

## VICTORIAN RESPECTABILITY: THE GENDERING OF DOMESTIC SPACE

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## **VICTORIAN RESPECTABILITY: THE GENDERING OF DOMESTIC SPACE**

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For my father, Hermanus Richard Lemmer (1948-2003)

*You who come of a younger happier generation may not have heard of her – you may not know what I mean by the Angel in the House...She was intensely sympathetic. She was immensely charming. She was utterly unselfish. She excelled in the difficult arts of family life. She sacrificed herself daily. If there was chicken, she took the leg; if there was a draught, she sat in it – in short she was so constituted that she never had a mind or wish of her own, but preferred to sympathise always with the minds and wishes of others. Above all she was pure.*

*It was she who bothered me and wasted my time and so tormented me that at last I killed her...She died hard. Her fictitious nature was of great assistance to her. It is far harder to kill a phantom than a reality.*

Virginia Woolf (1995)

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