

The yellow wallpaper by charlotte perkins gilman: symbolical interpretations essa...

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The basic aim of *The Yellow Wallpaper* by Charlotte Perkins Gilman is to reflect the oppression of women in the 19th century. Generally, while discussing the major themes of the story, it is necessary to analyze some symbolical issues, the author provides us with. Moreover, *The Yellow Wallpaper* allows us to consider one of the most important problems women faced in the 19th century in detail.

When reading the story, it becomes evident that Gilman was deeply concerned about the role of women as well as the psychological pressure they experienced. For this reason, one can make a conclusion that Gilman's *The Yellow Wallpaper* is to be analyzed based on symbolical interpretations the author wanted her readers to become familiar with.

In my opinion, nobody will deny the fact that the protagonist's oppression in *The Yellow Wallpaper* is depicted symbolically. For instance, one can notice that Gilman uses such complex symbols as the parts of the house, in order to reflect the psychological state of the main character. Thus, on the one hand, the house the main character lives in can be associated with a desire to become free; however, on the other hand, it is evident that the protagonist cannot avoid a cruel reality.

If one analyzes the short story deeper, he or she can probably conclude that the house reflects the process of transformation a woman experiences. In other words, the house can be regarded as the so-called symbol of self-expression. However, the protagonist's phrase, which cannot be neglected, is "There is something strange about the house" (Gilman p. 1).

Taking into account the woman's worldview, it becomes evident that the principal character cannot feel safe, as she is afraid of changes. The adjective strange is related not to the house, but the protagonist's expectations and hopes. The author shows that a woman's metamorphosis is unavoidable; however, being under constant oppressions too long, the main character cannot accept changes she experiences so fast.

The window the author depicts in her story is also of particular importance, as this symbol can also be regarded ambiguously. On the one hand, the window seems to express a woman's potential; however, taking into consideration the fact that a woman is afraid of looking through it, one can probably conclude that the window is the protagonist's reflection. The main character does not want to accept her true personality, as she understands what a miserable creature she can see.

For her, an opportunity to look through the window is accepted as real torture, because there she can see other women, who are the same, who must creep, to stay a part of the society. Hochman believes that " Gilman's nameless protagonist enters an action-filled world that she creates by inference from a printed design. As a result, her depression and despair are temporarily dispelled" (par. 5).

Finally, the yellow wallpaper should be regarded as a symbol of hope. Looking at the color, the protagonist feels safe. At the same time, the main character understands that the image in the wallpaper is considered to be a reflection of unhappy women who must creep to be a part of society.

According to Gretchen Lynn Greene, “ The Yellow Wallpaper is just one of many stories that Gilman wrote that dealt with women trying to attain their freedom from something or someone” (par. 5). For this reason, one can conclude that the author depicted the burning problem of the 19th century.

Gilman, Charlotte. *The Yellow Wallpaper*, Small & Maynard, Boston: MA, 1899. Print.

Greene, Gretchen. “ The Yellow Wallpaper,” n. d. Web.

Hochman, Barbara. *The Reading Habit and The Yellow Wallpaper*, 2002. Web.