

# Casey reflect the importance gender roles play in

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Casey ReichenthalDr. HaleyEnglish 9January 25, 2018Women in the OdysseyMost people refer to Homer's epic, "The Odyssey", as a war story or a story about men. They overlook the vital role that women play in the development of the story. All the female characters have very pivotal roles and one could gain from analyzing each one. Odysseus is a warrior, an analyst, a tactician and many more.

He has countless positive traits that help him on his journey home. Although Odysseus' will is constantly challenged by the temptation from these women throughout the book. Countless examples from the text reflect the importance gender roles play in "The Odyssey." A perfect example of the importance of the roles of women is their role as being seductresses. When Odysseus and his crew arrive on Circe's island, they are immediately attracted to Circe's house because of her beautiful voice. Homer describes her as "singing in a sweet voice as she went up and down a great design on a loom, immortal such as goddesses have, delicate and lovely and glorious in their work." (10. 221) Odysseus' men give into their temptation and enter her house.

The men's desire for this beautiful goddess lets her exploit their weakness and turn them into pigs. If Odysseus hadn't taken the protective drug he would have done the same thing. Since he did, he goes to rescue his men. He follows Hermes instructions and when Circe tries to strike him, he pulls out his sword and lunges at her.

From this, Homer wants to show how a woman's sexual appeal is a threat to the men's ego and dominance. Odysseus could have gotten away from

Circe, but he didn't. He was so involved in the scenario he stayed for a whole year. Odysseus finds himself in these situations many more times throughout the book. During Odysseus' time with Kalypso is another scenario where Odysseus can't control his instincts and is not loyal to Penelope while he is away. When Odysseus is relaying the story he twisted his words and states that he was being held captive and he protested the whole time. Although Homer shows us that Kalypso just didn't please him anymore.

This implies that at some point Odysseus did enjoy himself while on her island. When Odysseus was at his weakest point, Kalypso uses him and compares herself to Penelope in order to get him to stay. " I think I can claim that I am not her inferior either in build or stature, since it is not likely that mortal women can challenge the goddesses for build and beauty." (5.

211). Kalypso then forces him to stay on the island which goes completely against the Homeric roles of women. Women are supposed to be objects that succumb to men and aren't manipulative like Kalypso. Men during this time see women only for their physical need. Zeus then sends Hermes to reason with her and let Odysseus return home. She complains about how gods are allowed to take mortal lovers but gets immediately shut down by Hermes which shows the basic men's bias in this society