Candidate 10

Dissertation Topic	Feminist science/speculative fiction
Dissertation Texts used	"The Female Man" - Joanna Russ "The Handmaid's Tale" - Margaret Atwood

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9. "A Room with a View" and "Maurice" by E.M Forster are novels with setting of high thematic significance. Most notably to the themes of love, self-discovery and societal restrictions. Love and self-discovery are paralleled for both the protagonists of Lucy in "A Room with a View" and Maurice in "Maurice". The repressive setting of English Edwardian society enforces the foil of these themes, societal restrictions, which is contrasted in "A Room with a View" by Italy and nature in "Maurice". Forster is masterful in his conveyance of these themes through the stark juxtaposition of these "good" and "bad" settings.

Both Lucy and Maurice are

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subjected to the famous Forster "muddle" Zadie Smith in the Guardian notes this saying "His protagonists are not readers or successful moral agents but chaotic and irratic human beings". The solution to this "muddle" for both Lucy and Maurice is finding true love because with finding that they first have to accept their true selves. Lucy and Maurice also have failures in love before finding truth. Lucy's muddle is between Cecil, an agent of society's restrictions and George, whom she truly loves. The setting contrast between Italy and England really highlight how George is her who she should really be with as if is there they share their kiss surrounded by violets that are symbolic of romance. There is

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	further symbolism in this setting as the violets are described as being like water with words "waves", "pools" and "gushing" to describe them. ~~Miss~~ George notes here how Lucy looks "like one fallen from heaven" and this alludes to the painting "The Birth of Venus" by Bothicelli ~~a picture~~ noted before in the novel. This is significant as ~~it is noted~~ Venus is symbolic of true and intellectual love. ~~Mean~~ In contrast, ~~with~~ the chapter in which we first meet Cecil is set back in England and is called "Medieval". This clearly highlights how Forster believes going back to England is a regression for Lucy by contrasting Italy, symbolic of the renaissance, and England, clearly compared to Medieval times. George is also associated with the Renaissance and Cecil, his foil, with medieval times	

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with ~~[illegible]~~ the narrator commentary "He was mediaval, like a Gothic statue". When Lucy is able to reject Cecil, ~~and you~~ she takes the first steps to self discovery. Her realisation is ~~with~~ highlighted in "The scales fell from Lucy's eyes. How had she tolerated Cecil for one minute?" At the ~~The~~ end of the novel Lucy, having now admitted her feelings for George, returns to Italy with George and the final lines "Youth enwrapped them; the song of the Pathean announced passion, love requited. But they were conscious of a love more mysterious. A song fades away, they heard the river, bearing down on the snows of winter into the Mediterranean." Forster is clearly highlighting through the setting of Italy that love

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transcends all else and melts society's restrictions in to the Mediterranean

Maurice similarly discovers that love transcends what society has restricted you too. Whilst George and Lucy have to overcome class, Maurice has to overcome the law because of his homosexuality being illegal at the time.* At the start of the novel Maurice is told ~~at the start~~ on the Beach whilst his friends were on the cliff above by his teacher Mr Ducie that there is nothing more noble than "to love a woman" but Maurice rejects ~~not~~ not yet knowing why this saying "I think I shall not marry" and believes Mr Ducie has told him nothing. The seperation between he and the other boys on the cliff is symbolic of how he is not like them

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and it is noted how "he longed to be with his friends" foreshadowing his later rejection ~~and~~ of his homosexuality and attempts to subdue it to be like everyone else. Like Lucy, Maurice's first step to self-discovery is in finding love. When Clive Durham, his first love introduces Maurice to the Symposium,* Maurice felt "a breath of liberty" touch him (* which contains ideas of homosexual platonic love). ~~However, Clive and Maurice end up ends up giving in~~ However, when Maurice is told by Clive that he loves him, he ~~fa~~ is scandalised and horrified. He was shocked right to the bottom of his suburban soul". This suggests how Maurice was still too indoctrinated by upper middle class, "suburban" English sentiments that being gay is abhorrent to

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accept Clives confession and his true self.
Maurice's self-discovery is
paralled by his love of nature. He
states in Part 4 that he was not afraid
anymore because "the trees and
the night are on my side". In fact,
Maurice's happiest day with Clive is
spent in the Cambridge countryside
where they could've pursued and
"ever retreating horizon" driving those
roads. Yet, when Clive and Maurice's
love begins to hinder, the setting is
of Penge, Clive's Estate, is more
prominent. The Penge imposes the
need for Clive to produce an heir
and in it's description it is noted
as missing the money and touch of
a wife. It is also noted as "decaying"
mimicing the decaying relationship between

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	Maurice and Clive and how as an institution of Society it is symbolic of how society decays love, especially if it is between two men. Society is also embodied in Greece where Clive finally rejects Maurice tearing up his letter largely ~~to~~ to appease his societal expectation to be with women and produce and heir. Greece was the start of modern civilisation and to reject Maurice these highlights how it was societally motivated. Their Platonic love however was not what Maurice ~~really~~ really needed to find himself as Robert K. Martin notes the love Maurice experiences in the first half is a "false vision of an idealised homosexuality." ~~Thomas~~ Lucy's false love with Cecil	

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and therefore the theme of societal restrictions ~~with~~ are highlighted in the sub-settings of rooms. Lucy, George and Mr Emerson are the most progressive characters in the novel and they are all noted as having "views" or being in a room with a view. It's significance is clear from it's eponymous nature and ~~means~~ it's symbolic of being able to look beyond society's pressures and want something more than what society dictates.

This is also similar with Nature in "Maurice" as characters like Alec ~~are~~ and Maurice are most comfortable in nature and able to express their true selves free from rules. Maurice meets Alec in nature and at the end runs away with him there

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at the end of the novel. Light and dark is also a motif in settings especially natural settings that indicate Maurice's level of self acceptance. At the start darkness like in the beach scene is used ominously because he has not yet accepted his nature: "The darkness rolled in, the darkness that is primeval but not eternal and yeilds to it's painful dawn." He is also noted as being in "The Valley of the Shadow of Life" ~~to highlight~~ with the valley being a constricting image also representing society. However, whilst this partial darkness is bad, total darkness is comforting for Maurice as seen in "Total darkness he could bear". Light is also evident in

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the settings of "A Room with a View" but light is used more traditionally to reflect good things and dark to reflect bad things as seen in the start of the chapter "Medieval", they are all sitting in a dark room, Lucy not yet knowing her true self. Light in Maurice is actually seen as a bad thing because light exposes things and Maurice certainly does not want to be exposed by society as his psychiatrist notes, "England has always been disinclined to accept human nature."

The natural world is also associated in "A room with a View" as being a free place and foil to English oppressive society. This is most embodied in the Sacred lake

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which is ~~called~~ compared to the "Garden of Eden" and symbolises washing away societies impurities and restrictions much like being baptised. This further made significant by Freddy and George's keenness to embrace this and nature showing that they are destined for more than what society expects of them.

Clearly setting has been successfully utilised by Forster to highlight the key themes of love, self-discovery and societal restrictions. The romantic renaissance setting of Italy ~~High~~ and nature or the countryside in Maurice parallel self-discovery and love. Furthermore both novels use Edwardian English society as a foil to highlight these and show

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	the restrictions of society that attempt to hinder ~~[illegible]~~ love and one's true nature. ~~This~~ These perfectly crafted setting with huge symbolic significance show Forster's talent for creating perfect setting to overall show his disdain for repression in society and celebrate what can overcome that.	
	* This is also highlighted in Forster's "A Passage to India" where an inter-racial couple must overcome the stigma of English society.	