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**Feminism in The Yellow Wallpaper**

The yellow wallpaper is the short story that depicts the two perspectives that are feminist theory and psychoanalytic theory. Each scientific or social theories, as well as movements, are always linked to past incidence. The number of incidences happens which brings the focus of the issue or need of the society. The feminist organization was founded by Wilhelmina Drucker who raised her voice for the equal rights of women and voting rights in America. Later, feminism and its demands appeared in highlights to ensure the rights of the women and to bring the society based on equality. The main purpose of the essay is to analyze the feminist aspect of the story "The Yellow Wallpaper" to depict the actual picture and status of women in early American society. The story was written by American writer Charlotte Perkins Gilman. This is the short story that is published in January 1892. The main character of the story is the women and the reason behind the story is also an experience of the author "a woman". This is why the story is one of the best examples to understand the role and status of women in America in the past. The short story and link of the story with the author's life experience brought mixed opinions for the word especially in the field of medical and social activists who were working for women's rights.

The author portrayed the feminist perspective by identifying the fact that the story is based on real-life experience. She was suffering from a nervous disease called melancholia when the misfortune happened. She visited a male physician because at that time most of the physicians were men and women were not supposed to choose such fields for the profession. On her visit, she explained her condition to the doctor on which the doctor advised her to leave her professional life. According to the doctor, she was required to stay at home and she was advised not to touch the pen again in her life. She wrote about this stage in her story through the line “If a physician of high standing, and one's own husband, assures friends and relatives that there is really nothing the matter with one but temporary nervous depression - a slight hysterical tendency - what is one to do? My brother is also a physician, and also of high standing, and he says the same thing,”(Gilman) which shows that women were not able to even explain their mental situation. Gilman followed the doctor's condition but her condition became worse than before and then she decided to join the office on a friend's advice. Soon she came to know that she had a nervous disease which became worse due to homesickness and leaving her professional life. This incidence indicates that male specialists had a great influence on society and stereotypes and rather than focusing on the scientific syndromes and causes, he considered the social influence and advised the author to live a domestic life. This is because at that time women were considered as the essential part of the family and they were bound to look after the home and children rather than focusing on their career. In addition, the author linked her dream with the story by explaining that she also wanted to be a physician but as the society had stereotypes according to which a woman can be a housewife, writer, teacher but she cannot join medical, engineering and other similar fields. It depicts how people had made the gender role on which everyone had to agree (Fisher and Silber).

Another example that the author used in the story to portray the feminist perspective was the characters of the story. A woman whose husband and brother both were physicians had to live in a big house alone. His husband spent his time in the clinic while she spent her time moving around the home without any reason or work to do. She was suffering from post-partum depression which brings a combination of behavioral, emotional, and physical changes in women. When the woman explained her issue to her husband, the husband advised him to take bed rest. She knew that her husband is not considering her real issue but she had to agree which can be understood by the line. She had to spend the whole day alone in the house and now she was forced to take more rest and do not work much. She spent her days sitting in the room watching yellow wallpaper. With time her disorder became worse and she noticed a woman crawling on the wallpaper and asking her for help. She wanted to free the woman she saw in the wallpaper. Later she reached the level of madness and her condition became miserable and when her husband found the complication it was too late. This story highlighted the status of the man and woman where male characters were professional and working for the nation while women were bound to the home. The woman looked after home without knowing what is happening in the outside world. This strictness resulted in various psychological disorders in women which most of the time misunderstood and the condition of the women was miserable. The lines “I don't feel as if it was worthwhile to turn my hand over for anything, and I'm getting dreadfully fretful and querulous. I cry at nothing and cry most of the time,” (Gilman)depicted her mental condition. Besides the characters of the story, the story itself identifies the mentality of the people. People opposed the story with the claim that this story will result in negativity among the husband and wife. People also opposed it by saying that it does not raise the social issue rather portray sexual politics where women's freedom will bring negative consequences in society. It indicates that feminism was the element that was raised by the writers and society had a harsh reaction towards it.

The third example that portrayed the feminist perspective is the woman crawling in the yellow wallpaper. Those women who asked for freedom were portrayed as the wish of all the American women. By portraying that women author tried to spread the message that not all women want to stay at home looking after house and children. The line “That was clever, for really I wasn't alone a bit! As soon as it was moonlight and that poor thing began to crawl and shake the pattern, I got up and ran to help her”(Gilman) indicate the inner condition of the woman who wanted freedom from her lifestyle. That crawling woman wanted to live according to her desire and wanted to go outside her house for fresh air and new experiences. Women were supposed to give birth to the children and then spending life raising their children. Education among women was limited and the illiteracy rate among American women was high. Few women were able to acquire knowledge who also faced the issue of choosing a profession according to their gender. The author highlighted the fact that even women get able to join profession life still her main priority remains the house. It means if due to the family issue one of the members had to quit the job then it will be the women. In addition, after the long working hour, women had to complete a house job like all other women which means working women had double responsibilities. This was the sad reality of America where women faced discrimination based on their gender and were considered as weak and obedient to the male member of the family (Lanser).

Therefore, three situations that are author’s disease, woman’s disease in the story, and crawling woman in the yellow wallpaper indicated the feminist perspective through the story. This is one of the best stories which highlighted the condition and true face of American society. Society was formulated on the basis of stereotypes and gender discrimination where men looked after the financial condition of the house while women lived to give birth to their children and raising them with care. Few women got the opportunity to get higher education and join professional life. Women had to stay at home after marriage leaving their social circle and activities outside their home. These limitations resulted in psychological health issues in the female population. This story helped feminist after so many years to educate women and make them able to raise their voice against gender discrimination. Women understood their value and rights and with the help of activists participated in feminist organizations. Moreover, not only females but the male of society agreed to the bias in society among gender. When the author explained the background of her story various physicians appreciated her and agreed to the fact that most of the decisions were depended on the social mindset of the people. The author successfully portrayed the feminist perspective through her short story.

**Work Cited**

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