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PREVIEW

Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to several people who have had major influences on my life:

To my father who passed away before the completion of this project but was the main reason that I choose to complete my Master's in the United States.

To my brother David whose support and encouragement throughout my life will forever live in my memory.

To my mother Madeleine, whose love and support have always been the backbone for my studies. Thanks mom for everything.

To my wife Louise who is the inspiration in my life as well as my best friend. Her constant energy and

encouragement helped get me through the difficult times during this project. Thanks for being in The Bahamas at the right time.

**AMERICAN AUTONOMY AND EUROPEAN SUBMISSION:
VERSATILITY IN ERNEST HEMINGWAY'S
EARLY SHORT FICTION**

by

ROGER CHARLES DUTHIE, B.A.

THESIS

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Introduction

Critics over the years have argued over Ernest Hemingway's treatment of his heroines in his short stories and novels. Willard Thorp, for example, states that Hemingway's female characters are a "convenience, and a technique to turn a monologue into a dialogue" (191). Leslie Fiedler believed that Hemingway is only comfortable dealing with "men without women" and emphatically declares that there are "...no women in Hemingway" (316). Linda-Wagner Martin, on the other hand, maintains that Hemingway's portrayal of women in his early fiction was "sympathetic and skillful" (239). Nancy Comley and Robert Scholes put forth a theory that Hemingway's female characters can be placed in a variety of categories, such as bitches, whores and devils (34).

Others felt that Hemingway did not know how to create a complete female character because he often essentialized female gender roles. These critics argue that his female characters are too easily drawn and therefore are "flat" characterizations of women. Edmund Wilson states that Hemingway's heroines seemed doomed to embody one of two extremes, either the deadly, like Brett Ashley or Margot Macomber, or the saintly, like Catherine Barkley or Maria (30). Bernice Kert appears to agree with Wilson's assessment when she argues that the good heroines reflect

Hemingway's fantasies while the bad ones reflect his prejudices (347, 134). Alan Holder also argues that Hemingway's female characters are either "the bitch who threatens to rob the Hemingway male of his strength and integrity, or the dream girl, a mindless creature who makes no demands upon her man and who exists only to satisfy his [sexual] needs" (103).

There are another set of critics who theorize that Hemingway's portrayal of his female characters is based on the problems he has had with females in his own life, including his mother, Grace Hemingway. Charles Nolan, for example, believes that Hemingway's troubles with women began "with his quarrels with his mother--'that all time, All-American bitch,' as he once called her,-and [ran] throughout his relationships with his four wives" (14). These critics suggest that the difficulties Hemingway had with women in his own life were illustrated through many of his early short stories and novels. James Mellow, in his 1992 biography on Hemingway, suggests that "in his early stories, Hemingway did not stray far from autobiographical terrain (221)" while others, such as Scott Donaldson, also argue that Hemingway's "fictional situation found its counterpart in Hemingway's private life," suggesting that the writer's fiction is partly autobiographical (169). Bernard Oldsey, meanwhile, renders a biographical reading

of several Hemingway works including A Farewell to Arms and "A Very Short Story," where Oldsey contends that the short story "approaches the autobiographical" (50).

The debate over Hemingway's treatment of his heroines will no doubt continue to grow as critics constantly present new theories about the writer's personal life and the effects it had on his professional life. I would like to extend this debate by suggesting that some of Hemingway's early portraits of females in his short stories were used as vessels or devices by the writer in order to work out his personal feelings about women in his own life and in the changing society around him. The period, I believe, that was the most influential and therefore, I suggest, most important in Hemingway's development as an artist, came during the years 1921-1927 which is the period in his life that Charles Fenton deemed the beginning of Hemingway's apprenticeship (preface). Fenton proposes that journalism, war, sport, travel and a variety of literary associations contributed to Hemingway's apprenticeship. I would like to add to Fenton's theory by suggesting that the females in Hemingway's life and in the changing society surrounding him were just as vital contributors to his apprenticeship.

In the early stages of his writing career, Hemingway may have been confused about the role women played in society. He was raised androgynously by parents who were

peculiarly steeped in the conflicting codes of manhood which were vying for sway in the late nineteenth century and would continue to press their rival claims upon him throughout his life time (Spilka 205). Both parents tried to impress upon the young Hemingway their own sexual patterns. Hemingway, therefore, became a confused young man, which caused him to become a confused young writer. As a youngster, he was able to "hit the bull's-eye eye by the age of four," yet was dressed in clothes similar to those that his sister would wear. (205). He began writing during a time period in American history when females were beginning to become more than just domestic mothers. The "New Woman" in industrialized America became economically autonomous and "wielded real political power." Many women in this situation, including Grace Hemingway, realized that they could, and therefore should, challenge their political position in this society. Grace became an "avowed feminist who campaigned for suffrage and asserted autonomy in the world of men" (Smith-Rosenberg 245). The emergence of this New Woman was one of the causes for the "crisis of masculinity," within American society and eventually within Hemingway. Structural change transformed the status of gender relations as "both men and women struggled to redefine the meanings of masculinity and femininity; the real gender drama,

therefore, in this period involved the changes in men's lives and their reactions to them" (Kimmel 142). Historian G.J. Barker-Benfield felt that American male writers recognized that their "readership was hungry to be told of what true manhood and true womanhood consisted" and though they often flew to the simplest, most extreme kind of definitions, a serious reexamination was also under way (210).

In the larger cultural context of this situation, Hemingway attempted to capture and define the role of women and men in society through his early fiction. Hemingway recognized and feared this "New Woman," for this woman was not new to him at all. His mother was the ideal example of one who never backed down and who attended Suffragette meetings fighting for Women's "liberation." Hemingway saw first hand how this type of women could completely destroy a man and force him into domesticity if the man wasn't "manly" enough. Even though Hemingway's father, Clarence Edmonds Hemingway, was just as comfortable in the kitchen as he was in the woods, he still could not help but succumb to the powerful will of Grace (Kert 23).

It is during his apprenticeship that Hemingway first revealed through his work his attitude toward those females who greatly affected the early part of his life and, according to some critics, shaped the remainder of his later

creative work. Mimi Gladstein argues that Hemingway's mother, Agnes von Kurowsky, and his first wife, Hadley, were the greatest female influences on his life. Future relationships "did not have the same impact on his character or on his art" (53). To continue with Gladstein's notion that Hemingway's art was shaped by those females around him during the early part of his career, I would like to look at the importance of four female characters, Liz, Marjorie, Jig and The American Girl from four short stories written during 1921-1927 to illustrate how each character reflects Hemingway's changing internal struggles with respect to the position of the female in society and how he deals with these struggles through his work. I suggest that Hemingway's attitude changes towards females during these years because he was still developing, not only as a writer, but also as a man. Carlos Baker calls "Up in Michigan," "Cat in the Rain," "The End of Something" and "Hills Like White Elephants" the "marriage group" stories (135). These stories are the only stories written during this time period where the reader gets to see the female perspective.

At this point of his career Hemingway was able to separate his fears from his art because he was not yet set in his ways of how he portrayed women in his fiction. In these early apprentice stories he writes of females who are.

submissive and of females who are independent and yet he portrays each "type" of character in a sympathetic manner. The early struggles he had with his mother, combined with how Agnes von Kurowsky broke up with the young writer and perhaps how Hemingway broke up with Hadley is reflected in the two short stories written in the early 1920's, "Up in Michigan" and "The End of Something." Although Hadley played a very important part in the writer's life, I would like to suggest that her influence was greatest after the couple broke up. In A Moveable Feast Hemingway wrote about his feelings for Hadley almost thirty years after the fact, "when I saw my wife again standing by the tracks as the train came in by the piled logs at the station, I wished I had died before I ever loved anyone but her" (208). In my discussion of "Up in Michigan" and "The End of Something," the focus will be how Hemingway's mother, and perhaps Agnes, shaped the creation of his early heroines.

I will illustrate in this study how Hemingway portrays Liz and Marjorie as characters with independent traits similar to those that Grace and Agnes had. These stories will be contrasted with two later stories written during the 1920's, that show how Hemingway, the man, changes during this time period. I agree with Mark Spilka's argument that Hemingway eventually separated from the

feminine "softening influences" that the women in his life had upon him (206). Hemingway eventually broke with his mother's and older sister's influential ways. I would like to continue Spilka's argument and suggest that this separation occurs during the aforementioned latter apprenticeship years. He became more aware of what his own feelings were about females in society during 1921-1927. In A Moveable Feast Hemingway suggests that he changes and perhaps grows just before his break-up with Hadley when he writes, "it was always Paris and you changed as it changed" (182). John Raeburn also makes mention of the changes that Hemingway went through over the years as a writer. Many of his stories foreground "hypermasculinity" while others offer misogynist values. Hemingway's discourse of sexuality is not a fixed and coherent one (90). Hemingway illustrates these changes through the characters of "the American wife" and "Jig" from "Cat in the Rain" and "Hills Like White Elephants." As he became more mature and broke away from these influences, he created relationship stories that were based on more serious love affairs. Ferrel points out that during this time period "Hemingway was using his art to come to terms with his life" (113).

In "Up in Michigan" and "The End of Something," he presents relationships that are not as serious as the relationships in "Hills Like White Elephants" and "Cat in the

Rain." Robert Gajdusik points out that "in Hemingway's early work 'The End of Something,' [Hemingway] studies how it is the fear of going with Marjorie that is answered by the artificial, largely verbal, and adolescent abstract male world of Nick and Bill" (267). It may be that in this, early less mature, writing of Hemingway, he was comfortable creating those characters who possessed the same traits as the women who influenced his life. In this study I will focus on how Marjorie and Liz were autonomous females who did not need men in order to survive in a predominately male-centered setting. The contrast to this will be the characters of Jig and the American wife, who are in more serious, mature relationships with their partners. I will look at these characters and illustrate that Hemingway was becoming more aware of what he felt the position of a female in a relationship should be. As he became older and therefore more mature, his protagonists became more mature during these apprenticeship years. He wrote "Cat in the Rain" immediately after his marriage to Hadley and "Hills Like White Elephants" just after he met his second wife. Both female characters in these two stories are submissive, needy, and both long for domesticity. The Hemingway males in these stories are quite content living carefree lives as expatriates, just as Hemingway himself enjoyed. When Hadley became pregnant with their first child, Hemingway

was upset and feigned happiness (Donaldson 2). He did not want to settle down to domestic life because he saw how domesticity could destroy a male's sense of manhood.

Domesticity and domination are two of the areas of concern in this study. These concerns are also part of what I will call Hemingway's fears. Because of his strange androgynous upbringing, Hemingway received a mixed blending of conflicting definitions of manhood. Nolan calls him a "troubled artist" during the early writing years. It is these early years that I will focus on in an attempt to discover why Hemingway was "troubled" as well as how he dealt with these troubles. Bernice Kert posits that Hemingway's lifelong assertion of masculine power grew out of his emotional need to exorcise the painful memory of his mother asserting her superiority over his father, that his personal difficulties with women, even his submissive heroines, originated with his determination never to knuckle under, as his father had done (21). According to this theory Hemingway's fears, therefore, made him create many submissive and weak female characters. However, in the early short stories Hemingway creates at least two heroines with the characteristics associated with The New Woman, because this was the "type" of female that influenced him the most as a young man. At the same time he creates male characters who were strong, rounded

characters rather than weak and flat characters. His fears of a new dominating woman in the public realm were sparked by the presence of the "Roaring Twenties" in the United States and the presence of this rising "New American Woman."

PREVIEW

Chapter One

An Auto Erotic Discovery in "Up in Michigan"

In 1921 Ernest Hemingway wrote "Up in Michigan," about a young girl, Liz Coates, living in a small rural town who experienced sex for the first time with a drunken man, named Jim. The setting is rural and the characters generally follow the positions laid out for them by societal standards. During the early part of the twentieth century the stereotype for rural America was that men controlled the external duties of the house while females performed the domestic duties (Saltzman-Chafetz 82). The men in this society were blacksmiths, hunters and drinkers, while the women usually performed the traditional domestic duties as they "cook[ed] for four days for them before they started" on their hunting trips (Hemingway 82). Hemingway placed Liz in this rural, stereotypical society where women controlled the internal domestic chores while men controlled the external duties of the household.

Liz, though, was not just a domestic housemaid, nor was she created as a "typical" female for this era. She was much more than that. Liz becomes the type of woman that Hemingway, in his own life, was accustomed to seeing. Liz becomes independent and sexually aware and, perhaps, a

sexually aggressive female well ahead of her peers for this rural environment. Hemingway models Liz after females in his own life who were neither domestic nor "typical" according to their society. Liz, therefore, I would like to argue, represents a combination of personality traits possessed by Hemingway's mother and Agnes von Kurowsky, two women in the young writer's world, that at this stage in his career, I feel, were the most influential females in his life.

Hemingway's mother was independent, aggressive and according to Kenneth Lynn "sexually mature" and sexually aware at a young age (28). Lynn notes that Agnes also possessed the very same qualities that Grace possessed as she "[f]lirt[ed] with those she like[d] and refuse[d] to be tied down by smitten suitors." Had it not been for her "aggressiveness" Agnes' relationship with Hemingway might never have developed (Lynn 88). During Hemingway's apprenticeship, he did not have that many influential models to base some of his early female characters on and therefore chose those females who were around him and who affected his own life. Liz, then, represents females who stepped out of their societal "positions," much like Agnes and his mother did, in order to go after what she wanted. In this story, Hemingway uses the discovery of a girl's

sexuality to illustrate how Liz steps out of these "approved" parameters.

Hemingway creates Liz as a character who matures throughout the story, from one who was alienated, timid and essentialized in her domestic role, to one who acted upon her physical needs. The general view in the 1920's by the male population was that women were thought to be more intuitive and more emotional than the dominant, stronger male. This was the stereotype of American women living in small rural towns. Marylyn Lupton reiterates this stereotype by confirming that any woman of Liz's era had to wait for a man rather than go after him, suggesting that there are indeed pre-defined roles that both sexes must play (3). The story constantly sets the parameters for the stereotype. Hemingway sets up what he considers to be a traditional, rural, American household of the 1920's, with traditional male and female characters. However, as Linda Patterson Miller reminds us, "seven-eighths (by his iceberg ratio) of the character development in all of Hemingway's fiction is not on the page" and we are given that one-eighth to form our opinion of a character (5). Although Hemingway's iceberg theory was not firmly established until later on in his writing career, there is evidence of it in Liz's character. Therefore, we must decipher that part of Liz's character that remains beneath the surface in order to

truly understand what kind of character Hemingway was attempting to create.

That one-eighth of Liz's character that is described seems to suggest the timid woman who waits passively by while her man arrives for his conquest. This male conquest is the stereotype for those feminist critics like Judith Fetterley and others who look at the patriarchal elements so prevalent in American literary history. Linda Phelps, for example, argues that the archetypal American love story involved the sexual theme of conquest by the superior male and submission by the powerless female (21). "Up in Michigan," at first look, would appear to follow this archetype because Liz waits in the kitchen for Jim and when he is ready he leads her by the elbow down to the dock. Yet, what is interesting, is that according to Alice Petry Jim is "a man whose very livelihood involves animals and brawn rather than humans and brains" and therefore is not "superior" and definitely not "someone to look up to" (26). Why then would Liz wait for him in the kitchen? The answer lies within the first few pages of the text and in that seven-eighths of the iceberg in Liz that we do not see.

Even though "Up in Michigan" was written before he developed his omission theory, the Hemingway terse writing style is quite apparent in this story. Within any Hemingway story one must follow the language closely in

order to decipher the clues that are keys to understanding the hidden seven-eighths of the iceberg. One of the most important scenes in the story occurs as Liz constantly thinks about Jim while he is away hunting, "all the time Jim was gone on the deer hunting trip Liz thought about him. It was awful while he was gone. She couldn't sleep well from thinking about him but she *discovered* it was *fun* to think about him too. If she *let herself go it was better* " (82 emphasis added). This can be read as a masturbation scene. What Liz has discovered is the pleasure of self-love and the pleasure of an orgasm. The key words in the passage and possibly the key to Liz's autonomy are the italicized words. The most important and interesting word is Hemingway's use of "discovered" when describing Liz's problems with sleeping. To discover something is to gain insight or knowledge of something previously unseen or unknown. Webster's Thesaurus lists several synonyms for discovery, such as, exploration, unearthing, sensing, experimentation, finding and breakthrough. If these words were applied to Liz, they conjure up images of her uncovering something. That something could be her sexuality and a realization of her sexuality. Alice Petry argues that Liz's erotic feelings are innocent and that she is unaware of what is happening to her. Although Liz feels "funny" and "sick" it is not because she doesn't know what is happening to her, but more

importantly, she knows exactly what is happening and is just nervous about the prospect of having sex for the first time.

To continue with this passage, Hemingway uses the word "fun" to describe Liz's feelings while in her room. Fun is something that provides pleasure, amusement and enjoyment. Again looking at synonyms for fun we find relaxation, diversion, frolic, entertainment and celebration. All of these words suggest that what Liz is doing in her room is something positive. Her discovery is that of her sexuality and even though it may scare her, she finds it entertaining, relaxing and above all a diversion until she can have a real sexual experience with Jim.

Finally, the last phrase "if she let herself go it was better" in conjunction with the previous words unites the clues to answer the question of whether or not she is knowingly discovering her sexuality by way of masturbation in her room. This phrase suggests that Liz is fantasizing, because she lets herself go and discovered it was better. Her fantasy is better for her when she loses the inhibitions that society has placed on her. She has gained the knowledge of something that she discovered for herself and it is this knowledge that has led her to the realization that her sexuality should be celebrated and not, as her community would have it, repressed.