



March Issue

The Spirit Month

Letter from the Editor -

This month, the student council came up with an idea to engage students and teachers from both middle and senior school into spirit building activities. This month we didn't only engage in dress up days but also indulge in various other activities, to celebrate the spirit of spring. Grade 11, had a lot in their plates when some of them, being a part of the student council, were not only involved in the events lined up, but also, had their Summative cycle to focus on. This was the main point of attention for students this month, with which they learnt something new, discovered more about themselves, voiced their opinions and gained a better understanding of their own interests.

Overall, this month has been about working ahead of time to ensure that we meet the deadlines.

Happy Reading!

Prachi Sharma & Chitrali Tewari



Portrayal of the Punk Subculture, Islam and Stereotypes by Media

In a defining moment for punk Islam in Pakistan, a controversial documentary film called “The Taqwacores: The Birth of Punk Islam”, directed by Eyad Zayra and based on the novel by

written by Michael Muhammad Knight was screened at the Lahore's National College of Arts. The documentary experiments with merging mohawks, feminists, gays, skateboards, porn magazines, beer in the fridge, parties, stoners, sex, graffiti, punk with Friday prayer meetings, Allah, religion, and burqas; basically the most unorthodox collision one would not even fathom. Knight who coined the term “taqwacore” in his novel says it is about “giving the finger to both sides”. The word itself echoes of an outlandish idea as it mashes the word ‘taqwa’ which means faith with hardcore which symbolises punk. I think the question we as taqwacore followers dare to ask is: why should something of such a vast and diverse culture and religion be limited to only a single interpretation?

A conflict was bound to happen when two extremely polar views - Islam and punk - get into bed and it would not be pretty. It is like daring to putting The Sex Pistols and The Queen in the same room except here the community is the same however the interpretations, not so much. Conservatives did not remain quiet while an attempt to share this eccentric idea to the gen Z of Pakistan was being made. Some highly conservative Islamic-Pakistani media are not too delighted by the same saying it “made fun of Islam” and it was “shocking” that a film such as Taqwacore was even released. Furthermore they pinpoint towards a female gay Muslim saying it is against what “devout Muslims” believe in. The fact that the conservatives simply dismiss the idea of another perspective existing is truly saddening. The same views are shared by radical clerics such as Mufti Muhammad Naeem who runs the Jamia Binoria seminary. He released a fatwa or a religious directive regarding banning the film across Pakistan. Not only new viewpoints are being choked in the very beginning by strong censorship, they are also being dismissed all together as Islam.

Taqwacore I believe has been revolutionizing. It's not only a single sub-genre; it's the melting pot of radicals, traditional, gays, straights, hedonists, abstainers, stoners etc. The culture captures the new found diversity in Islam as it is one of the most widespread religions of the world. It is loud, it is rough, it is honest, it is non-pretentious and it is rebellious - what better way to convey our message? I believe Taqwacore isn't about rebelling against religion, but truly living with it, interpreting it and following it your own way. With Rabhya, always seen with a burqa and a Dead Kennedy patch in the film, crossing out verses in the Quran she finds problematic such as “ayah advices men to beat their wives” and Jahangir sporting his bright red mohawk announcing the morning prayers with his electric guitar, Taqwacore embodies the fact that we need to have a platform to submerge the two ideologies as we are living under modern and contrasting conditions. Islam means something personal to everyone and the way you interpret it should be allowed to be accepted. In a time when we are bombarded cantily with ideologies, perspectives, religions, news, politics, violence, sub cultures, spirituality, which all have fleeting meanings, Taqwacore is about reinterpreting life itself and not fitting into specific boxes. Why should we define things? With this liberal environment thriving, I anticipate it is finally time for

individualism to flourish. Islam and punk are quite similar in their purpose of beginning: seeking and sharing the truth. It is about not having ambitious simplifications and flattening of life but in fact making a change, finding who you are. Taqwacore lets you see Islam from a new lens - a dirty, gritty lens - allowing you to finally stop being ignorant of issues that are often clouded with rigid taboo and dogmas. Taqwacore is a safe space for all the misfits of alternate ideologies, perspectives, identities, philosophies and practices. As Knight puts it best, "It's just a spectrum of the Muslim rainbow that wasn't seen before".

This is an imperative topic that must be discussed rather than being dismissed. Conservatives needs to realize that the increasingly diverse and liberal population cannot have limited interpretations to Islam. The conflict here exists between the Muslims themselves and the conversations needs to start. Arm twisting the youth about values and instilling fear will not bring a permanent solution to this. I hope change is right around the corner.

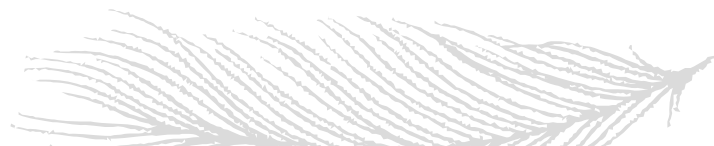
Nishtha Rampuria
Grade-11

Spring week-



Spirit week had started off as a blast. On Monday, the students dressed up in the theme “spring/floral themes” to showcase the arrival of Spring. Along with the dress up, there was also a successful “open mic” where the students could showcase whatever they wanted on stage throughout lunchtime to entertain the other students.

On Tuesday, the theme to dress up was “cultural day” in which the children would dress up from different cultures. Along with that, there was an ice cream sale during lunchtime wherein a few ice cream vendors had come inside our school to sell their ice creams.



On Wednesday, the theme was “teacher vs student” day where the students would wear one color while the teachers would wear another color. The teachers wore red and the students wore blue. Also, in lunch, the students played a football and basketball match against the teachers, in the end, the students won and there was a drink sale to hydrate the audience.

On Thursday, there was no dress up but there was a music event in lunch where the students could participate as individuals, duets or groups.

To end the week, on Friday, there was no dress up, however, there was a color run at lunch. The students wore old shirts while the council threw colour's as they ran in the field. Overall, this week was a very successful week for the students and teachers.

Advika Srivastava
Cultural Secretary
Grade- 11C

Color Blast-

Today, was sadly the end of Spirit week. Yes, we all wish it could have lasted a bit longer. But, even on the last day, we had something special. It was the colour run. It was a lot of fun getting coloured and running with my friends. We all hope for such weeks and activities to come up. It was actually for keeping up the spirit of spring and for us to have fun. The Spirit week as a whole has been fun for all of us, wearing home clothes might have been the best. In the spirit of spring, we didn't only run to have fun but also to keep fit. But I have personally never been or seen anyone so happy getting coloured this way.



Bhavya Balaji
Grade- 7B



EE Cafe

The extended essay cafe was an ideal way of introducing our parents to the extended essay and getting us started. I had been waiting for my aha! Moment of serendipity to hit me so that I zero down on my topic. It was the clear deadline of the cafe that got me going. And has set the momentum for the journey. A discussion with parents seemed appropriate to start the process as they got involved in understanding and counter question our research questions. The extended essay cafe was therefore a good step towards the realisation of the process and what it demand from each and every one of us while also giving a sneak peek into the very real challenges that lie ahead.

Dev Vaidya

Grade-11

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