ST MARY’S UNIVERSITY

TWICKENHAM, LONDON

BA/BSc Degree Examination students registered for

Level **FOUR**

Title: **An Introduction to Critical Theory**

Code: **ENG4003**

Semester: **TWO**

Date:  **May 13th 2019**

Time: **1:30 – 3:30 PM**

TIME ALLOWED: **TWO** HOURS

Answer any **TWO** questions. You may illustrate your answers with any texts you wish, except where a particular text is specified.

1. ‘It is impossible to understand a ‘literary’ text without reference to the historical, social and cultural contexts in which it was written’

Do you agree? You may, if you wish, illustrate your answer with examples from one or more literary texts.

2. Discuss the postcolonial claim that the European imagination divides the world into the ‘West’ (Same/Self) and ‘East’ (Other), with reference to *Jane Eyre* or any other literary text you have read.

3. *Either*

a) ‘It isn’t language that has a hole in its ozone layer.’

Examine what eco-criticism can bring to literary texts, using if you wish, this famous intervention by Kate Soper as a starting point.

 *Or*

b) Discuss eco-criticism’s distinction between ‘nature’ (the real world itself) and ‘Nature’ (the cultural construct) with reference, if you wish, to any text or texts of your choosing.

4. ‘The postmodernists were wrong, and the neo-modernists are right: some texts – and some readings of those texts – are more valuable than others.’

Discuss this comment, in relation to *Jane Eyre* if you wish.

5. Evaluate the claim that, in *Jane Eyre*, Bertha Mason is given no identity of her own, and her only role is as a contrast to Jane and Rochester. In your answer, you should refer to one or more of the following theories: Structuralism, post-structuralism, postcolonialism, psychoanalytic criticism, or feminism.

6. Was Roland Barthes correct when he proclaimed the ‘death of the author’?

7. How helpful do you find political criticism – for example, feminism, Marxism, postcolonialism or eco-criticism – in reading literary texts?

8. Take one ‘theory’ that we have studied on this module, and examine its critique of liberal humanism.

**END OF EXAMINATION**