



VOL 4 2018-2019 DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH VIVEKANANDA COLLEGE

## NEWSLETTER

### Foreword

In her essay 'Writing as An Act of Hope' Isabel Allende declares, "[n] one, finally women are breaking through the rule of silence and raising a strong voice to question the world ..... [with] a literature that doesn't invent history or try to explain the world solely through reason, but also seeks knowledge through feelings and imagination."

Literature is the art of written work. Over the past two centuries the role of women has changed dramatically. Many women writers have made their very own selective universe in direct restriction in reacting to the male ruled artistic world. Mary Wollstonecraft's A Vindication on the Rights of Women (1792) has not only inspired many women but also sparked many women related discussions. In 70's, 80's, second wave feminism initiated a revival in creating a place of women's work in spite of years of discussion concerning the gender diversity benefits, progress has been very slow. Eventually juxtaposition of the accounts presents a more holistic image as we have a tendency to be attracted to the ideas relevant to gender equality across disciplines. Today there are many women writers but this doesn't mean that gender disparities have been eradicated, much has been accomplished and many more things are yet to come. Pattern is upward.

**Dr. Nalini Gandhi Kapoor**

**Teacher-In-Charge**

**Department of English**

**Wordweaves Masthead sketched by: Rashmi, B.A. (H). English, II Year**



## Editorial

It's about women's voices, their right to speak, their right to be heard. As a special issue on women narrators we have provided a space for perspectives and standpoints which have managed to break through the shackles of sheer dismissal to disregard and discrimination. There are evocative poetry, lucid prose and thought provoking articles on myriad issues ranging from sexual abuse, disability, LGBTQ+ accounts and above all the experience of being a woman, the expectations, idealisations and its reality. Throughout the narrative of the newsletter there is questioning of gender stereotypes, a reason to celebrate defiance, the glory well deserved by the rebel, the sparkling intelligence of the thinking woman, the talent of the skilled craftswomen and the visual and written display of creativity.

The format of the newsletter has been deliberately transformed to include essential reports of the various activities organised by the Department. *Wordweaves* becomes an important platform to acknowledge and appreciate the efforts of the faculty and the students who come together to participate in, organize and celebrate events and activities with utmost dedication and sincerity. Along with the celebration of budding creative artists, *Wordweaves 2018-19* also wishes to be a record of the camaraderie and vibrancy of the department.

“Here is to Strong Women

May we know them

May we be them

May we raise them”

**Edited and Designed by: Chaandreyi Mukherjee and Anchala Paliwal**

**Assistant Professors**

**Department of English**

**Student Coordinators: Vidushi Miya, B.A. (H). English, II Year**

**Mrinalini B.A. (H). English I Year**

A decorative border made of musical staves with various notes and clefs surrounds the text.

## A Song for You

Loveless city by the river is incumbent upon  
heartless beings

I am just a bird with a sweet voice

My voice is not heard in the crowds

Only when a passer by walks alone is when  
he stops to listen

Ignorant men misinterpret my song as happy

A song is not always a happy song

And I tell tales not to please

I do not wish to sound the  
sweetest

I wish to sound the  
harshest

I've been singing the Song of the Wretched  
Girl raped by a community

I've been singing the Song of the Homeless  
Boy who has been engulfed by the monster  
of rags

I've been singing the Song of Trees who are  
being preyed upon from generations

I've been singing the Song of Animals who  
die of inhuman practices

Now I sing at night

Alas, common men have begun to seek  
solace in darkness

How can I sing a Song of Love in this  
loveless city?

I am no lovebird

My songs are not for comfort

Because I tell tales not of comfort

I do not wish to

Somnambulate

My only wish is to awaken

The pristine sky, watching me from a  
distance, asks-

'But why sing?'

The hope for...

The free sky, watching me from a distance,  
asks-

'But what gain?'

The many distraught voices...

The eternal sky, watching me from a  
distance, asks-

'But how long?'

The Song must go on...

**Vipula Sharma**

**B.A. (H). English, III Year**



## Diary of a Young Girl

**Our lives split**

**When Hitler bombed our kin,**

**We hid ourselves under a lid**

**Darker rooms, darkened our lives,**

**Limited supplies didn't fill the fear**

**That fear that kept us awake all night.**

**In search of light, I went around**

**Secluded corners became my friends,**

**Me and my kitty shared the thoughts**

**About the holocaust;**

**The closed cell pained my ears,**

**People screaming and blood spilled**

**Made my heart weep in grief.**

**I missed my scooter, my Quack Quack school,**

**My heart searched in claustrophobic space**

**To fly to a place, where no yellow star existed,**

**Hate that leader, who had a hew**

**And murdered the Jew; all hail Hitler, the Satan is here.**

**Father, here keep my soul (Diary)**

**This surrounds my whole,**

**Here, I go and will return in the shine of sun**

**Paper has more patience than People,**

**Anne my name, I'm a Jew.**

**Vidushi Miya**

**B.A.(H). English, II Year**





## Deception

Familiar faces often reappear in our lives and we tend to overlook past indiscretion and admit them back.

I often wonder why do they feel like coming back to us after all the deceptive words and dissembling glances they cast our way?

Or why haven't they discovered new lives to probe, new faiths to despoil and newfound loyalties to contaminate?

Why don't they find anyone new to share their loneliness with?  
The loneliness that haunts them makes them inch closer towards us, mend old bonds and infiltrate our lives again.

They do so since they need someone to emotionally latch on to and derive sustenance.

And that 'someone' will always be a person, who loved them selflessly,

Someone whose trust they mangled,

Whose purity they corrupted and whose soul they defiled.

Also, they feel that it's always easier to revive older ties than forging new ones.

These old bonds will eventually ensnare us in all too familiar bondages, cripple us and incapacitate our reason, our logic and judgement.

Slowly stealing our selfhood from us, robbing us of our sanity and emptying us of love.

**Shreya Aggarwal**

**B.A.(H). English, III Year**

# Beauty and Beautiful

What was beauty?

A futile attempt, a vain practice;  
Full of remorse, causing pain of transience.

What could be beautiful?

Maybe I can, maybe I am;  
Maybe a touch of eye,  
A vision of smell,  
A sight to hear, a spell to taste;

What is the most beautiful?

The feeling of joy to be what I am,  
Due to someone's presence,  
Within me and also external;

When have I felt beautiful myself?

To be eternally in love,  
That gives us hope to be better  
And elevates our lives  
A feeling to cherish every moment,  
No matter where I am,  
An ecstasy which returns  
When we are least aware

To love and be loved lend us different  
presents,

That touch our souls like we have lived ever  
together,

Nowhere to be found with no glimpse of our  
images,

But a meet without meeting always tears  
hearts apart,

Mind says; have to play not only lover's  
part.

What is beauty?

Living loving living  
Loving living loving  
Loving on and on,  
Living not for own.

World is always a beautiful hell

When I have a couch of my paradise,

There is a sync within that dispels,

With warmth the frozen ice

On my soul and sells

The worries keeping track

Of a customer giving it a blank cheque,

Possessing that syncing heart

Which has been now accustomed to my  
darkness.

**Srishty Bhardwaj**

**B.A. (H). English, III Year**

**Sketch by Pourushi Pundil**

**B.A. (H). English, I Year**

## Loneliness

And I want no one  
To console me in my loneliness.  
I do not need lights,  
For in darkness  
I have found my calm.  
Each burning sensation  
Passing through  
My chest and slowly  
Sinking to my stomach  
Has given me fire  
Which I am made of.  
Each fallen leaf  
Of Autumn,  
Passing through the shades  
Of yellow mustard brown  
And then wilting off  
Into nothingness  
Has given me purpose  
For life is nothing  
But the wait of end.

**Bhavya Saini**

**B.A. (H) English, II Year**

## Stop Dreaming!

Moon cannot fill the sky with light  
Fragrance cannot be kept in a box  
Even though it's tight,  
So Stop Dreaming!  
After 6p.m. cannot go out of our  
tent  
Talk as much as possible  
For Women Empowerment,  
So Stop Dreaming!  
Thinking to do something  
For our own sake in coming time,  
It's ruining our milky life  
With a pinch of sour lime,  
So Stop Dreaming!  
Only books and newspapers  
Can show your bravery punch  
After reading them, you will  
Put that to pack your lunch,  
So Stop Dreaming!

**Simran Verma**

**B.A. (H) English, I Year**

## Aspire Higher

Soar your wings higher in the sky

Give your dreams a try

Unnumbered opportunities are knocking on the door

Explore them once more

Discover the world by knowing your worth

Because you are an important creature of this Earth

Let go off vanity, sorrow and grief

Have faith and belief

Don't follow the norms of patriarchy

Have power to break this hierarchy

Raise your voice against the cruelty of society

Changing people by promoting equality

Encourage women to make their own decisions

The world will have a better vision

Be ambitious and optimistic in every situation

You will be happy with this equation.

**Kriti Sardana**

**B.A. (H). English, II Year**

## I, Woman

Biased rights, unequal fights, dominance of patriarchy, burden of family reputation

These are the few things I, the woman, have to face, with those filthy eyes on me full of predation.

Yes, I'm tired, tired and afraid

Exhausted from the filth, I, everyday have to face.

“Don't wear this; too short...You're too naive,

You're a woman, you've got to adjust.

You've to wait.

Don't say this or sit like that, You're a woman, women talk trash.”

No, I will say, and I will make my way

If you're uncomfortable, that's your problem, because my arguments weigh.

Yes, I'm a woman, free, independent and full of glee

Not “Your-Type”, I say proudly.

Being the woman, I don't say, I'm your supreme.

If truth's being told, I'm your equal, in every way it seems.

Yes, I'm a woman, strong yet weak

Woman, that falls, cries, gets up and speaks

Woman, that needs the man

Woman, that the man needs.

**Nandini Sirohi**

**B.A. (H). English, I Year**



## At The Gable

I saw the moon with you,  
Without even wishing for;  
Now when I looked out at  
The seductive silence of the sky  
Melting the clouds like  
I would have in your arms.  
I think of that moment  
When I wasn't even sure of,  
A single star spying on our hearts.

**Srishty Bhardwaj**

**B.A. (H). English, III Year**

## Friendship: An Eternal Bond

Friendship: a story untold,  
A journey which holds  
Two persons by heart and soul.  
Walking along the road,  
Making their path aglow  
And through it the essence of  
friendship flows.  
Hearts enlightened with joy  
With souls inseparable as if an  
alloy.  
Experiencing the pure bliss,  
Giving all the sorrows a miss!

**Shreya Aggarwal**

**B.A.(H). English, III Year**

## Haiku

A friend never leaves  
Into life's dreary desert  
I have my wheelchair

**Muskaan Verma**

**B.A. (H). English, III Year**



## Let Us

Let us not bear an untold story,  
Let us invent a new glory.  
Let us not be cast into the mould of a victim,  
Let us break the patriarchal dictum.

Let us be another Jane Eyre,  
Who is not a bird to be ensnared.  
She faced the world alone,  
And like a sun, shone.

Mariam can be our inspiration,  
Who is a hidden splendid sun.  
She defeated evil and sacrificed her life,  
She acknowledged herself as a warrior and not only a helpless wife.

Let us be the Sinner and the Saint,  
Let us not live under any constraint.  
Let us not blindly follow the mass,  
Let us be like Kamala Das.

Let us fight for our rights and not follow the myth,  
Let us be a bit braver and a bit like Sethe.  
Let us now demand a room of our own,  
Let us not settle for less and be like Mary Beton.

Learn from Panchaali and aim for the kingdom,  
Don't vie for favours and use your own wisdom.  
Be like Shrimati and walk away when in need,  
Let us be the guide and learn to lead.

The best you can be is you,  
Just don't stand like a statue.  
Fight for your passion,  
Your life is your own narration.

**Sukanya Saha**  
**B.A. (H) English, II Year**

## Urgency!

Nobleness in epoch she is promulgator,  
Waggish her consciousness still forges that  
accommodation.

Distance between two needs to dissolve,  
Then, my reality and fiction become one and  
resolve.

There no occult scepter of virile notion,  
Departed past still haunts, creates present  
commotion.

Alienation between the theory and their  
praxis needs to wane,

Then, my Roc will cherish denial again.

Modernity flourishes as lack of desire,

Derogation still visible in her entire.

Boundaries between the discordance need to  
be blurred;

Can I ask the surrogate nature of equality is  
not absurd?

Now the truth has light.

Renege affirms conformation and revived,

“Let’s breathe for a journey of Utopia”

Otherwise it leads eventual Myopia.

**Sonia Panchal**

**B.A. (H). English, III Year**

## Valentine’s Day

Yesterday while I lay thinking on my bed,

Your picture flashed in front of my eyes.

And guess what? My tears shed.

Oh was that a hallucination?

Or something else in nature?

Anyway it gave me some relaxation...

Yet again I thought and thought of you,

Like I’m wed,

Until my mom woke me up

Alas I encountered that it was 14 Feb!

**Kritika Kargeti**

**B.A. (H). English, I Year**

**Sketch by Vidushi Miya**

**B.A. (H). English, II Year**

# Little Red Riding Hood

A little girl who lived in the woods,

Always used to wear red cloak and everyone called her LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD.

One morning, she asked her mother to visit her grandmother,

Because it had been a while since they had seen each other.

The mother agreed and told her to go there,

With a red basket which she had prepared with extreme care.

“Go straight and don’t talk to strangers” – the mother warned,

“I’ll be careful mother” – the girl confirmed.

Looking at the beautiful flowers and the butterflies, the girl became fascinated,

And went to pick some flowers forgetting the instructions which her mother had stated.

Riding Hood was engrossed in the warmth of nature,

Enjoying while ignorant of the slowly approaching danger.

“What are you doing here?” – the wolf asked in a friendly way,

Frightened girl replied- “I’m on my way to see my grandma” and ran away.

The wolf in the meantime took a shortcut,

And reached before Riding Hood at grandma’s hut.

“Come in,” the grandma said thinking that the knock on the door was of her grand daughter.

The wolf cleverly moved towards grandmother and caught her.

The wolf attacked the grandmother and gobbled her up,

And then wore grandma’s nightgown and covered up.

A few minutes later the girl arrived,

“I’ll eat her too,” thought the wolf and cleverly smiled.

Almost too late Riding Hood realised that the person in bed was not her grandmother,

And ran out of the house to call somebody to help her.

A woodsman who was chopping the logs nearby,

Ran immediately when heard her cry.

He grabbed the wolf and made him spit out the grandmother,

And took him deep into the forest where he wouldn’t bother people any longer.

“I’ll never speak to strangers” sobbed the Little Red Riding Hood,

The grandma replied “It’s an important lesson which today you understood”.

Riding hood learnt a lesson which she would not forget in her lifetime,

And little girl and grandma had lunch and a chat in that warm sunshine.

**Sonali Sahni**

**B.A. (H). English, II Year**





## **A Woman of Ability**

She was visually impaired. Could not see her mother and father but felt that they were around. Her age was not more than thirty years and she wanted to have a partner. Practicing on the Braille script she wrote a word called "love" because she wanted someone in her life. Her dad entered her room and shouted at her calling her ludicrous and frivolous. "You are blind my daughter and no one will like to stay with you". It did hurt to the core of her heart but she stood for what she wanted and said, "I love you, I cannot see you, does that matter?". He left and talked to her wife and expected her to react the same way as he did. But it was dissimilar. "She wants a man whom she can love and be with, if she can love us she can love that man too," the wife said. The soft hearted heard everything. She knew there was something called "strength" a woman is born with that has no comparison. Everybody needs support, care, love, couldn't she give all that to the man of her life? She deeply thought about it and realized it requires persuasiveness, not only because she would not be able to see her children but to gain the strength and moral courage. She explained to herself, I am a woman and that man deserves me as I deserve him. She did weep somehow and went to her mother, "Why me... mother? Why me?, I do not know how I look I will not be able to see my future husband, my children, their life, their children." Her mother said, "That is the quality you will live with, you will show the world how a woman like you describes her power, you will see not through your eyes but your heart. Your life will be surrounded by happiness...you will feel the happiness without seeing, you are a woman of ability."

**Iram Haque Peer**

**B.A. (H). English, II Year**

## **Colourless**

He tickled my feet and said I am like your father and I will always be with you. I was a seven year old girl. Inculpable, adorable and innocent. Never thought I would be able to express this my entire life. It was the month of March and we were gearing up to celebrate the festival of colours. I was ecstatic and told him how frantically I awaited this festival. He told me he loved colours too. He wanted to play with me inside out. I admire colours, no... I do not, I abhor them for many reasons, some of them so brutal, so harsh. He made me hate colours that fill the life. He was not like my father as he meant. I now understand why experienced women write like this and people comment and say it is obvious and so very common. Colours indeed create visual attributes but I felt out of it because my mother said do not ever speak about it, forget, forget forget.

**Iram Haque Peer**

**B.A. (H). English, II Year**

**Sketch by Zeenat**

**B.A. (H). English, I Year**

## Women's World

Beginning from her father's home,  
And ending her life in her husband's house,  
She carries out many memories and many  
more struggles with her.

Losing her own control over her own life,  
First lives her life according to her father  
And then according to her husband's choice.  
But finds her happiness in their smiles,  
Living her life for their lives.

She as a mother, cares for everyone in the  
house,

She as a friend, supports from heart,  
She as a sister, cares far and far,

And she as a daughter, completes the life.  
She is always present in one's life,

May be as daughter or as wife,  
Reflecting her attributes through her soul,  
She keeps on working for twenty four hours,  
Just for the sake of the family's calm.

**Mrinalini Singh**

**B.A. (H). English, I Year**

## Mother

My mother

My friend, my support, my guide

The one who will always be by my side

The day when even I won't feel like taking a  
stand for my own,

She would be there not leaving me alone

She would be there for me to care,

With her, every quirky feeling of mine, I can  
share

She feels jocular even when my success is  
not at all grand,

At the same time, she is the one who never  
fails to understand

I don't know with what miraculous power  
she is augmented,

I feel sad and far away she immediately  
becomes dejected

Though living without her is erroneous,

But then she is the one who makes me  
audacious

To say I will love her as much as she loves  
me will not be right,

But I can promise to make her happy, every  
moment I will fight.

**Muskan Raj**

**B.A. (H). English, I Year**

**Sketch by Arpita**

**B.A. (H). English, II Year**



# Prey

Like an orphan with mother, father and the whole family in the house we call home...I lived! Breakfast on time and dinner as well! Whatever I want is served, but something is lost... resembles like home...after encountering the demon.

I met him in past who is present in my memory...related by blood to him...related to him with a childhood fear ...I couldn't name what was it that night. They say, "experiences of childhood remain with us forever..." that is why, that night still accompanies me...

After coming home; after playing that evening, I threw myself on the bed and fell asleep...Ooh...Such a sombre sleep it was! In the middle of the night...something hushed...then suddenly moved harder and tried to push something into me from behind! Slowly I felt a hawk's hand rubbing my intimate area and gradually pressing it. I still don't know how to give words to that feeling... An unknown fear...a devastating shiver ran down all over my veins...I pushed him back with my might...The claws withdrew then.

I played carrom with him the next day... Ignorant of the game which he tried to play.

I didn't reveal it to anybody...What would I say and how could I explain the shiver which I cannot name.

I understood what game it was. All the reverence for him as being the eldest of the family was crumpled apart.

Hollow relations! I shouted out loud within me...

What is the way out? How to get out of this? Every girl is the victim of such fear in one form or another; I thought. How could we come out of this vicious cycle? Should girls run away from their houses as they are not safe there? Where would they go then...Outside? No! No! How could they? The outside world is ready to swallow them down...Remember Nirbhaya? Or did you forget?

**Kirti Dubey**

**B.A.(H). English, III Year**





## Jeanette Winterson Writing 'Love'

Jeanette Winterson – the renowned postmodernist novelist, writes in her novel *Written on the Body*, “It’s the clichés that cause the trouble.”

This statement, perhaps, condenses the very idea that postmodernism brought to the forefront of the Western literary discourse. With its emphasis on the experimentation in narrative forms, hybridization of genres and deconstruction of conventions associated with writing fiction, the postmodern worldview distinctly breaks itself off, from the various other epistemes in the history of English literature, in terms of its rejection and subversion of the ‘clichés’ that characterized most fiction before postmodernism. Winterson’s fiction, true to its postmodernist character, celebrates a communion of the genres, incorporating elements of fairy-tale, history and science within the larger framework of fiction-writing. This fluid mélange of genres, coupled with techniques of problematizing closures and valorizing instability, is what Winterson amalgamates into the finished product of her artwork.

Winterson's reworking of the genres involves the re-working of love as a theme, in all its different categories - romantic, sexual and courtly, across the spectrum of sexuality and sexual difference. The theme of ‘love’ in the fiction of Jeanette Winterson transcends institutionalization in the form of marriage and rather, becomes a search for the more pronounced form of the self. In *Sexing the Cherry*, for instance, Jordan in his quest for Fortunata – the dancing princess says, “Was I searching for a dancer whose name I did not know or, was I searching for the dancing part of myself?”

Fortunata, the double that Jordan had been looking for in all his journeys, represents a desire that is indistinguishable from his search for a more coherent whole. The quest motif is significant, only because Fortunata refuses to be the closure and the end point of Jordan’s journey. In effect, the desire which propels Jordan’s imaginative journeys is a transcendental quest for a spiritual, and not a physical self, symbolized by ‘empty space and points of light.’ This, in a way, is at odds with the traditional romantic plot lines that culminate in fulfilled relationships. In fact, it simultaneously downplays the narratives that end in unrequited love, for by refuting the communion of Jordan and Fortunata, Winterson sets Jordan to a quest which is no longer an outward fixation of the self, but the search of his true self beyond time, space and material existence. Winterson writes, “Love is a map, not a destination. That's why there is no such thing as ‘they all lived happily ever after.’” Indeed, Jeanette Winterson redefines the mythical/mystical idea of ‘love’, employing it as a theme, only to subvert the ‘clichéd’ notions associated with it; she defies romanticized closures leading to fulfillment and happiness. For Winterson, it’s not merely about pursuit of ‘happy endings’, rather, it transcends normative boundaries of gender, sex, desire and sexuality and becomes a more idealized and metaphorical trope constituting her fiction which escapes the coordinates of temporality and materiality.

**Shivangi Bhatia**

**B.A. (H). English, III Year**



## The Unsuccessful Story

“They regularly drugged me so I would fall unconscious and clients could do with me as they pleased.”

We live in a society that judges people by their profession. A doctor or engineer might be considered highly respected occupations while a painter or a dancer might not be appreciated much for their choice of profession. A girl staying at home all day might be considered an “ideal” woman, while one returning home late night maybe termed “characterless” and topic of gossip and speculations for the neighbourhood.

Prostitution is illegal in India and there are millions of unfortunate girls who are forced into it. The prostitution victims often suffer from depression and other psychological problem which in turn scar them for the rest of their lives. It is happening not only in India but in other countries also. In Cambodia, young girls are sold like commodities and slips and receipts of the payment are given to their sellers. They are even sold off by their parents because of poverty or greed. Forced prostitution and sex slavery is a global reality. According to government statistics, there are over two million sex workers in the country.

Dr. Vargeshwari Derwal, a woman’s right activist and a senior faculty member in Delhi University opines, “legalizing it would surely help but as a prostitute if I think about it, society would not give them a new found respect which they actually deserve.” The reason is, we view this profession with prejudiced bias and women who indulge in it are considered as fallen women. We think that they are polluted. The same society does not point finger on men who are their clients or those who coerce women into this situation.

Within the Feminist discourse, increasingly the term sex workers is being used. It attributes the dignity of labour to already marginalised women. It’s a beginning towards a long overdue journey.

**Shivani Yadav**

**B.A.(H). English, III Year**

PROSTITUTION

**Sketch by Vidushi Miya**

**B.A. (H). English, II Year**

# REPORTS

## *Literature as Representation of Society*

### **Interdisciplinary Lecture**

An Interdisciplinary Lecture on “Literature as Representation of Society” was organized by Department of English, Vivekananda College on 24<sup>th</sup> July 2018 at 2:30 pm in Sharda Hall. The lecture was held as an introductory session on literature for the newly admitted students of B.A. (H.) English of the college. Dr. Nalini Gandhi Kapoor opened the discussion with a brief note on the role of literature in our lives. She also described literature as a discourse which tunes people to greater heights and also as a mirror which reflects our own lives.

One faculty member from each language department was invited to share their views on this occasion. Dr. Kamini Taneja (Assistant Professor, Department of Sanskrit) began her lecture by exploring the deep rooted relationship between Indian culture and Sanskrit. She also opined that Sanskrit is not limited to only ritualistic practices and explored the contribution of the language in representing Indian society citing examples from ancient texts and also from modern writings in Sanskrit. Dr. Yojana Kalia (Assistant Professor, Department of Hindi) also began her engaging and interactive session by exploring the relationship between literature and society. She addressed “what is literature” by using the ideas of literary critics such as Bhama and Ramchandra Shukla. She also discussed some of the works of prominent writers such as Sadat Hassan Manto and Premchand and their relevance in Indian society. She concluded her lecture by stating “Literature trains us for a good life and to be a good human”. Ms. Kanika Kumar (Assistant Professor, Department of French) discussed the various literary phases of French Literature and how it captured a portrait of the society of its own time. She also asserted that literature is both informative and educative.

A multi disciplinary approach towards literature enhanced and enriched the young minds.

## *Women Narrators in Post 1960s Fiction*

### **Intra Department Students’ Seminar**

For the first time the Department of English, Vivekananda College organized a Students’ Seminar on 30<sup>th</sup> October 2018. The topic of the seminar “**Women Narrators in Post 1960s Fiction**” had been specifically selected to encourage the students to delve into a fascinating range of fiction, predominantly by women authors and encompassing women narrators. It was an effort by the Department to initiate the students into the field of new contemporary fiction which still possesses plenty of scope for genuine research.

The welcome note was delivered by Dr. Hina Nadrajog (Principal, Vivekananda College) and Dr. Nalini G. Kapoor (Teacher-in-Charge, Department of English). The seminar was introduced by Ms. Chaandreyi Mukherjee (Assistant Professor, Department of English).

Dr. Brati Biswas (Associate Professor, Department of English, Dyal Singh Evening College, University of Delhi) delivered the keynote address. She covered the entire trajectory of British Literature until the Post Modern times. She also charted the development of women's movements and the issues they addressed. Her expansive knowledge, interactive method and accessible style of speaking made it a delightful session.

The first session was chaired by Dr. Jyotika Elhance. The first paper in this session 'Amruta Patil's *Kari*: Queering the Narrative and Postmodern Feminist Text' was presented by Shivani Arora and Vipula Sharma from B.A. (H.) English III year. *Kari* is the first Indian woman centric graphic novel that deals with homosexuality. *Kari* is a lesbian narrative that gives us a view of the kind of society we inhabit. It portrays lived realities of homosexual women in a highly heteronormative society which presumes certain things and tries to shape us accordingly. Ideas of ecofeminism and gender as performative were also discussed by both the presenters.

The second paper was presented by Tanya Thakur from B.A. (H.) English III year on the topic 'Women in Indian Patriarchy: A Critical Study of Mrinal Pandey's "Girls"'. She uses an eight year old narrator. Her mother tells her that she is a burden. The narrative depicts the women's position in a patriarchal society where women are positioned as animals. A girl is not allowed to depict her emotions. She is an object and not a subject. Patriarchy controls women's behaviour and passes on from generation to generation.

The third paper was presented by Kriti Dubey from B.A. (H.) English III year on 'Mahabharata from the Third Eye.' In *The Palace of Illusions*, Divakaruni has created the character of Draupadi not only in the public sphere but also in the private sphere where it also relates the situation to contemporary times. Female identity in an epic retelling was discussed.

The fourth paper was presented by Simran and Tejaswini from B.A. (H.) English II year on 'Sexual Dynamics of Marriage in *The Intrusion* by Shashi Deshpande.' They discussed the issues of marital rape, image of ideal woman and sexual dynamics of a marriage. The short story is about the entrapment of women in arranged marriages (of middle class specially) in India. The story questions such marriages where women suffer from alienation, loneliness and guilt.

The fifth and the last paper of the first session was presented by Urvashi Sharma of B.A. (H.) English III year. Her paper was on 'Mother-daughter relationship in Jenny Diski's *Like Mother*'. The presenter's main objective was to investigate into the dynamics of mother daughter relationship with special attention to psychoanalytical approaches. It is a narration by a female baby who is born without a brain. The novel challenges the established notions of what it means to have maternal fostering.

The chairperson concluded the session by offering interesting insights on the papers presented and appreciated the hard work put in by the students.

**Vandana**

**B.A. (H). English, II Year**

The second session was chaired by Mr. Abhishek Bhaskar.

The introductory speaker was Shivangi Bhatia from B.A. (H.) English III year who presented her paper in collaboration with Shreya Aggarwal on the topic "The 'Feminine' in the Fiction of

Jeanette Winterson and Angela Carter.” They highlighted the journey of women from ‘angel of the house’ during Victorian era to Dog Woman with ambiguous femininity in Jeanette Winterson's *Sexing the Cherry*. Both femininity and masculinity coexist in the character of Dog Woman. They also spoke about the androgynous nature of characters of Angela Carter. She rejected the boundaries of gender in her own unique way. She gave her presentation on Carter’s well known novel *The Passion of New Eve*. She explained that how Carter’s dark satire successfully shatters the stereotypical bashful heroines of earlier novels.

The next paper was presented by Srishty Bhardwaj from B.A. (H.) English III year on the topic “*Sexing the Cherry* and *Written on the Body*: A Comparative Study.” She talked about how the female characters of Winterson are beyond conventional depictions. She talked about the performativity of gender.

The last paper of this session was presented by Aafreen Rashid and Deepika Kaushik. Their topic was “Feminism and Misogyny in Gillian Flynn’s *Gone Girl*.” They put forward the point that women were previously considered to be naïve and were advised to be kept in the guidance of men but now are presented as a character who is able to manipulate all the male characters.

The chairperson concluded this session by explaining about the feminist authors and activists who played a huge role in emancipating women and their characters in literature.

**Shivangi Panda**

**B.A. (H). English, III Year**

The third and final session was chaired by Ms. Sophia Pde.

The introductory speaker was Sonia Panchal from B.A. (H.) English III year who presented her paper on the topic “The Female Diasporic Identity in Jhumpa Lahiri’s *The Namesake*.” She talked about Jhumpa Lahiri and her fresh sensibility. She explained cultural –isolation especially in female diasporic identity. She analyzed the journey from self-denial to self-affirmation of the protagonist.

Sukanya Saha from B.A. (H.) English II year presented on “*Beloved*: Women and Slave Narrative.” She spoke about the struggles of black women. *Beloved* by Toni Morrison is about a mother who killed her own daughter in order to save her from slavery. The speaker also talked about freedom, commodification of women for the production of more slaves. *Beloved* is a story about the murdered and the murderer. The speaker mentioned the unique writing style of Toni Morrison and how the neo slave narrative was fashioned with sincerity and passion.

The next paper was presented by Sonali Sahni and Disha from B.A. (H.) English II year on “Analysis of Female Narration in Kamala Das’ “An Introduction”. They explained about the feminine experience of longing for freedom in a patriarchal society, men’s obsession with female body, the intrusion causing marital rape and women being puppets in a male dominated society.

The last paper of this session was presented by Vaishnavi from B.A. (H.) English II year. She presented on “Feminism and Patriarchal Challenges in *The Golden Notebook* by Doris Lessing.” The novel is about war, communism, feminism and sexuality, the contradiction between the free woman and the real woman. The book is significant not only to women but to culture as a whole. Women trying to navigate life experience, politics, family and personal feelings.



The chairperson concluded this session by appreciating the variety of the papers presented and the relevant topics analysed.

**Iram Haque Peer**

**B.A.(H.) English, II Year**

The seminar featured first time paper presenters and was greatly appreciated by everyone for their sincere research. Students from all the three years contributed to the formation of a highly interested and engaging audience. The successful seminar was concluded with the Vote of Thanks delivered by Ms. Anchala Paliwal (Assistant Professor, Department of English).

### **A Visit to Dr. Ambedkar National Memorial**

**on 21 February 2019**

The Department of English organised a study trip to Dr. Ambedkar National Memorial on 21<sup>st</sup> February 2019. The students along with the teachers reached the venue for a guided tour of this newly inaugurated state of the art memorial.

The bewilderment on seeing the beautiful book shaped structure of the museum along with the replica of Ashoka Pillar at Sarnath soon doubled on entering into it and witnessing the 12 foot high marvellous bronze statue of Bharat Ratna Awardee Dr. Bhim Rao Ambedkar. Immediately 2-3 guides accompanied all the students in exploring the museum that showed the life span of the chairman of the Drafting Committee of Indian Constitution. The place overwhelmed its visitors mainly due to two reasons:

First one being the Mahaparinirvana Sthal where Dr. Ambedkar took his last breath; and second being the method of recollection used which was quite distinctive in nature. There were various LED, depicting the different phases of Ambedkar's life in 3-Dimensional form – Ambedkar studying in library in London, the Mahad Satyagraha etc.

Before moving to the basement part of the museum, every person was forced to stand in amazement by the exceptional example of animation in the entire museum – a very life like statue of Ambedkar addressing people, with gestures too!

The basement has the exhibition of 22 parts of the Constitution in 22 pages including the replica of our Constitution. Acharya Nandlal Bose's art and Prem Behari Narain Raizada's calligraphy on the pages evoked the feeling of astonishment among the students as well as the professors. There was also the computer operated programme system with which the departmental students interacted by playing quiz, listening to the speeches of famous personalities and going through e-art gallery.

Moving ahead, the department followed the panch teerths - 5 places associated with Dr. Ambedkar which are Janam Bhoomi (Mhow), Deeksha Bhoomi (Nagpur), Mahaparinirvana Bhoomi (Delhi) and Chaitya Bhoomi (Mumbai).

There was also a study room of Ambedkar that shows how studious he used to be, being an inspiration for others, holding 32 degrees. Besides the huge number of books, the centre of

attraction was the replica of Ambedkar's pet dog named Tobi. Thereafter in the serene meditation hall, a number of visitors meditated for a while.

Outside the cafe on its opposite wall, there were various gestures or "hasta-mudras" under which a bunch of students gathered copying the hasta-mudra in order to get clicked. The chief manager, then had a small interactive session with students in which their attentiveness during their exploration of museum was evaluated and the participants were awarded with certificates.

The interactive session ended with a group photograph of the entire Department of English along with the chief manager of the museum.

**Rashmi**

**B.A. (H). English, II Year**

### ***Orality and Mamang Dai***

#### **Lecture by Invited Faculty**

The Department of English, Vivekananda College invited Ms. Banani Choudhary, Assistant Professor, Zakir Hussain College, to deliver a brief lecture on the Postcolonial writings of Mamang Dai. The lecture was organized on 29 March, 2019 at 9:00 am and lasted for an hour. The lecture began with a discussion on situating Mamang Dai within the Postcolonial discourse, followed by significant emphasis on aspects of language in her writings. The professor also talked about how Dai's poetry encompasses a confluence of myth and memory, the use of Nature through folklore – ideas that are organically enmeshed in the North-East Indian reality. It was, indeed delighting when the professor recounted her experience when she had the opportunity to meet Mamang Dai. Lastly, the professor highlighted upon Conflict Literature and why is it central to the literary scholarship of North-East. The session revived the joy of reading poetry; all of this was blended together into a very engaging and lively discussion and opened new perspectives for us to look and address at.

**Shivangi Bhatia**

**B.A. (H). English, III Year**

## **ENGLISH LITERARY SOCIETY**

**2018-2019**

In August 2018, the office bearers and student co-ordinators for various activities of The English Literary Society were selected:

Sonia Panchal (III Year) - President

Tushita (II Year) - Vice President

Yamini Jain (I Year) - General Secretary

Under the guidance and supervision of teacher co-ordinators, the office bearers and student co-ordinators plan and organize all the activities held by the department.

### **Reading Sessions**

#### **Session 1: 7<sup>th</sup> September, 2018**

##### **Topic: *The Story between the Melodies 1***

Under the supervision of the teacher co-ordinator Rengleen Kongsong, the Reading Society of the English Literary Society conducted its first session for the academic year 2018-19. The session began with an introduction and the thought behind the above mentioned topic. As the name suggests, the session was an attempt to explore and listen to the narratives that are embedded in many songs across the years and thus to arrive at a more nuanced understanding of how songs and music as a form of popular culture have had, is, and will continue to reflect, influence, and critique contemporary social, cultural, economic, and political realities. Therefore, music is, in a way, like any art form, not free from the material realities of its production and consumption. In fact, music as a medium of popular culture, combines a number of art forms including literature through the story it tells, the emotions it expresses, as well as the rhyme, metre, and rhythm that music often incorporates in the form of different styles and genres such as blues, rock, jazz, classical, bluegrass, folk, country, blues-rock, pop, soul, R&B, metal, etc. that students of literature are accustomed to negotiate when analysing epics, poetry, or prose.

To illustrate this analogy, the session began with Bob Dylan's Nobel Prize for Literature acceptance speech which tries to look at the politics of neglecting an entire genre of literary art form from the purview of what is considered 'proper' Literature or the so called "Great Tradition". Considering the backlash that the Nobel Committee was subjected to over the announcement of the 2016 Literature winner, Dylan carefully traces not only his and others' literary inspiration behind the voices in their songs but also likens the performative aspect of his craft to that of the oral culture of Literary arts of the classical epics and plays.

Having thus established an entry point for inclusion of music as a part or sub-genre of literature, the session now looks at specific songs that embody the spirit of certain era or historical events providing alternative perspectives of understanding the said events. The Eagles' "*The Last Resort*" narrates the story about "*how the West was lost rather than how the West was won*", a song that summarizes the colonial enterprise in the new continent. It was then followed by Dan Fogelberg's "*John Sutter's Mill*", a song that vividly captures the mood during the California Gold Rush in 1847, just a few years before the Civil War. The Session continued to explore similar events such as the Civil Rights Movement, the Hippie Movement, and so on, through the songs of CSNY, John Denver, Mavis Staple, and so on.

#### **Session 2: 14<sup>th</sup> September, 2018**

##### **Topic: *The Story between the Melodies 2***

The second session served as a continuation of the first session continuing on with the attempt to look at history from the perspective of popular culture especially music. This session was

primarily focused on protest songs that redefine the way we look back at history. CSNY's "The Cost of Freedom", and "Ohio" are two anthemic songs of the 1970's that is exemplary in the way they captured the unrest that people in America felt vis-à-vis the Vietnam war, Watergate, and the overall political climate of the time. Interestingly, the shooting of young non-violent student protestors at a university by an otherwise corrupt political regime of Richard Nixon brought about a revolution that altered historical realities and a phenomenon that resonates to this day and age. The current "#MeToo" movement, "#BlackLivesMatter", or the student protests against gun violence in America, can all be traced back to the spirit of yesteryears that these songs beautifully articulates through their haunting refrains. Bob Dylans' "***Blowing in the Wind***", "***Times they are a-Changin***", "***Hurricane***", and "***Masters of Wars***" to John Lenon's "***Imagine***", or "***Give Peace a Chance***", to Sam Cooke's "***A Change is Gonna Come***", or Scorpion's "***Wind of Change***" or U2's "***One Love***" to contemporary Imphal Talkies' "***India I See Blood in Your Hand***" are all songs that believed in the power of change when ordinary but conscientious citizens are willing to be agents of positive changes in society.

The sessions were an attempt to realign the way we generally tend to consume music and move beyond the narrow vision through which we perceive popular culture and music in particular, and thus inculcate a more perceptive eye to the story that these songs long to tell and the truth embedded between the notes.

The two sessions were attended by about 12 students and supervised by the teacher co-ordinator Rengleen Kongsong and the methodology involved reading as well as singing some of the songs. Both the sessions concluded with a cup of hot tea from Vishnu's Canteen.

### **Film Screening Sessions**

In order to meet the expanding domain of Literary Studies and its discipline, the Department of English organizes regular film screening sessions. The core objective is to acquaint the students with the different genre of literary studies and enable them to develop a comprehensive approach towards the domain of Film and Adaptation studies. With the beginning of the new academic year (2018) the society opened its session with the screening of *Stree (1961)*, followed by *The Bandit Queen(1994)*, *Troy(2004)* and *The Help(2011)*.

### **Department Library**

Arrangement and classification of books in the Department Library of the Department of English for session 2018-2019 was completed in room no. 21. At first all the books were rearranged and were properly stacked on the shelf on the basis of their genre. New books were also added to the related to graduation and post graduation courses. Study material and literary criticism was also replenished by the teachers of the department.

After this, all the books were catalogued by Tushita, Kajal, Simran and Vidushi of B.A. (H.) English II year with the help of Ms. Chaandreyi Mukherjee and Ms. Anchala Paliwal. The

cataloguing was done in both hard and soft copy. The names of authors and number of books available in library was also added to the catalogue. At last the library almirah was also decorated with thoughtful quotes and decorative flowers, written and made by Vandana from B.A. (H.) English II year.

**Tushita Singh**

**B.A. (H.) English II year**

## **ALUMNI SPEAK**

### **Is Women Writing A Risky Business?**

One cannot help but get absorbed in the exploration of ceaseless writing potentialities snowed by the literary world, blooming with women writers one after another.

It provides such intriguing variety of shades, themes, choice of languages, genres and styles that one eventually lands up in an ocean of wisdom, empathy, power and eventually indecisiveness regarding what to finally write upon.

What particularly puts me in high spirits though, is my recent encounter with legendary writer Nalini Jameela at the annual City Scripts event in Delhi.

Jameela, the author-activist and sex worker from Kerala spills spark with each word that she writes.

Talking about her book *Romantic Encounters of a Sex Worker*, she laughingly explained employing 'kinkiness as a strategy' of her writing 'to lure male and other brahmanical readers' in bringing them to read the tales they would otherwise not choose to read.

This brings to the surface the challenges jabbed upon women writers in a male-dominated literary sphere.

Jameela's strategy is a reminder of just one of the many remarkable solutions women narrators tend to come up with in order to acquire a space of their own, letting the world know their stories, and for the world to acknowledge that these tales exist and *must* be shared.

In an era where women writings are jostling for space in public, an act as simple as keeping their books in our shelves becomes an act of defiance. How much risk are you going to take?

**Shruti**

**Member of Internal Quality Assurance Cell (2016-2018) Vivekananda College**

**B.A. (H.) English (2012-2015) from Vivekananda College**

**Best Student Award 2015 Vivekananda College**



# Unposted

Listen, I wrote you a letter the other night. But there stands a possibility that it might never reach you. Because of the certainty that I didn't write your address beneath.

But just in case, if you somehow, some day, sometime, come across that expression of love and hatred and everything in between, I want you to be aware of a few things.

1. You must know, tightly fixed under the knots of memories that gift carries emotions, too fragile for its own good. So be gentle while unwrapping it from a count of near about two thousand four hundred sixty five words.

2. You must know, I didn't add any endearments at the beginning, not to be rude, rather in a confused state of mind, whether I have the right to call you "My Beloved" because they say true love understands the unsaid, right ?

3. You must know, I also forgot to sign it off with any references at the end. I am not really sure, if the whole of my existence still belongs to you, am I still Yours...Truly ? Lovingly ?? Well just so you know, a piece of my heart will always be yours to keep, and I guess you'll have to make 'peace' with that piece only.

4. You must know that you won't be able to find any "Hope you're doing good" kind of statements anywhere because this stupid little part of my brain lives by the belief that you too, are dying without me by your side, just like me.

5. You must know that there's a line in the post script which delivers that I miss you and a thousand other things but hey! Don't you blame it on me if that sounds like 'I love you.' For I'm not very good at comprehensions and sentence formations.

Listen, I wrote you a letter the other night, but I've kept it safely in the third drawer of my almirah, and it better be there until we both forget that I'm capable of writing, at all, because I want you to stay unaware of a few things.

1. You must NOT know about all the minor details I admire about you, the way your eyes sparkle and chin lifts up naturally while talking of a new interest you just developed.

2. You must NOT know of all the times when I fool the organs of this body that you're here, right beside me. Those haunting thoughts I fight with, daily, before going to bed.

3. You must NOT know about all the memories I'll cherish for ages, and all the unfulfilled dreams I'll always have, now that you're gone.

4. You must NOT know about the number of times I think of you, engaged in your favourite chores, like drinking coffee on that armchair of your room or reading a book by the window seat of a Cafeteria .

5. You must NOT know the reason behind my bad grades, damaged nails, worn-out clothes, messy hair, fading smiles, lost hopes, cold nights, dull eyes.

So here I am, on another random night, writing you a letter, yet again. And hoping this time, to find enough courage, to fill up the column that asks for the recipient's address, and to enclose it in the envelope of trust that it'll reach you . . . sometime, someday, somehow.

Until then, keep a check at the door.

**Anjali Gupta**

**B.A. (H.) English (2013-2016)**

**Sketch by Zeenat**

**B.A. (H.) English, I Year**

## **I can't write**

I can't write,  
About anything,  
That comes to my mind,  
I can't about the pain,  
Of breaking up,  
I can't write about how period  
Made me feel,  
I can't write about,  
The woman that I am,  
Because people judge,  
People judge if we hang around guys,  
People judge about the topic I write,  
People judge because I am a woman.

I can't because they believe I have no ability,  
Just because I use a wheelchair,  
I can't write about the pain of having a  
disability,  
But I am reminded of it as the stares go by,  
I can't write about anything that I want to,  
Because I am judged on what I wear each  
time I step out,  
I can't write about love because it is so  
outdated,  
They tell the same thing over and over  
again,  
That I can't write... I can't write BUT I  
believe in nothing but myself.

**Vinayana**

**B.A. (H.) English (2013-2016)**

## A “Queer” Incident

Sometimes, it is miscommunication that pushes the communication to its rightful end. A couple of days ago one of my badly narrated anecdotes led my roommate into (mis)believing that I'm a lesbian. She was first amused, and then the colour from her face went slowly into her eyes. The following silence made it easy for me to recognise the heat duly generated wasn't the warm comforting one. The give away, interestingly, was the term of endearment for my female friend I chose to begin my story with, I called her my “high school love.” Maybe Shakespeare wasn't completely right with his proposition of “What’s in a name.” The name I attribute to someone not only creates their image for others to look at, but also reshapes my own image to label my identity. Naming one and then being named by another, it’s one hell of a circle. It may not be logical, but when were expressions and impressions calibrated?

Nevertheless, seeing the "look" on her face, I decided to play it a little and didn't venture to clarify. The result of this, to my dismay, has been a complete shut down on her part. Previously (excessively) chatty, my roommate is now silent, restrained and completely indifferent to my presence. The doors are now closed with virtual chokeslams, and mugs are broken too often. It feels like a comic strip moving about me, SLAMS and BANGS are all in capitals while the words are reduced to a minor, unintelligible font size. What saddens me, however, is the fact that she is preparing for the civil services. She'll soon be acquiring some important position in this country's administration, the country which is not "queer-ridden", as much as people wish, hope, or believe it to be. Now, I don't intend to trivialise the issue of sexuality and sexual orientation by my roommate's insensitive reaction or by my faulty (maybe indecent) sense of humour, neither I claim any sort of shared experience with the LGBTQ+ community, my intention is solely to put this incident here for someone to read and realise that words are not most equipped to hurt, silence does it much better.

**Anshika Sharma**  
**B.A. (H.) English (2015-2018)**