

## Prompt

How can you relate this article to your own life?

Your papers will be read with an eye toward your careful consideration of the reading (you can choose to mention all of them, some of them, or concentrate on just one), how the text/s relate/s to the broader course topics, and must include outside at least one outside reference of your choice that you feel relate to the reading.

Word count: 340

*The Troll Slayer* written by Rebecca Mead, describes the toxic masculine environment that classics professor Mary Beard is required to navigate. Having been a professor at the University of Cambridge for many years, her credentials and knowledge are constantly being questioned by men in and outside of her field.

Despite these attacks, Mary has continued to fight back against her verbal attackers. Much like modern day society, sexism was prevalent in Roman times. In her lecture, "Oh Do Shut Up Dear," Mary describes the Odyssey and the first recorded instance of a man telling a woman that her voice was not to be heard. Suffice it to say, those trolling Mary have not used the same etiquette as the Romans when insulting her. They instead resort to tweeting, "Shut up bitch" (Mead, 2014) to get their point across. Comparing her verbal attacks to Roman history in order to further people's knowledge about Roman civilization as well as the unfair treatment and representation of women, has been beneficial to her history teachings.

While not under the same circumstances, I too have been verbally attacked by men, in person as well as online. Just like Mary, I speak up about it. Unlike Mary, I make the issues more public. After one grueling online incident where a man called me sexist and degrading names because I did not accept his sexual advances, I sent screenshots of his comments to his mother on Facebook. These types of incidences cannot and should not go unnoticed. By ignoring it, we discredit a very real and toxic problem plaguing women. As Mary says, "One has got to keep that sense of anger, otherwise you'll never change anything" (Diversity & Equality University of Liverpool, 2016).

Although these verbal attacks will not cease overnight, people like Mary are using them to their advantage. The trolls that spend their time typing foul things over the internet, are helping Mary teach history to future scholars, and helping me learn the power of perseverance and confidence as a woman in modern-day society.