

Digital Story of Woman Character in Gilman's The Yellow Wallpaper

Rasynal Tenrisanna¹, Fathu Rahman², Herawaty Abbas³ and Amir Pattu⁴

Abstract

This article aims to describe the performance of the woman character as shown in the story and to reveal the achievement of obsession that the woman has obtained in the story. The analysis of the work has been carried out by using structuralism and a psychoanalysis approach from Freud's theory and collaborate with creative digital illustration can be helped the readers understanding the story on digital illustration. The result of this analysis shows that woman character may appear to hold a less powerful role in society throughout Gilman's work. The Yellow wallpaper is locked in a room by her 'loving' spouse, as a physician. The story centers on her need for an escape as the kind of remedy that is needed to cure her illness. She expresses her desire for an escape and hides from her spouse. In creative digital illustration of the story concept can be appeared into plot stories. The woman character can be shown on illustration using graphic design.

Keywords: Digital Story, Woman Character, The Yellow Wallpaper

INTRODUCTION

Literary works are born in the midst of the community as a result of the imagination of the author as well as reflections of social phenomena in the vicinity. Therefore, the presence of literary work is part of people's lives. Author as individual subjects attempt to produce collective view of the world to the subject (Rahman, 2018; Barabari & Moharamzadeh, 2020). The significance of individual subjects elaborated the surrounding social reality suggests a literary work is rooted in a particular culture and community. The existence of such literature, making it can be positioned as a sociocultural document.

Literary works can be divided into three parts: poetry, drama, and prose. The author's use of language in producing works (Rahman & Weda, 2018; Suma et al., 2023). In this research, the researcher is interested to analyze one type of ordinary prose, we also call a short story. Forms of literature is part of the prose.

Short story is a fictional short story. The short story is a form of literature that simple. Short story is an interesting literary and simple (Kafka, 2017; Rahman et al., 2019). Telling a short and brief conflict, but had elements of literary interest (Lanham, 2004; Rahman et al., 2023).

In response to the fast-paced nature of modern society, the format of traditional novels and lengthy stories can be a challenge to engage with fully. To accommodate this, the concept of short stories presented through creative digital illustrations has emerged. These bite-sized narratives offer a convenient option for readers who have limited time available for leisure reading (Lawrence & Paige, 2016; George, 2020; Junaid et al., 2023). Despite their brevity, short stories possess the remarkable ability to convey profound meanings that encourage diverse interpretations among readers.

One of the advantages of short stories lies in the ability to maintain reader engagement. Unlike longer narratives that might risk becoming monotonous, short stories captivate with their concise yet impactful storytelling. The appeal is further enhanced by authors' avoidance of pedantic approaches, allowing for an immersive experience that resonates quickly (Kidd & Castano, 2013; Pardede, 2021).

Furthermore, this story delves into the tumultuous journey of women in both societal and familial contexts. Through its narrative, it vividly portrays the struggles faced by women, shackled by societal norms and domestic

¹ Hasanuddin University, Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Indonesia

² Hasanuddin University, Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Indonesia. E-mail: fathu.rahman@unhas.ac.id

³ Hasanuddin University, Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Indonesia

⁴ Hasanuddin University, Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Indonesia

obligations. The tale serves as a stark reminder of the challenges that women historically encountered, shedding light on their restricted roles as homemakers and mothers, often devoid of agency and opportunities for personal growth.

"The Yellow Wallpaper" masterfully illustrates how women's lives were often marred by contradictions. Though marriage was expected to bring happiness, the story reveals a starkly contrasting reality (Jam et al., 2011). Women were confined and denied the freedom to engage in social activities or explore their potential. Rather than experiencing a life of fulfillment, they were relegated to roles as caretakers, bound by societal expectations (Gilman, 2009; Rashid, 2011).

By weaving its narrative with precision, "The Yellow Wallpaper" epitomizes the power of the short story format. It encapsulates complex themes and emotions, sparking conversations about gender dynamics, societal limitations, and women's rights. Through such compelling examples, the realm of short stories proves its ability to convey poignant messages concisely, making a lasting impact on readers while accommodating the demands of contemporary life.

Structuralism Approach

At its core, the structuralism approach to literary analysis prioritizes the intrinsic elements of a literary work, delving deep into its essence rather than being preoccupied with external influences. This methodology champions a meticulous dissection of the narrative, seeking to uncover its inherent meanings and messages (Sanusi, 2012; Foucault, 2019). In the specific context of short stories, the structuralist lens prompts an intricate examination of the story's internal architecture, encompassing essential components such as plot, character dynamics, setting, and theme. By meticulously unraveling these structural threads, the researcher can unveil a profound comprehension of the narrative's underpinnings. Such an approach illuminates the interconnections of these elements, ultimately revealing the narrative's intricate tapestry.

Psychoanalysis Approach

According to Grünbaum (2008) envisioned by Sigmund Freud, the psychoanalysis approach stands as a cornerstone in both psychology and literary analysis. Freud's pioneering theories, originating in the late 19th century, have left an indelible mark on our understanding of human psychology. The psychoanalytical lens seeks to delve into the labyrinthine corridors of human cognition and emotional development. Applied to the realm of literary analysis, this approach unearths the subconscious motivations, desires, and fears that shape a character's behavior (Blagoveshchenskaya & Ainoutdinova, 2017; Kheirkhah & Pishkar; Stefanescu, 2021). By peeling back the layers of a character's psyche, this approach unearths a more profound comprehension of their role within the narrative. When merged with the domain of Graphic Design, especially within the realm of story illustration, the psychoanalysis approach provides an avenue to visually represent these intricate psychological landscapes. This fusion results in a multi-dimensional portrayal that transcends surface-level depictions.

The amalgamation of structuralism and psychoanalysis within the context of Graphic Design and story illustration is poised to yield a nuanced and holistic exploration of narratives (Kim, 2015; Chamberlain & Thompson, 2022). While structuralism unravels the narrative's core structure and underlying meanings, psychoanalysis delves into the character's subconscious, enriching their visual representation (Kurzweil, 2017; Akande, 2023). This synergy between analytical methodologies and creative expression facilitates a profound and impactful representation of the stories at hand, forging a connection between textual analysis and visual interpretation that amplifies the resonance of the final illustrated narrative (Freed-Thall, 2018; Kennedy, 1985).

METHOD

The research methodology adopted for this research is centered around an intrinsic approach. This approach focuses on delving deeply into the inherent elements of the subject matter to gain comprehensive insights. In this research, a meticulous and detailed exploration will be conducted, aiming to elucidate the central issues under scrutiny. Specifically, the research aims to provide a comprehensive description of the challenges faced by women depicted in the short story "The Yellow Wallpaper." This investigation will be further enriched through the integration of creative digital illustration, utilizing graphic design techniques to visually depict the

experiences of the female characters within the narrative.

The research seeks to illuminate various facets, including the representation of womanhood within Charlotte Perkins Gilman's literary creation. The treatment of women within the narrative, their struggles, and the intricate dynamics between genders will be thoroughly examined. By leveraging the visual potential of graphic design, the study aims to encapsulate the essence of the narrative in a visual form, thereby offering a tangible representation of the story's thematic underpinnings.

At the heart of this study lies a meticulous analysis of character dynamics within "The Yellow Wallpaper" and an exploration of how the female protagonist's challenges are intertwined with broader societal and gender-related contexts. The research endeavors to unravel the complexity of her experiences through the harmonious interplay of visual imagery and textual analysis.

Through the fusion of literary analysis and graphic design, this research strives to present a comprehensive understanding of "The Yellow Wallpaper." The intrinsic approach guarantees a profound exploration of the narrative's core elements, while the incorporation of creative digital illustration adds a visual layer to the analysis. This synergistic approach promises to illuminate the nuanced themes of the story, the treatment of women, and the underlying societal intricacies, culminating in an all-encompassing and captivating analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

"The Yellow Wallpaper," penned by Charlotte Perkins Gilman, is set within a single century rather than spanning two. The narrative revolves around a married couple's arrival at an old colonial estate that has long remained unoccupied. The husband, a physician, selects this estate as a refuge for his wife, who requires a rest cure.

The estate, while surrounded by idyllic landscapes, exudes an unsettling presence within the confines of "The Yellow Wallpaper." Drawing the narrator's attention are its enchanting gardens, yet an unease settles in as she ventures indoors. The room she is confined to was once a nursery, its past evident in its weathered appearance. Notably, the room's defining feature is its yellow-patterned wallpaper, faded with time and adorned with sporadic patches of orange. An enigmatic odor pervades the space, contributing to the atmosphere of disquiet.

These descriptive elements paint a rich picture of the estate, emphasizing the dichotomy between its external allure and the unsettling aura it holds within. By skillfully employing setting and imagery, the narrative underscores its thematic nuances while immersing readers in an evocative experience.



Figure 1. Illustration stories 1

The window has been barred for the protection of children. The barred window is her only view and relief to outside of the room. The narrators husband John laughs at her ghost. The narrator believes she sees are in the

wallpaper's complex pattern. However the narrator's ghosts are not as a result of someone who has once lived in the house.

The Narrator in The Yellow Wallpaper

The narrator in the yellow wallpaper is a young wife and mother who just suffered from symptoms of depression and worries while. She does not believe that there is something wrong to herself. A young woman who has a husband named John, he is a physician and diagnosis to his wife is temporary nervous depression. Then Gilman in her fiction describes in the following as:

John is practical in the extreme. He has
no patience with faith, an intense horror of
superstition, and he scoffs openly at any talk of
things not to be felt and seen and put down in
figures.

John is a physician, and perhaps -- (I
would not say it to a living soul, of course, but
this is dead paper and a great relief to my mind)
-- perhaps that is one reason I do not get well
faster.

You see he does not believe I am sick!

And what can one do?

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 -- (Gilman, p 1)

Her husband decided to move in a small town in America to cure his wife. It is a place that has beautiful views and a quiet place because the place is very far from the city noise. They chose a colonial mansion that has an enormous garden. They live in a small town for three months for the summer. It is shown in quote below:

It is very seldom that mere ordinary
people like John and myself secure ancestral
halls for the summer.

A colonial mansion, a hereditary estate, I
would say a haunted house, and reach the height
of romantic felicity -- but that would be asking
too much of fate!

Still I will proudly declare that there is

something queer about it.
Else, why should it be let so cheaply?
And why have stood so long untenanted?
John laughs at me, of course, but one
expects that in marriage. (Gilman, p 1).



Figure 2. Illustration stories 2

Based on picture above, since arrival his wife to the house that she has felt about old mension that there is something odd about the house. This case has been disclosed to her husband. But John does not believe in the existence of superstition. John laughed at his wife because he is a physician of high standing.



Figure 3. Illustration stories 3

The narrator is expressly prohibited activity such as writing or involved in the creative activities that use her minds. Narrator wants to please her husband but she was unable to balance the needs of her husband with all her desire to express her creativity. When the narrator tries to obey the wishes John hoped to obtain healing rest on room, narrator secretly writes in her journal, to seek solace from loneliness experienced. The main character is believed to be depressed by her husband, his family, and should be rested in a place away from the

crowds she also had to take some kind of medication. This situation reflects in the statement as:

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.
Personally, I believe that congenial work,
with excitement and change, would do me good.
But what is one to do?
I did write for a while in spite of them;
but it does exhaust me a good deal -- having to
be too sly about it, or else meet with heavy
opposition.
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 to think about my condition, and I
confess it always makes me feel bad (Gilman, p 1-2)

The narrator begins to find comfort in the horrible wallpaper that covered the walls of her room from the nursery. The narrator gradually sees a woman being imprisoned in wallpaper and realized that the two women are suffering from the pressure of the man who was none other than the husband of the narrator. It is shows in quote below:

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.
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I'm feeling ever so much better! I don't
sleep much at night, for it is so interesting to
watch developments; but I sleep a good deal in
the daytime.
In the daytime it is tiresome and
perplexing.
There are always new shoots on the
fungus, and new shades of yellow all over it. I
cannot keep count of them, though I have tried
conscientiously.
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! I noticed it the moment we
came into the room, but with so much air and
sun it was not bad. Now we have had a week of
fog and rain, and whether the windows are open
or not, the smell is here (Gilman, p 13).



Figure 4. Illustration stories 4

Narrator became more concerned with the pattern of the wallpaper in her room, she forgot her desire to be the perfect wife and mother, and she thought the only way to release the imprisoned woman figure of wallpaper. Then Gilman in her fiction also describes in the following as:

There is one marked peculiarity about this paper, a thing nobody seems to notice but myself, and that is that it changes as the light changes.

When the sun shoots in through the east window -- I always watch for that first long, straight ray -- it changes so quickly that I never can quite believe it.

That is why I watch it always.

By moonlight -- the moon shines in all night when there is a moon -- I wouldn't know it was the same paper.

At night in any kind of light, in twilight, candlelight, lamplight, and worst of all by moonlight, it becomes bars! The outside pattern I mean, and the woman behind it is as plain as can be.

I didn't realize for a long time what the thing was that showed behind, that dim sub-pattern, but now I am quite sure it is a woman (Gilman, p 6).



Figure 5. Illustration stories 5

At the end of the story, the main character is described trying to escape from the pressures of her husband even though as not openly.



Figure 6. Illustration stories 6

She secretly began to perform activities of thinking and re-writing. Although in the beginning she commenced writing this feel frustrated, but eventually this activity was able to make she feels better than she experienced

psychological pressure. She felt the freedom of the pressure that had been suffering from feelings. And at the end of the story, the main character succeeded in liberating the figure of a woman in the yellow wallpaper and free herself, the narrator managed to independent from her state of imprison herself. This can be knows from this quote:

"I've got out at last," said I, "in spite of
you and Jane. And I've pulled off most of the
paper, so you can't put me back!"
Now why should that man have fainted?
But he did, and right across my path by the wall,
so that I had to creep over him every time! (Gilman, p 8).



Figure 7. Illustration stories 7

Based on the quote above, The woman behind the paper are getting more and more a reality and the lady. Identifies herself as the woman in the wallpaper, doing senseless things, feeling herself living behind the wallpaper, ending up in total insanity. Liberation narrator of her sanity and the bars of the wallpaper is to escape from the prison for her depression.

How Is the Achievement of Obsession Obtained by Woman Character on Digital Illustration Story?

The narrator becomes obsessed with the room's revolting yellow wallpaper. The yellow wallpaper pattern her begins to illustrate something what it is ocured in the wall with the pattern of wall decor is always on her mind. When looking at the color of the walls and irregular decorations very scary and makes she always hallucinating. She felt herself surrounded by color and wall decor that is very scary. This information reflects as:

There are always new shoots on the
fungus, and new shades of yellow all over it. I

cannot keep count of them, though I have tried conscientiously.

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! I noticed it the moment we came into the room, but with so much air and sun it was not bad. Now we have had a week of fog and rain, and whether the windows are open or not, the smell is here (Gilman, p 13).

The narrator's acknowledgement of the wallpapers "vicious influence" on her shows she had some awareness of something not right with her mentally. Her growing paranoia coupled with continued hallucinations showed just how much of an effect being kept inactive in the room had on her well-being. The narrator is determined to make sense out of the disorder she finds in the wallpaper. It is where the pattern lolls like a broken neck and two bulbous eyes that causes her an internalized anger and it should be noted her anger is not expressed outwardly in violent fits of uncontrollable rage. The narrator is in fact a very calm for someone who has gone mad, she is still in control of her emotions as she loses control of everything else around her. He narrator desperately tries to regain control of the one outward thing she believes is within her power to control, the room in which she's confined. An issue for the narrator is trust; which for her is difficult to achieve with her husband John. This information reflects as:

I wish I could get well faster.
But I must not think about that. This paper looks to me as if it knew what a vicious influence it had!
There is a recurrent spot where the pattern lolls like a broken neck and two bulbous eyes stare at you upside down.
I get positively angry with the impertinence of it and the everlastingness. Up and down and sideways they crawl, and those absurd, unblinking eyes are everywhere There is one place where two breaths didn't match, and the eyes go all up and down the line, one a little higher than the other (Gilman, p 5)

The narrator struggles with becoming comfortable making the new place a home. She non-verbally questions

her husband decision to choose that house as a place to live. She also worries if her dear loving husband even takes her seriously. Of course the distrust she stems from her questioning is only seen from the narrator's perception but the houses cold and deteriorated appearance is an apparent reflection of her husband responses to her as his wife. John has a different perception towards the house and thought she was hallucinating. He did not believe her story about her feelings with the house situation. He lightly laughed at his wife's complaints about the house. In her fiction describes:

Still I will proudly declare that there is
something queer about it.
Else, why should it be let so cheaply?
And why have stood so long untenanted?
John laughs at me, of course, but one
expects that in marriage.
John is practical in the extreme. He has
no patience with faith, an intense horror of
superstition, and he scoffs openly at any talk of
things not to be felt and seen and put down in
figures (Gilman, p 1).

The husband's too controlling behavior over the narrator placed a strain on what is marriage. Additionally his control over the narrator, although well intentioned, may not have been what caused the narrator's mental illness but his treatment of her most certainly did not help to prevent it from worsening. The narrator described trying to escape from the pressures of the husband; symbolic of her biggest obsession in what she saw with the figure of a woman imprisoned in the yellow wallpaper. The narrator does not explicitly show to her husband that she has changed for what may be the worst in his eyes. The marriage was one that had no trust as the narrator secretly returned to performing activities and writing. Although in the beginning she agreed with her husband instruction to cease all activities and keep from entertaining any sort of fantasy in her mind, she eventually found that this activity was able to make she feel better than she experienced psychological pressure. She felt freedom from the pressure that had been tormenting her feelings. The main character would soon successfully realize her obsession is free from a state that imprisons herself by saying, "I've pulled off most of the paper, so you cannot put me back!"(Gilman, *The Yellow Wallpaper*, 9).

The woman character in *The Yellow Wallpaper* is locked in a room by her "loving" spouse, a doctor. The story centers on her need for an escape from the kind of remedy that has her confined to the room as a cure to what makes her ill. She expresses her desire for an escape to her journal in private and hides it from her spouse and his sister. Other characters male and female are given a voice, but she, the character woman narrates throughout the entire story about her circumstance. The young woman in first half of *The Giant Wistaria*, although having a dominant presence throughout the entire story, is given little or no voice at all. The young woman's voice is left out, a compassionate mother who once spoke on her daughters behalf, and 100 years later, curious women who symbolically give to the young woman a voice. In each one of these works by Gilman not one of them shows the woman in a powerful societal position, absent a male presence. However, the character woman's effect remains dominant throughout each work.

The character woman effect keeps the story moving in each of the different experiences and choices she makes. The narrator is a round character in that she starts out like any ordinary domesticated wife of the 19th century who follows the direction of her husband. Her actions are coy and kept subtle. Although her character must follow the direction those who are important to her life nothing happens in the structure of the story without the narrator's direction. She leads the reader through the changes occurring in her mind and as a result of her

emotions. It is her character more than any of the other characters that rises and falls in emotional response to the shifts in the story, the less than desirable place she lives, the condition of the house interior, the beauty of the doors that she is tempted by but denied, and most of all its aged wallpaper, all of the narrator's emotional responses lead to her choices and to what makes up her experiences.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, "The Yellow Wallpaper" serves as a poignant critique of the oppressive societal norms and medical practices prevalent during the time of its writing. The narrator's confinement to the room, enforced by her husband's authority, symbolizes the broader limitations placed upon women in patriarchal societies. Despite the doctor's intentions to alleviate her depression through the rest cure, the enforced isolation and lack of mental stimulation exacerbate her condition, highlighting the inadequacy and harmful effects of such treatment methods. Through the narrator's gradual descent into madness and her eventual identification with the woman trapped behind the wallpaper, Gilman poignantly illustrates the consequences of denying women agency over their own lives and bodies. Ultimately, "The Yellow Wallpaper" stands as a powerful testament to the importance of autonomy, self-expression, and the recognition of women's inherent humanity in the face of societal oppression and medical paternalism.

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