



A Room with a View / Howards End

E.M. Forster, Benjamin DeMott

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Wit and intelligence are the hallmarks of these two probing portraits of the English character written by E.M. Forster. Both are stories of extreme contrasts--in values, social class and cultural perspectives. Romantic relationships lead to conventional happiness in the delightful social comedy *A Room with a View*, and to unexpected scandal in the richer, deeply moving novel *Howards End*.

Howards End, which rivals *A Passage to India* as Forster's greatest work, makes a country house in Hertfordshire the center and the symbol for what Lionel Trilling called a class war about who would inherit England. Commerce clashes with culture, greed with gentility.

A Room with a View brings home the stuffiness of upper-middle-class Edwardian society in a tremendously funny comedy that pairs a well-bred young lady with a lusty railway clerk and satirizes both the clergy and the English notion of respectability.

Quintessentially British, these two novels have become twentieth-century classics. With an introduction and bibliography by Benjamin DeMott.

A Room with a View / Howards End Details

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Author : E.M. Forster , Benjamin DeMott

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From Reader Review A Room with a View / Howards End for online ebook

Clara says

[Forster has a habit of suddenly snatching victory from the jaws of defeat in a way that strikes me as kind

Melissa says

Delightful.

Traci says

I only have read "A Room With a View."

This book is not easy to sink into but so far I love the language.

Update: finished the book. It was very enjoyable as I kept on reading it and towards the last 5 chapters read it more quickly than the others. The prose is so thick with details every chapter packs somewhat of a punch which made me read it more slowly than I would normally. I have never been the type to reread books, wanting to move on to the next but this one is the first I've read that I think "I've got to read that again" because there was so much involved in it that was outside the story but definitely still opened up new perspectives about the story.

The story is very romantic and George the love interest is very attractive and appealing but the main character Lucy comes off a bit of a wimp; however in all fairness this was a different time and in old England where impressions about your reputation was taken with extreme seriousness. So I think that was hard for me to appreciate.

Georgeous read and insightful glimpses into another time and place.

Kenneth Iltz says

After trying to read two new novels and giving up after about 30 pages, I went back to my comfort zone. The plot is fairly simple. The heroine, Miss Lucy Honeychurch, heads to Italy on the grand tour and is kissed by George Emerson. The episode is embarrassing to Lucy and she and her chaperone move from Florence to Rome after the incident. She then becomes engaged to a wealthy and respectable but snobbish man named Cecil Vyse. George warns Lucy that the marriage will never work and George's father convinces Lucy that she was meant to be married to George. A very well written book. I can't wait to view (again) the movie version of the book with Helena Bonham Carter, Maggie Smith, Daniel Day-Lewis and Judi Dench.

judy weaver says

classic romance 2015 reading challenge Edwardian England. Published in 1908 to both critical and popular

acclaim, *A Room with a View* is a whimsical comedy of manners that owes more to Jane Austen than perhaps any other of his works. The central character is a muddled young girl named Lucy Honeychurch, who runs away from the man who stirs her emotions, remaining engaged to a rich snob. Forster considered it his 'nicest' novel, and today it remains probably his most well liked. Its moral is utterly simple. Throw away your etiquette book and listen to your heart. But it was Forster's next book, *Howards End*, a story about who would inhabit a charming old country house (and who, in a larger sense, would inherit England), that earned him recognition as a major writer. Centered around the conflict between the wealthy, materialistic Wilcox family and the cultured, idealistic Schlegel sisters-and informed by Forester's famous dictum 'Only connect'-it is full of tenderness towards favorite characters.

Christa?? says

A Room With A View: Interesting ending, though I didn't really feel the events that led up to what happened at the end of the story. Wished it had much more of a dramatic flare, as some parts felt dreary and lacking in detail. The story felt like it kept jumping from place to place, I didn't feel grounded at all with the characters and the story flow.

Howards End: It had a fascinating but somewhat confusing beginning, the middle part was a little more so-so with less flare but more of the story taking shape, and the last part was just downright surprising but gave me a good feeling about the entirety of the story. I liked the characters, and I kind of liked how the settings were introduced and used in the story.

Arlene says

Howards End is a view of the English society of 100 years ago. The characters are mostly people who have an "income" so are concerned with society and conventions. I found them tedious except for the heroine, Margaret, but even she isn't without faults. finished Sep 5, 2009

A Room With a View I set the book aside after I finished the first novel. I finally finished the second novel in this edition. I found Victorian society strange looking back from a completely different century. The conventions that were observed between men and women have certainly changed over the years. finished Dec 6, 2009

Andrew says

Review to follow soon.

Suzanne Yuskiw says

A Room with a View - A real delight from beginning to end. Having seen the movie a few times and loved it each time, I wondered if I would discover new depths in the actual text. In fact, the film distilled all the best elements of the book in theme, character and setting. What you don't get in the film is the cheerful, ironic

British voice of the writer. With delicious understatement he pokes fun at his upper middle class countrymen and women. In Edwardian England, most of the characters take themselves oh, so seriously. Their tea, their dress, their manners, what is said and what must never be said in company, there are rules for everything. Lucy Honeychurch tries so hard to be a "Rules Girl." It's only in her passionate piano playing that her real soul seeps out, and Forster, like a kindly uncle edges her gently along the way. The last chapter unveils in sweeping poetry the mystery and magic of Lucy's ultimate destination.

reneenDaBomb says

Romantic and classic book that shows the upper class values as opposed to the lower class. Love still rules in these two stories.

Nadhirah says

Separate reviews for Howards End and A Room with a View below:

Howards End

I really didn't enjoy this one. There were so many themes crammed into this very short novel that I felt like I needed an English teacher looking over my shoulders explaining things to me.

Henry Wilcox and his son, Charlie are the epitome of upper-class snobbery. They think the lower-class uneducated, lazy, and crude. They think that men are superior to women, reflected in the way Henry treats Margaret (he thinks she's intelligent but should be left at that lest she becomes unladylike), and the way they laugh at Dolly who's merely a bimbo to them. Margaret and Helen Schlegel are also rich but they're idealists and aware of their privilege. Helen has a distorted sense of duty to the poor that manifests in her trying to force her help onto the lower-class (the Basts) even when they don't want it. Margaret, on the other hand, transforms into a submissive woman, who thinks she can change Henry but unconsciously becomes his enabler. Meanwhile, Leonard Bast represents the lower-class; his only desire is to have intellectual conversations with the Schlegel sisters but instead finds unsolicited help being foisted onto him. He is proud even when thrown into desperate situations.

While I appreciate the literary merit of this novel, in the end I really struggled to keep my interest especially in the long-winded passages of reflection that came too close to becoming stream-of-consciousness writing (a writing device I dislike).

A Room with a View

Slightly more enjoyable. I thought Part 1 was draggy and a tad boring. Part 2 was much better especially when Lucy started taking control of her life. I found her outbursts against the patronizing people around her particularly satisfying. This novella is a dig at social class and English snobbery by way of a love story. Also made me realize the importance of being truthful to one's feelings. And the ending was very beautiful.

I understand why so many people love Forster. He was an intelligent writer and weaved social commentaries into his work deftly. But I honestly had to slog through these two stories and ultimately, I think his writing

just isn't for me.

Annalee says

A Room with a View is one of my favorite books. I loved its overall theme of happiness comes from following what your instincts, not just what the world dictates. Forster did a wonderful job in his characterization of Lucy, Charlotte (oh how I love Charlotte, she is one of my most favorite characters ever), and Mr. Beebe, especially.

Howards End is well-written and engaging, but lacks some of the lightness of A Room with a View. It is more centered on criticism of social classes. The characters were interesting, I loved Helen, Margret and Mr. Bast. I did not really love Margret and Henry Wilcox's relationship, frankly because I did not like him as a character.

Overall, while both books are worth the read, A Room with the View is definitely worth reading over and over again.

Peggy Graves says

Sometimes I approach older novels almost like eating kale salad. I kind of like it but mostly I'm doing it for my health. Having read two EMForester novels before this one (Howard's End and Maurice), I was ready to eat my literary kale salad. Little did I know that I had just sat down at the sushi bar! What fun! Colors. Fun. Travelogue. Romance. Characters with character.

I especially enjoyed the study of the contrasts of English folk portrayed against the backdrop of Italy. And Mr. Emerson's talk with Lucy at the end was glorious.

My favorite E. M. Forester to date and this one will definitely be on my to-read-again shelf

Catharine says

Sometimes, though beautifully written, the language of the classics is more difficult to read. That was the case for me with this book. However, as I got into it, I enjoyed the story, the writing, and the characters. When I was nearly to the end and discovering how things were going to unfold (or how I thought they'd unfold), I was not happy. I was wondering why I'd read the book, but then there was a twist and turn and the actual ending was satisfactory. I borrowed this book from the library and "A Room with a View" was in the same volume. I wasn't excited enough about "Howard's End" to continue on with this novel.

Dave Moyer says

Decent and interesting if not my favorite.

Larry says

This is tricky, I give 'A Room with a View' a 5 star rating but 'Howards End' a 2. Also, I read the two books approximately 10 years apart. However, I found 'A Room with a View' to be a beautiful book filled with sharp observations upon society that are just as relevant today as they were when the book was written (I assume). While 'Howards End' also had some great writing and similarly acerbic observations on society, I found myself bored whilst reading it. Of course, this might have something to do with me being 19 when I read the first book and 29 when I read the second.

Rae says

I consider *A Room With A View* to be *Winnie-the-Pooh* for adults and something that should be read often. It is the delightful story of Lucy Honeychurch, a young woman who eventually accepts responsibility for her own life and marries a man whose sense of freedom reminds her of a room with a view. The movie version of the book is charming and faithful to the story and (despite an amusing river bathing scene in which there is full male nudity) is rated PG.

Rooms stand for social conventions, deadening by themselves--views for naturalness, freedom, whatever makes it possible for the spirit to breathe and expand.

Terzah says

I've always been drawn to love stories where, when someone finds a soul mate, that person knows them inside and out, and loves them inside and out, with just the barest of interactions to go on. Such is the case with George and Lucy in this book. All it takes are a few stilted conversations, a harrowing encounter in Florence and a kiss in a Tuscan meadow--and he knows he loves her and is willing to bare his heart to her and help her find her true self through both actions and words. He fears no embarrassment and never doubts that she loves him too, even when she flat out denies any feeling for him. Who among us wouldn't swoon for someone like George?

In the real world, at least in my experience, the truth of love is more complicated. People can't read you that easily--or if they can, such clarity is impeded by the fact that we all doubt ourselves so much, and second guess ourselves so much, that both the one who needs to be brave and the one who needs someone to brave on their behalf dare not speak or act. Edwardian England was a strait-laced society. But we are equally bound today by our desire not to upset anyone or rock anyone's vision of themselves. So maybe a love as spontaneous and simple and true as George's for Lucy is still possible--and maybe it's also possible that a modern Lucy, willing herself NOT to feel as she does because she doesn't wish it, could still see the light. But I kind of doubt it. Someone who spoke as directly as Mr. Emerson, George's father, does to Lucy at the end could easily be branded as a creep. I know I would make that judgment. It's hard for me to imagine a circumstance where I wouldn't.

All the more reason to read and enjoy this romantic book. It has made me think about the restraints I once laid on myself when I was younger, the concerns I had for what others thought. I wonder how many of them

are still there. I wonder to what extent they still hold me back from inappropriate actions, and what "inappropriate" really means.

Realini says

A Room with a View by E. M. Foster
Delightful classic

It is the second time that I am rating A Room with a View.
That is because I have finished listening to it again.

This time, it was a BBC production.
An adapted, abbreviated version.

Generally, this is to be avoided.
When the original is an acclaimed masterpiece, it is wrong to go to an abridged format.
But one cannot listen to or read War and Peace so many times.
Actually, I intend to listen to a BBC version of the mentioned chef d'oeuvre and a good deal more.
Hearing again the story is generally a good entertainment.
It does flop, like the recently heard Cat on a Hot Tin Roof, that had Elizabeth McGovern spoiling my pleasure with her artificial, over the top efforts.

A Room with a View has a somewhat simple story line.
Without giving details out, a man falls in love with a girl in the sensational setting of the Italian countryside near Florence.
Or maybe it all started with A Room with a View ...
Lucy Honeychurch, the main female character is talking to her companion, Charlotte Bartlett about their room in this pensione of Florence.
Charlotte is a rather artificial, pretentious character in the first place, but may take an unexpected turn later in the story.
She is complaining that they have no view.
Mr. Emerson and his son George offer to change their rooms, that have a view.
From here on, we have clash between authenticity and artificiality.
I would say that this book is a poignant criticism of a number of aspects of British mentality in the nineteenth century.
Only I must say that I am an unrepentant admirer of that very way of life.
At the upper level obviously.
If I were given to choose other periods for my life, I would choose Victorian Britain.
Not the gutter if possible, but a mansion, a sumptuous location in the Far East, the South Seas maybe.
So I disliked the character of Cecil Vyse, with his pomposity, falseness, snobbishness, stiffness.
But if he represents a caricature of British upper class unnatural behavior I still opt to favor those gentlemen.
That's because I probably am snobbish and unnatural

The film based on the book is also a good way to approach the original.
It won Academy Awards, Golden Globes and BAFTAs

Sharone says

Oh, friends. There is only one word to describe my experience reading this book: delightful. But because you know I can't resist the opportunity to say more than one word, I won't stop there.

A Room with a View is deeply satirical, and yet the characters manage to be real people rather than one-dimensional conduits for the author's social criticisms. Forster's voice and humor are subtle without being sly, and he draws you into the inner lives of his characters in a way that feels so natural it's hardly noticeable. Forster truly sees his characters, and he makes you feel that you see and instantly comprehend them too, in spite of their complexity. It seemed like every paragraph I read, I wanted to post part or all of it somewhere for others to share and appreciate, but I was afraid that once started, I'd be unable to stop.

Even though it's short and sweet, Forster packs in fabulous scenery, murders, scandals and gossip, people getting comeuppances, characters you love and characters you hate, characters that you hate and then love, and vice versa. I warned you I'd gush over this book - I mean really. Every time I read just a little bit of it, I slip right back into that world and I'm tempted to just drop everything and read it again--and it's so short that it could easily be done. Gosh, I could go on and on, using any and all of these words: charming, insightful, effortless, fascinating, hilarious, clever, absorbing. So enjoyable that I just flew right through it. Oh, and romantic. Terribly, meltingly, giddily romantic.

So go read it already. Come on, it'll take you five minutes -- at least, it will feel that way. That, to me, makes A Room with a View just the best kind of book. :)
