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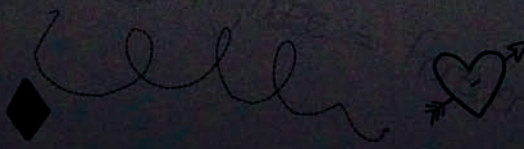


# BESCENE MAGAZINE

## Rebellion Issue



I WAS HERE!  
Really?  
who cares!





## Letter from the... Guest Editor!



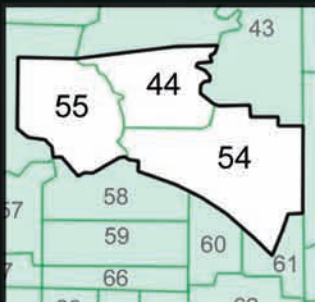
**Maryam Idroos**

Through collaboration and sharing our thoughts, my Be Scene friends and I were able to put together this great magazine you have in your hand today. This issue, themed 'rebellion', really does have rebelliousness in it. From heart-breaking rebellion to rebelling for defense, it will sweep you off your feet. Throughout history there have been many examples of rebellion and resistance often resulting in positive changes. Consider the example of when Gandhi fought for the equality of the 'Untouchables' of the Indian caste system. We couldn't have put together this issue if it wasn't for Sarah, our program facilitator and mentor. So if you're reading this right now, put your hands together for Sarah, because if it wasn't for her you would not be the rebellious individual you are today, having read this magazine. Every week we talk about the current and forthcoming issues of Be Scene. The meetings are held in a little confidential room with lots of food and more to talk about. Our conversations always consist of humour though when we have to be serious we are. Whenever we are in the middle of a serious conversation someone goes off topic leading to a whole different topic. Once we all were talking about being rebellious and we found ourselves in the midst of anime characters and manga, along with how tasty Rambutan fruits are. Even though we have fun at our meetings, we still do work, and that work becomes this rebellious magazine. At the Flemingdon Health Center we are always complimented and called 'a fun bunch'. I must let you start reading now, so as I always say at the end 'read and enjoy'!



REGENT PARK FOCUS  
YOUTH MEDIA ARTS CENTER

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44 - Flemingdon Park  
54 - O'Connor-Parkview  
55 - Thorncliffe Park

From the City of Toronto: Neighbourhood Map

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**BE SCENE**

BE SCENE youth magazine is a collaboration between the Regent Park Focus Youth Media Arts Centre's Catch da Flava magazine, Flemingdon Health Centre and other local community agencies servicing the O'Connor, Thorncliffe & Flemingdon Park neighbourhoods. The magazine is distributed free to libraries, community groups, and selected schools in the mentioned communities and across Toronto.

BE SCENE welcomes letters, articles, stories & poems from young people (up to 24 years of age)

Submissions should be  
NO LONGER THAN 1000 WORDS IN LENGTH

If you would like more information about how you can contribute to BE SCENE, call us at (416) 863-1074 or e-mail BeSceneMag@gmail.com

Guest Editor Maryam Idroos

Youth Contributors Shaili Chibba, Halima Hakimi, Maryam Idroos, Sabeeha Ishaque, Ramesha Javed, Araf Khaled, Fatema Khan, Misbah Manesiya, Sara Mussa, Rashmika Nugur, Bryan Peart, Trisha Rai, Milly Wang

Project Staff Adonis Huggins, Sarah Feldbloom, Amardeep Kaur & Azza Abbato

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## How to be Rebellious

It's Harder Than You Think! ...Or is it?

Milly Wang

See, the editorial committee meets the same time every week to discuss our next edition and our work in progress. And a few weeks ago, well exactly three weeks and 6 days ago (yes, I've been counting the days, and you'll soon know why), I was assigned to do an article on rebellion. Sounds fair enough. I mean, the issue is about rebellion and everyone else had done their articles or artwork. It's just one, little article, right? Not a big deal...I'm sure that I can at least put words down on paper. How hard can it be?

But...there was one tiny, itsy, bitsy, little problem. I'm not very rebellious. In fact, I'm probably the least rebellious in the family! I've always done what I was told (Okay, so there have been times when I refused to do chores or talked my way out of it...and times when I still fought with my siblings even though my parents told me to stop...and times when I put the blame on my siblings even though I did it...and...well anyways, that's beside the point). The point is, you have to at least know a subject before you can write a "How to" article on it! That's the rules! Well, not really, but how can you tell someone how to buy a car or swim when you can't even do it yourself? On the other hand, I'm pretty sure that there are authors out there who have written "How to" books with no idea of what they are saying (trust me, I've read them) Hmm... rebellious much?

Well, that began my quest to gain more knowledge on my rebelliousness. Nothing could stand in my way. I had a week, and I was going to find my inner rebelliousness.

At first, I tried to find my inner rebelliousness or my IR as I so endearingly called it, by reviewing my past actions. What could I have possibly done in the past that was so terrible, so horrible, and so outrageous that it would qualify me as an expert on rebelliousness? After a bit of thought, I realized that most of the things that I have done that could possibly qualify as rebelliousness were minor such as refusing to do the chores, surfing the net when I was supposed to do my homework, fighting with my siblings, not following little rules in order to get what I want and other little things like that. I mean, the best that I've ever done (or rather the worst, I guess), was read fanfiction online secretly without my parents knowing! Hey, those stories are addictive! I highly recommend you to read them! Now, let me refocus before I get off onto a tangent about fanfiction as usual. Where were we? Oh yes, my ineptness at being awesomely rebellious. What could I do? Skip class, refuse to do my homework all year, talk back to the teacher, run around the school shouting on the top of my lungs? Nah, none of these ideas would be exciting, original, or COOL enough to qualify.

Of course, after much thought, I realized a new problem: who was I rebelling against? ...My parents, my teachers or any random person on the street (e.g. refusing to let them walk past me)? How could I rebel when I didn't know who to rebel against? That seemed like the fundamental problem in this. I needed to find a focus. A goal. Something that would help me direct all

my rebelliousness in one direction. How hard could it be? I figured in the worst case scenario, I'd just put all the options into a hat and choose at random!

Nevertheless, before I resorted to that option, I decided to try my hand at upping my rebelliousness. I annoyed my little sister a little more: sang ridiculous songs when she was doing homework, called her names and picked more fights (well, more fights than usual anyways...). I also got out of doing chores by pointing out all the reasons that the chores should not be done (by me, at least). I read more fanfiction and procrastinated on my homework (I procrastinate all the time, but that's beside the point). And in the end, after three weeks of trying and thinking and investigating, I was still left as clueless as I was before. And now I am drawing a writer's block. I STILL do not know how to write a "How to" article on rebellion. Why can't anyone read a book called "How to write an article on How to be Rebellious"? It's just not fair. What can I do? Tomorrow, I have to hand in the article, and I've got nothing on my page. It's a hopeless case. I give up. I'm completely out of options and my execution date is drawing near. I am sure that I'll be slaughtered by my fellow Be Scene authors if I show up empty handed tomorrow!

But you know what? After being rebellious for weeks already, why not be rebellious for ONE last time? I won't write that "How to" article on rebellion. No siree. Never, nada, I've got nothing. See, my one time significant rebellion is from rebellion against writing an article on rebellion. But of course I have to ask myself how rebellious that really? This whole exercise has left me with a big question, what is rebellion anyways?

Stock images provided by StockExchange.



# REBELLION AGAINST THE PROBLEMS OF THE WORLD

Araf Khaleed

My name is Araf Khaled and I'm a Bangladeshi with a Canadian heart having lived in Toronto for more than half my life. I am passionate, opinionated and rebellious at the fiery age of 16. I rebel against the problems in the world. I rebel against world issues. In this article, I will share with you how I did just that in the summer of 2010.

I have a great thirst for learning about different cultures and international politics. Luckily, this past summer, I had the opportunity to attend an international conference discussing social justice and globalization. Housed at Barrie, Ontario, the organization iEARN-Canada hosted the 14th international youth summit in hopes of uniting youth and educators to reform the world globally. Representatives from all over the world came to share their thoughts and perspectives about the global issues that continue to ravage our world. We debated and discussed: there were enough problems; however, it did not stop there.

We presented the solutions as well.

Having a unique chance to interact with youth from other countries, I decided to interview many and gather their opinions on world issues. We explored problems whether they were social, political, economic or global, that plagued our countries, and in the end, attempted to suggest solutions.

I present to you a selection of the iEARN-Canada youth:

Slater; Canada

**Country Problem** Ecological Damage  
Slater is an environmental activist. She feels that while Canada is facing a variety of problems, one of the most pressing challenges it is up against is Canada's dependence on "dirty oil". A big part of Alberta's (a province in Canada) economy comes from the tar sands which generate plentiful oil for its resource industry. However, the process of refining and using the oil from the tar sands is extremely damaging for the environment. Slater stated that this is irresponsible for a developed country like Canada.

**Solution** Slater's suggestion to tackling this problem involves Canada slowly moving away from relying on its oil and increasing its investments into solar, wind and geothermal energy. Ecological and economical sustainability need to be one of Canada's top priorities!

**Global Problem** Climate change  
Industrial countries aren't taking all the necessary steps to confront the global threat to our environment. Slater believes that all these problems can be solved through young people. She says that we are the hope. Young people need to stand up and voice their opinions. She said that if we reduce our global temperature by even 2 degrees by 2015 we will be able to make a huge impact on climate change-positively. Many countries will be underwater in a matter of years because of the ice caps melting. If something isn't done to address this right away the world will regret it.

Koen; Netherlands

**Country Problem** Political  
Netherlands is doing very well in many aspects of society. But lately it has been criticized for its policies regarding immigration. Koen said that the major right wing party was dominating in influence and this as a result is upsetting the balance politics in Holland. And jointly opposition parties are unable to provide appropriate solutions and are divided in terms of their policies. There are too many political parties and decision making takes far too long. He explained his frustration with Holland's political system as "too democratic" in the sense that passing bills or making major decisions is often a slow and rigorous process. There is also a build-up of mistrust between foreign communities and the Dutch population in Holland. This is affecting the youth perspective of foreigners and creating an unfavourable climate to their education.

**Solution** Koen advised parties with similar ideas to band together and establish a more transparent group. He also suggested that civics should have a stronger focus in the educational curriculum and at a younger age.

**Global Problem** People should be more tolerant with each other. Governments should consult the governments of other countries and exchange thoughts on policies and problems.

Shadwa; Egypt

**Country Problem** Economic instability  
Shadwa pointed out that the economic division between the classes of people in Egypt are a serious problem. Those from poorer backgrounds suffer the greatest. Opportunities aren't at all equal and there is corruption within the education system. Those who perform the best do not always succeed-connections are often what earn you your grade.

**Solution** Justice! Shadwa encouraged communication between the different divides of poor to rich people. She thinks that if there is a system to balance out the wealth between people Egypt will advance greatly. The society needs to close the gap that keeps those in poverty away from opportunities.

**Global Problem** Wars between nations are a major problem in the world right now. International law needs to take precedence over all else for better justice. The powers of the world need to be balanced and the influence each country exerts on the economy needs to be divided more evenly.

Rondelle; Trinidad & Tobago

**Country Problem** Crime  
Rondelle is a very passionate youth leader. He spoke out against the high crime rates and violence in Trinidad and Tobago. He stated that the violence in schools and the violence fuelled by foreign media is a huge issue. Drug trafficking continues to be a persistent problem as well.

**Solution:** Rondelle suggested an entire educational curriculum reform. He said that the education currently doesn't attempt to accommodate the youth and the individual. There needs to be a stronger emphasis on catering to the individual needs of each student as opposed to a general outline that everyone is expected to meet.

**Global Problem** Lack of understanding between people and narrow mindedness to appreciate and understand

Rexxar; Taiwan

**Country Problem** Education  
Rexxar said that the education received in Taiwan needs to include global exposure in relation to all the subjects studied. He said that, "International relationships are important to create a global minded Taiwan".

**Solution** International projects like iEARN that promote interaction for students globally are the way to go! It helped broaden the horizons of Taiwanese students.

**Global Problem** Global warming

These were but a few glimpses of the many youth voices at the iEARN 2010 conference. There were many different problems from country to country but there was one thing in common that pretty much everyone seemed to agree on: global conflict centers around a lack of tolerance and understanding of each other as humans. Side by side, better education seemed to be the sole solution to this one basic problem.

What is my opinion you ask? I am rather inclined to agree with most of the youth leaders here. A good education provides the basic structure to solve problems whether they are social, economic or political. Only with understanding can we truly progress in society. People are a product of the moral values they acquire in the development of their youth. We youth are constant learners and know that we form opinions and establish values through what we learn from the society around us. If the problems around the world are currently based from ignorance and low tolerance for different peoples, then for change to occur, the youth of this generation need to gain a broader perspective of the world and accept people for who they are. We need to appreciate each other. Collaborative education between youths of different cultures is the only way to achieve that.

And that is what rebellion means to me: taking youth perspectives from all around the world and debating what we can do to make the world better. Rebellion is the only way to make the change we need.

Yasin, Ulduz; Azerbaijan

**Country Problem** Education system  
Yasin and Ulduz had a lot to say about Azerbaijan. There is a lot of corruption in the education system according to the pair. They said that it is a well-known fact that educators at all levels accept bribes from students to improve their marks. As well, that many of the universities are old and out-dated. Due to this case foreign education is preferred by many Azeris.

**Solution** The Azeris recommended that foreign education should be pursued and after that the knowledge gained from foreign countries should be brought back to Azerbaijan and implemented to improve the country.

**Global Problem** Racial tolerance

Sakina; Pakistan

**Country Problem** Political instability  
Pakistan faces a big problem with political corruption. The government, according to Sakina, does not take responsibility and an active role in many issues the society faces. The government system as it is now is not working because many people are illiterate. There is a huge lack of education and understanding of the civic system between the common people who vote for the government. As a result Pakistan is suffering in many other areas as well.

**Solution** Sakina encouraged responsibility to be taken at the individual level. She suggested awareness and a change in attitude toward finding solutions. People should not be content with the dismal situation they are in but rather be proactive and attempt to find solutions to their everyday problems. Alongside of course, education needs to have a huge reform and be inclusive to all regardless of sex or social background.



# A Soldier Dies

Sabeeha Isahque

In the humid, hot fields  
A gust of dry wind  
Awakens my senses  
To my surroundings  
The surroundings  
Where I know I will lie

In a deep eternal sleep  
My uniform soaked  
In scarlet beads of blood  
My hair strewn  
With dust and mud

My face dirty and possibly bloody  
But a smile of victory, clearly visible  
Lingering on my cold lips

The thought of me in this condition  
Makes me bolder and braver  
I fought with all the strength  
My body could gather

A blinding flash  
A searing pain  
A cry of anguish

I feel my body falling  
Falling, falling  
Till I hit the dusty battlefield



# My Chosen Life

Maryam Idroos

A dress code made in heaven  
Ignorantly reduced to a cartoon  
She's different, states the maven  
Uncover her face, strives the loon

We saw it in distant France  
Now in quintessential Quebec City  
Why can't I make my glance?  
It's indeed a great pity

Canada the great mosaic  
Tolerance runs so deep  
We are not staying in the Baltic's  
Please listen to what we speak

I'm no mark of separation  
It's my modest identity  
Are you planning my liberation?  
That's just plain fantasy

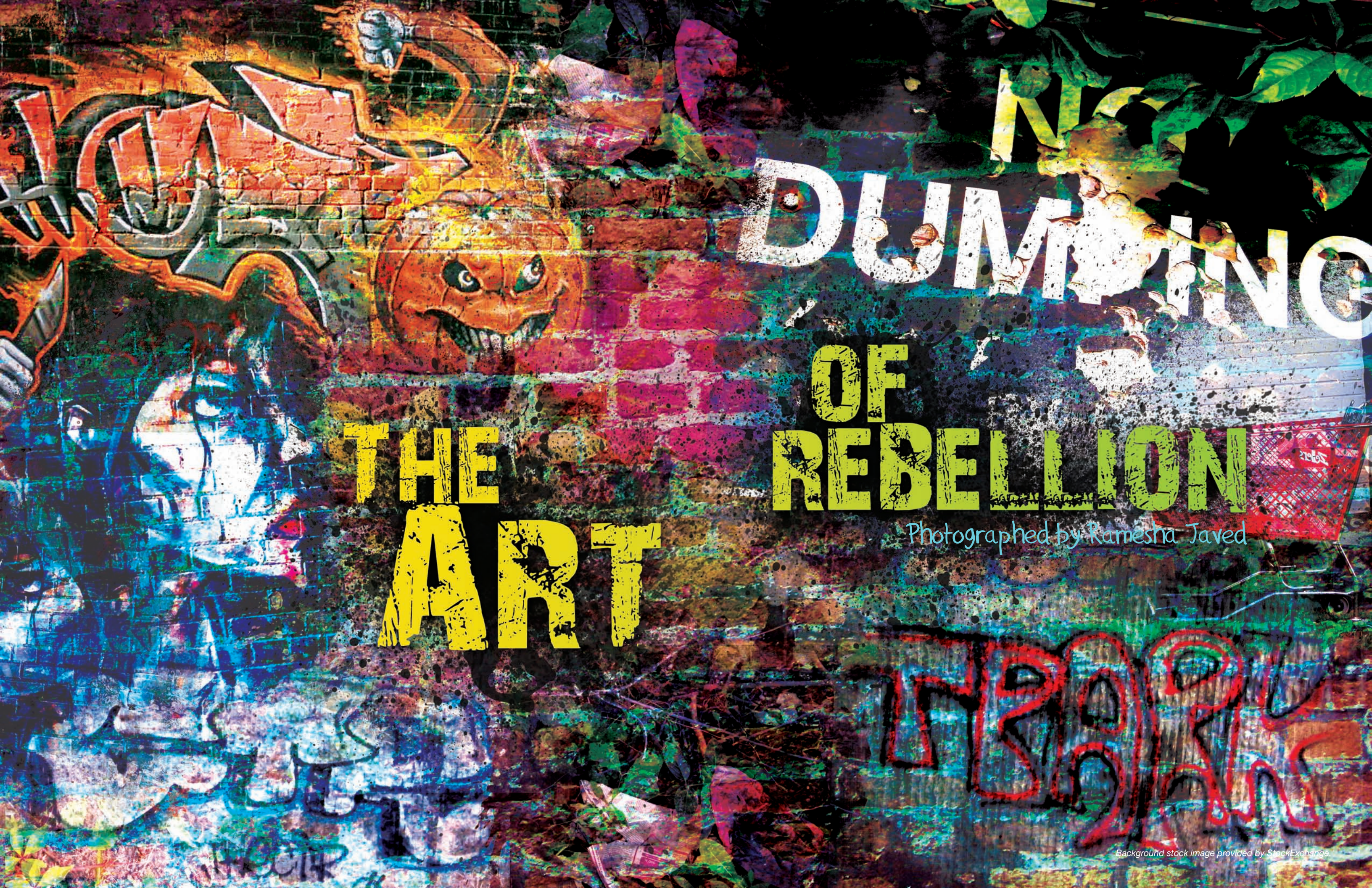
I am a shepherd to my family  
My Lord has questions for me  
A complete life I adhere fiercely  
Remove your veil to see reality

You are right; this world's a prison  
I'll protect myself as much  
Paradise I doggedly envision  
With molars I strongly clutch

Obedience is not for the creation  
Father, husband has limited say  
Time to change your inchoate notion  
With dignity I walk my way







DUMPING

THE  
ART  
OF  
REBELLION

Photographed by Ramesha Javed

IT'S A  
REBELLION



# Rebellion

## Against the Greater Good

Trisha Rai

Has there ever been a day when you are walking down the street, and you have seen litter or wrappers and whatnot on the walkway while there are garbage and recycle bins a block away? It totally frustrates me to see what a mess our community is in. Out in the world global warming is happening, and there are natural disasters destroying innocent lives as a result. Has there ever been something at the bottom of your heart that says, "what can I do to stop this from happening?" Well I would be glad to tell you that recycling, and using only as much as electricity and water needed would really help. Little things like that can make a huge difference. If we as a community work to make a difference, other communities might be inspired to do the same. However, you can't make a difference without doing anything.

Honestly, everyone is talking about making a difference but here in our community I have seen no such change. People don't recycle. People litter the walk way, and many organizations have brought volunteers to clean our community but nevertheless the next day it is filled with litter. My own building has given out recycle bins to each apartment but almost no one has bothered to use them. My family and friends are concerned but many haven't taken on the duty to

recycle. I have heard a lot of excuses from people saying they are "too lazy," or "don't have time." What's all this resistance towards doing a positive thing? You are rebelling against nature by trashing the environment, even if you are doing it subconsciously.

Do you ever not have time to do something you enjoy but make time to do it anyway? Well you can do the same here. You don't need to have a recycling bin, you can have a bag that you use for only recycling and keep it near your door so when you leave to go out you can drop it off on your way out. In buildings the recycle bins are downstairs in the basement so when you're going to go to your car you can drop it off or when you're going to do laundry. That's what my family does when the recycle bag is filled up. And if you are too lazy well then not doing anything makes you responsible for what will happen in the near future. So if you want to be guilt-stricken from destroying Mother Nature then so be it. We all have to do something before it's too late; we need to change the poor choices we have made so we all can live in a better environment. If we rebel against nature, the results will not be in our favour.

bryan peart

when i die i wanna go to heaven chances of dat rolling a  
seven or eleven

not much different between hell and this earth  
always wonder is life a blessing or a curse  
i've been pretty good since my mom gave me birth  
but what they did to blits dat styll hurt  
in di dark around corner never knows wat lurks  
it been a really long time since i went to moms church  
i gotta take care of certain situation first  
but everything i do mom says take it to the lord first  
daughter getting big whata growth spurt  
bloodline accomplish i'm give it what it's worth

life is sometime disappointing sometimes a trifle  
can't breath no more feels like i've been stifled  
tell u i don't believe everything in the bible  
in life the truth my only real rival





# Orange Blossom Perfume

Halima Hakimi

He had been missing for a long time. Then some people told us that my father had been killed. That was the worst day in our family's life. Then some people told us that my father was alive. We waited for him to come home, but he never returned. When my mom confirmed that our father had indeed died this was the darkest period in our family's history. It felt so bad to think that one moment my father is alive then he is dead.

We didn't have anyone to look after us. We sold our house and rented a basement apartment from a rich family in the east side of Kabul. Day by day our life became harder because my mom had no job. I was older than my siblings, but I was too young to work or to help my mom. Eventhough she faced many problems, my mom never gave up. She struggled a lot and looked every where to find a job, but unfortunately she wasn't able to get one. To add to my mom's struggles, my sister became very sick and we had to take her to a doctor. We had no money. My mom had to sell all her jewellery, which her beloved husband bought for her. I was born during war. I grew up during war. I have no idea what life is like without war. Shooting and being scared in dark nights. I can still remember my father with his bright smile and bright eyes, he was tall and handsome. My father was a surgical doctor.

He had no fear. He would spend all day at the hospital treating the sick and injured Innocent men, women and children, who were affected by the war. When he arrived home we could see how tired he was, but still he would smile at us, hug and kiss us with love and kindness. Unfortunately, those days didn't last too long.

Once I asked my mom about her life, when there was no war and people had a peaceful, normal life. She said, "We had a beautiful, big house in Afshar. The house had three bedrooms, a dining room, and a kitchen, where your grandma used to cook delicious Afghan meals. We had a big yard as well, where we had apricot, apple and peach trees. We would sit under the trees and enjoy Kabul's summer. Your grandma used to go to parties and your grandpa knew many people, ah..... I miss those days". I could see tears falling from her sad eyes. I knew what happened next. Once my father told me about it. Then the war started. Some called it a "holy war" against the Russians. Our military people, who called themselves Mujahiddin, started fighting for their country as pure Afghans. They fought with the Russians for more than ten years and won. When the Russians left our country our leaders started fighting with each other which had incredibly bad effects. The Mujahiddin fought against each other instead of rebuilding our country, and that's why my grandparents lost their house, because the Mujahidin bombed many buildings and houses. The Mujahidin were busy fighting each other when the Taliban took control of Afghanistan. They stopped women from working, studying and having a normal life. The Taliban were powerful. They had strong weapons and they killed many poor and innocent people.

One cold afternoon Taliban arrested my father as well, when he was back from his work. Since that day we have never seen him.

The Taliban were still in power when my mom found a secret job. She taught English to our neighbor's daughters, they were not allowed to attend school. Even though it was very dangerous my mom was brave. She never gave up, and with the money that she made, she bought us food and clothes. Some of our relatives told her to leave us and marry a rich man because she was young and pretty. She was also well educated, but she never said anything but worked as hard as she could. She even washed our neighbor's clothes and they paid her.

When I was fifteen, I was old enough to look after my family, I was working in a small bakery, but my mom was afraid and made arrangements for me to leave and join my father's friend, named Rashid, in England. I remember the day when I left my family. I looked at my brother and sister and they could see me crying because we didn't know when we would see each other again. On my way to Europe I faced numerous problems. I was lucky to find four other young boys aged fifteen, seventeen, and two of them were twenty years old. We walked for several hours across deserts and mountains, on dark nights and sometimes in rainy cold weather. We had to hide ourselves from the police and security guards because they would arrest us all and send us back to Afghanistan. It was a very dangerous and tough journey, but we were lucky that we had a compass, a map and some money. We spent many nights underground without any bed or blankets and with little food to survive. I feared and worried for my life, but I was not upset for myself because I am a man and a man never gives up. I think I travelled for more than two months, when finally we reached England.

We found it a beautiful and prosperous country, but still we weren't sure if we could stay there safely or not. God knows how happy we all were. We totally forgot our hunger and our weariness. My best friend and my helpful fellow-traveler, Ali, called his elder brother who is a civil engineer university student. And who has been in England for more than four years.

Now I am here in the UK as a refugee. I work every day of the week, and study at night in high school. I love my family. I love my country and my people with whom I could never fight. It's impossible to fire even one bullet towards my Afghan brothers and sisters even if they are wrong. That is why my mom wanted me to leave Afghanistan. Now, on TV, I am watching my country and people being attacked by the US. My people are again facing a very big problem. I have no idea what is my family doing. Where are they? What has happened to them? I can see on TV that people are very poor, without shelter or clean water. Sometimes they only eat once a day or once every two days.

When I reached England, I made a phone call to my family, but they had already left the country. No one knows where they went. Perhaps they escaped to foreign countries or if they are in some other part of Afghanistan. I am here in the UK, where the sun is bright and warm and the city is clean and light. Even if I walk late at night on the streets, I feel very safe, but I am not happy. I miss my brother, my sister and my beloved mother. I have no idea if they are alive and safe.

I miss everything, especially Eid, The smell of khina on our hands and the gorgeous yellow, red and orange colures of boiled eggs. I miss the excitement and restless moments when I used to get Eid gifts from my parents. I can still smell my mom's orange blossom perfume and see her warm, kind smile which gave me hope and pride. I hate terrorism, and the killing of innocent people. I'll never do anything to break the humanitarian law. I wish the world could hear my story. I want to tell them that Afghanistan is a beautiful country with nice people and an interesting culture, but unfortunately terrorism has taken away the freedom and rights of that historical country. They have taken away my beloved father as well. I don't know how one Afghan can kill another Afghan. Our religion doesn't allow us to kill human beings. It teaches us to value peace, love, freedom, justice and human rights. I pray to my God to help Afghani people. They are tired of the fighting and being refugees.



# Forbidden Love

Norma Khouri

Laced with the descriptive beauty of Jordan, and painted in the floral hues of romance, this novel addresses the stigma of honor-killing which is practised in various parts of the world, and portrays the extent to which love ventures to resist and rebel against this gruesome practice.

Despite the cloud of controversy that hovers over this book concerning whether it is fiction or reality author Khouri adamantly insists that it was published as a memoir attributed to her best friend Dalia and is based on the love affair that Dalia had had in her later youth and how Norma and Dalia resisted all opposition that fate chooses them to encounter for the sake of Dalia's true love. Even if this novel might be discovered as fiction the theme of honour-killing is no fallacy.

The vile act of honour-killing originates from pre-Islamic Bedouin culture. It materializes from the assumption that women's chastity signifies the honor of their families so if any advent occurs that questions the chastity of a woman no matter if she is innocent or guilty, the patriarch members of her family should kill her in order to salvage the family's honour, and cleanse the family of the impurity that she had brought. The practitioners of this locally underrated crime often define chastity in stringent terms so that a brother might even kill his sister for chatting with a man on facebook. This depicts how these murderers rebel against human and social rights in order to practise what they believe in. They resist justice and mercy by inheriting this out-dated culture. Husbands and fathers seem to own their wives and daughters like they may own cattle and thus many a woman is victimised by this atrocious trend and is compelled to live like something without feelings, or rebel secretly to live the life of her choice which can consequentially lead to being killed by those whom she had learnt to love.

Our story is situated in Jordan where our two main characters Norma and Dalia have been best friends for around twenty years. Though Norma is Catholic and Dalia is Muslim this does not intervene in their friendship. They grow through the same struggles of learning to yield to their fathers and brothers all the time and of always being chaperoned by these patriarchs. Although unlike Norma Dalia has to be clad in her Hijaab whenever she goes out they both grow up learning to stifle and suppress their opinions and ambitions because of their culture. Khouri employs strong metaphor and examples to depict how superficialities of modernism blot out from view the vile traditions that reign in the core.

The story follows our two main characters to find them in their mid-twenties, owning and running a salon together after much convincing and persuading from their fathers and brothers. Meandering around this occupation Dalia our fiery and passionate heroine finds much scope of falling in love with a dashing and unusually open-minded soldier called Michael. Their mutual love is challenged by fate as Michael is Catholic and marriage for Dalia with a man of another religion is out of bounds! Norma and Dalia rebel as much as their courage allows them against their traditions and though the girls do smoke cigarettes indulgently under the noses of their fathers and brothers will they be able to illuminate a path amidst all this darkness that leads to real bliss in true love?

# STRESS

—BeScene Health Corner—

Just in time for exam season Rashmika Nugur and Sara Mussa of Be Scene interviewed one of the Flemindon Health Centre's social work students, Najimeh Abdorrahimi, about stress and its impacts on youth...

## **R & S: What are some common stress reactions that youth talk to you about?**

N: Well, stress is the emotional and physical strain caused by our response to pressure. Common stress reactions include tension, irritability, inability to concentrate, anger and a variety of physical symptoms like headaches and fast heartbeat.

## **R & S: How does stress affect the brain and our ability to study?**

N: Chronic stress induces chemical disturbances in the brain to serotonin, norepinephrine, epinephrine and dopamine. These chemicals are known to affect a person's ability to concentrate and think clearly.

## **R & S: What are some of the ways that youth deal in stress?**

N: In many different ways. Stress in moderate degrees commonly increases performance. Most teenagers respond to stressful events in their lives by doing something relaxing, trying positive and self-reliant problem-solving or seeking friendship and support from others. When stress is too great it overwhelms our mental capacity and therefore decreases performance and affects our daily functioning and relationships with others. Youth with high levels of stress sometimes act out their stress by joining in various gang activities, bullying, substance use and abuse, aggressive behavior, and self harm. High levels of stress can also lead to depression, anxiety and various other mental and physical issues.

## **R & S: Who is most affected by stress?**

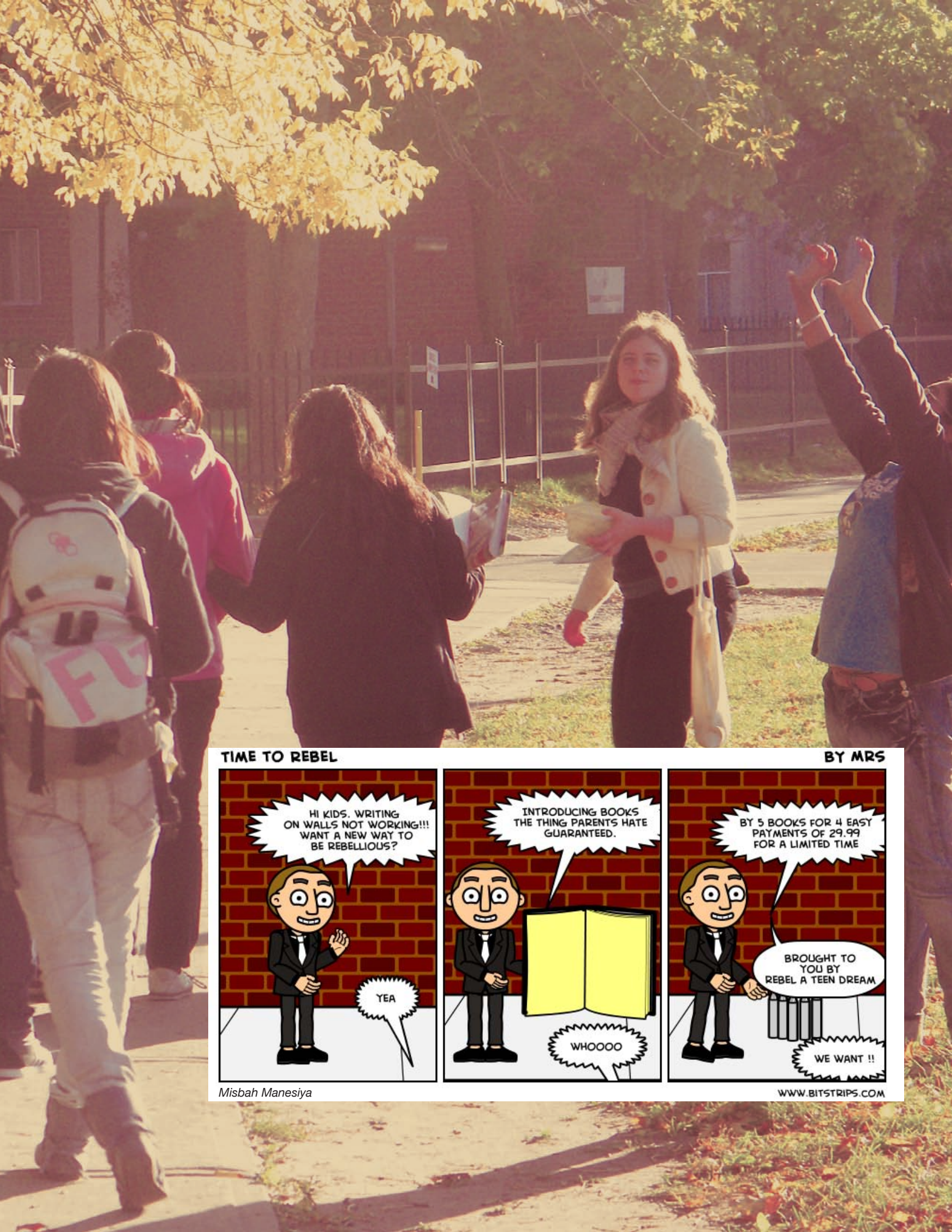
N: Children and youth are specifically prone to stress because they are just beginning to develop psychological defenses. They need a healthy family environment and good role models to learn to cope well since there are so many things that can lead to high stress like increased arguing between parents, change in family financial status, serious illness or injury of family members, relocating from home countries, peer-pressure, etc.

## **R & S: What advice would you give to youth to reduce stress?**

N: Talk about what's going on in your life with close family members, friends and school counselors. If you're experiencing unresolved anxiety perhaps due to traumatic experiences see a professional like a family doctor. Another good way to manage stress is by being active – for instance joining group activities like sports and community centre programs.

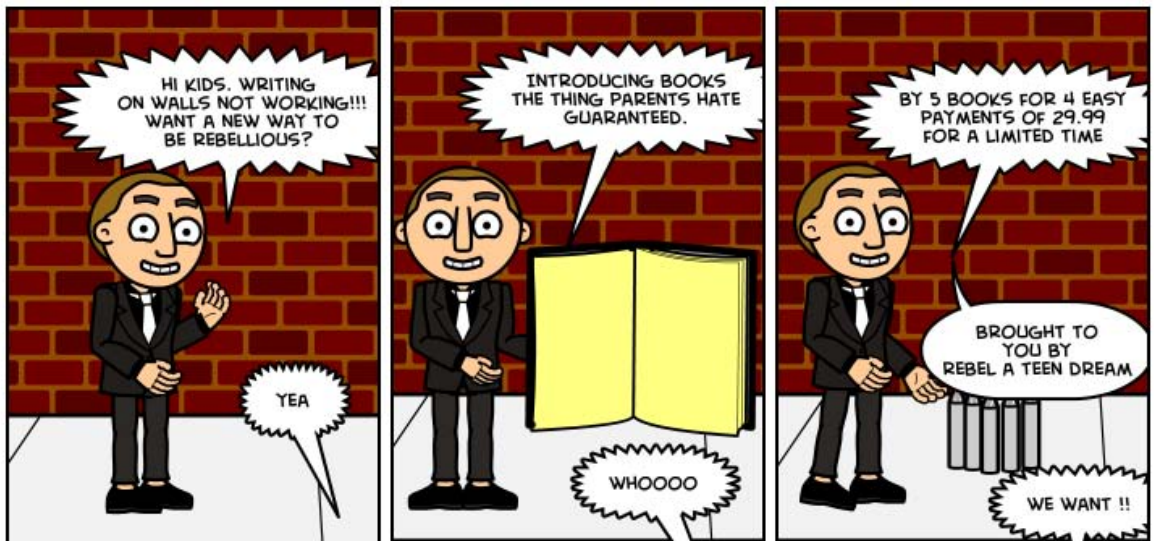






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Misbah Manesiya

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