A Room with a View Study Guide

A Room with a View by E. M. Forster

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Introduction

Forster's belief in personal relationships and his experience as a globetrotter allowed him to be a staunch advocate of multiculturalism long before the term came into academic vogue. His stories and writings are rife with a permissive transgression of social, racial, sexual, and cultural strictures. Forster's egalitarianism found a large audience during a time when his intellectual contemporaries were elitist, conservative, and still trying to transition from Victorian to Modern England.

Forster contributes to this transition with his third novel, *Room with a View,* which he started in 1902 but did not publish until 1908. In this novel, Lucy finds completeness in an ending of unabashed happiness after journeying through a story of textbook comic structure. She has found love, adulthood, and happiness—all things lacking in the beginning. The work celebrates youth, nature, and the comic or Greek spirit with Lucy a light that illuminates a path for both men and women to follow.

Lucy, with her husband, takes the best of radical politics and Victorian society and makes a place of equanimity.

Author Biography

Forster, born in London on January 1, 1879, was raised by his mother, Alice Clara Whichelo Forster (known as Lily), two aunts, and a grandmother. His father, an architect named Edmund Morgan, died of consumption in 1880. Forster spent a happy childhood at Rooksnest, a house in Hertfordshire his mother rented, which provided the material for Forster's 1910 novel *Howards End.* Boarding school, however, was a misery. In 1890, Forster attended Kent House, a prep school in Eastbourne, but harassment led to his transfer to The Grange. When that proved intolerable, Lily moved to Tonbridge in 1893 and Forster became a day boy at Tonbridge School, where he finished prep school. While attending Tonbridge, Forster had his first taste of travel when he joined his mother on a tour of churches in 1895.

Marianne Thornton, a great-aunt, bequeathed Forster monetary independence. He used some of this money, beginning in 1897, to attend King's College, Cambridge. Forster thrived in the liberating atmosphere of the university where he belonged to the Cambridge Conversazione Society, also known as the Apostles. Among these friends, Forster learned that being homosexual was not abnormal. After a period of travel, Forster joined his old friends for avant-garde discussions as a member of the Bloomsbury Group. At school, he achieved an unsatisfactory second-class honors degree in classics followed by one of the same rank in history. He was awarded an M.A. in 1910.

Disappointed by his academic rank, Forster accepted his mother's plan to delay the future by travelling. In Italy, their stay in a Florentine pension inspired Forster to begin work, in 1902, on the "Lucy" novel, which would eventually become *A Room with a View.* He returned to England briefly before he began a life abroad with a journey to Greece in 1903. This expedition was followed by travels to Germany, South Africa, and the United States. Forster's visits to India resulted in several works, most notably a 1924 novel, *A Passage to India.*

During World War I, Forster volunteered as a searcher for the Red Cross in Egypt. He interviewed convalescent soldiers in order to gain information about missing persons. While in Egypt, Forster made a name for himself as an essayist and travel writer under the pseudonym Pharos (for the ancient lighthouse). These writings gave way to *Alexandria: A History and a Guide,* followed by a book that collected essays from the period.

At the age of forty-six, Forster separated from his mother and rented a flat of his own in London. He began a relationship with Robert Buckingham which became a lasting friendship when Robert married in 1931. For the next thirty-nine years, Forster remained a respected essayist and literary critic. After his death June 7, 1970, from a series of strokes, *Maurice,* a largely autobiographical novel whose protagonist grapples with the trials of being gay, was published in accordance with Forster's will. A seventh novel that Forster never completed, *Arctic Summer,* was published in 1980.

Plot Summary

Italy

When Lucy Honeychurch and Charlotte Bartlett arrive at the Bertolini Pension, the women are upset that their rooms view a courtyard instead of the promised view of Florence. An uncouth man, Mr. Emerson, offers to swap rooms but Charlotte refuses. Clergyman Beebe, however, rescues the situation and the swap takes place. Lucy, a young woman in Italy for the first time, wants to take in all the sights but is slowed down by Charlotte, her spinsterly chaperone. Fortunately, another English tourist, Miss Lavish, offers to take her to Santa Croce. After an exciting walk, Miss Lavish abandons Lucy who enters the church alone.

Since Miss Lavish kept the guidebook, Lucy finds herself "in Santa Croce with No Baedeker." She has no choice but to tour the church in remembrance of what she has read. By accident, Lucy meets the Emersons, who show her how to enjoy the church with their own unfiltered senses. Lucy insists on points the book had highlighted but "the pernicious charm of Italy worked on her, and, instead of acquiring information, she began to be happy." While his son, George, is at a distance, Mr. Emerson proposes that Lucy take an interest in him. Despite this insult, Mr. Emerson helps her to not have the proper aesthetic experience. Rather, she is "inflated spiritually," "thoroughly happy, and having a splendid time."

Invigorated by a rainy afternoon spent playing the piano, Lucy avoids being ensnared by Pension gossip with Beebe and Miss Catherine Alan and walks into the now sunny Florence. After purchasing some photos of famous paintings, Lucy witnesses passion boil over into murder in the Piazza della Signoria. As an Italian is knifed, he looks to Lucy and opens his mouth as if to give a message "and a stream of red came out." Lucy faints and her pictures are soiled with blood. George, who happens to be in the Piazza, rescues Lucy and tosses the besmirched photos into the River Arno. Art has met life and "something happen[ed] to the living: they had come to a situation where character tells, and where Childhood enters upon the branching paths of Youth." While they recover, they watch the River Arno.

Lucy's confrontation with reality disables any chance of a "return to the old life!" Fearful of her feelings for George, she shops with Charlotte the next day instead of joining a tourist excursion. They run into Miss Lavish in the Piazza trying to salvage the murder scene for use in her novel. Lucy and Charlotte leave her and bump into Mr. Eager, who invites them on a drive—a treat he reserves for the most deserving—to view Fiesole. Mr. Beebe manages to be included on the trip but fails to consult with Mr. Eager before doubling the party to include the undeserving. Despite careful planning, Lucy finds herself in a carriage with Mr. Eager and the two people he disapproves of the most: Mr. Emerson, for killing his wife, and Miss Lavish, "a shoddy lady writer."

Mr. Eager proposes that they discover the very spot where Alessio Baldovinetti made his Tuscan landscapes. They go to the bluff with this in mind but instead of rediscovery, Lucy falls into a bed of violets and George—enraptured by the beauty of the scenery and the lovely woman lying in flowers before him—imprudently kisses Lucy. This leads Charlotte into paranoid delusions that Lucy will be exposed to others as the beloved of George, a man of the lower class who did not have such permission.

The party returns to Florence during a storm and whatever "game" was being played on the hillside has been "lost." A Miltonic lightning bolt seals off the possibility of return to the garden where play and liberty were possible. Charlotte, who witnessed the kiss, ponders over who else knows. George chooses to remain in nature, and walks back. The storm's violence allows the party one brief moment of lost self-control but then they recover their roles. Charlotte struggles to recover Lucy from being like the Emersons; Lucy wants "to be truthful."

Worried that George may strike again, Charlotte packs Lucy off to Rome where they have a miserable time with the Vyse family. Cecil Vyse, induced to take the two women to St. Peter's, notices Lucy as more than a commonplace English tourist. He sees that Italy has given her "light" and "shadow" and made her a "woman of Leonardo," a body for intellectual admiration, not engagement. Cecil wants to purchase her.

England

Back at Windy Corner in England, Lucy accepts Cecil as her "fiasco" and society is pleased with the impending match. Believing he has purchased Lucy, Cecil considers how to finish Lucy's education while he dreams of ways to redecorate the drawing-room at Windy Corner as "more distinctive." Lucy's brother, Freddy, and Beebe are inwardly disappointed; even Mrs. Honeychurch shows signs of disillusionment with Cecil, her dream son-in-law. This results from his reaction to suffering through an announcement party. He hypothesizes that engagements should be private— like a business transaction. In the ensuing discussion, Lucy shows her brain and pains Cecil: he wants to look at his Leonardo, not see her in moral judgment amongst Michelangelo's figures in the Sistine Chapel.

Walking home, the party runs into Sir Harry Otway, who has cottages to rent. After a discussion of the ramifications of the cottages, Cecil disapproves of the knight alone to Lucy, who begins to wonder if anything from her hometown can meet with Cecil's approval. Chiding her for always leading him on the road, the lovers take the path through the woods. As they near Windy Corner, Cecil attempts to be romantic and asks Lucy if he might kiss her but "passion should believe itself irresistible." Their kiss proves to be a failure. Strangely, it leads Lucy to pronounce the name Emerson.

In an attempt to pull a prank on the knight, Cecil arranges for the Emersons—a pair he meets mispronouncing names in the art galleries in London— to take a cottage on his recommendation. This angers Lucy, who had been trying to bring Miss Alans to the same cottage. As the Emersons arrive, Lucy and Cecil leave to visit Mrs. Vyse in

London. There, Lucy glimpses her future life of playing piano for grandchildren. Mrs. Vyse comforts her when she awakes from a nightmare about a kiss.

Back at Windy Corner, Lucy, Cecil, and Mrs. Honeychurch are on their way to visit a neighbor when they run into Freddy, George, and Beebe in the midst of bathing in the Sacred Lake. Instead of a proper social encounter with George, for which Lucy had spent hours rehearsing, Lucy bows to him while he is half-naked. She finds him beautiful and clearly more her type than the contracted Vyse.

During a dinner party, Vyse refuses to play tennis and Lucy seizes on the refusal as indicative of Vyse generally and breaks off the engagement. What really set her off, however, was Cecil's insistent reading from a romance novel written by Miss Lavish and another uninvited kiss from George. The novel happens to have a scene in it made up of information that Charlotte provided about the kiss at Fiesole. Having been betrayed by Charlotte, Lucy plays the piano as she thinks about her next step.

Back to Italy

Lucy decides to catch up with Miss Alans in Greece. Tickets in hand, Lucy encounters Mr. Emerson in Beebe's rectory and he brings her to her senses. Lucy extracts herself from the muddle she has created and accepts union with George. They return to the Pension in Florence to enjoy a room with a view.

Part 1, Chapter 1

Part 1, Chapter 1 Summary

This novel, written in the early 1900's, tells the deceptively simple story of a young woman's gradual acceptance of true love. Its abundance of symbols, however, enhances its fully developed characters and gentle satirical sensibility, developing a constantly deepening richness of meaning. This makes *A Room with a View* not only a romance, but also a gently pointed meditation on the universal human drive toward emotional and spiritual awakening. The first part of the novel takes place in Florence, Italy.

The Bertolini- Lucy and Miss Bartlett, her cousin and chaperone, sit down to their first evening meal at the Pension Bertolini, in Florence. To their disappointment, the Pension is populated entirely by British visitors, decorated with portraits of British notables and run by a British woman. Lucy complains that they might just as well be in London. Charlotte complains about the food. Together they complain about the fact that they were promised rooms with views, and have been given rooms without views. An elderly man across the table, Mr. Emerson, overhears their conversation and shouts enthusiastically that he and his son have rooms with views and would be happy to let the ladies have them. Miss Bartlett recoils at such un-genteel behavior, thanks him politely, and says they couldn't possibly accept his offer. When Mr. Emerson insists, and his son George sullenly agrees, Lucy tries to persuade Miss Bartlett to change her mind; but the overly polite Miss Bartlett refuses.

The tense situation is relieved by the arrival of Mr. Beebe, a clergyman from Miss Bartlett's home in England. As conversation reveals, he is about to take a position in Lucy's hometown. Lucy, Miss Bartlett and Mr. Beebe continue their conversation in the drawing room after dinner. They discuss the Emersons, with Mr. Beebe commenting that he's sure Mr. Emerson meant no harm. Miss Bartlett takes genteel offense, assuming that Mr. Beebe is telling her to apologize. Mr. Beebe then takes offense at Miss Bartlett taking offense, and leaves. Miss Alan takes his place in the conversation. Miss Alan is an elderly lady who was also at dinner, and who agrees with Miss Bartlett that he behaved inappropriately. However, with some confusion, she suggests that such impulses might be regarded as beautiful.

As Miss Bartlett is absorbing that remark, and Lucy is considering that it might very well be true, Mr. Beebe comes back in with the news that he, having believed Miss Bartlett was reconsidering the Emersons' offer, told Mr. Emerson that she was willing to change rooms. Miss Bartlett, who had been doing nothing of the sort, sees she now that she has no choice but to accept. George comes in, explaining bluntly that his father is having a bath and can't speak with her personally. Miss Bartlett, upset by the un-genteel reference to the bath, offers her barely grateful thanks.

Lucy and Mr. Beebe, both secretly enjoying Miss Bartlett's discomfort, watch as George leaves. Miss Alan commiserates with Miss Bartlett. After an interval of half an hour, during which the Emersons move out of their rooms, Miss Bartlett unpacks for both Lucy and herself. A short time later Lucy finds that Miss Bartlett has taken the larger room because, she says, it had been George's; and she didn't think Lucy's mother would think it appropriate that Lucy sleep there. As Lucy and Miss Bartlett get ready for bed, Miss Bartlett discovers a piece of paper with a large red question mark written on it. Assuming it belongs to George, and that he must value it for some reason, she preserves it between two pieces of paper and goes unhappily to bed.

Part 1, Chapter 1 Analysis

This first chapter lays the groundwork for development of the narrative's key elements. Most can be interpreted as conflict between conventional views, which are portrayed as restricting full and honest expression of emotion, and unconventional views, portrayed as open, unexpected, vulnerable and ultimately more humanist expressions of genuine feeling. This tension is at the core of almost all relationships and events of the novel. The politely expressed friction between Miss Bartlett, who represents convention and society, and Lucy, who represents a broader perspective and an awakening identification with natural feeling, is a good example. The tension between Miss Bartlett and the Emersons, particularly Mr. Emerson, can be similarly defined, with Miss Bartlett again embodying convention and the Emersons embodying spiritual and emotional liberty. Their actions and attitudes serve as the catalysts for the growth of similar feelings in Lucy. This growth, however, does not occur painlessly. The anxiety, confusion and muddle it causes Lucy affect her thoughts and judgments with increasing potency throughout the novel.

A third key element introduced in this chapter is a more symbolic manifestation of the core conflict between having a view, which represents freedom and a wider perspective, and having no view, which represents a lack of freedom and a limited perspective. Those who have views appreciate that they are valued throughout the novel as being enlightened, worthy, and full of joy. Those who don't are portrayed as being narrow, small-minded, and petty. The Emersons have no need of the Pension's views - for their more spiritual views are internal. Therefore, they give their rooms with views to Lucy. Mr. Emerson perceives her being desperate for both the literal physical view, as well as the more symbolic, metaphorical one.

It's important to note that Lucy is consciously aware of the first need, but unaware of the second. Her desire for the metaphorical view is, to use a psychological term, a subconscious one. It is, nevertheless, the core desire that that motivates her actions and reactions throughout the novel, as well as triggering intense internal and external conflict.

A fourth key element is the novel's narrative and stylistic sensibility, which can be described as gently satiric. Satire is a form of comic writing, in which characteristics of an individual or group are heightened or exaggerated to point out how foolish they are.

In *A Room with a View*, the satire is focused on the English, specifically those English who take their restrained, conventional Englishness even into the heart of foreign cultures. This is most vividly illustrated by the extreme Englishness of the community at the Pension, which is a kind of boarding house for travelers. Other manifestations of this sensibility appear throughout the novel. These manifestations repeatedly illustrate the play's theme that living according to feeling is living truly and, according to Miss Alan, "beautifully". Since the novel is chiefly concerned with the tension between convention (i.e. British-ness) and non-convention, the style with which that tension is portrayed (poking gentle fun at such British-ness) continually reinforces that theme.

The question mark apparently left behind by George, and subsequently discovered by Miss Bartlett, is an example of the teasing, questioning nature of his mind. It is perhaps, even at this early stage, an invitation for Lucy to get to know him better.

Part 1, Chapter 2

Part 1, Chapter 2 Summary

In Santa Croce with No Baedeker-- The next morning at breakfast, Miss Bartlett and Lucy get into a polite argument about what to do for the day. Lucy wants to go out and explore. Miss Bartlett is feeling unwell and thinks it's wrong for Lucy to go alone. The argument goes around in circles until it is interrupted by Miss Lavish, another guest at the Pension. She volunteers to show Lucy around and expresses hope that they will have an adventure. She also clearly states that Lucy is NOT to use her Baedeker (guide book).

Lucy and Miss Lavish set out after breakfast discovering, as they wander through the streets of Florence, that they have acquaintances in common. They fall deep into conversation, forget to pay attention to where they are and become lost. Miss Lavish reacts with excitement; but Lucy reacts with nervousness, becoming more so when Miss Lavish refuses to return Baedeker. As they wander the streets searching for the church of Santa Croce, they become even more lost. Still, Lucy gets a glimpse of some beautiful sculpture she wouldn't have seen, had they gone the way Baedeker suggested.

Eventually they reach the church. Miss Lavish goes in search of another adventure, and Lucy goes in search of paintings she'd been told she must see. Inside the church, she encounters the Emersons. Speaking in the polite manner she evidently learned from Miss Bartlett, she thanks them for their kindness concerning the rooms and asks where the paintings are. George seems unhappy and wanders off by himself. Mr. Emerson shows Lucy the paintings, interrupting a lecture given by Mr. Eager, a British tour guide and local minister. Mr. Eager leads the tour away. Mr. Emerson follows in an attempt to apologize, but Mr. Eager snubs him. Mr. Emerson again finds Lucy and talks at despairing length about how frustrating it is to be around people who only see, believe and feel what they are SUPPOSED to. He also reveals his frustration with George, whom he says is desperately unhappy.

He suggests that even though the world is full of suffering, there is still the capacity for happiness within that suffering, stating that George ought to have learned that lesson by now. He tells Lucy that she doesn't have to fall in love with him, but that he would like her to be his friend and to try to understand him. Lucy, completely unable to cope with this kind of conversation, suggests that George simply needs to find a hobby. Mr. Emerson looks at her pityingly, aware that she hasn't understood a word he said. He describes her as being in a "muddle", and that she must do everything she can to get out of it. George appears with the news that Miss Bartlett has arrived. Mr. Emerson expresses regret that Lucy must go to her; but Lucy angrily protests there's no need to feel sorry for her, and that she's having a wonderful time.

Part 1, Chapter 2 Analysis

Just as the view/no view concepts repeatedly illuminate the novel's theme of freedom being preferable to convention, the idea of "muddle" repeatedly symbolizes an obstacle to achieving freedom. This symbolizes the confusion as to whether doing the conventional thing or the emotionally true thing is doing the RIGHT thing. Lucy experiences this confusion more often than any other character, which explains why she uses the word "muddle", or has it used about her, most often. This is an example of a motif, a word, expression or image used in differing contexts to consistently define a character's experience. For example, Mr. Emerson's use of the word here to describe Lucy's situation foreshadows his use of it in almost exactly the same context in his climactic confrontation with her (Part 2, Chapter 18).

At this point he tells Lucy, not only that she loves George, but for the good of them both she must marry him. The implication at that point is that the only way out of muddle is to live truly and emotionally. At this point, however, the way out of muddle isn't clear. However Lucy is definitely a muddle, and will come more deeply muddled over the course of the following several chapters.

The character of Miss Lavish, like the characters of the Emersons, represents the presence and power of unconventional perspective. She is, nonetheless, a symbol of the way such power can be misused and can lead a person to become insensitive. An example of this insensitivity can be seen in Miss Lavish's kidnapping of Lucy's Baedeker. The Baedeker is a symbol of convention and the way people, the British in particular, rely too much on doing what they're told to do, as opposed to doing what they FEEL like doing. For now, though, Miss Lavish's action is an example of how unconventionality can become self-righteous and, perhaps, even dangerous.

Cecil, a character introduced in the second half of the novel, functions in a similar fashion. All that being said, however, the passing mention of Lucy seeing statues she wouldn't have seen if she had stuck to Baedeker is the first of several experiences that gradually awaken her to the possibility of reward in unconventionality. Still, rejoining Miss Bartlett at the end of the chapter, means that Lucy has rejoined the world of convention. Mr. Emerson has done his best to wake her up; but Lucy is as yet unwilling to be woken up, because she thinks he's wrong.

The confrontation between Mr. Eager and Mr. Emerson foreshadows later revelations (Part 1, Chapter 4 and Part 2, Chapter 18) of their confrontational history.

Part 1, Chapter 3

Part 1, Chapter 3 Summary

Music, Violets and the Letter S-- On a rainy afternoon, Lucy sits down to the piano in the Bertolini's drawing room and plays Beethoven, reflecting on how the world seems to make a little more sense when she's at the piano. Mr. Beebe listens, himself reflecting on a comment he once made after hearing her play in a recital: "If Miss Honeychurch ever takes to live as she plays, it will be very exciting - both for us and for her." He recounts the comment to Lucy, who jokes that her mother once said something similar. She tries to explain how music makes her feel, but doesn't have the words. She takes embarrassed refuge in commenting that Miss Bartlett, who has gone out in the rain with Miss Lavish, will be soaked when she comes back.

This leads into a conversation about how Miss Bartlett had been upset with Miss Lavish, when she learned about the muddled expedition to Santa Croce, but quickly came around and made friends. As Mr. Beebe is reflecting on the strange combination of the prim Miss Bartlett and the adventurous Miss Lavish, Miss Alan arrives. She says she heard Lucy playing and came down to listen. Instead, she joins the conversation about Miss Lavish, revealing that she's recovering from the complete disappearance of a recent novel. She has now started a new one about modern Italy, and has been doing research.

She says that Miss Lavish has constantly supported the Emersons since they arrived, referring to an instance where Mr. Emerson spoke indelicately about the stomach (which the delicate and proper Miss Alan refers to as "S") of another elderly female guest, and Miss Lavish insisting he had every right to do so. Lucy asks whether Miss Alan thinks the Emersons are "nice"; and Miss Alan reluctantly says she thinks they are not. Mr. Beebe contradicts her, saying that after the incident with the violets he's obligated to think that they ARE. Miss Alan, embarrassed at the mention of violets, changes the subject and comments that it wasn't nice at all of the Emersons to disrupt Mr. Eager's lecture at Santa Croce. Lucy says that, in her opinion, the Emersons ARE nice, citing the episode of the swapped rooms. As the conversation continues, Mr. Beebe reflects on how the Emersons have been completely snubbed by most of the guests at the Pension, to the point their seats in the dining room have been moved. As evening approaches, Lucy announces her intention to go out. Miss Alan and Mr. Beebe attempt to talk her out of it; but Lucy insists and leaves. As she goes, Mr. Beebe puts her impulsiveness and obstinacy down to "too much Beethoven."

Part 1, Chapter 3 Analysis

Two more motifs, or repeated images, appear for the first time in this section - Lucy's music and violets. Both are manifestations of the novel's core theme relating to the passion between conventional and non-conventional behavior. In terms of Lucy's

musicianship, her unconventional playing of Beethoven (generally a dramatic, aggressive composer) represents an aspect of her spirit and character struggling for freedom and expression. Mr. Beebe's (and Mrs. Honeychurch's) comment is therefore very perceptive. It foreshadows Lucy's decision at the end of the novel to indeed live as she plays - according to her feelings of passion and desire.

Interestingly, when she attempts to explain to Mr. Beebe what music means to her, she becomes inarticulate. This again indicates that she has yet to realize the possibilities of her unconventional larger emotions, as represented by her playing Beethoven. In other words, she's still uncomfortable being unconventional.

The motif of the violets, meanwhile, is repeated somewhat less often than that of Lucy's music, but has no less impact. The full meaning of the reference in this chapter is revealed in Part 2 Chapter 10. Apparently Mr. Emerson, upon hearing of Miss Alan's love violets, stole into their rooms and filled every available vase and surface with them. This explains Miss Alan's reference in Part 1 Chapter 1 to how unconventional things can sometimes be beautiful. It also foreshadows one of the novel's key incidents (Part 1 Chapter 6), in which George kisses Lucy while they're both standing in the midst of a field of violets. The motif, therefore, can be seen as representing the free and beautiful expression of passion and feeling

The mention of Miss Lavish's Italian novel foreshadows the publication of that novel later in the book (Part 2 Chapter 15). At that point, the novel is revealed to have a character in it based on Lucy, and to include Lucy's aforementioned experience with George in the field of violets. Therefore the reference to it here also foreshadows both Lucy's experience and its traumatic aftermath.

Part 1, Chapter 4

Part 1, Chapter 4 Summary

Fourth Chapter--This chapter begins with a lengthy narrative reflection on the nature of womanhood, and on its process of transformation from the medieval ideal of the noblewoman, desperate for protection, to the more modern woman, desperate for experience. Narration then recounts how Lucy was more modern than medieval, but still had some medieval feelings with which she always struggled. She continues to struggle as she leaves the Pension. She buys some photographs of nude paintings and sculptures, which she feels are somewhat shocking (the medieval woman) and knows that Miss Bartlett would not approve; but she also realizes that she bought them for exactly those reasons (the modern woman). As dusk settles in the streets, Lucy walks through the city, gradually becoming calmer and getting ready to return to the Pension. In the Piazza Signoria, however, two Italians arguing over money catch her attention. One stabs the other. The victim dies at her feet, leaning toward her "as if he had an important message for her."

Lucy faints, reviving in the arms of George. She assures him she's all right and asks him to reclaim her photographs. As he goes to do so, she tries to sneak away, uncomfortable at having been found in a compromised position, and at having been in his arms. He firmly tells her to stay where she is, insisting she's not well enough to travel back to the Pension alone. Lucy does as she's told. George returns with the photographs, and they watch as the body of the murdered man is taken away. They then leave the Piazza.

George tosses something into the river as they walk past it, eventually confessing to an angry Lucy that it was her photographs. As George explains that they were covered with blood, the river swirls the photographs into its depths. George talks about how "something tremendous has happened" and about how he must face it without getting "muddled", adding that it's something more than a man dying. Lucy asks him to say nothing to anyone else at the Pension about what happened. He agrees, still wrapped up in his own thoughts. She comments with deceptive ease on how quickly people get over traumatic incidents like what just happened; but George says he doesn't, hinting that he's changed significantly and that as a result, he shall probably want to live.

Part 1, Chapter 4 Analysis

The opening reflections on the nature of womanhood essentially summarize the journey of transformation Lucy is undertaking. Incidents such as the witnessing of the murder, her being repeatedly kissed by the uninhibited and passionate George, and her increasingly troubled relationship with the spiritually repressive Miss Bartlett are all stepping-stones along that journey. However her thoughts, feelings and experiences are essentially still governed by the medieval perspective, at war with her desire for more.

So she finds herself right in the middle of the increasingly troubling "muddle". As following chapters reveal, her passions have been awakened, but are struggling for freedom against the kind of convention that makes her determined to keep the momentous events of this day a secret. As a side note, the reference to "medieval" foreshadows the Part 2 Chapter 8 appearance of Cecil, who is described in both physical appearance and attitude as medieval.

The casting of the photographs into the river and their being carried away by the rushing water symbolize the way both Lucy and George are being cast into the unpredictability of life. They are being carried away by the rush of experience and of nature swirling around them. At the same time, the photographs represent Lucy's medieval belief system. Both must be gotten rid of, if she is to truly live according to the passion that makes her (among other things) interested in Beethoven. Also, it's possible to interpret George's comment about wanting to live as a foreshadowing of his actions in subsequent chapters, particularly his socially inappropriate, but personally profound, kissing of Lucy. It seems that, for George, expressing his passionate attraction to her without regard for social convention is "living". Mr. Emerson confirms these possibilities in Part 2 Chapter 19 during his final, climactic conversation with Lucy. It may even be that the "message" the dying Italian seems intent upon conveying relates to this idea. "Live passionately," he may be saying, "before your physical and spiritual life is cut short by trivialities."

Part 1, Chapter 5

Part 1, Chapter 5 Summary

Possibilities of a Pleasant Outing-- Narration recounts how Miss Bartlett, perhaps surprisingly, was calm and understanding when Lucy told her story of what happened in the Piazza Signoria, how the other guests at the Pension Bertolini left her alone with her feelings and how Lucy longed to talk with someone about what happened. The following morning she chooses to accompany Miss Bartlett on a tiresome shopping expedition, rather than go out for a drive with Mr. Beebe and the Emersons. Her belief is that time with Miss Bartlett will help her clear the muddle in her mind. It will also free her from having to face George, and the possibility that they have both been changed by their experiences of the previous day.

As she and Miss Bartlett stroll through the city, Lucy becomes uncomfortable when their route takes them by the river, past the very place where George threw the photographs, and into the Piazza Signoria. There they find Miss Lavish, who has apparently been there the whole morning trying to find out what happened the previous night, planning to include the story in her new book. When her attempts to question Lucy are rebuffed, Miss Lavish leaves. As Miss Bartlett comments on how wonderful her book will be, she and Lucy encounter Mr. Eager, who invites them to go for a drive with him the next day to experience a wonderful view. Miss Bartlett happily accepts.

Then, with barely restrained eagerness for gory details, Mr. Eager asks Lucy to recount what happened to her the previous day. Lucy's half-hearted explanations are interrupted by Mr. Eager's outbursts of anger, vented at an Italian trying to sell them photographs. They eventually evade him (the Italian), continue on their shopping expedition, and purchase several cheaply made souvenirs. Conversation turns to the Emersons, with Mr. Eager revealing that Mr. Emerson used to work for the Socialist press, that he was once married, and that in Mr. Eager's opinion he (Mr. Emerson) killed his wife in the eyes of God! He refuses to say any more; and after confirming that their ride the following day is still going to take place, he takes his leave.

As she and Lucy return to the Pension, Miss Bartlett reveals her concerns about the ride, saying that Mr. Beebe had asked them and Miss Lavish to go on exactly the same ride. As she and Lucy go to the bank, Miss Bartlett worries that Lucy finds Florence boring, and that they can go anywhere she wants. Lucy contemplates this offer as she looks through the mail from her mother and brother, full of homey gossip and stories. She also has news of mutual acquaintances, Cecil Vyse and his mother, who are in Rome. As they return to the Pension, they again pass through the Piazza Signoria. Reminded of what happened, and of the muddle in her mind that resulted, Lucy impulsively suggests they catch a train to Rome the following day. Miss Bartlett teasingly asks what happened to the idea of the ride and the view. They laugh together at the foolishness of Lucy's suggestion, and make their way back to the Pension.

Part 1, Chapter 5 Analysis

As the story of the novel unfolds, it becomes possible to see that seemingly insignificant details carry more layers of meaning than what might be immediately apparent. For example, the insistent Italian can be seen as representing the insistence of Lucy's passions, while Mr. Eager (who represents convention and medieval thinking) shooing away the Italian represents Lucy still keeping her passions at bay. The irony is that Mr. Eager then invites Lucy out to see a view that, as has been discussed, carries with it the symbolic value of spiritual and emotional openness. In this context, the plans for the ride foreshadow, not only the physical events of the following chapter in which the residents of the Pension Bertolini go for the ride, but also the opening of Lucy's perspectives and passions that eventually result from her having seen this view.

Another piece of foreshadowing can be found in Mr. Eager's angry, judgmental comments about Mr. Emerson. The full meaning and explanation of these comments isn't revealed until Part 2 Chapter 19, at which point Mr. Emerson explains exactly what passed between him and his wife. Still another piece of foreshadowing can be found in the reference to Cecil Vyse, who plays a key role in developments when the novel's action moves to England for Part 2, as well as in Lucy's impulsive request to go to Rome. It foreshadows her actual trip to Rome at the end of Part 1 Chapter 7. One last piece of foreshadowing is Miss Lavish's research in the Piazza. This foreshadows, not just the appearance of those events in her book, but the way she uses other real life events (in particular, George kissing Lucy in the following chapter) as material.

Part 1, Chapter 6

Part 1, Chapter 6 Summary

[Several Residents of the Pension Bertolini] Drive Out in Carriages to see a View; Italians Drive Them-- On a beautifully warm and hazy morning Lucy, Miss Bartlett, Miss Lavish, Mr. Beebe, Mr. Eager, Mr. Emerson and George ride in two carriages into the countryside. Narration describes how Miss Bartlett and Miss Lavish had spent a great deal of time determining where everyone was to sit in order to minimize the potential for tension. However they lost their heads when it came to the moment, resulting in everyone sitting with the wrong people. Mr. Eager, Mr. Emerson, Lucy and Miss Lavish end up in the front carriage, driven by a young man resembling Phaeton. He convinces Mr. Eager to let him pick up a young woman, described by the narrator as Persephone and by Phaeton as his sister.

As the carriage descends into the countryside, and as Miss Lavish and Mr. Eager continue a noisy, confrontational conversation, Lucy is left to contemplate her experience in the Piazza Signoria and at the riverside with George. She reflects on how she knows something significant has happened, suspects George knows more than she does about it and decides that it's best that they keep their distance. She is essentially choosing to remain unwise and unchanged by the event. Meanwhile, Phaeton puts his arm around Persephone, attempts to kiss her, and in doing so gives his passengers an uncomfortable, jolting ride. Mr. Eager becomes aware of what Phaeton is doing. He orders him to stop both his behavior and the carriage, and then demands that Persephone get off.

Mr. Emerson and Miss Lavish defend Phaeton, Miss Bartlett worries that a crowd is gathering to watch, and Lucy is torn. Propriety insists that she support Mr. Eager, but her growing instinct toward passion and compassion tells her to support Phaeton. Eventually Mr. Eager wins. Persephone is abandoned along the roadside and the expedition continues. They eventually reach their destination, a view made famous by the painter, Baldovinetti. The visitors split up, with Lucy at first staying with Miss Bartlett and Miss Lavish, but soon being politely snubbed and going in search of Mr. Beebe. Phaeton misunderstands her very poor Italian and instead leads her to George, who is standing in a field of violets which narration describes as a waterfall. He turns to her, studies her, and suddenly kisses her. "Before she could speak, almost before she could feel", Lucy hears Miss Bartlett calling her.

Part 1, Chapter 6 Analysis

This chapter contains the novel's first climax. To this point it is the highest point of emotion and the point of deepest crisis for Lucy. George's kiss is a huge violation of propriety to Lucy's conventionality and the manners of the time. It also serves as a powerful awakening, an even stronger trigger than the events in the Piazza Signoria, of

Lucy's experience of life. The repercussions of this kiss are the key, defining factors for Lucy's actions in the rest of the novel, in terms of what Lucy does, what she feels and, most importantly, how she evolves.

A trio of symbols that make their reappearance here reinforces the emotional and spiritual depth of George's kiss. The first is violets that, as already discussed, represent uninhibited expressions of beauty. Setting the kiss in the midst of a field of violets gives the seemingly inappropriate kiss the same air of unpredictable joy that Miss Alan experienced, when Mr. Emerson filled her room with violets (Part 2 Chapter 10). The second symbol is the reference to the violets as a waterfall. Water, in relation to the river into which George casts Lucy's bloody photographs, represents emotional power and its capacity to sweep away old beliefs and constraints. The third symbol is the reference to the view from where the kiss takes place. As previously discussed, views in this novel are representative of mental and emotional perspectives. The beauty of the view here suggests that Lucy's experience, while unexpected and emotionally jarring, is nonetheless beautiful. It is therefore a trigger for the emergence and development of further beauty and openness within her.

Two powerfully evocative symbols make their first appearances here - Phaeton and Persephone, both characters from Classical Roman mythology. Phaeton was the son of the sun god, Apollo, who rashly asked to be allowed to drive his father's chariot (the sun) across the sky. He proved too inexperienced to control the chariot and ended up crashing to earth in a blaze of fiery light. Persephone was the daughter of Ceres, the goddess of the earth and agriculture. She was kidnapped by the god of the underworld and forced to live with him in darkness as his wife, returning with the spring to be reunited with her mother for six months. There are several levels of meaning in these two symbols. They both represent youth and uninhibited passion. Phaeton represents foolish behavior (i.e. his attempting to kiss Persephone) and Persephone represents the temptations of the dark, the unknown and the mysterious. Most notably, the union of the two god characters represents the union or, potential union, of Lucy and George. In the joining of light, sky and masculinity (Phaeton) with darkness, earth and femininity (Persephone), there is the potential for harmonizing convention and passion. There is a balancing of desire with responsibility, and the connection between emotional truth and intellectual self-awareness.

Part 1, Chapter 7

Part 1, Chapter 7 Summary

They Return-- Narration describes the events that followed George kissing Lucy in terms of a game played by everyone on the expedition. Everyone loses track of everyone else until it comes time to climb into their respective carriages for the drive back to Florence. George elects to walk and Mr. Emerson, in a carriage with Miss Lavish and Mr. Beebe, worries about him aloud. Lucy and Miss Bartlett, however, are worried about other things - the approaching thunderstorm, which frightens Lucy when it appears, and what to do in the aftermath of the kiss. She and Miss Bartlett huddle closer together. Lucy, desperate for love, mistakes the comfort offered by Miss Bartlett's proximity for genuine, deep affection.

They discuss in whispers what to do about George and about Phaeton, whom Miss Bartlett says saw everything after showing Lucy where George was. At a pause in the drive, when the carriages encounter a fallen tree and the other driver clears it away, Miss Bartlett gives Phaeton a coin to keep silent. Narration recounts how Lucy is disappointed in him. Back at the Pension, relationships are falling back into their normal patterns. The trusting Mr. Emerson is convinced George is all right, Miss Lavish and Mr. Eager are once again resentful of each other, and Miss Bartlett is again the soul of conventional discretion. She ensures that no one knows anything about what happened on the mountainside, carrying on conversation with Miss Alan as though nothing had happened. Lucy, however, is desperate to talk further. Caught up in intense emotion, she wants to analyze it and feel it again. Miss Bartlett, however, has other ideas. When they finally retire to their rooms for the night, she asks Lucy what's to be done about George. Lucy proposes to talk to him; but Miss Bartlett is horrified, insisting that he's a man and therefore can't be trusted. She then resolves to go with Lucy to Rome, and therefore escape any possibility of discomfort.

Lucy is reluctant, and looks out the window to see if George is coming. Miss Bartlett immediately calls her back, concerned that someone in the street will see her. As Miss Bartlett starts packing, Lucy again comes to her for affection, but receives only comfort. Miss Bartlett plays the martyr, accusing herself of being a bad chaperone. In doing so, she manipulates Lucy into saying the opposite - that she's been wonderful. They discuss whether Lucy should tell her trusted and beloved mother what happened; and Miss Bartlett manipulates Lucy into promising not to. They resume their packing, but a few minutes later are interrupted by the return of George. Lucy is immediately tempted to run out and speak to him; but is beaten to the door by Miss Bartlett, who takes George into the drawing room for a brief conversation.

On their return Miss Bartlett bids George goodnight; but George goes into his room without saying anything. Lucy cries out that she doesn't believe what Miss Bartlett is doing is the true way to behave, that she doesn't want to be muddled anymore and that

she wants to be older right away. Miss Bartlett tells her to go to bed immediately. They leave for Rome the following morning.

Part 1, Chapter 7 Analysis

The essential conflict in this section is once again convention, as represented by Miss Bartlett, and sudden feeling, as represented by Lucy's confusion. The novel implies that the thunderstorm, a violent and unpredictable act of nature, has similar qualities to George's kiss. They both upset Lucy's equanimity and perspectives. In that context, Lucy's seeking of affection from Miss Bartlett is simultaneously understandable and troubling. After having experienced, albeit reluctantly, a joyful, emotional and vulnerable connection with George on the mountainside, Lucy seems to desire a similar emotional connection with Miss Bartlett. What's troubling, however, is that Lucy is essentially seeking comfort in convention. To her credit, she realizes it. Miss Bartlett, in response to Lucy's affection, displays a conventional shallowness that Lucy almost immediately recognizes as being insufficient. The problem is that Lucy's emotional and mental development is still so undeveloped, she has no idea how to cope with the storm of feelings breaking in and around her. In spite of her natural inclination to be with George, continuing to experience life and feelings with him, convention and the desperate desire for safety dictate that she travel with Miss Bartlett to Rome. It's important to remember that Cecil is in Rome. Cecil, despite his claim to unconventionality, is one of the most conventional characters in the novel. In fleeing to that city, and therefore to him, Lucy is fleeing again into a safe, familiar, non-thought provoking and non-feeling conventionality. The irony is that her passions have been irrevocably awakened, and struggle as she might throughout the second half of the novel; they cannot and will not be suppressed. Nor, the novel thematically suggests, should they be.

Part 2, Chapter 8

Part 2, Chapter 8 Summary

The second part of the novel takes place in England.

Medieval -- In the drawing room of Lucy's home in England (Windy Corner), Lucy's mother, Mrs. Honeychurch, busies herself with a chatty letter to Mrs. Vyse (last referred to in Part 1 Chapter 5) and Lucy's brother, Freddy, busies himself by pretending to examine a dinosaur bone. In reality, they're both much more interested in what's going on outside. Cecil is once again proposing to Lucy. Conversation reveals that this is his third try. He proposed once in Rome and once on a trip to the Alps. On both previous occasions he was gracefully rejected, but he and Lucy continue as friends.

Freddy, both aloud and in his thoughts, reflects on the various ways Cecil makes him uncomfortable. Mrs. Honeychurch tells him repeatedly to behave. They're on the verge of gossiping about Cecil's mother when Cecil himself comes into the room. Narration describes him as medieval - tall, thin, arrogant, self-conscious, and pretentious. He announces that Lucy has accepted his proposal, first in Italian (which neither Mrs. Honeychurch nor Freddy understands) and then in English. They offer their congratulations, which perhaps aren't as genuine or as effusive as they might be if either Mrs. Honeychurch or Freddy truly liked Cecil. They go out to talk things over with Lucy, while Cecil writes a letter to his mother.

Lengthy narration describes how his feelings for her grew as they got to know each other in Italy, how he doesn't care for either Windy Corner or its furnishings, and on how he thinks Lucy might just have more depth to her than her giddy, predictable, playful relationships with her mother and brother indicate. Mr. Beebe, who has moved into his new position in Lucy's hometown (referred to in Part 1 Chapter 1), arrives in hopes of having afternoon tea with the Honeychurch family, whom he enjoys immensely. He and Cecil have an, at times polite and at other times pointed, conversation about the Honeychurches. At various times, they each despise each other's views, but are nevertheless each surprised by how the other has got his perspective on Lucy and her character exactly right.

Eventually Cecil confesses that he and Lucy are engaged, and Mr. Beebe immediately apologizes, saying he wouldn't have spoken nearly so frankly if he'd known the situation. Cecil stiffly accepts his apology, Mr. Beebe worries that he's caused offense, and an argument between them is interrupted by the timely arrival of Mrs. Honeychurch, Freddy, and Lucy. Mr. Beebe speaks formal, clerical words of congratulation and Mrs. Honeychurch teases him about being too serious. Everyone has a good time at tea, even though there are under-currents of unspoken feelings around the table and nobody is being completely honest.

Part 2, Chapter 8 Analysis

The essential element to note about this chapter is the introduction and portrayal of Cecil, a key figure in both the development of the story and in Lucy's development as a person. The title of the chapter is particularly significant, given that the word "medieval" first appeared in Part 1 Chapter 4 as part of a description of submissive womanhood. In that chapter the implication is that Lucy is caught between living the life of a medieval woman and the life of a modern women. The description of Cecil as medieval reflects on what he truly wants from Lucy. In spite of his carefully and pretentiously enlightened exterior, what he truly wants is a woman who will do, think and behave exactly the way he thinks she should - a conventional, medieval belief if ever there was one.

It's interesting to note that Lucy barely appears in this chapter. Aside from the fact that this allows more time and narrative space for the detailed introduction of Cecil, a new and significantly important character, her lack of presence represents her lack of emotional presence in Cecil's thoughts. To him, she exists only in terms of how he sees her and wants her to be.

Two other important characters are introduced in this section, Mrs. Honeychurch and Freddy. The most noteworthy characteristic of both characters is the free, casual intimacy of the way they talk and the way they behave with each other, as well as with Lucy. In this aspect of the Honeychurch family life, can be seen the seeds of Lucy's passion. The Honeychurches are more at liberty to say what they feel and feel what they like. Neither Mrs. Honeychurch nor Freddy have the depth of feelings Lucy has, and as such live relatively happy and peaceful lives. However, their barely concealed distaste for Cecil, for his aesthetic elegance and his pretensions, speak eloquently of their freedom and loving natures.

Part 2, Chapter 9

Part 2, Chapter 9 Summary

Lucy as a Work of Art-- Mrs. Honeychurch hosts a garden party to give her friends and neighbors a chance to meet Cecil. Cecil is extremely uncomfortable, and complains in the carriage on the way home about the conventional attitudes and expectations that make such parties necessary. Lucy and Mrs. Honeychurch both attempt to argue with him, but soon realize that his own self-righteously and self-consciously contradictory attitudes won't be changed. At one point conversation focuses on cultural fences, and whether there's any difference between the fences people put up because society and tradition tell them to, and fences people put up to defend themselves and define their own lives. This leads to a conversation about Mr. Beebe, whom Lucy says has no fences at all, as well as about Mr. Eager, whom Lucy says is all about fences and judgments.

She relates his story about Mr. Emerson (whom she calls Harris) having killed his wife, becoming so angry herself that Mrs. Honeychurch tells her to calm down. Cecil changes the subject to what he thinks is the safe topic of nature and its beauty. As he talks, Mrs. Honeychurch and Lucy are both barely able to restrain their amusement at his frequent mistakes, errors of which he is completely unaware. As they drive down Summer Street, Cecil, Lucy and Mrs. Honeychurch are greeted by Sir Harry, who complains to them that he's having a difficult time with the tenants of one of the semi-detached villas he owns.

Lucy suggests that he rent to the Miss Alans, from the Pension Bertolini, with whom she keeps in touch and who is apparently looking for the place to live. Sir Harry likes the idea in spite of Mrs. Honeychurch's advice to only rent to men, because they take better care of the place, and Cecil's pointed comments about how the habits of middle class gentle-women like the Miss Alans are irritating. The premise here is that Cecil feels the same way about the Miss Alans as he does about the guests at Mrs. Honeychurch's party, that they're small minded and traditional. Narration also indicates that he feels the same way about Sir Harry. When Mrs. Honeychurch asks to see the inside of the villa, Sir Harry agrees to show her around. Cecil and Lucy walk back to Windy Corner.

As they walk, Cecil apologizes for being so irritable. Lucy tries to comfort him, but is soon overwhelmed by his arrogance. When he suggests they walk through the woods rather than on the road Lucy agrees, and they set off on a path that is familiar to Lucy from her childhood. Cecil confesses to Lucy that he believes she's uncomfortable with him in the woods, suggesting that she thinks he's much better suited to being in a room without a view. Lucy, surprised into honesty, says that's exactly how she feels about him. Somewhat hurt, Cecil confesses that he would rather that she thought of him as loving nature. At that moment they come across a little pond, that Lucy calls the Sacred Lake, which fills after it rains. She tells how she and Freddy used to swim there when they were younger, and how she was stopped from ever doing so again after being caught by Miss Bartlett. Cecil takes advantage of her reflective mood and asks

permission to kiss her, since he hasn't yet done so. Lucy agrees, somewhat surprised. Their kiss is awkward. Cecil believes kisses should be passionate and much more spontaneous.

Part 2, Chapter 9 Analysis

The first important element of this chapter is the effect of events on later developments in the plot. Specifically, the conversation with Sir Harry about tenants for his villa foreshadows Cecil's manipulations in getting the Emersons to be those tenants, which in turn result in the Emersons' arrival. This creates even more muddle for Lucy, and eventually results in Lucy's ultimate conversion to a life of feeling, rather than a life of convention. A second important element is related to the first, in that the truly superficial, supercilious and small-minded nature of Cecil is revealed. It's so ironic that he talks repeatedly and disdainfully about conventional people, who behave as they think they should, when he personally holds the view that people should behave the way HE thinks they should. There's really no difference. Either way, people are controlled by outside influences, rather than by what their hearts and souls dictate.

The third important element of this chapter is the way the action moves from the streets of town into the woods. This is notable for several reasons. It provides a trigger for the thematically important discussion between Cecil and Lucy about views. As has previously been discussed, views represent broadened emotional and intellectual perspectives. The mutual perception of Cecil, as being more comfortable in a room without a view, is a perhaps heavy handed; but it is nonetheless pointed commentary on how he, in spite of his insistence that he's somehow enlightened, is the most narrow minded character in the book. The little forest also proves to be a significant setting for the kiss. George's kiss in the natural environment of the Italian hillside, in spite of Lucy's initially conventional reaction, is ultimately successful as a natural and deeply felt extension of his and Lucy's human and spiritual natures. Cecil, on the other hand, is so anti-nature that his calculated kiss, a non-natural act if ever there was one, is a failure. This reinforces the idea of Cecil being most comfortable in a room without a view. Cecil, and the medieval ways he intends for Lucy, are essentially anti-nature, anti-passion, and anti-freedom.

While on one level the conversation about fences is simply a way of filling time on the admittedly uncomfortable carriage ride, on a thematic level the discussion is a glancing reiteration of the novel's core theme. In her reference to Mr. Beebe, Lucy is essentially arguing that any kind of fence is ultimately spiritually limiting. This is an interesting perspective to say the least, given that Cecil (her fiancy) is all about fences, George (the man she loves) is all about having NO fences, and she herself is ON the fence about which man she wants or should be with. Meanwhile, her calling Mr. Emerson "Harris" indicates which side she's leaning toward - Cecil and convention.

As she does frequently, Lucy desperately avoids any hint of a connection to the Emersons, in order to avoid dealing with the feelings of passion for George. Her renaming of Mr. Emerson, therefore, means that she's coming down on the side of

having fences to protect oneself - which ultimately are the same kind of fences as those imposed by other people. Each kind of fence involves living the way one believes one is SUPPOSED to live.

The significance of mentioning the Sacred Lake is two-fold. Firstly, Lucy's reference to having bathed there with Freddy when she was younger reinforces the previously discussed idea that, at their core, members of the Honeychurch family have always had free spirits. In that sense, the reference foreshadows Lucy ultimately claiming the freedom to love George. On another level, the reference also foreshadows events in Part 2, Chapter 12, in which Freddy, George and Mr. Beebe go bathing and encounter unexpected visitors.

Part 2, Chapter 10

Part 2, Chapter 10 Summary

Cecil as a Humorist--The chapter begins with a lengthy description of the Honeychurch family history. Mr. Honeychurch was the first person to build on the street where Windy Corner is situated. Other higher-class buyers built there and became friends with the Honeychurch family, thinking they were high class. They remained friends, once they discovered how much fun Mrs. Honeychurch was. This relationship with the upper classes caused Lucy to grow up with a certain set of traditional, conservative principles; but she came back from Italy with those principles revised. "...Italy was offering her the most priceless of all possessions - her own soul."

Narration then recounts how Lucy attempts to talk with Mr. Beebe and Mrs. Honeychurch about the imminent arrival of the Miss Alans. While playing a raucous game with Freddy and Mr. Beebe's niece, Minnie, Mr. Beebe confirms that the Miss Alans is indeed moving into the villa. However Freddy says that's not what he heard from Sir Harry, whom he says told him a family named Emerson is moving in. As Mrs. Honeychurch is exclaiming that she knew there'd be "a muddle", Lucy reacts with apparent calmness. Mr. Beebe explains to Minnie that's how people should react when something goes wrong.

Meanwhile, Freddy explains that Sir Harry made the change as the result of something Cecil did. That's when Lucy becomes angry. Attempting to change the subject, Mr. Beebe reassures her it couldn't be the Emersons from the Pension, and tells Mrs. Honeychurch how Mr. Emerson, having heard that the Miss Alans loved violets, unexpectedly filled their room with vases of them. He recounts how Miss Alans found what he did spontaneously quite improper, yet quite beautiful (the story is the detailing of an incident referred to in passing by Miss Alan in Part 1 Chapter 4). Lucy confronts Cecil about what he's done. Cecil, very pleased with himself, explains that he did what he did to teach a lesson to the small-minded Sir Harry. He goes on to explain that he only met the Emersons casually, at the National Gallery. Lucy says he had no business doing what he did, calling him disloyal. She storms off and Cecil calmly watches her go, putting her anger down to snobbishness. He resolves to follow through on his plans, as well as to educate Lucy about the value of living with the wider world, by making friends with the Emersons.

Part 2, Chapter 10 Analysis

The first part of the chapter provides interesting, but ultimately unimportant, information about Lucy's background. The novel has already made it plain that Lucy has a strong conventional streak in her nature and is struggling to overcome it. The chapter indicates where that conventional streak came from, and further defines the important role that

being in Italy plays in erasing it. Aside from indicating that people find Mrs. Honeychurch delightful, this section has little additional purpose.

The complications arising from Cecil's gleefully malevolent manipulation of circumstances define both the plot and Lucy's turbulent growth as a character through the rest of the novel. He has, unwittingly, sown the seeds of his own downfall by bringing the Emersons into the picture. He reveals his essentially selfish and self-satisfied nature, and deludes himself that Lucy will sooner, rather than later, calm herself and enjoy the joke as much as he does.

Part 2, Chapter 11

Part 2, Chapter 11 Summary

In Mrs. Vyse's Well Appointed Flat--Cecil's plans worked out exactly the way he wanted. The Emersons took the villa; upsetting Sir Harry when he found out they weren't the kind of gentlefolk he'd been hoping for. Lucy convinces herself that having the Emersons nearby is not going to pose any difficulty. Then, while visiting the London flat Cecil shares with his mother, Lucy tells Cecil she loves him. Cecil consequently believes that she is finally being submissive, as a woman ought to be.

Lucy receives a letter from Miss Bartlett, forwarded from home. The letter reveals that Miss Bartlett has learned from Miss Lavish, who was on a bicycle tour of the area, that the Emersons have moved into Lucy's neighborhood. She urges Lucy to tell her mother and Cecil everything. However Lucy, who is still angry with Miss Bartlett over tensions that grew up between them in Rome, writes a snippy letter back. She says she couldn't possibly tell everyone because it would make it all a much bigger deal than it needs to be. Sometime later, at a smart dinner party given in her honor by Mrs. Vyse, Lucy is impressed by the "society" Mrs. Vyse assembles. Society, Mrs. Vyse, and Cecil are in turn impressed with Lucy's independence of spirit and musical abilities. She plays a piece by Schumann; but when Cecil asks her to play Beethoven she refuses, and continues to play Schumann. Mrs. Vyse urges Cecil to make her "one of us" as soon as possible, and then tends to Lucy when she later wakes from a nightmare. Cecil had slept through Lucy's nightmare, not hearing her frightened screaming.

Part 2, Chapter 11 Analysis

In a way, Cecil in this chapter has it right. Lucy has indeed decided to be submissive to him. She has decided that there will be no difficulty with the Emersons, or with her own feelings as a result of the Emersons living nearby. She is, in short, reacting in the way Cecil clearly wants her to react, as if the situation is a joke and nothing more. This attitude carries over to her letter to Miss Bartlett. Although Lucy's attitude is colored by their ongoing tensions, she is nevertheless still following Cecil's line of behavior and, it's important to note, her ongoing determination to not admit her own feelings. This is something else important to Cecil.

The depth of this determination is illustrated by her refusal to play Beethoven, which, as previously discussed, represents to her passion, power and triumph. The softer, gentler and more lyrical music of Schumann, on the other hand, expresses her idea of the softer, gentler, more loving woman she believes Cecil wants her to be. Cecil accepts this on face value, citing her choice as an example of how she's developing and deepening. The irony, of course, is that she's doing exactly the opposite - becoming shallower and more compliant. Lucy is her most closed-minded, to the point of being her most self-betraying. Denying Beethoven is the same thing as denying George, violets,

and the un-whispered warning of a dying Italian. She is trying to live her life in a room without a view, but somewhere inside she knows it. Why else would she wake screaming from a nightmare?

Part 2, Chapters 12, 13 and 14

Part 2, Chapters 12, 13 and 14 Summary

These three chapters tell of Lucy's first encounter with George in England, her reaction, and Miss Bartlett's reaction.

Chapter 12 - *Twelfth Chapter*--Mr. Beebe invites Freddy to visit the Emersons, whom he says Freddy will enjoy. They arrive at the villa and, while they're waiting for George to come downstairs, they look through the library. They discover someone has written on the back of a wardrobe "Mistrust all enterprises that require new clothes." Mr. Beebe comments that it must have been Mr. Emerson. George comes downstairs, followed shortly afterwards by Mr. Emerson. Freddy impulsively invites George to go swimming with him, and George accepts. Mr. Emerson and Mr. Beebe get lost in a conversation about the beauties of nature. Freddy tries to interrupt, and finally everyone except Mr. Emerson goes off to swim.

Freddy leads the way through the woods to the Sacred Lake where he, George, and eventually Mr. Beebe, take off their clothes and swim. At first they just paddle about, but then start splashing and playing. Their spirits are free from the confines of adulthood, in the same way their bodies are free from their clothes. George and Freddy chase each other round the pond, unaware of Mr. Beebe's warnings of approaching ladies! Suddenly Freddy and George come face to face with Lucy, Cecil and Mrs. Honeychurch, walking through the woods on their way to pay a call. George and Freddy laugh, while Mrs. Honeychurch (not un-amused) tells them to behave and get dressed. Lucy hides behind her parasol, but nods to George when he says a particular hello to her. Cecil tries to shepherd her and her mother away. At the end of the chapter, narration recounts how the following day the heat of the sun and the natural current of the water emptied the pond. "It had been ... a momentary chalice for youth."

Chapter 13 - *How Miss Bartlett's Boiler was so Tiresome*--Narration recounts how taken aback Lucy was by her encounter with George, describing how she had envisioned and rehearsed a completely different (and much more proper) version of their first meeting. These thoughts pass through her mind while she, Cecil and Mrs. Honeychurch are paying their call, and while Cecil is being deliberately patronizing toward their elderly, conventional hostess. When they get home Lucy and Mrs. Honeychurch argue about Cecil's behavior, with Mrs. Honeychurch commenting on how he's getting more and more patronizing toward everyone. Lucy argues in his defense, stating that he's an advanced thinker and that old-fashioned ways upset him.

Yet she feels increasingly untrue to herself. Instead of getting dressed for dinner, as her mother asked, she looks out at the very limited view out of a window in the hall - no sky, no light. At dinner her thoughts become more and more confused, with memories of George's kiss, Miss Bartlett's warnings, Cecil's attitude, and the story of the violets in Miss Alans' room... all creating a deepening sense of unease in her.

Mrs. Honeychurch turns the conversation to Miss Bartlett, whom she wants to invite for a visit because she's having her boiler replaced. Lucy, aware that neither she nor Cecil likes Miss Bartlett and that her presence would create tension because of the situation with George, argues doggedly in favor of not inviting her. Mrs. Honeychurch scolds her for being ungenerous, and insists that Miss Bartlett come. The chapter concludes with Cecil, who had also argued for Miss Bartlett to not be invited, making one of his patronizing remarks.

Chapter 14 - *How Lucy Faced the External Situation Bravel*--Miss Bartlett accepts Mrs. Honeychurch's invitation. In the days before her arrival, Lucy encounters George and they speak politely, but she is nervous and uneasy. Narration comments that most readers would think Lucy obviously loves George. But for Lucy, who believed she loved Cecil, the "obvious" source of her nervousness wasn't clear at all. Miss Bartlett eventually arrives, having gotten off at the wrong train station and taken a cab, which Freddy paid for. Miss Bartlett insists upon paying him back, leading to a comic argument about who can change her large coins into smaller ones. The argument ends when Lucy takes the coins into the house to be changed by one of the maids.

Miss Bartlett follows and immediately asks whether Lucy has "...told him about him yet?" Lucy says she hasn't, annoyed with herself for understanding so easily what Miss Bartlett meant, as well as with Miss Bartlett for bringing it up. They argue politely about whether Lucy should say anything, with Lucy convinced that George will say nothing and suggesting that he's improved a lot since their encounter in Italy. She describes him as no longer looking as though he wants to burst into tears all the time. Convinced she has won the argument, she takes Miss Bartlett back down into the garden where Cecil is reading a book brought home by his mother. In spite of her outward calmness, however, Lucy's mind is fuller than ever of violets, kisses, and sudden feeling.

Part 2, Chapters 12, 13 and 14 Analysis

The visit to the Sacred Lake dramatizes the emotional changes George experiences, following his experiences with Lucy in Italy, such as the death in the Piazza Signoria (which inspired him to want to live - Part 1 Chapter 4) and the kiss in the field. He is clearly making an attempt to live according to both his personal passions and the teachings of his father, whose scrawl on the wardrobe foreshadows the incident at the lake and is a comic commentary on the necessities of convention (i.e. buying new clothes in order to make a good impression). George's joyful greeting to Lucy is a further indication of abandoning his reticence and inhibitions, as is Lucy's comment about him to Miss Bartlett.

It's interesting to note that Lucy has made the observation at all. It indicates that she is much more aware of him, sensitive to him and attuned to him than she is letting herself realize. Her comment, therefore, foreshadows her eventual acceptance of that aspect of herself and her eventual marriage to George, even though she is still struggling hard against him and all he represents.

The contrast between Cecil's behavior and that of several other characters is well drawn here. In comparison to Mrs. Honeychurch's playful pragmatism, Lucy's emotional confusion, the spontaneous joy of the two young men (Freddy and George) and the surprising youthfulness of Mr. Beebe, Cecil reacts with conventional prudery as he tries to lead Mrs. Honeychurch and Lucy away. So much for his precious advanced thinking. To look at it another way, every character in this section, except Cecil, experiences and celebrates the freedom and joy of the swim in the lake - even Lucy, who's aware of it but tries to suppress it. Cecil, in his complete rejections of that joy, demonstrates more vividly than ever how he simply does not fit in the world of feeling, expression of feeling and wider views of the self.

This narrowness of perspective is represented by the view Lucy sees out of the window in the hall after the fight with her mother. As always, views represent levels of emotional freedom. When Lucy experiences a smallness of view after she encounters Cecil's smallness of spirit, it's a sign she's on the wrong path. Union with Cecil represses her, as opposed to George, who adores and frees her. Meanwhile, the arrival of Miss Bartlett heightens the narrative tension, as her persistent pot stirring creates complication after complication for Lucy. The first example is the way she brings up George at the first available opportunity. As she does so, Lucy is in the process of fighting all the feelings and questions that being around George awakens in her. Miss Bartlett's oppressively tactful, but clearly obsessive, curiosity brings those feelings and questions back to the surface; and Lucy knows that this is exactly what would happen. This is why she is so adamant that Miss Bartlett not come. But come she does, with the inevitable result that Lucy's veneer of calmness becomes even more difficult to maintain. It becomes impossible to do so in the following chapter, in which the final sequence of events leading Lucy to confront her feelings is set in motion. Those events are foreshadowed by the appearance of Cecil's book, which plays a key role in initiating Lucy's ultimate spiritual crisis.

Part 2, Chapter 15

Part 2, Chapter 15 Summary

The Disaster Within--The Sunday after Miss Bartlett's arrival, the women of the house fuss, as they get ready for church. The book Cecil had been reading sits forgotten outside, until Mrs. Honeychurch sees it and fusses over that too. She, Miss Bartlett, and Lucy all go to church, after which they encounter the Emersons. Mrs. Honeychurch is introduced. She and the Emersons speak with teasing, clever playfulness to each other, and Lucy thinks that George and her mother would probably get along. Miss Bartlett, however, refuses to join the conversation, pointedly getting into the carriage when invited by Lucy. She reflects on how the argument with the Emersons over the rooms with the view at the Pension Bertolini seems, at least in Miss Bartlett's mind, still to be going on.

The conversation with the Emersons indicates to Lucy that George has told his father nothing about what happened on the hillside, and she feels so relieved that she invites George to play tennis. George accepts. That afternoon he, Lucy, Freddy, and Freddy's visiting friend play doubles, as Cecil annoyingly and repeatedly interrupts with readings from his book. Lucy realizes the book was written by Miss Lavish, stops playing, and sits to listen more closely, inviting George to do the same. Cecil, however, is annoyed by their talking about Miss Lavish, and resolves to read no longer.

In the silence that follows, Lucy and George converse about the view from Windy Corner, with George speaking eloquently about his father's belief that there are two classes of people "those who forget views and those who remember them, even in small rooms." Cecil, even more annoyed now, gets up to leave. Lucy asks him to stay, tells George to be quiet, and flips through the book in search of the point at which Cecil stopped reading. She catches sight of the opening of Chapter 2, reacts with shock, and tries to discourage Cecil from reading it aloud. Cecil insists, and Lucy listens with growing horror as her encounter with George on the hillside is described in perfect, accurate detail. Cecil realizes that that wasn't what he wanted to read and searches through the book, but Lucy suggests they go in to tea. They start in, but Cecil forgets the book and has to go back. Lucy, alone with George in a quiet part of the garden, is taken into his arms and again kissed. Narration then recounts how George leaves her, Cecil joins her, and together they go in to tea.

Part 2, Chapter 15 Analysis

There are two significant and essential elements in this section. The first is the conversation about views, which again reiterates their symbolic importance and the layers of meaning the symbol embodies. Lucy and George clearly belong to the first class of person, as do Mr. Emerson and probably Mrs. Honeychurch. To one degree or another, these characters remember and rejoice in the feelings and experiences

symbolically represented by open, beautiful views, which are their freedom and delightful experiences of emotional humanity. Cecil, on the other hand, is clearly someone with little or no experience or appreciation of such views. What's interesting here is his perception that he's one of these people.

This idea is reinforced by his earlier comment (Part 2 Chapter 9) that he thinks Lucy imagines him most frequently in rooms without views. His hurt, when she agrees, indicates that he wants to be a person who enjoys views. However his reaction, whenever confronted with emotional open-ness, freedom and passion (i.e. the encounter at the Sacred Lake), indicates he has a long way to go before that goal is achieved. An interesting question to consider is where Miss Bartlett fits on this continuum. An easy conclusion would be to think of her as Cecil-like, having no perspective and no view at all. Later in the novel, however, other possibilities emerge, suggesting Miss Bartlett's spiritual room does indeed have a view, albeit a very small and barely remembered one.

The second important element in this scene is the point of dramatic crisis, reached when Lucy recognizes her experience with George in Miss Lavish's novel. This is important on two levels. First it triggers the realization that since Miss Lavish wasn't there to witness the encounter personally, Miss Bartlett broke her promise to keep what happened a secret. In other words, Miss Bartlett told Miss Lavish. The repercussions of Lucy's realization of this fuel the dramatic conflict in the following chapter, as well as the total destruction of what little closeness she and Miss Bartlett may have had.

The second level of importance to the reading of the novel is that it triggers George's second kiss, which in turn triggers Lucy's increasingly desperate efforts to suppress her feelings. In the chapters that follow, all of which focus on the lies she tells others, what she's really doing is lying to herself in an effort live according to convention. What she doesn't realize is that she's trying to turn herself into George's second category of person - one who has no relationship with or takes no joy in views, either remembered or experienced.

Part 2, Chapters 16, 17 and 18

Part 2, Chapters 16, 17 and 18 Summary

These three chapters focus on the increasingly desperate lengths Lucy goes to in order to avoid dealing with her feelings for George.

Chapter 16 - *Lying to George*--After the encounter with George in the garden Lucy reacts calmly, determined to fight the feelings of love arising in her and to fulfill her duty to Cecil. She sends for Miss Bartlett, tells her what happened, and accuses her of telling Miss Lavish about the incident on the hillside. Miss Bartlett tries desperately to avoid answering, but eventually is forced to admit that yes, she did, in fact, tell Miss Lavish everything. But her vows that Miss Lavish will no longer be her friend mean nothing to Lucy, who wants to know what to do next. "We've ... made a muddle of it," she says, wanting to know whether George is to be left unpunished. She asks Miss Bartlett to speak to him, as she did on their last night at the Pension Bertolini; but Miss Bartlett is too caught up in self-recrimination for having told Miss Lavish.

Lucy takes matters into her own hands, bringing Miss Bartlett along with her as she confronts George, telling him she never wants to see him again. George struggles to convince her that he loves her and should marry him, not Cecil. He states that Cecil is the kind of person who can't know a woman intimately and wants to marry Lucy so he can control her. Lucy calmly suggests that, in trying to get her to leave Cecil, George, too, wants to control her. George admits that's true, but adds that he wants her to have her own thoughts and feelings, even while she's wrapped in his arms. He speaks passionately about his love for her, appeals to Miss Bartlett for understanding, and confessing that he believes deeply that love matters intellectually as well as emotionally.

Lucy indicates that she wants him to leave (this is the lie that gives the chapter its title). Seeing that he's getting nowhere with Lucy, he goes out. After he's gone Miss Bartlett makes gently mocking comments about him and leads Lucy back down to the garden, where Freddy wants to play another game of tennis. Lucy says they can't because George has gone. Freddy tries to get Cecil to play. Cecil refuses, speaking in the patronizing manner he always uses when he speaks to Freddy. Lucy suddenly realizes how intolerable he is. Narration recounts how, that evening, she broke off her engagement.

Chapter 17 - *Lying to Cecil*--The chapter begins in the moments immediately following Lucy breaking off of her engagement. Cecil reacts with bewilderment, saying that Lucy is behaving unlike herself. Lucy takes him to be suggesting that she loves someone else, and angrily tells him she's not (this is the lie she tells in this chapter). Becoming increasingly angry, she tells him she's long been questioning whether their marriage is a good idea, and lists several reasons: he doesn't like her family, she isn't educated enough and he can't know a woman intimately. In making this comment, she quotes George's argument, apparently without realizing she's doing so. She does the same

thing again as she tells Cecil that she won't be controlled by him, adding that he doesn't understand people.

Cecil, after a moment, admits that she's right. As he continues, Lucy realizes that he's behaving better as their engagement is breaking off than he ever did while it was still on. After speaking at length about how much he's learned from Lucy and how grateful he is to her, he asks to shake her hand. Lucy agrees, they bid each other goodnight, and Lucy says goodbye to him. As she watches him go, Lucy vows to herself to never marry, telling herself to forget George's protestations of love. As she reflects on how she is sending George into the darkness, she puts out a lamp and goes upstairs. The book delves into how the world is full of people who put aside passion and joy in the name of pursuing duty. It describes those people as hardening toward cynicism and hypocrisy. It compares them to spreaders of discomfort, and suggests that Lucy became one of those people that night. The chapter concludes with a description of Lucy going to bed. "The night received her, as it had received Miss Bartlett thirty years before."

Chapter 18 - *Lying to Mr. Beebe [and others]*--Mr. Beebe rides over to Windy Corner with a letter from the Miss Alans that he wants to show Lucy. They are planning to go to Greece. He encounters Freddy and Cecil, on their way to the train station. Cecil is evidently leaving. He and Mr. Beebe make small talk about Miss Alans and about Italy being more attractive than Greece, and then Cecil enters the carriage. Freddy whispers to Mr. Beebe that Cecil is upset because Lucy broke off the engagement. As Freddy and Cecil drive off, Mr. Beebe reflects briefly on how glad he is and then goes into the house. He finds Lucy at the piano reflectively playing Mozart, decides to not disturb her and goes down into the garden. He finds his niece, Minnie, watching as Miss Bartlett unsuccessfully tries to help Mrs. Honeychurch repair damage to some windblown flowers.

Mr. Beebe invites Miss Bartlett and Minnie to tea with him; and Mrs. Honeychurch, with some relief, tells them to go. As he's waiting for Miss Bartlett and Minnie to change clothes, Mr. Beebe tells Lucy the news about Miss Alans. Lucy, to his surprise, becomes suddenly and intensely enthusiastic, having the idea that she should go with them. Having broken off her engagement, she says, she needs some time away to give everyone time to recover (this is the lie she tells in this chapter). While at tea with Miss Bartlett, Mr. Beebe tells her Lucy's idea. Miss Bartlett says she can understand why Lucy might want some time away. However she doesn't think going as far as Greece is necessary, adding that she invited Lucy to visit her, but was refused.

Nevertheless, she tells Mr. Beebe that she will support the idea of traveling to Greece, hinting darkly that she knows the real reason why Lucy wants to leave and imploring Mr. Beebe to help convince Mrs. Honeychurch. Somewhat bewildered, Mr. Beebe agrees, because he believes in celibacy and virginity more than he believes in the value of marriage. They return to Windy Corner, where they eventually convince Mrs. Honeychurch that the expense and bother of sending Lucy to Greece is both necessary and worthwhile. They give Lucy the news, and she reacts with enthusiastic gratitude. After a brief argument over the song Lucy is playing and singing - she loves it and Freddy hates it because of the lyrics - Mr. Beebe leaves, content in the knowledge that

Lucy had behaved splendidly. As he goes into the night, he recalls the words of the song ... "Vacant heart and hand and eye/Easy live and quiet die."

Part 2, Chapters 16, 17 and 18 Analysis

The narrative tension in all three of these chapters comes from Lucy's internal struggles translating into external action. In other words, her determination to avoid the truth about her feelings for George struggles with her growing awareness of that truth. As a consequence of both experiences, she takes drastic steps. She says to Miss Bartlett she's in a muddle; and to her credit she takes clear steps to end that muddle. The problem is that some of those steps could probably be described as getting off on the wrong foot - her lies to George and Miss Bartlett about her feelings and her spontaneous, almost hysterical determination to go to Greece. The latter is not, as she suggests, fueled by a need to get away, but by her desperation to avoid George and the feelings he awakens in her.

As those feelings strengthen and intensify, they also become harder to deny. At the same time as they fuel her desperation, however, they also fuel her awareness of another fact - her utter incompatibility with Cecil. This is the key example of how her growing awareness of, and union with, herself affects her actions. Yes, Cecil is insufferable. Yes, he can't stand her family and yes, those are also reasons why she breaks off the engagement. But the key reason she finds him insufferable is that he is so clearly repressive and judgmental about the part of her that she holds most dear. It is the part that is blooming within her like the field of violets in Italy - her ideas, her feelings, and her freedom.

What's ironic here is that Lucy is not yet consciously aware that this part of her is the most important part of her life. She's reacting to her feelings in the same way as George is - spontaneously and without a great deal of thought. The problem is that Lucy is reacting negatively, trying to push those feelings away. George embraced, and continues to embrace, his feelings fully, openly and trustingly. Lucy acts more and more repressively, turning herself into, as her mother points out in the following chapter, Miss Bartlett. The closing paragraphs of Chapter 17 foreshadow this development, as they convey the potential emptiness that may result from Lucy's choice. What's interesting in this section, however, is not only the gentle sense of painful sadness, unique to this generally and ultimately joyous novel, but also the twist it puts on the experience by the invocation of Miss Bartlett.

The sense of surprise at both the mention of Miss Bartlett, and the implication that Lucy's situation is akin to hers, is almost tangible. It raises one of the novel's most intriguing questions, one that relates back to the previously discussed possibility (Part 2 Chapter 15) that, in spite of the impression she gives, Miss Bartlett is in fact a view person, albeit with a very small and distantly viewed one. Did Miss Bartlett, at some point in her youth, have an experience similar to the experience Lucy had with George? The implication here is that she did, an implication reinforced by the conclusions drawn by George at the end of the novel (Chapter 20). He explains somewhat surprising

actions in the following chapter by suggesting that Miss Bartlett knew exactly what Lucy was experiencing, because she had experienced it too. Whether she did or didn't is never explicitly confirmed. The point is that because the question is raised, the novel's emotional context and thematic resonance take on even more depth. Life and passion, it seems, can be found in the most unexpected places.

The final words of Chapter 18, the song lyrics so hated by the youthful, passionate Freddy, represent the kind of life that Lucy is potentially moving toward. It is the kind of life described in the final paragraphs of Chapter 17 - a life that may be quiet, serene and easy to live, but one that is ultimately empty. Freddy hates the idea of an empty life. Perhaps this is why he has such a difficult time enjoying Miss Bartlett. This may also be why he detests Cecil. He sees Cecil's life as empty, and is glad that Lucy breaks off with him. He saw the potential for her living a similarly empty life. The trouble is, Lucy is on her way to living that life on her own. Only the intervention of Mr. Emerson in the following, climactic chapter can save her.

Part 2, Chapter 19

Part 2, Chapter 19 Summary

Lying to Mr. Emerson--In London, Lucy and Mrs. Honeychurch meet with Miss Alans and her sister to plan the trip to Greece. Well-meaning questions from Miss Alans lead to awkward half-truth responses; and after she and Lucy leave, Mrs. Honeychurch irritably asks why Lucy is keeping news of her broken engagement a secret. Lucy tells her it's because she doesn't want to be bothered with questions and gossip. However the truth is that she doesn't want George to hear she's no longer engaged; believing that, if he does, he will resume his improper advances. She and Mrs. Honeychurch argue all the way home, with Mrs. Honeychurch saying that Lucy gets more and more like the martyred, manipulating Miss Bartlett all the time and Lucy angrily insisting she's nothing of the sort.

They make a kind of peace only as the carriage pulls up in front of Mr. Beebe's home to pick up Miss Bartlett. Lucy notices that the door to the Emersons' home is padlocked, and learns from the coach driver that the Emersons are leaving. George finds the travel to and from London for work too tiring, and Mr. Emerson needs his son closer to home because his rheumatism is troubling him. Lucy instantly realizes all the fuss she's created about going to Greece has been for nothing, and feels particularly guilty about having argued with her mother.

Meanwhile, Miss Bartlett comes out of Mr. Beebe's home and announces that that she wants to go to church. Exasperated, Mrs. Honeychurch agrees to go with her. Lucy remains behind, goes into Mr. Beebe's sitting room, and discovers Mr. Emerson, who is staying there for the night until George and the movers come the following day. Lucy immediately becomes cold and distant, but cannot remain so once Mr. Emerson starts apologizing for George's behavior. He explains that George loves Lucy, and that not being able to be with her is hurting him in the same way as his mother was hurt. At this point, it becomes clear what Mr. Eager meant (Part 1 Chapter 5) when he said Mr. Emerson killed his wife in the eyes of God. Mr. Emerson explains that because he disbelieved in religion he had refused to have George baptized, but when he became ill his wife believed it was a judgment from God. She called Mr. Eager, while Mr. Emerson was gone, and was about to have the baptism take place. When Mr. Emerson returned, he prevented it and threw Mr. Eager out. Shortly afterwards, Mr. Emerson says, his wife died, adding that George is just like her, physically, spiritually and emotionally. He says that since Lucy rejected him after the kiss in the garden (Part 2 Chapter 16) he became as despondent as his mother, which is part of the reason the Emersons are moving to London.

Lucy tells them she's going to Greece, and urges them to not leave on her account. Mr. Emerson asks why she's going away to Greece when she's to be married soon, and assumes that Cecil is going with her. Lucy (in the lie to which the title of this chapter refers) lets him think that that is in fact the case. Mr. Beebe then arrives and asks Lucy

how she got on with Miss Alans, asking Mr. Emerson whether he thinks it's brave of the three ladies to tackle Greece on their own. Caught in her lie, Lucy tells Mr. Emerson the truth - at least about Cecil and her engagement. Mr. Emerson gently suggests that she's in a muddle, that muddles must be avoided at all costs. After all, it was a muddle led to his wife's death.

Suddenly he makes a realization, and confronts Lucy with the fact she's going to Greece because she loves George! Lucy angrily denies it. Mr. Emerson tells her that, even if she goes to Greece, she will never be able to forget George or his love for her. As she weeps he urges her to make herself happy and marry him. Narration recounts, "as he spoke the darkness was withdrawn ... and she saw to the bottom of her soul." In other words, she finally faces the truth. She gasps that all the plans for Greece have been made, and that she will have to face the humiliation of admitting that she lied.

Mr. Emerson tells her frankly that she has to face the consequences of everything she did. Lucy turns to the still present Mr. Beebe for support. Offended by both her lies and her apparent refusal to live his preferred celibate life, he nevertheless tells her to marry George. "He will do admirably," he says. Mr. Emerson gently urges her to remember Florence and the view, face her muddle, and fight for truth. She asks him to kiss her and he does so. She takes the strength gained from that kiss out into the carriage and tells her mother and Miss Bartlett the truth. She comments for years afterwards that she "never exactly understood ... how he managed to strengthen her. It was as if he had made her see the whole of everything at once."

Part 2, Chapter 19 Analysis

This chapter contains the novel's highest point of crisis and its climax. Through her conversation with Mr. Emerson, Lucy is forced to confront the true depths and meaning of her feelings for George, and to face the consequences of the lies she's told. Most of these have to do with the denial of those feelings to herself, and to others. As a result of this conversation she finally faces who she is, what she feels, and why. This is the novel's climax, as she sees "to the bottom of her soul" and finally and fully embraces what she finds there - the view from her inner room, with its violets, the thundering roar of passion, George's kisses, the pain and shame of her lies, everything.

Along the way, there are somewhat smaller, but nonetheless telling, incidents that play a part in propelling Lucy into this final revelation. The first of these is the pointed, accurate and, for Lucy, very irritating comment made by Mrs. Honeychurch that she resembles Miss Bartlett more and more every day. The comment follows through on the narrative reference to Miss Bartlett at the end of Part 2 Chapter 17. The suggestion here is that in denying her feelings the way Miss Bartlett perhaps did, Lucy is becoming as small minded, as martyred and as selfish as her despised chaperone. There is the sense that Lucy, almost more than anything else, doesn't want to end up as miserable as Miss Bartlett. This is not an insignificant contribution to her ultimate choice of facing and living with the truth. Another contribution is made by Mr. Emerson's story about his wife. This illustrates for Lucy the dangerous smallness of attitudes and belief systems like Mr.

Eager's, and more importantly shows her the smallness of her own attitudes by likening George's reaction to Lucy's rejection to his mother's reaction to Mr. Eager's denunciation.

The final point to note in this chapter is related to the actions and motivations of Miss Bartlett, and whether Miss Bartlett has, for lack of a better phrase, a "George incident" in her past (discussed in relation to the end of Part 2 Chapter 17). It also raises the question whether, as George suggests in Part 2 Chapter 20, she doesn't tell Lucy on purpose that Mr. Emerson was in Mr. Beebe's home. The situation must be considered in some detail. The novel makes clear that Miss Bartlett continues to despise the Emersons and everything they stand for, a situation pointed out by her refusal to greet them in Part 2 Chapter 17 and her continued insistence that Lucy put George in his place. Yet in this chapter, as George points out in Part 2 Chapter 20, she knows Mr. Emerson is in the house when she comes out, doesn't insist that Lucy come to church, and makes no resistance when Lucy suggests she'll wait inside.

Another point to consider is her attitude in Part 2 Chapter 16, where she feebly backs down from confronting George and leaves the conversation to Lucy. Is she, again as George suggests, subconsciously trying to bring them together? It's impossible to say. Whether she's overtly trying to unite them, or subconsciously choosing to not act to keep them apart, it amounts to the same thing. By her action, or inaction, in this chapter, Miss Bartlett connects Lucy with the one person who can inspire her to live her truth - Mr. Emerson, who does what nature has apparently intended him to do all along. It started in Part 1 Chapter 1 with his insistence that Lucy have the room with the view (which, as has already been seen, represents a broader perspective on feeling and relationships). It continued in Santa Croce (Part 1 Chapter 2) in which he urged her to become friends with George, and concludes here. He has brought light and life into her soul, making the view from Lucy's inner room complete - a circumstance tenderly detailed in the following, final chapter.

Part 2, Chapter 20

Part 2, Chapter 20 Summary

This chapter takes place back in Italy.

The End of the Middle Ages-- Miss Alans did, indeed, go to Greece and thence around the world; but the story must be content with a visit to a much smaller voyage - back to the Pension Bertolini. Lucy and George, now married, argue playfully about whether they're in his original room or hers. As George looks out at the view and describes it to his wife, Lucy reflects on a letter from Freddy and on her changed relationship with her mother and brother. She thinks they will never love her, welcome her or trust her again; but George hints that once they get back home everything will be fine.

Their conversation, repeatedly interrupted by a coach-driver shouting up to them to take them for a ride, turns to how their happiness is dependent on small moments and choices made by unexpected people such as Cecil, Miss Lavish and Miss Bartlett. Lucy comments that if Miss Bartlett had known Mr. Emerson was at Mr. Beebe's that night (Part 2, Chapter 19), she would have insisted that Lucy come to church with her and everything would be different. George informs her that his father told him he and Miss Bartlett saw each other. They didn't speak, but she definitely knew he was there. Lucy insists she couldn't have, saying that Miss Bartlett would never have let her speak with him. George insists that his father is right; and then both he and Lucy come to the same conclusion - that Miss Bartlett did know.

They theorize that somehow, in spite of everything she did to keep them apart, on some level she wanted them to be together. They wonder whether she chose to leave Lucy with Mr. Emerson in the hope their conversation would encourage Lucy to admit the truth and be happy. As the driver again interrupts them, Lucy gently calls down and asks him to leave them alone - they're on their honeymoon. The driver, who reminds them of Phaeton (the driver in Part 1 Chapter 6), immediately and graciously goes away, wishing them good night.

Part 2, Chapter 20 Analysis

The title of this chapter has particular meaning, in that the Middle Ages are often historically described by the term "medieval" which, as has been discussed, refers to a particularly limited and repressive attitude towards women, feeling and relationships. *"The End of the Middle Ages"*, therefore, refers to the end of this period of Lucy's life. She is no longer a medieval woman in need of protection and dominance. She has accepted her own feelings, passions, desires and thoughts. She has become more modern, more independent, freer, and much more in love. As such, there can be little doubt in the mind of the reader that George is right - once he and Lucy return to Windy Corner all will be forgiven. The seeds of Lucy's mental, spiritual and emotional freedom

were sowed in her home and family, where the blooming and blossoming of those seeds through her union with George will no doubt be celebrated. Lucy's self-made muddles have been put right. Her loving and compassionate family will soon understand. Mrs. Honeychurch will welcome a son-in-law with whom she already gets along. Freddy will welcome a tennis-playing brother in law, and Lucy will eventually be congratulated on having followed, but first on finding, her heart.

The most important element of this chapter is the theory it presents about Miss Bartlett. George puts the pieces of the puzzle together most effectively and intriguingly. He makes it clear, and perhaps even logical, that the repressed Miss Bartlett might, in fact, have helped bring them together. It may be that, in spite of how she presents herself, she is one of the first class of people referred to by George in Part 2 Chapter 15, when he spoke of people who remember views and people who don't. The possibility first becomes apparent at the end of Part 1 Chapter 17, which hints at the chance that, once upon a time, Miss Bartlett loved as passionately as George and Lucy. The possibility is also evident in Miss Bartlett's actions, or inactions, in leaving Lucy alone with Mr. Emerson in Part 2 Chapter 19. George's deduction, and Lucy's bemused agreement with it, increases the likelihood that the possibility is, in fact, a reality. Perhaps Miss Bartlett, in her small conventional room, still remembers the view of love and passion that seems to have filled her life at one point, the way that it now fills George's and Lucy's.

The appearance of the driver embodies the role that Italy and its people played in bringing Lucy and George together. He represents, not only Phaeton, but also the dying man in the Piazza Signoria, Persephone, the man who pestered Lucy and Mr. Eager (Part 1 Chapter 5), the river, the views, the violets and the storms. He is Italy's passion, its art, its light and all the manifestations of its expansive spirit. In bidding him a gentle thank you and good night Lucy is thanking Italy, saying we are where we are and we have the view thanks to you. Yet she is also saying we are married, our lives, our feelings and our truths are our own.. We must be left now to live according to what you've taught us. As the driver goes away and the immediate need for Italy recedes; but its impact is felt forever in the lives of Lucy, George and in the minds and memories of the reader, whose own view has perhaps been improved.

Characters

The Miss Alans

Miss Theresa and Miss Catherine Alan are normally referred to as "the Miss Alans who stood for good breeding." They are yet another example of what Lucy might become by following Charlotte. They have chosen independence but within the confines of society's rules. They can remain single but they gain little in doing so. They are dull people who see the world as a book. They travel to read the great book and learn about life but they cannot live for themselves. They cannot be passionate living people. They must be staid, demure, and carry their guidebooks. They are part of the Army of Darkness.

Lucy is actually en route to join them when she confronts Mr. Emerson. At this moment, the Greek spirit, in the form of life with George, can be hers but she thinks she wants to study past Greek civilization. Fortunately, she chooses to live life now.

Charlotte Bartlett

Cousin Charlotte is not as rich as Lucy and travels with monetary help from Lucy's mother. In return for this help, Charlotte tries to impart her wisdom to Lucy by acting as chaperone. Instead, she comes off as a self-serving spinster who loves to play the role of "prematurely aged martyr."Charlotte is also a prude, absurdly so. Charlotte successfully manipulates Lucy into a successful match with Cecil. When this proves obviously stifling to her protege, Charlotte orchestrates an escape route in the form of independence and travel to Greece. The Comic Muse has the last laugh, however, and Charlotte's visit to church allows Lucy to converse with Mr. Emerson who convinces her to marry George. The happy couple wonder whether Charlotte intended the fortuitous meeting.

Arthur Beebe

At first appearance, Beebe seems to be a tolerant man hoping to see Lucy blossom in all the glory she can possibly attain as a young woman. Through the course of the novel, however, Beebe reveals that he wants Lucy to become a gothic statue—celibate, religious, and proper. Mr. Beebe thinks people are "better detached." As his name suggests, Beebe is a drone worker for the hive. He is a clergyman who ministers to the needs of the hive's proper functioning. Lucy, for Beebe, is a problem.

Mr. Beebe has a theory about Lucy which he shares with Cecil while he doesn't know of the couple's engagement. Some day, Beebe thinks, Lucy's musical ability will merge with her quiet living. Then she will be both "heroically good, heroically bad." He pictures her in his diary as a kite whose string is held by Miss Bartlett. In the next picture of the Lucy series, the string breaks. Mr. Beebe, therefore, is disappointed when he hears that Lucy is to marry Cecil. In the end, when he hears that Lucy loves George, Beebe shows

her a genuine concern for the first time. However, his feelings about the idea of Lucy's life with George remain ambiguous; he only wants to help Lucy.

Minnie Beebe

Mr. Beebe has taken charge of the education of his niece, Minnie. The little girl looks to Lucy as a role model and shows that she has Emersonian potential when she insists on sitting outside at the pub.

Cuthbert Eager

Mr. Eager serves as chaplain to the English expatriates living around Florence as well as to the tourists. However, he helps to keep the two groups separate. The expatriates jealously guard their knowledge and access to the real Florence from the ignorant tourists with their Baedekers. Every so often, a tourist will appear in Florence who is above-average. Only such select people are taken by Mr. Eager to the expatriate group. Lucy receives such an invitation. However, the inclusion of others on the outing by Mr. Beebe dissuades Mr. Eager from taking her to "tea at a Renaissance villa."

George Emerson

The younger Emerson, George, "has a view too." Though freed of the molds of religion by his father's enlightened scheme of education, George is a classic melancholic depressed by too much knowledge. Mr. Beebe reveals several of the works George has imbibed—books that easily lead one to a despondent view of life. Reflecting the Freudian airs of the time, George's melancholia can be cured by sex. Happily, Mr. Emerson sees very quickly, Lucy's problem can also be solved by sex. The two young people are introduced and love takes over.

George scoffs at a society that wants to bar him from kissing a woman when he wants to and running through suburbia naked. "He had sighed among the tombs at Santa Croce because things wouldn't fit;... after the death of that obscure Italian he had leant over the parapet by the Arno and said to [Lucy]: "I shall want to live, I tell you." Playing tennis he shows that he wants to live and in doing so seems to shine like the sun. By the end of the novel, George and Lucy will, like Phaeton and Phoebus, show that life must be lived in the fullness of the moment.

Mr. Emerson

Mr. Emerson has a distinct view which frees him from answering to a specific social order or mechanic clique. Mr. Emerson is a man of the Enlightenment who values experience and science and, in his thoughts about education, conjures Jean-Jacques Rousseau. Taken together, Mr. Emerson— in comic theory terms—is the wise elder who comes off as an angry old man. He views his purpose in life as that of a teacher—he

wants to free the minds of the young so they will make decisions and personal philosophies based on experience, not the dictates of society. He reveals this in his encounter with the child in Santa Croce. Mr. Emerson is horrified that a child plays in the dark of a church instead of running around in the sunshine. Mr. Emerson "is kind to people because he loves them." Such honesty horrifies members of society who are accustomed to the awful machinations of women like Charlotte and men like Cecil.

Mr. Emerson looms large in the novel, for his singular gesture of room-swapping disrupts the ritual of society beyond recovery. The Emersons have the rooms with a view—they can see the beauty of Italy and the role of passion in life. By giving his room to Lucy, Mr. Emerson lets her taste this view—a view she will come to adopt as her own. His reasons for doing so allow a discussion of the assumptions underlying the view held by society— thus, on the matters of religion, gender, education, art, and music, Mr. Emerson shows Lucy that there are alternatives.

Freddy Honeychurch

As with Lucy, society assumes that Freddy will take his rightful place and become Lord of Windy Corner. Charlotte, in Part I, presents Freddy as the chivalrous type who would defend his sister's honor against any who might dare sully it. However, Freddy fails at chivalrous calculating. Thus, in his amusement over Cecil's medieval request for his sister's hand, he replies rashly; "Take her or leave her; it's no business of mine!" But Freddy does not pose such thoughts intellectually—Freddy acts in the heat of the moment. Freddy embodies the comic spirit—he is a "seize the day" type of character. His response to Cecil and other social blunders indicate this. While Mr. Beebe theorizes the Garden of Eden, Freddy asks, "what about this bathe?" Enough talk, says Freddy, let's have fun.

Still, Freddy tries to gain an education in manners though he merely acquires bruises. His endless self-consciousness about the way in which he handled Cecil pains him. Freddy doesn't like Cecil but he adores his sister. He tries to emulate Cecil once he knows him but George disrupts Freddy's education. George also encourages Freddy's natural philosophy. Freddy believes in the notion of "freedom of the individual"—so long as nobody else is hurt.

Lucy Honeychurch

Lucy, the protagonist, is from a middle-class family accidentally brought up in society through association with bluebloods. Her coming of age involves an achievement of wisdom, or view, of life. In the process, she unsuccessfully attempts to mold herself into a proper woman to please her mother, her teacher (Charlotte), and her fairy-tale suitor (Cecil). Within this route, she might have emulated the Miss Alans who represent a kind of feminine freedom within the rules of Cecil's world. Instead, she becomes "a rebel who desired, not a wider dwelling-room, but equality beside the man she loved." Her decision costs her to "break the whole of life." By accomplishing such destruction and

deriving genuine happiness, she becomes a beacon to others; she shows that women can have a view alongside a man.

Lucy's name announces her allegorical status. Her name comes from the Latin word for light. Throughout the novel Lucy cannot help but love light (especially sunlight), nature, and views of pretty scenes. However, the world which longs to possess her is the "army of darkness." There, bourgeois rules, fashion, and rooms are the views that must be enjoyed. Such a life of shadows does not accommodate members of the light. Lucy's challenge in the novel is to stay true to herself and have a clear view or be a proper woman and be snuffed out. Throughout the work, Lucy's journey toward her true nature as a light is revealed in the degree to which she stands in the shadows. Her final epiphany, of course, finds her fumbling in the dark before Mr. Emerson. This darkest and most trying of hours gives way to the brilliance of happiness with George.

Mrs. Honeychurch

Widowed mother of Lucy and Freddy, Mrs. Honeychurch is mistress of Windy Corner. The house was a speculative venture on the part of her husband, an honest solicitor, but its early existence in what was becoming a suburb of London made the newly arrived aristocracy regard the Honey-churches as old blood. By the time they learned of the error, it was too late and the middle-class family had been raised to the upper class.

Mrs. Honeychurch is an antifeminist who mistrusts passion. Despite being in charge of her own household, she glories in doing what she can to uphold traditional gender roles. She gets worked up about women who do not take up their proper place, saying "beware of women altogether"—especially women writers. She compliments men as embodiments of their chivalrous role. Aware of the change that occurs in Lucy around music, Mrs. Honeychurch hopes Lucy will "never live a duet."

Eleanor Lavish

The stock phrase "Miss Lavish is so original" is used several times to describe this representative of early-twentieth-century liberated woman. Society members perceive her as being a radical, wise woman of the world and they tolerate her as such. This tolerance and encouragement symbolize the traditional ability of the upper classes to purchase and enjoy the superficially subversive artists, art-work, or person. Miss Lavish, in a way, plays the role of fool. She may appear to understand how lifeless society is but she can't bear to leave the courtroom. She remains the clown, not a spout of wisdom, because she doesn't care about others. Mr. Emerson, her opposite, does care and does succeed in saving a soul from society's vise.

As a novelist, Miss Lavish mirrors Forster. Her novel about an Italian romance uses Lucy as inspirational material. The book should entrap Lucy in the "army of darkness" but the opposite happens. Lucy sees herself incompletely in that artwork and sets about finishing her creation of herself.

Harry Otway

A member of the local aristocracy in Sussex and a friend of the Honeychurch family, Sir Harry Otway has recently purchased the Cissie and Albert cottages from Mr. Flack. These two cottages, to many in the area, have ruined the traditional main street. In late-twentieth-century parlance, the cottages are sprawl constructions that are hurriedly built without regard to the established aesthetic. Otway's inability to prevent their construction brought him much criticism from his peers. He now hopes to assuage the predicament by finding good tenants. Proper, in this case, is homogenous. Otway hopes to find a certain tenant with the right class, race, and ethnic identities. Such screening will become a mainstay of suburbs as they try to keep out blacks in the course of the twentieth century. In terms of the novel, Otway represents another failure of an otherwise likable person to keep pace with the times. Significantly, it is Cecil who "helps" him complete the search.

Phaethon

Phaethon, in Greek mythology, was allowed by his father, Helios, to drive the sun chariot for a day. Unable to control the horses, the chariot began to burn the earth until Zeus' thunderbolt knocked Phaethon into the river Po. He is the mythological counterpart to George, a railroad worker, who will succeed in driving a new chariot in a new way.

Phoebe

The driver of the carriage on the outing to Fiesole begs permission to pick up his "sister." As it turns out, Phoebe is his girlfriend and they proceed to behave as young lovers, right under Mr. Eager's nose. Her name conjures the Titan daughter of Uranus and Gaea in Greek mythology who signifies brightness and the moon. Thus, she is a symbol of femininity and of the passion of the night with all the mystery such symbolism affords. Phoebe is Lucy's counterpart; Lucy becomes a beacon for others to follow when escaping from the "army of darkness."

Cecil Vyse

"Appearing late in the story, Cecil... was medieval. Like a Gothic statue. [Whose] head . .. was tilted a little higher than the usual level of vision, he resembled those fastidious saints who guard the portals of a French cathedral." More importantly, Cecil represents masculine sexuality as seated in Rome to oppose the passionate sexuality represented by George in Renaissance Florence. Rome, as seat of the Pope, represents the heart of Europe's dark medieval traditions within the universe of Forster's novel. As a representative of the gothic, Cecil invokes the traditions of chivalry, celibacy, rules, sins, and the stringent attitudes that allowed witches to be burned—misogynistic and fearful of bodily passion. Cecil is a Victorian mother's dream and he has thrice

asked Lucy for her hand in marriage. Lucy does say yes, on the very day in fact that Sir Harry Otway finds tenants for his rental property. Cecil makes this connection and it is appropriate because Cecil views relationships in feudal terms. For Cecil, Lucy is an artwork whose possession will aggrandize his self-worth.

Mrs. Vyse

Cecil's mother represents the crushed light that Lucy might become. "Mrs. Vyse was a nice woman, but her personality, like many another's had been swamped by London ... the too vast orb of fate had crushed her." She, unabashedly, reveals the intentions of the society people arrayed against the Emersons' and Lucy's natural inclinations. To Cecil she orders, "make her one of us." As a woman of society, her judgment on whether a person will "do" is sacrosanct and Lucy steadily wins her approbation.

Themes

The Body

Forster investigates ideas about gender by showing how the body exists as a site of societal contest. A body that has been claimed by society as, for example, female due to its reproductive abilities will have definite strictures placed upon it. Likewise, a male body has certain freedoms which he can sacrifice in order to show himself more civilized. Beebe, as usual, unconscious of having put his finger on it, nicely cuts to the point himself with a rich summary. "Can you picture a lady who has been introduced to another lady by a third lady opening civilities with 'How do you do? Come and have a bathe'? And yet you will tell me that the sexes are equal." Men have certain privileges denied to women and the continuation of this paradox depends on Lucy becoming a woman like Charlotte.

Women like Charlotte exhibit absurd prudish-ness about male flesh while using the body to censure young women. They hold up the "medieval lady," who loathed all physical elements, especially her own flesh, as the ideal. Charlotte displays this stance early through her shock over George's admittance that his father bathes. She also betrays her ideas when she refers to naked Venus as "a pity."Charlotte desires a world of chivalry where men donned armor to amuse well-dressed ladies. The distance between men and women is, thus, well maintained. Charlotte uses her body against Lucy constantly. For example, she wins their fight at Fiesole by sitting on the wet ground and tries to physically reclaim her from George beneath the carriage rug. Lucy learns that Charlotte's view, like that of Mrs. Honeychurch, depends on viewing the male body as something extraordinary. However, she realizes that men, like women, are just human. After realizing this, she accepts Mr. Emerson's idea of "direct desire" with which she robs "the body of its taint." This frees her from the "medieval lady" for she accepts that "love is of the body."

George comes alive when nude. The pond where he bathes with Freddy and Beebe acts like "a spell" from a "chalice" that resuscitates his spirit. He abhors civilization's distaste for the body and longs to live a balanced life. However, in keeping with his father's teaching, George knows that women must also enjoy the body. Only then can men and women be "comrades" and enter Eden together. Cecil, however, embodies the perfect male Vyse. He gives up the ability to play lawn tennis and reads from a book in order to show he is more civilized.

Travel

Travel enables the English person of an open mind to taste life and, thereby, begin to live. As Miss Lavish says, to Italy "one comes for life." All too often, the largest obstacle in this process is also the first one confronted by the traveler. The English hotel simply recreates England and allows the English tourist to stay English. His vacation, then,

consists of collecting evidence of having been there: "The narrowness and superficiality of the Anglo-Saxon tourist is nothing less than a menace." Lucy comments to Charlotte that there is no difference between a Bloomsbury boarding house in London and the Pension. The same social rules, people, clothes, and paintings surround them. Only in surroundings completely foreign to the pension and London will Lucy possibly learn anything. Different surroundings are important but contact with different people is intrinsic.

The characters reveal their ability to discover themselves in their attitude toward travel and the use of the Baedeker. For example, Miss Lavish is the type of tourist who believes she owns the place and likewise believes that there is nothing about her that needs perfecting. Charlotte is terribly lonely, clingy, and loves to play the emotional martyr in her personal relationships. Likewise, she views traveling as an endless series of chores. Cecil, a proclaimed Italophile, understands as little about Italy as he does about himself though he gives off airs of knowing both. Lucy and George, however, learn little about Italy in comparison but they have a good time and become better people for it. This, Forster indicates, should be the goal of every journey—self-discovery.

Taste and Manners

"Tact!" is the very thing the Emersons disdain but which lubricates the societal hive. Manners, taste, and tact are the very things that muddle Lucy's brain. She spends hours rehearsing bows and statements, and interpreting the actions of others. She wants to "do"; to be approved of by high-standing members of society and, if she tries hard enough, by the queen bee—Mrs. Vyse. At the start of the novel, Lucy has "not yet acquired decency" but she hopes to do so by the end of her Italian tour with Miss Bartlett, her teacher. The education is not without its hardships; one of Charlotte's early lessons ended Lucy's bathing in the Sacred Lake. To be a Lady is to give up on manly prerogatives like public bathing.

In the storm on the return from Fiesole, the result of such an education is glimpsed. The various party members lose control of themselves and act naturally. They act in "unladylike" or "unmanly" ways. Lucy is quickly acquiring such unnatural abilities but "she was not better able to stifle emotions of which the conventions and the world would disapprove." An educated lady can violate natural inclinations and always act properly. Ultimately, she will become a nearly "medieval lady," and as "mechanical" as Mrs. Vyse.

Fortunately, comic forces intervene and Lucy sees the world of Vyse as "nonsense." It helped that throughout her progress on the path to being ladylike, she was always conscious of how unnatural it was. She succeeded in being a lady only when she concentrated and remembered to perform properly. Otherwise, she was as truthful as the Emersons— who would not "do."

Art

Art, in the novel, can inspire characters to live more passionately. Therefore, paintings, literary works, and musical pieces exist as gauges of a character's open-mindedness. By thinking about art and its role in society, a character reveals his or her view of whether life should be experienced naturally or aesthetically, directly or in its written form. For example, as they begin the drive to Fiesole, Mr. Eager points out a beautiful cottage, which happens to be owned by an Englishwoman. To some, the cottage becomes exciting only when Mr. Eager points out that some believe it to be the place of a scene from Boccaccio's *Decameron.* The literary connection enhances the aesthetic enjoyment of the cottage and displaces the natural reaction. Books act this way throughout the novel. Book knowledge overrides natural inclination. Not surprisingly, Cecil hopes to finish Lucy's education with books. The base of aesthetic living, then, is to know how to respond to a given situation by collating one's knowledge.

Paintings work in the same way. Lucy hopes her guidebook will enable her to have the proper response to the frescoes in Santa Croce. Instead, the Emersons react from their experience. Likewise, Lucy reacts to Botticelli's "Birth of Venus" from her own experience. She purchases a copy of the painting in a fit of rebellion. Charlotte disapproved of the painting because Venus is naked. Purchasing photographs, however, does not satisfy Lucy—she wants to recapture the passion the artist felt in the painting.

Performance becomes the key to recapturing the Renaissance spirit. Miss Lavish comes off as a villain for her writing and yet she offers Lucy a hint: Anyone can accomplish a work of art. Lucy also performs: "Lucy never knew her desires so clearly as after music." The performance of a beautiful work—much like the reading of a good book—can help to illuminate desires. In other words, when Lucy is engaged with life—playing tennis, piano, or kissing—she becomes fully alive. Artworks can show the way, but Lucy must play.

Style

Leitmotif

A term that literary criticism borrows from music describes the technical repetition of key phrases or ideas in association with persons or places. The device can also assume larger proportions when, for example, an action is repeated with different portents. Forster employs leitmotif throughout his novels.

Swimming and violets are George's simple signifiers. The device becomes more intricate with Lucy. She employs music as her leitmotif. Lucy's playing affords an opportunity for other people to glimpse her real personality. The pieces she chooses to play have far reaching effects. Beethoven means something different from Schuman. Lucy's inability to play Wagner signals the novel's larger comedic struggle. The piece she cannot play comes from Wagner's operatic adaptation of the Holy Grail legend. Forster's novel is full of references to the tale and these references are leitmotifs.

Place becomes a leitmotif governing the novel's structure. Italy, at both the beginning and end, is a place of passion, youth, and possibility. The dark phase of the novel when Lucy is most endangered of joining the "army of darkness" takes place in England; far in the north, Englandis the seat of cold Victorianism. The leitmotif of physical intimacy reveals the position of opposing character. Lucy's kisses with her mother are mechanical. Hand brushings with Mr. Emerson are genuine but Charlotte's embrace is a betrayal. Kissing, of course, becomes the most potent act. George's kiss sets her ablaze. Cecil's kiss makes her feel awful and awkward.

Comedy

Forster makes no secret about this technique. He ascribes the structural theory of the novel to George Meredith at the moment when Cecil thinks he is scoring a victory for the Comic Muse. Meredith put forth his comic theory in an 1877 lecture, "On Comedy and the Uses of the Comic Spirit." He said, in part, "now comedy is the fountain of good sense; not the less perfectly sound on account of the sparkle: and comedy lifts women to a station offering them free play for their wit. As they usually show it, when they have it, on the side of good sense. The higher the comedy, the more prominent the part they enjoy in it." He then goes on to discuss classic works of comedy and the role that women play. Dorine in Moliere's *Tartuffe* is one example. That Lucy plays the most prominent part indicates that the novel is of the highest order; it wants nothing less than to save mankind. In "Le Rire," Henri Bergson, a contemporary of Forster, pointed out that comedy arises wherever the living are encrusted with the mechanical. Bergson argued that where humans become bogged down in ritualized habits, rules, or patterns that deaden vitality, comedy arises to offer a corrective. By viewing themselves in a comedic light, people feel better and sometimes seek to live better.

The comic structure originates in springtime ritual. The deadening pattern of winter is disrupted by a change in temperature which results in the rejuvenation of living things. This phenomenon is transcribed into society, which is laboring under a very dull and unchanging pattern of existence. The disrupting element, often referred to as the Comic Muse or Comic Force, can take the form of a stranger, a fool, or a revelation of knowledge. In A *Room with a View,* the typical rite of initiation of a young woman into "medieval lady" is disrupted by the interference of Mr. Emerson. The hive of society attempts to counter his disruption using Charlotte, Beebe, and others. They only make the problem larger and soon the mechanisms that had hitherto gone unquestioned become exposed and look "brown" against the violent beauty of the Italian landscape.

The disruption to the norm is important to begin the process but does not guarantee a comedic ending. The characters in the midst of the muddle must experience some form of raw nature and intellectual epiphany. Lucy experiences the forces of nature when she witnesses the murder, is drenched in a storm, confronts George at the Sacred Lake, and compares kisses. Mr. Emerson gives her philosophic questions that lead to her tear-filled awakening in Beebe's rectory.

Comedy, in its basic structure, also demands a sacrifice before allowing rebirth, redemption, or spring. Lucy, the Christ figure of this novel, sacrifices her family, friends, and her sought-after place in society. In doing so, she achieves the happy life of eternal spring. George is also saved and they become a new Adam and Eve who can remake society. More than just laughter, comedy shows its audience how to break with mechanical restraints and live naturally once again. As Mr. Emerson says, "let us rather love one another, and work and rejoice. I don't believe in this world sorrow."

Symbolism

Forster employs symbolism to bolster his comic structure. Nearly allegorical names serve to cement the position of certain characters. Beebe, like his insect namesake and the sign over the pub door where he conspires with Charlotte, gathers pollen—young people—into the hive where they become proper communal members, like Mrs. Honeychurch. The Vyses are at the top of the hive. Like their name, they are gripped and squeezed by their own rules. Mrs. Vyse is described, in fact, as a machine who is all but dead. Cecil is well on his way to his mother's stature for already he cannot play—he is too tight. The Vyse society has many names; they are the "the army of darkness" and they appear "brown"—the color of Charlotte after the first kiss.

Clothing, as the accoutrements of society, is symbolic. When George and Lucy meet at the Sacred Lake, they meet amidst strewn clothes, the shambles of civilization. In the last scene, a lone sock stands for the rules of Vyse that should have been left in England. Lucy is tempted to mend it. Instead, George helps her to put it down and join him at the window to take in the view.

Historical Context

Edwardian Age

King Edward VII, known as Bertie, ascended the throne at the death of his mother, Queen Victoria, in 1901. Bertie turned the monarchy into a national pageant. He opened the parliament in 1902, worked hard to improve foreign relations (including the entente with France that allowed for the Anglo-French alliance), and gave every encouragement to military reform. Domestically, Bertie championed tolerance by going out of his way to show that Jews and Indian princes were not, by nature, inferior to himself. Bertie's love of pageantry ensured that people noticed this attitude and British society grew more tolerant.

By 1906, Bertie's health showed signs of decline while a constitutional crisis brewed. The question arose as to whether the Lords or the House of Commons should deal with financing the arms race with Germany. As the dispute flared in 1909, Bertie vacationed in France although elections were imminent. He returned to political chaos, succumbed to bronchitis, and died in the spring of 1910.

The British Empire

At the end of the nineteenth century,Britain ruled an empire that encircled the globe. However, the degree to which Britain controlled the areas of the map it marked in pink or red was questionable or in decline. Exacerbating Britain's anxiety, European nations increasingly challenged her hegemony. The most brazen was Germany and the most worrisome was Russia.Britain sought to pacify her challengers. She successfully formed an alliance with France through trade concessions and military agreements. The United States, clearly on its way to being a great industrial power, was pacified and war between the two nations became unthinkable if not quite impossible. Challenges in other areas of the Empire (namely, Ireland,Palestine, Africa, and India) were not so easily dealt with.

At home, the suffragette movement had taken its demands to the streets. Through various militant displays, women publicized their demand for the right to vote. They did not win this right until 1918; New Zealand was the first nation to grant suffrage to women in 1893, while the United States granted the right in 1920. Trade unionists and a very strife-ridden parliament made the latter half of the first decade tumultuous. This strife would lead to a series of strikes in 1911 and 1912. Still, by the eve of World War I, Britain was the wealthiest and most powerful nation on earth.

Italy

Since the Renaissance, wealthy Europeans and salaried intellectuals have traveled to Italy in order to regain the knowledge and riches of Roman civilization. During the

eighteenth century, Italy rivaled Franceas the necessary stop for any gentleman completing his education with a Grand Tour. This interest in Italy its ancient ruins, museums, and art treasures—continued into the nineteenth century. The strength of the British currency and the money accruing to its upper classes enabled a lively tourist trade in Italy. This is the basis for Forster's A *Room with a View* but its depictions of Italians as the passionate idyllic peasants of old is false.Italy during Forster's sojourn was caught in the throes of modernization.

Officially adopting a modern parliamentary system in 1861,Italy still had to overcome centuries of international intervention, internal strife, the Catholic Church, and an underdeveloped economy. For the first fifty years, barely two percent of the population had the right to vote. However, the industrial regions in the north grew their economy at a phenomenal rate and, in southern Italy, the number of literate people began to outnumber the illiterate. By the eve of WWI,Italy's yearly steel output had gone from negligible to nearly one million metric tons and the nation was a producer of cars, typewriters, motorcycles, silk, and fertilizer.

These successes concentrated in the north; many Italians from the rest of the peninsula sought opportunity elsewhere. More than half a million Italians left the country each year of the first decade of the century. Many went overseas and a majority to the United States. In addition to its lopsided development,Italy adopted imperial ambitions beyond its abilities. This led to the humiliating defeat of the Italian army by the Abyssinians at Adowa in 1896. Italy's policy of irredentism—a desire to control areas inhabited by people speaking the same language outside national boundaries—led it to attempt annexation of Trieste and Tripoli. Failure in these areas by 1912 added fuel to the fire that would implode as World War I.

Avant-Garde

Though the term has been applied to numerous epochs and movements, as a label for a specific period it denotes the bridge from post-impressionism through cubism to surrealism (roughly 1906-1930). The avant-garde was a series of art movements whose practitioners saw themselves leading society to better and better plateaus through art. Usually this meant remaking society with socialist or Marxist doctrine. At minimum, the artist of the avant-garde saw himself as an interpreter of the place of the individual in an industrial world.

The Italian poet Filippo Tommaso Marinetti began one such movement, futurism. Marinetti believed that industrialization was the only means for Italy to achieve its ambition to become a world power. He wanted Italy to destroy its museums and build factories in their place. He further believed that a consumerist society was the ultimate form of living. He therefore advocated a state of war (the purest state of consumption by any society) that would eventually destroy relics of the past and spawn new machines. Many adherents of futurism died during World War I and Marinetti went to work for Benito Mussolini.

In England, the most famous avant-garde movement was the Bloomsbury Group. This group was composed of Cambridge Apostles, including Forster, who had moved to London. The group met alternatively at the homes of Virginia Woolf and Vanessa Bell in the Bloomsbury district adjacent to the British Museum beginning in 1907. The group's early discussions centered around the agnostic ponderings of G. E. Moo re's *Principia Eth-ica* and the *Principia Mathematica* by A. N. White-head and Bertrand Russell. The group survived World War I but disintegrated by 1930.

Critical Overview

Critically, *A Room with a View* has been treated as a fine example of travel literature, character development, satire, comedy, writing style, and a modernization of ancient myths. Forster's novel was immediately popular with readers and early reviewers praised the novel, enjoying the Jane Austen-style observation of human society. Acclaim began with a review in the *Morning Leader* (October 30, 1908) which declared the work the best of the year. C. F. G. Masterman's review in *The Nation* plugged the work because it deftly satirized Edwardian England. Virginia Woolf, writing for the *Times Literary Supplement* in her article "The Novels of E. M. Forster," and collected in *The Death of the Moth and other Essays,* declared the book a wonder for its beauty. However, Forster's friend also criticized Forster's characters as unsatisfying. Later critics have not agreed with Woolf.

Writing almost sixty years later, Jeffrey Meyers thought the characters exactly fulfilled their functions. In "The Paintings in Forster's Italian Novels," Meyers discusses how character response to Giotto's fresco, "The Ascension of St. John," "reverberates throughout the novel." Their "aesthetic responses become identified with moral issues" that are hashed out in the novel. Meyers furthers his claim by noting that Forster believed in art as a means for people to learn how to take up the Emerson view and celebrate life. The characters satisfy this principle to the degree to which they proceed to adopt a new view.

A Room with a View cemented Forster's reputation as a writer that began with his short stories and his first two novels. The third novel won him the compliment of being Austen-like in his observational ability and gained him admittance to a line of comic writers from Fielding to Dickens. Frederick C. Crewes comments, in his "Comic Spirit," that Forster and Austen's "comedy is generated by ironic contrasts between what is superficially 'proper' and what is truly reasonable." Land, in his *E. M. Forster,* writes that Forster doesn't simply write about class or race "but rather like Jane Austen he uses the attitudes and habits of a class as a framework or image for the exploration of human behavior." At the same time, the novel found him accused of writing melodrama.

"Technically," writes Walter Allen in *The Modern Novel,* Forster's work□except *A Passage to India*□"are as melodramatic as any in Victorian fiction." Forster is redeemed, for Allen, by his personal attitude whose pure humanism allows him a tone as pure as Fielding or Thackeray. A few years later, Forster defender Joseph Epstein responded in his review for the *New York Times Book Review.* "Technically . . . Forster's novels form a connection between the ethical-culture and traditional forms of the 19th century novelists and the main preoccupation of the novelists of the 20th□Forster takes up, that is, where George Eliot leaves off and leaves off where D. H. Lawrence takes up." But, he goes on to say that placing Forster there "is really not to place him at all." For Forster looms so large in English letters that he transcends it. Forster, for Epstein, rooted himself in his nation's character and remained decent about it. Though Forster, like Jonathan Swift and Samuel Butler, satirizes his nation through fantasies, he never humiliates his characters.

Forster attempted to deal with timeless themes by modernizing ancient myths. Lionel Trilling, in his *E. M. Forster,* uncovers Forster's secret way of doing this when he notices that there is a "barricade" in each of Forster's novels. "The opposed forces on each side are Good and Evil in the forms of Life and Death. Light and Darkness. Fertility and Sterility ... all the great absolutes that are so dull when discussed by themselves" are made interesting in Forster because he uses the "comic manner." Forster wrote in light of the comic theory being developed in his day by George Meredith, Sigmund Freud, and others. This theory holds that characters who have too much of an absolute within them need to be adjusted□usually, as Northrop Frye says, by a chaotic clash with nature. John Lucas deftly shows how this works in *Room with a View* as well as the essential role music plays in the novel.

In his essay "Wagner and Forster," Lucas first places Forster's novel in its cultural milieu. He describes how Wagner dominated European arts at the close of the nineteenth century. He also notes the importance that Forster himself ascribed to the art of music. He relates these two facts to the dynamics of the novel. Thus Wagner's *Parsifal*□a retelling of the Grail legend with only one major change□is shown to be a guide to deconstructing the text. Also, music proves to be the only available technique to wire in the problems Lucy faced. By making her a pianist, Forster can quickly build up her character in notes familiar to the music fans of 1908. To the reader of today, this element is easily forgotten but in 1908, playing Beethoven or Mozart was a crucial distinction. According to Lucas, Lucy's "transition from Beethoven through Schumann to Mozart . . . [prefigures] her decline into a probable future of middle-class sterility." The call for Parsifal, but Lucy's inability to deliver as George steps into the room, is, therefore, an essential scene to the novel's denouement. Lucy cannot play the score of a work in which she plays the lead role.

In light of *Maurice,* critical interest in Forster' s third novel was revived by gender identification theory. For example, Claude J. Summers, in his *E. M. Forster,* declares the novel "a bold festival of domestic comedy and sexual celebration; *A Room with a View* assimilates into a heterosexual plot the ideology of homosexual comradeship." Summers' essentialism, fortunately, becomes rational in the hands of other critics who point out that Forster's sexual identity motivated his insight into Edwardian personal relationships. Forster, soon after the publication of the novel, worried that it already appeared dated. By all accounts, *A Room with a View* remains one of the best Edwardian novels and a novel whose observations on human nature retain relevance.

Criticism

- Critical Essay #1
- Critical Essay #2
- Critical Essay #3

Critical Essay #1

Hubbell has an M. Litt. from the University of Aberdeen, Scotland, and currently seeks a Ph.D. in history at the State University of New York at Stony Brook. This essay purports that the place of technology in civilization haunts A Room with a View.

Though they had profited handsomely by industrialization,Britain's upper classes did not view technology with the enthusiasm characteristic of Americans. They still held to the feudal or "medieval" view, which held that profit should accumulate in their pockets—they saw themselves as the center of the universe. Technology, for the elite, achieved a good investment return, which they enjoyed, but it also increased the prosperity of the lower classes. Gains in productivity allowed for healthier wage packets while union action shortened the workweek. Thus, members of the working class began to play sports on their off days, women went shopping in arcades built with new building technology, families rode bikes and went on outings to museums and parks. The elite did not meet this alteration bravely and continued to insist on class separation. This tension is at the heart of E. M. Forster's novel A *Room with a View,* whose message of ultimate compromise includes dismantling the nature versus civilization dichotomy. Cecil Vyse, who offers a speech to Lucy Honey church to the effect that the classes ought to intermingle, notes that the rabble are even eating better so that "the physique of the lower-middle classes was improving at a most appalling rate."

Before industrialization accelerated in the eighteenth century, Europeans regarded themselves as warring against nature for their very lives. That changed when the Renaissance revived science and took advantage of medieval mechanics. Attitudes altered as civilization gained the upper hand and began to control nature. By the nineteenth century, control was all but attained and philosophic figures like Thomas Carlyle began to suggest a new attitude of harmony. They declared that the battle was over; civilization and its technics were harmonious parts of nature, not at war with it. Theories of evolution helped bolster the idea that by cooperating with nature, humans would prosper in both wealth and health. One technology stands out in this period and in Forster's novel because it was the growth engine of the nineteenth century economy, the steam engine atop a wheel carriage.

The rich invested heavily in the railroad in the late nineteenth century and they received handsome rewards. However, the railroad allowed unprecedented social mobility and created an entirely new class of rich people. Walt Whitman captured the appreciation of this technology in his 1851 poem, "To a Locomotive in Winter." There, the locomotive was a beautiful creature set free in nature. The railroad quickly became more than just a creature; it became a liberator of people and latent potential. The railroads enabled greater prosperity for all people which led, of course, to increased mingling of the classes. The railroad, as Ralph Waldo Emerson put it in "The Young American," "is the magician's rod, in its power to evoke sleeping energies of land and water." Emerson celebrated technology because it enables people to further their abilities to open up land to agriculture and the progress of civilization. Only by the employment of technology can people build a Garden of Eden where everyone is fed and clothed—a garden, after all,

employs cutting-edge agricultural technology. That is the message of Forster's book, a realization that the American spirit is a good one and Britain would do well to learn from it. Britain, as the novel shows, may not be able to Americanize because of people like the Vyses and, therefore, places like Italy might be the better place for that spirit.

The discussion of technological advance occurs at several points in the novel. While in Florence, Mr. Eager notes the way in which trams enable people of the lower classes to take outings in the countryside. However, the reality of a working person's life justifies Mr. Eager's pity for them. Still, trams enable the "poor" to walk where only the rich had previously. Sir Harry Otway enunciates the anxieties of the rich to Mr. Vyse. He fears, he says, that he will rent to the wrong sort of person because the physical barriers that had kept the rich apart have been overrun. The rich had always been able to afford the time and expense of country estates, but both time and expense were being leveled by the railroad. "The train service has improved—a fatal improvement, to my mind. And what are five miles from a station in these days of bicycles?" He worries that the bike and the train will enable the working-class man to afford a home away from the toxicity of industry (cars will soon make the matter worse). His fears are realized when the Emersons, the working-class heroes of the novel, move in. Though only Mrs. Honeychurch makes the connection, Mr. Emerson, who was a mechanic before going into journalism for socialist organs, follows the teachings of the American philosopher already mentioned. George, appropriately, works as a clerk for a railroad company. Otway had hoped for a bank clerk, an occupation he understood, but in the new economy, suggests Forster, the railroad clerk becomes the victor.

The novel assesses the anxiety of the wealthy classes in terms of its inability to change its view of life by which is meant, philosophies of life or interpretations of the universe—how things work. The rich, like Otway and Vyse, are conservative; they want class separations maintained with themselves at the top according to the medieval ideals. They see nature as something to be controlled for their benefit as it was in feudal times. They can be thought of "as in a room" or protected by "fences" and ensconced in palaces and churches. Members of this view "have no profession." Instead, they manage and accumulate wealth—the Vyses are parasites whose salary is made up of dividends. The Emersons are liberals, meaning they believe in individual rights and democratic institutions. They are humanists and base their judgments about society on empirical data "of," not from (as in stolen), nature. Thus, they can be thought of as a view without obstructing walls. People who share the Emersons' view live by their own labor and they enjoy bodily pleasure. Reason governs their behavior.

In Freudian terms, a person of cathexis focuses his mind toward one goal or view of life. Such a person can be described as anal or unyielding. This person frequently becomes the center of a comedy whose end is his catharsis. That is, events and experiences of disruption force the person of cathex-ion to see things differently and realize he had been narrow-minded. A catharsis is, literally, a release of psychic energy, a release from being anal, which allows for a readjusted and more balanced psyche. Forster's comedy is different. The Vyses cannot help but live up to their name, which conjures the Latin verb "to see." Vyse also conjures the mechanical apparatus, the vise. As the leading members of society, such allusions are fitting. The Vyses stick to their rules and view of

society normally described as hive-like. The blending of the biologic and mechanical is no accident. The society which the Vyses lead is, in modern parlance, like the Borgs from Gene Rodenberry's *Star Trek* series. They attach people to their system after a period of molding. In terms of the history of technics, the society of Vyse is a megamachine whose purpose is to maintain its members and itself by acquisition of new members and adamant adherence to decorum. The cathected are not saved by the story; hope lies in the young who have not yet made up their view.

Forster hated the megamachine of the Vyses'. In a short story written after *A Room with a View* he was even more vitriolic in his characterization of this tendency in humans to live in cathexion. In "The Machine Stops," a machine does all of society's work so that the humans can sit in their rooms away from each other and continually fabricate aesthetic systems. The body is left to atrophy. However, Forster does not foresee total divorce from the body and, therefore, maintains the hope of reconnecting with the body or giving the room a view. The Emersons are that hope. They are part of the middle class whose physique has improved with industrialization. They believe in communal recreation of the Garden where technology does not take over society but positively aids people in their lives. The Emersons, in their ideal, can be thought of as a utopic view of boundless progress. Forster, a pragmatist, believes in a compromise made possible by Lucy who, as light, can bring the two worlds together. She brings music, art, and literature to match George's modern philosophy and technology.

The marriage of the two views happens in Florence—one of the cities responsible for the change in Europe described as the Renaissance. That epoch of rediscovery held out the possibility of compromise from the outset. A historical example of this can be found in the efforts of a man who lived in Florence during the Renaissance and arguably has had the greatest view of the cosmos. His very name has become a synonym for clear sight. His sight would not be obfuscated by religious doctrine or doubt but fueled by Baconian practice. Galileo Galilei, court mathematician to the Medici, had the clearest view of all the Renaissance thinkers and it was straight up. His observations led to the downfall of the old geocentric view of the universe and the rise of a heliocentric view of the universe. Forster's location of his novel about views and technological attitudes was appropriately placed in Florence. Forster's sense of compromise matches Galileo's, who did not want to overthrow or disagree with the Catholic Church (the story often told about his "trial"). Instead, Galileo believed he utilized his God-given talents to explore God's wondrous creations in order to glorify the Catholic faith. Galileo failed to observe a separation between religion and science.

"It was the old, old battle of the room with a view." The statement stands like a thesis within a theory about human nature. While it appears to announce that there is nothing new in the Lucy problem, it also luxuriates in the timelessness within the problem. Industrial progress can be a boon so long as its goal is to make human lives better; industrial progress cannot be, for Forster, an end in itself. In other words, humans cannot be bound to machines. The choice depends upon our view of things, a problem as old as Plato's room. The old, old battle is over whether or not humans will stay looking at the shadows on the wall or go out of the cave. The Emersons remind the reader that "there is only one perfect view—the view of the sky straight over our heads,

and ... all these other views on earth are but bungled copies of it." Forster celebrated life and sunlight but he was not against technology. Forster, writing at a time when Europe had created a science of fatigue and was obsessed with industrial efficiency, points out that the important things

are to observe nature as our forebears did. And maybe observe and pay attention to each other. Machines, as critics of Taylorism were quick to see, can numb the senses of the human worker. Forster wants that worker to be able to have fun in the sun once in a while far from "the world of motor cars."

Source: Jeremy W. Hubbell, in an essay for *Novels for Students,* Gale Group, 2001.

Critical Essay #2

The following essay analyzes the structure of A Room with a View *and Lucy's journey toward enlightenment.*

Forster began *A Room with a View* (1908) before *Where Angels Fear to Tread* (1905) and finished it after *The Longest Journey* (1907). Since it is the most halcyon and direct of his novels and since it was the work with which he started, we shall begin with it. Though it is his least complex book, it is his most Jane Austen-like and perhaps his most delightful. As in the earlier-published *Angels,* Italy acts as the chief source of vitality, and the two novels reflect the intense impact that the South made upon him in his early twenties. In *Room,* after the characters return to England in Part II,Italy retreats to the background but still acts as a formative influence.

In any case,Italy is the main force which in Part I *of Room* contributes to Lucy Honeychurch's liberation. The conventional Reverend Beebe reluctantly acknowledges the intuitive wisdom of Italians though it chiefly annoys him: "They pry everywhere, they see everything, and they know what we want before we know it ourselves." So "Phaethon," the driver of the carriage taking the English to the hills above Florence, reads Lucy's heart and directs her to George Emerson rather than to the Reverends Beebe and Eager when she asks in faltering Italian "where the good men are." Both Italy and the English countrywide encourage a free and open existence as compared to cramped, stereotyped, middle-class British life. The primary impression produced by the novel, the prevalence of wind and air and sunlight, establishes, as in George Meredith, the primary role of nature as redemptive power.

The English and Italian settings, rendered with complete immediacy, reveal Forster's sensitivity to place. Houses and buildings take on life in his fiction: the church of Santa Croce and the Pension Bertolini in Florence, for example, and Windy Corner, a Surrey country house. The Florentine pension and the Surrey house focus the action in the two sections of the novel. Chapter 1 presents at the Pension almost all the actors who figure in Part I: Lucy; Charlotte Bartlett, her "proper" chaperone; George Emerson, a troubled but vital young man; his father, the prophetic proponent of the free and natural life like that advocated by the American Ralph Waldo Emerson; the Reverend Mr. Beebe, the ascetically inclined but socially agreeable clergyman of Summer Street near Windy Corner; Eleanor Lavish, an "emancipated" novelist whose unconventionality is superficial; and the Misses Alan, elderly and genteel lady travellers. Only the snobbish chaplain to the English colony, the Reverend Cuthbert Eager, remains for Chapter 5.

The opening chapter of Part II introduces at Windy Comer all the other principles: Mrs. Honey church, Lucy's impulsive and affectionate mother and an endearing portrait of Forster's maternal grandmother whom he loved intensely; Freddy, Lucy's playful but instinctively sound brother; and Cecil Vyse, a "medieval" young man to whom Lucy has become engaged after his third proposal. She breaks her engagement when Mr. Emerson convinces her that she really loves his son. In the concluding chapter, Lucy

and George return for their honeymoon to the Pension Bertolini which provides a frame for the novel and a reminder of Italy's pervasive power.

Structure depends upon a number of encounters between Lucy and George which revise her staid outlook. In Chapter I the Emersons offer the ladies their room with a view; and, before retiring, the now restless Lucy gazes beyond the Arno at the hills which betoken the freedom that she has not yet achieved. In Chapter 2 George appears in the Church of Santa Croce at his most lugubrious, and Lucy disdainfully pities him; but in Chapter 4 he reveals his potential strength as he supports her in his arms when she faints after witnessing a quarrel between two Italians over money, a quarrel that results in the sudden murder of one of them. After Lucy's "rescue," she and George gaze at the Arno flowing beneath them and respond to its mystery and promise (though with her rational mind, Lucy is later ashamed that she has given herself away to this extent). With the death of the Italian, Lucy feels that she, too, has "crossed some spiritual boundary," though she is not sure at the moment just what it may be. When they go back to Florence for their honeymoon, it is as if to place themselves under the spell of a force—the river—that has never ceased to exert itself. In Italy violence enlarges Lucy's horizons, and she now feels that something has indeed "happened to the living."

In Chapter 4 Forster also suggests the effete quality of the casual tourist's culture when Lucy buys photographs of works by the great masters. Reality impinges upon the pictures when the dying man's blood spatters them and when George throws them into the Arno to have them, as it were, washed pure in its waters. The principal picture, Botticelli's *The Birth of Venus,* has symbolic meaning that is at once lucid and profound. The picture connects with the Italian springtime, the pagan atmosphere of the novel, and the birth of love in Lucy's soul. Just as the blood of the murdered man defiles the pictures, so Lucy would, through her own blindness and obstinacy, do violence to her instincts. Just as the soiled photographs return to the water that has given birth to Venus, so Lucy must immerse herself in elemental passion, in order to cleanse her soul and to attain a new life. The birth of the goddess and the death of the Italian man also suggest the nearness of love and death as the most fundamental and mysterious of our experiences.

Lucy has another encounter with George when in Chapter 6 the Bertolini guests go for a drive above Fiesole. Lucy discovers that her standards have altered and that she does not know how to account for the change. She doubts that Miss Lavish is an artist and that Mr. Beebe is spiritual, but previously she would have been less critical. She judges them by a new criterion. Vital energy, she thinks, should animate them, but she finds them lacking in warmth and spontaneity, qualities that she has begun unconsciously to associate with George. Lucy is a woman who registers the effects of an emotional awakening before she can acknowledge its existence and cause. The Arno Valley is once more present in the distance from above Fiesole when George kisses Lucy after she surprises him on the bank covered with violets. Going against the dictates of instinct, Lucy seeks the advice of her proper chaperone, Miss Bartlett, who dismisses George, and the ladies depart forthwith from Rome where Lucy first meets Cecil Vyse.

Encounters with George also organize the narrative in Part II, although in the first chapters it is Cecil Vyse, Lucy's fiance (or "fiasco" as Freddy calls him), who dominates. Another kiss, Cecil's self-conscious one in Chapter 9, contrasts with George's spontaneous embraces. Cecil not only takes the place temporarily of George as his temperamental opposite, but assumes in Part II the role of Charlotte Bartlett as exemplar of the proprieties. In Chapter 12 Lucy regains contact with George as he emerges like a pagan god from "The Sacred Lake," a charming country pool near Windy Corner, and emanates all of nature's freshness.

Part II is a contest between George and Cecil for the control of Lucy's inner being. In Chapter 15 a kiss again enlivens the novel. George has just beaten Lucy at tennis; while the contestants rest, Cecil reads from Miss Lavish's novel, which features an incident similar to George's first kissing of Lucy on the heights over Florence. Miss Lavish had learned of the incident through the duplicity of Charlotte Bartlett who had enjoined Lucy to tell no one about it, even her mother. The memory of this scene arouses George, and he kisses Lucy in a copse close to Windy Corner. The outraged Lucy again does violence to her true self; she retreats from the light of truth and passion and prepares to enter "the vast armies of the benighted". After this second kiss and the lies that she tells about herself to George, Cecil, Mr. Beebe, her mother, and Mr. Emerson, pretense all but conquers her. In Florence, after George's kiss, she had realized how difficult it was to be truthful, but by this point she has become less conscientious.

The overall movement of the novel results in enlightenment for Lucy, after several divagations into falsehood. With one side of her nature she responds to passion as it concenters in George; with another, she aligns herself with upholders of Victorian social standards, Charlotte Bartlett and Cecil Vyse. With unremitting force Lucy's instincts carry her toward a larger life than these mentors will allow. Finally, Mr. Emerson sweeps away her accumulated errors of perception when he divines her love for George, instructs her about the sanctity of passion, and gives her the courage to claim the man she loves.

From the beginning Italy is a subversive influence, causing Lucy's well-known world to break up; and in its place the "magic city" of Florence elicits all that is unpredictable. Passionate, vibrant, violent Italy all but overwhelms Lucy. Her sympathies for "Phaethon," the coach-driver, startle her, as he embraces his "Persephone" on the drive to Fiesole. If she had been able to see more clearly, she would have recognized a god in George Emerson, who would, for his part, have seen in a liberated Lucy a real goddess. Before he kissed her in the hills, she had seemed "as one who had fallen out of heaven"; and, before her inhibitions stifled her, Lucy could identify him with "heroes— gods— the nonsense of schoolgirls". Later when she greets him at "The Sacred Lake," she thinks of herself as bowing "to gods, the heroes, to the nonsense of school girls! She had bowed across the rubbish that cumbers the world". And George was here a "Michelangelesque" figure, the essence of heroic vitality; earlier he had similarly appeared to her as a figure appropriate to "the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel, carrying a burden of acorns". But, in repudiating George a second time, she turns from a god incarnate to the academic study of Greek mythology as she prepares for her journey to

Greece with the Misses Alan. She is rejecting in the actuality a god, knowledge of whose counterparts she is pursuing in the abstract.

In order to intensify Lucy's conflict with convention and to convey the force of her muted passion, Forster uses imagery drawn from music. Music lifts her out of herself and permits her to see, at least for the moment, the irrelevance of prescriptive standards: "She was then no longer either deferential or patronizing; no longer either a rebel or a slave". By force of will, she transforms Beethoven's tragic sonatas, for example, into expressions of triumph. Lucy, moreover, instinctively suits her music to her mood or situation. In Italy where she can acknowledge the elemental, she leans toward Beethoven. When she plays for Cecil and his guests in London, she performs the decorous Schumann, who suggests to her "the sadness of the incomplete." It is as if she has some intimations that she is now denying the demands of life, and so cannot play her beloved Beethoven in these artificial surroundings. At Windy Corner she plays the erotic garden music from Gluck's *Armide* and makes her audience restless (as if they reflect her own conflicts), and she also finds it impossible to play the sensual garden sequence from *Parsifal* in George's presence, since she is sexually distraught at this time. When she plans to renounce the call of passion, she indulges in the artifices (for her) of Mozart.

Forster suggests Lucy's progress toward enlightenment in terms of light and shadow images (these are so numerous that full discussion is not possible). Light and darkness suffuse natural phenomena, as these respectively signify freedom and inner fulfillment or bondage and human waywardness. Forster also associates light with the Emer-sons to the extent that father and son represent spiritual truth. In Italy Mr. Emerson urges Lucy to expose her thoughts to the sunlight rather than keep them in the depths of her nature. She resists full illumination, however, because she resists as yet the full promptings of instinct. George is, like Lucy, in danger of spiritual disablement, and he will enter the abyss if Lucy does not return his love, his father tells her in England. Lucy, in fact, will condemn herself by her evasions and lies to "marching in the armies of darkness", so long as she resists the truth about herself.

Though the clouds of pessimism often surround George, he becomes a source of light to Lucy. Both darkness and bright light characterize her encounter with him in the Piazza Signoria. To correspond with the crime that takes place there, the Piazza is in shadow and the tower of the palace arises out of a sinister gloom. Yet the tower is emblematic of the sexuality that Lucy experiences and represses, rising as it does "out of the lower darkness like a pillar of toughened gold. It seemed no longer a tower, no longer supported by earth, but some unattainable treasure throbbing m the tranquil sky". In Surrey George's kindness to his father strikes Lucy as "sunlight touching a vast landscape—a touch of the morning sun". He has just said that "there is a certain amount of kindness, just as there is a certain amount of light," and that one "should stand in it for all you are worth, facing the sunshine." When he wins at tennis from Lucy, he is brilliant against the sunlight, godlike in appearance. In defending himself in Surrey after he kisses her, he emphasizes how his love had been kindled when he saw her the day that he bathed in the Sacred Lake; the life-giving water and the glorious sunlight

combined to make her beauty overwhelming. It is with this sunlight, too, that Forster identifies George and suggests that he is a Phaethon figure.

After she breaks the engagement with Cecil, Lucy realizes that George has gone into darkness; but she does not yet perceive that by her denial of sex she is fashioning an "armour of falsehood" and is about to go into darkness herself. She now becomes as one who sins "against passion and truth", or against Eros and Pallas Athena. She resists taking others into her confidence lest inner exploration result in self-knowledge and "that king of terrors— Light", the light that her own name (from the Latin, *lux,* meaning light) signifies and that she must acknowledge to become her true self. But for the intervention of Mr. Emerson, Lucy would stay in darkness. He gives her "a sense of deities reconciled"; he enables her, in short, to balance the claims of Eros and Pallas Athena, of sense and soul.

George, who is in part a nature god, is at his most vital seen against the expanses of the Florentine and English hills. Appropriately enough, his earliest memory is the inspiriting landscape seen from Hindhead in company with his mother and father, a prospect which unified the family in deepest understanding. In symbolic terms, both the Emersons now have, and have always had, "the view" that Lucy must acquire. External nature is always seen in motion, as if it too is in protest against Cecil's static existence and in sympathy with George's dynamic energies. Kinetic and auditory images dominate so that nature seems always active rather than passive. The Arno River after a storm bounds on like a lion, and at several points it murmurs a promise of a free and open existence for the lovers. In Surrey and Sussex the atmosphere, comprising "the intolerable tides of heaven," is always in motion. Glorious lateral views dominate the region; but this landscape becomes ominous as Lucy represses sexual passion. The sounds and movements of nature intensify to register their protest as Lucy denies life and love. Now the sky goes wild; the winds roar through pine trees; and gray clouds, charging across the heavens, obscure the white ones and the blue sky, "as the roaring tides of darkness" set in. The novel closes on a serene note, however, with nature's forces finding fruition in human beings, as Lucy on her honeymoon surrenders not only to George but to the Florentine spring and to the Arno's whispers.

When Mr. Emerson counsels Lucy toward the novel's end, he emphasizes the difficulties of life, the continual presence of muddles, and the consequent need to clear them away; he quotes a friend of his (actually Samuel Butler): "Life is a public performance on the violin, in which you must learn the instrument as you go along". Lucy acquires now a sense of the complexities of life; and she finds that she cannot plan for it and know in advance its contingencies. This lesson she learns from her first meeting with George in Surrey, for she had not thought of meeting him when he is happy and exuberant, as a godlike being at the Sacred Lake against the background of verdant nature. Lucy herself shines with intensity throughout the novel, with the result that a rather ordinary young woman is transfigured into a radiant presence, the resolution of whose conflicts becomes a matter of genuine urgency.

George is designedly less complex than Lucy, since he need not so much modify his values as gain the courage to assert them. Early in the novel George gives Lucy "the

feeling of greyness, of tragedy that might only find solution in the night", though Forster fails to establish the precise intellectual grounds for his pessimism. Forster misses in George some opportunity to convey the complicated mentality of a young man suffering from a *Weltschmerz* characteristic of the late Victorian age and induced, among other forces, by the loss of a dynamic religious faith. But George is, on the whole, a successful creation, an archetypal personage embodying the freshness, the power, and the passion of youth.

Lucy's chief mentor and George's father, Mr. Emerson, evinces a rousing candor that is refreshing, but on the whole Forster conceived him with less decisiveness and complexity than the novel demands. His valetudinarianism, for example, is too far removed from the vitality attributed to him, and his message is too direct to be aesthetically compelling. But what damages Mr. Emerson as a presence chiefly is the dated quality of some of his ideas, ideas which reveal how shallow he is when he assumes that he is being profound. In his scathing remarks about the Reverend Eager's Giotto lecture, in the Church of Santa Croce, Mr. Emerson exhibits a literalness of mind not far different from the fundamentalism he criticizes. Thus, he asserts that an edifice built by faith means that the workmen were underpaid and that Giotto's *Ascension of Saint John* is ridiculous because a "fat man in blue" could not be "shooting into the sky like an air-balloon". It is therefore difficult to agree with Forster that Mr. Emerson is "profoundly religious," for he seems to operate on the surface, rather than at the depths, of religious issues.

Forster's great success in the novel is with his rendition of the humorous and satirically envisioned persons. Some of them—the Reverend Eager, Mrs. Honeychurch, and Eleanor Lavish—Foster presents in brief, through epigrammatic summary or through their spoken words. He tells us, for instance, all we have to know of Reverend Eager, in this account of his unctuous ministrations for transient visitors: "... it was his avowed custom to select those of his migratory sheep who seemed worthy, and give them a few hours in the pastures of the permanent". The portrait is made complete when Eager discourses patronizingly upon the way in which the "lower-class" Emersons have risen: "Generally, one has only sympathy with their success. The desire for education and for social advance—in these things there is something not wholly vile. There are some working men whom one would be very willing to see out here in Florence—little as they would make of it". Reverend Eager's apparent generosity, in fact, masks feelings of snobbishness, contempt, and exclusive-ness.

But it is with Lucy's antagonists that Forster does best: Charlotte Bartlett and Cecil Vyse. Although he presents them satirically, he also sees them sympathetically; as a result, his humor at their expense is genial as well as satiric. Charlotte and Cecil are misguided, they are hypocrites, and they extinguish the generous instincts; they cause un-happiness and they propagate darkness. But, since they are not conscious of wrongdoing, Forster not only tolerates them but feels affection for them. As a consequence, he fully delineates them; and they become large-scale figures even if they are not complex individuals who develop dynamically.

Charlotte is given to excessive propriety and is deficient, therefore, in graciousness, kindness, and consideration. Her hypocrisies are the source of much fine comedy, as is her penchant for the irrelevant. Specious and superficial incidents and ideas gain ascendancy in her mind and allow her thereby to evade uncomfortable realities that a conscientious individual would feel obliged to facet. She is able to rationalize any occurrence in her own favor. Thus she stresses Miss Lavish's perfidy in using for her novel Lucy's being kissed by George on the Florentine heights. As a result,Charlotte diverts attention from her own perfidy in telling Miss Lavish in the first place: "Never again shall Eleanor Lavish be friend of mine". Her incompetence as a person who is "practical without ability" is the source of much humor. Her packing in Florence is protracted further than it ought to be, she is unable to pay the driver at Windy Corner because she arrives without small change and then becomes confused in her monetary calculations, and she "impedes" Mrs. Honeychurch with offers of help in tying up dahlias after a night of storm. Her sense of decorum is outlandish, as she recoils from George's casual mention in Chapter 1 that his father "is in his bath," and only she could be quite so thorough a martyr in her home to a "tiresome" boiler.

The portrait of Cecil is equally authoritative. He is the diffident man who finds it difficult to become emotionally involved even with an attractive woman. Forster describes him as resembling a "fastidious saint" in the facade of a French cathedral and as being by temperament self-conscious and ascetic. His courtship follows the are from "patronizing civility" to "a profound uneasiness." The uneasiness arises when Lucy threatens to become vital and dynamic, to be more than a Leonardesque work of art. Cecil calls himself a disciple of George Meredith, agreeing with his mentor that the cause of comedy and the cause of truth are identical, though Cecil cannot realize that he will be the individual, in the course of his engagement to Lucy, to be unmasked as self-server and hypocrite.

George Emerson appraises well his adversary. He perceives that Cecil "kills," when it comes to people, by misjudging or undervaluing them, by playing tricks on them instead of cherishing "the most sacred form of life that he can find", and by being snobbish and supercilious toward those inferior to him in station and income. Accordingly, Cecil patronizes Lucy when she confuses two Italian painters, winces when Mr. Emerson mispronounces the names of artists, becomes bored and disdainful of the Honeychurches for whom "eggs, boilers, hydrangeas, maids" form part of reality, and fails to see that it is sometimes an act of kindness for a bad player to make a fourth at tennis. In short, as with Meredith's Sir Willoughby Patterne, Cecil is an egoist, with the egoist's inability to see himself as he is, with the egoist's tendency to assume that other people exist to minister to his well-being. Something of the large dimensions of Sir Willoughby inheres in Cecil's portrait, though Lucy hardly attains the dimensions of Clara Middleton, her prototype in *The Egoist.*

Northrop Frye's discussion of the *mythos* of comedy illuminates *A Room with a View* which is the only Forster narrative that can be fully assimilated to these ideas of Frye's. This *mythos* devolves about the central characters attainment of a new society after the influence of those who obstruct their free development has been neutralized (Charlotte Bartlett and Cecil Vyse are the "blocking" figures in *Room).* There transpires a new life

for the hero and the heroine as they move "from a society controlled by habit, ritual bondage, arbitrary law and the older characters to a society controlled by youth and pragmatic freedom," under the aegis of "a benevolent grandfather,"—Mr Emerson in this novel. There are also occurs a visit to "the green world" of romance, to the healing powers of nature, as George and Lucy participate in their ritualistic honeymoon beside the life-restoring Arno River before they return, reinvigorated, to middle-class life in England. If anything, the mythic and archetypal—and romance—aspects of Forster's imagined universe are even more to the fore in his subsequent fiction.

Source: "A Sense of Deities Reconciled: *A Room with a View,"* in *Twaynes Authors Series: Twayne English Authors,* Twayne, 1999.

Critical Essay #3

In the following essay excerpt. Haralson analyzes the homoerotic elements of the Sacred Lake episode in A Room with a View.

A Room with a View, published in the same year as Forster's meeting of James, gives a convenient gauge of his progress along his different novelistic "road," as well as an inventory of the obstacles lying in it. In this monitory tale in which young lovers transcend "the rubbish that cumbers the world," obstructing both emotional and physical expression, old Mr. Emerson's much-quoted pronouncement that "love is of the body" seems a staunch rebuttal of the austerity that Forster disliked in James. Further, the novel (unlike James's) boasts characters whose clothes explicitly "take off," as with the three men who disport themselves in the Sacred Lake, a scene memorably circulated in popular culture through the Merchant Ivory film adaptation. Already in 1908, that is, Forster found himself searching-in the terms of Bristow's analysis-for "a public and plausible form" of representing homoeroticism in unobjectionable relation to both heterosexist taste and feminine authority; and already his text betrayed a crisis of representation, remaining "regulated-if not, by necessity, mystified-by profoundly heteronormative assumptions." As a narrative hot spot, the bathing scene conveys Forster's sense of the male body, in especial, as a "restless captive of culture" that "animates and disrupts the social order" and that the social order struggles always to recontain. Yet just as the clothes that "take off" eventually go back on—"To us shall all flesh turn in the end," they taunt from the lakeshore, countermanding the Thoreauvian dictum on the Emersons' wardrobe— Forster is ultimately compelled to cloak his critique of the "normal" in the garb of the normal, thus risking the same "cocooning and muffling" he deplored in James.

Before addressing the Sacred Lake episode in detail, however, it will be useful to review Forster's

characterization of his three bathers—Fredd), Honey church, George Emerson, and the clergyman Mr. Beebe—and of the negative countertype Cecil Vyse, who will show up with his intended, Lucy Honeychurch, and her mother to put "a confining and depressing end to the affair," as Samuel Hynes says. Young Freddy, whose letters to his sister Lucy are "full of athletics and biology" and who is seen "studying a small manual of anatomy," can easily be pegged as the earnest, hail-fellow-well-met creature of such homosocial institutions as the British public school and (prospectively) the medical establishment. Forster has fun with Freddy's efforts to sever the maternal apron strings ("Oh, do keep quiet, mother . . . and let a man do some work") and permits Cecil to sneer at him as the sort of muscular-Christian "healthy person . . . who has made England what she is," but Freddy also scores points for his glad animal movements: "Apooshoo, apooshoo, apooshoo . . . Water's simply ripping".

In George Emerson, who will dislodge Vyse as Lucy's true mate, Forster tests out a prototype of the new-age male—a character, as Bristow writes, who incorporates "an idiosyncratic blend of cultural interests . . . where the appreciation of art and 'love . . . of

the body' are not separate". Yet, although George is dedicated to securing the heterosexual love-plot, and will emerge from his dip "bare-chested" and "radiant" to smite Lucy's vision, Forster simultaneously invites another frame and another kind of gaze—not only by annexing the post-Whitmanian tradition of bathing-boys scenes but also, and less obviously, by stocking George's library with his own early readings of a homoerotic hue, notably Samuel Butler's *The Way of All Flesh* and A. E. Housman's *A Shropshire Lad,* which, as Forster said, "mingled with my own late adolescence and turned inward upon me".

Completing the trio, the "stout but attractive" Mr. Beebe is a slightly more hopeful incarnation of the Victorian bachelor figure whose line of descent, as Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick has shown, includes John Marcher of "The Beast in the Jungle" (1903) and other "poor sensitive gentlemen" whose psychic constitution opens onto homosexual panic, it not homosexual possibility In a tactful but no longer difficult allusion, Forster notes that Beebe has "rather profound reasons" for responding coolly to women and for seeing them as objects of strictly anthropological curiosity, even though as a "feminized" man of the cloth he lives mainly among them. Forster's indirection in describing Beebe, moreover, is inscribed in the cleric's own manner of commentary—or what Freddy calls his "funny way, when you never quite know what he means." Not coincidentally, what puzzles Freddy's amiable but restricted mind is Beebe's contention that Vyse can only *impersonate* a (hetero) romantic suitor, being in actuality "an ideal bachelor. .. like me—better detached." And even though Forster satirizes Charlotte Bartlett's lament to Lucy, bemoaning the death of chivalry ("Oh, for a real man! . . . Oh, for your brother!"), Charlotte's sense of Beebe as "hopeless" in this regard also tags him as exemplifying another style of masculinity.

An extra emphasis on "masculinity" is warranted here, for Forster takes pains to discriminate between Mr. Beebe and Cecil Vyse as, respectively, the hearty and mostly *sympathetic* "ideal bachelor"—one who, as Charlotte primly objects, "laughs just like an ordinary man"—and the repugnant variety, one of the "despicable and regressive species of mocking intellectuals" who combined, for Forster, a precious Paterian-Jamesian aestheticism with a Wildean lassitude and antiathleticism ("I have no profession," says Cecil, "It is another example of my decadence". It is Beebe, after all, who analogizes Vyse to a Gothic statue, implying "celibacy," where a Greek statue implies "fruition"—who perceives, in a word, that Vyse is insufficiently masculine for *either* heterosexual or "masculine love" (as it will be named in *Maurice)* and thus perniciously opposed to the currents that replenish and "fructify every hour of life". In this way, too, Beebe distinguishes himself from the novel's other clergyman, the Reverend Cuthbert Eager, who fatuously praises Giotto's frescoes for being "untroubled by the snares of anatomy" and for avoiding the corporeal "taint of the Renaissance". Beebe's consent to strip and swim, then, aligns him provisionally with the adversaries of "drawing-room twaddle" and genteel Baedeker discourse (echoes of Lamb House, to Forster's ear), which chastely applauds Giotto's "tactile values" and holds that "a pity in art ... signified the nude"—as in Charlotte's disdain for *another* water-borne being, Botticelli's Venus. Like Mr. Emerson, who pontificates about the paradise to be regained when "we no longer despise our bodies," like Lucy Honey church, who "by touch... come[s] to her desire" and "entertain[s] an image that [has] physical beauty," but

decidedly *unlike* Cecil Vyse with his "depths of prudishness," Beebe votes for— and with—the body at the Sacred Lake.

What makes the lake sacred in Forster's fable is no great mystery, although here again the level of popular, heteronormative signification and reception shades into more covert "messages" and a

queerer take on the scene As a medium of more or less *generic* lubrication, tumescence, nakedness— and notice that Lucy, too, had bathed there until "found out" and reclaimed for gentility by Charlotte—the take emblematizes Mr. Emerson's projected paradise on earth: "set in its little alp of green ... [it was] large enough to contain the human body, and pure enough to reflect the sky". Further, to the extent that the episode advances George's conquest of Lucy, the lake reprises the riverine bed of violets in which they first kissed in Italy that ejaculative "primal source whence beauty gushed out" to "irrigate" the grass with "spots of azure foam". At this level, both the hyperidealized scenery—the "beautiful emerald path, tempting the feet towards the central pool"—and the sacramentalized passion it induces ("a call to the blood ... a momentary chalice for youth") subserve an Eden whose beckonings and indulgences wear a look familiarly heterosexual, or at the very least "neutral". To put this another way, Forster's obligatory insistence on scenic "purity" and, by extension, on the innocent frolicsomeness of his male bathers does little to retard the normative thrust of the narrative or to disturb the normative valence of the "floods of love . . . burst[ing] forth in tumult" that it seeks to celebrate.

Yet as we remarked in sorting through George Emerson's library, in which Housman huddles next to Nietzsche, the heralded bathing scene manages to gesture toward a different call to the blood and a different kind of sexual immersion as well. As hinted by the unidentified "aromatic plant" flourishing near the pond's "flooded margin"—almost certainly a tribute to Whitman's calamus, or sweet-flag—Forster provides a comic, if inevitably veiled, variant of the "greenwood" fantasy of masculine love that concludes *Maurice.* In a setting "beyond the intrusion of man" and nestled in the bosom of nature —in an aqueous vessel, no less, that conjures up both seminal and amniotic associations— Freddy, George, and Mr. Beebe find a social space where not only anticorporeality but also hetero-sexist presumption and regulation are put in suspense— where for a moment, in the parlance of *Maurice,* the Law slumbers. Whether "rotat[ing] in the pool breast high"—in Forster's campy depiction—like "the nymphs in Gotterdammerung," or "play [ing] at being Indians," or kicking their bundled clothes like schoolboys at soccer, or "twinkl[ing] into the trees," the three men try on alternative genders, ethnicities, and social roles in a temperate carnival of deviance. In fact, they even try on each other's costumes in a homoerotically coded sequence of exchanges: Freddy, who significantly cannot see the repressed Cecil Vyse "wearing another fellow's cap", here makes off with Beebe's waistcoat, while George dons Beebe's "wide-awake hat" and ends up wearing Freddy's "bags." These often phallically connotative swap-pings and sharings, in turn, culminate in a figurative instance of male-male conception when Freddy announces, giddily: "I've swallowed a pollywog. It wriggleth in my tummy".

But as we know—and as Forster, for all his lighthearted treatment, underscores—the Law only slumbers, soon to arouse and reinstate itself, as the amalgamated powers of the maternal, the domestic, the female-amative, and the bourgeois-respectable intervene to terminate this idyl of masculine adhesiveness. Freddy's weak protest against the restoration of conventional rule ("Look here, mother, a fellow must wash,. . . and if another fellow—") is quelled when Mrs. Honeychurch declares that, being naked, he is "in no position to argue" and gains his compliance by means of a time-honored token of motherly concern: "All these colds come of not drying thoroughly." Meanwhile George, in all his "barechested" radiance, gets carefully reinvested in the heterosexual paradigm, calling Lucy to her romantic fate "with the shout of the morning star," and Mr. Beebe finds himself painfully recalled to reality and propriety, imaging—in his paranoia—that "every pine-tree [is] a Rural Dean".

Perhaps most telling, from the standpoint of Forster's adjudication of masculinities, is his cast-

ing of Cecil as unwittingly arrayed with the feminine forces of normalization—a notion embedded in Beebe's sentinel cry of alarm, "Hi! Hi! *Ladies!,"* which seems to collapse Vyse with his female companions. By now well-established as a condescending poseur who "believe [s] that women revere men for their manliness," Vyse here shows even more sharply as a walking parody of the English patriarch, "who always felt he must lead women, though he knew not whither, and protect them, though he knew not against what". To this ersatz version of an already corrupt gender style the Merchant Ivory film furnishes an added accent as Cecil—gloriously overplayed, as hardly seemed possible, by Daniel Day-Lewis—bushwhacks through the bracken, "ladies" in tow, in quest of new territory to colonize on behalf of the constrained body, male privilege, and imperial aggrandizement. We may confidently speculate that Forster, whose later novels criticize just such a "desire for possessions [and] creditable appendages," would have appreciated this touch.

A *Room with a View* might be read then as a concerted attempt to reject what Forster saw as the mistaken scheme of values informing James's oeuvre, as well as a critique of the sociopolitical context that surrounded and conditioned those writings. In a calculated riposte to authors like James, who believed fiction should delineate the "elementary passions ... in a spirit of intellectual superiority" and who anticipated modernist misgivings about sentimentalism's "connection to a sexual body", Forster set out to give his third novel a "stifling human quality"—to make it "sogged with humanity" (in the aptly fluid terms of *Aspects of the Novel)* and *not* to deny the "sentimentality . . . lurk[ing] in the background" of muchreaderly pleasure. As I began this essay by suggesting—and as would become apparent in the experiment of *Maurice*—one powerful (if still hidden) motive of Forster's campaign to make a great good place for the body and naked feeling in fiction was the hope of clearing a narrative field for homosexual subjectivity—for the "generous recognition of an emotion and ... the reintegration of something primitive into the common stock". Not only did the "common stuff" that Forster missed in James's characters need to be reanimated in the conversation of culture, but that same move should open a way toward acceptance of less common—or rather, less commonly acknowledged—sexualities as well.

In the final analysis, though, we must ask whether A *Room with a view* accomplishes or even effectively predicts such a "rout of... civilization" in this more ambitious sense or whether instead— as queer theory posits, and as Forster would perceive with growing acuity—certain costs attach to the traditional "marital teleology of the comic text" with its policing of nonnormative masculinities. If one means to contest the cultural position that Forster found inadequately contested in James by asserting that love is "of the body," why stipulate (as Mr. Emerson does) that love is "not the body"? Might stopping this one step shy of fully "carnal embracement"—a last-ditch reticence encountered in all of Forster's fiction, including *Maurice*—involve renewed concessions to a spiritualized "love" that is always in peril of being (re)engulfed in het-eronormativity? Doesn't *A Room with a View* forfeit something *politically* vital by deferring to the usual script with its "idiotic use of marriage as a finale," as Forster wrote in *Aspects of the Novel,* repeating an opinion he held even at the time of the novel's composition? Or if one *does* nod, in the same work, toward other possible desires and consummations, how much gets changed, in the realm of the real, when the nod is only to those in the know?

The rhetorical posture of such a line of inquiry is perhaps unavoidably invidious, and as we have seen, Forster's private ruminations were not without self-doubt and self-recrimination on this score. Yet to charge "queer Forster" with not being queer *enough*—or with failing decisively to subvert het-erosexist narrative conventions—would seem to miss the point. For how, in fairness, was one to "reveal the hidden life at its source" when "mutual secrecy" had always been the enabling premise of society, and especially when the state and its agencies of sexual regulation made one pay with one's body for certain disclosures? To leave Forster's perennial quarrel with Henry James simply in the region of psychobiography—the influence of somebody upon somebody, to adapt Woolf—would be to neglect the *collective* testimonial of their works to the efficacy and resilience of homophobia in what is called, evidently without conscious irony, the life of man.

Source: Eric Haralson, *Queer Forster,* edited by Robert K. Martin and George Piggford, The University of Chicago Press, 1997, pp. 66-72.

Adaptations

In 1950, Stephen Tait and Kenneth Allcott adapted *A Room with a View* to the stage. The play was produced in Cambridge and published by Edward Arnold in 1951.

Cinecom released a film adaptation of *A Room with a View* produced by Merchant-Ivory Productions in 1986. Using an adaptation by Ruth Prawer Jhabvala, James Ivory directed the film. Nominated for eight Academy Awards, the film won three: for screenplay, costume design, and set design. The cast included the notable Daniel Day-Lewis (Cecil), Helena Bonham Carter (Lucy), and Julian Sands (George).

Topics for Further Study

Forster's theory of marital comradeship has been said to be a homosexual viewpoint masked by a heterosexual story. Do you agree or disagree?

Forster identified readily with Renaissance figures. Research the Neoplatonist Gemistus Pletho or the Italian mathematician Girolamo Cardano and read Forster's essay on either one. What comparisons can be made between these Renaissance figures and Forster?

The Greek Spirit or the Comic Muse are composed of profound human musings. Taking George's book shelf as a guide (Byron, Butler, Gibbon, Schopenhauer, and Nietzsche) as well as the novel itself, define Mr. Emerson's understanding of the Greek Spirit.

In the novel, the potential liberating effects of art must be guarded against. This is done by aesthetic education, not censorship. How has the battle over the impact of media on youth changed? What can be learned from Forster on this issue?

Botticelli's "Birth of Venus" was celebrated in the novel as a moment of body appreciation— not an example of exploitation. Feminists in Forster's day, and still today, disagree. Research the arguments on both sides using Forster's novel and Lynda Nead's *The Female Nude.* Which do you find most persuasive?

Read Forster's own travel books or early National Geographics to ascertain the conditions a traveler faced in Forster's time. What does Forster believe to be the value of travel? Compare this to the goal of package tours and the ability to eat at McDonald's in any city on the planet. Is Forster's sense of travel possible in, for example, the Florence of today?

Compare and Contrast

1908: Based on an arrangement with Russia, Austria annexes Bosnia and Herzegovina. This disrupts Serbia's plans for a Greater Serbia including the two provinces. Britain and France thwart Russia's gain of the promised access to the Dardanelles and Bosporus straits.Austria denies any secret arrangements and the Balkan fuse is set to explode as World War I.

Today: With the collapse of Yugoslavia, Balkan provinces again struggle for control. At the close of the twentieth century, Serbia has been isolated for its attempt to annex and ethnically cleanse Kosovo.

1908: Before it annexes Hawaii in 1898 and colonizes the Philippines a year later, the United States possesses a military just capable of dealing with indigenous tribes, the Mexican army, and Spain. America's stance is defensive, although the world powers know that the United States has the capacity as soon as it finds the will.

Today: The United States has the largest military-industrial complex in the world. On paper, the United States can fight two full-fledged wars simultaneously. This military might is matched by a consumer and financial base that dominates global markets.

1908: The West views China as a source of riches so long as the country can be controlled.

Today: The view of China by the West has not changed. The United States hopes to edge out its competitors and gain preferred access to China's vast population for its goods and services.

1908: Europe and the United States account for nearly all industrial production. Europe depends on Africa, Asia, and the Americas for its raw materials and food.Europe begins industrializing its colonies by building railways, mining centers, and factories.

Today: Europe and the United States lead the world in finance, service, and legislative sectors but have given up ground in manufacturing and production.

1908: The heterosexual ceremony of marriage allows no mutations. Due to industrialization, women and men can choose to be single. In addition, the social atmosphere allows nontraditional relationships.

Today: The Big Three automotive companies in the United States have extended spousal health-care benefits to their gay employees. Homosexual marriage, meanwhile, is gaining acceptance in parts of the West.

What Do I Read Next?

The first novel of Forster's Italian series, *Where Angels Fear to Tread* (1905), sequentially follows from *A Room with a View.* The novel anticipates the themes Forster would explore in his later works through a story about two journeys to Italy. On the first, an English widow, Lilia Herriton, goes to Italy, falls in love with an Italian, and dies in childbirth. Fearing the idea that this child should grow up Italian causes another journey to Italy to be made by English people. The goal of this journey is to recover the baby.

Set in Cambridge, Forster's *The Longest Journey* sits in the middle of the Italian series. In this novel, the comfortable university world is forever disjointed for young Rick Elliot when he falls in love with Agnes Pembroke. The novel captures the essence of university life in turn-of-the-century Britain as well as the experience of tea with a dowager.

With some autobiographical touches, Forster memorialized the house of his youth, Rooksnest, in his fourth novel, published in 1910, *Howards End.* Here, the children of the Wilcoxes try to ignore the note by their mother, Ruth, which bequeathed the house to Margaret Schlegal. Margaret marries Ruth's surviving husband, Henry, and gains the house regardless. After a series of traumas, Margaret and an ailing Henry return to the house.

The 1924 work *Passage to India* was the last novel Forster published and it has been widely acclaimed as his best work. The novel examines the themes of race and colony through the problems that develop when Adela Questad, an Englishwoman, accuses Dr. Aziz, an Indian, of attacking her on an outing. During the trial, Dr. Aziz befriends Cecil Fielding but colonialism impossibly complicates their relationship.

Iris Murdoch has been favorably compared with Forster. *A Severed Head,* from 1976, displays Murdoch's abilities to observe humanity in its complexities. In this novel, Martin Lynch-Gibbon believes he can have both a wife and a mistress but when his wife leaves him his sense of reality crumbles.

Portrait of a Lady, by Henry James, was first published in three volumes in 1881. This work about a young American woman, Isabel Archer, who is "doing"Europe has many points of comparison and contrast with A *Room with a View.* James' heroine becomes a victim of her provincialism as she is the focus of an examination of American values.

A very different approach to analyzing relationships and society appeared in 1925 from Forster's friend Virginia Woolf. Written under the influence of James Joyce, *Mrs. Dalloway* follows the title character through one June day as she confronts her surroundings and remembers the past.

After Forster, the person most responsible for creating the stereotypical early twentieth-century British gentlemen is P. G. Wodehouse. His ninety-some stories concern the

chaos of society life as experienced by Bertie Wooster and his manservant, the original butler, Jeeves. The first of Wodehouse' s success was the 1913 novel *Something New.*

Quite easily, the domestic scene did not exist before Jane Austen and certainly the genre of spoiled rich kid depends on her 1815 novel, *Emma.* Emma Woodhouse thinks she knows what is best for everyone in her provincial society and she attempts to resolve fates accordingly. Her plot lines are not exactly carried out and she finds herself married in the end to George Knightley.

The 1988 Pulitzer Prize winner by Anne Tyler, *Breathing Lessons,* is an American domestic comedy set, appropriately, in the car. The Morans display their familial difficulties through flashbacks as they travel to an old friend's funeral.

Further Study

Adams, Henry, *The Education of Henry Adams,* Oxford University Press, 1999.

The greatest representative of its genre,Adams' 1906 autobiographical *bildungsroman* grapples with the themes of the corruption of humanity. In one chapter, "The Dynamo and the Virgin," he compares the figure who unified the Middle Ages, the Virgin Mary, with the technological enthusiasm of the dawn of the twentieth century.Adams fears that modernism will devolve humans into greedy beasts incapable of appreciating those finer elements of civilization—such as art.

Ellman, Richard, "Edwardians and Late Victorians," edited by Richard Ellman, Columbia University Press, 1960. Ellman's volume reveals the differences between the Edwardians and the Victorians. Philosophically, the Edwardians sought to create a more modern view of the world, though it was not modern enough for some.

Forster, E. M., *Aspects of the Novel,* 1927.

Forster was the first novelist invited to deliver a Cambridge University Clark Lectures series and his se-

ries remains the most well-known. The lectures he delivered were gathered together as *Aspects of the Novel* in 1927. Forster argued in favor of remembering that a novel represents life, that it is not a dead work of art.

Frye, Northrop, *Anatomy of Criticism: Four Essays,* Princeton University Press, 1957.

Frye's work, and others like it, has helped to show the way in which cultural artifacts, like literature, are a part of a greater record of human civilization. In this work, Frye attempts to reveal the taxonomy of literature. For Frye, the literature of the West has historically utilized the same structural principles although it moves, chronologically, from pure myth to works of realism. In the "Third Essay," he diagrams the four basic patterns: romance, comedy, tragedy, and satire. Frye's work almost accomplishes the scientific analysis of literature that Forster's contemporaries, like George Meredith, desired.

Nead, Lynda, *The Female Nude: Art, Obscenity, and Sexuality,* Routledge, 1992.

The dominating discussion in *A Room with a View* hovers around the way women are viewed by society, or should be viewed. The depiction of women in artworks, Nead argues, has been historically constructed out of the long-running aesthetic debate and that depiction impacts women. She begins her discussion with a violent act by a suffragist against a painting of Venus in 1914. The work gradually journeys to female artists who are reacting to the artistic tradition.

Nye, David E., *American Technological Sublime,* MIT

Press, 1994.

Nye traces the evolution of America's attitude toward technology back to the eighteenth-century aesthetic discussion of the sublime. Nye shows that technology does not have its own agency but must be championed and utilized by farsighted individuals.

Wagner, Richard, *Parzival,* directed by Hans-Jürgen Syber-

berg, Image Entertainment, 1999.

Early in the thirteenth century, Wolfram von Es-chenbach used the unfinished epic poem by Chretien de Troyes to introduce Germans to the Grail legend. At the end of the nineteenth century, Richard Wagner—one of the most famous composers of his day—adapted the story to the stage in the form of his last opera. Elements of this story can be seen in Forster's *Room with a View* whose heroine, Lucy, cannot perform the piece for her suitor, Cecil. Image Entertainment has produced a DVD of Syberberg's 1988 production.

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Late-nineteenth-century London was a dynamic period which ushered in recognizable consumerist habits. These habits were altering social customs governing young women especially and new dangers cropped up attempting to maintain traditional gender roles. Walkowitz examines the murders ascribed to the elusive Jack the Ripper and their social fallout in this book. She hypothesizes the underlying reason as a cultural habit of anxiety over women who venture out into the city alone.

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Introduction

Purpose of the Book

The purpose of Novels for Students (NfS) is to provide readers with a guide to understanding, enjoying, and studying novels by giving them easy access to information about the work. Part of Gale's□For Students□ Literature line, NfS is specifically designed to meet the curricular needs of high school and undergraduate college students and their teachers, as well as the interests of general readers and researchers considering specific novels. While each volume contains entries on □classic□ novels

frequently studied in classrooms, there are also entries containing hard-to-find information on contemporary novels, including works by multicultural, international, and women novelists.

The information covered in each entry includes an introduction to the novel and the novel's author; a plot summary, to help readers unravel and understand the events in a novel; descriptions of important characters, including explanation of a given character's role in the novel as well as discussion about that character's relationship to other characters in the novel; analysis of important themes in the novel; and an explanation of important literary techniques and movements as they are demonstrated in the novel.

In addition to this material, which helps the readers analyze the novel itself, students are also provided with important information on the literary and historical background informing each work. This includes a historical context essay, a box comparing the time or place the novel was written to modern Western culture, a critical overview essay, and excerpts from critical essays on the novel. A unique feature of NfS is a specially commissioned critical essay on each novel, targeted toward the student reader.

To further aid the student in studying and enjoying each novel, information on media adaptations is provided, as well as reading suggestions for works of fiction and nonfiction on similar themes and topics. Classroom aids include ideas for research papers and lists of critical sources that provide additional material on the novel.

Selection Criteria

The titles for each volume of NfS were selected by surveying numerous sources on teaching literature and analyzing course curricula for various school districts. Some of the sources surveyed included: literature anthologies; Reading Lists for College-Bound Students: The Books Most Recommended by America's Top Colleges; textbooks on teaching the novel; a College Board survey of novels commonly studied in high schools; a National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) survey of novels commonly studied in high schools; the NCTE's Teaching Literature in High School: The Novel;and the Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA) list of best books for young adults of the past twenty-five years. Input was also solicited from our advisory board, as well as educators from various areas. From these discussions, it was determined that each volume should have a mix of □classic□ novels (those works commonly taught in literature classes) and contemporary novels for which information is often hard to find. Because of the interest in expanding the canon of literature, an emphasis was also placed on including works by international, multicultural, and women authors. Our advisory board members□educational professionals□ helped pare down the list for each volume. If a work was not selected for the present volume, it was often noted as a possibility for a future volume. As always, the editor welcomes suggestions for titles to be included in future volumes.

How Each Entry Is Organized

Each entry, or chapter, in NfS focuses on one novel. Each entry heading lists the full name of the novel, the author's name, and the date of the novel's publication. The following elements are contained in each entry:

- Introduction: a brief overview of the novel which provides information about its first appearance, its literary standing, any controversies surrounding the work, and major conflicts or themes within the work.
- Author Biography: this section includes basic facts about the author's life, and focuses on events and times in the author's life that inspired the novel in question.
- Plot Summary: a factual description of the major events in the novel. Lengthy summaries are broken down with subheads.
- Characters: an alphabetical listing of major characters in the novel. Each character name is followed by a brief to an extensive description of the character's role in the novel, as well as discussion of the character's actions, relationships, and possible motivation. Characters are listed alphabetically by last name. If a character is unnamed□for instance, the narrator in Invisible Man-the character is listed as □The Narrator□ and alphabetized as □Narrator.□ If a character's first name is the only one given, the name will appear alphabetically by that name. □ Variant names are also included for each character. Thus, the full name □Jean Louise Finch□ would head the listing for the narrator of To Kill a Mockingbird, but listed in a separate cross-reference would be the nickname □Scout Finch.□
- Themes: a thorough overview of how the major topics, themes, and issues are addressed within the novel. Each theme discussed appears in a separate subhead, and is easily accessed through the boldface entries in the Subject/Theme Index.
- Style: this section addresses important style elements of the novel, such as setting, point of view, and narration; important literary devices used, such as imagery, foreshadowing, symbolism; and, if applicable, genres to which the work might have belonged, such as Gothicism or Romanticism. Literary terms are explained within the entry, but can also be found in the Glossary.
- Historical Context: This section outlines the social, political, and cultural climate in which the author lived and the novel was created. This section may include descriptions of related historical events, pertinent aspects of daily life in the culture, and the artistic and literary sensibilities of the time in which the work was written. If the novel is a historical work, information regarding the time in which the novel is set is also included. Each section is broken down with helpful subheads.
- Critical Overview: this section provides background on the critical reputation of the novel, including bannings or any other public controversies surrounding the work. For older works, this section includes a history of how the novel was first received and how perceptions of it may have changed over the years; for more recent novels, direct quotes from early reviews may also be included.
- Criticism: an essay commissioned by NfS which specifically deals with the novel and is written specifically for the student audience, as well as excerpts from previously published criticism on the work (if available).

- Sources: an alphabetical list of critical material quoted in the entry, with full bibliographical information.
- Further Reading: an alphabetical list of other critical sources which may prove useful for the student. Includes full bibliographical information and a brief annotation.

In addition, each entry contains the following highlighted sections, set apart from the main text as sidebars:

- Media Adaptations: a list of important film and television adaptations of the novel, including source information. The list also includes stage adaptations, audio recordings, musical adaptations, etc.
- Topics for Further Study: a list of potential study questions or research topics dealing with the novel. This section includes questions related to other disciplines the student may be studying, such as American history, world history, science, math, government, business, geography, economics, psychology, etc.
- Compare and Contrast Box: an □at-a-glance□ comparison of the cultural and historical differences between the author's time and culture and late twentieth century/early twenty-first century Western culture. This box includes pertinent parallels between the major scientific, political, and cultural movements of the time or place the novel was written, the time or place the novel was set (if a historical work), and modern Western culture. Works written after 1990 may not have this box.
- What Do I Read Next?: a list of works that might complement the featured novel or serve as a contrast to it. This includes works by the same author and others, works of fiction and nonfiction, and works from various genres, cultures, and eras.

Other Features

NfS includes □The Informed Dialogue: Interacting with Literature,□ a foreword by Anne Devereaux Jordan, Senior Editor for Teaching and Learning Literature (TALL), and a founder of the Children's Literature Association. This essay provides an enlightening look at how readers interact with literature and how Novels for Students can help teachers show students how to enrich their own reading experiences.

A Cumulative Author/Title Index lists the authors and titles covered in each volume of the NfS series.

A Cumulative Nationality/Ethnicity Index breaks down the authors and titles covered in each volume of the NfS series by nationality and ethnicity.

A Subject/Theme Index, specific to each volume, provides easy reference for users who may be studying a particular subject or theme rather than a single work. Significant subjects from events to broad themes are included, and the entries pointing to the specific theme discussions in each entry are indicated in boldface.

Each entry has several illustrations, including photos of the author, stills from film adaptations (if available), maps, and/or photos of key historical events.

Citing Novels for Students

When writing papers, students who quote directly from any volume of Novels for Students may use the following general forms. These examples are based on MLA style; teachers may request that students adhere to a different style, so the following examples may be adapted as needed. When citing text from NfS that is not attributed to a particular author (i.e., the Themes, Style, Historical Context sections, etc.), the following format should be used in the bibliography section:

□Night.□ Novels for Students. Ed. Marie Rose Napierkowski. Vol. 4. Detroit: Gale, 1998. 234-35.

When quoting the specially commissioned essay from NfS (usually the first piece under the □Criticism□ subhead), the following format should be used:

Miller, Tyrus. Critical Essay on □Winesburg, Ohio.□ Novels for Students. Ed. Marie Rose Napierkowski. Vol. 4. Detroit: Gale, 1998. 335-39.

When quoting a journal or newspaper essay that is reprinted in a volume of NfS, the following form may be used:

Malak, Amin. □Margaret Atwood's □The Handmaid's Tale and the Dystopian Tradition,□ Canadian Literature No. 112 (Spring, 1987), 9-16; excerpted and reprinted in Novels for Students, Vol. 4, ed. Marie Rose Napierkowski (Detroit: Gale, 1998), pp. 133-36.

When quoting material reprinted from a book that appears in a volume of NfS, the following form may be used:

Adams, Timothy Dow. □Richard Wright: □Wearing the Mask,□ in Telling Lies in Modern American Autobiography (University of North Carolina Press, 1990), 69-83; excerpted and reprinted in Novels for Students, Vol. 1, ed. Diane Telgen (Detroit: Gale, 1997), pp. 59-61.

We Welcome Your Suggestions

The editor of Novels for Students welcomes your comments and ideas. Readers who wish to suggest novels to appear in future volumes, or who have other suggestions, are cordially invited to contact the editor. You may contact the editor via email at: ForStudentsEditors@gale.com. Or write to the editor at:

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