

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

577 0195

MA Examination
for Internal Students

PHILOSOPHY

Gender and Philosophy

Tuesday 20 May 2008: 2.30 – 5.30pm

Candidates should answer **THREE** questions. Questions should be chosen from **AT LEAST TWO** sections. Avoid overlap in your answers.

SECTION A

1. **Either** (a) Evaluate Kant's views on prostitution. Do you agree with Kant that the prostitute becomes a mere object for the use of clients?
Or (b) Why does Kant think that concubinage is a morally problematic relationship? Is he right to believe that the male partner in concubinage manages to escape objectification?
2. Why does Kant take monogamous marriage to be a morally ideal relationship? Are there any problems with Kant's conception of the two spouses as 'properties'?

SECTION B

3. Is men's consumption of pornography somehow connected to women's objectification? If so, how is this connection to be explained? If not, give reasons against the existence of such a connection.
4. Is there any reason to be concerned with the fact that women in our societies spend time, effort, and money on improving their appearance?
5. Martha Nussbaum claims that objectification should not be understood as a necessarily negative phenomenon. What are Nussbaum's reasons for her claim? Do you agree?

SECTION C

6. Why might someone hold that there has been a 'crisis of reason'? Has there been?
7. What is the relevance of social power to issues of credibility?
8. Explain the idea that gender is socially constructed, and why this idea might be considered important.

SECTION D

9. Can the claim that 'reason is male' be dismissed on the grounds that it is metaphorical?
10. Critically discuss Simone de Beauvoir's claim that women must transcend femininity.
11. Does the distinction between sex and gender perpetuate dualism?

SECTION E

12. Is it possible to ensure that caretakers have the liberty and power they need to care well for their charges, while preventing caretakers from using that power to dominate their charges? Can Pettit's account of freedom as non-domination yield a satisfactory answer to this question?
13. 'There are no good arguments for the view that women should be represented by women.' Do you agree?
14. How can a theory of capabilities enhance our understanding of gendered inequality?

SECTION F

15. In what sense, if any, can language be described as a repository of sexist attitudes?
16. Can a case be made that 'they' has as good a claim to serve as a generic singular pronoun as 'he' does?
17. 'Anyone who advocates the restriction of pornography or of so-called hate speech, demotes free speech.' Discuss. (You may discuss in connection with pornography OR hate speech OR both.)

SECTION G

18. To what extent is Freud committed to degenerationist theories; and to what extent might he be opposed to such theories?
19. '19th century degenerationist theory should make us suspicious of attempts to draw a distinction between moralities based on feeling/sentiment and moralities based on reason.' Discuss.
20. Explain and discuss Nietzsche's idea of 'ennoblement through degeneration'.

END OF PAPER