

In William Faulkner's "A Rose for Emily," and Sherwood Anderson's "Hands," both authors introduce main characters who are outsiders in their respective societies. In Faulkner's story, Miss Emily is an outsider because she wants to hide herself from the society by staying in her house until she dies. In the same way, Wing Biddlebaum, in Anderson's work, runs away from his society because he has been falsely accused of being a child molester. Thus, both characters are outsiders in their societies by choosing to remove themselves from their respective environments of their own free will.

An outsider is any person who does not ascribe to the society's paradigms of seeing phenomenon. An outsider is therefore a person who is outside as party of like minded individuals, a person brought up in a different cultural context to the context in question. An outsider therefore may not fully fit within the realms of the society that he or she is living in. for one to be labeled an outsider; the context of the topic is the main determinant of the meaning. If the context is within a party, an outsider is therefore one who does not ascribe to the party in question.

As identified in the introductory part of this essay, Faulkner's story Miss Emily is the outsider as she restricts her presence in the society. This is ascertained by the assertions of Faulkner's (32) that "After her father's death she went out very little; after her sweetheart went away, people hardly saw her at all" Caesar, (49) further asserts supports this assertions of an outsider characteristics of Miss Emily by asserting that "The scenes of Emily are all interior: she is held prisoner within the house by her father, and later, after the Grierson relatives force her to give up the scandalously public relationship with Homer Barron, she withdraws into her own house and becomes a prisoner of her own insanity." Unlike the other people in her habitat, she has acquired her own behavioral traits and thus she is an outsider in the group. In Anderson's story, Anderson's is the outsider. He runs from his area after accusations that he is a child molester. The justification for his outsider's nature can be seen when the author of "Hands" asserts that "Wing Biddlebaum, forever frightened and beset by a ghostly band of doubts, did not think of himself as in any way a part of the life of the town where he had lived for twenty years" which shows that he no longer belonged to what he had identified with in the better part of his life. Morgan (47) on the other hand also testifies that Biddlebaum was an outsider from the life due to the accusations that were levied against him when he asserts that "The character's consequent fear of human contact is afterward reflected in his tendency to hide his hands, and his final dehumanization represented by his employment as a berry picker who worked with mechanical speed and precision" When contrasted, the two characters have one major aspect in common; they are both reserved to themselves and are misunderstood by those who surround them and thus they abstain themselves from the public life. Miss Emily is reserved because she wishes that she should remain indoors the rest of her life. Miss Emily becomes a person hard to understand due to this self reservation, a fact that can be attested by the assertions made by Faulkner's (22) when she writes that "She did that for three days, with the ministers calling on her, and the doctors, trying to persuade her to let them dispose of the body". This shows that his view of the way things happen is different to what the others do. Biddlebaum also fails to be understood by his people when his the authors assert that "As he ran away into the darkness they repented of their weakness and ran after him, swearing and throwing sticks and great balls of soft mud at the figure that screamed and ran faster and faster into the darkness", a clear indication that the people that followed him misunderstood him and they had no time to listen to him. The characters are however greatly different each other. While Miss Emily was seen as an epitome of purity as attested by the authors assertions that "To the town, Emily Grierson is first and foremost an upper-class Southern woman with a specific role required of her concerning sexual propriety, a role that enables the town to see her as an image of feminine purity and perhaps, by extension, of Southern honor", Biddlebaum is thrown out from the community because he was accused of child molestation, a fact that leads

Anderson to assert that “Wing Biddlebaum, forever frightened and beset by a ghostly band of doubts, did not think of himself as in any way a part of the life of the town where he had lived for twenty years” (Anderson 3). This shows that while Miss Emily was a revered woman, the society was bailing after Biddlebaum blood for his unethical deeds. In conclusion it is evident that the outsider problem has far reaching effects to the people considered as outsiders. The outsiders are misunderstood by the society and this makes them to feel exogenous to the community. In my opinion, people should given time to explain their own side of the story and to promote understanding of the outsiders.