

Essay on the yellow wallpaper

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“ There are things in that paper which nobody knows but me, or ever will. Behind that outside pattern the dim shapes get clearer every day. It is always the same shape, only very numerous.

And it is like a woman stooping down and creeping about behind that pattern. I don't like it a bit. I wonder—I begin to think—I wish John would take me away from here” (Gilman)! Charlotte Perkins Gilman began her writing career in the late 1800's and the early 1900's and became well known for her fiction stories later in life(Biography. com). The short story she wrote, “ The Yellow Wallpaper”, can reflect her childhood growing up because she never had a strong male role-model in her life.

The Yellow Wallpaper is about a wife who is oppressed by her superior-minded husband and learns to overcome his obedience. Using the aspects of feminist criticism, “ The Yellow Wallpaper” can be analyzed by using dialogue, symbols, and the typical male character. First, feminist criticism can be found in the dialogue of “ The Yellow Wallpaper”. The dialogue between John and his wife Jane depicts the anti-feminist views that the author was trying to illustrate. John calls his wife, “ blessed little goose” (Gilman). This shows that he looks down to her as he would a child.

Using the word “ little” while describing someone shows that they possess childish features, and since John believes that Jane has those features depicts that he does not take her seriously. He uses this name in the dialogue after Jane is trying to tell him an idea of hers, which reflects John's anti-feminist views. Since she is a woman and his wife, he has the authority over her and he does not take her ideas seriously. The second dialogue

found that shows feminist critique is, “ What is it, little girl? Don’t go walking like that—you’ll get cold” (Gilman). John tells his wife this when he sees her walking outside.

The fact that he takes away a simple freedom of hers like walking outside, shows that he does not give her many freedoms at all. He uses the word little again which gives Jane an immature characteristic and he is treating her like a child. He acts as if he believes she is not capable of taking care of herself which is another example of him belittling her. The dialogue found in “ The Yellow Wallpaper” between Jane and John greatly depicts feminist criticism. Second, the symbols used throughout the short story gives clues to the feminist criticism found throughout it.

The main symbol that is used is the yellow wall paper in the house of John and Jane. Jane gives a great description of the wall paper, “ It slaps you in the face, knocks you down, and tramples upon you. It is like a bad dream” (Gilman). Jane is not only describing the paper on the walls of the room, she is describing the anti-feminist views of her husband and most men in the specific time era. She is referring the way her husband treats her.

He slaps his superiority in her face, he knocks down all of her ideas, and he tramples upon her with no respect. The narrator also says, “ She just takes hold of the bars and shakes them hard” (Gilman). Jane is referring to the woman in the wall paper. The woman in the paper is a symbol of her because the bars represent her husband’s restrain on her and she is trying to break through. Her husband restrains her by forcing her to lose her vivid imagination and all of her rights as a human being.

He does not let her leave the house and he rejects every idea or thought she has. Jane is obviously not fond of this so she tries to hang onto her freedoms, or her bars, as much as possible. She does this by writing in a diary and thinking to herself at night. This is how Jane shakes her bars. The symbols used throughout "The Yellow Wallpaper" shows the feminist criticism hidden within the story. Lastly, the character of the typical male can be criticized throughout the short story.

Jane describes her husband as, "He has no patience with faith, an intense horror of superstition, and he scoffs openly at any talk of things not to be felt and seen and put down in figures" (Gilman). This quote shows that John's character is the typical male because he has no emotions. He does not waste his time with morals of religion or faith which shows that he is heartless about sentimental feelings. The typical male has characteristics of being practical and emotionless. This quote by the narrator, his wife, describes those qualities perfectly.

Towards the end of the short story, Jane overcomes her husband and finally stands up to him. After standing up to him Jane says, "Now why should that man have fainted? But he did, and right across my path by the wall, so that I had to creep over him every time" (Gilman)! This can also show the typical male archetype because he had it so engraved into his mind that the female is supposed to be inferior to a man that he could not comprehend that she was standing up to him and so he fainted. She was finally the superior one and he could not handle that which shows the typical male. The character of the typical male can be found in this short story to be used for feminist criticism. Conclusively, using the aspects of feminist criticism, "The Yellow
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Wallpaper” can be analyzed by using dialogue, symbols, and the typical male character.

The significance of this story is to illustrate that women should have equal rights to men and to shows the severity of the discrimination against women.

It is obvious that the author, Charlotte Perkins Gilman, has strong opinions on feminism and how individuals abuse women’s rights. Works Cited: “

Charlotte Perkins Gilman.” 2011. Biography. com [http://www.](http://www.biography.com/articles/Charlotte-Perkins-Gilman-9311669)

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