

Miss Brill by Katherine Mansfield analysis essay

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My interpretation of "Miss Brill" is that she was very biased in her opinion through the fact she was so optimistic, and that her optimism had blinded her to the fact that human nature is bad, and that the kindness and goodness of people is the exception and not the rule.

She gets a shocking wake-up call in this direction when she finally starts to see the world as it is with the events that led up to her feeling upset about the opinions of strangers. Speaking figuratively, I believe she aged 50 years in a day. Miss Brill starts with a very clear view of the "company" that exists in the park. In her mind, at least at the outset, she has a very set and strong view about the company there and the experience that is to be had. She imagined a place where people may get together and enjoy the music and good times with a feeling of unity. She has a keen sense of consciousness surrounding what is to happen there and she makes remarks about how the company will begin to sing together with a manner of fellowship.

She feels that they will and should all have a similar sense of sharing and common interest in the park experience. Miss Brill has a fair amount of difficulty reconciling what she thinks should happen and what actually happens. My interpretation is that Miss Brill has a positive bias and was therefore experiencing a fair amount of self-deception prior to the visit to the park. I do not feel that she was incorrect in thinking that it would be nice there and that the people in the park would be having a good time, I simply think she was deluded as to thinking that "only" positive things would happen in the park. People were having a good time, so Miss Brill was right to think they would, but she was blinded to the fact that not all people in the

park were to have a good time. For example, the four girls that almost knock over the “funny old man with long whiskers” do so in a heartless manner.

The girls were having a good time, but their nature as humans is horrid. Human nature stinks, and clearly there has not been anybody in the lives of the four girls to help instill certain values into the girls. Those values would be to respect their elders. The value that people should respect their elders is a part of Miss Brill's experience. If people did have respect for their elders, if they were taught such values, then the elderly people in the park would have been having a better time.

For example, they wouldn't have smoke blown in their face, they wouldn't almost be knocked over, and they wouldn't be insulted within an earshot. Conclusion Much is said by other academics about the loss of joy that Miss Brill feels. She is not just humiliated, her joy has been removed, which is why she doesn't look at the fox fur when she puts it away and which is why she hurries past the bakery. These are all fine points that I consider to be true, but they do not address the fact that her premise/cause for being happy and full of joy was faulty. She overlooked the fact that human nature stinks, which is why people are not born with values such as respecting their elders.

If she had attended the park with a more realistic worldview, then maybe she wouldn't have looked forwards to it as much, but she would have been less likely to have her joy taken from her on that day. I feel Miss Brill is deluding herself with her positive attitude, and I feel that her experience helped bring her back to earth with a bump. In a way, she has finally grown up and lost

her childishly over-optimistic view for a more mature view. In a way, she aged 50 years in a day.