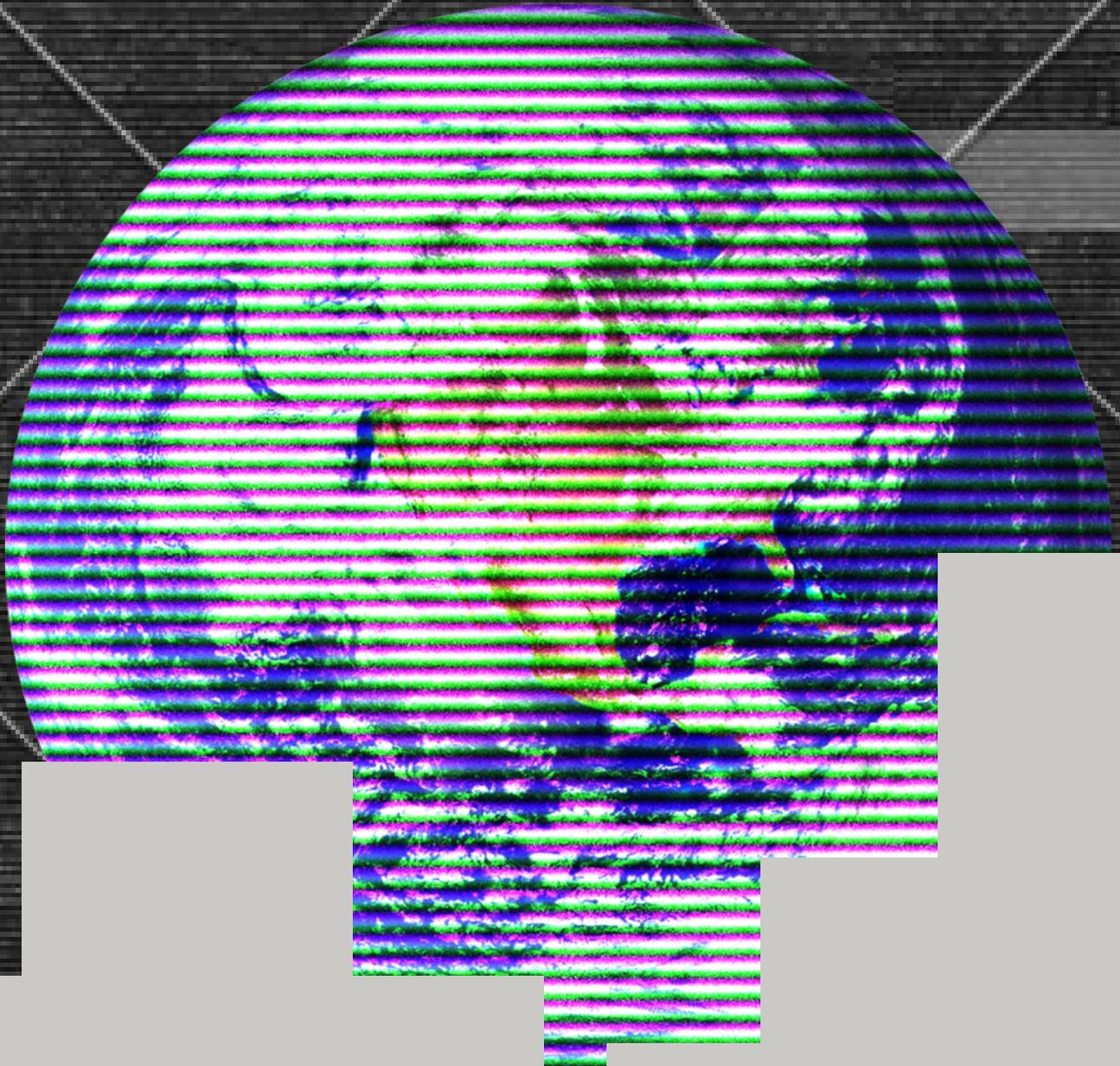


31st August, 2021

JDSOLA's Independent Student Publication

# THE LIBERAL CANON



A pandemic and a year later, the world is glitching.

# Editor's Note

*Think of all the beauty still left around you and be happy*  
- Anne Frank

This month's TLC is filled with love, laughter and learning. Right from Saachi Gupta's review on the Amazon Prime show, "Good Omens" to understanding well-being with Kabeer Murugkar, this edition has been painted and curated beautifully. Salony Shah, a fresher has already contributed by writing an exceptional piece of art and its philosophy, we also have Simran Bhimani with a mean thai noodle soup and a flavoursome black and blueberry sauce. A very happy bearing is the JDSOLA's team becoming Millennial Fellows in the United Nations! Our heartiest congratulations to all of you all.

I want to refer back to the quote above and talk about the difficulties that often seem too overwhelming. This month I came to realise that fear and commotion is expounding around us, the Taliban invading Afghanistan being a trigger of this thought. In the mundanity yet mayhem of our lives, we must remember and try to sanction the unsung heroes. Anne Frank was too stuck and hiding but through the candle of writing, she shed light on the important topics. Our privilege and gratitude are sometimes incongruent concepts but if they were put together, it would become our greatest ally. Having a voice and empowering it for the better is what this newsletter stands for; I urge all the newcomers (FYs) to contribute your beliefs, takes and come here for a space of sanity in the chaos of our lives.

The team of TLC would like to welcome you all to your first year of JDSOLA! We've opened up positions in all departments -- Management, Editing, PR, Design and the Podcast -- so please do apply. There will also be a Junior / Co-Editor joining from next month as I begin my last few months at TLC. Thank you so much for all your support! We'll see you next month.

**Sanah Shah**

# Laughing as the World Ends: Good Omens & The Good Place

Saachi Gupta

Amazon Prime's *Good Omens*, based on the book by Terry Pratchett and Neil Gaiman, is, without a doubt, one of the better shows to keep you engrossed for hours on end. Starring David Tennant and Michael Sheen, the series showcases an angel and demon teaming up to stop the predicted end of the world. There is a lot that could have gone wrong with a somewhat cliché premise like this, yet it all comes together perfectly. The existential comedy followed the success and acclaim of NBC's *The Good Place*, another lighthearted series revolving around the otherworldly, where people who are virtuous in their lifetime end up in 'The Good Place', while the corrupt find themselves in 'The Bad Place.'

The similarities between the two series are many, creating something of a formula for the impeccable existential comedy. In both shows, the stakes are unbelievably high: the fate of the whole human race – if not the entire universe – lies in the hands of the main characters, who are ordinary and insignificant in the grand scheme of things, and come from very diverse backgrounds (say, a moral philosophy professor raised in West Africa and an Arizonian fraud who sells fake medicine to the elderly; or an

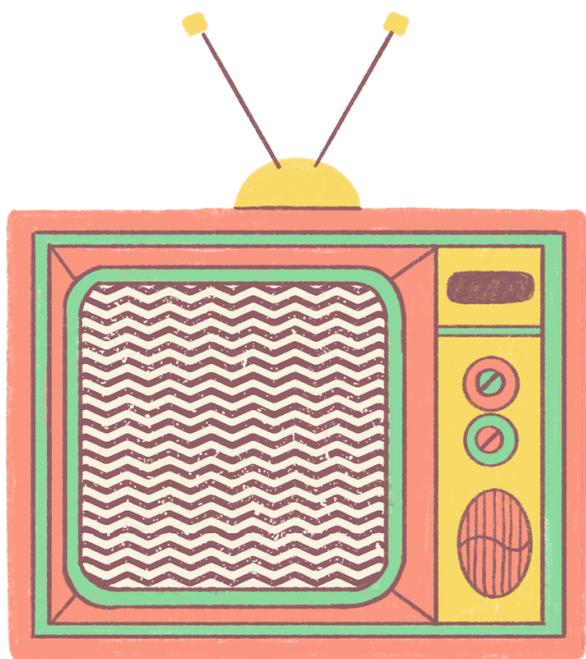
angel from heaven and a demon from the pits of hell). While these protagonists risk everything to save the world, the people around the globe are blissfully unaware of the danger they are in. This usually makes for some hilarious moments as the characters try to navigate through what they know without arousing any suspicion. There is also usually a black and white distinction between good and evil – angels are fundamentally good just like the people in *The Good Place*. The very essence of demons, on the other hand, is badness. Notably, as the show progresses, we realize that goodness and badness are not all that they're made out to be.

They are complex ideas, changing from context to context, and cannot be encapsulated in a person. Those depicted as good cannot be expected to stick up for what is correct any more than the bad – instead, they are rigid in their beliefs of right and wrong, and sticklers for rules. The protagonists, thus, are isolated in their journey to save the world, unable to depend on any side for help. At its heart, the protagonists' humanity is what sets them apart from everyone else – they are multi-faceted mosaics of both good and bad, shaped by their experiences, beliefs, and humanness.

What makes these shows so appealing, however, is not their plot or characters: it is their remarkable self-awareness. The absurdity of the premise they are depicting is not lost on them: an angel and demon forming an alliance to stop Armageddon, or four human beings reforming the way that afterlife operates is not the most realistic of stories. But through these, these shows make light of heavy discussions involving philosophy, ethics, life and death, making you question everything you think you know: Is

complete goodness ever possible to achieve? Are there powers that look upon us just as clueless as we are? Will we be able to stay sane without the setbacks we face every day?

By embracing postmodernist qualities, *The Good Place* and *Good Omens* manage to make you laugh with purposefully silly names, fantastical creatures, and extravagant CGI. The audience is always in on the joke – from time moving in a *Jeremy Bearimy* and the judge of the entire universe binge-watching *NCIS*, to the Garden of Eden being a small walled garden in the middle of a desert, and Jeffrey Archer's books reeking of evil. The shows are knowingly playful, making light not just of the universe as a whole, but of themselves. Add to the mix a love story (yin and yang, involving said characters from diverse backgrounds) and a star cast that is tired of unfulfilling, commercial hits – and you've got yourself the perfect existential comedy to binge-watch as you procrastinate from working.



# SPIRITUALITY & WELL-BEING

Kabeer Murugkar  
(for Group 5, Positive Psychology)

The words, “spirituality” and “peace” are often synchronized with each other, and although the meaning of spirituality varies from person to person, its ultimate purpose is to advocate inner peace. Spirituality is customarily associated with transcendence, and believing in a universal spirit, but it is quite personal and hence it isn't limited to a single meaning. It often deals with unfolding a person's thoughts, and fostering a connectedness with self and with others. It also involves finding a purpose, meaning, and direction, which ultimately promotes a better life. Thus, by its very essence, it is linked to a person's mental health.

Although it is underexplored on a global level, spirituality is being researched extensively over the past few decades. This is because psychiatrists are becoming more culturally conscious, and regardful of the impact of spirituality in a patient's life. This is especially important in a country like India, where most people are highly religious/spiritual. Research shows that 97% of people in India believe in a God or a higher universal power. As a result, we should be encouraged to be more sensitive to religion and spirituality in clinical practise, given the prevalence of spiritual views among the patients and the growing data demonstrating that embracing spirituality in treatment has a mental health benefit. Understanding a patient's beliefs, and finding ways to subsume their positive aspects into their treatment can be very effective. Also,

speaking about spirituality and religious beliefs, people who believe in a higher power are proven to be happier. This is because having a belief system can help one's mental health and well-being significantly.

There are also a wide range of spiritual practices that have a positive impact on mental health like meditations, prayers, yoga, reflection, rituals to name a few. Meditation, the most renowned one, is also the most effective. Although there are many types of meditation techniques, its ultimate purpose is to promote relaxation and reduce stress and anxiety, which can improve mental health. And there's a growing amount of research to back it up. During meditation, you get into a wakeful state, recognize the entangled thoughts crowding your mind, and try to guide them and free them. Doing this consistently enhances physical and emotional well-being. Immediate effects of meditation include producing a sense of calm and peace, as for the prolonged effects, it helps you carry out your day more calmly, it helps you deal with stressful situations better, and you get better at eliminating negative thoughts that occupy your mind. This also boosts your productivity. Research also shows that people who practice meditation have a quicker recovery in emotional response in their brains after seeing or going through something stressful as compared to those who do not. Furthermore, it helps you deal with anger in a better, more effective way. And this is what a large chunk of mental health is about. As WHO defines it, mental health always to subsume their positive aspects into their treatment can be very effective.

can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to their community. And as discussed, spiritual practices encourage exactly that.



## ART: A PHILOSOPHICAL VIEW

Salony Shah

I was left in wonder while writing an article on art. What is art? Who decides what is art? Why do they qualify as art? All these questions came to my head and I had no fixed answers for them. Often as art students, we hear people say, "Oh, do you draw and paint in the arts course?" People who confine art to drawing or painting are not exactly wrong, but they have a tapered concept of art. Only when I started studying it myself, did I realize the real meaning behind it. It's not just painting, drawing, sketching or writing. It is much bigger than that. In fact, it is bigger than us. Art is creation and expression, be it any form. It's the music and melody we hear and the thoughts that transform and make their way in our minds. It is how we perceive things and why we perceive it in that way. Humans are art too: Kind eyes and the crooked smile which lights up the face; The way the body works, the heartbeat which keeps us going; Our senses and the complex nature of our mind; The nature and cycle of life; The way we leave the earth in the same manner that we arrived on it. It's synonymous with the beauty of this world and it's what keeps this world from falling apart. It is the law of nature that keeps us balanced. There is no science without art. One thing I can promise you, when you feel lost, art will be there to save you.

# TLC'S COOKBOOK

by SIMRAN BHIMANI



## 1. Thai Noodle Soup

Comfort food for the soul this Monsoon!

- In a large saucepan, on medium heat, add a tablespoon of oil and fry off 2 crushed garlic cloves, 1 tablespoon of finely chopped ginger, 1 finely chopped red chilli and a teaspoon of turmeric, until fragrant.
- Then, add 500 ml of coconut milk to this and let it combine with the spices for a minute.
- To this add 4 cups of chicken stock and 1/4th cup fish stock (if you're vegetarian, substitute this for 4 cups of vegetable stock and a teaspoon of soy sauce and rice vinegar) and a tablespoon of brown sugar, and let it simmer for 5 minutes.
- Now, add your noodle of choice! You can use rice noodles, spaghetti or even Maggi! (without the spice packet). Once the noodles have started softening, add 100 grams of peas and let it cook until the noodles are tender.
- Now get it off the heat and season with sea salt, ground black pepper, coriander leaves and lime juice.

Curl up on your couch with a bowl of this and enjoy the rain!

## 2. Black and Blueberry sauce

This easy to make, versatile sauce is great on literally anything- pancakes, waffles, yoghurt, ice cream or even spoon on top of any meat or veggie.

- In a saucepan, add a cup of blackberries, a cup of blueberries, 1/2 cup water, 1/4 cup sugar and 2-3 tablespoons of lemon juice and bring this mixture to a boil on medium heat, stirring occasionally making sure that the sugar does not burn.
- Once it starts simmering, stir frequently till the sauce reduces and thickens. This should take about 15 minutes.
- Now, remove this off the heat, and stir in a tablespoon of unsalted (important) butter and 1/4 teaspoon vanilla extract.
- Once everything is combined, it's ready to serve.

You can have this warm (yum!) or refrigerate it in a glass jar and enjoy it whenever.



# MEET OUR VERY OWN MILLENNIUM FELLOWS, CLASS OF 2021!

*After months of brainstorming ideas, researching projects and going through round after round of applications, the team received an email with an ominous title - Millennium Fellowship Decision. Now, we are honored and delighted to announce that a cohort of 14 third year students from JDSOLA has been selected for the prestigious Millennium Fellowship!*

*Established in 2013 by the Millennium Campus Network (MCN) in collaboration with the United Nations Academic Impact (UNAI), the Fellowship is a program that aims to enable students to develop leadership skills and create a positive social impact. Each team selects one or more of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to work on during the semester-long program. Of them, we have chosen SDGs 11 (Sustainable cities and communities), 12 (Responsible consumption and production) and 13 (Climate Action). These, along with the UNAI principle #9, sustainability, make the focus of our project to raise awareness about sustainable development and eco-friendly alternatives to many of the items we use and practices we follow in our daily lives.*

*"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."*

*- Margaret Mead*

*Being part of the 6% of campuses chosen for the class of 2021, especially for a program that received more than 25,000 applications from over 2,200 campuses across 153 countries worldwide, is an unfathomable privilege, and an equally great responsibility. We hope to reach as many people and positively impact as many lives as we can in the time that we have. In light of the findings of the recently released IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) report, which the UN Secretary General, Antonio Guterres, has called a "code red for humanity", we take this opportunity all the more seriously. The road is long, and we have our work cut out for us indeed. But we hope, with perseverance and in collaboration with each and every school and student of NMIMS, that our combined efforts may alleviate the looming danger we have put our planet in.*

*- Asmita Kumbhar*

*Support the cause! Follow us on Instagram, Twitter and Facebook at millenniumfellows\_nmims! Feel free to reach out with questions, concerns, suggestions, ideas, and feedback at [millenniumfellows.nmims@gmail.com](mailto:millenniumfellows.nmims@gmail.com)*

# QUESTIONS

from the TEAM

*"The Fellowship gives me a space to create unique solutions to social issues we all face today. It is important that I motivate the youth to work towards issues they are most passionate about to create a more sustainable future."*

**Vedant Krishna,  
Founder**

*"I'm excited to be part of this prestigious fellowship where we can develop our skills and our combined efforts can leave a tangible impact on society now, and possibly a global impact further in life."*

**Simran Bhimani,  
Community Organiser**

*"Being a part of the UN Millennium Fellows will allow us to make small conscious changes on the home turf that will hopefully someday translate into a concrete, meaningful change not just here, but globally."*

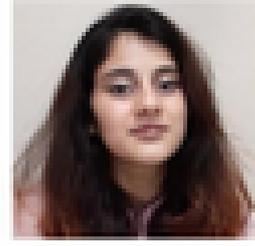
**Amatulla Mukadam,  
Programs Manager**



VEDANT KRISHNA



KAMEL PIRANI



NEHARIKA NENE



SIMRAN BHIMANI



ANUSHAKA SRIVASTAVA



HRITIKA DALAL



ANKET BATRA



AASHRITHA MURALI



KHUSHI SHAH



AMATULLA MUKADAM



ASMITA KUMBHAR



RAMAA BINAVKAR



SIDDHARTH JOSHI



SHLOK MISHRA

# JD16 LOVES

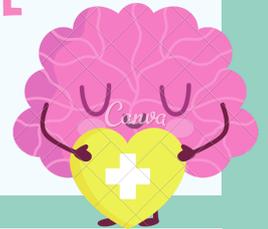
Sneakers of the month

**VISION RACER "JADEN SMITH"  
LOW-TOP SNEAKERS**



Mental well being organization

**FORTIS MENTAL  
HEALTH**



Destination

**OKAVANGO  
DELTA,  
BOTSWANA**

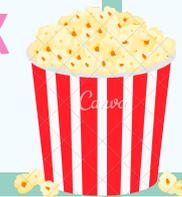


apps

**FOREST-  
STAY  
FOCUSED**

Movie

**THE  
MATRIX**



TV show

**BATES  
MOTEL**

Bored games

**ADORABLE  
HOME**



Take out

**SHAWARMA  
STREET**



Games

**STORMBOUND**

Workouts

**RUSSIAN  
TWISTS**



Online shops

**UNIQLO**



Insta page of the month

**ACERETROGRADE**

Book

**ZERO TO ONE  
AUTHORS- BLAKE  
MASTERS AND PETER  
THIEL**



Podcast

**KAHANI SUNO,  
NARRATED BY  
SAMEER GOSWAMI**



Online course

**CRITICAL  
THINKING  
COURSE -  
LINKEDIN  
LEARNING**

Art

**WHISTLER'S MOTHER-  
JAMES ABBOTT  
MCNEILL WHISTLER**

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