

# American poet, memoirist, and civil rights activist

Sociology



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

This was probably my real father; found each other at last. But then he rolled over leaving me in a wet place and stood up. " (Angelo, 71) A multi award winning author and poet, whom once did not speak for many years. With the many poems Maya Angelo has written, three of her most famous poems seem to have a similar symbolism. " Caged Bird", " Phenomenal Woman" and " Still I rise" all deal with her different thoughts and individuality against the standards of society.

Maya Angelo sees her past experiences and her thoughts as a symbol of being trapped in the image of society. Maya Angelo was born April 28, 1928, in SST Louis, Missouri. Angelo encountered many life difficulties and had to find alternatives to deal with them rather than being imprisoned in her own mind. Angelo experienced the brutality of racial discrimination, but she also absorbed the unshakable faith and values of traditional African American family, community, and culture. She was raised with her grandmother trying to cope with the emotional trauma of her mother's boyfriend raping her.

No one could deal with the mental state Angelo was in, so she had to move to Arkansas. Angelinos secretly admired a childhood mentor, Mrs... Flowers. Mrs.. Flowers reminded Slavery lasted for nearly two centuries. As a slave, it was very important that the slave's spirit be broken so he can never even think about rebelling against his master. The chains prevented him from his freedom, he " can seldom see through his bars of rage" (Angelo). Often, the slave sang a song, for comfort, or for a potential gateway of freedom.

Some readers say that "Caged Bird" is written as a reference towards slaves, and the difference between a "Free Bird leaps on the back of the wind and floats downstream"(Angelo) whereas a "Caged Bird sings for a fearful trill of things Angelo uses herself as a symbol of being trapped in "Caged Bird". Her parents spilt when she was very young, and was raised by her mother and grandmother. It was not until the age of seven when Angelo was raped by her mother's former boyfriend. She told her uncles, and a few days later her mother's boyfriend was found dead.

Being that she felt as if her words killed the an, she put herself on a literal mute for several years. She was imprisoned in her own mind, a cage in which she built herself. Throughout the poem she compares a free bird to a caged bird. The Free Bird being someone in society and a caged bird, representing herself, trapped in society. Angelinos voice was "heard on distant hill for the caged bird sings of freedom" (Angelo) Angelo to expresses her thoughts of her confidence in "Phenomenal Woman". As an African American woman during the segregation era, Angelo was definitely faced with much racial discrimination.

Her blue eyes with a petite, super model fugue. The tone of the poem is that of a strong, confident woman who does not bother what society think about her. She findshappinessin her womanhood. She describes what society standards are and her reaction towards their viewpoint on the type of woman she is. She's "not cute or built to suit a fashion model's size but when I start to tell them, they think I'm telling lies." (Angelo) Despite her appearance, her head is not bowed, but her confidence is known in every room she's in.

<https://assignbuster.com/american-poet-memoirist-and-civil-rights-activist/>