

After reading the Sparknotes analysis of Themes and Motifs in *Young Goodman Brown*, I would like you to find one of their ideas that you take issue with and explain why you disagree. Your response needs to be 50-100 words (no more).

NOTE: If you're having a hard time doing this with the Sparknotes analysis, go to one of the other two sources found here: [eNotes themes in the story](#) OR [Symbolism YGB](#)

Note: if anyone messes with what others have written, I will not be happy and bad things will happen :)

When entering your comment, add your name like this:

(Matthew Isom): Whoever writes for Sparknotes should be put in the pillory for the number of egregious errors. I dunno why, but I hate him and don't care that I will get a "D" for not supporting my assertions with evidence from the story. (This is true, by the way).

(Jimmy Smith) Although much of the analysis in Sparknotes is fairly good, I take issue with . . .

(Your name)

and then each one of you will simply add your comments underneath those of your peers.

Would we get more points if we followed the Max/Min. guidelines? ~Anonymous Students

(Daniel Kompolt)

I disagree with Sparknotes' theme *The Fear of the Wilderness*. While the forest creates an eerie tone to the passage, it is not a repeated idea that would classify as a major theme. The major themes include religious conflict and inward character development. These are recurring ideas that play a critical role in developing the story, while the forest is simply where it all takes place.

(Noah Baculi)

I do not agree with the theme *The Weakness of Public Morality* suggested by the poem's Sparknotes entry. In my opinion, Goodman Brown's diminishment and demise is either fault of his own or because of some preternatural force. In Brown's experience, which I consider to have been a figure of his imagination, the society is more inclined to evil. However, that society being in the mind of Brown and not actually in the reality of the tale, the "Weakness of Public Morality" is only in his head and therefore reflects on Brown (or that supernatural force) and not on the public of reality.

(Taylor Dejoode)

In the sparknotes theme section I disagree with one claim. I don't think that Goodman made a deal with the devil. He may have wanted to do evil actions but he resisted from all the bad actions the devil wanted him to do. Goodman had a slight temptation to give into the devil but he shunned all of the the devils actions and influences over him.

(Roger Clark)

I disagree with sparknote's theme "fear of the wilderness", it does not show reason as to why Goodman Brown became nearly repulsed by religion, when his family prayed "he scowled and muttered to himself, and gazed sternly at his wife...". Brown fell from religion after taking to the thought that his god is false, saying "what god doth the wizard pray to?" shows he no longer thinks god exists. This is due to the fact that god accepted and forgave those who committed dire sins and worshiped the devil, contradicting his image of god who wouldn't do such things.

(Marisela Gonzalez)

I disagree with Sparknotes intake on the theme "the weakness of public morality". I disagree with the fact that they said he was concerned with what other people viewed on his faith. It seems to me like Young Goodman Brown was going through a period of shock due to his new experience about the truth behind the Christians in his life such as his father and grandfather. "We have been a race of honest men and good Christians...and shall I be the first of the name of Brown that ever took this path and kept." He thought that he was infact the first of his family to ever go down this dark path but he wasn't, his father and grandfather were good friends with this strange traveler. It seemed that at one point the men in his family went hand and hand with the devil. Also it came to a great shock that the deacons of churches have had drinks with the devil as well. So I don't agree that he cared that much of other people's opinion upon himself. I think that he just collapsed under the weight of the world's darkness and evil.

(Carter Bateman)

I disagree with Sparknotes' theme of *The weakness of public morality*. In this section, it states that once Young Goodman Brown sees that his father, Faith, Goody Cloyse, and the Minister are all associated with the devil that he quickly decides to join in. I disagree with this statement. The whole time Young Goodman Brown was in the woods, he was being tempted, but he resisted because he kept thinking of all of those people. Then, once he saw that they were all associated with the devil, he decides that its ok to join in. I think he might have joined because he was a little mad at all of those people.

(Jaysa Coons)

I do not agree that The Fear of the Wilderness is one of the bigger themes in Young Goodman Brown. I think that the wilderness was just the setting that the author chose to represent evil in general. Essentially, I don't think that fear of the forest was one of the major points the author was trying to convey.

(Kiara Straub-daSilva)

I did not agree with the statement that "When Goodman Brown discovers that his father, grandfather, Goody Cloyse, the minister, Deacon Gookin, and Faith are all in league with the devil, Goodman Brown quickly decides that he might as well do the same." He did not quickly decide this. Throughout the tale he kept chanting that he would resist the devil, and even at the end he shouts to his wife "Faith! Faith! Look up to the heaven, and resist the wicked one."

Sparknotes made it seem as if Brown simply decided to follow the crowd, when it really was that he joined them out of fear, since all these people that he knew to be “good” were essentially evil, he just felt the pressure to conform.

(Franklin Sikel)

I disagree with sparknotes theme *the fear of wilderness*. Reasons to disagree would be that i believe that young goodman brown had a lot of fear pointed toward the wilderness but, I think that young goodman brown was more afraid of what was inside the forest. Like in the beginning he willingly ventured into the forest, so to me he could've been expecting something inside the forest. So if he knew what to anticipate inside the forest then that was more of a fear than an old forest.

(Eva Hixson)

I did not agree with Sparknotes' theme of The Weakness of Public Morality. Although Goodman Brown does witness good people turning to the devil and committing acts of evil, he returns back to his town to find them as the faithful, pure people he once knew. It does not completely appear that the other people in his town were affected by the events that took place in the forest, since it may or may not have been real. Sparknotes also says that Goodman Brown quickly decides to join the devil after discovering many others have done so, which is inaccurate. He spends a long time in the forest lamenting over whether he should do so, experiencing a major inner conflict.

(Ellie Slama)

I do not agree that the sparknotes theme: *the fear of the wilderness* is one of the more important themes. In the story, Goodman Brown walks through the forest, but I do not believe that that makes it a theme, just more of a setting. Although the forest is a scary, spooky place that Goodman Brown is afraid of, it does not qualify as a theme. To me, this stories theme would be that everyone has some evil in them and I do not think that sparknotes did a very good job displaying that.

(ネイサン ジャッパイ [Nathan Jappay])

I did not agree with the Sparknotes theme: *The Fear of the Wilderness*. To be perfectly honest, this theme does not seem substantial enough to be call a theme. While it is an important

part of the story, being the main setting, that does not qualify it as a theme. It is not a pervading idea, It is the predominant setting. Thus, this does not qualify as a theme.

(Abby Whitney)

On eNotes it says that "Young Goodman Brown" is a story about a guilty conscience. In the story there is no substantial evidence leading to the conclusion that the story is about a guilty conscience. The story has evidence leaning more towards the themes of loss of innocence and faith.

(Zunyana Crier)

eNotes states that Brown *resists the power of evil at the climactic moment* of the story. Brown does not resist but calls to Faith to "resist the wicked ones" and "look up to heaven". This to me means he is still trying to be innocent himself -because Brown believes that if Faith is pure then he can cling to her skirts and cohere to her. Brown does not resist but gives up in a feeble attempt to use Faith to protect him from losing his own faith. But he doesn't resist evil because it engulfs him.

(Aiden Shaeviz)

I disagree with the Sparknotes theme *The Fear of the Wilderness*. First of all, Young Goodman Brown being afraid of a dark and gloomy forest is far from being substantial enough to be considered a theme. However, I don't interpret his reaction as 'real' fear. He made the conscious decision to meet with the devil, therefore making him corrupt. This so-called fear of his seems rather to be a reaction that separates him from the evil around him (if only in his mind). If he wasn't afraid of everything around him, wouldn't that make him more like everything he dreads he might become?

(Jacob Angelo)

There is a specific part to the theme *The Inevitable Loss of Innocence* that I do not necessarily agree with. my question to this is how does he "die in gloom" when this very well could of been a horrific nightmare? Was it just too much for him to handle, seeing the visions of people he knew and loved dearly, like Faith for example to die so violently, and him having no control over it, because it was the work of the witch?

(Asia Vega)

I disagree with the statement on enotes stating that the whole story is about a guilty conscience. The story of Goodman Brown is overall about not being able to handle a world with such little innocence. It would only be about guilt if he did something wrong and couldn't handle it. What he couldn't handle was the realization that the world is not what he thought.

(Kyle Martz) I disagree with SparkNotes theme, *The Fear of Wilderness*. This theme is not an overly important theme of the story. Although the Forest was dark and intimidating, it is only a setting in which Brown travels through, not a major theme. Sparknotes also states that Brown believed that the Devil was more likely to be in this forest. Even though he does run into the Devil, a forest is more than likely not going to be a Devil's main habitat. A forest usually represents healthy life, and consistent thriving, not a Hell like area. The Fear of Wilderness is not a major theme, but a simple setting.

(Ben Gaona)

The eNotes theme that women are victims in "Young Goodman Brown" is largely inaccurate. First off, for the theme to be relevant at all we have to assume that the majority of the story was actually just a dream by Goodman Brown, which can't be proven one way or another. If the events did happen then Faith and the other women were just as much to blame for whatever happened to them. In Faith's case, the example eNotes uses, even if she was innocent, the story never states how Faith felt after he returns, or much of their life together at all. Neither side has enough evidence for this to be considered a theme.

(Susan Olvera)

I disagree with the sparknotes theme "The Weakness of Public Morality" because it was never an issue throughout the story. I understand his faith might have began to change when he saw close people he once looked up to turn per say evil but he never paid attention to what

they thought of him.

Meeting with the devil was his own decision it was not a cause of the revelation of the evil in others. The reasoning for this theme is not convincing and did not play a big part in this story.

(Hannah Hersh) I disagree with the sparknotes theme, The Fear of Wilderness. The dark and gloomy forest is represented as a setting in the story and not a major theme. Throughout the story it gives in depth details of the forest, which allows us to imagine how it would appear. Overall they are defining the setting of the forest from the beginning to the end.

(Enku Castellanos) I disagree with sparknotes idea of "The Fear of the Wilderness" being a theme. Because After Brown's initial fear of going deep into the forest, It was his choice to pursue into the wilderness. So the Wilderness becomes more of a setting in the story due to the fact there is no message behind it.

(Mya Stenlund)

I disagree with Sparknotes "Weakness of public morality" at least where Goodman Brown is concerned upon his wife going missing and seeing her in the woods. He appeared to be more concerned for her welfare rather than accepting the devil. His last cry was "for her to resist the wicked one" so it would appear his attention was on her life and innocence and well soul in this situation..

(Isaac King)

"Goodman Brown's decision to come into the forest is motivated by curiosity, as was Eve's decision to eat the forbidden fruit." I don't agree with this, because it's never exactly stated why Goodman Brown goes into the forest. In my opinion, this actually adds to the atmosphere. As it says at the beginning of the story, he "felt himself justified in making more haste on his present evil purpose" and while the evil is not explicitly stated, it seems to me that Brown planned to go despite the apparent danger and embarrassment.

(Emily Lonsdale)

I disagree with the bit about the weakness of public morality because it is not necessarily true that he , goodman brown just went ahead and became corrupt because they all were corrupt but if it was a dream as he thinks then he would have been corrupt first felt self concious about that so he dreampt that everyone else was corrupt to make himself feel better

Sara Komoda

Although the forest scene made up a large section of this story, I disagree with Sparknotes' theme of "Fear of the Wilderness". Goodman Brown described the gloomy and evil feeling emanating from the darkened trees along the path. As the story progressed, he became increasingly paranoid and feared for the townspeople, the loss of his own faith, coming across Indians deep within the forest. Perhaps it wasn't necessarily his fear of the wilderness that was the main theme, but his fear of others seeing him there and questioning his religious beliefs, and in a strong Puritan community, his angst grew more and more substantial. The forest is merely an appropriate setting used to set a creepy mood.