

Good example of conflicts in a rose for emily by william faulkner research paper

[Family](#), [Father](#)



A Rose For Emily is a short story that was written in 1930, by William Faulkner. It is considered to be among the greatest pieces of literature that has been interpreted many times. Faulkner writes a story about the life and death of the protagonist, Emily Grierson. The story is arrayed in five sections. First, it starts with the death of the protagonist, and her encounter with the tax officials when they came to inquire about her tax payment. Next, is her father's death followed by Emily going to a local store to buy poison for an unknown reason that the author conceals. The fourth section talks of Emily and Homer Baron's story of rejection. Lastly, Faulkner talks of Emily's death and funeral, and the shocking discoveries that follow it. In William Faulkner's A Rose For Emily, the principle conflicts in the story are; man vs. man, man vs. himself, in addition to the past versus the present, and man vs. the society conflicts.

A Rose For Emily portrays two important conflicts, which are encountered by the reader. There are different conflicting situations that can be seen in Faulkner's story. The most notable conflicts are man vs. man, and man vs. himself conflicts. The man vs. himself conflict is the most prominent in the story, then the man. vs. man conflict (Getty 230). The conflicts are well displayed by the protagonist, where she struggles with her personal desires against the society. Emily lived a life of isolation whereby her father secluded her from the rest of the world. She struggled with everything in her life; first her narcissistic father, the isolation from the rest of the society, her father's death, and now her lover who wants to run away from her. Seeing that her life was falling apart, she robs Homer her life just like her father robbed her teenage life, and later own she dies too. A Rose For Emily reveals conflicts

one can have within himself, the people around him, and the environment. Emily's life was a life of misery because of how she was brought up by her father.

Emily displays the man. Vs. himself conflict in A Rose For Emily. The conflict was within her as she struggled to deal with her inner morals, dreams and ambitions and the rights and wrongs. As a young girl, Emily had a strict father, who never let her have a healthy social life. She never shared her life with the rest of the people around her, but only her father. She was living like an outcast in her own community, as she was not allowed to interact with the people with her harsh and strict father. Emily lived a miserable life her entire life, and when she thought she had found happiness, it was the beginning of her sorrows. This situation itself was conflicting in her life and brought conflicting situations in her life after the death of her father. Her father's death brought confusion in her life as the author writes that, she went back and forth in the lonely house fighting with her inner thoughts (Faulkner 134). She was afraid to get out of the house, because of the towns people and in addition to that; she was brought up in a secluded house all alone with no friends to talk to.

Emily's conflict within herself is brought about by her inability to let go off her past. She refused to forfeit taxes and accept the new town rules. Emily was in conflict with herself on what to do after she realized that Homer, was not interested in her. Faulkner notes, "knew that you do not murder people, you marry, you do not take a lover" (Faulkner 80). Nevertheless, she goes ahead murdering Homer, despite knowing all this. Emily's conflict within herself ended after her death. Faulkner writes that, she died in "a heavy

walnut bed with a curtain," her head lying " on a pillow yellow and moldy with age and lack of sunlight" (Faulkner 249). Emily's character best explains the conflict of man vs. himself and the refusal to let Homer go demonstrates, the man vs. man conflict. Her conflict was within her because, she did not know when to let go of a person or a situation. She could not bear losing another person she had loved, just like her father.

In addition, the setting of the story contributes to the development conflict in the story. The short story was written during the time the South was fighting for their livelihood and against slavery. The time *A Rose for Emily* was written helps interpret the theme of conflict in the story (Nebeker 8). The south was fighting with the north and trying to hold onto what belonged to them. Faulkner used this period to write *A Rose for Emily*. In the story, Emily was very attached to Homer baron the same way the south was attached to slavery. She could not let Baron go away and she did everything to preserve Homer, her " rose" even if it meant breaking the laws. The setting best explains man vs. himself conflicts through comparing the struggle of the South and the North with Emily and his attachment to Homer.

The man vs. man conflict involves Emily and Homer Baron. Throughout the story, Emily could not let go off Homer, this is man vs. man conflict or rather Emily vs. Homer conflict. Emily struggled with herself as she attempts to keep Homer by killing him, and preserving his body. (Faulkner 21). Emily loved Homer, but he was attracted to the male company in the town, instead of Emily. According to Caesar, " he preferred the social company of his own sex" and, therefore, was not going to marry Emily (195). She was not ready to let Homer go; she was determined to keep him, even if it meant killing

him and staying with his body, which was her “ rose” that she preserved.

Emily bought poison at a local store, and it raised an alarm as people thought that she was going to kill herself because of Homer. Little did they know that Homer was with her and she was ready to kill him, and preserve his body as long as he was with her.

Emily loved Homer and she was trying to preserve Homer for herself as the South tried to preserve slavery. Moreover, Emily was not ready to let go off her father after his death. She left him in the house for three days without letting people know of his death. The conflict between them is also displayed by where they come from; Homer was from the North, and Emily represented the South. They had different personalities that were conflicting, and this makes the story more interesting (390). The fact that they were from different places, made them the talk of the town because the two represented different values and social morality.

The man vs. man conflict can also be explained through Emily and her father. Emily’s father was very strict on her and never allowed any suitors for her. Emily desired to have suitors and to relate with the people in the community, but her father locked her up. He was her only companion and indoctrinated her with the ways of the old south. He banished her from meeting with the people in the community; thus she lived in isolation with no friends. Emily was in conflict with his father because; she could not let her live a normal life like the other people in the society. (O'Bryan-Knight 331). She grew up attached and dependent to her father until his death. She was so used to him until when he died she refused to give up his body for burial. The town’s people “ believed that she had to do that” and “ she would have

to cling to that which had robbed her" (Faulkner 246), because, her father had denied her a life that every young girl desired. After her father's burial, she was all alone in the house. Faulkner writes, " Now and then we would see her at the window for a moment, as the men did that night when they sprinkled the lime, but for almost six months she did not appear on the streets" (Faulkner 104). She had become a slave to her father's will, which destroyed her, and put her in a psychological bondage. If her father had let her relate with the people in the community, she could not be psychologically ruined after his death. The man vs. man conflict between Emily and her father is well displayed when she refuses to go of her father's death.

Another conflict in A Rose For Emily is the conflict of the past versus the present. Emily was living in her past and refused to embrace the present time. There was much change in the town, but for Emily, she never cared; she was happy living in the past. Emily was brought up in the antebellum South; the town people called her " hereditary obligation" because she refused to demolish a worn out house. Faulkner writes, " had once been white, decorated with cupolas and spires and scrolled balconies but now it was " an eyesore among eyesores" (Faulkner 102). She still kept the house even in the present times. Her house was in a bad condition, but Emily could not demolish it, she was still holding onto her past, and this best explains the conflict of past vs. Present. Lastly, there is the man vs. the society, which was a conflict between Emily and the town's people. The town people despised her, because she was old-fashioned. They spent their time gossiping about her, and the things that were happening and had happened

in her life.

In conclusion, A rose for Emily is a great literary work, since it connects with human's reality and desire. The two main conflicts in the story are man vs. man, and man vs. himself conflicts, which are both portrayed by Emily. Faulkner brings out Emily's conflict within herself and with the community. The characters in the story help define the theme of conflict; starting with Emily, the town's people, Homer Baron, and Emily's father. Emily could not let go off what she loved, and this could be seen when she refused her father's body to be buried. In addition, the conflict between man vs. himself could be seen, when she killed Homer because he was not interested in her. Faulkner through his characters presents the conflicts well.

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