

The good wife guide essay sample



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The “ Good Wife Guide” is an advisory text from the 1950’s telling typical 1950’s women on how to accomplish their role as a “ good wife”. The mood set throughout the entire text is completely imperative based (e. g. “ Clear away clutter” and “ Be happy to see him”). This creates a rather stern and overpowering tone, connoting that women in the 1950’s were being ‘ told’ what to do. Other parts of the text seem to suggest that women had no right to make any individual decisions and that women are all expected to fulfil the needs of their superiors-in this case, men. The entire text also suggests that they were seen as inferior within society. Additionally, the little use of discourse markers or adverbs suggests that it was the wife’s duty to fulfil her husband’s needs and that the needs of her husband were more important than those of the wife-even if they want to speak. The way the text has been worded so simply seems to suggest that 1950’s women were less intelligent than men and implies that women cannot follow more complex instructions.

The constant use of imperatives and adjectives such as “ delicious” and “ favourite” are suggesting that the only thing a “ good wife” should be concerned about is the wellbeing and safety for her husband. The command “ Make the evening his” provides supporting evidence that the women is not part of the husband’s evening and that she should be the one making it a relaxing environment. The sentence “ Whilst feminine hygiene is of the utmost importance, your tired husband does not want to queue for the bathroom” also suggests that the women shouldn’t take long at all with anything, including their hygiene routine. It’s almost connoting to the women, that they should let their husband do whatever they must, first.

Some verbs throughout the text such as “gather up” and “clear away” give a menial feel, meaning that not much skill is required to carry out these tasks and suggesting, again, that women could not follow complex instructions and that they were set ‘simple’ tasks which reflected on themselves severely, showing them as less intelligent. On the other hand, the verbs associated with the husband’s such as “relax” and “make him comfortable” connote that the man should not focus on the women, but should instead, as the imperative says, make himself “comfortable”. The whole guide, in my opinion, seems to be suggesting that every man needs a wife in order for him to feel “welcome” and cared for when he arrives home from a long day’s work, and that the women is making his needs possible and available to him, whenever he requires it.