

Literary Response Paper for the story *The Yellow Wallpaper* by Gilman

In this book, the author, Charlotte Perkins Gilman, uses a number of characters such as John and Jennie in order to communicate a myriad of themes to his readers. The book entails a story concerning a married woman (the protagonist who is not identified by her name) who had been suffering from nervous depression as well as the subordination from her husband John. Her husband, who had also been her doctor, used to belittle her concerns, thoughts, and the worst her illness. The book opens when the narrator starts to describe her house, an expensive one with various decorations. She also went to the extent of describing her marriage life while at that time her husband had taken a summer vacation (Kennedy, Dana, and Nina 11). This paper pays high attention to the literary response to this story.

The author's central theme rests on exposing the manner in which the subordination of women in the society have gained roots in various societies, especially during the 19th and the 20th century. When this book was first published during the 19th century, most people failed to embrace it positively, claiming that the book entails a scary narrative of a married woman in an extreme state of consciousness. However, following the book's rediscovery during the 20th century, the readings of the story has become emotional to most readers, which can by far sensitize them to call for a societal change, one that no longer recognize women as second class citizens (Kennedy, Dana, and Nina 6). The fact that the narrator's health condition requires emotional support from her close associates, John cared less in this line. Precisely, he took her to a country house that he had taken in order for her to recuperate from her health condition. However, he locked her in a room in the third floor, which the owner was previously using it as a nursery class. The room, coupled by its grills is equivalent to a prison, whereby the narrator's freedom of doing her will as well as associating with others is restricted. This means that the

husband had reduced her wife to the level of a nursery school kid. To support this claim, the room had yellow wallpaper, which was the only company for the narrator as she tried to keep herself busy by reading and writing throughout the day.

Jennie, John's sister is also a victim who had been hindered by his brother from achieving personal development. Precisely, she had been mandated by her brother to supervise the kitchen, do some household decorations and to monitor the narrator's activities. She unquestioningly follows John's orders until when it was too late to reverse the narrator's level of insanity (Kennedy, Dana, and Nina 83).

Moreover, the narrator's condition was worsened by the lack of self expression. The narrator had a tendency of hiding her fears and anxieties in order to preserve her marriage, as well as to console herself that she was improving from her health condition. Though a woman who persevered pain and suffering in order to save her marriage is considered a wife material, for the narrator it was too much to bear. Her husband had even gone to an extent of forbidding her several times from exercising her mind in any way (Kennedy, Dana, and Nina 49-51). Apparently, the narrator went to an extent of writing and keeping a secret journal and eventually lost her control of intellectual and emotional imagination.