

**SUBJECT : ENGLISH**

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**TOPIC- SHE STOOPS TO CONQUER**

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## **TITLE / CENTRAL IDEA / THEME OF THE PLAY**

### **“SHE STOOPS TO CONQUER”**

The play, "She Stoops to Conquer" has no hero but the title suggests the central action. The play turns on the motive of love but it is not given prominence. Goldsmith revives humour and nature in the play, with which love-motive is interwoven. Marlow presents a sort of problem. He has been sent by his father to visit Miss Hardcastle with a view to marrying her. Marlow would have kept out of it, but he has to obey and please his father. He is not a man to play the gallant with a lady. He is bashful and reserved in the company of women of virtue and

accomplishment. He drags along his friend Hastings who is to be with him when he addresses Miss Hardcastle whom he cannot face alone. On their way to Hardcastle's, Marlow and Hastings arrive at an inn where they meet Tony Lumpkin, Hardcastle's step son. He directs them to Hardcastle's old house as to an inn, warning them that the landlord is not badly off, but is leaving off his business. They arrived at Hardcastle's place with the impression that it is an inn.

The title no doubt bears upon the central episode of the play, namely, the stooping of the heroine of the play Miss Hardcastle to be a barmaid and a poor relation of the family to conquer the heart of Marlow, whom her father had chosen as her would-be husband. Mr Hardcastle, determined not to control her choice of a husband, gives his daughter a whip hand in the matter. Miss Hardcastle got an unfavourable report about the young man that among women of low character he is daring and insolent rouge. The first interview with Marlow convinced her that

he had good sense, but was nervous for lack of confidence. Her object now is to “take any gentlemen off his guard”. In other words, she would stoop to conquer him. Now, her strategy succeeds because Marlow had already made the blunder of taking the house for an inn and herself as the barmaid who looks after the guests. In this character of a barmaid she has an opportunity of seeing the other side of the bashful young man in the first interview. In the next interview when she finds that Marlow is already realizing his mistake, she plainly tells him that it is the best family in the neighbourhood and the house belongs to Mr. Hardcastle. But she let him continue by mistake, by making him understand that she is but a poor relation of the family, and has come to cultivate his intimacy. Marlow is bewitched by her beauty but there is no hurdle in the way, namely the difference of their rank and fortune. But at last that consideration is shelved aside. Passion gets the better of social consideration and Marlow at last proposes to her on fallen knees. Thus the acquaintance gradually ripens into love and the two are at last joined in

wedlock. The title of the play has reference to this stratagem used by her, namely playing the first the barmaid of the supposed inn and then a poor relation of the family.

According to a critic, the play should have been named after Tony who is the author of the main trick that leads to the mistake of a night. This sub-title of the play is based on the initial mistake that sets the play in motion and as such, has some colour of appropriateness in it.

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