

# Judy Brady I Want A Wife Analysis



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## Critical Analysis Of I Want A Wife By Judy Brady

As the quote by Wyland says, "The ocean stirs the heart, inspires the imagination and brings eternal joy to the soul." I found this quote and took it into a different direction. This was by viewing women as the "ocean" and the "heart" as men, it shows through this quote and could be based on this essay because the women in the households are inspiring their husbands to do their best and giving them joy. This essay is focused on Brady highlighting the expectations and responsibilities married women are expected to fulfill in their marriages primarily focused for their husband and children. Brady also states that she wants to have a wife so that she doesn't have to be dependent on another person, she is trying to say that she wants to play the role as the husband. So what is Judy Brady's main thesis in the essay? Brady's thesis is that women's roles in marriages are unequal to men, in which they are the ones dealing with all the responsibilities of the family. Her purpose for this essay is to influence women to speak up for their rights and to move away from the stereotype of women taking care of everything in the house. "I Want a Wife" is an essay outlining the evidence of women being treated poorly and unequal to men. Some people to be more specific men, would say that is okay and that is their job but it is just simply them following the society during that time. I could understand both clarifications because of evidence, language, intended audience, method and structure. This was published in December 1971 in New York Magazine. This essay was written as a speech for a rally in San Francisco in 1970. I believe the target audience is women to show them that they are cruelly being treated in their society. In my opinion, the women were resistant in these suggestions to stand up for their rights because of the society or year they were living in and they didn't want to go against what others were saying. At the same time, they wanted to be receptive because they wanted change and were probably tired of being treated badly. The writer should have approached the intended audience in a strong and hard core way by showing how men treat them daily with a skit, and providing people of authority who would help to change stereotypes so the women would not feel as though they were alone, to also speak about their health and how stress affects their interactions with others. This is also in small way intended to men also to describe and show ways in which they are poorly treating their wives. The examples throughout this essay were suitable, relevant for this particular type and it had sufficient amount of evidence to support her reasoning. I could say this because through majority of the examples given, Brady has outlined the responsibilities and the roles that the men expect their wives to do. All of these examples show us that the women were being treated unfairly when viewing it based on the recent times, but, in the 70s that was the rule for the women to take care of the men and children by doing all duties. As doing a research to see whether women were allowed to, it only came into existence in the early 70s. So, it could be assumed majority of the women were still playing the role of housewives. This reassures us that the fact that her evidence is sufficient, supporting and suitable to the topic. Method and structure always play an important role to determine whether an essay is good or not. The modes of development which were used in this essay were description and narration in which she opened the essay by telling a story about her being a wife and wanting one for herself. Then the descriptive part came into which she

## Understanding Judy Brady's "I Want a Wife"

Judy Brady's "I Want a Wife" is a powerful essay that delves into the complexities of gender roles and expectations within marriage. Published in 1972, during the height of the feminist movement, the piece serves as both a personal reflection and a broader critique of societal norms surrounding marriage and domestic responsibilities. By employing irony and satire, Brady highlights the unequal distribution of labor and the unrealistic expectations placed on wives, making her work a poignant commentary on the struggles faced by women in a patriarchal society.

# Context of the Essay

To fully appreciate Brady's message, it is essential to understand the historical and social context in which she wrote "I Want a Wife."

## The Feminist Movement of the 1970s

The 1970s marked a significant period in the feminist movement, as women were beginning to challenge traditional roles and fight for equality in various aspects of life, including work, education, and family. The second wave of feminism focused on issues like reproductive rights, workplace equality, and the social constructs surrounding marriage.

## Brady's Personal Experience

Brady herself was a young mother and wife at the time she wrote the essay. Her experiences and observations about the expectations placed on women in domestic roles inform her narrative. By sharing her desire for a "wife," she exposes the burdens that women are expected to carry without recognition or support.

## Structure and Style of the Essay

Brady's essay is structured in a way that effectively conveys her points while engaging the reader through humor and irony.

## Use of Irony

Brady's use of irony is one of the most striking elements of the essay. She presents a list of the qualities and duties she desires in a wife, which, on the surface, appears to be a straightforward request. However, as the reader progresses through the essay, it becomes clear that her request is absurd and highlights the unrealistic demands placed on women.

## List Format

The essay is organized in a list format, which serves to emphasize the multitude of responsibilities that a typical wife is expected to fulfill. This structure allows Brady to create a rhythmic flow that contrasts the seemingly simple request for a "wife" with the extensive and exhausting list

of duties.

- Caring for children
- Managing household chores
- Providing emotional support
- Ensuring financial stability
- Maintaining a social life

By listing these responsibilities, Brady underscores the unrealistic expectations that society places on women, demonstrating that the role of a wife is far from a simple or easy task.

## **Thematic Analysis**

Brady's essay contains several key themes that resonate with readers and contribute to its lasting impact.

### **Gender Roles and Expectations**

The primary theme of "I Want a Wife" is the examination of traditional gender roles. Brady showcases how society has defined specific roles for men and women, with wives often relegated to domestic duties while husbands enjoy freedom and autonomy.

- Wives are expected to be nurturing and self-sacrificing.
- Husbands are often seen as providers and decision-makers.

This theme highlights the imbalance in marriages, where women are expected to prioritize their husband's needs above their own.

### **The Burden of Domestic Labor**

Another significant theme in the essay is the burden of domestic labor. Brady's list of desired qualities in a wife reveals the immense amount of work that goes into managing a household. She points out the lack of

recognition and appreciation for these efforts, emphasizing how society often overlooks the labor that women perform at home.

## **The Quest for Personal Identity**

Brady's essay also touches on the theme of personal identity. By expressing her desire for a wife, she highlights the struggle many women face in defining themselves outside of their roles as mothers and wives. This desire for autonomy and self-fulfillment is a recurring issue in feminist literature and reflects the broader quest for gender equality.

## **Impact and Legacy**

Since its publication, "I Want a Wife" has had a significant impact on feminist literature and discourse.

## **Influencing Feminist Thought**

Brady's work has influenced generations of feminists and has become a staple in gender studies courses. The essay is often cited as an example of the challenges women face in balancing personal aspirations with societal expectations.

## **Continued Relevance**

The themes explored in "I Want a Wife" remain relevant today, as discussions around gender roles, domestic labor, and equality continue to evolve. The essay serves as a reminder of the progress made and the work that still needs to be done in achieving true gender equality.

## **Conclusion**

Judy Brady's "I Want a Wife" is a compelling critique of the traditional expectations placed upon women in marriage and society at large. Through her use of irony, list format, and exploration of themes surrounding gender roles, domestic labor, and personal identity, Brady crafts an essay that resonates with readers and encourages reflection on the nature of marriage and the expectations of women.

As contemporary discussions around gender and equality continue, Brady's work remains a significant touchstone in understanding the ongoing struggle for

women's rights and the quest for a more equitable society. Her voice, which calls for recognition and appreciation of the work women do, continues to inspire and challenge readers to reconsider the roles they play in their own lives and relationships.

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **What is the main theme of Judy Brady's essay 'I Want a Wife'?**

The main theme of Judy Brady's essay is the exploration of gender roles and the expectations placed on women in society. Through a satirical tone, Brady illustrates the unrealistic demands placed on wives and critiques the traditional domestic roles assigned to women.

### **How does Judy Brady use satire in 'I Want a Wife'?**

Brady employs satire by exaggerating the qualities and responsibilities expected of a wife, highlighting the absurdity of these expectations. This approach not only entertains but also provokes critical thought about the societal norms surrounding marriage and domestic life.

### **What societal issues does Brady address in her essay?**

Brady addresses several societal issues, including gender inequality, the burden of unpaid labor on women, and the lack of recognition for women's contributions in both domestic and professional spheres. Her work calls attention to the need for equality in relationships.

### **How does the structure of 'I Want a Wife' contribute to its message?**

The structure of the essay, which lists the various roles and duties a wife is expected to fulfill, reinforces its message by creating a cumulative effect. Each listed expectation builds on the previous one, highlighting the overwhelming nature of these demands and emphasizing the need for reconsideration of traditional gender roles.

### **What impact has 'I Want a Wife' had on feminist literature?**

'I Want a Wife' has had a significant impact on feminist literature by providing a clear and relatable critique of the societal expectations of women. It has inspired discussions about women's rights, autonomy, and the redefinition of roles within marriage, making it a foundational text in feminist discourse.

<https://soc.up.edu.ph/11-plot/pdf?trackid=kxl20-0232&title=c46-license-study-guide.pdf>

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Explore our in-depth analysis of Judy Brady's "I Want a Wife" and uncover its themes

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