Controversial Topic Of Feminism In The Yellow Wallpaper And The Secret Life Of Walter Mitty

Charlotte Perkins Gilman's The Yellow Wallpaper and James Thurber's The Secret Life of Walter Mitty, express societies perception on men and women in the 19th and 20th centuries. Although two different stories, with different viewpoints, there come similarities with a picture society portrays against a young woman who experiences postpartum, and middle-aged Walter Mitty who may have experienced a "mid-life" crisis. In The Yellow Wallpaper, Gillman brings attention to feminism and displays how women in society were treated less than human when experiencing a form of maternal depression. Being demanded to follow rules, stripped of personal enjoyment, and locked in a room, which is compared to a prison cell, as a form "treatment" is a personal tragedy Gillman endured when faced with similar experiences. On the contrary in The Secret Life of Walter Mitty, Thurber narrates the life of a man who feels that he doesn't fit societies standard of a "real man". With a nagging wife and more than extraordinary visions, Walter Mitty struggles to cope with his less than extraordinary life.

The overall concepts between these two writings were to bring attention to the idea that women were beneath men in society. Though few women were not as submissive and some men were not as antagonistic to fit into this sought after way of life. In The Secret Life of Walter Mitty, Mitty's wife casualty berates him about his older age, which leads him to envision himself in a better light. Due to his passive reality, he escapes to a world where he is in control of his daily life. Thurber's literary allusions reverse the role of a society where men are in control. Walter Mitty's misuse of words, and the lack of knowledge, of stereotypical things that men are supposed to know, are expressed through Thurber's use of satire.

Charlotte Perkins Gilman manifested the concept of men over women through the controversial topic of feminism. In The Yellow Wallpaper John, the physician is the product of what society has dispersed as normal in the late 1800s. While belittling his wife to this commonly used, yet an unorthodox way of treatment to help women, in which ultimately leads to insanity. Gilman's use of diction when speaking about the nameless wife is a subtle representation of feminism, as her true identity remains anonymous, being that each male character's name has been revealed. Gilman's personal experience may fill the void between our characters missing names.