

## Homework: Gilman

Three short responses: Write about question 1, 2, and another question of your choice. All three questions (together) should be about a page to a page and a half, typed, double-spaced.

- Why do you think Gilman wrote this piece as autobiographical fiction rather than autobiography? Why is the female protagonist unnamed?
- What are the possible meanings of the title and the color of the wallpaper? Why did Gilman use first person narration in this autobiographically inspired story? Why is the female protagonist unnamed throughout the text?
- How would you describe the narrator's voice in this text? How does that voice evolve over the course of *The Yellow Wallpaper*? How does the fragmented style of the narrative influence you as a reader?
- How does Gilman engage with traditional ideas of femininity and masculinity in this story? What do the house and wallpaper symbolize? What does the woman/women in the wallpaper represent?
- What is the meaning of the last scene? Has this woman, through her madness, liberated herself as an individual from the control of her husband or has she experienced the ultimate victimization?
- What contemporary issues does *The Yellow Wallpaper* evoke? Why do you think it has become one of the five most popular readings in college courses in different disciplines such as literature, creative writing, history, American studies, women's and gender studies, sociology and psychology? How does this story compare with other narratives of mental distress such as Kaysen's *Girl, Interrupted* or Thompson's "The Wizard of Prozac"?

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