

A woman of no importance mrs. warren's profession

[Literature](#), [Russian Literature](#)



Consider the various ways in which Wilde presents the role of women in contemporary society in *A Woman of No Importance*. Compare and contrast this with Shaw's presentation of the female characters in *Mrs. Warren's Profession*. Ensure that you offer alternative viewpoints in your answer as well as demonstrating aspects of the dramatic and theatrical from both texts. In both *A Woman of No Importance* (1893) and *Mrs. Warren's Profession* (1894) texts, there is evidence of shared and contrasting views regarding the role of women in contemporary society presented through characters' attitudes, and this is particularly significant, considering that both plays were written near the turn of the century in a majorly patriarchal society, when the onset of equal rights was finally beginning to be considered and the 'liberated woman' had surfaced. How exactly did Wilde and Bernard Shaw present this? There much evidence to ponder. An arguably atypical and progressive nature of some of the female characters in both texts is evident within, particularly in that of *A Woman of No Importance's* American puritan Hester Worsely, ironically named after adulterous Hester Prynne of the Victorian novel 'The Scarlet Letter' (1850, Nathaniel Hawthorne). Hester is very much opposed to the aristocratic nature of the rest of the party and refers to English society as "shallow, selfish, foolish", (act II, p33) believing in social and gender equality. This is made clear when she goes on to show her outrage towards unseen infamous Lord Henry Weston, Lady Caroline's brother, and how they "are unjust to women in England" and she believes "If a man and a woman have sinned...let them both be branded". Her somewhat inappropriately timed speeches suggest her views are regarded as estranged, perhaps due to her bashful

naivety, and I believe the perhaps it was Wilde's intention for Hester to symbolize ' the New Woman', and her out of place nature following initial introduction to Victorian society. Hester's outlook and views on society are not dissimilar to the " strong, confident, self-possessed, " character of Vivie Warren in ' Mrs. Warren's Profession', who is also a firm believer in the liberation of women and equality of sexes, and whom, after immediate introduction demonstrates uncharacteristically male mannerisms and possessions, " A lady's bicycle is propped up against the wall"