

Task: Review the piece called The Yellow Wallpaper and describe its main themes.

Topic: The Yellow Wallpaper

Type: Analytical Essay

Length: 5 pages

Formatting: N/A

Requirements: Review The Yellow Wallpaper. Outline the themes of woman suffrage in the 19th and other points the author intends to convey.

The yellow wallpaper

Charlotte Perkins Gilman gives a completely different angle to the issues of marriage and the role of women in the complicated social institution (Gilman and Ann 49). A short story written by the author *The Yellow Wallpaper* narrates the life of a woman seeking freedom following the delivery of her first baby. The intention of this paper is to discuss three literary elements of the short story including the theme, irony, and symbolism including their relevance to the story.

Theme

A theme refers to the central idea of the story, a discussion, or a presentation. Gilman mostly focuses on activism and intellectual empowerment for women as explained:

Feminism

The Yellow wallpaper is an old narration of 1892, a period in which only conservative forms of entertainment existed while people upheld to some oppressive cultural beliefs. Jane, the anonymous character mentioned at the end of the short story undergoes oppression in a marriage seemed to be under the control of her husband John, brother in-law, and sister in-law (Gilman and Jean 6). The writer of the short story gets the idea from her past life considering that she equally faced mental torture and physical abuse in marriage. Jane does not have the freedom of expression even though she has a passion for writing. While caged in a room upstairs in the new apartment, Jane has to deal with the caging ordeal, humiliation from her husband's siblings, and lack of freedom. Jane uses the opportunity to write, but John considers her a mental case.

Feminism is an obvious theme under discussion in the short story in which the writer actively defends the position of women in marriage. According to *The Yellow Wallpaper*, women should

be capable of following their passion while married including the ability to support their families financially.

Education and intellectual development

The Yellow Wallpaper is an avenue through which women in the early 19th century used to explain why they needed education. John allowed his sister to become a nurse, but he caged up his wife behind metal bars to deny Jane similar privileges. The writer recognizes the successful family of John while empathizing with Jane in the story. Gilman believes that John needed to encourage Jane in pursuing her writing ambitions since all people have a right to education and intellectual development. A woman in the play takes the position of a wife, a mother, and a sister, but once married, she only lives within the confines of her boring house. John ensures that Jane does not get any form of intellectual exposure, and this explains why he denies her the opportunity to access any source of information or entertainment (Federico 10).

Symbolism

Symbolism is the comparison of a character, his or her behaviors, and the real life of another person in the society. It could also refer to the use of an object to represent something else or someone.

Jane and Gilman

Gilman reflects on her past life and divorce when writing the short story. Jane's life is a symbolism of the life of a writer who had to give up her marriage for her passion. The new house acquired by John symbolizes the luxurious life Gilman's husband offers her during the first phase of her marriage. Gilman is an activist for women because she understands the humiliation women undergo under manipulative husbands. Gilman keeps the main character anonymous until the end of the play explaining the less significance given to women in the 1890s. The same

symbolizes that lack of recognition amounts to irrelevance in the society. While Jane symbolizes the life of Gilman and several other women, a woman on her room's wallpaper also symbolizes her life. During one of her mental bouts, she often tried to remove the wallpaper in an attempt to free the woman. In addition, anytime she peeped through the window, Jane only saw women caged through the grills of the windows.

Metal bar windows

Living within the confines of one of the rooms in her house, caged in a metal bar, and denied all humane treatment, Jane lost concern for some of the most important things within the family framework. Gilman compares the same to the life of an ordinary woman denied the chance to do something that makes her happy. A woman who has the intellectual ability to break such barriers would be capable of making an impulse decision in order to explore her passion. Symbolically, Jane became mentally distressed leaving her with no option, but to ignore her marital duties and the newborn baby. In the setup, it would be impossible to imagine that the two respectable doctors in the short story hide a big secret at home while pretending to have a perfect life outside (Gilman and Ann 40). According to John and his brother, Jane needs rest because she suffers from postnatal depression. In summary, the metal bars symbolize lack of freedom in an area in which someone deserves autonomy.

Irony

Irony is a contradiction of reality in that the expectations of a writer or a viewer become the exact opposite. It mostly happens when a short story or a play needs to explain faults in characters that would otherwise benefit the society is done correctly. Normally, plays and stories use irony to create humor.

John, his brother, and sister are doctors and a nurse respectively. In medicine, the physicians have to learn about the physical and psychological responses of the human body to the medication. John understands the needs of his wife, but he simply ignores the fact that Jane wants freedom. To worsen the situation, Jane who suffers from postnatal depression has to live in a confined room that was previously a nursery (Federico 25). The action affects Jane psychologically, and anytime John visited the room, Jane escaped to the farthest corner of the protected area. Even though John understands that Jane suffers psychologically, he only mentions that his wife requires bed rest.

John understands the significance of seeking expert opinion in such extreme cases, but he ignores this even though he treats his patients better as opposed to the treatment he gives Jane. In such a profession, it is important to keep the family members safe in the same way the doctor treats other patients. Instead, John and his brother make other people believe that they have a perfect life. Another ironical element of the short story is that Jennie, John's sister treats Jane in the same manner. Jennie does not realize that Jane suffers as several other women, and she could be in a similar state in the future. When Jane said she wanted distraction, Jennie needed to convince John to grant her the desire and monitor any health progress. John's family seems to be under the control of conventional cultural belief systems making it impossible for women to notice the oppression they undergo in marriages (Gilman and Jean 14).

Conclusion

In conclusion, women suffrage was a huge problem in the early 19th century, and this denied them an opportunity to contribute actively towards economic development (Gilman and Ann 49). Gilman used the short story to display the importance of women in a male dominated

society by uncovering different truths. The paper focused on the theme, irony, and symbolism to explain a cross section of Gilman's sentiments.

Works cited

Federico, Annette. *Gilbert & Gubar's the Madwoman in the Attic After Thirty Years*. Columbia:

University of Missouri Press, 2009. Print.

Gilman, Charlotte P, and Ann J. Lane. *The Charlotte Perkins Gilman Reader*. Charlottesville:

Univ. Press of Virginia, 1999. Print.

Gilman, Charlotte P, and Jean S. St. *"the Yellow Wall-Paper": A Dual-Text Critical Edition*.

Athens: Ohio University Press, 2006. Print.

Overall Impression

Dude, this is not how a well-written paper should look like. I laughed at phrases like “a completely different angel,” or at “anonymous Jane”: these flubs are so in-your-face that I wonder how you managed to not notice them. The way you construct sentences makes it difficult to follow the flow of your thoughts, and your unconventional phrasing obstructs comprehension. I only managed to understand that you were writing about a woman suffering from domestic abuse in the end of the 19th century, and that it is somehow a feminist theatrical play. However, if you want other people to understand you, you should consider improving your language skills.