

Of kitchens and goddesses

[Sociology](#), [Women](#)



OF KITCHENS AND GODDESSES - Shashi Deshpande This essay basically talks about the space what a woman has in kitchen. It throws light on the importance she has relating to cooking and the status of being called as 'ANNAPURNA', the goddesses of food and fertility. Shashi Deshpande expresses how her point of view of a kitchen shifts as she grows up n gets married. The kitchen no longer seems a safe and secure world for her as it did when she was a little girl. She uses instances from her life to explain how rigidly confined the space in the kitchen becomes. After getting married, she is given a statue of Annapurna which meant that she had to prove herself of excelling at cooking, taking care of the house and following all the rules. It shows how a woman is tested at every step, as if every day was an exam for her. A kitchen not just signifies cooking and serving, but also the oppression, the suppression, the testing, the hard work the suffering, the tedious labour and the pain which a woman undergoes monotonously. It is as if her entire world revolves only around the kitchen. The women submit their life completely to their house. Even when they are fasting, they aren't exempted from cooking for the rest of the house. They work tirelessly just to give their best and all they want is just little appreciation and respect for themselves and their work. But this just remains as a dream as most of the times their work is not recognized. There is a common thing among women, that is, self-denial. There is a notion in their head that if they prove themselves in the kitchen and in managing the house, they are fit to be called Annapurna. But they don't realize the fact that it is the external forces and ages old superstitions and beliefs which is making them do so. It is basically the traditional and emotional trap which they are trapped into. It isn't what a

woman sees herself as but it is what the world sees her as. The writer shows how women are trapped between tradition and modernity. The writer points at the prejudice stricken traditional women who prefer their daughters getting married to getting them educated and making a career. She also talks about her friend who shows her new kitchen in her new home and calls it as her office. By making this reference, the writer tries to tell us that her friend enjoys what she does, that is cooking. Kitchen is both positive and negative for a woman. The whole idea behind this essay is to make women come out of their traditional views and thinking that serving the family alone is her life. They should understand that creating their own identity and self-recognition are also important along with the family. Women can work outside and make a career along with managing the house and taking care of the responsibilities. Many women are silenced by lack of time and they give up easily. If they have to come up in life, they have to stop getting themselves suppressed. The writer ends the essay by pointing out at the thing that if a woman gets tired she has the right to stop and rest as being a housewife is a very difficult task and stopping won't wipe off her title of being Annapurna. She should step out of the kitchen and find herself and define a new Annapurna.