

**The Awakening of Female Consciousness in Kate Chopin's *The Story of an Hour* (1894)
and Charlotte Perkins Gilman's *The Yellow Wallpaper* (1892)**

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Abstract:

This paper aims to analyze the two short stories *The Story of an Hour* (1894) by Kate Chopin and *The Yellow Wallpaper* (1892) by Charlotte Perkins Gilman in an attempt to unfold the journey that leads the female characters to awaken their consciousness and to stand against the dominating male figures in their lives. In both short stories, the central characters Louise Mallard and Jane, undergo an essential journey of self-realization, which leads them to finally freeing themselves from patriarchal authority and oppression. Moreover, the paper stresses the impact of the authors as females on their characters' development throughout that journey. Following the analytical approach within the feminist theory, the article is influenced by two major feminist critiques; Virginia Woolf and Simone De Beauvoir, who believed that women should incorporate their voices into their writings to depict more realistic female characters. Finally, both characters rejected being subordinate and oppressed and formed a reaction against it. Moreover, both authors succeeded in portraying the true characteristics of a female character; they were able to voice their own opinions and represent their true feelings.

Keywords: Charlotte Perkins Gilman, female consciousness, feminism, feminist literature, Kate Chopin, short story

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