



DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

MIRANDA HOUSE



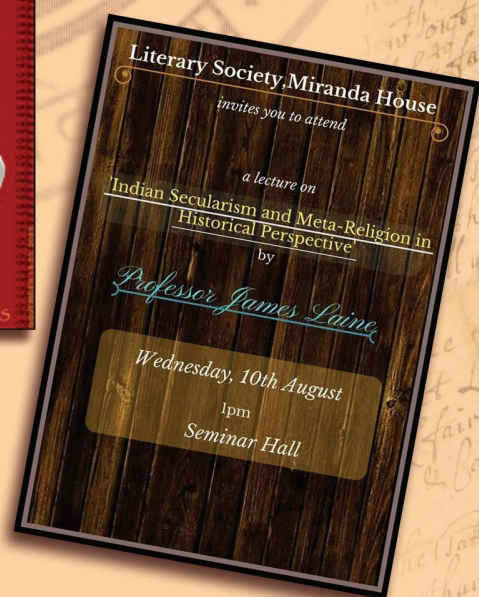
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The Department of English, Miranda House

The Department of English, Miranda House, was set up in 1948 with eight faculty members. One of the earliest activities undertaken by the Department was a performance of Shakespeare's *Tempest*, on the first Founder's Day of the college, 7th March 1949. This creative engagement, between text and performance, the English classroom and the collective life of the college, continues to characterise the Department.



Strength, Opportunities, Challenges of the Department and Future Plans



Strengths

- There has always been a strong focus on gender in the English department's research and teaching. This is consistent with the larger aims of Miranda House as a premier women's institution dedicated to the higher education of women.
- The Department has practiced interdisciplinary approaches, and has especially engaged with the fields of political science and sociology and with historical scholarship in bringing alive the interface between literary and historical narratives.
- The Department has organized national and international seminars such as *English Studies in India*, *The Nation and its Narratives*, *Women and Religion* and *Realism*. The most recent was the international seminar on Kalidasa's *Abhijñānasākuntalam*. These seminars have arisen from department seminars.
- Students are trained in academic research and writing and encouraged to publish their work as well as participate in student conferences and seminars. Teachers take student feedback as part of their continuous effort to improve their pedagogy.
- Some faculty members have worked to prepare textbooks and study material for courses in Delhi University as well as IGNOU.
- Many faculty members are familiar with and have worked on regional literatures in several different Indian languages, including Urdu, Hindi, Bhojpuri, Bengali, Malayalam, Tami, Rongmei, Gujarati and Marathi. This enables them to make the study of literature more inclusive.
- Several faculty members have published fiction and poetry.
- The Department has maintained an association with performance art forms through theatre performances, as well as the study of cinema and theatre within the classroom.
- There is an ongoing interest in producing digital archives and some faculty members are currently archiving material for digital humanities.

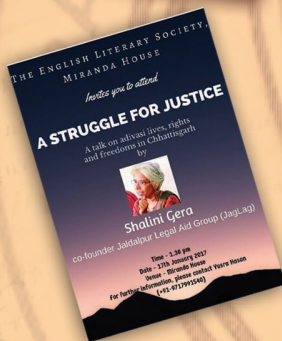
Opportunities

- The English Department is among the few departments which offers courses to students from all other departments, and thus has the opportunity to interact with students across the Humanities and Sciences.
- Faculty members' knowledge of several different languages provides them with the opportunity to introduce translation as a serious form of literary activity and study.



Challenges

- To teach classes consisting of a diverse range of students with varying levels of proficiency in English.
- Many of the students who opt for English Honours do so without much interest in literature and it is a continuing challenge to motivate them to do the reading required.
- Due to the information revolution, plagiarism offers an easy alternative to original scholarship. It thus remains a challenge to motivate students towards genuine research.



Future Plans

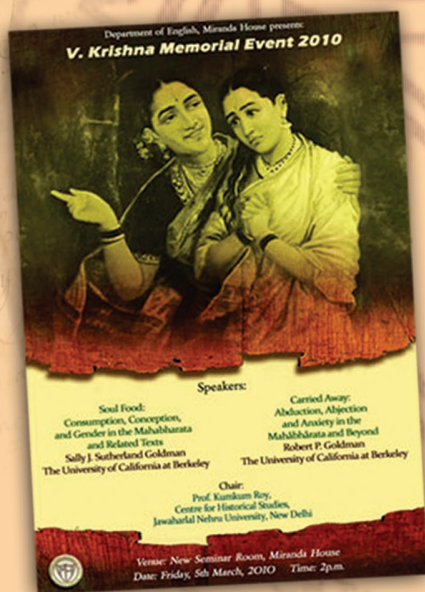
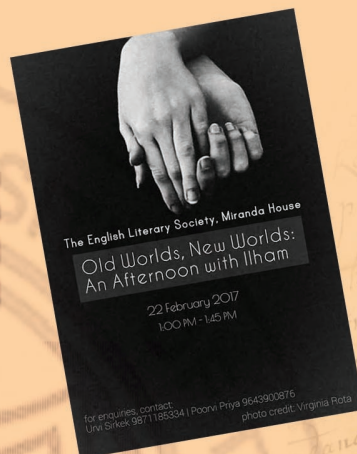
- To continue to build and expand our pedagogic skills and through keeping pace with developments in technology, to learn innovative methods of catering to the needs of our students.
- To use our familiarity with narratives for more work involving audio-visual media.
- To continue our efforts to integrate the study of literature with active social and political inquiry and engagement.
- To build collective ventures with other departments in different parts of the world and to encourage collaborative research work between faculty and students.



Best Practices

Department Library

- The English maintains a Department Library of approximately 3000 books for the use of faculty members and students in order to provide easy access to study material.
- The library consists of donated books, reading materials compiled by teachers, and purchases. The funds for purchase of books are raised by charging a nominal annual fee for membership.
- The library is regularly updated to keep pace with the demands of a changing curriculum.



V. Krishna Memorial Event and The English Literary Society

- The V. Krishna Memorial Event is organized by the department in memory of the faculty's first teacher who joined in 1948. Several eminent scholars have delivered the V.Krishna lecture, such as Gayatri Spivak, Mahasweta Devi, Aijaz Ahmed, Sumit Sarkar, Romila Thapar, Ngugi wa Thiong'o, Sukanta Chaudhuri, Robert and Sally Goldman.



- The English Literary Society holds an annual two-day inter-college event centered on a topic/theme, with panel discussions, lectures, student presentations, music and informal events.

- Instead of sponsorship, funds are raised through innovative methods like a food court, a second hand book bazaar and the sale of posters, diaries and bookmarks designed by faculty and students.

Walking Together

Remedial English Teaching

The Department, apart from identifying and assisting its own students who need extra coaching in English, has conducted programmes for remedial English language teaching for the entire college.

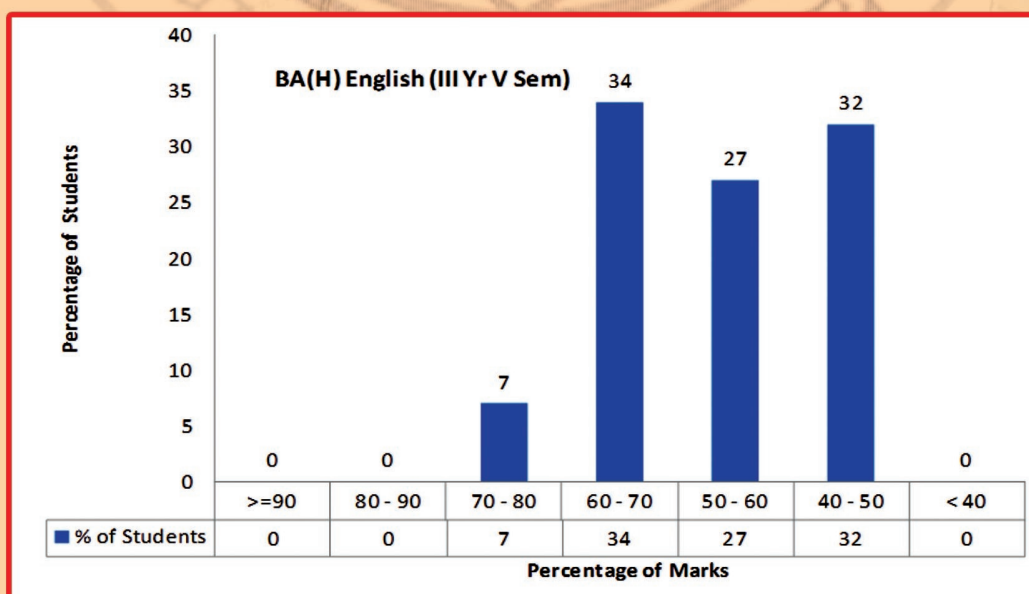
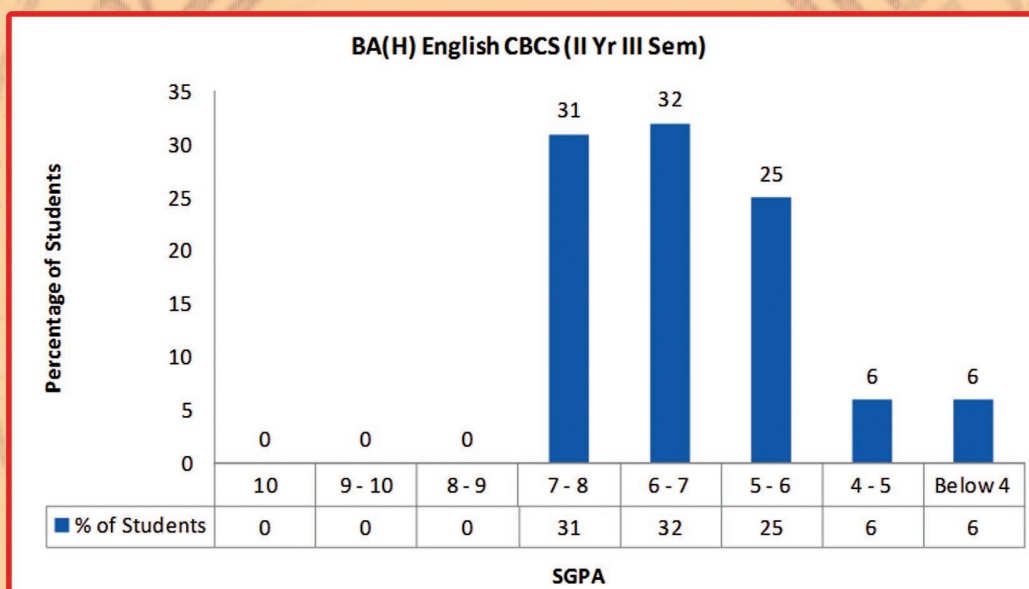
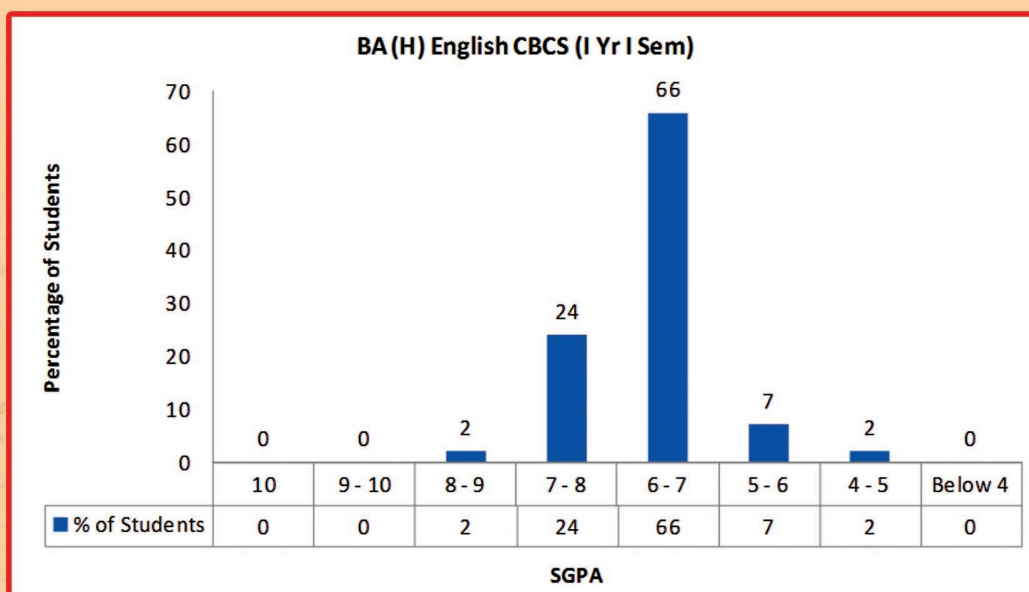
The university provides three levels of English options - A, B & C that correspond to levels taught and reached in school in class 12, 10 and 8 respectively. While B and C streams are recognised as groups that need remedial teaching, a bulk of students studying the advanced level of stream A English also fall in the same category, coming as they do from a non-English medium background.

It is for all such students that remedial classes in English, over and above regular classes, have been organised by the Department of English, in collaboration with the Equal Opportunity Cell. This is an ongoing project.



Department of English

Academic Performance Semester Exam Nov-Dec 2016



Looking Forward

Saswati Sengupta & Sharmila Purkayastha

Article

Sharmila Purkayastha and Saswati Sengupta, *Of Famines and Females: The Poetics and Politics of Lakṣmī Bratakathās of Bengal, Religions of South Asia* (Forthcoming).

International Conference

• 14th & 15th April, 2017, Medieval & Renaissance Centre, New York University: Spring Conference “Sirens and Centaurs. Animal Studies and Gender Studies, from Antiquity to the Renaissance.”; “*The Diffused Heritage of a Serpent Goddess: A Female Subaltern in a Caste-Patriarchal Pantheon*”.

• 23rd & 24th November, 2017: Université Grenoble Alpes of France: Space, Place and Hybridity in National Imagination; Sharmila Purkayastha and Saswati Sengupta: “The Competing Claims of a Post-colonial Nation: Hindi/Bombay Films of the 1970s as Cautionary Tales for Present Times”

Academic Project

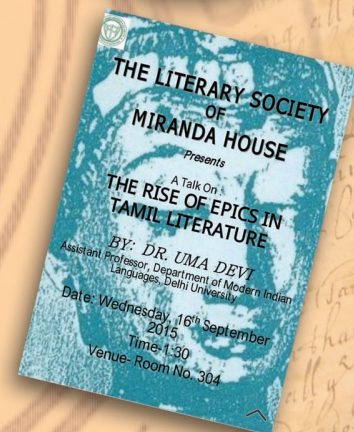
• Shampa Roy, Saswati Sengupta and Sharmila Purkayastha. Book Project with alumnae and current students. **A History of Anxiety: The Bad Women of Bombay Films.**

Indira Prasad

Conferences

• “Modes, Motives, Motifs, and Conditions in Intra-Asian Travel”, March 20-21, 2017 Department of English, University of Delhi, Delhi.

• International Conference on “Hundred Years of the End of the Indian Indentureship” at Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, New Delhi on 28-29 March 2017.



Shampa Roy

Publication

- Book titled "*Gender and criminality in Bangla Crime Narratives: Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries*" in July 2017 (Palgrave Macmillan, UK).

International Conference

- Paper titled *Detection and Desire: The Male Detective hero and his Female Bette Noires in Early Twentieth Century Bangla Crime Fictions* accepted for presentation at a conference on "Crime Fiction: Detection, Public and Private, Past and Present" (29th June - 1st July 2017) organised by the Bath University at Corsham Court.

Deepika Tandon

International Conference

- Paper Presentation: *The Fractured City: Genocide in a National Capital, Delhi 1984* at the 16th EACLALS Triennale Conference 'Performing the Urban; Embodiments, Inventories, Rhythms', University of Oviedo, Spain, 3rd-7th April.

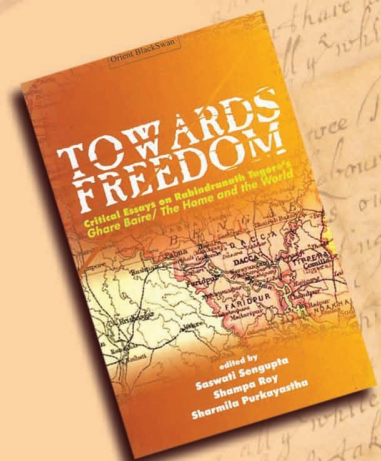
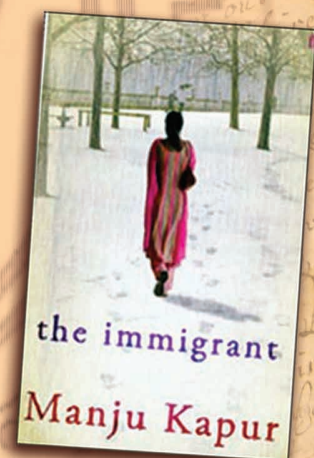
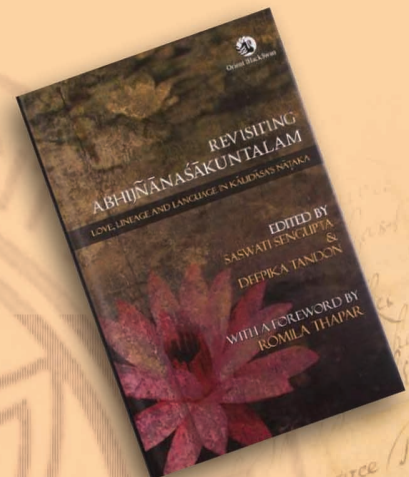
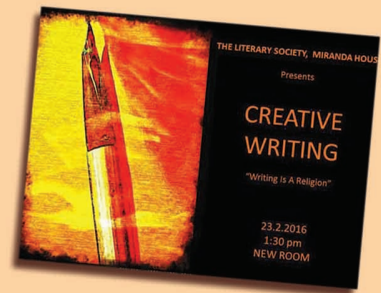
Ongoing work

- Article on the figure of the 'nartaki' in Hindi cinema.

Shweta Sachdeva Jha

Conference

- Invited to present a paper on *Tawa'if as Patron and Performer: Interrogating Agency and Feminist Historiography* at the conference 'Crossing Boundaries', Department of History, University of Delhi. Delhi, February 27 & 28, 2017.





Department of English, Miranda House presents
V. Krishna Memorial Event 2010



Speakers:

Dr. Anand Joshi
 Chair, Conception,
 Birth and Mahabharata
 in the Mahabharata
 Robert P. Goldman
 The University of California at Berkeley

Carried Away:
 Abduction, Abjection
 and Anxiety in the
 Mahabharata and Beyond
 Robert P. Goldman
 The University of California at Berkeley

Chair:

Dr. Anand Joshi
 Chair, Conception,
 Birth and Mahabharata
 in the Mahabharata
 Robert P. Goldman
 The University of California at Berkeley



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