

The background features a complex network of white nodes connected by thin white lines, set against a gradient background that transitions from dark purple at the top to a bright pink at the bottom. The nodes are scattered across the frame, with some forming larger, more prominent clusters than others. The overall aesthetic is modern and digital.

Maurice

Written by E.M. Forster

Published by griefconvention

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Maurice

By E.M. Forster

Maurices

Maurice is heartbroken over unrequited love, which opened his heart and mind to his own sexual identity. In order to be true to himself, he goes against the grain of society's often unspoken rules of class, wealth, and politics.

Forster understood that his homage to same-sex love, if published when he completed it in 1914, would probably end his career. Thus, Maurice languished in a drawer for fifty-seven years, the author requesting it be published only after his death (along with his stories about homosexuality later collected in *The Life to Come*).

Maurice

Maurice Jones Drew

Since its release in 1971, Maurice has been widely read and praised. It has been, and continues to be, adapted for major stage productions, including the 1987 Oscar-nominated film adaptation starring Hugh Grant and James Wilby.

E.M. Forster (*Howards End* , *A Room With A View*) finished this gay-themed novel in 1914, and though he showed it to some close friends, he didn't publish it in his lifetime. It eventually came out after his death, in the early 1970s.

What a gift to have a novel about same sex love written a century ago by one of the premier 20th century British authors!

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What a gift to have a novel about same sex love written a century ago by one of the premier 20th century British authors!

When Forster penned Maurice, homosexuality was so taboo that there was no name for it. For a man to be with another man was a criminal offense. One of the most touching things about this very moving book is seeing the protagonist – the closeted, very ordinary stockbroker Maurice – struggling to describe who he is and what he's feeling. He eventually comes up with something about Oscar Wilde. So very sad.

But how triumphant for Forster to have written this book and dedicated it "to a happier year." No one would argue that this is Forster's best novel. But it's an invaluable document about a group of men who experience the love that dare not speak its name.

I appreciate the fact that Maurice, unlike Forster himself, is a very unremarkable man: he's conservative, a bit of a snob, not very interested in music or philosophy and rather dull. But he's living with this extraordinary secret that affects his entire life. And the book shows how he deals with it, in his secretive relationship with his Cambridge friend Clive Durham, and later with gamekeeper Alec Scudder.

It would have been so easy for Forster to write a novel about a sensitive, soulful, brilliant, sympathetic character. How could we not love him, even though he's gay? But that seems to be part of his point. Maurice is a middle-class Everyman – certainly he's not as intelligent as Clive – but isn't he as worthy

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of love as anyone else?

Some details in the book are dated. The language at times feels stilted. The class system isn't as pronounced today as it was then. And of course there's a whole new attitude towards homosexuality and thousands of books to reflect that.

But there are still people and organizations trying to "cure" others of homosexuality (think of the group Exodus); young people are still committing suicide because of their sexuality; gays and lesbians are still choosing to live a closeted life by marrying members of the opposite sex; and let's not forget that in some parts of the world, being gay is cause for death.

So really: how dated is this book?

Considering that authors decades after Forster wrote veiled gay characters in straight drag, or killed off one or more characters (see: Brokeback Mountain), how revolutionary is it to have a gay love story with a happy ending?

It's absolutely revolutionary.

Now: who's going to write the sequel? ...more

Maurice

Maurice Ashley

"Begun 1913

Finished 1914

Dedicated to a Happier Year•

Edward Morgan Forster (1879-1970) wrote Maurice (*) as a relatively young man, aged 34, at a time when old Europe was starting to fall apart. However, it was not published until 1971, a year after his death. Maurice is probably the first literary work of fiction to deal with male homosexuality in such an open, sincere fashion. At the time it was written, men in the UK could still be imprisoned for "acts of gross indecency", as in the Oscar Wilde "Begun 1913

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Dedicated to a Happier Year•

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Well, in *Maurice*, E. M. Forster pours hot boiling water over spicy tea leaves.

Forster intriguingly describes Maurice Hall's journey of self-discovery and his sexual awakening. Maurice comes from a conventional middle-class background with a lukewarm mentality. He is very much an average guy (even though Forster describes him as rather good-looking and athletic): not very intellectual, and a bit arrogant. His being sexually different initially comes across as a hindrance to his plans to follow in his deceased father's footsteps: "Maurice was stepping into the niche that England had prepared for him." (p.45). Nevertheless, early in the novel Forster gives hints that Maurice has always known he is "different": Maurice remarks early on "I think I shall not marry", and he is rather baffled when he realises that he is overwhelmed by the fact that his mother's garden boy George "with whom he used to play in the woodstack" when he was

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a boy "gave notice and left. Maurice is, after all, a snob and he would never consider himself a friend of George. Nevertheless, George's departure unsettles him and he does not really know why he has these special feelings.

Feelings of this kind become clearer when he moves to Cambridge for his studies and meets Clive Durham, with whom he falls in love. Clive's pedigree is more sophisticated: he descends from landed gentry. Clive is deeply torn about his sexuality, even though he makes the first step in admitting his feelings for Maurice. Forster does not shy away from describing romantic moments between the two and he shows perfectly his skills in evoking beauty:

"I knew you read the Symposium" in the vac, he said in a low voice.

Maurice felt uneasy.

"Then you understand " without me saying more "

"How do you mean?"

Durham could not wait. People were all around them, but with eyes that had gone intensely blue he whispered, "I love you." (p. 48)

Clive considers himself a Hellenist and he celebrates "the love that Socrates bore Phaedo" love passionate but temperate" (p.85). They both set out on a philosophical journey of self-discovery about their sexuality and their place in society. Forster tries to be as open as possible in his depiction of them. We learn that both, especially Clive, have misogynistic tendencies. Alas, it is Forster himself who does not give the reader the opportunity to appreciate a fully rounded female character in his book.

This brings me to Forster's theory of flat and round characters. In E.M. Forster's Aspects of the Novel, he explains: "The test of a round character is whether it is capable of surprising in a convincing way" (p.81). Maurice in particular passes his creator's test with flying colours. Even though he might be snobbish, arrogant and misogynistic at the beginning of the narrative, the reader cannot ignore how he develops into a more tolerant and self-aware person, capable of tender feelings. What made this reader root for Maurice was his sincerity towards himself and thus his integrity. Despite all his inner struggles, he allows himself to be who he is; this makes him such an attractive character, not only to the reader but also to others characters in the book. Of course, only we as readers know his innermost thoughts and feelings. Forster offers us a deep insight into these thoughts, where we can learn how sincere and full of integrity Maurice becomes:

"He would not deceive himself so much. He would not " and this was the test " pretend to care about women when the only sex that attracted him was his own. He loved men and always had loved them. He longed to embrace them and mingle his being with theirs. Now that the man who returned his love had been lost, he admitted this." (p. 51)

Indeed, he loses his first love to conformity. Clive decides to adapt to his family's requirements and "beautiful conventions" and grows slowly away from Maurice. Ironically, it is on Clive's journey to Greece that he lets Maurice know by letter that "I have become normal, I cannot help it".

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(p.101). Not long after, he marries and settles in at Penge (his late father's estate) as the squire everybody expected him to become. Forster gives us only a few glimpses into Clive's inner thoughts and monologues, but they are enough to make the reader understand that Clive lives in denial and self-deception.

“One cannot write those words too often: Maurice's loneliness: it increased.” (p.124)

In the meantime, Maurice goes through hell. He begins to doubt his own sexuality and increasingly feels lonely. Forster's description of Maurice's journey of self-loathing and loneliness gets directly under the reader's skin. These are powerful passages which help enormously in empathising not only with Maurice, but with thousands of other men in real life who have had to go through a similar hell.

“Yet he was doing a fine thing – proving on how little the soul can exist. Fed neither by Heaven nor by Earth he was going forward, a lamp that would have blown out, were materialism true. He hadn't a God, he hadn't a lover – the two usual incentives to virtue.” (p.126)

He eventually seeks advice from a doctor he has befriended, confessing that he is “an unspeakable of the Oscar Wilde sort”. I don't want to spoil the doctor's answer, but I can assure you that it did not help Maurice's self-esteem at all.

It is on the peak of his crisis that he meets the third important character in the book: Alec Scudder, the gamekeeper at Penge, Clive's estate. Forster likes to let different characters from different social classes bump into each other, as his novel *Howards End* shows brilliantly. Alec Scudder, the gamekeeper, who everybody in Maurice's circle simply calls “Scudder”, belongs to the “class of outdoors-men”. He is a man of nature with natural instincts. The reader cannot really unravel his inner thoughts; Forster leaves us almost in the dark. This is certainly deliberate: Scudder remains the active, pushy, slightly aggressive and sexually attractive, almost mysterious “country lad” for the reader. Today he would probably be categorised as bisexual. He instinctively feels Maurice's pain and reacts accordingly to his nature. With Alec Scudder, Maurice eventually reaches sexual fulfilment.

“They must live outside class, without relations or money; they must work and stick to each other till death. But England belonged to them. That, besides companionship, was their reward.” (p.212)

Alec Scudder, who in the book represents carnality, the rural and nature (in comparison to Clive, who stands for the intellectual and platonic love) will eventually be the key to Maurice's “liberation”. Together with Maurice, the reader discovers, after several bumps in the road, the route to Maurice and Alec's happiness. This happy ending to Forster's novel has much been discussed. I was not entirely convinced, even though it has its roots in real life: namely in the concept of “Uranian love” (**) and the relationship between Edward Carpenter and George Merrill, who Forster visited in 1913 and who were an inspiration for this book. I am not sure if it is really a happy ending for Maurice and Alec, but I think it was the best possible end to the book, given the

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socio-political situation at the time. Forster writes in his Terminal Note: "A happy ending was imperative. I shouldn't have bothered to write otherwise" (p.220). I, for my part, tend to agree with Forster's Bloomsbury friend Lytton Strachey, who wrote in a letter to E.M. Forster that "the relationship of the two rested upon curiosity and lust and would only last six weeks" (Terminal Note, p. 222). I can sympathise with Strachey's train of thought: Maurice and Alec are first and foremost attracted sexually to each other and only later recognise that "what unites them is the need to fight a common enemy" (Introduction, p. xxii).

Despite these minor flaws, Maurice is still an important novel. E. M. Forster wrote it in 1913/14 and revised it in 1960. In his Terminal Note, written in 1960, he recognises a change in the public attitude towards homosexuality: "the change from ignorance and terror to familiarity and contempt" (Terminal Note, p. 224). Still, it took another seven years until the laws criminalizing acts of "gross indecency" by men were abolished in England. Today, the legal situation in Europe has improved significantly; one could only have dreamed of it fifty years ago. This is of course a very positive development. In the meantime, we should be aware that there are still nations where LGBT people are persecuted, incarcerated and even put to death for their sexuality. The human race still has a long way to go.

Let me thus go a step further and suggest that it is not enough to implement legally protected equality, even though this must be an unalienable right. We as a society ask our governments for rights which guarantee equality. But, I ask myself, does society really embrace and integrate diversity in everyday life? Forster writes pointedly: "We had not realized that what the public really loathes in homosexuality is not the thing itself but having to think about it" (Terminal Note p. 224). I can only speak for my part of the world and my generation, but I feel part of a monolithic world where sexual diversity has not yet reached unconscious acceptance and self-evident equality, and where definitions such as "gay" and "homo" are still used (unconsciously?) as an insult. Just look at the advertising industry, mainstream TV or cinema: one rarely finds "rainbow families" or same-sex couples. And of course the male action hero is supposed to be heterosexual. While there has been constant change for the better during the past few years, it is still slow; and I am afraid we still have a long wait before there is a gay James Bond and nobody thinks anything of it.

Until then, books like Maurice have lost none of their relevance.

(*) I highly recommend the Penguin Classics Edition with an introduction and notes by David Leavitt.

(**) "Uranians": The term has its origins in Plato's Symposium, in which Pausanias argues that men who are inspired by Heavenly Aphrodite (Aphrodite Urania) as opposed to Common Aphrodite (Aphrodite Pandemia) "are attracted to the male sex; their intention is to form a lasting attachment and partnership for life". In the 1860s and 1870s, Karl Heinrich Ulrichs promulgated the German Urning, the English version of which was subsequently put into circulation by Edward

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Carpenter and the art historian John Addington Symonds.â€• (Notes by David Leavitt, p. 232). ...more

I took the damned "Spoiler Alert" alert out--I think it keeps people from reading the actual review. That said, some of the following comments might be considered Spoiler, but I prefer to think of these comments as what Forster could have done better, should have done better, and any image of Hugh Grant spread-eagled on a table deserves to be noticed, IMHO.

At first, I thought rereading Forsterâ€™s gay novel for a group discussion would be fun. I liked it first time around and expected to like it a I took the damned "Spoiler Alert" alert out--I think it keeps people from reading the actual review. That said, some of the following comments might be considered Spoiler, but I prefer to think of these comments as what Forster could have done better, should have done better, and any image of Hugh Grant spread-eagled on a table deserves to be noticed, IMHO.

At first, I thought rereading Forsterâ€™s gay novel for a group discussion would be fun. I liked it first time around and expected to like it as much this time. Perhaps it was having watched the film since the first reading. Maybe I couldnâ€™t prevent myself from picturing Hugh Grant in the role of Clive Durham and a young Rupert Graves in the role of Scudder; whatever the reasons, rereading this novel, knowing where it was headed, made me impatient, made me angry, made me want to see the younger Hugh Grant shoved face-down over a table, depantsed, and deflowered in the most aggressive way. But, thatâ€™s just me.

Forsterâ€™s novel remained a featherbed of cozy, enveloping language. The early scene in which Mr. Ducie, a â€œseniorâ€™ at Mauriceâ€™s preparatory school and a man who felt the obligation to instruct Maurice in the â€œmystery of sexâ€• (complete with a diagram drawn in the sand on a beach, then abandoned, and too-late-realized, left to be discovered by other casual strollers of both sexes. Oh my!) was still funny. The developing relationship between Maurice and fellow Cambridge student Clive Durham was still touching in its intimacy and affectionâ€”but then, but then, but thenâ€”

That relationship stalls at intimacy. Maurice is coaxed by Clive, led on (if you will), only to reach a wallâ€”a wall of this-far-and-no-further. After â€œoutingâ€™ himself, Clive seemingly has no â€œoutâ€™ to arrive at. His bold confession to Maurice is overstated, leaving Maurice confused and wanting more. While this novel is certainly a matter of time and place, the Platonic relationship just doesnâ€™t ring true for a contemporary understanding. The British stereotypeâ€”the conservative, asexual, slightly effeminate [my apologies, good Brits, but we are talking stereotypes, not realities]â€”registers as alien in modern readers of anything other than Christian fiction.

And it was this alienation from the characters that left me thinking, â€œJesus Christ, Maurice, hammer himâ€”nail his assâ€”show the lame fucker what heâ€™s wanting but is too caught up in an ideal to grab.â€•

But, of course, that wonâ€™t do. We all know what rape is; thereâ€™s never good reason for it to occurâ€”even in fiction. Poetic justice and poetic injustice are opposite sides of the same coin. Theyâ€™re really two ways of saying the same thing.

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The poetic justice, if such a thing exists, is Clive's ultimate settling for passionless marriage while Maurice moves on—more power to him.

I don't regret rereading Maurice. It's still fine story-telling and plotting. A reader has to understand that Forster, writing when he did, could only imagine, only hope for, a better time when people were able to be who they are, without fear of social or legal repercussion. I think I've been spoiled—three decades and still going with my own partner makes me both more generous and more selfish. It makes me wish others had, or could have, what I have—just not MINE.

...more

Maurice

Maurice Starr

Possibly my new favourite book of the year so far. I absolutely loved this one - beautiful, moving, such a powerful read.

Perfect! There is probably nothing I can write that hasn't been written before about this work from one of our great English authors. It has no doubt been criticised, scrutinised, analysed, investigated, praised and acclaimed, I will just write about how the book made me feel.

The style of English was so refreshing to read. A style and mastery that has been long since forgotten. It has a beauty to it that flows and melts coming from an era where conversation really was an art. Where every word was carefully picked and every sentence construction built to hold, last and sit precisely. A rare treat. Forster manages to describe the emotions of gay love by eluding to it but never the vulgar. I ask myself what would he think about our modern romances and language if he could read them today.

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The book itself was like having my own personal time portal, swept back to a time, though noble also ignorant. A look into, class, social etiquette, traditions, and values of an era gone by. Into this was born Maurice and his fight for happiness begins. He goes through a personal hell and back, jilted by Clive who turns to women, here I reckon Clive was probably what we know to be bi today and was easier for him to bow to the pressures of society although quite possibly a sexless marriage to Anne. Maurice finds his absolution and love in the arms of Scudder the game keeper. An unlikely combination but Scudder's naive acceptance of his homosexuality is refreshing in it's nature. A character that creeps out of the background and has a more profound effect on Maurice than originally anticipated. Maurice goes through an emotional hell and back, looking at his sexual orientation as an abomination, a disease that has no cure, though treatments are sought the internal struggle remains until it nearly drives him to suicidal feelings. This would be all quite normal for this day and age and attitudes from society, you would have no other choice but to stay firmly in the closet and remain there! An extremely lonely feeling.

This book was far ahead of its time, therefore the publication after the death of the author in 1971, when society was ready to embrace its message. All I can say for anyone who wishes to read a classic from a master then READ THIS BOOK! It was a pioneering work of its day and anyone who takes their m/m romance literature seriously should read it as a shining example of how we've got to where we are today. ...more

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Maurice Harris

If *Dorian Gray* is the dramatic, scandal-creating gay classic, then *Maurice* is the snobbish yet emotionally moving gay classic. Written in 1913-14 but only published sixty years later, this is a book that is impressive - not because of its romance - but because of the character's personal journey towards self acceptance.

Began 1913, finished 1914. Dedicated to a happier year. With this heartbreaking opening statement, the story begins. We get to follow Maurice Hall as he grows up and starts to realize that he's attracted to men. This is not an easy realization: this story takes place, and was published, in England at the beginning of the 20th century. A time in which gay men (and women) are "nonsense!" or "get send to asylums, thank god!"

So this book is already unique for being so open and honest about (Maurice's) homosexual relationships. Despite knowing society's views, Maurice is certain of his love for his fellow student Clive Durham, a young man fan of the Classics like the story of Achilles & Patroclus. And while Clive and Maurice are a far cry from those Greek heroes - the English men are snobbish and have misogynistic tendencies - their love is treated with emotion and tenderness surprising for its time.

He educated Maurice, or rather his spirit educated Maurice's spirit, for they themselves became equal. Neither thought "Am I led; am I leading?" Love had caught him out of triviality and Maurice out of bewilderment in order that two imperfect souls might touch perfection.

Yet it is exactly this romance between Maurice and Clive (and Maurice and his future partner) that didn't convince me. The love between the first couple felt too intellectual and stiff - befitting for their characters - but it made me unable to root for them. With the second couple, love became too serious too quickly; their love was more lust instead of true. I had some similar problems with the romance in *A Room with a View*: I felt for the characters, just not for their (not-existing) chemistry.

But who cares about romance when the author is able to make you feel for a snobbish gay prat? Maurice's struggle and ultimately acceptance of his own sexuality is very moving and remarkable; because as mentioned in the author's final words "it made this book harder to publish. If it ended unhappily, with a lad dangling from a noose or with a suicide pact, all would be well." [page 220]

It's this bleak and grim reality - which echoes a bit in today's society - that proves all the more why

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people should read Maurice. Like my friend Lydia said in her review: "it makes me wonder what other books were written throughout history and never published, because they had a theme of same-sex love." ...more

4 Stars

I'm not well versed in historic stories of the British upper class, but I'm happy to say that despite the fear, despite having to hide, Maurice finds love, grabs on, and refuses to let go.

Though published posthumously, all the stars for having been written at all in a time of blatant unacceptance.

Maurice

Maurice Hill Protest

Sublime.

Oh my God, I won't forget this book. Maurice and Alec forever.

Off I go to read more E.M. Forster, though I know this was his only homosexual themed book in his esteemed career and the book was published after his death, as he'd requested to his friends, knowing the storm it would create in proper English Society.

It's a great work. I am humbled before it as a writer.

By the way, the author's terminal note of 1960, on homosexuality, was so brutally true and broke my heart.

Yes, Maurice may Sublime.

Oh my God, I won't forget this book. Maurice and Alec forever.

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It's a great work. I am humbled before it as a writer.

By the way, the author's terminal note of 1960, on homosexuality, was so brutally true and broke my heart.

Yes, Maurice may get away, but Alec will always be scorned upon by the Clives of the world...

...more

Vladimir Nabokov wrote in Pnin: Some people "and I am one of them" hate happy ends. We feel cheated. Harm is the norm. Doom should not jam. The avalanche stopping in its tracks a few feet above the cowering village behaves not only unnaturally but unethically. This is true for me as well. While of course I was cheering for the titular hero through the course of his internal and external struggle for identity, I can't help but feel, after finishing the book "well, that was very nice, but life is no Vladimir Nabokov wrote in Pnin: Some people "and I am one of them" hate happy ends. We feel cheated. Harm is the norm. Doom should not jam. The avalanche stopping in its tracks a few feet above the cowering village behaves not only unnaturally but unethically. This is true for me as well. While of course I was cheering for the titular hero through the course of his internal and external struggle for identity, I can't help but feel, after finishing the book "well, that was very nice, but life is not like that!" Endings are very particular thing, there is no sense of an ending in a novel, that is excepting for death. Madame Bovary, Anna Karenina, Lolita, etc. are all very satisfying in their fatal finales. It is the sad ending, the nadir and despair which is reached as the hero comes to the final fall, that is what satisfies a reader. It is the bottom which gives us the sense of completion, and not the peak. We are never finished with a full glass, only an empty one. The ending for Maurice is a happy one, and deliberately so, as was the intention of Forster, but I am not sure it is the right one. The whole story of Scudder to me seems a bit forced, a bit sudden, and a bit melodramatic; the reason to love this book is rather for the first half with the slow but genuine kinship between Maurice and Clive.

This is, of course, a "gay novel" - perhaps the early prototype of the pandering, panegyric course which

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that genre has taken: the road from internal struggle to external/societal struggle, to personal acceptance and then to the (not reached in Maurice) ultimate acceptance and embrace from the society or community at large. To be sure it is an interesting story, but with inevitable issue of being pigeonholed by its very protagonist's proclivities. I have been thinking very much about the statement that "gay novels don't sell" - and I would largely agree with this sentiment. For the same reason gay movies don't sell, etc. Of course there is the significance of numbers: homosexuals (apparently) constitute only ten-percent of the population at large, a small market. But if you consider the proliferation of successful black-novels, for example, certainly their success rides not on their portrayed demographic, but rather the entire market. I'm sure very few of the devout readership of the Harry Potter series are wizards or other magically inclined persons, but they buy and read them nonetheless. How important is it to share the characteristics of the protagonist or narrator? I enjoy *Lolita* although I am not a pedophile and if anything have an aversion to children (messy and whiny cretins that they are), I can read *Jane Eyre* and enjoy it despite my lack of female accouterments. There are bestsellers about blind kids and autistic kids and black folks and Asian-Americans and all sorts of minority demographics which the overall market for literature devour, with that "minority voice" being considered a testament to the literary value of the work. So why isn't it the same for queer literature? I confess that even I am not frequently moved by it, unremoved as I am, unless it is an otherwise moving narrative, such as Baldwin's *Giovanni's Room*.

Homosexuality is a unique struggle, I think, and should make for compelling literature, but yet it is hard to portray. Unlike race, gender, ethnicity, it is a very internalized characteristic, which can't be seen with the eyes at all (without a high percent of false-positives, anyway!). It is a matter of the heart, a matter of desire. A novel can be written with a black protagonist and they can desire anything: success, love, freedom, etc. - anything. But for a novel to be a gay novel that particular sexual desire is prone to the foreground, as in the present novel, as in *Giovanni's Room* et cetera. Perhaps the best portrayal of homosexuality is *The Great Gatsby*, wherein I would contend that Nick Carraway is gay - something alluded to indirectly if not obtusely throughout the novel, but far from canonically agreed upon. But even Fitzgerald's ambiguous narrator fails to address the particular queer experience, and as such appeals to a wider audience. Is it that the queer experience is too different, or is it that it is not different enough? Perhaps it has the sense of being self-indulgent? I am not sure. How can anyone be sure how their plight relates to anyone else's? Perhaps literature helps, but certainly no one's struggle, real or fictional, is exactly the same.

And maybe it is for that reason that queer novels fail, as they do? I don't feel that Fitzgerald (or Melville, or Twain, or Lee, or whomever wrote what is considered the top contender) meant to write the "Great American Novel" when he wrote *The Great Gatsby* (or *Moby-Dick*, *Huckleberry Finn*, etc.) - he wrote the story of Jay Gatsby, of Nick Carraway et al. That book, which is a compressed carbuncle of the human condition of one man, is one which appeals to many individuals, Americans etc., because we can see in another's struggle a glimmer of our own individual struggle. Same in *Jane Eyre*, we see not an orphan struggling a very specific struggle, but rather an individual struggling against the every extrapolating problem of life. I think it is perhaps the problem of the "Gay novel" that it tries to extrapolate itself, it is not internalized and it is not specific, it aims from the starting point to be universal to a small subsection

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of the population. It tries to generalize the struggle of gay men (or women, which is not the case in Maurice), and so loses its individual power. Search for identity, for love, for acceptance, etc. are all universal struggles, even for the most "normal" of individuals. While the goal of literature may be to make the particular universal, it is only implicitly done. It is impossible to make the universal particular.

The plight of Maurice is both particular and generalized, and so maybe it is a half-failure or a half-victory. Maurice's struggles are particular to him: the dynamic between he and Clive in particular is very much the friction between two individuals, the family pressure for Maurice to become the glittering replacement of his father in all ways is a problem unique to his family dynamic and the characters of his mother and sisters. But his desires and feelings of alienation seem general, his fear of social rebuff seems general, roving, imprecise. His initial self-loathing does not seem to be informed, it is confused, misguided, it is not quite a religious affectation nor a societal concern, but a sort of fear of self. This first apprehension to the idea of his love for Clive is believable, sympathetic, sincere. But this phase lacks resolution - Clive goes away and comes back changed, whether sincerely or insincerely as a matter of course. Maurice pines for him, hates him, resents him, but ultimately his feelings for him are essentially the same at the heart of the matter, a sort of kinship. But a lost fellowship. Maurice's drive is not for love but rather for companionship. This is by no means particular to the homosexual struggle, but poignant nonetheless. Where the story begins to falter is the introduction of Scudder. The reader must suspend his disbelief and take that love-in-a-glance kind of love for granted. The character of Scudder is scarcely fleshed out, and the reasons for Maurice's attraction seem to be vague at best. The issue of gay-love becomes highly generalized. We have Maurice, who although fully fleshed out in character, his motives with Scudder seem to me to be missing. Scudder on the other hand is almost a stock character, poorly characterized, maybe some form of Forster's ideal, which he imbues into Maurice's affections. Whether their attraction is mutual loneliness or true love is left unclear, there is little or no rhetoric of love, there are few bases for attraction beyond the physical. Yet we are left to believe in their mutual happiness, their rebirth and acceptance of each other: washed clean of their sins and histories, their prejudices and prides.

His ideal of marriage was temperate and graceful, like all his ideals, and he found a fit helpmate in Anne, who had refinement herself, and admired it in others. They loved each other tenderly. Beautiful conventions received them " while beyond the barrier Maurice wandered, the wrong words on his lips and the wrong desires in his heart, and his arms full of air. Perhaps this is ultimately the point which Forster wants to make? Is Maurice's 'arms full of air' any worse than the marriage of convention and convenience achieved by Anna and Clive? Is it better? While Maurice is borne away on a seemingly generalized happy ending devoid of individual passions, Clive enjoys (or suffers) the same general fate. Is Maurice happy at the book's resolution-- truly happy? Or satisfied? And what of Clive? Have Clive's passions truly inverted during his trip to the Mediterranean?

While we are meant to believe that Maurice and Scudder have found in each other a lasting love and companionship, happiness, it is rather the passions between Maurice and Clive which endure in the reader after completing the novel. It seems at one and the same time that the story of Maurice is both too long and too short. Too long to be the story of Maurice and Clive, too short to be the story of Maurice and Scudder. And so I am doubly dissatisfied. That said it is a wonderful novel: where it shines

Maurice

griefconvention

Maurice

it truly is a wonder of literary craft, but where the brush is dropped there are prominent smears which disfigure the art.

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Maurice

Maurices Coupon

listen that might be just my opinion but if a lgbt book from 1913 has a happy ending there is absolutely no excuse for gays dying in books in 2019

One of my favourite novels, and incidentally the one I wrote my MA thesis on. Maurice is, for all intents and purposes, a dime-a-dozen love story and a period piece. The only twist is that this love story concerns two men, which was unheard of in the time that it was written (1913). Forster wrote it mainly as a therapeutical effort, having grown tired of not being able to write about the kind of love that interested him the most, as a homosexual male. Published 60 years after it was written, Maurice was still a first of its time, and a decidedly sparkling and endearing read. The ending is sentimental, yes - but why should a love story not be allowed to have a sentimental ending? ...more

Maurice

Maurice Gibb

When I first started reading this book, I kept thinking, "I've read this before...when?" but a quarter of the way through this novel I realized I was thinking about Forster's "A Room With A View", a book I read years ago and liked very much. The two books are almost mirror images of each other and have many similarities.

1-Both books mostly take place in the early 1900s in England. (And, they may very well have been written at about the same time. "Room" was published in 1908 while "Maurice" was When I first started reading this book, I kept thinking, "I've read this before...when?" but a quarter of the way through this novel I realized I was thinking about Forster's "A Room With A View", a book I read years ago and liked very much. The two books are almost mirror images of each other and have many similarities.

1-Both books mostly take place in the early 1900s in England. (And, they may very well have been written at about the same time. "Room" was published in 1908 while "Maurice" was completed in 1914 but was not published until 1971 due to the subject matter (see below).

2-Both main characters, Maurice and Lucy Honeychurch (of "Room") are members of an upper class.

3-Both first become involved with characters of their same class. Maurice with Clive and Lucy with Cecil.

4-Both Maurice and Lucy struggle against the basic roles they are expected to play. Maurice is expected to remain in his upper class and marry in that same class, but Maurice rebels, as he is gay. Lucy wants to break the chains placed on women and go her own way, make her own decisions, much to the chagrin of her fianc  (who proposes to her three times before she finally succumbs to him and to her family's pressure).

5) Both separate from their first relationship: Clive breaks off with Maurice because he (Clive) wants to live a "correct/good" life and thinks he will prosper through a sham marriage. Lucy breaks off with Cecil, realizing he is extremely pretentious and silly man (in comparison to a man she has met on a trip to Italy.)

6) Both wind up with partners below their social class. Lucy with George and Maurice with Alec.

7) For both Lucy and Maurice, there is an instant attraction to/from George and Alex, respectively. But there is one big difference. "Room" is lighter in tone, mostly because it CAN be lighter, as Lucy can indeed live her life as she wants, in front of friends and family. Maurice is darker, and when Clive leaves him bitter and alone, Maurice seeks professional help: one person suggests that he (Maurice) go for a walk with a gun, but a final doctor simply tells Maurice that men like him have been around forever, that's just the way it is. Maurice accepts himself while Clive, at the end of the book, sadly has to consider how he will conceal the truth of his own life from his wife.

8) And finally, both books have a "happily ever after ending" for Lucy/George and for Maurice/Alec. Forster knew very well that the public would accept "Room" but not "Maurice", hence "Maurice" was published posthumously. But one of the great things about "Maurice" is that this book avoids the slurs that begin to appear within this genre in, for example, Vidal's "The City and the Pillar" in the 1940s and continue, sadly, to this day. ...more

I really did like Maurice, (though maybe not quite 4* because of the ending); I liked the deft, airy and

Maurice

generous tone Forster has towards his characters, even when theyâ€™re behaving badly. But itâ€™s a great shame the book wasnâ€™t published any time before about 1950, when a story about homosexual love that didnâ€™t end badly would still have been revolutionary. By the seventies, when it was, it had become unremarkable; more of an Edwardian period piece, though you still have to love the language.

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Maurice is not a lovable or heroic character â€” Forster highlights his careless disdain and unintentional cruelty towards his mother and sisters â€” and he doesnâ€™t really redeem himself when Clive says their affair is over â€” â€œself-centredâ€• describes him well, like many of his class. But he is still portrayed sympathetically, and Maurice captures well the utter loneliness of the loveless. Maurice himself thought he had a disease and was desperate enough to try being â€œcuredâ€• (even the word was unmentionable to him and he could say no more to his doctor than â€œhe was like Oscar Wildeâ€•). And then at Cambridge he met Clive.

In many ways, their relationship was not unlike male-female relationships of the time, but without a chaperone; it was an era where years of unconsummated longing were considered quite normal, after all â€” and it was completely acceptable for men to have close friendships with each other, far easier than with women. So the word, the act and the condition may have been unmentionable, but its practical realization certainly wasnâ€™t.

But for me, the contrast in Maurice is not so much between hetero- and homosexual love, but between love across the class divide. It had become acceptable if rather avant-garde for affairs to bridge Cliveâ€™s upper class world and Mauriceâ€™s merchant class. But Maurice is seduced by Scudder, Cliveâ€™s servant - a man without even the privilege of owning his first name (Alec). Love between their world and the lower classes? That to Clive, who was able to â€œgive upâ€• his affair with Maurice and marry Anne, is incomprehensible.

Until very near the end it isnâ€™t clear whether Maurice and Alec can overcome that divide. All that intensity packed into such a small book! (it is only 230 pages). But unfortunately I was quite unsatisfied by the actual ending (view spoiler)[when they more or less walked off into the sunset. (hide spoiler)] I know Forster wanted a happy ending but I was left feeling he had run out love or ideas for his own book at that point.

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Maurice

Maurice Sendak

A beloved college professor used this novel as his starting point for a glorious Humanities lecture on "The Unspeakable Vice of the Greeks." Except for the time I fell down the stairs of the lecture hall and dislocated my shoulder, that's pretty much the only morning I remember from my freshman year.

I love Forster's attitude toward his characters, which is similar to one a social worker might have towards his clients: he doesn't romanticize them and sees all of their faults, even emphasizing imp A beloved college professor used this novel as his starting point for a glorious Humanities lecture on "The Unspeakable Vice of the Greeks." Except for the time I fell down the stairs of the lecture hall and dislocated my shoulder, that's pretty much the only morning I remember from my freshman year.

I love Forster's attitude toward his characters, which is similar to one a social worker might have towards his clients: he doesn't romanticize them and sees all of their faults, even emphasizing important weaknesses, but never in a critical way and ever with an eye to the characters' strengths and what's good in them, and always with such powerful, empathic -- yet uniquely, subtly distanced -- affection. He wants us to understand them, and seeks to clarify their motivations and make sense of their actions, which he does through illumination of their internal worlds. Ultimately, in doing so, he locates and describes their humanity, which reaffirms his concept of humanity in general, and so makes a certain circular sense of what he's doing.... If only people'd write psychosocials with Forster's skill! Oh, well. In any case, E. M. probably would've been a great social worker, but I'm still glad he chose writing instead.

Maurice is also worth reading if only because it's got what I personally remember as the most ridiculous ending in modern literature. ...more

This book was vivid, historical and an unforgettable story of a boy trying to find his place in a rapidly changing world.

Maurice

Maurice Edu

Maurice is a novel that isn't perfect, but that is beautiful in its imperfection. A bit of an unpolished diamond, I might add, like some other classics I remember fondly despite their minor flaws. I admit it's been a while since I read this novel, and I never really found the time to reread it, which is a shame, but I do have an old review of mine at hand, and I will use it to remind myself. Recently I have read Dandy, a contemporary novel with a similar theme of homosexual love set in past time. Maurice is a novel that isn't perfect, but that is beautiful in its imperfection. A bit of an unpolished diamond, I might add, like some other classics I remember fondly despite their minor flaws. I admit it's been a while since I read this novel, and I never really found the time to reread it, which is a shame, but I do have an old review of mine at hand, and I will use it to remind myself. Recently I have read Dandy, a contemporary novel with a similar theme of homosexual love set in past times, and since then I couldn't stop thinking about Maurice.

Maurice is a story of homosexual love in twentieth century England. Written in 1913- 1914, and revised a few times, this novel was finally published in 1971. Should we talk a bit about about the date of publication? It is worth mentioning that this book was not published when it was written, but considerably later- due to its controversial nature. Moreover, at the time it was published it was practically illegal and would not have been able to escape censorship. It's an odd things, a book that was written in one time period but published in another.

I always felt that books that have not been published in their time are almost like organisms that never lived fully or rather like those antarctic bugs that can be frozen and come alive again after half a century. By that I mean that these kind of books never got the change to live in their time, be reviewed, and to be put into context. They're like lost ships wondering the seas, until we discover them some day. They're like distant legends one senses but never sees...until they reappear in one shape or other and then you have that feeling of meeting a relic from the past. Even those who read these books immediately after upon publication probably had seen them as a thing past or at least belonging to another time. There is something different about them.

Where to start? Maurice is, in many way, an exceptional novel and I still remember how enchanted I was by it. Perhaps it is best to start with the opening of the story. The story opens up with a fourteen year old Maurice, who already dislikes the idea of future marriage. We follow Maurice through his university days, where he falls in love with Clive, a close friend who shows him the ancient Greek writings about same sex love. Maurice is very committed to Clive, but with time it seems that Clive becomes more open to a standard way of life.

The idea behind the story had great potential. It is clear that it was very important to the writer to get it just right. Fortunately, Forster succeeded. He developed the story to its potential. Not to its fullest potential perhaps, but he has done a great job nevertheless. At times Forster took the explanations a bit to far. While reading, I was sometimes a bit startled to find out that the omniscient narrator is

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explaining everything (including the things that in my view did not need explanation) but that shows something of a writer's dedication.

The story is not completely credible and perhaps it is not intended to be, especially towards the end. The author said that he wanted the ending that could not happen in real life. He had his reason and I respect that. The ending made the book not publishable, but that was the cost he was willing to pay for his artistic vision to come to life. Sometimes, when authors write semi-autobiographical stuff or to pass on some belief, they ruin the novel. Forester did not do that. The faults in this novel are all minor.

It was an interesting choice to put so much faith in some parts of the novel, or so it seems to me. What I'm trying to say is that some parts really capture the essence, especially towards the end. I had a sense that if one or two scenes did not work out, the novel would not be as good. (Luckily, they did.) On the other hand, the majority of novel everything is spelled out for you. I think I have already said that, though. There is some repetition in the descriptions and the explanations, but it's nothing overbearing.

The characterization is very good. The novel is dominated by man figures, but taking the subject matter into consideration that is no wonder. (I would be nice if there could have been some interesting woman character somewhere in there, but maybe that too does not fit in with the context?). Anyhow, this novel features an interesting set of characters.

Maurice, the protagonist is analyzed in detail. His inner struggles are at the center so it was important that he was credible. For the most parts, he really was. There were some odd moments, when it seems he was trying something just for the sake of the plot. Alex was perfect. Bolt out of the blue, but made sense, really good characterization. He is also the character I must sympathized with, although he does not get much space in the novel. Clive is somewhat not defined. Maybe Clive is a type character, especially towards the end- he becomes a symbol for somebody set up in his ways, a snob.

One of the themes of this novel is class. Being raised in today's society one has to struggle to understand some things. Modern European societies do not really have such a strong class distinction, so reading about it took some getting used to. In other words, a reader needs to put in some effort to try to look at it from the perspective of characters. Probably modern day England isn't so divided, so they too probably have to look at books like this one from distance. This problem of class is portrayed very clearly in this novel although it comes into focus only towards the end. I would say that the main themes of this novel are personal freedom, sexual identity and class identity. Everything else is in the background or so it seems.

Part four of the novel put a big grin on my face, especially the ending. Who cares if it felt a bit rushed? What matters is that it felt right! The writing was very good, the characters were approachable, and the subject matter was of great interest to me. I would say Maurice is still relevant. The theme of density struggles that often come hand in hand with homosexual love isn't dated. Moreover, this book is well written, intelligent and original. To be candid, Maurice was more than I expected it to be. I wasn't

Maurice

expecting the emotions portrayed to be so vividly, and even if those emotional passages were often short, they had great force in them. Well, I think that is pretty much all I have to say about this novel. All in all, it was a very enjoyable novel. ...more

Oh, the mellifluous, soothing voice of Forster! I don't know what it is, but something just kicks into place in my innermost recesses when I read his best novels. Stephen King has said that it's the writers we read when we are young who impact us the most, perhaps in ways we don't always realize. That may be why it's more than just a reading experience to me when I read Forster; I feel that I meet not only my younger self but my true self when I read him.

Maurice is the novel Forster wrote some 55 years before it was published because the time he lived in was one of hypocrisy and intolerance. Indeed, Maurice, the main character, refers to himself a couple of times as one of the unmentionable Oscar Wilde types, and we know what happened to Oscar Wilde only a decade or so previously. Forster had a view which there was no room for, cf. the title of another of his novels, and only a few of his closest friends saw the novel in his own lifetime.

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The novel is about Maurice's seemingly impossible search for happiness in a world where homosexuality is illegal and in an England which is still marred by a rigid view of class distinctions. It is a brave attempt to paint a possible utopia which, sadly, Forster himself never lived to see, and it is a touching portrait of two people's ultimate refusal to bow to the expectations of the times, as well as one man's claim to have been able to change his sexuality.

Like Zadie Smith, I can see that Forster sometimes borders on the mawkish and the sentimental, but like Smith, I really don't care. His works remind me that it is possible to write feelingly and touchingly about human relations within the relatively narrow confines of literary fiction. All of Forster's works are about his humanistic vision, and wish, that we can only connect. I am unapologetic in my love of Forster, and I thoroughly enjoyed this novel.

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