

STELLA MARIS COLLEGE (AUTONOMOUS) CHENNAI 600 086
(For candidates admitted during the academic year 2019– 2020)

SUBJECT CODE: 19EL/PC/GS14

M.A. DEGREE EXAMINATION, NOVEMBER 2019
BRANCH VII – ENGLISH
FIRST SEMESTER

COURSE: MAJOR CORE
PAPER: GENDER STUDIES

TIME: 3 HOURS
MAX. MARKS: 100

SECTION- A

I. Answer any four of the following in about 300 words each. (4x10=40)

1. Why does Beauvoir argue that “for women, unlike minorities, alterity is a given, an absolute?”
2. With reference to *A Room of One's Own*, discuss how gender-consciousness hampers creative output and dims the incandescence of genius.
3. According to Judith Butler, what does it mean to claim that gender has no ontological status?
4. Discuss bell hooks' views on the fallacy of focusing exclusively on gender as the sole determinant of a woman's fate.
5. Examine David S. Gutterman's views on the implication of postmodern conception of subjectivity on the theoretical and political challenges to normative masculinity.
6. Consider Maya Angelou's poetry as an expression of resilience.

SECTION- B

II. Answer any two of the following in about 750 words each. (2x20=40)

7. Comment on the implications of power in determining the position of subaltern women in a patriarchal society with examples from the texts prescribed for study.
8. Consider Manobi Bandyopadhyay's self-narrative as a critique of society's fixed notions of gendered identities.
9. What views of Woolf does Showalter disagree with? How does it add to your understanding of aesthetics and politics in Gender Studies?
10. “Re-vision – the act of looking back, of seeing with fresh eyes, of entering an old text from a new critical direction – is for woman more than a chapter in cultural history: it is an act of survival.” Citing two examples from the texts prescribed for study, substantiate Rich's statement.

SECTION- C

III. Analyse the following poem in about 600-750 words commenting on the intersection of gender, race and class. (1x20=20)

11. Warming Her Pearls

Next to my own skin, her pearls. My mistress
bids me wear them, warm them, until evening
when I'll brush her hair. At six, I place them
round her cool, white throat. All day I think of her,

resting in the Yellow Room, contemplating silk
or taffeta, which gown tonight? She fans herself
whilst I work willingly, my slow heat entering
each pearl. Slack on my neck, her rope.

She's beautiful. I dream about her
in my attic bed; picture her dancing
with tall men, puzzled by my faint, persistent scent
beneath her French perfume, her milky stones.

I dust her shoulders with a rabbit's foot,
watch the soft blush seep through her skin
like an indolent sigh. In her looking-glass
my red lips part as though I want to speak.

Full moon. Her carriage brings her home. I see
her every movement in my head.... Undressing,
taking off her jewels, her slim hand reaching
for the case, slipping naked into bed, the way

she always does.... And I lie here awake,
knowing the pearls are cooling even now
in the room where my mistress sleeps. All night
I feel their absence and I burn.

Carol Ann Duffy
