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HEMINGWAY: A STUDY IN GENDER AND SEXUALITY

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*Hemingway: A Study in Gender and
Sexuality*

By

Kemen Zabala

Senior Honors Thesis

University of Connecticut

Submitted to the English Department and Honors
Program in partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the Honors degree of

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For my Aita and Ama, Xabier and Maria Zabala, who have given me their constant love and support throughout all of my endeavors.

For my sister, Jessika Zabala, who inspires me daily with her intelligence and thoughtfulness.

For my extended family, especially my grandparents, whose rich history makes me proud to call myself a Basque and Spanish woman.

For Brendon, my love and my companion.

In loving memory of mi abuela, Carmen Albero Frutos.

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Introduction

I wrote “Hemingway: A Study in Gender and Sexuality,” due to my personal, cultural, and intellectual concerns with various kinds of border crossings, particularly geographical and emotional crossings that are also gendered and sexualized. Both my awareness of my family history and my intellectual interest in representations of genders and sexualities have shaped my thesis.

On a personal level, Ernest Hemingway has always fascinated me. Every time I sit in a classroom and hear students complain about his “machismo” writings or listen to a professor speak of Hemingway’s mental instabilities, I find that makes me like Hemingway even more. Hemingway is exactly like his writing, simple yet full of complexities upon a second look. I enjoy the mental challenges of Hemingway’s works, that is, wondering what the character means when he or she refers to “it.” He engages a proactive audience in that everyone has their own interpretation about his works. The reader has to apply his or her own life experiences in an attempt to deconstruct Hemingway’s writings. I am attracted not only to his writing style, but also to his experiences around the world as an American, particularly in Spain.

I am astounded at a time when the United States was ideologically isolationist, Hemingway involved himself in several war conflicts abroad including World War I and the Spanish Civil War. His interest in Spain led him to portray the disenfranchised communities (most notably the Communists and Basques) under Fascist Spain in many of his works. Hemingway’s efforts to build ties with these communities caused the FBI and J. Edgar Hoover to question his loyalty to the United States. Since both my maternal and paternal family lineages struggled under Francisco Franco’s hellish rule, I feel a strong

connection with Hemingway and his contribution to the anti-Fascist Spanish culture. As an American who travels to Spain as frequently as she can, I understand Hemingway's observation of Spain through the eyes of an American. He often displays the struggles Americans go through in foreign countries due to the United States' foreign policies. For example, the Spanish rebels in *For Whom the Bell Tolls* (1940) initially do not trust the American who has come to fight for their cause, but they learn that he is a valuable asset and does not share his country's sympathies with fascism or anything anti-communist. Hemingway's close connections to my heritage as well as his controversial political views contributed to my desire to explore his popular works and not so popular works in my thesis.

My intellectual interests in representations of genders and sexualities have been key to shaping "Hemingway: A Study in Gender and Sexuality." Since scholars and students alike often criticize Hemingway for his "machismo" writings, which include stoic male heroes and feeble, weak-minded women, I had a strong desire to explore these criticisms and make up my own mind about Hemingway's "weakness." I decided to divide my thesis into three chapters that would explore the male and female characters of his works published during his life and posthumously. As my preparation for the chapters, I read six works: *The Sun Also Rises* (1926), *For Whom the Bell Tolls* (1940), *Islands in the Stream* (1970), *The Old Man and the Sea* (1952), *To Have and Have Not* (1937), and *The Garden of Eden* (1986). I decided that, in order to investigate his gender controversy, I had to read a range of his works. Upon reading his works, I started noting that the stance a reader took on Hemingway's gender portrayals depended on the reader's interpretation of Hemingway's succinct yet dense writing. The less the reader cared to unpack the dense writing, the more the reader tended to side with Hemingway's "machismo" and

“misogynist” gender portrayals. As I read each work, I began noticing that Hemingway did have a controversial stance on gender, just not in the way most of his critics suggested.

Hemingway’s works often portray the difficulties his characters face when facing societal gender binaries. Through my studies in gender-related topics, I have come to understand gender as fluid and increasingly unstable. Although Hemingway did not use specific language indicating his belief in multiple genders, his works often explore the challenges of having to adhere to strict gender binaries in societies. As a result, his characters often venture outside gender boundaries and exhibit behavior not specific to their gender. I paired each work according to the type of challenges the characters faced with societal gender boundaries.

All three chapters reflect this central preoccupation with gender. Chapter 1, entitled “Lost Generation Love: War as a Catalyst for Gender Reversals in *Sun Also Rises* and *For Whom the Bell Tolls*,” explores the ways that men and women of the “Lost Generation” realized that the strict, Victorian gender hierarchies no longer applied to their modernizing societies due to the technological thrusts of World War I. The chapter analyzes the male and female characters in *The Sun Also Rises* (1926) and *For Whom the Bell Tolls* (1940), and how they test Victorian gender binaries. In Chapter 2, “The Painter, the Fisherman and the Sea: a Multi-Gendered Sea Uncovers Thomas and Santiago’s Anxieties about Masculinity,” I look at how Hemingway uses a multi-gendered sea to reveal the male heroes’ anxieties over their masculinity in *The Old Man and the Sea* (1952) and *The Islands in the Stream* (1970). Finally, in Chapter 3, “Not a “Bitch” or a “Devil!”: Helen and Catherine Destabilize Heteronormativity,” I analyze how the female characters in *To Have and Have Not* (1937) and *The Garden of Eden*

(1986) challenge heteronormative, male-female relationships by exuding behavior not considered “female” according to gender binaries.

Chapter 1 analyzes how Ernest Hemingway dives deep into the societal culture that young men and women of the “Lost Generation” experienced. Hemingway’s works display how war conflicts, particularly in the early twentieth century, lead to vast changes in societies. While societies rebuilt themselves after the devastation, new cultural and societal views on gender emerged. During the post-World War I era, young men and women challenged the traditionalist, Victorian views of their parents regarding gender. Thus, the decades of the 20s and the 30s saw young men and women testing gender binaries by transgressing their gender spheres: men began to take on behaviors typically gendered female while women began to take on behaviors typically gendered male. World War I pushed many women into societal roles traditionally limited to men such as factory work due to the astronomical loss of life. Brett Ashley of *The Sun Also Rises* (1926) and Maria of *For Whom the Bell Tolls* (1940) reflect the gender experimentation the women of the “Lost Generation” underwent. Women discarded their long hair and frocks for shapeless, boyish “flapper” styles. Women also ventured out of their private home sphere and joined men in public discussing politics and other issues previously not open to women. As men encouraged women’s social mobility, they began seeing women as partners and not as their inferiors, which led to the increasingly blurred gender roles in contemporary society. Just as critics observed Hemingway’s “machismo” writings, others have also noted Hemingway’s challenge of gender binaries especially in *The Sun Also Rises* (1926) and *For Whom the Bell Tolls* (1940).

Many scholars have noted how Hemingway’s post-World War I environment facilitates gender reversals among his “Lost Generation” characters in the two novels.

Regarding *The Sun Also Rises* (1926), Wendy Martin explores how Brett Ashley embodies the re-definition of “woman” during the post-World War I era, the roaring twenties, in her work “Brett Ashley as New Woman in *The Sun Also Rises*.” Ira Elliot analyzes the meaning of masculinity during the post-World War I period and how Jake Barnes copes with the shift in meaning in his work, “Performance Art: Jake Barnes and ‘Masculine’ Signification in *The Sun Also Rises*.” Jake and Brett, as many men and women did during this period, experiment with gender roles. Their experimentation redefined male-female relationships.

Critics find different aspects of gender role reversal in Hemingway’s *For Whom the Bell Tolls* (1940), which is set in the thirties yet the characters still belong to the post-World War I “Lost Generation.” Although set a decade later, *For Whom the Bell Tolls* (1940) also displays the effects war conflicts have on gender roles. World War I does affect these characters since they could be included in the “Lost Generation” due to their age. Chaman Nahal in “Narrative Pattern in Ernest Hemingway’s Fiction: *For Whom the Bell Tolls*,” notes how Robert Jordan’s masculinity embodies the “Lost Generation” mentality. Meanwhile, in “Revisiting the Code: Female Foundations and ‘The Undiscovered Country’ in *For Whom the Bell Tolls*,” Gail D. Sinclair analyzes how the gender role shifting of Maria and Robert Jordan affects their romantic relationship. Although *For Whom the Bell Tolls* (1940) is set during the Spanish Civil War (1936-1940), both World War I and the Spanish Civil War affect the characters’ gender roles.

The critics that I analyzed for Chapter 1 informed my argument that Hemingway used war conflicts to challenge gender binaries; however, as helpful as they were, in the end, I found the critics, particularly regarding their assumptions about gender, limited. Most, if not all, of the scholars whose works I engaged failed to make use of the writings

and opinions of Victorian and Post-World War I gender theorists. In addition, they could have used the views of contemporary gender theorists in analyzing the relationships of Jake and Brett and Robert and Maria. I also found that they did not utilize the Hemingway text to the fullest. For instance, if a critic formed a controversial conclusion about a section of a work, he or she would only allude to a passage and not devote enough time deconstructing that passage. I would have liked to see these critics take on the “machismo” critics and refute “machismo” points by interpreting specific Hemingway texts from *The Sun Also Rises* (1926) and *For Whom the Bell Tolls* (1940) differently.

By analyzing Hemingway’s challenge of gender binaries in *The Sun Also Rises* (1926) and *For Whom the Bell Tolls* (1940), I hope that more readers will subscribe to a reading other than the “machismo” reading of Hemingway. Clearly, the “Lost Generation’s” gender experimentations led to how we view gender roles in contemporary relationships. Just as Jake and Robert view Brett and Maria as partners rather than gender subordinates respectively, women and men of contemporary society should consider the possibility that blurred gender roles actually lead to a more progressive society.

Hemingway noted the value of men and women working together to create an improved society, particularly after a war disaster. The challenge of traditionalist, Victorian gender hierarchies by the “Lost Generation” led to improved sexual and friendly relationships between men and women.

Chapter 2 focuses less on how gender binaries affect relationships between men and women, and more on how gender binaries affect men. *The Old Man and the Sea* (1952) and *Islands in the Stream* (1970) reveal the masculine anxieties that Santiago and Thomas experience respectively. The relationship between a gender indeterminate sea

and the two men highlights the men's anxieties about masculinity due to the strict gender binaries imposed by society. Both men, although described by many critics as "stoic" and the "classic Hemingway heroes," display discomfort by having to ascribe to a masculine ideal of tough, sexual, aggressive, bread-winner, etc. The multi-gendered sea reveals Santiago and Thomas' anxiety about masculinity in that they tailor the sea's gender according to their experiences at sea. If Santiago and Thomas perceive their experiences as masculine, then they label the sea feminine. However, if Santiago and Thomas think their experiences at sea reflect a failure of their masculinity, they label the sea as masculine. I seek to explore the curiosity of Santiago and Thomas' masculine anxieties as they reflect them on the sea.

Hemingway has a multi-gendered sea as a character in his works because Hemingway's characters refer to the sea as both male and female. Since Santiago and Thomas view the sea in terms of both genders, the sea's gender cannot be fixed. I will prove the gender indeterminacy of the sea by citing the arguments of various critics concerning the sea's gender in *The Old Man and the Sea* (1952) and *Islands in the Stream* (1970). Susan F. Beegel, in "Santiago and the Eternal Feminine: Gendering *La Mar* in *The Old Man and the Sea*," indicates that Hemingway "genders the sea as feminine throughout the text" (Beegel 132). Beegel is a thoughtful argument as to why the sea could be gendered female, but she exclusively labels the sea as female. By contrast, Thomas Strychacz remarks that a masculine sea provides Santiago with a challenge *Hemingway's Theater of Masculinity*, which provides an equally powerful argument, but he, like Beegel, assumes a reductive understanding of gender. My argument combines both of these valuable arguments. I propose that since both of these critics have valuable arguments for the sea as either male or female, that the sea is multi-gendered. The sea is

both male and female and Hemingway shows his readers a multi-gendered sea by alternating between male and female within his texts.

Regarding *Islands in the Stream* (1970), critics also label the sea as either male or female, but not both as I stipulate. Nancy R. Comley and Robert Scholes, authors of *Hemingway's Genders*, suggest a reading of the sea as a seductress or siren and allude to its traditionally female qualities. Comley and Scholes explore the traditional female characterization of the sea by examining a passage where Thomas Hudson experiences a sexual fantasy while at sea. I believe that the feminine sea takes the place of Hudson's first love, his first wife. Rose Marie Burwell notes the masculinity of the sea in that the sea provides the rough, aggressive environment for the Western hero in her essay "West of Everything: The High Cost of Making Men in *Islands in the Stream*." The sea as masculine in *Islands in the Stream* (1970) also makes sense according to textual evidence; however, again, Hemingway provides the reader with equally strong passages for both male and female readings of the sea. Thus, I believe the sea to be multi-gendered in *Islands in the Stream* (1970) as well.

As I explore the masculine anxieties of Santiago and Thomas Hudson, I will analyze *The Old Man and the Sea* (1952) and *Islands in the Stream* (1970), as well as the various heroic traits that critics observed concerning both men. Delbert E. Wylder notes the saint and sinner qualities of Santiago in his chapter entitled, "*The Old Man and the Sea: The Hero as a Saint and Sinner*." Wylder focuses on Santiago's failure to bring the Marlin back to the shores alive, which makes Santiago gender his surroundings as masculine due to his unwillingness to accept defeat at the hands of a feminine sea. Meanwhile, Thomas Strychacz's *Hemingway's Theaters of Masculinity* argues that Santiago is "the quintessential hero of Hemingway fiction. Particularly in his chapter,

“Reading the Bones: Santiago’s Audiences in *The Old Man and the Sea*,” Strychacz points to Hemingway’s “theatrical fashioning of manhood” (Strychacz 258). In the beginning of the novel Santiago feels confident and in his element. This allows for his chest-pounding, masculine theatrics against a sea he labels feminine. In other words, the sea’s gendering oscillates according to Santiago’s experiences with his masculinity, and this oscillation allows the reader to view Santiago’s anxieties concerning masculinity.

A similar gender fluidity is at work in *Islands in the Stream* (1970). Although Thomas Hudson, as a painter and a wartime captain, experiences the sea differently from Santiago the fisherman, he also alters the sea’s gender according to his level of anxiety about masculinity. As Thomas Hudson experiences vast changes in his life (from happily vacationing with his children to finding out all three perished), his levels of anxiety about masculinity fluctuate. Robert and Patricia Heaman’s “Hemingway’s Fabulous Fishermen,” labels Thomas as a “fisher hero,” and equate his experiences fighting German submarines during WWII to Santiago’s fight with the marlin (Heaman and Heaman 30). During Thomas’s time as a wartime captain against the Germans, the readers note a hero that has nothing to live for since he lost his family and his sense of purpose. A masculine sea provides Thomas comfort as his world around him crumbles. Even so, like Santiago, when Thomas Hudson is in his element (vacationing with his boys and as a painter observing the sea), he interacts with a feminine sea. Stephen Matthewson, in his work, “Against the Stream: Thomas Hudson and Painting” confirms my assertion. Although the critics do not specifically reiterate my claim of Thomas and Santiago interacting with a multi-gendered sea according to their masculine anxiety level, their observations note that Thomas and Santiago both experience events that challenge or conform to their notion of masculinity.

Chapter 2 proved the most arduous chapter to compose in that the critics did not view gender as a fluid, unstable component in Hemingway's characterization of the sea. The critics viewed the sea as "male" or "female," but not both. However, their views supported my observation of a multi-gendered sea because each critic had equally compelling arguments for the sea as both male and female. The critics also did not notice the masculine anxieties that Santiago and Thomas experience, so I had to act in a similar manner and take their compelling arguments for different aspects of the heroes' masculinities, and weave their arguments into my own argument signaling Santiago and Thomas' anxieties concerning their masculinities.

Hopefully, this chapter will inspire the male population to express their emotions more and not suppress them for fear of being labeled a "pussy" or a "wimp." Truthfully, just as women as the "second-class" gender have challenges, men have challenges in keeping up with the ultra-masculine persona as portrayed in music, television, and other forms of multimedia. Men's embrace of more "feminine" traits, will lead to improved relationship between men and women in society, as seen in Chapter 1. Basically, my analysis in this chapter explores how even Hemingway, known as "Papa" for his "machismo"-style writings, reflects his own anxieties about masculinity in his characters. Perhaps when men reveal their own grievances with gender binaries, violence against women and the inequality of women will decrease.

Finally, Chapter 3 explores how women deal with the challenges of gender binaries in their relationships and in the process destabilize heteronormative sexuality. In my final blow to critics solely adhering to the "machismo" writings of Hemingway, I explore a more compelling interpretation of Hemingway's powerful female characters. I believe that Hemingway does not use the strong women in his works as vehicles for his

misogyny, but rather as agents for questioning and challenging heteronormativity in society. Helen of *To Have and Have Not* (1937) and Catherine of *The Garden of Eden* (1986), both exhibit characteristics that are not “generically” female, thus challenging the reading that Hemingway characterizes his female characters as “weak” and feeble.” Helen and Catherine clearly display domineering characteristics in their relationships with their male partners in the works. Therefore, by Helen and Catherine venturing away from their prescribed societal gender roles, Hemingway acknowledges the challenges women face in having to adhere to strict societal gender binaries. Particularly in *The Garden of Eden* (1986), Hemingway explores the possibility of multiple genders in societies.

In investigating my view on the dominant women in Hemingway’s works, I will analyze Helen Gordon in *To Have and Have Not* (1937) and Catherine Borne in his posthumous work, *The Garden of Eden* (1986). I seek to show that Hemingway does not alter his perception of dominant women breaking down the barriers of heteronormativity. This viewpoint is both apparent in his early works and his later works. In society, the dominant view of relationships rests on the notion of heteronormativity, a demand of heterosexual behavior and a binary understanding of gender (male and female). Helen in *To Have and Have Not* (1937) questions the practicality of heteronormativity’s female gender and sexual roles in a primary relationship, while Catherine in *The Garden of Eden* (1986) attempts to alter these conventional roles by creating her own definition of what role a female should take in a heterosexual relationship.

Kim Moreland’s interpretation of Helen in her essay, “To Have and Hold Not: Marie Morgan, Helen Gordon, and Dorothy Hollis,” seeks to highlight Helen’s dominant attributes in a famous passage: The confrontation with her husband, Richard Gordon.

Nancy R. Comley and Robert Scholes explore Helen's gender role in the confrontational passage between Helen and Richard in *Hemingway's Genders*. Robert W. Lewis notes Helen's tactics in asserting dominance over her husband in the passage. These scholars' views supplement my theory of Helen questioning the practicality of her roles in her marriage by confronting her husband.

Meanwhile, as Catherine seeks to define her gender and sexual roles in her relationship with her new husband, David Borne, various Hemingway scholars note her sexual and psychological dominance. Amy Lovell Strong in her essay, "'Go to Sleep, Devil': The Awakening of Catherine's Feminism in *The Garden of Eden*," analyzes Catherine's feminist qualities in challenging heteronormative roles of a female. For her part, Nancy R. Comley in "The Light from Hemingway's Garden: Regendering Papa." indicates Catherine's fondness in gender shifting. Finally, Carl Eby and Richard Fantina, in their respective works, "He Felt the Change So That It Hurt Him All Through: Sodomy and Transvestic Hallucination in Hemingway," and "Hemingway's Masochism, Sodomy, and the Dominant Woman," they explore the ways in which Catherine asserts her sexual dominance over David in their works,"

A major shortcoming of the critics in their assertions about *To Have and Have Not* (1937) and *The Garden of Eden* (1986) was the difficulty they experienced in straying from using heteronormative language. For example, many critics could only articulate Catherine engaging in anal sex with her husband as "sodomy." Critics analyzed the passage as if it was two men having sex with each other, and did not explore the possibility of a woman in "male drag" having sex with her husband. In other words, a woman exploring her sexuality by feeling like a homosexual man. In order for critics to analyze Catherine's sex act with her husband, they could only envision Catherine having

sex as a man, not Catherine engaging in a “homosexual” act as a woman. It was as if critics found difficulty in acknowledging that Catherine was having a gender experience that defied conventional assumptions about gender and sexuality.

I hope that Chapter 3 opens up discussions about how gender binaries aid in society viewing the female gender as inferior to the male gender, and reducing heterosexuality to heteronormative behaviors/acts. In *To Have and Have Not* (1937) and *The Garden of Eden* (1986), Hemingway explores women willing to explore their sexualities with their male sexual partners and defy their role in their relationships as subordinate. Why can't women exhibit “masculine” traits without being labeled as a “bitch” or a “whore?” This question leads to the exploration of a possibility of multiple genders, not just “male” and “female,” in our society.

In summary, the three chapters of my thesis will encourage readers to encounter Hemingway texts from an angle other than the “machismo” angle. Although Hemingway exhibits some traits in his writings that many consider “misogynistic,” one must question why Hemingway uses this type of language. I believe he is examining the ineffectiveness of gender binaries in our societies through his characters' experiences. His writings lead to an understanding of gender as fluid and increasingly unstable as societies progress. In contemporary society, it is clear that the more “backward” societies exhibit clear boundaries between men and women, which leads to an oppression of women. Hopefully, my thesis contributes to inspiring men and women to live as equals in societies. In addition, I hope that as the population gets more educated on gender issues, societies decrease the persecution of people that fall under a gender category other than “male” or “female.” Even writings that may be considered as contributing to gender binaries can be used to blur the lines between male and female.

Lost Generation Love: War as a Catalyst for Gender Reversals in *The Sun Also Rises* and *For Whom the Bell Tolls*

Ernest Hemingway is an author known for portraying the sterile, disillusioned environment created by the massive human loss of World War I. Perhaps his exposure to the barbarous nature of war as an ambulance driver in the European theater during World War I aided his literary capturing of how the war affected the “Lost Generation,” particularly in Europe. The term “Lost Generation” reflects the disillusioned, hopeless attitude the war generated. The youth in World War I fought out of nationalistic pride, yet, in the process, hundreds of thousands of lives were lost, and millions were exposed to the inhumanity of war. The loss of millions of men changed the social and cultural landscapes of countries. The strict gender and class roles set by the Victorian era did not apply anymore as women took on many jobs meant for men. The massive loss of life also allowed for easier class mobility thus expanding the middle class. In addition, a surge in technology due to the war made consumer goods more readily available to the masses. With a newfound sense of experimentation, the men and women of the “Lost Generation” could reverse gender roles freely. Either with fashion or with a new philosophy on “gender appropriate” behavior, the men and women rejected the strict Victorian standards of their elders. Hemingway captures the gender experimentations of the “Lost Generation” in his works *The Sun Also Rises* (1926) and *For Whom the Bell Tolls* (1940). Both works deal with the gender experiences of a generation caught between world wars. An analysis of the relationships of Brett Ashley and Jake Barnes in *The Sun Also Rises* and of Maria and Robert Jordan in *For Whom The Bell Tolls* reveals how war conflicts of the early twentieth century (particularly World War I) served as the catalyst for reversing the rigid gender roles of the previous century. Furthermore, the war conflicts that allowed

men and women to experiment with gender roles contributed to how contemporary society view the increasingly blurred gender roles of men and women.

Usually, times of war shatter the societal and cultural norms providing an optimum environment for men and women to experiment with gender reversals. Ernest Hemingway's involvement in World War I and the Spanish Civil War, allows the author to capture accurately how the characters shift gender roles causing internal and external conflict. The *Sun Also Rises* and *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, although fictional, give the reader a front seat view as to how war conflicts affect all aspects of human life, particularly gender.

In many of his works, Hemingway explores the disadvantages of society's gender binary system. In *The Sun Also Rises* and *For Whom The Bell Tolls*, he examines how the gender hierarchy between men and women no longer applies after World War I. The gender spheres of men and women that the Victorian era so desperately tried to keep apart merge after World War I. Women begin to realize that they cannot retain their traditional lifestyles in a modernizing world. For example, long hair and frocks will impede women from working efficiently in the home and factories. Men find themselves accepting women's changes, as change coincides with a progressive, efficient society. That Hemingway likes to examine how androgynous hairstyles affect gender relationships between men and women will also be discussed in the third chapter. Hemingway's male and female characters most often find themselves impeded by the gender binaries of society, which explains why they venture beyond the gender lines of "man" and "woman." Although Hemingway never found the words to articulate the matter, Hemingway experiments with the possibility of multiple genders in society.

Brett Ashley: Matadora of the Victorian Bull

Brett Ashley, one of the 'Lost Generation' depicted in *The Sun Also Rises*, goes against every aspect of strict Victorian gender assignments for women. Through out the novel, Brett Ashley exudes characteristics that rebel against Victorian notions that make up a "Lady." She trades in her tight bodice and long sleeves and hair for the androgynous fashion of the twenties; short hair, revealing skin, and shapeless apparel. Brett also explores her sexuality by enjoying various sexual experiences with numerous men and disregarding the patriarchal marital arrangements of the Victorian Era. Finally, Brett Ashley ventures out of the secluded, private sphere of the home into the social, public sphere of men, rubbing elbows and drinking whiskey with the best of them.

Brett Ashley's fashion choices reflect the fashion choices of most women experimenting with gender roles in the post-World War I period. With most of the war casualties being men, women had to take work such as factory jobs, usually societal roles only open to men. Manual labor would be extremely difficult to perform in Victorian get-ups, so women opted for looser and freer clothing styles. Not only did women have to perform manual labor for money, but they also had to take care of children. This meant that women increasingly opted for easier hairstyles, such as cutting their long Victorian hair short. In addition, the fashion capitals of the world, such as Paris and Milan, began noticing the change in women's fashion and officially labeled the more androgynous style as "trendy." Wendy Martin notices the growing popularity of androgynous styles for women during the post-World War I period as she states, "Gone are the long skirts, bustles, and constricted waists: New clothes designed by Coco Channel and Erté are intended for movement. The short skirts and light fabrics of the new fashions for women shocked traditionalists" (Martin 50). *The Sun Also Rises* indicates Brett Ashley's

androgynous style as well. In fact, Hemingway gives Brett Ashley credit for being the pioneer of such a dress style during Jake Barnes physical description of Brett in a dance club in France:

Brett was damned good-looking. She wore a slipover jersey sweater and a tweed skirt, and her hair was brushed back like a boy's. She started all that. She was built like the hull of a racing yacht, and you missed none of it with that wool jersey.

(Hemingway 22)

The passage addresses two major factors in Brett's style of dress: her boyish hairstyle and her risqué exposure of skin. Brett Ashley embodies the post-World War I women of the 'Lost Generation' engaging in gender experimentation. Hemingway captures the image of Brett's flapper-like style perfectly. Additionally, the reader senses Jake Barnes traditionalist tone as he describes her exposure of flesh with "*that* wool jersey." Clearly, although Jake and Brett share a friendship, Jake still feels a bit threatened with women entering the societal and cultural spaces once limited to just men, as most men did during the period. Brett also crosses more gender boundaries formed by Victorian traditionalists when she exudes sexual confidence in her relationships.

Since Jake Barnes considers Brett Ashley his only love, his narration meticulously and jealously catalogues each of Brett's sexual affairs. The Victorian era taught women to repress their sexuality by making it taboo for women to express their enjoyment of sex, and forcing women to view sex as a "wifely duty" to please their husbands sexually and by procreating. As the women of the "Lost Generation" saw how easily they could lose their husbands through war, these women viewed the post-World War I period (mainly the roaring twenties) as an optimal time to engage in excess particularly sexual excess.

Since the “Lost Generation” noticed the dispensability of human life during the war, they chose to live a decade with the motto “life is too short.” As part of this generation, Brett Ashley chooses to not follow the patriarchal, Victorian notions of marriage, and opts for a life that allows her to express her sexuality and seek sexual gratification with multiple partners. Wendy Martin observes Brett’s sexual freedoms in her work: “Brett represents Hemingway’s idealized rendering of the woman free of sexual repression... [She] represents the principle of female eros unbounded by patriarchal control” (Martin 51). Martin notes how Brett participates in gender reversal by venturing into a world of sexual freedom once only inhabited by men, as well as by freeing herself of the Victorian patriarchal restraints on the female gender. Brett’s “open” relationship with Mike, a drunken Scottish war veteran, involves her sleeping with other men while she promises to marry Mike. Mike allows Brett’s sexual independence, but he does display bouts of jealousy and rage because of it. As Mike, Brett, and Jake engage in conversation in a bar, Mike coolly states, “Mark you. Brett’s had affairs with men before. She tells me all about everything,” to which Brett replies, “Michael and I understand each other” (Hemingway 143). However, Mike ends up getting into a drunken fistfight with one of Brett’s lovers. Brett and Mike’s relationship is an example of how Brett’s sexual independence, originally limited to men, leads to Mike’s forced passivity (if he wants to stay with her), a trait linked to Victorian women. Gender traditionalists, then, would shun the female gender in Victorian times. Therefore, Victorian traditionalists would shun their relationship. The novel displays how Brett feels at home around men in bars and engaging in conversations with them, which indicates that Brett ventures outside the private, home sphere that restricted women during the Victorian era.

After World War I, the number of men decreased in the countries that were involved in that war. Therefore, in order for women and their families to survive, many women had to assume male roles, particularly in the working sector. As working women grew increasingly aware of the social mobility men experienced (such as going out to the bars after a long day at work), women longed for leisure time in public spaces as well. As Wendy Martin remarks, "In the gap of meaning that opened after World War I, the female role was undergoing a transformation in the popular consciousness from passive, private creature to avid individualist in pursuit of new experiences" (Martin 49). As the embodiment of a "Lost Generation" woman, Brett Ashley enjoys engaging in discussions with men in bars, and while she socializes, she meets many suitors. Brett oversteps Victorian boundaries, since Victorian, traditionalist values would consider a woman who stepped outside the home as a danger or someone with a stained reputation. While in Spain, Brett goes out on and parties with her many suitors and friends, and she encounters some difficulties with the country's traditionalist, religious values. Perhaps the Spanish townspeople did not embrace Brett's independence since Spain's neutrality during World War I caused a lack of technological advancement, and Catholicism was embedded in the country's culture. Jake observes some of the difficulties Brett encounters as he states, "We started inside and there was a smell of incense and people filing back into the church, but Brett was stopped just outside the door because she had no hat" (Hemingway 155). Montoya's character, the owner of the inn in Pamplona where Jake and company stay, symbolizes how difficult it was for men with old traditionalist values to accept women in the public sphere. Montoya expresses his grievances to Jake about Brett as he attempts to shield the young bullfighter, Pedro Romero, from her influence. Montoya tells Jake, "He ought to stay with his own people. He shouldn't mix

in with that stuff” (Hemingway 172). Montoya does not want to see a young boy from a small town corrupted by the ways of a traveled, modern woman. However, as the public and private spheres of men and women merged, men saw women not only as lovers but also as trusted friends.

Jake Barnes: A Girl’s Best Friend

While some readers may regard Jake Barnes as the pathetic best friend yearning for a romantic relationship who never exposes his true feelings, Hemingway designed Jake Barnes’ character with many more complexities. Jake embodies the “Lost Generation” male who went into World War I seeking national pride and glorification only to become completely disillusioned with war and humanity. World War I damaged the Victorian notion of masculinity to many soldiers, since soldiers found it difficult to retain their emotions while being surrounded by human atrocities. In addition, war wounds (both physical and emotional) made men unable to fulfill their masculine duties as father and husband, which caused women to take on a more dominant role. Many men gained a newfound respect for women who took over their jobs as they went off to war, and as a result, formed closer relationships with women socially and culturally. Men began adopting language and behavior once thought to be limited to the female gender. *The Sun Also Rises* exposes the gender transformation that Jake undergoes during the post-World War I period.

Jake Barnes re-evaluates the meaning of masculinity due to his World War I wound. Jake’s war wound causes his emasculation since he cannot physically perform. However, his impotency allows him to explore new outlets for his masculinity since the Victorian, traditionalist values for a man no longer apply to him. Jake cannot impregnate

his wife; he cannot assert his dominance over women sexually due to his impotence. Ira Elliot also observes Jake's gender crisis: "Jake Barnes's male identity is called into question by the genital wound he suffered during the First World War" (Elliot 64). Jake realizes that he cannot compete with Brett's many lovers because he cannot satisfy her sexual desires. Rather than shutting down completely, Jake finds a new way to assert his masculinity, by not allowing his war wound take over his life. As Jake undresses in his hotel, he finds humor in his wound. Jake remarks, "Undressing, I looked at myself in the mirror of the big armoire beside the bed...Of all the ways to be wounded. I supposed it was funny" (Hemingway 30). Therefore, Jake has to find a new realm to compete among men, since Victorian as well as contemporary periods claim that the pinnacle of masculine dominance lies in the bedroom. In fact, anatomical differences between men and women allow for traditionalist gender binary systems. Jake presents a challenge to the traditionalist, Victorian gender system since his wound blurs gender boundaries. Jake experiences a gender reversal in that since he cannot exhibit sexual prowess, he has to adhere to the Victorian female gender role of being a non-sexual being. Since Jake cannot express his masculinity sexually, he explores different avenues in which he can connect with Brett thus establishing their mutual friendship and love for one another. In fact, due to Jake's war wound, Brett and Jake have the closest male-female connection in the entire novel since Jake enters the emotional realm once restricted to the female gender.

Although Jake views his war wound as "funny" and attempts to jump the emasculating hurdle as stoically as possible, his war wound also allows him to express himself emotionally. Like many "Lost Generation" men, Jake finds himself not only physically scarred, but also emotionally scarred by the war. Many war veterans experience severe emotional damage due to horrific wartime experiences, and Jake

displays signs of emotional trauma particularly at night. The following passage of Jake crying in his bed causes a drift between my observations and that of critics’.

I lay awake thinking and my mind jumping around. Then I could not keep away from it, and I started to think about Brett and all the rest of it went away. I was thinking about Brett and my mind stopped jumping around and started to in sort of smooth waves. Then all of a sudden I started to cry. Then after a while it was better and I lay in bed...and then I went to sleep. (Hemingway 31)

The passage affirms Jake’s entrance into the emotional realm, an action that Victorian values would discourage among men. Jake experiences what many war veterans experience when they find themselves alone, a vulnerability that enables them to confront their emotional wartime scarring. “It” may symbolize the war experiences that lead to his impotency and his psychological damage. However, Ira Elliot interprets the scene as a “masturbatory fantasy” in which the “it” that he “couldn’t keep away from” is the penis. While Elliot may have a valid point, the vague language makes a certain interpretation difficult. The passage does reflect Jake’s emotional vulnerability, most likely caused by World War I, and indicates Jake’s experimentation with gender reversals as he finds comfort in crying. Only after he cries can he go to sleep, which signifies that Jake finds comfort in embracing emotions as part of his new masculinity. Jake’s comfort with emotions allows him to see Brett as more than a sexual object, which causes a very strong bond between Jake and Brett.

With Jake’s entrance into the emotional realm comes a deeper understanding of his friendship with Brett. After his realization that he will not be able to be a lover to Brett, Jake decides that he will always be there as a friend for Brett regardless. As part of

Jake's gender reversal, Jake accepts women as friends and does not limit women to a private sphere. Perhaps because Jake knows that he may never inhabit a private realm with a woman, Jake does not mind socializing with women in public spaces. Whereas in Victorian times it would be unheard of for a woman to socialize with men and share their views, Jake values Brett's opinion and presence in public places due to his love for her. Jake articulates his feelings by stating, "Women made such swell friends...In the first place, you had to be in love with a woman to have a basis of friendship. I had been having Brett for a friend. I had not been thinking about her side of it" (Hemingway 148). Since Jake loves Brett, he finds that he can respect her as a friend rather than pushing her aside because he cannot be her lover. Jake's support of Brett's social mobility becomes part of his new definition of masculinity. As Wendy Martin argues, "Jake understands that to be her friend, he must truly relinquish his desire to control her...he is the only man in the novel who is able to meet Brett on common ground" (Martin 55). With the help of his war wound and his emotional awakening, Jake embodies the man of the "Lost Generation." As the "new man," Jake accepts the progress of women and, unlike traditionalist men, does not stand in the way of that progress. Jake is a "Girl's Best Friend" because he facilitates Brett's independence and experimentation with gender. By the novel's end, Jake could be considered a feminist.

Maria: A "Rabbit" Repaired

Like Jake's character, critics often misunderstand Maria's character in *For Whom the Bell Tolls*. Reading the novel for the first time may lead to the incorrect classifications of Maria as a submissive, mindless woman that Hemingway includes in his "machismo" writings. However, Maria also embodies the "Lost Generation" woman, even though her story takes place during the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939). The post-World War I era

still applies, Maria reflects the “Lost Generation” woman during the depressed 30s rather than the roaring 20s. Not only does Maria live in a war-torn country, but also like Jake, she experiences emotional and physical scarring: she is raped by fascist soldiers. Maria, though, behaves like a survivor rather than a victim. Maria is able to behave like a survivor because of her experimentation with gender reversals. In addition, Maria explores her sexuality in her relationship with Robert Jordan, and goes far beyond being Robert Jordan’s sexual “play thing.”

Similar to Jake, Maria had damage done to her genitals due to a wartime situation. Maria endured not only the killing of her family, but the brutal rape at the hands of multiple fascist soldiers. Since Maria is part of the “Lost Generation,” Maria does not allow herself to be helpless and defenseless at the hands of men. Just as Jake does not let his war wound ruin his masculinity, Maria does not believe that she is useless to men because other men violated her. During the Victorian era, if a woman did not retain her virginity until marriage, even if a man raped her, Victorian traditionalists deemed her unworthy of a “proper” marriage. Since Victorian customs viewed women as pious, asexual creatures, a woman had a responsibility to keep her virginity in tact. In a fascinating similarity to Jake, Maria finds humor as a way to heal from her traumatic event. As Maria recalls how Joaquín, a member of the Spanish rebel group, carried her to safety after he found her ravaged body, Pilar warns Maria that she may not be physically or emotionally healed enough to recall such traumatic events. Maria defends her conversation with Joaquín by stating, “I have thanked him...And I will carry him sometime. Allow us to joke. I do not have to cry, do I, because he carried me?” (Hemingway 133). At the beginning of the work, Maria does not want to speak of her violation, but towards the middle of the novel Maria can joke about Joaquín carrying her

while bullets flew everywhere. Gail D. Sinclair also notes how, “Maria is now able to joke about being rescued” (Sinclair 100). Joaquín even teases Maria that he was using her as a shield. He can have this conversation with Maria comfortably because he views her as an equal, not only because they are rebels against the fascists together but because of the gender reversals of the “Lost Generation.” Due to the gender reversals, men and women saw each other on more of an equal societal plane. Along with their closer societal equality, came ability of the men and women of the “Lost Generation’s” to view each other as sexual partners who experimented with gender reversals.

Maria experiments with her sexuality as a way to heal from the brutality of rape. Although because of her brutal rape she experiences physical pain when she engages in sexual activity with Robert Jordan, she perseveres through the pain. She does not bear the pain to please Robert Jordan, but to gain the control that her rapists tried to take away from her. In addition to being a rape survivor, her desire to gain control stems from the gender reversals experienced by the “Lost Generation.” Women had to gain control in many aspects of life due to the lack of men after World War I, hence their newfound spirit for survival. Her survival instinct comes from women of the “Lost Generation” tearing down the Victorian notions that women were meek and helpless and needed the aid of men. Clearly, women survived with out their husbands, fathers, and brothers after World War I. Gail Sinclair agrees as she declares, “She is not a submissive woman whose will is non-existent or twined around a man’s, but instead acts positively to assert her own force and to free herself from others’ intrusion upon her” (Sinclair 101). Indeed, her gender reversal of physically and emotionally gaining control of her life and her sexual desires affects her sexual relationship with Robert Jordan. During Maria and Robert’s first sexual experience, a hesitant and scared Maria may reveal herself but she initiates

the first sexual encounter by getting into Robert's sleeping bag. Even though this is her first sexual experience since her rape, Maria still finds that she can instruct Robert's physical movements by declaring, "I love thee. Oh, I love thee. Put thy hand on my head" (Hemingway 70). In addition, she expresses her desire to experiment sexually and release any inhibitions she may have. Maria states, "I cannot kiss, I don't know how," and upon hearing Robert's advice to slow things down she declares, "Yes. I must kiss. I must do everything" (Hemingway 70). Critics may take her declarations to mean that she feels like she *must* to submit to Robert Jordan; however, the passage reflects her desire to remove the psychological and physical barriers caused by the rape. In order to survive the rape she must free herself sexually and in life to embody the "Lost Generation" woman.

A similar factor that affects both Brett Ashley's and Maria's gender roles is their short hair. Brett Ashley wore her hair short because of the androgynous style dominating women's fashion during the 20s. However, in Maria's case, the fascists upon her capture cut off her hair. Instead of seeing the haircut as a source of weakness, the short, androgynous haircut empowers Maria and facilitates her gender role reversals in her relationship with Robert. Hemingway uses Pilar to point out Maria's androgynous appearance: "You could be brother and sister by the look" (Hemingway 67). Maria uses her appearance as a way to relate to Robert Jordan and establish herself as his equal in their relationship. Gail Sinclair agrees by stating, "Their similar physical appearance furthers the symbolic autonomy that develops in their love affair" (Sinclair 105). When both Maria and Robert Jordan dream of going to Madrid together to start a new life after the war, Jordan says, "We could go together to the coiffeur's and they could cut it [Maria's hair] neatly on the sides and back as they cut mine" (Hemingway 345). Due to Maria's androgynous appearance, Maria possesses more power in her relationship with

Robert Jordan. Robert does not think to ask Maria to grow her hair long, and, as stated in the quote, he supports Maria's short hair in the future. Maria's shortened hair allows the male characters of the novel, particularly Robert Jordan, to treat Maria with respect and as an equal in the fight against the fascists. Her short hair symbolizes that she has suffered at the hands of the fascists just as much as any other man, and that her inner and outer beauty surpasses her uneven, short hair. The men of the "Lost Generation" respect the women's androgynous appearance as a source to assert their equality among men. As with Jake and Robert Jordan, the men do not see the gender reversals of women as a threat to their masculinity, but as a way to redefine their masculinity.

Robert Jordan: A Gentleman Gringo

Similar to Jake Barnes in *The Sun Also Rises*, Robert Jordan also embodies the man of the "Lost Generation." Even though Robert Jordan's story takes place during a war conflict, he still displays the disillusionment with war and humanity that men displayed after World War I. In fact, his "Lost Generation" mentality affects his decisions in the novel, as he is not a bloodthirsty, glory-hungry war hero but a pacifist who has a close connection to nature. Robert Jordan re-defines the masculine hero by embracing more docile gender qualities usually attributed to women. However, the gender reversals do not come without internal conflict to Robert Jordan, as demonstrated by the large amount of internal dialogue within the work. In addition, Robert Jordan supports the gender reversals that take place within his relationship with Maria, and allows himself to view Maria as an equal from whom he could learn life lessons.

Robert Jordan's "Lost Generation" mentality reveals the gender reversals caused by war conflicts. As part of the post-World War I generation, Robert Jordan focuses more on the ideology of war than the action of war. Since both World War I and the Spanish

Civil War showed how easily a human life is lost, men focused their attention to their emotions in order to reevaluate the meaning of war and life. Although Robert Jordan realizes he desires to blow up a bridge in order to help in the Spanish Civil War, his internal monologue reveals that he is not bellicose by nature. As Chaman Nahal observes, “He is by nature a passive individual. Left to himself, he would rather be a writer...or make love, or breed horses” (Nahal 124). As Robert Jordan ponders his future with Maria in his hometown of Montana, he decides that he will write about his wartime experiences and declares, “Once you write it down it is all gone. It will be a good book if you can write it. Much better than the other” (Hemingway 165). Therefore, an aesthetic Robert Jordan often observes nature and life around him in hopes of creating a novel. Since Robert is a sensitive individual involved in the arts, his character is very different from the stoic Victorian characterizations of men. Robert Jordan clearly has a keen eye for nature, and each chapter almost always begins with Robert’s observation of nature followed by a stark realization that he is in a war-torn country and he cannot let his guard down for a second. He displays his close connection with nature as he tells Anselmo, a fellow guerrilla fighter, “I do not like to kill animals,” and he displays his ideological questions of war as later on in the novel he questions himself, “Do you think you have a right to kill anyone?” (Hemingway 303). Robert Jordan’s close relationship with nature helps him develop his pacifistic nature by noticing human beings as part of nature. The men of the “Lost Generation” became extremely conflicted about human life when reevaluating the need of war.

As displayed in the novel, Robert Jordan undergoes many internal conflicts. As men, because of the war atrocities became more sensitive to humanity, their masculinity came into question. Indeed, for men to begin to accept societal and cultural gender

reversals of men and women, they had to undergo an internal process of change. During most of the novel, Robert Jordan tries to “snap” himself out of his sensitive ideologies involving nature and life, and attempts to adhere to the Victorian male values of stoicism. For Chaman Nahal, “In none of Hemingway’s novels does the hero talk so much with himself as in *For Whom the Bell Tolls*- an indication enough of his inner conflict and disturbance” (Nahal 128). Towards the end of the novel, Robert Jordan finds himself unable to justify the killing of a human being even though he argued with Anselmo that killing a human being was at times necessary. As Robert Jordan undergoes the gender role reversal that distances masculinity from bellicose acts, his traditionalist ways attempt to halt the process:

Listen, he told himself. You better cut this out. This is very bad for you and your work. Then himself said back to him, You listen see? Because you are doing something very serious and I have to see you understand it all the time. I have to keep you straight in your head. Because if you are not absolutely straight in your head you have no right to do the things you do for all of them are crimes and no man has a right to take another mans life unless it is to prevent something worse happening to other people.

(Hemingway 304).

The passage alludes to the conflict between the men of the “Lost Generation” with the traditionalist values of older generations. The men of the post-World War I era had to realize that the beliefs of their fathers, grandfathers, and so on did not apply to them. Robert Jordan, like most men of the “Lost Generation,” realizes toward the end of the novel that being masculine does not mean that you must have control of every situation and be an emotionless killing machine. In many ways, Robert’s traditionalist ways are

calling into question his masculinity because he experiments with gender reversals that lead to him becoming more a more sensitive human being. Robert Jordan embraces his emotions and allows himself to love Maria as his equal.

Robert Jordan also defies the gender hierarchy of his forefathers by embracing Maria as his equal in their relationship. He experiments with gender role reversals with Maria, and allows Maria to heal herself by becoming more independent. In turn, Maria heals Robert by helping him become a more sensitive, emotional individual. Maria allows Robert to realize that not being a stoic man does not make you less of a man or endangers your masculinity. As Gail Sinclair states, “Largely resulting from his relationship with Maria...he moves from Pilar’s description of a man “cold in the head,” independent, and emotionally distanced, to an incorporation of all intimate possibilities” (Sinclair 105-6). Robert Jordan defies the Victorian notions that a man must view a woman as property and submissive in their romantic relationship. Robert Jordan accepts Maria’s androgynous looks and is sensitive to her emotional and psychological state. He does not try to coerce Maria into sex for his sexual enjoyment. Robert Jordan engages in sexual activity with Maria because she wants to and sees it as an outlet to physically express his love for her. Robert confesses to Maria, “You have taught me a lot *guapa*...I have learned much from thee,” and confesses to himself that Maria is, “my true love and my wife. I never had a true love. I never had a wife. She is also my sister, and I never had a sister” (Hemingway 380-1). Robert Jordan recognizes Maria as his equal who fulfills many roles in his life, and allows Maria to help him in his process of gaining a new identity. Victorian traditionalists did not value the opinions of women and that signals a reason as to why they ostracized them and kept them out of public, social circles. Robert

Jordan appreciates Maria and realizes that the more their gender boundaries blur the happier and healthier their relationship becomes.

In conclusion, Brett Ashley, Jake Barnes, Maria, and Robert Jordan represent some of the men and women of the “Lost Generation.” These men and women from *The Sun Also Rises* and *For Whom the Bell Tolls* belong to a generation deeply affected by war. The post-World War I era was characterized by feelings of disillusionment towards war and humanity, and the reevaluation of Victorian traditionalist gender roles. As the men went into World War I seeking glory for their nations, they left the war questioning the purpose of war and humanity. With the complete destruction of landscapes and human life, came the realization that traditionalist values did not apply anymore to a new era that included many technological advancements. Men came back to their countries and found women taking over their societal and cultural roles. Men had to come to the realization that women were not second-class citizens because they worked hard to sustain their country, their families, and themselves. Both Jake and Robert Jordan come to terms with the fact that Brett Ashley and Maria embody the “new woman” of the “Lost Generation.” These women ventured into public spheres once dominated by men, traded in their “gender appropriate” clothing for looser more revealing styles, they cut off their long hair, and expressed their sexuality openly. Men also redefined their gender roles by redefining their masculinity. To them, masculinity did not mean blindly accepting their pawn-like status in a war or making women submit in every aspect of society and culture. These men realized the advantages of having gender roles blurred by viewing women not as their slaves but as their partners. As evident by Brett and Jake’s relationship as well as Maria and Robert’s relationship, experimenting with gender roles improved their bonds. Improved bonds between men and women lead to progressive societies and a better

quality of life. Men and women both realized that they had to work together and put gender binaries aside in order to modernize their societies. Thus, the “Lost Generation” sparked the redefining of gender roles, which led to the increasingly blurred gender roles in today’s societies.

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**The Painter, the Fisherman and the Sea: a Multi-Gendered Sea Uncovers
Thomas and Santiago's Anxieties about Masculinity**

Upon reading Ernest Hemingway's works *The Old Man and the Sea* (1952) and *Islands in the Stream* (1970), one cannot deny the uncanny similarities between both works. Hemingway composed both of these novels simultaneously in 1951. *The Old Man and the Sea's* Santiago and *Islands in the Stream's* Thomas Hudson, a fisherman and a painter respectively, share similar qualities that structure their masculine personas. From their seemingly stoic status to their epic life struggles, both protagonists arguably personify the "Hemingway Hero." Both men also share a special relationship with the sea. Although many critics equate the sea with a specific gender, Hemingway portrays the sea with various gender dimensions. At times, Hemingway genders the sea as male; at other times, the sea is female. Understanding the sea as multi-gendered in *The Old Man and the Sea* and *Islands in the Stream*, leads to an understanding of Santiago and Thomas' masculinity as complex and unstable. Hemingway's heroes are often understood as unquestionably masculine; what the presence of a multi-gendered sea in both works indicates Hemingway's anxieties about masculinity. The multi-gendered sea reveals Santiago and Thomas' anxiety about masculinity in that they tailor the sea's gender according to their experiences at sea. If Santiago and Thomas perceive their experiences as masculine, then they label the sea feminine. However, if Santiago and Thomas think their experiences at sea reflect a failure of their masculinity, they label the sea as masculine. I seek to explore the curiosity of Santiago and Thomas' masculine anxieties as they reflect them on the sea.

Since Hemingway and his critics provide evidence for a sea that could be male or female, I suggest that the sea is both. A multi-gendered sea exposes Santiago and

Thomas' anxieties about masculinity to the reader. Although critics have not explored Santiago and Thomas' interaction with a multi-gendered sea because they believe the sea to be either male or female (not both), they do examine the changes both protagonists go through in their lives, which challenge their masculinity. I seek to examine how Hemingway provides the reader with plenty of evidence on how a multi-gendered sea interacts with Santiago and Thomas' anxieties about masculinity although critics have not explored this realm.

Constructing the Sea as Multi-Gendered in *The Old Man and the Sea* and *Islands in the Stream*

In order to explore how a multi-gendered sea exposes Santiago and Thomas' anxieties about masculinity, I must explore the notion of a multi-gendered sea. Textual evidence from Hemingway and critics provide me with helpful evidence that asserts my idea that the sea in both works is both male and female, not one or the other.

The sea in *The Old Man and the Sea* possesses powerful female qualities. Upon reading the novella, I noted the strong relationship that Santiago had with the sea and, in a work with few central characters, the sea stood out not only as a setting but as a character as well. The sea functions as a home for Santiago as well as a companion while he sets out on the long voyage to bring the marlin back to the shores. The sea and Santiago form a special bond, which Hemingway captures in the strongest piece of textual evidence that I could find confirming the sea as having a female gender.

He always thought of the sea as *la mar* which is what people call her in Spanish when they love her. Sometimes those who love her say bad things of her but they are always said as though she were a woman. Some of the younger fishermen, those who used buoys as floats for their line and had motorboats, bought when the

shark livers has brought much more money, spoke of her as el mar which is masculine. (Hemingway 29-30).

Santiago credits his experience as a fisherman, his age, and his traditional fishing methods as his tools for perceiving the sea as feminine. Due to Santiago's lonely existence while at sea, a feminine sea helps him pass the time by becoming a character with whom he can interact. Susan Beegel agrees by stating that the feminine sea is "a protagonist on an equal footing with Santiago" (Beegel 131). The passage conveys an ideal relationship between Santiago and the sea according to heteronormative standards. Since Santiago views the gender relationships as heteronormative, it would be taboo for him to speak of a masculine with such affectionate language. Perhaps a feminine presence soothes Santiago's feeling of loneliness by acting as a caring companion, especially since Santiago lacks a wife in the novella. A masculine sea would threaten Santiago's masculinity; therefore, a masculine sea could not act as a caretaker for Santiago. While at shore, Santiago does have a companion who takes care of him named Manolin. As Santiago's young companion, Manolin takes care of Santiago and keeps him company especially by engaging in discussions about American baseball particularly Joe DiMaggio, Santiago's idol. Manolin's parents forbid Manolin to sail with Santiago due to Santiago's failure at sea. Although Manolin is male, like the feminine sea, he does not threaten Santiago's masculinity. Therefore, Santiago allows Manolin to be his caretaker. As a child, Manolin idealizes Santiago as the man he wants to become, but in doing so Manolin occupies a feminine position because he takes care of Santiago. The sea may take Manolin's place as a caretaker for Santiago while at sea. A feminine sea may also act as a mother figure for Santiago. In the work, the reader assumes that Santiago's old age marks the absence of parents; therefore, if Santiago possessed close family ties with

his parents, particularly his mother, the sea may fill a void for his mother. According to the passage, Santiago perceives the sea as a feminine figure that he respects, just as he would his mother. In *Islands in the Stream*, a feminine sea takes on a sort of mythical persona as a siren.

Like Santiago, Thomas Hudson lacks female companionship. I attribute his lack of companionship to his numerous failed relationships. According to my perception, Thomas finds himself reminiscing through out the novel about his first wife because his first wife was his one true love. No other woman was able to fill the void his first wife left. While at sea, Thomas Hudson has sexual fantasies, and a feminine sea allows Thomas to experience his sexual fantasy comfortably. The feminine sea, much like a seductress or siren, creates the environment in order for Thomas to experience his sexual fantasies and express his emotions internally. As Thomas fantasizes about his first wife while at sea, the passage convinced me that a feminine sea created a comfortable, sensual environment.

He felt all of this and the tangibility of her legs against his legs and her body against his and her breasts against his chest and her mouth was playing against his mouth. Her hair hung down and lay heavy and silky on his eyes and on his cheeks and he turned his lips away from her searching ones and took the hair in his mouth and held it.

(Hemingway 332-33).

I interpret the passage as Thomas allowing the feminine sea to be the only female persona that can fill the empty feeling that his failed marriage left behind. Nancy R. Comley and Robert Scholes also examine the passage, “when Hudson is at sea, sleeping with his .357 magnum between his legs,” and believe that Thomas’ comfort with the sea allows for the

occurrence (Comley and Scholes 67). I believe that the sea is the only “woman” that Thomas Hudson has a healthy relationship with, because Hemingway portrays Thomas Hudson as being happiest when at sea. Thomas Hudson lives by the sea, sails and snorkels with his beloved sons at sea, and dies at sea. However, equally compelling arguments arise for a masculine sea in both *The Old Man and the Sea* and *Islands in the Stream*.

The epic struggle between Santiago and the marlin in the novella *The Old Man and the Sea* is arguably the best-known portion of the work. The sea’s gender shifts from caring, loving companion to a fierce challenger that tests Santiago’s physical and mental endurance. A masculine sea provides a challenge to Santiago in the form of a marlin. The struggle with the marlin brings Santiago to display exaggerated masculine qualities as he cries, “Keep your head clear and know how to suffer like a man” (Hemingway 92). I see Santiago as attempting to prove himself to his masculine challenger, the sea. Strychacz also notes how a masculine sea provides Santiago with a bellicose environment as he states, “Santiago’s solitary heroic struggle against the elements, appears capable only of ratifying principles of masculine conduct” (Strychacz 239). Santiago views the marlin, which is part of the sea, as masculine thus reflecting the sea’s masculinity. Upon killing the marlin Santiago states, “I have killed this fish which is my brother and now I must do the slave work.” (Hemingway 95). After Santiago defeats his adversary, the marlin, Santiago sees the marlin as a brother, a masculine symbol. Throughout Santiago’s struggle, the marlin personifies the masculinity of the sea. Santiago not only fights the marlin, but a part of the sea. Santiago associates himself with the marlin since he calls the marlin “brother,” and as a fisherman, Santiago associates himself with the sea. In calling

the marlin brother, Santiago notes that the sea does have a masculine quality. Thomas Hudson also struggles with a masculine sea.

A masculine sea provides Thomas Hudson with a high-risk environment fit for his role as a wartime captain during World War II. In Hemingway's chapter, *At Sea*, the sea not only possesses feminine qualities in which the sea acts as a seducing siren, but masculine qualities as well. The masculine sea creates a challenge for Thomas Hudson, just as the masculine sea created a challenge with the marlin for Santiago. However, in *Islands in the Stream*, Thomas Hudson chases after man-made German submarines attacking local island populations. Thomas Hudson fights a foreign object in the sea, but the sea provides excellent conditions for the submarine to thrive. Thus, the sea fulfills a masculine role by providing the battlefield for Thomas and the Nazis. Rose Marie Burwell's "West of Everything: The High Cost of Making Men in *Islands in the Stream*," also observes the masculine environment of the sea as she explains that the rough terrain the sea provides for Thomas parallels a Western novel or movie. Burwell indicates that the masculine sea in the "Western...whether the hero is on land riding a horse, or at sea commanding a fishing boat converted for submarine chasing-is to simplify, and...transform the effort and the struggle of daily life" (Burwell 159-60). The masculine sea provides a purpose to Thomas's life since he lacks a family and rejects his artistic endeavors, and through the masculine setting the sea offers, he finds meaning in his life. The audience sees that Thomas Hudson finds meaning in his sea quest as he dies in peace. Thomas observes the oceanic surroundings and Hemingway states, "He felt far away now and there were no problems at all...He looked up and there was the sky he had always loved and he looked across the great lagoon that he was quite sure, now, he would never paint" (Hemingway 446). The sea, which provides the masculine surrounding as the Wild

West provides in a Western, allows Thomas Hudson to achieve a final resolution in his life. Thomas Hudson, just as a Western hero, dies in the masculine setting amongst the chaos of gunfire and the like.

Since I examined how the sea in both Hemingway works has masculine and feminine qualities, I propose that the sea possesses both of these qualities simultaneously. While critics make a decent argument stating that the sea is either male or female, I believe that they support my argument for a multi-gendered sea. As I previously examined the textual evidence in both works picking out the feminine and masculine qualities of the sea, I suggest that the sea, since it is both genders, can accommodate to the protagonists' situation by fulfilling a masculine or a feminine role. Santiago makes an argument as to why he labels the sea as "la mar," yet he labels the sea's creature, the marlin, as a "brother" when he ensues in a masculine, epic struggle. Thomas Hudson experiences sexual fantasies, which a feminine sea facilitates, yet he engages in an epic struggle of his own battling German submarines in a masculine oceanic battlefield. Therefore, since Santiago and Thomas mold the sea's genders according to their situations, I suggest that the protagonists use the multi-gendered to deal with their anxieties with their masculinity. When Thomas and Santiago feel comfortable in their element as a painter or a fisherman respectively, they attribute feminine qualities to the sea. While both protagonists are comfortable with their masculinity, they assert their masculinity on a feminine sea. However, when the men feel anxieties and insecurities about their masculinity while at sea (loss of Thomas' children or loss of Santiago's marlin), they label the sea as masculine, so as not to be humiliated and defeated by a feminine sea but by a masculine rival.

Chest-pounding or tightening Chest?: Exploring Santiago and Thomas' Anxieties about Masculinity.

As I mentioned in the introduction, I sense that Santiago and Thomas alter the gender of the sea according to their level of anxiety about their masculinity. When Santiago and Thomas feel that they have failed masculine norms (i.e. showed a weakness), their anxiety levels about masculinity rise and they label the sea's gender as masculine. A defeat at the hands of a feminine sea would devastate their image as a masculine hero. However, if Santiago and Thomas feel they are in their element (exuding proficiency in their fishing or painting skills respectively), their levels of anxiety about masculinity decrease; therefore, they feel at ease to have a relationship with the feminine sea. At times, they may feel too confident and Santiago or Thomas may feel the need to exhibit what I call "chest-pounding masculinity," where they exert their dominance over the feminine sea by using misogynist terminology and the like.

Hemingway highlights Santiago's failure as a fisherman as Santiago returns with nothing but the marlin's skeleton in *The Old Man and the Sea*. As a fisherman, Santiago must be successful at fishing in order to fulfill his role in society. Before Santiago ventures on the perilous journey to catch the marlin, Hemingway notes that Manolin's parents refuse to allow the boy to fish with the man since they consider him "*salao*, which is the worst form of unlucky," due to the fact that he is not a profitable fisherman (Hemingway 9). Not only does Santiago fail at his trade, but also he lives isolated without a family. Therefore, judging by heteronormative societal standards, Santiago has failed as a workingman and a family man, two roles that comprise his masculinity. According to my reading, Santiago leaves the shores and engages in a fight with a marlin fit for many young men (not one old man), to redeem his masculine status. Santiago's

community had once revered him as “El Campeón,” since he successfully won all hand wrestling competitions in which he participated. Santiago leaves his masculine fame because he fears he may damage his right hand for fishing, an activity that makes him infamous in his community. Delbert E. Wylder agrees, “It becomes clear that Santiago feels superior to other men,” after he achieves his fame with hand wrestling (Wylder 203). Therefore, Santiago engages in the struggle with the marlin not only to redeem his masculinity, but because part of his pride gained from his hand wrestling days tells him he can achieve the impossible. However, Santiago loses the battle with the marlin as sharks eat the carcass that is too big to fit inside Santiago’s boat. As the sharks take numerous bites out of the marlin Santiago remarks, “He came like a pig to the trough,” when describing a shark. I noticed that Santiago labels the shark, a part of the sea, as masculine and not feminine. His anxiety levels are at an all time high since he is about to lose his trophy that will redeem his masculinity in his community. I feel Santiago cannot even fathom losing to female creatures of the sea, so he labels the sharks as male. For a man with high anxiety levels about his masculinity, he must believe that a male shark is a worthier adversary than a female shark, and to lose to a feminine sea would devastate his masculine image. Thomas Hudson experiences similar anxieties as he battles German submarines in *Islands in the Stream*.

Thomas Hudson experiences similar anxiety levels about his masculinity as he engages in a struggle, not with a marlin, but with German submarines during World War II. Thomas also feels that he has to redeem his masculine status as he becomes a wartime captain and leaves his love of painting behind. Thomas becomes disillusioned with painting after the loss of his three boys, and he realizes that he will never be in love with another woman as he was with his first wife. As Thomas accepts the mission to fight

German submarines he reasons, “Get it straight. Your boy you lose. Love you lose. Honor has been gone for a long time. Duty you do” (Hemingway 318). I feel that Thomas Hudson accepts a high-risk mission (he knows death is imminent since he signs wills and gives his paintings away) in order to regain a sense of purpose in his life as well as regaining his masculine status. Heaman and Heaman confirm my notions as they indicate that, “Thomas Hudson loses all-women, children... [He] seeks to restore order to the world by destroying evil in the form of a German submarine” (Heaman and Heaman 30). His anxiety levels concerning his masculinity are extremely high, so Thomas did not surprise me as he took on a role that would gain some of the honor he lost as a wartime hero. Hudson becomes intent on finding the damaged German submarine, containing German soldiers, after they decimate an entire village on their journey back to Germany. If Thomas kills the German soldiers responsible for their atrocities, he will achieve an honorable masculine status. A masculine sea provides a masculine setting for the wartime fighting between Thomas and his crew and the German submarines. Not once does Thomas label the sea as “la mar” (as Santiago suggests), but he does refer to the sea as “the water” or “the sea” (Hemingway 436). I feel that Thomas fails to gender the sea as feminine during a time where his anxiety levels about his masculinity are extremely high, and he does not want to perish on feminine waters for fear of debilitating his masculine status. However, I am interested at how Santiago and Thomas alter the sea’s gender when their anxiety levels about masculinity are at an optimum.

Santiago feels most confident about his masculinity at the beginning of his voyage, before he struggles with the marlin. Armed with his pride he attained as “El Campeón” during his hand wrestling days, he sets to prove his community wrong about his failures. Santiago believes that he can redeem his masculine status if he has a successful time at

sea, and he brings back physical, profitable proof upon his return. As he begins his relationship with the sea and he establishes to the readers why he calls her “la mar,” he begins to exhibit what I call “chest-pounding masculinity.” Since Santiago feels he is in his element (at sea because he *is* a fisherman), he begins to assert his dominance over a feminine sea. In Strychacz’s section entitled, “Reading the Bones: Santiago’s audiences in *The Old Man in the Sea*,” he argues that Hemingway’s work “is deeply imbued with a theatrical fashioning of manhood,” as he too focuses on Santiago’s treatment of the sea before his encounter with the marlin (Strychacz 258). Prior to Santiago’s meeting with the marlin, Santiago notices a creature floating in the water known as the Portuguese Man-of-War. At this time, Santiago alters the sea and all “her” parts as feminine, as he does not exhibit any anxiety. As Santiago describes the creature, the audience learns that Santiago holds much disdain for the creature as he equates the creature with a “whore” and calls it “the falsest thing in the sea” (Hemingway 35-6). Obviously, his “chest-pounding masculinity” comes in to play as Santiago uses a misogynist term to refer to a portion of the sea. Santiago focuses on the Portuguese Man-of-War’s deception as a tool for killing its prey. The creature, though beautiful, carries long purple tentacles deadly to its prey and a nuisance to fishermen. According to a sexist society, women carry the negative gender trait of deception. The book of Genesis in the Bible provides an example often used to portray the sexist female trait of deception, as Eve deceives Adam into eating the apple from the tree of knowledge. Similarly, Thomas Hudson also alters the sea’s gender to feminine as he is in his element as an artist and a father.

While Thomas’s sons visit Thomas on their summer vacation, Thomas enjoys their company as well as the company of his friends. Since Thomas is divorced and his children live in Europe, he cherishes the limited time he has with his children and decides

to spend the time at sea. While Hudson and his sons travel out to sea prior to the deaths of the boys, Hemingway describes to the audiences what Thomas observes as swims, “Thomas Hudson came up slowly to almost touch the reef, seeing the big brown coral heads, the black sea urchins on the sand, and the purple sea fans swaying” (Hemingway 84). Thomas is in his element because he is watching over his sons as a father and observing his beloved sea through the eyes of a painter. Stephen Matthewson examines how Thomas Hudson’s observance of the sea as a painter “is straightforward and objective” and “is not modified by any subjective adjectives,” as he confirms my inclination that he plans to capture his vacation with his sons in a painting (Matthewson 141). Therefore, Thomas’s levels of anxiety about his masculinity are at an all-time low in the novel because he succeeds in two important realms of masculinity: father and provider (as a painter). Since Thomas lacks love in his life in the form of a wife, a feminine sea fills that void by sharing with Thomas his beloved experiences. I believe that the feminine sea is the only “woman” that has a healthy relationship with Thomas. Unlike Santiago who called the Portuguese man-of-war a “whore” during his exhibition of “chest-pounding masculinity,” Thomas Hudson respects the majesty of a feminine sea and longs to be a part of the sea. In fact, Thomas Hudson builds his house to emulate a ship on the sea, and Hemingway notes, “He always thought of the house as *her* exactly as he would have thought of a ship” (Hemingway 11). Thomas Hudson labeling his ships as “her” parallels Santiago’s labeling the Portuguese man of war with a description for a female. Both men label a part of the sea as feminine when their anxiety levels are low and they feel secure in their element.

In my discussion about the multi-gendered sea and the interactions that Santiago and Thomas have with the sea, I have concluded that both men experience anxieties

about their masculinity. A multi-gendered sea exposes Santiago and Thomas' masculinity as complex and unstable. While critics often understand most of Hemingway's heroes as unquestionably masculine, the presence of a multi-gendered sea indicates Hemingway's anxieties about masculinity. With evidence from the Hemingway text as well as supporting conclusions from various critics, both protagonists alter the gender of the sea according to their anxiety levels about their masculinity. The sea must be both male and female in order for the men to tailor the sea's gender to their experiences. If the sea was either male or female as the majority of critics suggest, Santiago and Thomas would not be able to use the sea to relieve their anxieties about their masculinity because they would not be able to control the sea's gender. Without a feeling of control, Santiago and Thomas would experience grave anxiety levels that would make them unable to function as masculine heroes. Therefore, if Santiago and Thomas could not mask their failures of masculinity by concluding that they failed at the hands of a worthy, masculine adversary, they would be unable to proceed as heroic protagonists and both stories would lack an ending. Conversely, if the sea were only masculine, Santiago and Thomas would not be able to have the passionate relationship they have with a feminine sea. The masculine, heteronormative standards that Thomas and Santiago live by would prohibit a passionate relationship with a masculine sea.

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Not a “Bitch” or a “Devil!”: Helen and Catherine Destabilize Heteronormativity

I begin this chapter by expressing my gratitude to my former classmates who made such remarks as, “Hemingway just hates women because of his weird childhood!” and “Upon reading this Hemingway work, I note the misogynistic undertones.” Although some students chose to pass their judgment of Hemingway more eloquently than others after reading a work of his, I noted my classmates’ underlying stance on Hemingway: To them, he was a misogynist. Although Hemingway scholars would disagree with such a stance, I noticed that through out my four-year career at the University of Connecticut many students believed that Hemingway portrayed hateful women throughout his texts. I wish to strike down the majority of English majors’ first impression of Hemingway by exploring a more compelling interpretation of Hemingway’s powerful female characters. I believe that Hemingway does not use the strong women in his works as vehicles for his misogyny, but rather as agents for questioning and challenging heteronormativity in society.

Although Hemingway’s popularity stems from his male characters, many of his female characters either support Hemingway’s portrayal of the male characters or in their strength surpass the male characters. With a close analysis of Hemingway’s female characters *To Have and Have Not’s* Helen Gordon and *The Garden of Eden’s* Catherine Borne, one cannot write Hemingway off as misogynistic.

Helen Gordon Reaffirms She’s “Not a Bitch” as She Questions the Practicality of Heteronormative Roles

Helen Gordon, though not one of the main female characters in Hemingway’s work *To Have and Have Not*, plays a paramount role in the most powerful scene in the book: when she decides to leave her husband, Richard Gordon. Kim Moreland comments

that “Helen Gordon is far more conventionally cast as a Hemingway heroine” (Moreland 83). Hemingway also describes Helen as “The prettiest stranger in Key West that winter” (Hemingway 138). Therefore, I seek to analyze the “non-heteronormative” gender traits that Hemingway gives Helen, which includes the dominant traits of a male in a heteronormative society. Her non-heteronormative dominant traits help Helen question the practicality of the conventional heteronormative roles for a female in her marriage to Richard Gordon.

Preceding the famous Helen passage, Richard decides to confront Helen about her feelings for her friend, Prof. John MacWalsey. Helen and Richard’s marriage reaches its dissolution with the final confrontation. Richard slaps Helen and calls her a bitch, which makes Helen warn, “If you call me that I’ll leave you,” thus not stepping down from her assumed dominance (Hemingway 182). Helen provides Richard with all of the facts about her relationship with Prof. MacWalsey, and admits that while she did not kiss him, she did allow him to kiss her. Helen bitterly adds that she “would have kissed him if I’d known what you were doing” (Hemingway 183). Moreover, Helen refuses to let her husband label her a bitch and boldly declares, “I’m not a bitch, I’ve tried to be a good wife” (Hemingway 183). Richard’s labeling of Helen as a bitch sparks Helen’s monologue, which questions her roles in her marriage.

Many scholars choose the following quotation to question why Hemingway allows Mrs. Gordon to have one of the most defining scenes in the novel. Kim Moreland remarks that Helen “has a tour-de-force scene that is arguably the most powerful in the novel” (Moreland 88). In addition, Nancy R. Comley complements Moreland’s sentiment by stating that Helen “tells her husband off in one of the strongest monologues allowed a woman in the Hemingway Text” (Comley & Scholes 42). Here, Helen uses the

couples' notions about love to question a female's heteronormative roles in a primary relationship:

Everything I believed in and everything I cared about I left for you because you were so wonderful and you loved me so much that love was all that mattered. Love was the greatest thing, wasn't it? Love was what we had that no one else had or could ever have? And you were a genius and I was your whole life. I was your partner and your little black flower. Slop. Love is just another dirty lie. Love is ergoapiol pills to make me come around because you were afraid to have a baby. Love is quinine and quinine and quinine until I'm deaf with it. Love is that dirty aborting horror that you took me to. Love is my insides all messed up. It's half catheters and half whirling douches. I know about love. Love always hangs up behind the bathroom door. It smells like Lysol. To hell with love. Love is you making me happy and then going off to sleep with your mouth open while I lie awake afraid to say my prayers even because I know I have no right to anymore. Love is all the dirty little tricks you taught me that you probably got out of some book. All right. I'm through with you and I'm through with love. Your kind of picknose love. You writer.

(Hemingway 185-186).

In what seems as Helen's manifesto on love, the passage highlights Helen's dominance by having her recognize her submissive role in her marriage to Richard. Helen questions the practicality of conventional female roles such as motherhood and piety to relieve herself from the burden that is her marriage. Nancy R. Comley notes Helen's "ego strength" in the passage by pointing out Helen's main complaints in the passage: "a

thwarted desire for motherhood and a sense of religious guilt” (Comley & Scholes 43). Ultimately, Helen’s use of sterile imagery indicates her sterility as well as her own marriage’s sterility. Helen invokes religious language to articulate how Richard’s corruption of her led to her decision to leave him. By indicating that the conventional female role in a marriage did not lead to the fulfillment of her dreams in a marriage, Helen decides to leave Richard.

In the passage, Helen announces to Richard that her want for a heteronormative lifestyle with him did not save their marriage. In fact, Richard disregarded all of Helen’s wishes to fulfill her role as a pious wife and mother that a heteronormative marriage requires. Helen desired motherhood, yet Richard forced Helen to take “ergoapiol pills,” which caused her sterility. Helen’s use of sterile imagery bombards her monologue in an effort to leave Richard. From the information Helen provides, the reader notes that Richard may have caused Helen to have an abortion and use other preventative measures for childbirth. Helen recognizes that playing the conventional submissive female role in a heteronormative relationship led to the destruction of her dreams as a woman. Richard took away part of Helen’s identity as a woman by causing her sterility. Therefore, Helen informs Richard that her reproductive sterility led to the sterility of their marriage.

Hemingway dedicates the second half of the passage to indicate Helen’s lament towards her corruption caused by Richard. Helen desired to play the role of a pious wife in a heteronormative marriage by marrying Richard in a Roman Catholic Church, yet Richard refused to give in to her religious desires. Ironically, Helen rejected her religion in order to be the submissive and pious wife that Roman Catholic theology warrants. The conventional female role of piety led to the dissolution of sexual desire in their marriage. Basically, Richard had his way with Helen by teaching her “dirty little tricks” until he

grew bored of their relationship. Helen feels that by submitting herself to Richard's sexual desires, she as a pious wife forfeit her right to "say [her] prayers" at night. Therefore, the conventional role of pious female not only led to the destruction of her marriage but to her wish to lead a religious life. Helen cannot see any practicality in adhering to heteronormative roles since they led to the destruction of her own desires for her life.

Helen's denunciation of conventional female roles in a marriage leads to the uncovering Richard's affair with Helène Bradley. Helen bitterly inquires of Richard if Mrs. Bradley thought him "wonderful" in bed (Hemingway 188). Helen not only announces to Richard that she no longer loves him, but mentions Richard's extramarital affair. According to Robert W. Lewis, Jr., Helen "touches upon the sorest spot of all, his masculinity" (Lewis 131). Mrs. Gordon does know of Richard's affair with Mrs. Bradley, but she does not know what transpired between Mrs. Bradley and Richard during their last romantic tryst. Helène had been engaging in sex with Richard when her husband entered the room. As Helène begged Richard "Please don't stop," Richard Gordon could not continue. Helène proceeded to slap Richard out of her sexual frustration and to insult him she then ordered him to leave (Hemingway 188-189). Both women destabilize heteronormativity, though in completely different ways: Helen questions the use of her heteronormative role in her marriage while Helene destroys the heteronormative role in her marriage by having an affair with Richard.

A reader must note the resemblance of the names "Helen" and "Helène," Hemingway portrays the destabilization of heteronormativity differently. Kim Moreland indicates that Helen "unknowingly edged out the middle-aged 'famous beautiful Mrs. Bradley'" upon her arrival at Key West (Moreland 89). Therefore, while Helen recognizes

that she “tried to be a good wife” by adhering to conventional heteronormative roles and rejecting the superficial world of rich wives in Key West, Helène feels threatened by Helen’s beauty and destabilizes heteronormative norms by sleeping with Richard. Helène shows that heteronormative roles do not apply in the corrupt, superficial world of the “haves” in Key West. In an effort to regain the spotlight upon herself, Helène uses the scene where her husband observes Richard and her having sex to showcase her control over both men. The presence of Helène’s husband indicates to Richard the indispensability of both Richard and her husband. Helène can dissolve her marriage with her husband by engaging in an extramarital affair, just as easily as she can dissolve her affair with Richard by replacing him with her husband if Richard does not satisfy her needs. Therefore while Helen desires the heteronormative norm of a woman’s dependence upon a man by being a “good wife” in a marriage, Helène shatters heteronormativity by being a “bad wife.”

Richard’s reaction to Helen’s protestation of the usefulness of adhering to heteronormative roles in a marriage leads to Richard’s slapping of Helen. Written from Richard’s point of view, Richard realizes something in his wife the “sad, angry face, pretty with crying, the lips swollen freshly like something after rain, her curly dark hair wild about her face...” (Hemingway 188). Robert W. Lewis Jr. suggests that the quotation “shows Gordon seeing his wife for the first time as a person separate from himself and capable of an individuality that could, paradoxically, have been happily joined with his” (Lewis 131). Therefore, with her questioning of the practicality of her roles in her marriage she has finally gained the attention of a neglectful husband. Richard realizes that he had the “perfect” wife according to heteronormative rules, yet he disregarded her presence so much that he loses her. Hemingway sets up Helen and

Richard's marriage as a type of tragedy. Richard realizes the positive attributes of his wife including her mental capacity and physical appearance, and notes his own inadequacies in his treatment of Helen and his failure to please Helène. As Helen plans to begin a new life with Prof. MacWalsey and attempts to participate in another heteronormative relationship, Hemingway leaves Richard with an empty feeling of failure.

Although Helen does not receive a happily-ever-after ending from Hemingway due to her impending marriage with the alcoholic Prof. MacWalsey, Helen achieves her task in making Richard Gordon see that he has repeatedly neglected a wife that only wanted to make him happy. Ironically, Helen sees how heteronormative roles could not save her marriage, yet Hemingway hints her willingness to attempt another marriage by following those prescribed roles. Before Richard runs off to the Key West bars like a dog with his tail between his legs, he attempts to get a rise out of Helen by telling her that she was never "such a star" in bed (Hemingway 191). However, Helen has made her final position clear to Richard, and she has taken the power of ending or mending the marriage out of his hands and destabilizes heteronormativity.

Catherine's "Devilish" Ways Disrupt the Tranquility of Heteronormativity

Similarly, in *The Garden of Eden*, readers experience the demise of another young couple's marriage due largely in part to the dominance expressed by another Hemingway heroine, Catherine Bourne. During their travels throughout the south of France and Spain on their extended honeymoon, Catherine's gradual dominance over her writer husband, David, may seem more controversial since her redefining of heteronormative roles is closely linked to her domination. France and Spain, two countries known for their

conservative Roman Catholic culture, prove a trying environment for Catherine's experimentation with gender and sexual roles. Amy Lovell Strong describes Catherine as "newly married, vibrant imagination, yearning for creative outlets, desirous of sexual adventure, increasingly marginalized by her husband's career, then a growing sense of helplessness, fear of madness, and a tendency toward suicide" (Strong 191). Anyone who reads *The Garden of Eden* can attest to the complexity of Catherine's dominant character. Catherine seeks to re-define conventional gender and sexual roles for women by exploring controversial alternatives.

To understand Catherine Bourne, one must realize that her character constantly struggles for her gender identity. As her struggle progresses, we see a more dominant Catherine. Amy Lovell Strong observes that Catherine "is a divided self...tortured by definitions of normality, anxious to break beyond uniformity to find a place where her less constrained personal identity can emerge" (Strong 193). Unlike Helen, Catherine finds herself unable to follow the heteronormative roles for a female in her marriage. Catherine feels that becoming the "good wife" means rejecting her identity. Catherine has a unique understanding of the stereotypes that limit the women in her society in the 1920s, and in an effort to assert her identity she informs David that she will not be his stereotypical woman. In a particular passage when Catherine argues with her husband and David suggest that she lower her voice so as not to make the rest of the customers at the restaurant uncomfortable, Catherine declares, "Why should I hold it down? You want a girl don't you? Don't you want everything that goes with it? Scenes, hysteria, false accusations, temperament isn't that it?" (Hemingway 70). Although Catherine accepts her identity as a woman, yet abhors the socially imposed restrictions placed on women thus signaling her "divided self." According to Strong, "Catherine embarks on a series of

gender transformations with the hope of liberating herself from the codes of female behavior.” Therefore in an effort to combat societal repression of women, Catherine explores her masculine side by becoming more aggressive towards David and shifting heteronormative gender and sexual roles.

Haircutting marks the beginning of Catherine’s transformation into a boy. After Catherine cuts her hair she points out to a surprised David the advantages of what she had done, “You see...That’s the surprise. I’m a girl. But now I’m a boy too and I can do anything and anything and anything” (Hemingway 15). Clearly after cutting her hair, Catherine correlates having access to the masculine side of her as gaining independence, and more importantly, dominance. Nancy R. Comley points out that Hemingway himself “was fascinated with the possibilities of experiencing a shift in genders, which explains his own experiments with hair,” such as dying his hair red for his wife, Mary (Comley 212). The incident in the barbershop presents an example of Catherine’s newfound dominance over David thereby altering heteronormative roles. Catherine takes David to the barber that had cut her hair, and they discuss what David should do with his hair. Catherine asks the barber to “Please make it the same as mine,” while David quickly adds, “but shorter.” However, Catherine has the last word as she states, “No. Please just the same” (Hemingway 81-2). After David gets his haircut to Catherine’s liking, Catherine re-asserts her dominance over David by clearly letting him know about who controls the gender reversals and when they occur:

Let me feel your hair girl. Who cut it? Was it Jean? It’s cut so full and has so much body and it’s the same as mine. Let me kiss you girl. Oh you have such lovely lips. Shut your eyes girl (Hemingway 86).

Catherine repeatedly refers to David as “girl” to make sure that David understands that

she will not change her mind about the gender reversals, and that she is not going through any phase. *His* Catherine has changed and now Catherine has *her* girl.

A passage that caused much controversy in the posthumous, unfinished novel occurs after Catherine's first haircut and the gender role reversals between David and Catherine. While Catherine and David make love, David feels "something" and then feels Catherine's "hand holding him and searching lower and he helped with his hands and then lay back in the dark and did not think at all and only felt the weight and strangeness inside" (Hemingway 17). Clearly, Catherine steps outside the sexual restriction of strictly heterosexual sex in a heteronormative marriage. Strict heterosexual sex only involves penile-vaginal activity. Catherine reverses heteronormative sexual roles as she becomes the penetrator and David the penetrated. The scene becomes more complex since Catherine may be seen as assuming the heteronormative role of feminine submissive since she physically pleases David with no direct physical pleasure of her own. However, Catherine finds pleasure through a fulfillment of her sexual fantasy by engaging in sexual acts outside of the restrictions of strictly heterosexual sex. Catherine sodomizes David.

According to contemporary societal standards on sodomy, many may associate sodomy as "homosexual sex," or an act that defines only male on male sex. Catherine challenges the heteronormative view on sodomy by engaging in the act with her husband for sexual pleasure. Carl Eby explores the lovemaking passage and agrees with critics that claim that Catherine "sodomizes David" through "digital anal penetration" (Eby 78). Richard Fantina notes that "the ideal Hemingway woman...demonstrates a power and a will to dominate," and he refers to Catherine's sexual control by sodomizing David in *The Garden of Eden* as an example of the ideal woman (Fantina 84). Concerning a patriarchal society, Fantina declares that male masochism (David submitting to

Catherine's anal penetration) can deconstruct a patriarchic society (Fantina 102).

Although critics correctly identify the sexual act as sodomy, they equate Catherine's sexual behavior with male characteristics such as seeking power and domination.

Therefore, through the descriptions of Eby and Fantina an assumption may include that Catherine can only sodomize David when she shifts her gender to male due to sodomy's associations with male on male sex. I believe Eby and Fantina easily characterize Catherine as a phallic woman, yet fail to identify Catherine's divided self. Catherine acknowledges her identity as a woman and shifts gender primarily due to her frustrations with societal standards. Why does Catherine have to sodomize David in her role as a "boy" and not a "girl?" Catherine not only challenges heteronormative sexual role, but enters a world of sexual behavior presumably that only men can engage in with other men. In addition, David may not be the male masochist that Fantina describes, but a willing participant of engaging in an alternative sexual and gender relation with his wife.

David's response of "not thinking at all" and seemingly laying back and allowing his wife to fulfill her sexual fantasies, does not only bring pleasure to his wife but primarily to him. Fantina negates to explore the fact that David receives direct pleasure from Catherine in the sexual act. In more analytic terms, Catherine directly stimulates David's prostrate through her "digital anal penetration," which will lead to David's climax. Difficult to label as masochistic, David does not receive pain from his sexual experience with Catherine since Catherine merely explores an alternative method for their sexual enjoyment outside of heterosexual sex bounds. Fantina declares that David's "psychological submission" facilitated the sexual exchange between Catherine and David (Fantina 85). Fantina seems to allude to the assumption that strict heterosexual sex makes, two roles must be fulfilled: the dominant and submissive. Why can't a sexual

exchange occur between two dominant parties? Amy Lovell Strong adds “ the novel provides ample evidence that David wants to participate in Catherine’s nighttime reversals” (Strong 195). With another reform to the couple’s sex life named Marita, David becomes as much of a willing participant as Catherine.

Catherine begins to feel the pressure of being a divided self in her marriage, so in order to act more freely she imports Marita. David hesitates at first as Catherine states, “...I brought you a dark girl for a present. Don’t you like your present?” and he adds, “I don’t know about it, Devil.” (Hemingway 103). However, David begins to enjoy his new lifestyle and thinks to himself, “That’s all you need...That’s all you need to make things really perfect. Be in love with both of them” (Hemingway 127). Amy Lovell Strong notes the positive qualities of Marita for David as she states, “Marita becomes David’s helpmeet, his supporter, his lover; she gives, she sacrifices, she fulfills, she submits” (Strong 197). Catherine breaks through the strict heterosexual love barrier yet again as she engages in sex with a female, Marita. However, as the novel progresses one cannot help but to see Marita as Catherine’s pawn to wean David from her. Both David and Catherine benefit from Marita’s addition. As a result, Marita and David become extremely close, and he sees an opportunity to engage in a traditional heterosexual union again and begin a new life with Marita possibly including children. Catherine continues her journey to define her identity and enjoys her newfound freedom. Marita gives David an update on Catherine as she says, “She’s a very great publisher now. She’s given up sex. It does not interest her anymore...But she may decide to have an affair with another woman if she ever takes it up again” (Hemingway 190). With Marita’s information, David learns that Catherine experiments with writing just as he does, and succeeds in finding a career. Catherine’s career as a writer highlights more equality between

Catherine and David's character. One can further understand how Catherine and David's equal characterization makes defining them as opposites or in a binary system as heteronormative standards uphold more difficult. Catherine ultimately redefines her sexual and gender roles in a predominantly heteronormative society by shedding her marital union with David.

Upon review of Ernest Hemingway's *To Have and Have Not* and *The Garden of Eden*, I conclude that his portrayal of Helen and Catherine in his novels indicates their questioning of female heteronormative roles in a marriage and their redefining of these roles respectively. To label Hemingway as a misogynist and claiming he hatefully portrays women in his works would be to ignore the intricate layers of his stories and characters particularly his female characters. Hemingway's "iceberg theory" highlights an important bit of information I extracted from my four-year experience in the classroom as an English major, which I think applies to my exploration of Helen and Catherine. Similar to an iceberg, Hemingway only shows the reader the tip of a character, but beneath the story that surrounds him or her lies the rest of that character's composition. At face value, a reader may think of Helen as part of the vapid, beautiful women on the Key West strip or Catherine as a deluded, selfish woman intent on destroying her husband and his career. With analysis of the scenes these women play a paramount role in, comes a deeper understanding of two women searching for a gender and sexual identity other than the ones provided by the strict standards of a heteronormative world. If ignorant people did not exist, Hemingway would not give his readers the option to look past the tip.

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Conclusion

This study of the works of Ernest Hemingway turns on an assumption that constructions of gender are malleable, unstable. Even though I was initially interested in Hemingway due to his ties to Spain's history, my family's history, I was also aware of his reputation as a "machismo" writer whose writings many critics have considered offensive to women and sexual minorities. In the course of writing this thesis, I have found that the characters in his works encountered problems with traditional gender binaries in society. In order to grasp how the gender binaries affected Hemingway's characters, I felt that I had to look at a range his works, that is, works early and late, popular and unpopular.

After analyzing the texts, I found that the critics labeling Hemingway as a "machismo" writer did not read into the complexities of his representations of gender. Thankfully, I encountered scholars who resisted the "machismo" reading and aided in strengthening my argument that Hemingway's characters transgress gender binaries. The first chapter revealed how the male and female characters in *The Sun Also Rises* (1926) and *For Whom the Bell Tolls* (1940) found that the strict gender binaries from the Victorian era no longer applied to their post-World War I societal and cultural landscapes. In fact, traditional gender binaries hindered their societal progress. The second chapter explored the male protagonists in *The Old Man and the Sea* (1952) and *The Islands in the Stream* (1970), which led to the conclusion that Hemingway created a multi-gendered sea as a character that exposed the male protagonists' anxiety about their masculinity as defined by gender binaries. Finally, the third chapter countered the critics' "machismo" reading of Hemingway by exploring his powerful female characters in *To Have and Have Not* (1937) and *The Garden of Eden* (1986), who battle the heteronormativity of gender binaries by exhibiting behavior not traditionally thought as "female."

Through the three chapters, I learned that although Hemingway did not specifically find a language to articulate his dismantling of gender binaries, he designed his characters in such a way that they see gender binaries as a constraint on their happiness and progress. The characters' realization of gender binaries as a negative societal construction supports my argument of gender as fluid and increasingly unstable.

I would have liked to sharpen my argument even more by analyzing the works of scholars specializing in gender studies both during the times of the works and contemporary times. Although I have taken classes dealing with the study of gender, I feel that using specific examples from gender theorists would have made for a stronger argument. In addition, incorporating the works of scholars specializing in queer studies would have intensified my argument concerning Hemingway's depiction of sexuality in his works as well as examining the sexuality of each of his characters. Since gender and queer studies are always evolving, there may be some theories that I did not take into account.

I hope that both literary, gender, and queer scholars keep interrogating Hemingway's psyche by analyzing his works. I believe that not only Hemingway, but also many great writers all over the world provide evidence for gender as increasingly unstable and fluid. In order to achieve a non-discriminating society concerning gender and sexuality, studies must continue to educate the public on such matters. Hopefully, education will lead to acceptance of multiple genders and sexualities, which will create an increasing amount of modernized, progressive societies.