

# The yellow wallpaper journal

[Linguistics](#), [English](#)



September 11, The Yellow Wallpaper Journal What is the "condition" of the woman in The Yellow Wallpaper? Identify possible causes for her problem and use quotes and plot points to argue your idea.

The woman in The Yellow Wallpaper, written by Gilman, was besieged by an apparent chronic fatigue disorder, which could be classified as a form of mental illness. The condition was evident from the statements revealed by the woman as she stated that she was diagnosed by John, her husband with “temporary nervous depression – a slight hysterical tendency” (Gilman 380). The condition was also corroborated by her brother who believed that her illness was not physical in nature, but psychological, or in her mind.

The possible causes of her problem are surmised to be varied. For one, the newly born baby could have implicitly provided the impetus for her nervousness and depression (postpartum depression): “It is fortunate Mary is so good with the baby...And yet, I cannot be with him, it makes me so nervous” (Gilman 381). Secondly, the woman felt that she was a burden to her husband, which could be an effect of her inability to raise the baby herself and not to be able to perform her role and duty as wife and mother: “I meant to be such a help to John...and here I am a comparative burden already!” (Gilman 381). Further, transferring temporarily to a new home, while their home is being repaired could also cause nervousness and depression: “The repairs are not done at home, and I cannot possibly leave town just now!” (Gilman 385). In addition, always being left alone, since the job of her husband as a physician was perceived to be demanding, could also have contributed to her condition. This was exacerbated by the fact that John does not want her to write or delve into other activities which could exhaust

her and make her more nervous. The overbearing control was noted to have caused her to feel afraid of her husband: “ The fact is I am getting a little afraid of John” (Gilman 386). Thus, the woman’s fears and anxieties to perform the role and responsibilities as a wife and mother increase the preponderance to stress and contributed to her nervousness and depression.

#### Work Cited

Gilman, Charlotte Perkins. " The Yellow Wallpaper." n. d. 379-390. Print.