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Ruia Library Must Reads

Credits



Editorial

Dearest readers,

Happy new year! As we step into the promising dawn of 2024, I extend my warmest wishes to each of you. May this year be abundant with laughter, good health, and prosperity!

This month, Buzz Around discusses a security breach in the Indian Parliament and the introduction and passage of three bills aimed at amending and modernising India's legal system. Behind the scenes explores the inherent transgressiveness of art, its political nature, and the ongoing debate about separating the art from the artist. It emphasises how art, unencumbered by the need to be liked, serves the crucial purpose of conveying honesty and holding a mirror to the world.

Careerwise invites us into the realms of criminal, forensic, and consumer psychology. These fields lay bare the delicate dance of choices, human behaviour, and the human psyche. The narratives of Open Forum navigate parallel universes, where lines blur across multiple worlds, entwined in themes of love & escapism. Fictionally Yours captures the pulse of after-parties— New Year's Eve gatherings and rooftop parties, where shared memories linger beneath starry skies.

In Insight, we turn our gaze to the profound world of aesthetics, questioning conformity in fashion and urging caution against losing the authenticity nestled within predefined labels. A parallel exploration in Tech Tricked gracefully navigates the evolution of timekeeping devices, drawing parallels between the fluidity of time and the delicate balance between art and its commercialization.

With Safarnama, embark on a journey to the Himalayas and feel the crisp air of Kedarkantha and Brahmatal. Meanwhile,, Sahityangan's poem encapsulates the essence of unfulfilled commitments, portraying the timeless struggle of human resolve against the ticking clock.

May this edition resonate within your hearts, sparking curiosity, provoking profound thoughts, and fostering connections. Here's to a year of exploration, boundless empathy, and shared journeys!

Love,

Swabhi



BHARTIYA NYAYA SANHITA OR TRUCKERS PROTEST?

Ayuj Menda | SYBA

5 minutes read

The Parliament of India is the living spirit of Indian Polity, where lawmakers give quirky comments, thunderous speeches, and several motions that aim to repel or amend any constitutional provisions.... Meanwhile, on the Other hand, Unions and Opposition that maintain checks & balances within the wheels of government machinery, start strikes and protests that are against oppressive laws, mass agitations against Private entities, etc.

The Indian Penal Code of 1860, Code of Criminal Procedure 1973, and Indian Evidence Act of 1872 are pillars of Indian Law and Judiciary. Some of the famous provisions of IPC sections and clauses remembered by judges and advocates such as Section 120 B (Criminal conspiracy), Section 132 (Mutiny), Section 503 (Defamation), etc. IPC, CRPC, and Indian Evidences Act have been part of our Country's legal system for 77 years, but they set their own set of problems, whether their provisions were written by colonial masters and not by our legal luminaries, their clauses remain un–updated or un–amended by governments.

The Minister of Home Affairs, Amit Shah proposed 3 Bills: Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, Bharatiya Suraksha Sanhita, and Bharatiya Sakshya on December 11th, this idea was drafted by the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Home Affairs and discussed with various stakeholders, Officials, and secretariat of Minister of Home Affairs and Law & Justice, domain experts, etc, that published its report to propose the change of IPC, CRPC and Indian Evidences Act.

While introducing the bills, Home Minister Amit Shah said the soul of these three new laws will be to protect all the rights given by the Constitution to the citizens. British-era laws were made to strengthen and protect their rule and their purpose was to punish, not to give justice," With the new bills, which will replace the CRPC, proposal of 533 Sections, change of 169 Sections, repealing 9 Sections, etc. Around the same time, Amit Shah proposed bills that also have a clear definition of terrorism, scrap the sedition act as a crime, punishing Mob lynching, etc. In the halls of Rajya Sabha, nominated MP Mahesh Jethmalani, stated in a comedic way that by implementing these new bills, we will miss Section 420 which is imprinted in our minds and has also been part of Bollywood. "These new bills must ring new chances for the new generation, it has and I welcome it".

On the date of 21st December 2023, Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, Bharatiya Suraksha Sanhita, and Bharatiya Sakshya have been passed by both houses of the parliament and received the assent of President of India Droupadi Murmu. However, on January 1st, truck drivers across India announced 1 Month Strike against provisions of Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita 2023.

Most drivers of trucks, buses, and oil tankers staged demonstrations and blocked roads across the states of Maharashtra, Punjab, Haryana, and Madhya Pradesh which led to automobile fuel shortages. The Demonstrations and Protests were against the new Hit and Run Provisions: Section 106/2 that if a truck driver flees an accident spot or fails to report the incident to the authorities, the truck driver would face a jail term of up to 10 years or ₹7 lahks fine, erstwhile the IPC provision on punishment was 2 years for this offence. The nation went panic buying and several incidents occurred that went viral including a viral video of an IAS Bureaucrat remarking "Aukaat" while having a discussion on grievances by truck drivers on Section 106/2.

The Protest was called off after Ministry of Home Affairs Secretary Ajay Bhalla had a meeting with All India Motors Transport Association to end nationwide truck drivers and assured that new laws haven't been implemented yet and will be in full force after consultation with the AIMTC union. Readers, would read how foundations of unions and association are necessary for lobbying and Pressure Groups when it comes to new legislation, and how the Union government accepted this mistake then clarified the provisions, the point to note is that the Opposition of the Lok Tantra didn't actually point out the loopholes of new Bills nor consulted with learned counsel or even discuss the Bill provisions on the Parliament floor. N.D.A government's new Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, Bharatiya Suraksha Sanhita, and Bharatiya Sakshya Bills aim to bring a change within our Legal and Judicial System. However, , implementing its provisions and its sections will take a long time, it needs to be fully adapted by the Bar Councils, courts of procedure, Judicial Officers, practising Attorneys and stakeholders too.



PARLIAMENT BREACH EXPOSES SECURITY GAPS

Swaral Salwankar | TYBA

3 minutes read



On the 22nd anniversary of the 2001 Parliament attack, the Indian Parliament encountered a significant security breach on December 13. During Zero Hour, two individuals, Sagar Sharma and Manoranjan, leapt into the Lok Sabha chamber from the visitors' gallery. They released yellow gas from canisters and vocalised antigovernment slogans. Members of Parliament present in the Lok Sabha, the lower house of the Indian Parliament, promptly subdued and overpowered the intruders.

Outside the Parliament, two individuals named Neelam and Anmol were protesting against the government. They possessed gas canisters similar to the ones used during the security breach inside the Parliament. Lalit Jha was identified as the primary mastermind behind the breach of Parliament security. All five individuals, including Sagar Sharma and Manoranjan, are under the custody of the Delhi Police.

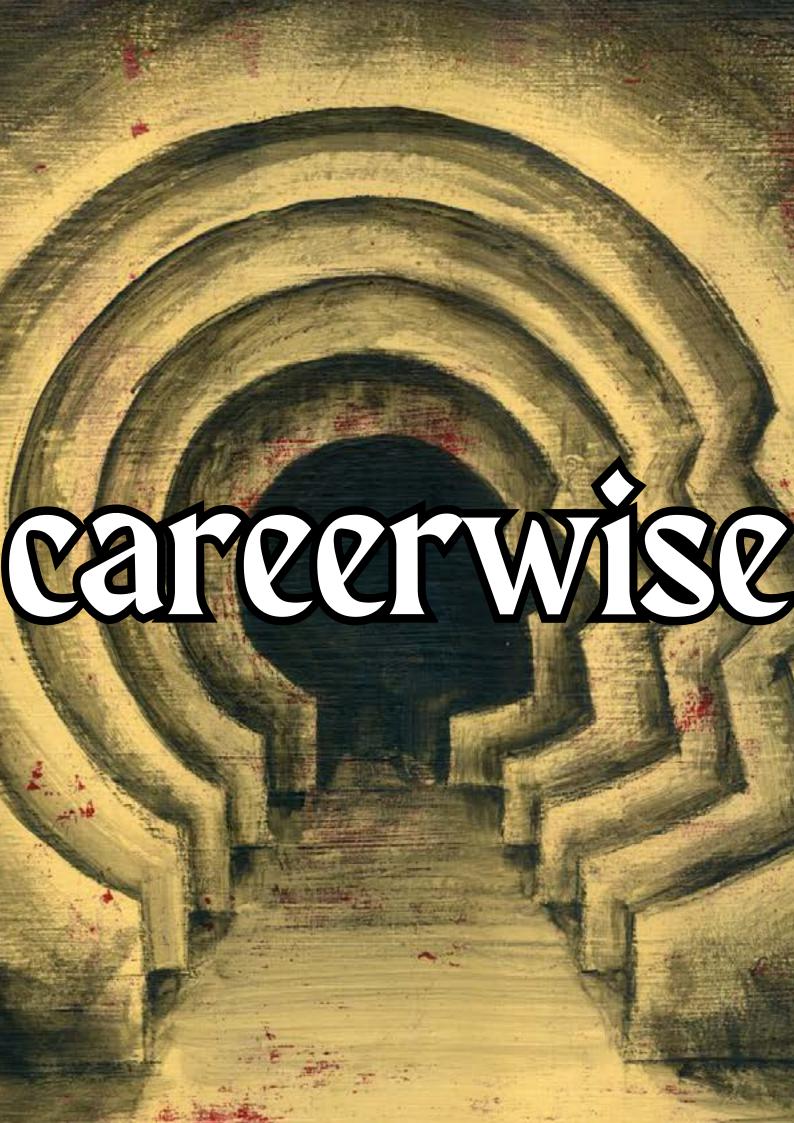
The breach of Parliament security is not only a serious incident in itself but also prompts challenging inquiries into the overall security protocols across India's critical infrastructure, including nuclear power installations. It serves as a stark illustration of security lapses and a failure to strictly adhere to established rules and regulations. This is particularly noteworthy given reports that the Indian government had implemented stringent measures in response to the 2001 Parliament attack. The incident also raises concerns about the effectiveness of security practices and highlights the need for a comprehensive reevaluation and reinforcement of security measures across vital national infrastructure.

Despite the incident proving to be harmless, it must be regarded as a serious oversight rather than being dismissed. It highlights the vulnerability of the multi-tier security system in place for the new parliamentary complex, necessitating a real-time investigation, decisive action against those responsible, and a thorough review to address any weaknesses.

Initially, it would have been appropriate for the Union home minister to proactively address the parliament, acknowledging responsibility for the failure without reservation. While the government asserts that the Speaker of the House is responsible for security, and he has already issued a statement, this stance is insufficient. The incident should be viewed as a matter of national disgrace, warranting direct intervention by the government.

The suspension of opposition Members of Parliament who were seeking answers regarding the security breach for the remainder of the Parliament session is a concerning approach. This action needs to augur better for open dialogue and transparency. It raises questions about the government's commitment to accountability and undermines the democratic principle of allowing elected representatives to voice concerns and seek clarifications on critical issues.

Regrettably, the prevailing culture of security in India appears to be lacking, especially concerning critical infrastructure. While this specific security breach may be perceived primarily as a political embarrassment, it underscores the persistent gaps in India's efforts to safeguard its crucial infrastructure. Incidents like these highlight ongoing deficiencies in the security framework, indicating the need for comprehensive improvements and a more robust approach to protect vital national assets. Addressing these issues is crucial to fortify the resilience and security of the nation's critical infrastructure.

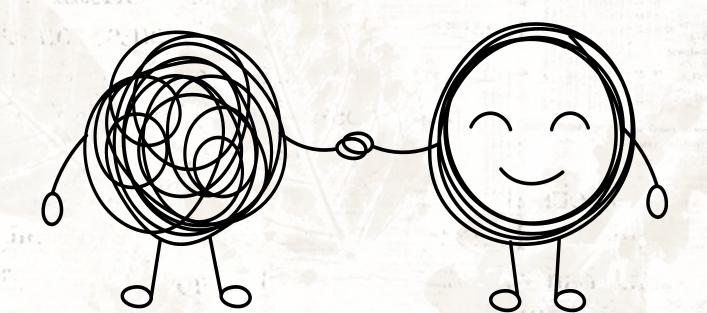


CRIMINAL PSYCHOLOGIST

Varada Vaishampayan | SYJC 5 minutes read

Every person, good or bad, white-collared or criminal, acts in a certain way due to some external or internal factors, and this study of behaviors is intriguing. Psychology, as a field which studies the behavior and mental processes of the mind, has numerous branches, Criminal Psychology being one of them. Criminal Psychology aims to study the factors which may influence a criminal's mind, their intentions and motives behind committing a crime, creating a profile of criminals, and attempting to prevent criminal behavior in future.

For a career in criminal psychology, typically a Bachelor's degree in Psychology or Criminology, a Master's Degree in Criminal Psychology, and a Ph.D. are required. Some Universities in India, as well as in the USA, UK, etc. offer these courses. Individuals should have proficiency in Abnormal Psychology, Forensic assessment, Research and Ethics. Internships, a license valid in the state you wish to work, and proper training are the ladder to reach the top. The job of a criminal psychologist is dynamic, as it covers both psychological and criminal/judicial aspects. A criminal psychologist attempts to study not only the causes but also the effects of crime. While creating a profile of criminals, the psychologist is required to study the criminal's background, early life, struggles, family life and personal life to find clues about his personality, find patterns in his behavior, and can also refer to similar behavior of other criminals to make predictions. They can be asked to accompany law enforcement officials to the actual crime scenes to find clues suggestive of the identity of a criminal, and help the officials narrow down the suspects, find evidence for a specific pattern, and also provide testimony in courts based on their analysis of the case. They can also work in criminal rehabilitation centers, undertaking the counseling of criminals, and should also be able to interact with victims with empathy and compassion, providing them with a sense of comfort.



Criminal Psychologists can work for local, state, or central government, law enforcement departments, or remain self-employed, or can even teach criminal psychology as a professor in colleges and universities. The field involves facing gory, gloom, and the overall dark side of humanity daily, and hence, individuals aspiring to be criminal psychologists must be mentally strong, expert in managing their as well as others' emotions, adept in communication skills, and should have sharp and clear analytical thinking, and problem-solving abilities, should be intuitive and patient. Generally, the salary of a criminal psychologist depends upon the country and organization they are working for, but as the field is rising, it gives around 8 lakhs salary per year for an entry-level.

As the popular saying goes, "No one is born a criminal; it is the circumstances that make one so." Nobody is completely good or bad, everybody has a light and dark side within them. Criminals are after all humans, and hence, it is important to understand why these humans opted to act with their dark side. Criminal Psychology aims to understand the causes of criminal behavior, use them to prevent further crimes, and bring criminals back to the path of humanity and peace.



FORENSIC PSYCHOLOGY: WHERE CURIOSITY MEETS INVESTIGATION

Samarth Sawant | FYBSc 5 minutes read

Right from the brilliant mindset of Dr. Salunkhe in C.I.D. to the gripping narratives of 'Criminal Minds', a dedicated fanbase has driven the inquisitive minds of young individuals into the riveting realm of 'Forensics'. Running parallel with the fascinating psychological thrillers as an all-time favourite genre amongst these intellectual minds illuminates the path towards an unexplored career. This month we'll be embarking on our odyssey through the illustrious career trajectory of 'Forensic Psychology'.

Forensic Psychology is a field which has been obtained by the compilation of two professions, i.e. Forensics and Psychology. It can be defined as a field involving forensic applications over the activities within the legal arena. As a practitioner in this field, you are expected to connect the complex human behavioural dots obtained by counselling victims and criminals, and conducting human and criminal behavioural research, thus further providing clarity of concepts to the court of law and enforcement agencies. To enter this field, you are minimally expected to complete your bachelor's degree in Psychology, Forensic Psychology or Criminal Justice (3-4 years) OR complete a master's degree in Forensic Psychology OR earn a Doctoral degree under the specialised field of Psychology of child abuse, law and ethics. Within the matters of judiciary, most forensic psychologists have a consulted doctorate.

However, in addition to these academic scrolls, there's a need for certain indispensable human skill sets. 'Critical thinking' for evaluating the scenarios from a legal perspective by providing quick and unbiased decisions, 'Communication Skills' to interact with different individuals, and establish a connection by listening to their personal perspectives, 'Attention to detail' by analyzing body language along with verbal and non-verbal cues, 'Following ethics' to grant access to confidential information and protect the identity of their subjects, 'Writing reports and articles' and 'Objectivity' for approaching each case without any biases, prejudices and emotional feelings. Sometimes you would also be expected to act as a witness to provide testimony during court proceedings, identify counterfeit's triggers, help victims cope with post-traumatic stress, work on convict's rehabilitation plans or counsel children in child abuse and child custody cases. Speaking of the salary, it may range anywhere from around 2 lakhs to 5 lakhs or more per annum in India, also depending upon work experience, geographical locations, type of cases and area of expertise.







Through TV and films, the work of 'Forensic Psychologist' has often been sensationalized. It becomes crucial for them to synchronize with the daily digest of the latest human behavioral and cognitive patterns. Though being an underrated career, it shines a broad spectrum of roles beneath its casual name. Indeed, without a Forensic Psychologist, the Court of Criminal Justice would fall apart. Your passion for unraveling mysteries and deciphering the intricacies of the human mind would foster a safer and more just society. The canvas here is vast with life-changing challenges and immeasurable rewards from society. If your interests sync with the career traits, embrace the calling of 'Forensic Psychology' and become a beacon of insight in the pursuit of truth and justice.



CONSUMER PSYCHOLOGIST

Gayatri Subramanian | TYBA 5 minutes read

Have you ever wondered why people buy some products and not others? Or how do advertisements influence people's buying choices? If the answer to these questions is yes, then let's look at this new profession, consumer psychology. Consumer psychology is a specialized area that studies how our thoughts, beliefs, emotions, and perceptions affect the way we buy or interact with goods and services. It is the study of individuals, groups, or organizations and the processes they use to select, secure, use, and dispose of products, services, experiences, or ideas to meet their needs, as well as the impact these processes have on consumers and society. Consumer psychologists are studying the influence of the decision-making process, social persuasion, and motivation on why consumers buy certain things but not others. Consumer psychologists are using their research to help businesses market their products and services to customers in ways that encourage them to make purchases.

To begin a career as a consumer psychologist, the most essential prerequisite is to have a bachelor's degree in the field of psychology. This degree would provide the foundation required for the future. After completing your graduation, you can pursue a master's degree that has consumer psychology as one of its core subjects. The most popular degree options are an MA in Industrial Psychology and an MBA. Both of these courses have consumer psychology as one of their subjects. The MBA, however, needs to be in a field allied with consumer psychology, such as marketing. While in India there aren't many colleges that offer consumer psychology as a specialization, you can always try abroad colleges and universities as they offer specialized courses for consumer psychology. Upon completion of your MA or MBA, you can work in academia and go for a PhD, or you can look for a job in the corporate market. In the job market, consumer psychologists are usually hired by marketing and advertising companies.



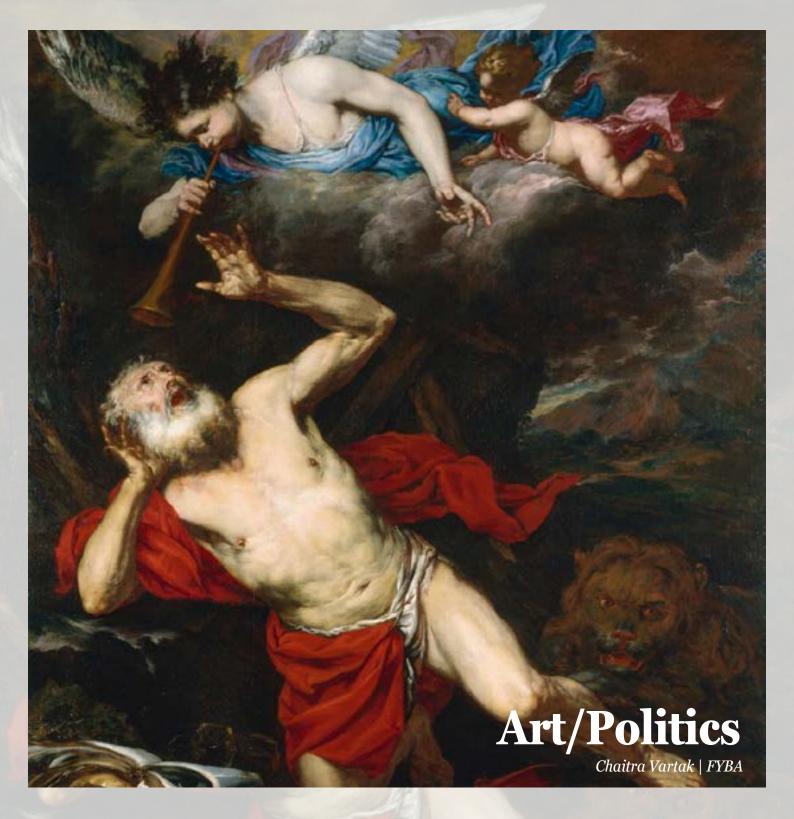
They are mainly assigned to perform research-related activities, understand the market, and develop products accordingly. They are quite useful in almost every sector and industry because they understand the market from the consumer's point of view and not the producer's point of view. For instance, consumer psychologists may help understand how people from a particular culture understand a particular product and why they react to it in that particular way. This helps the firm get to know its target audience better and tailor their products as per their needs, thus increasing sales and profits. Since consumer psychology is a developing field in India, the salary per annum ranges around 25 lakhs. If you are to work abroad, both the scope and the salary will increase.

In the business world, the demand for consumer psychologists is expected to increase as, with the fast-paced growth of the economy, everybody aims to earn profits and be the best in the market. If you think that understanding the market from the microscopic point of view of a consumer and developing strategies to attract them to the buyer is something that interests you, then consumer psychology is the right field for you.









At its core, art has always been transgressive. It does the impossible – it captures human thought, feeling, and perception; gracefully, and sometimes awkwardly, it encapsulates snippets of the human experience. It attempts—and often succeeds—in fulfilling our most fundamental need to feel understood, and in this, it also often says what we cannot. And as expressive as it is, art conveys meaning to those who know where to seek it.

For ages, art has been used as a medium, just as regular conversation is, and for as long as it has existed, art has been political.

Everything is politics, they say. From the clothes we wear to the food we eat to the very thoughts we have, it is completely influenced (and to some degree also originates from) politics. And it is not only world politics—it is politics on the smallest level: hierarchies in the state of affairs, sociocultural differences, even sartorial choices. Every time we make a choice, we play a move in the convoluted game of hundred-something-dimensional chess that is politics. So this transgression of choice (in what some call the "illusion" of choice) is made on a daily basis



by each and every one of us—but then why is it so vastly different when an artist does the same with their craft?

The answer is simple, yet not. It is simple in the sense that artists are instructed and expected to "stay in their lane", which presumably refers to creating art without making any choices, or rather, radical choices. 'Making something uncomplicated' seems to be the general consensus on the meaning of this statement whenever it is thrown about. The un-simple answer is layered.

Art has influence—and most imperatively, it has influence over the influential as well as the common people. It shakes the system up and puts emphasis on moral and political issues.

The Vulture and the Little Girl, a photograph by Kevin Carter, captures a starving child collapsed in the foreground with a vulture waiting for them in the back. It is a striking picture that ignited many a conversation about not just the famine in Sudan, but also about our perception of other people's pain. In her essay Regarding the Pain of Others, Susan Sontag wrote that, "the only people with the right to look at images of suffering of this extreme order are those who could do something to alleviate it ... or those who could learn from it. The rest of us are voyeurs, whether or not we mean to be." Political and moral discourse ensued, and even today, it remains an important conversation.

Take, for example, stand-up comedy. One could argue that the basic premise of stand-up is to package political or moral opinions affably to create maximum impact, or even to shed light on ignorance or bigotry. The current discussion raging around the Golden Globes monologue by Jo Koy is an example of just how much dust any art can kick up. In this case, of course, the Barbie movie is the art in question as well as the stand up monologue. Jo Koy's comments are a reflection of the insensitivity that the Barbie movie was literally made to fight against. The movie, with its utilisation of satire, has depicted an eons-long reality that has caused lasting impacts on our social, political, and personal lives.

Banksy's Flower Thrower from 2003 is a great example of paintings and their political messaging. The artwork depicts a man bombing a place with flowers in his fist, instead of a bomb; it is reminiscent of a riot, and alludes to the Jerusalem gay parade incidents.

Art is, was, and always will remain political. As a form of expression completely unencumbered by any obligation to be liked, art has the unique ability to truly say whatever it means. Being appreciated or liked is simply a by-product—the true purpose of it is honesty. It is meant to convey exactly what the artist means, and artists are in the business of holding a mirror up to the world; everyone can't always see what they'd like.

Toni Morrison once said, "The best art is political and you ought to be able to make it unquestionably political and irrevocably beautiful at the same time." There is no better way to describe the role of art in the world today; it is bound by only the requirement of being true.

Because if art is not true, there will be no honesty left in the world. There is enough lying already—politics has made sure of that.



A few weeks ago, Taylor Swift's Eras tour became the highest-grossing tour ever. The singer's massive influence is undeniable and this is just one of the plethora of records she's broken over the years. One such record, albeit one that didn't attract as much attention, was that of her becoming the biggest celebrity CO2 polluter at one point in 2022. Her multi-million dollar private jets had emitted over 8,250 tonnes of carbon dioxide by August 2022, nearly 1200 times more than the average person's total annual emissions. Unsurprisingly, the news quickly went viral, and mixed responses poured in. Some jumped straight to her defense, questioning why she was singled out and why there was more outrage towards her than towards corporations that do much worse. Some criticised her, continuing to listen to her music nevertheless. And then there were those who swore never to stream her songs again, refusing to support an artist who wasn't environmentally conscious.

In all these responses, one thing was observably common: people saw Taylor Swift and her music as two distinct entities, and they chose to 'stan' or shun her primarily via her music itself. Their decisions in response to the

pollution accusations against her shed light on an increasingly talked about phenomenon: the separation of the art from the artist.

With the advent of social media and more recently, cancel culture, it has become easy to expose celebrities for their wrongdoings and hold them accountable for their views and actions. What has become complicated, however, is the choice we have to make: Should we simply continue to consume the work of such people?

The content we indulge in undoubtedly has an impact on us, and it is no secret that we often have a special emotional connection with a certain movie or a book, and so on. But what happens when the person associated with that work, who profoundly influenced our relationship with it, turns out to be an extremely problematic individual in reality? Can we simply sever our attachment to it and immediately let go of something that meant so much to us?

It is in these situations that many choose to separate the art from the artist. That is, their opinion of the person's work is separate from their scorn for the person's views/actions. Now increasingly cited with reference to pop culture, the 'separation of the art and the artist' actually originated as a method of literary criticism. A tool used by 20th century New Critics, it was based on the principle that a work of art must be interpreted as it is, without trying to establish a connection between the artist's life and their work. This age-old debate of whether an artist's character has, or rather whether we should let it have, a bearing on the art itself has surfaced repeatedly in an era that has seen a deluge of public figures exposed for their vices. Be it academia, cinema, sports or the performing arts, 'consumers' in every field have been time and again left in an ethical dilemma.

What, then, is the right thing to do in such a situation?

Should we directly boycott such people and cease to consume their work, in order to give them less spotlight? Doesn't this, however, amount to shutting out a whole of work in a way that would hinder our development too?

Alternatively, should we let our consumption remain unchanged, compensating for it through ample (and valid) criticism of the wrongdoers? Isn't this stance, however, a convenient choice stemming from a position of privilege, and rather unjust for the victims?

There is no blanket approach to this. Whether something is acceptable to us is determined by our individual moral compass and by the degree of the 'crime'. As clichéd as it may sound, we cannot choose what we love, and this applies to art too. What matters regardless is the need for accountability at both ends. Whether it's J.K.Rowling (transphobia) or R.Kelly (sexual assault), the accused have faced varying extents of legal action, professional ramifications and social ostracisation. As conscious consumers, we must ensure that we don't end up being complicit in someone's wrongdoings by engaging with their work. Perhaps, rather idealistically, we must neither let them profit off their work nor grant them the privilege of slipping into silence and living in peace.

All said and done, the choice of separating the art from the artist is undoubtedly complicated. The beauty of a work or the ugliness behind it — which one outweighs the other?

Insight

–Aesthetics & Consumerism-



The Illusion of 'Aesthetic'

Siddhi Nawar | TYBA

6 minute read

Fashion thrives on individualism. It prizes creativity and a part of themselves that the individual brings to each piece of clothing that they make—it is anti—conformist. In a technical sense, Clothes are supposed to be the finished products that we purchase to style—trousers, denims, dresses, jackets. But what makes them more, is the piece of you that you add to each clothing that you own. While clothes are still just clothes—simple fragments of garments organised in a particular harmony; They are also raw materials that blend to create the person that you wish to portray. So to speak, the person who puts clothing apparel together with technique and precision makes them a finished product. What I love about it particularly, is that there are no rules to this technique—the only rule is to be yourself. The anti–conformity that fashion offers is the reason why people choose to express themselves loudly through it. It has always been an integral part of how movements are led, voices are heard and opinions are delivered.

On the contrary, the aesthetic culture which is on the rise today, urges us to hold our idea of fashion in boxes. What's ironic, is the fact that the term 'Aesthetic' didn't even begin the way we perceive it to be today. The term came forth in the 18th century and was developed as the philosophical study of beauty and taste. There have arisen multiple arguments over the principles of aesthetics as a field of study, particularly over the judgement of beauty and art.

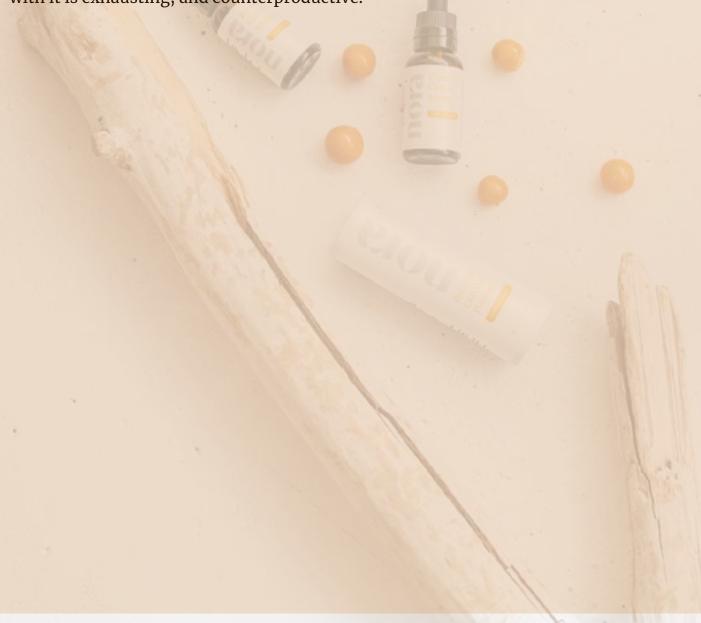
The same questions arise over the validity of the following of certain aesthetic trends fostered by online platforms to be considered appreciable today.

While a certain aesthetic curated on your Pinterest board looks like just the perfect vibe you would want to go for, there is also a certain level of conformity that comes with it. You could be obsessed with dark clothes, eyeliners and silver jewellery, and might get categorised as simply being a goth. The chase for the pursuit of the perfect aesthetic, to establish an image of yourself that perfectly aligns with the image you wish to portray can often be a hoax, as it ultimately caters to the American trend of fast fashion. It strays away from originality and capitalises on the vibe that a person would want to feel.

It's also important to note that the development of Aesthetics isn't inherently bad. It presents an array of choices to present yourself to the world, a curated list of the persons you could want to be at the moment. The problems arise with the lack of authenticity and individuality it can offer to human beings, who feel much more than just a category of style at a time. Moreover, its effects are exacerbated by capitalist fashion companies that fixate on the individuality created through style and mood boards. There is nothing wrong with dressing a certain way because it makes you feel good about yourself.

The focal point of this argument lies in the trend of rising consumerism- the high production of monotonous fashion trends that are fervently savoured by teen and young adult consumers.

It creates a set mindset that if you want to look like an e-girl, a soft boho-chic, dark Y2K or even simply minimalistic in your appearance, then there's a certain aesthetic board you should consult. This culture has created pressure among the masses to live up to a certain standard to look a certain way- the pressure to purchase the right clothes, the right makeup or the right skincare routine. Brands and fashion companies become just the right predators for this mindset, and often, even offer clothing apparel based on categories of what aesthetic you would opt for. The 'right' here focuses less on the individual's personal needs and choices, and more on the broadly marketed social trend of products. The fact that even something called a nomakeup look has to have makeup involved in it, goes on to show how online platforms and influencer culture have made us more aware of how we are perceived. For a society and a time that cheers its audiences for authenticity and the courage to present yourself the way you are, the craze behind aesthetic culture and keeping up with it is exhausting, and counterproductive.



A Quest for Self in a World of Commercialized Beauty

Kshiti S | TYBA 13 minute read

In today's world, "aesthetics" reign supreme, captivating influencers, brands, and even our inner circles. From the cosy charm of cottage core to the nostalgia of Y2K, from the chic allure of downtown to the intellectual aura of dark academia, aesthetics define our style, permeating every aspect of our lives from clothing to decor and beyond. They're not just about what we wear or how we live in our spaces; they shape our tastes in movies and music.

It's only natural to gravitate toward certain "aesthetics" that resonate with us. They reflect our moods, our aspirations, and our sense of self-expression. They invite us to explore new facets of our identity and to express ourselves in ways we might not have considered before.

However, there's a fine line between embracing an aesthetic and losing ourselves in it. Sometimes, in our quest for authenticity or trendiness, we can become consumed by the pursuit of a certain aesthetic, forgetting that it's just one aspect of who we are.

We've all been there, haven't we? Captivated by the carefully curated images and videos of people living out these mesmerizing aesthetics on our favourite social media platforms. It's like a spark igniting within us, imagining ourselves immersed in lives that seem so beautiful, romantic, and utterly captivating. And so, we embark on a quest to embody these aesthetics ourselves, eagerly scouring online stores for the perfect makeup, clothes, and accessories that promise to transform us into living embodiments of these digital dreams. We convince ourselves that if we look the part on the outside, the rest of our lives will surely follow suit.

I'll be the first to admit, I've fallen prey to the allure of practically every aesthetic out there at least once. I've meticulously curated my wardrobe, accessories, and makeup to match these aesthetic ideals simply because they felt like "me" at that moment. But I've also felt stifled by them. There were times when I stumbled upon items I genuinely loved, only to question whether they truly belonged in my prescribed aesthetic box. And I'm not alone. For many, these aesthetics have caused confusion and even distress, as they struggle to fit themselves neatly into these predefined categories or find themselves drawn to elements from various aesthetics, blurring the lines of their sense of self.

In essence, while aesthetics are often celebrated as descriptors of personal style, they can inadvertently hinder our journey towards self-discovery and authenticity. They impose boundaries and expectations that may not align with who we truly are or who we aspire to be. And in doing so, they can overshadow the nuanced complexities of our individuality, pushing us further away from embracing our true selves. Our sense of self is far too multifaceted to be confined to a single aesthetic label.

Aesthetics, at their core, revolve around the concept of beauty. While my earlier description primarily focused on how aesthetics manifest in personal style and taste, the broader definition encompasses the appreciation and pursuit of beauty in various forms.

Historically, aesthetics were closely linked to the realm of art. During the latter half of the 19th century, the Aesthetic Movement emerged as a significant cultural and artistic force. This movement, which originated in Britain, sought to challenge the rigid conventions of Victorian society and championed the idea of "art for art's sake."

The Aesthetic Movement wasn't just confined to the realm of fine art; it permeated all aspects of life, including music, literature, interior design, and fashion. At its core, the movement celebrated the pursuit of beauty, self-expression, and individuality over the moral expectations and stifling conformity of Victorian society.

Before this period, artworks often served as vehicles for conveying societal, political, religious, and moral messages. However, the Aesthetes sought to liberate art from these utilitarian purposes, advocating for its appreciation purely on aesthetic grounds.

The mantra of "art for art's sake" encapsulated their desire to divorce art from moral or didactic agendas, allowing it to be appreciated solely for its beauty and expressive qualities. This shift marked a significant departure from traditional artistic norms and paved the way for new forms of creative expression and exploration.

In essence, aesthetics, as exemplified by the Aesthetic Movement, represents a celebration of beauty, self-expression, and the inherent value of art itself. They challenge us to reconsider our notions of beauty and to appreciate the richness and diversity of human creativity.

The Aesthetic Movement of the late 19th century was not only a quest for self-expression but also a fixation on beauty. Its proponents advocated for the idea that life should imitate art, asserting that every aspect of our existence should be imbued with beauty. This movement emerged as a rebellion against the materialistic ethos of the Industrial Revolution, striving to break free from the mechanical mass production of goods and return to a more vibrant, humanistic way of living.

In many ways, the spirit of aestheticism persists today, echoing the same principles championed by its predecessors. It celebrates self-expression and the pursuit of life's simple pleasures while remaining captivated by the allure of beauty. Across online platforms, various aesthetics idealize beauty in myriad forms, presenting curated images of the perfect outfit, flawless makeup, and impeccable hair. Even moments that appear messy, with smudged eyeliner or lipstick stains on a coffee cup, are portrayed as inherently beautiful, perpetuating the notion that everything, even our imperfections, must exude beauty.

However, it's also a romanticized portrayal of life. When we encounter these images and videos, we're transported into a world where we envision ourselves frolicking through meadows, our hair dancing in the breeze as our dress billows around us.

We're drawn to the warm embrace of the morning sun streaming through the window, casting a golden glow upon the mirror perched on the windowsill.

In essence, the modern manifestation of aestheticism intertwines our longing for beauty with a romanticized vision of existence. It invites us to immerse ourselves in a world where every moment is infused with pleasure, where even the most mundane aspects of life become enchanting vignettes worthy of admiration and emulation. Yet, amidst the allure of these aesthetic ideals, it's important to remember that true beauty lies not only in perfection but also in the authenticity of our experiences and the depth of our connections with the world around us.

It's fascinating how much of the content we encounter revolves around images of life itself. These visuals highlight the more pleasing moments, yet they all portray aspects of living. From running through meadows and enjoying picnics to grabbing coffee with friends, browsing bookstores, and waking up with smudged makeup from the night before, these When we see these images, we're not just thinking, "I wish I looked like that." Sure, that thought might cross our minds, but there's also a deeper longing—perhaps, "If I looked like that, maybe my life would mirror what I see." It's about more than just physical appearance; it's about the lifestyle these aesthetics represent. Unfortunately, companies are keenly aware of this.

I can't help but wonder if "aesthetics" would be as troublesome as a concept if it weren't for the commercialization surrounding them. Today, the word isn't merely a category of things we like; it also perpetuates beauty standards, largely driven by corporate interests. They market products promising to fulfil our longing to embody a certain "aesthetic" lifestyle, knowing full well that we'll eagerly buy into the illusion. While social media platforms do play a role in perpetuating societal beauty norms by bombarding us with content, they're not the sole culprits.

This is where the darker side of marketing reveals itself—the exploitation of our desires to fit in and establish our identities. Brands and the media capitalize on our vulnerabilities, selling images capture the essence of existence. While they certainly idealize physical beauty, they also focus on the experiences and lifestyles associated with them. us the idea that a particular lip gloss or fashion accessory will transport us into the realms of the "desi girl life" or the "2000s IT Girl life." It's marketing at its most cunning and manipulative, preying on our aspirations and insecurities to turn a profit.

While it's easy to point fingers solely at social media, we must acknowledge the larger role that corporations play in perpetuating these ideals. By ignoring this aspect of the problem, we fail to address the root causes of the issues surrounding aesthetics and beauty standards in today's society.

The internet age can feel both empowering and dehumanizing simultaneously. While it provides unparalleled access to information and connectivity, it also fosters a sense of detachment and depersonalization. In this context, one wonders if modern aesthetics serve as a reaction to the dehumanization of the internet age.

Reflecting on the Aesthetic Movement of the 19th century, it becomes apparent that there are parallels between that era and our own. However, modern aesthetics differ in their nature; they are less about rebellion and more about a yearning for authenticity. In a world increasingly dominated by technology, social media, and artificial intelligence, there's a palpable longing to reconnect with the essence of being human.

Companies, recognizing this longing, don't just sell products—they sell experiences and identities. We crave a sense of belonging and purpose in a digitized world, and they capitalize on this by offering fleeting moments of joy wrapped in the veneer of physical acceptance.

While modern aesthetics may offer a semblance of comfort and identity in an increasingly digital world, they also remind us of the inherent complexity and richness of the human experience. It's through embracing this complexity that we can truly reclaim our humanity.

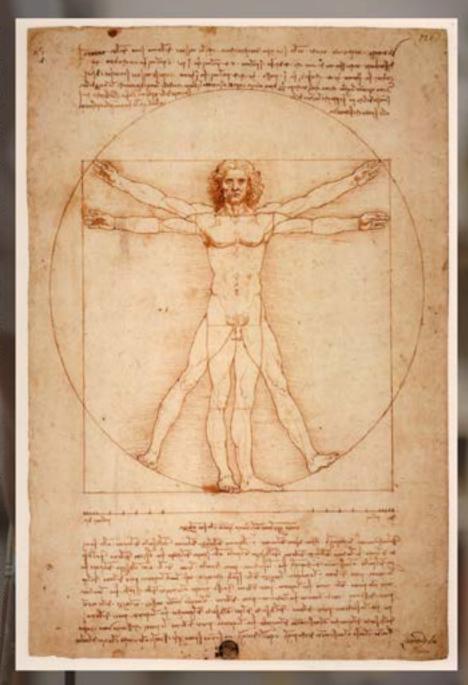
When we strive to embody aesthetically pleasing lifestyles, we risk reducing ourselves to mere physical manifestations. Human beings are infinitely complex, layered with contradictions and nuances that defy easy categorization. Our role isn't to neatly package ourselves or make sense of it all; it's simply to experience the full spectrum of human existence—the good, the bad, and everything in between.

OP-ED ART UNDER CAPITALISM

What is art? This has been the top question among philosophers for centuries! The good news is that in the puzzling cultural realm, art has no boundaries. Over the years, a multitude of its definitions have evolved tremendously. However, we can underline its essence as a way of communicating emotions, exploring people's minds and challenging boundaries.

Swaral Salwankar | TYBA Adavya Atri | TYBA Mrunal Rajadhyaksha | TYBA Aditi Singh | TYBSc Gauri Sarvankar | FYBA Leonardo Da Vinci's famous 'Vitruvian Man', strikes me as an exceptional creation every time I go back to it. It gives me the notion, contrary to many that science and art go beyond verbal explanation.

The commercialization of art in today's era has shifted its focus from a form of creative portrayal to a market product. We can agree on the fact that artistic creations have been in the commodity bracket for ages. But these days creativity is handcuffed to market value. Artists often find themselves conforming to the norms of the supply-demand loop which essentially dilutes their



actual talent. Genuine expression and exploration of the intricacies have been overshadowed by the trending chase.

On the flip side, art is unrestricted, right? It is an integral part of our everevolving society. Presently, commodification dictates its trajectory. But history is proof that this dynamic will shift or adopt an entirely new guise in the future. Those seeking something extraordinary will be disappointed if they assess the secrets or interpretations of art based on the time invested in its making. After all, art is a representation of current perspectives;, not a cryptic treasure hunt, with hidden messages waiting to be deciphered and an elusive emerald to be found.



The peculiarities of film as art stem from the fact that their initial production was predicated on their value as technological novelties. Unlike poetry or paintings, film was first and foremost conceived as a product, as a clarion call announcing the future of technology. The works of the Lumiere Brothers attest to this; they were essentially bare recordings with minimal artistry involved; the work was primarily a technological showcase. Film as developed later with its incorporation into culture as a viable method of storytelling. Cinema achieved merit as a creative art with the rise of Surrealist Cinema (see Luis Bunuel's collaborations with Salvador Dali) in the 1920s, coupled with the assimilation of technological advances into set design and camera work.

Despite the development of cinema as art, Theodore Adorno and Max Horkheimer were sceptical of the form. In their groundbreaking essay "The Culture Industry", they delineate the restrictiveness of cinema as an art form; according to them, the play of imagery and its attachment with sounds fetters the capacity of cinema to be truly fluid. Furthermore, to them, cinema serves as a tool of ideology; an apparatus that absorbs the viewer into its consumerist ideology. Their scepticism of the artistic potential of cinema has been contravened by the truly magnificent progress cinema has made as an artistic medium. However, their initial fears about the restrictive and anti-thought nature of cinema have, to a large extent, been vindicated. As they feared, modern cinema has devolved into a list of easily recognisable symbols that reiterated in different forms; symbols that ultimately resound and reverberate the ideological checkpoints. same conflation with entertainment has sapped the creative energy out of mainstream films. Cinema is reduced to a distraction, and as a result, its value as a creative, provocative and emotive medium has been liquidated.

BOOKS AS COMMODITIES:

Books, traditionally revered as vessels of knowledge and portals to different worlds, have transformed in the modern era, often being viewed through the lens of commerce. While their intrinsic value as sources of information, entertainment, and cultural preservation remains indisputable, books have also become commodities in the global marketplace.

In the realm of commerce, books are subject to the forces of supply and demand, with publishers, distributors, and retailers treating them as tradable goods. The commodification of books has led to a thriving industry where literary works are produced, marketed, and consumed in ways akin to other consumer products. Motivated by profit, publishers carefully select manuscripts based on market trends, potential sales, and commercial viability. This economic calculus has implications for diverse voices and ideas that find representation in the literary landscape. In this commodified landscape, bestseller lists, book reviews, and marketing strategies play crucial roles in influencing consumer choices.

The success of a book is often measured not only by its literary merit but also by its market performance. As a result, authors may face pressure to conform to popular trends and genres, potentially compromising artistic expression for commercial success.

Publishing conglomerates, driven by profit motives, sometimes engage in practices such as franchise-driven book series, celebrity-authored titles, and tie-ins with popular media, contributing to a commercialised environment. While these endeavours may boost sales, critics argue that they dilute the artistic integrity of the literature and undermine the pursuit of original, groundbreaking works. Moreover, the commodification of books raises accessibility concerns. As books become commodities, their prices may rise, potentially limiting access to knowledge culture for economically and disadvantaged individuals. This phenomenon prompts discussions about the ethical dimensions of turning intellectual and creative endeavours into profit-driven enterprises.

MUSIC AS A COMMODITY:

Music has been, from the beginning of time, universally adored. Humans find rhythm, beauty and song everywhere around them. As the understanding of rhythm became more refined, music became increasingly entertaining and eventually, addictive. Artists like Elvis Presley, The Beatles, Nirvana, Queen, and Eminem redefined music and kept the world hooked, leaving fans twisting and turning from withdrawal for their newest album, the newest persona they'd chosen to adopt, ready to embrace a musical revolution. We observe a very similar case even today with artists such as Taylor Swift, Lana Del Rey, Harry Styles and so on. But somewhere along the way, the industry started seeing the general formula present in all these songs that were amassing immense popularity. If producing music a certain way, incorporating unanimously adored themes and having a face that looks pretty on a poster parading that music around is getting money, why try and be authentic? Authenticity isn't going to pay the rent.

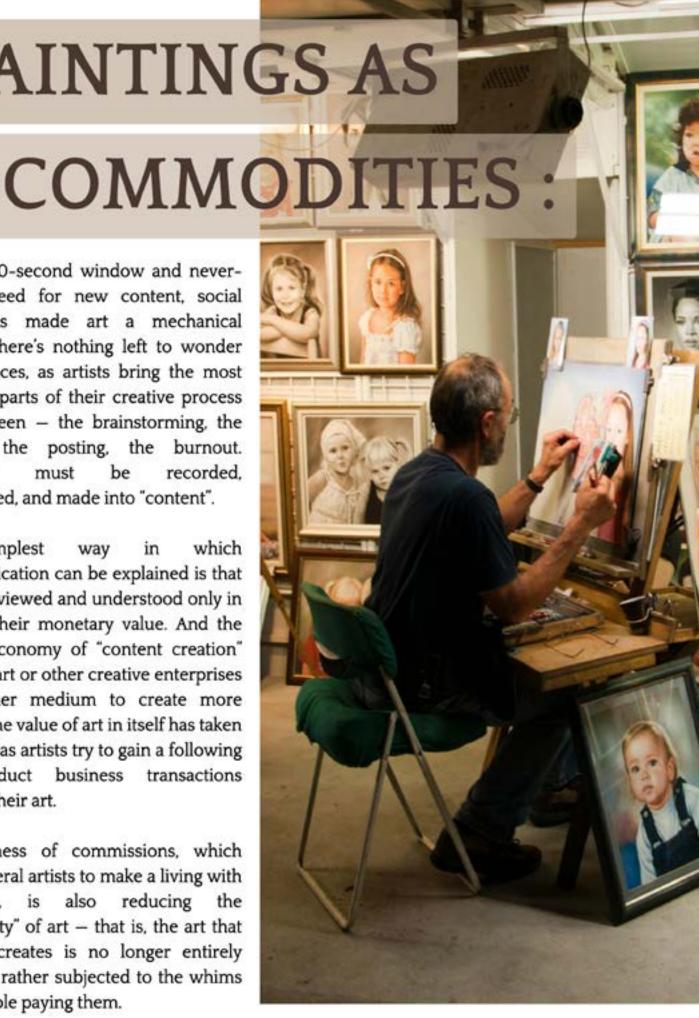
In an interview with the RTL Talkshow, Ed Sheeran himself explained how one could sing just about any pop song with 4 simple chords. A revelation like that provides insight into how the industry thinks. Authenticity has now become a lost cause in the industry, that fails, and what sells and tops charts is what prevails. How exactly did the world go from Lesley Gore, Celine Dion, and Lana Del Rey to the Ice Spices that we see today? Something that is too unrestrained or failing to adhere to the 'formula' gets shoved aside to make way for a shiny, catchy facade. Somewhere along the way, the industry swiftly replaced the question, "What moves people?" with "What sells?". The waves of unbridled authenticity and piercingly meaningful music that once graced the shores of the industry are weakening as time passes.

PAINTINGS AS

With its 30-second window and neverending greed for new content, social media has made art a mechanical process. There's nothing left to wonder for audiences, as artists bring the most cherished parts of their creative process to the screen - the brainstorming, the creation, the posting, the burnout. Everything must be recorded. documented, and made into "content".

simplest The which way commodification can be explained is that things are viewed and understood only in terms of their monetary value. And the growing economy of "content creation" has made art or other creative enterprises just another medium to create more content. The value of art in itself has taken a backseat as artists try to gain a following conduct business transactions involving their art.

The business of commissions, which allows several artists to make a living with their also reducing "authenticity" of art - that is, the art that an artist creates is no longer entirely theirs, but rather subjected to the whims of the people paying them.



THE COMMODIFICATION OF GALLERY CULTURE:

Art galleries, reputed for their elegance, and grandeur, and their showing of "popular" or good" art, are perhaps the biggest contributors surrounding the commodification of art.

The art gallery is a display of the fetishism of art as a commodity. The idea of an art gallery as a place of "classy" ambience — a place that acts as an indicator of a person's economic "status" — has shifted the focus of so-called art lovers from the actual artwork placed in the gallery to the experience of walking around the gallery and pretentiously admiring art in the chase of an ideal image of the class status they aim to acquire. The typical visitor of the art gallery today is more concerned about clicking pictures and posing in front of the art — more interested, in short, in creating content than taking in the art in itself. Pop-up art galleries and "immersive experience" projected art galleries have become the latest trends, featuring "indie" artists that ultimately become invisible in the visitors' act of fetishisation.

The commodification of all forms of art has undeniably transformed the artistic landscape, influencing the creation, distribution, and consumption of artistic works. The emphasis on marketability and profitability can sometimes compromise artistic integrity, as artists may be inclined to create works that cater to popular tastes rather than exploring more challenging or unconventional themes. This commercial pressure may stifle creativity and lead to the homogenization of artistic expression, limiting the diversity and depth of the cultural landscape. Moreover, the commodification of art can contribute to the widening gap between high-profile, market-driven art and marginalized or avant-garde expressions that may struggle to find commercial success.

Striking a balance between commercial viability and artistic authenticity is crucial for maintaining a vibrant and diverse cultural environment. As society continues to grapple with the impact of commodification on art, fostering an appreciation for the intrinsic value of creative expression, alongside its economic dimensions, becomes essential to ensure the continued flourishing of the arts.





BELIEVE

Rishita Patil | TYBA

1 minute read

Mom's chirpier than usual and as beautiful as ever. She's carefully, but haphazardly, slicing the guavas for me to munch on. Her potted plants are dancing with the wafts of jasmine adorned in her hair.

He is helping me tune the guitar as the microwave dings in the kitchen. Music runs in his blood; writing runs in mine. The chipper kids are filling the streets with songs of our love. At age 9, my neighbour, an encyclopaedia with legs and the brightest star in the sky, introduced me to George's Secret Key to the Universe.

Little did he know I would filch that key and create alternative lives in universes far beyond mankind's reach, so I wouldn't have to wonder about the what-ifs every waking hour. Or perhaps that's why he got me the book. So I could believe.

Mom's beautiful as ever. She's carefully, but haphazardly, slicing the guavas for me to munch on. Her potted plants are desolate and dying like the jasmine suspended from her thinning hair.

He isn't here at all.

SILENT SCREAMS

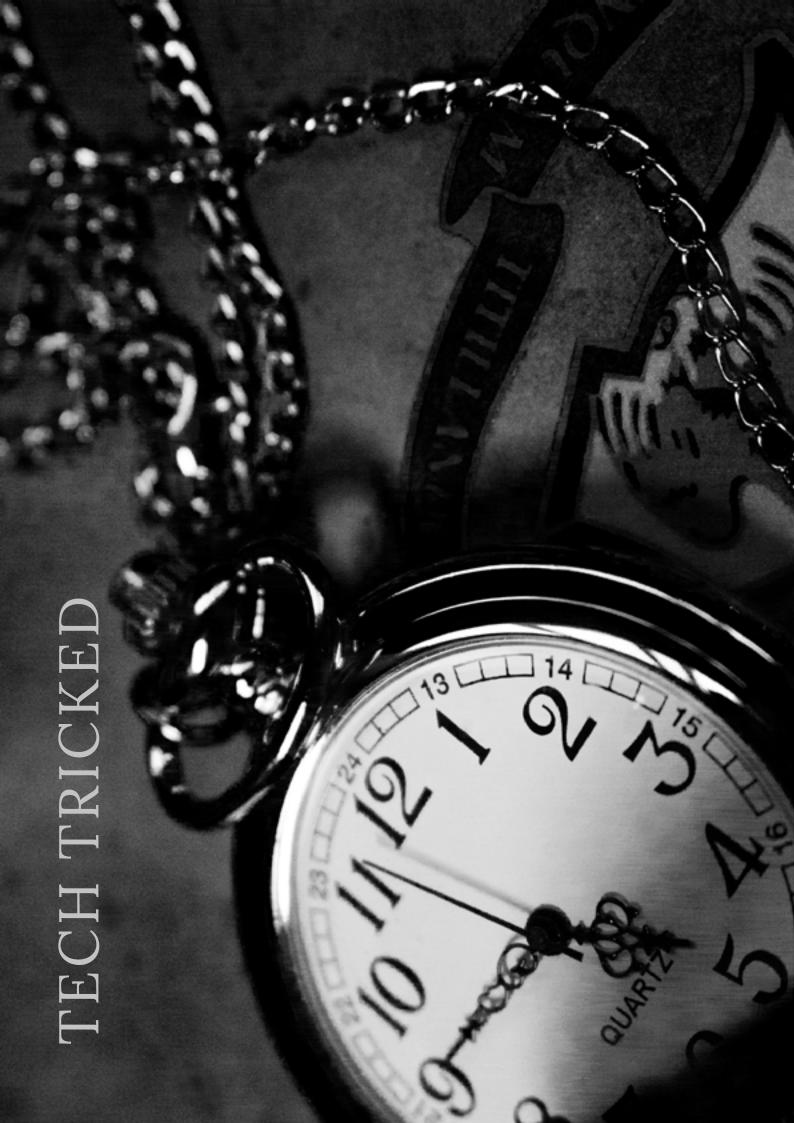
Rujula Kulkarni | TYBA 3 minutes read

Her eyes open at the sound of a car horn; she's expecting it. Her sweaty palms tighten their clutch on the gun beside her. Despite the midnight hour, she finds herself in a deep, uneasy sleep. The stale, suffocating room makes her want to gag. In this familiar position, lying on the left side of her bed, the stillness amplifies the beats of her own heart. She kicks off her heels in the empty room, questioning why she has slept with them on. A strange breeze passes, although the window is closed. Sitting upright, her fingers trace the cold surface of the empty wine bottle on her bedside. 'That's strange,' she thinks, unable to recall drinking any, yet the bottle feels oddly familiar, perhaps the reason for her deep slumber. Looking at her wine-stained baby blue sheath dress, she notices the gun in her hand, and chips of nail polish on the rim. She has been biting her nails again, a sign that something made her nervous, perhaps last night, but the details escape her memory.

The car horn repeats, and she stands up frantically, running towards the window. Her black, beady eyes scan the grassland; no one is there, let alone a car. The prairies stretch endlessly, surrendering to the blackness of the forest. It feels like a painting, visible but untouchable. Just as she is about to lose herself in thoughts, a howl echoes from the house opposite hers. Her blood pressure rises, and her throat feels dry; something ominous is approaching.

She can hear it—someone lurking beside her house, ready to harm her. "Who is it?!" she cries, gun pointed at the window, bloodshot eyes wide open. Shivering hands and cold feet, a piquant familiarity with the presence overwhelms her. She senses its hands on her, unable to recall when or how. Frustrated by the lack of clarity, her breathing quickens as she grips the gun and shoots, the loud sound surprising her.

The gun drops as she falls back, ears ringing with the piercing note. Panic fills her; trying to get up, her legs feel disfigured, bones melting away. Crawling towards the bed, her head dizzy, she cries, "I am not letting you go this time!" but slips, the wine bottle crashing, reflecting her distorted face in the moonlight. She screams hysterically; the presence has won again. Grabbing glass pieces, she pierces them into her skin, blood oozing out. Tear- stained and marked, a hollowness fills her heart. Who is it? Why couldn't she catch it? Vague memories surface—an indefinite figure trying to stab her arm, saying something unclear. Hopelessly, she gazes at the moon, reminiscent of better times. Suddenly, the moon's size strikes her; it is the same every night. Twinkling eyes turn to the cracked window as a loud thumping comes from the house opposite. The intruder isn't at her door; a man from the neighbouring house pounds on his window, blue eyes conveying a message. Panic surges as she turns, realizing the danger is behind her. Collapsing in hysteria, she hears footsteps, her shrill scream echoing. The doorknob turns, revealing the nurse. "Ma'am, are you okay?" The old woman, with broken nails tearing the bedsheet, wears an oversized blue hospital gown. The nurse, tired but sympathetic, helps her up, handling the chaos. Sirens wail; ambulances come and go. The nurse sighs, looking at the sky past midnight. The old man next door thumps his window, disturbed by her tantrums. The nurse gestures for him to sleep, taking charge of the old woman.



Mily to the graph of the state of the state

Kartiki Gole | TYBA

6 minutes to read

From the beginning to the present, time is the only thing that has remained constant. We use time as the basis of how we record life on the Earth. We organise our daily life and activities according to time. But, we never looked into how time as a concept came. How did we start to use devices to keep track of time? Time has become a precious thing in our lives where we can't own it but can use it, we can't keep it but we can spend it. So, let's dive into the concept of time and explore the science behind time.

If I ask you what time it is, you would probably look at a watch and answer me; but what if I ask you what is the science behind time? Time gives us abundant opportunities, it allows us to envision our goals, it allows us to manage our work, etc. Our world revolves around time, but what even is it? The burning curiosity leads us to understand the general definition of time: "Time is the continued sequence of existence and events that occur in an apparently irreversible succession from the past through the present into the future." Time has become an important subject of study in science but scientists have found it difficult to define it in a manner applicable to all fields without complications. In ancient Greece, some philosophers thought that time was not a reality but a concept. According to them, reality is limited to what exists in the here and now, and the past and future are unreal and imaginary. For instance, Aristotle defined time as a "number of changes with respect to the before and after." He argued that time is a measurement of change, and therefore cannot exist without some succession or change.

Even some physicists believed that time was nothing but an illusion until Albert Einstein reinterpreted the physical concept associated with time and space. He concluded that time was more like a river, flowing which depends on the effects of gravity and space-time. Thus, time was considered to be the same everywhere in the universe with all observers measuring the same time interval for any event.

Scientists have found two ways of measuring time: dynamic and atomic time. Dynamic time focuses on the motion of celestial bodies to keep track of time; the rotation of the earth, and the motion of a star across the night sky; however, we cannot rely on these methods for accuracy. The second is atomic time which relies on the energy transition within an atom of an element called caesium and a length of one second is based on atoms. Hence, time can be measured by accurately losing a tiny portion of a second in a million years.

Do you remember the Friends episode where Ross Geller counts time as "One Mississippi, two Mississippi..."? He uses the word "Mississippi" which equates to a second, stating that it is an accurate way to count how much time has passed. The atomic clocks were invented to measure time accurately so we that could elude Ross's Mississippi counts. Atomic clocks work on magnetic fields whereas modern clocks use lasers to detect energy transitions within a caesium atom to keep track of accurate time. Inside an atomic clock, caesium atoms pass through radio waves in a tube. The detector in a tube keeps track of the caesium atoms that have passed. The more finely tuned the radio wave frequency is to 9,192,631,770 cycles per second, the more caesium atoms reach the detector. The detector passes this information into radio waves, which synchronise its frequency with the number of caesium atoms striking it. At last, with a single swing of the pendulum, a second is ticked off when the frequency count is completed.

With the prime importance of time, humankind has developed the concern of keeping track of time to understand the concept of the future. Ancient civilizations have initiated a way to pay close attention to time to work accordingly, such as scheduling shipments, farming, and lunar events. We see Greeks and Romans used sundials, water clocks and obelisks to keep track of time. Among them are ancient obelisks used as the earliest shadow clocks in recorded history. Other timekeeping devices include water clocks, hourglasses and candle clocks. Hourglasses were prominent due to their accuracy and dependability.

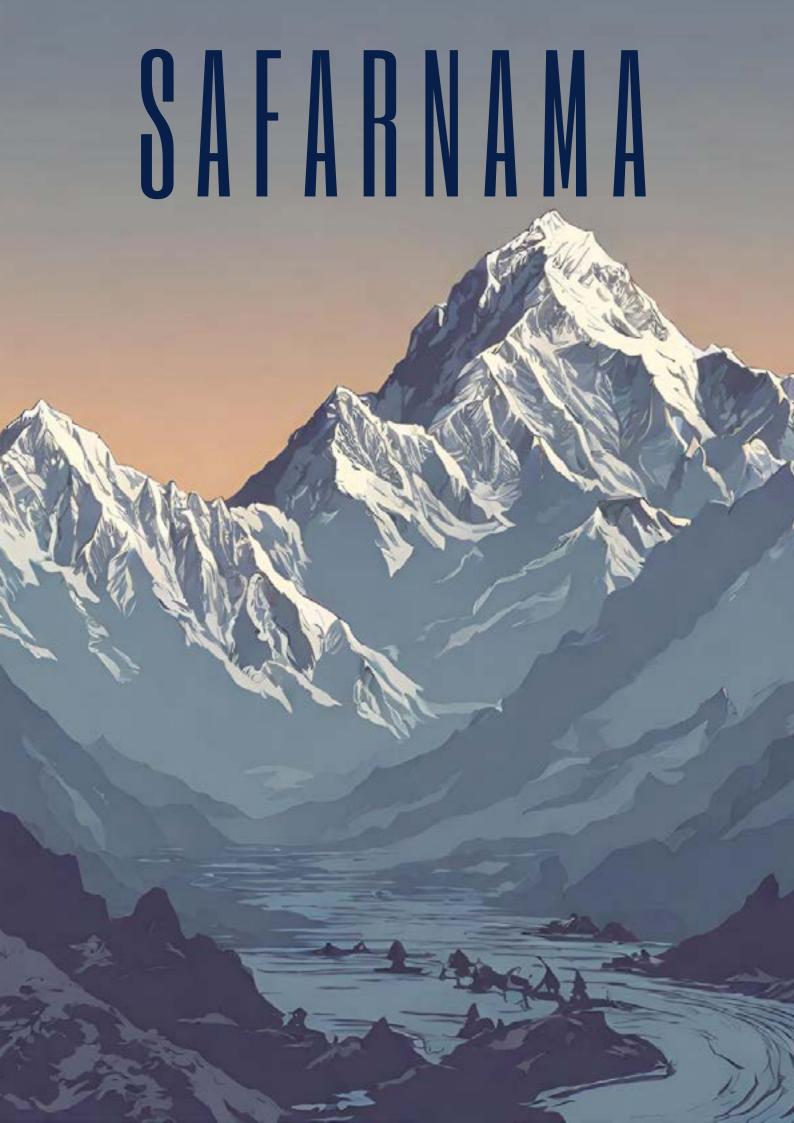
Today scientists do not have all the answers although, over the decades, they have made tremendous progress in understanding the concept of time. From ancient sundials to modern watches, we can witness the progress. Nonetheless, we are unravelling the secrets of this constant but complex thing called Time!

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HIMALAYAN WINTER TREKS-GIFT TO MANKIND

- Radha Parekh, FYJC
- 5.6 minutes

The Himalayan landscapes of India are a treat to the eyes in winter, thanks to the layer of snow that covers the large mountains like a blanket. Even the toughest trails are like a walk to paradise with the mesmerising view that it offers. Every year, thousands of enthusiasts travel to different places in India for the winter trekking experience. It is said that when you're climbing a mountain, you should pack a light heart, but no one talks about how when you complete the trek, the view that you see makes your heart full, making it heavier.

Some of the most famous winter trekking sites include Dayara Bugyal Winter Trek, Brahmatal Winter Trek, Deorital – Chandrashila Winter Trek, Kedarkantha Winter Trek of the easy levels, Sandakphu, Kuari Pass Winter Trek, Manali Kaisdhar Hike of the moderate level. Out of these, the Kedarkantha Winter Trek and Brahmatal Winter Trek attract a high number of tourists every year.

INTO THE SNOWCAPPED MOUNTAINS OF KEDARKANTHA

The trek to Kedarkantha Peak is an easy option for beginners and gives the thrill of reaching a summit. Situated in Uttarakhand, it offers stunning views of high Himalayan peaks and snow-covered forests.

Kedarkantha has some scenic campsites such as Juda ka Talab, Kedarkantha Base and Hargaon. Kedarkantha also known as Bal-Kedar has mythological connotations associated with the place.



Summit of Kedarkantha. Photo credit: Nitish Thakur

Kedarkantha

The villagers of Sankri, a place from where the trek starts, believe that the trident of Lord Shiva, erected at Kedarkantha protects them and keeps the Himalayan River replenished.

One can reach Sankri from Dehradun by bus or taxi, which offers one of the most enchanting views throughout the ride, rest for a day and start the actual trek on the next day by travelling to Juda ka Talab from Sankri. As you ascend further to the base camp, every location will offer the most spectacular views of the Himalayas. Not only the Himalayas, but the Milky Way also looks mesmerising. As you start the trek the next day, the Kedarkantha summit will look breathtaking at an altitude of 3800 metres. A small beautiful temple dedicated to lord Shiv and Parvati rises at the top of the peak along with a little temple dedicated to Lord Ganesha. The trek takes 2 hours and at the end when you are surrounded with snowcapped peaks, you'll feel that it's all worth it!



BRAHMATAL – THE POPULAR WINTER TREK

Brahmatal provides a panoramic view of the Himalayas with Mt. Trishul and Nanda Ghunti, and a bird's eye view of the majestic snow-covered Roopkund Trek. Throughout the journey of the ever-beautiful Brahmatal Trek, one looks at deep valleys that look like they hold thousands of secrets, streams that flow through the villages and have a journey of their own, conifers and oak forests that offer the darkness of pleasure one deserves. One of the best things that Brahmatal Trek has to offer is its magical colours during sunsets.

According to Hindu Mythology, the prepossessing Brahmatal is the place where the creator Lord Brahma did a serious penance. It is said that Brahma meditated here for several years. The place got its name from there.

One can travel to Kathgodam railway station and then drive to Lohanjung, which provides ecstatic views of hills and rivers. In between the oak trees, one can spend the night in Bekaltal and then travel to start the trek of Brahmatal Lake, which is at an altitude of 3400 metres. On the next day, one can trek to Brahmatal peak at the summit that provides you the most scintillating view of peaks that makes us believe that even if the journey is difficult, the view can always be great!



Campsite in Bekaltal with majestic Sunset Photo by: eUttaranchal.

As someone who has always been fascinated by both snow and mountains, these places look like must-travel destinations to me. In these places, the streams carry stories, the trees show ecstasy and the views from the peaks show how beautiful this world has been created. In a way, all the places we travel to take us one step ahead to know ourselves better. The mountains show us that no matter how many difficulties you face in the trek that is in your life, no matter how many times you feel like you're tired, you should always know that at the end, you'll experience the most beautiful thing ever, that'll give you an experience of a lifetime!



Winter Getaway - Bhutan

- Gayatri Subramanian, TYBA
- 5.9 minutes

We've always heard celebrities, or even our friends and family tell us about how they had a wonderful white Christmas in Switzerland or how they ditched the cold and spent their holidays basking in the sun on the sandy beaches of Maldives. But don't you feel the need to go somewhere quiet and fresh, and have a great time? Well, the answer to your question isn't that hard. It's none other than our beloved neighbour Bhutan!

Located in the northeastern part of the continent, Bhutan is a beautiful place in the lap of the Himalayas. The name 'Bhutan' is believed to be a transliteration of the Sanskrit phrase Bhoṭa-anta, meaning "end of Tibet," referring to the country's location near the southern end of Tibet. The exact origin of the name is unknown. Some argue that it is derived from the Sanskrit word 'Bhu-uttan' meaning 'high land,' which is also relevant considering the country's physical geography, dominated by steep mountains and swift rivers.

Reaching Bhutan is an exciting experience as many cities across the nation offer different modes of transport for you to choose from. Direct flights to and from our international airport in Paro connect you to Bagdogra, Guwahati, Kolkata and New Delhi in India. For flights from India, the costs start from Rs 20000 and so on. Indian citizens do not require a visa to visit Bhutan as they would be issued an 'Entry Permit' upon arrival. To reach Bhutan by road, there are four official entry points by road from India: Samtse and Phuentsholing (in western Bhutan), Gelephu (in central Bhutan), and Samdrup Jongkhar (in eastern Bhutan). To reach Paro by train, you must board a train to West Bengal or Assam. Some of the closest Indian railway stations to Bhutan are Kolkata, New Jalpaiguri, New Alipurduar and Hasimara in West Bengal. From here, you can begin a road trip to reach Jaigaon, a small town on the Indo-Bhutan border. Jaigaon is situated in Bhutan just beyond the town of Phuentsholing. You can go to Bhutan from Jaigaon and continue your journey along the Thimphu to Phuentsholing highway to reach Paro, which takes about five hours. This route, combining railways and roadways from West Bengal, is one of the fastest options after airways. If you want to travel within the country, the best way is to hire a car and travel around the country.

Bhutan is a small country with a colourful cultural tapestry and deeply rooted beliefs. So, it is quite essential to enjoy the various festivals of the nation. And what's better than the festivals of the winter season? Winters in Bhutan typically last from November end to early February. Many of the leading dzongs (fortresses, now administrative hubs) and monasteries hold the annual Tshechu festival at this time of the year. The Tshechu festivals include cham or mask dancing. It is considered that these colourful and energetic dance programmes provide protection against bad luck and evil influence. Depending on the time of your visit, you can enjoy the following festivals: Mongar Tshechu - November 28 onwards, Trashigang Tshechu - November 30 onwards, Lhuntse Tshechu - 29 December onwards, Trongsa Tshechu - December 30 and January. Another festival, the Losar or the Tibetan New Year is celebrated in Bhutan as well. It's going to be celebrated from 10 to 12 February 2024. It is a festival which has existed much earlier than Buddhism, and it is an expression of gratitude to the gods.

Apart from the festivals, the weather is in itself the best feature of winter in Bhutan. In winter, the northern part of the country is blanketed with thick layers of snow while the south region has a mild winter. The atmosphere continues to offer a very clear view of the snow-capped Himalayan peaks, and this is an excellent time for Sightseeing Tours. Bhutan's mountainous terrain gives us thrilling drives and fantastic hikes. You have a choice of transport to travel around: mountain bikes, motorcycles and yaks, domestic buses or flights, sport utility vehicles with private drivers as well as helicopter transportation. Adding on to this, the rare black-necked cranes from Tibet are also drawn to the winters here. The best places to visit here are the Paro Valley, Taktsang Lhakhang in Paro, Chelela Pass, Thimphu, Royal Manas National Park, Phuentsholing, Dochula Pass, and Gasa Hot Springs. You can also go on wonderful treks such as the Nabji Korphu Trek, Tiger's Nest Monastery Trek, and Jigme Dorji National Park Trek. If you think being surrounded by snow-clad peaks and a peaceful environment is your winter plan, then why wait? Let's go to Bhutan!





FICTIONALLY WOURS

UNINTERRUPTED

Chaitravi Kotavade | TYBA 9 minutes read

"No, Mom, I am at a party," twenty-eight-year-old Aditya protested as he stood outside the club. "Promise me you won't drink," his mother cautioned. Aditya rolled his eyes. "Sure, sure." He nodded lazily and disconnected the call. Finally, he made his way inside the club. The lights flashed brightly, almost making him dizzy as he made his way across the club towards his colleagues.

He took a seat at the bar, with his colleague Janhvi sitting beside him. A twenty-five-year old new employee, Janhvi was yet to blend in. He was sure his colleagues had dragged her here against her will. He nodded politely at her and ordered a drink for himself. "So, are you adjusting well?" he asked to make small talk. His friends, Mahesh, Amina, Sahil, and Priya, were already on the dance floor. Janhvi nodded, letting out a sigh. "It's quite different here," she said, looking around the club. "Unfamiliar to me." Then, with a small laugh, she shrugged. "I guess that's the benefit of moving out, huh? You can explore."

Aditya nodded in agreement. Janhvi had shifted to the city from some remote town, or so he had heard. The bartender served him his drink, and he looked at Janhvi with a raised eyebrow. "Aren't you getting anything?" She eyed the drink in his hands and shook her head. "Not appealing to me," she said with an awkward laugh. Aditya nodded. "Suit yourself," he said and stood up from the stool, making his way towards his crowd of friends. Janhvi watched him disappear among the unfamiliar faces and sighed again. "An orange juice, ma'am?" the bartender suggested with a gentle smile. Ever the awkward one, she nodded before she could even think. Well, orange juice couldn't be bad, right?

"Come here, come here! Whoo!" Mahesh pulled Aditya into their circle of friends. Riya and Amina were already dancing and having the time of their lives. Sahil glanced at the clock. It was eleven thirty, half an hour left for the year to end. He glanced at his phone, but there were no new messages. "What are you doing, bro?" Riya asked curiously, glancing at his phone. Panicked, Sahil quickly pushed it into his pocket. "Nothing," he replied with a smile. His voice was barely audible as the DJ suddenly cranked up the volume of the music, but his mind repeated just one name impatiently.

"Hey, let's get Janhvi to join too. Did she leave already?" Amina piped in. Riya shook her head. "She's the introvert type, you know. She will join when she feels comfortable," she said. "Let's get a drink." Mahesh watched as the girls left to get their drinks. Aditya closed his eyes and let the music guide his moves. Sweat was forming quickly on Mahesh's forehead, despite the air-conditioned room. He looked down at his shirt, pulling his tie over it to hide the yellow-coloured stain. He should have pinned it, damn it. Thankfully, it was dark enough inside the club for anyone to spot the stain. A random guy bumped into him and muttered, 'Shit, sorry,' to him.

She's there," Amina pointed out to Janhvi, who was sipping orange juice by herself. Riya nodded, checking her phone for new messages. It was close to eleven forty-five. She checked their contacts. Offline. She put the phone back in her pocket and smiled. The lights were energising, the music was amazing, and the crowd was loud. So easy to drown in. "Babe," she greeted Janhvi, patting her on the shoulder. "C'mon, let's dance," Amina said, holding onto Janhvi's hand. "I haven't—I don't know how to dance," Janhvi said with an apologetic smile.

"Oh, c'mon, no one's a professional here," Amina waved her off. They dragged her to the dance floor, and Janhvi followed their movements, awkwardly trying to replicate them.

"C'mon, guys! There are only two minutes left for the year to end!" the DJ shouted excitedly, and the crowd erupted in cheers. Sahil's phone vibrated in his pocket, and a smile curled on his lips. He excused himself as he rushed outside hurriedly. "I am feeling a bit nauseous too. Let me get some fresh air," Riya said, and she left as well. The four left cheered along with the crowd, bodies shaking with anticipation. In the darkness and silence of the chaos, Sahil spotted him standing near the entrance. Without a second thought, he grabbed his elbow and dragged him to the backside of the club. "Took you long enough," Sahil grinned, almost out of breath as he grabbed the man's face and pulled him for a desperate kiss.

Three, two, one... Boom! The fireworks went off. Riya sat on the stairs to the club and checked her phone again. 'Happy birthday, beta!' The last message was sent two years ago. The group had been quiet since then. Resting her chin in her hands, Riya sighed and watched people happily bursting fireworks, joking and chattering freely on the streets. Feeling drained, she began to walk back home. Janhvi stepped onto her own two feet for the umpteenth time as she tried to maintain her balance in the crazed crowd. The noise was loud, and everyone was yelling and cheering. "I think I will go back home, guys," she said. "Yeah, my husband is waiting for me too," Amina added. Janhvi looked at her surprisingly. "You are married?" Amina shrugged. "Yeah, he doesn't like partying much. So I decided to have my own fun. Goodbye, guys! See you tomorrow!"

Another hour passed by before the two men left as well. The moment Mahesh stepped out, he stopped fiddling with his tie and removed it altogether, letting out a breath of relief. Finally, he wouldn't have to hide that annoying stain. He wished they would make more affordable clothes in his size. His phone buzzed. His daughter had wished him a happy new year. The forty-year-old man smiled and searched for the heart emoji on his phone, almost stumbling over a pothole as he did so. Silence and darkness greeted Amina as soon as she opened the door. She turned on the lights and threw her purse on the couch. Unbuttoning her dress, she made her way to her bedroom. He smiled back at her, his beauty eternal in the picture she had clicked four springs back. "Happy New Year," Amina whispered to his picture with a smile, caressing the wooden frame. She remained like that for a while.

The taxi stopped in front of Janhvi's apartment. Her roommates were staying out for the night, so she was all alone. Opening the door, she turned on the lights and removed her shoes. Janhvi took her night dress out of the closet and began to take off her jewellery. She turned on some peppy love songs on the phone and glanced in the mirror. A woman with twinkling eyes smiled at her. Remembering how Amina had danced, she replicated the movements again, this time with more fluency. Her nerves buzzed with happiness, the previous nervousness fading as she danced by herself. So that's what the excitement was truly like. Aditya hummed a song under his breath as he walked back home. The night was beautiful and pleasantly cool. He sat on one of the benches that overlooked the seashore. The sky was not starry, but the moon's beauty prevailed over the polluted air. He saw a bunch of people partying on the beach. His phone pinged. He had replied to all messages, but this one made him snort. 'Now that the new year is here, , check out our offers today!' The world couldn't catch a break



Vaishnavi Mahajan | TYBA 2 minutes read

Underneath the chandelier of starry skies,

Shadows slowly dance along the way of the whirling passerby stars.

Amber-gold fibers fill up the small rooftop of the suburb

Quintessentially glimmering the nerdy but cute bow-ties

And glasses, giggling brackets, retro jerseys, punk hairstyles, box heels Twirling along the silly rock tunes.

Lights percolate down through the glasses

That might clink for one last time,

And the rooftop wears the cologne of the clustered entropies assembled.

We all know that tall, introverted friend,

Who can sing like Bob Dylan, but won't.

Well, he did sing, for it was the last time with those loud, nasty bunch of extroverts he pretended to hate, sadly.

Heck, the party's melting on the couch and

Dancing steps are slowly turning into foggy realizations of nostalgia.

Twenties or quarter-life crisis? Nobody cared, It was the life of the party.

The old, broken school projector,

Casting Dead Poets Society on the curtain

"Oh Captain, My Captain", the hearts quivered in unison.

Tight one last time hugs were exchanged,

Playful punches were dished out to crybabies.

The shore was too long to stroll down ahead,

But they had to go.

Soft smiles muttered that it was time to go.

Some left with their fair share of memories and took some for their journey

Some stayed to clean up the mess they didn't make and left Filling up the distance between the rooftop and the skies With the monosyllabic after-party reminiscence.



जुने घड्याळ नवीन गणित

निशिता गायकर

नवे होते की जुने होते ? संकल्प सारे तेच होते ! नववर्षात जिंकेल नवीन कमान, पण ते तर सगळे जुनेच सारे , नवे होते की जुने होते ? संकल्प सारे तेच होते !

ऐटीत भरला फॉर्म जिमचा, गेल्या वर्षीचे पैसे फुकटच गेले पण नवं वर्ष, नवीन संकल्प, वाहणारे तरी हे नवीनच वारे नवे होते की जुने होते ? संकल्प सारे तेच होते!

मध्यपान सारे संपणार होते पण त्या रात्रीच मित्रांसोबत, विरघळली थंड ग्लासामध्ये, आश्वासने सारी! गेल्या वर्षीही हेच झाले! कथी हे प्रयत्न संपतील का रे? नवे होते की जुने होते ? संकल्प सारे तेच होते !

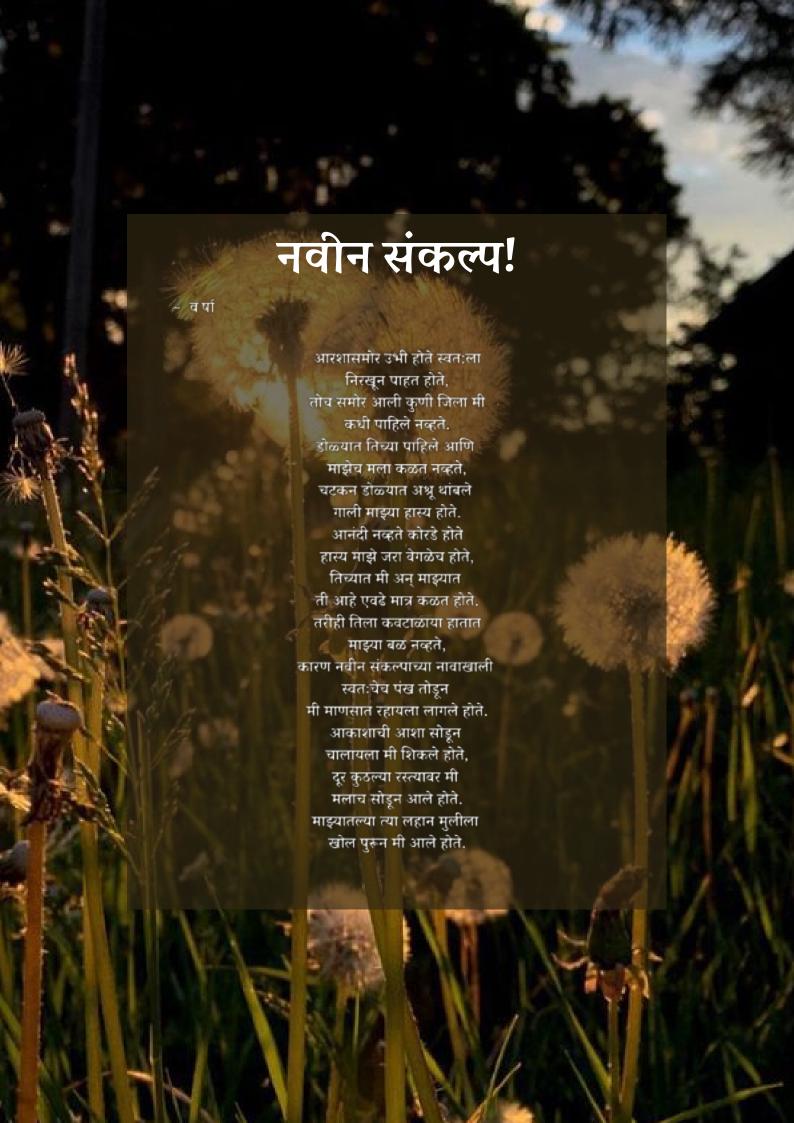
सकाळ झाली, रात्रीची उतरली झिंगता, झिंगता फिरले तारे आली शुद्ध तोवर दुपार झाली "पहाटे लवकर उठू!" हा संक्लप पाळलाच नाही, नवे होते की जुने होते? संकल्प सारे तेच होते!



भर दुपारी आयते जेवण गिळले सगळ्यांना हॅप्पी न्यू इयर चे रिप्लाय दिले आडोशाला जरा झोप काढली "घरकामात मदत करेन!" हे ध्यानीमनीच राहिले नाही बायको म्हणे, "हे पुराण जुनेच सारे" नवे होते की जुने होते ? संकल्प सारे तेच होते!

संध्याकाळी उघडला डोळा, तोवर कट्ट्यावर गोतावळा झाला जमा फुकली सिगारेट, चिरडली पायदळी संपतच आली होती, चाय पे चर्चा! निजवित डोळे घरी परतलो तोवर घड्याळात वाजले बारा दिवस संपला, संकल्प संपले शेवटी, नवे असो की जुने असो? संकल्प सारे तेच होते!





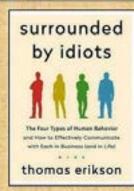


RUIA LIBRARY "Must-Reads" January 2024



Reading Recommendations by

Dr. Nilima Gajbhiye, Associate Prof., Head, Life Science Dept.



Surrounded by Idiots - Erikson, Thomas

"Proposing that there are four types of personalities, this book gives us insights on how to communicate with each of them. It also gives practical awareness to enhance relationships and remove misunderstandings."

Find this book in the Library at: S:7 / Er4 / J11710

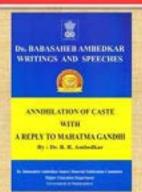


Before the Coffee Gets Cold

- Kawaguchi, Toshikazu

"A coffee shop in Japan offers its customers a the chance to travel back in time. The only rule is that they cannot leave the shop and should return to the present before the coffee gets cold. A unique, touching, and emotional novel..."

Find this book in the Library at: O:3/T63/J11711



Annihilation of Caste

- Ambedkar, B. R.

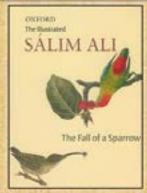
"Explaining the repercussions of the caste system in Hinduism, this book details the reasons why the system should be abolished and discusses the positive outcome that such a revolution would entail."

Find this book in the Library at: Wv2 / Am1 / 130102



Reading Recommendations by

Dr. Manisha Karpe, Teacher, Biology Dept., Ruia Junior College



The Fall of a Sparrow - Ali, Sálim

"In this autobiographical account, the great Indian ornithologist Dr. Sálim Ali recounts his exciting experiences in the outdoors and chronicles how his unusual love of birds began from a childhood incident with the yellowthroated sparrow. This book opens the world of birds to everyone ..."

> Find this book in the Library at: K96 / AL4 / 117953



नाच ग घमा - देसाई, माधवी

"प्रसिद्ध मराठी साहित्यिक रणजित देसाई यांच्या पत्नी माधवी यांचे हे प्रामाणिकपणे लिहिलेले आत्मकथन धक्कादायक तर आहेच. पण एका संवेदनशील स्त्रीमनाने हळ्वारपणे उलगडलेला हा सामाजिक व भावनिक स्वानभव निश्चित वाचनीय आहे."

Find this book in the Library at: O155w: Des / D45 / 135944



Malgudi Days - Narayan, R. K.

"An absolute classic presenting the simple and affectionate world of Malgudi, a fictional village located in South India. Heartwarming tales in this collection reveal the essence of India. Though written ninety plus vears before, these stories still hold appeal to the current generation ..."

Find this book in the Library at: O:3x8(IE) / N16 / 110117, J11713

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