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978-0-521-55651-4 - New Essays on Hemingway's Short Fiction

Edited by Paul Smith

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The American Novel series provides students of American literature with introductory critical guides to great works of American literature. Each volume begins with a substantial introduction by a distinguished authority on the text, giving details of the work's composition, publication history, and contemporary reception, as well as a survey of the major critical trends and readings from first publication to the present. This overview is followed by a group of new essays, each specifically commissioned from a leading scholar in the field, which together constitute a forum of interpretative methods and prominent contemporary ideas on the text. There are also helpful guides to further reading. Specifically designed for undergraduates, the series will be a powerful resource for anyone engaged in the critical analysis of major American novels and other important texts.

Ernest Hemingway is one of the most gifted, oft-taught, and frequently criticized authors of the short story in the English language. The introduction and four original scholarly essays in this volume constitute an overview of Hemingway's career as a short story writer and of practical problems involved in reading this work. The early short story "Up in Michigan" is explained in relation to the groundbreaking short story cycle *In Our Time*. Problems of narration are analyzed in "Now I Lay Me," an integral part of Hemingway's second collection of short stories, *Men without Women*. An essay on "Fathers and Sons" takes a detailed look at the ecological and Native American background of the collection *Winner Take Nothing*. "Snows of Kilimanjaro" is examined from a postcolonial perspective. Also included is a selected bibliography designed to direct readers to the most valuable resources for the study of Hemingway's short fiction.

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★ The American Novel ★

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Emory Elliott  
 University of California, Riverside

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The great thing is to last and get your work done and see and hear and learn and understand; and write when there is something that you know; and not before; and not too damned much after. Let those who want to save the world if you can get to see it clear and as a whole. Then any part you make will represent the whole if it's made truly. The thing to do is work and learn to make it.

– Ernest Hemingway

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Edited by Paul Smith

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

## Contents

Series Editor's Preface

*page ix*

1

Introduction:

Hemingway and the Practical Reader

PAUL SMITH

*page 1*

2

Reading "Up in Michigan"

NANCY R. COMLEY AND ROBERT SCHOLES

*page 19*

3

"Now I Lay Me":

Nick's Strange Monologue, Hemingway's

Powerful Lyric, and the Reader's

Disconcerting Experience

JAMES PHELAN

*page 47*

4

Second Growth:

The Ecology of Loss in "Fathers and Sons"

SUSAN F. BEEGEL

*page 75*

vii

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978-0-521-55651-4 - New Essays on Hemingway's Short Fiction

Edited by Paul Smith

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

---

*Contents*

5

Re-Placing Africa in “The Snows of  
Kilimanjaro”: The Intersecting Economies  
of Capitalist-Imperialism  
and Hemingway Biography

DEBRA A. MODELMOG

*page 111*

Notes on Contributors

*page 137*

Selected Bibliography

*page 139*



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Frontmatter

[More information](#)

## Series Editor's Preface

In literary criticism the last twenty-five years have been particularly fruitful. Since the rise of the New Criticism in the 1950s, which focused attention of critics and readers upon the text itself – apart from history, biography, and society – there has emerged a wide variety of critical methods which have brought to literary works a rich diversity of perspectives: social, historical, political, psychological, economic, ideological, and philosophical. While attention to the text itself, as taught by the New Critics, remains at the core of contemporary interpretation, the widely shared assumption that works of art generate many different kinds of interpretations has opened up possibilities for new readings and new meanings.

Before this critical revolution, many works of American literature had come to be taken for granted by earlier generations of readers as having an established set of recognized interpretations. There was a sense among many students that the canon was established and that the larger thematic and interpretative issues had been decided. The task of the new reader was to examine the ways in which elements such as structure, style, and imagery contributed to each novel's acknowledged purpose. But recent criticism has brought these old assumptions into question and has thereby generated a wide variety of original, and often quite surprising, interpretations of the classics, as well as of rediscovered works such as Kate Chopin's *The Awakening*, which has only recently entered the canon of works that scholars and critics study and that teachers assign their students.

The aim of The American Novel Series is to provide students of American literature and culture with introductory critical

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guides to American novels and other important texts now widely read and studied. Usually devoted to a single work, each volume begins with an introduction by the volume editor, a distinguished authority on the text. The introduction presents details of the work's composition, publication history, and contemporary reception, as well as a survey of the major critical trends and readings from first publication to the present. This overview is followed by four or five original essays, specifically commissioned from senior scholars of established reputation and from outstanding younger critics. Each essay presents a distinct point of view, and together they constitute a forum of interpretative methods and of the best contemporary ideas on each text.

It is our hope that these volumes will convey the vitality of current critical work in American literature, generate new insights and excitement for students of American literature, and inspire new respect for and new perspectives upon these major literary texts.

Emory Elliott  
University of California, Riverside