

**MASTER OF ARTS EXAMINATION, 2019**  
**First Year Second Semester**  
**ENGLISH**  
**Women Writing Madness**

**Time: Two hours**

**Full Marks: 30**

Answer any two questions from part A and one from part B:

**Part A**

**(11x2=22)**

1. "The binaries of reason and madness both construct and collapse the binaries of gender" Discuss the theoretical implications of this statement with reference to any one literary text that you have studied.
2. How are the early modern discourses of witchcraft and women's madness played off against each other in *Macbeth*? How do these contemporary debates construct the figure of Lady Macbeth?
3. Would you characterize *Maria* and the "The Yellow Wallpaper" as gothic texts? Give reasons for your answer and discuss why the gothic genre lends itself to writing women's madness.
4. Discuss how women's madness is connected with the construction of racialised sexuality in *Wide Sargasso Sea* and "Let Them Call it Jazz".
- 5a. "The experience of madness in Plath and Sexton and many other women of their generation in mid twentieth century America can be read as a product of conflicting gender roles." Do you agree with this view? Give reasons for your answer.

**Or**

- 5b. How do Plath and Sexton present suicide as an art in their poetry? Discuss with examples.
6. How does Adrienne Rich characterise the role of the feminist writer? How does this revise the idea of the inspired and 'mad' individual artist?

**Part B**

**8 marks**

7. Identify and annotate: " her speech is nothing/ Yet the unshaped use of it doth move/  
The hearers to collection/They aim at it/ And botch the words up fit to their own  
thoughts."
8. Write a note on Phyllis Chesler's *Women and Madness*
9. Explain the idea of the "wandering womb"
10. What is "the great confinement"?
11. Identify and annotate: "cast off all shame;/and sell yourself/in the marketplace;/  
then alone /can you hope/ to reach the Lord".