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SOCIAL COMMUNICATIONS MEDIA  
ANNUAL PUBLICATION 2002-2003



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## EDITORIAL

Considering that this magazine has taken shape completely out of the usual sequence, it is perhaps fitting that it be known as 'Montage'. Montage is a French word used in cinema which refers to a juxtaposition of images separated by cuts, often in quick succession. It is the placement of these images in relation to one another that gives the images added significance.

This magazine began as an amorphous mass of nascent ideas. It has since been pulled and stretched in multiple directions by various people who have all left their mark on it in some way or another. We did not want to choose an underlying theme for the magazine, as we felt it might be limiting. What has resulted is a wide array of articles that range from street children in Mumbai to one on the recent, horrendous spate of violence in Gujarat, to a critique of contemporary Indian lesbian writing. Various forms of writing have been experimented with, including interviews, creative writing, and original comic strips.

As students of social communications media, we have tried to deal with topics that go beyond the world we know, gaining insights into the lives of behind-the-scenes T.V. production personnel and the movie-poster painters of yesteryear. We hope that the issues we have chosen to write about, as diverse as extra-terrestrial life forms and the state of women's sports in India, will interest you as much as they fascinated us. If it is one thing that we have learned in these past months, it is to question everything. Presenting a critical analysis of various subjects such as animal testing in cosmetics, and the various effects of foreign direct investment, has been part of our endeavour.

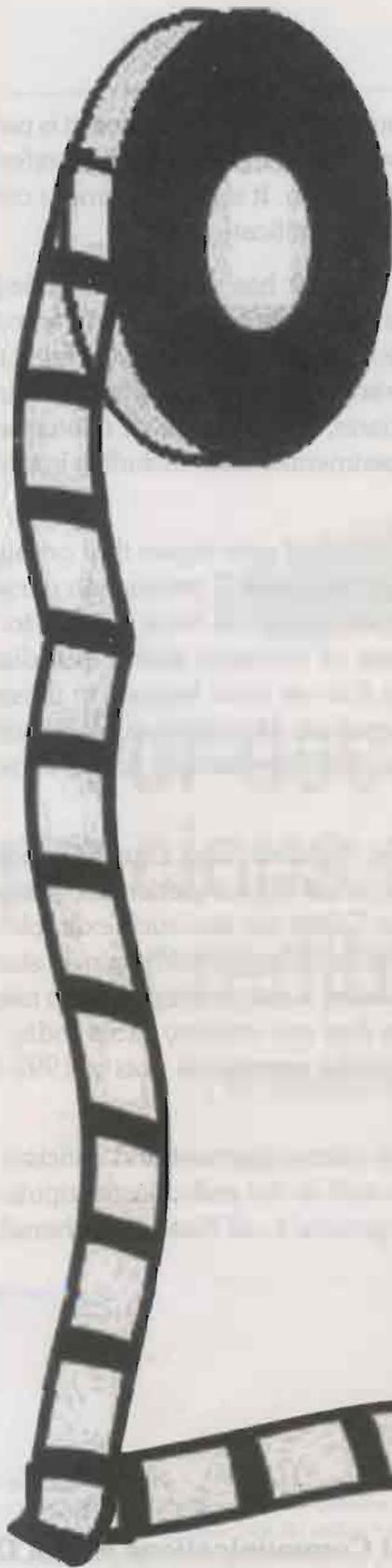
But of course, all work and no play make Jill a dull girl, so there are also equally important, socially relevant and irrelevant humour pieces to lighten the mood. The experience of travelling in a local train for the first time and the history of the Indian T-shirt are two such examples. We have attempted to analyse recent trends in society, such as the consistent 'brain drain' of students leaving the country for more developed nations. There is, however, a special emphasis on religious communalism, which we feel is the most pressing problem that our country faces today. This issue has been dealt with in the article on Gujarat as well as on the communal riots of 1992-93 in Bombay.

We express our gratitude to our faculty and advisors for their encouragement and criticism. The magazine would not have evolved without their support, as well as the enthusiastic inputs of all our contributors, whom we would like to thank. We are also grateful to all those who shared their time, knowledge and experience with the students.

To another year of stories struggling to be born!

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**2002-2003**



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# CONTENTS

## Articles

From Ahimsa to Ashes .....	04
Street Children: Choking Under an Open Sky .....	07
Local Lessons .....	10
Waiting to Exhale .....	12
Double Whammy: Animal Testing in Cosmetics .....	14
Coffee Haven .....	16
The Deepening Divide .....	18
Anglo-Indians: Angrezi or Desi .....	20
Photo Feature .....	22
Shillong: Scotland of the Far East .....	26
Unsung Heroes .....	28
Bombay Whines .....	31
Art on a Board .....	33
Box Office .....	34
The Story of Rock 'n' Roll .....	36
Lifting the Veil .....	38
The Universe at Large .....	41
FDI in Print Media .....	44
West Ahoy! .....	46
On the Beaten Track .....	49
Once Upon a T-shirt .....	51

## Poetry & Fiction

Techno-Love .....	08
Under My Sheet of Helplessness .....	40
A Stolen Night .....	43
All About Love .....	48
A Stranger's Smell .....	48
Many Mails Ago .....	Inside Back Cover

*The views expressed in the magazine are not necessarily those of the Social Communications Media Dept. at Sophia Polytechnic*

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Grief is an intensely private affair. But when an entire mass of people becomes a victim of leviathan calamity, individual tragedies tend to get blurred. Once swept under the banner of a national disaster, the common man's suffering is forgotten. Those untouched by the inferno become mere sympathizers of that faceless mass that perished. The pogrom in Gujarat may well have drifted into our amnesiac consciousness, but the victims continue to writhe in the most unremitting affliction of the massacre— despair. While Gujarat was smothered by gross hatred, the rest of India gasped in horror and soon slid back to the comforting humdrum of their lives. Life went on.

In Ahmedabad, life is not smooth. In vast pockets of the city, every other street is known as a 'border' marking the separation of the resident Hindus and Muslims. The concept of 'border' is so ingrained in the minds of the locals that even the daily task of

crossing the street could mean serious trouble for either community. Things might seem normal, but even a trifling matter could result in a violent



*Reconstructing their lives in Naroda Patia*

outburst.

One of the first to be torched, Naroda Patia witnessed gory crimes during the riots. The inhabitants fled to the nearby camps in a desperate attempt to save their lives. Several months have passed, but many are still afraid to come back. Those who have are picking up the pieces of their shattered lives.

Chand Bhai, a tailor, lost all six

of his sewing machines as they were burnt by the mob. The government's compensation schemes of providing sewing machines to the jobless tailors

hasn't brought any relief to Chand Bhai, who is yet to receive his share. Sewing machines have been distributed arbitrarily in the village and sewing classes are being organised to train these people.

"Jo silaai nahii jaanta, woh machine lekar kya karega?" asks a disgruntled Chand Bhai. (What will those who don't know how to stitch do with sewing machines?) Some of the recipients don't even attend these classes and have started selling off their machines. Chand

Bhai now plans to buy machines from these people once the rates drop. Organisations like the Islamic Relief Committee are compensating for the government's callous attitude by working towards the rehabilitation of those affected.

A walk through Daman Lal Iman Lal Ki Chaali in the Boot Bazaar lane in Kakoria, Ahmedabad reveals harsher

realities. Ramchander (Hindu) and Raju Bhai (Muslim) have been neighbours for twenty years now. The mob attacked Raju Bhai's house totally reducing it down to cinders. As a result, parts of Ramchander's wall and the beam supporting the roof caught fire. The amount of compensation received by the two families reveals staggering disparity. While Ramchander managed to get a sum of Rs.21,000, Raju Bhai had to content himself with a meagre Rs. 10,000/-.

**On entering the village one is greeted with a board, which reads 'Hindu Rashtra welcomes you to Ognez village'. Try the other entrance, and you'll find a mosque now reduced to rubble.**

*"Dus hazaar mein main apni chchat banaaon ya diwaarein"* (With ten thousand rupees should I do up my roof or walls?), sniggers Raju Bhai. The neighbours complain that Ramchander got a chance to renovate his walls and roof with extra money he received. Stories abound in Kakoria and the railway colony next to it, of preposterous amounts of compensation being awarded to Hindus.

"The entire process of allotting

compensation is full of corruption", says Mohan Bundela, a member of Jan Sangharsh Manch, a social organisation. "In some cases where people were to receive compensation in installments, the receipts were stamped twice the first time itself."

The scorching pogrom was not limited to the city alone but spread to the rural areas as well. When Altaf walked through his village, not one voice greeted him. Eight months ago, he was welcomed into every home. The same neighbours he grew up with looted and burnt the 22 Muslim homes in the small village of Buchansan in the name of patriotism. Three thousand kilometers away, Altaf's brother Ashfaq died in a landmine blast. He had been serving in the BSF for the last 18 years, defending the country at the borders in Kashmir and the North East. To the communal forces in his village, patriotism meant ridding the nation of these 'anti-national elements'. In stark contrast, Ashfaq, one such 'anti-national element', laid down his life for his country. He was due to retire in a few years. Finally, he would have time to spend with his wife, Mehmoona and their two children. Now, his family must carry on without him. Rebuilding their home and bringing up two children will not be easy for Mehmoona. Ten thousand rupees were all the compensation she got for a home reduced to ashes. She is still awaiting Ashfaq's death

certificate from the BSF without which she cannot claim insurance.

Not too far from Ahmedabad in Ognez village, people from all castes and communities gathered for a marriage. Exactly two days later, the 20 Muslim families of the village were attacked by a mob comprising fellow villagers. The change however, was not as sudden as it may seem. This hostility was a culmination of many social, economic and political factors. Ognez is a village of 8000 people. The Patels own most of the agricultural land in the village. However, in recent years most of the land has been sold to the government. The primary incentive to sell land is to educate their children abroad. This increases the contact they have with non-resident Indians making the Patels all the more powerful. In the political sphere, the current sarpanch of the village belongs to a political party which did not have the support of the Muslims. During the riots no attempt was made to help them.



*Entrance to Ognez*

After some initial hesitation, the villagers in Ognez are willing to talk to outsiders. However, the conversation takes a turn when one mentions the riots. Among some people, talk of the riots evokes responses which reveal subtle hostility towards the Muslims. Others are silenced by their fear of the upper castes. There are no Muslims living in Ognez today. On entering the village one is greeted with a board, which reads 'Hindu Rashtra welcomes you to Ognez village'. Try the other entrance, and you'll find a mosque now reduced to rubble.

Those most affected by this senseless violence are the children of the city, the children of Gujarat, the future citizens of India. There were around 10 relief camps operating in different corners of the state as of September 2002. One such camp at Quereshi Hall was home to approximately 250

children. At least ninety per cent of these children have lost one family member or have been first-hand witnesses to rape, murder or arson.

The thousands of innocent victims were ordinary people



**At least 90% of these children have lost one family member or have been first-hand witnesses to rape, murder or arson.**

living ordinary lives. Sher Khan from Bapunagar, Ahmedabad, is one such boy. Although in his early teens, all his hopes and aspirations were shattered by a lone bullet fired by the police. The doctors who performed the emergency operation not only removed the bullet from his leg but also one of his kidneys. He now survives with a single kidney and a paralyzed leg.

Life is the process of rebuilding itself from the rubble. It has ended up in a rubble of fear, disgust and hopelessness. But eyes that are so used to looking and never seeing will perhaps accept it as another macabre event to be mourned for. As we get on with our lives, a stygian gloom continues to haunt Gujarat.

**Faiza Ahmad Khan  
Janice Monteiro  
Neha Jain  
Rasika Dugal  
Sukanya Ghosh**

*I imagine one of the reasons people cling to their hates so stubbornly is because they sense, once hate is gone, they will be forced to deal with the pain.*

*-James Baldwin*

*All I am trying to say is that no religion is more important than respect for human values.*

*-Bharathiraja (Tamil filmmaker)*



## Street Children: Choking Beneath an Open Sky

*"Nashein mein sar ghoom sa jaata hai! Bhook, pyas sab bhool jaati hain. Jab ise leti hun to idhar udhar sab gol sa nazar aata hain. Bahut mazaa aata hain!"*

(In a trance, my head spins. Hunger, thirst - everything is forgotten. When I take this, everything goes round and round. It is a lot of fun.)

Ten-year old Baurakhi's impassioned testimony on the effects of the solution in the white bottle that she hides under her skirt is unsettling. For her, life on the platform of CST station holds countless means of escape. Huddled under a plastic sheet, she and her friends take turns sniffing glue, paint thinners and at times brown sugar. These drugs provide for them the easiest way to suppress hunger - their worst enemy.

Forty-five percent of Mumbai's street children are addicted to drugs. The reasons are varied and complex. A majority of these children have run away from home, hoping to find solace on the streets. Their peers become family and their only source of acceptance. So when Baurakhi's friends offered Baurakhi her first drag of brown sugar, refusing would only mean being teased and ostracized by her friends. And for Baurakhi,

having escaped from an abusive father, being rejected by her peers is the last thing she wants.

Once addicted, each child needs

groups that work towards drug rehabilitation in general, there are hardly any that specifically work for the drug rehabilitation of the street children.



**45% of Mumbai's street children are addicted to drugs.**

a minimum of Rs.300/- a day to obtain the drugs. Not surprisingly, most of them turn to crime and prostitution to survive. Sadly, efforts at rehabilitation have largely been erratic. Although there are

One organization that does have this specific focus is SUPPORT - The Society for Undertaking Poor People's Onus for Rehabilitation. SUPPORT has worked with drug abused street children for the last 7 years. Presently, they are treating 90 street children, of which 38 are girls. All these children either go to school or are in vocational training classes. To get children to come to the centre, they use an 'Outreach Programme', where ex-addicts go to speak to the children on the streets and convince them to visit the rehabilitation centre. This proves to be much more effective, since the children are a lot more open when one among them speaks to them. If they agree to come out of their own accord, they are taken to the centre, where the detoxification and de-addiction processes begin.

The reasons for the lack of organisations working towards the drug rehabilitation of street children are numerous. According to Mr. Walter Picado of 'The Nav Nirman

Foundation', it costs Rs.5,500 per month to rehabilitate one street child. He says, "An entire legal system authorising us to take these children from the streets needs to be formulated. As of now, we risk getting charged with abduction and molestation by the police, who may have their own reasons for keeping the children on the streets."

With such legal and financial considerations, it is not surprising that most organisations prefer to keep street children out of their agenda. The Nav Nirman foundation itself has only three street children out of the 50 addicts who are enrolled with them. Moreover, once the child is left back on the streets, he will almost certainly resume the habit. This is why most organisations say that complete rehabilitation is close to impossible.

Therefore, it becomes all the more important to keep these children in the organisations until they become self-sufficient. This may entail taking care of them for as long as five to seven

***The only solution lies in making the government and society accept this problem as its responsibility, and take more initiative to resolve it.***

years. Sujata Goneka of SUPPORT remarks, "Without making sure that the child becomes self sufficient and settled, the whole concept of rehabilitation is wasted."

Unfortunately, it is this very problem that makes funding difficult. Most sponsors are interested in short programmes, which only entail two or three weeks. Longer periods of rehabilitation are more expensive and demanding, as a result of which most sponsors back out.

Government aid too, hardly amounts to anything. Most of SUPPORT's funds come from well-wishers. The Narcotics Anonymous Rehabilitation Centre (NARC) is another

government-aided organisation situated in the Bhardavadi Hospital complex at Andheri. All its funds come from the salaries of the staff and sometimes, from a few stray philanthropic individuals. The only aid given to them by the government is permission to use one floor of the hospital, on which they are charged rent. But even this will terminate, since they have been asked to vacate.

Sujata Goneka says, "People don't realise that if these children are not rehabilitated now, they will end up being anti-social elements. They are society's responsibility".

It is not surprising therefore, that there are hardly any organisations that work for the specific needs of drug abused street children. The only solution lies in making the government and society accept this problem as its responsibility, and take more initiative to resolve it. We must contribute to the cause with either time, effort or money. Until then, it will remain a losing battle.

**Rosemary George  
Sanchi Bhutani**

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## Techno-Love

Love resembles a lizard with a cut-tail;  
it just moves on.  
A new tail grows.  
Tails are so common.

There's so much to do  
lots undone.

**Megha Subramaniam**



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# Local Lessons

V 3:36 F. C 3:38 S. B 5:40 S.

At first glance, these numbers and letters looked like nothing on earth. I stood all alone staring at the red platform indicators, trying to decipher their meaning. I wanted to turn back, run away, but I had no choice. I mustered my courage and walked towards the ticket counter. My ears perked up as I heard the man ahead of me say "*Ek Bhayander return.*" Fortunately my destination was Bhayander as well, and so I repeated what he said. (Lesson No. 1: Pay attention to the person ahead of you in the line – he could unknowingly guide you.)

The train was to arrive on platform number one. I looked around and saw a crowd of women waiting in anticipation. This undoubtedly had to be the spot where the train would halt at the ladies compartment. (Lesson No. 2: The general compartment is the danger zone for anyone of the female sex. The men can never get their eyes or hands off a woman).

I tried not to look nervous but failed miserably "*Ladies' compartment yahan par aati hai?*" I asked, for reassurance. (Does the ladies' compartment halt here?)

"*Haan, train abhi aayegi, jaldi se chadhna. Bahut gardi hai!*" a

woman replied. (Yes it will, but climb on quickly. It's very crowded). My worst fears were confirmed. This was not going to be easy. As the train stopped, a whole lot of women fell out (literally) while the rest clambered on, each one pushing and pulling the other. I was tossed about for a while until I found myself hanging on for dear life to one of the seats. (Phew!)

The stench was so strong that I could have passed out. I looked around, hoping to find a seat. But the compartment was

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**I could see diversity in culture and age right before my eyes.  
In one corner, a group of women were engrossed in conversation, while in another a woman was chopping vegetables.**

---

packed and buzzing with activity. College students, working women, old Parsi ladies, '*Gujju bens*', kids et al. I could see diversity in culture and age right before my eyes. In one corner, a group of women were engrossed in conversation, while in another a woman was

chopping vegetables. I suddenly got distracted by two of them who were haggling over a gulab jamun mix. In the midst of all this hustle and bustle, there were vendors selling articles, each at a single price of Rs. 10/-. (Lesson No. 3 – You can buy almost anything on a train, right from a safety pin to a sack).

Just then, I heard voices singing, "*Happy Birthday*" and "*Janamdin Mubarak*". I turned around and saw a host of women passing mithai around and embracing a friend. I caught sight of a woman looking in my direction. It almost seemed as if she knew what I was thinking about this unusual little party.

"*Aap pehli baar safar kar rahin hain?*" she asked, amused with the expression on my face. (Are you travelling for the first time?)

"*Haan, aur aap?*" I asked. (And you?)

"*Main bees saal se safar kar rahi hoon. Roz koi na koi pehchaanwala mil jaata hai, aur aise hi pakke dost ban jaten hain,*" she replied. (You encounter familiar faces everyday and gradually you make great friends).

I was stupefied. This seemed like a home outside home. I overheard a conversation. "*Teri saas kaisi hai ab?*" a woman asked a co-passenger. (How is



your mother – in – law?)

“Theek hai. Maine Prashant se keh diya hai. Woh apni maa se baat karenge, meri to bilkul pat thi nahi hai!” the other one replied. (She’s all right. I told Prashant to speak to his mother. I cannot get along with her).

The conversation ebbed and flowed and the women continued to carp about their mothers – in – law. I smiled and looked back at the woman I had spoken to earlier. She said, “Yeh to sirf baat cheet hai. Yeh ek doosre ke gharwalon ko jaante tak nahi!” (This is just idle talk.

They don’t even know each other’s families.) (Lesson No. 4: Women are good listeners, remember?)

I looked out and saw Bhayander approaching. I tried to fight my way out through the mob of women who pressed into the train but was trapped. There was no way I could get out. I tried to squeeze my way through the wall of women in front of me, but it was an impossible task. The train started moving. I had missed my station! (Lesson No. 5 – Get ready to get off before hand.

Nobody gives you way to get out.... FIGHT FOR IT! )

“I need to develop the skills to manoeuvre through the crowd. At this rate I’ll be stuck here forever”, I grumbled. Finally I did get off at the last station, which was Virar. I breathed a sigh of relief...and gulped in fresh air. (Lesson No.6: All ‘good’ things come to an end).

The next thought that flashed through my mind was, “Oh no! I have to get back home! HELP!”

**Roshan Chainani**



## Waiting to Exhale

Jams that cause the traffic to stagnate for hours, blaring horns and hurled expletives are the bane of every Mumbaikar's existence. Mumbai, in the midst of an enormous space crunch, is powerless to support its teeming millions. It is common to see crowded lanes, with scores of vehicles snaking down them. While these may appear to be superficial irritations, the scenario is gloomy. Thousands of cars, trucks, rickshaws, buses and motorbikes ply the city's streets daily, spewing noxious gases and fumes. While these vehicles are indispensable to the very nature of our lifestyles, they could also prove to be the deciding factor that governs our well-being.

**Vehicular pollution in Mumbai causes approximately 2,800 premature deaths, with health damages costing over \$500 million (Rs. 18 billion) a year.**

The AIR Act (Prevention and Control of pollution) of May 1981, defines an air pollutant as

any substance "present in the atmosphere in such concentration as may be injurious to human beings or other living creatures or plants or property or environment." By this definition, all human beings, plants and animals in Mumbai



face serious injury every day.

Of all the components of air pollution, it is undoubtedly vehicular pollution that plays the primary role in defiling our environment. Vehicular pollution levels in Mumbai have reached an unprecedented high. A TERI survey was conducted to locate the total vehicular pollution load, in tonnes per day (TPD), in various cities of India. Mumbai was found to be the most polluted city in the country, after Delhi. The total vehicular pollution load here is as high as 659.30 TPD. This is in sharp contrast to pollution loads of

226.25 TPD in Chennai and 293.71 TPD in Kolkata.

The implications of this are severe. Vehicular pollution has the capacity to debilitate life. It is more dangerous than many fatal diseases, for it has the advantage of being a relatively unseen evil. Although people are conscious that vehicular emission is harmful, they remain unaware about the true extent of the relentlessness of its effects. Prolonged exposure to diesel fumes causes changes in lung tissue at the molecular and cellular level. It also causes inflammatory response in the airways. According to Urban Air Quality Management Strategy (URBAIR) Greater Mumbai Report, in addition to illnesses and lost work hours, vehicular pollution in Mumbai causes approximately 2,800 premature deaths, with health damages costing over \$500 million (Rs. 18 billion) a year.

Smoke Affected Residents Forum (SARF) was formed by Dr. Sandeep Rane to combat ever-increasing pollution levels in Chembur. Says Dr. Rane, "SARF acted as a catalyst when it filed a petition against the taxis and rickshaws which pollute the city." After a prolonged struggle

the Bombay High Court directed auto rickshaws and 137D taxis to convert to eco-friendly fuels such as compressed natural gas (CNG) and liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) by April 2001.

Clean Air is another organisation that recognised the severity of the problem. Says Meher Raffat, a leading activist of this NGO, "CNG is a very good solution to combat vehicular pollution which constitutes 60% of the air pollution bulk. However, the taxi and auto rickshaw drivers seem to be avoiding the matter by trying to postpone the conversion date in spite of the fact that buying a new vehicle is costlier than converting the old one." She adds, "This conversion movement was considered an elitist move by many. They however do not realise that it is the commuters and drivers who will suffer in the long run."

Another way of fighting vehicular pollution was to introduce the idea of using ethanol in petrol. Ethanol contains 35% oxygen that helps to complete combustion of fuel and thus reduces harmful tailpipe emissions by 30%. It can displace toxic gasoline components such as benzene. Ethanol is non-toxic, water-soluble and bio-degradable. It is a renewable fuel produced from plants.

However, there are two sides to the same coin. Fears are being voiced about the environmental impact of ethanol and its economic viability. Fifteen litres of water are required to manufacture 1 litre of ethanol from sugar molasses. Smog is a well-known side effect of any ethanol-based fuel. The greatest disadvantage is the huge amount required to invest in the infrastructure, close to 600 crore rupees.

Simple solutions can go a long way. Meher Raffat advises, "We must make sure that our vehicles are in sync, that is, the Pollution check (PUC) is done regularly. We should also make sure that we are buying unadulterated petrol." She believes that effortless steps such as car pools or usage of public transport will greatly reduce the congestion in the city. Dr. Rane advises, "Awareness is of utmost importance. It's the youngsters who must come out and fight. This problem is going to affect their lives in the future."

However, solving a problem begins with recognizing that it exists. The reality of air pollution has become an intrinsic part of the fabric of our daily lives. The more the problem is ignored, the more imminent is its threat. Unless strict measures are taken to address its intensity, it will spiral out of control.

**Aditi Seshadri  
Bhakti Patwardhan**

*With best wishes*

*from*

**A WELL WISHER**

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## **: Animal Testing in Cosmetics**

All great traditions emphasise the importance of four ethics- knowledge, justice, compassion and autonomy. Our choices should be based on knowledge, express compassion and justice, and be freely made. But, one might be unconsciously supporting a practice that is totally against this principle, a prime example of which is animal testing. We all use products like shampoos, toothpaste, cosmetics and soaps. During their manufacturing process they are tested on hundreds of innocent animals, who usually die of torture.

Before being marketed, cosmetics and their ingredients are tested to identify their potential to cause skin and eye irritation. The need for safety assessment of new products is not disputed, but the problem that arises

is whether the tests carried out are relevant to normal human use. Says Ms. Riza Vazirani, trustee of People For Animals, Mumbai, "Researchers doing studies on animal testing methods themselves agree that animal tests lead them down blind alleys and impede progress. And in the process thousands of innocent animals are tortured and sacrificed."

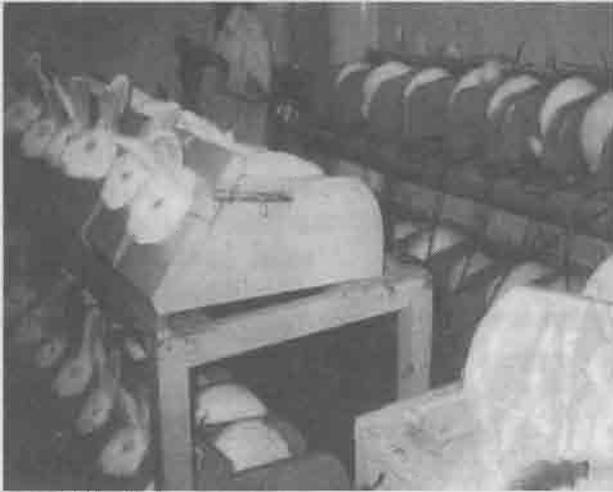
Tests are carried out on all sorts of animals, including dogs, cats and monkeys, but it's rabbits, white mice and guinea pigs that are most exploited. The cruelties inflicted on them are endless. For example, to test a shampoo, companies use the Draize Eye irritancy test in which albino rabbits are immobilized and drops of the product are poured into their eyes. Since the rabbits have no tear glands, the product remains in the eye for weeks. Consequently, their eyes may be swollen, ulcerated or they may even be permanently blinded. According to Ms. Maneka Gandhi, animal rights activist, over 10,000 rabbits are blinded in the shampoo trade every year. Another test called the acute toxicity, or LD-50 test, results in the death of half the animals used. The rest suffer from complications like convulsions, diarrhoea, bleeding etc.

Though they were mandatory earlier, these tests were made optional by the Bureau of Indian Standards in 1996. According to

Shefali Joshi, coordinator with Beauty Without Cruelty (BWC), an NGO working on animal rights, "Cosmetic companies are no longer mandated to test their products. Only the first batch of a new product or a product with a new ingredient needs to be tested".

However, cosmetic companies continue to test their products on animals. According to Anuradha Sehgal, representative of People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA), the low costs and the crude nature of animal tests prompts these companies to continue with these processes. "Animal tests protect companies, not consumers, as it allows manufactures to put virtually any product in the market. They can use the fact that their products are tested to defend themselves against consumer lawsuits," she informs.

Another school of thought believes that testing on animals helps them to compete in the market. "Consumers demand products with exciting new ingredients like alpha-hydroxy acids. Animal tests are often considered the easiest and cheapest way to prove that they are safe," claims Anuradha. The tests are unreliable due to the enormous physiological differences that exist between animals and humans. Also, the tests are done in such exaggerated amounts that they are rendered ineffective.



*The Draize Eye Irritancy Test*

In India, the movement against cosmetic testing is still in its infancy. Ahimsa, a voluntary organization, has been working towards banning testing of cosmetics and household products. But no concrete studies have been done to review the testing status of products in India. "A number of leading companies in India use animals for testing their

products," says Dr. Sainam Ahuja, representative of Ahimsa. Companies like Hindustan Lever are registered with the Committee for Control and Supervision of Experiments on Animals (CPCSEA), indicating the use of these tests. NGOs like PETA and BWC have compiled a list of do and don't companies.

The non-testing companies use alternative tests for their product safety. "Alternative tests are superior to traditional animal tests. Many of these new tests use human tissue cultures which are more relevant and reliable for predicting human reactions

to products," says Suzy Weisinger, joint secretary of Ahimsa.

Consumers concerned about animal rights can play a vital role in eliminating cruel test methods. This was evident in Europe when after consistent public pressure, European Union parliament voted for a ban on the cosmetics tested on animals. At present, UK and Netherlands are the only two countries that have a ban on animal testing. A similar movement in India is possible with consumer awareness. A boycott of products testing on animals will send a strong message to these companies to stop this cruel and worthless exercise - not just for the benefit of animals but for consumers as well.

**Surbhi Mehta**

*With*

*best wishes*

*from*

*A Well Wisher*

**I**n the old days, to get a cup of coffee you would have to smuggle beans from Arabia at the risk of death. Now all you have to settle for is self-service” – reads the banner at your local Barista café, one of several coffee bars to have opened in Mumbai in the last two years.

The city has been witnessing a new and rather interesting phenomenon – the growth of the Coffee Bar Culture. Mumbai has been bitten by the coffee bug and everybody right from the collegian, the social butterfly, the serious intellectual, the business executive, to the ‘arty’ type is saying, ‘we simply must meet over a cup of coffee.’

Coffee is now the drink of the city’s young and happening - thanks to the numerous coffee bars sprouting all over the city. The city already has a chain of Barista Espresso Bars, Cafés Coffee Day, Café Mocha and Coffee Mantra, all tantalizing the city’s palate with an array of exotic brews and coffee-based concoctions.

These coffee bars have managed to transform the simple unpretentious coffee bean into a hundred, hard-to-pronounce brews: Café Chaud Froid, Mochachillo, Affogato, and Coffee Bisque. To a city used to drinking solid, chicory-based *kapi* out of stainless steel *dabra watis*, at the local *udipi*, this is indeed an exciting, welcome change. Coffee now

has a distinct personality of its own. It is no longer ‘one cup of coffee’ but either ‘one double tall skinny no foam latte’, ‘one decafe mocha grande’, ‘one short latte, hint of almond, no foam’ or ‘one low fat decafe



cappuccino’. One now has a full-fledged coffee lingo that has become common among regulars at coffee bars. For the uninitiated, ‘Barista’ is Italian for coffee technician. ‘Doppio’ is two shots of espresso. Espresso with steamed milk is a ‘latte.’ ‘Ristretto’ is a smaller, slightly stronger shot of espresso. ‘Unleaded coffee’ is a synonym for decaffeinated coffee.

Welcome to latte land! The traditional South Indian filter has been replaced by sophisticated imported machines - French presses and Cappuccino makers that prepare the brew in an instant. What’s more, the adventurous customer can brew his own coffee rather than wait for the friendly *anna* to bring it to him. “It is our way of getting the customer involved with the sensual experience of coffee,”

says Brainard Colaco, Head Chef of Café Mocha at Churchgate. “We serve the coffee in these big colourful mugs so that they can hold the mug with both hands and can feel the heady aroma of the brew as it slides down their throats. It is very therapeutic,” he adds.

Mumbaikars are being introduced to the taste of coffee beans from Java, Sumatra, Hawaii and India. Café Mocha boasts of having 18 different flavours of coffee beans. These coffee bars attract an assorted variety of customers. Says Vijaya Kamat, Manager, Barista, Santa Cruz, “We usually get a young college crowd in the mornings and afternoons. Young couples and business executives also frequent the café at late hours.”

But is it only about the coffee or is there more to coffee bars? “I think it is the relaxed, friendly atmosphere that people really enjoy at our coffee bars,” says Vijaya Kamat. This explains the importance given to décor, ambience and service at these cafés. The Barista ambience is a recreation of the Italian neighbourhood espresso bar. To add to its informal setting, Barista provides interactive games like scrabble, chess, pictionary, and a guitar for the musically inclined. These coffee bars essentially provide the city’s young and restless their much-needed space – space for creative expression, space to hang around with friends, space

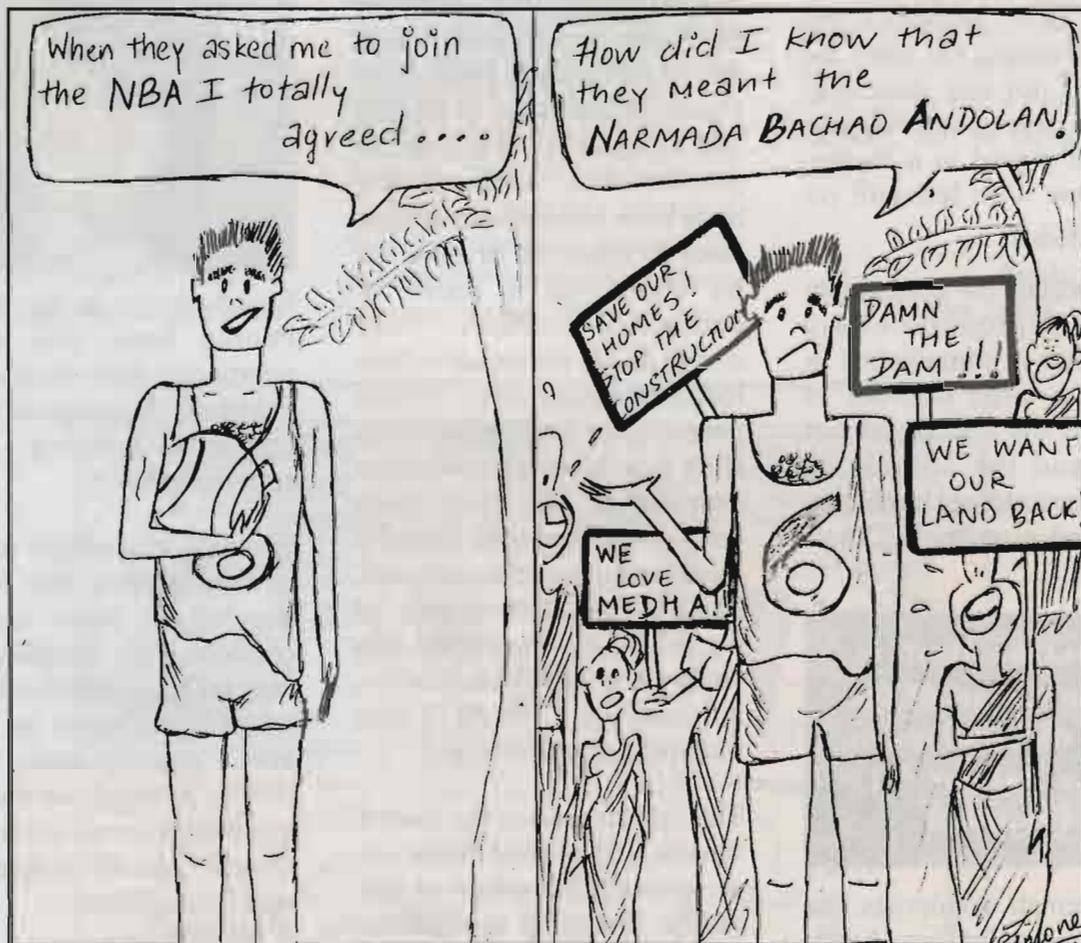
to just be. The Espresso Gallery at Barista is filled with art and poetry pieces penned and pinned up by the guests.

Café Mocha insists that its sole purpose for being is to “teach Mumbaikars to enjoy the simple pleasures of life.” Situated at Churchgate, Café Mocha has an exquisite Moroccan theme based décor complete with paintings, Persian rugs, low stools and beanbags to lounge on. “We want our guests to be

able to soak in the ambience, the music, the coffee. Sit on our bean bags, and just be themselves.” The flavoured hookahs, and the waiters dressed in tall red Moroccan caps and vests are an added attraction. “We want our guests to come to Mocha and take back a memento each time. The customer can buy any article that catches his fancy – except for the chef and his boys!” says Brainard Colaco.

Coffee bars have inspired a completely new way to socialize. It’s a fad, it’s on T.V., and it’s where the “FRIENDS” hang out. “They are more intimate meeting places than bars or discos,” says Mishi Agarwal, a regular at Café Mocha. In the final analysis, for a generation high on appearances and with money to spend, coffee bars are indeed a well-timed arrival.

**Roseanne Lobo**



# The DEEPENING Divide

She sits by the window every evening just to watch the children play. The sound of their laughter fills the air. "I can watch them playing for hours on end. It takes me back to fond memories of my childhood home." As the sun sets on yet another day, Mumtaz Wajid reconciles herself to her situation. But the disturbing memories of the 1992 riots will never really fade away. "My family was distraught when my younger brother was arrested on false charges of looting during the riots. When the boys in the locality harassed my sister we just could not stay there any more. We gave up our house in Parel and moved to a Muslim area as we were left with no other choice."

In any locality, the community that is disproportionately represented is immediately in danger. A large number of people in the city could not understand the attitude of neighbours suddenly turning on them, and questioning their loyalties.

**"Ghettoisation is the last sign of the death of secularism," says Ashgar Ali Engineer**

Even staunch secularists like poet and journalist Feroz Ashraf echoes these sentiments. "My family has been following the

Sufi tradition for years. It is deeply influenced by numerous other religious ideologies. We have been celebrating different festivals in the same spirit as our neighbours. In our locality we all lived as members of the same community despite our religious differences. So it came as a rude shock when these very people asked us to leave our residence in Malad."

This is one of the most dangerous outcomes of communal clashes. "Ghettoisation is the last sign of the death of secularism," says Ashgar Ali Engineer, Head of the Centre of the Study of Society and Secularism. "It is a recent phenomenon, where people have been shunted out of their place of residence or have left by choice as a result of communal conflicts. They simply do not feel secure in their localities any more." These people have no choice but to shift into a locality which is dominated by their own community. Terms like 'minority localities' have come into being. Muslims from various parts of the city have now moved into "minority ghettos" like Mahim, Jogeshwari, Kurla and Mumbhra, to name a few.

This can be seen in the case of Sakina. At the age of 14 she was an earning member of her family. She used to tutor the children in her locality. "We heard of the riots erupting in

various parts of the city but we never expected it to happen to us," says Sakina. There was worse to come. Shock and feelings of betrayal swept the family as neighbours they had lived next to for years attacked them. "I used to teach their children! What have I done to harm them?" Sakina's family was forced to flee to Kurla where they could feel safe. Today, Sakina works as a domestic helper. She is the sole



breadwinner in her family. People have now started referring to these areas as 'mini Pakistan', homogenizing and further isolating these communities.

Ironically, the people who live in these ghettos often feel that they don't have much in common with people of their own religious community. "We felt alienated when we moved into a predominately Muslim locality. Although we shared the same religion we belonged to diverse cultural backgrounds," says Feroz Ashraf.

Another result of ghettoisation is the growing number of people

who now cling desperately to their own religious identity. Flocking together reinforces an inclusive sense of community identity based on fear and the urge for retribution. This trend inflicts more damage than communal flare-ups.

“Ghettoisation only intensified the existing communal tension in the city. People affected by the riots had lost their faith in the police and the state. There was an urgent need to bridge the growing rift between the communities. This gave rise to the concept of Mohalla committees,” says Julio Riberio, founder of the Mohalla Committees. “We felt that people need to come together and understand each other. This could only be achieved through interaction and discussion between people involved in the riots.” The Committees have organized cricket matches, sewing classes and various other

activities to make people realize that they can rise above their religious differences. These committees have been functioning successfully in over 25 areas in Mumbai by taking local leaders of each area into their fold. These are not tailor-made solutions to solve the problems of ghettoisation or to ease communal tension, but a beginning in the fight against hatred.

Personal initiatives taken by people in the city have helped to restore some of the faith that was lost during the riots. For instance, Waquar Khan, a shop owner in Dharavi who was deeply affected by the riots made three short one-minute promos and a feature film on communal harmony. “Through popular Hindi cinema I wanted to bring to people’s attention that this divide is created by political parties to gain mileage and not by the common man.

So I put together clips from films like Border, Karma etc. which talked about communal harmony and it was very well received by the people.”

Yet, such gestures are few and far between. During these wars in the name of religion, the basic essence of humanity is lost. The very diversity that India has been proud of all these years is in danger, and it is time to question our commitment not towards any one religion but towards our nation and its people as a whole. Feroz Ashraf sums it up beautifully with his words “*Mushkil nahin is zamaane mein hindu ya muslim hona, mushkil hai yahan insaan hona.*” (In these times, it is not difficult to be a Hindu or a Muslim, but to be a human being.)

**Rasna Bami  
Avehi Menon  
Deeba Syed - Parihar**



# The Anglo-Indians – Angrezi or Desi ?

Mr. George Beckett, the destitute Anglo-Indian in one of Qurratulain Hyder's short stories is nicknamed 'Pilpili saheb' - though he preserves the pomp and pretensions of a true Englishman, he is as poor as any Indian. Hyder's portrayal of the ambiguous status of the Anglo-Indian just before Independence may not be far from the truth. But has this gregarious, convivial community that is said to have believed in the motto 'grub, grog and greens' (meaning food, drink and merriment on the house) outgrown its stereotyped image? This is probably the single most pertinent question about the identity of the 21<sup>st</sup> century Anglo-Indian.

In Mumbai there are just 150 Anglo-Indian families at present, and the multiplicity of perspectives within the small community is staggering. "My mother-in-law still stands up when 'God Save The Queen' is played," says one. "I always support India against England when they play cricket," says another. "I don't believe in the concept of an Anglo-Indian. We are all Indians," says a third. What is evident is that there is more to an Anglo-Indian than the fair complexion, lilting accent, foreign surname and the fact that he or she indicates English as their mother tongue for all administrative procedures.

"First of all, the definition of an Anglo-Indian must be clarified in

the public mind," says Mr Edmond Myall, former principal of St. Peter's School (Mazagaon), ex-President of the Anglo-Indian Association and former secretary of the Association of the Heads of Anglo-Indian Schools. "An Anglo-Indian is the offspring of the marriage between a European man and a woman from any Indian community, and it can be only a European man not a woman," he declares.

If one is to historically trace the origin of the community, then the actual expansion of the community occurred after 1857, the year that marks the beginning of the complete colonization of India. The year that saw the opening of the Suez Canal and the arrival of an additional British fleet. With the opening up of the trade route

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**Has this gregarious, convivial community that is said to have believed in the motto 'grub, grog and greens' (meaning food, drink and merriment on the house) outgrown its stereotyped image?**

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and the arrival of British soldiers, interaction between the British and the Indians increased. However, mixed marriages were frowned upon and Anglo-Indians were seen as an expanding race and a potential

threat. The Anglo-Indian therefore, had to abandon enterprise for a secure government job, a privileged career with no future. 'Plenty of rank but nothing in the bank' is their all-too familiar catchphrase.

Thus Anglo-Indians dominated the railways, postal service, the telegraph, fire brigades, schools and hospitals. Nobody can dispute the high standards of education in the 360 plus Anglo-Indian schools in India. Cathedral and John Connon School, Campion School, St. Peters, Christ Church and St. Mary's School, besides being some of the best schools in Mumbai, also happen to be Anglo-Indian schools. In fact, an Anglo-Indian board evolved the I.C.S.E. and I.S.E. syllabi.

The Anglo-Indian imbibed numerous traits from his British forefathers; the crisply laundered coats (embellished sometimes with a medal from the King himself), skirts, European cuisine and the acceptance of Christianity. However, far from being homogeneous, the community has defined for itself a quintessentially unique, yet hybrid identity. For instance, ball curry, yellow rice and jungle pulao are authentic Anglo-Indian cuisine, laced with local flavours like the addition of grated coconut in South India.

"My father insisted on my being prim and proper at all times-maintaining decorum at the

table, escorting the lady and so on. In fact he used to refer to the local Indians as the 'damn natives'. I was half afraid that he would start a communal riot," says Joe Rose, a teacher at Christ Church School.

Sports, music, dance and drama are integral to every Anglo-Indian's lifestyle, which would probably explain the number of stalwarts the community has produced. Cricketer Roger Binny, hockey player, Leslie Claudius, tennis player Leander Paes and other champions who have even represented India at the Olympics, pop singer Cliff Richard and writers Ruskin

Bond and Allen Sealy are just some of the many eminent Anglo-Indian personalities.

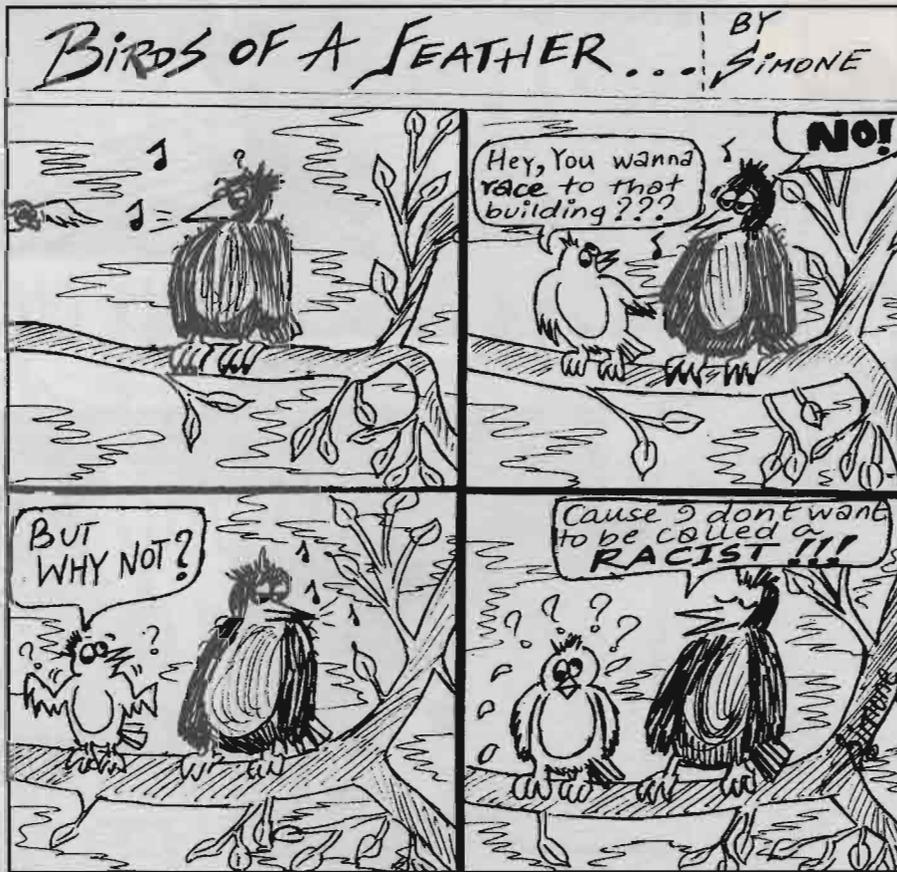
Then why have they migrated? Some attribute it to socio-economic reasons. With the introduction of competitive examinations and the consequent withdrawal of the guaranteed security of a government job, the economic status of the Anglo Indian suddenly suffered a decline.

The Anglo-Indian community has been massively stereotyped as a 'casual' community, lacking ambition, womanizers and wine drinkers. But all of these are vain

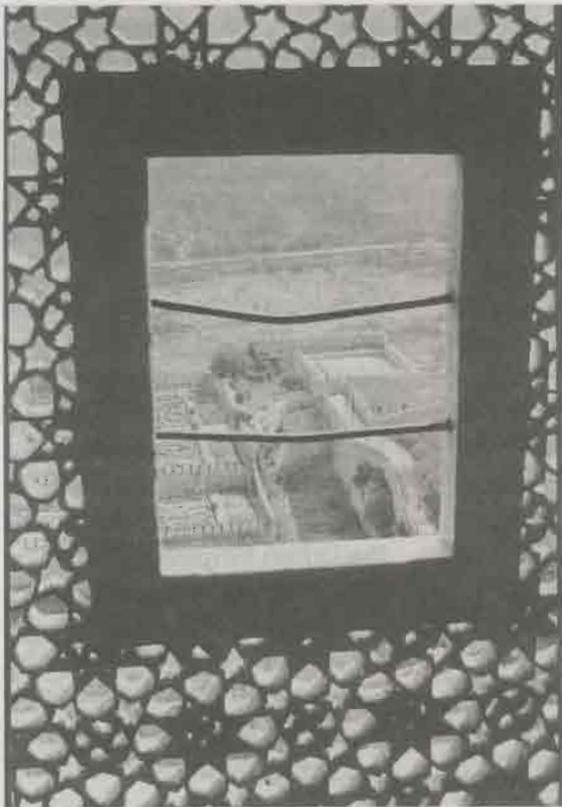
attempts to undermine the importance of a community that has added much to India's multi-faceted culture.

"We are all essentially staunchly Indian. This is best exemplified in Frank Anthony's (the champion of the cause) rejection of the offer of the Andaman Islands as a separate country for the Anglo Indians," says Mr Myall, putting into perspective a much-debated issue. It's quite clear that the erstwhile sons of the British Empire are mapping their own way into the future.

**Radhika Menon  
Sanyuktha Chawla**



# CUT away



*Bhakti Patwardhan*



*Rasika Dugal*

*Vidhu Aul*





*Roseanne Lobo*

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*Praveena Shivram*



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*Sanyalcha Chawla*

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*Deeba Syed-Parihar*



*Sarmistha Roy*

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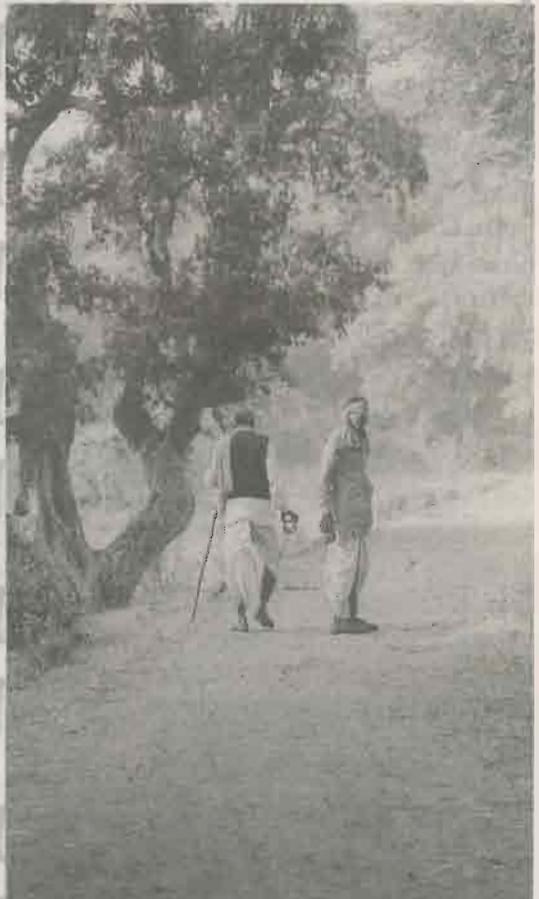


*Gayatri Panjabi*

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*Faiza Ahmad Khan*



*Radhika Gulwadi*

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# SHILLONG: Scotland of the East

Established in the 1880's by Colonel Henry Hopkins, Shillong was the capital of Assam till 1897. In 1972 when Meghalaya achieved statehood, Shillong became its capital. The name Shillong is derived from Leishyllong, the deity residing on the peak of Shillong.

Shillong is still relatively untouched by commercial tourism. This is noticeable in the absence of familiar advertisements and hoardings. The tribes that inhabit Shillong are mainly the Khasi, Garo and Jaintia. It is also home to a large Bengali population. Historically, there has always been friction between the Bengalis and the Khasi tribe. It is not advisable for visitors to venture into predominantly Khasi areas after dark.

Shillong is less accessible compared to other hill-stations like Darjeeling and Ooty. It takes four hours by road to reach Shillong from Guwahati, the capital of Assam. There is a chopper service available for those on a bigger travel budget.

**Sixty-four kilometers from Shillong is Cherapunji, one of the places that receives the highest rainfall in the world.**

The most popular tourist hotels in Shillong are the Pinewood Ashoka, Hotel Polo Towers, Alpine Continental, and the Blue Pine. Inexpensive accommodation is also available at the Shillong Club.

Transport in Shillong is mainly by taxis, cars or on foot. None of the taxis have meters attached, which is perhaps a novelty for someone from a big city like Mumbai. In the centre of the town is Police bazaar, the hub of all activity in the city. Shillong boasts of a range of cuisines from dosas at Hotel Center Point, to authentic Chinese food cooked in pig fat. Small roadside stalls sell 'momos' and 'thuppa' traditional Tibetan dishes. Handicrafts from all the northeastern states are available, from Naga blankets, to Mizoram skirts to woolen bags. For cheap imported goods, the Glory Plaza shopping complex is the place to visit.

After the tourist's need for souvenirs and food has been satisfied, Shillong peak is the next destination. Ten kilometres from the city at an altitude of 1965 m, Shillong Peak offers a panoramic view of the area. In the heart of the city is Ward

Lake, where tourists can enjoy boating at a mere Rs.15 per hour; this gives evidence of the lack of commercial intervention.

Seventeen kilometers before Shillong is Umiam or Barapani—a large lake formed after a hydroelectric dam was



*Shillong is home to many tribes*

built across a stream. In recent years, this has become an increasingly popular place for outings and weekend visits. The Orchid Hotel designed by architect Charles Correa, overlooks this lake. The Golf Course was built in 1889, and is known as the "Glen-eagle of the East".

Most of the houses in Shillong are built of wood and overlook breathtaking scenery. This lends a quaint feel to residential areas like Jailroad and Upper Laban. The majority of the population is Christian, and Shillong is famous for its beautifully constructed churches. The most well-known is the Cathedral of



**Shillong Peak :1965 m**

Mary Help of Christians located on a hill; stained glass windows

and high arches add to the beauty of this building. Directly below, carved out of the hills, is the Grotto Crunch. The All Saints Church opposite the state Central Library is another attractive building of wood and plaster.

Sixty-four kilometers from Shillong is Cherapunji, one of the places that receives the highest rainfall in the world. It is famous for its limestone caves. Accommodation is easily available at the Circuit House. A few kilometers east of Shillong is Nartiang, the summer capital of the Jaintia kings. Close to Cherapunji is Jakrem, a popular health resort with hot springs of sulphur water. Dawki, a border town 96 km from Shillong

provides a glimpse of Bangladesh.

The weather in Shillong is perfect for visiting the waterfalls as it rains most of the year. The Elephant falls are located near Upper Shillong. Beyond this are the Upper and Lower Elysium falls. The Beadon falls are 2 km from Barapani. There is a hydroelectric powerhouse at the base of the falls.

Shillong provides the unbeatable combination of an untouched paradise and an inexpensive getaway. So pack light and travel cheap because that's the best way to see the Shangri-la of India.

**Sulakshana Gupta**

*He who chooses the beginning of a road chooses the place it leads to. It is the means that determine the end.*

*-Harry Emerson Fosdick.*

*In the beginning you must subject yourself to the influence of nature. You must be able to walk firmly on the ground before you start walking of a tightrope.*

*-Henri Matisse*

# LIGHTS, CAMERA ACTION!

## UNSUNG HEROES

"My mother and grandma are glued to the television after eight-thirty."

Sounds familiar? Don't be surprised. This is a common scenario in Indian households today. The day's schedule is decided around the timings of these soap operas. From **Kkusum** to **Kyunki Saas...** to **Ek Mahal Ho Sapno Ka...** the list is endless. Bewitched by these soap operas, we seldom spare a thought for those working behind the scenes, those whose contribution is never acknowledged.

"Lights, Camera, Action!" are the three words that dictate the lives of the make-up men, light men and spot boys. With the sets for a home and no time to spare, one of them commented, "Our only true friends are the dogs on the roads, who are there when we leave our homes in the morning and when we return late at night." Whether it is Balaji Telefilms or UTV, the situation of these behind-the-scene workers leaves a lot to be desired. As one walks into any production house, the tension is palpable. Deadlines have to be met, and the work that remains seems like it cannot possibly be completed on time.

Glamour is the result of make-up. A skilled make-up artist can

turn an actor or actress into a villain, ghost, grandparent, teenager or parent. It is often seen that without make-up one cannot recognize these actors. This speaks volumes of the immense contribution of make-up men to the success of the characters and eventually the serials.

Jagdish and Mohammed are make-up men working for a T.V. production house. Like most in this profession, they were introduced to the industry by their relatives. "Make-up is learnt from your seniors and your success depends entirely on the level of interest," points out Jagdish who has been working as a make-up artist for the last nine years. Jagdish has been a mentor to Mohammed, who has worked with him for the last six years.

Though allowed to freelance for films, they prefer to work in television serials because of the continuous work. But it is anything but simple. Jagdish comments, "We have to be here earlier than any of the actors and leave after the shoot is over. Most of us have now got used

to sleeping for just three to four hours every night." Raju, another make-up artist adds, "We are just told what the character is, and we not only decide the appropriate make-up but also maintain the continuity sheet." Mohammed complains, "We have seen actors come in walking and leaving in a car. There are actors whose salary is

increased four times by the end of the year, but we get paid the same." Regardless of the poor working conditions, they continue to work because as Jagdish points out, they need the money. And their desensitized nonchalance to their work conditions is more disturbing than their situation.

The light men who are the cornerstones of production, were equally bitter. Wishing to remain anonymous, one of them commented, "So much is dependent on us, but we are never given any credit and there is no peace of mind." Agreeing, another added, "No one is bothered about us. Even when we get hurt people are not concerned. On the other hand, if a star gets a slight cut, almost

**"Our only true friends are the dogs on the roads, who are there when we leave our homes in the morning and when we return late at night."**

everyone is fussing over him.” A senior light man reveals, “As beginners you are paid a mere Rs. 250 for eight hours of non-stop work, but that’s the way this industry works.” Suddenly, the director walks in and without having any lunch the light men are back on the job.



Responsible for the innumerable odd jobs that need to be done, the spot boys are indispensable to any set. Complains Munna, “I do almost everything, from bringing *chai* to calling the actors on the set.” Adds another, “I think we bear the brunt of it all...star tantrums, directors orders - and if anything goes wrong, the first people to be shouted at are us.” Chotu, whose eyes suggest a lack of sleep, complains, “There is no respect for us, there are absolutely no values in this industry. There are times when we work for twenty hours at a stretch. This is a thankless profession.”

Unions are non-existent and protest is out of the question.

They need the job and above all the money. As one of them told us, “This industry is as addictive as nectar: if tasted once, it becomes impossible to leave.”

The pain and stress is etched on their faces, their depression apparent. The long work hours have taken a toll on their physical and mental health.

Credit and more importantly, respect, must be given to these people who work tirelessly just so that we can see thirty minutes of our favourite serial.

**Vidhu Aul**  
**Sarmistha Roy**  
**Garima Kumar**  
**Radhika Gulwadi**

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*The length of a film should be directly related to the endurance of the human bladder.*

*-Alfred Hitchcock*

*Television is the first truly democratic culture - the first culture available to everybody and entirely governed by what the people want. The most terrifying thing is what people do want.*

*- Clive Barnes*

BECAUSE COLD AND COUGH COME IN  
**S, M, L, XL SIZES**



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*Elder*

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# BOMBAY

Whines Whines Whines Whines Whines Whines Whines Whines  
Whines Whines Whines Whines Whines Whines Whines Whines  
Whines Whines Whines Whines Whines Whines Whines Whines

Talking of whines, I wonder why people whine so much, whine about DD, whine about MTNL, whine about the BMC, whine about the railway authorities, whine about the potholed roads and traffic snarls and inefficient postal service and inadequate water supply and escalating prices. So boring. While we are on the subject of whines, why not talk about wines (much more interesting eh?) Better still why not talk about love potions? Love potions... ah... now that brings back memories of childhood, of fairytales, where the prince would go in search of magical love potions that would make his beautiful, unrelenting sweetheart fall in love with him. Then suddenly the wicked witch would appear and try her "evilest" best to separate the lovers.

Well, times haven't changed much. Although the lovers have to do without love potions, they can count on the witch. In the twentieth century, the witch has sent scores of substitutes to make sure young lovers do not meet. Only these substitutes are in the guise of the police in Mumbai. Under the brave and fiery leadership of Pramod Navalkar the police have undertaken the responsibility of separating lovers. They have become the saviours of Mumbai. They risk their lives for us so that we do not go through the sin of seeing two lovers sitting in a park and holding hands.

Holding hands did you say? What Blasphemy! How can people think about doing that? Really, how can they? What utter sin. Look at how hard our noble politicians are trying, trying to divide us. And what are these two sinners in the park doing, holding hands? What's more, they are doing it in public and setting a bad example for other people. If this goes on for long, more and more people are going to fall in love with each other and slowly, love (God forbid!) will prevail. Surely we cannot let this happen. I mean, come on, our politicians thrive on riots and hatred, unrest and disturbances. If love prevails, where will all these things go? What will happen to our noble politicians? They will have to give up their careers (and going by the education of most of them, they will most certainly be incapable of taking up any other career!) Surely we cannot let this happen; surely we cannot be this cruel. We cannot let our politicians reach the point of starvation just because of two sinners who held hands in the park. But don't worry, as I said, the police is here to help.

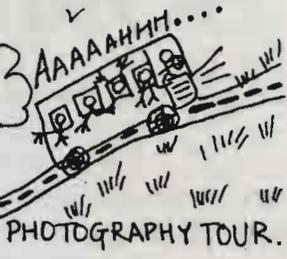
Who said that the Mumbai police always arrive an hour after the crime has been committed? That is not true. Why, just the other day I saw a pair of starry-eyed lovers having coconut water on Worli sea face. Well, no, having coconut water is not a sin but having it from the same coconut with their foreheads almost touching is

most definitely a crime and a grave one at that. But as I said, no cause to worry. Count on the brave *hawaldar*. To go on with the story of the two sinners, there they were, oblivious to the world, sipping nariyal paani from the same coconut. Suddenly, lo & behold! what do they see? A huge *hawaldar*, brandishing his paunch - oops! I'm sorry, brandishing his lathi in front of them. He had taken it upon himself to save humanity from the dangers of love and lovers. There ensued a battle of words, but the pair of sinners was a poor match against the God-fearing, brave hero. The lovers meekly walked away and the hero sauntered off to look for other sinners (and everyone lived happily ever after.)

The good news is that like our hero here, there are hundreds of *hawaldars* who at the break of day, don their uniform and armed, proceed to cleanse the city of lovers. Thank God for small mercies! As for me, I cannot imagine the backwardness of this clan of lovers. Here is the world, on the threshold of a nuclear war and the biggies (like them Americans) as well as the smallies (like us Indians) are playing with nuclear weapons. And here are the sinners still playing with Cupid's bows and arrows. Oh God! When will these wretched people progress!

**Deeba Syed-Parihar**  
**Kanika Vasudeva**  
**Radhika Shastri**

# RATASTHAN

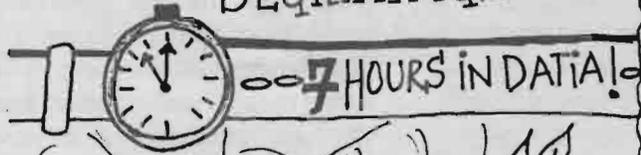


INAUSPICIOUS ☀️

I HAVE TO PEE!! WHERE ARE WE? DATA... AS IN TEETH?



BEGINNINGS



## DILLUSIONS

I SWEAR I SAW A TIGER!!



in RANTHAMBORE!! HOOT!

## SHUTTER-BUGS

CAPTURE A MOMENT! NO TIME TO FOCUS



THEY MAY TAKE OUR LIVES! BUT THEY WILL NEVER TAKE...

OUR CAMERAS!!!

in your stomach...

## Sleepless NIGHTS



[And RUSHED MORNINGS!!]

BY: *Simone*

## Art on a Board

As one enters a movie theatre, consciously or unconsciously, one's attention is immediately drawn to the huge billboards that adorn any cinema hall in the city. Their sheer size and magnitude transport the cine buff to a world where his favourite stars come alive in flamboyant colours that are exquisitely painted. Sadly, this perception, more often than not, ends there. This, despite the fact that M. F. Hussain started out as a billboard artist.

Any movie experience in India is incomplete without that gigantic billboard welcoming us into the world of cinema. Who then is this elusive billboard artist? Welcome to the world of Rehman Bhai who works for Alfred talkies on Mohammed Ali Road. This world however is swiftly disappearing as he talks about the unfortunate trend that plagues this particular genre of art. "There is no demand for us these days. Everything is digitized and to paint by hand is not considered qualitative work anymore."

Rehman Bhai is one of the many who is being forced to give up this art with the advent of technology in this field. Production houses would much rather get their work done with a click of the mouse, than subscribe to this genre of art. Hard-pressed for money, most billboard artists are quick to adapt to this change. Rashid Bhai of Dongri, has now

resorted to creating billboards for theatres [Metro cinema] on the computer. Since Rashid Bhai cannot afford a computer, he has to create his billboards with hired computers. "The companies pay for our expenses anyway. So I really don't mind working on the computer," says Rashid Bhai. His contemporary, Satish Bhai, who owns Elora house in the Fort area also succumbed to the pressures of technology and switched to working on the computer.

Rehman Bhai, however, remains resolute in his decision to keep the dying art alive. He abhors the concept of creating art on a computer. The son of an artist, Rehman Bhai trained under his father. Today, he trains his son, Razak. In fact, he signs all his work in Razak's name. Rehman has his own 'art department', as he calls it, in Alfred talkies itself and spends most of his day there painstakingly drawing and painting the faces of various artists. It takes him approximately two days to just trace them on the canvas and then he brings the sketches alive through his very own array of colours. Totally immersed in what he loves doing, he excitedly explains the process of painting and reveals, "The company gives me a template of what they want on the canvas. After I acquire that I paint it with the help of blocks. It is left to my discretion to colour the foreground and the

background the way I want."

It is tragic to think that Rehman is fighting a losing battle. Rashid Bhai says, "Rehman gets only small banners like Marathi films to paint for. The big banners are all digital." The reality of Rehman's business hits one in the face when things are put in perspective. And yet, his passionate enthusiasm leaves you wondering about the reality of this "digital" situation. With cloth banners and canvas billboards becoming digital, the future for people like Rehman is bleak. Ultimately, it is art itself that suffers.

Other than technological pressures, this art is also surrounded by one's callous negligence of it. Even a mere acknowledgement of this art would probably go a long way in assuring Rehman Bhai that he is at least appreciated. It has been only five to six years since the advent of digitization in this field, but the damage has already been done. Today the billboards we see of the big productions are created digitally.

The most one can do today is to probably wonder about the genius camouflaged behind that computer. Or if one happens to see a small banner production, then wonder which genius is behind that piece of canvas. Just remember that the genius is not hiding but is simply being pushed into oblivion.

**Praveena Shivram**

Balcony

Show Timings:

PRICE:	8:30	PRICE:	(Full)
Rs. 00.00	11:30	Rs. 00.00	
excluding	3:30	excluding	
all taxes		all taxes	

Rated: PG (H. C.)

ROW: SEAT:

Valid only for the show mentioned for. Rights of admission are subject to change. Money will not be refunded under any circumstances.

23 DEC 2002

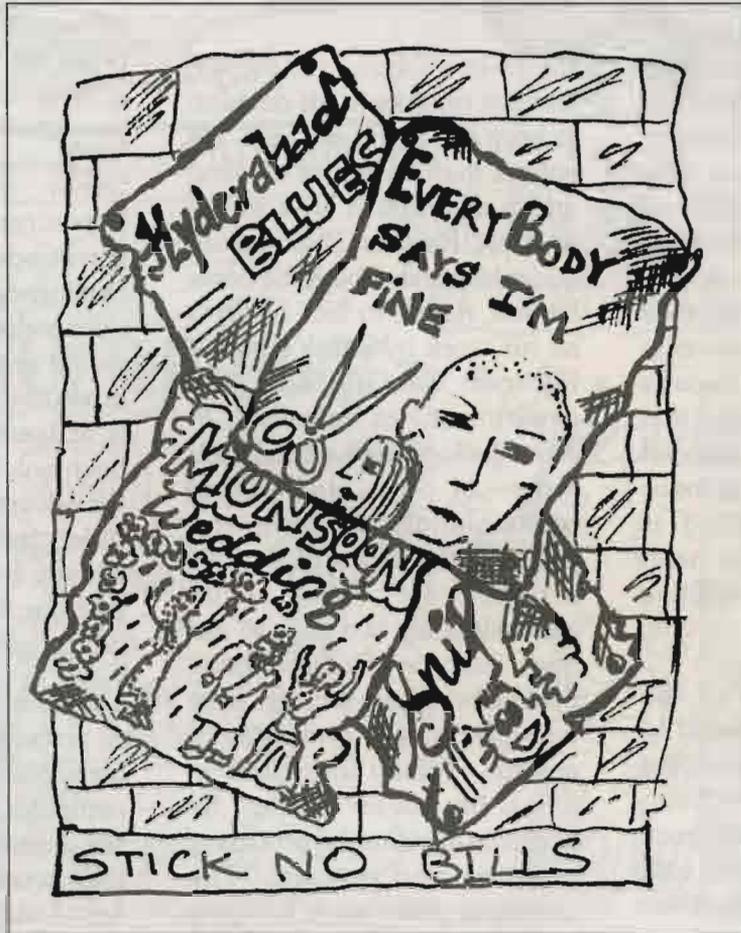
**BOX OFFICE**

A recent flood of independent films — with a Western sensibility, in the English language — is marking a major shift in the Bollywood movie tradition. The trend kicked off in the late '90s, with Nagesh Kukunoor's **Hyderabad Blues**, one of the most successful English language Indian films to date. "These films accelerated the change in audience expectations and redefined the market potential of well-made, offbeat films," reported The Times of India.

Today's new crop of filmmakers focuses on plot and character which reflect the ideas and sensibilities of India's new urbanites. They have drawn up a formula that defies the rules of Bollywood. The subjects that these movies deal with are down-to-earth, unlike the fantasy churned out by

Bollywood. Dev Benegal's **Split Wide Open** dealt with the subject of child prostitution. Mira Nair's **Monsoon**

portrayed. Vasundhara Das, who played the lead in **Monsoon Wedding** comments, "My character was



that of a girl who had her head firmly placed on her shoulders. She admits to her mistakes and is willing to face the consequences." Each individual character is clearly defined and tells a story. The traits of each character are uniquely exotic but true to life. "Most of the characters are taken from personal experiences and everyday life through observing people. The characteristic traits are drawn from the various facets of human existence," says Rahul Bose, Director of **Everybody Says I'm Fine**. It is this

**Wedding** was about the skeletons in the closet of a Delhi-based Punjabi family. The characters are easily identifiable as they are realistically

factor that makes the audience respond to films like **Bombay Boys** and **Bollywood Calling**, films that were written off by critics.

As a rule, Bollywood has always made films in Hindi. However, the degree to which English is being written and spoken in India has increased over the years. More and more independent filmmakers are using English, or 'Hinglish' (a combination of English and Hindi) in their films. The recent popularity of these films proves that English-language films no longer face any barriers in reaching out to the audiences. The filmmakers don't consider it a problem. For them, what seems to be more important is how well the subject is expressed, rather than in what language it is expressed in. "If the film is a good one, then the audience appreciates it whether it's in English, Hindi or any other language," agrees Rahul Bose.

Given the fact that the themes are not those of the run-of-the-mill Hindi films, it might be expected that some of these films face difficulties with the censor boards. For instance, the censor board had a problem with Nagesh Kukunoor's **Hyderabad Blues** as they felt that the word "blue" was suggestive. For Rahul Bose's **Everybody Says I'm Fine** there were two censor cuts. Bose stated that the director is self-censoring while shooting. But there seems to be no animosity towards the censor board. "There has to be governmental censorship in this country, as people don't honour other people's work, leave alone their own." However, one of the young debutant directors, Sunhill Sippy's tussle with the

censor board had graver consequences, as his film **Snip** was heavily censored by the board. He chose not to release the censored version.

Not only does this genre provide much-required variety in an industry flooded with staple Bollywood fare, it is also slowly changing the face of the Indian film industry. From new techniques of filmmaking, rehearsals and sync sound, this new batch of filmmakers is exploring aspects of cinema hitherto untouched by Hindi movies. For instance, the film **Monsoon Wedding** was completed within thirty days. This is unheard of in an industry where a film may take a year to complete. A tight budget is definitely one of the main factors that influences shooting schedules; rigorous rehearsals also help to speed up work. "We rehearsed exhaustively for two weeks before the shooting schedules began. It was great fun and a completely new experience for me," says actor Vasundhara Das, of **Monsoon Wedding** fame. Similarly, for **Everybody Says I'm Fine**, rehearsals took up to forty days.

From the financial angle, these films may make very little profit as they cater to the English speaking audiences, as compared to mainstream Bollywood fare. However, the proliferation of multiplex theatres has opened new avenues. The small fifty-seat cinema halls are perfect for films that cater to smaller audiences. The filmmakers also rely on

overseas distribution and television premieres. The recent interest in Indian culture has made it easier for many young directors to approach big production houses like Columbia Tristar and Twentieth Century Fox who are interested in distribution of these films. This has encouraged many filmmakers to put their films on the international platform not only through film festivals abroad but also through distribution rights.

Today, new releases include Rahul Bose's **Everybody Says I'm Fine**, Sujoy Ghosh's **Jhankar Beats** and Biju Vishwanath's **Déjà Vu**, Aparna Sen's **Mr. And Mrs. Iyer**, Vishal Bharadwaj's **Makdee**, Kaizad Gustad's **Boom** and Pritish Nandy Communications' **Debashish Chatterjee B.A.** Even acclaimed film director Shyam Benegal's latest project, **Deham**, is in English.

Thus, what started off as offbeat cinema in 1981 has slowly gained significance in the Indian film industry. The audience support for such films proves that this genre can no longer be considered embryonic. Gurinder Chadha's **Bend It Like Beckham** and Mira Nair's **Monsoon Wedding** are two successful films that broke barriers in the national and international scenario, proving the popularity of this genre amongst cinemagoers, the world over.

Suvani Singh

# The Story of Rock 'n' Roll

A musical genre does not simply appear; it gradually evolves to a point of time when some event – a performance, publication, or recording allows listeners to perceive its unique qualities or sound. In early times, rock 'n' roll tunes were only recorded by memory, and relayed either live or in person. Recording helped music reach a greater audience and history was never the same.

Rock 'n' roll went through a series of transitions. However, the basic rock 'n' roll form originally evolved from 12-bar blues, which mostly had 'bent-note' melodies. This form was first made popular about 1911-14 by the African American composer W.C. Handy (1873-1958). In the early 1960's, the urban blues performers were 'discovered' by young white American and European musicians like The Rolling Stones, Eric Clapton, The Yardbirds, John Mayall's Bluesbreakers, Cream and Fleetwood Mac, who took rock 'n' roll to a greater audience.

**The basic rock 'n' roll form originally evolved from 12-bar blues, which mostly had 'bent-note' melodies.**

Prior to the end of World War II, a growing teenager was expected to lead a conventional life, get married and have children. Teenagers had limited freedom, not much economic independence and little control in decision-making. In turn, they acted responsibly without demanding freedom as payment. In the '50's, expectations from teenagers had changed. With a booming economy, parents could help provide their children with what they never had. However, most parents expected their offspring to pay for their own education. This economic independence helped teenagers acquire their own radios and TV sets without having to rely on their parents. The result was a mushrooming growth of radio jockeys, disc jockeys and jukebox kids.

Alan Freed first coined the term "Rock 'n' Roll" in 1952 and the name caught on. The music gave teenagers a focus, an outlet of expression. The youth used it to maximum benefit by using influential lyrics to propagate ideas and beliefs. Yet, freedom came with a price and a "generation gap" was formed as teen beliefs, dress, pastimes, social mores and speech patterns differed from the older generation.

The first rock 'n' roll concert was held on March 21 1952 at the

Cleveland Arena (USA). Elvis Presley was the first real rock 'n' roll star. A southerner singing blues laced with country and tinged with country gospel, Presley brought music from both sides of the colour line together. Then came a phenomenon that called themselves "The Beatles". They made rock 'n' roll so

**Alan Freed first coined the term "Rock 'n' Roll" in 1952 and the name caught on. The first rock 'n' roll concert was held on March 21 1952 at the Cleveland Arena (USA)**

popular that at one point of time it seemed the whole world would sound like them. The Woodstock Musical fest was held in 1969 and was seen as a hallmark in the history of rock 'n' roll. This event saw the performance of talented musicians like Jimi Hendrix and Jim Morrison.

This growing popularity also gave rise to the "Flower Power" culture. Critics were outraged by the explicit exhibitionism associated with rock 'n' roll, and the dubious reputation of its icons earned the name, "The Devil's Music". Lyrics such as

**Elvis Presley was the first real rock 'n' roll star. A southerner singing blues laced with country and tinged with country gospel, Presley brought music from both sides of the colour line together.**

“Die, die, die, die, scum sucking depravity” evoked negative reactions from the press. By this time, it had become a fashion to mix drugs with rock 'n' roll.

Since the sixties, rock 'n' roll has undergone several blues revivals. Guitarists like Eric Clapton, Jimmy Page, Jimi Hendrix and Eddie Van Halen used the blues foundation to develop offshoot styles of rock 'n' roll. By the end of the eighties, rock 'n' roll had mutated into many sub-categories like rock, hard rock, heavy metal, etc. In the early nineties, Kurt Cobain from Seattle founded the band Nirvana and another sub-category called “grunge” was introduced to the world. The depressing lyrics and screaming vocals mentioning the darker sides of life like pain, depression, child abuse, etc influenced the youth. Lines like “I can feel it, I can hold it, I can bend it, I can shape it, I can mold it, I can kill it, I can taste it, I can spank it, I can beat it, masturbate it” raised eyebrows among the higher sections of society and journalists alike. By this time the

“Seattle revolution” had caught pace and a legion of musicians started following in Cobain’s footsteps. This popularity drove Cobain into a state of frustration until he decided to take his own life with a bullet. After his death, popular bands like Pink Floyd, The Who, The Doors, etc. have used rock 'n' roll to strongly criticize the system. Lyrics such as “We don’t need any education... teachers leave us kids alone” spoke strongly against the dominating character of teachers.

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**Critics were outraged by the explicit exhibitionism associated with rock 'n' roll, and the dubious reputation of its icons earned the name, “The Devil’s Music”**

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Many people may not approve of rock 'n' roll for its revolutionary and rebellious attitude. But there is no denying that this is one of the most popular forms of music, finding common acceptance, and transcending all boundaries. Another revolution in rock 'n' roll may or may not occur. But as long as the human race will exist, so will rock 'n' roll.

“All the world over so easy to see, people everywhere just wanna be free.” – Rascals.

**Richa Hansraj**



WITH

BEST

WISHES

FROM

IRFAN

PARIWAR



# Lifting the Veil

*"How does it feel to be a secret?  
How does it feel to be invisible?  
How does it feel to be unutterable?  
How does it feel to be forbidden to be?"*

-V. S. (from the poem  
"How Does It Feel To Be A  
'Problem'?")

The questions in these lines seem to be answered in the collection of lesbian writings known as "Facing the Mirror". A path-breaking work, it includes the poems, short stories and diary entries by a number of Indian lesbians. Lesbian writing in India, or more specifically, this book, is intimately related to the lesbian movement. This writing cannot be fully appreciated without the background of the lesbian struggle to be heard, to be understood, and to be allowed to exist in a homophobic, patriarchal society where lesbians live 'between the lines'.

History shows that lesbianism in India has been in evidence for many centuries. Why then, does one not hear more about the lesbian movement in India?

Why are lesbian and for that matter, gay – writers not well known in the plethora of writers that India boasts of? Researcher Gita Thadani points out, that the difficulty in identifying lesbians stems from a deliberate erasure of lesbianism in the distant past,

standards, and withstand the test of time before being called 'literature'. However, as Ashwini Sukthankar, the editor of "Facing the Mirror", says, "...for the purposes of this compilation, 'writing' signifies the gritty imperfect media through which

the body, with its yearning and its suffering, spoke out; the process through which our lives, put into the tangibility of words, could be made public." The book thus fulfills the demands of such a collection, and paves the way for future lesbian writers.



*Stifled voices : Indian lesbian writing*

as evidenced by the mutilation of sculptures depicting lesbian activity. It is thus, certainly a great step forward for the movement for lesbians to have published literature asserting their identity.

However, this does not necessarily constitute literature. Lesbian writing cannot and must not be upheld simply because the author is gay. Writing must meet aesthetic and literary

fears of being 'abnormal', evocative and sometimes gritty accounts of 'first times', adult perceptions of sexuality, and much more. For Naseem, the decision to become a lesbian was more a political than a sexual one. She says, in "Reflections of an Indian Lesbian", "lesbianism is a form of resistance to patriarchy and male oppression, and not just a sexual preference". Sunayna says, "We learn that it's a man

**The difficulty in identifying lesbians stems from a deliberate erasure of lesbianism in the distant past, as evidenced by the mutilation of sculptures depicting lesbian activity.**

who will give us love, security and companionship. No one tells us that we can get all these, and perhaps more, from a woman." ("Closeted in a Triangle")

This recounting of experience contributes toward the breaking down of stereotypes of lesbians as 'dykes' or 'femmes'. On the other hand, sometimes the writers themselves seem to perpetuate stereotypes, namely, that lesbianism is a storehouse of pornography.

Some of the stories and poems included in "Facing the Mirror" are blatantly sexual. Titillating, they use the language of soft and hard pornography. Some argue

that this kind of writing reduces the whole being of lesbianism to sex, and a falling prey to the existing stereotype. Others, however, see this as a taking over of sexual language. By using slang to refer to themselves, they strip the words of demeaning connotation. They are thus not recipients of male pornographic fantasy, but the creators of woman-centred sexual fantasy.

There is no one voice for the collectivity of writings. For some of the contributors, coming to terms with their sexuality involved feelings of being 'abnormal', feelings of guilt and shame. For others, it has meant a release from an unnatural heterosexual relationship, or a smooth, comfortable coming into being, almost as a blossoming of their latent selves. These personal and fictional experiences recounted are important for the insights they provide into the lives and experiences of a largely ignored community. They also reveal the attitudes of people toward lesbians, which range from trying to 'cure' them of their 'disease' to being completely unaware, that anyone they knew could be a lesbian.

It would be myopic to call this book the definitive work of Indian lesbians. At present, however, it is certainly revolutionary in what it attempts to do, which is to share with the public, part of the experience of

**"We learn that it's a man who will give us love, security and companionship. No one tells us that we can get all these, and perhaps more, from a woman."**

being a lesbian in India. While it cannot be hailed as a literary work, it is the first to address an issue, left unspoken for so long. And even if the actual words may fade, Sophie's heartbroken question in "Will I Ever Be Free?" will continue to ring in our minds – "Why can't I be accepted for what I am? When will I be free? Will I ever be free?"

**Jayati Vora**

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*Some books are to be tasted; others swallowed; and some to be chewed and digested.*

*- Francis Bacon*

*A mind once stretched by a new idea never regains its original dimension.*

*- Oliver Wendell Holmes*

# *Under My Sheet of Helplessness*

They murdered the sun yesterday.  
Believe me  
I saw it happen.  
I looked on weak, safe.  
Under my sheet of helplessness.

I could hear the screams,  
the wailing,  
and I saw the shadows looming closer.  
Horrified I looked on.  
From under my sheet of helplessness.

I could hear the heavy rasp  
of my mother's breath as she prayed  
for the longevity of her children  
and tried to cover my eyes  
with the big sheet of helplessness.  
I knew she cringed within.

This sheet was the legacy of her mother.  
And her mother before her.  
And her mother before her.  
And was to be mine,  
to be preserved  
and passed on to my daughter.

All my friends have  
family sheets of helplessness  
benevolent sheets  
bequeathed us  
by generations of mothers.  
We find solace and comfort here,  
under these we spend our dreary nights.

I remember the time  
when the sun was still alive.  
Mother would teach us  
to embellish our sheet  
and mend the gashes  
made by the struggle of some wanton,  
misguided daughter.

With deft strokes we would stitch,  
under the loving watchful gaze of my father.

And now  
you come along,  
imploping me to take off my sheet,  
to "stand up and speak."

Now  
that I have mastered  
the art of silence,  
you tempt me to use  
my vocal chords.

I cannot do it.

This sheet is my sanctuary.

**Deeba Syed-Parihar**



# THE UNIVERSE AT LARGE

Curiosity and passion drove men to cross the oceans and find new worlds. Curiosity and passion still drive men to search the great frontiers of space for land and life above and beyond. Are there other solar systems and other 'Earth's? Are we alone? Once considered heretic thoughts, they now fuel work in Astrophysics.

Artists and writers have entertained wild speculations about other worlds. Movies like Star Wars, Star Trek, E.T., etc. all reflect our basic curiosity and belief that we are not alone in this universe. The Drake Equation formalizes this belief by putting it into the language of probability.

$$N = R^* F_p N_e F_1 F_i F_c L$$

If an event has to occur we need to know the required conditions. Hence, if we need to find the number of detectable intelligent civilizations (N) we need to know the rate at which stars like our sun are formed ( $R^*$ ) and the fraction of these which have planets ( $F_p$ ) and the number of planets per solar system hospitable to life ( $N_e$ ) and the fraction of planets where life emerges ( $F_1$ ) and the fraction which give rise to intelligent life ( $F_i$ ) and the fraction of these planets on which inhabitants develop interstellar means of communication ( $F_c$ ) and the

length of time that such civilizations continue to communicate (L).

For centuries astronomers have known that there are other stars and galaxies in our Universe.  $R^*$  is once a year on an average. These stars could act like a Sun for other planets. However these planets have been playing hide and seek with astronomers for too long. Finally, as if now ready to show themselves, they are being discovered faster than ever before. Like pieces of a jigsaw puzzle they are slowly falling into place, shattering some of our earlier beliefs and simultaneously creating new understandings.

Planet hunting is like trying to find a candle which sits right next to a billion-candle power searchlight aimed straight at your face, 500 miles away-- the glare of it's parent star (like our sun) would be too overwhelming. Hence astrophysicists began looking for planets indirectly. As a planet orbits its sun, it tugs on the star by means of its gravity.

Astrophysicists look for this 'wobble', created in a star's path to detect a planet. However, our largest planet, Jupiter creates a wobble in the sun so small that if we were sitting on our nearest star trying to detect it, it would be like trying to observe and measure the apparent thickness of a human hair from two miles. Imagine the degree of accuracy required to measure the wobble created by an earth-like planet.



*An artist's rendition of a planetary system*

Beside the Solar system's nine planets, presently there are 101 additions to this new society we call the Universe. Most of the planets found are similar to Jupiter. However, we are looking for Earth-like planets which as yet are simply too small to detect. Our closest neighbor is more than 60000000000 times as far as New York is from Mumbai.

We are in a better position to determine  $F_p$  but  $N_e$  is still

vague. The clincher is The Terrestrial Planet Finder (TPF), which would finally photograph our neighbors directly! It will be able to analyze the planet's light and even search their atmospheres for telltale signs of life. All speculations on extra-terrestrial life is restricted to 'life as we know it'. Although there might be various types of intelligent life forms in the universe, it would be unrealistic to discuss and search for any other than that which we know and understand.

This type of life requires certain chemistry and temperature range and it alters its environment. There is an important region within a planetary system where water exists in the liquid form, called the 'habitable zone'. The planet's size, distance from parent star, ability to capture and retain heat and the time for which it lies in this zone, affect the habitable zone.

Ever since Drake formulated his equation, searching for aliens

has become highly scientific. It has meant years of waiting and listening without any realistic outcome. The fact is we do not know whether aliens exist. If they do, we do not know

different apperceptive backgrounds and technology. As the Fermi's Paradox says, "If extra-terrestrials exist, where are they?"

We must remember that every answer to every question is based on only one example of a living, advanced civilisation – our own. We have no tools to reject the existence of advanced extraterrestrials nor do we have any evidence to support the argument. Though even the most conservative estimates of the Drake Equation suggest that there are at least  $N=L$  i.e. 100,000 other civilisations, the fact remains that a number even close to zero would mean that we are essentially alone in this vast Universe.

But as Italian physicists, Cocconi and Morris said, "The probability of success is difficult to estimate, but if we never search, the chance for success is zero."

~ Querida Anderson



whether they are trying to communicate with us. If they are, we might not even recognize them because of

Sometimes I think the surest sign that intelligent life exists elsewhere in the universe is that none of it has tried to contact us.

- Bill Watterson (Calvin and Hobbes)

# A Stolen Night

He has eyes only for Tara. Her own glitter like stars, living up to her name. The diamond studs in her ears glint when teased by soft tungsten light that fill up the restaurant. Her throat is a long arch, made longer each time she throws her head back and laughs. The black stole wrapped around her neck is a gift from him. So is that perfume that she wears. Its hint brings back intimate memories. He is mesmerised as never before.

Wiping a tissue across her moist lips, she says, "It was a beautiful evening. I wish we could do this more often."

"We could, only if you had the time to spare," is his matter-of-fact response.

She looks hurt. If he could, he would bite his tongue. It is too precious, this time with her. Why does he have to spoil it like this?

"It's you who spent the last five months in London, not me."

So he has. Five unbearably long months without her. At times, he has missed her so much that it has become a physical ache. "I'm sorry, that was unfair. I know it's not your fault."

She smiles. He breathes. Things are okay again.

"I so wish this evening could go on and on forever. You know, like in the old days..."

The spark of mischief in her eyes is unmistakable.

"It doesn't have to end, you know." He places his hand upon hers on the table.

She sits still, watching him watch her.

He ignores the shadow of worry that crosses her face. Pulling her hand closer, he whispers, "Stay with me."

"I can't.... you know we can't... He's waiting for me."

"So let him.... it's not the first time. And it's not going to be the last."

The temptation is strong.

Yet, "But we can't take advantage of him like this..."

"It's not like he doesn't know...please. We need to be together. Alone." He holds onto the hand that she tries to free.

"But the baby needs to be changed...he doesn't know how to do that."

"He'll learn. He was the one who wanted it anyway.... Come on, it's been too long. I miss you."

He knows he has won, even before she replies, "Alright. But just this one night.... I'll make up some excuse."

He smiles triumphantly. "Alright. Now let's dance..."

As they dance, Tara smiles at her husband. "Are you sure your father won't mind staying up this late, to take care of the baby?"

He smiles into the eyes that he has longed to look into. "Why would he? He loves being with her. And he knows what this evening means to us...Happy anniversary, darling."

**Devayani Srivastava**

"No foreign newspaper or periodical should in future be permitted to be published in India. Newspaper and periodicals, which deal(t) with mainly news and current affairs should not be allowed to bring out Indian editions", decided the Union Cabinet under the leadership of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, on September 13 1955. This decision was reversed on June 25 2002 when the BJP government announced 26% foreign direct investment in print media. This has changed the

## FDI in Print Media

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Editors of major news magazines and dailies like Aron Purie of India Today, Shekhar Gupta of Indian Express and Narendra Mohan of Dainik Jagran have supported this disinvestment policy. They emphasize that in this era of communication revolution one must accept the political and economic inadequacies in our society and open our economy to foreign capital investment.

Dr. Aron Tikekar, the editor of Loksatta expresses his deep concern on this issue. He declares that the print medium is a serious business, which depends on economic stability and credibility. Only 23% of all advertisements accrued to mass

media go to print. He states that the current trend in print media is that the papers with the largest circulation incur the greatest losses, because the cost of production is very high and the papers have to be sold at extremely nominal rates. He reasons that merely opening the economy will not attract investors, "Nobody has come forward to invest in the last three months." He therefore feels that the investment will have to be increased to 49%. This, he claims, will enable some small newspapers to survive, although finally, only one or two will exist. He feels that the ownership issue is divorced from management control; therefore the fear of

**"When the tribals die of hunger, the so-called big newspapers report 'Miss Worlds'."**

people like Murdoch taking over print media is superfluous. "The big newspapers", says he, "have always had a monopoly, and papers like Eanadu, that are against FDI get their funds from the South-Indian film city. Therefore, they have no right to complain."

Mr. Nikhil Wagle, proprietor and editor of Mahanagar points out

**"We did not fight the freedom struggle for 150 years so that after 55 years of independence, we invite imperial powers to rule us again."**

that it does not make any difference to small newspapers like his if the print media is liberalized. He further states that the argument about outsiders being able to pollute our culture is ludicrous. "The Times Of India has polluted our culture with its page 3 of Bombay Times. If we ourselves can contribute to the degeneration of our culture, why shouldn't outsiders?", says he. He asserts that People like Sameer Jain and Vivek Goenka have always exploited small newspapers and that their fight is not going to be any different, just that the black Murdoch will change into a white one. He dismisses the fear of only one or two regional newspapers surviving economic liberalization of the print media. He insists, "Journalists like me will always be a requisite in this society. When the tribals die of hunger, the so-called big newspapers report 'Miss Worlds'. Our readers from lower

classes are loyal and definitely relate to papers that cover their woes, than that of the affluent". He finally asserts that the small and medium newspapers have contributed to social change and will survive FDI.

The Editor's Guild, The All India Newspaper Editors' Conference, The Times Of India, Hindustan Times, The Hindu and other organizations, treat the proposal for FDI as a violation of the Constitution. They firmly state that the Constitution reserves Freedom of Speech and Expression (ART.19, IPC) for Indian citizens alone. Therefore any indulgence by a foreigner, either directly or indirectly, in any form of free expression, could be considered as a breach of the Constitution.

Mr. Madhu Shetye, former Municipal Councillor and a veteran journalist derides FDI in print media. He says, "We did not fight the freedom struggle for 150 years so that after 55 years of independence, we invite imperial powers to rule us again." He expresses his concern for mergers of established organisations due to which small newspapers might cease to exist. He affirms that the relationship between a foreign investor and an Indian

proprietor or editor can never be that of equals, like that of the relationship between a Dollar and a Rupee.

Mr. Shetye feels that it will be difficult to maintain the purity of multi-religious and multi-ethnic cultures of India with the introduction of FDI. "These politicians, like Manmohan Singh, since their exposure in

**It is crucial to note that countries like China and Russia, who have liberalized their economies, have not liberalized their news media.**

the Bofors scam, want to curb the freedom of press. We have now witnessed how Sushma Swaraj has strategically changed her decision within four months (March-June), after their exposure in Gujarat," he remarks. He explains that the eastern European countries have been bought over by the highly speculative capital of the West. If they withdraw their capital later the whole economy will collapse. It is like borrowing from the World Bank in terms

of compound interest and by the end of 4 years, there is debt trap. When asked to comment on the views of papers like The Indian Express, he says, "The Indian Express Management are traitors!"

It is crucial to note that countries like China and Russia, who have liberalized their economies, have not liberalized their news media. The headlines of the Economic Times (September) states, "FDI to be curbed from neighbours," and "Chinese programmers in Bangalore suspected to be commissioned by the Taliban."

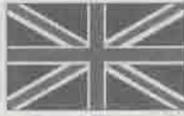
So, do we offer FDI in print medium only to the West? There is a lack of resources, but it is not an exclusively print phenomenon. The laws pertaining to liberalization are unclear and unavailable to the masses. All government functioning is already obscure; therefore a pact between foreign organizations and the Indian government is definitely a matter of grave concern for the citizens. All business is a risk. But FDI in print medium does not seem like a risk but a gross error that has already been committed in the electronic medium.

**Megha Subramanian**

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The media's the most powerful entity on earth. They have the power to make the innocent guilty and to make the guilty innocent, and that's power. Because they control the minds of the masses.

- Malcolm X



## WEST AHOY!



Prashant Sarin, an engineer from the Delhi School of Engineering, aspired to pursue his MBA from the Indian Institute of Management, Kolkata. But his academic career did not stop there. Awarded the prestigious Rhodes scholarship in 2002, he headed for the Said Business School, Oxford to study for an M.Litt in Management Studies. When asked whether he has plans to return to India after his sojourn abroad, he candidly replies, "I would like to work on my doctoral thesis at Harvard or some other Business School in America."



Prashant's is not an isolated case. Thousands of Indian students head abroad each year to pursue their academic and professional goals and United States of America, the United Kingdom, Canada and Australia head the list. Each year, the growing number of scholarships in every field facilitates this steady flow of migrants. For most aspiring students, Prashant's career path is a dream come true. Statistics

reveal that eight out of every ten management graduates and postgraduates dream of admission to international business schools. Only a handful ever come back to India.

But this is not a phenomenon restricted to the management graduates or students from the general streams of humanities, science and commerce. Working professionals readily give up their jobs and courses in the hope of securing a vocational scholarship, especially from institutes in England.

Sayoni Basu, a journalism student at the Indian Institute of Mass Communication, New Delhi, states, "I am using this one year diploma course as my sixteenth year of education. Having already appeared for the GRE, I intend to apply for the media courses at the London School of Communication next year."

The international exposure, well-integrated and easy-to-use facilities, excellent job prospects abroad, a comfortable life and most importantly, ready sources of funding seem to lure these youngsters. Gaurav Gupta, a student at the Xavier Labour Relations Institute, Jamshedpur, gives us some insight on this issue. He says, "A lot of us look at scholarships as equivalent to a job. Some of the scholarships like the Rhodes and Inlaks leave

you with large savings at the end of course. So what better way than to study what you feel passionately about and get paid for it?"

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**Statistics reveal that eight out of every ten management graduates and postgraduates dream of admission to international business schools. Only a handful ever come back to India.**

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Education fairs and career counselling sessions organised by the British Council and the United States Education Foundation in India allow young students to make informed choices about their future. Another boon to the student community is the rapid growth of centres offering coaching for examinations such as GRE and GMAT. An informal survey conducted by these correspondents at a popular college in Mumbai revealed that out of 30 students interviewed, 18 wanted to head for America in a year or two. Moreover, not every applicant is academically brilliant or an outstanding achiever. It is generally the average student who sees greener pastures for himself/herself away from the 'cut-throat

competition' at home. According to a report titled, 'Open Doors', an annual study on international educational exchange conducted by the Institute of Educational Exchange, a staggering 3,11,000 Indian students have gone to the US for higher studies during the last decade. This makes India one of the leading suppliers of brain power to the USA.

Such deep disillusionment with regard not only to education but also job prospects can in the long run only adversely affect the country's economy. India loses approximately two billion US dollars annually due to the migration of computer professionals to the US alone. The figure appears mind-boggling, especially when one considers that the average cost of educating each one of them is nearly fifteen to twenty

thousand US dollars.

Yet, can the Indian education system be completely

**Steeped in a post-colonial hangover, are we simply looking for affirmation from the West?**

jettisoned? "No," says Kaushik Roy, a scholar at the Teen Murti Bhavan, New Delhi. "Pursuing an academic career is not difficult in India. Yes, funds are not easily available, but the standard of education is definitely higher than that in America or the United Kingdom." He cites this as a reason why Indian students abroad usually excel in their fields. The Indian Institutes of Technology, Indian Institutes of

Management, Xavier Labour Relations Institute and even colleges such as St. Stephen's College, Delhi and Presidency College, Kolkata are on par with international institutes.

It is the steadily rising influx of multinational corporations that has tilted the balance in favour of the latter. Aspirations of working for MNCs have resulted in a mad scramble for foreign degrees which give job applicants an added edge.

Steeped in a post-colonial hangover, are we simply looking for affirmation from the West? It is too late to sit back and objectively analyse the situation. Dramatic changes need to be made in all spheres or our intellectual capital will be irrevocably lost. The brain drain will continue...

**Shalinee Chowdhury  
Purnima Raghunath**

*With  
best wishes  
from*

**A WELL WISHER**

# All About Love

When your lover's kiss  
Reeks of coffee,  
You should realise that  
Your love has become  
Just another habit.

**Remya Abraham**



## A Stranger's Smell

The smell of sweat,  
ripe, in waves,  
rising to envelop me,  
emanating from the hairy armpits  
of the stranger  
who will go home at night  
with the unwashed scent  
of dried sweat clinging to his skin  
which a woman will lick off  
with great delicacy

Don't share with me  
unmasked-for images  
I don't want any part  
In that most personal of things  
-your smell  
the thing which separates you  
from all the other animals

Smell  
tells all.  
And I exchanged smells  
with a stranger on the bus.

I turned my eyes away,  
suddenly uncomfortable.

**Jayati Vora**





On

the

## Beaten Track

Deepali Anwekar is a 21 year-old student of medicine at Virar Medical College, Mumbai. She hopes to be a successful physician some day. Lately, she has been busy with preparations for her forthcoming exams. Deepali is an international level squash player and a national level swimmer.

The story of women sportspersons giving up sports to pursue conventional careers is a common one. Deepali, the representative of India at the Asian Women and the World Junior squash championships, the national champion in swimming for the year 2000-01 and subsequently the runner up in 2001-02, would love to continue with squash. But in the battle between financial independence and the passion for the game, the former wins. Though Deepali practices when she can, her skill is on the slide. She does not have a choice. "Sport is too low-paying a career for me to support myself," says Deepali.

The main source of remuneration for a player is prize money. Sponsorships for travel and equipment are another source of income. For those who excel in their field, endorsements are the bonus. It does not take much effort to discover who has the lion's share

of all bonuses. The media have perpetuated the enshrinement of cricket and therefore funds for most other sports are negligible. While a male cricketer earns Rs. 2.5 lakh as match fee itself, the national women's squash champion wins no more than Rs. 25,000 and the national women's swimming champion earns nothing more than the trophy!

The unequal media coverage adds to the inequality in sponsorships and endorsements. Priscilla Fernandes, captain of the women's basketball team that played at the Asian Games of 1982, recalls, "I won the title of Miss ABC at the Asian Basketball Championships held at Tokyo in 1981. The title is equivalent to, say, a "man of the series" title in a game of cricket. Yet, I received an extremely cold response which was very disappointing." Today, an employee of State Bank of India, she lives in a modest apartment at Borivli, a suburb of Mumbai.

Not only is the income inadequate, a sports career entails early retirement as well. It is easy to see why players quit even before they have reached their prime. In fact, numerous obstacles exist at the entry level itself.

Sports facilities are limited and expensive. Priscilla remembers how she had to travel 32 kms every day. "There weren't too many clubs that had any good facilities. I used to go to the Good Council Club as it organised a number of league games with clubs throughout India which allowed for better exposure and experience." The same pattern exists for other games. Squash facilities in Mumbai are limited and access is available to only those who have the funds to take up expensive private memberships

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**While a male cricketer earns Rs. 2.5 lakh as match fee itself, the national women's squash champion wins no more than Rs. 25,000 and the national women's swimming champion earns nothing more than the trophy!**

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in clubs. Fortunately, in a very recent development, the Squash Racket Association of Maharashtra (SRAM) has opened a facility at the Andheri Sports Complex. Swimming fares have decreased, as more municipal pools are now

available. However, the fact remains that those able to fund their own training get better facilities – another privilege that only a select few can access and afford to pay for.

MID-DAY



*Deepali Anvekar in full stretch during the women's final against Mekhala Subedar in the CCI Western India Squash tournament.*

Even at international level participation, funding is inadequate. Netball player Kalpana Yadav says, "In netball, the players fund themselves. I had to give Rs. 35,000 to represent India. The fact that I had to pay shows how concerned the government is." Needless to say, she is pursuing an alternate career opportunity and expects to give up the sport in another two years.

State apathy is reflected not only in the dearth of facilities but also in the selection process. Aashyita Byotra, a national level skating and basketball player says, "A number of people enter the team through questionable means and not because they are actually good players. There is discrimination and bias in the system." Thus, even if the sportswoman beats the odds and succeeds in training and funding herself, she may find

that a less deserving candidate has replaced her. The insecurity of a sports career is no competition to a steady job.

Another barrier to taking up sports in India is that education and not sports, is given primary importance. "While some schools and families encourage their children to take up a game seriously, the total scenario is not positive," says Deepali. For women who do break the barrier and enter the arena, marriage often rings the death knell. It is ironic that Indian culture during ancient times encouraged the participation of women in sports. They excelled in sport and the art of self-defense, and were active participants even in games like cock fighting, quail-fighting and ram-fighting.

As in other spheres, women are given a raw deal in sports. A classic example is the reaction of officials at a recent meeting where the Sports Minister met all the national federations' chiefs. The dismal form of the men's hockey team prior to the Champions Trophy was being discussed. A suggestion made at this meeting was, "In case the men's team fails to repeat the success of the women's team, then they should give up the astro-turf facilities at the Dhyan Chand National Stadium for the women." The question one needs to ask is why the system discriminates between the sexes; why providing opportunities to a woman is a second alternative.

**Anuja Byotra  
Jotica Sehgal  
Shyma Rajgopal**



With  
best wishes

from



A

WELL

WISHER



# Once Upon a T-shirt



**C**omfortable, casual and always in style, the T-shirt has often been defined as a universal "fashion" statement. It can be traced back to the 20th century, when, during World War I, American soldiers noticed that the European soldiers were wearing comfortable, cotton undershirts during the hot, humid summer

days. This concept quickly caught on with the Americans. Due to their simple design they became known as "T-shirts" and their popularity has since spread far and wide. By the 1920's, "T-shirt" became an official word in the English language and was included in the Merriam-Webster Dictionary.

Known so far as an undergarment, it soon made its way to the silver screen when Hollywood actors like Marlon Brando, James Dean and John Wayne sported the T-shirt in films. Most will remember the handsome James Dean making the T-shirt a contemporary symbol of rebellious youth in his film, **Rebel Without a Cause**.

**FREE!**

Buy one,  
get one free!

**Hurry...** cut out this coupon for a **FREE Tantra Woman T-Shirt** at any of the 3 dealers mentioned below.

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ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

TEL: \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

**OFFER ONLY AT:**

① **TANTRA** at Narisons (Colaba, Opp. Police Stn. Tel: 22020614) ② **PRAKRITEE** (Lokhandwala, Tel: 26312274) ③ **TANTRA SHOP** (Mahakali Caves, Tel: 28378477)

NOTE: OFFER VALID FOR UPTO 6 T-SHIRTS PER DEALER ONLY. HENCE, PLEASE RUSH!



"Woman, I love you forever."

(John Lennon)



In the 60's, people began to tie-dye and screen-print the basic white cotton T-shirt, making it an even bigger commercial success. Variations soon came into fashion – the tank top, muscle shirt, scoop and V-neck, to name a few. Not to be outdone, India too adopted this simple design. However, for a long time the only brands available were American. When one thinks of an Indian brand, a single name comes to mind: Tantra.

Tantra is India's very own T-shirt brand and not surprisingly its base line is, "India on a T-shirt!" Mr. Rajiv Ramchandani is the brain behind Tantra. Mr. Ramchandani, who worked in an advertising agency as a junior writer, believed that as a field, advertising did not explore the entire realm of creativity. He wanted to communicate messages to people and what better way to do this than on the world's favourite garment? He believes that he is more connected to the public than any

advertising agency can be, as people all over the world appreciate Tantra T-shirt designs. According to him Tantra is "First-World creativity at Third-World prices!" 'Why India?' one may ask. "Why not?" counters Mr. Ramchandani. "India has a culture over 5000 years old, which is both interesting and unique."

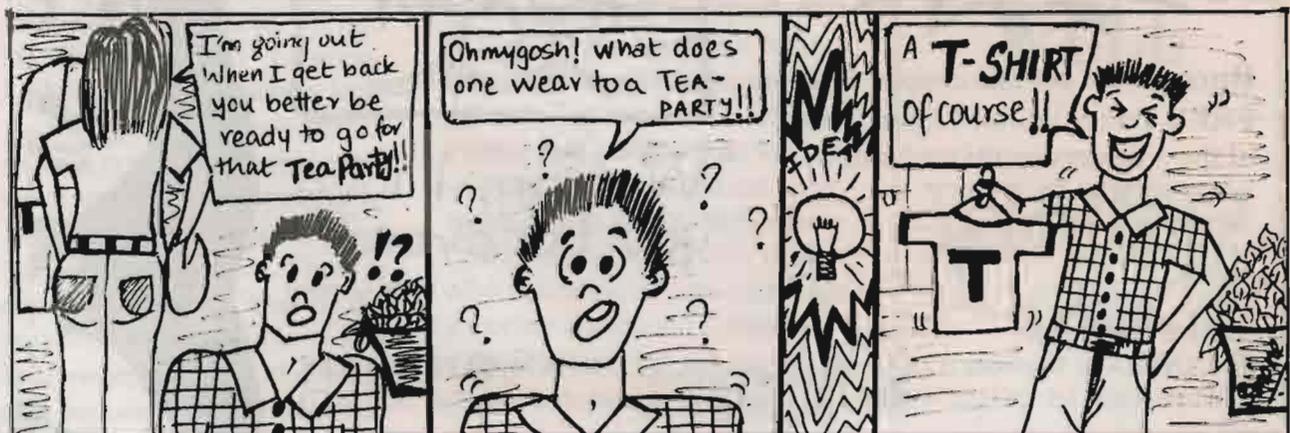
Culture and religion are the two most important factors in Indian society. It is therefore extremely interesting to note that in this culture, that is so obsessed with the Sanskritisation and Hinduisation of values and attitudes, people sported bright orange T-shirts with messages during the *Ganpati* celebrations. The T-shirt, being the quintessential symbol of American fashion, is now so much a part of our lives, that although there are frequent and vehement protests against Westernisation, people don't realise that every time they don

a T-shirt, they are also contradicting themselves.

These simple garments are loved and appreciated by all. Aamir, a 14-year-old, wears T-shirts to go for tuitions. Deepika, an 18-year-old, wears her favourite T-shirt to bed at night while Nigel, 40, wears T-shirts for a casual Saturday at the office.

They make T-shirts to fit babies, adults and sometimes even dogs! Faded, tight, frayed, torn, crumpled or ironed - wear it how you will, one thing is certain – the T-shirt has come a long way from being just another undergarment. It is now the most popular choice of clothing for almost all casual occasions. The messages on T-shirts have brought life to the concept of wearing one's attitude and have transcended even those with ease and casual style!

**Simone Patrick  
Seher Latif**



# Many Mails Ago

Many mails ago –  
Strangers, acquaintances at best.

Netscape/Internet Explorer <click-click>  
Yahoo/Rediff  
Inbox <click>  
Reply <click>  
<type-type-type>

Intoxicating e-correspondence –  
A cocktail of word and mood  
<sip-sip-type-type>  
August to June –  
Curiosity to bonding  
<click-click>  
<slap-slap-wink> ...LOVE!

Crash Boom Bang  
A hung screen  
“ \_ ” <minimize>

Many mails ago –  
Me? A novice.  
Today? Thankful-I type faster.

**Seher Latif**





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**new petrol**

**that continuously**

**energises**

**your vehicle.**



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