

INTRODUCTION



Ernest Hemingway

(1899-1961)

Ernest Hemingway is the most popular literary author in the world today, the most influential prose stylist in history, and the most legendary American writer. He wrote short stories that changed world literature, at least three of the most widely read classic novels, and one of the greatest novellas ever written. Various critics have called each of his major novels his best—*The Sun Also Rises*, *A Farewell to Arms*, and *For Whom the Bell Tolls*. There are statues of him in three countries, President John F. Kennedy acclaimed him, and he was awarded a Nobel Prize that cited *The Old Man and the Sea*. Hemingway set high moral as well as literary standards for himself, he risked his life in 4 wars and he became an exemplar of courage, strength, integrity, eloquence, and grace. He made friends all over the world and inspired millions of people. The poet Archibald MacLeish said, “He was one of the most human and spiritually powerful creatures I have ever known. The only other man who seemed to me to be as much present in a room as Ernest was FDR, and I am not excepting Churchill.”

F. Scott Fitzgerald called people who made negative criticisms of Hemingway “imbeciles” and William Faulkner characterized them as adolescents “throwing spitballs.” The declaration by novelist John O’Hara that Hemingway is the “greatest writer since Shakespeare” may eventually prove to be less an exaggeration than it has seemed to most critics. One scholar has observed that in response to his first collection of stories *In Our Time* (1925), “the critics did not want to push Hemingway to Parnassus and yet they sensed that he would embarrass them by getting there without their aid.” As his stature grows ever larger his detractors get smaller, receding into the past.

BIOGRAPHY

Ernest Hemingway was born in Oak Park, Illinois, a commuter suburb of Chicago where middle-class families escaped the evils of the big city—personified as hit men in “The Killers.” His father was a doctor and his mother Grace Hall-Hemingway a professional musician, singer, published composer, orchestra and choir director, church and civic activist—a strong influential woman from whom Ernest inherited much of his character and personality. Grace was a Victorian who embodied the prevailing values of the Oak Park community, expressed in ordinances against alcohol, prostitution, gambling, uncensored movies, boxing matches, and information about birth control or venereal disease.

CHILDHOOD

Grace wrote in her baby books: "The two big children were then always dressed alike, like two little girls [Ernest in 1902 at age 3, sister Marcelline at age 4]...Ernest Miller at 3½ had a lovely Christmas.... He was fearful whether Santa Claus would know he was a boy, because he wore just the same kind of clothes as sister....He gives himself a whipping with a stick when he has done wrong, so Mama does not have to punish." Hemingway learned self-discipline and formed his credo of "grace under pressure" by being a good boy for his mother Grace. However, what influenced him even more was getting blown up on the Italian front at the age of 18. Dying changes your sense of proportion.

The critic Philip Young emphasized Hemingway's death experience and his interpretation in 1952 came to be known as "the wound theory." In 1985 the male feminist Kenneth S. Lynn published a revisionist biography of Hemingway that invented bad behavior and argued that he was a Mama's boy who acted "macho" to compensate for being forced to wear a dress as a little boy. He denies that Hemingway was severely wounded, claims he was "androgynous," and gives his mother credit for his writing. To the contrary, the quotation from his baby book is evidence that little Ernest was unusually independent, self-confident, and aware of his masculinity for a child of 3½. Throughout his adult life no man had more confirmation of his manhood and less need for compensation than Ernest Hemingway.

BOYHOOD

The residents of Oak Park were mostly progressive Republicans who voted heavily for Theodore Roosevelt in 1912--a hero to young Ernest. As a boy under 18, by law Ernest could not own a cap gun, buy cigarettes, play pool or drive a car, prohibitions significant in his story "Soldier's Home," in which the mother is modeled on his own. He submitted to her discipline, mostly. For two years he played the cello in the orchestra of his high school student opera. "He continued to listen to classical music all of his life. During his courtship of his first wife, Hadley Richardson, piano concerts were part of their shared interests; after their marriage, Hadley replaced his mother at the piano they rented in Paris. Out of this background came Hemingway's compulsion to public performance and his understanding of counterpoint, which he used to advantage in his writing." (Michael Reynolds, *A Historical Guide to Ernest Hemingway*, Oxford 2000: 19) Counterpoint is most conspicuous in the Expressionist structure of his first book, the collection of stories with thematically related vignettes *In Our Time* (1925).

As a boy he escaped from society during the summers at the family cottage on Walloon Lake in the woods of northern Michigan. Throughout his boyhood, every July and August he immersed himself in the natural world, exploring the woods, camping out, hunting and fishing. The last Ojibway Indians lived in the woods nearby. The polarity of Society versus Nature originated themes in some of his early stories such as "Up in Michigan," "Indian Camp," "Ten Indians," and "Big Two-Hearted River." Until the age of 12 he had the companionship of his father, whose depressions eventually caused him to withdraw into himself toward suicide, a situation that became the basis for the story "The Doctor and the Doctor's Wife." The pastoral retreat from the world to go fishing is a recurrent ritual in Hemingway, most famously in "Big Two-Hearted River" and *The Sun Also Rises*.

FORMAL EDUCATION

In high school he played on football, swimming and water polo teams, he read Rudyard Kipling and the short stories of O. Henry and he began writing humorous pieces for the school newspaper and the literary magazine. His high school education was much better than a college education today. His curriculum included Latin—he translated Cicero—history of the English language, formal rhetoric, prose composition, classic myths, Chaucer, Spenser, Shakespeare, Milton, Pope, British Romantic poets, Walter Scott, Dickens, George Eliot, Tennyson, Browning, and Matthew Arnold. He continued to read literature of the English Renaissance all his life and drew quotations from it for some of his titles.

WORLD WAR I

He graduated from high school in 1917 just two months after the United States entered World War I. At 18 he was too young to enlist in the army. Instead he got a job as a cub reporter for the *Kansas City Star*, then one of the top newspapers in the country. He learned to write objectively in simple declarative sentences using vigorous economical language with few adjectives. On the police beat he covered violent crimes. He had been at the *Star* seven months when he got called to the war in Italy as a volunteer ambulance driver for the American Red Cross, along with other young writers including John Dos Passos, e. e. cummings and Malcolm Cowley, who drove ambulances in France. Young idealists wanted to help “make the world safe for democracy,” as President Wilson said. Over 700 young men from Harvard, Yale and Princeton alone became ambulance drivers in the war. “I went to war instead of college,” Hemingway said. At the front in Italy he was manning a canteen when he got blown up.

DYING

He wrote to his parents, “Got hit with a *Minenwerfer* that had been lobbed in by an Austrian trench mortar. They would fill these *Minenwerfers* with the goddamnedest collection of crap you ever saw—nuts, bolts, screws, nails, spikes, metal scrap—and when they blew, you caught whatever you were in the way of...I died then. I felt my soul or something coming right out of my body like you’d pull a silk handkerchief out of a pocket by one corner. It flew all around and then came back and went in again and I wasn’t dead any more....” When he regained his body, he saw “Three Italians with me had their legs blown off...I was lucky. The kneecap was down on my shin and the leg had caught all that metal but the kneecap was still attached.” He hoisted one of the Italians onto his back and carried him to the dressing station. On the way he got hit twice by a heavy machine gun. He collapsed at the dressing station and was left for dead. The Italian on his back was obviously dead. Eventually he got treated and doctors removed 227 fragments of steel from his right leg alone. “My pants looked like somebody had made current jelly in them and then punched holes to let the pulp out.”

He later rendered the experience of his soul leaving his body in the story “Now I Lay Me.” He was awarded the Italian silver cross. Later he told Malcolm Cowley, “In the first war I was hurt very badly; in the body, mind, and spirit and also morally. The true gen is I was hurt bad all the way through and I was truly spooked in the end.” It was not until the next world war in 1941 that he overcame his fear of being blown up at night. The great early works of Hemingway were written in a state of what later would be called “post-traumatic shock.” His most perfect expression of this condition is “Soldier’s Home” and his most extended treatment “Big Two-Hearted River” (1925). Hemingway’s early fiction did not derive from trauma, but from transcending trauma.

WOUNDS

In his writing physical wounds often symbolize psychic wounds. By the end of his life his body was covered with scars. He was involved in 3 serious car wrecks, one in Cuba, one in Montana with Dos Passos that almost cost him an arm, and one in a London blackout that necessitated 57 stitches in his head, which he removed himself on the way to the Fox Green Beach sector of Omaha Beach during the invasion of Normandy. It once took 16 million units of penicillin to save him from an infection, he was wounded in the head 6 times and he sustained at least 10 concussions, 5 during WWII from 1943-45. In combat he was hit in both feet, both knees, both arms, both hands, and the scrotum.

After getting wounded at the front in 1918, he was treated at a hospital in Milan, where he fell in love with his American nurse Agnes von Kurowsky, who was 8 years older than him. He returned home to the United States in 1919 planning to get a job and send for Agnes and they would be married, but she wrote him a letter saying she was too old for him. Now she was engaged to someone else. He cauterized his wound with bitterness in “A Very Short Story,” but eventually Agnes became the model for his most exemplary woman character, Catherine Barkley in *A Farewell to Arms*.

CORRESPONDENT

In 1920 he began writing features for the *Toronto Star* on trout fishing, prize fights, rum running, and Chicago gangsters like those in “The Killers.” Meanwhile he courted Hadley Richardson of St. Louis, who was 8 years older than him, like Agnes. They were married at Horton’s Bay in 1921, the setting of “Up in Michigan” (1921). While living in Chicago the couple met Sherwood Anderson, who advised Ernest to go to Paris and generously wrote him letters of introduction to the influential Gertrude Stein, Ezra Pound, and Sylvia Beach, owner of Shakespeare and Company, the bookstore meeting place for English-speaking expatriates soon to publish Joyce’s *Ulysses*.

Hemingway moved with Hadley into a flat on the Left Bank in Paris just as literary Modernism was about to burst into Leopold Bloom in *Ulysses* and into the vortex of T. S. Eliot’s “The Waste Land” (1922). He submitted color stories and covered new events for the *Star* in Europe, developing the style of extreme compression required in cabled dispatches—“cabelese”—learning to convey as much information as possible in the fewest words, by implication. “Everybody my age had written a novel and I was still having a difficult time writing a paragraph.” He progressed to fictional vignettes, then to the economy and multiple implications of his short stories, written according to his “omission theory” and his “iceberg principle.”

At the Genoa Economic Conference in 1922 he witnessed the conflict between the Fascists and the Communists and concluded that both were fascist and dangerous. As a Realist he became distrustful of all government. He covered the short war between Greeks and Turks culminating in a massacre of retreating Greek families at Smyrna and later evoked the atrocities in the first story in his first book, “On the Quai at Smyrna.” He also experienced a painful setback in his own life. While covering the Lausanne Peace Conference in the winter of 1922, he asked Hadley to come up from Paris and join him for a vacation in Chamby. She happily gathered up his manuscripts of stories and his first novel in progress and boarded a night train to Switzerland. She left her train compartment briefly and when she returned, the valise containing Hemingway’s writing had been stolen.

PARIS

Hemingway had such personal charm he sustained friendships with all three of the Modernist literary gurus in Paris—the imperious Gertrude Stein who recognized no rivals, Ezra Pound and James Joyce. He remained loyal to Ezra all his life. In 1922, after he submitted to her the letter of introduction from Sherwood Anderson, he came with Hadley and with hat in hand to pay homage to Gertrude Stein at her salon on the Left Bank. He literally sat at her feet. He said that with her short hair combed forward Stein looked like a Roman emperor, adding that one might not prefer women to look like that. “Mrs. Stein” had been one of his nicknames for his mother, apparently due to similarities between the two women. She critiqued his prose and he typed parts of her *The Making of Americans* and got excerpts published in *transatlantic review*. “Me and Gertrude are like brothers,” he quipped. It was Stein who recommended to Hemingway that he go down to Spain and see the bullfights, which he did first in 1923. Later he asked her to be the Godmother of his son. And he made a companion of Joyce, the most influential experimental fiction writer of the century, disdained by Stein. Joyce was frail and almost blind. When they were out drinking together on the Left Bank and encountered an unruly drunk, Joyce would step behind Ernest and say, “Deal with him, Hemingway.”

The critic Malcolm Cowley got to know him in Paris and reported with awe that he had never seen anyone learn so much about so much so fast. Hemingway studied every day, taking notes. He learned from the most important innovative writers of the new century in Anderson, Stein, Pound and Joyce. Thoreau traveled much in Concord, Hemingway traveled throughout the world. There were no machine guns in the woods of Walden, nor sharks in the pond. Hemingway learned the language of every place he was in—both in Nature and Society. Fluent in Italian, French, Spanish, Basque, German, and Swahili, he transcended nationality, integrated languages in his fiction and became a world icon. By the age most PhDs earn their degrees in one narrow specialty, Hemingway was qualified to teach composition, journalism, fiction writing, literature, modern painting, military geography, navigation, European history, ballistics, infantry tactics, boxing, fishing, skiing, hunting, wing shooting, bullfighting and bartending. Professors who spent most of their lives sitting down called Hemingway “limited.”

As a young expatriate himself, Malcolm Cowley knew the writers on the Left Bank: “One couldn’t say that Hemingway was a leader among them, because he stood apart from the group, but the others were proud to be seen with him. It was an event of the evening if he passed the Dome, tall, broad, and handsome, usually wearing a patched jacket and sneakers and often walking on the balls of his feet like a boxer. Arms waved in greeting from the sidewalk tables and friends ran out to urge him to sit down with them....In view of the whole terrace, Hemingway would be striding toward the Montparnasse railroad station, his mind seemingly busy...and he wouldn’t quite recognize whoever greeted him. Then suddenly his beautiful smile appeared that made those watching him also smile; and with a will and an eagerness he put out his hands and warmly greeted his acquaintance, who, overcome by this reception, simply glowed; and who returned with Hem to the table as if with an overwhelming prize....

Ernest did have that gift for attracting public homage—‘charisma’ would be the later word for it—but he also had other gifts that distinguished him from the young writers at the sidewalk tables, now obscure or dead. He had more talent, he worked harder, and he had a peculiarly studious habit of mind that the sidewalk writers lacked....” (Cowley, *A Second Flowering: Works and Days of the Lost Generation*) “I respected a lot of painters,” Hemingway wrote, “some of my own age, others older—Gris, Picasso, Braque, Monet, who was still alive then—and a few writers: Joyce, Ezra, the good of Stein....If you are lucky enough to have lived in Paris as a young man, then wherever you go for the rest of your life, it stays with you, for Paris is a moveable feast.”

PRINCIPLES OF FICTION WRITING

What Hemingway probably acquired from Gertrude Stein were: (1) orientation to the current trends of international Modernism in all the arts; (2) inspiration to innovate; (3) techniques of repetition; (4) some prose rhythms; (5) avoidance of subordination; (6) avoidance of punctuation especially in compound sentences; and (7) confidence that he could write in a “modern” way. Many feminists have had a visceral reaction against Hemingway not only because of their false stereotype of him but also due to the masculinity of his characteristic style: linear action, authoritative tone, powerful rhythms, infrequent subordination and a sustained assertive syntax of subject-verb-predicate. Ironically, the model and mentor of Hemingway’s masculine style was Gertrude Stein. However, they also were opposites in their primary aesthetics: she abstract, he concrete; she Expressionist, he Realist, and so on.

In his own words: “I was trying to learn to write, commencing with the simplest things....My aim is to put down on paper what I see and what I feel in the best and simplest way....Prose is architecture, not interior decoration....First I have tried to eliminate everything unnecessary to conveying experience to the reader [Neoclassicism] so that after he or she has read something it will become a part of his or her experience and seem actually to have happened....[Realism] Whatever success I have had has been through writing what I know about....I was trying to write then and I found the greatest difficulty, aside from knowing what you really felt, rather than what you were supposed to feel, and had been taught to feel, was to put down what really happened in action: what the actual things were which produced the emotion that you experienced...the real thing, the sequence of motion and fact which made the emotion [objective correlative]....You see I’m trying in all my stories to get the feeling of the actual life across—not to just depict life—or criticize it—but to actually make it alive....Experience is communicated by small details intimately observed....Show the readers everything, tell them nothing....

If it is any use to know it, I always try to write on the principle of the iceberg. There is seven-eighths of it underwater for every part that shows. Anything you know you can eliminate and it only strengthens your iceberg. It is the part that doesn’t show....You could omit anything if you knew that you omitted and the omitted part would strengthen your story and make people feel something more than they understood....I am trying to make, before I get through, a picture of the whole world—or as much of it as I have seen. [Modernist holistic realism] Boiling it down always, rather than spreading it thin....The secret is that it is poetry written into prose and it is the hardest of all things to do....A writer should be of as great probity as a priest of God. He is either honest or not, as a woman is either chaste or not, and after one piece of dishonest writing he is never the same again.”

In Our Time (1925)

Hemingway followed *Three Stories and Ten Poems* (1923) with the short story collection *In Our Time* (1925), alternating the stories with vignettes, concentrated scenes that generate ironies by juxtaposition, showing the influence of (1) James Joyce. The intense vignettes evoke the violent world “in our time” like his dispatches as a war correspondent and also like jump cuts in newsreels, reducing the individual to insignificance in the tradition of Naturalism. The stories are about people as feeling individuals, representative human types in the tradition of Realism deepened by archetypal symbolism that conveys a vision of “all time”—universal human experience. The vignettes and stories counterpoint each other in theme, character, event, tone, and otherwise—like music, an influence of (2) Ezra Pound. The fragmentary effects of the Expressionist structure were influenced by (3) German Expressionist cinema and (4) Cubist painting—in particular Cézanne. The strikingly original prose style looks plain but is crafted to evoke feelings and is dense with subtle implications, influenced by (5) Imagism in poetry; while Hemingway’s rhythms, repetition, punctuation, and compound sentences were influenced by (6) Gertrude Stein, though his prose style is concrete and hers abstract.

In Our Time includes half a dozen of Hemingway’s best stories: “Indian Camp,” “The Doctor and the Doctor’s Wife,” “The End of Something,” “Soldier’s Home,” “Cat in the Rain,” and “Big Two-Hearted River.” Modernism was new then, critics did not know what to make of it, but the structure of *In Our Time* still baffles them. The book became a model of the unified short story collection, its influence on later writers superceding Sherwood Anderson’s *Winesburg, Ohio* (1919). Within the abstract *intellectual expressionist* (Stein, Eliot) structure of *In Our Time*, the style of the vignettes and stories exemplify concrete *holistic realism* (Frost, Cather), integrating the two primary modes of Modernism. The magnitude of this aesthetic achievement has never been recognized.

TORRENTS

The reviewers compared him to Sherwood Anderson, a superficial perception. Hemingway appears to have written “My Old Man” (1925), a story like one of Anderson’s about a boy disillusioned by his father in the world of horseracing, to invite a more attentive comparison and illustrate the differences between his style and Anderson’s. However, instead of recognizing differences critics then cited the story as evidence confirming their impression that Hemingway was imitating Anderson. Adding to the charge, Gertrude Stein claimed that she and her friend Anderson had created the upstart Ernest Hemingway. Her implication that he was not original provoked Hemingway into writing a parody, *The Torrents of Spring* (1926), ridiculing the Romantic primitivism of Anderson’s recent novel *Dark Laughter* (1925). Hemingway included satire of Stein in his parody and in return, Stein belittled Hemingway and called him a coward in *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas* (1933).

There was another compelling motive for his parody. Several major publishers had expressed interest in him. Fitzgerald had recommended him to his own editor at Scribner’s, the legendary Maxwell Perkins. Hemingway wanted to change publishers from Liveright to Scribner’s, but he was bound by a contract. He knew that Liveright would reject a parody of Anderson, one of their leading authors, and then he would be free to sign with Scribner’s. His plan worked and *Torrents* got mostly favorable reviews, setting up critics for his first serious novel. Stein and Anderson never forgave him.

While he was writing *Torrents*, he met a friend of Hadley’s named Pauline Pfeiffer, a wealthy young fashion writer for *Vogue* magazine only recently graduated from college. In December 1925 Pauline joined the Hemingways in Austria for skiing and fell in love with Ernest. He later described the romantic triangle: “an unmarried young woman becomes the temporary best friend of another young woman who is married, goes to live with the husband and wife and then unknowingly, innocently and unrelentingly sets out to marry the husband....The husband has two attractive girls around when he has finished work. One is new and strange and if he has bad luck he gets to love them both....All things truly wicked start from innocence.” (quoted by Carlos Baker, *Hemingway*, 1969: 163)

Hadley wrote out an agreement that if he and Pauline would separate for 100 days and still felt the same, she would give him a divorce. They did so, but Hemingway felt they were committing a sin. Asked by a

friend why he was getting a divorce from Hadley he said: "Because I am a son of a bitch." He felt such a deep remorse at losing his wife and child he considered suicide. He dedicated *The Sun Also Rises* to Hadley and felt so badly about hurting her that he signed over all the royalties of the novel to her. It is evident in *Islands in the Stream* that Hemingway loved Hadley for the rest of his life. His sad experience of a romantic triangle contributed to his unfinished and censored tragedy *The Garden of Eden* (1986). After the great success of *The Sun Also Rises* he married Pauline in 1927, later confessing that he became impotent with her until he went to church and prayed.

The Sun Also Rises (1926)

In response to the limited comprehension of reviewers and critics, Hemingway wrote a first novel that appears conventional and much simpler than *In Our Time*. The prose style is explicit, discursive and conversational rather than concentrated with a texture dense in subtle implications like his short stories. *The Sun Also Rises* is first of all a Realist novel in the journalistic tradition of Mark Twain, appealing to readers in general as well as to literary critics, like *Huckleberry Finn*. With the background of an objective reporter, Hemingway modeled all his main characters on real people who were recognizable to everyone in the cafes of the Left Bank in Paris. He trusted his observation more than his invention until he learned that what he invented was often his best writing. Some genteel reviewers disapproved of the hedonism in the novel and called Hemingway a "nihilist," failing to notice the epigraph from the Bible and the moral code of integrity and grace under pressure against which all the characters are measured and found wanting except the exemplar Pedro Romero, the young matador at the center of the novel.

The Sun Also Rises has the vivid flash and promised excitement of a bullfight poster and became one of the most popular literary novels of the 20th century. Hemingway gave so much honor to Pamplona and attracted so many tourists and newsreel photographers there each July for the running of the bulls, they erected a statue of him beside the entrance to the bullring where the bulls charge through the tunnel and burst out into the arena like an explosion trampling runners in the deafening roar of the crowd. Hemingway expressed common feelings of the time with such accuracy that this became one of the few novels ever to change how thousands of people talked, behaved, and cut their hair. To this day, every summer young people come to Pamplona with copies of *The Sun Also Rises* in their backpacks.

Beyond its Realism, informed by Neoclassical aesthetics, the novel is a Modernist masterpiece. Unity is virtually the only value common to all aesthetic theories except Postmodernism. As a Modernist, Hemingway sought unity through the poetic ideal of *synecdoche*: "Let those who want to save the world if you can get to see it clear and as a whole. Then any part you make will represent the whole." Seeing the whole and evoking it with concrete imagery is *holistic realism*. Form expresses content. *The Sun Also Rises* is a perfect aesthetic whole unified by the metaphor of the bullfight at the thematic center, manifest in each major character, in behavior, in implied moral judgments, in explicit aesthetic values, in the first sentence of the novel, and in the last sentence. This integrity of form manifests the spiritual integrity attained by Jake Barnes and embodied in the bullfighter Romero.

The bullfight in Hemingway is one of the most elaborated metaphors and sustained motifs in literary history, as also most clearly seen in "The Doctor and the Doctor's Wife," "The End of Something," "Hills Like White Elephants," and "The Killers," the story of a fighter named *Ole*. The story of Jake Barnes ultimately rounds figuratively into a circle like a bullring with Romero at the center, the moral and aesthetic exemplar spiraling his cape above the bull. Influenced by Pound's theory of the vortex and Eliot's "The Waste Land," four Modernist American novels appeared within five years of each other that are structured with a central symbol creating a vortex: the Blue Mesa in Cather's *The Professor's House* (1925), the valley of ashes in Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* (1925), the bullfight in *The Sun Also Rises* (1926), and the dying mother Addie in Faulkner's *As I Lay Dying* (1930).

SUCCESS AND SUICIDE

The Sun Also Rises was censored in some parts of America. In a letter to him his mother called his novel "one of the filthiest books of the year....I could not keep my silence any longer, if any word from me might help you to find yourself....I love you, dear, and still believe you will do something worthwhile. Try to find

Him and your real work.” She sounds just like the mother in “Soldier’s Home.” She embodies all in middle-class America that made her son and many like him expatriates. In 1928 Hemingway got word that his father had killed himself. His mother Grace sent him a chocolate cake and the revolver his father had used to shoot himself in the head. As implied in “The Doctor and the Doctor’s Wife,” Hemingway had anticipated this event and he blamed his overbearing mother. Thereafter, he said he hated his mother, yet he continued throughout his life to be a gracious and dutiful son, caring for her financially, telephoning her regularly, communicating with her far more often than most sons do with their mothers, especially after the 1960s. Hemingway’s sister Ursula committed suicide in 1966, his brother Leicester in 1982, and his granddaughter Margaux in 1996.

A Farewell to Arms (1929)

His first novel is Modernist in aesthetics and traditional in vision—too subtle for those critics who saw it as hedonistic and nihilistic. His second novel is traditional in aesthetics—easier for critics to understand--yet Modernist in vision. Frederick Henry, an idealistic American studying in Italy volunteers in World War I, is wounded, falls in love with his nurse Catherine Barkley, is disillusioned by the war, deserts and flees the country with his love to the high mountains, where she dies in childbirth. The title *A Farewell to Arms* refers to the arms of war, to the arms of Catherine, and to the arms on the famous statue of the goddess of love. The novel itself has the solid ideal form of the statue. In the development of the Hemingway protagonist, Frederick Henry in effect walks out of this novel into the cafes of Paris and in some ways--wounded and disillusioned--becomes Jake Barnes in *The Sun Also Rises*.

A Farewell to Arms perfectly expresses the mood of the country after World War I, the vision is timeless and the style and form are impeccable. Traditional aesthetics: (1) the formal structure of a tragedy in 5 acts, each ending in dramatic movement of action and plot, the first three by train, then one by carriage, and finally walking alone in the rain; (2) the omniscient narrator; and (3) the themes of love during war and romance versus duty. Other traditional Neoclassical characteristics include (4) the social utility of the vision; and (5) the clarity, directness, economy, restraint, and moral tone of the prose style, which is also poetic in some passages, such as the first paragraph. (6) The archetypal symbolism is in the tradition of myths—baptism, spiritual death/rebirth, wise old man, ascent to the mountains; (7) the Realism is in the tradition of James and Twain; (8) the Naturalism is in the tradition of Stephen Crane (Frederick Henry inverts the name of Henry Fleming in *The Red Badge of Courage*); (9) the Romantic dramatization of true love is in the tradition of Shakespeare—especially *Romeo and Juliet*--and other poets, as is the pastoral theme of (10) *carpe diem*, or seize the day. (11) The priest’s spiritual love of God can never be lost is a theme that exalts traditional Christianity above the romantic love of humans for each other. (12) At the same time, the novel is Modernist in its (1) consistent irony; (2) Existential confrontation with nothingness, or *nada*; (3) affirmation of Nature despite its “dirty tricks”; and (4) individuation to spiritual transcendence, when the two lovers become One.

TYPES OF LOVE

A Farewell to Arms dramatizes and differentiates among types of love, ascending from (1) mere Eros, the lust of the whore house; to (2) romantic love; to (3) to true love; to (4) spiritual love, or *agape*, in the Christian tradition; and finally to (5) love of God. Frederick individuates through the first 4 phases but he has lost faith in God due to his experiences in the war and then the death of Catherine. The vision of the novel includes both the *nada* felt by Frederick and the faith and love of God embodied in the priest from the mountains, who is depicted as wiser than Frederick. At first Frederick cannot love at all and his relationship to Catherine is “a game, like bridge, in which you said things instead of playing cards.” Then one morning she comes into his hospital room and “When I saw her I was in love with her. Everything turned over inside of me.” Romantic love is a revolution of the heart over the head.

The priest defines *true* love: “You wish to sacrifice for. You wish to serve.” In true love as in religion, the ego is transcended. Catherine is more mature than Frederick, having already experienced romantic love with her fiancé killed in battle. She becomes an exemplar, teaching him both true love and spiritual love: “You’re my religion.” Later the wise old man Count Greffi confirms to him that love “is a religious feeling.” Frederick does not transcend his ego and attain spiritual love until near the end of the novel when he declares their spiritual union: “We’re the same one.” Long intimate dialogues between them that do not identify who is speaking give the reader a vicarious experience of transcending oneself in another so

completely that it no longer matters which one is speaking. Tragically, by investing all their love in each other they make it inevitable that in the end, sooner or later, they will lose everything.

Some critics would not tolerate Hemingway transcending the Realism expected of him with an allegory of love in the tradition of Hawthorne. Allegory requires some degree of abstraction. Catherine is rendered first with Realism as an independent, brave, self-sacrificing nurse wounded herself by the loss of her fiancé. She is gradually idealized for exhibiting specific virtues. What is most exemplary about her in the end is her spirit—her bravery and grace under pressure. Cynical male critics such as Edmund Wilson and Leslie Fiedler, followed later by Feminists, belittled Catherine as nothing more than a male erotic fantasy—merely a “love goddess.” They saw nothing spiritual. People who have never felt love often scorn it in others, like the nurse Miss Van Campen. True love transcends faults. Romantic lovers idealize each other, they talk like Frederick and Catherine.

THINKING

Some called Hemingway “anti-intellectual” because his characters sometimes try to stop thinking. On the contrary, such characters are thinking too much. They try to stop because they are thinking obsessively and self-destructively about a trauma or the loss of a loved one or some other wound, like Nick in “Big Two-Hearted River,” the Italian major in “In Another Country,” and Jake in *The Sun Also Rises*. Thinking too much impeded Hamlet and paralyzed Prufrock. Then too, there are modes of consciousness that transcend intellect, as in holistic insight, epiphanies, mystical experience, and the discipline of Zen.

Critics consider themselves intellectuals, yet (1) they did not detect the symbolism in Hemingway’s fiction until after 1940. The ability to detect irony is supposed to be a function of intellect, yet (2) it took critics until the 1950s to notice that irony had always been a consistent tone in Hemingway. (3) The musical and Cubist structure of his first book *In Our Time* (1925) is *intellectual expressionism*, consistently ironic. (4) Hemingway was never duped by Communism like Dreiser and Dos Passos, or like his detractors the prominent critics Edmund Wilson and Max Eastman, intellectuals who had to reverse their politics. (5) Existentialism was a major intellectual trend in Modernism that became dominant in Europe and the United States after World War II. Hemingway defined Existentialist philosophy in literature years before the emergence of Sartre and Camus, in “A Clean, Well-Lighted Place” (1933). (6) Hemingway read more widely than T. S. Eliot and (7) he originated the most influential prose aesthetics in history, an intellectual achievement far greater than that by all his detractors combined.

1930s

Ernest and Pauline had a son and moved to tropical Key West, Florida in 1930, where he wrote his scholarly dissertation explaining the bullfight, *Death in the Afternoon* (1932). On a hunting trip with John Dos Passos he slid his vehicle into a ditch in Montana, broke his arm and spent 7 weeks in the hospital, the basis for his story “The Gambler, the Nun, and the Radio.” He began to sell movie rights to novels as well as publishing magazine stories, but he also received support from Pauline’s trust funds and gifts from her wealthy uncle, including their house in Key West. His celebrity increased and his third collection of stories *Winner Take Nothing* (1933) included several of his greatest: “Hills Like White Elephants,” “The Killers,” and “A Clean, Well-Lighted Place.”

Green Hills of Africa (1935), based on a safari in 1933, is experimental—an attempt to create a novel directly out of actual experience. It is a “non-fiction novel” such as Norman Mailer and Truman Capote claimed to invent decades later, with digressions on literature and other subjects. The book contains lovely natural descriptions of Africa but lacks dramatic form and is usually ignored because of popular hostility to hunting after the 1960s. Hemingway enjoyed participating in the natural order by hunting game animals that were not endangered, while at the same time he loved animals and was sensitive to conservation issues, as evinced by his appointment as an honorary game warden in Kenya.

“The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber” (1936)

Two of his best stories emerged from his experiences on safari, “The Snows of Kilimanjaro” and “The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber,” which became his most popular short story. Macomber is an

American husband who gets shot from behind by his wife Margot. Feminist critics identified with Margot and condemned Hemingway as a “misogynist” based only on this one character, disregarding the diversity of admirable women in his fiction. Hemingway learned from covering politics that “A big lie is more plausible than truth.” In contrast to Feminists, the British hunting guide in the story criticizes American women and men both, and Hemingway says that Margot “had done the best she could for many years back and the way they were together now was no one person’s fault.” Margot is modeled on a rich adulteress Hemingway knew. She is the only “bitch” in his fiction, though Feminist critics refer to “a line of bitch goddesses” in his work. Margot is hardly a goddess. Nor is Miss Van Campen the head nurse in *A Farewell to Arms*, whose bitchy conduct is her professional prerogative. Brett Ashley is a pathetic lost soul who in the end is capable of “deciding not to be a bitch.”

“The Snows of Kilimanjaro” (1936)

The bastards in Hemingway’s fiction far outnumber Margot. Harry the writer in “Snows” is literally rotten. Hemingway is traditional in criticizing males far more often than women, while at the same time he is egalitarian in judging each character by the same moral standards regardless of gender. Usually, in the tradition of Realism, he renders his male protagonists as generic types such as young Nick Adams in order to dramatize universal truths. Harry the writer is exceptional in representing an autobiographical purgation of rot: “If he wrote it he could get rid of it. He had gotten rid of many things by writing them.”

Evidence of autobiography: (1) The reference to “poor Julian” was originally “poor Scott.” Hemingway changed the name in response to Fitzgerald’s request to Max Perkins. The personal specificity in this passage indicates that in this story Hemingway is countering Fitzgerald’s awe of the rich as one writer to another. Furthermore, many of his self-criticisms applied to his friend Scott as well. They both had the traditional tragic flaw of hubris: “I didn’t pay any attention to it because I never infect.” (2) Harry’s self-criticism corresponds to Hemingway’s during the early 1930s in particular with respect to his own writing and to his relationship with Pauline. Harry got infected by the superficial values of the rich and indulged himself, wasting his talent “by not using it, by betrayals of himself and what he believed in, by drinking so much that he blunted the edge of his perceptions, by laziness, by sloth, and by snobbery....It was a talent all right but instead of using it, he had traded on it.” He spoils and rots on the lowlands and never reaches his peak. (3) The explicit symbol in the epigraph of the leopard frozen on the mountain is unique in Hemingway—“the House of God.” As a writer he had tried to be like a “priest of God” and to write prose with such purity it would never spoil, as if frozen at the peak. That would be immortality. Hemingway felt that, instead, he had spoiled himself, he was betraying his mission and his soul, like Harry. He felt rotten. Most of all because he was blaming and taking out his anger on his wife.

The wife in the story is rich like Pauline but older, with a previous marriage and children and lovers before she met Harry. The autobiographical parallel is not absolute. Its essence is that the writer is blaming his wife for what he did to himself: She “was not pretty” and he married her for her money. She has done everything he wanted her to, yet he calls her “this good, this rich bitch, this kindly caretaker and destroyer of his talent. Nonsense. He had destroyed his talent himself.” He is rotten for blaming her: “It wasn’t this woman’s fault”; “It was not her fault that when he went to her he was already over”; “She was always thoughtful”; “She was a damned nice woman too”; “She was very good to him. He had been cruel and unjust in the afternoon. She was a fine woman, marvelous really.” Feminists count the wife in “the line of bitch goddesses,” ironically taking the word of the rotten male who admits she does not deserve his abuse. Harry is the opposite of Catherine Barkley in *A Farewell to Arms*, who proves her love by preserving her relationship with Frederick under the pressure of great pain and dies with grace. In contrast Harry turns “into a devil” because he is selfish: “‘I don’t like to leave anything,’ the man said. ‘I don’t like to leave things behind’.” In the end he is too ugly from rot for her to look at.

To Have and Have Not (1937)

During the Great Depression of the 1930s the Communist Party became increasingly influential. Leftist critics harassed writers for not being Leftists and using their art as weapons in the class war. Hemingway’s prominence made him a major target. In *To Have and Have Not* he took up the economic theme, castigates the “Haves” and dramatizes the escape of four revolutionaries from Cuba. The protagonist Harry Morgan, a

fishing guide out of Key West, has the same first name as the writer in “Snows” and Hemingway agrees with the working-class perspective of both Harrys. At first Leftists thought that in this novel Hemingway had joined their cause, but the Depression turns Morgan into a bootlegger and smuggler, not a Communist. All he affirms with his last gasp in the end is the need of people to work together: “One man alone ain’t got...no chance.” Hemingway is able to identify with a criminal but not with a Communist: “What you wanted was the minimum of government, always less government....Let those who want to save the world if you can get to see it clear and as a whole.”

To Have and Have Not is an adventure novel with a sociological focus and Hemingway did not have his heart in it. He seems to have felt it was an example of his own sell-out, like Harry’s in “Snows,” calling this novel “a teen-age work devoted to adultery, sodomy, masturbation, rape, mayhem, mass murder, frigidity, alcoholism, prostitution, impotency, anarchy, rum-running, Chink-smuggling, nymphomania, and abortion.” It got poor reviews, but it does contain some excellent scenes and Hemingway is always interesting the way a painter is--at his worst as well as his best. The movie version of the novel became popular and was partially written by William Faulkner, who contributed clever bits.

SPANISH CIVIL WAR

Like Harry in “Snows,” Hemingway had a contempt for his wife’s rich friends, and he felt increasingly guilty socializing with them during the Great Depression. He became estranged from Pauline, who was raising their two sons in Key West. In 1935 he predicted another world war and in 1937 he became a war correspondent again and went to Spain to cover their Civil War. Spaniards had finally overthrown the monarchy and established a democratic republic, only to have it overthrown in turn by the Fascist military under Francisco Franco. Communist revolutionaries from Moscow came in and supported the Loyalists against the Fascists, intending to take over the country themselves.

Hemingway saw that Adolph Hitler was testing weapons in the Spanish war, preparing for his blitzkrieg of Europe. He saw no choice but to support the Loyalist coalition with the Communists in an effort to prevent another World War. He went to Hollywood and raised money for the Loyalists and helped make a documentary film about the war called *The Spanish Earth*, directed by a Communist. Along with many other Americans who went to Spain and fought for Democracy, for associating with Communists in the 1930s he was thereafter considered a possible security risk by the U.S. government. For the rest of his life, his activities were tracked and he had a file at the FBI.

A month after he began reporting on the war from Spain he was pictured on the cover of *Time* magazine. Under bombardment in Madrid, a city under siege, he met a fellow war correspondent named Martha Gellhorn, an attractive blonde 29 years old who was not rich. She accompanied him close enough to the front to be shot at and he would praise her courage for years to come. In 1937 she arranged through her friend Eleanor Roosevelt for *The Spanish Earth* to be shown at the White House, and he wrote a play about the war called *The Fifth Column* featuring a war correspondent resembling Gellhorn.

Hemingway left Pauline in 1939, took his boat the *Pilar* and moved to Havana, Cuba. He began writing a novel of the Spanish Civil War and moved in with Martha at La Finca Vigia outside Havana. Once Pauline was granted a divorce, he and Gellhorn were married in 1940, the year *The Fifth Column* was produced on Broadway. Gellhorn proved to be an ambitious writer. She published books of fiction in 1941 and 1944 and left Hemingway in 1943 to cover World War II in Europe. They scarcely saw one another again and observers suspected that she had married him as a career move.

For Whom the Bell Tolls (1940)

The epigraph from John Donne repeats the message of Harry Morgan at the end of *To Have and Have Not*: No man is an island. Hemingway had overcome his own alienation from society and is speaking in particular to fellow Americans who were inclined to be individualistic like him. In middle-class America individualism translated into isolationism and complacent self-absorption, as exemplified by the parents in “Soldier’s Home.” Hemingway wanted to prepare Americans for the next world war and inspire them to work together in order to defeat Fascism.

His hero Robert Jordan represents the thousands of Americans who went to Spain and fought for the Loyalists against the Fascists in the Civil War (1936-39). He is thought to be based in part on Robert Hale Merriman, an officer and hero in the Abraham Lincoln Brigade, killed in 1938. As an engineer, Jordan is sent to join a guerilla band of peasants and blow up a bridge. He decides that his mission is futile but he completes it anyway and is killed, yet he attains a spiritual victory, comparable to Santiago's. Inspired by his belief in fighting for Democracy, the great theme of sacrifice and transcendence lifted Hemingway from the lowland of rotten Harry and set him on his feet again climbing toward the House of God.

For Whom the Bell Tolls is his most expansive novel, with many colorful developed characters and liberated prose and action on an epic scale, in contrast to his economical short stories. The powerful woman leading the guerilla band has the name of his boat the *Pilar*. Feminist critics who stereotyped Hemingway as a "misogynist" ignored Pilar and belittled the traumatized girl Maria, a victim of gang rape by the Fascists. Jordan's stream of consciousness as he is about to die firing a machine gun at the Fascists is Hemingway's contrast to the concluding soliloquy of Molly Bloom in Joyce's *Ulysses*.

The novel got ecstatic reviews in 1940, became Hemingway's greatest bestseller and was adapted in a blockbuster popular movie that ends with a tolling bell that still resonates. Some of its most enthusiastic critics consider *For Whom the Bell Tolls* his best novel.

WORLD WAR II

After the attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941 German submarines cruised all along the Atlantic coast and throughout the Caribbean sinking freighters and oil tankers. They landed saboteurs on the south coast of Long Island and on the coast of Florida. In two months of 1942 more than 30 ships were torpedoed off the coast of Cuba. Hemingway patrolled the Cuban coastline in his boat the *Pilar* helping the U.S. Navy locate German submarines. He never had an opportunity to execute his plan if a Nazi sub ever surfaced--to ram it with the *Pilar*! The U.S. Ambassador to Cuba recommended him for a decoration in honor of his service. By 1944 Hemingway felt compelled to get to the main action at the front in Europe. Once again he became a war correspondent. He flew with the Royal Air Force on two missions intercepting German rockets headed for England, he landed at Omaha Beach in the invasion of Normandy, and after the break-through at St. Lo he attached himself to the 22nd Division of the 4th U.S. Army.

In tribute to the great war correspondent Ernie Pyle, recently killed in the Pacific, Hemingway called himself "Ernie Hemorrhoid, the poor man's Pyle." The regiment he was with at Hurtgen Forest lost 80 percent of its officers and men. At one point in a battle, according to the Commanding General of the 4th Division, Hemingway was 60 miles in front of anything else in the 1st Army, including General Patton's tanks. He had Germans ahead and on both flanks and was sending back intelligence and calling for tank support to hold his position. Said the General, "I always keep a pin in the map for old Ernie Hemingway." He seemed reckless with his life, exhibiting what Stephen Crane in *The Red Badge of Courage* called a "sublime absence of selfishness." Soldiers told other reporters that Hemingway seemed to them the bravest man they had ever seen.

War correspondents were not supposed to be combatants. Nevertheless, seizing a military opportunity Hemingway took charge of over 200 French irregulars at Rambouillet southwest of Paris. He equipped the men with scavenged German and American weapons and a liquor ration and began clearing out remaining pockets of the enemy. "Task Force Hemingway" is credited with being the first Allied unit to enter Paris, a distinction that was supposed to have gone to a French general. Sylvia Beach recounts in her book *Shakespeare and Company* how Hemingway arrived at her bookstore in a jeep and at her request went up and wiped out the German machine gun nest on her roof. Papa and his friends had already liberated the bar at the Ritz Hotel and were celebrating there with magnums of champagne when General Phillipe Leclerc marched into Paris with what he thought was the first Allied expeditionary force. Despite offending the French, Hemingway was cleared in a court-martial of conduct forbidden to correspondents, such as killing Nazis, and later was given a medal.

By the end of the war in 1945 he had slurred speech from concussions and his memory was impaired temporarily. By 1947 "Hemingway, morose, overweight, and ears buzzing, was diagnosed with high blood

pressure. From this point on to his death, he was to fight a holding action against hypertension, diabetes, depression, paranoia, and perhaps hemochromatosis—many of the same problems that led to his father's suicide and would, years later, lead to his younger brother's suicide." (Reynolds 43) He divorced his third wife Martha Gellhorn on grounds of desertion and married a more compatible journalist, Mary Welch, with whom he remained for the rest of his life.

Across the River and into the Trees (1950)

The title quotes the last words of the legendary Confederate General Stonewall Jackson, a hero of the Civil War who got killed by one of his own men, a sentry who mistook him for the enemy. The book poignantly dramatizes the last words and experiences of Richard Cantwell, an American Army colonel, by implication a hero in World War II who has been "killed" by his own Army. He was promoted to General for his leadership in battle, but then he got assigned a mission known by his superiors to be impossible, merely in response to press coverage. When he failed to take an impregnable position, his superiors made him their scapegoat and stripped him of his command and his star. Cantwell has also lost three women in his life. His broken heart is killing him, he knows he is dying and he visits Venice one last time, the city of love, where he does what he loves most—visiting friends, duck hunting, and making love in a limited way to Renata, a girl only 18, a countess who symbolizes the traditional ideals he fought for and is losing now. He hopes to pass along his knowledge and values to her, as Santiago does to the boy Manolin in *The Old Man and the Sea*. In the end, Cantwell dies of a heart attack in his jeep.

Many details differentiate Cantwell from the author, but the similarities encouraged a reflexive equation. Hemingway set up the equation himself especially by modeling Renata on Adriana Ivanich, a real Venetian girl of 18 with whom he had a brief infatuation and idealized. In boxing terms, he stuck out his chin to the critics with the same indifference to consequences that he had in the war. *Across the River and into the Trees* is his own preparation for death. Through Cantwell he vents his anger at officers who had gotten men killed in the war through incompetence and careerism. He kills their patriotic cant, or bull. "There are events which are so great that if a writer has participated in them his obligation is to write truly," Hemingway said, as he had done about the First World War in *A Farewell to Arms*.

Cantwell could not be more Realistic in his reflections and perspective on the war, but *Across the River and into the Trees* is more than a Realist novel. Cantwell and Renata become symbols. Dante is mentioned a dozen times. "I am Mister Dante," says Cantwell. "And for a while he was and he drew all the circles." The war was an Inferno. Venice is a Purgatory. "Don't you see you need to tell me things to purge your bitterness?" Renata says to him. American critics did not want to hear it. To them it was "cant," as Hemingway anticipated by using the ironic name Cant-well. Critics had so much prejudice invested in the reductive stereotype of Hemingway that most of them merely projected it onto Cantwell. They faulted him for everything and forgave him for nothing. One reviewer said other reviewers had made up their minds about this novel before reading it. Most American critics of *Across the River and into the Trees* have been as incompetent as the officers Hemingway damns to Hell.

The European perspective has been more objective: "What distinguishes the book from the earlier ones is a peculiar balance of resignation in the premonition of death, of bravely contested bitterness about certain war experiences, and of a reluctant gentleness of touch in the description of the love relationship between the aging man and the young girl. In fact this relationship...causes the disillusioned colonel to try and make sense of the events of his life. Contrary to the numerous critical objections raised, the novel has not failed to appeal to the post-war reading public as the twentieth-century version of the eternal subject of love and soldiering." (Heinrich Straumann, University of Zurich, *American Literature in the Twentieth Century*, 1965: 109) The American critic Robert E. Fleming has suggested that Hemingway was so deeply hurt by the reactions to this novel that he was unable to finish *Islands in the Stream* or *The Garden of Eden* before he killed himself. (*The Cambridge Companion to Hemingway*, 1996: 131)

The Old Man and the Sea (1952)

For his grand finale, Hemingway turned a simple fishing story into one of the most popular masterpieces of world literature, appealing to a wide spectrum of readers, like *Huckleberry Finn*. "This is the prose that I

have been working for all my life that should read easily and seem short and yet have all the dimensions of the visible world and the world of man's spirit. It's as good prose as I can write as of now." In his review William Faulkner considered it perfect: "His best. Time may show it to be the best single piece by any of us. I mean his and my contemporaries." Better than anything by Eliot or by Joyce or by Faulkner himself. Two years later Hemingway was awarded a Nobel Prize "for his powerful, style-forming mastery of the art of modern narration, as most recently evinced in *The Old Man and the Sea*."

Santiago the old Cuban fisherman embodies the best in humanity. His struggle to catch and land a great fish becomes an allegory of the human spirit aspiring, struggling, enduring, sacrificing and succeeding, only to lose in the end--yet attaining a spiritual victory. As the poet Browning said, "Man's reach should exceed his grasp, or what's a Heaven for." The tone of the prose is exalted. Santiago, named for St. James, becomes Christ-evoking and a spiritual exemplar to Man—as in the boy *Man-olin*. In receptive readers the narrative induces a vicarious experience of heroic performance and the divinity manifest in the numinous fish. *The Old Man and the Sea* is among the works of American literature with all the characteristics of the transcendental mode of consciousness, with the "Personal Narrative" of Jonathan Edwards, "The Artist of the Beautiful," *Nature*, *Moby-Dick*, *Walden*, *Leaves of Grass*, Emily Dickinson's poems, "A White Heron," "Tom Outland's Story" in *The Professor's House*, *Black Elk Speaks*, and *The Bear*. The power of the story derives from perfectly cadenced prose, simplicity, economy, holistic vision, basic emotions, vivid imagery, archetypal symbolism, continuous action, dramatic pacing, heroism, humility, self-sacrifice, loyalty, love of man and boy and fish, and a meticulous perfection of form.

The Garden of Eden (unfinished)

This complex psychological novel is about two sexual triangles involving two married couples—the Bournes and the Sheldons—and one unattached man and one unattached woman. It probably derives from Hemingway's experience of a triangle in 1925 when his wife Hadley's friend Pauline joined his household and broke up his marriage. Hemingway and Hadley most resemble the Sheldons, the unattached male resembles John Dos Passos and the story plays off of *Tender Is the Night* (1934) by Scott Fitzgerald. The novel is set on the French Riviera and the characters, including three artistic men, are comparable to the hedonists in *The Sun Also Rises*, but without the excuse of having been wounded in a war. Though living in the 1920s they are essentially Postmodern wastelanders like the idle rich in "The Snows of Kilimanjaro," "The Waste Land" and *The Great Gatsby*.

Hemingway experimented with androgyny in his marriage to Mary Welch, developing the feminine side of himself as he had been doing in his fiction all his life. "She loves me to be her girls, which I love to be," he wrote. He even dyed his hair and called himself Catherine, after Catherine Barkley in *A Farewell to Arms*. Mary said later in *The Way It Was* (1976), "In our mutual sensory delights we were smoothly interlocking parts of a single entity, the big cogwheel and the smaller cogwheel...Maybe we were androgynous." Developing both sides of oneself is involved when lovers become "One" like Catherine and Frederick. In *The Garden of Eden*, however, androgyny is selfish and promiscuous, leading to betrayal, guilt, loss of identity, near madness and suicide—tragedies all around. The hedonists turn their Edenic lives into a living Hell. The character named Catherine represents the degeneration of modern woman from the traditional ideals embodied in Catherine Barkley to the loss of any ability to love truly at all, to selfish narcissism and near insanity.

"African Betrayal"

By far the best part of the unfinished manuscript is the story written by David Bourne about his boyhood experience with his father on an elephant hunt in Africa, published separately as "African Betrayal." Hemingway believed elephants were intelligent equals of humans and opposed hunting them. In the story the boy cannot prevent his white father and a black hunter from tracking down and killing a magnificent elephant that is a numinous manifestation of the divine. Hemingway said the theme of the novel is "the happiness of the Garden that a man must lose"--as in Hawthorne, Melville, Twain, Faulkner, and the Bible. The theme applies to both the individual and the human race, making the novel an allegory in the Christian tradition, represented in the narrative by the famous allegorical painting *Garden of Earthly Delights* by Hieronymus Bosch. To Hemingway, Africa was a Garden of Eden. The original sin of Man was overkill in dominating Nature: selfishness and greed. The sin of modern Woman is selfish narcissism as personified

in Catherine the fashion addict, who is unnatural and shallow, wants David to be just like her and to write only about her and destroys his writing that is not about her.

The story-within-a-story cannot be fully appreciated until a scholarly edition of *The Garden of Eden* is published with the African story at the heart of it and spreading out into the narrative as a whole as Hemingway intended. The mythic elephant hunt centers the novel like the bullfight metaphor in *The Sun Also Rises*, juxtaposes the past with the decadent present in the tradition of Modernism, and expresses a transcendental mode of consciousness like *The Old Man and the Sea*. Hemingway's elephant is comparable to Melville's white whale, Jewett's white heron, and Faulkner's bear.

CRASHES

In 1953 the Hemingways went on a safari in Kenya for about six months, where Ernest had been appointed Honorary Game Warden for the Kimana Swamp region. The climax was a flight in a small plane so that Ernest could show Mary the sights of Africa from the air and she could take photographs. Two days into the excursion while circling over spectacular Murchison Falls, a flight of ibis crossed in front of their plane and their pilot dove to avoid them, nicking a telegraph wire. They lost altitude and were forced to crash land, dislocating Hemingway's right shoulder.

The wreckage of their plane was observed by another pilot, who saw no survivors. The news spread overnight. Headlines around the world announced the death of Ernest Hemingway. This proved to be an exaggeration recalling the famous case of Mark Twain. Next day the Hemingway party got picked up by a small rescue plane that in taking off from irregular ground, bumped along lifting and dropping until it burst into flames and burned. Mary and the pilot scrambled out through a window too small for Hemingway. The doorframe had crumpled and he could not force open the door with his dislocated shoulder. As the flames intensified, burning him alive--he inhaled *fire!* He lowered his head like a fighting bull and with all his force he butted the door open.

BRAIN DAMAGE

He stumbled out of the fire onto a wing, bleeding from the head with cranial fluid leaking down his neck and first degree burns on his face, head and arms. After they eventually made it back to civilization by car, Ernest and Mary celebrated their survival. Hemingway woke up the next morning on a wet pillow soaked with cranial fluid. He was vomiting repeatedly and seeing double. In addition to severe burns, he had a wound to the brain, a collapsed intestine, two crushed vertebrae, dislocated bones, temporary loss of vision in one eye, paralysis of the sphincter, intermittent hearing, internal bleeding, and a ruptured liver, spleen, and kidney. The spine injury made it difficult for him to move.

Yet not long after the crashes, when a brushfire sprang up near his camp at Shimoni, in trying to help the firefighters he stumbled and fell into the flames, suffering second degree burns on his legs, abdomen, chest, and lips, and third degree burns on one hand and a forearm. Later that year, due to his condition, he was unable to travel and accept the Nobel Prize in person. He never fully recovered from the crashes in Africa. Subsequently he had high blood pressure, anemia, nephritis, hepatitis, depression, severe back pain, and a worse drinking problem. At times even writing a letter induced fatigue. Yet he struggled to keep writing. He finished *A Moveable Feast* about his early years in Paris, but could not finish *The Garden of Eden*, a debunking of the stereotype of him spread by detractors throughout his career. Meanwhile Ezra Pound had been indicted for treason, declared insane, and incarcerated in a mental hospital for 12 years. Loyal to his old friend regardless of politics, Hemingway and Robert Frost and several other writers petitioned and eventually secured Pound's release in 1958.

DECLINE

On a trip to Spain in 1959 to gather material for an article on bullfighting, Hemingway collapsed. He returned to the United States paranoid, despairing and suicidal. He was hospitalized twice and underwent electroshock treatments twice a week for almost a month. The shock treatments impaired his memory. President John F. Kennedy sent him a telegram inviting him to his inauguration, but Hemingway had to decline due to his high blood pressure, which ranged as high as 220 over 150. Visiting him in Ketchum, Idaho, two English professors, Seymour Betsky and Leslie Fiedler, were shocked by his appearance: "We

were particularly struck by the thinness of his arms and legs....He walked with the tentativeness of a man well over sixty-one. The dominant sense we had was of fragility.” (Baker, *Hemingway*, 555)

Asked if he had a psychoanalyst: “Sure I have. Portable Corona number three. That’s been my analyst. I’ll tell you, even though I am not a believer in the Analysis, I spend a hell of a lot of time killing animals and fish so I won’t kill myself. When a man is in rebellion against death, as I am in rebellion against death, he gets pleasure out of taking to himself one of the godlike attributes, that of giving it.” A. E. Hotchner quotes him in conversation saying, “What the hell? What does a man care about? Staying healthy. Working good. Eating and drinking with his friends. Enjoying himself in bed. I haven’t any of them. Do you understand, goddamn it? None of them.”

DEATH

At his lodge in Idaho in February 1961 he was asked to contribute one sentence to a presentation volume to President John Kennedy. He sat down at his desk. Stopping only for lunch, he tried all day to write one sentence--but he could not. In silence, he wept. Having his high blood pressure taken, he would say of his writing, it just “doesn’t come any more.” Mary agonized along with him. She did all she could for him and did not know what else to do. In April, nervously distraught, she walked in her sleep one night and fell down the stairs, gashing her head and spraining a foot. Hemingway watched her hobbling around using a cane. He could no longer write, he could no longer behave with grace under pressure, and he was causing harm to his wife. He had nothing left but shame and despair. He made two attempts to kill himself that were stopped by those close to him. Then one quiet Sunday morning while Mary slept, he bowed forward and blew most of his head off with his double-barreled Boss shotgun.

The blast resounded around the world. In the days thereafter, Hemingway was memorialized by the White House, by the Kremlin in Moscow, by the Vatican in Rome, by Harry’s Bar in Venice, by Cubans in Havana, and by crowds in the bullrings of Spain.

DESECRATION

Hemingway remained loyal to his publisher throughout his whole career and made a lot of money for the Scribner family. After his death, Scribner’s repaid him by disregarding his wishes and desecrating his canon, publishing unfinished manuscripts edited dishonestly in ways that reinforced the false stereotype of Hemingway, as by making Thomas Hudson unsympathetic in *Islands in the Stream* (1970). In 1986 Feminist editors at Scribner’s published the censored version of his unfinished last novel *The Garden of Eden*, a surprising exploration of androgyny that exploded the stereotype of the Macho Man, obliging Feminists to admit that they had been wrong about him all along.

Academics who wanted permission from Feminists to publish on Hemingway seized upon the theme of androgyny. “Clearly it is no longer an embarrassment in intellectual circles to be identified as someone who has written about Hemingway, and suddenly those who write about him no longer feel the need to be as defensive of their subject as they once were.” (Jackson J. Benson, *New Critical Approaches to the Short Stories of Ernest Hemingway*, Duke 1990: xiv) For decades Feminists had condemned Hemingway as too masculine, now some academics tried to put him in a dress like his mother did. Emasculation made him politically correct. As Dorothy Parker once said while he was alive, “Probably of no other living man has so much tripe been penned and spoken.”

The Feminist editors at Scribner’s censored *The Garden of Eden* (1986) and rewrote it, gutting the art in the book and reversing the meaning in order to sustain the false Feminist stereotype of Hemingway as a misogynist. “Sadly...editors have altered, deleted, added, and rearranged substantial amounts of material” in all his unfinished manuscripts. (Kelli A. Larson, *A Historical Guide to Ernest Hemingway*, Oxford 2000: 218) “In many instances the published texts diverge widely from the manuscripts that Hemingway left behind. Instead of editing these books with fidelity to Hemingway’s final intentions, Hemingway’s editors have chosen to edit according to what sells books. As a result, Hemingway’s experiments in theme and style have been suppressed in order to make his works conform to the canonical Hemingway, the Hemingway that readers expect.” (Susan M. Seitz, “The Posthumous Editing of Ernest Hemingway’s Fiction,” Ph.D. diss., U Massachusetts, 1993: 212)

Michael Hollister (2012)

JACKALS AND HYENAS

“The picture is not of a tree being felled, but of a dead lion surrounded by a pack of jackals. At first they gather round him cautiously, ready to take flight at any sign of life, and then, gaining courage from one another, they rush in to tear the flesh from the bones. I suppose the bones are the critical canon, but they will not remain undisturbed; soon the hyenas will come to crack them for their marrow. There will be nothing left but a white skull on the wide African plain, and hunters will say as they look at it, ‘Why, it wasn’t such a big lion after all.’ But Hemingway for much of his life was our biggest lion....”

The favorite victims of a new age group are likely to be representatives of the preceding age group, persons too young to be their parents. Hemingway is an exception here; he was a man of the 1920s; but he was also an idol of the 1950s and hence something to be destroyed with other idols of the time....For a new generation of parricides, Hemingway becomes an especially tempting victim, partly because he had been so abundantly paternal. All the hard-boiled novelists of the 1930s, with most of the proletarian novelists, were his sons in one way or another, and so too were almost all the war novelists of the 1940s....

I still find that Hemingway the writer paid a high price for his activities as a sportsman and war correspondent. His real excuse for engaging in them, implicit in everything he wrote, was that he liked them....But the work is what interests me, not the career, and that is why I am disturbed by the later sapping and pruning of his literary reputation. Does nothing survive of the work but a few short stories? Why not toss them out with the novels and finally reduce the Hemingway canon to a blank page? As yet that gesture of total rejection has not been made by any reputable critic. [Feminist critics later made the total rejection]....What we are witnessing is a crucial stage in an event that has been delayed beyond expectations, that is, the ritual murder of the literary fathers....It seems to me a snobbish business essentially. Each critic is tempted to display his superior discrimination by excluding a little more than other critics excluded. The process is exactly similar to the one by which drinkers some years ago used to display their superior taste by insisting on less and less vermouth in their martinis....

If I deplore the continued attacks on Hemingway’s reputation, it is not because I think that the critics are guilty of more than the customary measure of ingratitude....Hemingway’s work as a whole is so clearly permanent that, even if his reputation were destroyed for the moment, and the work buried, it would be exhumed after a hundred years, as Melville’s was. My protest is simply in defense of American literature. This is vastly richer now than it was when Hemingway started writing, but it is not yet so rich that it can afford to disown and devalue one of its lasting treasures.”

Malcolm Cowley
“Mr. Papa and the Parricides”
--*And I Worked at the Writer’s Trade:*
Chapters of Literary History 1918-1978
(Penguin 1979) 25-26, 31-34

HEMINGWAY ALSO RISES

“All of the articles published in all the years prior to 1975 are roughly equal in number to those published in the decade following, and the output in the last decade is nearly double that of the preceding decade....There are a number of reasons for the immense growth of Hemingway short story criticism. Most important, I think, has been the recognition in recent years that, despite the continued popularity of several of his novels, the short stories are Hemingway’s great contribution to our literature. In addition, the antagonism inspired by the Hemingway public persona, which had turned many academics and critics against his work [Why were these professionals influenced by his persona rather than by his work—*for three decades?*], has gradually, nearly three decades after his death in 1961, dissipated. Indeed, the change in the author’s standing has been dramatic, although it has come so gradually over the last two decades that few have stood back and commented on it.

Those of us who have written about the author for many years...can feel a definite shift in the atmosphere. A good number of bright young scholars are devoting some or all their attention to Hemingway research, many more women have become involved, and several older, well-established

scholars are coming back or turning to Hemingway studies for the first time. Clearly, it is no longer an embarrassment in intellectual circles to be identified as someone who has written about Hemingway...All of a sudden...Hemingway criticism is fun once again.”

Jackson J. Benson, ed.

New Critical Approaches to the Short Stories of Ernest Hemingway
(Duke 1990) xiii-xv

“The decade of the 1960s saw the publication of nearly four hundred scholarly articles and books with Ernest Hemingway as their subject....Statistics show that Hemingway’s critical reputation met the challenges of the 1970s with ease. The decade saw production of some 729 scholarly books and articles about his work and life, up 42 percent from the 1960s. In part, Hemingway’s fictional treatment of World War I and its aftermath assisted him posthumously in bridging the gap between World War II and Vietnam generations....The number of women scholars at work on Hemingway rose from 7 percent of the whole in the 1960s to 13 percent in the 1970s [many of them Feminists making false charges and smearing him as a misogynist]...The 1970s also marked the real beginning of a phenomenon known as the ‘Hemingway industry.’ So many critics were now at work on Hemingway that the available spectrum of generalist journals could not accommodate their productivity....

[Feminists] overreacted to Reaganism with an intolerance labeled ‘political correctness,’ an effort to silence alternative views and dictate values....In the early 1980s literary critics as a whole seemed uninterested in Hemingway [because they were intimidated by intolerant Feminists]...Critics interested in multiculturalism tended to ignore the author as ‘politically incorrect’....During the 1980s the involvement of women in Hemingway studies continued to grow...Many focused on rehabilitating Hemingway for feminist readers, on making him ‘correct’....

The appearance of *The Garden of Eden*...was sufficient to prompt a radical reassessment...From 1985 through 1991, the last year of this survey, the productivity of Hemingway scholars surged upward more sharply than ever before, doubling, and in some years almost tripling the output seen in the energetic period of canonization immediately following Hemingway’s death....With so many new questions to answer, Hemingway scholarship exploded, and today the flawed text of *The Garden of Eden* is almost as often read and criticized as *The Sun Also Rises* and *A Farewell to Arms*. The novel’s complex gender issues did more than any number of feminist apologies to make Hemingway politically correct [and] dispel the notion of his intolerance...” [This acknowledges that most Feminists were wrong about Hemingway all along. They taught and published falsehoods for decades. Now all their false criticism will remain in the libraries as a huge discredited Feminist mistake--an orgy of sexism.]

Susan F. Beegel

“Conclusion: The Critical Reputation of Ernest Hemingway”

The Cambridge Companion to Hemingway

ed. Scott Donaldson

(Cambridge 1996) 274, 280, 282-83, 286-87, 288-90

Michael Hollister (2014)

