CHARACTERIZATION OF THE HEROINE IN THE FICTION
OF ERNEST HEMINGWAY

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CHARACTERIZATION OF THE HEROINE IN THE FICTION
OF ERNEST HEMINGWAY

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Before receiving the Nobel Prize in 1954, Ernest Hemingway was considered a major contemporary author, but his works had received a comparatively small amount of attention from the nation's leading critics and professors of literature. Even after the publication of A Farewell to Arms in 1929, none of the critics deemed him worthy of book-length consideration.

Prior to the publication of The Old Man and the Sea, Hemingway had generally been regarded as an expert on bull-fighting, hunting, fishing, and boxing who happened to possess a flair for writing short, idiomatic sentences; his books were for thrill-seekers and escapists. Several critics, led by Robert Penn Warren, attempted to point out that Hemingway, in his heroes, was trying to establish a code of conduct in the violent twentieth century. Even For Whom the Bell Tolls (1940), considered by many critics to be his best work up to that time, failed to convince the majority that there was anything suggestive of a positive life-force to be found in his works. Recent volumes by Carlos Baker, Charles Fenton, and Phillip Young have helped to correct many popular misconceptions about Hemingway and his works.
During the period preceding *The Old Man and the Sea,* much of the criticism centered around the hero. The importance of maintaining "grace under pressure," keeping a "stiff upper lip," was stressed. Other critics expounded the themes of violence and death that seemed to pervade Hemingway's books. Few of these earlier critics, however, found any inference of moral or universal values in the stories; he was a complete nihilist.

*The Old Man and the Sea* initiated a basic change in the approach of critics. Where he had once been considered the most natural of naturalists, critics now began to describe him as essentially a lyric poet, a romanticist. Where he was once considered nihilistic, critics now began to bring out the Biblical allusions in *The Old Man and the Sea* and to elaborate upon Christian symbolism and universal values. In the light of the newer Hemingway, much reappraisal of the earlier works has taken place.

Although the latest critics, especially Young and Baker, have done much to increase an understanding of the earlier works, several major ideas yet require considerable further development. One such neglected idea is Hemingway's treatment of women, his concept of the role of woman in man's life, and the development of the Hemingway heroine.

Most of those critics who have commented upon the women have interpreted the principal female figure in each of the novels to be a one-dimensional caricature, placed
there to serve as a combination mistress, servant, and comforter to the leading male. Among this group are Edmund Wilson, Lloyd Frankenburg, Green Wyrick, and J. Donald Adams, who have described her as a mere foil for the hero, having no thoughts or ideas of her own and relying upon him for every facet of her behavior. A limited few of the critics, including Carlos Baker, Theodore Baradacke, and James Colvert, have taken a more positive approach. They view the key females as more fully developed than the former group admits and attribute to them varying degrees of individuality. It is possible, however, that none of these critics has brought forth completely the depth and meaning that may be found in Hemingway's fictional women.

The purpose of this paper is to examine both the women in Hemingway's life and his works, to search for influences exerted by the biographical women, to categorize the fictional women, and to draw whatever conclusions the evidence may justify. It must be emphasized, however, that in the case of a living author, there is a shortage of acutely personal information, and there is always the fact that he has not ceased writing. The Old Man and the Sea does not contain a central feminine figure, thus raising the question of what his latest attitude is. The answer will depend on the trends indicated in the next works by
Hemingway; in the meantime, however, the scope of this study is necessarily limited to a consideration of the women appearing in Hemingway's fiction up to and including *Across the River and into the Trees*. 
CHAPTER II

THE WOMEN IN HEMINGWAY'S LIFE

The women in Ernest Hemingway's life may be identified succinctly: his mother, his four wives, and actress Marlene Dietrich. As his mother and two of his former wives are still living, there is little information available regarding the close personal relationships between Hemingway and these women. However, in the cases of his present wife, Mary Welsh, to whom he has been married for eleven years, and especially Marlene Dietrich there is sufficient material from which to draw conclusions regarding the effect they have had upon Hemingway and his attitudes toward them. While he has often commented about the present Mrs. Hemingway and Marlene Dietrich, there appears no evidence of his having spoken about his former wives, except for the possible references in his fiction which will be studied in the next chapter.

Hemingway, who was born July 21, 1899, was reared in a stable environment marred only by the conflicting interests of his parents. If his future had followed the mold of family tradition, he should have become a respectable Republican businessman, Rotarian, and Protestant churchgoer. He was born in an upper-middle-class suburb of
Chicago, Oak Park; his parents were from the community's leading families; graduates of Oak Park high school normally attended the nation's leading universities and became substantial citizens. But young Hemingway fell off the assembly line and did not become the standard product of the social machine.

From all outward appearances, Hemingway must have been a well-adjusted adolescent during his high school period. He was a good student and athlete, and he displayed a talent for writing while contributing to the school publications. His early success as a cub reporter in Kansas City, following graduation from high school, indicates that he was a responsible, cooperative, and industrious young man. Yet beneath these calm surface waters must have been running the undercurrent of unrest that culminated in his "farewell to arms" when he was wounded at Fossalta di Piave while serving as an ambulance driver. His adolescence certainly was not turbulent. As biographer Charles A. Fenton states, "To think of his adolescence in terms of misery or maladjustment is to misunderstand his Oak Park experience and his personality as a whole." The fact that he twice ran away from home for short periods, however, is ample evidence that he was not enjoying complete contentment.

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The earliest evidence of unrest is found in the conflict of interests between his parents. His father, Clarence Edmonds Hemingway, a brawny, bearded physician, was an outdoorsman. Each year he took the family for its vacation to the lake country of northern Michigan; he had given Ernest a fishing rod before he was three years old and a shotgun before he was ten. In contrast, his mother, the former Grace Hall, was seriously devoted to music and religion. A large room with a concert stage, where she sometimes sang to invited audiences, was a feature of their stucco home. Hemingway later revealed,

My mother used to make me play the cello. She took me out of school one year to learn the cello, when I wanted to be out in the fresh air playing football. She wanted to have chamber music in the house.²

Both parents tried to model their sons after themselves. The Spartan demands of his father were constantly in conflict with the artistic aims of his mother. As Fenton observes, "... there was inevitable confusion and bitterness for a boy as responsive and sensitive as their oldest son."³ The significance of this conflict should not be underestimated, for in a later interview Hemingway revealed that as a result of the enforced hours of practicing the cello, "by just sitting and thinking,"

²Lillian Ross, "How Do You Like It Now, Gentlemen?" New Yorker, XXVI (May, 1950), 46.
he gained the impetus to write.\textsuperscript{4} Obviously his father's interests won out, for Hemingway apparently has not touched the cello since leaving home upon graduation. The suicide of his father in 1928 indicates that there must have been less harmony in the Hemingway family than biographers thus far have assumed. Young concludes that although his father finally exerted the greatest amount of influence, he never commanded Ernest's admiration. For evidence Young cites a passage in \textit{For Whom the Bell Tolls} in which Robert Jordan, reminiscing about his parents, asks himself, "... if he wasn't a coward he would have stood up to that woman and not let her bully him. I wonder what I would have been like if he had married a different woman?"\textsuperscript{5}

In studying a writer whose works are as autobiographical as Hemingway's, it is not unreasonable to assume that this is his personal opinion of his parents. It could have been this resentment against his mother and father and their efforts to mold him that led him to decide against going to college after his graduation from Oak Park High School in 1917.

Hemingway's mother had very little influence on his life for the eighteen months following his graduation. After another summer among the lakes, the hunting and

\textsuperscript{4}"All Stories End ...", review of \textit{To Have and Have Not}, \textit{Time}, XXX (October, 1937), 83.

fishing, and the Indian girls of Michigan, he went to Kansas City, where an uncle, Tyler Hemingway, helped him to obtain a reporter's job on the Star. He stayed there until the spring of 1918, when he received an appointment as an ambulance driver for the American Field service. While in Italy he was wounded at Fossalta, recuperated in Milan, rejoined the service as an infantry lieutenant, and returned to Oak Park following the Armistice.

Hemingway found Oak Park more intolerable than when he left it before. Not only was it necessary for him to have an additional operation on his wounded knee; the "death" at Fossalta had completely emancipated him from Oak Park and its values. He felt completely removed from his generation, developed a cynical attitude toward the hometown girls, and spent many hours aimlessly walking. He returned to his boyhood haunts around Horton's Bay and Petoskey in Michigan, where he stayed until the spring of 1920, hunting, fishing, reading, and writing. An old friend, Carl Edgar, who was with him during this period, later remarked Hemingway was "... figuratively as well as literally shot to pieces," adding that "He seemed to have a tremendous need to express the things that he had felt and seen." 6 During this period he may have decided

6 Fenton, op. cit., p. 72.
never to return to Oak Park, for his mother was to exert no direct influence upon his life in the following years.

Shortly after leaving Michigan, Hemingway was to meet the girl who became the first of his four wives. He went to Toronto and worked on the Star until autumn, when he returned to Chicago, where he became an associate editor of the Cooperative Commonwealth and moved into the North Side apartment of Y. K. Smith along with John Dos Passos and other friends. Chicago at this time was becoming the literary center of the country, and Sherwood Anderson was an important influence on Hemingway and the "Chicago group." At the Smiths' residence he again encountered Hadley Richardson, a St. Louis girl who was visiting Smith's daughter Kate. They had met years earlier in Michigan; now a quick romance ended in marriage at Horton's Bay in September, 1921. Since his bride, a gifted pianist who sympathized with his restlessness, was as anxious as he to go to Europe, he began maneuvering for some type of position that would enable them to do so. They went to Toronto in November, where he managed to obtain the post of roving European correspondent for the Star with headquarters in Paris.

The next six years, in which Hemingway was to gain his first literary fame, also led to the break-up of his

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marriage. The facts are obscure and at best one may only
conjecture about the events leading up to the divorce.
During the first two years of his assignment, Hemingway
reported on most of the important political developments
in Europe, including the Greco-Turkish war, the seething
conflict over the control of the Ruhr Valley, and the
peace conferences. It was on a trip to the conference
at Lausanne that a suitcase containing all his manuscripts
was stolen from Hadley on the train at the Gare du Lyons
in Paris. The loss of four years' work was a shock. She
said in 1952 that "... so deeply had Ernest put himself
into this writing that I think he never recovered from
the pain of this irreparable loss." As Hemingway has
said many times since, he forgets as he writes. It is
possible that this circumstance along with the guidance
he was then receiving from Gertrude Stein and Ezra Pound
resulted in a significant development in his literary pro-
gress. Nevertheless, his new efforts were published in
August, 1923, in Paris as Three Stories and Ten Poems.
Hemingway's literary career had commenced, but his
personal life was not progressing well. His wife became
pregnant, which he apparently did not welcome. Gertrude
Stein describes him as having disclosed the news with con-
siderable bitterness over the interruption of his career

\[8\text{Ibid.}, \ p. \ 196.\]
which the birth would cause. In spite of his own hatred of the idea of returning to America at such an important time, Hemingway decided to return for two years to provide the child with a stable infancy. Although he may have returned unwillingly, Fenton states:

It was also, on the other hand, a notable gesture of private fortitude in a twenty-four year old writer who had been living with pleasure and professional profit in a milieu where such decisions are almost unique.10

The Hemingways returned to Toronto in September, 1923, only to find the situation much worse than he pessimistically had expected. Not only was the city in the throes of prohibition and puritanism; it was dull, routine, and disgusting to him. There also developed friction between Hemingway and Harry G. Hindmarsh, assistant editor of the Star. "Ernest," his wife said many years later, "felt that if we did not get away from that atmosphere quickly, his soul, which means his own creative writing, would dry up within him."11 By mid-November he had decided to leave the newspaper business and to go back to Europe. They left Toronto in January, 1924, the proposed two years reduced to four months.

10 Young, op. cit., p. 243.
11 Ibid., p. 262.
Upon his return to Paris, his literary fortunes again rose while his marriage moved steadily toward divorce. He published a few stories in French and German magazines before Atlantic Monthly bought "Fifty Grand," and he was deluged with good offers, all of which he turned down. A Hearst editor offered a contract which would have temporarily ended any financial worry, but Hemingway refused it, afraid that he might slacken off if he knew his story was sold before he had written it.\textsuperscript{12} The details of the marital relationship preceding his divorce in 1927 have thus far eluded the biographers. John Peale Bishop, who had been introduced to Hemingway by Ezra Pound in 1922 when Hemingway lived in Verlaine's room on the rue Cardinal Lemoine, visited him shortly after The Sun Also Rises was published in 1926. At this time he was living alone, Hadley having left him. Bishop found him living over the studio of a friend behind the Montparnasse cemetery, existing on five sous a day and eating fried potatoes from street vendors.\textsuperscript{13} Whether or not Hemingway's devotion to his writing was responsible for the divorce is difficult to determine. It was not if Malcolm Cowley's later description of Hemingway's ideas on love was true at that time. In 1949 Cowley stated that:

\textsuperscript{12}Ibid., p. 111.

\textsuperscript{13}"Who the Hell Is Hemingway?" True, XXXVI (February, 1956), 17.
He is romantic by nature and he falls in love like a big hemlock tree crashing down through the underbrush; also he has a puritanical streak that keeps him from being a cocktail-party flirt. When he falls in love he wants to get married and stay married, and he regards the end of marriage as a personal defeat.  

A similar but less reliable observation was given by Margaret Anderson, whose *Little Review* published "Mr. and Mrs. Elliott." She wrote:

Hemingway is so soft-hearted that it must be as much as he can bear to beat a punching-bag; and he is so afraid of falling often in love that he doesn't go about it as blithely as he used to. He knows that falling in love, for him, is the absorbing emotional experience which leaves him no time for eating, sleeping, working, or living. As with all one-track organisms, it cuts him off completely from any other sensuous activity, and the element of sensuousness in every aspect of life is the foundation of his huge enjoyment in living.

These inconclusive observations indicate that if Hemingway was responsible for the end of the marriage, it was probably a conflict of attitudes rather than his art that caused the trouble.

Following the divorce, Hemingway was remarried in the same year to another St. Louis girl, Pauline Pfeiffer, wealthy fashion editor in the Paris office of *Vogue.* The couple returned to America, living at Key West, where

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A Farewell to Arms was written. The following years were those in which the legendary conception of Hemingway as hunter, fisherman, boxer, bull-fighter, and drinker was to grow, largely as a result of his own encouraging antics. However, his literary career declined. He produced two non-fiction works, Death in the Afternoon in 1932 and The Green Hills of Africa in 1935, and a book of short stories, Winner Take Nothing, in 1933. Most of his efforts went toward the series of articles in Esquire. The loose assortment of available facts regarding this period, which includes an automobile wreck in Wyoming, bullfighting in Spain with Brooklyn-born Sidney Franklin, and dysentery deep in Africa, would indicate that Hemingway spent these years living dangerously, attracting attention, traveling, and devoting little attention to the further development of his writing skill. Young assumes this conclusion in his discussion of "The Snows of Kilimanjaro," which he interprets as an inner purging. He states that by 1936 Hemingway had become disgusted with his own conduct since the publication of A Farewell to Arms, that his second marriage was going badly, and that he felt he was disgracing himself by writing for Esquire.16

The Spanish Civil War provided the impetus that brought him out of his literary slump, but it also provided

16Young, op. cit., p. 49.
the events that led to the end of his second marriage. In 1937 Hemingway ended what many called his political isolation and joined the cause of the Spanish Loyalists. It was probably his admiration of the Spanish people rather than political sentiment that first prompted his response. However, he borrowed heavily and bought ambulances. He corresponded for the North American Newspaper Alliance and helped produce a propaganda movie, "The Spanish Earth." To raise funds, he published To Have and Have Not, a novel built around short stories written earlier. While in Spain he wrote a play, The Fifth Column, in 1938. Upon his return to America he wrote the novel which placed him again in the front ranks of literature, For Whom the Bell Tolls. A few days after its publication in 1940 he was divorced for desertion.

Within a week Hemingway was married for the third time. He had met Martha Gellhorn, another St. Louis girl, when she interviewed him for Collier's at Key West before the Spanish War. They met again in Spain as war correspondents and were married in Cheyenne, Wyoming. The facts regarding Hemingway's marital relationships become progressively obscure as events reach the recent past. Hemingway divorced her in 1945 for abandonment and was married for the fourth time in 1946 to Mary Welsh in Havana. He had met her in 1944 while she was with the
London bureau of *Time*. They are still married and live at a country estate named Finca Vigia near Havana.

Although Hemingway may have found the "perfect match" in his fourth wife, the most interesting and fascinating woman in his life appears to be one with whom he has maintained a warm yet distant friendship. While crossing the Atlantic on the *Ile De France* in 1934, Marlene Dietrich refused to take her seat at a dinner party because she was the thirteenth member. Turning to leave she bumped into Hemingway, who promptly offered to become the fourteenth member of the party.

They met again in Europe during World War II when Hemingway was covering the front as a correspondent and Dietrich was wearing GI clothes and standing in chow lines while entertaining troops. They were together at the time of the action at Hurtgen Forest in which the regiment to which Hemingway was attached suffered 80 per cent casualties. It made a terrible impression upon him, and he later showed Dietrich a poem on war that made her burst forth in tears.

An illuminating article about her appeared in *Life* in 1952, accompanied by a personal note from Hemingway, both of which evidence the high plane of their mutual respect for each other. The author described her as a "professional," as "dropping her eyelids and flashing her legs with the challenging air of a
champion fencer menacing an opponent with his foil.”¹⁷
In describing her personality, it is stated that the
Spartan training of her father and step-father, both
Prussian army officers, has made her a rigid disciplina-
rian. She is pictured as hating waste or anything
amateurish, being a good soldier, and maintaining an
implacable self-discipline.¹⁸

When asked during an interview about the meeting
with Hemingway in 1934, she is quoted as replying:

That was in 1934, and for twenty years we
have been good friends. We do not see each
other often, but we write, and his letters are
funny and sad and compassionate and sometimes
so overwhelming I could die. It is a great
pity I must be selfish about them and cannot
share them with the world, so wonderful are
they. I keep them in a fireproof strongbox,
for they are the only possessions that have
real value for me. My other possessions I
have never cared about. But the letters are
different. Sometimes I reread them and enjoy
them the way you enjoy certain classics, no
matter how many times you have read them.¹⁸

She also has said of Hemingway that he is "the most posi-
tive life force I have ever encountered. I hate anything
negative, and I hate waste. In Hemingway nothing is
wasted."¹⁹ Since their close friendship began, Hemingway

¹⁷Winthrop Sargeant, "Dietrich and Her Magic Myth," 
Life, XXXIII (August 18, 1952), 86.
¹⁸"Who the Hell is Hemingway?" p. 18. ⁸
¹⁹John Owen, "Inside Hemingway: His Strange Search
has sent his manuscripts to Dietrich for her opinions.
Winthrop Sargeant explains that:

In this role Marlene displays an almost masculine type of mind contrasting fantastically with her incarnations as "Mama," the glamour queen, the "Hausfrau," and the helper of the world. "I admire men's minds," she confided with an open stare. "They are not like women. They think things through." 20

In his article that accompanied the Life story on Dietrich, Hemingway was equally expressive in declaring his mutual admiration of her. Although he is apparently elaborating on the virtues of a single woman, it bears far more importance for the student of Hemingway's works. This article may be very plausibly interpreted as the "Hemingway code" for womanly behavior in the twentieth century, which provides a panoramic background for the author's works. If a heroine counterpart to the much discussed Hemingway hero is to be found in his stories, it is very likely that she will be the embodiment of the code of conduct set forth here. The article is quoted at length in order to preserve the full impact and significance.

"She is brave, beautiful, loyal, kind, and generous. She is never boring and is as lovely looking in the morning in a GI shirt, pants, and combat boots as she is at night or on the screen. She has an honesty and a comic and tragic sense of life that never lets her be truly happy unless she loves. When she loves

20 Sargeant, op. cit., p. 87.
she can joke about it; but it is gallows humor. . . .

She cannot be cruel or unjust but she can be angry and fools bore her and she shows it unless the fool is in bad trouble. Anyone who is in serious trouble has her sympathy.

If this makes her sound too perfect, you should know that she can destroy any competing woman without even noticing her. She does it sometimes for fun and then tosses the man back where he belongs. She has a strange, for these times, code that will not let her take a man away from another woman if the woman wants him.

We know each other very well and are very fond of each other. When we meet we tell each other everything that has happened in between times and I don't think we ever lie to each other unless it is very necessary and on a temporary basis.

All the wonderful stories I could tell you about Marlene are not for Life. She would not mind and I would not mind. But many people would. Marlene makes her own rules in this life but the standards of conduct and decency are no less strict than the original ten.

That is probably what makes her mysterious; that anyone so beautiful and talented and able to do what she wants should only do what she believes to be absolutely right and to have had the intelligence and courage to make the rules she follows.

She loves writing and is an intelligent and scrupulous critic and the happiest time I have is when I have written something that I am sure is good and she reads it and likes it. Since she knows about the things I write about, which are people, country, life and death, and problems of honor and conduct, I value her opinion more than that of many critics. Since she knows about love, and knows that it is a thing which exists or does not exist, I value her opinion there more than that of the professors. For I think she knows more about love than anyone.

My wife Mary admires Marlene and thinks she is one of the finest women in the world. She knows some fine and wonderful stories too. But she said she would rather put it that way.
I know that everytime I have seen Marlene Dietrich ever, it has done something to my heart and made me happy. If this makes her mysterious then it is a fine mystery. It is a mystery we have known about for a long time.\textsuperscript{21}

When Hemingway brought *Across the River and into the Trees* to New York in 1950 for publication, the first thing he did was to call "The Kraut," as he affectionately named Dietrich during the war. When interviewed later on the trip he remarked, "I love the Kraut and I love Ingrid (Bergman). If I weren't married to Miss Mary and didn't love Miss Mary, I would try to hook up with either of them. Each one has what the other hasn't. And what each has, I love very much." In a typical "Hemingwayism," he said it this way: "The Kraut's the best that ever came into the ring."\textsuperscript{22} Ingrid Bergman has been linked with Hemingway on two other occasions. Young reports that Bergman, who later played the role of Maria in the movie of *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, received a gift copy of the book from him with the inscription, "To Ingrid Bergman, who is the Maria of this book."\textsuperscript{23} Hemingway mentions her in *Across the River and into the Trees* when Colonel Cantwell asks Renata if she still wants to be like

\textsuperscript{21}Ernest Hemingway, "A Tribute to Mama from Papa Hemingway," *Life*, XXXIII (August 18, 1952), 92-93.

\textsuperscript{22}Ross, *op. cit.*, pp. 44-46.

\textsuperscript{23}Young, *op. cit.*, p. 80.
Miss Bergman, to which she replies, "Not any more." 24 This might indicate that Hemingway had lost some of his respect for her. Since these are Hemingway's only public references to Bergman, it is difficult to determine to what extent she is a real-life heroine comparable to Dietrich. For this reason she was not mentioned as one of the six principal women in his life.

In discussing the effect of war upon Hemingway's values, John Owen states:

> It is here too, at war, we first see the emergence of Hemingway's strange attitude toward women. . . . Women were not part of this world, and in his books they suffer for not having been strewn limb by limb in the fields among the men. 25

According to Owen, the women who suffered made themselves attractive to Hemingway, women, for example, who became war correspondents. Both Martha Gellhorn and Mary Welsh were correspondents, and Dietrich had more experience than either of them. Writing of the occasion when Dietrich cried over Hemingway's poem indicting war, Owen states:

> Here . . . was a woman being a woman in the very midst of war. No wonder Hemingway

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loves the Kraut... She has everything; the manly quality of courage under fire, the womanly quality of being able to cry when moved.26

A certain line of development can be traced through the women in Hemingway's life, as Owen points out. When Hemingway returned from Italy after the war, the hometown girls were complicated when compared to the Indian girls he had known during his high school days. The girls he had known in Oak Park and Chicago were "either from the boyish, bold, and romping breed or strict, artistic, and respectable, like his mother."27 Owen states that when he married Hadley Richardson he had not yet seen the combination of the modern woman and the womanly woman, so he married the womanly woman.

He evidently did not find the desirable mixture in either Pauline Pfeiffer or Martha Gellhorn, although when he met the latter again in Spain "... she was closer to the blood and stench, closer to being a modern woman while retaining her womanliness."28 Both women seem to have been only partial realizations of the ideal modern woman he apparently has found in Mary Welsh. She has indicated how this harmonious balance may have been

26Ibid., p. 30.
27Ibid.
28Ibid., p. 31.
attained in two contrasting statements. On one occasion she remarked that any wife of Hemingway had to know how to handle a gun. 29 She has also said that:

I agree with the writer Han Suyin that "It is bad to come too close to the center of a man's being" and since I believe in personal private liberty I try never to trespass on Ernest's inner privacy. 30

In other words, she believes in sharing his world without trying to dominate him, or "mother" him.

In spite of the harshly critical opinions existing of Hemingway's conduct, Owen believes "Hemingway is still true to the Indian girls, clinging to marriage and the womanly woman." 31 When asked about the woman's role in a man's life during a recent interview, Hemingway replied:

A woman should be properly loved as one is able and according to her deserts. Men and women have their duties and pleasures and rewards, also the right to make mistakes if they are not intentional ones. 32

Owen concludes:

He may "love" Marlene Dietrich and Ingrid Bergman, but there is nothing promiscuous about this man or his work. "Integrity in a writer is like virginity in a woman," he has said. "Once lost it is never recovered."

29 Ross, op. cit., p. 61.
30 "Who the Hell Is Hemingway?" p. 29.
31 Ibid., p. 31.
32 Kurt Bernheim, "Ernest Hemingway," McCall's, LXXXIII (May, 1956), 10.
Only a one woman man could say: "There is no lonelier man in death, except the suicide, than that man who has lived many years with a good wife and then outlived her. If two people love each other there can be no happy end to it." 33

The evidence cited in this chapter brings forth a side of Hemingway that the critics have slighted thus far. He is generally considered as having an unconventional attitude toward love and marriage, as little better than a philanderer in his affairs with his wives and other women. The females in his works seldom are considered to be more than foils for the hero, mere feminine duplicates provided to fulfill the whims and desires of the male. However, there is evidence which points strongly to the converse. There exists a real-life Hemingway heroine, a distinct and separate entity possessing many of the qualities of the "Hemingway hero." This heroine too must be a "professional" at her art; she also receives dignity by rigid adherence to a strict code of conduct. Like the hero, the heroine also has had her "Fosalta," the symbolic wound that has brought her to a broader and deeper understanding of what is essentially, in Hemingway's view, a man's world. The characteristics of this heroine obviously are embodied in Marlene Dietrich and Mary Welsh. Since this heroine exists, parallel to the real-life bull-fighters, soldiers, and fishermen in Hemingway's life, it is logical to expect to find her in Hemingway's fiction.

33 Owen, op. cit., p. 33.
CHAPTER III

THE WOMEN IN HEMINGWAY'S FICTION

The women in Hemingway's works, viewed in their relationship to his own life, are significant figures rather than mere shadows or one-dimensional creatures. Studies of the heroes have revealed that Hemingway's novels are very close to being his own autobiography. Young states:

Of course Hemingway has left a lot out, but a good many of the main outlines and really significant events of his life have been recorded in the guise of fiction. It is always risky to take any kind of fiction as presentation of fact, but it is less of a risk here than it would be in most places.¹

When this approach is taken, every feminine character in his works assumes varying degrees of significance. As Young explains;

Catherine, Maria, and Renata have assuredly no exact counterparts in reality. But there is no danger of anyone's thinking they do, and Hemingway has given, along with these heroines, portraits of the three women from whom he is divorced.²

¹Phillip Young, Ernest Hemingway (New York, 1952), pp. 117-118.
²Ibid., p. 118.
The feminine characters may be classified in three groups: the heroines, the autobiographical figures, both mentioned by Young, and those women who seem to have been created to portray Hemingway's aversions. In some instances the line between the groups is a close distinction; however, in most cases the relation of the character to biographical facts and to Hemingway's expressed ideas is obvious. Such interpretation lends much to a more comprehensive understanding of Hemingway the man. As the heroines, Brett Ashley in *The Sun Also Rises*, Catherine Barkley in *A Farewell to Arms*, Marie Morgan in *To Have and Have Not*, Maria in *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, and Renata in *Across the River and into the Trees*, are easily the most important figures, the analyses of the other types will be undertaken first in order to establish their relation to the development of the heroine.

The autobiographical figures allude to both his boyhood and young manhood as well as to life after his first marriage. Two stories refer to Hemingway's relationship with his mother at different periods of his life. In "The Doctor and the Doctor's Wife," young Nick Adams' mother moralizes and mentions that she is a Christian Scientist. Her Bible, a copy of *Science and Health*, and the church quarterly were lying on the table. The manner in which Nick's father allows him to disobey his mother reveals the resentment Hemingway and his father may have felt against
Mrs. Hemingway's artistic impositions. The mixed emotions Hemingway felt upon his return from Italy are reflected in "Soldier's Home," when Krebs rebels against his mother and the old social patterns that no longer hold any meaning for him. Impressions of the emotions of early romance and sexual experience may be found in several of the short stories. Nick receives his first upsetting experience in "Ten Indians" when his father informs him that Prudence Mitchell, his Indian girl, was "threshing around" in the woods with Frank Washburn. In "Fathers and Sons" Nick has his first completely satisfying relationship with another Indian girl, Trudy, a willing partner. Both of these stories may reflect Hemingway's boyhood experiences among the Indian girls around the Michigan lakes. Confusion and bewilderment accompany the end of an early romance, related in "The Three Day Blow" and "The End of Something," as he breaks off an affair with Marjorie. She was of the wrong class for a doctor's son; his friend Billy consoles him by telling him "you can't mix oil and water," but Nick seems perplexed and it makes him uncomfortable. Hemingway's later attitude toward the Oak Park girls also is reflected in "Soldier's Home," when Krebs refuses to become entangled with the younger hometown girls. He thinks of the German and French

girls, who like Trudy made no talk nor entailed any consequences; he refuses to try to break into the social patterns of the hometown girls.

As Young stated, Hemingway has given portraits of the three women from whom he is divorced. The first of his wives, Hadley Richardson, may be reflected in Helen in "Cross Country Snow." In this story Nick's wife becomes pregnant while they are in Europe, and it is necessary for him to return to America. Nick would rather stay in Europe, skiing, hunting, and fishing with his friend George. Nick says of skiing, "It isn't worthwhile if you can't," but this may well be Hemingway referring to the interruption of his creative writing. It may be assumed that the story expresses the bitterness Gertrude Stein reports Hemingway as having displayed regarding his wife's pregnancy just as his first works were printed in August, 1923.

The reference to the second Mrs. Hemingway, Pauline Pfeiffer, is unmistakable in Green Hills of Africa, the nonfictional account of Hemingway's 1933 African safari. There also are direct allusions to her in two short stories set against African backgrounds, "The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber" and "The Snows of Kilimanjaro."

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The seeds of the themes expressed in both of these stories may be found in the earlier *Green Hills of Africa*. Throughout *Green Hills of Africa* there is the sense of the presence of antagonism and conflict between Mrs. Hemingway, Poor Old Mama, and the author. Her attraction to the guide, Jackson Phillips, Pop or Mr. J. P. as she reverently calls him, is mentioned repeatedly, first when Hemingway writes:

> Pop was her ideal of how a man should be, brave, gentle, comic, never losing his temper, never bragging, never complaining except in a joke, tolerant, understanding, intelligent, drinking a little too much as a good man should, and, to her eyes, very handsome.

In the closing paragraph P.O.M. says:

> . . . I can't remember Mr. J. P.'s face. And he's beautiful. I think about him and think about him and I can't see him. It's terrible. He isn't the way he looks in a photograph. In a little while I won't be able to remember him at all. Already I can't see him.

Hemingway replies, "I can remember him. I'll write you a piece and put him in." There is little doubt that Jackson Phillips is Robert Wilson in "The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber," Hemingway's protest against the paradoxical American female who can tolerate neither the dominating nor the submissive male.

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6Ibid., p. 245.
7Ibid., p. 295.
The essentials of the plot of "The Snows of Kilimanjaro," especially the woman, also are found in the Green Hills of Africa. He describes how money and the critics can destroy a writer. He also refers to the amoebic dysentery he contracted on a French freighter in the Red Sea which resulted in the premature termination of the safari. It was necessary to fly Hemingway out of the Serenghetti Plain in deepest Africa past Mount Kilimanjaro to Nairobi. As has been pointed out in Chapter I, "The Snows of Kilimanjaro" was a purging of the past for Hemingway. The story was written in 1936, the year following the publication of Green Hills of Africa, when his second marriage was falling apart and he was trying to "work the fat off his soul." In the story, Harry, a writer, is dying of gangrene, the obvious symbol of his wife's destructive wealth, while the vultures, the critics, stand by waiting to devour the remains. Harry's references to Spur and Town and Country allude to Pauline Pfeiffer's Vogue, making it obvious that his wife Helen is not a wholly fictitious character.

In these two stories Hemingway appears to be spelling out the reasons that eventually resulted in his divorce from his second wife. Although the fact that the traits of Helen and Margot Macomber were those of Pauline Pfeiffer is supported by both Hemingway's revelations in Green Hills of Africa and the available biographical information, some
critics have interpreted these characters as Hemingway's sweeping condemnations of all American women. Carlos Baker states:

Margot exemplifies most of the American wives he has met in the course of his professional life. Although his perspectives are limited to the international sporting set, the indictment is severe. These women, he reflects, are "the hardest in the world; the hardest, the cruelest, the most predatory, and the most attractive, and their men have softened or gone to pieces as they have hardened." 8

Also commenting on Margot Macomber, Edmund Wilson states:

Here Hemingway has got what Thurber calls the war between men and women out in the open and has written a terrific fable of the impossible civilized woman who despises the civilized man for his failure in initiative and nerve and then jealously tries to break him down as soon as he begins to exhibit any. 9

Both of these critics are very reasonable in their assumptions, for it is probable that his first two wives embodied much of what Hemingway came to detest in women. Many of the women who were created to serve as antagonists to the heroes and heroines are characters very similar to Helen and Margot Macomber.

The portrait of the third wife was presented in Across the River and into the Trees when Colonel Richard Cantwell


discusses his first wife with Renata. In the conversation he reveals:

She was an ambitious woman and I was away too much. . . . She had more ambition than Napoleon and about the talent of the average High School Valedictorian. . . . she married me to advance herself in Army circles, and have better contacts for what she considered her profession, or her art. She was a journalist. . . . I told her about things once, and she wrote about them. But that was in another country and besides the wench is dead. . . . exorcised and with the eleven copies of her reclassification papers, in which was included the formal, notarized act of divorcement, in triplicate. . . . Maybe she will take a good look at herself in the mirror sometime and hang herself.10

Here again the usual risk is involved, but there is little doubt that the allusion is to war correspondent Martha Gellhorn, whom Hemingway divorced for abandonment in 1945.

Although the facts are far from complete, the information revealed through these autobiographical characters does much toward supplementing the biographical data and presenting a more adequate understanding of the causes of Hemingway's often erratic but colorful behavior. It is noteworthy to observe that the characters who allude to his wives are almost completely lacking in the qualities Hemingway attributes to Marlene Dietrich.

It has already been stated that Hemingway's dislikes in women are further delineated in the group of characters

termed antagonists. Like Margot Macomber, Helen, and Cantwell's first wife, Helene Bradley in To Have and Have Not and Dorothy Bridges in The Fifth Column were both created explicitly to point out those qualities which should not be found in the perfect woman. If To Have and Have Not was Hemingway's figurative return to America and society, it was certainly to the Marie Morgans and not the Helene Bradleys. Richard Gordon calls Helene Bradley a social phenomenon. Dorothy Hollis says,

The bitches have the most fun but you have to be awfully stupid really to be a good one. Like Helene Bradley. Stupid and well-intentioned and really selfish to be a good one.11

Baker describes her as "the exact moral equivalent of African gangrene."12

The case is restated in The Fifth Column against Dorothy Bridges, the typical middle-class product of colleges and summer camps further seasoned by men and abortions. John Atkins points out the domineering, Margot Macomber-like strain in Dorothy Bridges when he cites the passage in which Philip Rawlings asks her, "Is it true that the first thing an American woman does is to try to get the

11 Ernest Hemingway, To Have and Have Not (New York, 1937), p. 245.
12 Baker, op. cit., p. 213.
man she's interested in to give up something?" Atkins, an Englishman who appears to find delight in the plight of the American male, makes the following interpretation of the conflict Hemingway portrays:

Ultimately the American woman seeks power over the male— not power of love with its willing and fruitful submission but the conquest of personality demanded by the politician and business man. To compel the man to give up something, to surrender a portion of his ego, is the sign she seeks for... The conventional love relationship is almost impossible with such women.

Worse than Dorothy's superficiality and vanity is her lack of understanding of Philip's ideals and motivation; Anita, the Moorish prostitute, says she has paint for blood. After she spends 1200 pesetas for the fox stole, he tells her:

That's one hundred and twenty days' pay for a man in the brigade. Let's see. That's four months. I don't believe I know anyone who's been out four months without being hit—or killed.

When Dorothy displays little sympathy for the cause that means so much to Philip, he tells her:

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14 Ibid.
And because you don't understand, and you never could understand, is the reason we're not going to go on and live together and have a lovely time and etcetera.\textsuperscript{16}

And "etcetera" may well mean the gay life of the international sporting set upon which Hemingway turned his back with "The Snows of Kilimanjaro." Baker states that Hemingway said Dorothy's name may well have been Nostalgia, because she "bridges" the gap with the past.\textsuperscript{17}

Also in this group are several female characters from the novels and short stories who reflect loveless and sterile marriages. In some cases it appears that the husband may be equally guilty for the failure, and the woman is treated sympathetically. Theodore Bardacke interprets this treatment to mean that Hemingway is employing heterosexual intercourse as a symbol of love, which is one of the most important lost ideals in a world that Hemingway thought was losing all of its ideals. "He has often expressed his frustrations and desires of the modern world with sexual symbols," states Bardacke.\textsuperscript{18} Two of the best examples of this type of woman are Helen Gordon and Dorothy Hollis, both in \textit{To Have and Have Not}. Helen Gordon decides

\textsuperscript{16}Ibid., p. 73.

\textsuperscript{17}Baker, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 235.

to leave her writer husband who refused to have any children in order that he could continue to ski and swim in Europe. The unsatisfactory sexual relationship indicates the state of their marriage when she tells her husband:

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 all night afraid to say my prayers even because I know I have no right to any more. 19

The same degradation of love and sex is expressed in Dorothy Hollis, the wife of a Hollywood movie director who is cohabitating in Florida with Eddie, "a professional son-in-law of the rich." She also is enduring a very unsatisfactory sexual relationship along with her loss of love. She resorts to drugs and masturbation for some degree of satisfaction. In spite of her miserable condition, she still remembers that sleeping on the pillow is bad for her skin. It is interesting to note that the Gordons and the Hollises are members of the "international sporting set" and that To Have and Have Not, published in 1937, followed closely behind Hemingway's purge of the

19 Ernest Hemingway, To Have and Have Not, p. 185-186.
past in "The Snows of Kilimanjaro." These facts lend credence to Bardacke's statement that:

Dorothy Hollis is the female crystallization of the sexual decay and meaninglessness of the rich. . . . For Hemingway she is the result of a way of life rather than a vicious personality, and in her soliloquy at the end of the novel she finds she can blame neither herself nor the men who love her for the frustration of her life: "I suppose we all end up as bitches but whose fault is it?" 20

Identical traits of sexual degradation, spiritual absence, and vanity permeate several other female characters. In "Hills Like White Elephants" Hemingway presents a young couple in an argument over an abortion. As the man tries to persuade her to go through with it, his wife repeats " . . . we could have everything." 21 The frustration of their sterile marriage is symbolized in the contrast between the trees and fertile fields of grain across the river and the barren, dry hills. A second sterile marriage is presented in "Cat in the Rain," although George's wife provokes less sympathy than does Jig in "Hills Like White Elephants." In this story the woman longs for silver, candles, and new clothes, the marks of middle-class domesticity. According to Bardacke, her short hair, symbolizing a lack of true womanliness, establishes

20 Bardacke, op. cit., p. 348.

her as a "frustrated new woman" and her longings are symbols for "the more abstract loss of her true sexual role." Cornelia, the wife in "Mr. and Mrs. Elliott," proves unable to conceive, and their marriage disintegrates until Mr. Elliott is practically living by himself, resorting to wine as a remedy. A heterosexual romance turns into homosexuality in "The Sea Change" as Phil's girl leaves him for a lesbian. He sees himself as a different man in the mirror over the bar, and the two homosexuals move over to make room for him.

A false veneer as well as a perversion of the sexual role is portrayed in Mr. Wheeler and the waitress in "Homage to Switzerland." He attempts to entice her to go upstairs in the railroad station to commit fornication, but she steadfastly refuses; however, both of them realize all the while there is no second story. Another decaying marriage is portrayed in "Out of Season." The argument and division between the man and wife indicate that love too is out of season.

A seldom mentioned character, Paco's sister in "The Capital of the World," illustrates one of the most important aspects of Hemingway's attitude toward women. In this story a cowardly matador attempts to seduce a young hotel-maid and is thwarted. It is her calling him a coward,

22Bardacke, op. cit., p. 344.
"What hasn't left you?" she asks, that embitters the bull-fighter more than her refusal. He has been wounded, and he realizes he no longer possesses the courage he once displayed. He is now overcome with fear before every performance, but, he asks himself, "... what did any whore know about what he went through before he fought? And what had they been through that laughed at him?" 23

It is this lack of experience and understanding that Hemingway seems to detest in women, just as the matador detests the inability of Paco's sister to understand the moral struggle he was waging with himself. As was pointed out in Chapter I, one of the traits for which Hemingway admires Marlene Dietrich is that "... she knows about the things I write about, which are people, country, life and death, and problems of honor and conduct..." 24 This question of a woman's experience and understanding will assume greater importance in the examination of the heroines. Before proceeding, however, certain observations must be made concerning the two types of characters studied thus far.


The fictional characters included in these first two groups would lead to the conclusion that Hemingway might take a completely negative attitude toward love, sex, and marriage. At first glance this would seem to be true; however, as was pointed out in Chapter I, Hemingway has displayed positive attitudes toward these subjects in his personal life. The characters discussed thus far have been the outgrowth of the dissatisfactions and disappointments of his life. By comparing these characters mentioned to their real life counterparts, further evidence supporting the development cited by Owen can be determined. These characters illuminate his rebellion against the domination of his artistically minded mother; his equally artistic first wife, who, as Owen points out, was a mother-image; his wealthy, socially-minded second wife; and, finally, his disgust with the ambitious career woman, his third wife. With these negative attitudes defined and traced to their sources, it is now appropriate to study the traits to be found in the heroines.

Lady Brett Ashley in *The Sun Also Rises*, Hemingway's first heroine, has generally been considered by critics as the symbol of the war-ruined Lost Generation. For example, Edmund Wilson calls her a destructive force, while Bardacke states:

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25 Wilson, op. cit., p. 238.
Brett embodies the concept of the post-war woman, without spiritual meaning. Her love life has decayed to alcohol and meaningless sex. She and Mike live in a brothel-like hotel, the level of their love. Brett has become desexed as a result of her loss of womanliness. She travels with homosexuals and has bobbed her hair and wears a mannish felt hat. Even when she thinks she loves Romero, she is too much the way the world has made her. She cannot respond. He wants her to let her hair grow.26

Although both of these critics are partially correct, they have overlooked a number of significant events that give Brett Ashley heroic proportions. Like Marlene Dietrich and Mary Welsh, Brett Ashley also has been close to war and suffered her wounds. After her first love had died of dysentery in the war, she met Jake Barnes while she was working as a nurse in the hospital in which he was convalescing. The Hemingway "secret society" is introduced when Count Mippipopolous shows Brett the scars on his ribs, and she tells Jake, "I told you he was one of us." The count reveals the nature of the society when he replies, "That is the secret. You must get to know the values."27 The wounds of the trio symbolize the shattering of their former existences by the world, and the values are the new standards, "the code," they must construct in order to find purpose.

Rather than being without spiritual meaning, Brett Ashley, like Marlene Dietrich, has her own code of behavior. As Baker points out, "Brett is the reigning queen of a paganized wasteland with a wounded fisher-king as her half-cynical squire."\(^{28}\) She realizes this and repeatedly admits her misery. In spite of her own sexual freedom, however, she is still very conscious of proper behavior. She detests Robert Cohn's lack of manliness, but both loves and respects Jake. She admits "I've never felt such a bitch,"\(^{29}\) and refuses to hurt Pedro Romero, the bullfighter. After leaving him she tells Jake, "He shouldn't be living with anyone. I realized that right away."\(^{30}\) She also refuses to become "one of those bitches that ruins children."\(^{31}\) Brett Ashley definitely has her code. She speaks of it at the end of the novel, when she tells Jake, "You know it makes one feel rather good deciding not to be a bitch. . . . It's sort of what we have instead of God."\(^{32}\) Rather than being a destructive force, a sexless bitch, and a meaningless woman, Brett Ashley is the embryonic stage of the Hemingway heroine. In direct contrast to Margot Macomber, Helene

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\(^{28}\) Baker, op. cit., p. 90.

\(^{29}\) Hemingway, The Sun Also Rises, p. 190.

\(^{30}\) Ibid., p. 253.

\(^{31}\) Ibid., p. 254.

\(^{32}\) Ibid., p. 256.
Bradley, Dorothy Hollis, and Dorothy Bridges, here is the woman who "... knows about the things I write about, which are people, country, life and death, and problems of honor and conduct."

Many of the traits that were found in Brett Ashley are distinguishable in Catherine Barkley, the heroine of *A Farewell to Arms*, although, as Bardacke points out, Catherine's long hair symbolizes the womanhood Brett never achieved. 33 Again the heroine is accused by most critics of being a selfless shadow of the hero. Such statements as "I want what you want. There isn't any me anymore. Just what you want. ... I do what you want" 34 by Catherine are interpreted to mean that she makes no decisions of her own, in spite of the fact that Frederick Henry tells her "I want you to have a life. I want you to have a fine life. But we'll have it together, won't we?" 35

It seems here that the unfavorable critics are lacking in empathetic projection. As in the case of Brett Ashley, Catherine too lost her first love; "He was going to marry me and he was killed in the Somme. ... He didn't have a sabre cut. They blew him all to bits." 36 She also was a.

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murse in a hospital when she met Frederick Henry. Alone and destitute in a cruel world, is it any wonder she became involved in a completely absorbing love affair? "You're my religion. ... You're all I've got," she tells Henry, "... when I met you perhaps I was nearly crazy."37 As Hemingway told Margaret Anderson when it was suggested to him that the love affair was only on the physical level, "I don't get you. Those two people really loved each other. Gee, he was crazy about her."38 It is unfair to say that Catherine's only thoughts are those of the hero. When her friend Ferguson berates the couple for their behavior, Catherine tells her, "No one got me in a mess, Fergy. I get in my own messes."39 Like Brett Ashley, Catherine has shared many of the experiences of Frederick Henry and regrets not having shared all of them; "I wish I had been with you so I would know about it too." She desires to become a full member of the "secret society." Catherine has found it necessary to determine her own values, to adopt her own code. She tells Henry, "Everything we do seems to be so innocent and simple.

37Ibid., p. 120.
39Hemingway, A Farewell to Arms, p. 255.
I can't believe we do anything wrong." Without her fulfilled love and long hair, Catherine would have been a replica of Brett Ashley. With them she represents the second step in the development of the heroine. To agree with Wilson that Catherine's dead baby reflects Hemingway's antagonism toward women would be a gross injustice to the author. This story was a tragedy and could have ended no other way. The tragic ending was prefigured when Hemingway wrote:

They threw you in and told you the rules and the first time they caught you off base they killed you. Or they killed you gratuitously like Aymo. Or they gave you syphilis like Rinaldo. But they killed you in the end. You could count on that. Stay around and they would kill you. To Catherine life had been "just a dirty trick."

Although The Sun Also Rises was published before A Farewell to Arms, it must be pointed out that since the war events in A Farewell to Arms set the scene for the portrayal of the post-war Lost Generation, Catherine Barkley may be considered to precede Brett Ashley. If, as Bardacke states, the sex relationship symbolizes the state of the hero's relationship to the world, all of Frederick Henry's values, everything important, died with

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40 Ibid., p. 160.
41 Wilson, op. cit., p. 238.
42 Hemingway, A Farewell to Arms, p. 338.
43 Ibid., p. 342.
Catherine Barkley in *A Farewell to Arms*, crucified by a hard, cruel world that plays dirty tricks. Therefore, Brett appears to embody fewer of the traits of the heroine. She has been robbed by the world of most of her values, just as Jake Barnes has lost his potency. In spite of their sterility, however, life retains some vestige of meaning as long as they continue to adhere to their codes.

In *To Have and Have Not* the emphasis in the conduct of both the hero and heroine, Harry and Marie Morgan, seems to be upon the development of their relation with society rather than upon the development of their individualistic codes. In spite of the new approach to the problems of conduct and honor, Bardacke states that Marie is connected to Brett Ashley by her short hair and her mannish felt hat, but that she has given up her life of promiscuity for a complete man. Marie is sexually compatible and potent; she is capable of positive love like Catherine. In contrast to the other women with cropped hair, Marie wants to let hers grow, indicating a trend toward heterosexuality, the symbol of a regeneration of values. In this respect she is contrasted to the degeneration of the idle rich, Helene Bradley,

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Helen Gordon, and Dorothy Hollis, all of whom lead unsatisfying lives. The situation is focused in two ironical scenes involving Richard Gordon. He had seen Marie Morgan and decided, as he sat down to write,

... he was going to use the big woman with the tear-reddened eyes he had just seen on the way home. Her husband when he came home at night hated her, hated the way she had coarsened and grown heavy, was repelled by her bleached hair, her too heavy breasts, her lack of sympathy with his work as an organizer. ... He had seen, in a flash of perception, the whole inner life of that type of woman.

Her early indifference to her husband's caresses. Her desire for children and security. Her lack of sympathy with her husband's aims. Her sad attempts to stimulate an interest in the sexual act that had become actually repugnant to her. 45

Later, after Gordon has argued with his wife, the true level of his own love is revealed as his wife prepares to leave him:

"Good-by!" she said, and he saw her face he always loved so much, that crying never spoiled, and her curly black hair, her small firm breasts under the sweater forward against the edge of the table, and he didn't see the rest of her that he'd loved so much, and thought he had pleased, but evidently hadn't been any good to, that was all below the table, and as he went out the door she was looking at him across the table; and her chin was on her hands; and she was crying. 46

45 Hemingway, To Have and Have Not, p. 177.
46 Ibid., p. 192.
The importance of Marie Morgan as a Hemingway heroine may be somewhat obscure without the comparison made in the foregoing quotations when it becomes obvious she was created to present the antithesis of the Bradleys, Hollises, and Gordons. As Atkins pointed out in the discussion of Margot Macomber, it is only when a woman seeks to be complementary to a male rather than to dominate him that a satisfying relationship can exist.\(^{47}\)

Although the traits of the heroine are clear in Maria of *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, it appears again that she has suffered undue harsh criticism. Lloyd Frankenburg thought her no more than a foil for the male ego, the materialization of a dream.\(^{48}\) Edmund Wilson went so far as to compare her with Kipling's native wife who lives only to serve her English lord and to merge her identity with his. He refers to Maria as an "amoeba-like little Spanish girl" who is Hemingway's most striking parallel to Ameira, the Indian girl in Kipling's *Without Benefit of Clergy*.\(^{49}\) Even Young, whose criticism often brings out many of the truly significant underlying values

\(^{47}\) Atkins, *op. cit.*, p. 222.

\(^{48}\) Lloyd Frankenburg, "Themes and Characters in Hemingway's Latest Period," *Southern Review*, VII (September, 1942), 781.

\(^{49}\) Wilson, *op. cit.*, p. 239.
in Hemingway's works, states:

Maria is far too good to be true... She does not drink (that's for men); she exists for her lover alone, and has no other interest or function in all life or the world but to serve him. And although she is for awhile a very lovely vision, as we get to know her she becomes more and more a vision until ultimately she ceases to be a person at all. 50

Joseph Warren Beach at least gave her credit for representing the brute force and sadistical cruelty of the Fascists. He stated, "She is a sacrificial lamb of the cause of humanity," but he did not bestow upon her the dignity of being a person. 51 All of the foregoing conclusions regarding Maria reflect an ignorance of the clues that relate her to the previous heroines.

Maria too has her wound; the death of her parents and her rape at the hands of the Fascists gave her the same tragic introduction to life as Brett and Catherine suffered by the loss of their first loves. Her cropped hair, as Bardacke again points out, symbolizes her loss of her womanliness and, in a broader sense, a loss of values in the world as a whole. 52 Her hair is short; however, in this novel it is growing back and she welcomes it. Unlike

50 Young, op. cit., pp. 80–81.


52 Bardacke, op. cit., p. 351.
Dorothy Bridges in *The Fifth Column*, the other Hemingway work with the Spanish War as a setting, Maria understands her man. She realizes that he is a man with a purpose and a code of conduct which keeps him from deviating from that purpose.

Bardacke interprets Maria as the first wholly affirmative heroine; she is Catherine recreated. He states, however, that whereas Catherine's love for Frederick Henry was apart from the war, Maria's love inspired Jordan for his service to his cause. He says, "It is his first complete sexual and spiritual relationship." 53

It must also be emphasized that the hero's concept of love reaches a more nearly fulfilled stage in *For Whom the Bell Tolls* than in the previous works. Never before has the hero met a woman who so nearly meets him on equal terms. Both share the same tragic understanding of violence and death, Jordan as a result of his war experience and Maria as a result of having been raped. This pair of lovers, probably more so than Catherine and Frederick, must have had a vivid awareness of the imminence of death and the preciousness of life. To call their relationship mere physical attraction, or to say, as Frankenberg does, that Jordan *treats* Maria with contempt

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outside the sleeping bag, is to overlook the romantic beauty and lyric emotion with which Hemingway has surrounded the love affair. Again it is necessary to quote Hemingway at length, for in the following passages he has some important things to say about the things of which he writes, "... which are people, country, life and death, and problems of honor and conduct." Jordan says to himself:

And another thing. Don't ever kid yourself about loving someone. It is just that most people are not lucky enough to ever have it. What you have with Maria, whether it lasts just through today and a part of tomorrow, or whether it lasts for a long life, is the most important thing that can happen to a human being. There will always be people who say it does not exist because they cannot have it. But I tell you it is true and that you have it and that you are lucky even if you die tomorrow.54

Later Jordan tells Maria:

"Do you know that until I met thee I have never asked for anything? Nor wanted anything? Nor thought of anything except the movement and the winning of this war? Truly I have been very pure in my ambitions. I have worked much and now I love thee and," he said it now in a complete embracing of all that would not be, "I love thee as I love all that we have fought for. I love thee as I love liberty and dignity and the rights of all men to work and not be hungry. I love thee as I love Madrid that we have defended and as I love all my comrades that have died. And many have died. Many. Many. Thou canst not think how many. But I love thee as I love most in the world and I love thee more. I love thee very much, Rabbit. More

54 Ernest Hemingway, For Whom the Bell Tolls (November, 1940), p. 305.
than I can tell thee. But I say this now to tell thee a little. I have never had a wife and now I have thee for a wife and I am happy." 55

With some authors Maria may have been only a foil, but it could hardly be true with Hemingway. As was pointed out in Chapter I, only a few days after For Whom the Bell Tolls was published, Hemingway married Martha Gellhorn, who had shared his war experiences in Spain as a war correspondent. Paradoxically, it is Young, who described Maria as a vision, who points out the similarity in appearance between his third wife and the heroine of this novel. He also points out that the book is dedicated to Martha Gellhorn. This surely does not necessarily imply that Maria is Martha Gellhorn, but it presents the viewpoint that there are no foils in Hemingway's life, and it is hardly possible there will be any in his fiction.

Many of the comments about Maria have been repeated in criticism of Renata, the heroine of Across the River and into the Trees. Young remarks that the usual introductory comment, "There are no living people . . . in this book," may mean more than the author intended. Young says that ". . . the heroine was never less real, being more than ever the girl who exists so for her lover

55Ibid., p. 348.
that she ceases to exist for herself."\(^56\) As this entire novel has generally been misunderstood and berated, so has the heroine. It apparently has gone unnoticed that Renata is the fictionalized embodiment of all the virtues for which Hemingway exalts Marlene Dietrich. Renata is also brave, beautiful, loyal, and kind; she too possesses a "tragic sense of life that never lets her be truly happy unless she loves."\(^57\) Colonel Cantwell can tell her everything without lying. Most important is the fact that she too is concerned with people and country, life and death, and problems of honor and conduct.

Renata's relationship to the previous heroines is as unmistakable as her relation to Marlene Dietrich. Once Colonel Cantwell learns that her family has always been soldiers, he begins to tell her everything; she becomes an \textit{ex officio} member of the Order of Brusadelli, the "secret society" into which Jake Barnes and Brett Ashley admitted Count Mippipopolous.\(^58\) Although Bardacke's article was published prior to this book, he obviously would see Renata's long hair as the next logical step following the growth of Maria's cropped hair. This step

\(^56\) Young, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 90-91.

\(^57\) Ernest Hemingway, "A Tribute to Mama from Papa Hemingway," \textit{Life}, XXXIII (August 18, 1952), 92-93.

\(^58\) Ernest Hemingway, \textit{Across the River}, p. 219.
would further strengthen his conclusion that Hemingway has turned from love to emptiness and back again to love.60 Of even greater significance is her desire to know more about people and country, life and death, and the problems of honor and conduct; not in order to lose her own existence, but because, in her words, "I love you, you know, and I would like to share it with you." In order that she may deepen her understanding of life and death, Renata asks Cantwell, "Will you tell me... some more of war for my education? ... I need it for my education."61

The relation of Renata to Marlene Dietrich and the other heroines is omitted but not necessarily excluded from Baker's interpretation of the latest heroine. He sees Renata as "... the figurative image of the colonel's past youth, still living in the vision-city he once saw from a distance when he fought for Italy on the plains of the Veneto long ago."62 Baker points out that her age is "nearly nineteen," which is precisely the age of the young Cantwell when he received his big wound. He states that "... her freshness and her bravery, like the seemingly inborn wisdom she displays, are qualities which evidently

60Bardacke, op. cit., p. 351.
61Hemingway, Across the River, p. 216-217.
belonged to young Lieutenant Cantwell in that winter of his rapid growing up."63

It may be said, depending upon the viewpoint taken, that Renata lacks the full dimensional development found in the characters of other writers. This conclusion is somewhat justifiable; however, under no circumstances could she be termed a "vision," for she is a carefully contrived character displaying those qualities which Hemingway deems essential in a modern woman if there is to be true understanding between the sexes.

63Ibid., p. 283.
CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION

Numerous critics have drawn their conclusions regarding Hemingway's treatment of women, but, as has been brought out by study of the female characters, there has been little favorable comment upon them. Most critics have considered them either targets for Hemingway's castigation or "amoeba-like" foils who obey every desire of the male. In the cases of the autobiographical characters and the antagonists, most of whom Hemingway presented unfavorably, the remarks of the critics have been justified. Much, however, has been omitted in the study of the heroine; none of the major critics has delineated the parallel between the fictional heroine and the real-life heroine, Marlene Dietrich.

Edmund Wilson places all of the heroines in the "amoeba" category where he put Maria. He writes that there is the need for a chapter on the relationship between Kipling and Hemingway because:

Kipling anticipates Hemingway in his beliefs that "he travels fastest that travels alone" and that "the female of the species is more deadly than the male," and Hemingway
seems to reflect Kipling in the submissive infra-Anglo-Saxon women that make his heroes such perfect mistresses.¹

Wilson does not confine this observation only to For Whom the Bell Tolls, for he also states that:

One suspects that Without Benefit of Clergy was read very early by Hemingway and that it made on him a lasting impression. The pathetic conclusion of this story of Kipling's seems unmistakably to be echoed at the end of A Farewell to Arms.²

Wilson's comment cannot be wholly denied, but it already has been pointed out that the Hemingway heroine is much more complex than Wilson thus far has realized. Frankenbourg's observations suffer the same shortcomings; he states that love and war do not mix, and that Hemingway turned his back on love in the Spanish War. His comment on The Fifth Column that "Love is an irrelevance if not an impertinence"³ seems to disregard the nature of the symbolic values that the war and Dorothy Bridges held for Philip Rawlings.

Green D. Wyrick made an acute summation of Hemingway's view of the man-woman relationship when he wrote:

¹Edmund Wilson, "Hemingway: Gauge of Morale," The Wound and the Bow (Boston, 1941), p. 239.
²Wilson, op. cit., p. 239.
Perhaps the individual unit of society is the relationship between man and woman. Usually this union is called "the home" and is considered the nucleus of any society. Through most of Hemingway's fiction the power of love, the sexual attraction between male and female represents one of life's higher values. And deviation from the classic roles of men and women in the love game was witnessed with disgust by the Hemingway hero; especially appalling was the domineering, damning female.4

After stating that Hemingway raises the woman to the status of full partner, he appears to reverse himself by saying:

The lovely heroines find their actions directed by the existing conditions of their society or by the men with whom they fall in love... they become flat models of willing, unprotecting femininity... 5

Apparently without any regard for Robert Jordan's romanticized approach to love, Wyriqk concludes his remarks by saying that such an attitude as Hemingway's "... leads, at times, to a vaulting masculinity, a sort of chest-pounding that destroys depth and sensitivity in an author's fiction. / Hemingway's women, in order to exist at all, are inclined to become caricatures rather than characters.6 Robert Penn Warren, who considers Hemingway essentially a lyric rather than a dramatic writer, comes a step closer

5Ibid., p. 10.
6Ibid., p. 22.
to admitting a full-dimensional heroine by observing that the women are not mere foils, but that they embody the masculine virtues and point of view characteristic of Hemingway's works.  

Whereas the preceding critics appear to have given Hemingway's treatment of women and sex only a superficial examination, others such as Colvert, Baker, and Bardacke have provided interpretations that indicate some perception of the heroic qualities of the central female figures. Bardacke emphasizes that sex is not an obsession with Hemingway; heterosexual intercourse symbolizes love in the same manner that war and bull fights symbolize violence and death. He points out that sex is a symbol of the protagonist's relation to life, a relationship that becomes increasingly satisfying in each of the works.  

Emphasizing Hemingway's concern with problems of conduct, Colvert says that he is not guilty of moral irrelevancy but that his morals reflect the effect of science and empirical thinking. He states:

Hemingway's fiction reflects directly and immediately the character of our times--its moral uncertainty, its experience with

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violence, destruction, and the threat of
destruction. Colvert adds that Hemingway's women, who are once removed
from castigation in the world of action and violence, fall
into a special class. "Like their lovers, they reject
conventional moral judgments and have the right attitude
toward the all-important virtue of reliance upon experience
as a means of evaluation." Here, however, instead of de-
tecting the Dietrich-code which guides the heroines,
Colvert says the heroines rely upon their masculine
counterparts for the actual conclusions drawn from male
experience. As was especially noticeable in Brett,
Catherine, Maria, and Renata, these women understand this
world of violence and destruction and the men who have been
thrown into the midst of it. They realize that a woman,
in order to become a full partner in the man-woman
relationship, has to rise above confession magazines, the
kitchen, and charge-accounts in order to be able to
understand a man's world. As was pointed out in Chapter I,
this quality of understanding, which Hemingway has public-
ly admired in Marlene Dietrich, he has evidently found in
his present wife.

9James B. Colvert, "Ernest Hemingway's Morality in
10Ibid., p. 384.
Baker, who disagrees with Wilson's "amoeba" theory of the heroine, presents four conclusions regarding the relevance of the female:

1. Hemingway shares with many of his predecessors an outlook indubitably masculine and a disinclination to interest himself in what may be called the prosaisms of the female world.

2. Hemingway carefully establishes a moral norm of womanly behavior.

3. Hemingway's heroines are an aspect of the poetry of things.

4. Hemingway's women are placed in an accelerated world; they are not puttering around in a kitchen but only dreaming of that possibility.\(^\text{11}\)

Although Baker also does not relate the Dietrich-code to Hemingway's women, the second and fourth conclusions point to the parallel between the fictional heroine and the real-life heroine.

In elaborating his second conclusion, Baker says that Hemingway establishes a norm through a method of comparative portraiture, then uses the established norm as a means of computing various degrees of departure from it.\(^\text{12}\) This conclusion supports the grouping of the


\(^{12}\)Ibid., p. 111.
women into heroines, or protagonists, those who establish the norm, and those whose behavior deviates to varying degrees.

Baker's fourth point should afford a deeper understanding for those who insist on the crying of babies and the rattling of dishes in the background. He states that they are never presented as harassed mothers because wars and revolutions, the inevitable enemies of peace and domesticity, set them adrift or destroyed their lives. "Yet," Baker adds, "they contrive to embody the image of home, the idea if not the actuality of the married state, and where they are, whatever the outward threats, home is." 13

Wilson's belief that the love affair between Catherine and Frederick is an "abstraction of lyric emotion" may be partly explained, according to Baker, by the fact that most of the characters in Hemingway's works are rootless. Commenting on the characters in A Farewell to Arms and The Sun Also Rises, Baker states:

They have substance and cast shadows, but they lack the full perspective and chiaroscuro that one finds among most of the people in For Whom the Bell Tolls. We are seldom permitted to know them in depth. The inclination is to accept them for what they do more than for what they are. They are men and women.

13 Ibid., p. 114.
of action, the meaning of whose lives must be sought in the kinds of actions in which they are involved, very much, again, as in Romeo and Juliet.  

Baker supports the possibility of the parallel between the heroine and the Dietrich-code when he states, referring to the characterizations, that:

> It is probably wisest to assume that Hemingway knew what he was doing. That he could draw a character fully, roundedly, and quickly is proved by a dozen minor portraits in the first two books... If he went no deeper in the backgrounds of his displaced persons, he went as deeply as he needed to do for the purpose of his narrative. And the paring-out of the superfluous has always been one of his special addictions.  

From the conclusions of the critics mentioned, four important ideas stand out. They are Bardacke's interpretation of heterosexuality as the symbol of universal values and long hair as the symbol of complete womanliness; Colvert's idea that the heroines, like the heroes, reject convention and determine their own behavior; and Baker's suggestions that Hemingway is establishing a code of womanly behavior and creating characters to exhibit these prescribed traits. Each of these ideas may be linked directly with the conclusions Owen drew regarding Hemingway's actual life.

14 Ibid., p. 114.
15 Ibid., p. 115.
As Owen stated, "Hemingway is still clinging to marriage and the womanly woman," 16 whether she be Marlene Dietrich, his fourth wife Mary, or Renata. (His ideas on women, love, and sex, like many other of his attitudes, took a long time to develop. Hemingway underwent many years of unhappiness, reflected both in his biography and his fiction, trying to solve the riddle of the relationship between men and women in the modern world. His early rejection of middle-class America was soon followed by a similar rejection of the international sporting set. Soon thereafter he came to realize fully that only when man is faced with imminent death can he truly understand the real meaning of life. He also decided that only a woman who has shared this experience can understand her man and live with him in a deep and lasting partnership.) These ideas he expressed in For Whom the Bell Tolls and again in Across the River and into the Trees. Contrary to Owen's conclusion that the womanly woman is never brought to life in his books, the development of these ideas was increasingly reflected in Hemingway's treatment of women, reaching a climax in Renata. (In this fictional heroine he embodied those traits of bravery, loyalty, sympathy, beauty, womanliness, discipline, and understanding which made Marlene Dietrich and Mary Welsh his real-life heroines.)

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