

A disabled protagonist, Rickie, allows Forster to demonstrate the ways these modern institutions harm everyone, privileged and underprivileged alike.

## THE CHURCH

The *Longest Journey* is not anti-religion; rather, Rickie's faith is hindered by the church's institutionalization and commitment to external purity.

The modern church has lost commitment to loving one another; the atheist Stephen has more love for others than the Christians in the novel do.

# “Man wants to love mankind”: Disability and the Inadequacy of England's Modern Institutions in E.M. Forster's *The Longest Journey*

## MARRIAGE

The greatest failure in the novel is Rickie's marriage to Agnes, which he pursues for security and idealized love.

Relationships outside of marriage are given no legitimacy in the modern world, which damages those like Rickie who need alternate forms of community.

“E.M. Forster.” *Encyclopædia Britannica*, BBC Hulton Picture Library, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/E-M-Forster#/media/1/214006/10744>. Accessed 20 Mar. 2023.

## CLASS AND PROPRIETY

The struggle for status prevents the characters from forming connections. Forster presents this as beginning in the school system and continuing into adulthood.

Rickie, as a “disrespectable” disabled body, cannot step out of line, or he risks losing his class and status. This means he cannot form the connections with others he needs.