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## Feminism In The Yellow Wallpaper And The Play Trifles

Both 'The Yellow Wallpaper' and the play trifles were written during a time when women had totally no say by authors who were really strong feminists with the intention that it would go along way in advocating for these women's rights. In the nineteenth century the social expectations were such that it encouraged pessimistic selflessness from women which resulted in women thinking of themselves as worthless beings. During this time women were controlled by people seen as their 'superiors' in the society like their fathers, husbands or brothers making them to lose their identity in a society that is full of patriarchy. men in these two texts are portrayed as being too cold towards women and rarely understand them making this the more of a factor these women go into defiance mode in the quest for liberation to freedom.

The two texts have portrayed marriage as an oppressive institution. Both these wives fall victims of being oppressed by their own husbands. These men have come out as the one who are not giving any support to see that their women are happy and not suppressed in the society. In Perkins book, the physician's wife is denied the pleasure to indulge in any form of writing by her husband. He even goes ahead to lock her up in a room claiming she is suffering from some sort of mental illness. In Trifles the same conditions are outlined through the experience of Meenie Wright in the hands of her husband Mr. Wright. other women characters in the play, Mrs. Hale and Mrs. Peters finally realizes that probably Meenie killed her husband because he had strangled her bird; the only thing she had that gave her of freedom (Glaspell 46). This type of oppressive mistreatment behavior in marriage is what these two authors want us to see. The way in which men are viewed in both these societies showed that women had very little say in this patriarchal society.

The lack of independence in marriage has been widely explored in these two texts. During this century, when a woman had gone into the covenants of marriage, most of them seemed to lose their sense of independence and totally depended on the man for even things like food to eat. In the story 'The Yellow Wallpaper', the physician decides on his own what is best for his wife without thinking to consult her. He decides that she is not to meet any visitors no more, engage in any form of writing or participate in any form of activity. She wanted to write so bad, that she is prompted to keep a secret journal just so that she could at least feel a little independence in doing what she wanted to do. She stays locked up in a room that eventually causes her neurosis condition to even worsen. In Trifles, the women are also seen to dependent on the men so much so that they can not raise their own opinion concerning the crime scene until the men have stated their opinion. These men see nothing past a normal crime scene; however, Mrs. Peters and Mrs. Hale have really paid attention to the details in the crime scene, being able to pick up very minute details that the men only see as kitchen things. However, they can only just keep silent on the information since they know it is not in their place to say it. Mrs. Wright also has lost her independence because she is locked out from the society by her husband because he does not want her to tell other people who he really is behind the closed doors. Mrs. Wright can not therefore freely move out in and out of the house as she would want, or the way she did before joining the marriage institution

In trifles, the bird cage has been used as a symbolism of how Mrs. wright is trapped in her own marriage to Mr. Wright and unable to escape and the presence of the lock just shows how

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women can be locked up in marriages by their husbands. The breaking of the birdcage shows how her marriage to Mr. Wright is broken and also it shows the type of freedom that comes when a woman finally manages to escape the toxic marriage that they were in and finally be a free woman. In 'The Yellow Wallpaper', the prison like setting of the physician's wife room, is not a symbolism of how marriage institution could be so much of a prison. In this marriage, she has lost her free will and whatever happens in her life is what has been decided on by her husband just like a warden in a prison setting. "Personally, I believe that congenial work, with excitement and change, would do me good." (Gilman 56). She thinks this is what is best for her, but she has no free will to see it happening.

These two texts describe clearly the effect of patriarchy in a society and all the suffering women have to go through. They clearly depict how this can bring up defiance when these women have reached a point they can not take it anymore as a way of starting up a revolution in the confused society they are in (St. Jean 398), just so that they can achieve equality to their male counterparts, more so when it comes to issues that concerns their wellbeing to attain freedom at last.

## Work cited

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3. St. Jean, Shawn. 'Hanging' The Yellow Wall-Paper': Feminism and Textual Studies.' Feminist Studies 28.2 (2002): 397-415.