

Major Works Data Sheet

<p>Title: <u>The Yellow Wallpaper</u></p> <p>Author: <u>Charlotte Perkins Gilman</u></p> <p>Date of Publication: <u>January 1892</u></p> <p>Genre: <u>Short story, Captivity Narrative, Socio-political allegory</u></p>	<p>Biographical information about the author: Charlotte Perkins Gilman (July 30,1860-August 17,1935) American author, feminist, sociologist,poet, and lecturer. Gilman was a utopian feminist, and her accomplishments were considered exceptional for women during her time. Gilman had a turbulent school life and home life, where she only had about four years of schooling, and her mother was never affectionate with her children. Gilman is best known for her semi-autobiographical short story, "The Yellow Wallpaper", that was inspired by her bout of postpartum psychosis.</p>
<p>Historical information about the period of publication:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Post United States Civil War * 19th Century little information about women's health known (mental and physical) *Gilded Age (coined by Mark Twain to describe how the new buildings had a gild of gold on them to hide the economic depression facing this country). * Severe economic depression and instability in The United States 	<p>Characteristics of the genre:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fewer than 50 pages, About captivity A short instance in time Little characters Center's around women's issues and brings about the validity of them.
<p>Plot summary:</p> <p>The story depicts the effect of understimulation on the narrator's mental health and her descent into psychosis. With nothing to stimulate her, she becomes obsessed by the pattern and color of the wallpaper. "It is the strangest yellow, that wall-paper! It makes me think of all the yellow things I ever saw – not beautiful ones like buttercups, but old foul, bad yellow things. But there is something else about that paper – the smell! ... The only thing I can think of that it is like is the color of the paper! A yellow smell."</p> <p>In the end, she imagines there are women creeping around behind the patterns of the wallpaper and comes to believe she is one of them. She locks herself in the room, now the only place she feels safe, refusing to leave when the summer rental is up. "For outside you have to creep on the ground, and everything is green instead of yellow. But here I can creep smoothly on the floor, and my shoulder just fits in that long smooch around the wall, so I cannot lose my way."</p>	

<p>Describe the author’s style:</p> <p>The author uses a gothic tone and style in her writing to create a psychological and socio-political thriller. Gilman not only uses devices particular to Gothic literature, but also implores to the use of irony and sarcasm to impose her political sentiments.</p>	<p>An example that demonstrates the style:</p> <p>I don't like to look out of the windows even—there are so many of those creeping women, and they creep so fast. I wonder if they all come out of that wall-paper as I did?</p>
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Memorable Quotes: You must have a minimum of five

Quote	Explain the Significance
<p>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? . . .So I take phosphates or phosphites—whichever it is, and tonics, and journeys, and air, and exercise, and am absolutely forbidden to “work” until I am well again. Personally, I disagree with their ideas . . .</p> <p>I sometimes fancy that in my condition if I had less opposition and more society and stimulus—but John says the very worst thing I can do is think about my condition, and I confess it always makes me feel bad. So I will let it alone and talk about the house. There are things in that paper which nobody knows but me, or ever will.</p> <p>Behind that outside pattern the dim shapes get clearer every day. It is always the same shape, only very numerous. And it is like a woman stooping down and creeping about behind that pattern. I don't like it a bit. I wonder—I begin to think—I wish John would take me away from here!</p>	<p>The narrator is trying to justify the passive nature she is supposed to be, because while she complains of being ill, her family, husband, and physician all feel they know what she is supposed to do to feel better. They believe they have more knowledge on her condition than she does, and she is just hysterical.</p> <p>*</p> <p>*</p> <p>*</p> <p>*</p> <p>*</p> <p>*</p> <p>*</p> <p>The narrator is striving for companionship and more stimulation in her life, rather than being in the room "resting", however, she is reminded that in her condition this is not what she needs, and it will make her feel worse. this is where she starts to accept her passive role in her own treatment.</p> <p>*</p> <p>*</p> <p>*</p> <p>*</p> <p>*</p> <p>This is where the narrator begins to lose touch with reality, and the use of the word creeping first is introduced. It foreshadows the narrator's movement in the ending scene, where she is then the woman creeping around the room.</p>

Characters			
Name	Role in the story	Significance	Adjectives
Narrator	Protagonist	The narrator is used as a means to bring light to women's mental and physical health issues, largely ignored by society of that day. The narrator slowly starts to lose touch with reality, but soon discovers her inner self. The narrator fights the realization, that she is imagining the woman in the wallpaper, and that really she is a reflection of herself, needing help.	rebellious multifaceted "fragile" disassociated
John	Antagonist	John is not wholly evil, he attempts to help his wife, by following the doctor's orders, thinking he is taking care of her. He does not value his wife intellectually, and dismisses her claims to illness, and mental wellbeing.	Misguided patronizing

Setting	Significance of the opening scene
<p>Set in late 19th century, in America. Set in a large summer home. The story takes place mostly in one bedroom that could have been a nursery before.</p>	<p>The narrator and her husband arrive at a summer house that is romantic and aristocratic. The narrator believes something is "queer" about the place, like haunted, because she does not realize how they can afford it. The narrator then has a conversation with her husband, John, about their marriage and her illness. He rebuffs her, which sets the tone for the socio-political message the author is trying to portray. The belittling of women, the evilness of resting cure, and the psychological damage done to women of this time. This scene sets the tone and exemplifies society's views on medicine</p>
	<p>and women Significance of the ending/closing scene</p>
<p>Symbols</p> <p>The Wallpaper- The narrator believes the wallpaper is a text she must interpret, and that it symbolizes something that can affect her. The wallpaper's symbol changes throughout the text. First the wallpaper is seen as just unpleasant. Then the wallpaper takes on a supernatural force, the narrator sees a ghostly sub-pattern behind the main pattern and it is only visible in certain light. Eventually the narrator sees the sub-pattern as a desperate woman, crawling and stooping looking to escape from the main patten, which resemble the bars of a cage. The narrator sees the cage fashioned with the heads of many women, all who were strangled as they tried to escape. The wallpaper represents the structure of family, medicine, and the tradition that the narrator finds herself trapped in.</p>	<p>By the end, the narrator is hopelessly insane, convinced that there are many creeping women around and that she herself has come out of the wallpaper—that she herself is the trapped woman. She has realized that she is trapped in her mind and her role in society, as she imagines the woman trapped in the wallpaper. She is the embodiment of the woman's plight. She creeps endlessly around the room, smudging the wallpaper as she goes.</p> <p>When John breaks into the locked room and sees the full horror of the situation, he faints in the doorway, so that the narrator has "to creep over him every time!"</p>
<p>Possible Themes—Please state in complete sentences</p>	
<p>The Subordination of Women in Marriage The Importance of Self-Expression The Evils of the "Resting Cure"</p>	