

# SHAWANGUNK REVIEW

State University of New York at New Paltz  
New Paltz, New York

# SHAWANGUNK REVIEW

## EDITORS

H.R. Stoneback, Director of Graduate Studies  
Daniel Kempton, Department Chair

## MANAGING EDITOR

Jason Taylor

*Shawangunk Review*, the journal of the English Graduate Program, is an annual review published by the Department of English at the State University of New York at New Paltz. *Shawangunk Review* publishes literary articles of interest to the graduate students and faculty, book reviews, poetry and reports and news about the program. The views expressed in *Shawangunk Review* are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the Department of English at SUNY New Paltz. Please address all correspondence to *Shawangunk Review*, Department of English, State University of New York, New Paltz, New York, 12561.

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# SHAWANGUNK REVIEW

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## From the Editors

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As this issue goes to press, we are preparing for the Twelfth Annual Graduate Symposium, “Shakespeare 1600-2000: Art, Adaptation, Appropriation,” to be held on April 13, 2000. The Symposium Director is Professor Thomas G. Olsen, who promises a lively, engaging program featuring papers by our graduate students and a keynote address by renowned Shakespeare scholar David Scott Kastan of Columbia University. For the year 2001, Professor Nancy Johnson will serve as Symposium Director for a program centered on Eighteenth-Century literature. In 2002, Professor Fiona Paton will direct the Fourteenth Annual Graduate Symposium: “The Beats.” Watch these pages and the Graduate Bulletin Board for further announcements and calls for papers.

The editors of *Shawangunk Review* stress that, in addition to our mission of publishing the proceedings of our Annual Graduate Symposium, we welcome and encourage submissions concerning any area of literary studies: essays, explications, book reviews, scholarly notes and queries from any graduate student in English. *We also welcome submissions of poetry, and translations of poetry, from English graduate students and faculty* (see submission guidelines, page 109). Faculty members are also invited to submit book reviews and scholarly notes and queries. The deadline for all materials (including 2000 Symposium papers) for the next issue is May 31, 2000.

We will continue to publish our “news and notes” columns, as space permits, and we ask that readers continue to provide information regarding the many distinguished achievements of our former and current graduate students. For example, we would like to know the details of conference participation, publications, grants, and honors as well as news regarding progress of our MAs in Ph.D. programs, and reports about teaching and employment activities. Please submit items for this column to the editors. Also, we will include in future issues an “Abstracts of MA Theses” section. Degree candidates are encouraged to consult with their advisors and to submit a Thesis Abstract of approximately 150 words for publication in the *Review*.

H.R. STONEBACK

# Grace Under Millennial Pressure: The Hemingway Centennial

The XI Annual Graduate Symposium

## INTRODUCTION

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The Eleventh Annual Graduate Symposium, “Grace Under Millennial Pressure: The Hemingway Centennial,” was held on April 12-13, 1999, under the direction of Professor H. R. Stoneback. The first symposium to have a two-day schedule since the Second Annual Graduate Symposium in 1990 (“Hemingway and Film”), the program began on Monday evening April 12, with The Hemingway Centennial Poetry Reading held at the The Locust Tree Inn. A standing-room-only crowd applauded the readings of original work by both our graduate students and poets of national reputation, as well as readings from Hemingway’s work which left no doubt in the listeners’ minds that Hemingway was, first and last, a poet. Readers included Mark W. Bellomo, Richard Allan Davison, Dennis Doherty, David Fish, Robin Gajdusek, Donald Junkins, John Langan, AnnMarie Meisel, Dan Rutar, H.R. Stoneback, Dennis C. Winter, and Aaron Zeidman. Selections of original work from this reading are included in this issue; copyright restrictions prevent the printing of the passages from Hemingway that were carefully selected by other readers to exemplify the poetry of Hemingway’s prose.

The symposium continued on April 13, with several excellent program sessions featuring presentations by our graduate students and our distinguished visiting speakers. Graduate student papers included Mark W. Bellomo, “Nothing Under the Sun: *Nada*, Light, and Grace in *The Sun Also Rises*”; Steven J. Florczyk, “Religious Ecstasy and ‘Disregard for Death’ in *Death in the Afternoon*”; Breida Gallagher, “Faulkner and Hemingway: The Old Men, The Sea, The Big Woods”; Christopher Hartley, “‘And Not One Word More’: Ritual and Catholicism in the Writing of Graham Greene and Ernest Hemingway”; and Dennis C. Winter, “Playing (with Hemingway’s Fiction) in the Dark: Morrison on Hemingway.” In addition four panelists—Jane Massey Dionne, Soma Mitra, Anne Mooney, Aaron Zeidman—offered reflections on the Hemingway Centennial and key critical issues in Hemingway studies. All of these graduate student presentations offered important insights and fresh scholarly and critical readings of Hemingway’s *oeuvre*.

Valerie Hemingway, the keynote speaker, and the visiting panel of the nation's leading Hemingway scholars (see below) participated in the lively discussion session that followed the graduate student presentations. Our distinguished visiting speakers praised the "extraordinary quality" of the papers by our graduate students—"far better," it was said, than what they had been hearing at national and international conferences, and better than the work of doctoral candidates in leading Ph.D. programs around the country.

Valerie Hemingway's keynote address, "Grace Under Millennial Pressure: Hemingway for the Twenty-First Century," delivered to a standing-room-only audience that overflowed into the hallway, offered a compelling portrait of Hemingway, the man and the writer. Drawing on her friendship with Hemingway in his last years, and on her experience as his private secretary and, after his death, the organizer of his papers, Valerie combined precision and passion in her address. Under both rubrics, she provided new information and interpretation likely to have important implications in Hemingway studies. We are pleased to be able to publish here, with her gracious permission, both Valerie Hemingway's keynote address and the transcript of the discussion session which followed (which also contains valuable new information for Hemingway scholars and readers).

After the keynote address, a panel discussion featuring no less than *seven* of the nation's—indeed the world's—leading Hemingway scholars was the concluding event of the symposium. Richard Allan Davison (University of Delaware), Robin Gajdusek (San Francisco State University), Robert W. Lewis (University of North Dakota), Allen Josephs (University of West Florida), Linda P. Miller (Penn State University), Donald Junkins (University of Massachusetts) and H.R. Stoneback (SUNY New Paltz) offered brief formal reflections on the Hemingway Centennial and why Hemingway matters for the next millennium. The distinguished panelists closed the symposium with engaging discussion and moving meditations on the Matter of Hemingway. As someone remarked, during this session the panelists at the front of the room embodied more than 200 years of critical acumen and cutting-edge scholarship in Hemingway studies. As one graduate student observed, "the history of Hemingway scholarship is here in this room." (With two past presidents of the Hemingway Society present, with five members of the Board of Directors of the Hemingway Foundation present, with the editor of the leading journal in Hemingway studies present, with a combined bibliography longer than the Wallkill River represented on stage, it would be hard to argue with that observation.) Equally significant was the response of several of the visiting scholars, commenting on the work of our graduate students:

“And the future of Hemingway scholarship is in this room.” Due to the chrono-geographics serendipity of events, with the International Hemingway Centennial Celebration at the John F. Kennedy Library immediately before our symposium, and thanks to the generosity of these visiting scholars, we were able to present this extraordinary panel, which truly put the New Paltz Hemingway Centennial Symposium on the international map of major centennial events. And we are pleased to publish here the brief formal presentations by our panelists.

In sum, after a very full and rich two-day program of events, with a total attendance of well over 200, another highly successful graduate symposium came to an end late in the evening. We express our gratitude to all who worked to make the symposium a success, including the English TAs and graduate student publicity and refreshment committees, and the College Foundation for its support; and we especially thank William Vasse who supported the symposium for many years and, before his retirement in 1999, annualized the budget for the Graduate English Symposium, thus ensuring continued support for one of the most enriching and longest-running annual events on the campus. Above all, we express our gratitude and admiration for the work and presence of our TAs and graduate students—they were, are, and will continue to be the *raison d'être*, the vital center, of our annual symposium.

H. R. Stoneback

PART ONE: KEYNOTE SPEAKER

## Grace Under Millennial Pressure:

### Hemingway for the Twenty-First Century

VALERIE HEMINGWAY

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Once there was a traveler who journeyed alone to the Grand Canyon. He came to the brink just as the day died, and the slow mists circled upward. There he stood and looked. And there came, from behind him, the sound of footsteps—large, firm steps dealt by the accustomed feet of a lady tourist. She gained his side and stopped there, radiating native friendliness and good cheer provided by Fred Harvey. She, too, looked. And woman's world-old need of speech seized her, and seemed as if it would rack her very tweeds apart. "Well!" she said. "it certainly is attractive."

And I feel, my friends—for I think of every one of you gathered here tonight as my friend, and I want you to think of me that way too!—I feel not unlike that good lady of the Canyon when I am asked by this hospitable [group] to speak a few words about Ernest Hemingway. Well! He certainly is attractive.

For it is so neat in my mind that the author of *In Our Time*, *Men Without Women* and *A Farewell to Arms* is far and away the first American artist, that it is the devil's own task for find anything more complicated or necessary to say about him.

I could have written these words for you, but Dorothy Parker beat me to it in her 1929 *New Yorker* profile of Ernest Hemingway. I came across this piece while searching for the origin of the phrase "grace under pressure." What is so extraordinary about Parker's piece written when Hemingway was thirty was that it was just as true when he was sixty when I first met him, and I would say that it is equally true today on the eve of his hundredth birthday.

I am not a scholar. So what you are going to hear is something of a stream of consciousness from one who has had a longtime association with the writer and his works, but who is in every sense of the word a lay person.

When Professor Stoneback told me the title of this symposium, I had quite a time curling the phrase around my tongue: Grace Under Millennial Pressure. It set me to thinking about titles in general and names in particular. Hemingway had a great fondness for names. He acquired a number of nicknames and aliases in his life before he finally settled upon Papa. If you go through the *Selected Letters*, you will find "Hem," "Hemmy," "Hemmingstein," "Stein," "Steen," "Oin," "Wemedge" and, to Scott Fitzgerald, "Ernest-Christ-what-a-name." From 1943 on, "Papa" was what most of his intimates called him, including his last wife, Mary.

This preferred epithet suggests a kindly protector: affectionate, commanding respect, exuding authority, begging for tolerance. I think it was well suited to his temperament. He was a born leader and teacher and a maverick. He was a serious person, an authoritative figure, and yet he could also be a very bad boy. The name Papa suggest kinship, deep affection, a lack of criticism. While we might wish they were different, we tend to accept and love our parents for what they are. This, anyway, is my estimation. On the other hand, Hemingway's biographer Carlos Baker sees it differently. He makes much of Ernest's increasing pleasure in the role of Papa, starting in 1943. Of course, Ernest had been Papa for years before to his children, and even Martha Gellhorn, his third wife, sometimes referred to him by that name. Baker writes: "Some friends thought the use of the name brought out the less admirable traits in his character, not least his curious liking for obsequious behavior among those who basked in his ambience."

However this might be, the name stuck, and when I met him in 1959, Papa he was to those around him. The appellation seemed awkward to me, too familiar for a newcomer, perhaps a little juvenile. I knew he disliked Ernest, and Mr. Hemingway was equally unacceptable from one in his immediate circle. I thought I was doing a very good job by avoiding the use of any form of address until one day after I had been working for him for about two months, quite out of the blue, Hemingway said to me, "What would you call me in an emergency?"

I don't know the answer to that. It was never put to the test. What would anyone do in an emergency? How we behave in an emergency denotes whether or not we act with "grace under pressure." That is the essence of the phrase. For the most part, I don't think it can be determined until the moment of truth arrives. At least that's what I have found in my own life. I have been surprised—sometimes sadly, sometimes happily—at my reactions in a moment of crisis. Now, I always associated Hemingway's use of the phrase "grace under pressure" with bullfighting. Perhaps because I had heard Ernest describe Antonio Ordoñez's performance in the bullring as the supreme example of grace under pressure.

I wondered if the origin of the phrase came from *Death in the Afternoon*. A little probing showed me that it was first documented in an April 1926 letter to F. Scott Fitzgerald, where Hemingway writes:

It makes no difference your telling G[erald] Murphy about bull fighting statement except will be careful about making such statements. Was not referring to guts but to something else. Grace under pressure.

It was the footnote to this letter which sent me to Dorothy Parker's profile. I did not find what Parker had to say about grace under pressure illuminating, because

it contradicts the letter quoted above, but it does show that the phrase and Hemingway were becoming partners.

My personal recollection of the use of the phrase, as I have mentioned, is that it was applied to bullfighting and in particular to the art of Antonio Ordoñez. I had the good fortune to work for Hemingway in Spain in 1959 when he was preparing the material for what became *The Dangerous Summer* and the next year in Cuba while he was writing that book. So I was able to observe both sides of the writing process: the gathering of the material and the spinning of the tale.

I'm sure that each writer has a *modus operandi*, but it surprised me greatly to what extent the realities of life played a part in Hemingway's writing. He was fond of saying, "Write what you know about best." The depth of his writing bears out that he practiced this maxim. If the subject was bullfighting, then all aspects of the *corrida* were placed under scrutiny: the weather, the locus, the lineage of the bulls, their size, the shape and length of their horns, their present disposition. Then the matadors: their lineage and history in the bullring, their luck in the drawing of the bulls, in their placement on the cartel, how they appeared on that particular day in their lives. All this was seriously studied on each day before the *corrida* took place. Nothing was taken for granted or left to chance. Speculation was one thing, but with aforeknowledge and preparation, each action in the *plaza de toros* was meaningful and could be evaluated with the judgment of an expert.

Keen observation was a habit, almost a reflex with Hemingway. He used it in other aspects of his life besides writing. When I lived at the Finca Vigía in Cuba in 1960, I saw him apply it to our many Sunday afternoons at the cockfights, to the Friday night boxing matches, which we watched on the television in the kitchen pantry where the staff were invited to join in the betting pool. And I saw it again each week as we prepared to go fishing on the Gulf Stream in his beloved boat, *Pilar*.

Grace under pressure when applied to a skill or a sport can be a splendid thing. When a person comes in contact with danger, and in the case of bullfighting that danger can mean death almost every day of his life, there is a chance to develop a knack or at least a tolerance for dealing with it. But when it comes to randomness, that is, in the course of one's personal life, displaying grace under pressure is a completely different matter. There were many times during the short period I knew him that Ernest exhibited fury and was less than gallant. Bluntly, under unforeseen pressure he could behave like a detonated time bomb. For instance, in Pamplona in 1959 when he learned that the film producer, David Selznick was nearby, Ernest was prepared to find him and do

unmentionable things to his person because he held Selznick responsible for what he considered Paramount's abominable job with the movie of *A Farewell to Arms* (never mind that this took place 27 years before). On top of which, Ernest held a grievance because he had sold the novel outright to Hollywood for fifty grand, and they had realized that amount over and over again. That same week in Pamplona his demeanor was less than graceful when Mary broke her toe on the slippery stones of the riverbed while we were picnicking on the banks of the Irati river between bullfights.

Sometimes people ask me, "What was Hemingway like?" There is no simple answer to that. It is easier to say what he was unlike, that is unlike anyone I have ever met before or since. He was not a type; he was atypical. I think the only value in knowing about a writer's or artist's life is in how it illuminates their work. How it makes their work more meaningful for us. The writing is what's important. Hemingway realized that very early on and never let it out of his sight. In a way, his life was an understudy of his work.

This was brought very much to my mind in my recent reading of the edited version of what is now called *True at First Light*. I went to Cuba in 1961 with Mary. I went with her to the bank in Havana and recovered the manuscripts that were in the vault there. We brought them back to the United States, and for the next four years I worked sorting and classifying the papers in my office on the tenth floor of the Scribner building on Fifth Avenue. It was during that period that I read the African journal for the first time. What struck me then, and even more so now, is that the life and work are so much a part of the same thing. People will ask, "Is it truth or is it fiction?" I reply, "does it matter?" It is neither. It is literature.

It was curious to note that Parker touched upon the same question of what Hemingway was like. But she went one step further. She wrote:

Questioners, in my experience, never conclude with the "What's he *like*?" number. There is always one more interrogation, put in a delicately lowered, and yet lightly rippling, voice. "Does he," it runs, "does he talk like he writes?" Yes, he does talk like he writes. In fact, liker.

This vividly brings to my mind that other profile of Hemingway in the *New Yorker*, this one twenty years later in 1950 written by Lillian Ross. Great umbrage was taken on Ernest's behalf by friends and family because Ross's indiscriminate reporting of Ernest's speech pattern made him sound like a parody of his own writing. I can't say how Hemingway felt about it in 1950, but ten years later that essay was one of the first things he gave me to read after I arrived in Cuba. Then, he clearly enjoyed what Ross had written. Perhaps he considered it

a private joke. Secrets and jokes were very much a part of his private life. He was not bothered that people might think him a buffoon, because he knew that the good stuff would always be recognized by the right people and that was what mattered.

For my personal celebration of this Hemingway centennial, I returned to Cuba a month ago after an absence of thirty-eight years. I spent three days at the Finca Vigía, now Museo Ernest Hemingway, and found it in many ways unchanged from when I last saw it. That was in August of 1961, one month after Hemingway died by his own hand, a fact that Mary still could not bring herself to accept. Before we left, she and I packed up all the manuscripts and letters, we had the paintings crated, together with a quantity of silver and china. We had created a grand bonfire and burnt a number of items including some letters, as requested in Ernest's will. Castro had come to the Finca personally to discuss the disposition of the property. It was Mary's wish that her home and Ernest's be used by the Cuban people, she suggested, as an education center because of the extensive library, or as a museum. Castro accepted her proposal, telling her that she would always be welcome, she would have a home there whenever she returned to Cuba.

It was not to be for Mary, although she did make a brief visit back to Cuba in 1977. I never imagined that I would return to the house which held so many memories for me. In life it is not possible to go back, only forward. What impressed me about that recent trip to Cuba was how much the spirit of Hemingway still lives. The poor man's Papa is visible at every turn. Hemingway is a veritable tourist industry; the Ruta Hemingway, a must for every foreign visitor, takes the tourist to all the Hemingway haunts, real and imagined, in the course of a day. The Floridita bar can and does extract six U.S. dollars for a daiquiri, simply because Hemingway drank there, whereas an unpatronized bar will charge two dollars. Think of the enormity of this in a country where the average monthly wage, I am told, is the equivalent of thirteen U.S. dollars.

The home of Pilar's mate, Gregorio Fuentes, is a veritable shrine, where pilgrims stop to pay homage and for a mere five dollars U.S. can take a picture of the man who is now venerated as the model for both Santiago in *The Old Man and the Sea* and the boy, Manolin. (Could the latter be because at 101 years old he is reaching his second childhood?) Nobody bothers to calculate that Gregorio, a mere year older than Ernest, was his contemporary, and far from an old man at the time of the writing. He has, however, grown into the part, and no fisherman in the whole of Cojimar, his village where *Pilar* was docked for so many years, would dispute Gregorio's claim.

All of this fanfare could be very distasteful, what Ernest would call “ballroom bananas,” were it not for the fact that the people actually know that Hemingway was a writer. Indeed, many of them have read his books. Hallelujah! Paradoxically, the books are not generally available in bookstores, So I tested the first taxi driver who started telling me the places I should visit that were associated with Hemingway. “What did he do,” I asked. “He was a writer.” “What did he write?” “*The Old Man and the Sea, Islands in the Stream, For Whom the Bell Tolls.*” (All of these titles have associations with Cuba.) “Have you read his books?” “Oh yes.” “Where did you get them?” “I read them in school, I take them out of the library now.” Those were the answers.

Someone from the Ministry of Culture told me that Hemingway is required reading in the schools, that his works are used as a model for teaching young people how to write. When I spent a couple of hours talking with the staff of the Museo Hemingway, I was delighted with the depth of their knowledge both of the man and the works and with the perceptiveness of their questions. These people were genuinely interested in Hemingway the writer. I am not oblivious to the political overtones, to the use of Hemingway as a tool of the revolution. But I think time will prove that the power of the writing transcends manipulation.

I recently interviewed Patrick Hemingway for the French magazine, *VSD*. When I asked him to evaluate his father’s place in 20th-century literature, this was his reply:

This century has seen the golden age of American literature. There was Faulkner, then Fitzgerald, and my father. Certainly I know now that he was a much better writer than I realized for most of my life. As I grow older I am amazed that he was so wise at such a young age. How do you go on living with the torture of trying to outdo yourself when you have succeeded so early? What does the rest of your life hold for you? I would say that Hemingway is the equivalent of Picasso in painting. Literature has a very long tail. Everything is interconnected. *The Garden of Eden* is another version of Kipling’s story, *The Light that Failed*. It is the same thing with painting and music. Every two notes in music remind you of two other notes. It is an insuperable challenge to rise above what has been done and create something new, create something that is not an imitation of past achievements. I think Picasso did this in painting and my father has done it in writing.

Well, there you have it. Thank you very much.

## Discussion Session:

### Q & A with Valerie Hemingway

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EDITORIAL NOTE: After Valerie Hemingway's keynote address, a lively question-and-answer session followed. Moderated by H.R. Stoneback, with questions from the general audience, our graduate students, and the visiting Hemingway scholars, this session revealed certain information—potentially of great significance in Hemingway scholarship—for the first time (e.g., see following re: *A Moveable Feast*). A note on the following transcription: in spite of repeated examination of session tapes, some exchanges remained unclear and are here indicated by ellipses. Bracketed information is supplied where clarification is necessary. Grateful acknowledgments are due to Sparrow Stoneback, who listened to the material over and over, day after day, to produce this transcription. —H. R. S

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Question: What's your favorite Hemingway work?

Valerie Hemingway: I tend to go in moods and I do this with all literature. You know before the conference in Provence last year ["VIII International Hemingway Conference: Hemingway in Provence" directed by H. R. Stoneback, at which Valerie Hemingway was a keynote speaker] I read *The Garden of Eden*. I think the whole purpose of reading is that it relates to the life that you're living or it draws you out of the dullness of your own life. So I love *For Whom the Bell Tolls* but that's because I have a strong attachment to Spain. It varies. There are a number of short stories...but it depends on my mood.

Q: Tell us something about literary forecasting. How do you think *True at First Light* is going to affect our picture of Hemingway? [At the time of the conference, *True at First Light*, Hemingway's "last" work to be posthumously edited and published, had not yet been released. Eagerly awaited and much discussed in national popular and literary media, *True at First Light* was being hyped in some quarters as the "last great literary event" of the millennium, in others as a grave offense to the literary legacy of Hemingway.]

VH: I don't think it's going to take away anything. Let me put it that way. First of all, he is a superb writer. As somebody I was talking to the other day—I won't mention the name, but this critic was talking about the Joan Didion piece—did you read that in *The New Yorker* a few months ago? And this person said: "How dare Joan Didion speak like this? The best thing she ever wrote is much worse than the worst thing Hemingway ever wrote..." Everything Hemingway writes

is interesting. I was going to say good. It's good to an extent, but we value things against other things, and so what we will value *True at First Light* against or evaluate it against is what he has already written. But it will certainly add to the body of work. It won't surpass anything, but it's nothing to be ashamed of.

Q: What was Hemingway like?

VH: I think I've already answered that.

Q: About the paintings that were taken out of the house in Cuba—were there any specific artists whose names we would know?

VH: One—Miro's "The Farm." That was on loan to the Museum of Modern Art... [Other paintings mentioned, unintelligible on tape, but include several by Masson.]

Q: Valerie, I think it's in Norberto's book [Norberto Fuentes, *Hemingway in Cuba*] that he thinks he remembers a vast burning of letters at the time you were back there with Mary. Do you remember that at all?

VH: Well, it was so very fanciful in Norberto because there was the staff of the house and there was Mary and I think Roberto and myself and you know... Norberto did come to visit us in 1960, but he was not there in 1961. He later denied it probably because of that—the letters which I mentioned—because it comes up a lot that there were a number of letters which were written and unsent letters. Hemingway had specifically said: "I want these letters burned or destroyed."

Q: Written but unsent letters? They were all in that category?

VH: The ones that were burned, yes.

Q: He spoke of many saints in his work—who was his favorite?

VH: I don't know that I can say who was his favorite because, you know, he lived in Latin countries where saints are very much a part of the culture. And to be honest, I'm trying to think—normally if you lose something you ask St. Anthony to come up with it...

Q: He gave his Nobel Prize Medal to the Virgin of Cobre [to her shrine outside of Santiago de Cuba]...

VH: But you know, I don't know if that was his devotion to the Virgin or if it was more to the Cuban people.

Q (Allen Josephs): I'm very interested in the Picasso-Hemingway connection. Patrick Hemingway said a long time ago that his father's style was like Cubist style and that's undeniable. I think the vignettes particularly from *In Our Time* and certainly other things are Cubist in construction in the same way. But to me the Picasso that is most like the Hemingway that is most like Picasso is *Les Femmes d'Alger* because *Les Femmes d'Alger* is to the style of painting the same sort of explosion that the early Hemingway style was...A kind of antirhetorical stance. Both Picasso and Hemingway were dismantlers of Western illusion. Did Patrick say any more about that or do you have any thoughts you would like to add?

VH: He said that Picasso had invented Cubism, and then he sort of retreated a little bit and said he was *one* of the inventors. He only made the reference in terms that they had both created and that they were not copying others. But I think that Ernest was passionately interested in painting, and he always said if he had not been a writer he would have loved to have been a painter. There's always that little thing where you wish you were something else. We went to many art galleries—The Prado, The Louvre, others. He just loved to study the paintings and he sort of, in his mind, transferred that. Now, I have to say that when I knew him there could have been a parallel between the two artists. But he did not consciously try to emulate Picasso...Ernest was very competitive.

Q (AJ): We know a lot about Cézanne and Hemingway, but nobody really talks very much about Hemingway and Picasso. It seems to me the spirit of *Les Femmes d'Alger* and the spirit from there on in Picasso up into the 1930s—he is constantly repainting the entire history of art. He's going back to older forms and particularly he's going to fetishism and tribalism and what you might call primitive art, and I think Hemingway did the same thing in his writing style. He went back to Ecclesiastes, to the Book of Common Prayer, to the King James, etc., and his stylistic revolution comes not from his immediate predecessors at all. Not from Gertrude Stein—I'm getting really tired of hearing that. Far more from Ezra Pound, James Joyce, than Gertrude Stein. But really it comes from going back to these older styles and bringing them into a kind of new focus. And I think Picasso was doing the same thing. In other words, I think maybe Hemingway was having a dialogue with literature which was somehow analogous to the dialogue with painting and the history of painting that Picasso was having.

VH: I certainly wouldn't quarrel with you.

AJ: Professor Stoneback probably would.

HRS: Not too much—I would accept your Picasso-proposition or thesis if it were stated in this way: Hemingway learned to write, as he said, from looking at Cezanne. And maybe looking at Picasso helped him to keep on writing and making it new.

Q: I want to know how and why you sought Hemingway out. How did that happen?

VH: In fact I didn't know very much about him. I'd grown up in Ireland. I'd read a few of his books—I'd read a lot of books. That was my interest. But I knew nothing about his life or that he was such an important figure in American literature, because he wasn't in Ireland. In fact, one of the books that I read, *The Sun Also Rises* or *Fiesta*, came out in England but was banned in Ireland and that was why I read it. Then I was sent to interview him and we got on. We got on extremely well, and because he had an interest in Ireland, I was able to tell him what was going on in literature there at the time. And he was one of those people that always wanted to know more about you than you did about him. I mean, he would practically turn the interview around. So we talked about Joyce, and Joyce's *Ulysses* was banned in Ireland, but I had gone over to England when I was sixteen, and the thing I brought back that I had to hide was *Ulysses*. I had read that, so we got along famously, and then he said would I come to Pamplona in July, so I said yes because at the time it seemed like a great idea. It was early in May when I met him and other things came into my life, and so Pamplona wasn't on my list. I moved my digs and I was going by my old flat, and the concierge came out and waved me down and said I have a couple of letters for you. These letters had been there for a couple of weeks. And they were from the man who was doing business for Hemingway—buying bullfight tickets, setting up all his appointments. The letters said we're expecting you in Pamplona and we've made these reservations and we're getting bullfight tickets and you must let us know by a certain date if you can't come because these are so hard to come by. And so that date had gone by, but the second letter said we're so delighted you are coming. So it was just fate, not something I looked for.

Q: Why do you think that so much negative criticism of Hemingway is so intensely personal? Why can't these negative critics separate the personal from the fiction?

VH: I think part of it is our world today because it's a two-edged sword. Through publicity people are read. Unfortunately, there are some wonderful writers who

just don't get their books sold because you never hear anything about them. On the other hand, you get this publicity that takes away from the writing and I think people—well, it's a laziness in one way rather than just concentrating on the writing. It's so much easier to talk about the gossip and the exploits and the other stuff. I worked for years in publicity, so I know exactly what we do to authors. Wonderful authors like Tennessee Williams and marvelous people who were terrific to talk about and exploit.

Q: From a writer's standpoint, did Hemingway ever get writer's block? Did he have habits or activities that would give him inspiration?

VH: I'm sure he did get writer's block...This was a very personal and solitary trade that he engaged in. But he worked every day—every day that I knew him. Even though we had some wild times out late at night, he was always working the next morning. He was a serious writer and a serious person. The thing that he always said, and I think it's a very good thing to follow, is that he always stopped when he was going well. If he got writer's block, if he got stuck, he would keep going even if it meant he worked another hour. Because he always left his writing at a point where he knew the next day he could go on. When he got going—the juices flowing—that's when he cut off. It wasn't quite in mid-sentence like Graham Greene.

Q: Joyce has come up twice now. Did Hemingway ever articulate the influence of *Ulysses* on his own technique?

VH: No, I knew him in his last years. He didn't really talk about technique in terms of his technique. It is as if that were already established. But he greatly admired Joyce, and he had certainly read him and knew him as a friend. But I don't recall him saying that so and so influenced him, other than painters. He was able to take that angle. That was not his parlance—he didn't talk that way—but he read incredibly. He must have read three or four books every week. I'm sure he was influenced in all different ways. But I think that at that time he pretty much felt established. So perhaps at an earlier age he might have said some particular writer had influenced him.

Q: Maybe one main point here is that scholars and critics should not meddle in...and misconstrue, in particular, the unpublished Hemingway manuscripts...[such as the latest one, *True at First Light*] that he evidently did not want published. Did you ever hear him talk about that? Or object to that and how do you feel about that yourself?

VH: Joan Didion! Whatever anyone else might say, I think he would have agreed with her on that, and I think he was the sort of person where his work was very much a part of himself, and he would not want anything published that he had not had the last word on. He would not want other people editing and tampering with his work. I'm just saying, the way I knew him, that is my feeling about it. On the other hand, it's a hard question...For example, throughout the years he said he did not want his letters published. He made that very explicit. I was quite horrified when Mary [Hemingway] told me that she was going to have the letters published. On the other hand, people have had tremendous pleasure, interest, and knowledge accumulated from reading these letters, and I even quoted them myself tonight.

Q: [question unintelligible]

VH: Years ago, I certainly would have said, if I had been asked: No, I think his wishes should be respected and nothing should be published. I can't really say now. I enjoyed *The Garden of Eden*, so it would be a bit hypocritical to say it shouldn't have been published. That could be a question for a long conversation.

Q: Could you give us some specifics of your involvement with *A Moveable Feast*?

VH: *A Moveable Feast*. I probably first saw it in Cuba in 1960. He had pretty much got it together where he thought it should be. It had already been to...his editor at Scribners. Anyway, he thought it was just about finished. He was tying up some details. He was quite pleased with it. I typed up all those chapters. That was one of the things I did...He would write these little notes...[for example, one note read] "Paris Book Val please type in at the top of first page 'It was easy to decide that you would never do any more newspaper work but it was hard to eat regularly.'" During the day he would accumulate these little notes and then he would give them to me and say include this or include that.

Q: So were they very frequent?

VH: Well, something would occur to him and if it occurred to him in the middle of the day, he would just make a note of it then and there.

Q: Are they in the JFK? [The Hemingway Collection at the Kennedy Library]

VH: Not the notes he gave me. I have those.

HRS: This is very interesting news. But we have time for just one last question.

Q: Several times in Boston [at the Kennedy Library Centennial Conference] this business came up about the trunk at the Ritz and how much stuff [for *A Moveable Feast*] was written in the 1920s and how much was written in the 1950s. Since you were working intimately with that manuscript, could you give us your sense of it?

VH: To be honest, I don't think anything was written in the 1920s. He might have made some notes at that time...he wrote every day of his life and some of you have seen the papers at the Kennedy. He wrote generally pertaining to what was going on, and often he threw in a different name if he didn't want to name names. And later he developed some of this into novels, so you get this type of thing: is it fiction or is it fact? What is it? But he told me, and I have no reason to disbelieve him, that he started *A Moveable Feast* after the crashes in Africa. When he came home—his back was very bad and he couldn't move around a lot—this sort of brush with death... [led him to think] about Paris in the 1920s, and he thought he wanted to put it down then. I've no proof that is exactly what he did, but there's no reason he would have told me that if it weren't true.

Q: You never saw any material, any notebooks from the 1920s?

VH: From the 1920s, no. And I pretty much saw everything.

HRS: Thank you very much, Valerie. I think there are already some important scholarly articles in progress—as we speak—based on some things you've said here tonight that have never been heard before. I'm sure everyone will remember to say that they heard it first at New Paltz. Thank you everyone, thank you Valerie.

[applause: standing ovation]

PART TWO: DISTINGUISHED GUEST PANELISTS

**Reading Hemingway:**

Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow

RICHARD ALLAN DAVISON, University of Delaware

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It was in Saintes-Maries-de-la-Mer that I first confessed that I was the same age as Holden Caulfield and Donald Duck. (I recently learned that Flash Gordon is in our slowly shrinking club).

And age has some advantages—it gives me a memory (when it's working) of Hemingway before the Hemingway Industry took over, a memory of reading Hemingway before his Nobel Prize, reading him with fewer preconceptions of others than one is inundated by today.

In 1952 there were only five books on Hemingway (and two of them were edited collections). By 1975 there were eighty-four. At Middlebury College in 1952, Hemingway was yet to be taught in the English department. The professors stopped at Eliot and Frost. (Frost qualified because he lived less than seven miles away.) I read Hemingway on my own; that's the best way to read him first. Grab his books and go away and hide with them and read them all by yourself. *Then* talk about them. Too many people talk about Hemingway before they have read him.

In 1956 at the University of Rochester the great Melville scholar William H. Gilman assigned Hemingway to his undergraduates. He taught a graduate seminar in Melville. There was no graduate course on Hemingway. When I arrived at the University of Rochester that year, secondary criticism had become more fashionable to many than the primary literature. Most of the other graduate students knew about *PMLA* et al, but I knew the literature. Two months later I had learned my way around scholarly journals, but many of the students still did not know the literature. Know the literature and know it first. If you read it at a young enough age, you'll always have it with you.

When you read the critics, or become one, avoid the hobby-horsism of riding one critical approach to the tunnel-vision exclusion of other approaches, whether it be Marxist, Feminist, Mythic, Freudian, Jungian, Post Post Modernist, Post Deconstructionist, New Historicist or, yes, even New Critical. Use the best of the best approaches with common sense. The best articles and books use an amalgam of approaches to discover something about the *literature*. Nowadays, jargon seems to be growing along with nouns, now verbs. Teachers

“conference”; scholars “foreground” and “privilege.” There’s the signifying signifier which signifies—? To achieve all the components of their mutual agenda *vis-à-vis* the ideological trope of closure in post destructive post post modernism, scholars must be holistically simultaneous in order to empower the preformability of their ideologically and politically correct adherence to Neo-Marxist, gender-conscious modular paradigms. During the last thirty years or so, we have become inundated by the “isms” of criticism, by critics who take up one “ism” and live through their thesis-driven essays with it. We recall the dangers Sherwood Anderson warned against in his “The Book of the Grotesque” preface to *Winesberg, Ohio*:

It was his notion that the moment one of the people took one of the truths to himself, called it his truth, and tried to live his life by it [i.e., try to read Hemingway by it], he became a grotesque and the truth he embraced became falsehood... It was the young thing inside him that saved the old man.

Too many critics read other critics more thoroughly than they read Hemingway. Forget or stay away from these critics. Read Hemingway.

I wrote my first article on Hemingway over thirty years ago on Hemingway’s use of the poem “Western Wind” in Frederic Henry’s dream sequence in *A Farewell To Arms*. Caught in a road jam amidst the retreat at Caporetto, Frederic falls asleep and has a dream of Catherine Barkley: he is soothed for a time by echoes of Tennyson’s “The Princess,” a child’s bedtime prayer, and the haunting Medieval lyric “Western Wind,” literary allusions gracefully emanating from the sensuous sounds and rhythms of the stream-of-consciousness riff:

Western Wind, when wilt thou blow  
That the small rain down can rain.  
Christ, that my love were in my arms  
And I in my bed again.’

Now I lay me down to sleep,  
I pray the Lord my soul to keep.  
But If I die before I wake,  
I pray the lord my soul to take.

Sweet and low, sweet and low,  
wind of the western sea...  
Low, low, breathe and blow  
Wind of the Western sea!  
Over the rolling waters go.  
Come from the dying moon and blow,  
Blow him again to me.

While my little one, while my pretty one, sleeps...  
 Sleep, my little one, sleep, my pretty one, sleep.

These are how the three poems are echoed and re-echoed in Frederic's mind:

The column of vehicles did not move but the troops kept passing alongside. It was still raining hard and I thought some of the stops in the movement of the column might be from cars with wet wiring. More likely they were from horses or men going to sleep. Still, traffic could tie up in cities when every one was awake. It was the combination of horse and motor vehicles. They did not help each other any. The peasants' carts did not help much either. Those were a couple of fine girls with Barto. A retreat was no place for two virgins. Real virgins. Probably very religious. If there were no war we would probably all be in bed. In bed I lay me down my head. Bed and board. Stiff as a board in bed. Catherine was in bed now between two sheets, over her and under her. Which side did she sleep on? Maybe she wasn't asleep. Maybe she was lying thinking about me. Blow, blow, ye western wind. Well, it blew and it wasn't the small rain but the big rain down that rained. It rained all night. You knew it rained down that rained. Look at it. Christ, that my love were in my arms and I in my bed again. That my love Catherine. That my sweet love Catherine down might rain. Blow her again to me. Well, we were in it. Every one was caught in it and the small rain would not quiet it. "Good-night! Catherine," I said out loud. "I hope you sleep well. If it's too uncomfortable, darling, lie on the other side?" I said. "I'll get you some cold water. In a little while it will be morning and then it won't be so bad. I'm sorry he makes you so uncomfortable. Try and go to sleep, sweet."

I was asleep all the time, she said. You've been talking in your sleep. Are you a all right?

Are you really there?

Of course I'm here. I wouldn't go way. This doesn't make any difference between us.

You're so lovely and sweet. You wouldn't go away in the night, would you?

Of course I wouldn't go away. I'm always here. I come whenever you want me.

"—," Piani said. "They've started again?"

Not long before I savored this brilliantly crafted passage, I had read Wyndham Lewis's "The Dumb Ox: A Study of Ernest Hemingway," in which he declared Hemingway's heroes and (by association) Hemingway himself "in contrast to those who have executive will and intelligence." This became the rallying cry for what has been called the Dumb Ox School of Hemingway criticism. This school was attended by and continues to be attended by many who read more about Hemingway than by Hemingway. One who reads Hemingway

attentively, with a literary sensitivity, can hardly conclude that Frederic, for instance, and Hemingway's other great heroes lack intelligence.

When Polonius asks Hamlet "What do you read, my lord?" Hamlet answers: "Words, words, words." In the next millennium we must continue to read Hemingway's words. And what we write should provide a deeper appreciation of those words.

# Project for the Hemingway Centennial Year:

## The Reconstitution of the Legend of Ernest Hemingway

ROBIN GAJDUSEK, San Francisco State University

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Hemingway once told Fanny Butcher that he most often deliberately wrote about fifty years ahead of his time. If that is true, we are indeed delinquent, for in this 75th year since the composition of his first novel, *The Sun Also Rises*, not only the general reading public but the vast array of so-called Hemingway scholars have yet to prove to me their recognition of its deep structures, its many hidden patterns, its great variety of in-jokes, its complexity, and its remarkable humanity. The *bandillera* placed in him by Wyndham Lewis, of being “the dumb ox,” spirited but unintellectual, seems to have remarkably slowed not him but his readers, his critics—certainly never the great elusive stylist, who went on throughout his career and until the end writing, as he said he would be forced to, for a yet unreached posterity. His intricate multi-leveled and profound structures become increasingly intellectually delightful and rigorously complex, aimed at an audience no longer as sensitive as the one of elite contemporaries for whom he wrote in the Paris of the 1920s—Joyce and Pound and Ford and Tate and MacLeish and Stein and Fitzgerald and Barnes—so that we still have no accurate readership for *Green Hills*, for *Across the River*, or even for *To Have and Have Not*. As Jackson Benson noted, we readily accord to Joyce a kind of profound reading attention we have never accorded the *equally* deserving profound modernist texts of Hemingway. It is impossible to read among his selected letters of the 1930s without being well aware of how the banality of his interpretation and its frequent viciousness often drove him suicidally towards despair. We seem to have become too egalitarian a society, and we resist having to deal with his genius, his incomparable memory, his unusual intellectual acuity. Instead of being inflamed with admiration for specialness and spirit, we are made awkward or embarrassed for unexamined or outrageous ardour.

While Hemingway was but yet a young man in his early twenties and before he had written his first novel, Ezra Pound told Ford, “he’s the finest prose stylist in the world...He’s disciplined, too,” and Ford acknowledged, “I did not read more than six words of his before I decided to publish everything he sent me.” John Peale Bishop, on meeting Hemingway in 1922, described him as having “the most complete literary integrity it has ever been my lot to encounter.”

Allen Tate spoke of him in those early Paris years as “one of the most intelligent men I know and one of the best-read.” Samuel Putnam, who met him at that time, said of him, “No successful writer was ever less pretentious or more cordial toward others engaged in or associated with the craft.” Note how that almost unanimous note of generous recognition of a competing and even superior talent (which the 1920s could so instantly acknowledge) is scarcely to be heard again from the 1930s on, and not because his talents waned—rather they steadily increased in subtlety and power—but because we as a culture began to develop the coterie and partisan politics in criticism, the art of vilification of the uncomprehended or the intimidating, which characterize our politics generally today. In part, his subject was that loss of grace, that failure of nerve that comes over a generation of boy-men who, in their self-defensive fear, cannot empathetically and generously acknowledge their enemy’s virtues, the beauty and integrity of “the other.”

Yes, there are many ways in which he is still unread—I would not hesitate to say our most badly read writer, of whom we are, as a readership, least worthy. It speaks wonders for his craft that his other gifts—his clarity and power, the loveliness of his prose, the precision of his sight, the carefulness of his description of the subtlety in moments in nature as in conversation—readily make his living experience ours. Celebrating him for that alone, we are in homage.

# Hemingway's Legacy

ALLEN JOSEPHS, University of West Florida

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It's 9:00 P.M. on Good Friday last and a still-nearly-full moon is rising, deep yellow and baleful, through streaky clouds over Argentina's Rio Grande, deep in Tierra del Fuego, at the end of the world, in "the uttermost part of the earth," to use E. Lucas Bridges's famous phrase.

My implacable guide, Fabían Mansilla, finally relents. "Two more casts," he says somewhat ruefully. I throw the black woolly buggie against the far dark bank and begin to strip it back. Almost at once there is a heavy pull, and I set the hook three times. The fish, a sea-run brown trout, grown heavy and strong as a salmon from feeding at sea, moves steadily off downstream. My fly reel screams, the rod bends deeply, and I know this time I am hooked up. Then the line goes slack, and with a sinking feeling I realize I have lost the fifth fish in a row.

Fabían and I barely speak. I bring in the fly, examine the hook, and cast again to the far bank. The yellow moon clears the streaks of clouds and my fly swings in the current. Good Friday has let me down, I think, and I am cold and the fishing is over now. I begin to strip in the fly and, miraculously, again, there is a deep and heavy pull. This time I get the hook in solidly, and out over the water the trout explodes into the air, a cartwheeling mass of fluid silver in the golden light. When the fish hits the water, it sounds like someone has thrown in a load of lumber. Fifteen minutes later Fabian nets the fish, a silver-plated female, fresh from the sea and full of roe. We take her picture and release her to spawn. She weighs 11.5 kilos on Fabían's scales, just over 25 pounds, and we name her *la trucha de la persistencia*, the trout of persistence. At dinner I say for the fourth time in six days: "I just caught the biggest trout of my life."

When I was in school, aside from Shakespeare and *Huck Finn*, I seemed to dislike almost everything I was asked to read, preferring by far to read in fishing magazines of the exploits of Lee Wulff or Joe Brooks, who caught monstrous sea-run brown trout at the end of the world. Those trout were the stuff of dreams. Then when I was a senior in high school, I read *The Old Man and the Sea* and all that changed radically. Two worlds became one.

Several years later in Spain, I discovered the brilliant and complex world of *toro* (what we call bullfighting). I was transfixed by the fluidity and grace of the spectacle, especially as I was lucky enough that first time to see a bull so brave

that his life was spared. Not long after, I read *Death in the Afternoon* and *The Sun Also Rises*, and the combination of the beauty of *toreo*, the intensity of life in Spain, and Hemingway's writings changed my life forever.

Or did they? Looking back, I realize that I was a passionate fisherman long before I read Hemingway. And I discovered *toreo* before I read Hemingway on the subject. So it was not that I read Hemingway and was influenced by him to seek out those experiences. Quite the opposite. It was that Hemingway somehow ratified those experiences for me. He defined them, he refined them, and he described them as no one else had. But they were already mine.

Now: Why all this self-indulgence? Because I suspect I am not remotely alone when I say that Hemingway did not lead me to fishing or to *toreo* or to anything else. Rather it was fishing and *toreo* that led me to Hemingway.

One day not long after the historic Tuscaloosa Hemingway Conference in 1976, Alfred Kazin and I were walking on the beach in Pensacola and Don Alfredo, as I always called him, asked me: "Why do you like Garcia Lorca's poetry so much?"

I said, "Because it's so atavistic."

Don Alfredo snorted and replied: "All poetry is atavistic."

He was right of course, but some poets are more atavistic than others. And Hemingway is our most atavistic poet. That atavism is his truest and finest legacy. Over the years I came to understand that why I liked him so much was not simply because he wrote about fishing and *toreo*. It was because he fused writing and fishing and writing and *toreo*. He made them inseparable, the seamless intertwining of form and substance. In the process he returned us to an older and purer way of contemplating that from which we are inseparable: the natural world. Because of the sacred way—I am tempted to say the shaman's way—with which he approaches his subjects, he has become our foremost ecological writer. His modernism—the return to Ecclesiastes—was ferociously anti-modern, a legacy that will help sustain him as our most enduring writer in the coming millennium.

# Hemingway's Opening Paragraphs

DONALD JUNKINS, University of Massachusetts

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At the summer 1959 Breadloaf Writer's Conference, John Ciardi dramatized the cruciality of opening lines by describing how he rejected the weekly poetry submissions to the *Saturday Review of Literature*—lifting each from the weekly 500 submissions pile, reading the opening line as he passed it over the “possible” tray to drop it among the rejects. The poems that hovered in hand as Ciardi read the second and maybe third lines met the same fate unless he made it through to the end. From the ten or so final possibles, he could choose two small poems for publication. The point I want to make from Ciardi's poetry rejection ritual is an inverse one intended to highlight the dramatic cruciality of Hemingway's opening lines, and because it's a critical commonplace that Hemingway was writing poetry as prose (doubters see *Death in the Afternoon*), I offer the opening stanzas of three Hemingway novels.

In the first lines of *Across the River and into the Trees*, *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, and *Islands in the Stream*, archetypal nouns, series of prepositional phrases, and the sense of unexpected imminent action build contexts of undescribed but felt drama. Something tangibly significant is about to happen, and the reader is present at its inception. Here are the opening lines of *Across the River*: “They started two hours before daylight, and at first, it was not necessary to break the ice across the canal as other boats had gone on ahead.” There is a poler and a shooter, guns and decoys, a sack with live mallard hens, a dog who “shifted and shivered uneasily at the sounds of the wings of the duck that passed overhead in the darkness.” The reader feels more than what is being described in this darkness before daylight, this water journey, this hunt, for life itself is the decoy.

In the opening paragraph of *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, “He lay flat on the brown pine-needled floor of the forest”: pine trees, a gently sloping mountain side and an oiled road through a pass, a stream, a mill, a dam and falls, “white in the summer sunlight.” Archetypal nouns, prepositional rhythms, the created sense of imminent action, and a context of unspoken but felt drama. Something significant is about to happen.

In the opening lines of *Islands in the Stream*, “The house was built on the highest part of the narrow tongue of land between the harbor and the open sea.” Listen to the following nouns: three hurricanes, a ship, coconut palms, the trade winds, the bluff across the white sand, the dark blue water of the Gulf Stream,

the green light of the water over the floury white sand—and “you could see the shadow of any fish a long time before he could ever come in close to the beach.” Again archetypal nouns, prepositional rhythms, the created sense of imminent action, and a created context of unspoken but felt drama.

Hemingway’s opening stanzas/paragraphs cast the Ciardi first line poetry test in a larger craft perspective, but they also demonstrate the simple truth about Hemingway’s craft—that it pushed the beginnings of modernism beyond experimentation into the new dimension of sentence poetry.

# Hemingway at One Hundred: Saying Grace

ROBERT W. LEWIS, University of North Dakota

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Like some others here, last week I attended the Hemingway celebration at the John F. Kennedy Library. It was an unusual birthday party in that the celebrant was not there, not even in spirit, and many of the party-goers were members of some other party.

I feel more comfortable at this more intimate symposium, and I'm pretty sure Ernest Hemingway would have preferred this gathering as well. For my part, that of an only son with three sisters, I feel a kinship with the three graces—Sparrow Stoneback, Linda Miller, and Valerie Hemingway—here with us that I did not feel in Boston. But I must say that here as in Boston I now understand the Cain and Abel story on a visceral level much better.

Thank you for your hospitality and collegiality—related qualities, the former domestic, the latter academic. I'd like to comment on Hemingway and us *apropos* these virtues and to pursue the topics of this brief sermon in subsequent dialogue with you.

First, however, since, according to Elie Wiesel, God made humans because he loved stories, and we are the one creature who can tell stories, an academic story: when I was in graduate school beginning a dissertation on Hemingway, I wrote a letter to him outlining my ideas for it and asking him what he thought. I mailed it on Thursday. That Sunday he killed himself. Some of my fellow graduate students mordantly accused me of pushing Hemingway over the edge. In an ironic way, they honored our apprenticeships even as they teased me since in general we suffered from the ambivalence of having a passion for literature within the larger society (including some of our professors) that was generally indifferent to or even scornful of our devotions. (Hemingway's own distrust of academics perhaps stemmed from the same syndrome: not everyone who professes art loves or understands it.)

The point of the story (also demonstrated in Hemingway's own life): believe in stories, believe in what you are doing, the story of your own life in which, if you are lucky, you may be cast in a leading role. Have courage and probity and know who you are. Hemingway once said that the good writer needed the probity of a priest and the guts of a cat burglar. Anyone doing anything worthwhile well probably needs the same qualities.

Practicum: good academic writing has three qualities. It is based on what has previously been written on the topic. The writer should not assume in innocence or hubris that she or he is the first to write on Hemingway's beliefs or style or themes. Yet much of what passes for scholarship ignores or circumvents this basic need. Second, the writer has something original and positive to add to the dialogue emanating from the author's work. Much time and energy (and paper) are wasted every year in trivializing, regurgitating, and Hemingway bashing. If you find an author or a work weak or uninteresting, look elsewhere and hope, with Emerson, when half-gods go, the gods arrive. Work hard with humility and passion, and if your territory has already been mapped, push on beyond to original work. Third, write your contribution to the collegial dialogue as well as you can. Let the art of art rub off on you and bring your unique perspective to bear. Conversely, beware of writing in ways or on topics that may reveal more about you than about Hemingway or whatever your subject is.

So, do your homework, eschew the trivial and superficial, but be humble too, knowing that good work can be done in cameos as well as in panoramas. And with courage, honesty, and grace demonstrate that what can be written can be written well.

I first asked Stoney [Professor H.R. Stoneback] if a Jeremiad encompassing academe and particularly Hemingway studies would be appropriate for these remarks, and he said yes. And there is much to bemoan in our academic (and non-academic) culture, especially hypocrisy, incompetence, and mendacity. But I chose to listen to some of my own advice to you: Don't waste your breath so much on the bad as to build on what you see and value. And we here, together, in common, demonstrate that with grace, probity, and courage in our reading and writing and in gatherings such as these, we may continue to celebrate the old communion with art.

## “The Most Gentle and Loveliest Man...”

LINDA P. MILLER, Penn State University

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During the past two decades, I have repeatedly had to defend my reading Hemingway, that man’s writer. Although Hemingway scholarship has begun to reassess Hemingway’s supposed heroic code and machismo, the war is not over.

Recently, one of my female students talked about how reading Hemingway had caught her off guard. “Maybe because Hemingway is considered the father of modern American fiction,” she said, “I am tempted to read his work like I would read a trade novel. You can do that. All the required elements are there—love, action, adventure, intrigue, foreign locales.” But she felt “unsatisfied” and vaguely like she “was missing something” until she returned to his work again “with a more critical eye.” “I’m not sure how it happened,” she said. “I think it was a cumulative effect or a slow build up, like a locomotive that chugs along at first and then when the steam starts to build, the train is just careening down the track and all of a sudden I’m on board, and I’m turning pages and Hemingway is talking to me. So, just like one of his wild, never-ending sentences, I’m suddenly in the thick of his work and I’m starting to really like it.” Initially she found herself too “lost in misconceptions about his work-code heroes and *nada* to ever notice his style,” which is “infectious.” “Whereas before I thought his work to be masculine, raw, harsh and violent,” she concluded, “I found it on a second reading to be tender and insightful and very emotional.”

This weekend, as scholars, writers, and hangers-on gathered at Hemingway’s centennial celebration at the Kennedy Library in Boston, I stood instead at the gravesite of Honoria Murphy Donnelly, daughter of Gerald and Sara Murphy, Hemingway’s “understanding rich.” That her burial coincided with Hemingway’s celebration seemed fitting, for she too throughout her life celebrated Hemingway and believed that most people, including scholars, had gotten him wrong. Her childhood memories of Hemingway when I was with her often came by chance association, striking in their clarity and primitive purity. “I remember,” she said once, suddenly, “how Hemingway would talk out of the side of his mouth, like this.” In her favorite photograph, she and Hemingway stand against the white backdrop of Switzerland, where Honoria’s brother Patrick had been taken to fight off tuberculosis, and where Hemingway had come to visit. In the picture, she and Hemingway hold hands, look into the camera, and Hemingway is grinning. “I call this picture ‘Pals,’” Honoria would

say. She often recalled how Hemingway taught her to catch and gut a fish. Because he wanted to show her the fish's beauty, he slit it open and spread it wide, slowly pointing out and naming all its parts. In Hemingway's hands, in the morning sun, the fish's insides glistened like jewels.

Honorio's interment next to her husband in Washington's Arlington Cemetery called for a military ceremony that seemed precise, hurried, and somehow unlikely for someone who seemed like her own Renoir painting. A man in a dark red-trimmed uniform, his arms held out stiffly, carried Honorio's boxed ashes, his heels clicking, to place them on the chartreuse astro-turf rug that draped the gravesite. Throughout the short service, the square box sat there beside a single vase of flowers that tilted and then spilled midway through the Lord's Prayer. We stood in clumps among the surrounding graves, and behind us, in another part of the cemetery, the white markers of the soldiers fanned out until they floated skyward. In the gray morning air, I remembered Honorio turning to me and saying: "Hemingway was the most gentle and loveliest man I have ever known. When he came to see Patrick as he lay dying, Hemingway wept openly. It was the first time I had seen a grown man cry."

Because tenderness and passion, and not crudity or violence or exclusionary politics, inspired and sustained Hemingway's art, this essential Hemingway will sweep us into the next century to show us yet again who we are and how best to live our lives. My own love affair with the father of modern American prose will continue and thrive. I took recent comfort in Maya Angelou's confession that William Shakespeare was her "first white love." Angelou "pacified" herself about Shakespeare's whiteness by saying that "after all he had been dead so long it couldn't matter to anyone any more." Although some today persist in trying to bury Hemingway, banishing him to that authorial graveyard of dead white males, Hemingway will not go quietly. Nor should he.

# On the Syntax of the Sacred, the “Moral Severity of Hemingway’s Sentences,” and the Grammar of Greatness:

Or, Homer, Dante, Shakespeare—and Hemingway

H.R. STONEBACK, SUNY New Paltz

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The problem with going last on such a distinguished panel is that my colleagues have said nearly everything worth saying, have covered the terrain. They have eloquently answered various questions posed to the panel: 1) Why celebrate the Hemingway Centennial? 2) What kinds of grace, æsthetic, moral, spiritual etc., does Hemingway’s work give us to carry into the next century, the next millennium? They have also addressed the current state of affairs in the academic world with perspicacity, have prepared the final burial place for the rotting corpse of that academic trend so fashionable since the 1960s, that critical cadaver known as Hemingway-bashing. What is left for me to say?

I’ll begin by reading to you a greeting from an invited speaker who could not be with us here tonight, Professor Fraser Drew, Professor Emeritus at SUNY Buffalo, who published 40-some years ago his account of his visit with Hemingway in Cuba. It is, to my mind, one of the best such accounts. Professor Drew wanted to be here but he is circa 90-years-young and does not travel much any more. He sends his greetings to all Hemingway aficionados and his wish that things will be said here to counteract what he calls “the appalling trends of Hemingway-bashing.” He hopes that all students of Hemingway will be granted genuine insight to the “great writer and modest, shy, kind, generous, and devout man I was privileged to know.” Hemingway’s sons Jack and Patrick, and Hemingway’s nephew John Sanford, who had also hoped to be here as our special invited guests, also send their greetings and regrets. They were exhausted, as many of us here in this room were, by the three-day Hemingway celebration that just concluded at the John F. Kennedy Library in Boston.

Let me give a brief report on that Boston Centennial celebration. Five Nobel-Prize winning novelists and dozens of other well-known writers offered their reflections on the Hemingway Centennial. It could be said that “Grace under Millennial Pressure” was not much in evidence in some of the presentations. Some of the lesser writers, who seemed not to have read Hemingway,

posed tired questions that have long since outlived their uselessness, subjected Hemingway to the usual textual harassment, and scattered haphazardly old clichés and notions that condemned any possible response to significance. Much of this talk caused many in the audience to entertain despairing thoughts about the state of contemporary American culture. It is also reported that some of the Hemingway scholars present fled the lecture halls in dismay. At times, it was bad enough to make you want to summon an immediate emergency session of the United Nations Literary Security Council.

On the other hand, there were moving moments, compelling commentary, such as in the tributes paid to Hemingway's art by the Nobel-Prize winning Japanese writer Kenzaburo Oe, the Nobel-Prize winning Caribbean poet Derek Walcott, and the American Nobelist Saul Bellow, who remarked that when he was a young writer learning his craft he "bathed in Hemingway." Indeed, Asian and African, Afro-Caribbean and American writers of the highest rank paid eloquent tribute to Hemingway as *the model writer and stylist*, as a source of profound aesthetic and moral inspiration. And Walcott firmly placed Hemingway where he belongs—in the company of Homer, Dante, and Shakespeare. For Walcott, the "sacred" is even in the *sound* of Hemingway's prose, in the "moral severity of Hemingway's sentences." Such is the grammar of greatness, and the news from the Kennedy Library.

What else is there to say? Shall I say simply that I am convinced that the acts of truly reading, understanding, writing about, and teaching Hemingway are among the most important things we can do? Here, now, in these final hours of the bloodiest, most scandalous and outrageous century in history, we stand in grave need of what Hemingway has to teach us. His work does indeed offer vital paradigms of "Grace under Millennial Pressure," his art gives us themes and images and visions, words and style and rhythms, that can help us to hold steady today and all our tomorrows into the next millennium. All the novels and short stories offer a vision of precision and passion, of complexity and compassion, of the grammar of grace—physical, aesthetic, moral, spiritual—under the pressures of death, war, the scandal of suffering, and the problem of how to live our lives fully. My colleague Professor Josephs said a moment ago that Hemingway is "profoundly atavistic." I agree. Hemingway is one of the 20th century's most compelling avatars of atavism, in the best senses, leading his readers to reconnect with and recover lost ancestral sources and resources. Or, as I prefer to say, Hemingway is a radically spiritual writer in a radically desacralized world, and he names and proclaims the numinous, resacralizing all things great and small through his art.

If all this sounds too grand for this late hour, let me close these proceedings with Hemingway's words, the very reason why we are here celebrating the Hemingway Centennial. We are here because Hemingway tells us, in *The Sun Also Rises*, some secrets of getting to "know the values" so that we can be "always in love" and thus utterly alive, living our lives "all the way up." Because he tells us, in "The Snows of Kilimanjaro," that we can "work the fat off our souls," and because he gives us the incarnational image, in *The Old Man and the Sea*, of what it means when we say "A man can be destroyed but not defeated." Because he tells us, precisely, in "Big Two-Hearted River" how trout "hold steady" against the current, and how we can do the same, and how "satisfactory" it is to be in our home where we have made it. Because he wrote such lines as "The world breaks everyone and afterward many are strong at the broken places." (Scott Fitzgerald thought that is one of the best lines in American literature. Most of the time, I agree.) We are here because Hemingway showed us what writing could be, because he wrote in *A Farewell to Arms* these words:

In the late summer of that year we lived in a house in a village that looked across the river and the plain to the mountains. In the bed of the river there were pebbles and boulders, dry and white in the sun, and the water was clear and swiftly moving and blue in the channels. Troops went by the house and down the road and the dust they raised powdered the leaves of the trees.

It is because he wrote such words, each word as lucid and exact as the singular stone in a stream; it is because he wrote such sentences, the rhythms as moving and streaming as all the water you have ever seen; it is because he composed the bright rhythmic particularity of such paragraphs everywhere in his work—each paragraph, if carefully studied and deeply felt, worth two creative writing courses at any institution anywhere—it is for all these reasons that we celebrate here the Hemingway Centennial. Because he made such words and sentences and images, such poetry, such story; because his narrativity is always driven by the deep core of what Faulkner called the "eternal verities"—courage, honor, compassion, sacrifice, endurance—this is why we celebrate Hemingway's work here tonight. And always. "Hurry up please it's time." "Isn't it pretty to think so?" Goodnight and thank you—you've been a great audience.

PART THREE: GRADUATE STUDENT PAPERS

## Nothing Under the Sun:

*Nada*, Light, and the Grace of God in Hemingway's

*The Sun Also Rises*

MARK W. BELLOMO

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In Robert Penn Warren's introduction to *A Farewell to Arms*, we read this: "The typical Hemingway hero is the man aware, or in the process of becoming aware, of *nada*. Death is the great *nada*... Hemingway describes himself... as obsessed by death" (44). This statement caused me to reflect upon H.R. Stoneback's article in the Fall 1989 *Farewell to Arms* issue of *The Hemingway Review*, where he explains that when the word *nada* or "nothing" appears in a Hemingway text, some critics act as "*nada*-hounds," and "start baying, with their shrill orgasmic pursuit on the scent of *nada*, which they see everywhere, which they think they have cornered, treed, comprehended" (48). Could it be that Robert Penn Warren was, in Stoneback's phrase, a "*nada*-hound"? Warren sees the Hemingway protagonist as a "man obsessed by death, by the meaninglessness of the world, by nothingness, by *nada*... [he] is one of the recurring symbols in the work of Hemingway" (43). After surveying various inadequate critical views of *nada* as existential sleeplessness or blank despair, I decided to try and figure out just what Hemingway's intention was in his use of the word.

In a 1954 interview, Hemingway was asked by George Plimpton, "Who would you say are your literary forebears—those you have learned the most from?" (Plimpton 127). Hemingway responded with a list of thirty names of painters, composers, and writers, one of whom was San Juan de la Cruz, a famous 16th-century saint and mystic. I borrowed *The Collected Works of St. John of the Cross* from the library, and in a section entitled "The Ascent of Mount Carmel," I found an astonishing map in which St. John shows that "the path of the...perfect spirit," the path towards a union with God, is a path which is strewn with the word *nada* (De La Cruz 66). In Book II of "The Ascent," St. John of the Cross further explains his idea of humans walking on the path of *nothing*, of *nada*, on their way to a union with God:

I was brought to nothing and did not understand<sup>1</sup>...that the true spiritual person might realize that his union with God and the Greatness of the work he accomplishes will be measured by his annihilation for God in the sensory and

spiritual parts of his soul. When he is brought to *nothing*, the highest degree of humility, the spiritual union between his soul and God will be effected. (De La Cruz 125)

As epiphanic as this quote was for me, I still needed more proof that San Juan de la Cruz's philosophy influenced Hemingway's ideas about *nada*—there had to be a more definite connection. I reread "A Clean Well-Lighted Place" a number of times, because it makes use of *nada* more than any other work. I kept San Juan de la Cruz close by, and I finally found a key passage in St. John's *Collected Works* that explains the reason why a despondent person needs a "clean, well-lighted place," and where the term *nada* fits in to this theory:

In observing a ray of sunlight stream through the window, we notice that the more it is pervaded with particles of dust, the clearer and more palpable and sensible it appears to the senses; yet obviously the sun ray in itself is less pure, clear, simple, and perfect in that it is full of so many specks of dust. We also notice that when it is more purified of these specks of dust it seems more obscure and impalpable to the material eye... If the ray of sunlight should be entirely cleansed and purified of all dust particles... the eye would find no images on which to rest... If there is nothing visible off which the ray of light can reflect, nothing will be seen. (De La Cruz 145)

This begs the question, "What does a ray of light symbolize to a 16th-century Spanish saint and mystic?" Light was the first thing God created to pierce the dark vapors of chaos in Genesis 1:3: "Then God said, 'Let there be light, And light appeared.'" In John 1:5 the apostle states, "Christ's life is the light that shines through the darkness—and the darkness can never extinguish it." I am positive that Hemingway, a good Catholic, recognized this symbolism and made use of it throughout his works. Moreover, as Dante had it (and Hemingway knew his Dante), God is the one "True Light."

If we accept the notion that the ray of light is a symbol of God (or God in Christ), and agree that such a notion influenced Hemingway's works, then we might conclude that the "nothing" the old man has a strange fear of in "A Clean Well-Lighted Place" is not death, but the mystery of the divine power of God. Fearing his time on the earth is coming to an end, the old man tries to assuage his fear of the divine unknown, tries to avoid the light of day, by staying up in the darkness late into the evening in a bar filled with "electric" and non-divine light. The old man recognizes the necessity of God's grace, but is frightened of pure clean sunlight where, "If there is nothing visible off which the ray of light can reflect, *nothing* will be seen." Of course, most humans think about the after-life, and spiritual grace, and God, but these are rarely things we feel comfortable

thinking deeply about. We note, too, the old waiter, a man who can also feel his life growing shorter. He understands the spiritual dilemma presented in the story, for after the bar closes, the narrator explains: "Now, without thinking further, he would go home to his room. He would lie in bed and finally, with daylight, he would go to sleep," avoiding the light and mystery of God for a few more hours. The old waiter rationalizes: "After all, he said to himself, it is probably only insomnia. Many must have it" (*Stories* 291).

Indeed, many of Hemingway's protagonists do have this willed sleeplessness brought about by a fear for their souls: Frederick Henry, Nick Adams, Jake Barnes.<sup>2</sup> Due to the fact that they were all brought close to death, these characters realize they have souls and are concerned over the fate of their souls. Frederick, Nick, and Jake are aware of the mystery behind the divine power of God, "'Come on, Jake,' he said, 'have a drink... what's the matter with you? You seem all worked up over something?' 'Nothing... [said Jake]," (*Sun* 21).

If in *SAR* the light of the sun is a symbol of the mystery of God's grace, then Jake's quest for spirituality, his pilgrimage (part of which is to come to terms with *nada*) could be interpreted fully and accurately; his insomnia could be explained, and the novel's true purpose could be revealed. I reread *SAR* and found the evidence in support of my claim overwhelming, but first there are three key points we should state. First, Jake makes a spiritually renewing yearly pilgrimage to the fiesta at San Fermin ("...a religious festival" [*Sun* 153]), following the path of Santiago de Compostela. Second, Jake prays and goes to mass and is often seen practicing his technique of being a good Catholic. Finally, Hemingway manipulates the setting of the novel so that the story begins in grayness and ends in the blazing sun of July. The first two points of summary have been documented fully,<sup>3</sup> but it is the third point that I wish to illuminate with the vision of San Juan de la Cruz.

San Juan de la Cruz, of course, did not make a distinction between the light of the sun and electric light, but we can assume that if there were electricity back in the 16th century, it would not be a direct manifestation of God. You cannot receive the grace of God through artificial lighting. This fact is important when considering the first third of *SAR*, because this part of the novel is utterly devoid of the presence of the sun. *SAR* opens in a gray Paris where Jake and Robert and Lady Brett and Bill and the Count and Georgette shuffle around from cafe to cafe, never basking in the light of the sun.

All the *light* is artificial: "Watching it get dark and the electric signs come..." (14), "...passed the...doors of shops...their windows lighted..." (15), "...in the light from the door." (20), "Under the light from the door..." (20), "The

taxi...passed the lighted square..." (25), "There were lighted bars...on each side of the street." (25), "I saw her face in the lights from the open shops..." (25), "...men were working by the light from acetylene flares." (25), "I lit the lamp beside the bed." (30), "...a bateau mouche went by, all bright with lights" (77), etc.

After the sun's first appearance in the novel, as Jake and Bill head south with the pilgrims on the train, it truly becomes a presence at Bayonne, where "...the morning... was bright, and... Already, so early in the morning, it was very hot on the bridge across the river" (90). Jake becomes revitalized with the light of the sun as he and Bill cross the Spanish frontier where, "It was hot...and the houses were a yellow, sun-baked color" (91). In Spain, Jake discovers God's country, where the sun blazes over the plateau of Pamplona: "There was a big river off... shining in the sun...and away off...you could see...the great brown cathedral" (93).

The most important scene of the true light of God responding and touching Jake Barnes occurs a few pages later when Jake is at the cathedral praying. After he kneels and prays, trying to be a good Catholic, he leaves the cathedral with wet fingers from crossing himself. As he stands "out in the hot sun on the steps of the cathedral...[he] felt them dry in the sun. The sunlight was hot and hard..." (97).

Next, Jake and Bill leave on a fishing expedition to Burguete, where Jake notices: "It was baking hot in the square... and the women had their fans going in the sun. It certainly was hot" (103). There, "they all went out into the sunlight and the heat, and climbed... on top of the bus" (106). Then, in the sacred shadow of Roncevaux, Jake and Bill fish and talk and drink and discuss Jake's Catholicism, and they sweat from the work in the sun: "It was very hot on the dam" (120). Jake then reflects upon the beginning of his pilgrimage: "We stayed five days at Burguete and had good fishing...the days were hot... It was hot enough so that it felt good to wade in a cold stream, and the sun dried you when you came out and sat on the bank" (125).

The fiesta and corridas also take place in the hot sun, and after San Fermin Jake experiences spiritual renewal (possibly as he does every year), as he basks in the heat of the sun: "The sun was out and the day was bright" (207), and the pilgrims "...stood in the sunlight. [where] it was hot and good after the rain and the clouds from the sea" (208). After the final great bullfight, on the last day of the fiesta, Jake becomes completely drunk, stands on the balcony of his hotel room and thinks: "The world was not wheeling any more. It was just very *clear* and *bright*..." (224).

Then we see Jake in San Sebastian, where he notices the effects of the sun on a girl who is swimming at the Concha. She was "browning her back... [and] turned her brown back in the sun" (235). Here, Jake yields himself to the rays of

the sun: he “lay on the raft in the sun until [he] was dry” (235), and he “lay on the beach until [he] was dry” (235). Jake is now at his spiritual peak, and he studies the effects of the sun on the Spanish people at San Sebastian, where he observes a bicycle race in which the bicycle riders “were burned brown by the sun...” (236). Jake spends the next few days relaxing at the beach in sun-country: “I sat in the sun... in an easy chair in the sun” (238).

With Jake’s spirituality peaking, his pilgrim’s progress (according to Dante’s law of motion, which permits progress only when the sun of God’s love is shining) takes him into the “summer heat of Madrid” (244), where he gets off the train, rides by “the unfinished church on the edge of the cliff” (240) into the “high hot modern town” (240). Then Jake and Brett talk about religion, and Jake asserts his love of God:

“You know it makes one feel rather good deciding not to be a bitch.”

“Yes.”

“It’s sort of what we have instead of God.”

“Some people have God,” I said. “Quite a lot.” (240)

On the novel’s last page, the commanding presence of the light of the sun is potent, and Jake is overwhelmed by it: “It was hot and bright... We sat close against each other. I put my arm around her and she rested against me... It was very hot and bright, and the houses looked sharply white... the car slowed suddenly pressing Brett against me” (247). It may be pretty to think they “...could have had such a damned good time together” (247), but Jake knows it will not be, could not have been, so he will undertake this pilgrimage for spiritual renewal again the next year, where the constant light of the sun as the grace of God will help him to transcend his problems of the flesh. For “one generation passeth away, and another generation cometh; but the earth abideth forever... The sun also ariseth and the sun goeth down, and hasteth to the place where he arose...” (Ecclesiastes 1:4,5). *The Sun Also Rises*, then, provides us with a sufficient emblem of “Grace Under Millennial Pressure.”

## NOTES

1. Translated from Latin: “Ad nihilum redactus sum et nescivi.” From Psalms 72:22, as spoken by David.

2. For Frederick Henry: “...and I felt *myself* rush bodily out of myself and out and out and out... I went out swiftly, all of myself, and I knew I was dead and that *it had all been a mistake to think you just died*” (AFTA 54, emphasis added).

For Nick Adams: "I myself did not want to sleep because I had been living for a long time with the knowledge that if I ever shut my eyes in the *dark* and let myself go, my *soul* would go out of my body. I had been that way for a long time, ever since I had been blown up at night and felt it go out of me and go off and then come back" ("Now I Lay Me," CSSEH 276, emphasis added). For Jake Barnes: "It is awfully easy to be hard-boiled about everything in the daytime, but at night it is another thing" (SAR 42).

3. See footnote #2 and H.R. Stoneback's "From the rue Saint-Jacques."

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# Religious Ecstasy and “Disregard for Death” in *Death in the Afternoon*

STEVEN J. FLORCZYK

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In a letter to Maxwell Perkins anticipating the publication of *Death in the Afternoon*, Hemingway wrote, “I think a really true book...about the one thing that has, with the exception of the ritual of the church, come down to us intact from the old days would have a certain permanent value” (Baker 237). The art of bullfighting has certainly achieved a “permanent value” in the work of Ernest Hemingway, for he was drawn to the *plaza de toros* throughout his writing career. *In Our Time*, Hemingway’s first published story collection includes six vignettes portraying the bullfight, and *The Dangerous Summer*, one of the last works Hemingway completed before his death, also deals with the art. While these works confirm that Hemingway’s attention to the bullfight endured throughout his lifetime, most would agree that his best work on bullfighting is *Death in the Afternoon*.

In his article “*Death in the Afternoon: A Reconsideration*,” Allen Josephs ponders these central questions: “Why did Hemingway write *Death in the Afternoon*? How good is it? And what does it tell us about the rest of his work?” (2). Josephs highlights these questions in response to the criticism regarding the book, which “treats *toreo* superficially or avoids the topic and concentrates on peripheral, although sometimes important, issues such as Hemingway’s personality or his pronouncement on writing” (2). Josephs summarizes some of the more confused critical reviews of the work, and he specifically refers to Max Eastman’s article “Bull in the Afternoon,” in which the author refers to Hemingway’s supposed need to compensate for an inadequate sense of his own manhood (Josephs 3). Thankfully, Josephs steers his readers back on track with the critical assessments that approach the most important question regarding *Death in the Afternoon*: “What needs to be addressed,” he states, “is the central issue of Hemingway’s treatment of *toreo* itself” (2).

While Josephs’s entreaty regarding *toreo* is certainly of utmost importance, I think we should arrive at these issues with the understanding that Hemingway was first attracted to the bullfight as a writer. One of the “subjects that a man may write of,” (*Death* 2) Hemingway wrote, “is death,” and he was drawn to the bullfight to observe those facts which would produce the “feeling” that he

wanted to make in writing: “The only place where you could see life and death, i.e., violent death now that the wars were over, was in the bull ring and I wanted very much to go to Spain where I could study it” (2). He was a student of death, he explains, because so many other writers had “only produced a blur” on this subject; Hemingway believed that these authors “turned away” at the precise moment of death, therefore rendering the moment inadequately. It was his goal to move beyond the “blur” and write through the moment of death to enhance the clarity of feeling. Hemingway explains what he was trying to achieve in his account of the goring of the bullfighter, Hernandez:

[T]he problem was one of depiction and . . . I tried to remember what it was that was the thing that I had really seen and, finally, remembering all around it, I got it. When he stood up, his face white and dirty and the silk of his breeches opened from waist to knee, it was the dirtiness of the rented breeches, the dirtiness of his slit underwear and the clean, clean, unbearably clean whiteness of the thigh bone that I had seen, and it was that which was important. (20)

In this passage, Hemingway clearly focuses on the contrast between the soiled outfit of the bullfighter and the “unbearably clean” whiteness of his exposed thighbone. Perhaps he is fascinated with the complete exposure of man’s innermost qualities when he confronts death—not a physical quality, but the exposure of man’s essence. When a bullfighter confronts death, if it is authentic, then all facades and trappings are stripped away, and we are left only with the purest or “cleanest” manifestation of our existence: the soul.

Clearly, Hemingway was fascinated with the existence of the soul, as in the crucial passage of Frederic Henry’s wounding: “I felt myself rush bodily out of myself and out and out and all the time bodily in the wind. I went out swiftly, all of myself, and I knew I was dead and that it had all been a mistake to think you just died. Then I floated, and instead of going on I felt myself slide back” (*Farewell* 54). Here, Hemingway characterizes the moment when Henry faces death and acknowledges the existence of a soul, an acknowledgment which awakens Henry to the responsibility one must face in redeeming the soul. Hemingway is more explicit when he describes Harry’s redemptive reason for going to Africa in “The Snows of Kilimanjaro”—“That in some way he could work the fat off his soul,” (*Complete Short Stories* 44)—and he revisits a similar theme in “Now I Lay Me” when Nick Adams describes his fear that “if I ever shut my eyes in the dark and let myself go, my soul would go out of my body” (276). Hemingway’s characters are often haunted by a confrontation with death which leads to a concern for the state of one’s soul. In Hemingway’s treatment of

the bullfight, we see that the author was fascinated with death in a similar way, in that the perfect *faena* can provide the crowd with a sense of immortality, i.e., acknowledgment of the soul. If man is to understand himself in terms of eternity, it is only through the manifestation of a soul that he can do so. Consider, now, the structure and integrity of the art of *toreo*.

Hemingway defines the bullfight as follows:

The bullfight is not a sport in the Anglo-Saxon sense of the word, that is, it is not an equal contest or an attempt at an equal contest between a bull and a man. Rather it is a tragedy; the death of the bull, which is played, more or less well, by the bull and the man involved and in which there is danger for the man but certain death for the animal. (16)

This passage clarifies an important distinction between sport and tragedy, placing the bullfight in the latter category because it involves the very real and certain presence of death. Hemingway explains the tragedy of the *corrida* as it is divided into three acts for each bull that is killed: the trial, the sentencing, and the execution. All actions that occur in the three stages of the bullfight are significantly associated with the ultimate kill in the third act, or “moment of truth.”

It is the strict arrangement of the actions of the bullfight, the attention to ceremonial detail and the repetition of this tragedy, that leads to the distinction of the *corrida* as a ritual. We can be sure that Hemingway was interested in the bullfight as ritual because he is careful to distinguish the ceremonial nature of the *corrida* as it exists apart from different forms of crude bullfights: “All amateur or group killing is a very barbarous, messy, though exciting business and is a long way from the ritual of the formal bullfight” (24). Throughout *Death in the Afternoon*, he offers many examples of the ceremonial quality of the bullfight with reference to bullfighters “as devoutly ritual as altar boys serving a high mass” (59). He also explains other acts of ceremony including the trumpet blows between “acts,” the ordered entry of the *caudrilla* into the arena, the president’s salute, etc. Clearly, it is this sense of ritual and tradition along with the presence of death that attracted Hemingway to the drama of the bulls.

Also divided into three stages, the final moments of the bullfight are a culmination of all that has occurred since the team of bullfighters entered the ring. In his explanatory glossary, Hemingway defines the *faena* as “the sum of the work done by the matador with the *muleta* in the final third of the bullfight” (407). The *muleta* work and the kill are the most important stages of this final act and Hemingway explains it thus:

...the *faena* that takes a man out of himself and makes him feel immortal while it is proceeding, that gives him an ecstasy, that is, while momentary, as profound as any religious ecstasy; moving all the people in the ring together and increasing in emotional intensity as it proceeds, carrying the bullfighter with it, he playing on the crowd through the bull and being moved as it responds in a growing ecstasy of ordered, formal, passionate, increasing disregard for death that leaves you, when it is over, and the death administered to the animal that has made it possible, as empty, as changed and as sad as any major emotion will ever leave you. (206-07)

Here, Hemingway reveals the central profundity of the bullfight.

First, we note that he highlights the quality of immortality associated with the final act of the bullfight, and it is important to understand that this quality is felt not only by the matador, but the audience as well. Second, we should stress the importance of the author's comparison of the ecstasy of the *faena* with a religious ecstasy. Third, it is that ecstasy that is felt simultaneously by the audience and the matador which moves the crowd together, thereby increasing the emotional intensity through unification. Fourth, the excitement is attributed ultimately to the "ordered, formal...disregard for death," which stems from the man's domination of the bull (and the death threat that the animal represents) as he proves his immortality by challenging death. Finally, we should consider the "death administered to the animal that has made it possible" as a sacrificial death, one in which the crowd and the matador find spiritual rejuvenation and redemption through this sacrifice, whose significance is much like that of Christ's death. Perhaps Hemingway was somewhat less than sarcastic when he refers to Goya's portrayal of the crucifixion

...that could serve as a poster for the announcement of crucifixions in the manner of bullfight posters. A crucifixion of six carefully selected Christs will take place at five o'clock in the Monumental Golgotha of Madrid, government permission having been obtained. (204)

Even if the tone is ironic, the import of the comparison is not lost upon the reader, for Hemingway does equate the ecstasy produced by a bullfight, however momentary, with true religious ecstasy.

As H. R. Stoneback suggests in his article "From the rue Saint-Jacques to the Pass of Roland to the 'Unfinished Church on the Edge of the Cliff'": "...it is quite natural...to hear Hemingway tell us that there are three acts in the fighting of each bull and the church tell us that the dramatic structure of the Mass is a three-act sacrifice" (28). In the foreword to *This is the Mass*, Bishop Sheen explains the purpose of this sacrifice: "The Mass is the application and the pro-

jection through space and time of the redemptive love of Christ on the Cross” (16). This rite celebrates and repeats the gift of spiritual immortality given through Christ’s death on the cross: “It [the crucifixion] is something that is still happening” (17) and the “Priest and the Victim both on the Cross and in the Mass, are one and the same person” (18).

We might translate this redemptive ritual of the soul into the experience one feels with the immortality of the bullfight and consider the correlation regarding Hemingway’s description of the kill as “man and bull become one figure as the sword goes in” (238). The “oneness” of the bull, the matador, and the crowd during the moment which produces the “ecstasy of immortality” takes on a mystical quality much like the “oneness” between victim and redeemer expressed in the ritual of the Catholic Mass. The “moment of truth,” then, can be seen as the point where the rituals of Catholicism and the bullfight converge to reinforce one’s awareness of spiritual immortality. As Stoneback remarks, “This sense of immortality, this ordered, formal passionate ‘disregard for death,’ Hemingway says, is accessible and sometimes given in the bullring, just as it is available and availing, a gift of grace, in the more ample terrain of the Church” (28). What is significant, of course, is man’s desire to redeem his soul. The bullfight is an intense reminder that man has a soul while the church allows him to prepare his soul so that he does not lose it.

Hemingway’s familiar code of values, including loyalty, honor, and courage, also includes a sacramental sense of the rituals of the bullfight and the Catholic Church and what they mean for the human spirit in the struggle to live, and die, with grace under pressure. And it is through an understanding of these core rituals and values as, in Joseph’s words, “something that would stand in the winds of change in the modern age” that Hemingway’s work will retain its “permanent value” and transcend any “millennial pressures” to come.

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# Faulkner and Hemingway:

## The Old Men, the Sea, the Big Woods

BREIDA GALLAGHER

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Through careful examination of the works of both Ernest Hemingway and William Faulkner, we can see that they were compelled to write about humanity and nature—human beings in nature and as a part of nature. Although Faulkner and Hemingway considered these issues in all of their works, it is in “The Bear” (1940) and *The Old Man and the Sea* (1952) that each comes closest to perfection of expression. Each story is a quintessential definition of correct behavior insofar as the human race interacts with or exists within nature. In saying that the works are strikingly similar, I do not wish to pose a traditional source-study argument and say that one stole from the other. All writers are necessarily influenced by the world around them, and certainly Hemingway had read *Go Down, Moses* and “The Bear” before he wrote *The Old Man and the Sea*.

There are so many small but significant similarities between the two stories that I could use all of my allotted time here to list them without a single comment as to their relevance. That the two stories, or novellas, contain numerous related elements is not a point of contention here, and we will benefit more from looking closely at the major similarities and looking also at points of divergence, thus coming to a deeper understanding of both works, both authors.

The most obvious comparison is clearly found in the designation of characters. Each story hinges on the relationship between an old man, a young boy, and a noble creature. It is not enough, however, to say that Sam Fathers and Santiago are both old and wise, for this is only the beginning of what they have in common. Along with age, they also have in common their place among the ultimate exemplars in American literature of the rites and rituals involved in a man’s interaction with nature. Although one is a fisherman and the other a hunter, each performs essentially the same role within his respective story. Both exemplify the way the ancient ceremony should be handled.

Traditionally, that example would be provided by a father to his sons, and yet in these two narratives, each man is apprenticed by a young boy who is not his own. Isaac McCaslin and Manolin are bound to their mentors not by blood but by love, a willingness to learn, and a dedication to the ritual that one can learn only from a master.

Completing this neat triad of similarity, Faulkner and Hemingway present us with the true heart of these stories: the great bear and the great marlin, which *are* the embodiment of Nature. The individual animals, in this instance, are mainly a vehicle used by the authors to help the reader arrive at an understanding of nature and man's relationship to it. It is, of course, the *natural* element of these works that is the true representation of the human condition which they both strive to define. To examine *The Old Man and the Sea* as a comment on nature and the human condition is to see that Hemingway maintains a sense of nature as "other." This is not meant to imply that Hemingway holds himself above what Bickford Sylvester calls the "inscrutable natural order" (130). Certainly, *Santiago* does not presume to superiority, but he does find it necessary to prove himself the most powerful force within the natural realm. He must defeat or be defeated; it is only at the expense of the fish's life that he may keep his own. "I killed him in self-defense," the old man said aloud. "And I killed him well" (OMAS 106). While it is true that Santiago kills the marlin to save his own life, it is also important to inspect the deeper motivations behind the act. The old man says to himself, "You did not kill the fish only to keep alive and to sell for food, . . . You killed him for pride and because you are a fisherman" (105). The major difference in the two stories is this: *whereas Santiago must kill the marlin to preserve himself, Sam Fathers must participate in the death of Old Ben in order to release himself from life.* According to Cleanth Brooks, "The basic symbolism of the story is clear. Old Ben obviously represents the wilderness itself, nature against which man must pit his strength" (269-270). Put in these terms, it would seem as if Sam Fathers had something to gain by the death of the bear. It would also seem that those who hunt Old Ben are able to take him down and kill him against his will. And, as Brooks is correct in his assumption that Old Ben is the representative of nature, this would imply that Sam Fathers and the other hunters act against the will of nature itself. But as Ike and Sam both understand, Ben will not die, as Faulkner says, "until the last day. When even he don't want it to last any longer" (GDM 212). And of course we must remember that Sam Fathers dies *willingly* along with the bear that he helps to kill: "It had been foreknowledge in Sam's face that morning. And he was glad, . . . He was old. He had no children, no people, . . . it was almost over now and he was glad" (215). In truth, Brooks's idea of man pitting himself against nature, is more appropriately applied to *The Old Man and the Sea*. It becomes quite clear that *Faulkner's* vision of man is such that he exists as a small part of nature and that he is literally controlled by it. Hemingway's Santiago is also a small part of nature but he feels that he must master it. In Faulkner's terms, every living thing comes under the command of the wilderness:

...the men, not white nor black nor red but men, hunters, with the will and hardihood to endure and the humility and skill to survive, and the dogs and the bear and the deer juxtaposed and relieved against it, *ordered and compelled by and within* the wilderness in the ancient and unremitting contest according to the ancient and immitigable rules which voided all regrets and brooked no quarter. (GDM 191-92, italics mine)

Both characters embody this basic idea of “will and hardihood to endure and the humility and skill to survive.” Just as Santiago strives to preserve himself through his struggle to stay alive, Sam Fathers can die knowing that he will live on in the wilderness itself. Hemingway would echo this idea of a need for preservation in his Nobel Prize acceptance speech which, while directly addressing the subject of writing and being a writer, makes more than one certain allusion to *The Old Man and the Sea*: “Things may not be immediately discernible in what a man writes and in this he may be fortunate; but eventually they are quite clear and by these and the degree of alchemy that he possesses he will endure or be forgotten” (Hemingway, Nobel). To endure through the written word was Hemingway’s goal for himself and to endure through triumph in the face of nature is the goal that Santiago achieves.

Hemingway readers often struggle to find the seven-eighths of his work that cannot be seen above the surface. And, as a rule, Faulkner’s style is more explicit than Hemingway’s. “Things” were sometimes deemed “indiscernible” in Hemingway’s work by critics and readers alike. With *The Old Man and the Sea*, however, there is a recognizable shift toward a more obvious or overt style. When Hemingway speaks of “things that are not immediately discernible” in his acceptance speech, he is obviously referring to the same “old universal truths” that Faulkner speaks of in his Nobel Prize Address. Hemingway had always dealt with “love and honor and pity and pride and compassion and sacrifice,” and in *The Old Man and the Sea*, they are at last “quite clear.” Faulkner knew this. Hemingway knew this.

In another vein, it might be interesting to look at how well the two writers knew each other. While Faulkner and Hemingway knew of each other because they read each other’s work, exchanged letters, and lived around the corner from each other in Paris in the twenties, they never actually met in person. However, as documented by H.R. Stoneback, Hemingway did go to Yoknapatawpha County to try and meet Faulkner. And then, too, there was a much publicized feud between them stemming from remarks that each made concerning the other’s work. Although both authors, in moments of passion, made negative comments, there is also an undeniable respect present. As to *The Old Man and*

*the Sea* and “The Bear,” it seems that each agreed that it was the best work the other had done. I will echo Joseph Blotner as he says, “Perhaps the remarkable thing was that they expressed as much admiration for each other as they did” (1429). The two *were* competitors, and yet they saved their highest praise for each other. Interestingly enough, even the remarks that come to us intact from each author on the other’s greatest work reflect the differences in their writing styles. Faulkner was convinced to write a formal review of *The Old Man and The Sea*, in which he said:

Time may show it to be the best single piece of any of us, I mean his and my contemporaries...[Hemingway had] discovered God, a Creator. Until now, his men and women had made themselves out of their own clay; their victories and defeats were at the hands of each other, just to prove to themselves or one another how tough they could be. But this time he wrote about pity; about something somewhere that made them all...made them all and loved them all and pitied them all. (Blotner 1428-29)

Despite Faulkner’s incorrect assertion about the nature of previous Hemingway characters, he is quite correct and explicit about what makes *The Old Man and the Sea* a masterpiece. He touches on the moral nature of the writing as well as one of the famed “eternal verities.” Faulkner goes on to say, “It’s all right. Praise God that whatever made and loves and pities Hemingway and me kept him from touching it any further” (1429). This last goes to the core of the stylistic conflict between the two authors. Faulkner thought Hemingway worked his stories too much; they were “highly refined but essentially limited in style” (1429). Hemingway thought that Faulkner rambled on, unable to end something well. Thus, each criticized the other’s most celebrated stylistic trait. I believe that it was the recognition of greatness, each in the other, that caused them to criticize. In a letter to Cowley, Hemingway said “Faulkner has the most talent of anybody...I wish to Christ I owned him like you’d own a horse and train him like a horse and race him like a horse—only in writing—how beautifully he can write and as simple and as complicated as autumn or spring.” In Hemingway’s unpublished manuscript “The Art of the Short Story,” he says of Faulkner:

When they didn’t know him in Europe I told them all how he was the best we had...So you asked me just now what I think about him, as everybody does and I always stall. I say: You know how good he is. Right. You ought to. What is wrong is that he cons himself sometimes pretty bad...But he wrote a really fine short story called “The Bear” and I would be glad to put it in this book for your pleasure and delight if I had written it. But you can’t write them all, Jack. (28-30)

So they tell the same story, and when they do, they can each appreciate the

other's work fully. Perhaps we can read both works as a warning. Man must take responsibility for the encroachment of modernity, the disappearing wilderness, the depleted sea, the end of Nature and the wisdom she has to offer. Both stories end with images of depletion. In "The Bear," the big bottom, the wilderness, is gone. The sight of all important action in the story has been destroyed by the logging company and no longer exists.

*The Old Man and the Sea* ends similarly, with an image of the great marlin after he has been brought all the way in to the port:

That afternoon there was a party of *tourists* at the Terrace and looking down in the water among the *empty beer cans and dead barracudas* a woman saw a great long white spine with a huge tail at the end that lifted and swung with the tide... (139, italics mine)

The woman, who is identified only as a tourist, demonstrates a total lack of understanding, which exemplifies the danger that comes with the loss of knowledge that is necessary for life to continue. These tourists are not a part of Santiago's world. We have come into the know by reading the novel, and to be faced with this woman and her companion leaves a faint sick feeling in the stomach. The thought of the great marlin lying among the dead fish and other human waste is quite killing.

Hemingway ends his Nobel Prize acceptance speech by speaking directly to what motivates him as a writer: "It is because we have had such great writers in the past that a writer is driven far out past where he can go, out to where no one can help him." This bit from his speech might sound rather hopeless, but when it is read with the knowledge of *The Old Man and the Sea* to inform it, we can see that Hemingway's vision included a point where there is no help for a man except that which he can find in his own heart: we *can* be destroyed and not defeated.

As those present in this room for this Hemingway Centennial observance clearly demonstrate—from the distinguished scholars gathered here from around the country, whom it has been my pleasure to meet and who have suddenly come to life for me from the pages of countless Hemingway articles, to the graduate students who are just beginning to teach Faulkner and Hemingway, to the inspired readers who are just now discovering these writers for the first time—Hemingway and Faulkner have endured, will endure and prevail. As stylists, they are very different writers, yet in their profoundly shared sense of values, their vision of "Grace Under Pressure," they are one and the same.

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## “...And Not One Word More”:

### Ritual and the Catholic Faith in the Writing of Graham Greene and Ernest Hemingway

CHRISTOPHER HARTLEY

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There is a popular misconception that great writing springs fully formed from the mind of the author; the muse whispers into the author's ear and the words magically appear upon the page. Another, more recent perception of literature insists that these words do not even belong to the author but, instead, to the audience, who in reading shape the meaning for themselves; the text itself is treated as nothing very special at all. It is, to borrow from Hamlet, nothing but words, words, words. In both of these models the product is divorced from the process which created it, and so the act of writing itself becomes incidental. The act of writing can be ignored, the author can be disposed of, and we can make of a text whatever we choose.

In a perfect world, perhaps. For, imagine how shocked I was to read about authors such as Graham Greene and Ernest Hemingway who, for a good deal of their respective lives, had something that could actually be called a writing process, and imagine my embarrassment to discover that this process could not be dismissed but that it both reflected and informed the works themselves. In two authors whose lives and careers could not be more different, their similar and seemingly idiosyncratic work habits, their unique (but again, very similar) faith and relationship to the Catholic church, and the way this sensibility informs their writing not only connects these authors but also testifies to the importance, not only of what they wrote, but of how these works were composed.

What is so remarkable about Graham Greene's writing process that it deserves to be singled out in this way? In *The End of the Affair*, Greene writes of the novel's chief protagonist, Bendrix: "Over twenty years I have probably averaged five hundred words a day for five days a week...when my quota of work is done I break off, even in the middle of the scene" (38). While this type of discipline may seem remarkably vigorous and self-controlled, Bendrix's writing process was actually somewhat less rigid than Greene's own. Michael Korda, present one morning when Greene was just finishing the above-mentioned novel, was witness to the following scene:

...[Greene] took from his pocket a small black leather notebook and a black fountain pen, the top of which he unscrewed carefully. Slowly, word by word, without crossing out anything, and in neat, square handwriting, the letters so tiny and cramped that it looked as if he were attempting to write the Lord's Prayer on the head of a pin, Graham wrote, over the next hour or so, exactly five hundred words. (Korda 44)

Reading this, I was struck by Greene's work habits, but equally remarkable was the sense of ceremony, of ritual, that Greene brought to the process. Note the pen, "carefully" unscrewed, the exacting precision and neatness, and, of course, the famous self-discipline. Bendrix would stop, "even in the middle of a scene"; Greene, it is said, "stopped at five hundred words, even if it left him in the middle of a sentence"(45).

Why did Greene insist on this ritual, this exacting precision that must have often collided with the passionate urge to write more, to say more? Greene was, undoubtedly, what some critics have labeled him, an "obsessional writer"; it is important to realize, though, that this quality (which, aptly enough, Greene admired in such writers as Henry James) was not one of circumstance or chance, but was instead carefully cultivated by Greene himself (Stratford 16). Greene, like Hemingway, was not a writer in the same vein as William Faulkner, content continually to explore (in both his life and his writing) the same geographical milieu; rather, Greene was a man, both physically and emotionally, who was always on the move. Whether involved in Africa or French Indochina, in an adulterous affair or in the curious comfort of a brothel, Greene lived a life that was in a constant state of tumult and flux (Korda 45).

Why then this fidelity to his writing? Again, Korda give us at least part of the answer:

Whatever else was going on, his daily writing, like a religious devotion, was sacred and complete. Once the daily penance of five hundred words was achieved, he put the notebook away...in a life full of moral uncertainties and confusion he simply needed one area in which the rules, even if self-imposed, were absolute. (45)

While this gives us a portion of the answer, the picture of the whole is actually much more complex. If Greene had brought to bear the near "religious devotion" on decidedly secular subject matter, unconnected from any issues of faith or spirituality, perhaps the distinction between the "ritual" of his writing process and his belief in the Catholic faith would be valid.

What Korda's view ignores is that Greene's novels always have, at their base, a "strong religious concern"; even when there is no obvious religious connec-

tion, they “bear the imprint of a creative attitude which is indelibly Christian” (Stratford 2). Greene was an English Catholic and thus was not invested in the long, symbolic history and tradition of the Roman Catholic church enjoyed by this Continental European counterparts; because of this Greene was not able to rely upon the same assumptions of superiority that other Catholic writers could take for granted. The three-hundred-year-old gap that exists in England’s Catholicism is a crucial one, and has created a crisis of identity for its parishioners. So long out of favor, English Catholicism has developed a rather polemical, aggressive stance more militant and questioning than accepting and repentant (17). Francois Mauriac, another Catholic writer, has eloquently described this situation: “The work of an English Catholic novelist always gives me the sense of being lost. It takes me into a familiar country, into my own spiritual domain in fact...but by a secret door hidden in the wall...” (17). Unfortunately, many critics and readers are not willing to take that journey with Greene, but instead stand forever on the threshold of the mystery and complexity that is his faith.

One reader who may have been unwilling to take that journey was Ernest Hemingway. When asked about Greene’s statement that “a ruling passion gives to a shelf of novels the unity of a system,” Hemingway dismissed the idea by replying that “Mr. Greene has a facility for making statements that I do not possess” (Plimpton 136). Other than the obvious question of why Hemingway did not see the same connection between this statement and his own work that the interviewer (and many readers) obviously did, there remains another, more intriguing question: why would Hemingway, who shares so many similarities in terms of both faith and its connection to the writing process with Greene, think that he and his fellow author had so little in common. While this question is impossible to answer fully, there is evidence that, in private at least, Hemingway was willing to admit some grudging similarity. A guest of Hemingway once described the following scene: “[Hemingway] went to the library and came back with a copy of Greene’s latest book and the only one my wife had not read, and inscribed it to her: ‘From her friend, Ernie (Graham) Greenway’” (Stoneback, “In the ‘Nominal’” 118). It is possible, of course, that Hemingway’s inscription was meant entirely as a slight against Greene and his literary reputation; even if this was the case, though, it is still significant that, in doing so, Hemingway would identify himself so closely with the object of his apparent scorn. And lest we should overlook another small detail of this encounter, it was Hemingway’s own copy of the book that he presented to his friend’s wife.

How much of a similarity actually exists between these two men, though? As

far as their literary reputations and comparisons between their various works are concerned—that is a topic better left for a different paper. Whatever the difference between these two in aesthetic terms or in the eyes of critics and peers, the similarities between Greene and Hemingway in terms of faith and the effect it had on their writing, both as process and product, is still quite remarkable.

While Hemingway's writing process was not as rigid or unwavering as Greene's, it was intensely ritualized and included some elements that remind us strongly of that English author. The image of Hemingway standing, not sitting, at his desk, the morning sun just rising over the horizon, writing for hours to get that one true sentence, is a popular one, and implies a seriousness of purpose and an emphasis on ritual similar to Greene's. Hemingway himself, in a letter to his publisher, places great emphasis on counting the words he had written that day, saying that "it is a hell of a thing to get anything over five hundred of them in a day" (*Letters* 503). Moreover, and again echoing Greene, Hemingway went on to say that "at the end of the week I always add them up so that I can think even if I am a no good son of a bitch I wrote, say, 3500 words this week" (503).

Like religious devotion, such fidelity to one's craft is not an easy thing to maintain; it was not simply a balm that Hemingway could apply to his conscience, but was instead something he consistently wrestled with throughout his life and which led him to write, in *Men at War*, that "a writer should be of as great probity and honesty as a priest of God" (Stoneback, "In the Nominal" 105). A rather unusual comparison to make, unless the man who wrote those words looked upon his work in a very sacred, ritualized manner.

Is this concept, of Hemingway as writer/acolyte, really so difficult to accept concerning an author who, as H.R. Stoneback has argued, found transformative ritual and ceremony in the sacred space and sacred time of the church and the bullfighting arena ("Holy Cross" 13-14)? The religious subtext is there, whether or not critics see it or acknowledge it. In a way again very similar to Greene, Hemingway brought to bear this very "Catholic" process on works that, even when not obviously or wholly religious, were "profoundly Catholic" ("In the 'Nominal'" 122). Whether transforming a solitary fishing expedition into a parallel of the Fisher King tale (in "Big Two-Hearted River") or sending Jake Barnes on a modern-day pilgrimage of redemption in *The Sun Also Rises*, Hemingway's writing does not merely acquiesce to a religious interpretation: it nearly cries out for one ("From the rue").

As was the case with Greene, though, many of Hemingway's critics and biographers have had a difficult time understanding the religious subtext of his life and work, and for much the same reason. Hemingway's faith was not an easy

step-by-step guide to salvation that he could roll out for critics and naysayers at the drop of a hat; instead, it was as fittingly private and complex as the man himself, embracing many contraries and, in some instances, contradictions, the likes of which only become clear upon close examination and serious inquiry (“In the ‘Nominal’” 105). And of course, what critic has time for that?

Hemingway was born into a Protestant background of “religious liberalism,” and most critics see any deviation from this belief system (other than an “escape” into atheism which is, after all, the only intellectually correct thing to do) as delusional and misguided on Hemingway’s part. Because Hemingway first came to Catholicism during his experiences in World War I, all his later protestations of faith are merely meant, some say, to cover up a callow “foxhole” Catholicism; because he was later married to a woman who happened to be Catholic, it was she “who *led* Hemingway into the church” and who was the real spiritual force in their relationship (111-113). Both of these views are preposterous, of course. Other than the simple fact that it is not for anyone (and certainly not a literary critic) to judge another human being’s faith, there is no evidence to contradict Hemingway’s own statement, in a letter to a friend, that he had tried “to be kind, and Christian and gentle” his entire life, and that many times his efforts had been made through the auspices of the Catholic church (*Letters* 710; Stoneback “In the ‘Nominal’” 105).

And so Graham Greene wrote the way he wrote and lived the way he did and was able to say that “a ruling passion gives to a shelf of novels the unity of a system”; Hemingway wrote the way he wrote and lived any way he damn well pleased, and one of the more insightful evaluations of the man states “that a specifically Catholic tension informs his books and his life,” and another, by Reynolds Price, that Hemingway’s “lifelong subject...[was] saintliness” (*Letters* 116; Stoneback “In the ‘Nominal’” 105). While neither author was overly enthusiastic in their praise of the other, for both authors the moral geography of their works is every bit as familiar to modern readers as the physical topography of Faulkner’s Yoknapatawpha County. They not only endeavored, through their lives and, more importantly for us, through their work, to struggle with issues of faith and morality; both were rewarded for their efforts with misunderstanding and prejudice on the part of critics and biographers. Yet, long after the critics and biographers are forgotten, the works of Greene and Hemingway will continue to convey to many readers a compelling vision of “Grace under Millennial Pressure.”

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# Playing (with Hemingway's Fiction) in the Dark:

Morrison on Hemingway

DENNIS C. WINTER

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The third and concluding essay from Toni Morrison's 1990 national best-selling monograph, *Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and the Literary Imagination*, is entitled "Disturbing Nurses and the Kindness of Sharks." It is devoted specifically to a critical discussion of Ernest Hemingway and three of his works in particular: *To Have and Have Not*, *The Garden of Eden*, and the short-story, "The Battler."

With this essay Morrison completes her otherwise strong and convincing observations which support her overall premise that much of our classic American Literature is informed by what she calls an "Africanist presence." Most often this occurs, she explains, as an exclusion of credible African-American characters in the works of many American writers, or as a reaction to that silent, signifying presence. Having developed this premise carefully and thoroughly in the preceding two essays which dealt with Poe, Melville, and Cather, this concluding essay, unfortunately, proves to be an extremely wrenched reading of Ernest Hemingway. It belies the Nobel laureate's unfamiliarity with Hemingway's work, and with Hemingway criticism.

Curiously, Morrison chooses to found her critique on *To Have and Have Not*, one of the least esteemed Hemingway novels, if not his least successful. She also deals with *The Garden of Eden*, another curious choice, given that novel's status as a posthumously published and questionably edited work. But we do not have world enough and time to deal here with Morrison's strange reading of *The Garden of Eden*. And she looks into "The Battler," a good short story from *In Our Time*. Misreadings of "The Battler" are numerous, especially the currently fashionable approaches involving themes of latent homosexuality, incest, "dark mothering fixations," and the like. To these we can now add Morrison's "black nursemaid/Tonto's all, to the Hemingway Ranger" perspective.

Much recent criticism blurs the realm of literature, politics, and sociology. Dogmatic readings abound, in which fictional characters are confused with their creators, and bad biographies or pop-culture myths of the author dictate the perception of the fiction. In this confused, badly-seasoned stew, the author himself

becomes a fictional character used by politically correct pseudo-scholars and do-it-yourself psychoanalysts to interpret fiction.

Morrison begins her critique with this assertion: “My interest in Ernest Hemingway becomes heightened when I consider how much apart his work is from African-Americans. That is, he has no need, desire, or awareness of them either as readers of his work or as people existing anywhere other than in his imaginative (and imaginatively lived) world.” This raises an immediate red flag and, I believe, sets the tone for what is to come later—more of the same old Hemingway bashing, softened only by inclusion of cleverly couched disclaimers. It implies condescension and also suggests that perhaps Morrison would prefer that Hemingway had lived some other way. Unimaginatively, perhaps? And what other characters should we prefer to examine? Those not made by imagination? If so, then we are not discussing fiction.

Morrison then states that “Hemingway’s work *could be described* as innocent of nineteenth-century ideological agenda as well as free of what may be called recent, postmodernist sensitivity” and that it is also “[an] exclusively male world that Hemingway *usually prefers* to inhabit” (my emphasis). Next she discusses, “one of the author’s special concerns...[his] well documented, romantic attachment to a nurse.” Morrison asserts that “not only is the Hemingway Ranger invariably accompanied, but his Tontos, his nursemen, *are almost always* black.” And, to emphasize this, she claims that, “*the array* of black nursemen is *impressive*” (added). Now, I’m sure she is not talking about Robert Cohn, Bill Gorton, or either of the Counts, Mippipopoulos or Greffi, nor can she mean Rinaldi, or the priest from the Abruzzi, or Anselmo, El Sordo, or Pablo, and certainly not Manolin, or Pedro Romero. Who are these masked men, these *negroes extranos*, and where is this “impressive array” that populates the work?

As for the female nurse, we are left to assume that it is Catherine Barclay, though she’s never mentioned by name in the essay. But Morrison is quick to add: “*the other women* in Hemingway’s fiction who become objects of desire have the characteristics of nurses without the professional status.” So, perhaps we are talking about Brett Ashley (*the 20th-century Creseyde*), Robert Cohn’s Frances, or Robert Jordan’s Maria? Or, maybe Pilar, since Renata doesn’t appear to need the job. Who are these “other women,” these, “rare, perfect nurses, towards which the prose yearns”? And, where in the voluminous Hemingway texts are the “impressive array of black nursemen”? In actuality there are few, and those that do exist do so only in these few texts that Morrison chooses to deal with. Had she pursued this lack of black characters in the work, I think it could have strengthened her basic premise.

That Morrison makes only one critical reference in her entire essay is further cause for suspicion, especially since that reference is to Kenneth Lynn, arguably the poorest and least trustworthy in the long list of psychobabble biographers. Lynn's book is of the sub-coffee table variety, ranking at the bottom of the biographical scale along with James Mellow's absurdly titled *Hemingway: A Life Without Consequences*. Given that Hemingway lived through and participated in two world wars, the Spanish Revolution, several failed marriages, and severe head injuries, and eventually suffered chronic, clinical depression culminating in tragic suicide, it is unconscionable and preposterous for any one, especially a biographer, to imply that Hemingway's life was led without consequences. If anything, Hemingway was more keenly aware of consequences wrought by careless, undisciplined living than most of his contemporaries, and for that matter most people in general.

Of *To Have and Have Not*, Morrison claims that it is "said by many to be intentionally political" and that Harry Morgan "seems to represent the classic American hero." To whom, one might ask, does a rum-running, minor-league pirate, an eventual murderer with an ex-prostitute for a wife, seem to represent a "classic American hero"? Relying on such vague usage as "seems to," "usually prefers," "almost always," "other women," and "said by many," at the outset of a critical discussion involving an extremely important topic like racism and how it may relate to the literature of one of America's undeniably great authors, I believe, is a lapse in scholarly judgment and critical standards.

Morrison believes Hemingway purposely left the character Wesley nameless for the first five chapters of *To Have and Have Not*, and implied that he doesn't have a real job. He was only there because "he put on a good bait"—in fact a very important job—and the rest of the time, Morrison explains, "we are told, this nameless man sleeps and reads the paper." Again, this tone evokes a question: what else would she prefer he be doing to be a more realistic character? Studying the saxophone? Or a correspondence course for the Bar Exam? And do we really know from the text that he is not paid in some way? But of far more important critical concern here is that the black bait-cutter in book one is in fact not Wesley. They are two different characters. Morrison misses the differences between the black Cuban bait-cutter of book one and Wesley, the Key West native of book two. Who, then, is stereotyping or deprivileging black characters? Morrison, not Hemingway. Morrison then cleverly and surreptitiously attaches the "proximity of violence" from the shoot-out scene in Havana to the overall "dark" and threatening sexual overtones that are supposedly conveyed through Wesley, as Africanist presence, to provide the mystical, "dark magic" undercur-

rent of Harry and Marie's sex life. And hence, Marie's need to "whiten up," by bleaching her hair in order to be more attractive to Harry.

Blurring two characters into one, and misreading both exemplary black characters, Morrison industriously builds the case that Wesley is represented as inferior and less than a man. Yet she misses the point that it is Wesley who makes one of the most perceptive and redemptive statements in the novel when he asks Harry, "Why don't people be honest and decent and make a decent honest living?... You don't care what happens to a man... You ain't hardly human... You ain't got human feelings." Harry has to be at death's door before he figures out his need for interdependence and compassion concerning his fellow man—something Wesley apparently has known for a long time.

Morrison points out that Harry uses Wesley's name when speaking to him but "whenever he thinks about this black man he thinks 'nigger.' Hemingway writes [her emphasis] nigger when as narrator he refers to him." One can only approach this sentence with skeptical apprehension, for it is too easily interpreted by the untrained reader that she is implying that Hemingway is the narrator. She then outrageously suggests that Hemingway, the writer, had to *contrive* a way to keep this character's speech from gaining any importance: "*Enforcing the silence of the 'nigger' proves problematic in this action-narrative and requires of Hemingway some strenuous measures*" (my emphasis). To further elucidate, Morrison cites this sentence: "The Nigger was still taking her out and I looked and saw he had seen a patch of flying fish burst out ahead." For Morrison, this is the, "strangely awkward, oddly constructed" solution to Hemingway's problem of keeping to the "logic of the narrative's discrimination," and to continue the "muzzling of this nigger."

Permit me to note that anyone who has served as a crewmember at sea, as apparently Ms. Morrison has not, knows exactly how recognition is transferred without words. In fact, much of Hemingway's work zeroes in on exactly this type of exchange: the knowing glance, smile, or the silence evidenced in the numerous instances of the many exemplary characters who "said nothing." The showing-not-telling aspect of his style is what is at work here.

At sea, as well as in life at large, one need only see that another mate has done or seen something of importance. It passes in the glimpse of an eye and is acknowledged and acted upon accordingly. I once *saw* that a crewmate of mine on a nuclear submarine *had seen* that a manual override valve was in the wrong position for "Dive" procedures. I made the proper adjustment after *having seen what he saw*. No words were spoken, I simply *saw that he had seen*. This is very common at sea.

This construction for describing such an occurrence was often used by Hemingway in other works. In *For Whom the Bells Toll*, when Robert Jordan and Maria have to cross the road by the bridge on separate horses, we read: “She looked back at him but did not say anything. He did not look at her except to see that she had understood” (FWBT, 458). In other words, he saw that she had seen.

To suggest that Hemingway “risked this improbable syntax to avoid a speaking black” is further evidence of Morrison’s lack of familiarity with Hemingway’s style, his impeccable mastery of the writing craft. The sentence does the job truly. Morrison’s explication does the job of inserting the ethos of her argument, but by this time the reader can’t help feeling the strong implication that Hemingway is actively pursuing pointedly racist ends in his work. Hence the need for Morrison’s disclaimers.

In mid-essay she says: “It is Harry Morgan who thinks a black woman is like a nurse shark, not Hemingway. An author is not personally accountable for the acts of his fictive creatures, although he is responsible for them.” What type of responsibility is implied here? Moral, political, or merely that they were created by written words? Moreover, Morrison has again totally misread the allusion. It is quite obvious that she doesn’t know what type of shark nurse-sharks are, and therefore she completely misses the point of Harry’s compliment to his wife.

Morrison’s final, Chauceresque disclaimer comes at the end of the essay when she concludes by flatly stating: “these deliberations are not about a particular author’s attitudes toward race.” This, after nineteen pages devoted to how racial matters appear to her in the work of Hemingway and after having implied that the connection between narrator and author makes them almost identical and that there must be responsibility for these characters and that ultimately, Hemingway’s “use of African-Americans [is] much more artless and unselfconscious than Poe’s.”

The recently deceased American writer William Burroughs, parodying the words of Jesus, said, “We will know them by the fruits of their labors, not their disclaimers.” The fruits of Morrison’s essay are truly strange and disappointing, to say the least, and certainly disconcerting to this graduate student. Shouldn’t we expect Nobel Prize-winning authors who choose to write literary criticism, “best selling” though it may be, to exhibit a modicum of textual mastery before expounding their aggressively politicized readings? Morrison’s reading of Hemingway is quite obviously steeped in those same postmodern critical sensitivities that, at the outset, were said to have been irrelevant to Hemingway.

To be sure, Hemingway is not a racist, as Ms. Morrison's convoluted argument suggests. Like Faulkner, with his profound analysis of the burden of the "curse of slavery," Hemingway celebrates the "eternal verities" and human dignity wherever he discovers it—in the nameless Cuban of *To Have and Have Not*, in Wesley, in Harry and Marie Morgan. Yet Morrison, playing with Hemingway's fiction in the dark, sheds no light on the subject; her argument is riddled with basic errors in reading textual details, lacks any larger grasp of Hemingway, the complex moral realist and profoundly spiritual writer whose extraordinary literary art is deeply rooted in the age-old tragedian's workshop. Morrison does not get the Hemingway who revered Tolstoy, Twain, Dostoevski, the Book of Saints, the Bible, and—above all—the sacramental sense of life as passed down through the true old rituals of *toreo* and the Church and the "secrets" of the timeless unchanging values: courage, compassion, sacrifice, endurance and human dignity. In Morrison's academically correct and fashionably reductionist reading, Hemingway's vision of "Grace Under Pressure" is diminished to "Race Under Pressure." Shouldn't we expect more from a Nobel-Prize winner? Given the Millennial Pressure of today, we need Hemingway's undiluted vision to truly help us "keep on," and see us into the coming century.

#### NOTE

The editors wish to apologize for the lack of proper citations in the above essay. Dennis Winter's activities as a folksinger have taken him on an extended tour of Ireland which has made it impossible for the *Shawangunk Review* to reach him.

PART THREE: GRADUATE STUDENT PANELISTS

## Values for Living

JANE MASSEY DIONNE

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1. Values for living are found throughout Ernest Hemingway's writings; EH has strong words of wisdom for his readers:

—*Live your life where you are.* H.R. Stoneback has a way of bringing the message home... "This is a good town. Why don't you start living your life in New Paltz?"

—*Values are always the same; we must get to know them.* Once you find them, they remain the same.

Brett: "Doesn't anything happen to your values?"

The Count: "No. Not any more."

Hold steadfast to our beliefs...And like the Count, be always in love.

—*Holding steady.*

Nick looked down into the clear, brown water...and watched the trout keeping themselves steady in the current...they changed their positions by quick angles, only to hold steady in the fast water again."

The trout are made to hold steady in their quest—so are we.

—*Man is not made for defeat.*

"A man can be destroyed but not defeated."

Santiago is our most obvious exemplar. Jake and Robert, Jordan and Maria are our exemplars in fiction; Ernest is our exemplar in real life.

2. Ernest Hemingway has brought many exemplary saints into our lives:

—*Saint Anthony*, to help us find ourselves when we are lost.

—*Saint Odilia*, to help us to open our eyes to the truth—in others and in ourselves.

—*Saint James/Santiago de Compostela*, the greatest pilgrim, the most difficult pilgrimage. Our life—what we do with it, how we live it—matters.

—*The Virgin of Cobra/Our Lady of Charity*, to whom I prayed and promised a pilgrimage for help on my *Old Man and the Sea* paper—she answered—a certain professor was most charitable.

3. Hemingway has given us beautiful stories and important messages. It must not stop with ourselves. It must be passed on...from one person to another...from us as teachers to our students...we are under obligation.

We all know about the sins of commission; we must not forget the sins of *omission*. We are obligated to bring the truth to light to resist, and to fight such insidious literary critics as Brenner. We are obligated to alert our teachers as well as our students to such calumny under the guise of criticism.

Ernest Miller Hemingway—this writer, this storyteller, this teacher.

H. R. Stoneback—has taught me to search for the iceberg, to look under the iceberg, to see clearly the vision, to bring the messages into my life.

Stoney—this writer, this storyteller, this teacher.

You both have made a difference in my life.

# A Vivid Character

SOMA MITRA

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A question this panel was asked to address is “Why is Hemingway one of our most important writers?” One answer is because of the vivid characters he created. Jake Barnes faces life with apparent confidence and humor. Except for one confession of seething anger, when he sees Brett with the homosexuals (*Sun* 28), Jake is detached and ironic. It is only when he is by himself late at night that the “hard-boiled” façade slips off (42). His insomnia is a symptom of his fragility. Jake’s customary understatement—“I felt tired and pretty rotten” (61)—throws his private hell into sharp relief. The only time he seems to be at peace is in Burguete, when he hears the wind howling and says, “It felt good to be warm and in bed” (116). But this temporary peace is shattered once he goes to Pamplona. The narrative becomes as speedy and as dramatic as the fiesta, and Jake is swept away.

There is a period of retreat, as Jake slowly puts himself back together by focusing on tangible realities such as newspapers and wine and food (236). We are reminded that Jake has been consistently spiritual, even as he tells us in his understated way that he is a “rotten Catholic”(103). His floating in the “quiet water” (241) is our clue that there is a chance he will recover and order will be restored in his mind and heart. Brett’s telegram brings on the final note of bitterness:

That seemed to handle it. That was it. Send a girl off with one man. Introduce her to another to go off with him. Now go and bring her back. And sign the wire with love. That was all right. (243)

On the overnight journey, Jake finally comes to terms with the situation, and when he meets Brett, it is more as a friend than a tormented lover. The evolution is clear from their meeting in his bedroom at the start of SAR, when he pleads, “Couldn’t we live together, Brett? Couldn’t we just live together?” (62). At the end, his rhetorical question to her bit of wishful thinking says it all, “Isn’t it pretty to think so?” (251). The pain of railing against the unchangeable is over for him. In its place is acceptance and faith.

H.R. Stoneback likens Jake’s progression in the novel to the pilgrim’s journey. Jake, he believes, is on a quest and reflects the same “moral and spiritual anguish

and joy of the pilgrim.” He traces Jake’s steps up the rue Saint Jacques, past the Val de Grace (83-84) and discovers that it is the “ancient route of millions of pilgrims.” His theory further states “that the fundamental structure of SAR is pilgrimage,” with Jake as the “conscious pilgrim of the peace”. If one scrutinizes the development of Jake from anguish (61-62) to envy (of Cohn and Romero) to pain (190-191) to final acceptance and peace (251), the theory makes sense. It is also no accident that Jake’s journey to meet Brett in the final movement of the story takes him through Avila, the birthplace of the “famous Carmelite nun and mystic,” and Escorial, “a monastery and palace near Madrid built in the sixteenth century” (OED). Jake’s affirmation of his faith is explicit and firm: “Some people have God,’ I said. ‘Quite a lot” (249).

So they endure, Jake and all the others, as symbols of triumph over moral adversity, their struggle as fresh and relevant today as they were in the 1920s. Reminders of the heroism of the ordinary person, they serve as beacons for those who try to live by a code of honor and courage at a time of cynicism and spiritual chaos. For us, they are examples of “Grace Under Millennial Pressure,” as they will be for the next century and millennium.

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# Women in Hemingway's Work

ANNE MOONEY

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I would like to focus briefly on the current state of Hemingway studies, which fails miserably in dealing with the strength and complexity of Hemingway's female characters. All too often, criticism mentions these characters as an afterthought, ignores them completely, or writes them off as not credible. Consider, for example, such sweeping critical generalizations as the notion that Hemingway's fictional women are people, not credible characters. Indeed, the "macho" label of the Hemingway Myth that has plagued Hemingway's reputation presupposes that his female characters are stereotypically submissive women, all adhering to the same mold. This could not be farther from the truth. It is imperative that future critical study of Hemingway's writing should deal with and emphasize the depth, complexity, and multidimensional and exemplary functions of women in his work.

Hemingway's fictional women not only have minds of their own but are often the catalysts for the spiritual growth of the male protagonist. Could Robert Jordan have learned anything without Maria? Would Frederic have had a story to tell if he had never known Catherine? Jake's evolution from "rotten Catholic" to "pretty religious" is similarly reliant on his relationship with Brett, who challenges his sense of spirituality throughout *Sun Also Rises*. These female characters are *not secondary*, and their essence cannot be summed up in one word.

Critics have to go to great lengths and through curious contortions to arrive at such views as Catherine as a scapegoat figure, who bears the burden of Frederic's sins and dies from them, or Brett functioning as an androgynous boy/woman because of her cropped hair. Isn't it far better to rely on the text, to read closely the words and actions of the characters? Hemingway expresses Catherine's supreme strength throughout the novel, through her courage and exemplary conduct, and through her words on her deathbed, "I'm going to die," "I hate it," "I'm not afraid, I just hate it" (330). And in *The Sun Also Rises*, he depicts Brett's vulnerability by describing her after her breakup with Pedro: "She looked away. I thought she was looking for another cigarette. Then I saw she was crying. I could feel her crying. Crying and shaking. She wouldn't look up. I put my arms around her" (243).

Hemingway criticism must stop referring to Hemingway's female characters as Hemingway's *female* characters. They are characters, as crucial to the stories in which they live as the male characters. For the next century, for the next millennium, I hope to see critical writing that explores the depths of Brett, Catherine, Pilar, Maria, Jig, Marie, and Renata because it is all there in the text, waiting to be discovered and understood.

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#### NOTE

The Eleventh Annual Graduate Symposium featured remarks from one additional student panelist. Aaron Zeidman's panel presentation consisted of an excellent reading from Hemingway's *A Moveable Feast*. With limited editorial commentary (and thus no text to print here), Zeidman's reading illustrated and exemplified the importance of Hemingway as stylist.

## Few Days

MARK W. BELLOMO

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In the autumn of that year we lived in an apartment in a village that looked across the river and the plain to the mountains. In the bed of the river there was muck and weeds, dank and moist in the sun, and the water was clouded and slowly moving and brown in the channels. Students went by the apartment and down the road and the dust they raised powdered the slots of the parking meters. The bases of the meters too were dusty and the slots filled early that semester and we saw the students marching along the road and the dust rising and slots, filled by the coins, full and the students marching and afterward the road bare and white except for the risen red lines.

The plain was full with crops; there were many orchards of apple trees and beyond the plain the mountains were brown and rich. There was mischief in the mountains and at night we could see the sparkling of fires. In the dark it was like summer lightning, but the nights were cool and there was not the feeling of a storm coming.

Sometimes in the dark we heard students marching under the window and fraternities going past driven by convertibles. There was much traffic at night and many bicycles on roads with boxes of groceries on each side of their handlebars and blue pick-up trucks that carried jocks, and other trucks with cabs covered with aluminum that moved slower in the traffic. There were expensive mountain bicycles too that passed in the day driven by Land Rovers, the long handlebars of the bikes covered with neon logos and bright corporate logos and customized paint jobs laid over the Land Rovers. To the east we could look across a valley and see a cluster of locust trees and behind were hills on this side of the river. There were parties in those hills too, but they were not excessive, and in the winter when the squalls came the coins all left the slots and the meters were empty and the parking spaces were filled with snow.

Below in the town, I watched the snow falling, looking out of the window of the English Department, the office for Teaching Assistants, where I sat with a friend drinking two bottles of Molson Golden, and looking out at the snow falling slowly and heavily, we knew the semester was over. Up the river none of the hills had been mischievous; none of the mountains beyond the river had been mischievous. That was all left for next year. My friend saw the professor

from our department going by in the quad, walking carefully in the slush, and pounded on the window to attract his attention. The professor looked up. He saw us and smiled. My friend motioned for him to come up. The professor shook his head and went on.

Andy finished his beer and opened the small refrigerator to bring out two more Molsons. He handed one to me.

"I'm glad this semester is over. I'm sick to death of all this goddamn work. I can't wait to go on vacation," said Andy.

"Where are you going on vacation?" I asked.

"Somewhere warm with no snow and no ice and lots of beaches. I can't stand all of this cold weather. It drives me nuts. I hate shoveling my truck off every morning just to get to class."

"I don't mind the snow. It reminds me of mom, home, Christmas, the smell of cookies baking."

When I was a little kid, at Christmastime mom would hang gingerbread men on the Christmas tree and after a week the arms would be gone and after two weeks the legs would be gone until on Christmas eve all that was left of the men would be their tiny heads, staring at you with their deep dark raisin eyes.

"Do you know where you are going for break?" asked Andy.

I went to my cluttered desk and fingered a map of Belgium, folding out the creases and sipping the cold beer.

"I'm going to Belgium. I spend so much time with my family in America, I figure I should visit my relatives in Tienen. It's a nice little farming town near Brussels."

"Why Belgium again? We get enough bad weather here. Besides, didn't the whore in *The Sun Also Rises* dislike Belgians? She said something like 'God, I hate Flamands.' Belgium must be a pretty boring country if even a prostitute hates it."

I took a long pull off my beer.

"Me, I want to have a totally relaxing vacation. I might even pick up a few books that I have been meaning to read but haven't had the time," Andy said.

Andy sat on the brown couch next to my desk, put down his beer and leaned over to look at the stacks of books piled in front of him. He picked *The Brothers Karamazov* off the top of a pile and began thumbing through it.

"I want to read something good over vacation. Real page-turners where I can relate to the main character and say to myself 'You know, I'm just like that' or 'Hey, that's me!'" Andy tossed the book on top of a falling pile. He reached for another one and held it up.

"This any good?" he said.

"I try to read it once a year."

"I remember the part where they get lost in the cave and the Indian tries to get them."

"He can really write relationships. It's a great book."

"From what I remember it seemed a little childish. You know, juvenile?"

I finished my beer and set it down on the floor.

"I want to enjoy my vacation. And I want to write stories."

"Stories? Writing and teaching. Man, I'm not going to miss teaching," said Andy, finishing his beer. "What a grind."

"I wonder why he didn't stop in to say good-bye?" I said, nodding to the window.

"You know him. He's always busy with lectures or conferences or papers. He means well. He's probably got a hell of a lot to do."

I thought about the professor. He was a great scholar. The department liked him well enough and his students loved him. He was a good teacher, and during his lectures the undergraduates, hands on their chins, looked like baby birds at feeding time. They looked to him for answers to all their questions.

"When are you leaving?" asked Andy.

"The day after tomorrow. We're taking the bus from downtown to Grand Central Station and they'll provide transportation to JFK. It's a direct flight from there to Brussels."

"Murphy's going with you?"

"Yeah. He's going to drive me crazy because this is the first time he's ever flown. Jesus. I hope everything goes well."

"It'll be fine. Look. I gotta go. If I stay for another beer, I'm probably going to have to shovel my damn truck out again. Take it easy on those European women," he said.

I shook his hand and he put on a black wool hat and tightly drew his gray down jacket around his body. He tied up his boots and walked out of the office and I waited for him at the window, resting my head on the pane. My breath fogged up the glass and I wiped the window clean with the sleeve of my sweater and looked outside. It was snowing so hard you couldn't tell unless you looked carefully at the light around one of the lamps littering the quad. After a few seconds I saw Andy trudging through and cursing the snow. He and the few other students outside looked like nomads wandering a vast desert but as the snow hit their faces it melted—a cold quiet reminder. I stepped back from the window and looked down at the map and found Tienen, and then looked for the coast.

# Swagger (for Hemingway)

DENNIS DOHERTY

---

Guilty. And why not?  
You've had a fine day's  
work; the world can  
curse your cocky strut—  
beard to the horizon—  
and wish you toward your crux,  
for you've done something  
cleanly and well: fixed  
a fractured sentence  
knitted stronger at the wound;  
cooked stew that smelled  
of onion, herb, and fields  
of wine soaked cloves;  
declared love in words bold,  
fatal as Roland's song;  
thrilled children with spikes high  
sliding into home;  
planted bulbs in a good place:  
the fast and tragic April sun.

Refine the death that whets the air.  
Each moment is an act of grace;  
each action is a runic stone.  
Construct the rhetoric  
of guts; birth bricking towers  
of ritual basic as bread,  
of chords, peril plumbed.  
It's pretty to think on buds  
in chance clusters, but  
fibrous will's muscle forks  
roots of purple stock in mad  
union with the ground it pounds.

Soon, the antidote to structure, sleep—  
doom—confounder of control that  
can't be cornered. Don't pick about  
this petty mort; drink its grape-red blood.  
Artifice, that universal intersect,  
is your communal human proof.  
Embrace what's wild and what's been bred.  
Stride through fools and faults and fears  
toward your soul's roving own.

# Walking to the “Indian Camp”

DONALD JUNKINS

---

something about a meadow soaking wet with rain  
in late October, and the golden  
leaves, about coming around a bend  
above a thin creek, and Indian names,  
something about the Indians  
gone, a logging road running back into the hills,  
about new turnips broken  
and scuffed in the trail, something  
about a great earth mound  
at the clearing where shanties fell down  
and yellow leaves blazing in the rain  
something about not dying  
and dying  
something about yellow leaves and names  
where an Indian girl had lain  
something about a yellow wood  
on a Sunday in the October rain

# Dozing in Hostal Burguete after Walking to Roncesvalles

DONALD JUNKINS

---

I dream of Robert Lowell lost  
down a well in a beech forest  
dripping , foxglove in a mist

beyond a turn, Roland's horn  
sounding in the wind.  
Already the foxes have the hind.

I try to save the thistles  
in his heels (this blood rust  
shutter banging, those split-tail

hawks above the field). Christ  
knows this is a double story.  
This was a Basque ambush party.

Today high above the pass  
we found a beech grove with green blanket grass  
by a communications tower, and higher

followed black iridescent sheep dung  
beetles up the trail. On the rung  
of the top ridge, a dark oak grove hung,

and grazing black-faced sheep  
and horses moving in wind-deep  
mist. I picked a piece of quartz for a keep

sake, and wildflowers, and headed face  
down past the dove blinds and empty  
scattered in the wet sedge erasing

each step to the pass, and the pilgrim trail  
by the stream and the oaks to *Roncesvalles*  
through the deep pink bells

of foxglove ringing. Can our pilgrimage be over?  
At the feet of the iron oaks, in pockets of moss,  
lie soft handkerchiefs of thousands of clovers.

# The Soul of Brew

## [In the manner of Ernest Hemingway]

DAN RUTAR

---

*The Collected Poems of Ernest Hemingway* features a comic parody “The Soul of Spain [In the manner of Gertrude Stein].” In the spirit of Hemingway’s parody of Stein, we offer the following line-by-line parody of Hemingway’s parody.

In the bars in the bars in the bars in the bars Downtown.  
Are there bars Downtown?  
Oh yes papa on the contrary and there are no barfights.  
The students stew in kegs of brew  
It isn’t right to dis’ your crew  
Yo! Cuz, let’s go to the dorms.  
Dorms are where the herb’s at, dorms are where the  
slurp’s at.  
Yo!, let’s go slurp in the dorms.  
There is no burp in a slurp.  
Still a slurp may not be burpless.  
Let’s go slurp a burpless slurp in the dorms.

Fellatio.  
Fellatio.  
Bill says fellatio’s not sex.  
Sex fellatio.  
Sex  
Sex  
Sex  
Bill’s misses never knowingly would go down white  
waters on Philanderers.

Now Bill says fellatio’s not sex.  
Go down fellatio.  
Fellatio is a tripp.  
Synchronicity is a tripp.

Dictators are (still) a tripp.  
Wagging Dogs is a tripp.  
Interns are a tripp.  
Big Mac is a tripp.  
Tyson is a tripp.

They say Stoney is a tripp.  
But Stoney is nice.  
Yo!, let's go sing a spring to Stoney.  
Wooooooo hooooooo! very nice spring.  
You sang that nicely  
Can you sing another?  
Let me go and sing one.  
Let us all go and sing one.  
Let the seventeen girls in the seven canoes sing one.  
Yo! there, little nymph.  
Sing one for Stoney.  
Cool.  
You have all been secret spring divers.  
Now all the springs are sacred.  
The whole World sings its springs for Ernest.  
We will sing another spring for Stoney.  
Singing a spring is singing a spring.  
In April it is the spirit of the spring that heals.

## Easter 1999

From *The Hemingway Variations: Spinning the Centennial*

H.R. STONEBACK, SUNY New Paltz

---

It's not the economy, stupid—it's the world.  
When you fight, Papa said, you fight to win.  
Ground troops or nothing. Yeah, right. The Liberation  
Of Paris, or Belgrade or Pristina—a picnic  
With Apaches and ground troops. Montenegro's  
Next. Then Bulgaria, Cyprus, Greece, Turkey.  
My word yes a most pleasant picnic.  
Funny how the very train the kid Hemingway rode  
Through Serbia maybe some of the same cars,  
Eight decades ago, to see the refugees,  
The women with the dead babies,  
Is the same train,  
The Midnight Special of Ethnic cleansing.

Before these train rides, in some lost valley  
Village, huddled for a week in some lost basement  
Waiting to be shot. Then the exodus, the raised  
Arms in the hungry mob at the border, hands reaching  
For stale bread. The camera closeup: she lost her father,  
Eight brothers, and her baby this week, but now  
she looks happy in the snow with her loaf of bread,  
This is my Body. Welcome to the Ottoman Empire.  
Welcome to the Crusades. Welcome to World War Three.  
The women with their dead babies. All the nice chaps.  
In another lost valley, the Serbian nuns at the ancient  
Convent and the Serbian farmers placed there for 500  
Years survey their poisoned fields and livestock:

Stiff-legged hogs rot and litter the lots behind  
The single village street. An old man stands sentry  
With a World War One vintage rifle. The KLA has struck

Again. This time they only kidnapped three Serbian children.  
 “Why does the West,” the old man asks, “give the KLA  
 such deadly weapons?” The film-maker says nothing.  
 The old nun, weeding in the ancient convent garden,  
 Shakes a handful of weeds at the camera, asks,  
 “Why does the Christian West support Muslim expansionism?”  
 All the paradoxes—I need a paradoxygen mask.

It’s Easter morning and Belgrade is burning:  
 Over pre-Mass coffee I watch the flames explode  
 On my TV screen, I see the train we rode three decades  
 Ago, our passports confiscated by the nice chaps,  
 Altercations at the border. I watch the bombs hit the streets  
 Where we once walked. I watch the Pope praying for the River  
 Of Refugees. I study the sealed Macedonian frontier,  
 The Albanian mothers holding tight to dying babies  
 In the freezing rain, waiting for the border to open.  
 It’s NATO’s 50th Anniversary. Happy Anniversary.  
 Sparrow is in the kitchen weeping, reading  
 Another Kosovar mother’s book, reading Mother Teresa’s  
 Diary. The single token Serb on CNN says that changing  
 Demographics threaten Sacred Serbian Sites.  
 Before the commercial, the announcer says,  
 “Easter is not until next week in Serbia.”

This week I got so I dreamed about things—  
 You don’t mind the women who are having babies  
 At the closed borders  
 As you do the women with the dead babies.  
 It is all a most pleasant business.  
 My word yes a most pleasant business.

## Michigan: Summer 1961

From *The Hemingway Variations: Spinning the Centennial*

H.R. STONEBACK, SUNY New Paltz

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Summer 1961: I am working as what they call  
The Social Director at what they call a Dude  
Ranch in Northern Michigan, just down the road  
From Hemingway's Horton Bay and Petoskey.  
When I get my paycheck I go to the village bar  
And drink with the lumberjacks and the fishermen.  
It is the second of July. Firecrackers, Cherry  
Bombs shatter the night, shudder and split the streets.  
The village is preparing to celebrate the Fourth.  
On the big old green-tinted TV over the bar  
We hear the news, the shot heard round the world.,  
The shots that ring out a lost world,  
The shots we remember better, where we were,  
Who we were with, than those new frontier shots  
Two years later in Dallas. The TV says:  
Hemingway died from a gunshot accident in Idaho.  
The bar community agrees—no accident, must be suicide.  
An old whitebearded man, like some ancient lost Nick  
Adams, sits at the end of the bar, crying over beer,  
Saying over and over again: "Papa betrayed us.  
Papa betrayed us." I did not know what he meant then,  
But even then, just a kid, I knew it was not betrayal.

Oh hold him tight, he is in much pain.  
Hold him very tight.  
We owe God a death but I am utterly unable to resign myself.  
Those of us who know walk very slowly,  
And we look at one another with infinite love and  
Compassion. Twenty years later, Mary, in double-martini  
Tears told me how it was that morning when she heard,  
When she found her husband.

And Renata was not there, no one was there,  
To give the grace of a happy death.  
But Mary said they sang old folksongs on his last night.  
The huge filthy birds are hunched.  
The hyenas are whimpering.  
The bicycle policemen are coming.  
And there, through that waterfall, toward that mountain,  
Great, high, and unbelievably white in the sun—  
Is that where we too are going?  
Happy Birthday, Papa—Happy Hallelujah Birthday anyway.

# After Hemingway

AARON ZEIDMAN

---

These people in their shirts and ties, or dresses, and their hair gone wild, or pinned over neatly, symptoms of the same madness.

Ernest sat in the room and looked around seeing sweaters and wild hair, and barrettes, and suit-jackets and bright eyes with black rings around the eyes. Poring over books all of last night probably, Ernest thought. He sat and pondered what that meant exactly.

“That depends,” he could hear himself say out loud, “on what you make of it. Whatever is done fake usually just feels awkward afterwards.”

“Mr. Hemingway,” the teacher said, “Nobody’s asked you anything.”  
“Excuse me,” Ernest said.

Then a girl spoke up. She said, “I’ve probably done the work wrong because I didn’t ask you what you wanted like the rest,” which drew an immediate laugh from everyone, but then a hush drew in as the truth of the statement went home.

Ernest looked down at the front of his brown sweater. He could feel his collar creeping up his neck. I’m in the wrong place, he thought.

“Oh hell, that’s any place,” he could hear himself say out loud.

“Mr. Hemingway,” the teacher said. “Please pipe down.”

After the meeting Ernest got up quickly and went up to the office to get his things. He settled some papers on his desk and went out in the cold to where his car was parked a few streets away. He had soon left behind New Paltz and its dark orchards, stone walls and cemeteries, and passed through Modena whose flimsy houses were arrayed tastelessly at the sides of the road, leaving a bitter longing for the old country. Plattekill was next, looking too much to Ernest like Mexico, rocky and dusty, even at night, with numerous peeling wooden signs by crumbling buildings, or hammered into the dirt at the peak of a rocky outcrop—Casa Tula; La Copa—Comidas y Bailes; Il Nilo—all advertising businesses that had long been closed down. One building only looked Spanish (the sign had corroded illegibly away) and its suspiciously cultural exterior sat deteriorating next to a pile of rubble and an asphalt lot with grass coming up through cracks in it. Ernest drove past the Café 32, Spanish-American cuisine, which was open, but didn’t keep regular hours, and so when Ernest chanced to pass it, the bar lights on in the window, he couldn’t afford or was too tired to stop. Ernest wanted to go

there, and each time he passed it he would turn his head so that he could see the picture of the bullfighter painted on the white brick.

Soon Ernest came to the crest of a large hill, and the expanse of the Hudson River Valley opened before him. He dropped down the winding roads that led to the river's bank and was on the remarkably wide lamplit streets of Newburgh.

A crescent moon was just rising over the mountains on the Beacon side of the river, setting off the ripples in the stream with white tips, and revealing the river's breadth more accentuated by the opposite bank's retreat into shadow. There was a grandeur about the scene that Ernest felt was worthy of stopping for, tired as he was. He drove up the steep hill that rose up over the riverbank, parked his car and walked out onto the grassy hill that offered a superior view of what lay before him.

There was the moon, the river, the dark mountains. Cars were passing over the bridge that spanned bank to bank, their headlights shining off into the air that hung over the water. A train rumbled onto the scene, ticking over the tracks just at the water's edge. Ernest looked at, from one angle, the train and the bridge; from another, the bridge and the moon; and yet another, the moon and train.

"Unlikely combinations," he said out loud, "though they all speak pretty much the same language." As "modern" a writer as Ernest was, he understood that everything he saw said more than it did.

Looking downriver, he could not see Bannerman's Island and its ruined castle that sat strategically where the river narrowed. But he knew it was there. And looking back at the river, then the moon, he made a vow: "I will try to see all I can, and remember it, and in the morning I will stand to set it down." Still looking at the moon, he felt the promise of its counterpart that he would so boldly assert in the midst of despair. And gazing still at the slim crescent, curved and white like a bull's horns, he made another vow, drawing his hand from his head to his middle, and again from shoulder to shoulder: "I will try to accept the truth gracefully, no matter how roughly it appears."

PART SIX: BOOK REVIEWS

**Proust in Africa:**

Hemingway's *True at First Light*

JOHN LANGAN

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EDITORIAL NOTE: Since Valerie Hemingway's keynote address and the following discussion session (published herein) address the controversy over the publication of *True at First Light*; since it was the most-discussed literary event of 1999; since various media proclaimed the publication of Hemingway's "last" work as the last great literary event of the 20th century and a fitting way to close the writerly millennium; since there was much remorse and incrimination expressed in major literary venues from the *New Yorker* to the *New York Times* to major Hemingway Centennial events around the world, indeed ill-informed accusations and moral anguish over the decision to publish *True at First Light*; and since a leading journal, *The Hemingway Review*, saw fit to print no less than ten reviews of *True at First Light* in its last issue, the *Shawangunk Review* here publishes two reviews which address, obliquely and directly, most of the issues raised.

—H. R. S.

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Published to coincide with the centenary of his birth, *True at First Light* is the latest of Ernest Hemingway's posthumous publications. Hemingway's son Patrick has edited this "fictional memoir" out of a long manuscript that Hemingway wrote in the nineteen fifties but left unfinished and unrevised at the time of his death in 1961. It is a frequently interesting, occasionally exciting, but ultimately disappointing book.

Set in the Kajiado District of Kenya in December of 1953, the book relates Hemingway's experiences as acting Game Warden, focusing on his wife Mary's efforts to kill a marauding lion and his own relationship with Debba, a young African woman who considers herself and is considered by him to be his "fiancee." Hemingway writes that Africa's great age reduces everyone in it to relative children, and as if Africa has shown his fifty-four years to be so short a time span that the past really is close to the present, Hemingway's past is very much a part of this book. Hemingway incorporates his past into the narrative through conversation and through authorial asides triggered by seemingly minor details. We learn about his encounters with D.H. Lawrence and George Orwell, and we learn about his life as a young man, hunting and fishing. In his reflections on the

past, particularly on those writers who were his contemporaries and who are now dead, we see Hemingway reflecting, poignantly, on his own mortality, while the vignettes about his young life contain some of the book's best writing.

The past elements deepen the book's thematic concerns. Like all of Hemingway's work, *True at First Light* is concerned with manners: if Africa is the place where past and present come close together, it is also the place where one's values and what one does with them are put on display. It is a book about trying to be good, about trying to balance duty with desire. As acting Game Warden, it is Hemingway's duty to ensure that all marauding animals are dispatched promptly, including the lion that his wife is and has been trying to kill for the last several months, yet Mary Hemingway insists that she be the one to kill the lion and that it be hunted properly, in the fashion of the old hunters. Similarly, Hemingway has no intention of marrying Debba, which she seems to know, but both of them persist in the play that she will be his wife, especially when Mary leaves for Nairobi for a few days.

With this much good to say about its individual elements, it might come as a surprise to hear that *True at First Light* ultimately disappoints, but this is a book whose whole is less than the sum of its parts. The book is repetitious where it does not need to be so, and particularly during its last third, Hemingway's writing becomes increasingly sloppy, increasingly rambling, as anecdote and vignette are supplanted by run-on interior monologue. The climax to the relationship with Debba is underdeveloped and rushed; indeed, that entire aspect of the book would have benefited from more development. Had he lived, perhaps Hemingway would have done so; as it is, though, what we have with *True at First Light* is the outline for what could have been a very interesting book together with some well-written scenes from it.

If *True at First Light* is not the last, lost masterpiece that it is advertised as being, neither is it Hemingway's worst book (a distinction of which *To Have and Have Not* seems secure). Much of it is at least interesting writing, and it shows Hemingway pursuing a more Proustian direction for his prose. It is, of course, a must-have for scholars and aficionados of the writer, but others might wait for the paperback edition. It is to be hoped that, at some point in the future, the entire manuscript from which this book has been carved will be published; indeed, one wishes that this had been done in the first place.

# Hemingway's African Pilgrimage:

Or, No Remorse over *True at First Light*

H.R. STONEBACK, SUNY New Paltz

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Let's get this said and clarify the web of complicity at the outset: I cast one of the five votes, perhaps the deciding vote, which allowed the publication of *True at First Light* to occur. And I feel no remorse. "Don't you feel even a little guilty?" I have been asked by both Hemingway fans and Hemingway bashers. The answer is NO—I'll have double anchovies, hold the remorse.

Certainly the most-discussed fin de siècle and end-of-millennium literary event, the publication of *True at First Light* in its present form should be valued for what it is: a much-edited posthumous publication of an unfinished manuscript which brings important news of Hemingway, along with some great writing and some uneven, unfinished prose narrative. At one of the many Hemingway Centennial celebrations around the world in 1999, a jaded Hemingway scholar remarked wearily: "I can't decide which event is more important—the publication of *True at First Light* or the production of the Thomasville line of Hemingway Furniture." In case my readers have been on another planet, I note that Thomasville has been aggressively promoting its 98-piece Hemingway Furniture line: chairs, beds, desks, etc., bearing the names of Hemingway characters and other iconic Hemingwayesque nomenclature. When the collection had its debut, I even went to the Thomasville store—as always the hands-on literary critic concerned with close reading of, or reclining on, the actual "text." I went to inspect—was it the Jake Barnes or the Brett Ashley bed? Then there was the Santiago desk (why a *Santiago desk!*), the Frederic Henry-Catharine Barkley couch, the leather Papa armchair—which is really a very nice chair, even if Hemingway never owned anything remotely like it. I suggested to the store manager that they could advance both sales and civilization if they included the complete works of Hemingway for their buyers to read in those Papa beds and chairs. He thought it was a good idea, but it never happened. He gave me several copies of the fat, full-color issue of the Thomasville magazine on Hemingway, which tells us that "the Ernest Hemingway Collection is an eclectic mix of home furnishings inspired by the life and adventures of *America's greatest writer*" (emphasis added). In a way the Thomasville magazine is more interesting than most academic journals devoted to Hemingway, and the production values are better, the distribution wider.

Maybe it will inspire some would-be Ph.D. to write a dissertation on “Furniture Imagery in Hemingway’s Fiction,” or “Transgressive Beds and Phallogocentric Bookcases in Hemingway’s Posthumous Works.” In any case, since I haven’t noticed any line of furniture produced in the name of anyone else in the *Norton Anthology*, one answer to the ironic inquiry above about the relative importance of the Hemingway Furniture and *True at First Light* is this: *Anything* from Hemingway’s hand, no matter how unfinished, no matter how it is edited, is worth having.

What are the facts about this new book, ostensibly the last from Hemingway? *True at First Light* (not the author’s title) is an account of Hemingway’s second African safari, in 1953-54. The published version, edited by Hemingway’s son Patrick, is about 100,000 words, by most reports roughly half the length of the unfinished manuscript that Hemingway worked on from July 1954, and well into 1956. (The extent of the cut material has been variously reported as 25 percent to 50 percent of the manuscript. Even Patrick has reported both figures. Clearly, someone will have to do a precise word count.) No one seems to have decided yet exactly what it should be called; some reviewers call it a “novel,” others describe it as a “fictionalized memoir,” still others refer to it as a “journal.” As Patrick Hemingway writes in his introduction, it “is certainly not a journal”; he calls it “a fiction” and stresses that “ambiguous counter-point between fiction and truth lies at the heart of this memoir.” (This is probably true of all memoirs.)

We have seen much of this work before. More than one-fourth of the manuscript was published in three special issues of *Sports Illustrated* (20 December 1971; 3 and 10 January 1972), under their title *African Journal*. I will make what might sound like an extraordinary statement from a Hemingway scholar: the best discussion, to date, of Hemingway’s African manuscript is by Ray Cave, the *Sports Illustrated* writer who edited and introduced the piece. He has a vivid appreciation for Hemingway’s writerly problems with the manuscript, as for passages that “equal Hemingway’s prose at its finest,” and for the new Hemingway “revealed for the first time in his own words... a Hemingway quite different from his public image.” And I can confirm what Cave reports from Mary Hemingway—that the work is “fictionalized fact” and the “fictionalizing” is minimal—for Mary told me the same thing. In the late 1970s, standing in her New York penthouse in front of the skin of the lion who is a major character in this work, Mary told me: “It’s amazing how Ernest remembered the details without taking notes or keeping a journal. I checked his facts against my diary. He always got it right. Except when he was making it up to make a better story. Then he got it righter.” I reached out and touched Mary’s lion skin; that was, in

a sense, my first contact with this African book. Then Mary said: “You would be very interested in this manuscript—there’s an awful lot about religion in it. Too much. I don’t know how this can ever be made into a book.” She handed me a folder containing part of the manuscript. I read some of it, intending to come back and read more, but at that time my real interest was in another manuscript that Mary showed me, some of the 2,000-plus pages that would eventually be published as *The Garden of Eden*. But that was in another country, and besides, it wasn’t long before the lion skin and the manuscripts were moved to the Kennedy Library. And the *Garden* manuscript was “closed” to scholars until 1986, the *African Book* manuscript (most of it) “closed” until 1999.

In Cave’s *Sports Illustrated* introduction, he lists “five primary plot lines or themes” in the manuscript: 1) “nature, hunting and the hunter, subjects upon which [Hemingway] is a writer without peer in the English language”; 2) “what might be called the Africanization of Hemingway”; 3) “the graces of age and the pleasures of power”; 4) “the Mau Mau, the police and the weakening of British Colonial rule in Kenya”; 5) “the issue of religion.” As Cave notes, his edited version stresses only the first theme, but his five-point list serves as a useful touchstone for the new book edited by Patrick Hemingway. In my view, three of the themes identified by Cave are primary—nature and hunting, the “Africanization” of Hemingway, and religion; the others are secondary. And these three primary themes are inextricably interwoven.

Among the many variations on the theme of “nature, hunting and the hunter,” we might note first the seriousness with which Hemingway takes his role as Honorary Game Warden, his “duty...to kill any lions that molested cattle, donkeys, sheep, goats or people. This we would always do.” And the hunt would always be conducted, under Hemingway, by “certain ethical standards,” which the Africans find “too rigid.” But they are the standards Hemingway learned from Pop, the primary exemplar in the book; Pop is based, of course, on the famous “white hunter” Philip Percival, who had been Hemingway’s guide in 1934 (and much earlier, Teddy Roosevelt’s guide) and who served as one of the models for Wilson in “The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber.” While the duty to hunt marauding beasts, especially the lion, is taken seriously as duty, it is also presented as a kind of religious quest, Miss Mary’s “search for the Holy Grail.” Indeed, it is Miss Mary who does most of the shooting while Hemingway studies and identifies with the animals. “The time of shooting beasts for trophies was long past with me,” Hemingway writes; “I was shooting for the meat we needed to eat...and against beasts that had been outlawed for cause.” Animal rights activists may not be converted to Hemingway aficionados by reading this

book, but, for example, some of the anti-deer and anti-goose crowd much in the news these days may be, those liberal yuppie suburban mothers who are the anchor of local politics in the Northeast and the leaders of the fight against Bodacious Bambi and the Goose Plague. Mother Anti-Goose will find support from Game Warden Hemingway. And the hunt itself remains, for Hemingway, a “wonderful thing...there is much mystic nonsense written about hunting but it is something that is probably older than religion. Some are hunters and some are not.” After this observation Hemingway develops a three-page extended metaphor of Miss Mary’s hunt for the lion in terms of the ritual of *torero*, i.e., the *corrida* (or “bullfight”).

Much of this is what we might expect from Hemingway, but there are some surprising variations on the theme of nature—e.g., Hemingway the Bird-watcher. He and Miss Mary study bird books and observe the extraordinary bird life very carefully, and Mary does so with greater precision. This leads Hemingway to write, after the lion quest is over: “by hunting one beast too hard and concentrating on him I had missed much in not observing the birds properly...I had neglected them terribly. Reading the bird book I felt how stupid I had been and how much time I had wasted.” He thinks of all the birds—their movements, colors, songs—that he loves to watch at home in Cuba and resolves to study African bird life with the same love and attention: “This looking and not seeing things was a great sin, I thought, and one that was easy to fall into. It was always the beginning of something bad and I thought that we did not deserve to live in the world if we did not see it.”

The next primary theme, the “Africanization” of Hemingway, pervades the book. At the beginning, Hemingway states his love for Africa, then he narrows the range of that love to a specific part of Africa, Kenya, and then to the particular tribal part of Kenya that he loves, that he wants “to know more about...than [he] had any right to know.” He is there not as a tourist, not as just another rich and fashionable maker of safaris, but “to learn and to know about everything” and to do this not to serve some anthro-missionary goal but in order to become increasingly a part of local tribal life. He stresses this intense localism throughout; he thinks “how lucky we were this time in Africa to be living long enough in one place so that we knew the individual animals and knew the snake holes and the snakes that lived in them. When I had first been in Africa we were always in a hurry to move from one place to another to hunt beasts for trophies.” Although all white people are here called “Europeans,” Hemingway emphatically asserts that he is “not a European”—he is an American, and his American identity is proclaimed as Indian. That is to say, the

primary mode of identity in this Hemingway work, as in most, is tribal and local. In this version of selective tribalism, nearly every chapter has some indication of Hemingway's identification with, then his participation in, and finally his membership in the Kamba tribe.

Near the end of the book, Mary says that she wants "to go and really see something of Africa... You don't have any ambition. You'd just as soon stay in one place." To which Ernest replies: "Have you ever been in a better place?" And again, more firmly: "I'd rather *live* in a *place* and have an *actual part in the life of it* than just see new strange things" (emphasis added). Of course, contrary to the popular view and the usual biocritical view, this has always been the fundamental Hemingway mode of being: in France, or Cuba, or Africa. He is never a tourist, always a local or in the process of being localized, or longing to be a member of a selected community, or *creating* a new tribe or community, rooted in place, in the best traditions of the best places.

At the very heart of Hemingway's African pilgrimage is the question of religion. Religious motifs and images are so pervasive that the subject should be allotted much more than the brief space here in which I must summarize. When I talked to Patrick Hemingway as he was editing the book, he stressed one thing: "It's full of talk about the Baby Jesus and all this stuff foreshadowing the coming of Christmas, but Christmas never comes" (Conversation: January 1999). When I received my pre-publication copy, the first thing I did after reading it through was to begin a count of the key passages and allusions dealing with religion; I stopped counting after 85 such passages. Likewise, with the references to the marijuana-effect Christmas Tree that Miss Mary quests assiduously for (with magic potent enough to keep many men stoned for many days), I stopped counting after 35 references. And there are many references to the "Birthday of the Baby Jesus" and other formulations, some serious, some hilarious, involving the words "Baby Jesus"—e.g., when they go to dig up the magic Christmas Tree, Hemingway says they are 'working for the Forestry Department of Our Lord, the Baby Jesus.' I stopped counting the "Baby Jesus" occurrences after about 30. And I stopped counting the citations of the Mountain-God Kilimanjaro after about 30. As *Sports Illustrated* noted long ago, religion comes up "repeatedly, often in a humorous connotation; but at heart it [is] no laughing matter." Rose Marie Burwell, one of the few Hemingway scholars who has commented on this question, asserts that "the weakest part of the African book is Hemingway's attempt to construct a religious mythology that resembles nothing so much as the hilarious, irreverent South African film *The Gods Must Be Crazy*." Burwell misses the main point, but she is right about one thing—Hemingway's treatment

of religion is comic, at times, hilarious—yet, at the same time, as is always the case with Hemingway, religion is a serious matter. Burwell seems to miss what *Sports Illustrated* got way back in 1971: “at heart” religion is never a “laughing matter” for Hemingway. Pilgrims don’t make pilgrimages just for laughs.

In any case, I am willing to bet that there are already dissertations, essays, and books in progress on “Hemingway’s ‘New Religion’ in *True at First Light*.” Some of these studies, no doubt, will see the “new religion” as a rejection of Christianity, or as Hemingway’s farewell to Catholicism, and thus miss the point of Hemingway’s Catholicism yet once more. Others will be sophisticated enough, it is to be hoped, to recognize that Hemingway’s vision of Catholicism in relation to his African tribal religion is subsumptive, that beneath all the comic play with religion, there is a syncretic religious thesis at work, a syncretistic drive to reconcile, to localize and thus truly universalize his fundamental Catholic beliefs.

Under the rubric of syncretism *True at First Light* might seem to some students of Church history to be an adumbration of post-Vatican Two trends, and Hemingway might be seen as a kind of forerunner, a prophet of ecumenical inclusiveness and new modalities of worship. Here, for example, is Papa describing what Mary calls “Papa’s religion”: “We retain the best of various other sects and tribal law and customs. But we weld them into a whole that all can believe.” Take your choice: all on one page “Papa’s religion” is described as a “new religion,” as a “frightfully old religion,” as a religion that Papa makes “more complicated every day,” as a “revealed” religion rooted in Papa’s “early visions.” Whatever is serious, whatever is joking, one theme remains constant: the syncretistic drive to reconcile the local and the universal.

Yet, for all the syncretistic drive of *True at First Light*, familiar Catholic themes persist—such as the rejection of certain aspects of Protestantism. For example, one rather unpleasant character who wants to convert to Hemingway’s “new religion” is a Protestant, educated by Protestant missionaries. Hemingway notes that he has “strong black shoes to prove his Christianity.” He tells Hemingway he is not Catholic. Hemingway replies: “I thought you were not of that faith from the shoes.” The Protestant says: “We have many things in common with the Catholic faith but we do not worship images.” “Too bad,” Hemingway says. “There are many great images.” When this character, renamed Peter by Hemingway, wants to convert, he will have to take off his Protestant shoes and learn to appreciate images. Later, when he tells Hemingway proudly that he never speaks “of the Baby Jesus except with contempt,” Hemingway warns him: “We may need the Baby Jesus. Never speak of him with disrespect.”

And what else would Papa say, in a book that tends toward Christmas and the “Baby Jesus” on every other page?

There is much more in the religious design—throw in Gitchy Manitou, the Great Spirit, the Happy Hunting Grounds, add sacred trees and mountains and African religious ceremonies, animistic and Muslim references, meditations on the soul, ample pilgrimage allusions involving Rome, Mecca and Santiago de Compostela, and you have some notion of how rich the mix is. The reader who has not studied the omitted portions of the manuscript should tread cautiously before drawing conclusions about this serio-comic *mélange*, and should remember also that Hemingway is always serious about religion, which is precisely why he jokes about it. Never preachy, *True at First Light* rides on the syntax of spirituality, moves in religious rhythms that alternate between mystical meditation and epiphanic moments and the self-deprecatory mockery of Papa, leader of the “new religion.”

One striking example may be seen in the sequence of movements that begins with the death of Mary’s lion. First, there is ceremonial drinking; then Hemingway writes: “I drank and then lay down by the lion...and begged his pardon for us having killed him and while I lay beside him I felt for the wounds...I drew a fish in front of him with my forefinger in the dirt and then rubbed it out with the palm of my hand.” This Ichthus-ceremony then flows directly into a meditation on the dark night of the soul and leads eventually to a quasi-Eucharistic meal: “It was wonderful to be eating the lion and have him in such close and final company and tasting so good.” These incarnational moments of epiphanic communion with and in and through the body and blood of the lion are followed almost immediately by a sequence of self-mockery and mocking of religious clichés. Papa, paraphrasing the 18th-century Protestant hymn-writer Isaac Watts, tells his friend G.C. (which stands for Gin Crazed): “Satan will find work for idle hands to do.” He asks—in inflated preacherly mode—if G.C. “will carry these principles into Life.” Drinking a ceremonial beer (and beer drinking functions throughout the work as a ritual act of communion), G.C. says “Drink your beer, Billy Graham.” If we read Hemingway accurately and well, such joking does not undercut but underlines the seriousness of religious matters. Beyond all irony, Hemingway’s work is about carrying principles into action, and he is a kind of evangelist always preaching ethical and moral and spiritual codes of conduct, even in the very rhythms and syntax of his prose. As Derek Walcott recently observed, the “sacred” is “even in the sound of Hemingway’s prose” and in “the moral severity of his sentences.” Walcott sees Hemingway’s prose as “evangelical” in its hope for innocence and redemption; and he finds in

Hemingway the “romance of the Protestant for the Catholic,” “Franciscan tenderness towards animals,” and “Bible-based moral conviction.”<sup>1</sup> While Walcott’s remarks refer to Hemingway’s work in general, they are particularly apt for *True at First Light*; moreover, they confirm my view that Hemingway’s narrativity, his story-telling and his style are profoundly religious, are (as Flannery O’Connor observed) “God-haunted”; and Hemingway’s ultimate subject (as Reynolds Price observed) is indeed “Saintliness.” At any moment in Hemingway’s work it is always the Hour of Decision. Did I hear some reader mutter, “Drink your beer, Billy Graham?”

Students of *True at First Light* should be reluctant to make sweeping judgments regarding Hemingway and religion based on this published version, which might leave readers with the feeling, for example, that Hemingway had actually become a true worshiper of the Mountain-God Kilimanjaro. Before reaching such a conclusion, consider carefully such omitted manuscript passages as this one: “We all worshipped the mountain with our borrowed and insecure religion...but she belonged to another people and we loved her but we knew that we were strangers and we looked at her as a boundary and a delight and a source of coolness and something to be enjoyed and loved. But she was another people’s God.” And remember that as he was writing his African Pilgrimage, and afterwards, he was still praying at the Cathedrals of San Marco and Chartres and Burgos and Segovia, and still remaking segments of his old beloved Catholic Pilgrimages of Santiago de Compostela and les Saintes-Maries-de-la-Mer.

This African manuscript was very important to Hemingway. At times while he was writing it, he felt he was writing as well as he ever had. He wrote it in the months and years immediately after the two terrible plane crashes, when he was in very bad shape. Indeed those plane crashes are the foundation of Hemingway’s “iceberg” in this book—the crucial omitted material which, in this instance of his “iceberg theory,” Hemingway can count on his readers to recognize. The book (and the unfinished manuscript) ends with Mary about to get her Christmas present—the flight over the Belgian Congo that would result in those two famous plane crashes in two days, January 23 and 24, 1954. There was an orgy of obituary in the world press: Hemingway Dead in Africa. But no, he was alive, just almost dead. A.E. Hotchner, among others, recorded his sense of shock when he saw his friend Hemingway after the crashes. And Hotch has told me many times how great the shock was, seeing Hemingway’s wrecked condition, his sudden radical aging, his “aura of massiveness” gone. (Consult the photographic record, see for yourself.) And so, to prove he was still alive, Hemingway wrote this book. While he was writing this book, some evidence

suggests, he dreamed of moving to Africa, settling there for keeps. He was weary with Cuban weather, Cuban politics. His son Patrick lived in Africa. In Africa he could be just another man, not the most famous writer-celebrity, hounded by his fame. Maybe he could be a true local. He could start a new life in Africa. Isn't it pretty to think so. He was distracted from finishing his African manuscript by his work on the film version of *The Old Man and the Sea*. Then, when he left Cuba in August 1956, he was bound for Africa, considering where he might settle down, how he would finish the African book (would he have included the plane crashes?). Then came the Suez Crisis, and Egypt closed the Canal; Hemingway could not get to Africa. Instead of settling down in Africa he spends more than two months at the Ritz Hotel in Paris. It is not Africa. He begins *A Moveable Feast*. His condition further deteriorates, and he never gets back to Africa, or to his African manuscript.

This, then, is the short version of Hemingway's African book. There will be, doubt, a longer version when we have the next edition of this manuscript, the next book that will not leave out so much. If we wait patiently, we will see that book. No, *True at First Light* is *not*, as all the media hype would have it, Hemingway's *LAST Book*. And there is no need to atone for what Patrick Hemingway wryly calls "the sin of publishing Hemingway posthumously."

By way of conclusion, a few final words about the controversy over the publication of this work. This is neither confession nor oblique expression of remorse—just some valuable information for the historical record. For a long time, before I knew much about the intricacies of literary estates and posthumous publication decisions, and before I became involved in the decision-making process, I suppose I would have taken what some regard as the high moral ground of the scholar: no major editing of Hemingway's unpublished work should be allowed, and if posthumous publication is to occur, it should be in the form of manuscript facsimile. But now, from the perspective of a scholar who has spent days in high-rise board-rooms in Manhattan, surrounded by lawyers, sworn to secrecy, discussing the intricacies surrounding the publication of *True at First Light*, it is rather bizarre to read the ill-informed literary magazine accusations and tormented breast-beating, to hear the naive academic anguish over the great moral and ethical issues involved in the posthumous editing and publication of Hemingway's works. At the 1999 Kennedy Library Centennial Conference this was a major theme with some of the famous writers as well as with the pontificating unknown writers who addressed the subject, almost all of them saying that the lesson for writers is "burn everything" before you die. (Some of the writers who said this should have considered burning their manu-

scripts before they published their last books, any of their books.) Some who took a high moral tone on the ethics of posthumous publication may have done so to conceal their secret envy of the writerly stature of Hemingway who has had more books published since his death than they will have in their lifetimes. It is quite clear that both commercial and scholarly motives as well as the fetishism of popular culture—that fetishism that gives us, say, basement and bootleg tapes of Dylan and Springsteen—will ensure that all of Hemingway’s unfinished unpublished work will eventually be published. It is precisely his writerly stature that guarantees that long before the Hemingway Bicentennial every extant and accessible word written by him will be in print.

All of the newspaper coverage of the landmark Hemingway Centennial celebration at the Kennedy Library that I saw prominently featured Nobel Laureate Derek Walcott’s reaction to the posthumous publication issue: “It means that I should learn to start burning everything I own.” Yet no reportage that I saw covered what Derek Walcott said to me (and to reporters) on the same day: “Anybody as great as Hemingway, we’re all interested in the relics. An unfinished Gauguin is still a Gauguin and you want to see it.” That is the essential human reality, the literary and æsthetic, historical and spiritual necessity. Even if they are just relics, they must be seen, and they sustain the faith. Our best hope must be that the posthumous Hemingway will be well served by his editors. This has not always been the case in the many books published since his death. Yet for this edition of this book, this version of this unfinished manuscript, Patrick Hemingway was the right choice: Patrick knows Africa and hunting far better than his father did; he knows his father far better than we do. It is better to have what we have than to have nothing at all. And that, dear reader, for reasons I am bound by law not to discuss here, was the *exact choice*. Precisely because we now have this version we will soon have another version of the “African Book.” If this publication is an occasion of “sin” (to use Patrick’s word), then it is, in every sense, a Fortunate Fall.

#### NOTE

1. Walcott’s remarks, as yet unpublished, were made in his Keynote Address at the International Hemingway Conference in Bimini, Bahamas, in January 2000.

# Harold Bloom's *Shakespeare: The Invention of the Human*

THOMAS G. OLSEN

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Some years ago, there ran a television ad showing a high-level business meeting in session, executives noisily conferring in a sleek boardroom somewhere high above the metropolis, until one intoned the name of the brokerage firm "E.F. Hutton." As all froze in their tracks, a somber voice-over declared, in a timbre designed to set E.F. Hutton above the common rout of mere businesses: "*When E.F. Hutton talks, people listen.*"

So it is in the world of high-brow commercial publishing: when Harold Bloom speaks, people listen. Whether in his massive series of Chelsea House anthologies of critical essays, or in his academic bestsellers *The Book of J* or *The Western Canon*, Bloom is seasoned in providing a highly personal, popular brand of literary criticism. He is, however, less and less willing to do what others in his profession do: engage systematically with others' ideas, provide footnotes and indices, and perhaps most of all, respect the unwritten but acknowledged rules of professional decorum. And while it's apparent that an educated general public has been listening raptly to him for some time, it is also true that the academy isn't listening with anything like the same enthusiasm.

*Shakespeare: The Invention of the Human* is likely to split audiences along precisely these lines, all the while enjoying the status of (as the old saw goes) "a major publishing event." It is an ambitious, learned and generous treatment of Shakespeare's dramatic canon, but it's also idiosyncratic, cranky, and tendentious in ways absolutely guaranteed to distance Bloom even further from the disciplinary corps in which he was trained and from which he has for some time been desirous of finding release at any cost.

Bloom's thesis is hard to miss, for it is stated, restated, and referenced dozens of times throughout the book: Shakespeare is the universal author who speaks for all humanity because he first invented literary inwardness, expressed in words the complex psychology of human beings when all around him was literary caricature and stereotype. Or is it that he merely improved upon Chaucer? Or that he invented four hundred years of post-Renaissance human psychology? At different turns Bloom rather inconsistently offers up both variations instead of what appears to be his central argument. This thesis constitutes a colossal claim,

of course, and Bloom cannot hide his delight in knowing how he will rile the academic establishment, which he dismisses as a cabal of ideologically driven sourpusses who hate literature and are instead mesmerized by the latest *théorie du jour*—structuralism, post-structuralism, feminism, new historicism, cultural poetics, and so on.

Bloom's war with current academic and professional theatrical establishments, at least as he constructs them, is one of the truly distinctive features of this book, and something that sets it apart from similar extended readings of Shakespeare, starting perhaps with Dr. Johnson, whom Bloom regards as his ideological and methodological predecessor. He ponders whether dramatic readings would be preferable to seeing staged performances in the "ruined" theater of our day, and he takes issue again and again with academic and dramatic adversaries whom he identifies only anonymously and generally, as in "our current specialists in gender politics." In effect, he picks a nearly 800-page fight with "Marxists, multiculturalists, feminists, *nouveau* historicists—the usual suspects—[who] know their causes but not Shakespeare's plays" (668). For me, his tirade seriously mars a book that has many more virtues than the splenetic, beleaguered tone of these brickbats would suggest. There is perhaps something winsome about Bloom's admission throughout the book that he is the last of the High Romantics and a happy, worshipful Bardolator, but that appeal fades with each new fusillade against his stereotyped versions of his professional peers. Ironically, perhaps, Bloom is often most interesting when there is the least at stake, professionally speaking: his discussion of the little-discussed late play *Henry VIII*, for example, offers a string of very interesting insights and connections in fewer than ten pages.

Two further characteristics that truly mark this book are Bloom's investing Shakespeare with an artistic and moral teleology that would, in any systematic study, be all but impossible to defend, and a rather more defensible application of his "anxiety of influence" thesis of decades ago to Shakespeare's professional relationship with Christopher Marlowe. According to Bloom, Shakespeare's creative energies not only found their fullest expression in Falstaff and in Hamlet, but nearly everything about his career was directed toward discovering (or inventing) these larger-than-life creations. Thus, most of Shakespeare's comic characters are little more than imperfect versions of what is to come, mere stopping points "on the road to Falstaff" (152). Likewise, Hamlet is for Bloom the fulfillment of every tragic, every intellectually probing character that Shakespeare ever invented, but is also his great triumph over his anxiety over Marlowe's artistic influence: "When Shakespeare broke away from Marlovian

cartooning, and so became Shakespeare, he prepared the abyss of Hamlet for himself' and in so doing, according to Bloom, invented the human (436). Small wonder, then, that his argument begins to fall off after his discussion of *Hamlet*: where else is there really to go once Falstaff and Hamlet have been invented?

After making my way through the nearly 800 pages of this book, I still find that I am not completely sure of its purpose. Most essays fall within a 15-25 page range, and so suggest a sort of handbook or companion to the plays, something along the lines of Goddard's *The Meaning of Shakespeare* or Maurice Charney's *All of Shakespeare*, to name only two examples of a centuries-old tradition. However, since the essay on *Two Gentlemen of Verona* amounts to not even four pages, while the discussion of *Hamlet* runs to almost fifty and has the feel of a full-bore monograph, it seems clear that Bloom wants this project to do something more than serve as a beefed-up Cliff's Notes or Masterplots treatment of each play. *Shakespeare: The Invention of the Human* is part critical overview, part collection of plot summaries, part argument, but its most significant part, as I see it, is an extended jeremiad against the state of the literary and theatrical professions. There is only so much of this sort of argumentation one wants to hear.

There are certainly more concise, systematic, even-handed one-volume critical surveys of Shakespeare available. This book is very repetitive, either the result of some very slack editing or a sign that it's not intended to be read through. And it's laced with long quotations, often running two full pages, and with long plot summaries that do in fact suggest Cliff's Notes. Meanwhile, it avoids history as if history were one long plague, but more important, Bloom is so idiosyncratic, offhand, and often peevish in his analytic style that I fear readers coming to Shakespeare for the first (or second, or fifth) time will be misled, misinformed, or misdirected—or simply made weary by far too many examples of academic bickering.

Though I am glad to have read this huge book and will keep it within easy reach on my shelf, I will continue to recommend Charney's *All of Shakespeare* and the introductions to *The Norton Shakespeare* to my students: Charney is more focused and far less ideologically driven; the editors of *The Norton Shakespeare* are certainly ideological, but they never conceal their ideology, and they are a good deal more fair and systematic to other points of view than Bloom ever is.

All of this said, and despite all its pre-publication hype, this project pleasantly surprised me at dozens of different turns, for once one is past some very significant stumbling blocks, one finds that Bloom is in fact a masterful reader who has been at work on Shakespeare's canon (and for that matter, the entire Western

canon) for half a century. And I am more rather than less inclined to accept at least the general drift of his thesis: there really is something categorically different, more inward, more “human” in Shakespeare’s works than in even the very best of his best contemporaries: Kyd, Marlowe, Jonson, Heywood, Webster. Even if Shakespeare did not invent the human, as Bloom contends, he certainly achieved an expression of something quintessentially human that his contemporaries did not, and indeed, few writers since have. But *Shakespeare: The Invention of the Human* would have been a far better project if it had been clearer in its aims, a third shorter, and no more than half as tendentious as it is. I am willing to accept that *Shakespeare* is indeed a major publishing event, but I am left not really sure for whom, or why.

## News and Notes

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In this column, we feature news from current and recent graduate students: honors, achievements, publications, conference papers, progress in Ph.D. programs, and other news. Please submit your news to the editors.

We are pleased to report the following news items from current and recent graduate students in English:

1. In 1999, three recipients of our MA applied to Ph.D. programs. All three were not only accepted but received major fellowships: Christopher Hartley at Fordham University, John Langan at CUNY, and Sharon Peelor at the University of Oklahoma.
2. Lynne Crockett, recent New Paltz MA, has finished her coursework and passed all her exams in the Ph.D. program at NYU and is now working on her dissertation.
3. Fiona Paton (MA New Paltz) completed her Ph.D. at Penn State University in 1999 and is now Assistant Professor of English at New Paltz.
4. New Paltz graduate students continue their extraordinary track record of scholarly presentations at conferences. For example, in the past nine months alone, fifteen of our graduate students have presented a total of 26 papers at regional, national, and international conferences. Since we do not have citations for all of these presentations, we will not print an incomplete list. Students should please submit, at the end of each year, a complete list with date, place, and title of conference presentations, and we will print them in future issues.
5. Current and recent New Paltz graduate students swept the awards at the International Hemingway Conference in Bimini, Bahamas in January 2000, receiving nine of the fifteen awards given. Mark W. Bellomo, Michael Burns, Jane Massey Dionne, AnnMarie Meisel, Edward Meisel, Michael Smith received Hagland-Helmer Awards for Literary Excellence in their conference presentations; Larry Beemer, Mark W. Bellomo, and Steven J. Florczyk received Hemingway Society Conference Fellowships. The awards were presented by Nobel Laureate Derek Walcott and Conference Director Donald Junkins.

6. Current and recent New Paltz graduate students—Mark W. Bellomo, Steven J. Florczyk, Breida Gallagher, John Langan, and Susan Piperato—together with Professor H.R. Stoneback have founded the Elizabeth Madox Roberts Society, a national literary organization devoted to the work of Roberts, one of the most important yet neglected writers in American Literature. In April 1999, they organized the first national Elizabeth Madox Roberts Conference, held at St. Catherine College in Roberts's hometown, Springfield, Kentucky. The second Elizabeth Madox Roberts conference will be held April 16-17, 2000. In less than a year the society has grown to include members from around the country; the society has already had an impact on the urgent matter of restoring classic Roberts works to print; and the EMR Society has been recognized by ALA (the American Literature Association), the leading international scholarly organization in American Literature studies. In 2001, the Roberts Society will sponsor a Roberts session at the ALA conference in Baltimore. For information, contact EMR Society President John Langan or Steven J. Florczyk and Breida Gallagher, editors of the Elizabeth Madox Roberts Society Newsletter.

## Guidelines for Submissions

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As the journal of the English Graduate Program, *Shawangunk Review* publishes the proceedings of the Annual Graduate Symposium. In addition, the editors welcome submissions from any graduate student in English concerning any area of literary studies: essays, explications, book reviews, scholarly notes and queries. English graduate students and faculty are invited to submit poetry and translations of poetry, and faculty members are invited to submit book reviews and scholarly notes and queries.

MANUSCRIPTS should be original material on literary biography, history, theory and methods, analysis and interpretation, and critical syntheses that may emerge from courses or seminars taken at the college. Manuscripts should be prepared in the preferred style published by the Modern Language Association in its *MLA Handbook*. All manuscripts should include an abstract of 50 words or less and biographical information of four to six lines that indicates the author's professional, research, and literary interests. Please submit three copies.

BOOK REVIEWS are invited that relate to specific courses or to literary interests having general appeal to the graduate student body. Book reviews should be scholarly in orientation and approximately 1,000 to 1,500 words in length. Please submit two copies.

ORIGINAL POETRY OR TRANSLATIONS of one to five pages may also be submitted for consideration. Please submit two copies.

ABSTRACTS OF MA THESES should be approximately 150 words in length. Degree candidates who have completed (or are nearing completion of) an MA thesis are encouraged to consult with their advisors in preparing an abstract. Please submit two copies.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR are invited to promote scholarly discussion and debate.

The deadline for all submissions is May 31, 2000. Manuscripts and other submissions should be sent to *Shawangunk Review*, Department of English, State University of New York, New Paltz, New York, 12561.

## Contributors

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MARK W. BELLOMO is an adjunct in English, former TA and candidate for the New Paltz MA in English. He has presented numerous papers at national and international literary conferences and his work has been published in the *North Dakota Quarterly* and elsewhere. He recently gave an award-winning paper at the International Hemingway Conference in Bimini.

RICHARD ALLAN DAVISON is Professor of English at the University of Delaware, a leading Hemingway scholar of international reputation, and the author of *Charles Norris* and other works.

JANE MASSEY DIONNE is an elementary schoolteacher and an Adjunct in reading at New Paltz. She has taken numerous post-Masters graduate courses in English and recently made an award-winning presentation at the International Hemingway Conference that was featured on Bahamian television.

DENNIS DOHERTY is a former TA in English who holds the New Paltz MA in English. Currently a Creative Writing Instructor in English, he is a widely published poet.

STEVEN J. FLORCZYK is an adjunct in English, former TA and candidate for the New Paltz MA in English. He has presented numerous papers at national and international literary conferences and was the recipient of the Hemingway Society Fellowship at the International Hemingway Conference in Bimini.

ROBIN GAJDUSEK is Professor Emeritus of English at San Francisco State University, a leading Hemingway scholar of international reputation, and the author of *Resurrection* and other works of literary criticism and poetry. He is a former Director of the Hemingway Society.

BREIDA GALLAGHER is a former TA and candidate for the New Paltz MA in English. She has presented numerous papers at regional and national literary conferences

CHRISTOPHER HARTLEY is a former TA and recipient of the New Paltz MA in English. He is currently a Ph.D. candidate at Fordham University.

VALERIE HEMINGWAY is a writer who lives in Montana. She was Ernest Hemingway's private secretary; after his death, she worked with Mary Hemingway on the organization of the writer's papers. A world traveler and lecturer, she was also the Keynote Speaker at the International Hemingway Conference in Provence in 1998.

ALLEN JOSEPHS is University Research Professor of Spanish at the University of West Florida, a leading Hemingway scholar of international reputation, and the author of *For Whom the Bell Tolls: Hemingway's Undiscovered Country* and other works. He is immediate past President of the Hemingway Society and Foundation.

DONALD JUNKINS is Professor Emeritus of English at the University of Massachusetts, a leading Hemingway scholar of international reputation, and the author of *Journey to the Corrida* and other works of literary criticism and poetry. He has directed several International Hemingway Conferences.

JOHN LANGAN is a former TA and recipient of the New Paltz MA in English. He is currently a Ph.D. can-

didate at the CUNY Graduate Center. A frequent contributor to these pages, he also serves as the newly elected President of the Elizabeth Madox Roberts Society.

ROBERT W. LEWIS is Professor and Chair of English at the University of North Dakota, a leading Hemingway scholar of international reputation, and the author of *Hemingway on Love* and other works. He is past President and Director of the Hemingway Society, and long-time editor of the leading journal in Hemingway studies, the *North Dakota Quarterly*.

LINDA P. MILLER is Professor of English at Penn State University (Ogontz), a leading Hemingway scholar of international reputation, and the author of *Letters from the Lost Generation* and other works. She serves on the Board of Directors of the Hemingway Society and Foundation.

THOMAS G. OLSEN is an Assistant Professor of English at SUNY New Paltz, where he specializes in Shakespeare and English Renaissance literature. He is the editor of *The Commonplace Book of Sir John Strangways*, forthcoming from the Renaissance English Text Society.

SOMA MITRA is a TA and candidate for the MA in English at New Paltz.

ANNE MOONEY is a graduate student in English at New Paltz.

DAN RUTAR is a former TA and candidate for the New Paltz MA in English. He served as publicity director for the Hemingway Centennial Symposium.

H.R. STONEBACK is Professor of Graduate Studies in English at New Paltz, a leading Hemingway scholar of international reputation, and the author of *Hemingway's Paris*, *Singing the Springs*, and other works of literary criticism and poetry. He has served on the Board of Directors of the Hemingway Society and Foundation and has directed several national and international Hemingway conferences.

DENNIS C. WINTER is a former TA and candidate for the New Paltz MA in English. He is a widely traveled and published folksinger and folksong scholar.

AARON ZEIDMAN is a TA and candidate for the MA in English at New Paltz. A published poet, he is active in organizing regional literary events.