
Feminism And Symbolism In The Yellow Wallpaper

Feminism, also known as the women rights movement, is a movement of women fighting for their freedom and equal opportunity as men. Burkett, Elinor. "Women's Rights Movement." Encyclopædia Britannica, Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., 13 Feb. 2019. The author of the Yellow Wallpaper, Charlotte Gilman was born on July 3, 1860, in Hartford Connecticut, and died on August 17, 1935 in Pasadena, California. She was known as a Feminist and Literature figure. Charlotte got married to an artist known as Charles Walter Stetson, with whom she had a child with. After giving birth to her child she entered a period of depression. Stone, Les. 'Charlotte (Anna) Perkins (Stetson) Gilman.' Contemporary Authors Online, Gale, 2003. Literature Resource Center. The Yellow Wallpaper is based on Charlotte Gilman's life, the narrator in the short story suffered from depression after giving birth. Her husband, John also her physician prescribed her rest cure. They had to move into a house in the countryside for her treatment, the narrator agreed to the advice because John was a respected physician. The Yellow wallpaper can be viewed differently depends on an individual's opinion, I will be focusing on feminism. In this paper I will be analyzing the main character's behavior, what lead her into losing insanity, and how she freed herself from her husband's controlling way throughout the story.

John is the one to be blamed for his wife's breakdown because he did not understand his wife's feelings and didn't take her condition seriously. He believed the medical theories of Dr. Silas Weir Mitchell, according to the article, Dr. Silas was the one who treated Charlotte Perkins Gilman from her nervous breakdown and forbade her to write. Golden, Catherine. "Overwriting' the Rest Cure: Charlotte Perkins Gilman's Literary Escape from S. Weir Mitchell's Fictionalization of Women.' Short Story Criticism, edited by Janet Witalec, vol. 62, Gale, 2003. Literature Resource Center. Just like how John is denying the narrator's right to visitors and going outside. He kept her in the room all day with nothing to do, this made her more depressed than she was after giving birth. According to the narrator John doesn't take his wife's condition seriously "John laughs at me, of cause, but one expects that in marriage. John is practical in the extreme. He has no patience with faith.....and he scoffs openly at any talk of things no to be felt and seen and put down in figures.... you see he doesn't believe I am sick and what can one do?" (Gilman,647). John believes his wife's condition is not that serious and will be well very soon, in the story he said that his wife condition is "temporary nervous depression.... a slight hysterical tendency...then Jane asked, "what is one to do?" (Gilman,648). She is asking because she has been told by her husband, she cannot do anything than sitting down and relax, but the narrator disagreed with the idea because she wants to go outside and walk around the garden writing her journals. Being kept in the room all day, made the narrator obsessed with the wallpaper. The narrator stated that "one of those sprawling flamboyant patterns committing every artistic sin.....Dull enough to confuse the eye in following, pronounced enough constantly to irritate and provoke study....The color is repellent, almost revolting as smoldering unclean yellow....There comes John, and I must put this away....he hates me to write a word"(Gilman,648-649). According to the statement the narrator hates staying inside, she wants to go outside and have some fresh air. Without John knowing, he is making his wife's condition worse by keeping her in that room. Where she is disturbed by the hideous smell of the yellow paper, the pattern on the wall and the figure of the women in the wall. All that led to the narrator becomes obsessed with the wallpaper. In the process she loses her sanity, feeling that she

must release the woman behind the wallpaper.

Throughout the story, the narrator has finally found something that she wants to protect and save, that was the woman behind the wallpaper. She wants to set her free from the wallpaper, Jane felt it was her responsibility to help the woman. The narrator started peeling the wallpaper off, but when she reached the bed she was stuck because the bed can't move. Jane was unable to move the bed because it was nailed down on the floor. In the short story, the narrator stated: "Immovable bed. it is nailed down" (Gilman,650). As we can see the bed and the narrator have some similarity, Jane is locked in the room and cannot go outside just like how the bed was nailed down and cannot move. The narrator is locked in the room and she cannot move, or someone cannot get her out of that room. She will have to stay in that room because no one can help her. At the end of the story, Jane removes all the wallpaper on the wall and freed the woman from the wall. Saving the woman from the wall, illustrated how Jane is free from her husband's controlling ways. It stated in the short story "I've got out at last. "Said I "despite you and Jane? And I've pulled off most of the paper so you can't put me back!" (Gilman,656). The one is talking is the woman behind the wallpaper, Jane is talking like someone else meaning she has completely lost her mind. Yes, she is free, but she is also insane. The narrator could have never reached this stage, if Her husband did his job as a doctor, maybe she might have recovered.

Feminism was portrayed in this story by the main character, Jane. Despite all her husband controlling ways, in the end, she came to free herself from him. As we saw at the end, she crept on John heading toward the door, she always wanted to be outside not locked in one place. She became free at last as she always wanted, wandering outside like other people. We saw how the narrator changed from the beginning being a submissive wife like many other women during that period did, but at the end, she became a different person than she used to be and escaped from her husband's controlling ways. A lot of women have been denied their right as a citizen and as a woman in the society just like how Jane in the Yellow Wallpaper had been denied her right to write in her journal, going outside also they ignored her need as a woman. Feminism can be fought in many ways, it depends on what you are standing for, everyone has the right to fight for what is right.