1. The following poem was written by a contemporary Irish woman, Eavan Boland. Read the poem carefully and then write an essay in which you analyze how the poem reveals the speaker's complex conception of a "woman's world."

It's a Woman's World

Our way of life has hardly changed since a wheel first whetted a knife.

So when the king's head gored its basket—grim harvest—we were gristing bread

Well, maybe flame burns more greedily and wheels are steadier but we're the same.

or getting the recipe for a good soup to appetize our gossip.

who milestone our lives with oversights—living by the lights

And it's still the same: By night our windows moth our children to the flame of hearth not history.

of the loaf left by the cash register, the washing powder paid for and wrapped,

And still no page scores the low music of our outrage.

the wash left wet Like most historic peoples we are defined by what we forget,

(20) by what we never will be: star-gazers, fire-eaters. It's our alibi

(45) But appearances still reassure: That woman there, craned to the starry mystery

by what we never will be:

(50) of evening air, while this one here—her mouth

(1982)

a burning plume—she's no fire-eater, (55) just my frosty neighbour coming home.

(1982)

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