

Across a person's  
life, but take the



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

Across the world, people have different ideologies and lifestyles in many different places. These types of people dictate how people should think, react, and how to regard things in people's everyday lives. Because of these people, certain things in society wouldn't be in existence and would cause the world to go crazy. However, when people would take these ideas too far, they would abuse them and become dangerously influenced by them. Oppression is a huge theme in many of these types of ideas, as when something new comes into society, the old is thrown out. The idea of "throwing out the old, in with the new" can't sit in some people's stomachs, while others would become comfortable with this.

People who are very oppressive see what they do as doing what's right, but others want salvation for those who are oppressed. To some, salvation is seen as very rebellious and a dangerous influence, while others see it as a noble deed and very inspiring to people, even if it's dangerous. Pursuing salvation can cost a person's life, but take the risk for what they fight for to become reality. When a demonstrator fights for salvation, they would take it too far, and treat it as their own form of self-inflicted oppression. Charlotte Perkins Gilman's "The Yellow Wallpaper" is an example of this type of situation. The story helps the reader understand the madness that Gilman is suffering from, and draws a picture on how we should fight against oppression.

In the story, the similarities and differences between salvation and oppression given through the mind of the main character shown to the reader by describing its imagery and symbolism. At the beginning of the story, the narrator Jane shows the readers how salvation and oppression is shown in the

beginning of the story. The main character is at the mercy of her husband, who believes that he can dictate what she can and can't do. In the story, she states " Personally, I disagree with their ideas" (Gilman 473), meaning that she has a huge problem with John controlling her like a puppet. However, she decides that she'll just do what he wants her to do, while also holding back her true feelings of being very oppressed and controlled by him.

As the story progresses, every passing day, she is slowly losing her own patience with the entire situation around her, and she desperately wants to have the freedom to do what she truly needs for herself. In other words, she wants salvation from all the hard rules and constraints put on her by her husband. But sadly, she becomes forced to become her own slave, subjected to holding back all her true feelings and motives, but she feels like she is doing what's right for her and her husband. This idea of just holding back her true self is just eating her up inside. In the story, she is constantly bothered by the ugly, old, crumbling yellow wallpaper that covers the whole room she sleeps in. But she also feels like people are trapped within the wallpaper, and keeps this idea throughout the story, and concludes that there are women trapped within the wallpaper, and sees figures of women walking inside the papers.

This is an example of how wanting salvation can make a person see and believe in things that don't exist, holding back her feelings about what's happening to her, and having someone who can understand her, all while transforming into a psychopath while doing it. In Barbara Seuss's article, " The Writing's on the Wall", "...the wallpaper gains more and more authority over her, it becomes the recourse to which Jane turns." (Seuss 92), showing the

readers that the wallpaper represents a prison-like setting for her, where she is trapped in her own mind prison and has nowhere to go and no one to go to, destroying what little humane thoughts she originally had. The woman in the wallpaper and all the things that she does shows us readers the main character's descent into total madness.

Because the main character has already been oppressed by her husband, the thought of the whole situation opens her up a new door towards removing all of the hard constraints and rules put on her, thus freeing her into her own world where she can be herself. In John Bak's article, "Escaping the jaundiced eye: Foucauldian panopticism in Charlotte Perkins Gilman's 'The Yellow Wallpaper'", "...she has essentially released herself from the external bars and rings that John uses to constrain her" (Bak 6), emphasizing that because of the woman trapping her in a hallucination-like dream, she is able to realize her true self and releases all of the rules that John has placed on her. Because the woman in the wallpaper is the narrator of the story,

she is telling us readers about all of the things happening in the house.

Because of this, we get an idea about what certain things in the story represent. The woman in the wallpaper can represent the harsh oppression put on the main character by her husband, stuck within her own mind, trying to find a way to escape it.

She is depicting the main character and everything that is happening throughout the story, and slowly becomes more supportive towards her. With all the other scenes that she is describing, she uses imagery to paint a picture on how self-salvation for any person who suffers from being oppressed can look and seem like it's a true reality. As she continues to

think that a woman is trapped within the yellow wallpaper, freeing her becomes her number one priority. In other words, this represents Gilman being very concerned with getting her own independence. According to Paula Teichler's "The Wall Behind the Yellow Wallpaper: Response to Carol Neely and Karen Ford", "The Wallpaper is a disruptive center, that chaotically fragments any attempt to fix on it a single meaning" (Teichler 327). This is a major reason why she keeps a diary, being one of the only places that she can be herself, and feel relief for herself because of her current life.

To Gilman, anyone who has a very imaginative mind should not keep it a secret and away from others; if they do, they would feel destroyed inside, feel completely alone, unrelatable to others, and ignored by everyone. "The resting cure" is supposed to be able to cure a person's insanity, by taking away everything that the person has, telling the patient what they can and can't do, and isolating them from everything stressful around them in order for them to just relax. The creator of the resting cure, Dr. Silas Weir Mitchell, originally made this idea because he was intrigued with intellectual, active women, and how they live their lives. John takes this issue seriously for his wife, and takes it a step further by constantly keeping tabs on her to make sure that she is not stressing herself. And she clearly doesn't support this idea, but as stated previously before, John believes he's the genius and that he is doing right.

Because Gilman's mind was nearly destroyed by this "cure", the way she writes the story, she is disagreeing with the cure being ineffective and very wrong for everyone who endures this. "The Yellow Wallpaper" is painting a

<https://assignbuster.com/across-a-persons-life-but-take-the/>

picture of an intellectual mind that is completely contaminated with a lot of anxiety and stress. And when this happens, this type of mind can be destroyed, and it will cause the person to be a completely different person; they would act different, present themselves differently, and overall just not be the person that people recognize and just stay away from. Gilman in the story is clearly attacking the resting cure, as she does not support it and wants no one to have it done to them. According to Jeffrey Berman's "The Unrestful Cure: Charlette Perkins Gilman and "The Yellow Wallpaper", "After three months, she rejected Mitchell's advice and began writing, immediately making gain towards a recovery (Berman 64)", showing readers that the resting cure wasn't even effective for her, and a good cure for this type of condition is writing.

Because this was a very popular story, all the criticism that Mitchell was attracting because of his cure ended up in him abandoning it. Gilman doesn't just not support the resting cure being something wrong, but also doesn't support the idea of any form of medical care that throws aside what the patient wants and expects, and the higher-ups just considers them like a test subject. The relationship between the woman's mindset in her home and the mindset of a patient/doctor is crystal clear in the story, and since John is both Gilman's personal doctor and her husband, this also applies to both her and John's relationship. According to Susan Lasner's article "The Yellow Wallpaper and the Politics of Color In America", "The fact that these works which feminists now found exciting and powerful had been denounced, ignored, or suppressed seemed virtual proof of the claim that literature, criticism, and history" (Lasner 417).

Gilman shows us that both the powers could be used the wrong way, even if the doctors feel like they are doing the right thing for others. And since women are the primary targets for this type of thing, they are forced to do this because they believe that the doctors know what they are doing. Even though "The Yellow Wallpaper" was very controversial to some, it was one of the gateways for people to realize that they shouldn't keep their true feelings and true mindsets inside of them, even if they are shunned for it, and are treated like they are outcasts. People today who suffer from a mental illness like Gilman should be very fortunate that she brought us the idea of new modern-day medicines, that involve expressing their minds and being welcomed in by others. While writing is a good medicine for having a stressful and insane lifestyle, just being yourself overall is a great natural medicine. The story gave us the idea that freedom to do what you love is what's best for a person, but also the fact that freedom can be an illusion to other unfortunate people.

This raises a big question: What would happen to all human life if no person on the planet had any freedom?