

**PG Diploma/ MA Degree in Women's and Gender Studies
(PGDWGS/MAWGS)**

ASSIGNMENT
(July 2016-17 Academic Year)
First Semester
(July 2016)



School of Gender and Development Studies

Indira Gandhi National Open University

Maidan Garhi, New Delhi - 110068

PG DIPLOMA/ MA DEGREE IN WOMEN'S AND GENDER STUDIES

ASSIGNMENT for MWG 001
(2016-17)

Assignment No.	Submission of Assignments by the Students
MWG-001/AST/TMA-2016	25th th Sep, 2016

As explained in your Programme Guide, you need to complete one assignment for each course of 8 credits. Last date of submission for all assignments is mentioned above. **Please contact your Regional Center regarding any further updates regarding assignment submission.** With proper planning you will be able to do them within the stipulated period.

Kindly note that examination forms for December 2016 Term End Examinations will only be accepted if you have submitted the assignments by the given deadline at your Regional Center/Study Center.

PLEASE ALSO READ CAREFULLY INFORMATION REGARDING ASSIGNMENTS AND STATEMENT ON PLAGIARISM PROVIDED IN THE PROGRAMME GUIDE.

Course Code : MWG 001
Course Title : Theories & Concepts in Women's & Gender Studies
Assignment No. : MWG 001/AST/TMA-2016

Note : The assignment requires you to attempt any two essay type questions. The recommended length for each answer is 1200-1500 words. **Maximum Marks: 100**

Statement Regarding Plagiarism: Please write all answers in your own words. Assignments with plagiarized material (copied directly from course books or any other external sources) will not be accepted. Please read statement on Plagiarism provided in the Programme Guide.

Attempt **any two** of the following Long Answer questions (50 marks each)

1. The famous writer and activist Mahasweta Devi, who passed away recently, was well known for her short stories depicting the lives of tribals in India. Read the short story "The Hunt" by Mahasweta Devi (*Imaginary Maps*, Routledge, 1995). <http://ebookinga.com/pdf/imaginary-maps-three-stories-by-mahasweta-devi-pdf-5039236.html>

Based on your understanding of the Unit on Ecofeminism (Block 2, Unit 3), what connections can you draw between this short story and feminist theories of eco-feminism? Present your analysis of the story from this perspective in your own words.

2. In her article "The Laugh of the Medusa," Hélène Cixous explores a particular style of feminine writing (*écriture féminine*) to inspire women to go beyond patriarchal limitations and 'write their bodies'. Read Cixous' article which is available on either of the following links and answer parts a. and b. below:

https://artandobjecthood.files.wordpress.com/2012/06/cixous_the_laugh_of_the_medusa.pdf

Or

http://disciplinas.stoa.usp.br/pluginfile.php/66416/mod_resource/content/1/cixous-the-laugh-of-the-medusa.pdf

- a. In your opinion, to what extent is the author successful in performing a feminist critique of knowledge and in reclaiming writing on behalf of women writers? Discuss with the help of your understanding of feminist psychoanalytic theory (Block 4, Unit 3 and Block 5, Unit 2).
- b. Create your own piece (essay/creative prose) in the style of *écriture féminine* proposed by Hélène Cixous.

3. Michel Foucault proposes that in western society a ‘scientific’ surveillance of sexuality is carried out by means of four phenomena which link knowledge and power to sexuality (see Unit 1, Block 6, esp. pp.454-455).
In your opinion, to what extent are these phenomena outlined by Foucault applicable in contemporary Indian society and the way we view, construct and control sexuality? Discuss (according to you) the varying relevance of Foucault’s theories in the context of Indian society. Support your answer with the help of examples drawn from everyday life/ personal experiences/ newspaper reports or any other resources of your choice.

4. Read the following article by Nancy Chodorow: “Gender Differences in the PrOedipal Period, The Reproduction of Mothering: p. 92-109:
<https://toleratedindividuality.files.wordpress.com/2015/10/the-reproduction-of-mothering.pdf>

Based on your understanding of Chodorow’s article and your reading of Unit 2 of Block 5 (“Feminism & Psychoanalysis”), explain in your own words how Chodorow sets out to undo some of Freud’s assumptions about infantile sexuality and gender differences.