

# Miss brill and miss emily essay



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Miss Brill & Miss Emily Emily Grierson from "A Rose for Emily" and Miss Brill from the story "Miss Brill" are two women that are trying to relive their past in the present time. In these stories, you are taken into the lives of two elderly women living very different lives, yet sharing many characteristics. You wouldn't think to compare these two characters, but if you do, they are strikingly similar in many ways.

In addition to being significantly alike, they also have their obvious differences. From the very beginning of both stories, we can tell that the women are lonely. Miss Brill would go to the park every "Sunday" (Mansfield 232) and watch the people around her. She was disappointed that the people on the bench "did not speak" (Mansfield 232) to her. She also shows her sense of loneliness by showing an attachment to her "fur" (Mansfield 231) by talking to it and acting like it has feelings. She even feels it "move in her bosom. (Mansfield 232). She describes the people around her at the park as "odd, silent, nearly all old, and from the way they stared they looked as though they'd just come from dark little rooms or even—even cupboards!" (Mansfield 232). She is unable to see that she is no different from McPherson 2 the others around her at the park. Miss Emily also exhibits loneliness in the story "A Rose for Emily". Emily feels significant loneliness because of the way her father had sheltered her. He believed that no man was good enough for his daughter.

He pushed everyone away that came near her. As a result, Emily is left with nothing but loneliness when her father dies. She is forced to cling to her father, the one that had deprived her of any relationship. She clings to her

father's body for several days before turning him over for proper burial.

Emily finally meets a man, Homer Barron. Time went by without any obvious marriage proposal. Emily's loneliness began to resurface and as a result, she killed Homer. Her loneliness causes her to lose her sense of the real world.

Another comparison between the two women is their inability to move beyond their past. They are stuck in the earlier times of their life. The Grierson family held themselves at a very high status. Miss Emily believed that she could avoid paying her taxes because she was so stuck in the past. She was raised thinking she was above everyone else. Once again, she tried to avoid the reality of the present. Miss Brill had the same weekly, or maybe even daily, routine. She spent every Sunday going to the park and observing the people around her.

She never moved on with herself, and tried to live through others. Although both women were lonely, they acted differently towards society. Emily preferred to be left alone. She didn't like to Mcpherson 3 communicate with people outside of her house. Before Homer, the only person that had seen the inside of her house in over 10 years was " an old manservant. " (Faulkner 209). In contrast, Miss Brill tried to live through people that she repeatedly watched. She wanted to feel included in society and hoped people would converse with her while sitting on the bench in the park.

Her life revolved around listening and watching other people, as well as her " fur" (Mansfield 231). Miss Emily's character is considered static, because she remains the same until her death. She was continuously emotionless throughout the story. Miss Brill, on the other hand, is considered a dynamic

character. She undergoes a change of character and outlook. In the end of the story, she becomes very sad after overhearing a young couple say, “ Why does she come here at all—who wants her? Why doesn’t she keep her silly old mug at home? ” (Grierson 234).

She also hears them making fun of her fur. This makes her realize that no one in society cares for her, she is a laugh for them. Consequently, it probably changes her tremendously and I’m sure she won’t be returning to the park anymore to vicariously live through the people there. These women are two very different individuals, yet alike at the same time. They have lived two significantly different lives, but manage to share many similarities. Their loneliness takes over them. Emily chooses to shut out society and her character does not change in the story.

Miss Brill wants to fit in society and enjoys McPherson 4 their presence. Her character experiences a big emotional change at the end of the story.

McPherson 5 Works Cited Faulkner, William. “ A Rose for Emily. ” Literature: Reading, Reacting, Writing. Ed. Laurie G. Kirszner and Stephen R. Mandell. 7th ed. Boston: Wadsworth, 2010. 209. Print. Mansfield, Katherine. “ Miss Brill. ” Literature: Reading, Reacting, Writing. Ed. Laurie G. Kirszner and Stephen R. Mandell. 7th ed. Boston: Wadsworth, 2010. 231. Print.