

Year of wonders essa essay sample

[Religion](#), [God](#)



In what ways does Brooks explore both brutality and hope in Year of Wonders?

In the novel Year of Wonders, the text explores the brutality of nature and people within a small community stricken with disease, but also the sense of hope, which characters encounter in their own ways. The exploration of brutal maltreatment to particular characters within the novel emphasises the changes to everyone's behaviour during the plague. From Anna having a childhood of abuse, to Puritans within the community of Eyam who dedicate themselves to self-harm, to rid all sin, shows the desperate measures the characters go to in order to grant their way to God. In contrast, Brooks manages to incorporate the theme of new life and hope to all in result of the plague. New perspectives of the world are formed, a sense of community is more evident and the plague ultimately changes the relationships between each character. Between brutality and hope, both are contrasting each other with Brooks exploring the positives and negative connotations of the plague and how each person is affected. In the time of the 1600's, women were badly treated by their husbands, if ever they were to speak against them. Brooks managed to incorporate this historical context throughout the novel, to emphasise the importance of women obeying their husbands, and putting up with their brutal and barbarous behaviour. When Anys Gowdie had her final act of defiance before she was killed, she had stated that many women had had affairs against their husbands. Urith Gordon endured harsh physical violence once her husband, John Gordon knew of the affair. " Before she could answer, he smashed his fist into her face. Blood streamed from her nose".

This quote shows that Brooks highlights the abusive nature, in which each character encounters, assert the mental and behavioural changes at the time of the plague for both male and female characters. Brooks mentions Anna's father, Josiah Bont being a human of a "brutal and menacing creature". When Josiah Bont is executed, the true harshness and gruesome reality of his death is all explained through Anna, who chose not to save him, because of all his own barbarous treatment of herself and her mother.

Brooks includes the detailed and elaborate death of Josiah Bont because it highlights the brokenness of Anna and her father's relationship, and how much the characters contrast each other. Anna is a character of strength, but at time vulnerable when she recollects her thoughts back to her harsh childhood, and her brutal and menacing creature of her father and how he was disrespectful to everyone because of his abuse as a young man.

Although there is brutality and madness described throughout each character, there is also a silver lining and a chance of hope for all in the community. The relationship between Elinor Mompellion and Anna changed vastly throughout the year. From Anna being merely a servant and only a servant, to breaking down the social barrier of master and servant and Elinor welcoming her and teaching her the knowledge that she has now gained. 'To me she had become so many things'.

Brooks states in this quote by Anna that Elinor had become her influential role model in the period of the plague. She had become a teacher, a friend, and in some aspects, a mother figure by Brooks including that Elinor had looked after Anna, and elaborating in the closeness of their friendship/relationship. The comparison of death to new life also brings about

the hope in Brooks' novel. When Anna states that being a midwife and helping the living was what she was put on this earth to do, she believes that she and Elinor can be a force that can bring great change to benefit those around her. Brooks mentions Anna as being strong, hopeful and courageous because she has developed in such a major way because she's more learned because of the relationship change that she went through with Elinor. Despite Elinor and Rector Mompellion having a malfunctioning relationship and Anna going through the rough relationship between Aphra and Josiah, they show their hope knowing that they continue with delivering babies and helping the living, which is what they end up doing.

Anna's new life once she leaves England promises new life and hope. The Bradford's baby is now in her hands and she names her. Brooks supports the new life and hope connotation because Aisha sustains her and gives her life and makes it worth living. With this thought, her new life will be succeeded by looking after her daughters, taking her knowledge of what she knows now, and starting all over, leaving England behind promising Anna of a life that she never thought she would have had the year during the plague. Brooks displays many stylistic features in which she elaborates and includes brutality and hope throughout many characters, the relevance of the plague and nature, and the personal relationship changes and how the plague brings about the barbarous and new life concept of each person in the community.