourselves in the shoes of those stalwarts who continue to leap ahead. However, do we need to live a life where we are blissfully unaware of the bleakness of our dreams because they are not accompanied by the complimentary industriousness? It is a choice; you can choose to live in false bliss or do something about it.

To reinforce a cliché, your thoughts become words and your words become actions. Maybe the silver lining of the pandemic is an opportunity to put our feet back on the ground, think about our goals beyond the few years of school life and ACT to achieve them. The pandemic pushed us apart, but we revelled in the connections that technology made. However, the distance is real and we are alone more often than before. Solitude is an amazing catalyst to get your mind running. You could think about the college you want to go to and work to get there. It could be anything, but wasting time, especially now, would be a lost opportunity. Like I mentioned earlier, it is not wrong to have dreams but it is important to find how to reach there and start working. So along with going out, sit down for once and make a discovery.

**-Viraj Lohia**  
Editor-in-Chief

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## BOOK REVIEW ONE OF US IS LYING

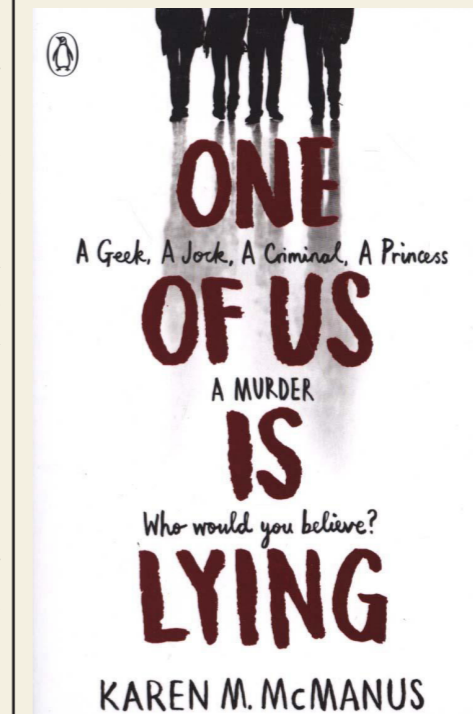
Set in Southern California, ‘One of Us is Lying’ focuses on many concerns typically associated with the millennial generation—specifically social media addiction and abuse, entitlement and the unique financial struggles this generation faces all over the world. The novel also delves into the existence of large-scale violence in schools across America: when Simon Kelleher (the antagonist) becomes hell-bent on planning his vendetta against the conformist “lemmings” at his school, he looks up to the work of mass shooters but wants to do something more innovative.

‘One of Us is Lying’ follows the gripping story of Bronwyn, Addy, Nate and Cooper as suspects in the murder of Simon Kelleher. Each of these high school students has secrets that they would do anything to conceal.

I admire this book because it dives into the personalities and thoughts of each suspect and keeps the readers guessing who did it till the very end. I particularly liked how the perspective of each of the characters was elucidated. Overall, ‘One of Us is Lying’ is a surprisingly engaging book that was hard to put down.

At the start of the book, we are introduced to four characters who seem to be a little more than teen-movie archetypes. Despite being well-aware of the stereotypes, they present themselves to the world in an unconventional manner. All of these characters are painfully aware of these

Author - Karen M. McManus  
Publisher - Penguin Books  
Rating - 4.5/5



expectations and are sometimes even frightened of how their true selves go against the image of the roles they are expected to follow. As each character’s journey of self-discovery and search for truth gets underway, they begin forming connections with one another, shattering the stereotypes that have been thrust upon them and helping one another to do the same.

Through her characters’ unlikely connections, McManus conclusively argues that nothing is ever quite as it seems and that even the most straightforward-seeming individuals and situations contain hidden depths. As I said earlier, McManus focuses

on a few major stereotypically “millennial” problems throughout the novel. Feelings of entitlement are a significant problem for many millennials, who feel that the dreamy lives of wealth, luxury and ease peddled to them by entertainment, media and advertisements should be as easily attained as a breath of air.

As the novel unfolds, the characters within it untangle the webs of all they have been conditioned to believe about themselves and one another. As they do so, the connections they form with one another allow them to begin breaking down those stereotypes. Through her characters’ unlikely but profound bonds, McManus shows how stereotypes stand in the way of meaningful relationships and argues that the only way to create those bonds is to look past the harmful labels standing in their way.

‘One of Us is Lying’ is a teenage-take on themes as dark as murder and depression. Although other writers are unsuccessful in developing such deep plots for a younger audience, Karen M. McManus writes with a certain pleasantness that establishes her story very effectively among young and adult readers. So, if you want to sit down and unravel a complex but grounded mystery, you should definitely check out ‘One of Us is Lying’.

**-Vihan Shukla**  
IX

## T.V. SERIES REVIEW

# THE CROWN

I feel elevated to be able to write a review about a television series covering the life of such a spectacular woman: a woman who has held the public office of an institution which has been a symbol of elegance, globalisation and power throughout the world for more than six decades. 'The Crown' is Netflix's most lavish and luxurious series about Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth the second (current head of the British monarchy, Queen of the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia and New Zealand along with being the Head of the Commonwealth) and the most popular white-haired matriarch of the British royal family.

The Crown's first season begins before the queen was the icon that she is today and before her coronation. It begins in 1947, just before her wedding to Prince Philip of Greece and Denmark, on the day when he renounced his older titles, converted to Anglicanism from Greek Orthodoxy and adopted the name "Lieutenant Philip Mountbatten" (he was later given the title Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, and "His Royal Highness"). It was a time when the Queen was still a princess, fondly called "Lilibet" by those close to her.

This is what The Crown does best: it manages to weave a real-life story about public figures that we're quite familiar with. It has been created and written by Peter Morgan and shows us Elizabeth Regina's life from a young girl to an old monarch, the relationships she had with her husband

Creator - Peter Morgan  
Cast- Claire Foy, Olivia Colman, Tobias Menzies, Matt Smith  
IMDb rating- 8.7/10



and family and her interactions with the politicians of her time: statesmen like Winston Churchill, Margaret Thatcher and many more. All the while maintaining a certain level of suspense. The cinematography is great, each episode unfolds gradually along with unraveling a little bit more about the public enigma that a British monarch can be in her private moments. Immense attention is given to each detail from the casting to the actors' body language. The show also utilizes elaborate costumes and set

pieces and mostly adheres to historical facts. The Crown has been praised to be an exquisite drama by the press: it has been being dubbed as "TV's best soap opera", given a 5/5 rating and has received many awards like the Golden Globe Awards. 'The Crown' is a good enough series to binge-watch on Netflix. I watched a lot of historical dramas, movies and series, but this takes the number one spot among them. I would sincerely urge everyone to watch this series if they haven't watched it already.

**-Lavansha Shah**  
**XI**

## MOVIE REVIEW

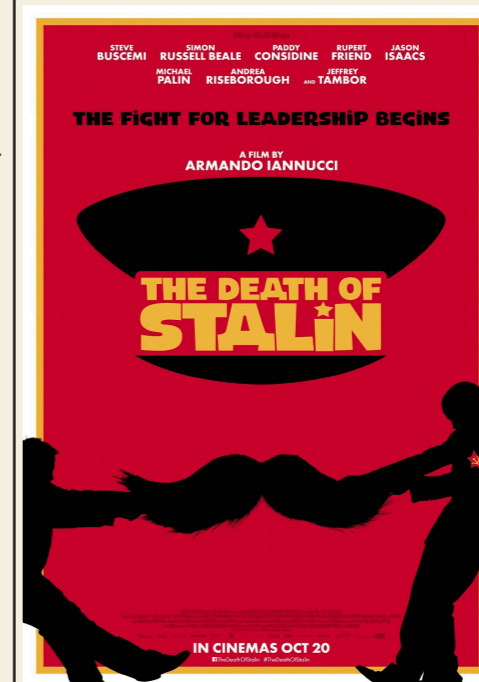
# THE DEATH OF STALIN

It is wrong to assume that the genre categories constructed by the film industry are static and stationary. Every once in a while, a film will come up and demand the industry to reevaluate its assumptions about which kind of film goes into which genre bin. 'The Death of Stalin' is one such film. Call it what you want- political, historical, thrilling, funny, satirical or even horrifying- but it is undeniably fabulous. It is, of course, a hefty undertaking to seek to satirize and caricature a rather grey and gloomy era of human history. Director Armando Iannucci (known for Veep and In the Loop), not only does justice to this weighty task, but also carefully builds an engaging and witty narrative within this otherwise dark era.

The title itself is revealing and misleading. Stalin is dead and a power vacuum has been formed, his deputy and assumed successor, Georgy Malenkov (Jeffrey Tambor), is weak and easily misled by his colleagues in the Central Committee. The film is not centred around the death of Stalin or even the man himself; it focuses on the events that take place after his death and the merry band of politicians, statesmen and politicians he leaves behind. Of these, the most prominent ones that come to mind-- who drive the story from beginning to end- are Nikita Khrushchev (Steve Buscemi) and Lavrentiy Beria (Simon Russell Beale). It is their conflict, both political, personal and sometimes conjunction of the two, that acts as a catalyst for the events that take place in the story. Khrushchev's and Beria's conflict is neither solely for power nor solely for dominance; it is perhaps best described as a schoolboy-esque collision of egos, somehow both fitting and unfitting for career politicians.

The characters themselves are both exceptionally well-written and well-performed. Their interactions make up the meat of the movie. In the first act, when

Director: Armando Iannucci  
Cast - Steve Buscemi, Simon Russell Beale  
IMDb rating - 7.2/10



Stalin's yet unconscious body lies on the floor of his posh dacha, covered in urine, the scheming opportunists arrive one by one: some gush crocodile tears, while others plot brazenly. Their intentions fool no one- not their counterparts, not the soldiers standing guard outside and definitely not the viewer. They somehow manage to haul the strongman's body from the wet carpet to his bed but are faced with an acute problem- Stalin got all the good doctors in Moscow killed. The ironic and cutting humour often stems from and is heavily dependent on the characters' relations to one another- the career politician, the diplomat and the spymaster have unique ways of interacting with one another.

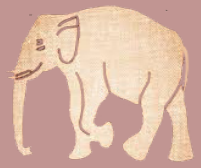
All of that is not to say that the characters

are not weighty individually and in and of themselves. They are heavily caricatured versions of their real counterparts. Their unique personas embed themselves within the viewer's mind. From the very beginning, they are built up to fulfil concrete roles in the storyline. Beria is sinister and ruthless, Malenkov is resoundingly frail, Molotov is ageing and yearning for some engaging political action and Khrushchev is marginalized and looking for revenge. These personality tags stay attached to the characters to the end; some get what they want, and some don't.

In any endeavour to synthesize and condense history into art, nuance is key. And Iannucci has it in plenty. He carefully orchestrates individual storylines within large contextual frameworks, and that in itself is highly commendable. Historical context is not a weight on Iannucci, it is an adept enabler for him. Perhaps no other historical era, other than post WW2 USSR, could have yielded such an engaging story. Of course, the era was politically fragile and that makes it possible for such a story to take place within it. But it also serves to make possible certain subtle stylistic choices. The irony increases tenfold when the otherwise envious and scheming politicians refer to each other as comrades.

In its 107 minutes of runtime, 'the Death of Stalin' presents an engaging and nuanced opus to the viewer. The humour is subtle and ironic, the characters are unique and the storyline is stable and fixated. The film is a highly focused affair, rarely deviating from the alluring narrative of the power struggle between two self-proud and egoistic men. It is not meant only for the political and historical aficionados but for anyone who finds thrilling dramas worthwhile.

**-Samanyu Malik**  
**XI - HUM**



## *Never Surrender*

Hiroo Onoda, or Onada, as his comrades called him, was extremely busy at the moment. He was busy trying to hammer a notice to a tree trunk, right above a dead body that was tied to the same. The notice read “This one took a long time to die” in Japanese. The body was that of a white man with blonde hair, dressed in the uniform commonly associated with the Australian Army.

Hiroo did not particularly enjoy the task, but it was an order from an officer and an order from an officer was carried out at the pain of death. He had dared to ask, one day, what was the point of these bloody actions. Not that he minded carrying them out, of course. Like other recruits, he had spent his time in China and had been properly “blooded” as the practice of killing Chinese civilians was called by the recruits. It was meant to imbibe a sense of duty within the recruits. From their birth, Japanese men learnt that they must be ready to die for their emperor. This process was simply a way of reiterating that they must also be ready to kill for the emperor.

But what was the point of doing the same to the Imperialists, that too in manners the Christians so despised? The answer, as one kind lieutenant had told him, was surprisingly simple. Japanese units did not surrender. It had never happened and until the sun burst to swallow up the earth and the moon, it was unlikely to happen in the future. But in case if some weak-resolved troops decided to bring shame to the nation by laying down their arms, they must not, under any circumstances, be allowed to peacefully spend their time in a prisoner of war camp and then be sent back to the Fatherland. No. And to prevent this, the troops were told to show no mercy to their opponents, dead or alive. This way, every allied soldier would have a comrade, a brother in arms, who had not only died from Japanese bullets and then had his dead body mutilated to the last vestiges of recognition. It was expected that the imperialist forces of the allies would then be kind enough to return the same favour of “taking no prisoners” to the Japanese battalions too, thereby ensuring their enduring loyalty. It was a saddening unrequited procedure, of course. Japanese soldiers never surrender.

Onoda had not slept for a month. There was a very peculiar reason behind that. The Japanese forces liked to attack at night. The Allied troops attacked during the day. It was a constant cycle of exchanges in dominance on the field. And how much sleep could a wise man even expect, in the mosquito-ridden marshes of New Guinea? There was no respite for a soldier in the Imperial Japanese

Army, but then, men were not put in the Imperial Japanese Army to have respite. His family was safe back at home, his children being told repeatedly how proud they should be of their father, fighting for the emperor in the sanctuary of all that is ill on this earth, or as the westerners called it, New Guinea. The marshes that went up to a man’s necks, the hills which one climbed only to see another on the horizon, the hostile natives waiting at every turn to hunt for Japanese heads and the constant allied bombardment, all ate at the heart of the soldiers. Back home, there used to be a saying. “Heaven is Java, hell is Burma, but no one returns alive from New Guinea.”

Of course, the forces of the world tried to subdue the Japanese. But they always failed. Love for the emperor had made the Japanese spirit impenetrable. And, again, Japanese soldiers never surrender.

As the scattered moonlight filtered through the dense canopy of trees, Onada let out a rare sigh. Soon, he would be charging the Australians, right towards their damned machine guns that had taken too many of his comrades’ lives. Or, he might be chosen for an ambush and be made to stand in a lake, immersed in freezing water up to his neck, waiting for Australian soldiers that might never turn up. If he was lucky, he would be killed in action or he would end up with a fate like that of his former buddy, Akiro.

Akiro had succumbed to his injuries in the middle of a clearing. He was bleeding, and he would soon die. There was no hope for him. With his dying breath, Akiro had pulled the clip of a grenade, and the group of Allied soldiers standing above him, contemplating whether to help their fallen enemy or put him out of his misery, realised it a second too late. Onada often thought of Akiro and the last message he had given. It was not a message he had spoken out loud or whispered or yelled, or even written or shown. It was a message he had delivered with his last ounce of strength, a message he had conveyed through his last action on earth. In pulling the pin of the grenade, Akiro had delivered his final message to the Allied troops. The Japanese never surrender.

And with that thought, Onada picked up his gear and joined his remaining comrades on their trail.

**-Mrinank Chandar**  
**XI - HUM**  
**Senior Editor**

## The Netflix Effect

Netflix is the definitive media company of the 21st century. It was among the first to parlay new Internet technologies into a successful business model. In the process, it changed how consumers access film and television. It is now one of the leading providers of digitally delivered media content. It is continually expanding access across a host of platforms and mobile devices. Despite its transformative role, however, Netflix has drawn very little critical attention. Far less than competitors such as YouTube, Apple, Amazon, Comcast and HBO.

Ever since the quarantine started, we have had too much free time on our hands and most of us have squandered it away by sleeping, eating and consuming content. However, it is not just about the lockdown. We have been consuming content at paces unprecedented, binge-watching shows and movies, even though we might have deadlines in our immediate futures.

Moreover, who might be the main reason for us wasting away our time? Well, Netflix is the first to come to our minds. Ever since it has started self-producing content in 2013, it has been pioneering in the streaming industry and successfully been able to bring about the downfall of the Video-DVD services. It has even brought about the downfall of our productivity. This has given rise to a new term called “The Netflix Effect.”

The Netflix Effect is when a new series catapults an unknown actor to fame - overnight - a result of millions of people binge-watching a show. Moreover, Netflix has weaponized this to its advantage by arranging a host of features that make it more difficult for you to stop watching a particular series. It blocks notifications from social media apps, it provides an automatic option of moving on the next episode and even provides an option of adjusting the screen’s brightness without moving away from the tab!

Moreover, it has also impacted our lives drastically. We like to spend more time in front of a blue light screen rather than going out and chilling with our friends. Yes, we do still go out and have fun, but when compared to the amount of time we spend inside our rooms watching Netflix is drastically higher. Majority of the people might settle in for a night of binge-watching, rather than go out with their peers.

Netflix has redefined how we look at people on just the

basis of their taste in shows and has become a defining factor in gauging how much we like that particular person. Furthermore, since now movies from a multitude of regional cinemas are being aired on Netflix, it has moved on from being a luxury to being a necessity for content producers choosing the platforms on which they air.

Let us face it: We are more likely to stay at home, call over a few friends and watch a movie while stuffing ourselves with snacks, rather than go to a movie theatre and pay extravagant amounts of money on popcorn and drinks which we will finish even before the movie starts. All of us are now stuck in a never-ending loop of finishing our favourite series in one night and then crying about when the next season will air on Instagram Stories. Furthermore if you are one of those lucky ones who have been able to break free from this cycle, cheers on being a normally functioning productive person! However, for the rest of us, it will be life as usual, with a new season every other night.

**-Ateeksh Anand**  
**IX**

## All News Is Fake News

Fake news may seem new, but the platform used is the only new thing about it. Propaganda has been around for centuries and the internet is only the latest means of communication to be abused to spread lies and misinformation.

Social media has become the new battleground for any movement that takes place nowadays. From petition.org forms (that have had such a huge impact on the decisions our government takes, it's amazing) and mobilizing for peaceful protests to expressing one's opinions on how good/bad a song is. Social media aggregators and statisticians always exploit the trail of comments we leave behind in the form of dedicated emails, social media profiles and electronic fingerprints to prove their point of view since statistics can be used to prove anything. However, for real, how bad is this infodemic?

The term infodemic has been coined by the World Health Organization in response to curb the drastic spread and effects of misinformation across the world. Fake social media handles aggregate these fake articles, news and statistical analyses by taking over the ones that have been deactivated or by using temporary emails to influence popular opinions and using myriad statistical data to prove their points.

Nevertheless, why is this the case? Why can't social media giants like Facebook and Twitter which are the barons for free speech and expression use their might to counter the spread of fake news and misinformation, so that users are free to form their own opinions and not have them shoved down their throats?

A study was conducted this year throughout the months of May-August by the NATO Strategic Communication of Intelligence to calculate how easy it is to buy fake social media handles and how hard it is to get them noticed by social media platforms.

In a society that has become so fragmented that each fragment depends on an entire network of fake accounts to function, it becomes easy to manipulate an entire network by just tweaking and modifying the source code of one fragment. After that, there is no more work that needs to be done instead of sitting back with a tub of popcorn and watching the drama start to unfold and explode all over social media platforms.

Moreover, when you are also a fragment of such a network,

it becomes disturbingly easy to manipulate people by posting "unpopular opinions" on Twitter and in the Instagram comment sections. All of us have at least once gone down a rabbit hole wherein we have wasted our not-so-precious time by reading the entire comment chain of two strangers on these social media platforms and watch them fight it out. Hell, it feels more entertaining than a sanctioned heavyweight title bout at moments.

So, can we do something to curb its spread? You cannot do much on a personal level, but that does not mean you should? Whenever you come across any disturbingly opinionated article or blog, check to see if the sources used for that article are comprehensible and verified. After actually being genuinely aware of issues like these makes one realize how much information that we consume daily is opinionated and biased and not in the right direction. We can easily realise how it is lacking any ability to do good for society.

It is true when they say that the only unbiased news is the one you agree with. So, to conclude, it is my plea that the reader tries knowing both sides of the story to make sure your opinion on any situation is backed by information that is verified.

**-Vanshaj Tandon**  
X

## Discovery of Zero

In India about 200 BC Pinglacharya was touted as the father of Chandah Sastra. He is also called father of binary mathematics after Chanakya. In the same period Panini was credited for writing the Sanskrit grammar. Most of the scholars agree that Pinglacharya is the inventor of Zero.

If we see the rules of Chand of Pinglacharya in mathematical terms they work as binary mathematics; on the other hand they exhibit the solutions of cubic and biquadratic equations. The basis of this must have been a very erudite understanding of Mathematics by someone. Hence the discovery of zero may have happened before 200 BC.

A very valuable manuscript of Mathematics was found in Village Bakshali in Khyber province in 1881. These were written in Bhojapatras. On the basis of the language, the scholars predict these manuscripts were written between 200 BC to 300 AD. These manuscripts are important in a sense that it depicts the nature of Sulbh Sutri Vedic Mathematics of the period between 800 BC to 500 BC. This manuscript has the mention of 'zero'.

One of the available Granthas in India is the Bhagvati Sutra of 300BC which illustrates Combination. The 200 BC Sthagna Sutra talks about number theory, Geometry, Fractions, Simple equations, Cubic Equations, bi-quadratic Equations and permutations etc. Till 200BC one can find the use of Set theory and infinite numbers.

Aryabhata who was born in (476AD) cannot be credited for discovering zero. Aryabhata invented an alphanumeric method. He in his Aryabhata Grantha worked on the same method. People consider Aryabhata inventor of zero because in his Aryabhata Grantha (498BC) in Ganitpad-2 has written numbers from one to billion and his writings depict that every next number is ten times which means that every next number is ten times of the previous number. His depiction proves that the discovery of zero had happened before the period of Aryabhata.

In the age of the Guptas, the Indian Mathematics spread in the world due to great mathematicians like Brahmagupta, Aryabhata, Sreedharacharya, Mahaviracharya, etc. Indian mathematician Brahmagupta in his Grantha Brahmasphutic Siddhanta defined zero as  $a-a=0$ . In his book Trishvika Shreedharacharya writes that if we add zero

to any number then there is no change in the value of the number, but if we multiply any number by zero, the product is also zero.

In the 7th century, which was the period of Brahmagupta, the concept of zero had reached Cambodia and it is known from the written documents that afterwards, the concept of zero reached China and then to the Arab world. The middle east Arab countries also knew the concept of zero from the Indian mathematicians. Finally, in the 12th century AD the zero of India reached the west--Europe.

The division of zero by any non-zero number is zero. After 500 years, Bhaskaracharya said that any non-zero number divided by zero gives the result infinite and he explained it as well. The addition or subtraction to infinity gives infinite or in other words, it does not make any difference. The zero India in the Arab word was called Sifr and was called zero in English.

**-Mr. Laxman Bhandari**

After working so hard, I finally got into one of the finest boarding schools in India, Welham. I was anxiously waiting to join the school from the beginning of April, starting my new adventure with this school, with new teachers, new friends but it didn't happen. There were definite expectations like I will learn to be independent, focusing on my overall advancement. But due to these testing circumstances I am left with this tag of an 'Online Welhamite.' I never visited my school in its actual fashion, never got to know the school from inside out, never met my teachers. My only point of contact to the school is a screen. So tiresome, right?

**BEING AN 'ONLINE' WELHAMITE**

I often wonder when I would be able to come to school. When will I be able to make new friends? When would I meet my teachers in a classroom? Till now I don't know the answer to these questions and neither do my parents or teachers. I never realized that the Covid-19 will put me in such a fix, leaving me nowhere. Every day, I attend these online classes, online assemblies, online tutor gatherings. Till now I only know my class teacher, classmates and my tutor. Being in this petite shell sometimes disappoints me but I have accepted the reality. And I know for a fact that very soon I will be in school and the situation right now is the best it could get. I know that one day, I will come to this

I can summarize my experience at Welham with a simple phrase- 'A home away from home.' I was ecstatic when I knew that I was going to join the school, as this was going to be a completely different experience compared to any other in my schooling career. Not only was I joining a boarding school but also a school with all its students being boys. I joined Welham with a vision in my mind, a vision that could help me improve my outlook towards life and its challenges. Having said that, by challenges I don't mean any sort of challenges in studies or in other co-curricular activities, which have been my strengths throughout, but the challenges that I would face being away from a caring and supportive family.

In general, people assume that boarding schools are limited to certain stereotypical goals, like helping children succeed in academics or becoming independent, but for me, there's more to it. They are tasked with developing knowledgeable and confident youngsters who leave school equipped with the skills to succeed in whatever they choose to pursue in the future. And my foremost motive of joining such a school to inculcate such qualities within me. I was

prestigious school, make new friends and do all the things I wanted to do as a Welhamite. When I sing the school song, sometimes I feel curious what's so special with the smell of lychee trees or unity in diversity; that's because I haven't got a chance to explore the school and its values. Sometimes, I wonder how to make myself known? As neither my seniors know me, neither do my juniors. In a boarding school, one tries to establish himself and to make himself a better person. And that can only happen when the person is physically in school. In a boarding school, we make memories. We cherish them once we graduate from the school. For those, who haven't seen this institution and haven't lived in it, won't ever be able to develop these memories.

In these times, we hope that one day, we will come to school, one day we will assemble in the classroom in front of our teachers, running on the track with our batchmates and a lot more. This all has become a dream for us, for those who haven't seen the school yet. We remain an 'online Welhamite'. As the days pass we hope that one day, we will come to school.

**-Devvardhan agarwal  
VII**

supposed to be at the campus by now, engaging in a fruitful learning experience with my teachers and fellow mates but on the contrary, I am unable to mark my presence at the campus during these trying and unprecedented times. Of course, we all could've done better if we were all together, but even in dark times like these, we refused to be deterred. We embraced this new way of life as a challenge. I believe we will definitely come back with multiplied strength and determination to achieve whatever we want.

The situation has changed our way of living life, not the spirit to live it. Looking forward to meeting all my esteemed teachers and seeing all my friends soon!

**-Darshan Jain  
XI**

## The Web of Information

With today's technology, we have a different era to stay updated. We have Mass Media (further referred to as MM) and Citizen Journalism (further referred to as CJ). MM is composed of professional reporters who publish data via wide distribution such as newspapers, television and radio. On the other hand, CJ is composed of individuals who report information and opine on what they witness firsthand. But how do they differ in reporting the same news? The motive of this article is to compare and contrast the treatment of the media under the same subject. First of all, we will look at the reliability of each media, then at the objectivity and subjectivity of the speaker, and, ultimately, at the content of the media.

The information from MM appears to be more accurate than the information from the CJ. In many cases, information from MM is based on verified and highly trustworthy sources, an example of which is The Gazette (a public publication which has been authorized to publish public or legal notices). On the other side, CJ is partaken by an ordinary citizen who collects news from general meetings or daily events and publishes it on a blog. Since the articles we are referring to as CJ are written only by one person, which is the key feature of CJ (and even if we go on to assume that there is a team which helps the blogger) we can conclude that the authenticity is not as robust as the source of MM. Furthermore, some studies indicate that MM uses more interviews and show the source of information to a greater extent as compared with CJ. Most articles constituting MM, report descriptions of general meetings or descriptions of special events. It is not the same with the CJ. Some writers do not hesitate to give their views, and some choose to stick only to the truth. Both are, at large, is heavily adulterated with opinions and personal biases, but MM usually ensures that the reader is aware that they are reading an opinionated piece. While MM may not be more reliable than MM, it is still more objective in whatever it wishes to project.

It has also been observed that MM is more structured and formalised than CJ. Furthermore, while the information put forward is not breaking news in all of the articles, it is still up to date in all of them. Because most of the articles part of CJ are daily journals, we cannot reasonably infer that CJ is attempting to vilify one party and celebrating the other. Concludingly, each form of media, MM and CJ, has its strengths and weaknesses. The benefit of CJ is that the writers might present something that MM's editorial board doesn't approve of. But on the other side, an author from CJ can easily be swayed by his own beliefs and culture. And which side we want to rely on totally depends on our understanding of the issue.

**-Rakshit Khurana  
IX**

## Fear: The Staircase to Heights

As per my opinion, every person has some fears within themselves. This is normal and alarming at the same point. I believe fear is linked to the mental health of a person and it has many variations, for example, small kids have spectrophobia and their insecurity strikes every time they are alone. Stage fright is also a pretty good example.

There is a solution to every problem; it just needs good execution. There are several ways through which one can overcome his fear, but the first thing is that we need to recognize when fears become terrifying. You may experience anxiety when you ride a bike for the first time or when you start a new job. However, when fears begin to take control of your life and affect your functioning, they become a problem. If your worries feel upsetting, the distress from the fear can interfere with your ability to function and you may experience intense anxiety or constant nervousness. Reflect on your fears and notice how much they affect your life. Fear is something or some kind of feeling in which the more you chase it, the earlier it will run away.

If you have the guts, then you can overcome your fear very quickly but it is never about guts; fear is something everyone should have. It is not about eradicating the fear or covering it, it is about accepting that very fear and striving with all your heart to overcome it.

The most critical and common problem with most of the people is that they have a fear of their fear. They are scared of the exposure of their phobia to their friends and family. One reason might be that people always make fun of someone's insecurity or someone's fear, which I don't think is a healthy way to have a conversation. These are the very reasons for hiding those fears.

Thus, sadly, instead of accepting our insecurities, we hide them.

**-Dhruv Jain  
IX**

## A Toast to Seniors

Welham is a legacy boarding school, by that I mean that there are certain traditions that every generation in the school follows. It has been a year since I have been part of this incredible family, so, I don't have much to say about this school, although the experiences until this moment have nevertheless been remarkable. My first day at Welham Boys' School was not so fabulous because most of the time I was just dreaming of being separated from my parents but now I look back and see this as a sacrifice that I had to make to achieve something for myself.

I never knew that seniors played such a tremendous role in our boarding life until I mixed with them; they were helpful for me in every way, eventually shaped me to be a better 'Welhamite', The best part was that they didn't give up on me. They told me about their stories, their experiences, their hard times in school; which enlightened me about the world that lay beyond the demarcated, protected portions of school life and it helped me a lot to shape my opinion.

But now when I am away from school, it's easy to see what effect the school has on me. I am away from my batchmates, seniors, teachers. I miss those days, when I brushed my teeth, washed my face and hurriedly got dressed for school? Whenever I went there, I got to know my classmates, who were pretty good to me. I got to admire my seniors from afar, they made me feel better about this new schooling experience. I was a bit shy to express myself but after a little "Welham" style of ice-breaking, it didn't take me time to open up. I was easily able to adapt to my classmates. I also made new friends.

Ma'am Bindra also played a big part in helping me settle in school. She helped me gain the confidence to open up. And I did; interacting with my batchmates, forging a bond with them. I felt inspired by my seniors and I hope that someday I will also provide the same kind of support with the same spirit to my juniors. I don't know if I will be able to succeed but I will try my best to be a good senior.

**-Siddharta Patro (IX)**

## VE'R'SES

I am big! It's the picture that got small.

Two Poems. One Heading. You Be The Judge And Jury

People think I'm small,  
But actually it's my picture that is small.  
I'm bigger than you have ever thought of,  
But how do I prove it?  
With my picture being so small.

Don't look at the picture,  
Just look at real me,  
Then you will understand,  
It's the picture that is small.

The closed ones know what I am,  
And what I am suffering through,  
Thank you for not abandoning me,  
Due to my picture being so small.

If you still don't believe me,  
Then just challenge me,  
I'll show you what I am truly made of,  
Then you will not denounce me,  
Because of my picture being small.

Now I think you understand me,  
Being aware of what I truly can be,  
I don't care what my picture says,  
Because I truly know,  
I am big! It's the picture that is small.

**-Rakshit Khurana  
IX**

Back there, in the garage  
There are pieces of me  
Which I wish I could  
Carry along with me, till eternity.

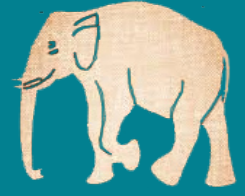
I still remember  
How I longed to reignite those embers,  
and on the first day of the breaks, he came  
back from the army, with new timber.

"I'm big! It's the picture that got small"  
He would always say while sharing the pictures  
When people mocked him, I thought of my stature  
"You'll make me proud son." He would say.  
His warm words and embrace always made me  
smile.

The beaches we've gone to together  
The camping and the swinging  
The late-night ice cream  
Things with which mom always disagreed.

One day he had gone to the border and  
journeyed to granny  
Now that I realize what it was all about  
the time we spent together will always be golden  
Because his warmth kept my embers burning.

**- Viraj Mahajan  
XI**



# Rising Intelligentsia

## Gratuitous Chaos

A law meant to uplift a certain community or group must take into account the background and history of that particular group in order to have the desired effect. One would think that is common sense. Shallow laws would either lack proper implementation or go on to trigger protests. In any bill therefore, details are of essence. Unfortunately, the 2020 farm reforms have failed to meet this criteria. As the major stakeholders, farmers are clearly not satisfied with the provisions introduced. Even more worrisome is the fact that the three acts have perturbed state governments and households across the country. The Central Government insists that the reforms shall prove advantageous for farmers at large. Which begs the question- why is this decision not positively affecting farmers, despite the good intent behind it? Perhaps, more importantly, how is misinformation and the dearth of awareness paving a path for unnecessary chaos?

As a group, farmers have always been oppressed, be it the erstwhile zamindari system or feudal dues. The rule of inheritance has resulted in the allocation of very little land to the plethora of farmers in our country. This has limited any major development and led to exploitation by unlicensed traders. To curb this, the Mandi system was introduced along with Agricultural Produce Market Committees which allowed the Government to meddle and eliminate unfair trade. In this system, traders are allowed to offer their prices at mandis which gives farmers various options to choose from and a chance to negotiate for lower costs. However, due to uneven distribution of these mandis and illicit practices followed by traders, this set-up has failed to protect farmers. The Farmers' Produce Trade and Commerce bill is meant to reverse the above by allowing farmers to trade directly with people outside their own states. This is beneficial as it allows farmers to expand

their circle of buyers and eliminates the cut of income that went to the 'mandis', hence removing middlemen. But a bigger loophole arises when we take into account factors like education and experience. Farmers who are illiterate will easily be exploited by traders as they do not possess the power to negotiate. This bill has naively reverted agricultural trade to an older system without any external regulation.

The Farmers( empowerment and protection) agreement of price assurance and farm services bill has a similar drawback. It promotes contract farming where prices are fixed at the beginning of the year. But there exists no check against any breaches by the companies or exploitation of unaware and uneducated farmers. The responsibility of dispute redressal has been given to the sub divisional magistrate, who barely has time to resolve petty conflicts and is also not professionally meant to engage in dispute redressal. Furthermore, small farmers are ignored in this system as large companies require produce in bulk. In some ways, mandis assure protection for farmers because they require special qualifications for people to become traders and have an immediate payment system. On the other hand, anyone with a PAN card can be a trader in the newer system with a three day credit period. This adds an element of uncertainty which has led to widespread skepticism and criticism. Some state governments, as well, are disapproving of the action as mandis majorly contribute to their revenue. To sum up, both these bills ignore certain elements of a farmer's life. The bone of contention still remains the lack of education and failure of collective price fixing -things that haven't been addressed at all. Another amendment has been made to the essential commodities act under these reforms. Essential commodities are items whose price and supply is regulated by the Government. For oilseeds,

pulses, cereals, onions, potato etc, the initially existing stocking limit has been removed. It has also prompted an increase in the prices of these items, thus, helping increase the income of farmers. For households, on the contrary, this increase in price of essential commodities and the danger of hoarding has sparked concern. Thus, these three reforms have affected various sections of society without intending to do so. As far as farmers are concerned, the main objective seems to be income based and not actual education of trading or commerce.

Which brings to me the latter part of this discussion. Why aren't the flaws of these bills being corrected through feedback from farmers and instead triggering violent protests? Why aren't the positives being highlighted to the same extent as the negatives? I would say because of misinformation and needless glorification. This brings to surface an even more perturbing issue- that of irrational thought and propaganda. Most farmers who are protesting do not even understand the pros and cons of the reforms listed above. The root cause of this outrage is something as trivial as a baseless hunch that the Government might remove Minimum Support Price (MSP). For a total of 23 items, the Government buys produce from small farmers, at a minimum cost and stores it as a buffer. Since mandis are no longer directly involved in trade, people fear that the Government might remove this practice despite there being no such indication. A petty assumption, and a rather illogical one at that, has fuelled a crisis during an ongoing pandemic.

That is the state of our country, and all so because of the gullibility of the uneducated. In the case of Haryana and Punjab, where protests are massive, the State Government is itself provoking farmers to rebel, since it gets a majority of its revenue from the Mandi system. Statistically, only 6% of farmers are given the MSP because the Government cannot buy from everyone, which means that most people are protesting without a valid reason. The belief that contract farming will strip people off their rights has led to these reforms being termed 'black laws.' This is a clear indicator of how society barely analyses the boons and banes of something before arriving at a decision; it endangers the whole idea of democracy and constructive criticism. Some would say that the responsibility of educating citizens and increasing awareness is of the Government itself and I wholeheartedly agree that it is. However, this endless exchange between provocation, gullibility and outrage will not stop unless there is

communication between different communities and those who make laws for these communities. Platforms like the Farmers Produce Organisations should be encouraged so that they can unite and present their side of the deal. Unfortunately, this essential part of democracy has gone missing in our country. All in all, the farm reforms have thrown light on a multitude of existing problems, which will endure even after this pandemic- if not remedied immediately.

-Arnav Goel  
X



India is a secular and democratic country, and is referred to as an example of 'Unity in Diversity'. But is this as real as we are told in schools? Unfortunately, the truth is far from reality. In Indian Politics, religion has always played a significant role and even after repeatedly calling ourselves a secular nation, it's use in politics is extremely common and mostly unobjectionable.

In my opinion, religion should not be represented in politics because when people vote for someone on the basis of their social identity and not for their manifesto, it creates a threat to development and secularism. Many times, in Indian Politics, politicians have tried to create vote banks with their radical speeches which incite hate between religious communities. Sadly, they have been successful with this strategy. For example, some politicians promise to abolish secularism and make people believe that their religion is in danger. The people have been made to believe that the only way to save their faith is to practise hate online and in real life.

Now, these politicians have started propagating their agenda online by demonising certain communities. For example, they claim that some ad about jewelry propagates 'love jihad' and they have initiated a call to boycott Tanishq. Another instance of the same social media outrage occurred when Netflix released a limited series, 'A Suitable Boy' which is based on a Novel by Vikram Seth. It portrays a love story of a Muslim man, and a Hindu woman, which society doesn't permit in that era. Unfortunately, people and some politicians were outraged about it normalising 'Love Jihad'. In this case, it has nothing to do with Love Jihad, but inciting hate through social media is a common practice in our nation. So, outrage was tweeted, calls for boycotts echoed, just as expected. But for what? Just for showing communal harmony between two religions.

People were also outraged by a consensual kissing scene shown in a temple which has been termed as 'Hinduphobic'. I don't think this is wrong in a secular democracy, but for politicians, it's just a way to incite people. As expected, political IT cells played a significant role in this outrage and found an excellent opportunity to incite hate and increase their vote bank. This is not the first time such illogical outrage has taken place, this is just one example and there are lots of them. This creates divisions between different communities, leads to extremism and in the long run, it might even account for violence.

Surprisingly, education is not an essential factor for applying to stand in the elections, but clean records are. What we see these days is that most politicians don't have degrees and furthermore, the majority of them have criminal cases going on in court. Most of these cases are about hate speech, inciting violence, causing riots, murders and even rapes. In my opinion, basic education should be a necessary qualification one must possess in order to contest for elected office. This is because an illiterate person cannot be expected to talk about development. Such a person's rhetoric will be based on the environment in which they have grown up in and try to rile up their base with minimal effort. In most cases, both of these parameters are fulfilled by religion.

It is regrettable that some governments focus on religious issues more than developmental issues. For example, in Uttar Pradesh, a state that is in desperate need of development, the Government is instead focused on passing laws such as the recent religious ordinance laws. Still, when it comes to execution, these laws are used for separating interfaith couples and as a secular Indian, I find this atrocious. How can a country claim to be secular when even love has a religion?

To conclude, I believe that religion should not be represented in politics, as it is mostly a publicity stunt. It is constantly used as a conduit for spreading communal hatred among people by trying to create outrage within them, with divisive speeches or tweets. Unfortunately, this strategy works and Indians must realise that it's time for us to unite and prevent such negativity and hatred from infecting all of us.

**-Pranay Singh Dhaka**  
**IX**

Since the inception of democracy the foundation of the Indian political system was based on religion. The development of this country has reached this point because of this very factor; we vote for leaders who think of a better future for the country and in a land of diversity like India, development cannot be set on such a vague premise. When we plan of any advancement we have to keep in mind the cultural settings and norms of different communities because as a secular state it has to be based for all and it could offend many communities if not followed. To be precise enough, let us jump into the scenario when the Government was about to launch social distancing regulation; they had to keep in mind how cultural weddings or devotees at temples, mosques or churches, etc. would be managed.

This very connection between religion and politics also grants equality and an identity to a person of every creed. If we look back and compare it with today, Dalits or the lower caste community has attained the height of equality or is still fighting in some places. because there are people who them and empower them. These are dynamics where a political party helps and gives voice to an oppressed community, this may be considered as an ulterior motive by leaders just to make vote banks but at the end of the day that community is still helped and reaches the point of equality.

This brings up the concept of egalitarianism. If the representation of religion ceases to exist in politics, people's pride and identity would be lost and equal rights for some would forever be a myth. Let us take an example of what the Chinese Government is trying to do to their minority, Uyghur Muslims--Xinjiang, where nearly 10 million Uighurs and a few other Muslim minorities live. The Government has implemented repressive policies from the banning of certain Muslim names for babies to chilling reports

of torture in so-called "reeducation" camps where hundreds of thousands have been detained and even stripping away their right to privacy from their lives. These human rights violations by China is an attempt of cultural genocide. The system in China has failed to acknowledge vast religious communities, on the other hand a voice is given to every community in India because of the role of religion in politics. This very function helps every community to have a stand and this development further helps for the betterment of the society. Our governing foundation has to be on religion because of our societal structuring.

Even though religion is exploited by many people and scenarios of extremism come up every now and then, these cases are few in number compared to how the system actually works. We cannot just believe that a whole system is wrong just because of a few wrongs. Religious expression extends beyond politics. If a person connects with his fellow people more because they belong to the same religion or creed, it would be better for the society because as the representative of the state one should be able to understand people's issues. Although everything has its ups and downs, we become better as we outfox our past every day.

**-Trayambak Pathak**  
**IX**

# Lasagna

## Separated at Birth

Viraj Mahajan	Silencer (3 Idiots)
Kartik Tripathi and KT Ma'am	Rahul Gandhi and Sonia Gandhi
Samanyu Raj Malik	Lalu Prasad Yadav
Bhavya Goyal	Vaibhav Pandey (Kota Factory)
Instagram	Online Classes

## What's In

---
Network issues
The I.T. Department
Nostalgia about school
Mr Raunaq Datta

## What's Out

Power of one, pockets of time ...
Hospital chits
The Sports Department
Gossiping about school
Mr Justin Burrett

## RUMOUR HAS IT

Puneet Sir, the new Ganga-B House Master, has been frequently calling Mr Laxman Bhandari. Shikhar is the perfect arena for a game of catch the flag. (Ganga 11th would know)

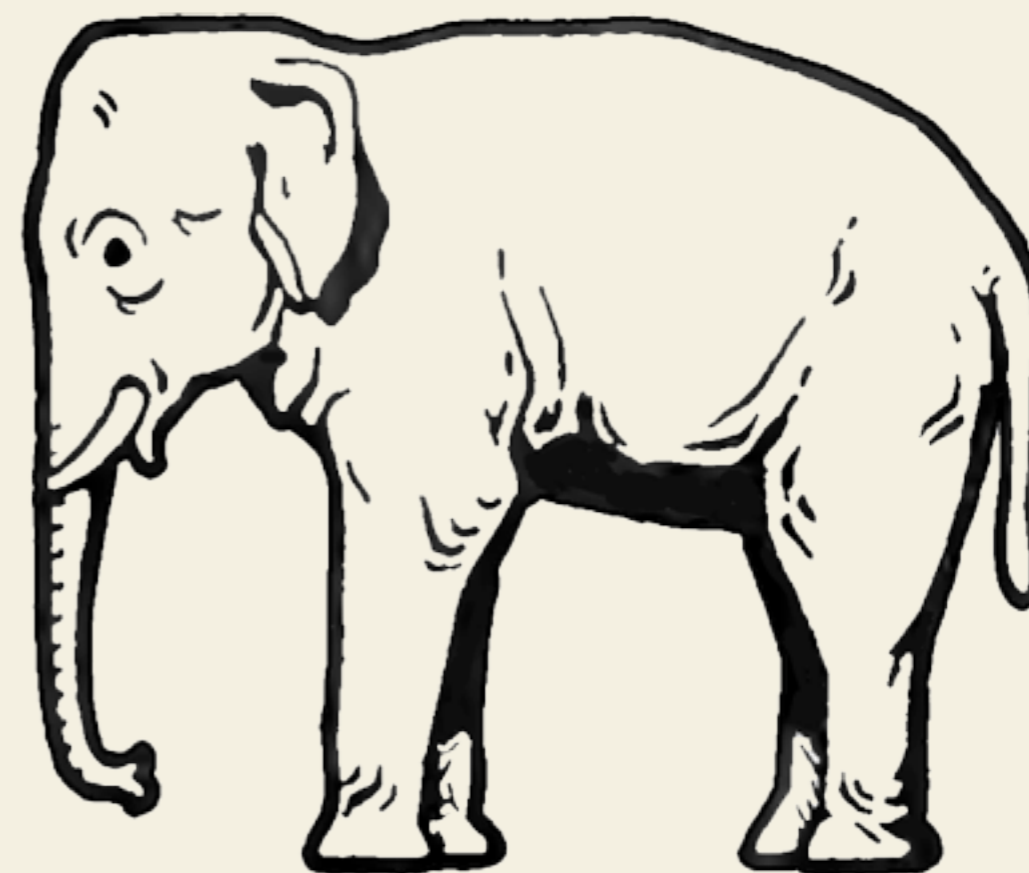
The school is about to install 'Sophos' in every student's computer to curb usage of other sites during online classes.

Higher fences are being added to the walls to limit outside interaction. (We sure have some slippery ones)

## Through The Keyhole

JK sir to someone wearing (GAP)- It's good to see that you are maintaining social distancing.

Puneet Sir to GRADE X- Guys, please do not study IT, it doesn't even count on your mark sheet. (The truth is surely a bitter pill)



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