

# I want a wife

Linguistics, English



The paper "I Want a Wife" is a great example of an essay on English. According to Judy Brady, a wife is a person who might also be engaged in a position known as mother. The denotation of the position as it is defined throughout the remainder of her writing reveals that a wife is something closely related to a slave. The only difference is that the slave is simply expected to follow orders and the wife is expected to intelligently anticipate the writer's every need. As she is described, the wife is not a person in and of herself but is instead a necessary extension of the individual attempting to accomplish a measure of success in today's hectic world. In order to enable the individual to make the most of school, the wife is expected to provide financial support by working full-time while also keeping the family's schedules organized. She is also supposed to take care of all the speaker's physical needs like cleaning the environment, caring for personal items, providing and preparing the food and caring for the various bodily needs. The denotation even makes it clear that the individual personality makes no real difference when the narrative points out "if, by chance, I find another person more suitable as a wife than the wife I already have, I want the liberty to replace my present wife with another one." The connotation of the writing, though, is very different. There is a strong sarcastic tone throughout as the writer continues to point out the hypocrisy of the expectations. Although the wife is working to put 'me' through school, she is also expected to do everything else required to take care of the family with no help from the student. "I want a wife who takes care of the children when they are sick, a wife who arranges to be around when the children need special care, because, of course, I cannot miss classes at school." The entire

piece is about what the speaker wants with no consideration or appreciation for what the wife might be trying to do or what she might be going through. This is blatantly stated when the speaker says “ I want a wife who will not bother me with rambling complaints about a wife’s duties. But I want a wife who will listen to me when I feel the need to explain a rather difficult point I have come across in my course of studies.” The bitterness of the tone forces the reader to reconsider the expectations placed on women and the unfairness of their position.