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An Equality Layered Cake

1. Judy Brady, a part time wife but full-time mother, provokes the readers with questions. These questions mostly regarding the hardships of women but Brady narrows it down specifically to wives for simplicity. With that she crafts a short story called “I Want a Wife”, filling the page with rhetoric and repetition for her to strongly, yet clearly, state her argument. The timing of her essay was crucial for not only her, but for the rest of the feminist community; to brings light to the borderline oppression they were enduring. Through her use of rhetoric, she was able to capture the different expectations wives were to meet that helped in her propaganda to push forward the feminist movement.

2. Her thesis is in broad daylight: women are treated as dependence of man, beings who must serve and please to their titled husbands. To this, I cannot agree more. Obviously, we as a society should provide equal rights to all humans, but knowing that this was written I the early 70’s, it was very common to see a separation between race and sex. Brady states “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.”(Brady) which is filled with satirical humor in the eyes of the wives in the 70’s, yet it still retains the idea that husbands unequally treat their wives.

3. Readers must understand that “I want a wife…” is being said in the perspective of a man, whose desires are far too farfetched to the standards of a human. The essay illustrates the incredibly needy husbands and rather mocks their outrageously luxurious life that comes with having a wife. If the current wife fails, “[you can] find another person more suitable as a wife than the wife [you] already have, [you have] the liberty to replace [your] present wife with another one.”(Brady) This line in Brady’s essay seems to have lingered in me the most. Her descriptions that objectify women were at prime at this point of the essay and I even felt outraged myself, reminding me of how many of these Brady listed in the essay could still be applied to today.

4. Luckily there is enough awareness around the parts where I grew up to not experience too much of the expectations listed in Brady’s story. Therefore I do not have a direct experience with objectifying women with unrealistic numbers of expectations. However, I do hold a stand that there is a point where we can go “too far.”

5. I strongly support equal rights; all people, regardless of size, color, religion, and background, should have equal treatment. However, there must underly a “healthy” amount of expectations. When I’m asked to study because the man is entitled to support the family, I do not see that as an issue. When asked to get in shape since the fat makes me look ugly, I do not have an issue. I do not have an issue when I am called the wrong “gender pronoun” as I think at that point it’s become ridiculous. My point is, I believe that many of us are beginning to take advantage of the idea of gender objectifications and beginning to use it to get out of humane responsibilities. The idea of these expectations are not to hinder one’s life, but to improve it. I believe expectations must be required to an extent, allowing one to strive to be a better person and become and overall asset to a society. Without these goals and expectations, we see a form of chaos between each other, unknown how to act nor respond, afraid to hurt each other’s feelings.

6. To keep short: there must be a healthy amount of expectation for the society. One that has too much may hinder human rights but too little will inevitably push society to take advantage of such freedom. In Brady’s essay, she focuses on women’s rights, striving to empower woman to change the United States, and luckily we can see her contribution take into effect today.