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**The Yellow Wallpaper**

The Yellow Wallpaper is a short story written by Charlotte Perkins Gilman to deliberate her personal struggle with postpartum depression. The critical appraisal of the narrative offers widespread interpretations for the readers. It is a powerful fictional narrative that cultivates broad manifestations for the women. When the narrator comprehends there are multiple traps, creeping women, Gilman asserts the essence of her story transcends an individual situation. The story was written in the 19th century. The objective and the theme of the story was to confront the pervasive gender discrimination that existed in the 19th century. Moreover, the writer harnesses several potential literary devices to strengthen her narrative and make it exciting for the reader to acknowledge and comprehend the theme of the story. The primary aim of The Yellow Paper is to confront the misogynistic principles and the consequent sexual politics suffered by women in a patriarchal society.

To begin, the narrator suffers from a medical condition which her husband refrains from acknowledging. Her husband, John, deems her suffering nothing else than a hysterical tendency. The narrator was adamant about writing and expressing her undermined feelings. However, her husband directs her not to engage in writing and thus she gets confined a room. The wallpaper is placed in the room with which the narrator establishes a keen resemblance. The notion of not being able to function as per the expectations of her husband instigates the depressing state of mind for her. The disgusting pattern and color of the wallpaper further aggravate her mental state. The narrator translates her existence into that of a woman inside the wallpaper, confined and trapped. She expresses the nature of the yellow wallpaper in the story as follows, “the color is repellant, almost revolting; a smouldering unclean yellow, strangely faded by the slow-turning sunlight. It is a dull yet lurid orange in some places, a sickly sulphur tint in others.” It was the very first instance where she advances to establish a depressed state of mind.

In addition, a wide range of literary devices is utilized by the narrator in the story. Personification, simile, symbolism and metaphor are the prominent devices used in the story to highlight the oppressed state of women in that era. Throughout the story, the author offers a metaphoric representation of the females confined in American society. For instance, the women imprisonment is stipulated as the protagonist is imprisoned in the room beside the yellow wallpaper. The bars on the windows of the room demonstrate the notion that freedom cannot be exercised and the window is a symbol of limitation. Besides, personification is used by the author to term the wallpaper a living entity. The critical diction used to define the wallpaper, as the curves of wallpaper commit suicide, is an explicit illustration of making it an influential and living object. Moreover, the simile is fostered to underpin the pattern of the twists and convulses of the yellow paper. The author highlights that the hallucinations emanating from the wallpaper were paralyzed like a nightmare. Irrefutably, the evocative diction offers the reader a clear insight into the imaginary experience of the narrator and further validates the theme she sketched in the story. Lastly, symbolism presents the narrator’s worldview of the garden as the world of unlimited opportunities which women cannot exercise. She observes the women who manage to escape and enter the garden are bound to creep and hide. Similar to the way she creeps during the daylight once the pattern of the wallpaper subsumes the sub-pattern.

Moreover, the story successfully manages to sketch the adverse consequences of gender discrimination in a society. John, the husband, is a male and a physician. Thus, he is the authority and is right irrespective of the rationale and circumstances. The author and the husband hold opposing standards in society. It causes the author to lose self-esteem and courage to pursue her will to cure her mental condition. The perspective established by the author is reflected in the following lines in the book, “I have found out another funny thing, but I shan’t tell it this time! It does not do to trust people too much.” Irrefutably, this perspective is the rationale in light of those circumstances. The female could never advance to exercise the will in the society dominated by men and especially husband (Dock et al.). Even though the author believes she can cure her illness with writing, she succumbs to the husband's views and refrains from curing herself. It is an explicit illustration of the injustices and discrimination subjected to the women in the 19th century.

Furthermore, a critical appraisal of the story reveals that the feminist views of the narrator are largely influenced by the husband. As a woman, she founds solace in writing because the society and husband pay no heed to her intentions, thoughts and desires. Meanwhile, she has to stay in the care of her husband because of social pressure. “He takes all care from me, and so I feel basely ungrateful not to value it more”, reflects that the author’s need to ponder is eliminated by the husband and she thanks her sarcastically. It is further stipulated that the feminist dimensions are perpetuated by the husband’s surroundings. For instance, her environment resembles a prison with barred windows and the gate at the end of the stairs. She felt repressed by these surroundings, yet her husband preferred not changing them and keeping her imprisoned (Gilman). It validates are the essential tools harnessed by the author to express her feminist worldview and the mental hardships faced by women in that era. Her mind urges her to break the gender roles and cherish the freedom which seems impossible.

In the end, the narrator crawls over her husband and succeeds. However, this success translates into madness. The descent into insanity highlights the scarce availability of opportunities for intellectual and creative women to avert the detrimental social definitions of womanhood presented by the male-dominated society. Thus, the horrifying depiction of madness concludes that denying fundamental values for women is dangerous for family, women and society collectively. The publication of The Yellow Paper was rejected by The Atlantic in the first place. It was not before 1973 that a first comprehensive assessment of the piece was published by Elaine R.Hedges. She critically examined the manifestations of the story and stipulated the work as a literary masterpiece. Since then, the story has received critical attention from feminist. The contemporary scholars interpret the story in several ways. Among these, the feminist readings are the most prominent. Primarily, the oppression and the discrimination faced by the women in the 19th century made the story a scintillating account of feminist view even in the current age (Crewe).

To conclude, The Yellow Paper is a captivating account of the realistic theme of gender discrimination. Gilman advanced to delineate her experiences and supplemented her rationale with the social environment of the 19th century. Gilman, despite her depressed state of mind, paved the path for the acquisition of women's right and status in the patriarchal society. After several years, Gilman advanced to write and express her thoughts and creativity freely. This is explicit evidence of how she demonstrated the validity and the influence of The Yellow Paper on the American society in the later years.

**Work Cited**

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