

# Swimmer and yellow wallpaper

[Life](#), [Emotions](#)



Asim Soomro The Significant emotional changes in the Major Characters of "The Swimmer" and "The Yellow Wallpaper" Cheever's "The Swimmer" and Gilman's "The Yellow Wallpaper," use surrounding objects to bring about the major characters emotional deconstruction. "The Swimmer" portrays Neddy's transition from a state of optimism to despondence through the use of swimming pools. Neddy also views the swimming pools as a source of comfort, but at the same time encounters disconcerting ones. "The Yellow Wallpaper" on the other hand, uses artistic images of the wallpaper to bring about feelings of frustration in the narrator. Moreover, the wallpaper facilitates her final step into insanity. The objects employed by both stories are the agents, which bring about crucial sentimental changes in the major characters. "The Swimmer" uses swimming pools to highlight Neddy's change in behavior from being hopeful to feeling downcast. Neddy's journey through the array of swimming pools gave him a sense of purpose as he compares himself to a "Pilgrim, explorer and a man with a destiny" (Cheever 206). Neddy does however encounter certain swimming pools, which bring about feelings of despair. "[The Halloran's] dark water" (Cheever 210) itself was able to dishearten Neddy, indicating how the swimming pools have a profound impact on him. The effect of this observation on Neddy is crucial as it weakens his confidence in the chain of his swimming pools. It provides a different perspective for the aim of his journey, where a downcast feeling contradicts his idealistic viewpoint. At the same time, the narrator of "The Yellow Wallpaper" finds the wallpaper frustrating. The image of the "Two bulbous eyes star[ing] at you upside down" (Gilman 78) seems to anger her greatly as she cannot seem to grasp the idea of the "impertinence and

everlastingness" (Gilman 78) of the wallpaper. The wallpaper seems to bring out these detrimental emotions in the narrator, which initiates her obsession with it. The obsessive relationship with the wallpaper is what causes the slow decay of her mental wellbeing. The basis of this obsession can be attributed to the frustration brought about by the artistic images of the wallpaper.

Neddy looks upon the swimming pools as a source of comfort, but comes across pools that seem displeasing. Neddy describes his experience in the first pool as "the resumption of a natural condition" (Cheever 206). The public pool however can be perceived as a disconcerting pool, where Neddy refers to it as a "stagnant bend in the Lucinda River" (Cheever 209). The emotional change can be interpreted as a jolt or awakening, which brings him back to reality. It shows a different side of the Lucinda River and perhaps a different side to his current lifestyle. The carefree life of Neddy is not devoid of obstacles and does comprise of imperfections. The narrator in "The Yellow Wallpaper" is shown to win her freedom by removing the wallpaper. The narrator exclaims that "she has pulled most of the paper so [they] can't put her back" (Gilman 86), where this action can be perceived as crossing the threshold into insanity. The narrator does feel liberated, but this liberation has come at the cost of her sanity. The imperative emotional change observed marks the final chapter in her mental wellbeing where one can no longer interpret her thoughts and actions as sane. The short stories use personal objects to bring about crucial emotional changes in the characters of Neddy and the narrator. Neddy is shown to emotionally transition from a sense of purpose and personal connection to that of feeling disheartened and disconnected. At the same time, the frustration of the

narrator is brought about by the wallpaper, which in turn fuels the obsession with it. The wallpaper then acts as the final obstacle between the narrator's current mental condition and insanity. References: