

EDITORIAL

Ravi P. Reddy The theme for this issue was "FILMI WORLD." Surprisingly not many entries were received on what I thought would be a most popular subject. Maybe watching too many movies has killed people's ability to think about them.

My choice for the "Most Imaginative Article" is "The Back Bencher Concept" by Kamaljit (an inveterate backbencher!). I like such backbenchers!

THE BACK BENCHER CONCEPT (KAMALJIT MOHANTY)

The character of a person can be determined from the coordinate of his/her seat in the class in which one is sitting. This concept is really very weird and vague but there still are many believers of the concept. Why? No one knows. Even in this era of such mind-boggling technological advances this concept has many takers.

As far as I remember, in my school days, seating was done on the basis of height. Back then mischief was not synonymous with the backbenchers. But now, if anything funny happens inside the classroom, alien obviously the blame is on the back benchers, i.e., on the tall chaps of the class. Hence now the common belief is that mischief is confined to the last rows. But how are these tall guys responsible for the chaos because of their height, which is in their genes. Had Mendel been alive today, he certainly would have found a way to avoid the birth of tall children by inventing some new technique of gene crossing.

Turning back the pages of history the "Back Bencher Concept" is age old but -how or why this originated is really very difficult to be traced. Take for example, there are 100 seats in a class in which the same number of students are to be seated. Obviously the last two rows have to be filled up by some unlucky chaps who have the premonition that bad times have arrived. The sharp sword called 'Get Out!' always hangs over their heads, ready to fall on them without warning.

So who are ready to be the martyrs. Who are the courageous ones who should be ever ready to face the music even though being 100% innocent. With time ideas change and concepts change but unfortunately generations have passed away waiting for the Backbencher Concept to change.

(Editor: Reminds me of an old joke: The Railway Officer received a report that robbers were always robbing the passengers in the last bogey. The officer replied "Simple! Just remove the last bogey!")

HINDI FILMS: LICENSED TO OVERKILL (PIJUSH GUPTA. Asst. Editor)

If there was a flood and God told some modern Noah to build an ark, He would probably warn him, "Two of every creature ... but none of Bollywood species!" It's tragic to see a whole generation emulating them, adoring them dressing like them and even the media which should know better wasting reams of paper on these phoneyes.

Today's directors are refreshingly consistent-always insane. They all have the 'anything-that-you-do-I-can-do-better' attitude and end up churning out another liver shrivelling toxic waste. In the past 10 years Hindi movies have improved in only one respect-intolerability, and still going, strong! I'm told, they are more torturous than nagging wives (I need a few more years to verify that)

Nothing influences us more than films. How else can one explain, the suicides committed by slashing wrists or taking an overdose of sleeping pills? After emerging from halls I've seen people behave like Salman or Akshay -eyes bloodshot, flexing their muscles, ready to hit anyone who dare cross their path. One such daredevil is Mr. X (name changed for confidentiality). All of 5 feet and no inches, he once tried to show his martial art prowess to a policeman outside a cinema hall's ticket counter. Only the policeman's baton turned out to be stronger than X's wrist. The result: X's fractured wrist. But ask him anything on that topic and he puts up a famous Jim Carrey act. A frown followed by a smile and then a third nondescript mutation of the face and you are more confused than you were to begin with. Then there is Y (name changed for security - my security!) whose

Sweetheart wants him to be Ruf 'n' Tuf like Akshay and the poor soul who had never seen the sunrise can now be seen lifting dumb-bells at 5 o'clock in the morning. Hope he gets his Dumb Belle who cares more for brawn than brains.

The fate of Today's films are decided by their songs. There is ample scope for the music directors to show their dexterity in the art of plagiarism ... err ... getting 'inspired'. The lyrics are utterly filthy, replete with double entendres (how many times have you come across this line?), I still haven't been able to figure out what comes first, the words or the tune. Maybe writing lyrics is like searching for a corpse to fit into an already dug grave, sometimes

the head pops out, sometimes the feet. Nowadays, the songs are honorable but surely shortlived.

Bollywood boasts of an abundance of colorful personalities. The hero's and heroine's clothes are well as dreams are technicoloured-fashion designer's fantasies. As for the heroine's clothes, you can do old neckline vs stockmarket analysis. The overwhelming ugliness of their clothes is the only true thing that backs up their silly notion of "Girl Power". "We dare to wear this stuff we must be strong women". If you want to be 'realistic then own clothes to wear to college. Take inspiration from Karismas, Urmilas & Kajols of celluloid and go on an adipose losing spree to fit into those 'out-of-this-world' outfits.

Films have seen a sea change in the dance sequences. Earlier dance meant, holding the pallu of the sari and singing in a heavy nasal tone, "Mein ban ki chidiya and now the dance routines are tight, energetic and vigorous ... so spellbinding that people in the audience have their jaws and tongues drop to the floor and not necessarily in that order. Two's company and three's a crowd and the filmi couple prefer the latter. Infact, it is more than three! What else can explain the presence of a million dancers cavorting behind the star pair? The rapidity of their pelvic thrusts makes one wonder whether they suffer from Parkinson's disease.

There can be no more judwaas anywhere than in Bollywood. In fact, each production is the perfect twin of the other, right from the story to the songs, from the props to the performers. Cliches are liberally strewn all over hindi films like potholes on, Calcutta's roads. Take for instance the typical filmi mother. The hands that rocks the cradale inspires the script. The ideal filmi mother is never below 55. An added qualification is widowhood and a complete ban on black hair. ' The sewing machine is her perennial sustenance and Aquarius great significance and is only next to that little idol of Krishna bhagwan where the hapless lady pours out her soul. Mataji is forever eager to feed beta with gajar ka halwa accompanied by the dialogue, "Main apne hathon se tumbare liye gajar ka halwa banaya hai. " As if it could be made any other way! So that is the ideal mother figure for you. Incase you have a mother who prefers to dye her tresses, jog every morning and feed you with readymade gulab jamun, you know what she is missing out on.

The strike rate of Cupid is the fastest in Bollywood (he must be out of arrows by now), Everybody is into pehlapehla pyar, whether they are 20 or 45. The heroine is head-over-heels in love with the hero after our hero saves the damsel in distress with some mandatory dishoom! dishoom. I Just try that in real life and the penalty ten days of complete rest and the reward : a visual treat(your distorted face). Here are a few reel life tips for some real life lovers.

1. Make sure there are trees in your college campus (only to run around them silly!). And what if there are no trees? Then ... the huge demand-supply gap can stimulate the human brain to innovate new ways of winning (See, Economics always comes in handy!).

2. When you indulge in passion play, make sure there is a vacant bungalow or a deserted cave nearby. The premises will come in handy when the rain gods decide to shower you with blessings. Also learn how to light a fire when all- you have next to you is a wet log of wood, no match sticks in sight and an overactive libido.

I know that by now you must be tired and fidgety after going through this article but think of your condition, if you see the above mentioned things on screen. I have been cynical enough to last a lifetime but these utterly boring offal, we call hindi films are likely to become them great! open your eyes, take a deep breath &- ask: Main kahan hoon ? You are sure to get exciting answers for the rest of your life. The hindi movies are as painful as a two-hour-45minute long yawn. Try the yawn first if you don't believe me.

The views expressed in this piece are solely of the author alone. Any, resemblance to any, incident on campus or any person studying in NIST is purely coincidentally intentional.

SUMMER (ABHISHEK CHATTERJEE)

The sun bums;
sweating and panting.
Stale stench of talcum powder and sweat;
Fast shallow breathing;
Closed doors and windows;
Sweat drenched shirts hanging to be dried,
or trying to moisten the skin against all odds.'
As energy soaks out;
Eyebrows knit as the frowns gets transfixed
Streets wear a deserted look,
or boasts of an ill tempered,
sun-burnt diehard traveler;
Dogs with tongues hanging out,

giving you a tired gaze,
A drowsy feeling overtakes you,
As you walk towards the scanty shade;
Punctured by insolent sun beams,
As the leaves remain deathly still;
The summer's come for its kill!

(Editor: Once again, my congrats to all my students for having successfully survived the record-breaking heat of the Summer of '98!)

NISTians & THE FILMI WORLD (RESHMA ROUT)

NISTians being influenced by movies?!!!! (Sorry! I ran out of exclamation marks!). Whom, are you kidding? 'A capite ad calcem' (from head to head) they are unique, NISTians undoubtedly belong to a highly original and innovative species- a breed that stands apart from the rest. Who can ever dare to abase their standards by proclaiming that the Filmi World can have an impact on these budding intellectuals?

What if the sunglasses resemble those donned by 'Aamir's or 'Juhi's in 'Ishq? After all we need to ensure that our precious eyesight doesn't get impaired. Reason: we have got more to study than those dumb actors (any questions?). The bottomline is, since everyone of us knows that prevention is better than cure, so even when you are in the bus or moving on the corridor (never mind if its sunny or cloudy!) stick to your caps (and don't hesitate to give your eyes, glasses of the latest make cause they'll keep your eyes in good mood).

What if the day, ends with "... Aati kya Khandala.."or "Pyar to hona hi tha.." While returning from college in the bus" It's just that we believe in providing impetus to real talent. Believe it or not , if the NISTians stop appreciating and signing the 'in' songs then the musicians will no longer be inspired to create soulful lyrics. Reason: absence of intellectual admirers.

Now let us examine the college lingo."Dosti main no sorry, no thank you"(courtesy MPK) is common among frainds. When the classes never seem to end, someone or the other has definitely uttered,"Kya bachche ki jan loge(Mr & Mrs. Khiladi). In the first year the common utterances were, "Yeh ho nahin sakta" &

"Hone ko to kuch bhi ho sakta he" (Diljale);"bade bade shaharoon main (read colleges main)aisi choti-choti batein ho hi jati he"(DDLJ) ..etc, Last but not the least the most popular-"Some one somewhere made for you"(blame it on DTPH). That does not mean that the NISTians are copycats. It's just a mere coincidence. Can't two persons think and speak alike?

Then some of you might argue that Mr. M's ponytail or Mr. Y's ear stud is similar to that of Akki's and Miss A's suit is an exact replica of Kajol's attire. I can assure you, its the other way round. The NISTian dressing sense (be it ethnic kurta or the skin fitting jeans, waist coats, et al.) can put to shame even the topmost dress designer of the film industry. Anyway, isn't it unfair to assume that only the demi-gods & goddesses of the big screen have the sole rights to put on the best and the latest apparel . After all "Hum bhi kisi se kam nahin "(never mind my Hinglish). The NISTians set the trends. Nevertheless it's a sad fact that the filmi world tries to copy us. Well! the NISTians don't mind. They just take it in their own spirit! Don't they!?!)

FREEDOM(MANORANJAN MISHRA)

Suddenly my muscles become tense;
Words trail off in mid-sentence,
thoughts abruptly cease to be;
The ink dries within the, pen,
the human sap no longer flows from me;
Memorable thoughts get lost wrong pages,
like the last testament;
forgotten and discarded into the sea;
A tiny ray from somewhere,
shines there before me;
Speeding up my withdrawal into my shrivelled soul
then the background comes up and envelopes me;
Frees me, liberates me,
from the human cycle of death and destiny.

ANYTHING HOLLYWOOD CAN DO SOLLYWOOD CAN DO *VRSE (MANISH JAJU)

An Unidentified Flying Object is seen cruising past the green pastures at supersonic speed. Seconds later, half a dozen Martians alight from the saucer and declare an ALIEN -INVASION on planet Earth. Within minutes, a number of important landmarks, from the White House to the Buckingham Palace, are bombarded by the alien missiles and razed to the ground. The US President takes charge and launches a global counter-attack, and for the next few hours, a hi-tech combat operation of TITANIC proportions takes place. Ultimately, the seemingly invincible aliens are vanquished and it's a glorifying victory for the human SPECIES .

No! This isn't a real story, rather it's one from Hollywood. The present day Hollywood movies are becoming all the more innovative, entertaining and sci-fi oriented, involving state-of-the-art technological stuff. But fooling at our own Bollywood, one can't feel more embarrassed at its status quo. The Indian film industry is a colossus in its field. It's like an active VOLCANO, disgorging movies incessantly. Just for the record, Bollywood alone produces close to 700 films annually. Wonder what the figures would be like if films in regional languages are also taken into account! Thus, quantity and not quality seems to be of paramount concern.

The Hollywood filmmakers put in all kinds of efforts and resources to do justice to their movies. They employ the best script writers (the plots are often taken from bestsellers), cinematographers, animators, computer wizards etc. They carry out a whole lot of research work on the subject and leave no stones unturned to deliver a stupendous blockbuster.

Any film buff would readily agree that more often than not, it pays to watch a Hollywood superhit. The short 90 minutes really invigorate us with great gusto and flesh fervour. Agreed that the adventure and technology shown might be too incredible to be imitated in real life, but then why the hell would one waste valuable time and money to see the same story of life's blues when the whole purpose of watching a movie is to escape away from the humdrum and mundane chores into 'A CITY OF JOY' , however fictitious it may be. More importantly, these films are a tremendous source of inspiration for the young prodigies who are simply mesmerised by the mind-boggling technology shown.

On the other hand, a film from Bollywood lacks all the three E's of a good film: Entertainment, Education and Enlightenment. Forget about the last two, even good entertainment isn't there to be seen. Nine out of ten films are based on the all time favorite and probably the only available subject: ROMANCE. But in the name of entertainment , what one actually gets to see is some stupid slapstick comedy, nonsensical dialogues, extensive hamming and not to mention, some cheap song-hot scores. If this is what they call the art of filmmaking, then it's art by no means. Any Tom, Dick or Harry with brain the size of a pea can do it! But blame them and without any qualms they retort back saying that they only cater to the demands of the audience-

So generous of them. Giving much more than asked for! Anyway,, if they are so willing to fulfill our demand then may we demand for clean, entertaining and innovative movies and wait for tomorrow with hope that TOMORROW NEVER DIES!

LJGHTS, CAMERA, ACTION (MANOJ DAS)

"I want to become an actor", I yelled. A director sort of guy with a baseball cap perched on his bald head, dressed in casuals that is certain to draw one helluva sing from the likes of Ralph Lauren is trying his level best to get a raw rookie (read actor) to do some word mouthing complemented imperfectly by sonic body convulsions.

The word from the grape vine is that tills rookie the face that would easily fetch him a place in the Greek pantheon(a Greek god of course!) and a lower half that would make a Spartan go gaga. In toto one that would drive Helen and Venus alike to the realms of insanity, needless to mention his histrionics that would have fetched him something well beyond an Oscar (an award from the film society of the Milky Way perhaps!), In short, people had to say, "It'll take time and a man of calibre to give this uncut and unpolished diamond it's actual brilliance and lustre". And who better. to accomplish this than the martinet with an iron fast, the al mighty director.

This time around the scene is totally different. The blinding spot light , the stare of the camera, the director shouting his lungs out, the makeup man's creative instincts at play and last but not the least the stars and their myriad tantrums , all have given way to an entirely different kind of setting. The lights are dim & the whole place smells overtly of sophistication. They are in fact waiting for something to happen. It's like you can almost hear the air crackle with excitement. Small beads of sweat skiing down the slope (read neck of a beauty) that would certainly be a skiers delight are mopped up well before they make it to the mounts. The gliterrati & paparazzi alike are flaying palpitations. One sells time for exorbitant price and the other buys time timed to perfection (a second amiss and somebody else would have made a mission just because he had bought the same thing one moment earlier). But at this instant all their sense of time has gone haywire.

The floodgates have opened and through it gushes out a torrent of spine tingling mixture of raw passion and inspired idiocy which I presume is so contagious that it can kick off an epidemic of gigantic proportions, over &c floodgates which astounding mahogany; astounding because they have withstood the time and written on them in polished brass are the words--From Here Till Eternity & Immortality. The whole place is reverberating with whispers like- "The kid's a genius", "He's better than &c best", "He's got it all & he's up there with the best" and much much more, Smart previews, rave reviews, interviews galore, parties unlimited and already thousands of chicks dedicated, only god knows where the kid's headed.

The hackneyed script, the director on idea thrift, work done on the basis of a shift and money of course is the

only thing that conies in swift. All this and more to indicate that the kid's on a life raft and still adrift. The thought of 'capsizing does not provoke that much fear as does the idea of staying alive on the life raft and dying of alienation.

He is relying on his unquestionable talent, his steely determination (that too reinforced steel- the ones used for building bunkers in Iraq), his innate sense of judgement. But streets above the rest few hundred grams throbs, which is the seat of all goodness(more precisely the heart).

The moment of truth has arrived and he's got to take the acid test. The test is what will ultimately separate the men from the boys. On the panel of judges is a fair sprinkling of puritans, iconoclasts and a few who have always taken the rough with the smooth and the salt with the sugar.

To conform to the idea of in actor for all these people is a colossal task in itself, but the man behind the wheels has now rowed on and on, on a hope (that will never perish) and intuition that is absolutely amazing . And in the wee hours of the morning he finally gets his reward—limelight, land & civilization.

This Ladies & Gentlemen is filmdom Choppy waters, sharks in the water who will tear everything and anything to shreds on the slightest scent of blood (read weakness in character) and land which seems to more and more frustating mirage as each day wears on. But I know not why may heart still yearns to become an actor.

Any answers ... ?

DAWN (J. V.PRASAD REDDY)

I had never witnessed the birth of a new day.'
Except on this singular morning,
Aware of the strangely insistent euphoria,
I raise the shades on dawn.
It was a sight that transfixed me,
Low, burnished light gleamed,
Through the August leaves in the woods;
Shadows fled west, climbing walls and picket fences,
ribboning lawns with lavender.
Bird calls floated like gossamer in the still, clean air;
I felt the sun smote on my skin,
Atoms of air spinning above my head.
The five o'clock world is as fresh, as miraculous and round as an apple from a tree,
It gives one the feeling of being really free.