HEMINGWAY: FOR WHOM THE BELL RARELY TOLLS IN COLLEGE CURRICULA

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ABSTRACT OF THE CAPSTONE

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This capstone discusses the possible reasons for the virtual absence of any college class curricula devoted to or including the works of Ernest Hemmingway. Hemingway was the recipient of the Pulitzer Prize, a Nobel laureate in Literature, and an author whose writing talent in his early years garnered the praise and literary master recognition of other iconic literary figures of his time like Ezra Pound, Gertrude Stein, James Joyce, F. Scott Fitzgerald and Sherwood Anderson. This capstone will examine the Hemingway legacy both in his perceived hedonistic lifestyle and misogynic labeled writings and formulate an argument that might explain why, despite recent decades of critical reviews revising the negative myths of his legends and
literature, the study of Hemingway’s art is rarely found in the majority of college curricula.
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INTRODUCTION

As an augment to my formal Liberal Studies courses, I began last year between semesters to initiate a personal goal of reading as many of the great books in literature as I could. I selected as the superset of these target books and authors, a reference volume citing roughly five hundred of the most well known books and authors across a spectrum of genres\(^1\). As part of this personal quest, one summer’s selected personal readings included a number of early twentieth century American modernist authors. By summer’s end, I had managed to wade through about a dozen novels including two from Hemingway’s early writing career, *The Sun Also Rises*, and *A Farewell To Arms*. I was surprised to find both of these widely read works to have a formulaic storyline populated with characters that lacked complexity in their dialogue or actions. I was disappointed with my experience in reading Hemingway. Hemingway’s conveyance of the world through his words and storyline seemed an oversimplification of reality and relationships.

My next sequence of formal academic course exploration took me into the world of some new authors; Joyce and Nabokov. I found their respective works engaging, complex in story line and character development and for me a thoroughly enjoyable reading experience. I then realized these two authors were contemporaries of Hemingway which lead me to believe that perhaps I may have missed something in my reading and evaluation of Hemingway’s work. In some further exploration of Hemingway’s credentials, I was surprised to find, not only prestigious literary awards such as the Pulitzer Prize, but that this Nobel Laureate also had a cadre of literary peers, including James Joyce, that held Hemingway’s work in high regard. I obviously must have missed something in my previous reads of Hemingway, and decided to take a formal course as part of my graduate study to find out what I was missing. My course search of our graduate catalogue yielded no such courses, either on Hemingway individually, or included as a group with other early Twentieth Century American modern writers. A cursory survey of other campus catalogs and the catalogs of nearby universities yielded the same empty set of results. Hemingway was conspicuous by his absence in college curricula. An American author, whose name was as familiar to the average American as Kleenex or Xerox, was
apparently not an author of interest for any college classroom. This mystery piqued my interest as a viable research topic for a Capstone project and so..."the game was afoot!"
Ernest Hemingway was born in 1899 in Oak Park, Illinois to an upper-middle-class family. The Hemingway scholar Michael Reynolds encapsulates Hemingway's childhood as:

Ernest Hemingway grew up in the bosom of a well-known, extended, and respected family, college educated at Wheaton, Oberlin, and Rush Medical School, a family whose sense of civic responsibility was strong and whose interests were divided among medicine, the Congregational Church, and real estate.2

Hemingway's father, Clarence Edmonds Hemingway, was a physician who prior to his marriage to Ernest’s mother, Grace Hall Hemingway, dreamed of escaping the Midwest after medical school and putting his medical skills to work in Christian missionary service in Africa or China. After medical school Clarence married Grace who imposed her will on her new husband and curtailed his missionary wanderlust. Instead they both set up their residence near Chicago where she could continue to be immersed in her lifelong love of music, the arts, and her social networks. Grace was an accomplished singer and composer who prior to her marriage

considered a professional career on the stage. Grace was a strong-willed woman who imposed her will on her husband and her family. Despite Ernest's confrontations with his mother in his teenage years, and his later outright public resentment of her overbearing nature that he claimed was responsible for his father's suicide, future biographers would compare the headstrong nature of both the mother and son as one and the same. Hemingway in youth was surrounded by these strong-willed older women and despite future critics labels of his misogyny, he would continue in his adult life to seek out and surround himself by older strong-willed women such as his first three wives in his personal life, or, in his professional life icons such as Gertrude Stein.

Hemingway's parents both imparted to their son different sets of skills and experiences that he would find useful in his later life and in his later writings. From his father Hemingway learned a love of the outdoors and was delighted to spend his summers at their cottage in Upper Michigan hunting and fishing with his father, who developed in Ernest awareness in the ways of the naturalist. From his mother Hemingway was schooled both in the theory of music and composition. Hemingway in later life would suggest that
his novels would have appealed to Johann Sebastian Bach not necessarily for the content or dialogue but because Hemingway used melody, harmony and counterpoint in a manner very similar to how Bach composed his own music. Although Hemingway was not one of the children that inherited his mother's musical talents he did, nonetheless, gain from her an appreciation of music and the arts in general.

Not much is known of Hemingway's elementary and high school education other than the fact that the Oak Park schools were renowned for their high-caliber of study and discipline. In later life biographical sketches by his younger brother and older sister, described Hemingway in high school as being a late bloomer from a physical standpoint but who nonetheless loved physical activities and held Theodore Roosevelt as one of his childhood idols. Hemingway, in his adult life, would continue to admire the physical prowess of professional athletes and especially his beloved matadors. Hemingway's early life followed the pattern of a similar regimen year after year with the summers being spent at their cottage in Upper Michigan and the remainder of the year back in Oak Park focused on school activities and his musical education.
By the time he graduated from high school, the United States had finally decided to enter World War I, now in its third year. Hemingway after graduating was still too young to enlist and spent his last idyllic summer with his family at their summer cottage. During this last summer of his childhood Hemingway despite pressures from both his father and mother to attend college locally decided to set forth out on his own and through the patronage of one of his uncles, secured a job as a cub reporter in St. Louis. Hemingway left Oak Park in the fall of 1917 and closed the chapter on his childhood and began his young adult adventure as an aspiring writer and journalist.
THE YOUNG MAN AND EMERGING ARTIST

In the fall of 1917 Hemingway turned the page of his childhood and began the chapter of a young adult in his new job as a cub reporter for the Kansas City Star where he said he "learned to write a simple, declarative sentence." As Michael Reynolds writes:

Hemingway also learned the Star’s style sheet: short first paragraphs, vigorous language, no superfluous words, few adjectives, no trite phrases. For seven months young Hemingway covered the usual beats assigned to raw recruits: City Council, train station, police station, and hospital emergency room. As engrossed as Hemingway was in his new occupation, his attention was becoming distracted on the unfolding events of the First World War. Hemingway, like most young males his age, found the adventure and allure of participating in the war in Europe the Siren’s call. Rejected on his bid to join the American Armed Forces because of a bad eye, Hemingway answered the call of the American Red Cross for American volunteers to drive ambulances on the Italian front in the winter of 1917. Hemingway was originally assigned to a field hospital relatively secure in the rear

\[^3\] Reynolds 22.
on the Italian front. After two weeks, he clamored to be assigned to the front lines retrieving the wounded from the battlefield. Within his first month at the front, and while carrying a wounded soldier to safety in the midst of an enemy artillery barrage, Hemingway was hit and seriously wounded by an Austrian mortar. Hemingway's short lived war role as an eighteen year old young lieutenant was over, albeit not without distinguishing himself for personal bravery on the front lines and later receiving the Medal of Valor from the Italian government for rescuing several wounded soldiers during the artillery barrage. After six months in an Italian hospital Hemingway returned to his home in Oak Park in January of 1919 for continued recuperation. After a listless year and a falling-out with his mother, Hemingway moved to Toronto in 1920 and successfully parlayed his previous journalistic experience in Kansas City for a part time job with the Toronto Star. The city editor agreed to buy Hemingway’s stories on a piece by piece basis as they suited the needs of the paper.

When Hemingway left Toronto in May 1922 and returned to Chicago, his loose arrangement with the Star remained in place; over the next 20 months the paper regularly printed Hemingway features on rum running and Chicago gangsters. During the same period,
Hemingway was courting Hadley Richardson, a St. Louis woman eight years older than himself. They married at Horton Bay on September 3, 1921.5

Prior to his marriage to Hadley, when not writing articles for the Toronto *Star*, Hemingway devoted himself to his love of writing short stories.

He continued to write short stories in his spare time, although they were consistently rejected by the magazines ... In January of 1921 the aspiring writer met Sherwood Anderson, the author of *Winesburg Ohio* and a writer Hemingway respected. Anderson mentored the young Hemingway, suggesting books for him to read, giving him feedback on his writing, advising him on how to become a professional author, and urging him to go to Paris.6

The prospect of returning to Europe for Hemingway was not a hard sell. Hemingway had lived somewhat vicariously over the last two years through his recall of experiences in Italy and yearned to return to the excitement of a European city. Once the young married couple finalized their move to Paris, Anderson provided an invaluable travel gift which


6 Tyler 4.
was a personal letter of introduction that Hemingway could use in connecting with Anderson's extensive literary network in Paris.

Hemingway's first few months in Paris were spent settling in to their modest flat and absorbing the sights and sounds of the fabled city of lights.

During the spring, armed with Anderson's letters of introduction, he sought out a few of those whose labors had already gained them fame. One was Ezra Pound, who invited the Hemingway's to tea at his studio apartment in the rue Notre Dame des Champs beyond the Luxembourg [park]. Hemingway's first reaction was one of dislike for Pound’s habit of pontificating in a loquacious mixture of slang and polysyllabics. But he soon changed his mind, described him as ‘a great guy and a wonderful editor,’ and by March was teaching Pound to box in exchange for lessons in how to write... Pound had long since declared himself opposed to all ‘rhetorical din and luxurious [verbal] riot,’ and called for a kind of writing characterized by directness, prosperity, and freedom from emotional slither. This was the kind of
counsel that Hemingway most needed and to which he felt himself most strongly and temperamentally drawn.\(^7\)

Hemingway's association with Ezra Pound also opened other Paris notables' doors to him like Sylvia Beach, Ford Madox Ford and Gertrude Stein. Through these relationships, Hemingway would also garner additional mentoring and introductions to other young artists that were under their patronage such as Pablo Picasso, Archibald MacLeish, and James Joyce. At this point in his life Hemingway was an insatiable student sharing his ideas and his prose with his mentors, soliciting their critical feedback, and taking their direction without question. In later years even after a widely publicized fallout with Hemingway, one of the things that stood out in Gertrude Stein's mind of her time with Hemingway in Paris was the intensity to which he listened to whatever critique or advice she delivered.

THE ARTIST AND HIS STYLE

In *Death in the Afternoon*, Hemingway uses an effective metaphor to describe the kind of prose he is trying to write:

If a writer of prose knows enough about what he is writing, he may omit things that he knows and the reader, if the writer is writing truly enough, will have a feeling of those things as strongly as though the writer had stated them. The dignity of movement of an iceberg is due to only one-eighth of it being above water.  

Carlos Baker provides an example of how Hemingway's metaphor relates to his writing:

His short stories are deceptive somewhat in the manner of an iceberg. The visible areas glint with the hard factual lights of the naturalist. The supporting structure, submerged and mostly invisible except to the patient explorer, is built with a different kind of precision -- that of the 'poet symbolist'. Once the reader has become aware of what Hemingway is doing in those parts of his work which lie below the surface, he is likely to find symbols operating

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everywhere, and in a series of beautiful crystallizations, compact and buoyant enough to carry considerable weight.\(^9\)

The topic of symbols in his work usually elicited Hemingway’s ire in any discussion as happened with the 1958 interview with George Plimpton. Hemingway, agitated with a question about his craftsmanship, responded to Plimpton:

... [a writer] writes to be read by the eye and no explanations nor dissertations should be necessary. You can be sure that there is much more there than will be read at any first reading and having made this it is not the writer’s province to explain it or run guided tours through the more difficult country of his work.\(^{10}\)

Hemingway provided an additional perspective later, with less emotional bravado, to Carlos Baker on the same topic of symbolism:

...when asked his views on symbolism in The Old Man and the Sea, he replied that ‘no good book has ever been written that had in it symbols arrived at beforehand and stuck in.’ What he did not deny was that natural objects or scenes may be made to acquire

\(^9\) Baker Artist 117.

the unifying power of symbols in the actual process of writing. To make such an achievement even more difficult, this endowment must occur in such a way that the artist does not violate the integrity of the symbol in its actual or nonsymbolic aspect. This is part of what he had in mind when he said of the story of Santiago: ‘I tried to make a real old man, a real boy, a real sea and a real fish and real sharks. But if I made them good and true enough they would mean many things.’\(^{11}\)

The writing style of Hemingway was greatly influenced in his training as a cub reporter for the Kansas City Star: short declarative sentences unencumbered by extraneous adjectives where the reader left the writing with an experience or feeling conveyed through the simplicity of the words. Hemingway explained his style in an interview with Lillian Ross in 1950 as he was editing one of his manuscripts:

The test of a new book is how much good stuff you can throw away. When I'm writing it, I'm just as proud as a goddamn lion. I use the oldest words in the English language. People think I'm an ignorant bastard who doesn't know the $10 words. I know the $10 words.

\(^{11}\)Baker Critics 15.
There are older and better words which if you arrange them in the proper combinations you make it stick, remember anybody who pulls his erudition or education on you hasn’t any.\textsuperscript{12}

Although this sounds like another Hemingway bravado statement, there is substantiation both from his interview with George Plimpton where he commented that he rewrote the pages of the ending of \textit{The Sun Also Rises} thirty nine times before he was satisfied that he had the right words, and, from \textit{The Oxford English Dictionary}. The second print edition of the \textit{Oxford English Dictionary} (1989) shows 39 entries crediting Hemingway with a word's first recorded use in English, citing dates, titles, and quotations. Shakespeare probably leads all writers in providing first recorded usages of English words in print (179 according to last September's online version); Faulkner has 25, and Steinbeck nine.\textsuperscript{13} This writing style, using specific simple words, unadorned with superfluous adjectives or sentence structure was the hallmark style coined classic Hemingway:

\begin{quote}
In truth, it begins with the ear of a literary genius for the rhythms of the English language and then
\end{quote}


requires the ability, first, to see and then, when writing, to recall the killing detail -- all of this demanding the sort of intensely focused mental concentration that even an international class athlete can deliver only when in peak physical condition.\textsuperscript{14}

This Hemingway style which was the structure of his early short stories and novels of the 20s and 30s allowed Hemingway to achieve his definition of a successful writer; as he termed it to "write one true sentence."

THE EARLY CRITICS OF THE 20S AND 30S: LEGENDS ARE BORN

Hemingway was a known commodity in literary circles in Paris in the early 20s due largely in part to the patronage and mentoring of the then literary giants, Gertrude Stein and Sherwood Anderson. These two sponsors not only helped Hemingway develop his writing style but also were influential in getting Hemingway’s short stories published in a number of European magazines. Hemingway tried unsuccessfully for several years in the early 20s to gain the attention of an American publisher for his works. Even with the critical success of his short stories in the European periodicals, Hemingway was ignored by the American publishers until 1924 when both Sherwood Anderson and F. Scott Fitzgerald decided to aggressively push their respective publishers to consider Hemingway's book of short stories, *In Our Time*. Anderson's publisher, Boni and Liveright, finally acquiesced to their top money maker and offered Hemingway a contract which he reluctantly signed. Hemingway's reluctance was due largely in part to being associated with a publisher of the old school of writers rather than Fitzgerald’s publisher, Charles Scribner & Sons, whom Hemingway felt was more aligned to the new style
of the “Lost Generation” emerging writers such as himself and Fitzgerald.

In early 1924 Hemingway submitted his book of short stories to his new publisher. It was not until October of the following year before his book of short stories was published. In the intervening time Hemingway had already started and finished the first draft of his first novel The Sun Also Rises. Hemingway was disappointed with his publisher’s release of only 1335 copies of his first published work of his short stories; In Our Time. The book caused relatively little public stir. The advertising budget at Bony and Liveright was limited, and review copies were rather parsimoniously distributed. As Malcolm Cowley once remarked, first books by new authors sold poorly in those years, and the market for short stories was not good, even in a time when short fiction was being widely read in magazines.

There seems also to have been a creeping prejudice in some quarters against American writers who had deserted their native land in order to live abroad. Ernest Boyd, who conducted a book page in The Independent later confessed to such feeling about Hemingway's first book...The collection nevertheless
received serious consideration from such Montparnassians [Paris] as Paul Rosenthal, Anderson's friend and benefactor, and Allen Tate, who did not share in the belief that foreign residency necessarily, corrupted American talent. Though Rosenfeld professed to find evidence of the influence of Sherwood Anderson and Gertrude Stein at various points among the stories, his judgment was that the new voice was plainly original.\textsuperscript{15}

Other critics differed on the influence of Anderson and Stein in Hemingway's short stories but were in general agreement about the talent of this new author, and like his new publisher were anxiously awaiting the release of the rumored new novel, \textit{The Sun Also Rises}. Despite his friendship with Sherwood Anderson, Hemingway was deeply conflicted with critical reviews that tied his style to an extension of Anderson's talent. A published interview with Anderson, exaggerating his influence on Hemingway's writing, pushed Hemingway over the emotional edge when Anderson proclaimed that he had taught Hemingway his style. Although no one in the literary world took Anderson's comments seriously, it affected Hemingway to the point where he stopped editing the final draft of \textit{The Sun Also}

\textsuperscript{15} Baker Artist 34.
Rises and immediately set to work on a second novel The Torrents of Spring. This new novel was a parody of the novel Dark Laughter by Sherwood Anderson. Hemingway was an accomplished writer of parody and would later admit that his intention in writing this novel was to differentiate himself from Anderson’s writing style. Hemingway submitted this second novel to his publisher who viewed it as an affront to Anderson, and quickly rejected it with a request to Hemingway to send The Sun Also Rises instead. This rejection allowed Hemingway to opt out of his contract with Boni and Liveright. Hemingway in turn submitted The Torrents of Spring manuscript to Scribner & Sons, who despite their misgivings about offending Anderson found the work to be of merit, and were anxious to secure the rights of Hemingway's future novels including the completed The Sun Also Rises. Scribner & Sons published The Torrents of Spring within five months and started a lifelong relationship as Hemingway's publisher that has lasted to this day.

Although The Torrents of Spring was received with generally positive acclaim, it was easily identified as an artistic parody of the old school style of Sherwood Anderson, and was held in disdain by both Anderson and those literary
critics that had historically supported his style. Hemingway later would state that writing *Torrents* was not primarily an excuse for breaking his contract with his first publisher but his obligation as a writer to be aggressively critical of all forms of literary pretentiousness. Whatever the real reason was for admonishing his former mentor, his action would invoke the wrath of a number of literary critics for the next two decades:

It was plainly a strategic error on his part to project himself so fiercely into the literary warfare of that time, whether through stories like "Mr. and Mrs. Elliott," or parodies like *The Torrents*, or through the use of people he closely knew as prototypes for the characters of *The Sun Also Rises*. Literary grudges are among the most lasting, and it was natural enough that the enemies he made at that time would seize the occasions offered by their reminiscences to attack him in turn. Some of this was doubtless in Dorothy Parker's mind when she remarked in *The New Yorker*, shortly after the publication of A
Farewell To Arms: ‘probably of no other living man has so much tripe been penned or spoken.’\(^{16}\)

Although his masterpieces for the next decade until the mid-30s left little for his literary adversaries to admonish, Hemingway's personal life and lifestyle provided a wealth of material for the rumor mongers. Hemingway's marital affairs which led to his divorce of two wives combined with his extravagant globetrotting lifestyles during a period of the Great Depression in America provided an overflowing well of opportunity for gossip in newspapers and magazines that offset the despairing news of the Depression and the impending second World War.

During this period (1933 – 1936) Hemingway was also writing a series of personal essays, called “Letters”, for the newly founded *Esquire* magazine. This forum allowed him to create a public persona that became as well-known as that of many movie stars. His subject matter was himself in situ: Africa, the Gulfstream, Paris, Spain, Cuba, Key West, wherever his interest took him.\(^{17}\)

Hemingway’s literary masterpieces delivered in the 20s and 30s garnered him his own spot in the pantheon of American

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\(^{16}\) Baker, *Artist* 46.

\(^{17}\) Reynolds 33.
literary giants. Hemingway's lifestyle, legend building in his *Esquire* articles, and delight to share his exploits in the glow of the public limelight, created the myth of the man who was better suited as a giant in the pantheon of Hedonism, Machismo and Misogyny.

Hemingway's literary star continued to burn bright through the 30s, culminating with his publication in 1938 of *The Fifth Column* and *The Forty-nine Stories*, which in turn was followed in 1940 by his epic *For Whom The Bell Tolls*:

At that time, the two massive books together would have been seen to represent a major writer at the peak of his powers, in full command of his art, and surely poised to produce many more works of great fiction. Sadly, as we can now see in retrospect, they also constituted the effective end of his writing career.¹⁸

**CRITICS OF THE LAST THREE DECADES: ALTERNATIVE CRITICAL VOICES**

Hemingway's tragic suicide in 1961 saw the passing of a literary giant whose works since 1945 were derisively termed "Papa's Hokum years". With the exception of *The Old Man and The Sea*, which earned him both the Pulitzer Prize, ¹⁸ Dempsey 239.
and, the Nobel Prize in Literature, his other works more reflected a former literary genius whose body was ravaged by alcohol and drugs and whose mind was slowly destroyed by the same mental illness that had destroyed his father. His intermittent flashes of literary genius were considered by the critics no better than the worst that he wrote prior to 1940. Most of his writing was considered incoherent ramblings. Hemingway was no longer a target of his literary critics, and the myths and legends of his life slowly crystallized into facts.

It would be another 20 years before a new breed of literary critics would pick up the gauntlet to reevaluate Hemingway’s art. The primary advantage of this new breed was that they were not burdened by the preconceptions of the critics of the 20s and 30s, and they also gave voice to a substantially larger percentage of female critics who would tackle head-on the myth of Hemingway's misogyny and treatment of gender in his characters and storyline:

Philip Young's concept of the code hero made it hard for subsequent critics to approach Hemingway in any other fashion so the challenge by these women to 40 years of often superficial or misguided interpretation of Hemingway's treatment of women and gender has
infinitely deepened and expanded our understanding of the ways these complicated subjects function in Hemingway's novels and stories.\(^{19}\)

Gender treatment was another issue of Hemingway under review:

...from Miller to Comley, these [collected] essays demonstrate not only that gender was Hemingway's constant concern, and that his female characters are drawn with complexity and individuality equal to Hemingway's males, but that the feminine voice in Hemingway resonates throughout his work in often surprising ways.\(^{20}\)

Linda Paterson Miller has always been enamored with Hemingway and often speaks as a female scholar in his defense. She cites a cartoon of a male scholar addressing four women in a book discussion group with the male scholar’s caption “Just what is this book group’s problem with Hemingway?”

Were some of my female colleagues to answer this question, they would say -- and they do -- that Hemingway's world of machismo both alienates and undermines women. Accordingly they argue that he


\(^{20}\) Ibid xi.
should not be taught, either in book groups or in schools. Even my mother-in-law takes potshots, telling me that ‘the man was a slob.’ No other American writer, except for Norman Mailer, generates such venom. But what evokes the hatred? The man? The legend of the man? The art? A little of each?²¹

Miller provides her own scholarly answer in Hemingway’s defense:

I would argue that many of Hemingway's women reach that third or fourth dimension where true art lives, even though Hemingway's macho label continues to prohibit a totally unbiased reading of his art. Beyond this, some readers fail to recognize the truth of Hemingway's characters, because they do not meet the demands of Hemingway's art. They do not read between the lines and thus miss the emotional complexity of his art and of his heroines. Failing to allow for Hemingway's whittled style, they interpret what seems to be a sketchy treatment of the women as a weakness of character. With Hemingway's women especially, he discovered them more fully by giving them little to say. His women embody the 7/8 of the iceberg that is

down under and carry much of the works emotional weight accordingly.\textsuperscript{22}

Lisa Tyler, another Hemingway scholar, attributes Hemingway's negative image to misrepresentations of his earlier critics and misunderstandings of his public persona:

When potential readers reject Hemingway as indifferent to minorities and hostile to women, they are often responding not to Hemingway's fiction, but to the indifference and hostility of some of his early critics, and a negative image of the author those influential first admirers unintentionally projected.\textsuperscript{23}

\textsuperscript{22} Miller 6.
\textsuperscript{23} Tyler 28.
HEMINGWAY’S CHALLENGES IN GETTING INTO THE COLLEGE CLASSROOM

A broad brush summarization of all of the critical reviews and opinions covered in previous sections of this paper would have three parts. The first part would cover the artist’s writing career and contributions. Hemingway's career can be seen in 20 years segments. The first 20 years, the 1920s and the 30s, would be the Hemingway classic years where his style and genius produced a masterpiece of short stories and at least four novels that would qualify as masterpieces. The next 20 years, the 1940s and 50s, up until his death in 1961, would be the Hemingway “hokum” years where alcohol, drugs and mental illness decimated the genius of the former literary giant and the quality of his output lacked the focus and artistic purity of his former self. The 20 years after his death, in the 1970s and 80s, saw a flood of Hemingway novels released posthumously. These novels were cobbled together by well-meaning scholars and gifted writers with the end result of unfinished works that did not reflect the editorial skills of Hemingway's genius.

The second part of the generalization of this paper would be the findings that literary review excoriation of
Hemingway's early work in the 20s and 30s was primarily unjustified and vindictive. Recent literary critical review of the last 30 years has exonerated Hemingway's writing style from the long-standing misrepresentations of gender bias and anti-woman sentiment in his female characters and male-female dialogue.

The third and final part of the summarization of this paper would be that there were no outrageous or socially unacceptable themes that sullied and distorted Hemingway's storylines, topic matter or dialogues. As Carlos Baker would cryptically summarize in his Hemingway biography, "Hemingway liked the topics of hunting, fishing, bullfighting, and war."

If I collapse all three of these parts of my summarization into a single sentence we arrive at: an American author whose works in the 1920s and 30s were considered masterpieces of his time, international in readership appeal, and commercially successful (to the extent that they remain in print 60 years after his death).

My premise is that Hemingway is not found in college curricula for the same reason that vaulted him into the ranks of literary titans; the classic Hemingway writing style:
Indeed, in his classical period, Hemingway’s style—his stripping of his declarative sentences to their elemental words and connecting such sentences into paragraphs through repetitive patterns rather than through conventional coordinating and conjunctive phraseology—force the active participation of the reader to affect completion of the action; thus, the reader experienced the emotion as a participant. This style can seem, to the casual reader, limited or staccato or just simple, but—as all the would-be Hemingway imitators have learned—deceptively so. We may find that Hemingway's works may have elemental words and short sentences but often the structure is anything but simple. One of Hemingway's writing characteristics, as coined by his biographer Carlos Baker, was that he was a “poet-symbolist”. And although Hemingway insisted that he did not use symbols for the sake of imbedding symbols, he did allow that often symbols can be read into the settings of the story. Such a scenario might be what Barnhisel observes in his critical essay on The Snows of Kilimanjaro:

The story moves by means of oscillation. It is structured as a pendulum that swings between two extremes, and this motion works on many levels. On a

24Dempsey 240.
typographical level, the story moves between Roman and italic type. At the same time, the text oscillates between dialogue-driven, almost adjective-free plain prose and a reminiscence laden, run-on style of thinking about the past. Harry's attitude towards his wife oscillates between contempt or even loathing for her to affection and respect. Most of the symbols of the story are polarities, as well; the hyena at the end of the story and the leopard at the beginning are different extremes of the same pendulum, as are the clean white peaks of the mountain and the fetid humidity of the plain.²⁵

The scholar Arthur Bethea, describes another Hemingway-esque technique that adds another layer of complexity to the illusion of his simple word structures: "The technique of omitting clear antecedents for pronouns and locating important meaning in indefinite words..."²⁶

From a scoreboard standpoint, we have an author who has at the surface level a genius for using elemental words, connected unconventionally, requiring the active participation of the reader to complete the process, and,
on another plane, the author is imbedding his poet-symbolist skills with explicit and implicit symbols to add a further dimension to the story. To this literary tapestry, the author further infuses the dialogue with ambiguous pronoun usage, and a technique of omitting clear antecedents for pronouns along with locating important meaning in indefinite words. Even with the complexities of all of these dynamics interacting, producing the melody, undertones and harmonics of the storyline, an intellectual grasp of such a literary creation is certainly not beyond the capability of graduate or undergraduate students. Perhaps it would be more challenging for those creating the teaching materials since, although the literary texts exist for Hemingway's novels and short stories, the dynamics of each level of complexity often exist in disparate essays and references, often lacking a consensus of opinion. Even this task of pulling together the teaching syllabus, although tedious and laborious, is not an impossible undertaking. Preparing for class discussions would also add an additional level of required work for the instructor, since the possible answer sets are more like a quadratic equation rather than a single answer; because of the symbolism and intentional language ambiguities, there may
be several valid conclusions in interpreting a discussion topic.

We are still, however, within the capability domain of most seasoned professors who populate our universities. However pulling together all of the requisite teaching references and scholarly research along with preparing for the discussions that would take place in each class might end up being a labor of love undertaken by only the most ardent of Hemingway teaching scholars.

There remains, however, one final trait of Hemingway’s style that may be the key to the mystery of why this American genius of modern literature is not to be found in our college classrooms; Hemingway’s technique of omission. Earlier in this paper, Hemingway’s iceberg metaphor was outlined, where only 1/8\textsuperscript{th} of the iceberg is visible but is supported by a robust foundation of the 7/8\textsuperscript{th} that is unseen, but can be discovered. Hemingway expanded on his technique of omission in his interview with Plimpton:

...different people bring different experiences to his readings and therefore will have a different experience with each reading or subsequent reading of
his work because they will discover more of what lies below the water.\textsuperscript{27}

I suspect Hemingway's statement to Plimpton is inherently correct in reading any author. In a classroom setting however each student formulating their own interpretation of what the author has hidden below the waterline might yield an unproductive and chaotic discussion in an attempt to reach a consensus that might be supported by scholarly research. It apparently can be done as is evidenced by the research for this paper (see next section). There are graduate and undergraduate courses with Hemingway as their primary topic, that have overcome all of the preparation and research hurdles to accommodate all of the dynamics and interactions of Hemingway's writing style; including peering into that iceberg and deriving some truths as it was meant by the author. For the bulk of college curricula however preparing and teaching classes on Hemingway for all of the above-mentioned reasons would be a task of substantial effort and likely would only be undertaken for those universities that have a scholarly commitment to Hemingway or to those teaching professors who have devoted their lives to researching and promoting this giant of the American literary 20th century.

\textsuperscript{27}Plimpton 30.
CONCLUDING COMMENTS

In the introduction portion of my Capstone project, I had indicated that one of the reasons for selecting my topic was that in perusing the Rutgers graduate and undergraduate course catalogs I could not find any reference to Hemingway topics, at any of the Rutgers campuses. I did a cursory scan of other universities in the area such as Princeton, Farleigh Dickinson and Kean, but given the number of universities in the Northeast and in the nation, it could not be considered a representative sampling except for the purposes of my topic. This semester, in developing my paper and augmenting my research with secondary and tertiary references, I decided to reach out to selected Hemingway scholars directly, via e-mail and ask for their opinions as to why Hemingway was absent from the classrooms in general. As I suspected of the half-dozen e-mails that I sent to Hemingway scholars that I ran across in my research I received no responses accept from Prof. Linda Miller from whom I received an invaluable response last week. The net effect of her response, included in its entirety below, is that many colleges do indeed teach Hemingway including Penn State which happens to house volumes of the Hemingway “Letters”. Dr. Miller
was also one of the Hemingway scholars who contributed an essay in one of the books I used as a reference, Women on Hemingway.

Dr. Miller has expanded my knowledge base with some interesting reasons of her own that might explain why Hemingway is not more widely pursued in the college classroom. These insights are unique to any of the other scholarly data that I found in writing my paper originally:

Dear Mike Mullaney,

I would say that a main reason Hemingway isn't taught as often relates to issues with the Hemingway Estate and the almost prohibitive cost of incorporating his stories into anthologies. Because it costs big bucks, his stories tend not to enter the textbooks, except minimally, and then this leaves the impression that his work no longer matters. I do think that Hemingway is being taught today much more than 20 years ago. I would refer you to an excellent article on this topic by Susan Beegel in the Hemingway Review, Spring 1998, p. 5. She talks about some of the myths circulating about Hemingway no longer being taught. It is really pertinent to your topic. Let me know if you have trouble getting a copy of this article. 30 years ago
I think that he wasn't being taught because of all those gender issues rife at the time. I don't think this is true today. Indeed, female scholars have thrived (and even driven) Hemingway scholarship. He is being studied in
Graduate programs, certainly at Penn State where we have housed the Hemingway Letters project (with the publication of Volume 1 of 18 volumes forthcoming this fall). I am the Head of the Editorial Board for this project, and Sandra Spanier, another female scholar, is the General Editor. Several other women have taken on a role as a volume editor. When I teach Hemingway, which I do often, his work transforms the classroom at all levels. His appeal crosses all cultural, gender and class boundaries these days. If he isn't being taught that much, I suspect it relates more to those practical issues I raised above as tied in with the accessibility of his texts. I know of many who teach Hemingway besides me, at my own campus and also at colleges across the country. Good luck with your work. If it would be
helpful, we could talk more by phone, as convenient.

Linda Miller\textsuperscript{28}

\textsuperscript{28} Linda Paterson Miller. "Re: Insights to my Capstone." E-mail to Michael Mullaney. 1 April 2011.
WORKS CITED


Miller, Linda Paterson. “Re: Insights to my Capstone.” Email to Michael Mullaney. 1 April 2011.


