

In "The Yellow Wallpaper" by Charlotte Perkins Gilman the author uses descriptive imagery, bizarre irony, and grim foreshadowing in order to show society's misinformed concept of mental illness in women at that time.

Charlotte Perkins Gilman uses vivid imagery to show the unnoticed mental illness in women. The lady in the short story seems to be mesmerized by the yellow wallpaper and as the wall paper changes, her mental state changes as well. Gilman writes, "It is dull enough to confuse the eye in following, pronounced enough to constantly irritate and provoke study..." (line 34) In this quote the yellow wallpaper can be compared to the woman's state of mind because her symptoms are confusing to normal people while her illness is severe enough to make it hard to function in society. Gilman also writes, "There are things in the wallpaper that nobody knows but me, or ever will. Behind that outside pattern the dim shapes get clearer everyday." (line 124) The reason that she is the only one who can understand the wall paper is because it represents her mind and the way it works. Behind the pattern is the insane part of her mind and as she gives into that section of her mind, the more the strange shapes in the wallpaper make sense. The descriptive imagery

of the yellow wall paper relates back to the women's mental illness and how it changes with time.

Gilman provides strange irony to describe mental disorders. The husband, John, tends to treat his wife like a child rather than an adult. He doesn't allow her to do as she pleases even though she is a full grown woman. She is also required to be watched by Jennie like a child with a baby sitter. Gilman writes, "What is it, little girl?" (line 134) Thus strange for the fact that they are husband and wife yet he refers to her as a child as a father would. It is also ironic that near the end of the story the woman begins to care for the yellow wall paper, maybe even love it. As her mind starts to let insanity take control, the more she admires the wall paper. However to help free the lady in the wall paper she starts to tear her beloved wall paper off the wall. Gilman says, "I got up and ran to help her. I pulled and she shook, I shook and she pulled, and before morning we had peeled off yards of that paper." (line 221) He she is destroying the wall paper that she grew to love. Normally when people are of sound mind they do not destroy the things they care about.

Gilman uses gloomy foreshadowing for hints to the outcome of the mentally ill women. Throughout the story she describes the woman's perspective with a grim feeling of suicide and death that no sane person would. Gilman hints at suicide in this quote, "There is a recurrent spot where the pattern lolls like a broken neck and two bulbous eyes stare at you upside." (line 68) In that description the woman sees one of the most common methods of suicide in the pattern on the wall paper. People in their right mind would just see an old room with strange wall paper, but she sees more. Gilman also writes, "... and when you follow the lame uncertain curves for a distance they suddenly commits suicide - plunge off at outrageous angles, destroy themselves in unheard of contradictions." (line 36)

This quote leads back to the fact that she foreshadowed destroying herself by tearing down the wall paper physically and mentally and by hanging herself while trying to catch the lady creeping in the wall paper. It seems the further her mental illness went without actual treatment the more the gloomy predictions became marvelous.

Sally, the yellow wallpaper

In "The Yellow Wallpaper" by Charlotte Perkins Gilman, the author uses symbolism of yellow wallpaper, chronological sequence, and a first person point of view to convey confusion and, in turn, show a lapse of sanity.

good point

The yellow wallpaper is mentioned many times throughout the short story; it almost becomes a main character. At the beginning of the story, the main character says, "The color is repellant, almost revolting; a smouldering, unclean yellow." (30) The "smouldering uncleanliness" represents the main character at the point in which it is mentioned. She is unclean because, in her current state, she is not a functioning member of society due to the postpartum depression she is experiencing. Her husband, John, moves her to the nice, big house... in the country, away from anything or anyone that could potentially hurt his reputation of being a physician in the community. He does what anyone would do with a pair of soiled, unclean pants; he put them away so that no one can see them. Only, the pants being completely invisible.

good transition

As the story progresses, the narrator becomes accustomed to the wallpaper. She says, "I know she was studying that pattern, and I am determined that nobody shall find it out but myself." (44) She has despised the wallpaper for the entire time in which she has been there, but now no one else, in the narrator's mind, is allowed to look at it. It's very similar to the bond a brother and sister share. The brother hates the sister, but no one else is allowed to criticize her. The way our narrator looks at the wallpaper and how she reacts when someone

great point

Sanity is the wallpaper of our lives

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else is looking at the wallpaper, shows the bond that is developing between the two.

By the end of the story, the yellow wallpaper and our narrator are one in the same. It says, "I've pulled off most of the paper, so you can't put me back." (205) In this case, the wallpaper is acting as our narrator's protector. She "can't be put back" because the wallpaper isn't there. However, entreevous confusion: our narrator says she "can't be put back." Put back where exactly? our narrator has created a false reality in her head, and in doing so, has had a lapse in sanity because she can no longer differentiate between what is real and is helping her view what is false and in turn hurting her.

transit

The author uses chronological sequence to portray the loss of sanity taking place in the narrator's life. In line one of the story the narrator still has her innocence and her sanity. It says, "It is very seldom that mere ordinary people... secure ancestral halls for the summer." (1) At this point our narrator is naive and is blind to why she has been relocated for the summer; she needs to be hidden as to not hurt her husband's reputation. However, as the story progresses, she becomes crazily obsessed with the yellow wallpaper. She continues to be engrossed with said wallpaper until the end of the story, where she has been set free. This chronological sequence shows our narrator's progression of obsession, and eventually insanity.

The author uses a first person point of view to stir up confusion. Instead of using a third person all knowing narrator, the author uses a

very limited first person point of view. The author wants the audience to be confused as to why certain events transpire. The author wants the audience to question the sanity of our narrator. But, without a first person point of view, these questions would be answered much sooner, in a much less climactic way. The audience would not have the build up of the "woman behind the wallpaper" (247) who escaped; nor the build up of our narrator confusing herself with the woman behind the wallpaper and trying to "catch her with a rope" (239); nor the continuous, mysterious "creeping" which occurs throughout the last pages of the story. Having said first person point of view allows for the narrator to confuse her audience because of the narrator's sanity level, which is decreasing tremendously throughout the story.

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AP Lit

Greed in the A&P

In "A&P" by John Updike, the author utilizes a bizarre form of characterization, situational irony, and the idea of a quest to show the selfishness of mankind.

John Updike uses a bizarre form of characterization to show the selfishness of mankind. Updike writes, in the beginning of the story, "In walks these three girls in nothing but bathing suits." (462) This statement, made by Sam, shows that the girls are from a place where it is acceptable to go into a supermarket in their bathing suits and it also shows that the girls want people to look at them. This idea is furthered when Updike writes, "What he meant was... women generally put on a shirt or shorts or something before they get out of the car into the street." (464) This proves that the girls strive for attention and dress the way they do to get it. Normal women cover themselves but these girls don't.

Updike also uses situational irony to show mankind's greed. In the story, Sam thinks to himself, "Poor kids, I began to feel sorry for them, they couldn't help it." (464) Sam talks about their looks and feels bad when a coworker of his oogles the girls. This is an example of situational irony as Sam checks the girls out throughout most of the story. He feels that the girls belong to him and no one else can look at them. Updike also has Sam say, "I look around for my girls, but they're gone, of course." This tells that Sam thinks of the girls as his even though they never say anything to him.

Finally, Updike uses the idea of a quest to show greed in humans. Our quester, Sam, works in a supermarket in a town that he doesn't want to be in. All of a sudden, three girls in bathing suits come in and Sam is hooked. Once his boss gets onto the girls, he takes the step to try and swoon them by quitting his job. By this time, though, the girls have gone on their way and Sam notices this too late. He sees his mistake and is enlightened to the world. This shows his greed in the fact that the only reason Sam quit his job was to gain the approval of the girls, but ends up left by himself with his selfish desires.

We've all done it

In "First Confession" by Frank O'Connor the author utilizes biblical allusions, a child-like point of view, and dialogue between characters to show that all people have sinned. Regardless of the time period or the physical age of the person, everyone has sinned and so no person is better than any other.

From the mouths of babes is a well-known phrase, meaning that often times a child will tell the truth of what they see because they are not hindered by what adults deem socially acceptable. In writing from a child's perspective O'Connor gets the honesty of a child. "I decided that, between one thing and another, I must have broken the whole ten commandments," Jackie is honest with himself and knows he has sinned. In this way O'Connor demonstrates how we as individuals sin and do things we shouldn't. Taking into account all of the actions he has taken Jackie has no choice but to accept he has sinned.

Since the beginning of time man has sinned, in fact the first man sinned. Jackie knows this and as he walks to confession he finds himself identifying with Adam, the first man. "and the small hillside beyond the valley of the river, which I saw in the gaps between the houses like Adam's last glimpse of Paradise." In likening himself to Adam, Jackie shows how he has sinned as all others have and that is the reason he was denied his haven. Even the first man sinned.

Not only have those before him sinned, but even in his present life there are those around him and in his daily life who also sin. Even his sister, who acts as if she is beyond reproach, sins. "I remembered the devilish malice with which she had tormented me." Like a devil from the very depths of hell Nora has

decided to make it a goal to torment Jackie.

Communication is a key part of any good story. When Jackie goes to his confession the priest speaks to him at length and reveals that he has not always followed the right path. "Between ourselves, there's a lot of people I'd like to do the same to but I'd never have the nerve." Through revealing this to Jackie he shows that he has also sinned. Be it those from the past or present, older or younger, or lower or higher social standing. All people of every station of life and every type of person has sinned.

Unhappy White Elephants

"Hills like white elephants" is a short story set in Spain in the early- mid 20th century, its two main characters, the American and Jig, are travelers stopped at a train station. The short story is comprised mostly of their conversation. In his short story, "Hills Like White Elephants", the author Ernest Hemmingway uses vague dialogue, allusion and contrasting imagery to comment on the fleeting nature of happiness.

Hemmingway utilizes vague dialogue prevalently in his story "Hills Like white Elephants" in order to demonstrate the fleeting nature of happiness. When the American and Jig first begin their conversation, it's comprised mostly of just small talk, like when Hemmingway writes "What should we drink?' the Girl asked... 'It's pretty hot', the man said 'Lets drink Beers.'" (Lines 8-10) their conversation continues on like this for several lines, but when the American brings up the idea of this operation their dialogue suddenly changes. Hemmingway writes, "We'll be fine afterward. Just like we were before' 'what makes you think so?" That's the only thing that bothers us. It's the only thing that makes us unhappy.'" (Lines 77-80) After the American brings up the operation, Hemmingway starts to only use the most basic elements of dialogue. The pronouns, introductory phrases and tone setting adjectives are all cut out, leaving the reader slightly disoriented. This is done purposefully by Hemmingway to make their conversation seem more generic, this is also why he left the details of the operation the characters are talking about vague. Hemmingway is telling the reader that what is happening to this couple, their loss of happiness, is not extraordinary, that it could happen to anyone. In this way, Hemmingway is conveying to us that happiness is fleeting.

Hemmingway also uses powerful allusion to remark on the transitory nature of happiness. In the story Hemmingway writes "'They look like white elephants,' she said" (Line 19) The phrase 'white elephant' refers to a thing that has no use and may even be a burden, financially or otherwise. This originated with the kings of Siam, who would gift sacred white elephants to their courtiers who opposed or annoyed them; the idea was that the cost of keeping the white elephant would be financially hurtful to those bad courtiers. Hemmingway is saying that everyone has their own 'white elephant' eventually, even Jig who seems to be a young healthy woman. Jig's 'white elephant' is her pregnancy (which is what the hills are referring to). These 'white elephants' bring

out the fleeting nature of happiness in that they themselves take away an amount of security or happiness.

Finally, Hemmingway uses contrasting imagery to comment on the impermanent nature of happiness. Hemmingway uses very vivid imagery when describing the scenery on either side of the railroad station. Hemmingway describes the side Jig and the American are on like this "The girl was looking off at the line of hills. They were white in the sun and the hills were brown and dry." (Line 19) this image is starkly different from the imagery Hemmingway uses to describe the opposite side of the tracks "The girl stood up and walked to the end of the station. Across, on the other side, were fields of grain and trees along the banks of the Ebro." (Line 106) The first image does convey to the reader a sense of bitter unhappiness and infertility, while the second image conveys the direct opposite of that. Hemmingway is showing the reader that the American and Jig have symbolically crossed over from happiness to dissatisfaction, and Jig is looking back at what they had before. Here, Hemmingway is showing, from the perspective of people who have already lost their happiness, that happiness —when achieved- is fleeting.

A Sexist Perspective

In "A & P" by John Updike the author reflects social class, symbolism, and tone in order to exemplify the morality of sexism.

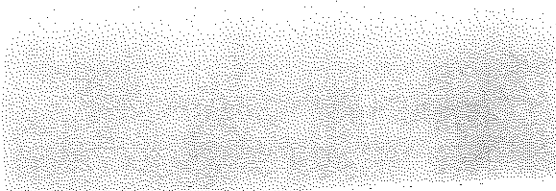
In "A & P" Sammy is a young man with a limited perspective. In the beginning of the story, Sammy complains about an older woman, a fifty-year-old "witch" with rouge on her cheekbones and no eyebrows, who is waiting to check out her groceries. She gets annoyed with Sammy because he is too busy drooling over the young flesh that has just walked in the door. The first half-naked girl who walks into the A&P and catches Sammy's eye is a chunky girl with a two-piece plaid bathing suit on that showed off her "sweet broad soft-looking can". As if staring at this girl's backside wasn't enough, Sammy also noticed "those two crescents of white just under it, where the sun never seems to hit". Then he notices another girl who is "the kind of girl other girls think is very "striking" and "attractive" but never quite makes it" He judges these girls harshly, just because their body type is not to his liking. Then there's the "queen" who is the most beautiful creature he has ever seen. This difference in social class is shown here. All the shoppers in the store are most likely lower

middle class people, while the girls are most likely rich.

Sammy refers to both the shoppers in the A&P and the two girls with Queenie as followers, or "sheep." Sheep, for Sammy, symbolize people who just follow the flock, unthinkingly doing what everybody else does. Sheep are symbols of the ultimate, most blind conformity. But it's really boring when everybody acts and dresses the same way – Sammy craves difference. Queenie, on the other hand, is symbolic of all that is alluring about women and life that might be possible for Sammy on the outside, a life that seems palatable yet unattainable to Sammy. Stokesie, Sammy's older co-worker, is symbolic of the life Sammy may well be headed for: married, tied down with children, and few options for another life. Lengel, the manager, is symbolic of those too far-gone, the adults who, like the witches, could not care less about youthful ambition. Finally, and perhaps most symbolically, is the supermarket itself. It is symbolic of the consumer culture that has a definite hierarchy: the "witches" by bland "HiHo" crackers while Queenie purchases "Fancy Herring Snacks."

Updike is a serious writer, who's known for tackling all sorts of

tricky topics like religion, alcoholism, and spousal abuse, just to name a few. His trick is to delve headfirst into an issue, but to do so in a humorous manner. In "A&P" the serious issue is sexism. Although we would argue that a certain humor is maintained throughout this brief tale, it's tinged with darkness. And despite Sammy's victory, it ends on a note of dread and isolation. This lends to the story's realism – after all, Sammy has just experienced a kind of trauma. He's angry from seeing the girls humiliated and also frightened about what his act of daring (which nobody seems to be patting him on the back for) means for his future.



In the short story "Hills Like White Elephants", Ernest Hemingway uses setting, dialogue, and irony to express the issue of abortion. Even though the word "abortion" is not ever mentioned in the story, there are obvious several hints of the idea that will be seen through this analysis.

Setting is very important part of bringing this issue of abortion to light. "On this side there was no shade and no trees and the station was between two lines of rails in the sun(page475)." The detail that the train station is between railroads is much like how the couple are between a huge decision to have an abortion or not. "The girl stood up and walked to the end of the station. Across, on the other side, were fields of grain and trees along the banks of the Ebro(page477)." When the girl is looking at this scenery she is also thinking at about her unborn child because the fields of grain are suppose to represent the fertility. In these ways, setting helps to observe that she is pregnant.

Dialogue doesn't just convey the awkwardness between the couple but also the awkwardness of the decision they will have to make. On page 476, the man says to the girls, "It's really an awfully simple operation, Jig". This suggest that the man would like her to get the abortion and it starts up a little argument while they are waiting for their train. In the end, after all the dialogue they have through out the story they end up not resolving anything, which adds to the awkwardness of they're situation.

There is a lot of irony in the story, but the most notable one would be when the girl talks about the hills looking like white elephants. White elephants are very unique and special, just like children. The color white represents the purity and innocents of children. White elephants are not to be used for work and are considered luxury pets. So, they are a gift that just takes up time and money to take care of. The irony is that the white elephants the girl is talking about is a symbolism of her unborn child.

