

# A rose emily criticism

Business



The story "A Rose for Emily" is not just a disturbing tale of an unfortunate woman; it is also a canvas for the reader response method.

Using reader response criticism the reader can analyze William Faulkner's "A Rose for Emily" through morals, hidden meanings, and anthropology. This is all just a way of criticism, but a different form of criticism that allows the reader to draw information from the passage that is not always in the text. Through prior knowledge the reader can understand what the author had written in different ways, and all of these ways are correct if there is enough evidence to support them. There is more than one way of looking at this story. Through a female perspective one could understand what the character Miss Emily Grierson felt throughout the story.

There is support throughout the text that describes her relationship with her father as being deficient. It seems that the background information on Emily is that her father held her back from living her life. In the text, after her father's death, it states, "We remembered all the young men her father had driven away, and we knew that with nothing left, she would have to cling to that which had robbed her, as people will." This quote from the story explains that her father kept her from living a normal life, and when he died she had no purpose for living. Reading as a female one can realize her struggles that eventually lead to her insanity.

Another way the reader can view this story is through the perspective of an elderly person. In this short story Emily is portrayed as an elderly woman who has been in the town her whole life. Through the elderly perspective of reading one can understand that it is frustrating seeing her whole town,

albeit her whole world changing and turning against her. Her frustration is expressed when the tax collectors come to talker to her. The narrator portrays her dissatisfaction by stating, " Her voice was dry and cold.

' I have not taxes in Jefferson. Colonel Sartoris explained it to me. Perhaps one of you can gain access to the city records and satisfy yourselves.'" For her whole life there has been no problem like paying taxes, but now as the modern age grows the reader can see how frustrating it is to be old and have to learn to follow the new way of life. There are secret details that the writer intended for his readers to discover.

One of these symbols is that of the fear of change and how it can affect those not ready to do so. The people in the town are afraid of change. Emily shows her own personal fear of change in a few ways. She vehemently rejects the fact that she has to pay taxes and gets angry with the tax collectors. After continually defending the fact that she should not have to pay taxes she finally says, "' See Colonel Sartoris.

' (Colonel Sartoris had been dead almost ten years.) ' I have no taxes in Jefferson. Tobe!' The Negro appeared. ' Show these gentlemen out.'" Then, it is seen at the end of the book that Emily would not let the man she loved walk out of her life, so instead she poisoned him.

This is another fear of change and it is taken to the extreme. The story shows her fear of change by hinting to the reader that Emily had in fact been sharing her bed with the corpse of her once beloved Homer Barron. The narrator states that the corpse of the man was in their bed, and finally says, " Then we noticed that in the second pillow was the indentation of a head.

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One of us lifted something from it, and leaning forward, that faint and invisible dust dry and acrid in the nostrils, we saw a long strand of iron-gray hair." Obviously the secret that the reader is supposed to infer is the fact that an otherwise insane Emily, driven mad with the refusal to change, was sleeping with the dead body of her love.

In this story are embedded a few morals. These morals are subtle, but they do make sense. One such moral is that change is a good thing, but refusal to change can be deadly. This is represented in the story when Emily kills Homer Barron. She refuses to change because she was afraid it would be too difficult. This ultimately drives her to insanity and results in the death of a man who did not really love her.

The narrator explains this to the reader subtly when the townspeople walk into Emily's room after she has died. The narrator states plainly, "The man himself lay in the bed." This references of course Homer Barron, and the fact that not accepting change can be harmful. Another moral that the reader can deduce is that sometimes people need to read between the lines. The townspeople and the narrator go throughout the story and disregard every bit of evidence that Emily is in fact crazed.

The story ends with a death but if they read between the lines Homer Barron's death could have been avoided. The first sign of ignorance was when the druggist sold Emily the arsenic poison. The narrator states, "Miss Emily just stared at him, her head tilted back in order to look him eye for eye, until he looked away and went and got the arsenic and wrapped it up. The Negro delivery boy brought her the package; the druggist didn't come

back.” Later in the story the narrator explains that Homer Barron left Emily for some time, but came back.

After he came back the narrator said that it was the last they saw of him. This should have been a clue that something was not right. Instead the entire town decided to avoid discovering an inconvenient truth and as a result Homer Barron was killed. The story “ A Rose for Emily” can be studied through morals, hidden meanings, and anthropology. This short story is filled with information that the reader can learn. Through the reader response and criticism method a story like “ A Rose for Emily” can be perceived in a few ways.

Instead of taking the story for face value the reader can apply prior knowledge and intuition to take different meanings from this disturbing story. By giving evidence to support these interpretations the reader can be proven correct. This allows endless connotations by multiple readers and they all come from one story.