

# Connection in howards end essay



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Connection in Hoard's End In E. M. Forester's novel, Hoard's End, connection is perhaps the most important theme of the story, as the words "Only connect" make up its epigraph. Connections are necessary in many cases such as family, friends, and many other acquaintances. Hoard's End deals with conflict of class distinctions and human relationships. Connecting within oneself is a very important role which we are introduced to through Mr. Henry Willow's character and his development between family and friends throughout the story. His new wife, Margaret Schlemiel, knows Mr.

Wilcox could open up and "connect" if he only tried to focus on things other than business. She urges him to "only connect", yet he cannot as he is so full of concentration. Forester also demonstrates the importance of connecting with others. He does so by proving the connection of the Schlemiel family, one of the more prominent families in the novel, to Leonard Bass, a poor insurance clerk who doesn't have much going for him. Forester provides his readers with this example of connection as Leonard Bass speaks with the Colleges after his late night walk.

Discussing many theories and intellectual ideas, the Colleges are only interested in his personal stories. Many forms of connection play throughout this novel, rather they be between the two families (Schlemiel's and Willow's), the rich and the poor (Schlemiel's and Bass's), one's family (Seychelles sisters), or within the neighborhood. Connection within the novel is the biggest and most memorable theme in Forester's novel. I believe it is safe to say that no one group or social class can do without the others; it is made evident by Forester's assertion that connection between all humans is achievable.

Leslie White suggests in her article, “ Vital Disconnection in Hoard’s End”, “ If Forester’s intentions were merely to show that connection of this or any kind is undesirable or impossible to achieve, the book would be little more than an “ ethically evasive,” even mean- spirited trick” (White). There is no doubt about it that connection is a truly symbolic reference of the many different relationships throughout Forester’s novel. Connection plays a huge role in family bonding throughout the novel and perhaps the strongest family connection is through the newlyweds Margaret and Henry Wilcox.

Their allegations started off on a shaky foot as Margaret feels detached from her husband and finds out her husband has had a ten year affair with Jacky, Leonard Bass’s wife. She too is distraught that Henry cared more about business and puts more emphasis on this work than he does to his family. Crazy and unfortunate events, much like this affair, take place frequently in the novel. In Margaret and Henrys case, the words “ only connect” play over and over as a symbol of family connection and human relationships between two people.

One page 220 of Forester’s text is states, “ If Henry had shown real affection, she would have understood, for affection explains everything” (Forester 220). A wife should be able to feel the love from her husband as should others around them; however, this is not the case in the Wilcox relationship. We first see the quote of connection when referring to the Willow’s relationship on page 198, “ Only connect the prose and the passion, and both will be exalted, and human love will be seen at its height. Live in fragments no longer” (Forester 198).

This excerpt represents the main idea that Forester carries through the book: relationships should be the most important thing for people, specially for those “ in love”. I suggest quotes around those to words to emphasize that we are actually unsure at this point if there even is love in their relationship, at least on Mr.. Willow’s end. I believe by no longer living in these so called fragments, each individual will come together as one and become connected with a bond that could never be broken. In doing so, Henry Wilcox will have to adapt to his wife’s wishes by becoming a little less concentrated on business and focus more-so on her.

Jeffery Frank Teach mentions that “ Forester has done a good deal, sounding the homes of separation and difference, of the possibility of unity’ (Teach 40). If the couple is able to put differences aside and move forward in their relationship, the duo would be able “ connect” as Margaret and Forester so wish. Forester suggests that Margaret “ never forgot any one for whom she had once cared; she connected, though the connection might be bitter, and she hoped that someday Henry would do the same” (Forester 220). Margaret is a genuine example of a person trying to salvage a marriage and stay connected with her husband.

Without that connection, true love goes not exist: a thought Margaret fears most in her marriage. We also see connection between two sisters and the loss of that connection as they have grown apart after the news of Margarita’s engagement to Henry Wilcox. At the very beginning of the novel we are started off with letters back and forth between Margaret and her sister Helen. This connection between the two seems indestructible and strong; however, that thought is demolished once Helen receives taunting

news. They stay in contact through the letters and describe their each and every day.

We see their love for each other as the letters are addressed to “ dearest” ND “ dearest, dearest” (Forester 7). Typically this compassion between the two seems strong as it does throughout most of the story; however, things take a turn for the worse when Margaret announces her engagement to the slime ball. Helen, angry about the engagement, mentions that the marriage is bogus. “ It’s Just like a widower. They’ve cheek enough for anything, and invariably select one of their first wife’s friends”, she suggests. (Forester 181).

As a sister looking out for what’s best, I understand that this announcement of his proposal may come as a shock and Helen suggests he does not really truly love her. Helen fears that Margaret will start to be like Mrs.. Wilcox and become “ gruffer, more downright, and inclined to patronize the more foolish virgin” (Forester 160). Here, we see the true feelings of Helen as she becomes disconnected with her sister and feels anger towards her sister’s fiancé, Henry. Helen punishes her sister by disconnecting herself from Margarita’s life and moving far away; out of sight, out of mind.

Unsatisfied with the way things were left after telling Helen about the engagement and their continuous arguments on the object, Margaret asks to meet up at Hoard’s End where they start reminiscing about all the strong family bonding experiences they had years ago. By talking and laughing about the good old days, the sisters were able to reunite and rebuild that family connection they had lost. It is evident in this realistic example

between to loving sisters' causes family bonds and connections to forever remain.

Although they may be damaged due to disagreements, these close relationships can never be broke. John Cooler mentions in his critique, "Marriage and Personal Relationships in Forester's Fiction, that, " Personal relationships triumph between the two Seychelles sisters, among the familiar furniture at Hoard's End, the past comes to sanctify the present and the sense of the continuity of life gives promise for the future" (Cooler 121). This relationship between sisters is a prime example of connection that many of the readers are able to relate to with their siblings.

The last connection I find to be truly symbolic in the novel is the connection between Leonard and Hellene young child. The baby, now living in Hoard's End with his mother Helen, Aunt Margaret ND Uncle Henry, brings a strong connection between all three; a miracle that was never thought to have happened. The baby boy is said to be a reincarnation of Leonard who has been granted a second chance to prove himself in this world. Leonard was devastatingly killed in a previous chapter.

In the beginning of the novel, he was " not as courteous as the average rich man, nor as intelligent, nor as healthy, nor as lovable", but through all those faults was still a genuine human being (Forester 49). Social standings should not depict whether someone is " lovable" enough a person should just naturally feel that love within. Connections throughout Hoard's End prove this as the higher class Schlemiel family becomes quite good friends with the

low life Leonard Bass through a common communication encounter at the Beethoven's Fifth Symphony concert.

Now having that second chance, Leonard should be able to prove himself as a courageous, well-rested human being. After living in Hoard's End together, the connection only builds stronger and stronger as the family and their neighbors all come together to help support the newborn child. As the years in Hoard's End pass on, it is said that the residences friendships will last a life time, especially that of the baby and the neighbor boy Tom. Their relationship is said to resemble the strong connection of the Hoard's and Bravery's from back in the day.

Here too, we are introduced to a connection that seems so touching in the novel. It is almost as if Forester has created a scene that brings the reader into the connection as well by feeling compassion, happiness, and overall love for these characters we have become well acquainted with. Jeffery Frank Teach, exclaims, " E. M Forester's views as a secular humanist are at the heart of his work, work which often features characters attempting to ' connect' with each other, in the words of Forester's famous epigraph, across social barriers. I too feel this is truly what Forester is trying to depict in his novel as he presents us with the friendship between two very different social classes and the relationships within a family. Companionship and " only connecting" should be a consistent routine in everyone's daily lives no matter what the case may be. Rather you are married, related, or a friend, there should be a distinct connection shared between two or more people. Without our families, friends, and other loved ones, we are not able to stay strong and carry on as evident through many of Forester's characters.

As we see throughout the novel, The Colleges and Welcomes represent different approaches to life and the obstacles they go through in order to finally make the connections shown at the end of the book. When looking over the prominent theme of connection in this novel, we see notice the many incidences where connection plays a huge part in the socio-economic part of Hoard's End. Connections should never be lost with loved ones; we always need that love and strength from those motivational individuals. This is what Forester suggests through his theme of "only connect" in the novel Hoard's End.