

# Virginia woolfe's professions for women

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In her essay, "Professions for Women", Virginia Woolf writes of the internal conflict many women endured every day in the face of a male dominated society. They are pressured to hide their intellect behind the facade of a delicate, emotional person who is unable to think for themselves. Woolf uses metaphor and anaphora to urge women to think and stand up for themselves. Woolf's purpose of inspiring women to be whatever they want to be is conveyed through two explicit metaphors predominantly used in this essay.

The first is the Angel in the House, the Angel representing the image of the stereotypical Victorian era woman. The Angel is "charming", "sympathetic", and has all the qualities expected of women. Instead of allowing Woolf to write what she thinks, the Angel attempts to persuade her to "be sympathetic, be tender; flatter; deceive; use all the arts and wiles of your sex. Never let anybody guess that you have a mind of your own." If the Angel was not stopped, she would have "plucked the heart out of [Woolf's] writing. Killing the Angel signifies Woolf's overcoming of societal pressures to become the cliched Victorian woman. The next important metaphor is of the fisherman in a girl's dream. In the dream the girl is at the bottom of a lake which is symbolically used to characterize her mind. The girl lets "her imagination sweep unchecked around every rock and cranny of the world that lies submerged in the depths of our unconscious being." She was able to think freely and let her imagination take over.

The fisherman was "on the verge of a deep lake with a rod held out over the water." Then "her imagination rushed away" and the girl was "roused from her dream." The reason behind the fisherman in the dream was to show

the censorship placed on the minds of women because they were considered below men with only thoughts of trivial things. " Men, her reason told her, would be shocked" if they knew that she in fact did have even a hint of brainpower. " Her imagination could no work longer. To reach out to the women in her audience, Woolf uses anaphora in her conclusion. With the repeated use of the word " you", she tells women that they have to be the ones who take action. Once they do so, they may reach an equal standing with men and make their own decisions in order to make changes for themselves. With the use of the rhetorical strategies, Woolf shows how women in her time were " impeded by the extreme conventionality of the other sex. " She encourages women to think independently and to not let a man's judgment hinder their potential.