

PROTEST AND POP CULTURE



Disclaimer: All opinions mentioned in The Paper Crane are not the beliefs of the IJPSL, but that of the author.

INTRODUCTION

Our mortal world changes each day- and we change it more than anyone or anything else. Everyday, we are bombarded with content that we create. Needless to say, the digital world (and beyond!) transforms, and determines, even, how we perceive, are perceived, and most notably, act. Art can take multiple shapes and forms, ready to be interpreted and received in infinite ways. Each interpretation changes the world around us, and these transformations are both tangible and intangible. Bob Dylan, Nirvana, Bollywood, Orwell's 1984 and the like are relevant examples.

This issue of The Paper Crane explores the specific intersection of art, pop-culture and protest. To commemorate womanhood this International Women's Day, themes of feminism are latticed with resistance in the featured pieces. In its own right, each aspect of this issue is a change-catalyser, yet they often work in unison to yield the most impact. Read on to know more about events at the IJPSL related to this thematic area and to expose yourself to some food for thought from our contributors!

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IMPACT REPORT

Global Protest Tracker via Carnegie Endowment for International Peace

OVER
230

SIGNIFICANT ANTI-GOVERNMENT PROTESTS HAVE ERUPTED WORLDWIDE.

MORE THAN
110

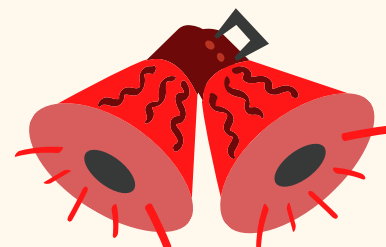
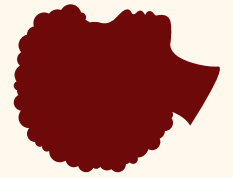
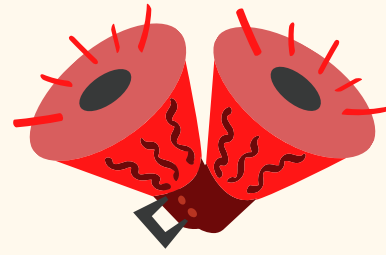
COUNTRIES HAVE EXPERIENCED SIGNIFICANT PROTESTS.

OVER
25

SIGNIFICANT PROTESTS HAVE BEEN DIRECTLY RELATED TO THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC.

78%

OF AUTHORITARIAN OR AUTHORITARIAN-LEANING COUNTRIES HAVE FACED SIGNIFICANT PROTESTS.



FOOD FOR THOUGHT

*by Utkarsha Jagga,
Counselling Psychologist*

It's an opportune time to look back and reflect. Last year, while atrocities on students were taking place in Delhi, students across the country stood up for justice.

I guess that's the beauty of revolution and protest! Protests, resistance, and keeping a check on the power structures reinstates the idea of democracy that we have been taught. Hence, they are extremely important!



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SHUSH- SOMETHING SHAMEFUL

*by Angelina Florence Shicil
Student, St.Stephen's College, University of Delhi*

The ghastly dates left her in glee,
And the pain came without delay-
Greater than any other but none did know,
She discharged her duties without a woe.

A pad wrapped in newspapers;
No discussing the pangs and such;
Shush, it's a secret! -
Lessons from her childhood months.

Is there a red stain behind?
Can't stand the mockery-
What if the boys see?
Ah, thoughts in her head since the wake of teenage.

People, o people!
Is it unlawful or a disgrace
To talk about periods and pangs?
A curse on womanhood-
Or a mere normal way?

Listen, o' people!
Share this with those who don't bleed
Let them know your pangs,
Let them know a pad and the blood aflame,
This isn't a secret- this is no shame.





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PATRIARCHY AND POP-CULTURE

by Reet Singh

Student, Seth Anadram Jaipuria School, Kanpur

Entertainment plays an important role in society. I believe, apart from entertaining us, the stakeholders involved possess some social responsibilities. Many people derive inspiration from the content they consume- some go so far as to emulate the reel life in their real lives. In light of this, the entertainment industry should remain very careful about the content it produces.

We have all grown up watching Bollywood movies; herein, the representation of women has always been marred by patriarchy. Historically, women have been portrayed as inferior, fragile, and financially dependent on men. While watching patriarchal content, we seldom realise how sexist portrayals of women and men shape impressionable minds and instil prejudices in us. Bollywood churns out problematic movies and songs repeatedly. Perhaps this is one of the contributing factors to Patriarchy in the Indian society.

For the past few years, deliberation around women in Bollywood has intensified- particularly since leading actors like Kangana Ranaut, Anushka Sharma, Vidya Balan, Priyanka Chopra and Sonam Kapoor began raising their voices against sexism.

Reese Witherspoon at Glamour's 2015 Women of the Year Awards said, "I dread reading scripts that have no women involved in their creation because inevitably I get to that part where the girl turns to the guy, and she says, "What do we do now?!" Do you know any woman in any crisis situation who has absolutely no idea what to do? I mean, don't they tell people in crisis, even children, "If you're in trouble, talk to a woman." It's ridiculous that a woman wouldn't know what to do." Reese is a Hollywood actress, but sadly, the same trend prevails in Indian cinema as well.

Some have argued that rap artists- especially in American rap music- use misogynistic lyrics and portrayals of women as ways to assert their masculinity or to demonstrate their authenticity as rappers. The extent of sexism and outright misogyny in hip-hop is so pervasive that it triggers categorical dissent from American pop-culture feminists. This is just the tip of the iceberg- these are deep-rooted issues that we need to address and redress at the earliest.



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JOURNAL FEATURES

Fast Fashion: A Testimony on Violation of Environmental and Human Rights

Sartorial culture often makes an appearance in mass resistance, and of course, clothes- especially those by fast fashion brands- feature pop culture symbols and icons. In our IIIrd Issue, Neha Aggarwal and Chinmay More wrote extensively about how a rise in fast fashion has led to increased waste, low wages and gender-based violence against women employees. They have studied the Zara-Inditex model in the paper and the ways in which these fast fashion brands have tackled the aforementioned environmental, labour and human rights issues.

Impact of Witch-Hunting on Feminism and Legitimacy of Donald Trump's Politics

Written by Anjani Chadha and Lakshita Narang, the paper explores in detail the contemporary prevalence of rampant witch-hunting in Trump-ruled-US, which has targeted women from various walks of life. It has constantly attacked feminism, women's rights, identity, and women's agency in society. The United States has seen a rise in the number of women's marches and feminist groups. The presence of these protests is felt in pop culture too- people have been using art, music and tv shows in popular outcry against Trump's witch-hunting.

EVENT REPORT

On February 26, 2020, the IJPSL hosted a webinar with Dr. Rajarshi Dasgupta. In a stimulating conversation topped with anecdotes and wit, the IJPSL community dissected the interplay of pop-culture, protest and art with professor Dasgupta. Here are some key highlights from the discussion-

- The interplay of pop-culture and protest is the outcome of a long historical process catalysed by the use of mass media.
- The idea of a culture of protest was earlier limited to the enlightened minority that fulfilled the role of public intelligentsia. During the 1960s, pop culture became prominent as a global phenomenon.
- What was pop culture in the West was considered high and elite culture in most parts of the Indian subcontinent.
- Today, the content of protest is more fluid, comprising memes, WhatsApp forwards, video fragments, etc. This has brought much more people in the ambit of political conversation, especially the rural demographic.

Call for Entries!

Next issue, The Paper Crane hovers around topics of sustainability, green consumerism, clean lifestyles and minimal waste.

Send in your entries:

Short opinion pieces, thought snippets, poems, book and film reviews (200 words) and artwork or photographs now!

prandoutreach.ijpsl@gmail.com

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