

**FILMING THE LOST GENERATION: F. SCOTT FITZGERALD,
ERNEST HEMINGWAY, AND THE ART OF CINEMATIC ADAPTATION**

by

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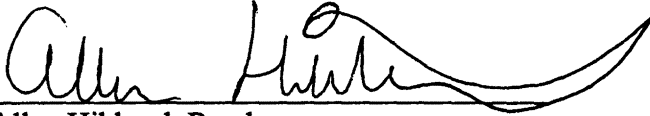
Filming the Lost Generation:
F. Scott Fitzgerald, Ernest Hemingway, and the Art of Cinematic Adaptation

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DEDICATION

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ABSTRACT

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Lost Generation authors F. Scott Fitzgerald and Ernest Hemingway incorporate autobiography into their writing. Through cinematic adaptations of the authors' fiction, viewers can see how filmmakers and actors integrate their own experiences into the authors' self-portrayals. This phenomenon creates a cycle of literary celebrity—a ouroboros—in which the authors' lives and cultural reputations become intertwined with that of those who adapt their works.

In order to determine how film encourages the cycle of literary celebrity over time, a comprehensive list of major motion pictures inspired by Fitzgerald and Hemingway is examined. The goal is to determine what circumstances produce the most cohesive film adaptations of fiction by authors with well-known public personas. A six-question approach is used to signify an adaptation in which the artistic visions of the original author and film production team converge in a manner that seems thematically consistent and contextually plausible.

This approach advocates incorporation of authorial autobiography and temporally relevant historical, political, psychological, and socio-cultural details as the primary source for filmable content outside the original text. Consideration is given to the effectiveness of three adaptation styles: faithful conversion, updated interpretation, and thematic revision. Two new film treatments are provided to suggest how cohesive cinematic adaptations might be developed for future markets.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
I	Introduction: A Six-Question Approach to Film Adaptation Theory..... 1
II	The Ouroboric Cycle of Literary Celebrity: The Creation and Maintenance of F. Scott Fitzgerald and Ernest Hemingway as Cultural Icons.....28
III	Screening the American Icarus, Part One: Film Adaptations of F. Scott Fitzgerald's Works, 1924-1962.....81
IV	Screening the American Icarus, Part Two: Film Adaptations of F. Scott Fitzgerald's Works, 1974-2008.....132
V	Papa's Grace under Genre Pressure, Part One: Hollywood's Adaptations of Ernest Hemingway's Works, 1932-1952.....207
VI	Papa's Grace under Genre Pressure, Part Two: Hollywood's Adaptations of Ernest Hemingway's Works, 1957-2008.....303
VII	Conclusion: Notes and Examples Regarding Cohesive Cinematic Adaptation.....411
	Appendix of Film Treatments and Analysis.....417
	Bibliography.....450

Chapter I

Introduction: A Six-Question Approach to Film Adaptation Theory

In his recent article, “Adaptation, the Genre,” Thomas Leitch recognizes a trend among film scholars: “whenever students of adaptation gather, a call invariably arises for an alternative to a remarkably persistent model of adaptation studies: the one-on-one case study that takes a single novel or play or story as a privileged context for its film adaptation” (106). The problem that Leitch notes is genuine. Anyone searching for a persistent theory of film adaptation must wade through endless case studies of films that he or she most likely has not viewed in order to sift out the wheat of theory from the chaff of close reading. Instead, Leitch proposes an alternative, one which defines adaptation “as a genre with its own rules, procedures, and textual markers that are just as powerful as any single ostensible source text in determining the shape a given adaptation takes” (“Genre” 106). However, defining film adaptation as a separate genre also has its obstacles to practical application. In his effort to define the boundaries of the film adaptation genre, Leitch identifies four “markers”: period setting, period music, obsession with authors, books, words, and use of intertitles (“Genre” 111-114). Although Leitch’s markers each point to significant commonalities among film adaptations, they could be summed up more concisely in one underlying theme. Most often, film adaptations reflect a collective effort by filmmakers to visualize the cult of the author who created the original source text.

Adapted cinema tends to film the author’s public image in connection with the original work. Because of this tendency, I have developed a new, systematic method of

film adaptation criticism. This theory delineates the parameters of quality film adaptation through a series of six questions in an attempt to define a new term: “cohesive cinema.” Cohesive cinema is a term that represents a chorus of collaborative creative voices used to express a consistent artistic vision throughout a film, which the audience accepts as a harmonious visual and aural adaptation of the original printed work and its author in a social context. By working through the six-question cohesive cinema analysis method, critics may determine whether a film adaptation represents a responsible and aesthetically acceptable work derived from its original source.

Before discussing how to apply the six-question cohesive cinema method to film adaptation studies, it is first necessary to provide a brief history of the field of study. The chief obstacle in creating any new critical analysis instrument is refutation of previous methods. Simone Murray, in another recent article that echoes Leitch’s earlier call for a new approach to adaptation theory, gives an overview of past trends in the field. Murray groups the historical development of adaptation studies into three “waves of innovation” (5). The first wave that Murray discusses is perhaps the most annoyingly persistent and unhelpful of the trio: fidelity criticism. Since the 1950s, academic critics of film, such as George Bluestone, have railed against the “moralistic and sexually loaded vocabulary” of fidelity-based criticism and its employment of terms like “unfaithfulness,” “betrayal,” and “debasement” (Murray 5). Although Murray claims that fidelity criticism softened over the years into a modes-based approach that allowed for limited departure from the source texts, she chastises these small concessions as “inadequate schema for appreciating the richness of and motivations driving adaptations” (5). Murray’s

denouncement of fidelity criticism is on point; however, it begs the question of why critics and audiences hold so firmly to a method of analysis that has proven inadequate.

The answer is simple. General audiences and critics tend to watch film adaptations of works by authors around whom they have previously built or absorbed a sense of image and cultural mystique. Film adaptations that are successful most often find some way to tap into the same sensibilities evoked by the popular image with which audiences are already familiar. For example, Ernest Hemingway's readers who choose to view a film adaptation of his work expect to see a certain type of raw masculinity from his male characters visually depicted on the screen, because a pre-existing image of the Hemingway brand is already firmly implanted in their collective consciousness by representations of the author in popular culture. In contrast, fans of F. Scott Fitzgerald's novels expect to see a more sentimental, albeit emotionally tortured, performance from the male leads in film adaptations of his work, because of their familiarity with Fitzgerald's writing as documentation of his legendary life as a modern-day hero of tragic romance.

Many times, potential audiences for film adaptations are so well-versed in the biographical lives of the authors and their complete bodies of work that they feel a level of personal connection with these individuals. Some even model their own lives after the behavior of these writers and their characters, in a sort of imitative hero worship not unlike that lavished upon royalty, music and movie stars. Thus, when an author and/or his or her work has acquired a public image so identifiable that it carries its own set of conventions and expectations, a filmmaker who attempts to superimpose a different artistic vision onto an adaptation will encounter problems. Most likely, audiences will fail

to accept a film adapted from familiar material that exhibits little connection with an original that they already love and understand. For this reason, fidelity criticism continues to haunt film adaptation studies and must be addressed in any new theoretical approach to the genre.

Murray identifies a second wave of film adaptation criticism that appeared during the late 1970s and included some principles of narratology from Russian formalist literary theory, structuralism, and continental semiotics. Murray notes that critics such as Brian MacFarlane use the theories of Roland Barthes, Gerard Genette, and Christian Metz to isolate the signifying “codes” underpinning both literature and film with the aim of legitimizing film studies as a discipline on par with literature. Although the goal of validating the field of study was achieved by this method, structuralist criticism also isolated the film texts from “circuits of production and consumption, or from sociologies of media cultures generally” (Murray 6). Thus, while the second wave of film adaptation studies establishes important groundwork that opened the field for serious inquiry, it failed to engage the more nuanced areas of audience analysis and historical, political, socio-cultural, or psychological inquiry that is necessary to fully consider the motivations of filmmakers who create adaptations and the audiences who view them.

Murray claims that the third wave of film adaptation theory, which began in the late 1980s and early 1990s and persists to the present day, seeks to import “concepts from post-structuralism, postcolonialism, feminism, and cultural studies” in order to “[break] down one part of the self-isolating critical wall built up around the text, and [to open] adaptation studies up to concepts of audience agency” (6). For third wave critics, the goal of film adaptation is never solely fidelity, but instead a means by which

filmmakers “[interrogate] the political and ideological underpinnings of their source texts, translating works across cultural, gender, racial, and sexual boundaries to secure cultural space for marginalized discourses” (6).

Murray’s argument that film adaptation can serve as social commentary intended for particular reception by audiences is sound. However, my six-question analysis method goes further to address these issues directly, by forcing would-be critics to consider them both from the perspective of the filmmaker seeking to impart a social message, and the audience member choosing to accept, reject, or understand it. Murray also advocates implementation of what she calls an “industry-centric adaptation model,” in which academics study the commercial factors influencing film production and “take account of adaptation’s role as the driving force in contemporary platform media” (14). This concept forms a part of the theoretical underpinnings of my six-question method. Once again, this method creates a working process of inquiry. Through examination of the potential financial and career-building motivations supporting producers’, actors’, and filmmakers’ decisions in processes such as budget setting, interpreting roles, and editing the final product, my six-question method will help to determine the specific impact of industry forces on film adaptation.

One central goal results from the concerns taken into consideration by this method: to produce a film adaptation that is a work of cohesive cinema, representing an equal balance of artistic concerns for authors, screenwriters, directors and their casts and crews, while simultaneously creating a derivative work that is commercial enough to satisfy the financial demands of producers and expectations of audiences who know the original. For the remainder of this introduction, I will discuss each of the six questions in

order to demonstrate their implementation in a practical context that might be used in the classroom. In subsequent chapters, I will provide in-depth analyses of Fitzgerald's and Hemingway's works adapted for film to serve as models.

Question One: Does the work represent a consistent artistic vision of collaborators?

This question represents the central inquiry of the six-question approach, by asking whether the creative interests of all parties involved in creating the film adaptation are represented in a way that creates cohesive cinema. Thematic consistency between the original author and the source text as well as the filmmakers and their adaptation should be the primary concern. Finding that the central narrative of the original should be the focus of any film adaptation, Brian MacFarlane describes in his book, *Novels into Film*, how certain incidents of plot, which he calls "cardinal functions" and "catalysers," are crucial to maintaining the connection between textual and visual narrative. Applying the theories of Roland Barthes to film, MacFarlane explains the term "cardinal functions" as "the hinge-points of narrative: that is, the actions they refer to open up alternatives of consequence to the development of the story; they create risky moments in the narrative" that cause readers and viewers to "recognize the possibility of alternative consequences" (13). Alternatively, "catalysers" act "to root the cardinal functions in a particular kind of reality, to enrich the texture of those functions" and "to lay out areas of safety, rests, luxuries" that allow the audience to mentally prepare for upcoming conflicts (14). According to MacFarlane, the essential scenes depicting cardinal functions and catalysers must be maintained in the transition from printed work to screen in order for the audience to recognize and follow the narrative flow of an adapted work.

One example of how to use the concepts of cardinal function and catalyser productively to answer question one of the six-question approach might be to ask whether Jack Clayton's 1974 film adaptation of *The Great Gatsby* is paced too slowly in relation to Fitzgerald's original novel. Many critics feel that the film lingers too long on romanticizing Gatsby's lavish lifestyle and romantic spectacle while undercutting the novel's moments of quick-witted social commentary and class conflict. To answer this question, scholars must look at the major themes and subtexts in Fitzgerald's original, in order to determine whether social commentary or romantic spectacle dominates as the cardinal function of the work. If social commentary is found to be the cardinal function, with the romantic spectacle functioning as a catalyser, then the film could not be considered a thematically consistent artistic vision with the original work, because the film's focal conflict and catalyser are reversed. Read in this manner, Jack Clayton's adaptation of *Gatsby* must be considered inferior, because it is not a piece of cohesive cinema.

On the other hand, if the film's slower pace is found necessary to accentuate Fitzgerald's cardinal function of criticizing the idle lives and meaningless romantic entanglements of the rich, with the class conflict serving as the catalytic framework upon which the audience might base their judgment of this issue, then the film could be considered a work of cohesive cinema. A critic who views the romantic elements of *Gatsby* to be Fitzgerald's central focus could read Clayton's leisurely narrative pace as a visual representation of that romance, and thus an acceptably consistent artistic vision shared by filmmaker and the original author.

In short, a critic of film adaptation must first decide where the original author located the cardinal functions and catalysers of the narrative in order to determine whether the film adaptation is thematically consistent. If this thematic consistency is maintained in the transference from page to screen, then the adaptation can be considered a work of cohesive cinema, and the critic can begin to describe how that consistency is achieved using the remaining five questions. However, if the opposite result is found, the critic may use the following five questions to determine when and how during the creative process that the film adaptation developed thematic inconsistencies from the original work.

Question Two: Is the filmed work incorporated or unincorporated?

A film adaptation may be considered an “incorporated” work if it includes information about the original author’s biographical life and times and/or contains references to other works in the author’s canon besides the text claimed as the central focus. In contrast, a film adaptation is considered “unincorporated” if it contains no references to the author or his other works outside the main text. Incorporation of biographical, historical, or canonical detail can be used very effectively to fill in the narrative gaps left in the transference from printed work to film. With short stories and novellas, screenwriters and directors must often add new details of plot and character in order to create a filmable story. If the new details are added from circumstances completely foreign to the original author’s life and time period, then the resulting film might be considered anachronistic or overly editorial. However, if such details are carefully selected from sources relevant to the original work’s creative circumstances, then narrative and thematic consistency can be maintained to create cohesive cinema.

In his book, *Film Adaptation and its Discontents*, Thomas Leitch describes the appeal of films based on stories that are told for the truth, saying that the phrase “based on a true story” appeals to audiences because it assumes “the authority of a master text that has all of the authority of a precursor novel or play or story with none of their drawbacks. Not only does ‘a true story’ have no authors or agents to be recompensed, but its authority can never be discredited” (*Discontents* 289). Leitch’s recognition of the true story’s appeal can also be applied to supposedly true elements of popular mythology that often surround authors whose lives have been distinctive enough to bring them recognition as celebrities apart from their works. However, filmmakers must be careful when using elements of an author’s celebrity mythology to select only portions of the author’s folklore that would be familiar and acceptable to the film adaptation’s target audience. If the biographical, historical, or canonical details that a filmmaker chooses to include are too obscure, they risk alienating or offending fans who believe in a more mainstream brand identity that they believe the author represents.

Two examples from the Fitzgerald film canon that show the levels of success with which a text might incorporate details from the author’s life are Richard Brooks’s, *The Last Time I Saw Paris* (1954) and Richard Wolstencroft’s adaptation of *The Beautiful and Damned* (2008). Brooks’s choice to expand the plot of “Babylon Revisited” by making Charlie, the lead character, into an alcoholic, struggling writer succeeds because Fitzgerald’s literary audience is already familiar with this information from knowledge of the author’s biography. In contrast, Wolstencroft’s choice to modernize *The Beautiful and Damned* does not succeed because the audience is not familiar with the obscure and speculative biographical reference upon which Wolstencroft based his choice to make the

characters cocaine addicts rather than alcoholics. Since the incorporation of cocaine use is outside the bounds of Fitzgerald lore commonly acknowledged by his readers, the adaptation fails. At its initial screening before an audience of scholars at the 2009 Fitzgerald convention, many audience members walked out. Judging from the very different public receptions of these two adaptations, it is easy to determine that, while biographical and historical information about the original author can form an excellent basis for additional material, such information must be selected with an eye toward the target audience.

Question Three: In which of the three style(s) is/are the filmed adaptation performed?

According to this analysis instrument, I can identify three styles of film adaptation: conversion, interpretation, and revision. These styles are variants of the three categories presented in Geoffrey Wagner's book, *The Novel and the Cinema* (1975), which he describes as follows:

(a) *transposition*, in which a novel is given directly on the screen with a minimum of apparent interference; (b) *commentary*, where an original is taken and either purposefully or inadvertently altered in some respect...where there has been a different intention on the part of the filmmaker, rather than infidelity or outright violation; and (c) *analogy*, which must represent a fairly considerable departure for the sake of making another work of art. (222)

The first of Wagner's categories is very similar to the style of conversion explained here, with the change in word choice made to reflect an even closer relationship between source text and film than the word *transposition* suggests. Conversion occurs when transference from page to screen is made with as little alteration to the original text as possible. This style of adaptation is commonly referred to in critical circles as a "faithful"

adaptation. According to Thomas Leitch, faithful adaptations are popular among producers because of their “power to pre-sell spin-offs” that trade upon brand recognition, allowing “economic propriety” to “[forbid] adapters from tampering with speeches and characters and scenes that viewers were presumably expecting to see onscreen” (*Discontents* 128). An example of conversion style is Elia Kazan’s 1977 adaptation of *The Last Tycoon*, which leaves the viewer with the feeling of incompleteness in order to reflect the unfinished novel left at Fitzgerald’s death. The potential drawback of slavishly faithful adaptation is twofold. First, overly faithful adaptation sets severe artistic limits on the screenwriter, director, cast, and crew of the adaptation. However, perhaps even more detrimentally, faithful adaptations sometimes threaten to collapse under the weight of audience over-awareness. This danger is most prevalent with very well-known literary classic texts, which audiences attend in hopes of seeing a new angle on an already too-familiar story.

In order to combat an audience’s potential for time-worn narrative fatigue, film adapters often choose a second style, interpretation. An interpretation is created when the screenwriter or director keeps the main characters and/or plot of the original, but sets the film in a more current time period in hopes of making the work culturally relevant for audiences. Interpretation, as an adaptation style, is different from previous attempts to explain the concept of a classic text reset in more modern times. Although Geoffrey Wagner’s adaptation style categories, *commentary* and *analogy*, seem superficially similar to interpretation, they are fundamentally different. Both of Wagner’s categories merely involve speculation regarding the degrees of departure from the original, suggesting that faithfulness is still at the heart of his inquiry. In contrast, the six-question

approach term, interpretation, assumes that departure is a necessity of form and concentrates instead on the motivations behind the changes made in the transition from page to screen, rather than faithfulness.

Film director David Fincher takes an interpretive approach to his 2008 adaptation of “The Curious Case of Benjamin Button” with great success. Fincher updates Fitzgerald’s original story by placing it in the more accessible World War Two era, rather than its original setting of the Civil War, so that the themes resonate without the cultural baggage associated with the earlier time period. Interpretation is often the safest path for filmmakers to follow commercially; however, it also comes with the small risk of alienating viewers who desire either a more faithful or fanciful version of the original.

In contrast, revision is a style of film adaptation that makes significant, large scale changes to the plot, characters, and themes of the original work, in order to make the work more appealing to its intended audience and/or to pursue some new and different artistic vision that the filmmaker draws from the source text. Revision represents a combination of Wagner’s *commentary* and *analogy* categories previously described. One example of a revision is Johnny Hines’s 1924 silent film adaptation of Fitzgerald’s short story “The Camel’s Back.” Hines’s film is almost completely divorced from the original story, a romance from Fitzgerald’s early period. Instead, it screens as an Irish exploitation comedy with only a background romance.

The potential drawback of creating a revisionist adaptation is that filmmakers may range too far into editorialization about underlying social issues of the original work, alienating the target audience. Thomas Leitch calls such an approach “colonization,” about which he says “any new content is fair game, whether it develops meanings

implicit in the earlier text, amounts to an ideological critique of that text, or goes off in another direction entirely” (*Discontents* 109). Further, Leitch notes that colonization “is a term that is difficult to empty of its pejorative charge, a charge that is usually leveled when a filmmaker from one country tackles a classic text from another” (*Discontents* 110). Hines’s adaption described above, titled in film form as *Conductor 1492*, clearly demonstrates Leitch’s point. Hines’s film pokes fun at the racial stereotype of fighting Irish culture while simultaneously romanticizing the Irish characters’ tendency toward acts of self-sacrificing bravery. As a result of the high potential for ideological conflicts such as Hines’s, revisionist adaptations are the most commercially risky.

Despite the potential risks of their styles of adaptation, all three of these sample films were commercially successful when first released, suggesting that it is possible for any of the three styles to find a sizable audience in the marketplace. However, the films which tend to be the most critically acclaimed and enduring are the ones which blend one or more of these styles to balance cultural relevance with thematic purpose to create commercial success.

Question Four: In which of the four contextual manner(s) is the filmed adaptation made?

After filmmakers and critics examine and classify a text according to the three styles described above, it is next helpful to determine the contextual manner in which the work might be approached. Simone Murray urges in “Materializing Adaptation Theory: The Adaptation Industry,” that “one of adaptation studies’ chief aims should be to bring academic discourses into dialog with adaptation industry practices;” however, she laments that such “exchange has to date barely taken place” (13). Particularly, Murray

advocates study of political economy of media, cultural theory, and history of the book in conjunction with examination of the film business to create a complete picture of the factors influencing production (10-12). For these reasons, the fourth question asks scholars to consider four manners of academic approach concerning both the creation of the source text and its film adaptation: historical, socio-cultural, political, and psychological. If adequate supporting information is available, these four approaches should be combined for maximum critical effectiveness. Also, when producing new films, filmmakers should allow the manner of approach to determine what details to emphasize or downplay from the original work, the author's incorporated life and canon, or from other relevant sources in relation to the themes and plot of the original. With this approach, scholarship and the creative process should be able to develop a mutually beneficial relationship.

The first, and perhaps most common, manner of approach to film adaptation is historical. Although historical adaptations naturally consider the biography of the author and the time setting of the book, they should also include historical discussion of the original text. Simone Murray aptly focuses on "the mechanics of print production, dissemination, and reception" of a work during the time of its original release when examining source texts (11). However, history of the film should also be pursued by critics, since the circumstances of a film's production, release, and reception in comparison to the source text often yields important scholarly insights.

Hemingway's second novel, *A Farewell to Arms*, is one example of a source text that may have benefitted from a production more grounded in historical research. Critics of Charles Vidor's 1957 adaptation blame its overreliance on romantic drama and neglect

of attention to historical detail as the causes for the film's box office failure. However, Frank Borzage's earlier 1932 version fared better in critical circles and audience reception because more attention is paid to these concerns. Still, Hemingway was unhappy with both productions for their neglect of important historical events that he found crucial to plot and thematic developments in the novel. *A Farewell to Arms* contains a great deal of information about the Italian army in World War One. Since many members of a modern, English-speaking audience may not be familiar with this information, filmmakers should include historical details that would educate the audience about important facts necessary to comprehend the film.

The second manner of adaptation, socio-cultural, focuses on societal trends and cultural attitudes relevant to the setting and creation of the original work, in relation to similar concerns surrounding production of its film adaptation. Additionally, it is important to take into account Simone Murray's caution that issues of economical concern often influence cultural values. As Murray explains, "critical theory and cultural studies have tended to develop theories of cultural value in relative isolation from the material industry contexts that preoccupy political economy" (11). Further, Murray points out that "political economy's realist, materialist, and interdisciplinary methodology critically illuminates content's key role in contemporary media industries" (10). In short, what Murray seems to be saying is that the social-cultural message conveyed in a source text might be altered by the political economics of the filmmaking industry, in an effort to target the widest possible audience while simultaneously avoiding censorship.

Henry King's 1957 production of *The Sun Also Rises* is one example of a Hemingway work that is adapted within such constraints. Although the film contains

many scenes that play up the sensual appeal of Ava Gardner in the role of Brett Ashley, the more explicitly sexual scenes with her character from the novel are excluded from the adaptation because of censorship and economic concerns. In the 1950s, general film-going audiences were not prepared for explicit displays of sexuality by females in mainstream cinema, and most likely would have responded negatively to the film, resulting in lower box office returns. Brett Ashley is known as the first New Woman character type to appear in an American novel. The New Woman is known for her worldliness, independent self-maintenance, and willingness to break traditional sexual mores. Thus, one manner of approach to constructing a new film adaptation of the novel is from a socio-cultural perspective, one that examines Brett Ashley's attitudes and behavior, as well as the reactions to it from the men who surround her. Such an approach was not possible in the more conservative 1950s but is more acceptable today, and could provide stunning new insights that explore Hemingway's contemplation of women in his early novels.

However, this suggestion does not imply that modern society is completely free to explore political issues without concern for economic impact on the reception of the finished film product. The third manner of adaptation, political, is difficult because it forces both filmmakers and critics to consider not only their own political beliefs, but also those political attitudes held by large portions of the adaptation's target audience. As George Bluestone writes, "In the film, more than in any of the other arts, the signature of social forces is evident in the final work" (35). Bluestone cautions against making overt political statements in film, explaining that film is "the product of a commercial society, the Hollywood commodity must make a profit; to make a profit, it must please

consumers” (34). If their primary motivation is to create commercially successful films, filmmakers must consider the current tide of political opinion when creating new adaptations and select works that hold timely viewpoints that are relevant to public concerns.

Perhaps the most difficult kind of subject matter for filmmakers and critics to create and evaluate on a political basis are films adapted from war novels. Most often, war novels are written by veterans, who tend to hold more right-wing, pro-war beliefs. The target audience for such novels and their film adaptations tend to be people who are comfortable reading about and then watching the atrocities of war. However, many members in the creative and journalistic media have more left-wing, anti-war sentiments that often cause them to impress their own value judgments upon novels and films that graphically depict war. Filmmakers and critics must be careful not to push their own agendas if they have no relevance to the source text. Otherwise, they risk alienating audiences in agreement with the tone of the original work.

Still, neutralization of political issues, while it may produce box office success, is not an easy way to please all parties concerned in the adaptation process. Sam Wood’s 1943 adaptation of *For Whom the Bell Tolls* is a Hemingway work that benefitted financially from a manner of adaptation which reserves judgment and limits political themes. Hemingway’s original text is filled with many overt political viewpoints and opinions about the futility of war. When they were removed from the film version, in an effort to make the film more marketable to a pro-war, pro-democracy, American audience, Hemingway was very dissatisfied. Perhaps in today’s post-Vietnam political climate, mainstream audiences might be more accepting of Hemingway’s ruminations

about the differences between the ideologies that start wars and the realities faced by the men who fight them. A political adaptation that considers the timeless politics of war, while reserving final judgment, could make the story fresh and relevant to 21st century audiences, simply by allowing more of the original text to speak for itself.

The final manner of adaptation, psychological, is perhaps the most difficult to film, because it involves delving into the minds of characters and the author who created them. As Brian MacFarlane explains, printed texts that place emphasis on the life of the mind present special problems for filmmakers because “they address narrative elements which are not tied to a particular mode of expression” (25). Texts with prevalent psychological themes usually contain significant periods of flashback, which disrupt the linear flow of narrative and have the potential to disorient film audiences, who do not have ability to flip back a few pages to catch important details that they may have missed. Audiences watching their own copies on digital video can revisit scenes, but the flow of visual narrative is still interrupted. George Bluestone calls this potentially disruptive narrative event a “time-flux,” and cites it as a persistent difficulty in the adaptation process from page to screen. As Bluestone describes the problem, “in time-flux, past and present lose their identity as discrete sections of time. The present becomes ‘specious’ because on second glance it is seen as fused with the past, obliterating the line between them” (54). The central problem for filmmakers producing a psychological adaptation is how to maintain narrative flow when most of the action takes place inside the mind of a character.

The simplest way to accomplish this maneuver is through liberal, though careful, use of flashback sequences. Henry King’s 1952 adaptation of Hemingway’s short story,

“The Snows of Kilimanjaro,” accomplishes this feat quite neatly. King includes a whole additional narrative of Harry’s exciting life that takes place in flashback sequences while Harry lies in his sickbed. Although the use of flashback is a very effective way to present Harry’s backstory, King makes a detrimentally inconsistent deviation from the psychological themes of the original text by allowing Harry to live in the end. One of the central themes of Hemingway’s tragic original is that Harry realizes that he threw away opportunities to create meaning in his life through writing, because he wasted his time among the leisurely rich. Harry’s death at the end of the original short story creates a tragedy of great psychological resonance from which Hemingway’s original audience could logically draw the conclusion that a productive life is ultimately more satisfying than one wasted by slacking.

However, in King’s adaptation, this psychological element is lost in an almost Dickensian happy ending that allows Harry to recover with the resolution to change. The failure of King’s ending demonstrates the danger of tampering with the internal psychological motivations behind fictional characters. The inconsistent manner of King’s psychological adaptation makes the film adaptation seem dated and unrealistic today, while the original short story retains relevance as a meditation on the psychology of death and regret.

In sum, the level of consistency and adherence to one of these four suggested manners of adaptation can determine the success or failure in the process of transferring print fiction to film. The most successful adaptations balance these four contextual manners of adaptation and reflect and understanding of the major themes, plot, and characters contained in the original work.

Question Five: Into which of the five media categor(ies) does the original work(s) and/or filmed adaptation fall?

The five categories into which an original work or adaptation might fall are creative fiction, plays, poetry, and songs; creative non-fiction prose, plays, poetry and songs; moving visual media; static visual media; or multi-modal expression. These categories are named in an effort to simplify meaning and should be understood according to the expected definitions of their words. Each of these five categories of original texts carries with it the cultural expectations for that medium of expression. These intrinsic differences affect the film adaptation process.

In his discussion of the issues associated with creating film adaptations, Robert Stam notes what he refers to as the “automatic difference” between novels and film. According to Stam, a novel is “a single-track, uniquely verbal medium” that is “usually produced by a single individual.” In contrast, Stam claims a film is “almost always a collaborative project, mobilizing at minimum a crew of four to five people and at maximum a cast and crew and support staff of hundreds,” all working together to produce not only words, but also “music, sound effects, and moving photographic images.” In addition to these creative elements, filmmakers carry the burdens of “budgetary constraints, issues of available talent, studio or producer pressures, censorship in terms of performers, screenwriters, editors, and so forth” (17). Stam rightly concludes his analysis by discussing how film adaptation is the most complicated transition between media, because it requires consideration of so many issues.

One concern that filmmakers seeking to adapt a work of creative fiction often face is the problem of narrative point of view. Most often, films are made from an omniscient

perspective, allowing viewers not only to see the activities of the characters, but also to hear their internal thoughts. John Sturges manages this issue very well in his 1958 adaptation of Hemingway's novella, *The Old Man and the Sea*, by having Spencer Tracy speak Santiago's thoughts in voiceover and also utter them in real-time onscreen. However, the second most common problem that filmmakers face when adapting works of fiction plagues Sturges's film, which is creating a suspension of disbelief for fantastical circumstances.

In Hemingway's original novella, readers easily accept that Santiago, an aged fisherman, could hold on to a giant blue marlin for days with little rest, food, or water. This fantastical circumstance plays out believably in John Sturges's adaptation. The audience is prepared, by the convention of suspended disbelief allowed in creative fiction, to accept that a man of Spencer Tracy's advanced age might wrangle a fish of that size. The problem occurs in creation of a realistic giant marlin. Hemingway's readers are free to imagine the fish in any way they chose; however, Sturges is forced to resort to the use of unrealistic special effects due to the technical constraints of his era. The marlin itself is noticeable as the weakest and most dated element of the film. Even though the audience may be willing to suspend disbelief regarding feats of human endurance for which they are prepared, they will not usually tolerate special effects that do not measure up to their imaginations.

In contrast, films adapted from creative non-fiction sources present the opposite problem. Directors must often work against the actual facts, which may even be contained in the original work, in order to create an illusion of plausibility that audiences will accept as the truth. As Thomas Leitch writes, the term "based on a true story"

denotes material that “indicates a source text that both is and is not a text, one that carries some markers common to most source texts but not others” (*Discontents* 281). Leitch further claims, the “one thing that [the term based on a true story] does not mean is that the film is an actual record of historical events” (*Discontents* 282). The most solid guide for potential films of creative non-fiction works is that they should give the appearance of realism, rather than the fantasticism that fiction allows, because “true story” audiences are less likely to willingly engage their suspension of disbelief. For example, if Hemingway had included a fantastical element in his non-fiction film, the *The Spanish Earth*, the work would not have seemed credible. Hemingway narrated and co-wrote the screenplay for the Spanish Civil War propaganda piece, which had to remain as gritty and realistic as possible in order to achieve its intended effect of gaining sympathy for Spain’s political left, because of the higher audience expectation for veracity in non-fiction pieces.

Although Hemingway and Fitzgerald never produced films, paintings, or multimodal pieces on their own, all of these media are used in adaptations of their work. Each of these media categories carries with it a different set of expectations. Films, television programs, and other moving visual media normally seek to entertain audiences, whereas static visual media, such as painting and sculpture, create higher expectations of artistic merit. However, these two media can collide in interesting ways to create multimodal pieces, particularly in works of animation that are carefully planned and executed. As Robert Stam says, “the new technologies, and the theories associated with them, undermine, in their way, ideas of purity and essence” (12). Perhaps the best

example of this subversion of traditional expectations about media is Alexander Petrov's 1999 adaptation of *The Old Man and the Sea*.

Although *The Old Man and the Sea* had been previously adapted in live action for film with great success, Petrov's adaptation ignores the conventional expectation that only live-action cinema can be considered art. Instead, Petrov creates a piece of independent artistic significance that won an Oscar for best animated short film. Petrov's adaptation is the first animated film ever to be released in IMAX theaters. Consisting of 29,000 frames of hand-painted oil on glass, Petrov's film demonstrates how heightened audience expectations for static-image painting and multi-modal animated expression can inspire filmmakers to produce new adaptations of older works that are just as timeless and unique as the originals. In short, today's filmmakers, freed from the technical constraints of visual media, are now able to create adaptations that continue to break down the boundaries between serious art and entertainment.

Question Six: Is there a balance in levels of creative command among the six types of collaborators for each of the factors controlling the consistency, level of incorporation, style, manner, and category of the final film adaptation product and what might the motivations be for these decisions?

Six types of collaborators work together to produce, distribute, and interpret film adaptations: the original author, producer, screenwriter, director, cast and crew, and audience. Each of these collaborators significantly impact adaptations and their journey from page to screen can often provide important insights into how to interpret the quality of a final product in relation to the original. As a result, in order to analyze any film

adaptation, critics must examine the contributions that each collaborator makes to the process.

In the beginning of the adaptation process, the collaborative team must realize that each original author is a genre unto himself. Thus, adapting a film from a textual work by an author necessarily creates a genre conflict between the general genre of adaptation and the specific genre of an individual writer. However, this assertion does not mean that the author created his original work in a vacuum. The number of collaborators involved in the creative process for writers is small compared to film. Editors, agents, and publicists, as well as the literary, financial, and cultural interests that they represent, play a large role in a writer's process. As Simone Murray states, "the book is demonstrably as much the product of institutions, agents, and material forces as is the Hollywood blockbuster" (8). Due to the similar collaborative processes of the publishing and film industries, it is no wonder that filmmakers often attempt to collaborate with authors, as well as their production team, in the construction of film adaptations.

Robert Siodmak's 1946 adaptation of Hemingway's short story, "The Killers," is perhaps the best documented example of how this collaborative process worked on a Hemingway-based film. In his biography of Ava Gardner, who played femme fatale Kitty Collins, Lee Server chronicles each collaborator's process in making a film noir classic out of Hemingway's original hard-boiled story. By shrewd bargaining, Hemingway was able to hold out for the highest price ever paid for the film rights to short story at the time. Most likely, Hemingway was aware of the two-pronged motivation for film adaptation production later recognized by Brian MacFarlane: the "crass commercialism" of appealing to a ready-made market and "high-minded respect for literary works," that

tend to cement an author's place in the literary canon (7). Due largely to the high risk incurred from their costly investment, Universal Pictures carefully chose the writers, director, cast and crew to be the best available.

Screenwriter Richard Brooks and producer Mark Hellinger pumped Hemingway for further details on how to lengthen the trajectory of the story, and when the author claimed he had no other ideas for the characters, enlisted the help of John Huston as an uncredited co-writer. In all likelihood, Brooks and Hellinger were anxious for help in navigating what Brian MacFarlane calls "the story/plot distinction," which means that while "novel and film can share the same story" they are necessarily "distinguished by means of different plot strategies which alter sequence, highlight different emphases, which – in a word – defamiliarize the story" (23). Thus, Huston was chosen because he was a very Hemingwayesque writer and well-versed in the film noir genre, making him the perfect choice to fill in these story/plot gaps.

After choosing to add Huston to the team, the writers, producer, and director made the decision to style the film in the manner of a standard noir, which necessitated adding a femme fatale not present in the original. Director Robert Siodmak wisely chose to play his role in the creative process as what Francois Truffaut would have called a *metteur-en-scene*, rather than an *auteur*, allowing space for Hemingway's authorial genre and the carefully crafted, genre-specific screenplay to form the basis for the adaptation without adding unnecessary stylistic influence. Siodmak's restraint in the situation was warranted, considering that the ideological field of production was already crowded by so many collaborators.

Once Ava Gardner was brought in as Kitty Collins, the woman who provides the motivation for Burt Lancaster's sinister deeds in the film, the plotline of production made its final turn. The choice to cast Gardner as Kitty was smart, because of Gardner's complex seductive and treacherous, yet still vulnerable, on-screen persona. Somehow, in this early role Gardner appears to possess an intrinsic knowledge of what Brian MacFarlane calls "character function," which creates "significance for the course of action" that an actor takes in her approach to a role (24). Consequently, audience members familiar with other tough, tragically beautiful New Woman characters created by Hemingway eagerly sold out theaters to see Gardner as the visual embodiment of this intriguing type.

The finished film adaptation focuses not solely on the men's world of Ole Anderson's struggles, as Hemingway's short story does, but also on the newly created romance between Ole "the Swede" and Kitty. Audiences accept the additions to plot and characterization for several reasons. First, Hemingway's story is kept almost wholly intact in the first reel, allowing readers familiar with the original to recognize the characters, while those unfamiliar with the source can learn the story's origins. Afterward, the film uses the original as a springboard to launch the psychological drama of the Swede and Kitty that culminates in her betrayal and his murder, satisfying the conventions that audiences of film noir expect. *The Killers* serves as a successful model, showing how all six collaborative forces might work together to create, distribute, and interpret a film adapted from a literary work. Adaptation disturbances in the balance of these six creative forces will be discussed in later chapters to demonstrate why an out-of-balance approach is less often successful.

As Thomas Leitch notes, filmgoers watch adaptations of novels “to test their assumptions, not only about familiar texts but about new ideas of themselves, others, and the world those texts project against new ideas fostered by the adaptation and the new reading strategy it encourages” (“Genre” 116). Perhaps this is why both filmmakers and audiences continue to gravitate toward making and watching adaptations that include additional information about the author’s life and historical times. In his seminal text on film adaptation, George Bluestone quotes Sartre: “one cannot write without a public and without a myth – without a *certain* public which historical circumstances have made, without a *certain* myth of literature which depends to a very great extent upon the demand of this public” (31). Film adaptations that are based upon a source text while also incorporating material from the original authors’ biographies and canons allow filmmakers and filmgoers to preserve, expand, and in a way, relive the mythology surrounding their favorite authors.

Chapter II

The Ouroboric Cycle of Literary Celebrity:

The Creation and Maintenance of

F. Scott Fitzgerald and Ernest Hemingway as Cultural Icons

The cult of literary celebrity is best understood in the context of an ouroboric cycle. In order to cultivate the reputation of an author, a publicity campaign must be built around him. Unfortunately, the extra attention that heavy publicity foists upon authors often stifles their creativity, since a public reputation forces them to produce works that conform to that image. The ultimate result of this cycle is that the later works produced within this artificial environment are often inferior to the originals, leaving critics no choice but to declare a celebrity writer's career over, even as his iconic status continues to grow. Thus, the ouroboric cycle of literary celebrity might best be described by the motto on Christopher Marlowe's portrait: "*qvod me nvtrit me destrivt,*" which translates from the Latin as "that which nourishes me destroys me" (*Marlowe-Society.org*). This motto encapsulates the histories of F. Scott Fitzgerald and Ernest Hemingway as public writers. The public images of Fitzgerald and Hemingway greatly influenced both the critical receptions and film adaptations of their works. Scholars and filmmakers continually seek out the motivations behind these men, whose private lives were at times even more interesting and complex than their iconic fiction. Like the ouroboros, both Fitzgerald and Hemingway's careers moved in an endless circle, nourished by the cult of celebrity during their early years, but destroyed by it once the authors actually became

famous and were forced to work within the confines of personas that continue to live on today as self-perpetuating legends.

During his early career, Ernest Hemingway seemed to flourish more in the limelight of his newfound fame than Scott Fitzgerald did. Perhaps the reason for this was Hemingway's own personality. From adolescence to late middle age, photos of Hemingway typically depict a handsome man whose most arresting feature is his enormous grin. These smiling pictures suggest not only that the person in them is having the time of his life, but also that his life is somehow bigger and more exciting than the lives of others. According to Carlos Baker's seminal biography on the author, Hemingway was almost preternaturally disposed to creating an image of himself as a man's man, even as a young boy. Baker recalls a story about the author at age five, recounted by Hemingway's mother:

When asked what he is afraid of, wrote Grace, he shouts out '*fraid of nothing* with great gusto. His aspiration was to be taken for a man. He stomped about with half an old musket on his shoulder. He memorized some stanzas from Tennyson's Charge of the Light Brigade and became forthwith a soldier, gathering various pieces of wood which he called his blunderbuss, his shotgun, his rifle, his Winchester, and his pistol. His parents were much impressed by his courage and endurance. He took to dramatizing passages from Longfellow's *Hiawatha*, with [his sister] Marcelline as the dark-eyed daughter of the old Arrow-maker in the Land of the Dacotahs. (*Life* 5)

From this early anecdote, it is easy to see how the young Hemingway intrinsically understood manliness to be a public performance, albeit one pieced together from a hodgepodge of ideas. The genesis of what would become the author's internal identity conflict, combining the man of action and adventure with the romantically conceived artist of reflection, is present in this recollection. Here, Hemingway's audience can pick out images of the future soldier, storyteller, sportsman, and lover of women, the parts of

what would become his legend, performed simultaneously each day to the delight of his family in their living room.

In contrast, F. Scott Fitzgerald, although equally handsome and given to public performance of dramatic works in the homes of his family and friends, appears far more pensive and unsure of himself in boyhood photos than the young Hemingway. Very few of Fitzgerald's photos taken during his childhood depict the young man smiling. These images of a well-dressed, yet somehow uneasy-looking boy seem to predict the public image that the author would later develop. As an adult, Fitzgerald was a man who craved public attention, but was uncertain of how to behave once he attained it.

In what has become the standard biography of the author, Matthew J. Bruccoli describes how Fitzgerald, at age seven, was an exceptionally bright student at his convent school. However, Fitzgerald was dismayed when his "intelligence and cleverness could not inspire the admiration Scott craved from his contemporaries" (18). As a result of "the unwillingness of others to acknowledge his superiority" Bruccoli claims that the previously quiet and well-mannered Fitzgerald became "boastful and bossy" (18).

Further, Bruccoli states that:

In 1905, his desire for leadership was complicated by his interest in girls when he entered Mr. Van Arnum's dancing class at the Century Club in Buffalo. Scott was a handsome boy, with blond hair and eyes that were described as green, blue, or gray. He projected an intensity that made people notice him, and he catches the eye in boyhood group photos. He was clothes-conscious and something of a dandy – at seven he carried a cane when he went with his father to have their shoes shined on Sunday mornings. Yet with girls, too, he found that boys he considered to be his obvious inferiors were more popular than he was. (18)

In this anecdote, one can discern the beginnings of Fitzgerald's anxious public persona as a middle class man who aspired to be a member of the upper class in an effort to attract

the attention of girls and admiration of other men. Fitzgerald's awareness of class consciousness and his dependence on the approval of popular females as key to his sense of self-awareness is readily apparent in this childhood story. In short, the themes that would later appear in Fitzgerald's writing were present in childhood, as manifestations of his later popular image.

Although from these details it is relatively easy to see how the very different public images of both Fitzgerald and Hemingway would develop in time, only one literary editor saw in these two complex personalities any marketable potential. Fitzgerald met Maxwell Perkins first, through the unsuccessful submission to Scribners of his initial attempt at a novel. Written in 1917-1918, while Fitzgerald anticipated being sent overseas in the Army, *The Romantic Egoist* was rejected for publication by senior editors at Scribners. However, it caught the attention of junior editor Maxwell Perkins. According to Bruccoli's biography of Fitzgerald, Perkins had recently been promoted from the advertising department at Scribners to its more prestigious editorial staff (84). Looking for a new writer who might help him make a name as an editor, Perkins encouraged the young Fitzgerald in his rejection letter for the novel, advising him to revise and resubmit. Upon receipt of the letter, Fitzgerald quickly began revision of the novel, which he resubmitted to Perkins as *This Side of Paradise* in 1919. Even though Perkins lobbied hard for the improved novel, it was again rejected. Fitzgerald set his hand to revision a third time, even more determined to earn publication, because he now had someone else to impress.

During the time in which he was writing and revising *This Side of Paradise*, Fitzgerald met and fell in love with his future wife, Zelda Sayre, at a country club dance

in her native Montgomery, Alabama. Fitzgerald's desire for Zelda's hand in marriage proved to be the added incentive the young writer needed to begin his career in earnest. Brucoli notes that although she was "reckless and impulsive about many things, Zelda was cautious about marriage to an unpublished writer with no money" (91). Determined to win her sole attention through exhibiting proof of financial security, Fitzgerald took a job with an advertising agency and began writing short fiction for magazines so that he could earn enough money to marry Zelda before anyone else could. Perhaps this early recognition that wealth and self-promotion could allow him to win the woman he loved was the beginning of Fitzgerald's later desperate dependence to hold a captive audience through monetary and literary achievement.

Fitzgerald was not the only man staking his life and career on the publication of *This Side of Paradise*. To finally acquire permission from the senior editors at Scribners to accept his pet project for publication, Max Perkins threatened them with resignation, saying "My feeling is that a publisher's first allegiance is to talent...If we're going to turn down the likes of Fitzgerald, I will lose all interest in publishing books" (qtd. in Brucoli 99). Unwilling to lose their zealous young editor, Charles Scribner relented and agreed to publish the novel. Overjoyed upon hearing the news that he eagerly anticipated, Fitzgerald responded to Perkins by saying in a letter, "I have so many things dependent on its success – including of course a girl – not that I expect it to make me a fortune but it will have a psychological effect on me and all my surroundings and besides open up new fields" (qtd. in Brucoli 99-100). Fitzgerald's hopeful prediction about the novel proved prophetic.

Thanks to a heavy promotional campaign by Scribners, *This Side of Paradise* sold out its initial printing of 3,000 copies in only three days (Brucoli 115). Numerous additional printings followed. The success of the novel cemented Maxwell Perkins's place at Scribners as a tastemaker with an eye for new talent and paved the way for Fitzgerald, at twenty-three, to become an international celebrity overnight. Although the book was generally well-received by critics, the strength of Fitzgerald's writing was never its sole selling point:

Fitzgerald's appearance accelerated his elevation to celebrity status. His striking good looks combined with his youth and brilliance to complete the image of the novelist as a romantic figure. He photographed handsomely, especially in profile; and, though never a dandy, he dressed well in Brooks Brothers collegiate style. During the Twenties he sometimes carried a cane, as did many young men. It was frequently remarked that Fitzgerald resembled an illustration in a collar ad.

(Brucoli 115)

From this assessment, one cannot help but wonder whether both Perkins and Fitzgerald, men who were both well aware of how to manipulate a celebrity's image from their backgrounds in advertising, knew exactly what they were doing in creating Fitzgerald's public persona. A handsome, witty Ivy Leaguer who wrote poignantly about the changing youth culture of the time was an easy sell to college men and women looking for the voice of their generation expressed in print. Also, both editor and author readily admitted in printed interviews and speaking engagements that *This Side of Paradise* was a largely autobiographical novel. These admissions encouraged legions of fans to become as intrigued by Fitzgerald's own life as that of his fictional alter ego, Amory Blaine. All of these efforts created the perfect storm of media attention that would launch Fitzgerald as America's first full-fledged literary celebrity, a man on par with movie stars.

As Fitzgerald's star continued to rise in the public consciousness, another handsome young writer struggled in relative obscurity. Bored with his job as a cub reporter for the *Kansas City Star* and longing to be a part of WWI, even though his poor eyesight kept him out of the United States Army, Hemingway joined the Red Cross as an ambulance driver in 1918. After only three months on the front lines, Hemingway was hit by a mortar blast while distributing supplies and mail to soldiers and subsequently shot in the legs during the same firefight while carrying another fallen soldier to safety (Baker 45). While Hemingway recovered from his wounds in an Italian hospital, he fell in love with his night nurse, Agnes von Kurowsky.

Unfortunately for the young Hemingway, his first love affair, which Agnes claimed was never consummated, ended after his return to the United States, when Agnes sent him a letter saying that she was going to be married to an Italian officer (Baker 59). Heartbroken and healing slowly from his severely wounded legs, which still required him to use a cane a year later, Hemingway found readjusting to civilian life difficult. After a several months of loafing, Hemingway took a job as a reporter for the *Toronto Star* newspaper. Not ready to be tied down to a regiment of deadlines, Hemingway began looking for a way to go back to Europe as a writer.

He found it in 1921, when he met his future wife, Hadley Richardson, and the writer, Sherwood Anderson (Baker 78). After only a few months of dating, Hemingway and Hadley married and planned an extended trip to Italy using the money from her trust fund. However, Sherwood Anderson, knowing Hemingway's desire to be a professional writer, suggested that they go to Paris instead (Baker 78). Swayed by his respect for Anderson's opinion as an established author, Hemingway and his new wife moved to

Paris in December 1921, armed with letters of introduction from Sherwood Anderson to the city's major literary figures.

Once in Paris, Hemingway's literary career did not begin immediately. According to biographer Carlos Baker:

He was determined to begin afresh with brand-new standards of truth and simplicity. 'All you have to do is write one true sentence,' he told himself. Write the truest sentence that you know.' It must be above all a 'true simple declarative sentence' without scrollwork or ornamental language of any sort. It must deal with something he knew from personal experience. (84)

Hemingway was at first shy and reluctant to use the letters of introduction with which Anderson had provided him. However, by March 1922, Hemingway introduced himself to Ezra Pound and Gertrude Stein, who became his most important mentors for the next five years (Baker 86). Earning money as an unknown fiction writer was difficult.

Hemingway continued his work as a foreign correspondent for the *Toronto Star* during this time, to supplement the income he and Hadley received from her trust fund so that they could travel around Europe, albeit frugally. These lean early years would later inspire Hemingway's memoir, *A Moveable Feast*, adding a much-needed sense of humility to what became the author's overblown posthumous reputation.

The first half of the 1920s was anything but frugal for Fitzgerald and his wife, Zelda. Fitzgerald followed the success of *This Side of Paradise* with dozens of stories in popular magazines, which were compiled into two collections, *Flappers and Philosophers* (1920) and *Tales of the Jazz Age* (1922), as well as a second novel in 1922, *The Beautiful and Damned*. Fitzgerald's short stories brought him a substantial income and widened his readership, but the sophomore novel did not live up to his professional aspirations as a serious writer.

Although *The Beautiful and Damned* sold well, literary critics saw it as inferior to his first book. After reading Fitzgerald's second novel, renowned critic Edmund Wilson wrote that Fitzgerald "has been given imagination without an aesthetic ideal; and he has been given a gift for expression without very many ideas to express" (qtd. in Bruccoli 161). Biographer Matthew Bruccoli claims that Wilson and other critics who did not take Fitzgerald seriously judged him harshly as "a natural but not an artist," the effect of which "damaged Fitzgerald's contemporary reputation [and] perhaps also impeded the fulfillment of his genius by depriving him of the critical respect he sought" (161). Regardless, Fitzgerald's popular appeal was strong during this time period.

Fitzgerald sold the film rights of *The Beautiful and Damned* to Warner Brothers, who released it as a silent film in 1922. Although it earned the strongest reception among early screen adaptations of his work, *The Beautiful and Damned* was not Fitzgerald's first composition to be filmed. According to *The Romantic Egoist*, a reprinted collection of Fitzgerald's personal scrapbooks edited by his daughter Scottie and scholar Matthew Bruccoli, three movies were adapted from the author's works in 1920-1921: *The Chorus Girl's Romance* ("Head and Shoulders"), *The Husband Hunter*, ("Myra Meets His Family") and *The Offshore Pirate* (74). Unfortunately, like many other silent films, all three of these early adaptations are now lost.

The only surviving silent film adapted from a Fitzgerald work is *Conductor 1492* (1924). Based upon the short story "The Camel's Back," it was released on video for the first time in 2008, and bears little resemblance to the Fitzgerald original. Nevertheless, publicity stills and advertisements from all of these films prominently display Fitzgerald's name, usually in equal billing with the director, and feature actresses who

look like twins of Zelda. These promotional materials survive as testaments to the commitment of publicists to link Fitzgerald's personal life with visual images of his work in the public consciousness from the very beginning of his career.

During March 1922, Fitzgerald began work in screenwriting for the first time under the supervision of then up-and-coming producer David O. Selznick (Brucoli 165). Quickly seduced by the \$2,500 earned for writing the screen story of "Trans-Continental Kitty," Fitzgerald viewed movies as a way to make easy money from that point onward (Brucoli 165-166). However, Fitzgerald's gift for witty description and dialogue did not translate well onto the silent screen, and most of his early screenwriting work never culminated in a finished film release.

Still, Fitzgerald's belief in the potential economic security of screenwriting was perhaps the simplest explanation for his decreased literary output during his later career in the 1930s. Beyond financial reasons, Fitzgerald's reliance on screenwriting, in addition to continuous efforts at publication in popular magazines throughout his career, may be read as a conscious effort to retreat into the psychological safety of popular entertainment. By appealing to a mass audience, Fitzgerald could gather the mental strength and confidence necessary to face serious literary critics, who sought to eviscerate his literary writing as the unimportant product of a deliberately un-intellectual wunderkind.

Perhaps due to a round of disparaging commentary from literary critics, the decision was made to shift the focus of Fitzgerald's publicity to highlight his life rather than his work. The earliest attempt to construct Fitzgerald and his wife Zelda as models embodying the lifestyle brand of 1920s flapper culture was an article that ran in *Motor*

magazine in 1920, titled “The Cruise of the Rolling Junk” (Brucoli and Smith 73). This article chronicles the first journey taken by Fitzgerald and Zelda after their marriage to visit Zelda’s parents in Montgomery.

Photos accompanying the article depict the spunky newlyweds as dapper, slapstick precursors to Bonnie and Clyde. The largest picture showed Fitzgerald and Zelda leaning casually out the window of their second-hand car, smiling as if they were inviting readers to hop in the back seat and come along for the ride. Written by Fitzgerald himself, the text of the article could have been lifted from one of the humorous passages in his early novels. Typical of magazine pieces written by and about Fitzgerald during his early career, the overall effect of the article leaves the impression that Fitzgerald’s fictional writing was merely a slightly adapted chronicle of his actual life and that readers were made to feel like welcome participants in the ongoing story of his life with Zelda.

Examination of these articles provides important information about the role Fitzgerald’s early publicity played in the construction of his image as the foremost authority on youth culture in the 1920s. The title of Fitzgerald’s second collection of short stories, *Tales of the Jazz Age*, gave the era a moniker that it would carry forevermore. The term described the hedonistic lifestyles led by the flappers and sheiks described in Fitzgerald’s prose. In numerous non-fiction articles during the early 1920s, both Fitzgerald and his wife, Zelda, offered social commentary about the flapper culture which they both ironically perpetuated and to a certain degree derided.

As early as 1922, in her editorial “Eulogy on the Flapper” for *Metropolitan* magazine, Zelda Fitzgerald declared the personality type dead (Brucoli and Smith 78). Zelda’s editorial was surprisingly insightful, suggesting that her usually flippant attitude

may have been merely a social performance. In the editorial, Zelda distinguished between original flappers, such as herself, whom she claimed to have been socially innovative, and the later second-phase flappers whom she said were merely “striving to do what is pleasant and what they please...to outdo everything. Flapperdom has become a game; it is no longer a philosophy” (qtd. in Brucoli and Smith 78). Despite similar efforts by both Fitzgeralds in later articles to disassociate themselves with the flapper stereotype, the public saw no distinction. As a result, the flapper persona simultaneously plagued and promoted both Zelda and Scott Fitzgerald for the rest of their personal and professional lives.

Perhaps the reason for the persistent association of the Fitzgeralds with flapper culture was that the pair sent mixed messages to the public about their connection to the phenomenon. While in articles such as the one mentioned above, Fitzgerald and Zelda denounced the movement as past its prime, they continued to behave in ways consistent with the stereotype. The couple was frequently photographed engaging in social activities that usually involved then-prohibited alcohol. Also, Fitzgerald persistently produced stories about these escapades that he continuously claimed as semi-autobiographical. This combination of fictional and non-fictional chronicles linking the Fitzgeralds to jazz age culture permanently linked them to the era.

Scandal sells, and during the 1920s the globetrotting Fitzgeralds were frequently short of money. Little wonder, then, that when popular magazines sought out the Fitzgeralds for promotional interviews about flapper culture, they seemed only too happy to oblige. According to Fitzgerald biographer Matthew Brucoli, “because Fitzgerald was regarded as a spokesman for his generation, he was asked to write articles about love,

marriage, and sex” (188). The titles for these articles spoke to the fluffy nature of their content. Examples of such pieces produced by Fitzgerald in 1924 include, “Why Blame It on the Poor Kiss if the Girl Veteran of Many Petting Parties is Prone to Affairs After Marriage?” and “Does a Moment of Revolt Come Sometime to Every Married Man?” The second piece came with a companion article by Zelda, a format that was repeated in many of these magazine advice column pieces produced by the Fitzgeralds at the time (Brucoli 188). Though they must have realized the potentially detrimental long-term effects that the connection to a fleeting social fad would have on Fitzgerald’s career as a serious literary writer, it was a risk the pair seemed willing to take in order to finance their lavish lifestyle in the short term.

In hindsight, this sort of engagement was not a completely unsound means of promoting the reputation of F. Scott Fitzgerald as a specific brand, even though that brand’s shelf life was certainly limited. A talented, handsome Ivy League-educated rebel who threw away his advantages in life so carelessly cut a tragically romantic and appealing public figure. Also, reviewers seemed eager to moralize against Fitzgerald’s work, which only served as a way to promote it to young people seeking a voice to guide their cultural rebellion. This phenomenon was evidenced by the title of one review for *The Beautiful and Damned* which proclaimed, “Fitzgerald’s Latest Not For All Palates...a story of deterioration, brilliantly written” (qtd. in Brucoli and Smith 96). Still, the chronicle of Fitzgerald’s dissipation, both financial and emotional, at the peak of his popularity in the 1920s, was based in genuine fact, not contrivance.

In April 1924, Fitzgerald wrote a humorous non-fiction article for the *Saturday Evening Post* titled “How to Live on \$36,000 a Year.” The article told how Fitzgerald

and Zelda squandered this amount of money, the equivalent of \$250,000 in today's purchasing power. It caused a sensation among Fitzgerald's detractors, who pointed to him as an example of a wasteful youth culture that would lead to the downfall of the American economy. As biographer Matthew Bruccoli notes, this "cycle of extravagance kept Fitzgerald in bondage to magazines. It seemed he could always write another story, and his story price kept going up. Writing stories provided Fitzgerald with no satisfaction and generated guilt because he knew his chance for greatness depended on novels" (189). This cycle of spending in anticipation of future income was already beginning to take its toll on Fitzgerald even as he wrote this gallows humor account of his financial situation. In the month that "How to Live on \$36,000 a Year" was published, Fitzgerald made the decision to move to Paris, so that he and Zelda could live more cheaply as expatriates while he tried to gain control of his finances and to write the novel that he hoped would make his name at last as a writer of serious literary fiction.

Sadly enough, the book that Fitzgerald would complete while in France would accomplish only one of these two goals. *The Great Gatsby* was published in April 1925 to the best reviews of Fitzgerald's career; however, the book did not make money. After selling out its initial printing of 20,870 copies at \$2 each, most of the 3,000 copies produced in the second printing "were still in Scribners' warehouse when Fitzgerald died. At a 15 percent royalty, the first printing earned \$6,261, canceling Fitzgerald's \$6,000 debt to Scribners" (Bruccoli 217). Although the book put him barely back in the black, Fitzgerald's letter to editor Maxwell Perkins expressed his depression at the popular failure of the novel for which he had such high hopes:

In all events I have a book of good stories for the fall. Now I shall write cheap ones until I've accumulated enough for my next novel. If it will support me with no more intervals of trash I'll go on as a novelist. If not, I'm going to quit, come home, go to Hollywood and learn the movie business. I can't reduce our scale of living and I can't stand this financial insecurity. Anyhow there's no point in trying to be an artist if you can't do your best. I had my chance back in 1920 to start my life on a sensible scale and I lost it and so I'll have to pay the penalty. Then perhaps at 40 I can start writing again without this constant worry and interruption. (qtd. in Bruccoli 217)

Once again, Fitzgerald appeared to have a sixth sense about the path his life would take. When sales of *The Great Gatsby* did not pick up, Fitzgerald produced a new volume of short stories in 1926. The collection, appropriately titled *All the Sad Young Men*, sold at the high rate to which Fitzgerald was accustomed, cementing in his mind the impression that he was doomed to work only for money in the popular markets, rather than attaining a reputation as a serious novelist. Perhaps even more prophetically, the first film version of *The Great Gatsby*, produced after Fitzgerald sold the rights to Paramount for only \$2,500, was one of the most successful films of 1926 (Bruccoli and Smith 138-139). All of these circumstances combined to convince Fitzgerald that his future as a writer depended on his ability to succeed in the movie business. As a result, the disappointed Fitzgerald, a has-been at the age of thirty, became trapped in the consuming ouroboric cycle of literary fame even before he moved to Hollywood to try screenwriting for the first time in January 1927.

As Fitzgerald's first flush of literary fame began to fade, Ernest Hemingway's career as a fiction writer was beginning to take off. By October 1924, Fitzgerald had read Hemingway's two earliest collections, *Three Stories and Ten Poems* and *in our time*, which then had only been produced in small quantities by the lesser known publisher,

Boni & Liveright. Impressed with Hemingway, Fitzgerald wrote to his editor Maxwell

Perkins about his new discovery in France on October 10, 1924:

This is to tell you about a young man named Ernest Hemingway, who lives in Paris, (an American) writes for the *transatlantic* Review and has a brilliant future. Ezra Pound published a collection of his short pieces in Paris, at some place like the Egotist Press. I haven't it here now but it's remarkable & I'd look him up right away. He's the real thing. (qtd. in Brucoli and Smith 129)

Ever on the lookout for new talent, Perkins followed up on Fitzgerald's advice and contacted Hemingway about the possibility of publishing his future material. After a meeting in New York, the two men hit it off immediately, resulting in a contract for American republication of *in our time* and also Hemingway's first novel of wide publication, *The Sun Also Rises* (1926).

The timing of Fitzgerald's recommendation could not have been better for Hemingway. Despite the fact that Hemingway lived far more frugally than Fitzgerald, by 1924 Hemingway was in poor financial condition. Hemingway's wife, Hadley, had made a bad investment that resulted in the loss of half her trust fund, which at the time provided the Hemingways with their primary source of income. (Baker 124). Friends of the couple were troubled by the fact that Hemingway was constantly paranoid about losing money and "was making his wife live an unnecessarily poverty-stricken life in well-worn clothes and a dingy flat" (Baker 124). In short, by 1925 Hemingway was desperate to find someone who could change his life.

Hemingway and Fitzgerald met in person for the first time in May 1925 at the Dingo Bar in Paris. Accounts of the meeting claim that Fitzgerald was enthusiastic about meeting Hemingway. However, Hemingway initially "could not make up his mind about Fitzgerald," mostly because he felt embarrassed that the more successful Fitzgerald

praised him too loudly upon first seeing him and then shortly thereafter became very drunk on champagne and passed out. (Baker 145-46). After Fitzgerald recovered several days later, Hemingway's initial suspicions about Fitzgerald subsided enough to allow him to accompany Fitzgerald to Lyon to pick up a car (Baker 146). On the trip, the two men spoke about their literary pursuits. Fitzgerald invited Hemingway to read *The Great Gatsby*, which Fitzgerald was then finishing up to send off to Maxwell Perkins in New York. According to biographer Carlos Baker, Hemingway "read *The Great Gatsby* with admiration, and wrote Max Perkins that it was an absolutely first-rate book" (146). In return, Hemingway offered Fitzgerald the opportunity to be the first person to read his working draft of *The Sun Also Rises*. Fitzgerald "said that it was an excellent book" although "he recommended a number of internal cuts in the opening chapters" to which Hemingway agreed. Ultimately, "the first fifteen pages of the manuscript – the whole biography of Brett Ashley and Mike Campbell and the autobiography of the narrator Jake Barnes" were cut (Baker 170). This period of collaboration forged the volatile friendship between Fitzgerald and Hemingway.

While Fitzgerald languished in the paradox of *The Great Gatsby*'s critical success and commercial failure, Hemingway enjoyed his first rush of fame with *The Sun Also Rises*. However, from the very beginning of his career, Hemingway seemed wary of becoming a literary celebrity like Fitzgerald. Leonard Leff describes the relationship between the writers as strained because of Hemingway's distaste for Fitzgerald's lifestyle, saying:

Hemingway saw Fitzgerald as a mentor; following his tips, he had reworked the openings of both *The Sun Also Rises* and "Fifty Grand," the boxing story that the *Saturday Evening Post*, *Liberty*, and *Collier's* had praised and rejected. The

longer he knew Scott, though, the more Hemingway doubted and finally mistrusted him. His European travels and free spending on cars and liquor suggested a bottomless wealth that, Hemingway later discovered, Scott did not have. Fitzgerald was self-destructive even in his work: he wrote good fiction, then added the bumps and twists that made it saleable. It was whoring, Hemingway later wrote in *A Moveable Feast*. Unintentionally, Perkins had countenanced it. (64)

Hemingway was also disturbed by Fitzgerald's persistent willingness to invite the public in to his family life. Although all four of Hemingway's wives were writers, their work never appeared in paired editorial articles as Fitzgerald's and Zelda's did. This absence is perhaps due to the personalities of Hemingway's wives. In response to the storm of publicity advertizing her husband as not only a great writer, but also as model of behavior for manly men, Hemingway's second wife Pauline wrote to him:

I don't mind reading about Hemingway the writer, or Hemingway the expatriot, or Hemingway the bull-fighter, or Hemingway the satirist, or Hemingway the punctured balloon, or Hemingway the man, or even Hemingway the artist. But I WON'T read – can't read – about Hemingway the legendary character. At least not unless he is in the same room. (qtd. in Leff 63)

However, Pauline's plea was in vain. Although Hemingway begged Maxwell Perkins to slow down the avalanche of media attention to his personal life, the advertising executive-turned-editor knew a good story when he saw it, and Hemingway as a character made a very good story. Even though by 1925 Maxwell Perkins openly acknowledged in a letter to Hemingway that "Fitzgerald's personal reputation had injured his books and given him, an altogether frivolous look in the eyes of the trade and the public," Perkins believed that he could assist Hemingway in the construction of a more controlled public image that would advertise both the man and his work in a way that would maintain his literary respectability (Leff 62).

This belief began the construction of Hemingway as a public figure, a fictitious character who suffered from an extreme case of multiple personality disorder. Greatly exaggerated accounts of Hemingway's military service, his prowess as a sportsman, and his affinity for bullfighting were published alongside stories about his dedication to the writing craft. The additional intrigue of Hemingway's highly publicized divorce from his first wife, Hadley, and quick remarriage to second wife Pauline during the first run of publicity on *The Sun Also Rises* added another dimension to his already complicated public image: Hemingway the great lover. Hemingway quickly replaced Fitzgerald in the ouroboric cycle of literary fame, as the sort of Renaissance man whom college boys wanted to be and college girls wanted to fall in love with.

Letters from Hemingway's fans and friends at this time reflected this trend. According to Leonard Leff, scores of young women wrote to Hemingway about their fascination with *The Sun Also Rises*, which they assumed to be a true account of his "vivid and interesting" life, and asked, "Would he please send them a picture of himself?" (qtd. in Leff 62). Amused and flattered but somewhat embarrassed by the attention, Hemingway wrote to Scribners requesting "pictures of aged New England gentlemen that he could autograph and send to his fans" (Leff 63). This incident can be viewed as Hemingway's first assumption of the Papa persona in public. As a young married father, Hemingway enjoyed the attention from female fans; however, he attempted to maintain a certain degree of emotional distance from them.

Nevertheless, Malcolm Cowley wrote to Hemingway that young women at Smith College were "modeling themselves after Lady Brett" Ashley, the female lead of *The Sun Also Rises*, and that "hundreds of bright young men from the Middle West are trying to

be Hemingway heroes, talking in tough understatement from the sides of their mouths” (qtd. in Leff 63). This mimicking of Hemingway’s characters’ behavior and appearance is not surprising, and is the strongest support for the idea of Hemingway’s fame as an ouroboric cycle.

The character of Lady Brett Ashley was based on Hemingway’s acquaintance with Lady Duff Twysden, with whom he had attended bullfights in Spain. Hemingway’s characterization of Robert Cohn in the book was based on Harold Loeb, a man whom Hemingway disdained because of his fawning over Lady Twysden. The castrated Jake Barnes from *The Sun Also Rises* was most often read as an alter-ego of Hemingway, who might have felt constructively castrated by his marriage and was subsequently never able to satisfy his fascination with Lady Twysden sexually. Throughout his career, Hemingway repeated this pattern of drawing characters from his real life and including much of himself in one character, usually the hero of the piece. In return, Hemingway fans would imitate his imitations of these people, reinforcing and expanding the Hemingway legend, which then circled back around to begin the process again, as Hemingway produced more works in conformity with these ideas.

The first repetition of this pattern came with Hemingway’s second novel, *A Farewell to Arms* (1929). In this book, Hemingway cast the hero, Frederic Henry, as a man very similar to himself. Henry, an American ambulance driver in Italy during World War One, is injured and subsequently falls in love with his night nurse, Catherine Barkley. In most accounts of Hemingway’s construction of the narrative, Agnes von Kurowsky, Hemingway’s own unrequited love, was the inspiration for Barkley. Based on Kurowsky’s account of their relationship, one could assume that here again in his second

novel, Hemingway was working through the sexual frustration of not consummating an affair with a woman whom he desired. The added peril of Catherine Barkley's deadly pregnancy in the book was largely assumed to be the result of Hemingway's anxiety during the birth of the first child with his second wife, Pauline, who had a very difficult delivery. These two novels, combined with the rave reviews and wide publication of an additional volume of short stories during this time period, *Men Without Women* (1927), made Hemingway a well-known literary personality by the end of the 1920s.

A more savvy businessman than Fitzgerald, Hemingway was eager to cash in by selling the film and stage rights to his works; however, he was well aware of his ability to hold out for a premium price. Hemingway told Maxwell Perkins that Scribners should request \$30,000 for the film rights to *The Sun Also Rises*, with the special direction that he would "take whatever you can get in *cash*" (Leff 64). Hemingway wanted the money in cash for two reasons. First, he wanted to leave his first wife Hadley with a very generous divorce settlement and had already assigned future publication proceeds from the novel to her. Second, and more significantly, Hemingway's request for cash in hand demonstrated his distrust for the film industry, which he regarded as a fickle business.

Hemingway's inclination toward waiting and demanding money in hand was wise. Taking Fitzgerald's advice on selecting an agent to shop his film rights, Hemingway chose Paul Reynolds, the agent Fitzgerald used for *The Great Gatsby* (Leff 77). However, the advent of sound greatly increased the value of writers known for their dialogue in just the few short years between the time that Fitzgerald hastily sold his rights and Hemingway patiently brokered his own. Film rights for *The Sun Also Rises* and *A Farewell to Arms* brought over \$30,000 each, and short stories such as "The Killers"

commanded over \$10,000 (Leff 64). At that time, the success of these deals made Hemingway the most highly compensated writer in the history of works adapted for film.

Although film adaptation deals proved very lucrative for Hemingway, he was not seduced by the allure of easy money in screenwriting as Fitzgerald had been. Still, Fitzgerald was right in his advice to Hemingway that no book-to-movie deal ever took off in the public consciousness without a scandal (Leff 65). The scandal surrounding Hemingway's early adaptations on film centered on his use of foul language, which offended film censors. Words such as "cocksucker," "shit," "whorehound," and "son of a bitch" in the first drafts of *A Farewell to Arms* not only made editor Maxwell Perkins cringe at the thought of the publication censorship struggle that lay ahead of him, but they also presented Perkins with a great possibility for publicity about Hemingway (Leff 92). Perkins highly publicized his negotiations with Hemingway about the use of socially unacceptable language and highly sexualized themes, throughout both the novel editing and film production processes.

As a result, even though all of his works commanded high selling prices for adaptations, only *A Farewell to Arms* was distilled into a film that was considered acceptable enough to appease the censors. After the 1932 release of *A Farewell to Arms* by Paramount, no new Hemingway film adaptations appeared for the next twelve years. Regardless, the commercial success of Paramount's adaptation of *A Farewell to Arms* made Hemingway's works coveted in Hollywood as sellable properties that retained a desirably dangerous marketing edge.

Unlike his early anxiety at the possibility of becoming an idol for the college set, like Fitzgerald, Hemingway seemed to revel in the idea of media portrayal as a man of

adventure. Oftentimes, Hemingway would hear wildly fantastical stories about his exploits and, rather than contradicting them, would counter in the press with other equally untrue accounts of his own. In all likelihood, Hemingway knew that such scandal and speculation boosted sales. The infamous skylight incident of March 1927 is one example of this phenomenon. After returning home late one night drunk, Hemingway accidentally pulled the cord for the skylight instead of the toilet chain in the bathroom. When the broken skylight came crashing down on him, it left a huge horseshoe-shaped gash on his forehead that required nine stitches. The accident was reported in a wire-service story that ran in newspapers all over the world, causing Ezra Pound to wire Hemingway back with the also often-reprinted response, “‘How the hellsufferin’ tomcats did you get drunk enough to fall upwards thru the blithering skylight!!!!!!” (qtd. in Leff 80). Maxwell Perkins, never one to allow a marketing opportunity to pass him by, quickly requested new photos of Hemingway to accompany the story.

Hemingway responded by sending a photo of himself turbaned in an comically large head bandage as he stood propped jauntily against the front of Sylvia Beach’s Shakespeare & Co. bookstore wearing a new three-piece suit (rpt. in Bruccoli and Smith 129). In the photo, Beach is gawking at Hemingway in exactly the same way that his audience would after they saw the photo which circulated through newswire services. Wanting better photos of the author, an exasperated Perkins contacted Hemingway’s wife, Pauline, who encouraged Ernest to sit for a series of professional photographs. These photos depict a more appropriately attired Hemingway, dressed in open-collared shirts and fisherman’s sweaters. Perkins circulated these pictures widely in an effort to convey the idea that Hemingway was not only a sophisticated man of letters who could

appeal to a female audience, but also an accessible fellow sportsman for men who wanted to identify with him. In all of these photographs, Perkins had the scar from the skylight incident retouched (Leff 81). Both Hemingway's madcap, self-staged, candid photo and Perkins and Pauline's carefully planned ones contributed to the overall creation of the author as a complex, fascinating character.

While Hemingway's career as a public writer took off, Fitzgerald was not doing as well as he had hoped in Hollywood. Painfully aware that he squandered his early success, Fitzgerald wrote, in a voice that showed his literary maturity, tragically learned too late:

The compensation of a very early success is a conviction that life is a romantic matter. In the best sense one stays young. When the primary objects of love and money could be taken for granted...when the fulfilled future and the wistful past were mingled in a single gorgeous moment – when life was literally a dream.”
(qtd. in Bruccoli and Smith 145)

From this passage, it might be derived that Fitzgerald had already given up on his career as a serious writer by the time he reached Hollywood. Whatever his feelings of personal remorse might have been, Fitzgerald threw himself into his work during his first screenwriting contract.

In 1927, United Artists signed Fitzgerald on as a staff screenwriter to produce a new vehicle, titled *Lipstick*, for ingénue Constance Talmadge's film debut. A gossip column piece by Allene Talmey explained the expectations for Fitzgerald when he went to Hollywood:

As blondes, ash, yellow, or brass, have been the heroines of Mr. Fitzgerald's tales ever since he came up on the crest of the younger generation in *This Side of Paradise*, he will be set immediately to fashion one of his blonde, reckless, willful and irresponsible girls for Constance Talmadge to use as background for her sparkle. He will go not to Hollywood not to adapt any of his published pieces but

to work out originals. When *This Side of Paradise* arrived with its message that college wasn't the same as when Stover went to Yale, Famous Players-Lasky bought it, and then after reading it decided that, unfortunately, their purchase was not movie material. When his next book appeared Warner's rushed out, bought *The Beautiful and Damned*, and made it into a handsome movie with Marie Prevost to swank around as Gloria. Last summer Herbert Brenon, for Paramount, developed Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* into a movie.

(qtd. in Bruccoli and Smith 147)

In this excerpt, it is easy to see that popular opinion in Hollywood had already pigeonholed Fitzgerald even before his arrival. *This Side of Paradise*, Fitzgerald's deeply personal bildungsroman about his fictional alter-ego, Amory Blaine, was bought and then hastily cast aside as not suitable for film. This quick dismissal of Fitzgerald's first novel mirrored the author's treatment as a sensational flash in the pan by Hollywood executives looking to cash in on the lucrative college-aged market without regard for the subtle nuances in Fitzgerald's work.

This view is further supported by the characterization of Warner Brothers' adaptation of *The Beautiful and Damned*, not as dual modern tragedy of a young couple, who enjoyed too much of life too soon, but instead as a superficial flick for Marie Prevost to "swank around in." For the second time with *The Beautiful and Damned*, Fitzgerald saw the details drawn so carefully from his life with Zelda into his fiction rendered completely meaningless on screen. The final blow must have come with Paramount's first adaptation of *The Great Gatsby* (1926). Although the film does not survive today, the trailer and promotional materials suggest that its focus was once again on the female heroine, Daisy Buchanan, played by Lois Wilson, and her wild-partying exploits, instead of Gatsby's tragic personal story.

Fitzgerald tended to regard *The Great Gatsby* as his masterpiece, both because it represented the culmination of his evolving fiction-writing style and because it depicted his own deepest personal insecurity, that no matter how successful he might become, he would always be a sham with only a tenuous hold on the social respectability he craved. After seeing this book so reduced on screen, Fitzgerald remarked, “This is no art. This is an industry” and set to work learning his new trade (Phillips 27). After the initial rush of interest in Fitzgerald adaptations accompanying his personal fame in the 1920s, no new film versions of his work appeared until 1949, when Paramount released a new version of *The Great Gatsby*. Unfortunately, Fitzgerald never lived to see this later version of his favorite work. By the time the second adaptation of *Gatsby* was made, Fitzgerald had been dead for almost a decade.

Adding insult to injury was the fact that this screenwriting work, which Fitzgerald held in much contempt, most often did not even carry his name. Ironically, Fitzgerald was never invited to participate in the adaptation of his early flapper stories for film, even though the promotional materials routinely featured his name. Instead, Fitzgerald became the man of choice in Hollywood for writing witty women’s dialogue. After *Lipstick* (1927) failed to result in a finished production, Fitzgerald’s first trip to Hollywood ended. Later, Fitzgerald was selected as the primary writer on *Red-Headed Woman* (1931), a Jean Harlow vehicle that never came to the screen. After this second excursion in Hollywood under contract to MGM ended in disappointment, Fitzgerald did not return to Hollywood again until 1937 when he worked on dialog for *A Yank at Oxford* (1937) but received no screen credit. Determined to finally see his screen work and his name together, Fitzgerald insisted upon, and received, his only screen credit for an adaptation

of Erich Maria Remarque's *Three Comrades* (1938), produced during his third tour of duty in Hollywood from 1937 until his death in 1940.

However, this small victory did not come without a fight. The studio constantly argued with Fitzgerald during the writing process over adding co-writers who threatened to push his name off the marquee. After finishing the screenplay for *Three Comrades*, Fitzgerald wrote to his friend Harold Ober, "a good deal of the glow of Hollywood has worn off for me, but I would as soon be here as anywhere else. After forty, one's surroundings don't matter so much" (qtd. in Phillips 27). The defeatist tone of Fitzgerald's letter predicted the remainder of his tenure in Hollywood. Over the next two years, Fitzgerald would co-write five additional screenplays, *Infidelity*, *The Women*, *Gone With the Wind*, *Winter Carnival*, and *Raffles*, all under paid studio contract, without ever receiving another screen credit.

Although Fitzgerald's work in Hollywood did virtually nothing to enhance his public reputation as an author, the print work he produced during this time did enjoy a significant readership. Fitzgerald continued to find ample work as a writer of short fiction for magazines such as the *Saturday Evening Post* and *Esquire*, but became bitter about it. This bitterness was further reflected in Fitzgerald's self-deprecating, semi-autobiographical stories about hack screenwriter Pat Hobby, also produced during this time.

Writing to Hemingway in 1929, Fitzgerald attempted to defend his slow progress on his next novel, *Tender is the Night* (1934), with the assertion that he was at least making money, saying, "Here's a last flicker of the old cheap pride – the *Post* now pays the old whore \$4,000 a screw. But now it's because she's mastered the 40 positions – in

her youth one was enough” (qtd. in Brucoli 281). Hemingway tried to offer Fitzgerald tough love and encouragement in his reply, writing back:

Oh, Hell. You have more stuff than anyone and you care more about it and for Christ sake just keep on and go through with it now and don't please write anything else until its finished... The stories aren't whoring, they're just bad judgment – You could have and can make enough to live on just writing novels.
(qtd. in Brucoli 282)

Despite the urgings of his friend, Fitzgerald's progress on *Tender is the Night* was slow, chiefly due to two reasons beyond his control.

First, Zelda's mental health continued to worsen, requiring increasingly expensive mental care at various facilities in Europe and America. After her attempt to launch a professional ballet career too late in life ended in disappointment, Zelda suffered the first of many nervous breakdowns in fall 1929 (Brucoli and Smith 172). After several months of rest trips that he had hoped would help Zelda proved unsuccessful, Fitzgerald secured the best, and most expensive, treatment that money could buy for her at the Prangins clinic in Switzerland, beginning in April 1930 (Brucoli 290). Although her mental health would improve for a short time, Zelda remained unstable and she required continued rounds of hospitalization for the rest of her life.

Worry over his wife and the strain her medical treatment put on their finances forced an already borderline alcoholic Fitzgerald into a severe drinking problem, leaving him exhausted and unable to write. Fitzgerald became trapped in an ouroboric cycle of concern over Zelda, which led to more drinking, followed by less writing, resulting in less money and progressively more worry. Even if Fitzgerald had been able to create at top form, it is likely that the stock market Crash of 1929 reduced the market of readers interested in novels about lives of rich excess. As Brucoli characterizes the situation,

“with his capacity for becoming identified with the moods of his times, Fitzgerald came to symbolize the excesses of the boom decade. The Twenties had spoiled and rewarded him. The Thirties would disparage him” (286). As a result, when Fitzgerald finally completed *Tender is the Night* in 1934, and followed it with a collection of short stories, *Taps at Reveille* (1935), sales were steady, but nowhere close to the levels set by his earlier work. To observers of the literary celebrity cycle, Fitzgerald’s era had ended.

Surprisingly, the tabloid press was kind to Fitzgerald and Zelda during this time. Most likely, this kindness was due to a series of self-deprecating personal magazine essays that Fitzgerald produced during the middle to late 1930s, which were later collected into *The Crack-Up* (1945) by editor Edmund Wilson. The title essay of this collection, “The Crack-Up,” was originally published in 1936 as the first installment in a three-part series appearing in the February, March, and April issues of *Esquire*. In this initial essay, Fitzgerald blends the two sides of his persona as a public writer. On one hand, “The Crack-Up” is an excellently written piece of creative non-fiction, recalling the confessional style of the Romantic poets whom Fitzgerald had admired and copied since his college days at Princeton. On the other hand, the essay is a tragic lament on the destructive cycle of literary celebrity, the first of its kind.

Fitzgerald demonstrates awareness of his unique cultural position as a public writer early in “The Crack-Up,” saying:

It seemed a romantic business to be a successful literary man – you were not ever going to be as famous as a movie star but what note you had was probably longer-lived – you were never going to have the power of a man of strong political or religious convictions, but you were certainly more independent. Of course within the practice of your trade you were forever unsatisfied – but I, for one, would not have chosen any other...Life, ten years ago, was largely a personal matter. I must

hold in balance the sense of futility of effort and the sense of the necessity to struggle; the conviction of the inevitability of failure and still the determination to succeed. (70)

In this passage, Fitzgerald identified the perks and pitfalls of his literary celebrity. By describing the writer's life as a romantic concern and comparing his notoriety to that of movie stars, Fitzgerald suggested that, as a young man, he thought of his life as if he were a character in a movie. While playing out the public role of a dashing young author, Fitzgerald was a guide of public opinion, with himself as a lifestyle model. However, Fitzgerald also acknowledged that this real-life Method acting, in which a public writer tried to hold on to his genuine creative self while simultaneously cultivating a public image, eventually became an unwinnable struggle.

The image that Fitzgerald used to describe himself after succumbing to the emotional stress of this struggle for selfhood was the cracked plate, from which the essay derived its name. In "Pasting It Together," the second essay of his 1936 *Esquire* series included in *The Crack-Up* collection, Fitzgerald compared his recovery to a state of marginal functionality after the mental breakdown that he suffered in the 1930s and chronicled in the first essay. The extended metaphor of the cracked plate that he used to describe his post-breakdown status as a public writer was quite vivid and profound when considered in the context of ouroboric literary celebrity life cycles. Explaining the motif, Fitzgerald wrote:

Sometimes, the cracked plate has to be retained in the pantry, has to be kept in service as a household necessity. It can never again be warmed on the stove nor shuffled with other plates in the dishpan; it will not be brought out for company, but it will do to hold crackers late at night or go into the ice box under leftovers.

(75)

By the late 1930s, Fitzgerald had become the cracked plate of literary America. Shuffled out of the spotlight he once enjoyed as an up-and-coming literary talent, Fitzgerald considered himself fit only to hold the cracker crumbs and leftovers of the entertainment world, polishing scripts of unimportant films for other screenwriters. Magazine publications, always his standby outlet for creative fiction, served Fitzgerald during this time period as a forum for chronicling what he believed to be his descent into obscurity.

In a way, Fitzgerald's essays in *The Crack-Up* may be read today as precursors to reality television shows like *Celebrity Rehab*. These television shows offer viewers the catharsis of seeing how celebrities' lives often lose their appeal, as they squander early wealth and fame. The suggestion implied by these life-dissipation reality shows is that celebrity status is ephemeral, and the general public is better off not suffering through the stressful gains and catastrophic losses that the roller-coaster lives of the rich and famous often entail.

During the 1930s, Fitzgerald's first generation of readers, the former flappers and college boy sheiks, moved into middle age during the Great Depression. Generally, the middle years of life are considered less exciting than those of their youth. However, the extreme financial hardships of the Depression exacerbated the natural emotional traumas expected from this transition. Fitzgerald's decision to place this series of articles, chronicling his descent into despair and subsequent semi-recovery, in *Esquire* is particularly telling. By putting his own troubles on display for other well-to-do men to read, Fitzgerald might be read as making a play for sympathy from other men who, like himself, had once been financially and emotionally secure, but recently had suffered reversals of fortune. Out of this sympathy, Fitzgerald may have hoped that his readers

would remember his glory days along with their own, incorporating early impressions of his life and work into their own personal mythologies and thus preserving his preferred public image for future generations.

If this was Fitzgerald's strategy to preserve his literary legacy, it worked. The last novel that Fitzgerald completed during his lifetime, *Tender is the Night* (1934), sold respectably for a Depression-era title, but did not enjoy the success of his earlier works. However, as with *The Great Gatsby*, it did not immediately cement a place for Fitzgerald in the American canon as he had hoped. John O'Hara, a friend of Fitzgerald's, perhaps summed up the situation best, saying:

The book came out at precisely the wrong time in national history. No matter how good it was, it was about the Bad People, the well-fed, well educated, well born – the villains of the Depression...it was a time for Steinbeck and the imitators of Steinbeck...I am proud to say that I did not go along with the gutless thinking that all but destroyed *Tender is the Night* and without a doubt broke Fitzgerald's heart.
(qtd. in Brucoli 363)

With the disastrous critical reception of his last completed novel, one might suspect that Fitzgerald's descent into literary obscurity would have been assured. However, perhaps because of his pleas to be remembered, both in public magazine editorials and in private letters to friends, Fitzgerald may have saved his postmortem literary reputation. After his death from a heart attack in 1940, the public that Fitzgerald had worked so hard to cultivate finally came to rescue the literary pied piper from cultural obscurity. Thus, with *The Last Tycoon*, Fitzgerald's identity as a writer merged with that of Perkins, making one entity of the author and the publisher who had created his public persona.

The Fitzgerald revival began with his closest acquaintances and over the ensuing decades became a widespread cultural phenomenon. Almost immediately after

Fitzgerald's death on December 21, 1940, Maxwell Perkins began trying to find a way to publish Fitzgerald's final novel, *The Last Tycoon* (1941). Perkins solicited the help of Budd Schulberg, John O'Hara, and even Ernest Hemingway, all of whom declined because they believed that Fitzgerald's work was too unique to reproduce (Brucoli 489). Ultimately, Perkins edited Fitzgerald's working notes himself and published the book as an unfinished novel.

Also, in one of many ironic twists of fate during Fitzgerald's antagonistic relationship with the motion picture industry, new adaptations of his works began appearing steadily in the decades after his death. A remake of *The Great Gatsby* (1949) came first, starring Alan Ladd. The Ladd *Gatsby*, although considered the best *Gatsby* adaptation by some scholars, nevertheless succumbed to the pressures of conforming to the expectations of a Hollywood gangster genre film, rather than reflecting the deeper meanings within Fitzgerald's original text.

An adaptation of Fitzgerald's short story "Babylon Revisited" came next, under the title *The Last Time I Saw Paris* (1954). This adaptation represented a turning point in films based upon Fitzgerald's works. In 1940, Fitzgerald, under extreme financial pressure, wrote a screenplay that turned "Babylon Revisited" into a childish star vehicle for Shirley Temple. However, Temple never made the film, which Fitzgerald had re-titled *Cosmopolitan* in his screenplay. Whereas Fitzgerald might have been content to sell out his most poignantly autobiographical short story for quick cash, the makers of *The Last Time I Saw Paris* expected more. The film, starring a young Elizabeth Taylor, is well-made and represents the first time that a film adaptation attempted to capture onscreen the emotional depth and complexity of an original Fitzgerald work.

From 1954 onward, most filmmakers have worked diligently not only to preserve, enhance, and update the central themes of Fitzgerald's works on film, but also to cultivate the conception of Fitzgerald as a tragically heroic literary figure who became one of American celebrity culture's first victims. Feature films such as Henry King's *Beloved Infidel* (1959) and *Tender is the Night* (1962), Jack Clayton's *The Great Gatsby* (1974) and Elia Kazan's *The Last Tycoon* (1977) encouraged a Fitzgerald revival in the 1970s and 1980s, which in turn inspired several high quality television adaptations, including *The Last of the Belles* (1974), *Bernice Bobs Her Hair* (1976), and *Under the Biltmore Clock* (1986). Also during these decades, *The Great Gatsby*, as well as many of Fitzgerald's short stories, became staples in the high school literature classroom, ensuring his literary reputation to another generation of readers. The combination of continued filmmaker and educator interest in the second half of the twentieth century finally allowed Fitzgerald to achieve what he had sought most during life: assurance not only of transitory pop culture celebrity status, but also lasting literary immortality.

The millennium ushered in a second wave of Fitzgerald revival through cinema. Beginning in 2000, with an A&E adaption of *The Great Gatsby* starring Mira Sorvino as Daisy, filmmakers returned for another, deeper examination of Fitzgerald's texts. Yet, the highest point so far of Fitzgerald's latest reincarnation as an adaptable writer came in 2008, with David Fincher's much-lauded picture, *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button*. Assisted by the draw of its stars, Brad Pitt and Cate Blanchett, the film topped the Christmas box office and was quickly released on a Criterion Collection DVD, signifying the film's cultural significance. By seeing Brad Pitt age backwards, audience members could mentally preserve the romance of his strikingly handsome good looks. Through

transference of Pitt's image to popular Fitzgerald lore, audiences were invited to recapture the glamour and excitement of Fitzgerald in his first flush of fame, all while relating both to their own reminiscences of youth. Although some critics dismissed *Benjamin Button* as too sentimental, most praised the film for what it was: a story not only of a man who aged backwards, but also a documentation of how Americans want their celebrities frozen in time at their peaks of physical beauty and creativity. In sum, David Fincher's adaptation of "Benjamin Button" allowed audiences to press pause on the iconic lives of Brad Pitt and Scott Fitzgerald, while simultaneously giving them time to rewind and reevaluate remembrances of their own pasts.

The success of *Benjamin Button* prompted *Entertainment Weekly* to proclaim Fitzgerald their "Comeback of the Week" on January 16, 2009, saying of his most recent revival, "His story is the basis for *Benjamin Button*, Baz Luhrmann may remake *The Great Gatsby*, and Keira Knightley is set to play doomed wife Zelda. Drink up, old sport — you're hot again!" (Vary). All of this press has done much in the past two years to rekindle interest in the author and his works; however, it has also attracted the interest of less conscientious filmmakers looking to cash in on Fitzgerald's sixty-years-in-the-making overnight success.

Richard Wolstencroft's independent adaptation of *The Beautiful and Damned* (2008), created during the same time that Hollywood was buzzing with anticipation over Fincher's production of *Benjamin Button*, is little more than pornography thinly disguised with bad acting and an almost complete departure from Fitzgerald's original storyline and dialogue. Wolstencroft's adaptation serves as a cautionary reminder that not all new attention for a long-dead author is positive or possessing of the potential to enhance a

literary reputation through film. Still, Wolstencroft's film is an anomaly. From industry accounts of projects in production, it appears that today's filmmakers are willing to assist in the cultivation and expansion of Fitzgerald's posthumous literary celebrity by probing the emotional depths of the man and his characters in ways more meaningful than Fitzgerald himself could have ever imagined.

Now that the cycle of early fame, midlife fadeout, and late career/posthumous revival have been mapped out for Fitzgerald, it is easy to trace the same circular pattern in Hemingway's life and work. Since Hemingway's life lasted longer and was far more productive than Fitzgerald's, the ouroboric circle of Hemingway's career was larger in circumference.

After the initial meeting in Paris, the divergent career paths of Fitzgerald and Hemingway caused their friendship to deteriorate from the 1930s onward. While Fitzgerald was writing magazine stories to stay financially solvent at the beginning of the Depression, Hemingway had domestic problems of his own. Hemingway's father, in debt and suffering from a variety of medical problems, committed suicide in November 1928. Left as the head of a household comprised mostly of females, Hemingway felt that he had to assume the role of patriarch. Hemingway threw himself into work on what would become his second major novel, *A Farewell to Arms* (1929). The book was a huge success and received an advance of \$16,000 from *Scribner's* magazine for serialization. At the time, it was the largest advance ever paid by *Scribner's* (Baker 199). The money could not have come at a better time for Hemingway, because it allowed him to avoid the threat of financial ruin that plagued Fitzgerald during the early years of the Great

Depression and bought him the time that he needed further cultivate his public image by choosing his next major project carefully.

Hemingway's next work, the non-fiction bullfighting manual *Death in the Afternoon* (1932), opened the eyes of his reading public to new insights about the author's personal interests. Although reviews and sales of Hemingway's bullfighting book were not as positive or significant as those for his earlier fiction, the work added the important persona of aficionado to Hemingway's growing list of personality traits. In the years following the publication of *Death in the Afternoon*, Hemingway would become a standard source of information on the sporting life for popular magazines, writing on topics ranging from fishing and boating to African big game hunting. These types of articles did much to ingratiate Hemingway to the sensibilities of male readers, who were looking for role models of manly behavior after suffering from the emasculation of losing their fortunes in the Great Crash of 1929. This idea of Hemingway as a man's man would persist throughout his career as a public writer.

Although Hemingway was glad to supplement development of his persona as a sportsman with autobiographical non-fiction works, he remained reluctant to have his personal life portrayed by the motion picture business. Hemingway's distrust of the film industry grew after he saw Paramount's first adaptation of one of his works on screen, *A Farewell to Arms* (1932). Appalled by the studio's decision to change the ending, making it happy instead of tragic, Hemingway refused to remain silent as Paramount's promotion team attempted to attach largely bogus stories of his personal life to the film in hopes of attracting audiences intrigued by his lifestyle. Hemingway sent the following press release to Max Perkins as a counterattack:

Mr. Hemingway, who is a writer of fiction, states that if he was in Italy during a small part of the late war it was only because a man was notoriously less liable to be killed there than in France. He drove, or attempted to drive, an ambulance and engaged in minor camp following activities and was never involved in heroic action of any sort. Any sane person knows that writers do not knock out middleweight champions, unless the writer's name happens to be Gene Tunney. While Mr. Hemingway appreciates the publicity attempt to build him into a glamorous personality like Floyd Gibbons or Tom Mix's horse Tony, he deprecates it and asks the motion picture people to leave his private life alone. (qtd. in Baker 235)

Despite the release of this disclaimer by Perkins on Hemingway's behalf, the public chose to believe Paramount's more exciting account of his exploits. From this point in his career onward, Hemingway would struggle with the personal dilemma of whether to correct erroneous accounts of his life that only served to enhance the reputation that he wanted to cultivate more accurately by himself, or to succumb to the publicity machine that would make him a household name. Ultimately, Hemingway would choose a middle path. If his personal life did not measure up to press hype, Hemingway would modify his behavior and writing to suit the image that his public expected of him. In short, the legend was made first, and the man would live up to it later.

The next important step in creation of the Hemingway legend came in 1935, with the publication of his safari memoir, *The Green Hills of Africa*. Although Hemingway was optimistic about the book's potential for success, both financially and as an image enhancement, sales and critical reviews were disappointing. Before publication of his Africa book, Hemingway had told Max Perkins that it was "an absolutely true autobiography...presented with complete and admirable candor" and containing the "best writing he had ever done" in addition to possessing an "extra-dimensional quality" that Hemingway believed would finally set the record straight by separating his personal life

from his fiction (qtd. in Baker 275). Two of Hemingway's fictional short stories, written simultaneously out of material gathered on this same safari, were phenomenally successful. The first, "The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber" (1936) was published for the first time in *Cosmopolitan* magazine, resulting in significant gains for Hemingway's female readership. The other, "The Snows of Kilimanjaro" (1936), appeared initially in *Esquire* magazine, and drew similar numbers of male readers.

The publication of each of these stories was significant, albeit for different reasons. The success of "The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber" proved that Hemingway's readers preferred to read fictionalized accounts loosely based in fact, and then speculate about his personal life, rather than reading the truth as Hemingway chose to tell it in genuine autobiographical texts such as *The Green Hills of Africa*. Further, it seemed that the only thing Hemingway's readership enjoyed more than speculation about his personal life was speculation about his personal life in conjunction with F. Scott Fitzgerald's. In "The Snows of Kilimanjaro," Hemingway's protagonist laments the loss of what might have been his writing career, remembering "poor Scott Fitzgerald" and "his romantic awe" of the rich as a "special glamorous race" (qtd. in Baker 290). Hemingway's inclusion of the Fitzgerald allusion was purposeful.

Fitzgerald's series of *Crack-Up* essays had appeared in *Esquire* during February, March, and April 1936, during the time that Hemingway was preparing "Snows" for publication in *Esquire*'s August issue. Hemingway was appalled at what he interpreted as Fitzgerald's public display of unmanly mental weakness. As Carlos Baker states, to Hemingway, "Scott seemed almost to be taking pride in his defeat" (283). Although he wrote Fitzgerald several letters that vacillated between admonishing his friend for writing

such blatantly confessional material and offering a sort of tough-love encouragement, Hemingway struck the final blow to his friendship with Fitzgerald by portraying him as a pathetic person in “Snows.”

Willing to be supported by the pity of his readers, but not that of his closest friends, Fitzgerald responded curtly to Hemingway after reading the unflattering reference, by writing:

Dear Ernest: Please lay off me in print. If I choose to write de profundis sometimes it doesn't mean that I want friends praying aloud over my corpse. No doubt you meant it kindly, but it cost me a night's sleep. And when you incorporate it in a book would you mind cutting my name? It's a fine story – one of your best – even though the “poor Scott Fitzgerald, etc.” rather spoiled it for me. (qtd. in Baker 290)

Fitzgerald's politely worded response to Hemingway proved effective in at least one aspect. Hemingway removed the Fitzgerald reference in later collections that included “Snows.” However, Hemingway's overstepping of the bounds of welcome criticism almost cost him Fitzgerald's friendship. The frequency of correspondence between the pair declined steadily after the publication of “Snows,” suggesting that Fitzgerald was willing to forgive, but not forget, the slight. Among their extended circle of literary friends, what seemed to some like Hemingway's eagerness to scold Fitzgerald, when he was obviously suffering from depression, added perhaps the most unflattering aspect of Hemingway's public persona: the author as bully to other authors.

To his credit, Fitzgerald's personal animosity towards Hemingway's inclination to reprimand him in fiction did not cause him to find fault with Hemingway's other professional endeavors. When the Hemingway-scripted, pro-Loyalist, Spanish Civil War propaganda film, *The Spanish Earth* (1937) appeared, Fitzgerald praised it heartily,

wiring Hemingway that “the picture was beyond praise and so was your attitude” (qtd. in Baker 316). However, Fitzgerald would have little to praise after an incident involving the critic Max Eastman demonstrated to the world what Fitzgerald already knew. By 1937, Hemingway’s personality had become so absorbed within his bravado-filled public persona that even the author himself could no longer tell the two apart.

Four years earlier, Eastman had written a scathing review of Hemingway’s book, *Death in the Afternoon*, titled “Bull in the Afternoon.” In the review, Eastman not only disparaged the book, but also questioned Hemingway’s public persona as a man’s man, insinuating that it was all a ruse to cover up the author’s impotency. Hemingway was understandably upset about the personal attack on his manhood; however, his reaction was excessive. After meeting Eastman by chance in Max Perkins’s office, Hemingway bared his hairy chest to prove his manliness and shortly thereafter struck Eastman across the face with a book and wrestled him to the ground (Baker 317). Perkins had to separate the two men and Hemingway soon after found himself defending a lawsuit from Eastman. After hearing about the incident from Perkins, Fitzgerald responded with a sentiment that seemed to echo through America at the time:

[Ernest has done] exactly the asinine thing that I knew he had it in him to do. The fact that he lost his temper only for a minute does not minimize the fact that he picked exactly the wrong minute to do it...He is living at the present in a world so entirely his own that it is impossible to help him, even if I felt close to him at the moment, which I don’t. I like him so much, though, that I wince when anything happens to him, and I feel rather personally ashamed that it has been possible for imbeciles to dig at him and hurt him. (qtd. in Baker 318)

Ironically, Fitzgerald’s response to Perkins seems to reflect awareness that Hemingway violated the very code of behavior that Hemingway admonished Fitzgerald for breaking only a few months before. The Eastman incident was the first of many occurrences

during which Hemingway's own highly touted emotional wall of "grace under pressure" would show just as many cracks as the damaged plate in Fitzgerald's *Crack-Up* series metaphor.

Here, the essential difference between the public personas of the two men later in their careers is shown in the comparison between Fitzgerald's *Crack-Up* essays and Hemingway's behavior during the Eastman incident. Fitzgerald chose to open up to his public, sharing his innermost insecurities in hopes of garnering sympathy, and later, fond remembrance. In contrast, Hemingway chose to keep his true emotions closed to the public. As a result, Hemingway's public image during the 1940s and 1950s would fossilize, creating a stagnant environment in which the author's personal life became almost a caricature that in turn stifled his ability to create complex characters that did not build upon this increasingly overwhelming persona.

The first Hemingway novel to appear after the Eastman incident was *To Have and Have Not* (1937). Although public reception was strong, the novel was not critically acclaimed and Hemingway sold it off quickly to the movies, resulting in Howard Hawks's 1944 film adaptation of the same name. The film adaptation of *To Have and Have Not* nevertheless united for the first time the tough guy onscreen presence of Humphrey Bogart and the Hemingway code-hero of printed fiction. Bogart's portrayal of Harry Morgan would be echoed in almost every subsequent film portrayal of a male Hemingway lead. These depictions of Hemingway code heroes on film would become inextricably intertwined with the author's public persona.

The visual image of Bogart onscreen, acting out a Hemingway text, at last gave the public what it had wanted from Hemingway since the beginning of his career: a

moving visual depiction of what it perceived to be genuine Hemingway-like behavior that could serve as a model for masculine behavior. This pressure to maintain a highly masculine persona would inhibit Hemingway's later novels, as he struggled to find ways of articulating characters often behaved outside the bounds of his own self-imposed genre. Although the novel upon which it was based is arguably stronger, the same film-noirish, genre-heavy sensibility permeates the film adaptation of Hemingway's next work, *For Whom the Bell Tolls* (1943), as well as other Hemingway film adaptations that followed in the late 1940s and 1950s, such as *The Killers* (1946), the first remake of *To Have and Have Not*, titled *The Breaking Point* (1950), *The Snows of Kilimanjaro* (1952), the first remake of *A Farewell to Arms* (1957), and the second remake of *To Have and Have Not*, called *The Gun Runners* (1958). Each of these films featured a Hemingway code hero who reinforced the public perception of Hemingway as a tough guy.

Of this group of adaptations made during the 1940s and 1950s, the two that did the most to add to the growing Hemingway legend were *For Whom the Bell Tolls* and *The Gun Runners*. In 1940, Hemingway sold the film rights to *For Whom the Bell Tolls* to Paramount for \$136,000, setting a high price record for that time. However, Hemingway was not content to remain hands-off after seeing how much impact on his own personal image that the selection of Humphrey Bogart as lead actor had made in the success of *To Have and Have Not*. According to John Raeburn, Hemingway was very active in the casting decisions for the adaptation of *Bell*, and lobbied hard for his friend Gary Cooper to play the lead (104). It was also reported in *Time* magazine and in Louella Parsons's column "that Paramount was urging Hemingway himself to take a screen test for a part in the film, but nothing ever came of it" (Raeburn 104). The interest in

Hemingway's Hollywood associations continued to gain momentum during production of the film, with *Life* magazine running four stories on Hemingway's friendships with various stars, including Ingrid Bergman and Gary Cooper (Raeburn 105). The spread with Cooper, chronicling a hunting expedition that the two took together, was an especially meaningful addition to the Hemingway public persona, because it represented an intermixing of his new image as Hollywood's Hemingway with his already established sportsman's identity.

Another Hemingway adaptation, *The Gun Runners*, starring WWII hero-turned-actor Audie Murphy, performed a similar feat for Hemingway's public persona, blending his history as a war veteran with his new Hollywood fame. The attachment of Murphy, an American folk legend in his own right, to a Hemingway project was probably intended to cause audiences to remember Hemingway's own well-chronicled WWII exploits. Hemingway, who had eagerly participated as a correspondent for *Collier's* magazine in WWII, wrote numerous accounts of his activities for readers back home. However, as with his previous non-fiction efforts, it was the stories written about Hemingway by others that gained the most attention. The most popular of these accounts were Hemingway's fabled, but not factual, involvements in the Normandy invasion and his so-called liberation of the Ritz Hotel in Paris. Although neither story was true, each contained enough credibility for those who wanted to believe in the mythology of Hemingway to accept both stories as factual. This new dimension of Hemingway as an indestructible hero of not only one, but two, world wars was added to his public image.

Even though he had not released a new novel in almost ten years, by 1950 it seemed that Hemingway's place as America's preeminent author was solid. However,

Hemingway's next novel, *Across the River and Into the Trees* (1950), was a critical and commercial disaster. Although the book was not Hemingway's best, most scholars today argue that the overwhelmingly negative reactions to the book were based not on the text, but instead on general overexposure of the Hemingway persona in the public consciousness. As John Raeburn noted, "The violent reaction resulted from three factors: Hemingway's previous novel had been an overwhelming success, and it was ten years in the past; his public reputation attracted attention and strong antipathies as well as loyalties; Colonel Richard Cantwell, the hero, seemed to be only Hemingway under another name" (125). Also, the novel suffered from a greatly over-hyped publicity campaign from Scribners that was off-putting to even Hemingway's most loyal readers. The movie magazines were particularly vicious about the book, printing articles with titles such as "Is Poppa A Floppa?" in *Night and Day*, which generally declared that Hemingway's career was finished (Raeburn 129). However, after the expected round of anti-critic posturing, Hemingway must have decided that he was not ready to retire. Instead, the author set diligently to work, making over both his writing and his public image in an attempt to overcome this low point in the ouroboric cycle of his literary fame.

That reworking of the Hemingway persona came with the publication of his next novel, *The Old Man and the Sea* (1952). The first major difference between this novel and Hemingway's others is the subject matter. Instead of the virile, white, militaristic, Hemingway code hero, the novel features an aging Cuban fisherman protagonist. Perhaps most startlingly absent is the presence of a typical Hemingway female love interest. Hemingway's choice to write against audience expectations in this novel was supported

by the publicity campaign surrounding it. The first publication of *The Old Man and the Sea* was not through Scribners, but instead in one issue of *Life* magazine. Hemingway's reasoning for this choice was to insure that the price point of his latest work made it available to the widest market of readers (Baker 499). Gone was the increasingly elitist aura of Hemingway as an author who chronicled the lives and tastes of amorous, wealthy adventurers. In its place was a writer who seemed willing to reach out to his public with a simple tale about a man's struggle with life itself.

The image of Hemingway's face on the cover of the *Life* issue that included the novel represented the biggest change in the author's persona of all. In past publicity campaigns, Hemingway was depicted in the most flattering light possible. Usually, his trim physique and grinning face were featured as he engaged in some outdoor activity that suggested youthful vitality. However, on this *Life* cover, a jowly, graying Hemingway stares solemnly, and somewhat sadly, straight into the camera. This was not a picture of Hemingway the soldier or lover who managed to attract four increasingly wealthy and attractive wives with his dashing lifestyle. Instead, this photo portrayed a man who had lived a full life, but who was now content to sit back and write about it in a fatherly way. Although he had used the nickname his whole life, from this *Life* photograph onward, Hemingway's public personality actually became Papa.

The Nobel prize-winner, *The Old Man and the Sea*, and its subsequent 1958 film adaptation, reaffirmed Hemingway's status as America's writer and the choice of Hemingway's friend, Spencer Tracy, as Santiago cemented the author's reworked image in the public visual consciousness. *Old Man* would be the last major work Hemingway would publish during his lifetime. Two years after its release, Hemingway was on an

African safari when he was severely injured during two plane crashes on the same day. Although Hemingway kept a brave face, scoffing in public at premature obituaries published for him stateside, his health would severely deteriorate in the years following the crashes and reduce his writing output to a few short stories.

Nevertheless, Hemingway's survival after the African plane crashes added one last characteristic to his public persona: invincibility. Journalist Robert Ruark's comment about Papa Hemingway's newly recognized indestructibility can be read as indicative of the pervading sentiment in America at the time. "The man is unkillable," Ruark stated, "He has been trying for years to polish himself off the hard way and never quite succeeds" (qtd. in Raeburn 146). However, even though the public seemed convinced of Hemingway's immortality, the author himself was less certain. Perhaps that is the reason he spent the remaining seven years of his life promoting the Ernest Hemingway persona, because the author realized at last that he was the character America wanted to read about most of all.

Since his Hollywood heyday in the 1940s, Hemingway acknowledged the potential to promote his public image through men's magazines, which often featured articles on his most noted pastimes, such as hunting, fishing, boxing, and pursuit of women. From the mid-1950s onward, these men's magazines became the primary place where the Hemingway legend would be promoted. In his excellent recent book, *All Man! Hemingway, 1950s Men's Magazines, and the Male Persona* (2009), David M. Earle explains how Hemingway strategically used these magazines to solidify his personal legacy for the public. Often appearing in articles with pages facing pin-up girls, Earle

argues that Hemingway became a sort of pin-up himself during these years, as a role model for hearty, yet sophisticated, masculinity.

Particularly, Earle cites an article written for the pulp magazine *Bluebook* in 1953 by Jackson Burke, and titled “Ernest Hemingway – Muy Hombre!” as indicative of the mood set by such pieces. Describing the tone of the article, Earle writes, “a noticeably star-struck young reporter hunts down the author in Cuba – in this instance at the Floridita Bar – becomes drinking buddies and fast friends and relates the ‘inside scoop’ on the famous author to the reader” (51). Earle’s impression of Burke’s article was correct. Burke opened with a pull-out quote, which demonstrated his awareness of the often-complicated Hemingway persona, saying “Whether you like him or not, you have to admit that ‘Papa’ Hemingway is a terrific hunk of man. And a terrific hunk of writer. Witness his recent Pulitzer Prize” (rpt. in Earle 52). Over the course of the article, Hemingway seemed very loquacious and engaging, discussing writing, hunting, drinking, bullfighting, war, politics, the allure of Cuban women, and his own publicity in *Life* magazine.

However, Burke was careful to inform his readers near the end of the article that Hemingway was no empty braggart, stating plainly, “Hemingway is a modest man. Not backward, just modest. For example, he does not boast; he just tells the facts. It’s hard for him to explain himself except in the simplest terms” (rpt. in Earle 58). The implication in Burke’s statement was that, when Hemingway simply told the truth about his amazing life, it only seemed like bragging to the average person. The suggestion, of course, was that this sort of undeniable awesomeness was the very reason men should revere Hemingway as a model of masculinity. Regardless of whether Burke’s inference was

wise or not, it appears to have been the mindset adopted by the readers of men's magazines during the 1950s. Hemingway encouraged it until the end of his life.

With all the braggadocio that Hemingway exuded in his later public interviews, it is no wonder that his audiences were initially denied knowledge of his death by suicide in 1961. After all, as John Raeburn noted, "The public Hemingway knew just what to do and how to do it and what to feel about it; and rather than need counsel, he could teach others" (203). However, in the days and weeks following his death, as it became inevitable that the manner of his death would become public knowledge, Hemingway's heirs carefully began to release details about his failing health that made his death seem like a noble act, rather than a cowardly one. The spinning of Hemingway's suicide as the deliberate choice of a man who preferred a quick death to a slow one resonated positively with Hemingway's audiences, providing a sense of closure to the psychological relationship that many readers had with the author.

In his *Field and Stream* column, Robert Ruark reprinted a letter from a fan that epitomized the public mourning of Hemingway. In his analysis of an anonymous letter from Ruark's article, John Raeburn commented on the unnamed man's statements, saying:

the loss of Papa hit me much deeper [than a relative's]. Hemingway had given him the whole world allowing vicarious adventures to a man who had no real ones because he lacked the money and courage to pursue them. Hemingway had taught him a standard of manliness and given him the knowledge that men aren't made at Yale or Harvard, but at the end of a .303, fly rod, or behind a dirty red cape. (169)

Perhaps this pressure to set an example for other men, more than anything else, was the ultimate cause of Hemingway's suicide. Hemingway had undergone numerous surgeries

and even electroshock treatments after the severe injuries he suffered during the African plane crashes. None of these health problems were shared with the public that Hemingway so carefully protected from any knowledge of his mortality. Although he continued to write during his final years, he published very little, fearful that he would detract from the legacy of his prizewinning turn with *The Old Man and the Sea* if he risked putting out poor material. In short, Hemingway's public persona had always been an act. The truth about Hemingway's life was in his fiction. Without the ability to express himself truthfully in fiction, the falsity of his public persona may have become too overwhelming for the ailing Hemingway to bear. In the end, only the ouroboros of his own fame could defeat the indestructible Ernest Hemingway.

Interestingly, Hemingway's writings released after his death have almost uniformly revealed a gentler, more complex artist than the super-manly image so often promoted by the author during life. The most well-known of these books, *A Moveable Feast*, was first published in 1965. This memoir chronicles Hemingway's early years in Paris, before he became a household name. In the book, many new sides of the author emerged that were rarely discussed during Hemingway's lifetime. Some of them, such as the genuine love and emotion Hemingway evidently possessed for his first wife, Hadley, and his son, John (Bumby), were truly admirable. Others, such as Hemingway's mean-spirited jabs at dead friends like Scott Fitzgerald and Gertrude Stein, were not. However, what results from reading the work is the overall impression that Hemingway, the man behind the persona, was just as intriguing without all the publicity.

The recently published *A Moveable Feast: The Restored Edition* (2009), edited by Hemingway's grandson, Sean Hemingway, serves as a testament to the fact even

Hemingway himself considered the line between fact and fiction in his life under constant revision. Sean Hemingway's appendix to the memoir included eleven different versions of the author's original disclaimer for the beginning of the book. In the first one, Hemingway wrote, "This book is fiction. I have left out much and changed and eliminated and I hope Hadley understands. She will see why I hope. She is the heroine and the only person who had a life that turned out well and as it should except certain of the rich" (229). In this prospective opening, Hemingway suggested an apology to his first wife, Hadley. By the time many of the events in the latter part of the memoir occurred, Hemingway had already secretly begun seeing Pauline Pfeiffer, Hadley's friend who became his second wife.

Leaving this information out of the text of his memoir could be read as an attempt by Hemingway to gloss over a past infidelity that he still felt guilty about. Read in a more accepting light, the opening could also be interpreted as Hemingway's attempt to protect Hadley from the further embarrassment of reading about her ex-husband's dalliances in print. Either way, this first potential opening must be seen as part of Hemingway's ongoing internal struggle between protecting the true feelings of himself and those he loved and maintaining the public image that made his fortune. The shortest of Hemingway's potential openings for *A Moveable Feast* possibly contains the most truth because it says so little: "This book is fiction but there is always a chance that such a work of fiction may throw some light on what has been written as fact" (230). For Hemingway, a writer who made himself a fiction, fiction was the only truth.

In the years following Hemingway's death, the author's life, fictional or truthful, has become a cottage industry. Fans can visit the Hemingway home and museum in Key

West, pet the descendents of his cats, and get married by his swimming pool (Hemingwayhome.com). For those wanting to bring Hemingway's style home with them, a line of Hemingway namesake furniture is available from Thomasville (Thomasville.com). Recently, Hemingway's heirs even endorsed a line of footwear allegedly inspired by the author's own, so that enthusiasts can walk a mile in Hemingway's shoes if they chose (Hemingwayfootwearco.com). All of these endeavors can be read as signs of the times. In years past, it was enough simply to read Hemingway's books or watch films adapted from them in order to experience the Hemingway brand. Today, fans can visit, sit on, wear, and absorb Hemingway into their very own identities, enclosing both author and audience at last together in the ouroboric circle of fame.

One has to wonder what impact commercialization will have on the future of F. Scott Fitzgerald and Ernest Hemingway as public writers. Fitzgerald currently seems to have the upper hand in garnering public sympathy and interest, whereas Hemingway's reputation has suffered in recent years due to feminist backlash against his overstated masculinity and accusations of ethnic prejudice in his works. Hemingway's estate appears ready to counter this negative impression, with the adaptation of *A Moveable Feast* currently in production. With Hemingway's granddaughter Mariel at the helm of the project, the film adaptation of *A Moveable Feast* has the potential to reveal a softer side of the author that would redeem him in the public eye. Also, the upcoming film *Hemingway and Fuentes*, directed by Andy Garcia and starring Anthony Hopkins as Hemingway, plans to add a multicultural dimension to the Hemingway persona that could contradict suppositions of Hemingway's Caucasian-centeredness, by describing the

friendship between the author and the Cuban fisherman who inspired *The Old Man and the Sea*.

Additionally, the new film version of Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*, currently in production under the direction of Baz Luhrman, promises a complete image update of Fitzgerald and his original work, starring Leonardo DiCaprio and Carey Mulligan, from an expectedly lavish Luhrman viewpoint, complete with 3-D effects. The attachment of A-list actors and a director known for his innovative artistry to the project could finally offer Fitzgerald's complicated life the nuanced film treatment that has been lacking for so long.

Regardless of the reception of these films, it is clear that they will once again bring the personas of Fitzgerald and Hemingway into the public eye for examination. To paraphrase *Gatsby's* ending, Fitzgerald and Hemingway have always been boats against the current of ouroboric literary fame, striving to maintain cultural relevance and literary immortality. Their perpetual status as pop culture icons continues because their families, filmmakers, and audiences could never allow their legacies to be borne back into the oblivion of America's celebrity past.

Chapter III

Screening the American Icarus, Part One:

Film Adaptations of F. Scott Fitzgerald's Works, 1924-1962

While he was an undergraduate at Princeton, F. Scott Fitzgerald made two remarks to his friend Edmund Wilson that, in hindsight, sum up his existence: "If I couldn't be perfect, I wouldn't be anything," and "I want to be one of the greatest writers in the world, don't you?" (Wilson 484). Although it is possible for a writer acting alone to aspire to create a work that is a perfect distillment of his artistic vision, it is virtually impossible for a writer to ensure that same level of perfection in the adaption of his work for the screen. By necessity, filmmaking is a collaborative process among the original writer, screenwriter, director, cast, producer, and audience. In the best adaptations, a balance of power amongst these creative forces aligns to create a product of cohesive cinema that is consistent with the major themes, if not always the exact content, of the original work.

In the novels and short stories of F. Scott Fitzgerald, two themes predominate to such a degree that they must be addressed by any filmmaker seeking to adapt one of his works. First, Fitzgerald relied heavily on his own autobiography as a source of inspiration for his writing. As Robert Wilson describes, "his life and work were so interwoven that the distinction between them blurs; in a sense, he imagined and created his life and lived in his fictional protagonists" (482). Fitzgerald's approach to writing might best be understood as akin to method acting, in which the actor and character become one. In order to achieve the level of genuine emotion and honesty contained in his original

writing, filmmakers hoping to successfully adapt Fitzgerald's works for the screen must willingly enter Fitzgerald's ouroboric conception of a life within creative process, while searching their own lives for biographical parallels to Fitzgerald and to lay such insecurities open for public view.

Concurrently, filmmakers must be aware of and prepared to address what has been referred to as the "Icarus complex" in Fitzgerald's life and writing (Wilson 483). Writing in 1955, psychologist Henry A. Murray developed a theory about an individual with the sort of personality that made him or her continually strive for high ideals in order to gain a sense of self-worth, not through actual achievement, but rather the pursuit of it. Robert Wilson, who has applied the Icarus complex to Fitzgerald, identifies all five of the behavioral manifestations indicative of the Icarus complex, including "burning ambition and exhibitionism, desire to ascend to great heights, desire to be the center of all eyes, a precipitous fall, craving for immortality, and depreciation and enthrallment of women" (483). These five traits can be read as a general synopsis of the life of Fitzgerald, and the fictional characters that he modeled after it. Filmmakers who do not address Fitzgerald's Icaric tendencies set themselves up for an epic fall. Over the past century, filmmakers have either ignored or attempted to address these two major themes in adaptations of Fitzgerald's works. Although each possesses some characteristics of other styles, all feature film adaptations can be classified into one of three stylistic categories: revision, conversion, and interpretation.

The revisionist approaches to Fitzgerald's works, including *Conductor 1492* (1924) and *The Great Gatsby* (1949), have historically proven the least successful. Of the pair, *Conductor 1492* might be considered stronger, because of director Johnny Hines's

intelligent choice to offer his manner of socio-cultural, historical, and political commentary from the solid foundational platform of Fitzgerald's Irish background. Elliot Nugent's adaptation of *The Great Gatsby* suffers from pressure to conform to both the delicate sensibilities of Hays Code-era filmmaking and the stifling conventions of the *film noir* genre. Only one conversionist film, *Tender is the Night* (1962), appeared during the first four decades of Fitzgerald adaptation. Henry King's *Tender is the Night* is an underappreciated film that delves deeply into the psychological underpinnings of Fitzgerald's novel, which deserve thorough reexamination.

However, Richard Brooks's interpretive adaptation of "Babylon Revisited," called *The Last Time I Saw Paris* (1954) is perhaps the most critically interesting Fitzgerald-based film released from 1924 to 1962. Not only does Brooks's film incorporate large amounts of Fitzgerald lore, but it also includes thought-provoking incidents from Ernest Hemingway's biography. This blending of the two authors' biographies creates what will be referred to here as the "Hemingerald phenomenon" of film adaptation, which means that when filmmakers need to incorporate additional information into a film about the era in which an original work is set, they often rely not only on the life of the work's author, but also on the lives of that author's contemporaries, in order to create the most intriguing plotline possible. Due in part to its incorporation of blended Hemingerald elements, *The Last Time I Saw Paris* can be read as a film with greater philosophical resonance than the short story upon which it is based, proving that interpretation is most often the most effective method of adapting texts to film.

* * *

Conductor 1492 (1924)

Although many of Fitzgerald's early short stories were adapted into silent films, only one, Johnny Hines's *Conductor 1492* (1924), survives today. Hines, the star and sole screenwriter for the film, was a popular comedian of the silent film era. The plot of *Conductor 1492* bears little resemblance to "The Camel's Back," a short story from Fitzgerald's early collection, *Tales of the Jazz Age* (1922); however, both the story and the film are thematically consistent pieces of light, romantic comedy tinged with commentary on race and social class. Since Fitzgerald himself claimed that his purposes for writing the original story were merely to serve his personal needs for amusement and financial capital, the pressures for a faithful adaptation that is true to the most nuanced details of his original story are virtually nonexistent.

Proof of Fitzgerald's nonchalance in relation to the story's content can be found in his preface to *Tales of the Jazz Age*. As Fitzgerald describes his inspiration for the tale:

I suppose that of all the stories I have ever written this one cost me the least travail and perhaps gave me the most amusement. As to the labor involved, it was written during one day in the city of New Orleans, with the express purpose of buying a platinum and diamond wrist watch which cost six hundred dollars. I began it at seven in the morning and finished it at two o'clock that same night. It was published in the *Saturday Evening Post* in 1920, and later included in the O. Henry Memorial Collection for that same year. I like it least of all the stories in this volume. (799)

Not surprisingly, there is no record of Fitzgerald ever having any involvement with the story's adaptation into film after selling his rights to Warner Brothers. Given Fitzgerald's cavalier attitude toward the story's production, it is safe to assume that, so long as the adaptation was a success and he was compensated, any resulting product was acceptable.

However, careful screening of *Conductor 1492* proves that its screenwriter and lead actor Johnny Hines found far more depth in Fitzgerald's material than the original author ever acknowledged to be present.

Fitzgerald's original story, "The Camel's Back," tells the story of Perry Parkhurst, an up-and-coming young attorney from Toledo, Ohio, and the girl he loves, Betty Medill, heir to local tycoon Cyrus Medill's aluminum fortune. When Betty rejects Perry's demand for marriage, Perry goes on a drunken spree, which culminates in his going to a costume party dressed as the front half of a camel. An unnamed cab driver, who seems to be Irish from his working class accent, stands in as the camel's rear end. After winning the costume contest, Perry and Betty are facetiously married in a mock ceremony by Jumbo, a black waiter. Later, they learn that the waiter is actually "a sho-nuff minister in the Firs' Cullud Baptis' Church" ("Camel's Back" 845). Also, they discover the marriage certificate that Perry mistakenly handed the waiter/minister in his drunken confusion was the genuine article that he had threatened Betty with earlier in the day. These details render the marriage to both men contained in the camel costume legitimate.

To save her reputation, Betty reluctantly agrees to marry Perry in a real ceremony and move West with him. After all, a society girl like Betty cannot be married to both an Anglo attorney and a working-class Irish cab driver, because, as Perry points out, "That's bigamy" ("Camel's Back" 849). The concluding theme of the story seems to be the same as much of Fitzgerald's early flapper fiction: a young, middle-class Midwestern man can only win the rich girl he loves, not through personal merit, but instead through besting her in the lover's game of flirtation, deception, and intrigue.

In contrast, the plot of Hines's *Conductor 1492* centers on a young immigrant, Terry O'Toole, who leaves his home in Ireland to come to America, hoping to find work as a motorman. During the scene of Terry's going-away party, which depicts Irish men engaging in stereotypical, yet comic, activities, such as drinking and fighting, Terry's father Mike gives Terry an Irish doll for good luck. Unbeknownst to Terry, the doll holds his future fortune: the two missing shares of Loteda Traction Company stock which are sought after by both the president of the company, closeted Irishman Denman Connelly, and his rivals who want to take over the company, Vice-President James Stoddard and company attorney Richard Langford.

Upon arriving in America, Terry lands a job at the company. After only a few days on the job, Terry rescues Bobby, a little boy who falls in front of his streetcar. Bobby turns out to be Connelly's son. Edna Connelly, Bobby's lovely sister, sees the rescue and invites Terry to dinner, where a romance blossoms between the pair. The remainder of the film is devoted to the business intrigue among these men, as well as the developing romance between Edna and Terry. Ultimately, it is revealed that Mike, who is visiting from Ireland, bought the two shares years ago and hid them in the Irish doll that he gave to Terry. After saving the day by rescuing the doll and his father from a fire, Terry marries Edna and returns to Ireland, where another party containing many demonstrations of stereotypical Irish drinking-and-fighting ends the film.

The camel, an instrumental plot device in Fitzgerald's original story, makes only a small appearance in Hines's film, when Terry picks up in his trolley car a well-dressed, drunken young man carrying a camel costume. This young man, presumably an unnamed Perry Parkhurst character, asks Terry to be the rear half of his camel. This question marks

the most significant thematic departure from Fitzgerald's original story, in which the unnamed Irish cab driver agrees to be the rear end of the camel. This scene presents a willingness of the working-class Irish immigrant to subordinate his own sense of self-worth in order to please his supposedly superior Anglo employer.

However, in *Conductor 1492*, Johnny Hines chooses not only to name the motorman, Terry O'Toole, but also to give him a sense of cultural pride that causes him to refuse this onerous duty. When the unnamed rich young Anglo man offers to pay Terry twenty dollars for this indignity, Terry considers it, until his father Mike stops him, saying "No O'Toole will ever be the South end of a camel!" After seeing how upset his father is at the possible insult to his family name, Terry not only rejects the young man's proposal, but instead makes a counteroffer.

When the rich young Anglo man agrees to this alternative idea, that Terry should be the head of the camel and he the posterior end, an ethnic power shift occurs in the film. Terry goes to the non-Irish, upper-class roller skating party that the young man was invited to as his equal. During the party, Terry becomes the toast of the event through his skillful skating prowess. Shortly thereafter, Terry saves the day by regaining control of the shares of stock hidden in the Irish doll. After these heroics, Edna is so overcome with love for Terry that she proposes marriage to him, and her father agrees, representing the greatest event of his acceptance into Anglo culture: a marriage to the daughter of a wealthy man, which will presumably make him heir to a fortune.

It comes as no surprise that Edna, who is at least half-Irish, falls in love with the working-class Irish immigrant, Terry, nor that Edna's wealthy father, the closeted Irishman Denman/Dinty Connelley, accepts Terry into the family so easily. As historian

Thomas Brown suggests, “Irish-American nationalism had its origins in loneliness, poverty, and prejudice” (333). In all likelihood, Dinty Connelley was a self-made man, who built the Loteda Traction Company through hiring other Irishmen, as evidenced by the fact that both Terry and his father Mike were employed there. According to Matthew Pratt Guterl, many Irishmen deliberately sought each other for personal and business ventures. Guterl claims that “missing their homeland and collectively uncomfortable with the grind of modern industrial America, the Irish in America took comfort in nationalism...that shared belief ultimately gave grass-roots nationalism in the United States a remarkable strength and longevity” (313). The ultimate result of many American Irishmen’s deliberate choice to disregard social divisions between rich and poor members of the Irish community in favor of unifying cultural interests “coincided with the needs of the Irish and Irish immigrant family and imposed strong communal pressures for ethnic solidarity and conformity on ambitious or assimilation-minded individuals” (Miller 107). Based on this information, it is little wonder why Edna rejects her other, wealthier potential suitor in the film, James Stoddard. Not only does Stoddard deviously scheme against her father, but choosing Stoddard over O’Toole would represent Edna’s rejection of her own Irish heritage in favor of Anglo-assimilation. By selecting O’Toole, Edna legitimates the decision for a wealthy daughter of a secret Irishman to choose a poorer husband who is openly Irish, based not only on his personal virtues, but also a shared willingness to embrace their jointly-held Irish heritage.

Hines’s choice to name the Anglo-American villain of the film adaptation Stoddard is most likely deliberate. In 1920, Lothrop Stoddard released his now-seminal text of American scientific racism, *The Rising Tide of the Colored Empires*. F. Scott

Fitzgerald was well aware of Stoddard, and subtly criticized him by having the villain, Tom Buchanan, of his most famous novel, *The Great Gatsby*, to quote from his works as a demonstration of Tom's blatant and unappealing racism. In what may represent a spoke in the wheel of the ouroboric cycle of literary celebrity culture, it is possible that Fitzgerald saw the villain James Stoddard in Hines's film adaptation of his story "The Camel's Back," in 1924, and then included the reference in his novel in 1925, which was in production at the time of *Conductor 1492*'s release. Regardless, it appears from the connection between these film and printed fiction villains, that both Hines and Fitzgerald were in agreement that Lothrop Stoddard's racist politics were worthy of ridicule.

From these inferences, the revisionist message that Hines sends in his film, although thickly veiled in comic farce, is clear for any viewer who chooses to see it. Although it is easy to stereotype the Irish for less desirable behaviors of boisterous drinking and fighting, Irishmen as a race are possibly even more capable of success in business and love than Anglos, due to their propensity for hard work, courage, and resourcefulness, especially when the positive stereotypes of Irish luck, charm, and cunning are added into the mix. The last title card in the film reflects the sentiment that Irishmen should view their cultural heritage as a source of pride, rather than attempt to disguise it so that they can pass into Anglo-American society.

In the card, displayed during the Irish homecoming scene after Terry's marriage to Edna, Mike O'Toole tells the father of his new daughter-in-law, "It's the divil of an Irishman ye are – changing yer name from Dinty to Denman" (*Conductor 1492*). Denman Connelly counters with the accusation to Mike, "Well, at least I didn't change it to Rosenthal!" implying that Mike's choice to pass in America as Jewish was an equal

denial of his Irish heritage (*Conductor 1492*). The two fathers almost come to blows in the final scene and must be calmed down by Terry. However, seconds later, all three are dragged into a mass street scene of fighting Irishmen that fades to black at the end of the film. By following this exchange, indicating that Irishmen should retain their names as a source of ethnic pride with a scene of stereotypical Irish temper and confrontational behavior, Hines was able to articulate his subversive message of pro-Irish equality from behind the protective veil of comedy.

Although less obvious than Hines's display, the ending of Fitzgerald's original story seems to indicate that the author also held pro-Irish sentiments that he could express only through the veil of comedy in his work. Fitzgerald was of Catholic Irish descent himself, through his mother Mollie McQuillan's side of the family. According to Matthew Bruccoli:

Philip F. McQuillan was an exemplar of the American Dream that his grandson, F. Scott Fitzgerald, would respond to complexly in his fiction. Born in County Fermanagh, Ireland, he moved in 1857 from Illinois to St. Paul, Minnesota, where he worked as a bookkeeper. Two years later, at twenty-five, he opened his own small business in the general line. In 1860, he married Louisa Allen, the daughter of an Irish immigrant carpenter. By 1862 he was a grocery wholesaler. Prospering with the post-Civil War expansion of the territory, McQuillan became one of the most substantial businessmen in St. Paul and a benefactor of the Catholic Church.
(*Grandeur* 11)

Interestingly, the course of Scott Fitzgerald's grandfather's life seems to follow that of Hines's character from *Conductor 1492*, as an Irish immigrant who made good, prompting the inference that Hines may have incorporated elements of Fitzgerald's biographical material into his film adaptation. Certainly, there was enough material circulating in the 1920s for Hines to refer to, since Fitzgerald's life story was widely

circulated in magazines during the height of his fame in the mid-1920s, when Hines was making his film.

However, it makes sense that the non-Irish Hines would pick up on the pro-Irish undertones in Fitzgerald's work that the author himself chose to downplay. Fitzgerald's parents married against custom in Baltimore, the hometown of his father, Edward Fitzgerald, rather than in the bride's hometown of St. Paul. Edward Fitzgerald hailed from a long line of Southern-sympathizing Anglo-American former plantation owners that included Francis Scott Key, for whom the author was named. Although both were Catholic, the bigger problem that prevented their marriage in St. Paul was the fact that the McQuillans, although the richest family in town, were Irish. At that time in St. Paul, "the Irish were regarded as common, a step above the Swedes" (*Grandeur* 12). However, by the time of Fitzgerald's birth, all his father's family money was gone, and the young couple raised their son on Mollie's inheritance from her Irish father. This uncertain social position, in which Fitzgerald was a descendant of pedigreed but poverty-stricken American social elite on one side of his family and wealthy but culturally ostracized Irish immigrants on the other, is arguably the root of Fitzgerald's obsession with class structure, which permeates all of his writing. By choosing not to name his Irish cab driver in "The Camel's Back," Fitzgerald was effectively disclaiming his own Irish heritage.

Still, Fitzgerald allows his unnamed cab driver to be the *deus ex venit* (God in the camel) in his short story, "The Camel's Back." The cab driver, not Perry Parkhurst, is the person who finally moves the story to its climax by pointing out that Betty was married to the whole camel, because she is wearing the ring that Perry borrowed from him for the pseudo-ceremony. The cab driver then gives Betty an ultimatum, claiming that "If you

[Perry] don't, I'm a-gonna have the same claim you got to bein' married to her!"

Fitzgerald's choice to let the lower-class cab driver rescue the upper-class Perry ends the story with the two men exchanging "a particularly subtle, esoteric sort of wink that only true camels can understand" (849). This wink means that the Irish cab driver and the Anglo-American Parkhurst are both aware of the fact that the greatest fear of a flirtatious upper-class girl like Betty Medill is to be married to a lower-class man. Thus, their choice to play on Betty's social insecurity serves the dual purpose in the story of giving a teasing girl who trades on her looks to manipulate men her comeuppance, while simultaneously proving that sometimes the lower class members of society, such as the Irish, are the wittiest of all. This wink and nod to flouting social conventions was as far as the still socially insecure Fitzgerald was willing to go in his early story, which was written in 1920 expressly for a decidedly socially conservative publication, *The Saturday Evening Post*.

Perhaps because he was more well-known as a comedian, and consequentially less likely to be taken seriously in his social commentary, Johnny Hines was able to bring out more pro-immigrant sentiment in his film adaptation than Fitzgerald was willing in his original story. The format of silent film allowed Hines to incorporate many sight gags that played on commonly held Irish stereotypes that Fitzgerald, in the print medium, would have been unable to employ. These sight gags allow Hines to draw audiences in, by fulfilling their anti-Irish expectations, and then subversively direct them to root for Terry, Mike, and Denham/Dinty when they defeat the evil Anglo-Americans Stoddard and Langford. In one particularly complex scene near the end of the film, Terry returns to Ireland with the gift of dozens of pairs of boxing gloves that he tosses out to his Irish

friends, while the title card reads, “Show your nationality!” (*Conductor 1492*). While on the surface level it is easy to read the rest of the scene, in which all the men spontaneously burst into a massive street-fighting free-for-all with their new boxing gloves, as cheap Irish stereotype exploitation played for laughs, a deeper meaning is present for those who look for it.

By giving them boxing gloves to fight with, Terry effectively tells his countrymen that, if they can learn to control their supposedly fiery temperaments, they can then turn brawling into a sport. In the 1920s, Irish-American boxers, such as Jack Dempsey and Gene Tunney, promoted Irish equality in American society to a generation of young boys, who regarded them as heroes. Beyond sports, Terry’s gift of boxing gloves could be read metaphorically, suggesting that Irish courage, softened by the temperance of self-restraint, could lead to financial and social success in America. In other words, when Terry’s friends ask him, “Terry lad – What did ye bring us from Americky?” the answer is actually that Terry brings back from America a new sense of why they should be proud of their cultural heritage. Just like the Irish doll that his father Mike gives him, which contains the stock certificates that eventually earn Terry his fortune, the average Irishman holds within himself virtues of determination, ingenuity, and wit that can make his fortune in a new world. Hines’s ending message in the film seems to be that with time, grit, and a little Irish luck, any new immigrant can write his own Horatio Alger tale.

Fitzgerald, an author normally given to various recreations of the Horatio Alger mythos in his fiction, was most likely still too insecure in his own cultural heritage at this point in his career to take up the cause of Irish nationalism that Johnny Hines found lying dormant in his original text. Although in his later career Fitzgerald would often create

fictional alter-egos of himself with Irish names, such as in his story for *Esquire*, “Financing Finnegan” (1938), the young author was not ready to openly disclose such bold connections to his Irish heritage in 1920, when he wrote “The Camel’s Back.” Instead, with Hines’s revisionist adaptation, *Conductor 1492*, the beginning of a pattern emerges that exist up to present day, of filmmakers exploring in greater depth the latent social and ethnic issues in Fitzgerald’s fiction that the author could not express explicitly in his original works, due to a hostile cultural climate.

The Great Gatsby (1949)

The second adaptation of Fitzgerald’s novel, *The Great Gatsby*, was made for Paramount in 1949 by Elliot Nugent. Blending elements of 1940s film noir and women’s film with his need to conform to the Hays Code, Nugent created a movie in the interpretive style that reflects the historical, social, and cultural sensibilities of his era. However, even though Nugent successfully incorporates some elements of Fitzgerald’s biography into the text, it still strays from the author’s major themes in an effort to conform with pressures of censorship and genre.

In his introduction to *The Great Gatsby*, Matthew Bruccoli writes:

The Great Gatsby does not proclaim the nobility of the human spirit; it is not politically correct; it does not reveal how to solve the problems of life; it delivers no fashionable or comforting messages. It is just a masterpiece. (vii)

Viewers of Elliot Nugent’s film adaptation of *The Great Gatsby* must consider strange Bruccoli’s astute observation about Fitzgerald’s reluctance to moralize about the novel. From its opening scene, during which Nick Carraway reads a Bible verse inscribed on

Gatsby's headstone, to its closing sequence, in which Gatsby makes an unequivocal confession of his life's sins, Nugent's adaptation for Paramount screens like a morality play condemning the sins of greed and adultery. Of course, this assessment of a character who sought to acquire the married woman he loved through accumulating an impressive amount of wealth first would have been well-accepted in the 1940s, when Hollywood's morality was still heavily regulated by the Hays Code. However, this take on *Gatsby* is almost completely inconsistent with the artistic vision of Fitzgerald's original tale, which sought to present the actions of the characters living in materialistic and promiscuous modern times without passing judgment upon them.

Nugent's *Gatsby* suffers from not only an overdose of Hays Code-inspired middle-American morality, but also from the pressures of genre restrictions as well. As a director of numerous films noir, Nugent approached *Gatsby* with the apparent intention of emphasizing the gangster elements of the story, depicting Jay Gatsby as a thinly-veiled, trench-coated mobster, Jordan Baker as overt *femme fatale*, and Daisy Buchanan as a damsel in distress. This choice to remain within the confines of genre runs counter to Fitzgerald's original depiction of Gatsby as a complex man who defies typecasting as a man from modest means who turns to crime for an easy livelihood. Whereas Fitzgerald's original Gatsby shuns connections with his shady past, Nugent's Gatsby at first embraces and then confronts his self-perceived moral shortcomings. This depiction is wholly inconsistent with the general attitude of denial and avoidance with which Fitzgerald's original character dealt with his history, and represents a second thematic departure in Nugent's film.

The film also alters Fitzgerald's original depictions of female characters. In the novel, both Daisy and Jordan struggle with the confines of their roles as women in the 1920s, a decade which paradoxically allowed women more sexual freedoms, but still left them financially dependent on men for their livelihoods. Fitzgerald's seems sympathetic to the condition of women in the 1920s. The author presents Gatsby as a potential protector and independence-facilitator for Daisy. By earning enough money to give Daisy the choice to be with the man she would have naturally selected (had financial security not been her primary concern) Gatsby offers Daisy a way out of her life of *de facto* marital prostitution.

After living for several years with his wife, Zelda, a very independent-minded woman, Fitzgerald must have surmised from experience that sexual liberties gained in the 1920s by women did not equate to equal treatment in the job market or social circles. Due to society's slow progress toward occupational equality, the socially independent flapper still remained financially dependent on a benevolent and open-minded man who was fiscally stable in order to survive. However, the Nugent adaptation removes Fitzgerald's realistic approach to women's inequality in the 1920s, by making the characters of Daisy Buchanan and Jordan Baker behave like females straight out of a post-WWII women's film.

Although Nugent's intent to show strong, decisive women characters is honorable, it is anachronistic when placed within the 1920s setting of his adaptation. Their strong-shouldered costumes and quick-witted quips inspired more by Bette Davis's fierce independence than Zelda Sayre Fitzgerald's feisty vulnerability. In sum, Nugent's choice to employ a revisionist strategy by adapting *Gatsby* for the screen as a cautionary

moral tale, with flavors of 1940s film noir and women's cinema, creates an entertaining film; however, it is almost completely inconsistent with F. Scott Fitzgerald's original artistic vision.

Nugent's adaptation of *Gatsby* opens with a scene of a middle-aged Nick Carraway and his wife visiting Gatsby's graveside. Nick notes that the tombstone is oddly simple, given Gatsby's tendency toward making grand gestures, and that it has a Bible verse inscribed upon it. The verse, Proverbs 14:12, reads, "There is a way that seems right to a man, but in the end it leads to death" (*NIV*). The addition of this Biblical verse sets the moralistic tone that persists to the end of the film. This choice is a departure from Fitzgerald's natural tendency, as a lapsed Catholic, to shy away from sacred quotation in his works, preferring instead only to have "his secretary read the Bible to him – not for divine inspiration, but because he admired the rhythms of the King James Version" (*Grandeur* 472). The inclusion of this opening Biblical reference begs further inquiry as to its possible purpose.

The answer to this question most probably lies in Nugent's effort to make a moral statement condemning the hedonistic culture of the 1920s. In the voiceover immediately following his recitation of the Bible verse inscribed on Gatsby's tomb, Nick Carraway describes the drunken excesses of Prohibition, while a montage of violent gangster images rolls across the screen. This montage ends with Gatsby, attired in a trench coat and fedora, walking toward the camera while looking directly into the lens as Nick concludes, "Out of the twenties and all it entailed came Jay Gatsby, who built a dark empire because he carried a dream in his heart" (Nugent). The overall effect of this opening sequence is to cement in the viewer's mind that Gatsby is, first and foremost, a

criminal. Even if he committed his crimes in furtherance of great ideals, those efforts were tarnished by his involvement in illicit activity.

Most likely, Nugent's choice to criticize, rather than glorify, Gatsby's rise to wealth and power came from an effort to tell Fitzgerald's original story in a manner that still conformed to the Hays Code. Initially enacted in 1930 by the Motion Picture Association as a self-regulatory attempt to curb public outcry against alleged immorality in cinema, the Code became the most effective means of imposing middle-class Protestant Christian morality ever introduced into American popular culture. As Michael Brooke states in an article for *BFI Screenonline*:

The Code was based on three general principles:

- No picture shall be produced that will lower the moral standards of those who see it. Hence the sympathy of the audience should never be thrown to the side of crime, wrongdoing, evil or sin.
- Correct standards of life, subject only to the requirements of drama and entertainment, shall be presented.
- Law, natural or human, shall not be ridiculed, nor shall sympathy be created for its violation ("The Hays Code").

These three regulatory restrictions made it virtually impossible for a director to adapt Fitzgerald's central theme: that love can cause a man to commit shameful or illegal acts that normally would be regrettable. However, if those acts are committed with honorable intent, they might be considered justifiable and even pitiable if the moral compromise is ultimately made in vain. In order to create a film based on this questionable modern theme, while still conforming to the Hays Code, Nugent had to find another villain in the story besides Jay Gatsby upon whom he could turn the eye of judgment.

As a result, Dan Cody, a minor character in Fitzgerald's novel, becomes the villain of Nugent's film adaptation. Cody's character in the film is quite clearly intended

to be a visual interpretation of Satan. The old man has an angular face, sinister laugh, and pointed beard, needing only horns and a pitchfork to complete his devilish depiction. Although in the novel, Cody is described by Fitzgerald as a “pioneer debauchee who...brought back to the eastern seaboard the savage violence of the frontier brothel and saloon” the author does not claim that Gatsby wholly adopted all of Cody’s vices without retaining some of his own innate Midwestern virtues (*Gatsby* 106). Instead, Fitzgerald seems to suggest that Gatsby studied the ways in which Cody made money and the ways in which he used it to acquire desirable things, but rejected some of Cody’s other bad habits, such as drinking to excess. In short, although Gatsby “filled out to the substantiality of a man” while under Cody’s tutelage, this coloring of character was not solely shaded with the dark tint of wholly accepted immorality (*Gatsby* 107).

However, the nuances of this blended sensibility of mentoring by both positive and negative example are dropped in Nugent’s film adaptation, most likely because only more clear-cut morality would have satisfied the Hays Code censors. Instead, Dan Cody is depicted as a completely evil entity, who seeks to tempt young Gatsby into a depraved lifestyle of lust and money. Ella Kaye, Dan Cody’s mistress who is barely mentioned in Fitzgerald’s original novel, appears in Nugent’s film as a devious *femme fatale* who foreshadows Gatsby’s later, purer love, Daisy Faye. Cody promotes Gatsby’s flirtations with Ella, knowing all the while that Ella will reject Gatsby because of his poverty.

In a manner that recalls Mrs. Havisham’s temptation of Philip Pirrip with her niece Stella in *Great Expectations*, Dan Cody appears to revel in the fact that Ella will break the heart of young Jimmy Gatz and harden him into the corrupt adult rum-runner, Jay Gatsby. The temptation culminates when Cody addresses Gatsby from his deathbed,

saying, “You never could lay a finger on her, could you Jimmy? Old Dan’s a devil, but old Dan’s always right” (Nugent). From this claim, Cody wants Gatsby to surmise that he will never win the steadfast love of a woman without money. In this film adaptation, Gatsby spends most of the remainder of the film acting in conformity with this belief; however, in Fitzgerald’s novel, the author seems to suggest that Gatsby’s heart was never so completely hardened, even after Daisy’s final betrayal. For Fitzgerald, a man’s moral code was never so clearly defined as it is in Nugent’s film.

Possibly the most telling influences of the Christian morality inserted into Nugent’s film through efforts to comply with the Hays Code occur in the *mea culpa* statements made by each character. Although in Fitzgerald’s original, Tom Buchanan makes a half-hearted effort to confess his past wrongs in the confrontation scene at the Waldorf Hotel, his plea for redemption seems annulled by the new sin he commits in the end of the novel, when he fails to prevent Wilson from killing Gatsby. In contrast, the Nugent film shows Tom not only repentant during the Waldorf scene, but also making repeated phone calls in an attempt to warn Gatsby that the murderous Wilson is approaching. Daisy also appears more morally straightforward in Nugent’s cinematic version. Whereas in Fitzgerald’s original, Daisy is only able to say that she “can’t help what’s past” and that she “loved [Gatsby] too” throughout her marriage to Tom, in the film version, her choice must be more unequivocal (*Gatsby* 140). According to the Hays Code, a married woman could not carry on an emotional affair with another man; therefore, Daisy must make a decisive choice in favor of Gatsby that is completely out of character with her previous emotional uncertainty about the situation. Last, and perhaps most tellingly, Gatsby makes a confession of his past sins saying, “I’ve beaten a lot of

raps in my time, but I'll take this one. I owe it to a kid named Jimmy Gatz" just before being shot in the back by Wilson (Nugent). Gatsby's confession gives him a moment of redemption just before death, which in turn provides the resolution of justifiable punishment necessary for Gatsby to emerge as a pitiable and tragic figure under the Hays Code.

Taken altogether, these confessional moments added in Nugent's film could be read as an encroachment of Christian morality upon Fitzgerald's theme of reserved judgment. Although Fitzgerald was confirmed as a Catholic, he did not actively practice his religion. Therefore, it is safe to assume that the confessional endings for each character's storyline in the film were additions inconsistent with Fitzgerald's original, which should be read as flaws in the adaptation.

Perhaps compliance with the Hays Code was only part of the reason that led Elliot Nugent to stage his adaptation of *The Great Gatsby* as a film noir. As a veteran of the Paramount studio contract system since 1925, Nugent would have been well aware that the standard film noir formula, of a criminal who strays but wins back audience sympathy through a redemptive final confession, would have been enough to satisfy Hays Office censors. Certainly, Nugent was eager to complete his adaptation as safely as possible, since he confided in a friend that he feared he would not be able to do justice to the book and would instead "betray Fitzgerald as well as my friends at Paramount" with his inadequacy as a director (qtd. in Phillips 116).

The film's star, Alan Ladd, was also personally invested in the film. Ladd, a self-described "Okie kid" whose life had been a sort of Hollywood Horatio Alger tale, impressed the adaptation's co-scriptwriter and producer, Richard Maibaum, as perfect for

the role of Gatsby when he “proudly displayed his wardrobe, particularly his collection of fancy shirts” to his future employer upon their first meeting (Phillips 117). Both Nugent and Ladd suffered from alcoholism and persistent depression as adults, stemming from fears of social inadequacy related to their childhoods, which coincided perfectly with parallel themes in Fitzgerald’s life and the *Gatsby* novel.

Considering these facts, it comes as no surprise that, in the opening scene of the adaptation, Nugent set the beginning date of Gatsby’s life as 1896 (a birth year that Nugent shared with Fitzgerald) and the ending date of Gatsby’s life in 1928, the year that Fitzgerald first came to Hollywood. In producing *Gatsby* as a film noir with a redemptive message, Nugent and Ladd ouroborically joined their psychological histories within Fitzgerald’s circle, creating a composite Hollywood myth of Gatsby. The hope in this film adaptation seems to be that, by making Jay Gatsby socially acceptable, Nugent could save not only his own reputation, but also Ladd’s and Fitzgerald’s.

The drawback of conforming to film noir conventions as a potential device of character redemption, of course, is that at least one of the female characters must be made into a *femme fatale*. Jordan Baker is the character who is played to fit this stereotype most closely. In a sharp departure from Fitzgerald’s novel, Nugent’s film makes Jordan the active agent in setting up the fateful meeting between Gatsby and Daisy at Nick’s house, without Nick ever being aware of the situation at all until their after arrival. Unbeknownst to Nick, Jordan has made a deal with Gatsby to arrange the meeting, in exchange for his new Dusenbergs automobile. When Nick chides Jordan for assisting in what will inevitably become an adulterous affair, she replies that she will do whatever she pleases, regardless of morality, “when it is worth my while” (Nugent). By making Jordan into a

woman who endangers men's morality, Nugent conforms to the conventions of film noir by transforming her into a typical *femme fatale*. However, the tradeoff is that Jordan lost the redeemable qualities that would make her a fitting romantic interest for Nick. Thus, this plotline is dropped from Fitzgerald's original novel in the film.

Jordan Baker could also be characterized as a "superwoman" typical of 1940s films. According to Molly Haskell, a superwoman "has a high degree of intelligence or imagination, but instead of exploiting her femininity, adopts male characteristics in order to enjoy male prerogatives, or merely to survive" (505). Although Fitzgerald's original portrayal of Jordan paints her as a coy and cunning professional golf cheater, she does not engage in the same degree of emotional espionage as in Nugent's film. Also, the novel version of Jordan is much more of a reserved romantic than her film counterpart, who makes a suggestive innuendo out of Nick's attempt to correct what he considers to be her lax morality. When he learns that Jordan has arranged for the meeting, he scolds her, saying "I'd like to take you over my knee," to which Jordan replies "Why darling! Any time, any place!" (Nugent). Jordan's playful naughtiness would have been innocuous enough to slip past Hays Office censors, but still enough to place her firmly in the role of a 1940s superwoman, who took charge of her sexuality, rather than in the position of Fitzgerald's flapper heroines, who remained less secure at the time. Nugent, as a veteran director of romantic comedies such as the Bob Hope vehicles *The Cat and the Canary* (1939) and *My Favorite Brunette* (1947) would have been well aware of exactly how far he could push the envelope of flirtation without censorship. He successfully maneuvers Jordan's character along these lines, safely within film conventions, without ever mentioning her sexual liaison with Nick, which is detailed in Fitzgerald's original novel.

In contrast, Daisy Buchanan, as characterized in Nugent's film, is also a woman very much in sync with the film era of the 1940s; however, she bears little emotional resemblance to the Daisy of Fitzgerald's original novel. Most critics agree that Fitzgerald's original Daisy was modeled after his wife, Zelda Sayre Fitzgerald, a vivacious yet emotionally volatile young woman during the time in Fitzgerald's life in which he wrote *The Great Gatsby*. Although this vulnerability is shown through Daisy's continuous self-doubt and second-guessing in the original novel, Nugent's film adaptation allows no such complex waffling. Instead, Daisy is set to be the damsel in distress in Nugent's film noir version of *Gatsby*, who must be rescued from society when her decisive resolve proves to be an insufficient weapon in an unfair world.

Molly Haskell describes this character type in 1940s cinema as the "superfemale," saying that she is "a woman who, while exceedingly feminine and flirtatious, is too ambitious and intelligent for the docile role society has decreed she play. She is uncomfortable, but not uncomfortable enough to rebel completely; her circumstances are too pleasurable" (505). Evidence of Daisy's conformity to this 1940s character type can be seen by comparing the Waldorf confrontation scene to the post-accident reconciliation scene in Nugent's film. In the Waldorf scene, Daisy demonstrates the nerves of steel that Fitzgerald's original heroine did not possess, when she fires back at Tom after he threatens to take custody of their daughter, saying "That's all I need, That's the final thing! I'm leaving you, and nothing in the world can force me back" (Nugent). Interestingly, even though Daisy is leaving her husband for another man in this scene, her conduct would still be within the bounds of the Hays Code. She has responded justifiably

to protect her child and sever a manipulative relationship, rather than carry on with a secret affair and emotionally desert her daughter.

However, when faced with the setback of her accidental killing of Myrtle in Gatsby's car, Nugent's Daisy retreats just as decisively back to the safety of Tom's money and power. In her scene with Tom back at their home, Daisy refutes her earlier declaration of love for Gatsby, saying to Tom, "I'll do whatever you say, whatever it takes" because she thinks Tom's plan to pin the killing on Gatsby will make a stronger defense than Gatsby's earlier agreement to take the blame willingly. Oddly, this reversal ends up with Daisy once again in technically safe moral ground under the Hays Code, since she is rejecting a potential lover and returning to her husband and home. After looking through the window and seeing Daisy definitively betray him, it is little wonder that Nugent's Gatsby comes to the cynical conclusion of so many hard-boiled film noir protagonists, when he asks Nick in the final scene, "Look at what I've done to myself and everyone else to get where I am, and for what?" (Nugent). For this Gatsby, there is no moral uncertainty in which he can find comfort. Betrayed by his mentor and the love of his life, he is prepared to make a confession and die. The result is that Nugent's film reaches a satisfying resolution that is consistent with the conventions of film noir and the Hays Code.

Still, although Nugent's film is successful as an independent work that provides adequate closure and symmetry with the themes that it chooses to introduce, it fails as an adaptation of Fitzgerald's original work because it strays from his central message. In love, there is no moral right or wrong. Just as in the acquisition and dissipation of a fortune, there is a natural ebb and flow to human emotions, and many more shades of

moralistic gray than the black and white of Hays Code era film noir could delineate. Perhaps this is why Fitzgerald writes that Gatsby's last thoughts were not definitive moral statements, but instead ruminations on lost desires in "a new world, material without being real, where poor ghosts, breathing dreams like air, drifted fortuitously about" (169). For the romantically-minded Fitzgerald, love moved like the breeze through an Aeolian harp, ever-changing and uncontrollable, but consistently self-aware.

The Last Time I Saw Paris (1954)

Richard Brooks's *The Last Time I Saw Paris* (1954) represents an important milestone in cinematic adaptations of F. Scott Fitzgerald's works. Brooks' adaptation of Fitzgerald's "Babylon Revisited" (1931) displays the first appearance of what is referred to in this dissertation as the "Hemingerald phenomenon." The term refers to the tendency of filmmakers, from the 1950s onward, to incorporate portions of the biographical lives of both F. Scott Fitzgerald and Ernest Hemingway into works by either author. Most often, their lives are used to fill in gaps left by chronological shifts in the time setting between the original print work and its adaptation. When performed well, as in *The Last Time I Saw Paris*, the additional information provided by the Hemingerald phenomenon can both enhance the resonance of the original story by giving studious audience members further literary dimensions to explore and also increase popular audience appeal by building upon the familiar mythology of a similar author.

Both "Babylon Revisited" and *The Last Time I Saw Paris* begin with the same opening scene. Charlie Wills (or "Wales," as he is named in Fitzgerald's original) stops

in at a familiar bar in Paris to gather courage by talking to old friends before heading on to his sister-in-law's home, where he hopes to recover custody of his young daughter. Here, in this early scene, Brooks sets the stage for his incorporation of biographical elements about Hemingway. In Fitzgerald's original story, the bar is one of Fitzgerald's favorite real-life watering holes, the Ritz. However, in Brooks's film, the name of the bar has been changed to the Dingo, a familiar Hemingway haunt, where the authors were first introduced to one another (Baker 145). This subtle change may be read as a gentle introduction to the concept that the two authors' lives will both be incorporated into the film.

Many other bits of Hemingway lore find their way into Brooks's film as well. For example, Charlie Wills begins the film as a low-paid reporter for the fictitious *Europa* news service, who later transfers to the *Stars and Stripes* in an effort to earn more money. Since Fitzgerald never worked as a reporter while in Europe and was fairly wealthy when he arrived there, the source of this information is most likely to have come from Hemingway's biography. Hemingway worked as a foreign correspondent for the *Toronto Star* upon first arriving in Paris and later, during WWII, wrote as a correspondent for the *Stars and Stripes*. Also, Hemingway and his first wife Hadley lived in an inexpensive carpenter's loft over a sawmill, which was the best that they could afford on their small incomes (Baker 122).

The addition of Hemingway's biographical material makes sense for several reasons. First, by moving the film's time setting to begin at the end of WWII, rather than in the early years of the Great Depression, the writers have no authentic biographical material from Fitzgerald's life to draw upon from that era. Fitzgerald died in 1940.

Therefore, the additional material to flesh out an updated adaptation of the story must be drawn from other sources, and the life of an author closely related to Fitzgerald in the public eye is a logical choice of inspiration. Second, inclusion of the Hemingway material would have broadened audience appeal for male viewers, since it allowed for scenes of relatable manly pursuits, such as serving in the military, arm wrestling, auto racing, and horse track betting, that were not found in the original story nor were parts of Fitzgerald's everyday life. Last, adapting the short story for screen necessitated the creation of a back story for Helen Wills, Charlie's flamboyant wife, played by Elizabeth Taylor in the film. Alluding to Hemingway opened up the possibility to draw upon worldly female characters from his early career, such as Brett Ashley and Catherine Barkley, as more rational bases for a female lead played by Taylor, who would have found little to work with as a Zelda clone or a Southern belle in the Daisy Buchanan mold.

Brooks also drew upon Fitzgerald's life and works to fill in the gaps left in the transition from printed story to film. On the most elementary level, changes made by Fitzgerald himself for the never-filmed screenplay *Cosmopolitan* (1940), can be found in Brooks's film. In the *Cosmopolitan* screenplay, Fitzgerald changed the name of Charlie and Helen's daughter, Honoria, to Victoria. This change reflected a changed loyalty in Fitzgerald's friendships. At the time he wrote "Babylon Revisited," Fitzgerald and Zelda were very close friends with Gerald and Sara Murphy, a couple they often vacationed with in Europe. The Murphys' daughter, Honoria, was the initial namesake of Fitzgerald's character. However, by the late 1930s, one of Fitzgerald's closest friends was the screenwriter Budd Schulberg. After Schulberg's first daughter, Victoria, was

born, Fitzgerald changed the character's name, telling Schulberg, "When she's old enough to understand, you can tell her that the little girl in the movie, who may be played by Shirley Temple, was named for her!" (*Babylon Screenplay* 11). Beyond these rudimentary updates, Fitzgerald made an almost complete overhaul of the storyline in his own adaptation of "Babylon Revisited" for the screen.

In Fitzgerald's screenplay, the emphasis was not on Charlie Wales, the reformed alcoholic father who feels remorse for his wife's early death and who longs to reconnect with the daughter he has lost because she represents his "only chance for a home" ("Babylon" 332). For Fitzgerald, the Charlie Wales of his original creation was a way of working out his greatest fear as a father, the possibility of losing custody of his daughter Scottie to Zelda's sister Rosalind, who blamed him for Zelda's initial nervous breakdown. Fitzgerald's screenplay shifts the focus away from the guilt-ridden father and highlights instead the viewpoint of the daughter, Victoria, while adding a sensationalist murder-for-hire subplot along the way. After reworking his story as a star vehicle for Shirley Temple, Fitzgerald wrote in his notes accompanying the screenplay:

This is an attempt to tell a story from a child's point of view *without* sentimentality...So who ever deals with this script is implored to remember that it is a *dramatic piece* – not a homey family story. Above all things, Victoria is a *child* – not Daddy's little helper who knows all the answers. Another point: in the ordinary sense, this picture has no more moral than *Rebecca* or *The Shop Around the Corner* – though one can draw from it any moral one wishes about the life of the Wall Street rich of a decade ago. It had better follow the example of *Hamlet*, which has had a hundred morals read into it, all of them different – let it stand on its own bottom. (*Babylon Screenplay* 190)

From this note and the author's extreme willingness to alter the plot, it is easy to discern that Fitzgerald would have been content for his original story to be adapted in any way

that maintained a sense of dramatic tension while pursuing a storyline that did not attempt to moralize the situation or make the child annoyingly precocious.

The film that Brooks finally created, after purchasing the rights from original producer Lester Cowan and rewriting Fitzgerald's screenplay with the help of Julius Epstein and Philip Epstein, appears to satisfy most, but not all, of Fitzgerald's intentions. In the film created from the Brooks and Epstein twins' screenplay, Charlie Wills's struggles with his own memories create the primary conflict, with the backstory of his history with Helen told as support in a lengthy flashback that takes up most of the film's running time. The flashback sequence contains many details from Fitzgerald's actual life, including his efforts to become a writer of wealth and renown in order to acquire and hold the attentions of the woman he loves. Although this storyline would be familiar to almost anyone with even cursory knowledge of Fitzgerald's romance with his wife, Zelda, it is not included in the original text of "Babylon Revisited." Since the story remains silent on the issue of how Charlie and Helen initially met and fell in love, the decision to supplement with information from Fitzgerald folklore seems logical.

Also, the film contains many lines that allude to other biographical information and works by Fitzgerald, demonstrating that the screenwriters diligently researched their subject matter. One early sequence in the film shows Charlie bailing Helen out of jail after she was arrested for jumping in a Paris fountain. Helen defends her actions by saying that she did it for fun, and Charlie accuses her of doing it because she wanted "to get into print" (*Paris*). Biographies of Fitzgerald and Zelda contain numerous accounts of Zelda jumping into swimming pools and fountains for attention. This scene is followed by Charlie's retrieval of Victoria from the room over the Dingo Bar, where Helen has left

her waiting. The little girl has fallen asleep in her ballet costume, and upon waking immediately wants to demonstrate her dancing to Charlie. However, Victoria's ballet skills are not very good, and she falls down.

This juxtaposition of Helen, who represented Fitzgerald's wife Zelda in the original story, pulling a crazy stunt for attention, followed by a ballet sequence should not be read as a mere coincidence. In real life, Zelda's first mental breakdown was brought about after she failed to become a ballerina in Paris at thirty, an achievement which she had hoped would make her Fitzgerald's creative equal. Little nuances like these create a sense of Fitzgerald's presence within the film as a hypertext, which reflect an effort by its creators to maintain a consistent artistic vision with the original story and its author.

In a later scene during which Helen and Charlie argue about whether to return to America to save their marriage, Helen says "Charlie, let's go back, before we crack up. If you love me, let's go back home" (*Paris*). This statement may be read as an allusion to Fitzgerald's series of magazine essays detailing his alcoholic breakdown in the 1930s, which were later collected in *The Crack-Up* (1945). The devolution of Charlie and Helen's marriage that follows, including the drinking, irresponsible spending sprees, and suspicions of infidelity, screen like a lightly fictionalized version of Fitzgerald and Zelda's relationship from 1924 onward. While Fitzgerald was writing *The Great Gatsby*, Zelda allegedly had an affair with French aviator Edouard Jozan (*Grandeur* 195). In Zelda's personal writings and in her semi-autobiographical novel, *Save Me the Waltz* (1932), Zelda denies that the affair ever escalated beyond serious flirtation (Cline 149-50).

On Fitzgerald's first trip to Hollywood, he began a similar relationship with the young actress Lois Moran, who became the inspiration for Fitzgerald's novel *Tender is the Night* (1934). In the novel, Moran is the model for Rosemary Hoyt, a young actress with whom Fitzgerald's alter-ego, psychiatrist Dick Diver, falls in love. However, their relationship does not become a sexual affair until after Dick's wife Nicole leaves him for a young playboy Tommy Barban. The Nicole/Barban plot is generally believed to be Fitzgerald's response to Zelda's Jozan affair, and the manner in which it was characterized in *Save Me the Waltz*. In real life, Fitzgerald was apparently much more interested in Moran than she was in him, going so far as to screen test in an effort to be cast in a film with her, but nothing ever came of it (*Grandeur* 255). Although Zelda was angry and suspicious as Fitzgerald had been about her affair with Jozan, both Fitzgerald and Moran claim that the affair was never consummated (*Grandeur* 255). The tension from these events, and the novels that resulted from them, culminated in the marriage between Fitzgerald and Zelda becoming "openly competitive." Zelda, believing herself to be the loser in their battle of wills, "resented the arrangement" (*Grandeur* 259-60).

The Moran and Jozan affairs became so much a part of the public consciousness surrounding the Fitzgeralds and their opposing novels that information about them appears to have provided a substantial amount of the plot for *The Last Time I Saw Paris*. In the film, Helen begins a serious flirtation with playboy tennis bum Paul Lane, portrayed by a young Roger Moore, while Charlie is working on his third unsuccessful novel. To retaliate, Charlie escalates his relationship with a wealthy, frequently-divorced socialite, Lorraine Quarl, played by a perfectly cast Eva Gabor. Although the Lorraine character appears briefly in "Babylon Revisited," their relationship is greatly expanded in

the film adaptation. Also, their exploit is changed from a drunken, late-night ride on a three-wheeled butcher's bicycle in the story to a more glamorous cross-country auto race at Monte Carlo in the film. These changes most likely reflect an effort by the filmmakers to create an environment of dangerous excitement, rather than petty foolishness, to explain why Charlie would be enticed into an affair with Lorraine. Such dramatic enhancements seem to be in accord with Fitzgerald's original intentions for a non-moralizing adaptation of the story and should be read as acceptable plot alterations.

The Paul Lane counterplot is completely absent from "Babylon Revisited," and instead parallels the real-life Zelda/Jozan affair. In the film, Charlie gets drunk and starts a fistfight over Helen with Paul at the Dingo, and has to be carried out. This action coincides with similar events in Fitzgerald's life, during which "Zelda egged him into fighting" knowing that Fitzgerald, after "a certain stage of inebriation, was ready to fight anyone. He believed he was – or should be – a proficient boxer. He wasn't, and his saloon brawls usually resulted in beatings for him" (*Grandeur* 258). This atmosphere of mutual agitation between Charlie and Helen mirrors the emotional climate of Fitzgerald and Zelda's relationship. In both the original story and the film, this conflict results in Charlie, who is passed out in a drunken stupor, accidentally locking Helen out in the snow. Helen subsequently catches pneumonia, which complicates her heart condition, and she dies. Helen's death scene in the hospital is especially moving, and provides a reasonable visualization of events only alluded to in "Babylon Revisited." For viewers familiar with the bedside vigils that Fitzgerald kept while Zelda underwent psychiatric hospitalization, the scene provides additional emotional resonance because of its biographical origins.

The interpretive style used in updating the time frame in “Babylon Revisited” from WWI to WWII in its adaptation, *The Last Time I Saw Paris*, has been highly criticized by Fitzgerald scholars. As Gene Phillips notes, the film “was deprived of the rich ambiance of Paris after World War I, which permeated the short story, and since the movie was likewise deprived of the hard-edged conclusion of Fitzgerald’s original story, it was written off by many viewers as a classy contemporary soap opera” (*Fitzgerald* 61). Phillips’s criticism of the film’s updated setting shows a bias toward the faithfulness side of the film adaptation debate. Although he acknowledges that it seems “logically and artistically right that the scriptwriters should follow Fitzgerald’s lead in utilizing further details from the author’s life, over and above those which he had himself already put into the story, in order to flesh out the screenplay,” Phillips fails to recognize that such incorporation showed an unprecedented attention to the careful balance of preserving Fitzgerald’s original themes and tone while simultaneously reaching out to potential audience members who might have been alienated by a historical piece.

Although Phillips is correct to point out that the altered ending of the film adaptation veers perilously off-course toward exactly the sort of homey family story that Fitzgerald warned against, careful scrutiny of the final lines of Fitzgerald’s original piece indicate that Brooks made the best concession possible to accommodate studio demands. Contrary to Phillips’s reading of “Babylon Revisited,” the story ends, not with Charlie’s request for custody being irrevocably denied, but instead with Charlie being told by his brother-in-law “to let it slide for six months” before approaching the issue with Marion again (“Babylon” 341). Afterward, Charlie leaves, thinking to himself in the story’s closing lines, “He would come back someday; they couldn’t make him pay forever. But

he wanted his child, and nothing was much good now...He was absolutely sure Helen wouldn't have wanted him to be so alone" ("Babylon" 341). From these lines, it is easy to see how the adapters of "Babylon Revisited" could write into the screenplay a scene like the final one in the film, which allows Charlie to reclaim Victoria after Marion has a change of heart. Brooks and the Epstein brothers simply had to abbreviate the six months time span into a few days, before giving Charlie the resolution of reestablishing custody with Victoria.

Choosing to put the phrase "Helen wouldn't have wanted you to be so alone" into Marion's final lines, rather than in Charlie's mind, simply reworks Fitzgerald's original sentiment in a more positive light that would have been suitable for the tastes of MGM executives (*Paris*). Phillips makes a pertinent point in his book on Fitzgerald's films:

The compromised ending of *Paris* was symptomatic of the fact that, as Richard Brooks states, many studio executives at the time had a predilection for sentimental endings of this sort. When he tried to tone down the sentimentality that tinged movies like *Paris* while he was making them, he was resisted by the front office. Studio boss Louis B. Mayer told him, You seem like a nice fellow, but if you could only make our kind of movies it would be much better. I can't blame them for their attitude, says Brooks, but he concedes, I should just not have gone along with it, when it came to sending the audience away with a smile rather than a tear at the end of a picture like *Paris*. (60)

However, the process of making movies is usually a careful dance of giving concessions and making stands. *The Last Time I Saw Paris* is a testament to how that process can sometimes bring out the best in actors, authors, and screenwriters to establish balanced creative command.

Charlie Wills was the last role Van Johnson played under contract to MGM. Signed to the studio in 1943, Johnson rose to prominence after a severe car accident left

him ineligible for military service, but still available to pick up many roles after MGM's usual leading men left to serve in WWII. Johnson's blonde, all-American good looks and affable charm were well-suited to the light romantic pictures of his early career. His easy-going personality was also well-suited to the studio system. Regarding MGM as "one big happy family and a little kingdom," Johnson flourished in the studio system environment, saying "Everything was provided for us, from singing lessons to barbells. All we had to do was inhale, exhale and be charming. I used to dread leaving the studio to go out into the real world, because to me the studio was the real world" (Harmetz, "Johnson"). Perhaps because of his complacency about his role as an MGM actor, Johnson never strove for a role that especially showcased his talents.

However, with *Paris*, Johnson seemed to tap into his closely guarded personal life to create one of his best performances. By 1954, Johnson's personal reputation was very similar to that of Fitzgerald's at the time "Babylon Revisited" was written. Both were witty, Mid-Western men of fair complexion and high ambition, whose commercial appeal was beginning to fade with their looks as the teenagers who had idolized them grew up. Also, both men had a history of alcohol abuse in their families. Fitzgerald and Zelda's drinking destroyed their marriage and made life difficult for their only daughter, Scottie. In contrast, Johnson's mother was an abusive alcoholic who divorced his father when her only son was still a toddler (Harmetz, "Johnson"). Perhaps this is why Johnson seems so adept at playing up the sense of psychological despair experienced by Charlie Wills as he struggled with controlling his own alcoholism in an effort to regain custody of Victoria. An actor's best performances are often created when he finds a sense of personal resonance within the storyline. Regardless, Johnson's witty, self-doubting monologues in

Paris expose the insecurities of Charlie Wills and Scott Fitzgerald more poignantly than anything else in the Fitzgerald film adaptation canon and seem to suggest that the actor may have studied Fitzgerald's personal essays while creating the character's psychological context.

The Last Time I Saw Paris also strikes a careful balance between reflecting the historical and socio-cultural manners of Paris during the 1920s and 30s, captured in Fitzgerald's original story, and the cultural awareness of an audience that would have been more familiar with WWII than WWI. As writers of the most famous film set during WWII, *Casablanca* (1942), the Epstein brothers would have known how small details, such as how Charlie and his future brother-in-law Claude became friends while under General DeGaulle's command, would have provided a frame of reference to draw an audience into the story. However, the device that they use to provide details about the Lost Generation is perhaps the cleverest of all.

In *Paris*, Walter Pidgeon plays WWI veteran James Ellswirth, father to Helen and Marion, who is apparently a holdover from the hedonistic Lost Generation. As Helen explains to Charlie in an early scene in which they gather liquor bottles from her father's secret stash for a V-E Day party, "Father says that after a war we should always be gay and have fun. He started after the Great War and has been celebrating ever since" (*Paris*). Upon first meeting Charlie Wills, Ellswirth asks him whether he is "one of the wealthy Willses from Maryland," to which Charlie replies that he is merely "an average Wills from Milwaukee. Does that count against me?" Fitzgerald's father's family was one of the wealthier families in Baltimore before the Civil War; however, his father lost his inheritance through a series of bad investments and the couple was forced to move to his

mother's home in St. Paul before Fitzgerald's birth. Since the Charlie Wills of "Babylon Revisited" was from Burlington, Vermont, the most likely explanation for this exchange about Charlie's background is that it is another allusion to Fitzgerald's actual life and the socio-cultural implications that surround it.

Coupling this information with further characterization of Ellswirth as a Lost Generation leftover, and the overall impression to be derived from his character is that he is the combined ghost of Scott Fitzgerald and the original Charlie Wales, hovering as a spectral reminder of the adaptation's roots. This supposition gains credibility when combined with the scene in which Charlie catches up with Ellswirth several years after Helen's death. At their reunion, Ellswirth, who is approximately the age that Fitzgerald would have been had he been alive in 1954, is no longer the well-dressed middle-aged rogue Charlie remembers. Instead, he is a sad, pale old man in a wheelchair, who is under doctor's orders to give up drinking and smoking due to a series of strokes. In accordance with Fitzgerald's admonition against moralization, the audience is left to determine for themselves whether Ellswirth's carefree lifestyle was worth his early demise.

The manner in which Ellswirth is portrayed suggests that he is a cultural symbol of the wasted lives that resulted from the Lost Generation. Even down to his wilted sweater and ascot, Ellswirth looks very similar to photographs taken of Fitzgerald during the months immediately preceding the author's death. After a series of heart attacks, Fitzgerald was also required to give up smoking and drinking, but to no avail. In sum, the fun-loving Ellswirth can be read as Brooks and the Epstein brothers' homage to the original Charlie Wales, and his similarly ill-fated author Scott Fitzgerald. In a film that was interpreted in an updated time period to gain audience appeal, inserting the character

of James Ellsworth, who is not present in “Babylon Revisited,” may have been their subtle way of suggesting that the audience should recall the story’s original setting.

In short, *The Last Time I Saw Paris* is a frequently underrated film adaptation in the Fitzgerald canon. It represents not only one of the earliest manifestations of the Hemingway phenomenon, but also one of the first times in which the levels of creative command among author, screenwriters, director, producer, stars, and audience come together to form a film that reflects the common interests and knowledge that most parties concerned with Fitzgerald and his works share. Although a later adaptation updated in the interpretive style, *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button*, would travel further down these same paths, this film version of “Babylon Revisited” can be credited with opening up a whole new way for filmmakers to reconsider Fitzgerald’s biography as a gateway into meaningful visual portrayals of his works.

Tender is the Night (1962)

Henry King’s version of *Tender is the Night* (1962) started a new trend in Fitzgerald adaptations. With this trend, which would continue through the 1970s, filmmakers converted Fitzgerald’s original work with as few changes as possible. The result of this effort is that, except for a few deletions or alterations of potentially volatile subject matter concerning race and sexuality, the finished film represents one of the most completely consistent artistic visions in the Fitzgerald film canon.

King’s adaptation maintains a level of incorporation of details about Fitzgerald’s personal life that is an almost perfect replica of the original. Most critical articles on the

novel discuss how Fitzgerald's inspiration came from his personal feelings regarding the dissipation of his life and marriage following Zelda's first mental breakdown and her subsequent series of lengthy psychiatric treatments first at the Prangins clinic in Switzerland and later at Johns Hopkins in Maryland. Fitzgerald's guilt about how his own drinking might have contributed to Zelda's decline, as well as his diminishing ability to produce quality pieces of new writing, are also often cited as the sources of the novel's central conflict.

The plot of Fitzgerald's novel follows a young psychiatrist with a promising career, Dick Diver, as he falls in love with one of his patients, the wealthy, emotionally disturbed heiress Nicole Warren. Although Dick is gradually able to help Nicole overcome her mental illness, which was caused by Nicole's father's sexual abuse of her as a child, Dick gradually succumbs to the indolent lifestyle that Nicole's money provides for the couple after their marriage. Eventually, after Dick becomes an alcoholic and both he and Nicole fall into affairs with others, Nicole leaves Dick for Tommy Barban, another man whom she perceives to be more stable. The novel reads as a manifestation of Fitzgerald's worst fears about his relationship with Zelda, that cavorting with her had turned him into an alcoholic whose creativity and emotional vitality had been drained by her constant needs. In short, Fitzgerald and his hero, Diver, shared the same fear: that they had become permanently weakened by their attempts to make the women they loved strong, only to have those women leave their empty shells for stronger men.

Interestingly, David O. Selznick, and female star, Jennifer Jones, seemed to share a similarly symbiotic marriage. When Jones first met Selznick, she was a little-known, newly-wed actress still performing under her maiden name, Phyllis Isley. However, after

Jones screentested for Selznick, he signed her immediately to a personal seven-year contract. Jones's first leading role under this contract, in *Song of Bernadette* (1943), earned her an Academy Award and made her a star. The film also introduced her to director Henry King, for whom Jones would consistently perform her best acting work, including her role as Nicole Diver in *Tender is the Night*. By 1945, both Jones and Selznick had developed a romantic relationship, left their respective spouses, and married.

As with the early years of marriage between Dick and Nicole Diver, Selznick was clearly in control of almost every aspect of Jones's life. According to Aljean Harmetz, "from 1943 until his death in 1965, Selznick made virtually all the decisions in his wife's career. He supervised her dramatic training and produced many of her early movies." However, as Jones aged, Selznick continued to take risks with his own career in order to secure desirable acting roles for his wife, an act of self-sacrifice which ultimately proved to be his undoing as a producer. Selznick's lavish production of Ernest Hemingway's *Farewell to Arms* (1957), starring Jones as Catherine Barkley, "was a critical and box-office failure and the last movie Selznick made" (Harmetz, "Jones"). After *Farewell* flopped, the man who made *Gone With the Wind* (1939) retired from every aspect of the movie business except one: bolstering Jones's career. In this aspect, he succeeded, and Jones eclipsed her husband's notoriety to remain a viable star for the next decade. Perhaps this is why the film remains so faithful to Fitzgerald's original novel. By telling the story of the Divers, and by proxy the story of the Fitzgeralds, David Selznick and Jennifer Jones were stepping inside the ouroboric circle of Fitzgerald's celebrity by folding in a veiled adaptation of themselves.

The connection between Selznick and Fitzgerald actually began during *Gone With the Wind*, when Selznick, who had long been an admirer of Fitzgerald's novels, hired the writer to polish dialogue on the film. Always in need of quick cash for the heavy expenses of Zelda's treatments and daughter Scottie's schooling, Fitzgerald hastily wrote a screen treatment of *Tender is the Night* in hopes of capitalizing on his new Hollywood connections. Unfortunately, the treatment was seriously flawed and filled with unnecessary scenes of garish action that rendered it an unmarketable commodity for many years. Still, Selznick had been a fan of the novel since its first release in 1934, and secured the film rights. Many years later, after Jones read the novel and set her heart on playing the part of Nicole, Selznick began the process of securing funding for the film. However, in 1958, after the failure of Selznick and Jones's adaptation of a similar project, Hemingway's *Farewell to Arms*, Selznick was unable to place the project and had to sell the script, along with Jones's services as Nicole, to Twentieth Century Fox. Selznick recalled afterwards, "it is one of the great regrets of my career that I did not make *Tender is the Night*" (qtd. in Phillips 140).

Even though he sold the rights to the production, Selznick could not stay completely out of the project. In essence, Selznick planted his own director's chair directly in the shadow of Henry King's, offering daily doses of unsolicited advice on casting, dialogue, cuts, and staging with his choices, more often than not, leaning toward lengthening scenes that included Jones (Phillips 141-42). The end result was an adaptation that seems to drag out almost every emotional scene that contains an opportunity for Jones to give another Oscar-worthy performance, especially the scene of Nicole's breakdown in the bathroom, which is brief in the original but quite lengthy in

the film. However, Jennifer Jones's portrayal of Nicole Diver should not be discounted, even if her husband permitted overindulgence. According to Aljean Harmetz, Jones "was in precarious mental health herself" while playing the equally disturbed Nicole ("Jones"). Regardless, Jones gives one of her best performances in the role. As the emotionally dependent wife of a brilliant man who had made her over, often at his own expense, Jones would have found much to relate to in Nicole Diver. Like Van Johnson in *The Last Time I Saw Paris* (1957), Jones seemed to draw on her personal struggles to create a very convincing portrayal of a Fitzgerald character, which is not a surprising phenomenon. In general, Fitzgerald's characters tend to convey his turbulent relationship with Zelda, adding a sense of realism for audiences.

Years later, in an interview with Gene Phillips, Henry King made the same complaint, stating that Selznick "was working on the assumption that the more of Jennifer there was in the film, the better it would be. As much as I like and respect Jennifer, that was not the case. More was less" (142). Regardless, King went on to say that he was vetoed on many cuts that would have shortened the film and he was overridden by Fox in the decision-making process. King recalled, "the studio let Selznick have his way, because they said he had caused so much trouble during shooting that they just wanted to get the picture out into theaters as soon as possible, and be done with his meddling" (Phillips 142). Frustrated with his lack of creative control, the film would be the last for King, who was seventy-five at the time. In an odd instance of life imitating art, it appears that the Nicole Diver character drained the professional vitality of yet another man during King's adaptation of *Tender is the Night*.

Yet, even with this flaw of well-meaning overexposure of Jones as the female lead, King's adaptation of *Tender is the Night* remains a film text that is remarkably consistent with Fitzgerald's original artistic vision. Jason Robards is subtly effective, playing Dick Diver's slow devolution into a pitiable alcoholic with sympathetic grace and a dry wit that evokes the *mea culpa* attitude of Fitzgerald's *Crack-Up* essays. Among the supporting cast, Tom Ewell, as Abe North, is a particular standout. Ewell takes North's character beyond the simply drawn boor of Fitzgerald's creation, making his senseless decline from respected composer to washed-up drunk appear as an echoing tragedy that mirrors Diver's decline, showing that no man can escape the destructive powers of easy riches. King's choice to direct Ewell's character as a sort of Greek chorus, incessantly playing his unfinished ballad which grows into the theme song of the film, is a particularly effective way of showing the tragedy of an unrealized potential life through music.

By using the Abe North storyline as an echoing tragedy, King deftly sidesteps the race issue in Fitzgerald's original novel, which would have been virtually unfilmable for a mass audience in 1962. In the novel, Abe North accuses an unnamed black man of robbing him, and Jules Peterson, a shoe-polish inventor of mixed African-Scandinavian descent, corroborates North's story when he gives a statement to the police against the robber. Peterson is subsequently murdered by the robber in Rosemary Hoyt's hotel room. When Diver arrives to find Peterson dead on Rosemary's bed, he fears that the scandal of a dead black man in her bedroom will ruin Rosemary's acting career. Then, Diver has the hotel-manager bribe the police to dump Peterson's body elsewhere. Diver, who by this time is in love with Hoyt, nevertheless summons his wife Nicole to bring him a blanket in

which to wrap Peterson's body. When Nicole arrives, and is shaken by the sight of Peterson's dead body, Diver attempts to comfort her with a phrase that would be read as much more racially insensitive today than in 1933, saying "Look here – you mustn't get upset over this – it's only some nigger scrap" (*Tender* 110). If the scene had appeared in King's 1962 adaptation, which debuted during the key years of the African-American Civil Rights movement, it could have easily incited riots for its racist theme.

Still, it would have been irresponsible to ignore the race issue that is clearly present in the novel, and for that matter, much of Fitzgerald's work. According to Robert Forrey, "On the question of race, Fitzgerald does not belong in the liberal tradition in American letters...Fitzgerald had a fondness for lost conservative causes, such as the Confederacy" (295). Forrey provides this explanation:

On the basis of what is known from his fiction and life, it does not seem unfair to suggest that Fitzgerald believed in the inherent inferiority of Negroes. In stories in which he indulged his imagination most freely, rich whites rule in lordly splendor, catered to by Negro servants of the docile and inferior kind. (295)

Forrey's interpretation of Fitzgerald's racial politics is supported by Dick Diver's reaction upon first meeting Jules Peterson, whom he describes as "a small, respectable Negro, on the suave model that heels the Republican party in the border States" (*Tender* 106). This statement, meant as a sort of backhanded compliment, does not seem natural to a doctor from upstate New York like Dick Diver. Instead, it seems much more likely to be spoken by someone like Fitzgerald, a descendent of Maryland plantation owners who tended to romanticize the Old South as a lost high point in American culture. This mindset, obviously incendiary by post-Civil Rights movement standards of racial equality, is completed when Fitzgerald describes Diver's characterization of his behavior

after the incident as the pinnacle of chivalry. In Diver's opinion, his cover-up of Peterson's murder raised his standing in Hoyt's eyes, as he thought "she adored him for saving her...and she had listened in wild worship to his strong, sure, polite voice making it all right" (*Tender* 112). In 1962, mixed race audiences of King's film adaptation would have found nothing "all right" about Diver's antiquated racism or his cover-up of Peterson's murder.

Instead of using this scene in his film, King wisely changed the entire context of the confrontation between Abe North and his unnamed black adversary. In the film, North plays his unfinished theme at a piano in a bar with his usual refrain of drunken ramblings instead of an ending. Sensing North's difficulty in finishing his composition, an unnamed black piano player comes up and offers his assistance. Somewhat annoyed, North gets up from the piano and allows the man to play. The piano player proceeds not only to provide an excellent ending for the piece, but also to greatly surpass North's hokey playing style by adding numerous runs and flourishes that clearly display extensive classical training and musical sophistication. Angered at being shown up by the other musician, North takes a swing at the black piano player, starting a fight which ends with North being ejected from the bar. Diver and Rosemary, who had also been at the bar, leave and Diver returns Rosemary to her room. Afterward, Diver goes down to the bar at his hotel where he sees Collis Clay, a young Yale man from Georgia with a deep Southern accent who is in love with Rosemary. The two men discuss why neither will ever have Rosemary, and in the following scene the discussion evolves into a fistfight between the two. When Rosemary reappears to break up the fight, paparazzi catch Diver and Rosemary together and publish their story as the scandal of a young

actress tempting a married man. Upon returning to his hotel room with Nicole, Diver learns that North returned to the bar and was killed.

The overall effect of the juxtaposition of these altered scenes in King's adaptation expresses a racial theme that would have been much more acceptable to audiences in 1962 than Fitzgerald's original novel. White men who resisted integration of African-Americans in the 1960s often feared two things would happen if black men were allowed equality: black men would surpass them in the professional fields and also charm white women, leaving resistant white men without careers or potential spouses. The confrontation between North and the black piano player demonstrates the fear that a white man could be surpassed by a black man in his chosen vocation if the black man were allowed equal opportunity and education. Also, by situating Diver's struggle for Rosemary's affections against the younger white Southern gentleman, Clay, between the two scenes of North's confrontations with a younger, more talented black musician, King's film seems to suggest that a sophisticated black gentleman could prove more adept at securing the affections of a white female than either Diver or Clay. For viewers choosing to see it, King's substitution of these scenes in place of Fitzgerald's less-relevant originals might be read as a subtly brilliant commentary on the state of race relations in the 1960s, added into an otherwise historically faithful film set in the 1930s.

King also makes a brilliant decision in his choice of staging for another potentially scandalous scene, in which Nicole's sister, Baby Warren, reveals that Nicole was raped as a child by their father, a crime which is cited as the source for Nicole's mental illness. In Fitzgerald's original novel, Devereux Warren, Nicole's father, comes to the clinic to confess directly to Dr. Dohmler, Diver's supervisor, that he had committed

incest with Nicole. Mr. Warren described the situation as if Nicole had become a substitute for her mother, and that to all outward appearances, they were the ideal father and daughter, until one day their relationship went too far. As Warren says, Nicole and he “were just like lovers – and then all at once we were lovers – and ten minutes after it happened I could have shot myself – except I guess I’m such a Goddamned degenerate I didn’t have the nerve to do it” (*Tender* 129). Although it was possible for an author in 1933 to write about incest, it would have been completely impossible, according to the Production Code still in place in 1962, for an actor to portray such a character on camera without scandal. Even Stanley Kubrick’s adaptation of Vladimir Nabokov’s *Lolita* (1962), in which the incest between a step-father and daughter forms the main plot, was severely toned down on film but nevertheless caused a major scandal upon release. Making the incest plotline a major feature of an adaptation of *Tender is the Night* would not only have caused a scandal, but also possibly alienated audiences of Fitzgerald films, who generally wanted their author’s works romanticized.

For these reasons, Henry King and his screenwriter, Ivan Moffat, chose to stage the scene revealing Nicole as an incest victim through a series of awkward pauses expressed in a conversation among Baby Warren, Diver, and Dohmler at the clinic. The sequence is very well-played by the three actors, who break off just short of stating that incest has occurred and allow the audience to fill in the unavoidable details. Mr. Warren never appears on screen. By making the act of incest so unspeakably horrible that the characters never actually name the crime, and eliminating the presence of Nicole’s attacker, King creates an atmosphere of horror about the incident that captures the tone of Fitzgerald’s original without stating its facts.

Also, King wisely omits the detail that Rosemary Hoyt, the young actress with whom Diver eventually has an affair, is filming a picture called *Daddy's Girl* when she first meets Diver. One inference that can be drawn from Diver's falling for Hoyt is that he is the sort of man who is attracted to spoiled socialites who live charmed lives. This interpretation gains support when one considers that Diver's wife, Nicole, is the rich heiress of Devereux Warren. Audiences can also infer from Diver's relationship patterns that he tends to see the emptiness behind the facades of such women, and becomes attracted to them in the role of their caretaker and protector. However, the inference that would have been impermissible to many film audiences in 1962 is that both Rosemary and Nicole tend to view Diver as a father figure. Knowing that Nicole was sexually exploited by her father, coupled with the belief that she viewed Diver as a father figure, could have caused audiences to believe that Diver was continuing to exploit, rather than helping her as a psychiatrist, by stepping into the abusive father role. This same unflattering inference could be extended to Diver's relationship with the much-younger Rosemary, skewing the dynamic of their affair and making Diver appear like an exploiter of both women. Since the point of the film adaptation is to focus on the central plot from Fitzgerald's original - the rise and fall of Diver's relationship with Nicole - Henry King makes a smart choice by eliminating the name *Daddy's Girl* from the film. By placing Rosemary in Rome to film an unnamed project, King removes all possible connections between Diver and Nicole's exploitive father that could have alienated audiences in 1962.

However, King does not eliminate all scenes of potentially controversial discussions of sexuality in his film adaptation. In one vignette from Fitzgerald's original novel *Senor Pardo*, whom Fitzgerald describes as "a handsome iron-gray Spaniard, noble

of carriage, with all the appurtenances of wealth and power,” comes to Diver’s clinic and rages that Diver must do something to cure his son, Francisco, of being a homosexual (*Tender* 243). Diver listens patiently, withholding his disgust, as Pardo tells him that he had another psychiatrist attempt to cure Francisco of homosexuality by giving him injections of cantharides and taking him to a bordello. When the supposed cure proved ineffective, Pardo whipped his son mercilessly.

Both in the novel and in the film Diver is much more sympathetic to Francisco, questioning the young man about whether he is happy with his sexuality and advising him on ways to live with it other than through excessive drinking, which had been Francisco’s coping method until their meeting. Fitzgerald describes Senor Pardo’s issues with his son’s sexuality as hilariously overreactive and offers Diver’s opinion that “often the sheer hysteria of the family representative was as interesting psychologically as the condition of the patient” (243). King’s adaptation adds a homophobic accusation from Senor Pardo directed at Diver’s attempts to tell him the truth about Francisco’s sexuality, when Pardo says that Diver’s “affection for my son may indicate that you are the same sort of swine that he is” (*Tender*). This wild claim achieves its desired effect, by making audiences side with Francisco and acceptance of his sexuality rather than with his father, a concept that was still radical in 1962. This scene demonstrates King’s attempt as a director to push the envelope of social equality as far as he dared, within the confines of then-present cinematic moral standards, in order to remain consistent with as many of Fitzgerald’s original themes as possible.

In his excellent book, *Fiction, Film and F. Scott Fitzgerald*, Gene Phillips emphasizes the effect of Catholicism and the ritual of confession on Fitzgerald’s repeated

use of his personal life as a basis for his fiction. Concerning *Tender is the Night* and the *Crack-Up* essays, Fitzgerald's chief works of the mid-1930s, Phillips claimed that the works "reflect the spiritual values that his Catholic education had afforded him" and that these works "embody a public examination of conscience which testifies to the fact that, as noted, the Catholic faith had a firmer hold on Fitzgerald than he was aware of" (136). In King's adaptation of *Tender is the Night*, it appears that Fitzgerald's Catholic tendency toward confession applies to filmmakers as well. As director, King used the otherwise faithful conversion of fiction to film as a platform to subtly push a social agenda that is decidedly pro-racial integration and anti-homophobia. The film's first producer, David Selznick, and his wife, lead actress Jennifer Jones, became very attached to the project possibly as a way of expressing the true dynamic of their relationship. Given the success of King's adaptation among Fitzgerald scholars and audiences, one might say that Catholic-style confessional can easily be absorbed into the film adaptation ouroboros.

Chapter IV

Screening the American Icarus, Part Two:

Film Adaptations of F. Scott Fitzgerald's Works, 1974-2008

During the 1960s and 1970s, the conversion style dominated Fitzgerald-based cinema, as filmmakers attempted to create adaptations that were faithful representations of the author's originals. *The Great Gatsby* (1972) and *The Last Tycoon* (1974) were successes at the box office and in release to video audiences; however, critical opinions on these films remain mixed. Jack Clayton's *The Great Gatsby*, often maligned because of its slow-paced plotline, deserves reconsideration for its visual manifestation of Fitzgerald's forays into Bergsonian philosophy. *The Last Tycoon* is possibly the most underrated Fitzgerald adaptation, if for nothing else than director Elia Kazan's excellent choice to incorporate themes found in the author's other works to enlarge Fitzgerald's take on Hollywood's mythmaking powers, including the creation and maintenance of the American capitalist mythos as a whole. Only one revisionist adaptation of a Fitzgerald work, Richard Wolstencroft's *The Beautiful and Damned* (2008), has appeared in recent years. Unlike Elia Kazan's *The Last Tycoon*, which limited directorial editorialization on Fitzgerald's role in latter-day popular culture to the scope of Fitzgerald's original texts, Wolstencroft's film serves as a cautionary tale against allowing too much of a director's own socio-political viewpoint to overpower a film adaptation. As with the first forty years, the interpretive style has proven to be the most successful means of transferring a Fitzgerald text to film. David Fincher's interpretive adaptation, *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button* (2008) strikes an excellent balance among incorporation of

autobiographical details, Hemingway phenomena, and use of original text to create a film of lasting resonance. Fincher's adaptation demonstrates, yet again, that film adaptation works best as a fully balanced collaborative process.

The Great Gatsby (1974)

Jack Clayton's adaptation of *The Great Gatsby* (1974) is perhaps the most faithful conversion of the novel to film currently in existence. According to Gene Phillips, Clayton paid painstaking detail to the historical accuracy of the film's costumes and setting, using 1920s vintage clothing and automobiles arranged around authentic mansions in Newport, Rhode Island's Miracle Mile, all in an effort to recapture the lost opulence of Jazz Age New York. Also, "to top it off, some of the extras who played Gatsby's crass menagerie of roistering party guests were actually members of Newport's first families" (Phillips 121). Clayton's adaptation is also careful to convey Fitzgerald's main themes, exploring through the voiceover of Nick Carraway's inner monologue issues of race, class, gender, romance, and the American dream as Eden that linger in Fitzgerald's Bergsonian understanding of the suffocating power of memory.

However, critics of Clayton's film claim that it fails in one important aspect: pace. Blaming Clayton for the slow pace, Gene Phillips writes, "it must be conceded that all of the interpolations which Clayton made in the screenplay, taken together...result in a motion picture that in the last analysis seemed at times slow paced and overlong" (120). Truthfully, Fitzgerald's original novel is a remarkably taut piece of prose. In fewer than two hundred pages, Fitzgerald captures both the failure of an epic romance and the

hedonism of the 1920s. In contrast, Clayton's film sprawls to an epic length of one hundred and forty-four minutes. The main reason for Clayton's extended treatment of the work is his persistent choice to dwell upon developing the personalities of Fitzgerald's characters, making the lives of each member of the novel's two love triangles a tragedy in its own right.

The languid pace of the film might be defended in two ways. First, Fitzgerald intended the novel partly as a commentary on the wasteful lives of the idle rich. An adaptation which takes such a leisurely stroll through the mixed psychologies of the characters reflects the tone of repulsion from overindulgence that was intended to ground audience sympathies against these people living the so-called good life. Also, critics of the film tend to overlook the impact of Bergson's theory on the duration of memory that permeates not only *The Great Gatsby*, but all of Fitzgerald's work. Bergson's duration theory concentrated on the power of moments that the Romantic poets would have referred to as "spots of time," or incidents in a person's life that haunted his or her very existence and influenced all major decisions. Fitzgerald's novel clearly demonstrates the influence of this Romantic connection between memory and quest in the overleaf, written by his *nom de plume*, the fictitious poet Thomas Parke D'Invilliers:

Then wear the gold hat, if that will move her;
If you can bounce high, bounce for her too,
Till she cry, "Lover, gold-hatted, high-bouncing lover,
I must have you!" (*Gatsby* 1)

Clayton's film dwells upon this sort of Bergsonian image, allowing scenes intended for special impact to linger like dreams in celluloid, in hopes that they will persist in the audience's collective memory.

This Bergsonian presence of memory in the film begins with its opening lines, converted directly from Fitzgerald's original novel through voiceover by Nick Carraway:

In my younger and more vulnerable years my father gave me some advice that I've been turning over in my mind ever since. "Whenever you feel like criticizing anyone," he told me, "just remember that all the people in this world haven't had the advantages that you've had." He didn't say any more but we've always been unusually communicative in a reserved way and I understood that he meant a great deal more than that. In consequence, I'm inclined to reserve all judgments, a habit that has opened up many curious natures to me and also made me the victim of not a few veteran bores. (*Gatsby* 5)

By choosing to open the movie with Fitzgerald's opening lines about long-remembered advice and its impact on Nick's current character, Clayton establishes a meditative pace in his adaptation that allows audiences to ruminate on the characters Nick meets, reserving judgment upon them, as if they had met them personally.

Clayton not only continuously relies upon inner monologue and voiceover to indicate points of character meditation for audiences, but also uses many visual metaphors to convey ideas expressed in Fitzgerald's novel that would not otherwise translate well to film. During the aforementioned opening monologue, Nick, dressed in a spotless white suit, attempts to guide a small, uncontrollable motorboat across the bay. This image begins the visual metaphor that will continue throughout the film until the final lines of Fitzgerald's original novel, that all men are voyaging dreamers, who will "beat on, boats against the current, borne back ceaselessly into the past" (*Gatsby* 189). Although Clayton's film uses more of Fitzgerald's original dialogue than any previous adaptation, his persistent use of visual metaphor effectively extends Fitzgerald's themes even further, creating a truly consistent artistic vision between original author and director.

Clayton also remains remarkably consistent with Fitzgerald's original in conveying the author's ideas about race and gender within the historical context of the 1920s. Instead of softening Tom Buchanan's blatant racism to suit post-Civil Rights movement sensitivities, Clayton makes the bold choice to trust that his audiences will hate Tom without the help of directorial editorialization. Through Bruce Dern's excellent portrayal of Tom as a blustering bully, audiences are able to laugh at him, along with Daisy and the others, as he rambles on about the potentially dangerous rise of what he calls "the colored empires" (Clayton). Counting on his audience to intelligently view Tom's racism as reprehensible, Clayton continually incorporates Tom's exact statements from Fitzgerald's original in most confrontation scenes, in an effort to direct audience sympathy toward Tom's opponents. During the climactic scene with Daisy, Gatsby, and Tom in a New York hotel room, which is replicated almost identically from the novel in Clayton's adaptation, Tom rants about the decline of family, saying:

I suppose the latest thing is to sit back and let Mr. Nobody from Nowhere here make love to your wife. Well, if that's the idea you can count me out... Nowadays people begin by sneering at family life and family institutions and next they'll throw everything overboard and have intermarriage between black and white.

(Gatsby 137)

By connecting Tom's racism to his rage about Daisy's affair with Gatsby, Clayton garners audience sympathy for the adulterous couple, even though mainstream sensibilities would normally be against them. Adding a touch of irony to the film that is not present in Fitzgerald's original, Clayton also allows a black eyewitness to come forward to identify Gatsby's car at the scene of the accident in which Myrtle is killed. The inference to be drawn in the scene is that Tom, who claims to be an upholder of traditional family values, is actually a hypocrite because he is having an affair with

Myrtle, a woman from the lower classes whom Tom, only hours earlier, decried as the worst sort of person with whom to violate marriage vows. By permitting a black man to tell Tom the true story about the incident, Clayton effectively conveys the message that Tom's ideas about both race and marriage are completely out of line and potentially dangerous.

Further, Clayton's choice to consistently juxtapose scenes depicting Tom's difficult relationships with Daisy and Myrtle, forces audiences to consider the linkage of financial status and social independence on gender relations that is integral to Fitzgerald's original novel. In most critical accounts, Fitzgerald is considered a champion for the rights of flappers, both rich and poor, to use their feminine wiles as tools in order to subvert the social order. As Ruth Prigozy states, Fitzgerald "shows clearly that they have become victims of a social order that values youth, beauty, and wealth" while their "destructive behavior simply mirrors the intense conflict these young women experience in an era that has removed the old boundaries and has not offered them the alternatives that the feminist movement would help make available for their granddaughters in future decades" (141). In both Fitzgerald's novel and Clayton's film, women are put at an economic disadvantage. While upper class women such as Daisy were allowed some degree of relief through affairs that could provide them with the emotional satisfaction they often lacked in their marriages based on financial need, lower class women like Myrtle were forced to use their sexuality merely to attain a greater standard of living, often without receiving psychological fulfillment from either lovers or husbands.

Two scenes in Clayton's film contrast the comparative state of psychological oppression between Daisy and Myrtle. In an early scene with Jordan Baker, Daisy

describes how she almost changed her mind on the day before her wedding, even throwing away the expensive strand of pearls from Tom, all because she had received a letter from Gatsby telling her that he loved her. However, after listening persuasive arguments from friends and family about her financial future, Daisy “married Tom the next day without so much as a whimper” (Clayton). This scene shows Daisy as a woman with freedom of choice in her decision about marrying Tom.

In contrast, Myrtle claims to have been deceived by George, who told her he had money to provide for her, even though she later finds out that “he didn’t even own the suit he was married in” (Clayton). This scene suggests that Myrtle, if offered the truth about her choice, would not have chosen George as a husband. Outraged over her deception, Myrtle becomes progressively more dangerous and physically violent. This violence escalates throughout the film, beginning with Myrtle knocking on a window so hard she breaks it and cuts her hand and ending with her death after trying to flag down what she believed to be Tom’s car. Also, Myrtle engages in role-playing to imitate rich women like Daisy when she dresses up and acts haughtily in the party at the New York getaway flat she shares with Tom.

However, when Myrtle invokes the name of his upper-class wife, Tom breaks her nose as a physical demonstration of his power. This party scene shows that Tom thinks no more of Myrtle than the female puppy, who is passed through the window of the car in the exact same manner that Myrtle clambers in only a few moments earlier in Clayton’s excellent shot parallel. The cumulative meaning of Clayton’s juxtaposition of these scenes is clear. Even though upper-class women suffered many disappointments because of gender pressure, they were still thought enough of to be told the truth. Lower-class

women, on the other hand, were forced to rely on falsehoods when making their own choices and ordered around as if they were, in Tom's parlance, "bitch" dogs.

Interestingly, the scenes of Tom's violent affair with Myrtle move swiftly in the film, whereas the love scenes between both Daisy and Gatsby and Daisy and Tom move at an almost excruciatingly slow pace. Most likely, Clayton's choice to speed up the scenes of spurious hookups in contrast to genuine love affairs was intentional, and constructed to produce the effect that romance causes time to stand still - to evoke the sense of Bergson's *duree* memory. One of the most influential philosophers on states of consciousness in the 1920s, Bergson described the development of human passions as a gradual, cumulative process:

An obscure desire gradually becomes a deep passion. Now, you will see that the feeble intensity of this desire consisted at first in its appearing to be isolated and, as it were, foreign to the remainder of your inner life. But little by little it permeates a larger number of psychic elements, tingeing them, so to speak, with its own colour and lo! Your outlook on the whole of your surroundings seems now to have changed radically. How do you become aware of a deep passion, once it has taken hold of you, if not by perceiving that the same objects no longer impress you in the same manner? All your sensations and all your ideas seem to brighten up: it is like childhood back again. We experience something of the kind in certain dreams, in which we do not imagine anything out of the ordinary, and yet through which there resounds an indescribable note of originality. (8)

The effect of reading the great philosophers, such as Bergson, while at Princeton had a profound effect on Fitzgerald. As a young writer, he was especially concerned with the concepts of free will and how man chooses to either exercise it or become bound by history (*Grandeur* 75). Many such philosophers, including David Hume, who appears as an overstuffed armchair into which a beautiful girl appears in front of a young scholar in Fitzgerald's early story "Head and Shoulders," were evoked by Fitzgerald's works in

order to explain the complex impact of early love on the lives of serious-minded young men (312).

Fitzgerald's use of Bergson in this manner is perfectly captured in Jack Clayton's slow staging of the evolution of the relationship between Gatsby and Daisy after their reunion. As with all the scenes that include Gatsby and Daisy, Clayton swathes their reunion in whites and softly lit pastels, to evoke the dreamlike quality of their relationship. To further the Bergsonian connection, Clayton picks up the line from Fitzgerald's original novel in which Nick prods Gatsby to stop "acting like a little boy" and finally enter the room at Nick's cottage where Daisy waits. The lingering reluctance of their approach to one another in the cottage scene contains the haunting resonance of recaptured childhood mentioned in Bergson. Clayton's choice to frame the close-up of Gatsby's face with an expensive silver tea set in the meeting scene just before he sees Daisy demonstrates how Gatsby attempts to create a barrier of wealth between his past feelings of insecurity and his current mental state. However, when Daisy enters the room and the two come together for the first time, Clayton frames the shot in a simple, white woodframe mirror. As Clayton's camera lingers on Daisy in a close-up, the audience seems invited to compare the uncomplicated beauty of this love rediscovered in the more pastoral setting of Nick's small cottage as preferable to Gatsby's attempt to make an unnatural display of his urban wealth in an attempt to impress Daisy.

This sensibility builds throughout the film, from the scene in which Gatsby tosses his vast collection of sorbet-colored shirts into the air, causing them to float to the ground like so many butterflies, to his last lingering kiss with Daisy, relaxing by the koi pond, each childish, pastoral dream lingering longer than the last, like living pictures in

Gatsby's well-maintained scrapbooks. The scrapbooks are an addition to the film outside the scope of Fitzgerald's original novel, and seem to demonstrate Clayton's knowledge of, and attempt to incorporate, then-current trends in Fitzgerald literary scholarship. In 1974, the year of Clayton's adaptation, Fitzgerald's daughter, Scottie Fitzgerald Smith, released a pictorial autobiography of her parents gleaned from their voluminous scrapbooks. For the first time, this book allowed audiences access to the lives of the Fitzgeralds simultaneously in three types of media: fiction, photographs, and a film adaptation of one of Fitzgerald's most personal works. When considered together, Clayton's lingering shots of Gatsby's scrapbooks in his adaptation and the contemporaneous release of Fitzgerald's own photographic recollections provide the final connection of ouroboric linkage, incorporating Fitzgerald's actual life, his writing, and film adaptations of his works into one complete idea.

Returning specifically to the film, as the pair attempts to recreate the innocence of their youthful romance, Daisy at last admits that Gatsby is even more "sentimental" than she when he admits to keeping and then models his uniform, after she admits to having tossed away the dress she wore to their first meeting (Clayton). These scenes, with their animal imagery and soft coloring, create a sense of natural ease and calm reflection between the two about their relationship that best evokes Fitzgerald's latent Romanticist sensibilities. They provide a stark contrast to the swifter confrontation scenes of the rest of the film. In short, Clayton's drawn out love scenes are necessary breaks in the plot's pace to show how the seductive power of memory can pull a person into endless self-reflection.

Clayton's slow-paced love scenes also serve the important function of demonstrating that such excessive reflection can dull the senses so that one is not aware of potential dangers. In Gatsby's death scene near the end of the film, he lounges in the pool, lost in dreams of Daisy, while George Wilson sneaks up from behind and shoots him in the back. As a member of the organized crime community, Gatsby would normally have been aware of threats to his personal security, attested to by the constant presence of his bodyguards in the film's early scenes. Later on, out of fear for the discovery of his relationship with Daisy, Gatsby fires all his servants, effectively eliminating all his usual safety barriers against the outside world. Through slowly showing Gatsby's declining interest in his personal security and business affairs, Clayton captures an important aspect of Fitzgerald's original novel that other filmmakers miss, that one "can't repeat the past," at least, not in a purely constructive way. The irresistible allure to do so is futile, no matter how innocent or recoverable it may appear in later circumstances.

Clayton's adaptation also captures, in sensitive visual details, the second of Fitzgerald's major themes portrayed in the original *Gatsby* novel that is often neglected on film: the author's persistent characterization of the American dream as Eden. In the scene during which Nick and Gatsby meet for the first time, a picture of a colonial tallship is on display behind Gatsby's desk. This presence of this painting, although not described in the novel, can be interpreted as a visual representation of Gatsby's belief in the American dream, and his self-characterization as a ship tossed in the waves toward what he hopes will be the fulfillment of his lifelong desires for wealth, power, and the hand of Daisy Fay. Read as such, the scene shows a heavy influence of the adaptation's

chief screenwriter, Francis Ford Coppola. While on break between the first two installments of his *Godfather* trilogy, Coppola wrote the screenplay adaptation for *Gatsby*.

Coppola has complained loudly in critical circles that the screenplay of *Gatsby* was “interminable” and “not what I had set up in the beginning” after the re-addition of certain scenes by Clayton into Coppola’s initially shorter screenplay (Phillips 119). However, Clayton’s final product does retain the stamp of Coppola’s work, particularly the opening of Coppola’s original *Godfather* film. Coppola’s *Godfather* opens with a scene in Don Corleone’s ominous, dimly-lit office, into which Bonasera comes to ask Don Corleone for a favor. Bonasera’s initial line, “I believe in America,” is the first spoken in the film; however, the remainder of the scene shows progressively how little faith Bonasera still has in the American dream of equal justice and opportunity for all (Coppola). Clayton’s meeting scene between Gatsby and Nick is similarly staged in a dark, opulent office filled with Gatsby’s intimidating entourage, and conveys the same message of a man who tries to cling to his belief in the American dream despite the obvious knowledge he has of its falsehood.

Clayton’s adherence to Fitzgerald’s theme about self-made men and their growing sense of disillusionment with the American dream is furthered by a later visual detail that is not included in the original novel, but which makes sense in the context of Fitzgerald’s Romantic-era leanings. Just after Gatsby reunites with Daisy, and Nick walks out of the house to give them some privacy, Nick spots a dead, white seabird washed up on the beach. Since the earliest records of sea-faring lore, dead albatrosses have been signifiers of sailors lost at sea, and of the hopes and dreams that perished with them (Eyers 12). A

quick line of inference can be drawn from Gatsby's dead bird to the albatross in Coleridge's *Rime of the Ancient Mariner*. The albatross's killing marks the beginning of the mariner's nightmare journey, whereas Gatsby's attempt to erase all emotional record of Daisy's marriage to Tom signals the opening of the lover's pentagram that will later consume all three of the novel's characters of lower-class origin: Gatsby, Myrtle, and George. Although both Gatsby and the mariner embark on their respective voyages with the best intentions, they are forced to cling to flagging faith as they are presented with mounting obstacles to overcome on their journeys. However, as most viewers of Clayton's adaptation will already know when they see the film, Gatsby can never shake the albatross of ill-gained wealth from his neck. The dead bird foreshadows the inevitable end of Gatsby's self-made version of the American Dream, washed up dead on the rocks of reality.

Two other pastoral scenes from Clayton's adaptation further support his characterization of *Gatsby* as Fitzgerald's Romantic meditation on the paradoxical loss of innocence that many suffer on their way to achieve the happiness promised by the American dream. First, just following the hotel confrontation scene between Daisy, Tom, and Gatsby, Clayton places another scene of dialogue in which Nick and Gatsby stand on the front porch of Nick's cottage overlooking the Sound and discuss the first settlers of New York. Nick says to Gatsby, "Can you imagine what this island must have looked like to those Dutch sailors when they first saw it? Fresh green. Like a dream of the new world," and Gatsby replies, "They must have held their breath, afraid it would disappear before they could touch it" (Clayton). For viewers familiar with the history of the American Revolution and the Romantic literary movement that paralleled it, this scene

does much to establish a sense of Gatsby's America as a new Eden, designed to allow love to be produced as the naturally meritorious result of persistence and determination fostered by his German immigrant heritage, Midwestern upbringing, and Lutheran work ethic.

Second, it is no accident that, in Clayton's film adaptation, the director adds a small gift from Gatsby to Daisy of an emerald ring. This green emerald is intended to symbolize the natural connection of their hearts through rekindled love; however, Daisy refuses to accept the gift, and Gatsby dies wearing it on his pinky finger. The gleam of this emerald ring, which swings out from under the sheet on Gatsby's hand as his body is carried away on a stretcher, is then reflected in the green light at the end of Daisy's dock that Nick sees in the final scene as he recites in monologue the lines from Fitzgerald's original text, "I thought of Gatsby's wonder when he first picked out the green light at the end of Daisy's dock. He had come a long way to this lawn. And his dream must have seemed so close, that he could hardly fail to grasp it. He did not know that it was already behind him" (189). In addition to being a symbol of fresh hope and the type of organic Romanticism coupled with desire for success in a new Eden that encouraged settlers to come to America, the obvious connection between Gatsby's emerald ring and Fitzgerald's insecurity about his Irish roots in the "Emerald Isle" should not be ignored either. Clayton's addition of Gatsby's failed gift of the emerald ring is one of the most powerful blended metaphors in the film, incorporating Fitzgerald's impressions about America and its inability to fulfill its promises, especially to ambitious immigrant sons.

The final impact of Clayton's adaptation can be read then as not just a Bergsonian mediation on the allure of memory, but more deeply as an indictment of the class

distinctions at the heart of Fitzgerald's original novel. Both the film adaptation and the novel ultimately force the audience to ponder the questions of what happens to a self-made man from humble beginnings and whether he can ever stay true to his originally honest intentions after making the inevitable sacrifices necessary to get ahead. Clayton's adaptation develops possible solutions to these questions throughout his film, causing the audience to question such themes. Through reading Robert Redford's facial expressions during tortured retellings of Gatsby's story, viewers can easily sympathize with a man who is ashamed of his past, without condoning the actions that Gatsby himself already condemns.

Also, Clayton's excellent attention to details of the general "ugliness" of business with a man like Meyer Wolfsheim, who wears cuff-links made of human molars in both the book and the film, is well-intended to garner the appropriate amount of sympathy and revulsion for Gatsby (Clayton). By choosing to show, rather than tell, his audiences how they should judge Gatsby's overall character, Clayton mirrors the temperament of Fitzgerald's narrator Nick, who ultimately refrains from expressing his opinion on Gatsby until the end of the work, when he suddenly exclaims, "They're a rotten crowd. You're worth the whole damn bunch put together" (Clayton). For three specific reasons, the placement of this statement as the final words between the two friends provides an excellent coda to Nick's interactions with Gatsby.

First, Clayton has already prepared his audience for Nick's pronouncement with his characterization of Tom as a racist hypocrite. Second, he follows the statement with a confrontation scene after Gatsby's death in which Nick admonishes Daisy for her hypocritical "retreat back into [Tom's] money" so soon after her declaration of love for

him (Clayton). Last, Clayton's choice to include the scene with Mr. Gatz near the end of the film, rather than omitting it as in the 1949 version, provides a final capstone to his increasingly sympathetic portrayal of a young dreamer who wanted to accomplish "big things," but who still remained "very generous" with the family he had left behind (Clayton). By closing with Mr. Gatz as a symbol of steadfast Midwestern family values, shown in sharp contrast to Gatsby's fair-weather friends who do not even attend his funeral, Clayton invites audiences to pass final judgment against the wealthy as unworthy of their station, to which many Americans aspire. This approach is far more effective than the too-often critically acclaimed 1949 adaptation of *Gatsby*, which has a much heavier, moralizing tone that is completely out of sync with Fitzgerald's original text.

Little else remains here, other than to discuss briefly the possible causes of the overall sense of animosity that many Fitzgerald enthusiasts have for Clayton's generally well-made film. Even Fitzgerald's daughter, Scottie, who praised the film for its adherence to historical background, expressed a preference for Coppola's original, shorter screenplay, "which she read in advance" and found "excellent in every detail" (Phillips 122). Although slow pacing and choice of Clayton, a British director not known for high emotionalism in his films, are the most common complaints made against the piece, evidence has been offered here that Clayton's goals for the film may be read in a manner validated by Fitzgerald's original artistic vision. Also, some critics, again including Scottie Fitzgerald, have complained about the choice of Redford for the lead. This position is untenable because at the time the film was cast, Redford was a natural fit. Following his roles in the nostalgic tearjerker *The Way We Were* and his Depression-era period piece *The Sting*, both in 1973, the waspishly good-looking Redford was certainly

in every position as an actor to capitalize on America's parallel memories of Fitzgerald as another golden boy from a bygone era.

Perhaps the most valid criticism against Clayton's adaptation can be levied against the choice of Mia Farrow as Daisy. Farrow, a native Californian from a famous acting family, had little in common, either personally or through previous acting roles, with Fitzgerald's Southern heroine, Daisy. As Scottie Fitzgerald explains, Daisy was modeled on her mother, Zelda, and intended by Fitzgerald to be "intensely Southern," while Farrow, "fine actress though she is, failed to project this aspect of Daisy's personality" (qtd. in Phillips 122). Farrow's decision not to attempt a Southern accent or mannerisms in the role of Daisy loses the innate sense of infatuation with the mysteries of Southern women that pervades much of Fitzgerald's work, including *The Great Gatsby*. By choosing instead to concentrate on portraying Daisy more simply as a shallow, *nouveau riche* social climber rather than a Southern woman who married up but still recalled her roots, Farrow's performance loses the warmth of Fitzgerald's original character, making love scenes between Daisy and Gatsby seem forced despite Clayton's persistent attempts to create warmth through soft coloring and natural imagery.

Also, Farrow's choice to portray Daisy's reactions to highly emotional situations, such as the confrontation between Tom and Gatsby, are consistently overwrought, whereas smaller, tenderer scenes that normally would have required a more nuanced performance are often played too coolly to generate any emotional chemistry between the two lead actors. As a result, audiences must struggle to remember Fitzgerald's original characters, while Redford attempts valiantly to solicit genuine romantic emotion from his costar. Farrow's failure in the role serves as a reminder of the important balance of

intentions between actor, director, and original author in forging the tenuous linkage of adaptation for audiences from page to screen.

In short, Clayton's adaptation of *The Great Gatsby* is an excellent conversion of the original historical, psychological, and socio-cultural aspects of Fitzgerald's original novel, which has probably been judged too harshly in the past by critics due to its languid pacing and flawed performance of its lead actress. Despite persistent derision by critics, Clayton's *Gatsby* found enough acceptance by general audiences to gross over \$26 million, more than four times its shooting budget of \$6.5 million, during initial box office release (*IMDB.com*). These statistics, coupled with the film's market presence as the only adaptation of the novel currently in wide release on DVD, perhaps serve as the best argument to claim that Clayton's *Gatsby* deserves a more positive reconsideration by critics.

The Last Tycoon (1976)

Since the creation of Virgil's *Aeneid*, great writers in emerging cultures have attempted to establish value systems through creating series of myths, explained in the most then-current forms of artistic expression. As a writer always concerned with the effects of the American dream in all its permutations, it comes as no surprise then that F. Scott Fitzgerald, by the time he reached his mid-forties while living in Hollywood, would choose to write a novel that encapsulates the value system of American mythology as depicted through film. On its most basic level, Fitzgerald's *The Last Tycoon* can be read as an attempt to legitimize Hollywood's place in the American landscape as the Mount

Olympus of popular culture, where stars and filmmakers weave epic tales of romance and adventure onscreen, while simultaneously living even more intriguing lives off-screen, shaping their personas as cultural icons.

What complicates this relatively simple task is the fact that filmmaking is an ouroboric art form, fed not only by the desire to create motion pictures that present life as realistically as possible, but also to inversely create lives that measure up to the standards set in such pictures, until the line between fantasy and reality becomes so blurred that it is impossible to tell where one begins or another ends. This meditation on the effects of erasing boundaries between the real and the imaginary is at the heart of *The Last Tycoon*. However, since existential crisis is difficult to describe on the printed page, and even more impossible to film, Fitzgerald, and later-adapting director Elia Kazan, couch these ideas in three different, easier to understand contexts: the romance, the Western, and classical mythology. These three approaches combine to make *The Last Tycoon* Fitzgerald's most deeply intellectual work, as well as his most significant contribution to the explanation and furtherance of the American cultural mythos.

Fitzgerald's original novel begins squarely in the realm of romance. As the book opens, the narrative is told from the point of view of Cecelia Brady, daughter of movie producer Pat Brady. Cecelia, a junior on school break from Bennington College, is in love with her father's partner, a young phenom producer named Monroe Stahr. Most critics agree that Fitzgerald modeled Stahr on the boy-wonder Irving Thalberg and Brady on MGM's legendary mogul Louis B. Mayer. In contrast, Cecelia represents a blend of Mayer's daughter, Irene, "who in her biography admits she had something of a crush on Thalberg," as well as two Communist-sympathizing sons of studio executives, Budd

Schulberg and Maurice Rapf, with a touch thrown in of Fitzgerald's daughter Scottie, a Vassar girl at the time of her father's writing (Rapf 78).

Cecelia identifies with the romantic side of Hollywood from her very first admission, which forms the opening line of the novel, "Though I haven't ever been on the screen I was brought up on pictures. Rudolph Valentino came to my fifth birthday party – or so I was told" (*Tycoon* 3). This statement sets the tone that pervades the remainder of Fitzgerald's original text, that Cecelia is to be the voice speaking like a Greek chorus for all Americans, who have been "brought up" on the romantic notions begun by Hollywood's golden age of cinema and have absorbed them so completely into their collective psyche that they are no longer separable from any individual sense of identity. In short, from the bobby-soxers of Cecelia's generation forward, Americans have grown up with their sense of romantic love shaped by the movies, fostering a collective, yet unrequited, teenage crush on men like Monroe Stahr, who shaped these images.

However, telling the story from Cecelia's point of view would have been a hard sell in a mainstream motion picture adaptation of the novel, since films based around the feelings of girls in their early twenties tend to be attended only by people from that same demographic. Most likely, screenwriter Harold Pinter changed the point of view of Fitzgerald's original text from Cecelia's perspective to the third person in his adaptation at least in part to reach a wider market. This wise choice opens Fitzgerald's romance into a broader context, to include not just a young woman's fascination with a handsome, dynamic executive, but more broadly, as Stephen Matterson describes it, to focus on "the power of the cinema as a romance, on its capacity to magically transform mundane

reality, to enrich and enlarge individual experience like any other art form” (50). In the opening scenes of Pinter’s adaptation of *The Last Tycoon*, the audience sees clips of dailies from several different films in rapid succession through the eyes of Monroe Stahr in his screening room. The intention is not only to make the viewer fall in love with Monroe Stahr for the same reasons that Cecelia did - for his intellect, energy, and intensity - but also to fall into love with the process of making movies as a romantic, artistic endeavor. Collectively, this is the effect desired by the filmmakers as the viewer is allowed into the inner workings of Stahr’s thought processes during the opening scenes from the screening room.

Fitzgerald would have found much to identify with in Thalberg’s character, thereby providing a logical first step away from his usual pattern of incorporating novels out of thinly veiled autobiographical elements. Like Fitzgerald, Thalberg was both ambitious and precocious, gaining success in his early twenties, while working as Carl Lammele’s personal secretary fresh out of high school and rising meteorically by his wits to executive producer at Universal City by age twenty-one (*TCMDB.com*). Once firmly established as a force to be reckoned with, first at Universal and later at MGM, Thalberg developed a signature style of high quality pictures, chiefly focusing on literary adaptations of classic texts, which he tested rigorously with audiences in post-production previews. Thalberg’s concern with audience reception of his films supported his ability to produce prestige pictures that retained a high level of commercial appeal in a manner very similar to the way in which Fitzgerald, during his early years, was consistently able to write critically successful novels and stories that were wildly popular with his readers. Fitzgerald’s choice to incorporate his personal experiences with Thalberg’s into the

character of Monroe Stahr can be read as a conscious effort to enlarge his persistent vision of himself as a romantic hero, and also expand what a romantic hero was capable of in his novels.

Yet, the romance of Monroe Stahr in the eyes of the audience, as a modern-day epic hero or, as John Callahan refers to him, an “Icarus in executive dress,” is not the only type of romance present in either Fitzgerald’s original novel or the film adaptation (208). The actual romance between Stahr and his deceased wife, Minna Davis, as well as Stahr’s subsequent attempt to romance Minna’s Irish-rose look-alike, Kathleen Moore, together form a second layer of intrigue that adds considerable depth to Stahr’s otherwise strictly-business demeanor. The Stahr/Davis plotline is partially based upon the real-life relationship between Irving Thalberg and his wife, actress Norma Shearer. The marriage between Shearer and Thalberg was unlike so many in Hollywood, idyllic, producing two children and mutually advancing the careers of both until Thalberg’s untimely death from pneumonia in 1936 at the age of 37 (*TCMDB.com*). Since Shearer outlived Thalberg, one must wonder about the source for Fitzgerald’s inspiration to create the young widower.

As usual, Fitzgerald’s chief source of inspiration to fill in the blanks of character was his own life. By the time he had begun work on *The Last Tycoon* in 1939, Zelda had been institutionalized with a series of mental health issues for almost a decade. With Zelda unable to leave the mental hospital and his work requiring him to live across the country in Los Angeles, Fitzgerald found himself in the awkward position of constructive widower. However, he was not without companionship. Fitzgerald’s last romantic relationship would form the basis for the interactions between his lead characters in *The Last Tycoon*.

In 1937, Fitzgerald first saw Hollywood gossip columnist Sheilah Graham at the Screenwriter's Ball in Los Angeles, the same event in which Monroe Stahr and Kathleen Moore first strike up acquaintance in *The Last Tycoon*. Also like her fictional counterpart, the English-born Graham was in a relationship with a titled man, the Marquess of Donegal, just before she met Fitzgerald. According to Matthew Bruccoli, the Marquess "had come from England to propose" to Graham on the night that she met Fitzgerald (*Grandeur* 423). In another biographical parallel that he incorporated into *The Last Tycoon*, Fitzgerald did not catch Sheilah's name at the ball, but instead was forced to track her down afterward based solely upon her resemblance to Zelda and the fact that she had been wearing a silver belt (*Grandeur* 425). However, the similarities between the fictional Kathleen Moore and the real-life Sheilah Graham begin to diverge beyond such coincidences.

As a self-made, once-divorced woman, Graham was far more secure and independent than the unemployed Kathleen Moore. Graham's syndicated column, "Hollywood Today," ran in 178 papers at its peak, nearly doubling that of her chief rivals, Louella Parsons and Hedda Hopper. Still, despite her success, Graham was a woman who felt insecure about her humble beginnings and inadequate education in a Jewish orphanage. Over the course of their three-and-a-half year relationship, Fitzgerald would prescribe intellectual readings for Graham in what the pair came to call her "College of One." They had planned to culminate with her reading Spengler's *Decline of the West*, exactly as Kathleen Moore describes doing with her former lover in *The Last Tycoon* (*Grandeur* 441). In return, Graham worked diligently to help Fitzgerald maintain sobriety, which he finally achieved, albeit too late, a year before his death.

When incorporated, these double-blended biographical inspirations for Fitzgerald's original characters in *The Last Tycoon* demonstrate a maturation of literary sensibilities. For the first time in his career, Fitzgerald was constructing, at the time of his death, a novel that used the techniques of romance to go beyond literary solutions to his own personal concerns. Instead of continuing merely to build upon the romance of his life as *F. Scott Fitzgerald*, tragic literary figure of high aspirations and devastating reversals of fortune, Fitzgerald reached beyond his own experience to write what Matthew Bruccoli has called in his preface to the authorized version of the text "one of the few American novels with a convincing and compelling businessman hero" (*Tycoon* vii). In short, by the time he created *The Last Tycoon*, Fitzgerald was still a romanticist; however, he was no longer the often self-absorbed romantic egoist displayed in his earlier writings. Perhaps this is the reason why Fitzgerald chose to create a hero who was a movie producer. Only a man on the business side of entertainment could continue to appreciate the beauty of illusion even after he saw the workings that maintained it.

The scene in Elia Kazan's adaptation that most perfectly captures this sense of Fitzgerald's maturation as a romantic writer is the often-reviewed "nickel for the movies" sequence. In the scene, Robert DeNiro, playing the part of Monroe Stahr, uses monologue and pantomime to act out a scene that seems to be straight out of a stock film noir piece. The English writer, Boxley, based on Aldous Huxley, who had only moments earlier completely dismissed film as an inferior medium of expression for conveying depth of emotion, is drawn in by DeNiro's riveting performance, carefully absorbing every detail of his action and description. When DeNiro brings the performance to an abrupt close without explaining why a nickel is left on the table, Boxley betrays the fact

that, despite his earlier discounting of the medium, he was drawn into emotional engagement with the scene by inquiring about the nickel. DeNiro grins like a delighted little boy performing a trick and replies, "The nickel is for the movies" (*Tycoon*).

In this instant, the audience sees exactly what Boxley realizes. In the hands of a masterful actor and director, film is a medium that can make even the most mundane details marvelously fascinating, just as romantic love with someone can transform every movement into a performance and every utterance into a song. In this scene, we see through DeNiro's performance both why Irving Thalberg/Monroe Stahr literally worked himself to death to create movies, and why Fitzgerald felt that, without writing, he was nothing. The power to draw disbelieving others in, to perceive reality from romantic illusion, is the closest modern man will ever come to performing magic. The joy of achieving this masterful feat of illusion evokes a sense of wonder normally known only to children and validates filmmaking as an art form equal to literature. In sum, both Kazan's film and Fitzgerald's original novel can be read not only as the romantic life of Stahr, a man who makes movies, but also as a romance of the movie industry itself, in which Stahr plays a role.

The move from classic romance to Western is a logical step for any American writer, since the elements that comprise a Western are essentially the same as those of a romance, only more clearly delineated. Whereas in a romance, the hero may have to overcome virtually any sort of adversary, including himself, in order to reach different goals or desires, the Western fills in these vague circumstances with specificity. The full title of Fitzgerald's novel, *The Love of the Last Tycoon: A Western*, suggests that the author was aware of the conventions of the Western genre and intended to manipulate

them to suit his purposes. Yet, if one is to read *The Last Tycoon* as a Western, two questions arise. First, why exactly did Fitzgerald seek to utilize the conventions of the Western genre to flesh out his mediation on filmmaking as American mythology? And second, to what extent does Kazan's adaptation also use these embedded conventions from Fitzgerald's narrative to assist in creating a visual representation of his work?

The easiest answer to the first question is that Fitzgerald, as a screenwriter who had seen the success of Western genre films' ability to create memorable characters of mythic proportions, viewed the conventions in a broader and deeper sense than most others of his day. Like a jazz musician who uses standard chord progressions not as a way to bind his music into a formula, but rather as a way to lull audiences into certain expectations only to offer a surprise break from them, Fitzgerald seems eager to reinterpret the conventional expectations of the Western genre in his novel.

In order to see how far *The Last Tycoon* actually goes beyond the expectations of a typical Western, one might compare both the original novel and its film adaptation to the classic Western film *Stagecoach* (1939), which came out during the year that Fitzgerald began his novel. In *Stagecoach*, John Wayne plays the hero, a fugitive named the Ringo Kid, who falls for Dallas, the typical prostitute with the heart of gold, as they ride with a motley crew of travelers across the dangerous Indian territory from Tonto, Arizona, to Lordsburg, New Mexico, in 1880. Among their companions are several stock Western genre players, including a schoolmarm, a drunken doctor, a Southern gambler, and several criminals, all of whom are superficially more socially acceptable than the fugitive Ringo Kid, but turn out to be far more morally reprehensible as the journey

progresses. The real threat to the Ringo Kid is Luke Plummer, another fugitive, whom Ringo ultimately kills in a shootout before riding off into the sunset with Dallas.

In contrast, Fitzgerald's hero, Monroe Stahr, is a businessman, not a gunslinger. However, as a New York Jew on the West Coast, Stahr shares with Ringo his position as a skilled outsider thrust into the role of protector, whose presence is tolerated only because he performs a desirable service. Whereas Ringo protects the stagecoach full of travelers from Indians and outlaws with his strength and marksmanship, Stahr protects his studio from financial ruin by managing a series of more modern disasters, ranging from on-set floods caused by earthquakes to offering psychological counseling to actors with impotency problems. Both Ringo and Stahr fall for the same type of women with questionable pasts. Dallas was an actual prostitute whereas Kathleen was merely a woman who engaged in a sort of *de facto* prostitution, living with a wealthy man whom she didn't love out of necessity before meeting Stahr, and then marrying yet another rich man afterward, while still holding feelings for Stahr.

Fitzgerald shows his willingness to thwart the expectations of a conventional Western as Kathleen, ostensibly a damsel in distress, refuses rescue by the hero, Stahr. This failure to win the girl who is the object of his affections is the first clue that Stahr, who is set up to be a Western hero, either is not fit for the role or that modern society has changed in such a way that it is no longer possible to present a Western hero in the classic sense. Next, Fitzgerald writes Stahr as a failure in both of his two defining conflicts. First, Stahr fails in his effort to get rid of the Union organizer Brimmer, who represents an outside threat to the financial security of the studio system in a manner similar to the way in which Luke Plummer represents a threat to the physical security of the people of

Lordsburg. Whereas Ringo dispatches with Plummer easily in their shootout, Stahr becomes drunk and is knocked out with one punch by Brimmer, in front of the schoolmarm character Cecelia. Stahr's failure to maintain his composure with Brimmer or to hold his own in a physical confrontation, especially in front of a female, marks the beginning of the end of his reign as a prince of Hollywood deal-making diplomacy and his failure as a Western hero.

In Kazan's film adaptation of the novel, the Brimmer incident also sets up Stahr's final expulsion from the studio. This addition to the text was made by playwright Harold Pinter and represents a logical extension of Fitzgerald's systematic thwarting of Western genre conventions throughout the novel. In a conventional Western, after the foe is vanquished, the hero is embraced by the locals and either becomes one of them or rides off into the sunset in search of new adventures, as Ringo does in *Stagecoach*. However, by allowing Stahr to fail in his attempt to run Brimmer and the Union organizers out of Hollywood, either by using his legendary business savvy to play power politics or by a show of physical force, Kazan and Pinter necessarily set up Stahr's rejection by the studio brass and expulsion from the studio in disgrace.

Although Fitzgerald's original novel was left unfinished by his premature death, the ending depicted in Pinter's screenplay completes the story arc established by Fitzgerald's attempt to use the generic conventions of the film Western to demonstrate that, in the modern American business world, it is no longer possible for a hero to win the girl or triumph over adversity. In all likelihood, that was why Fitzgerald viewed Monroe Stahr as "the last tycoon." Like many other romances, which depict the last cowboy or the last hero, Stahr is a man whom Fitzgerald perceives to be of a dying breed, an

executive with integrity in an industry that he saw as trading on emotions, but without any actual heart of its own. As such, it is only fitting that Kazan ends his visual depiction of Stahr's narrative with Stahr defeated, walking into the lonely abyss of an empty soundstage. The dark soundstage serves as a reminder of Stahr's failure as a generic Western hero and also represents a reversal from the brightly lit sunset into which so many victorious Western heroes ride. Read in this manner, Kazan and Pinter's ending provides appropriate closure to Fitzgerald's inversion of the Western in a modern context.

Critics of the Kazan/Pinter adaptation are divided about the decision to end the adaptation in this manner. Some, such as Lloyd Michael, see its open-endedness as purposeful, "an appropriate analogue for the aura of possibility left behind by Fitzgerald's unfinished manuscript" (117). Others see it, and the scene of Stahr's dismissal leading up to it, as incurably flawed, overlong, and melodramatic, feeling instead that, given Stahr's hit record at the studio, "a bonus, rather than a dismissal, would have been more believable" (Atkins 110). Additionally, most of the scene's critical detractors seem as if they would have preferred an approach that attempted to convert the remainder of Fitzgerald's unfinished work faithfully from his notes. However, no critic addresses the issue of the ending as a possible attempt by Kazan and Pinter to purposefully extend Fitzgerald's exploration of Western genre tropes in a modern context. To paraphrase the adage about Homer, it is on this point that critics nod off, while the perfectly balanced team of Pinter, Kazan, and DeNiro continue Fitzgerald's artistic dream of creating, from a tale based in the Hollywood Western and romantic

genres, a cohesive sense of American cultural mythos on a scale of Greek epic proportions.

The final theme that Kazan and Pinter explore in their adaptation of *The Last Tycoon* is Fitzgerald's continual employment of stories from Greek mythology to explain the creation of American mythology in the motion picture industry. Almost every critic of the film adaptation has made a passing reference to Fitzgerald as "both the sarcastic and truthful mythologist" who explores the mythos of America's universal hero, the self-made man, not only in *The Last Tycoon* but also in *The Great Gatsby* (Marsh 105). However, no critics have actually worked through exactly how Fitzgerald manipulates the classics to serve his thematic purposes, even though a completely separate dissertation could be made from these efforts alone.

Fitzgerald's formal grounding in the classics began during his teenage years at the Catholic Newman School, in Hackensack, New Jersey, where he studied Virgil, Cicero, Latin, and Ancient History, and continued at Princeton, where he took the required curriculum in Greek and Latin literature, which included intensive study in Livy, Sallust, and Cicero again (*Grandeur* 36-67). Further, Fitzgerald's lifelong study of the romantic poets, particularly John Keats, began at Princeton. Specifically, the young writer's obsession with Keats's "Ode on a Grecian Urn" caused him to endeavor "to become a prose Keats, imitating the poet's rhythms and enriching his own style with lush Keatsian imagery" (*Grandeur* 70). As a result of his love for the poem, which melded classical sensibilities with Romantic style, Brucoli writes:

Keats became an enduring presence in Fitzgerald's life, providing him with a model of creative sensibility. Like Keats, Fitzgerald was painfully responsive to the mutability of beauty and the evanescence of youth. Both yearned for

immortality through art, and Keats's early death imbued Fitzgerald with a sense of urgency. Above all, Fitzgerald identified with the Keatsian archetype – the handsome youth acclaimed for his genius. Literature was a glamorous thing for Fitzgerald. He aspired to early triumph and the fame that went with it.

(Grandeur 71)

From this background, it is easy to see how, in Fitzgerald's mind, the circle of immortality was drawn, using Greek mythology to connect artistic achievement as a Romantic endeavor with his aspirations for immortality. In all likelihood, the character of Monroe Stahr was born out of this ouroboros, and therefore represents the culmination of Fitzgerald's mediation on this theme.

Close reading of Fitzgerald's description of Stahr in his original text reveals Fitzgerald's attempt to create an American mythological hero in the classic model. As the allegedly blind Greek cameraman Pete Zavras describes him in the novel, Stahr is "the Aeschylus and the Diogenes of the moving picture...also the Asclepius and the Menander" (*Tycoon* 61). The ever-playful Fitzgerald engages in this moment of classical name-dropping with the purpose of describing Stahr as the embodiment of the goals of the American motion picture industry, and, in turn, the American mythmaking ethos.

Aeschylus, the oldest of the trio of Greek tragedians that included Sophocles and Euripides, signifies Stahr's role as supreme purveyor of meaningful emotion in an industry and nation full of fluff. Stahr's constant mission to convey truthful emotion that assists Americans in understanding their collective feelings, so prevalent in the "nickel for the movies" scene already described, in which he warns against actors who perform "violent movements," speak "cheap dialogue," and make overwrought "facial expressions," is invoked by Fitzgerald's passing mention of Diogenes (32). Diogenes, who carried a symbolic lantern of truth through the darkness in his relentless search for

an honest man, could be equated with Stahr's ritual in Kazan's adaptation of sitting in his darkened screening room alone, with only the flickering light of his projector illuminating his quest to pull true human emotion out of actors. By invoking the name Asclepius, the Greek god of medicine, Fitzgerald conveys Stahr's role as a healer, and, in turn, the cathartic role that motion pictures play in the American consciousness as a medium for collective vocalization of aspiration and resulting emotional release. Last, by naming Menander, the father of Athenian comedy, as Stahr's final classical parallel, Fitzgerald effectively claims that the laughter provided by lighter, humorous films, often played during Stahr's screening room clips in Kazan's adaptation, is just as important as tragedy for its healing powers and also in creating a balance within the overall American cultural psyche.

The total effect of Zavras's description is summed up in Stahr's brief line, "I'm the unity" (*Tycoon*). Spoken in the meeting scene among the studio brass, screenwriter Harold Pinter wisely lifts this line directly from Fitzgerald's original novel. In both the novel and film adaptation, Stahr stands for a perfect unity of artistic emotion in American filmmaking that is also in sync with the collective emotional needs of a nation, a unity that has been striven for since the very beginnings of narrative with the Greeks. In short, Stahr represents the culmination of the classical unities written large for the American cinematic stage.

Further, it is no accident that this description of Stahr is given by a Greek cameraman, whose career is attacked by a vicious rumor of his impending blindness before Stahr saves his reputation by sending him to an oculist and correcting the rumor. Fitzgerald, a Catholic writer of poetic sensibility who loved to play with words and

names and had a classical education, could have intended symbolic meaning for Pete Zavras's name as a combination of St. Peter, who holds the keys to the Kingdom, and Zephyrus, the Greek god of the fructifying west wind who in mythology was thought to bring love and spring. This reading of Zavras's name is the key to Fitzgerald's use of classical symbolism and is supported by Zavras's statement in the novel that Stahr is an "oracle...the solver of Eleusinian mysteries" (*Tycoon* 61). The Eleusinian mysteries, in Greek mythology, are part of the cult of Demeter and Persephone, and connect the mysteries of the passing of the seasons with the transition to the afterlife. Anyone who solves the Eleusinian mysteries is supposed to unlock the secret to immortality. Therefore, the ultimate significance of cameraman Pete Zavras's presence in Fitzgerald's original novel can be read to signify Stahr's abilities as a sort of Hollywood oracle, who has divined the secret of immortalizing stars, and the characters they portray, through film.

The secondary symbol of blindness, coupled with immortality, is also significant to a complete interpretation of Stahr's character. Although Stahr is able to immortalize in celluloid the stars of his motion pictures, he is powerless to preserve the life of his beloved wife, Minna Davis. As a result, Stahr remains purposefully blind to the possibility that another woman, Cecelia Brady, could offer him the emotional comfort he so desperately needs. Further, Stahr's blindness to anything other than the physical resemblance of Kathleen Moore to Minna Davis prevents Stahr, otherwise an impeccable judge of character throughout the novel, from seeing that Kathleen is emotionally unavailable and that Cecelia would be a far better mate.

Once again, Fitzgerald plays with name symbolism to support this inference, since Cecelia is a name of Latin origin signifying one who finds a way for the blind. Cecelia continually takes on this motherly role toward Stahr, culminating in Fitzgerald's novel with the final completed scene that he wrote, in which Stahr becomes so drunk that he blacks out after a fight with Brimmer, the Communist organizer. Kazan's film picks up in this moment with original material, putting Cecelia in the role of caretaker as she nurses Stahr's hangover and his ego, allowing him to maintain his delusion that he knocked Brimmer out, rather than the opposite, which is the actual truth. Read in consideration of the symbolism behind Cecelia's name, Kazan's staging of this scene makes clear Fitzgerald's intention. Cecelia may have been the only woman with a realistic chance of helping Stahr overcome the destructive blindness to the motivations of others that he has suffered from ever since falling for Kathleen.

To complete the exploration of Fitzgerald's implementation of classical mythology in his tale of Stahr as an American mythmaker who becomes ouroborically consumed by his own mythos, one must consider the possible classical parallels behind Stahr himself. When Stahr first sees Kathleen, she is "on top of a huge head of the god Shiva" having "found sanctuary along a scroll of curls on its bald forehead" and is "floating down the current of an impromptu river" made by the breaking of water pipes on a film set after an earthquake (*Tycoon* 26). This striking image is no doubt a symbolic gesture. Shiva is the Hindu god of destruction and rebirth, from whose hair Hindus believe the waters of the Ganges River flow, representing immortality. Stahr is immediately struck by Kathleen's resemblance to his dead wife, Minna. Fitzgerald describes the scene through Stahr's point-of-view:

Smiling faintly at him from not four feet away was the face of his dead wife, identical even to the expression. Across the four feet of moonlight the eyes he knew looked back at him, a curl blew a little on a familiar forehead, the smile lingered, changed a little according to pattern, the lips parted – the same. An awful fear went over him and he wanted to cry aloud. Back from the still sour room, the muffled glide of the limousine hearse, the falling concealing flowers, from out there in the dark – here now warm and glowing. The river passed him in a rush, the great spotlight swooped and blinked – and then he heard another voice speak that was not Minna's voice. (26-27)

In this passage, Fitzgerald uses Kathleen's arrival, on the head of Shiva, to symbolize how Stahr's memory of Minna makes her not only immortal, but also larger than life, like a goddess. Kazan's adaption furthers Fitzgerald's use of Shiva symbolism by including tiger-skin rugs in Stahr's home and office. Since tiger-skin is an often-used symbol of the lustful side of Shiva's presence, the tiger skins can be read to represent Stahr's ongoing internal struggle with sexual desire both for his dead wife and elusive girlfriend. Kazan's set decoration in his adaptation furthers this theme, by adding portraits of Minna looming over Stahr's shoulder in every scene of his quiet reverie about Kathleen. These additions to the set go a long way to further the viewer's sense that Stahr's feelings for Minna, and later, Kathleen, have surpassed mortal love and crossed over into the realm of religion.

Of course, the use of love and art to cross the borders between mortality and divinity is a pervasive theme in Greek mythology. Fitzgerald's inclusion of a small detail, replicated in the costume design for Kazan's adaptation, gives the audience a clue as to which mythological character Stahr is supposed to parallel. When Stahr begins his search for Kathleen, he does not know her name. He only remembers that her face looked like Minna's and that she wore "a silver belt with stars cut out of it" (*Tycoon* 54). The Greek mythological character most closely associated with a belt of stars is Orion, the great

hunter, who pursued the seven sisters of the Pleiades, until Zeus turned them all into stars, destined to roam the heavens for eternity in an unrequited romantic quest. A well-read man who knew his mythology, Fitzgerald could easily have been inspired to create a powerful producer named Stahr, whose judgment is blinded by his love for a woman wearing a starred belt, from the mythological story of Orion, a mighty hunter who is struck blind in pursuit of unattainable females, and whose constellation is a belt of stars.

Further, the faintest and westernmost of these stars in Orion's belt, Mintaka, is supposed to represent Merope, the most beautiful and graceful of the seven sisters with whom Orion is especially infatuated. Interestingly, Mintaka is a double star, meaning that it is actually made up of two stars, one brighter and one dimmer, revolving in an eclipsing orbit around the same center point. Considered in this context, the names of Stahr's two women, wife Minna and girlfriend Kathleen, might have had a combined inspiration, in Fitzgerald's ever-inventive mind, in the name Mintaka, the most unique star in the Orion/Pleiades constellation. Such an interpretation makes sense when considered in conjunction with the fact that the dramatic sea cliff location of Stahr's unfinished home is in Santa Monica, a town named in honor of one of the Three Marys, which is an alternate name for the major stars in the Orion's Belt constellation. Kazan's choice to film these scenes on the actual Santa Monica seashore, where the stars seem so close that the actors could almost reach out and touch them, offers a breathtakingly beautiful backdrop that promotes the inference of Stahr's proximity not only to Hollywood stars, but to actual ones, and the immortal tales represented by their constellations that most likely inspired Fitzgerald.

This mythological information allows viewers to appreciate not only Fitzgerald's original novel, but also Kazan's carefully constructed adaptation. Critics have complained that the film adaptation of *The Last Tycoon*, like Clayton's *Gatsby*, is too long and slow-paced, saying that Pinter's screenplay is "too filled with long awkward pauses" and that Kazan "is not a director noted for great sensitivity or depth of feeling" (Atkins 110). However, it is virtually impossible to watch the tasteful and poignant lovemaking scene in Stahr's unfinished house and not be moved by DeNiro's performance as a man whose calm wonder at finally consummating his love for Kathleen clearly depicts Fitzgerald's sense from the novel that Stahr was a man in love with a dream of a woman, and of the life that they would share in the still-unfinished house, more so than the actualization of the dream itself. Pinter's use of dramatic pauses, combined with Kazan's sensitive staging, and DeNiro's unhurried approach to delivering Stahr's lines, give the film an overall meditative quality of a love affair whose every moment must be savored because its participants are all too aware of the fleeting nature of such times.

Fitzgerald's original text seems ready to justify the adaptation's languid pace. In his description of their first meeting, which Kazan smartly stages as a balcony scene reminiscent of *Romeo and Juliet*, complete with an overhanging crescent moon, Fitzgerald writes, "Stahr's eyes and Kathleen's met and tangled. For an instant they made love as no one ever dares to do after. Their glance was closer than an embrace, more urgent than a call" (*Tycoon* 64). Looks of love such as these fill Fitzgerald's original novel, and cannot be hurried along without destroying their significance.

The ultimate effect produced is not one of an unnecessarily slow film, but instead a piece that evokes memories of Fitzgerald's reverence for Keats's "Ode on a Grecian Urn," a poem that conveys the same message as Fitzgerald's prose ode to Hollywood. Art, whether it is in the form of a Grecian urn, an English poem, an American novel, or a Hollywood film, has the power to capture and immortalize beauty and the love that so often is inspired by it. However, art will always remain, as Keats referred to it, a "cold pastoral" whose "silent form dost tease us out of thought / As doth eternity" (lines 44-45). Here, Keats's poem articulates the reason why Stahr can never be content by merely surrounding himself with cinematic images of Minna, and instead chooses to pursue the shadow of her presence in Kathleen. Although Stahr may be able to capture the essence of Minna's physical beauty in cinematic art, the actual presence of her inner beauty, however fleeting or difficult it is to procure, remains tantalizingly valuable. In his pursuit of Kathleen, Stahr hopes to recapture the happiness that he found only in real life with Minna.

Always respectful of Fitzgerald's thematic vision in his conversion of novel to screen, Kazan faithfully represents these effects of the author's leisurely approach, allowing his audience time to ponder each Bergsonian moment of recognition and romance in order to appreciate the balanced artistic vision among original author, director, screenwriter, and actors. By using a manner of adaptation that maintains historical accuracy in its incorporation of the same level of biographical detail included in Fitzgerald's original novel, Kazan and his collaborators are able to bring to life an adaptation that conveys the same psychological complexity of Fitzgerald's original novel, calling attention to the minor theme of fame's effects on male sexuality by casting Tony

Curtis in the small but important role of the nerve-wracked, impotent leading man, Rodriguez. Also, Kazan explores the socio-cultural significance of the motion picture industry in American culture by utilizing liberal amounts of Fitzgerald's original dialogue, as well as casting actors, such as Robert Mitchum in the role of Pat Brady, whom audiences would recognize as living embodiments of fame created within the Hollywood system. Kazan even calls attention to Fitzgerald's minor political theme of America's anti-Communist anxiety, mirrored and magnified by the Hollywood community, by casting high-profile actor Jack Nicholson as Brimmer, the Communist organizer. These supporting actors use their considerable screen presences to create remarkably nuanced performances of Harold Pinter's carefully wrought screenplay. As a result of these combined efforts, Elia Kazan's *The Last Tycoon* remains one of the best film adaptations of a Fitzgerald work to date.

The Curious Case of Benjamin Button (2008)

David Fincher's film version of F. Scott Fitzgerald's short story, "The Curious Case of Benjamin Button," is a rare example of an adaptation that not only represents a consistent artistic vision of the collaborators, but also demonstrates a keen sense of how to stylistically interpret that text to make it relevant for an entirely new generation of readers. In the table of contents for the collection in which "Button" was released, Fitzgerald dedicated "these tales of the Jazz Age into the hands of those who read as they run and run as they read" (802). Fincher's adaptation team seems to take this dedication as a motivational point. His Benjamin Button is a man of perpetual motion, which is a

fitting portrayal of a man whose life runs backwards, as if in flight from death, even as he inevitably moves toward it. The film's heavy incorporation of many locations and circumstances paralleling the life of Benjamin's globe-trotting creator, Scott Fitzgerald, prompts audiences to explore further into the author's life and works. Relying on historical and socio-cultural updates, Fincher creates new levels of psychological depth in Button's character that were only hinted at in Fitzgerald's original.

Fitzgerald was a writer immensely concerned with the issue of aging. According to Alice B. Toklas, Fitzgerald met with Gertrude Stein on his thirtieth birthday and said it was "unbearable for him to have to face the fact that his youth was over" (*Grandeur* 232). The short story most concerned with the process of aging that Fitzgerald wrote was "The Curious Case of Benjamin Button." First published in *Collier's* magazine and then collected into *Tales of the Jazz Age* in 1922, "Button" is an ironic and darkly humorous story about a man born looking physically old who aged backward into infancy.

Fitzgerald wrote his own abbreviated source study for the story in the annotated Table of Contents for *Tales of the Jazz Age*:

The story was inspired by a remark of Mark Twain's to the effect that it was a pity that the best part of life came at the beginning and the worst part at the end. By trying the experiment upon only one man in a perfectly normal world I have scarcely given his idea a fair trial. Several weeks after completing it, I discovered an almost identical plot in Samuel Butler's *Notebooks*. (800)

According to Andrew Crosland, Fitzgerald learned of Twain's odd observation about the aging process from reading Albert Bigelow Paine's three-volume biography of Twain, in which Twain supposedly thought that "if all men were born old, they would be happier" (137). Apparently, Fitzgerald, worshipper of youth that he was, took issue with Twain's comments and decided to try them out in a story that became a mockery of the idea,

focusing the reader's attention on the "incongruities which result from the fact that Button's way of maturing runs counter to that experienced by other people" (Crosland 137).

From its first publication in *Tales of the Jazz Age*, critics seemed aware of the odd mix of both ironic humor and deeper concerns such as morality and the meaning of life that Fitzgerald had in mind when writing "Button." An unnamed critic writing in 1922 for the *Portland Evening Express* commented on the humor in both *Tales* in general and "Button" in particular, but also noted that the reader "chuckles again, but on a different note" with this story, which perhaps made the reader "yield to emotions he had not been very sure he possessed, and is left with the impression that there is, after all, more even in his own drab world than he supposed" (Inge 145). The *Express* critic's take on the story may have been the most insightful reading of the "Button" story until the creation of David Fincher's 2008 film rendering, *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button*, starring Brad Pitt and Cate Blanchett. Fincher's adaptation seems to capture, through the added perspective of generational hindsight, many layers of nuanced meaning deeper than the original.

Fincher's interpretive film version, although in many aspects a radical departure from Fitzgerald's original text, conveys in a 21st century context the social issues that Fitzgerald lampooned in his original version in a straightforward way, more easily digestible for contemporary audiences. In this manner, Fincher creates a valid interpretation of the "Button" story by incorporating many common themes from Fitzgerald's longer works as well as numerous aspects of the author's biographical history. Ultimately, Fincher's film portrays the greater, yet more highly obscured, themes

about love and mortality that Fitzgerald, who was only twenty-six at the time “Button” was written, may have subconsciously recognized but repressed behind a protective veil of humor, due to a youthful lack of authorial perspective and maturity regarding the consequences of aging.

Button's journey from page to screen would become a long one. According to the DVD of supplemental materials included with the Criterion Collection edition of *Button*, in 1992 screenwriter Robin Swicord was hired to create a screen adaptation of the “Button” story by the newly formed Kennedy/Marshall production company, with Steven Spielberg set to direct and Tom Cruise selected to star. With this setup of a high-profile, all-American cast and crew, Swicord's vision for the storyline centered on making the cinematic adaptation a semi-retelling of Fitzgerald's life as an American icon, with heavy reliance on a jazz soundtrack to subliminally suggest the connective ouroboric cycle among original author, text, and work. As director David Fincher recalled, “It was a beautiful world, but a very different one from our film. It was much more about the Jazz Age: Benjamin as a stand-in for Scott Fitzgerald. But for me it required the audience to know too much about jazz” (James 28). Spielberg dropped out of the project after the fervor following *Jurassic Park*, and Cruise passed on the role. Unwilling to give up on the project, Kennedy and Marshall commissioned a rewrite by Eric Roth, who read the original story and the major Fitzgerald biographies to recreate a screenplay that was a darker meditation about love, death, and the value of human experience in his 2002 update (*Supplements*). What resulted was a film of epic proportions, a complete reinterpretation of Button as a sensitive, adventurous, modern-day hero, who had more in

common with Indiana Jones, another Kennedy/Marshall creation, than F. Scott Fitzgerald.

Still, even with this expanded scope, the film depends on Fitzgerald's often-used sense of Bergsonian meditation to bring an overall feeling of calm to what could have otherwise been a ludicrously-paced romp through American history. Credit for this approach should be given to David Fincher, who loved the Roth rewrite of the script and recommended his recent collaborator from *Fight Club*, Brad Pitt, for the leading role of Benjamin. Pitt, who envisioned the storyline of the screenplay as a romantic tragedy, felt the role would be a positive experience for him to show a more subtle side of his acting abilities by playing Benjamin at many different ages (*Supplements*). Pitt wisely plays Benjamin as a quiet, soft-spoken man of deep feeling, bringing his natural standard of quiet intensity to the role and causing audiences to ponder his carefully chosen words.

David Fincher's final addition to the creation of the screen interpretation of *Button* was widening the ouroboric cycle of authorship to incorporate not only references to Fitzgerald's biography, but also some of his own personal history. By choosing to direct Pitt's Benjamin as a man reminiscent of his own recently deceased father, a "journalist" and "wallflower," who was "very cautious" and "didn't want to engage with things until he really understood them," Fincher incorporated his personal history into Fitzgerald's original tale (James 28). Fincher claimed that the goal of his collaboration with Roth on bringing the screenplay to life was to make a film showing a real man with real regrets about the fleeting quality of youth and love, regardless of how he aged, because such concerns were universal. As Fincher told Roth, "Eric, if we're not making a movie about regret, then we're not making a movie about life" (James 28). After learning

about the intricacies of this carefully constructed project that represents such a unified collaborative effort on the part of all parties, not to mention the expenditure of hundreds of thousands of dollars in Academy Award-winning CGI effects to accurately and naturally portray the aging process of Pitt and Blanchett in the film, it would be difficult for any scholar to find that the film is not an artistic work worthy of addition to the Fitzgerald canon.

Yet, some critics have found grounds to completely dismiss the project. At the 2009 meeting of the F. Scott Fitzgerald Society in Baltimore, scholar John L. DiGaetani wholeheartedly expressed his disdain for the film, concluding his lecture about what he perceived to be unforgiveable deviations from the Fitzgerald *oeuvre* by saying that Fincher's film "is a failure on all levels." In the discussion portion following his lecture, DiGaetani appeared to focus his displeasure with the film on the casting of Brad Pitt, whom he felt was "much too old" for the role, and Fincher and Roth's adaptation, which he felt strayed too far from the original text, mostly because the setting was moved from Baltimore to New Orleans.

Given the all-too-common tendency of literary scholars to dismiss film adaptations that are not "faithful" to their printed originals, DiGaetani's disdain for Fincher's interpretive adaptation of *Button* is not surprising. However, it is important to remember that Fitzgerald was extremely open to significant alteration of his works for the screen, even doing so himself with the *Cosmopolitan* revision of "Babylon Revisited." Also, given Fitzgerald's tendency to admire those he perceived to have social standing, he would most likely have been excited about the possibility of a prestigious cast and crew taking such pains to make his words translate to a new, younger audience.

Fitzgerald's primary concern, during his early career when "Button" was written, was that his writing was timely and appealed to young people:

My idea is always to reach my generation. The wise writer, I think, writes for the youth of his own generation...Granted the ability to approve what he imitates in the way of style, to choose from his own interpretation of the experiences around him what constitutes material, and get the first-water genius.

(qtd. in *Grandeur* 137).

From this statement by Fitzgerald, one can deduce that the author would have considered a rendering of any story, even his own, in a way that was not directly relevant to the youth of the generation reading or viewing it as an ineffective writing product. According to Fitzgerald, it would have been valid for Roth and Fincher to take the base concept of "Button" and reinterpret it to reflect both the current social climate and their own personal experiences, which included their reactions to Fitzgerald's own tragic biography. Fitzgerald's most often-articulated fear was to become a forgotten anachronism, out of touch with youth culture and taste. Therefore, to dismiss a film adaptation of an original Fitzgerald text chiefly because it was carefully adapted to suit the sensibilities of the 21st century moviegoer would actually be a departure from the author's original intentions for the public reception of his works.

Perhaps even more importantly, Brad Pitt, because of his similar social standing to Fitzgerald, was the perfect actor upon whom to paint the visual canvas of the backward-aging Button. The handsome, blonde Fitzgerald, who became an overnight celebrity at twenty-four with the publication of *This Side of Paradise*, can be seen as a Brad Pitt of the 1920s. Both men's lives have been ceaselessly documented by a constant barrage of paparazzi, who meditated on their looks and personalities much more than on their respective works, especially after their marriages to high profile females (Zelda

Sayre and Angelina Jolie) who possessed scandalous reputations and questionable records of sanity. Also, both men, by the time they turned forty, had become objects of female desire. Each waited pensively to see whether his respective audience would continue to embrace him after his youthful glamour faded.

Unfortunately for Fitzgerald, the Jazz Age audience he had cultivated proved fickle, and he died believing himself a failure. However, Pitt seems to have fared much better. If audiences for *Button* can be considered an indicator, Pitt's viewers appear to be more than willing to pay to see their idol spend over half of a movie as either a wrinkled old man or a child. As proof, the film adaptation of *Button* was the number two movie of the record-high earning 2008 Christmas weekend, bringing in \$39 million in four days (Semuels). Also, reprints of Fitzgerald's original short story have skyrocketed since 2008, with new editions of "Button" appearing as the cover story in numerous mass-market Fitzgerald compendiums, such as Penguin's *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button and Other Jazz Age Stories* (2008).

Perhaps most intriguing about the phenomenal number of reprints inspired by the film's success is the public interest in Fitzgerald that such editions have reawakened. One need only peruse the customer comments on *Amazon.com* to find that many Fitzgerald fans rediscovered the author because of Fincher's adaptation and the reprint phenomenon that it sparked. Most of the comments read like those of Connecticut's Marjorie Bachand, who claimed that she was "Enjoying this book so far, I forgot how much I used to enjoy Fitzgerald's stories, it has been a long time since I read him" (*Amazon.com*). Other readers chose to analyze the connection between Fitzgerald, the

reprints, and the film adaptation more deeply. Wesley Mullins from Kentucky wrote a particularly long response about his reaction to rediscovering Fitzgerald:

Longer than a short story, shorter than a novella, “The Curious Case of Benjamin Button” was destined to be lost to everyone except the most ardent F. Scott Fitzgerald fans until Hollywood rescued it and turned it into a film. Intrigued by the trailer, I looked for the story to read before seeing the film...From what I have seen of the trailer, the film and story differ greatly...Fitzgerald speaks of Benjamin in almost fairy tale tones...It's full of the same quirks that have caused the movie to be one of the most anticipated this year...The story is tricky, poignant and sad. It was impossible to not see Brad Pitt in the role and impossible to not think about how they are going to show him as 80 years old or (sorry Brad) as a teenager. I don't think reading this spoiled anything about the movie for me. If anything, it only makes me want to see it even more. (*Amazon.com*)

The fact that Mullins’s review was for the Kindle edition of the reprint points to the important fact that the technologically savvy reader, with a youthful mindset, finds Fitzgerald’s work to resonate for today’s popular culture through its connection with Brad Pitt in the film adaptation, showing that the film has expanded and extended the story’s shelf life.

Perhaps most importantly, a customer from Long Island, using the name “Long Island Momma Abigail,” wrote that the reprint and film not only renewed her interest in Fitzgerald but also encouraged her son to read his work as well:

I read this story before seeing the movie starring Brad Pitt. The story is great and worth reading. It is only 20+ pages, but really interesting. I saw the movie yesterday, and highly recommend the movie. The movie has taken some liberties from the book, but still excellent. Movies are always a little different from the book. I recommend you read this story before seeing the movie. I gave the book to my 19 year old son to read, and he enjoyed it too. We went to the movie together, and both enjoyed the movie. It was a nice mother/son date. I am an avid reader, but my son normally only reads for school or Harry Potter books, so it was nice that he enjoyed this story too, and wanted to see the movie with his mother.

Pick up the book and share it with your family, you might be surprised how much they enjoy reading it too. (*Amazon.com*)

Abigail's review is important because it shows how the average consumer of entertainment product can use the film adaptation in support of the original text to encourage a younger generation of readers to become interested in Fitzgerald and to read more in general. This result is the best possible work that a film adaptation of a classic text can perform.

Although it might seem odd to consider customer comments about a literary work in a serious critique, such analysis is warranted here to establish the validity of Fincher's film as instrumental in reviving an interest in Fitzgerald studies. Fitzgerald was interested in consumer reactions to his stories, even choosing to put a reader's letter into the entry for "Button" in his Table of Contents for *Tales of the Jazz Age*. Always interested in pleasing his audience, Fitzgerald took an amused approach to what he describes as a "startling letter from an anonymous admirer in Cincinnati" and then reprints the letter, complete with mechanical errors:

Sir –

I have read the story Benjamin Button in *Colliers* and I wish to say that as a short story writer you would make a good lunatic. I have seen many peices of cheese in my life but of all the peices of cheese I have ever seen you are the biggest peice. I hate to waste a peice of stationary on you but I will.

(*Fitzgerald: Novels and Stories* 801)

This entry from Fitzgerald demonstrates how the author's eagerness to entertain his target audience was coupled in his early career with a sense of humor about the public reception of his works. Throughout his career, Fitzgerald worked in both the popular media of magazines and film, as well as the serious medium of literary writing, and would have

known the value of public reputation. As an artist who stood astride these two worlds, Fitzgerald, in all likelihood, would have delighted in the resurgence of interest in his life and works as Fincher's film adaptation brought the ouroboric cycle of Fitzgerald's fame into the age of digital media.

The Roth/Swicord script of the Fincher film plays off of the audience's ability to connect the cycle of Fitzgerald's fame as a public author in the early 20th century with Brad Pitt's similar celebrity status as an actor in the 21st. As *EW.com*'s Lisa Schwartzbaum observes:

Pitt, a comely actor, is no longer the golden surprise he was in *Thelma and Louise*. What he is, though, is a phenomenon of heightened celebrity. And that rarified status, combined with good grooming and exquisite digital effects care, produces the exact force field of fame needed to take our breath away in that first moment on screen when, rid of gray hair, Benjamin is bathed in sunlight that honors the movie-star beauty Pitt is. Was. Is.

The connection between a 21st century understanding of the transitory nature of movie star celebrity and actual accounts of Fitzgerald's mid-twentieth century fall from the heights of international fame is an easy one to make. This theme is also a valid one to pursue in a film adaptation of "Button," a story which places its primary concern on how a man is alternately embraced or negatively stereotyped by his culture because of his apparent physical age.

This additional connection of a meditation on whether Brad Pitt's fame is lasting actually enhances the underlying themes of Fitzgerald's original story, while simultaneously inviting the ironic comparison to the author's own tragic biography. Any critic who hastily discounts the validity of an interpretive film adaptation of a Fitzgerald work primarily on the basis of a lack of faithfulness misses the entire point of Fitzgerald.

He was a writer who deliberately sculpted his life into a work that he perceived to be of epic proportions, and then wrote about it, only to find that his work began to take on a life of its own, eerily predicting, fulfilling, and documenting his own inevitable demise, in an ouroboric circle of celebrity. The real irony of “The Curious Case of Benjamin Button” was that the elliptical nature of the story’s plotline reflected the elusive reciprocity of life and art in Fitzgerald’s world.

With this understanding of how the “Button” story was created, it is now necessary to look at how some specific details of the story were translated into a film suitable for 21st century sensibilities. First, the setting of the film in New Orleans, Paris, and New York is drastically different from the original story, which was set in Baltimore. Fitzgerald’s choice to set his tale in Baltimore was most likely related to his family history with the city. Fitzgerald’s full name, Francis Scott Key Fitzgerald, reflected his father’s pride in the family’s Old South lineage traced to the founder of Maryland, Philip Key, Fitzgerald’s grandfather of four generations back, and to Francis Scott Key, who was Fitzgerald’s second cousin (*Grandeur* 13). Throughout his entire lifetime, Fitzgerald considered himself a Southerner and a Confederate sympathizer who “became convinced that his father had never recovered from the Civil War and that its disappointments had sapped his ambition” (*Grandeur* 13). Fitzgerald’s father, Edward, was a former member of Southern gentility, who was a failure at every business enterprise he attempted. From these circumstances, Fitzgerald held a mixed view of the antebellum South as partly a fairytale land of aristocracy to which he, by birthright, should have been a part, and alternatively a pitiful, self-deluding disaster that collapsed upon the men who had been the pillars of its society before the war. Fitzgerald turned this inward meditation about the

cultural lineage that Southern fathers leave their sons into a humorous send-up of the morals and values of the Old South in the text of “Button,” his only story set not only in Baltimore, but also in the antebellum South.

Although Fitzgerald’s choices of time and place setting would have been easily appreciated by his Jazz Age readers, who very possibly could have endured many long-winded stories from their own fathers and grandfathers about the supposed glories of the Old South lifestyle, they would have been too remote for 21st century audiences. The negative associations of racial prejudice in the Old South and regional profiling of Southern stereotypes would have alienated many potential moviegoers, even if they recognized the society that Fitzgerald was attempting to lampoon in his original story. Instead, what was needed to modernize Fitzgerald’s story was the selection of a different Southern city which had a better reputation for racial equality, but that still maintained the classic ambiance of a Southern harbor town.

New Orleans was the city selected by Fincher’s production team after much debate as to the best reconciliation for all of these concerns. Contrary to the belief of some critics, who sought to dismiss the film as pandering to the sympathies of Americans after Hurricane Katrina, New Orleans was actually chosen several months before the hurricane, a situation which became a huge production obstacle that the film crew had to work around. Both Fincher and Pitt firmly believed that New Orleans was the ideal setting to house their vision of a film in which old and new were so closely juxtaposed. The film took on added metaphorical and cultural significance as set pieces such as streetcars and classic homes were restored by the film crew as some of the first signs of rebirth in the storm-ravaged city (*Supplements*). Also, the film’s chronological setting of

Benjamin's birth was moved forward to begin on World War One Armistice Day 1918, rather than in 1860. This move was another accommodation for audiences, who would have been more familiar via personal experiences of talking with elderly family members and friends about World Wars One and Two than the Civil War, making the film more personally resonant while retaining ties to America's military history.

Last, the choice of setting the film in early 20th century New Orleans allowed the filmmakers to grapple with issues of race, class, and social status that would be understandable to 21st century audiences. In Fincher's film, Benjamin's father, upon seeing what he perceived to be his newborn son's deformity, runs away with the baby and leaves him on a doorstep in the "colored" section of town. The baby Benjamin is discovered by Queenie, the African-American manager of a nursing home for elderly whites, and her long-term boyfriend, Mr. Weathers. Instead of judging Benjamin for his impairment of early-onset old age, Queenie takes Benjamin in and raises him as her own child, and after his marriage to Queenie, Mr. Weathers becomes a father figure to Benjamin. Over the course of the narrative, the audience learns that Queenie is a hard-working, generous woman of true Christian faith, while Mr. Weathers, who works as a cook, is actually highly self-educated, even reciting Shakespeare to Benjamin as he works.

These two morally sound characters stand in stark contrast to Benjamin's true father, whom Benjamin first meets in a brothel, and who never acknowledges Benjamin as his son until shortly before his death. As a result, the audience sees that the highly romantic, optimistic, and hard-working Benjamin learned these virtues from his African-American adoptive parents, prompting the inference that audiences should reconsider the

contributions made to American history by the nation's black population, who worked only in the shadow of whites during the early twentieth century. By the end of the film, when Queenie dies, Benjamin is clearly moved by the loss of his adoptive mother much more than that of his biological father, whose portraits he sells along with the house and business he inherits from Mr. Button. Finally, when Benjamin and Daisy become old, they return to the nursing home where he began his life as Queenie's son, suggesting that others should return to rebuild and repopulate New Orleans. As the film ends with Daisy's death in the hospital while flood waters sweep away Mr. Gateau's clock, audiences are prompted by a montage of all the historical events and people Benjamin has known to consider how much history could be lost if New Orleans were left in ruins. The ending of the film then becomes an ironic meditation not only on the significance of one human life that was allowed the possibility of being relived, but also on the possibility of what New Orleans, and the rest of America, could have been had all of its people been given equal opportunity to succeed.

The overall tone of the film differs from the tone of the story for one primary reason. Fitzgerald was a witty writer who often used ironic humor to create biting social satire in his works. However, social satire of a literary nature is extraordinarily difficult to translate to the screen, especially when the satire is made of a culture over a hundred years out of date. Screenwriter Eric Roth, who also transformed Winston Groom's Southern satiric text *Forrest Gump* into more palatable mass market film fare, wisely decided to make the message of the *Button* film more straightforward than satirical. Although Fitzgerald's primary concerns about aging and the mutability of love over time

are still present in Roth's screenplay, they are not obscured by Fitzgerald's poignant, yet anachronistic, witticisms.

One plot device that is completely new in the film adaptation of *Button* is the story of Mr. Gateau and his clock. The film opens with a sequence about a blind clockmaker who, heartbroken over the death of his only son in WWI, builds a clock for the new train station that runs backward instead of forward, saying "I made it that way...so that perhaps the boys that we lost might stand and come home again" (Roth and Swicord 12). Although this element is not present in Fitzgerald's story, the symbolism of Gateau's clock serves as a visual reminder of two themes important to the adaptation. First, a chief underlying theme of both the story and the film is that time can never be reversed. No matter how much sentimentality and worry is wasted, the fate of every person will continually unfold steadily and inevitably. This idea is furthered by the sequence in which the events of the day of Daisy's career-ending accident are unfolded in slow motion. Narrated by Benjamin, the sequence shows how, because of the sum total of small mishaps that befall numerous people in Daisy's world, she is fated to arrive in the spot where the car strikes her, shattering her leg. Daisy's ruined ballet career calls to mind the circumstances of Fitzgerald's biography, in which his wife Zelda also failed as a ballerina, mostly because she began too late in life. Gateau's clock, with the ridiculous oddity of its reverse timekeeping, is a visual symbol of this futility which calls to mind the last line of *The Great Gatsby* that people are merely "boats against the current, borne back ceaselessly into the past" (Fitzgerald 189). Second, the death of thousands of young men in the unprecedented bloodbath of WWI was the event that defined Fitzgerald's Lost Generation. The inclusion of WWI's end early in the film, as the moment from which

time should be made to run backward in order to erase the mistakes of the past, is a valid choice, based upon biographical incorporation from Fitzgerald's life.

Also, the circumstances of Benjamin's early life are different in the original story than in the movie, but these differences often serve to clarify or make more rational the events surrounding his birth. In the film, Benjamin's mother dies in childbirth, whereas in the short story, the mother is simply not mentioned again after she delivers Benjamin. Death of the mother as a result of complications from childbirth is acceptable considering the respective times in which the baby Benjamin might have been born. The Biblical Benjamin's mother, Rachel, died after giving birth to him, creating a possible symbolic context that Jewish screenwriter Eric Roth might have built upon in his adaptation (Gottheil). Further, it is possible that Fitzgerald intended to allude to the legend of the Wandering Jew in his tale, using Benjamin metaphorically in his farce as a symbol for the collective consciousness of man as an eternally restless species.

This possible allusion is made clear in the short story, when one of the Yale students mocks the gray-haired freshman, Benjamin, by yelling out, "He must be the Wandering Jew!" ("Button" 965). As Joseph Jacobs has noted, "The figure of the doomed sinner, forced to wander without the hope of rest in death until the millennium, impressed itself upon the popular imagination, and passed thence into literary art, mainly with reference to the seeming immortality of the wandering Jewish race" ("Wandering Jew"). Fincher's film illustrates this concept by showing a montage of Benjamin on a journey of self-exploration in his later life, during which he roams all over Europe, Asia, and the Middle East, after he realizes that, because of his aging condition, he will never be able to behave as a true husband for Daisy or father to their daughter, Caroline.

Instead, Benjamin sends her a series of letters and a diary, chronicling his adventures and wishes for her to live a fulfilling life in which she “always seeks out people with different points of view” to challenge opinions that she may hold (*Button*). Again, the inference in the film embraces Fitzgerald’s penchant for self-exploration, but broadens it to an overall sense of cultural exploration befitting of 21st century sensibilities.

Often in his work, Fitzgerald showed concern for the place of the Jew in early 20th century America as a metaphor for the universal plight of humanity. In his final unfinished novel, *The Last Tycoon*, Hollywood film producer Monroe Stahr is a Jewish executive who overworked himself while building a career that created no sort of meaningful existence for him. When Stahr at last slows down enough to allow himself the opportunity to find love, he becomes frustrated and depressed, realizing that he has waited too late to learn to enjoy the things in life that should bring the most meaning (*Tycoon*).

In short, the message conveyed by Monroe Stahr in Fitzgerald’s final novel is not unlike the one proposed by Benjamin Button, in both the film and original story versions. Life is not the sum total of aspirations and achievements, but is instead measured by the added values of earned experiences and personal relationships to create a balance within the whole equation of human existence. Fitzgerald’s personal life reflected a similar lack of aptitude for this sort of algebraic method of life’s true worth, and that same theme pervades two of his longer works, *The Great Gatsby* and *The Last Tycoon*. Like their author, the heroes of both these novels allowed the allure of fame and wealth to become their rulers. Fitzgerald was widely known for incorporating specific elements of his life into his characters, and Fincher’s adaptation follows his lead.

Further in-depth study of potential motivations behind the adaptation choices of the *Button* filmmakers might be pursued to uncover even more insights that add meaning to a careful rereading of the original short story text. One example of this approach could be an exploration of the relationship between Hildegard, called Daisy after Gatsby's heroine in Fincher's film, and Benjamin, compared to the relationship between Fitzgerald and his wife, Zelda. In the film adaptation, Daisy is a headstrong young ballerina with an independent personality very much like Zelda's; however, in the story, Hildegard is a long-suffering wife who indulges her husband's whims for years before finally leaving him and going to Europe. Fitzgerald's original heroine might be read as an expression of the worst fears he had for Zelda living a life in his shadow, while Fincher's adaptation is more likely a speculative, biographical reflection on the ballet career that Zelda might have had, and/or the life that the fictional Daisy might have led, as an independent woman, had she been born a generation afterward and married later in life.

Another direction of inquiry that might be pursued is the possible incorporation of biographical parallels not only to Fitzgerald's life, but also Hemingway's, that Fincher's adaptation appears to utilize. In the film, Benjamin takes part in WWII in an unusual way, by joining the crew of the Irish Captain Mike's tugboat. Captain Mike is a very Hemingwayesque character of overtly masculine personality who is given to alternating displays of bravado and debauchery that call to mind numerous exploits of Hemingway and the fictional Scotsman he created for *The Sun Also Rises*, Mike Campbell. Among his many military exploits, Hemingway was known for using his fishing boat, the *Pilar*, to help the Allies in WWII. Also, Benjamin's unique romantic relationship with the sophisticated British diplomat's wife, played by British actress Tilda Swinton, whom he

meets in Murmansk during WWII, seems very similar to the relationship between Jake Barnes and British Lady Brett Ashley in *The Sun Also Rises*. Only through further interviews with the filmmakers involved in the *Button* adaptation can these connections ever be solidified as definite examples of the Hemingerald phenomenon in Fitzgerald film adaptation.

Still, the major themes in Fitzgerald's original story survive into Fincher's film adaptation in expanded, thought-provoking form. Fitzgerald said, in his working notes for *The Last Tycoon*, "There are no second acts in American lives" (qtd. in "Second Acts"). Yet, Fitzgerald's short story, "The Curious Case of Benjamin Button" clearly has enjoyed a more popular second act over eighty years after its first. Benjamin Button's revival followed many years after the initial Fitzgerald revival in the 1960s, when this quotation was used in a 1968 *Time* magazine piece about Americans finding their avocations in second careers: "Any American who seeks self-renewal by serving others can almost certainly find a way today" ("Second Acts"). Brad Pitt's on-screen characterization of Benjamin epitomizes this new-found, mid-life optimism of the 1960s, when Benjamin says through his diary to his daughter, Caroline, "it's never too late, or in my case too early, to be whomever you want to be...I hope you live a life you are proud of, and if you're not, I hope you have the courage to start all over again" (Roth and Swicord 252). Although this statement is a clear departure from the cynical humor of Fitzgerald's original text, it cannot help but make those familiar with the author's biography wonder if his screenwriting career might have actually been a positive turning point in his life. If Fitzgerald had gained sobriety early enough in his Hollywood career to write out the sentiments that others have found percolating just beneath the smug veneer of protective

humor in his early works, “Button” might have become a masterpiece in Fitzgerald’s otherwise lackluster screenwriting career. Instead, David Fincher’s adaptation of *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button* stands as a monument to the exciting potential for additional depths of meaning that Fitzgerald’s works can have, if carefully interpreted for a new generation by a balanced group of collaborative writers, actors, and filmmakers.

The Beautiful and Damned (2008)

Richard Wolstencroft’s independent, revisionist adaptation of F. Scott Fitzgerald’s *The Beautiful and Damned* (2008) has never been the subject of scholarly review. This fact is not surprising, considering the chilly reception that the film received at its debut screening for the Tenth International F. Scott Fitzgerald Conference in Baltimore on October 2, 2009. Wolstencroft’s adaptation prompted large scale walk-outs, with Fitzgerald scholars mumbling comments from the polite, such as “I have better things to do with my time,” to the obviously dissatisfied and disturbed. At subsequent screenings after the conference, Wolstencroft’s adaptation has produced mixed reviews, the most positive of which originated in his native Australia. Reviewer Jack Marx sums up the Australian critics’ position best, saying:

Fitzgerald’s classic may have found a spiritual home in the hands of Wolstencroft. An independent filmmaker working on a peasant’s budget, Wolstencroft could be similarly assailed for ‘careless’ construction, his adaptation of *The Beautiful and Damned*, like his two previous feature films (*Bloodlust* in 1990 and *Pearls Before Swine* in 1999), notable for the sorts of technical deficiencies that are par-for-the-course when it comes to micro-budget cinema. But these are not the more remarkable aspects of Wolstencroft’s *B&D* - it’s what’s being filmed that is

guaranteed to kick a few crickets where the General Public is concerned.

(*news.au.com*)

Marx is certainly correct to point out the film's low production values, which include shoddy camera work and porn-style staging, yet it seems to be the alterations in content from Fitzgerald's original that are more likely to raise the ire of Fitzgerald scholars in the future.

Although Wolstencroft's revisionist adaptation captures the rebellious, hedonistic spirit of youth culture from Fitzgerald's novel, he neglects the trademarks that made the book quintessentially Fitzgeraldian, such as muted commentary on racism, purposeful linguistic playfulness, open discussion of fate versus determinism in American capitalist society, and an overall romantic approach to gender relations. Instead, Wolstencroft's revisionist adaptation replaces these themes with a plot that is tailored around his own personal interests, such as film censorship, the corrupting power of wealth, and the devaluation of meaningful sexual relationships in the 21st century. These discrepancies demonstrate an imbalance of creative control that improperly favor the director and serve to make Wolstencroft's adaptation a non-cohesive cautionary tale for all future filmmakers seeking to adapt Fitzgerald's works for mainstream audiences by incorporating their own autobiographical lives.

To be fair, Wolstencroft's adaptation does begin with a title screen that quotes Fitzgerald's title page for the novel, "The victor belongs to the spoils" (*Beautiful and Damned* 435). However, immediately in the following screens, Wolstencroft states that the adaptation, from his production company, Ontological Pictures, is to be "An Ereignis by Richard Wolstencroft." Wolstencroft, a self-proclaimed serious student of

Heideggerian philosophy, appears to make plain his intention here to create a revisionist adaptation that focuses on his own philosophical commentary about the state of youth culture in the 21st century, rather than to interpret Fitzgerald's 20th century views on the subject for a new generation.

In the first full scene of Wolstencroft's adaptation, there is an attempt to make the protagonist's morning ritual relevant and appallingly decadent for today's audiences. In the novel, readers are supposed to be amazed by the lavishness of what Fitzgerald dubs Anthony Patch's "reproachless apartment" and appalled at Anthony's choice to wallow lazily in bed while his English servant, Bounds, serves his breakfast and makes "deprecatative" comments (*Beautiful and Damned* 444, 446). In his adaptation, Wolstencroft captures Anthony's lavish home in the opening scenes, but adds two girls, referred to by the derogatory moniker, "the Hoover sisters," as Anthony's bed companions. One girl is openly topless and another strategically placed to conceal most of her toplessness. After Anthony is up and dressed, Bounds tells Anthony that he is "paid very well to be a PA two days a week, but some days I feel like a fucking housemaid" and asks whether he "should call the lost dogs society," to dispose of the girls, to which Anthony replies, "just make them breakfast and be sure they leave, preferably without any of my possessions" (Wolstencroft). As Anthony leaves, Bounds dismisses the girls by pulling off the covers, fully revealing their nakedness, and barking the one word command, "Out!" (Wolstencroft). This scene, which has no parallel in Fitzgerald's novel, is the first example of alteration to the plot and style of dialogue from the original.

Nowhere in Fitzgerald's entire published canon does the author ever use the word "fuck," although the epithet is one of many frequently used in Wolstencroft's adaptation. Also, there is never a mention of a threesome in Fitzgerald's work. Instead, Fitzgerald tended to leave women of easy virtue as objects of interest and speculation to his fictional young men like Anthony Patch, who finds such girls, "for all their vulgarity... faintly and subtly mysterious" (*Beautiful and Damned* 456). One might read this scene, then, as an early example of Wolstencroft's choice to depart from Fitzgerald's worldview and impose his own on the adaptation.

Wolstencroft's own life story factors largely into his creative choices for the film. In 1992, Wolstencroft opened The Hellfire Club, a controversial S&M nightspot in Melbourne. According to Australian nightlife reporter Michelle Griffin, "for years, he was the public face of the leather and lace-up crowd, generating headlines with calls to loosen pornography laws, and ill-advised plans for Nazi dress-up nights" (*theage.com*). Then, in 2000, Wolstencroft started the Melbourne Underground Film Festival, mostly as a reaction to the larger Melbourne International Film Festival's refusal to show films that displayed controversial amounts of sex, explicit language, or drug use. In an interview with Jack Marx, Wolstencroft acknowledges that his connection to a life of drugs and dangerous sexuality as providing the genesis of his revisionist version of Fitzgerald's novel:

When I ran the Hellfire Club I pretty much lived the *Beautiful and Damned* lifestyle. I had lots of money, a beautiful girlfriend, and I was friends with all these trust fund kids who didn't work, who all lived in mansions, who partied for five days in a row...I wanted to make a film about that whole milieu. Then I read *The Beautiful and Damned*, about a young couple who destroy themselves through excess. And I realized it was in the public domain. So I took it and laid it

over my own experience. You'd be surprised – about 70 per cent of the dialogue in the film is Fitzgerald's. (*news.au.com*)

Although Wolstencroft's assessment that a majority of the dialogue in his adaptation comes from Fitzgerald's original is an exaggeration, his statement that the novel was a secondary overlay to his own experiences in creating the film appears accurate. Many scenes from Wolstencroft's adaptation include large amounts of cocaine use, group sex, pornography, and even date rape that simply are not present in anywhere in the Fitzgerald canon, but in all likelihood were witnessed by Wolstencroft as part of his everyday existence as an S&M club owner. As a result, the film is quite clearly Richard Wolstencroft's *The Beautiful and Damned*, not Fitzgerald's. Still, what remains is to discuss exactly how Wolstencroft's personal life and directorial choices work within Fitzgerald's text, in order to determine whether this approach adds any relevance to the classic tale for today's audiences.

First, the issue of language use must be considered. According to Madeline Glaser, Fitzgerald uses wordplay in the novel "in the form of inverted semantic elements that disclose issues on which the plot revolves. This semantic reordering is an intentional reversal of the word order of a familiar quotation or common saying, which reorders meaning in the text" (238). The overall intention of Fitzgerald's witty turns of phrase, according to Glaser, is to create the sense in readers' minds that Anthony "lives in a society where cause and effect have been reversed" because "the rational concept of causal effect is challenged in the Jazz Age and is illustrated by chaos" (238). Therefore, the aforementioned quotation, "The victor belongs to the spoils" represents not just a clever turn of phrase, but instead a deliberate effort by Fitzgerald to demonstrate how

Anthony's wealth "possesses him rather than frees him" (Glaser 238). This type of wordplay, intended to convey a reversal of meaning, was rightly placed in the context of Fitzgerald's era, during which the world's value system had recently been inverted by World War One and Prohibition.

In Wolstencroft's adaptation, this type of wordplay is almost wholly omitted, and is instead replaced with a more hard-edged, 21st century linguistic sensibility that reflects the current state of youth culture's need to express a tough, aloof approach to the world by using large amounts of profanity, particularly the word "fuck." In his commentary after the film's debut at the Fitzgerald Conference, Wolstencroft claimed that one of his inspirations in creating authentic dialogue that represented current youth culture was Bret Easton Ellis, whose novel, *Less Than Zero*, takes a similar approach. The argument could be made that Wolstencroft's profanity-spewing youths are reacting to the same needs as Fitzgerald's more wittily-spoken characters, in that both are attempting to reflect a cool, nonchalant reaction to the chaos of everyday modern life. Read in this context, Wolstencroft's choice to alter Fitzgerald's linguistic sensibilities in the adaptation could be partially justified as an attempt to revise the emotional state that such phraseology was originally intended to convey.

In Fitzgerald's time, the social mores might have been turned upside down, but they were still identifiable enough that young people could identify and hold fast to basic emotions, such as aspiration, love, and sexual desire. However, Wolstencroft seems to be saying that in the 21st century, conventional values are not simply inverted, but instead have become fragmented beyond recognition. Therefore, Wolstencroft, who wrote the screenplay for his adaptation in addition to directing and producing it, might be

suggesting, through his continual employment of repetitive profanities like “fuck,” that every possible avenue of romantic endeavor or intellectual aspiration for young people today has been irretrievably perverted and that individuals are reduced to merely fulfilling the simplest of desires. In short, Wolstencroft’s characters’ repeated use of the word “fuck” may indicate not only that they consider their lives “fucked” in every possible way, but also that the very term, “fuck,” has been divorced from its sexual connotations, because even sex itself has become meaningless and devalued in the 21st century. Considered in this context, one could infer that Wolstencroft uses explicit language to reflect his belief that today’s youth culture faces an emotional wasteland even more barren than that of Fitzgerald’s Lost Generation.

This reading is justified by Wolstencroft’s frequent tirades against censorship in the press and in his “Manifesto for Ontological Cinema,” which is posted on his blog. In Wolstencroft’s “Manifesto,” which is similar in many ways to the Dogme 95 manifesto, he claims that his philosophy of filmmaking is an attempt “to apply the ideas of Martin Heidegger and others to cinema” (*IdeaFix.com*). Wolstencroft’s most clearly stated directive in the “Manifesto” - “Be honest when you make a film; do not lie. Uncover the truth of Being, do not observe it as an object” - seems to be the goal he is seeking in his adaptation of *The Beautiful and Damned*, which appears to be an attempt to convey the truth about life as Wolstencroft has experienced it, far more than it seems to be a reflection on Fitzgerald’s novel (*IdeaFix.com*). Although incorporation of a director’s personal experiences is inescapable and in some ways necessary in order to achieve a balanced collaboration of creative voices in the filmmaking process, it can be a fault when the director’s personal experiences do not closely parallel those of an adapted text’s

original author. Wolstencroft's worldview, which is far more sexually explicit and pessimistic than Fitzgerald's in this early work, often overshadows the themes present in the original novel.

Yet, according to Wolstencroft, his role as a director of supreme authority over his project is intentional. According to Wolstencroft's "Manifesto," "Cinema is in some senses inherently fascist at a deep level. The role of the director is fascism at its purest, a dictator of a cinematic world, with total power. But it should be noted that many, many directors are not tyrants or authoritarians and are truly and deeply transcendental fascists" (*IdeaFix.com*). "Transcendental fascism" is a term created by Wolstencroft to describe a political system that he advocates, which allows a benevolent dictator to rule with absolute power, but that does not include hatred of, or action against, any ethnic or sexual minority groups. This philosophy, which he discusses at length on his blog, has garnered much criticism in the Australian press, where it has been connected with other neo-fascist groups that Wolstencroft claims are completely unrelated to his beliefs. Regardless, Wolstencroft's ideology that the director should be a supreme authority over his films is clearly at odds with the six question approach to film adaptation advocated throughout this dissertation, because it represents the direct opposite of cohesive artistic vision among all collaborators which is the goal of such inquiry.

Still, it is important to understand Wolstencroft's transcendental fascist approach to ontological filmmaking in order to discuss some of the more unusual choices he makes in adapting *The Beautiful and Damned*. One scene, near the exact chronological center of the film, depicts Wolstencroft as a friend of Anthony Patch who is visiting Patch's home. Patch enters the room to see Wolstencroft's character watching a very vivid and explicit

pornographic film of himself date raping a woman who is asleep after being slipped some rohypnol. Patch is disgusted by the graphic film and the delight Wolstencroft's character and the other men seem to take in watching it. This scene is apparently intended to be the most morally revolting display of sexual deviance in a film that contains many such acts.

As a filmmaker working under his own "Manifesto" of transcendental fascism, Wolstencroft is under a duty of obligation to personally oversee this key commentary about his opinion on the true state of modern Being as it relates to sexuality. By putting himself in the role of a filmmaker who is engaging in sexual exploitation of a woman that is clearly reprehensible even under current, relaxed standards, Wolstencroft suggests that natural sexual desire has reached a complete state of depravity in today's youth culture, and the few who attempt to hold on to traditional connections of emotion and sexuality, as exemplified by the relationship between Anthony and Gloria Patch, are actually outside the mainstream. This questioning of traditional beliefs about what are considered acceptable practices of sexuality and visual depictions of sexual behavior is at the heart of Wolstencroft's film, and also of his particular worldview, which makes it fitting that his character is the one depicted in the scene. In Wolstencroft's cinematic world, sexuality is almost completely divorced from emotion, and he, as the director, must be present to oversee the proceeding.

However, once again, this scene has no thematic parallel to Fitzgerald's original novel. Instead of making a statement about the divorcement of sexuality from emotion being the new standard of modern society, Fitzgerald appears to suggest that sexuality can only produce meaning as a natural extent of romantic emotion and that it is natural for society to move toward this goal. Fitzgerald's Anthony Patch continually bemoans

“The Meaninglessness of Life” as a wealthy, bored, Ivy League-educated young playboy, but his life seem gains a sense of focus when he meets the love of his life, Gloria Gilbert (*Beautiful and Damned* 479). Fitzgerald describes the way in which Anthony Patch perceives Gloria’s role in his life:

Out of the deep sophistication of Anthony an understanding formed, nothing atavistic or obscure, indeed scarcely physical at all, an understanding remembered from the romancings of many generations of minds... The sheath that held her soul had assumed significance – that was all. She was a sun, radiant, growing, gathering light and storing it – then after an eternity pouring it forth in a glance, the fragment of a sentence, to that part of him that cherished all beauty and all illusion. (*Beautiful and Damned* 494)

Although Anthony’s life would later devolve as his party lifestyle pushes him further into excess, alcoholism, and even an adulterous relationship outside his marriage to Gloria, Anthony’s love for her never ceases to be the best part of his character. As Fitzgerald describes the situation, even though Gloria slowly falls out of love with Anthony over the course of the novel, Gloria remains Anthony’s “sole preoccupation... Had he lost her he would have been a broken man, wretchedly and sentimentally absorbed in her memory for the remainder of his life” (*Beautiful and Damned* 659). Anthony’s ability to love Gloria apart from sexuality before he consummates a relationship with her creates a sense of longing that makes the sexual acts which occur between them later more poignant. This story of a man who is so capable of love and devotion to one woman, but who then alienates himself from that woman’s affections, thereby rendering his existence meaningless, creates a romantic sensibility that makes Anthony Patch’s tragic downfall incredibly pitiable in Fitzgerald’s original novel.

However, by surrounding Anthony constantly with images of debauched sexuality that is completely devoid of emotion both before, during, and after his relationship with Gloria begins, Wolstencroft's adaptation lacks the sense of tragic romance present in Fitzgerald's original. In what comes across as his zeal to make a blanket statement about how film censors should be more open about allowing graphic sexual scenes in films in order to convey society truthfully, Wolstencroft loses the sense that Fitzgerald's narrative is the story not of any generation as a whole, but instead of one particular couple, and their existence within a generation.

Although Fitzgerald's novels today are widely regarded as voices that speak generationally to the hedonistic youth culture of the 1920s, one must always remember that those novels began as thinly-veiled fictional accounts of the biographical lives of two specific people, Scott Fitzgerald and Zelda Sayre. Almost all of the events in the novel that involve the interactions between Anthony and Gloria have autobiographical parallels to the turbulent early years of petty jealousies and personal insecurities in the relationship between Scott and Zelda. To take away the individuality of these characters, in an effort to make them seem more like behavioral models for any group of young people, is to remove the sense of authenticity derived from their closely autobiographical authorship, rendering them ineffective, and their story meaningless. In Fitzgerald's novel, even if society as a whole loses meaning, individual relationships still matter. Yet in Wolstencroft's adaptation, this Fitzgeraldian illusion, of finding happiness in a small cathartic oasis of romance amid a desert of wealth, is lost.

Also lost in this adaptation are subtle socio-political commentaries on racism and capitalism that are present in Fitzgerald's original work. For example, many critics have

noted that Fitzgerald's portrayal of Jewish-Americans changed dramatically over the course of his career, from the highly stereotypical and unflattering depiction of Meyer Wolfshiem in *The Great Gatsby* to the almost saintly description of Monroe Stahr, the Jewish hero of his final novel, *The Last Tycoon*. Alan Margolies has noted that Fitzgerald's description of Joseph Bloeckman, the Jewish film producer in *The Beautiful and Damned*, reflects Fitzgerald's mixed opinions about Jews during his early career.

Indeed, Fitzgerald's description of Bloeckman as "a stoutening, ruddy Jew of about thirty-five" who "introduced himself with a little too evident assurance" while "emitting two slender strings of smoke from nostrils overwide" is certainly unattractive (*Beautiful and Damned* 511). Also, Gloria's choice to "relentlessly pun on his name" results in the unfortunate nickname "Blockhead," foreshadowing her treatment of Bloeckman as an older man whose attraction to her is never taken seriously, but instead constantly manipulated for her benefit (*Beautiful and Damned* 515). Still, even though Patch refuses to recognize the Jewish Bloeckman as a legitimate rival for Gloria's affections, Fitzgerald makes a point of having Patch get beaten up after drunkenly raving against Bloeckman for being a "Goddamn Jew" (*Beautiful and Damned* 785). According to Margolies, this incident is "dramatically acceptable since Fitzgerald is demonstrating how despicable Anthony has become" (78). Fitzgerald's depiction of Bloeckman, who has by midpoint in the novel changed his name to the Anglicized "Joseph Black," as "a dark, suave gentleman, gracefully engaged in the middle forties" provides a stark contrast to Patch, who has aged out of his early handsome appeal through years of drunken debauchery (*Beautiful and Damned* 754). This change in physical description demonstrates that Bloeckman's appeal as a potential mate for Gloria is greater than

Patch's by the novel's end, and recognition by Fitzgerald of his own racial insecurities about Jewish men, if allowed to be romantic equals.

Yet, Wolstencroft's adaptation reflects none of this sentiment about male Anglo-American insecurities when faced with the potential of more stable, Jewish rivals. Instead of gaining appeal over the course of his film's narrative, Bloeckman comes across as increasingly villainous, culminating in a scene during which he tricks Gloria into taking off her clothes for a pornographic screen test after she mistakenly believes she is auditioning for a role in a mainstream film. This scene stands in stark contrast to the gracious manner with which Bloeckman treats Gloria for the screen test at his production company, *Films Par Excellence*, in Fitzgerald's novel. When Bloeckman tests Gloria, he acts very professionally, and after determining she is too old for the role, offers her a smaller character part, which she declines because her vanity will not allow her to accept anything but a leading role. Additionally, Bloeckman's wardrobe in Wolstencroft's film consists entirely of gold chains and open-collared, chest-hair-revealing shirts which, combined with his heavily hair-gelled comb-over, convey the overall sense that he is a sleazy, exploitive producer of adult films. Rather than demonstrating, as Fitzgerald does in his original text, that Jewish men can quickly and easily overcome racial stereotypes to surpass Anglo-American men in social standing through hard work and good grooming, Wolstencroft's adaptation suggests that Jewish businessmen are willing to stoop to the lowest possible standards to make money. This portrayal of Jews in Wolstencroft's film reinforces the kinds of racial stereotypes that Fitzgerald discarded as his maturity as a writer progressed, and thus represents a serious thematic departure from the spirit of the original text.

The final and perhaps most serious thematic discrepancy between Wolstencroft's adaptation and Fitzgerald's novel is the absence of any sense of the battle between free will and determinism in American capitalist society that is present in the original text. As Ronald Berman explains, Fitzgerald had a tendency to describe America "as an idea rather than a land or a people" (43). Throughout his career, Fitzgerald continued to work through this conception of America as a capitalist ideal versus what Berman characterizes as the chief threat to that ideal, which he calls "the Idea of Regress" (42). Berman explains the aim of the novel:

Fitzgerald's major work of 1922, *The Beautiful and Damned*, uses a generational sequence to satirize something a good deal larger and more interesting than the follies of great wealth. It gains momentum because it sticks to the great subjects of the Civilization debate, the loyalty of Americans to the idea of progress and the manifestation of those energies that Fitzgerald so much admired in life. This novel's language describes the downward trajectory from great moral energies of the past to inertia and unconsciousness in the present. (45)

This characterization of Fitzgerald's novel as a meditation not only on the devolution of a young couple's lives into decadent ruin, but also on the parallel deconstruction of American idealism when confronted by the harsh realities of 20th century capitalist stagnation, is on point because of its universal incorporation into all of Fitzgerald's major works.

Fitzgerald continually returns to the theme of a past that almost coexisted within the present, haunting young men in particular with the possibility that they will never fulfill the promise of the dreams that their ancestors began. In the *Beautiful and Damned*, Anthony Patch is constantly plagued by the fact that he is the grandson of the great business tycoon Adam Patch, and that he has done nothing to further that legacy or even

to equal the achievements of his other Ivy League-educated friends like the writer Dick Caramel, of whom he is extremely envious. Yet, even by the end of the novel, when he becomes involved in a common barroom brawl, Anthony seems to want to draw strength from his heritage, as he calls out to his attackers, "I'll fix it with you. My grandfather's Adam Patch of Tarrytown" (*Beautiful and Damned* 787). This outcry demonstrates that no matter how low Anthony sinks, he maintains a sense of pride in his descent from good stock, and that this lineage will eventually rescue him.

However, there is no such reverence for history, or the tragedy of its loss, in Wolstencroft's adaptation. Instead, the film serves as an extended exploration of the idea that Anthony's grandfather, depicted as a wealthy anti-drug reformer in the revision, is a laughable old man, completely out of touch with the interests and concerns of Anthony's generation. After he dies, Anthony engages in the struggle to hold on to his grandfather's fortune, just as he does in the novel, but he fails to grapple with the loss of his grandfather's other legacies, namely his highly esteemed business and social reputations.

Wolstencroft's elimination of the burden of American industrial and social history from his piece cannot be excused because of his choice to set the film in Australia, since that country also experienced growth from colonialism into an independent national presence as a result of the determined efforts of its industrial pioneers. In fact, Wolstencroft has spent most of his career to date arguing against what he finds to be archaic moralism left over in Australian society from this earlier, Protestant work ethic-imbued era. By choosing to craft his adaptation in a way that caters only to what he perceives as the need of young people to forget the past, Wolstencroft negates the

possibility of creating a meaningful mediation on the struggles produced by the very generation gap that he so clearly identifies and combats in his public protests.

In Fitzgerald's original text of *The Beautiful and Damned*, the writer Dick Caramel ironically decries the state of literature in the 1920s:

You know these new novels make me tired. My God! Everywhere I go some silly girl asks me if I've read *This Side of Paradise*. Are our girls really like that? If it's true to life, which I don't believe, the next generation is going to the dogs. I'm sick of all this shoddy realism. I think there's a place for the romanticist in literature. (773)

Although his friend Anthony Patch mocks him for making such statements after writing a sensationalist novel like *Demon Lover*, Dick Caramel does make a good point about the place of entertainment in society. In almost every age, the literature produced by youth culture is perpetually derided for being frivolous and amoral. Yet, also in every era, a few voices genuinely capture not only the spirit of that generation, but also the place of that spirit in the line of previous youth cultures that preceded it. The potential danger in adapting a text that speaks to the particular sensibilities of one generation is that it is all too easy to weigh that adaptation down with the burden of editorialization about the differences between that culture and the present one. In the best revisionist adaptations, a careful creative balance is struck between the themes contained in the author's original work and the interests of the director, screenwriter, and cast creating the adaptation. Due to its excessive emphasis on furthering the philosophical and ideological aims of its director to the neglect of themes present in Fitzgerald's original novel, Richard Wolstencroft's *The Beautiful and Damned* fails at its task of adaptation.

* * *

One might only speculate on the style of future adaptations scheduled for Fitzgerald's works. Director Baz Luhrmann's upcoming adaptation of *The Great Gatsby*, featuring Leonardo DiCaprio as Gatsby and Carey Mulligan as Daisy, promises to bring audiences literally closer to Fitzgerald and his characters, by presenting the author's most well-known work in 3D. Luhrmann's choice to film in 3D, although already generating negative buzz, is perhaps the most appropriate next step for a film adaptation of an author who wanted so desperately to share his own life with his audience through his characters. Perhaps for the first time in 3D, Gatsby's Icaric vision will be so close that any dreamer can grasp it, creating a final unity among author, filmmakers, and audience, inside Fitzgerald's ouroboric narrative circle.

Chapter V

Papa's Grace under Genre Pressure, Part One:

Hollywood's Adaptations of Ernest Hemingway's Works, 1932-1952

In the most recent reissue of his autobiography, *A Moveable Feast*, Ernest Hemingway waxes poetic about the universal immortal spirit that imbues his memories of Paris:

There is never any ending to Paris and the memory of each person who has lived in it differs from that of any other. We always returned to it no matter who we are nor how it was changed nor with what difficulties nor what ease it could be reached. It was always worth it and we received a return for whatever we brought to it. (*Feast* 236)

Hemingway's fond words about Paris, and the city's tendency to continue to live within and change the lives of those who have visited it, could also apply to most of the filmmakers who have chosen to adapt his works. With almost every film made from a Hemingway volume, one or more members of the production team appear to have a personal reason for attaching themselves to the project, blending their own stories into Hemingway's celebrity literary persona.

In the best cases, this level of engagement with the text brings out their best work from actors, directors, and screenwriters, resulting in a furtherance of Hemingway's original themes in new and interesting ways that add to audiences' understanding of both texts. This case is clearly made by careful screening of John Garfield's two leading turns in Hemingway works, *The Breaking Point* (1950) and *Under My Skin* (1950). In both films, Garfield builds upon stress in his personal life to create the dogged men against the world who come alive in these plotlines.

However, far more problems occur when Hollywood attempts to make Hemingway's works conform to the strictures of stock genres. For example, even though *The Killers* (1946) and *To Have and Have Not* (1944) are considered Hollywood classics, these otherwise great films suffer critically as adaptations due to their overreliance on *film noir* tropes. Also, other problems such as Hays Code censorship, cause some early Hemingway adaptations, like *A Farewell to Arms* (1932), to lose much of their original thematic significance. Instead of relying too heavily on genre, the Hemingway adaptations that choose to focus on filling in the gaps left by the transition from page to screen with extra details from the author's colorful life and canonical works seem to fare much better. Two films that use this approach to great effect are *For Whom the Bell Tolls* (1943) and *The Snows of Kilimanjaro* (1952).

In short, solid Hemingway adaptations, at least during the first two decades of Hollywood's attempts at the task, stay not so much close to the text as close to the author himself. Perhaps this is a clue to why Hemingway's works have continued to endure over time. Filmmakers and their audiences discovered what Hemingway readers have known all along: that the author and his works are very much like Paris. Collaborators take away from their interaction benefits in proportion to the amount of themselves they bring to the project with an open mind toward the realities of what is present beneath the surface of the story.

A Farewell to Arms (1932)

In 1932, Frank Borzage directed the first film adaptation of a Hemingway novel, *A Farewell to Arms*. Almost immediately, the film was rejected by Hemingway, who was unhappy with the thematic and content revisions made by Paramount. After receiving a telegram offering to send advance prints of the film from Paramount to the author, Hemingway replied:

Use your imagination as to where Paramount can put two prints unexpectedly available of the Borzage version of *A Farewell to Arms*, but do not send them here. If the book lasts and motion pictures also endure a real film will eventually be made of that novel. Meanwhile, although Paramount bought picture rights and the chance to make a great picture, they did not buy the right to make me look at a silly one. (qtd. in Leff 177)

Although Hemingway's tone in this wire is insulting, his irritation is justified. Prior to Paramount's request for an advance screening, film reviewers all over the nation anticipated Hemingway's negative reaction to the adaptation. Some, such as Regina Crewe of the *New York American*, even scolded Hemingway and the art of fiction writing in general in their overly lavish praise of Borzage's film. In her review of Borzage's adaptation, Crewe writes:

And please, Mr. Hemingway, don't make yourself ridiculous by finding the slightest of faults with Paramount's production of your tale, for in Frank Borzage's picturation there lies a thousand times more than you, or any of you, will ever put in the sterile, colorless black and white of type and paper.
(qtd. in Leff 177)

For Hemingway, an author who had already wrestled for months with Maxwell Perkins and others at Scribner's over his use of language in the original novel, this undermining of what remained of his authorial presence in the project was the final insult. Hemingway

tended to view *A Farewell to Arms* as a highly autobiographical account of his experiences in Italy during World War I that later shaped his entire liberal worldview on issues ranging from freer sexuality and unnecessary marriage to the ineffectiveness of religion and the futility of war. In contrast, Borzage's adaptation told Hemingway's deeply personal story from a completely opposite perspective that stressed the importance of religious faith, sexual chastity, marriage as an institution, and strict adherence to military discipline. It would be overly simplistic to argue that Hemingway's original text was sanitized in adaptation strictly because it was produced during the Hays Code era. Instead, a more nuanced reading of the adaptation reveals that the film's oddly inconsistent artistic vision results from a split between an original author who advocated social change and a director and cast who sought to uphold traditional, middle-class, conservative values.

The sanitation of *A Farewell to Arms* for the screen most likely began with the film's director, Frank Borzage. Borzage, raised in Utah as part of a conservative Roman Catholic family, retained a sense of religious reverence throughout his film career. The most obvious thematic deviations that Borzage makes from Hemingway's novel, *A Farewell to Arms*, center around Borzage's seeming insistence to reassert the importance of the Church amidst the chaos of World War I. Perhaps the best example of this circumstance is the scene in which Catherine Barkley is "married" to Frederic Henry by a lingering Priest, who murmurs the marriage service over the couple as they embrace in Henry's hospital room. Ironically, this scene is directly opposed to the corresponding scene in Hemingway's original novel.

In the novel, Frederic and Catherine have already begun a sexual affair when he starts worrying that she might become pregnant. When Frederic expresses this concern to Catherine, and asks her to marry him, she replies, “What good would it do to marry now? We’re really married. I couldn’t be any more married” (*Farewell* 115). As Frederic continues to press the issue, out of concern for her reputation and the possible future of their child, Catherine explains her reasoning further. “There’s no way to be married except by church or state. We are married privately. You see darling, it would mean everything to me if I had any religion. But I haven’t any religion... You’re my religion. You’re all I’ve got” (*Farewell* 115-116). From Catherine’s responses to Frederic’s worried inquiries, it is easy to deduce that Hemingway most likely intended Catherine’s love for Frederic to culminate not in a traditional, Christian marriage ceremony, but instead as an informal, non-religious, marriage of souls. This sense of true emotion transcending the bounds of religious convention to create meaning in romantic relationships is the central socio-cultural theme of Hemingway’s original novel. However, this progressive viewpoint is completely eliminated in Borzage’s adaptation. Instead, Borzage substitutes his trademark brand of cinematic romance, albeit within the confines of mainstream Christian morality, in place of Hemingway’s modern interpretation of love.

Borzage’s Christianized revision of *A Farewell to Arms* is reinforced by Helen Hayes’s performance as Catherine Barkley. Hayes, also a devout Catholic and a Republican, would have been a natural choice for Borzage simply for her conservative reputation. Moreover, Hayes’s slight five foot frame and large, innocent, dark eyes made her physically a perfect fit for a typical Borzage leading lady. Critics have noted that

Borzage tended to cast leading actresses who closely resembled his first wife, actress Rena Rogers. Although Borzage doted on Rena, she did not express similar emotion toward her husband, claiming to her sister-in-law, "I respect him, but I don't love him" ("Flesh and Desire"). After enduring twenty-four years of marriage in which his wife aborted their child without his consent and continually engaged in extramarital affairs with both sexes, Borzage finally divorced Rena, but spent the rest of his career:

Funnel[ing] his gentle romantic feelings into his films. His men, many of whom look like him, are confident and pretty, but always impaired in some way, fake-tough or childlike. His women are small and will o' the wisp but emotionally resilient, believing unreservedly in the power of two people against the world. The Borzage woman is an idealization of what he wanted his first wife to be. Rena let him down, so he made alternate Rena's in...big-eyed waifs with limitless reserves of toughness. Borzage never got over the charge of this contrast, and he never got over Rena. ("Flesh and Desire")

Read in comparison to the true story that inspired Hemingway's novel, Borzage's revisionist adaptation of *A Farewell to Arms* can be interpreted as a parallel to the Hemingway ouroboros.

The love story in Hemingway's original novel is based on the author's unrequited love for Agnes von Kurowsky, the English Red Cross nurse who cared for his war wounds in Milan. Whether their affair was ever consummated remains a point of contention, but Kurowsky's letter to Hemingway on March 7, 1919, announcing her marriage to another man, depicts her view of their relationship as very similar to that of a typical Borzage romance. Agnes writes:

Now, after a couple of months away from you, I know that I am still very fond of you, but it is more as a mother than as a sweetheart. It's alright to say I'm a Kid, but I'm not, and I'm getting less and less so every day. So, Kid (still Kid to me, and always will be) can you forgive me someday for unwittingly deceiving you? You know I'm not really bad, and I don't mean to do wrong, and now I realize it was my fault in the beginning that you cared for me, and regret it from the bottom

of my heart. But, I am now and always will be too old, and that's the truth, and I can't get away from the fact that you're just a boy – a kid. I somehow feel that someday I'll have reason to be proud of you, but dear boy, I can't wait for that day, and it is wrong to hurry a career. (qtd. in Villard and Nagel 163)

The similarities between Kurowsky's letter and the typical "Borzage woman" character type are striking. Both Kurowsky and Borzage's idealized Rena, reimagined in *A Farewell to Arms* as Catherine Barkley, are strong, independent women who become involved with men who return their love with dependent, childlike devotion hidden behind masks of bravado. However, the ouroboros breaks circle at the point of marriage as the goal of romance. For Borzage, who was married in real life to the object of his idolatry, the logical choice was to incorporate ceremonial marriage and its attendant Christian ideology into the story of Frederic and Catherine's romance. In contrast, Hemingway, whose love for Kurowsky was defeated by her marriage to another man, did not see marriage or Christian ceremony as necessary validations of the relationship between his autobiographical characters. For Hemingway, love's existence, once professed, was self-validating and assumed the place of religion.

Hemingway's description of the sexual relationship between Frederic and Catherine, as well as the theme of sexuality in general, are also downplayed in the Borzage film. For example, although Hemingway's original novel contains numerous references to the soldiers frequenting prostitutes and Rinaldi's fear that he had contracted syphilis, these references are wholly omitted from Borzage's film. Also, the trysts that Frederic and Catherine share both in his hospital bed and in Switzerland in Hemingway's novel are missing from Borzage's film. The absence of these references to sexuality is due, at least in part, to Hays Code restrictions of the era. However, they may also be the

result of the personal preferences of Helen Hayes, who played Catherine. Hayes, a well-known Hollywood republican and a devout Catholic, was known for choosing roles that showcased the wholesome, unworldly image both onscreen and off (Pace). In all likelihood, Hayes's association with *A Farewell to Arms* encouraged Borzage, already a conservative director in many ways, to channel Hayes's demure personality through Catherine's, diffusing sexual tension present in the novel.

Additionally, Hemingway's references to possible acts of government and military subversion after the Italian Army's demoralizing defeat and retreat in the novel are almost wholly missing in the film adaptation. Adolph Menjou and Gary Cooper were both widely known in Hollywood, both before and after *A Farewell to Arms*, for their conservative stances on what material was suitable for motion pictures. In the years following the film, both men went on to testify for the House Un-American Activities Committee, and to become founding members of the Motion Picture Alliance for American Ideals, which claimed in its "Statement of Principles":

In our special field of motion pictures, we resent the growing impression that this industry is made of, and dominated by, Communists, radicals, and crackpots. We believe that we represent the vast majority of the people who serve this great medium of expression. But unfortunately it has been an unorganized majority. This has been almost inevitable. The very love of freedom, of the rights of the individual, make this great majority reluctant to organize.

(Society of Independent Motion Picture Producers)

Once one considers that Cooper and Menjou were both moral conservatives and staunchly pro-military, many of the differences in theme and tone between Borzage's film version and Hemingway's original novel begin to make sense, even as they detract from efforts at a consistent artistic vision in the adaptation.

One thematic nuance in Hemingway's original that is lost in the film adaptation is that the two characters' distrust of political and military action also seems to be psychologically linked to sexual overindulgence and venereal disease. One might read this odd juxtaposition of concepts as Hemingway's exploration into what the author perceived as a warped sense of values that led to World War I. In the Italy of Hemingway's novel, the purest masculine motivation for action, risking one's life in war on the nation's behalf, is perverted by incompetent and uncaring military leadership. Also, Hemingway's original seems to suggest that the purest masculine motivation for sexuality, the true love of one man for one woman, is perverted by war, which forces couples into rushed, random encounters borne of an immediate need to gratify sexual appetites, instead of entering long term relationships grounded in strong emotional bonds.

Based on this premise, Hemingway's connection between diseases of state and sexuality may be read similarly to William Shakespeare's play, *Hamlet*. In *Hamlet*, the state of Denmark is made "rotten" because of Claudius's murder of his brother, King Hamlet, based upon the dual sinister motivations of political usurpation and sexual conquest of his sister-in-law, Queen Gertrude (1.4.90). In comparison, Hemingway's overarching political and psychological theme in *A Farewell to Arms* seems to be that if the Italian state is metaphorically sick with the disease of unjustifiable war and governmental corruption, then individual sexual relationships between men and women subjected to that war will manifest actual symptoms of venereal illness that testify to the rottenness of the society in which they live. In short, both *Hamlet* and *A Farewell to Arms* demonstrate that unjust war corrupts not only the state as a whole, but also the physical bodies and romantic relationships of men and women forced to take part in that war.

This theme is missing from Borzage's adaptation. No mention is made in the film of Rinaldi's syphilis, or the disillusionment he feels toward the war because of it. Early in both the film and the novel, Rinaldi displays a playful, carefree attitude toward sexuality. During this time, Rinaldi frequently teases the Priest about women he will never have and engages in playful banter with Henry about his relationship with Catherine, asking him "Is she good to you?" multiple times, to hopefully invite juicy discussions of their sex life (*Farewell* 169). Henry seems to take Rinaldi's jaunty nature very well, saying "He had spent two years teasing me and I had always liked it. We understood each other very well" (*Farewell* 169). Yet after Rinaldi contracts syphilis, he loses his sense of humor about both sexuality and the war. Complaining that the Italian military hospital is trying to force him to take a leave of absence because he has syphilis, Rinaldi says to the Priest and Henry:

To hell with you and the whole damn business... They try to get rid of me. Every night they try to get rid of me. I fight them off. What if I have it. Everybody has it. The whole world's got it... You'll never get it. Baby will get it. It's an industrial accident. It's a simple industrial accident. (*Farewell* 175)

In this passage, Rinaldi's paranoia about his disease is intertwined with his growing sense of disillusionment with Italy's role in World War I. As an Army surgeon, Rinaldi is engaged in the industry of war. In turn, Rinaldi seems to view his reliance on prostitutes for sexual gratification as one of the pitfalls of his job. Therefore when Rinaldi says "to hell" with the "business" of war, and characterizes his syphilis as an "accident" of the industry, in reality he is questioning the value of war in general as a cold enterprise that creates too many incidental casualties. Although such a viewpoint would garner a great deal of sympathy with 21st century audiences, who are accustomed to seeing the post-

Vietnam era entertainment industry constantly question governmental motivations for war, it would have been unacceptable in 1934, under the Hays Code, when Borzage produced the adaptation. Also, it is highly unlikely that Adolphe Menjou, an actor widely known for his conservative political and moral stances, would have played Rinaldi's role with the level of governmental contempt that Hemingway intended. As a result, the complex Rinaldi of Hemingway's original is reduced to a light romantic foil for Henry, stripped of all possibility for political or social commentary.

Further, Hemingway's most meaningful recurring natural symbol from the novel, rain, is presented in such a distorted manner in Borzage's adaptation that it actually reverses its original meaning. As Gene Phillips has noted in his study of the adaptation:

Hemingway was always depressed by rain and frequently complained about it in his letters home from the front. In the novel, he raised his natural dislike for rain to the symbolic level by making the deathly dark, relentless downpours that fall in several scenes, such as during the Caporetto retreat and Catherine's death struggle, signify the shadow of mortality that hovers over every human relationship. (21-22)

In the novel, Catherine expresses her fear of rain, saying to Henry, "I'm afraid of the rain because sometimes I see me dead in it...And sometimes, I see you dead in it" (*Farewell* 126). Although this statement is repeated verbatim in the adaptation, it loses its potential for symbolic significance twice in the latter part of the film, when the rain symbolism is distorted or omitted.

First, although the retreat from Caporetto is depicted as occurring in the rain as in the novel, the potential is lost for rain to be seen as the natural environment's symbolic outcry against the horrendous treatment of soldiers and civilians by an Army that has given up basic human decency along with its hope of winning. Further, by reducing the

retreat to a soggy montage of troops slogging along in the rain, and attempting to overjustify Henry's choice to defect from the Italian Army, Borzage's incorporation of Hemingway's rain symbolism is rendered almost meaningless in the film. Last, Borzage's choice to omit rain altogether from the closing image of the film completely alters Hemingway's original intent that Catherine's death should be read as a psychological defeat for Henry, who "[leaves] the hospital and [walks] back to the hotel in the rain" at the end of the novel (*Farewell* 332). Instead, Borzage ends his adaptation with an overdramatized scene of Henry holding Catherine's limp body in his arms while he repeats the word "peace" over and over, as a montage of Armistice notices, ringing bells, and doves waft their way into the sky to suggest the flight of Catherine's spirit and a more hopeful outcome for Henry's life after the war. By omitting the rain symbolism from Hemingway's novel at the end of the film, Borzage completely dismisses the author's intended meaning behind Catherine's death: that even off the battlefield, war often causes senseless casualties that should force people to question whether armed conflict is worth the human cost.

Borzage's film ends as innocuously as possible, "by refashioning Hemingway's love story along the lines of popular screen romance" (Phillips 23). Critics have noted that Borzage's adaptation "was tailored to avoid offending any segment of the mass audience" and that Borzage "felt that one of his duties as a director was to make his pictures financially successful, which is another way of saying he must please his audience" (Phillips 23). Although Borzage's adaptation succeeds in its short term goal of catering to Hays Code era sensibilities, becoming the highest earner of the year, even winning Oscars for cinematography and sound recording, it fails to hold up for today's

audiences, who are more accustomed to Hemingway's original themes of questioning government's absolute power to conduct war and the necessity of social institutions such as marriage. As a result, even though Borzage's heavily revisionist adaptation attempts to incorporate the director's preferences with those of the original author and cast, his version of *A Farewell to Arms* fails to screen well in today's more skeptical social climate.

For Whom the Bell Tolls (1943)

After Frank Borzage's adaptation of *A Farewell to Arms* (1932), eleven years passed before another Hemingway work was made into a film. By 1943, Hemingway's level of celebrity influence had risen considerably, allowing him to use his notoriety to negotiate what was, at the time, a deal for the highest price ever paid by a motion picture company for a novel: \$150,000 (Laurence 14). Reading the novel, it is impossible not to suppose that Hemingway was writing it with an eye toward film adaptation, especially since he sold the film rights to Paramount only three days after the novel was published (Phillips 41). Evidence of Hemingway's growing awareness of the allure of the movies crept into the subconscious of Robert Jordan, the author's semi-autobiographical alter-ego, in *For Whom the Bell Tolls*. As Jordan lies looking at his lover, Maria, he thinks that she is like "someone you have seen in the cinema who comes to your bed at night and is so kind and lovely. He'd slept with them all that way when he was asleep in bed. He could remember Garbo still, and Harlow. Yes, Harlow many times" (*Bell* 137). From this

statement, by 1943, it can be concluded that Hemingway was at least infatuated with the movies, if not in love with them.

Although the impossible love between Jordan and Maria is an important theme, Hemingway's chief motivation in writing the novel was the sense of disillusionment that the world faced as another World War seemed imminent. As Gene Phillips explains:

By the time he began writing at the end of 1938, the Loyalist cause was clearly lost, and he had become progressively disillusioned with what he termed "the carnival of treachery and rottenness on both sides." That disillusionment would fall like a shadow across the pages of his novel; but the book would also be a salute to the indomitability of the human spirit. (37)

This pervading sense of post-war disillusionment is similar to the one that fueled the development of the film noir genre. Most likely, Sam Wood, the director of the film adaptation of *Bell*, decided to use *film noir* staging in order to convey Hemingway's theme to audiences.

However, addition of *film noir* styling was not the only Hollywood technique incorporated into Wood's adaptation of *Bell*. Screenwriter Dudley Nichols, who penned the classic Western *Stagecoach* (1939), also used many characterizations common to the Western genre in his adaptation. Also, elements of 1940s "women's film" techniques can be seen in the portrayals of Pilar, the film's female guerilla leader, and Maria, the wounded, but strong, love interest. All in all, the incorporation of these genre techniques, coupled with a strong sense of collaboration among the adaptation's original author, film director, screenwriter, and stars, serve to create one of the most cohesive cinematic works, which was well-received by audiences.

The sense of collaboration begins with Sam Wood's choice as director to use the original epigraph from Hemingway's novel as the first shot in his film adaptation. The

lines, “No man is an island, entire of itself, every man is a piece of the Continent, a part of the main...And therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls, it tolls for thee,” are some of John Donne’s most famous from his *Meditation XVII (Bell)*. Hemingway found Donne’s poem in *The Oxford Book of English Prose*, when he was looking for “a little parable about the interdependence of human beings...the passage pointed up the theme of tragic loss and human solidarity with which he had been developing the story of Robert Jordan” (Baker 348-49). The epigraph serves as a touchstone for understanding both Hemingway’s original novel and its film adaptation. As Phillips states, “human loss anywhere harms mankind everywhere” (39).

Hemingway found inspiration to flesh out his characters among individuals whom he had met in real life. According to biographer Carlos Baker, Hemingway blended the story of a nurse he had met in Mataro with the fair-haired features of his then-wife, Martha Gellhorn (348). Further, Robert Jordan’s character was based in part on Robert Merriman, a California-native economics professor who served in the 15th International Brigade, but drew many character traits and personal details about his family from Hemingway’s own life (Baker 348). Possibly because he incorporated his own life so heavily into the creation of his characters, Hemingway was obsessed with making the details of its film adaptation as realistic as possible. To support accurate articulation of his original artistic vision, Hemingway lobbied heavily for the casting of Ingrid Bergman as Maria and Gary Cooper as Jordan. Both Bergman and Cooper were close personal friends whom Hemingway felt he could trust incorporating their own lifestyles into the characters (Laurence 224-225). However, Hemingway’s quest for realism in the production was not without limits.

Hemingway realized that the action sequences in the film would be ramped up, saying to friends, “They’ll have to do it Hollywood style, you’ll see, the scriptwriters will blow the train right off, instead of opening quietly in the forest as I wrote it” (Laurence 119). Sure enough, Sam Wood’s adaptation of *Bell* begins and ends with explosion sequences involving trains. Still, even though this Hollywood convention was most likely born of the necessity to attract maximum attention from general audiences, Wood’s choice is artistically sound when viewed according to the principles of creating cohesive cinema. Hemingway’s original novel begins and ends with bookended scenes of Robert Jordan lying “flat on the pine-needled floor of the forest” in order to show the interconnectedness of Jordan’s human sacrifice as literally grounded in the same physical and psychological terrain as his comrades (*Bell* 1). By substituting endcapped explosion sequences, both set off by Jordan and a comrade, in place of Hemingway’s quieter opening and closing, Sam Wood serves the audience’s need for sensationalism while simultaneously preserving Hemingway’s symmetry of form. The overall effect of this collaborative effort creates a cohesive artistic vision of human interconnection through tragedy.

Although the structural integrity of Hemingway’s original novel was relatively easy for the production team to preserve, his politics proved much more difficult to bring to the screen. On a personal level, Hemingway was able to see the corruption on both sides of the Spanish Civil War; however, his experience as a journalist enabled Hemingway “to assess a political situation dispassionately, even while he was in the middle of it” (Phillips 38). As a result, Hemingway was able to depict both the code hero of the work, the older guerilla fighter Anselmo, and his apprentice, the American outsider

Robert Jordan, with equal amounts of respect for their different political viewpoints. Their sense of camaraderie borne of a feeling of obligation to perform penance for the acts of war they committed captured the spirit, if not the dogma, of Hays Code era cinema, and most likely helped some of the film's more controversial scenes pass the censors.

However, the sensitivity of filming a book, at the height of World War II, about Spain, fascism, and communism caused a great deal of concern among the members of the production team. As Phillips claims, Sam Wood and the producers at Paramount worried about "having the film boycotted by the Spanish government or by Spanish groups in the United States – just as the same studio's officials had worried about offending Italians with the 1932 version of *A Farewell to Arms* (43). Additionally, in 1943 director Sam Wood made himself infamous among the Hollywood community for testifying before the House Un-American Activities Committee. The result of Sam Wood's ultra-conservative politics combined with Hemingway's more liberal view of portraying all sides resulted in a compromise that can be seen during one of Jordan's monologues in the final film version, which was not part of Hemingway's original novel. In the monologue, "Jordan explains that he is in Spain because the Nazis and Fascists are testing their war machinery against democracy in order to get the jump on England, France, and America before they are ready to defend themselves" (Laurence 161). This statement helps to justify Jordan's involvement in the Spanish Civil War as an American, when to a Hays Code era audience, he should not naturally have any political preference for either the Loyalist cause or for Franco's, because both were equally un-democratic and un-American. Interestingly, Hemingway, who found fault with many of the

historically inaccurate details of the film adaptation, said relatively little about this alteration of the novel's original neutral political stance. In all likelihood, Hemingway had learned by 1943, after past confrontations with film censors, that such a compromise was acceptable as long as other aspects remained intact.

The addition of *film noir* elements to film adaptation of Hemingway's novel may have served as another of Sam Wood's compromises, in an effort to preserve the psychological sense of distrust and disillusionment from the original in a manner that would be acceptable to censors. The screenplay was penned by Dudley Nichols, a Hollywood veteran who was experienced in writing *films noir* both before and after *For Whom the Bells Tolls*. Nichols's most notable *film noir* was *Scarlet Street* (1945), a classic of the genre featuring Joan Bennett as the prostitute Kitty March. By definition, a film noir is "decidedly pessimistic" in tone, and their action commonly takes place in "dark streets and dimly lit apartments of big cities" (Beaver 97). This sense of darkness is generally understood as reflective of the pervasive mood of paranoia and distrust in America and Europe during the World War II era. The film adaptation of Hemingway's novel certainly reflects stylistic influences of *film noir*, from the heavily-shadowed meeting scene between General Golz and Jordan, during which Jordan receives his order to blow up the bridge, to Jordan's costuming throughout the film, which relies heavily on fedoras and trench coats until he reaches the guerilla camp. Also, almost all of the scenes of the guerilla camp that take place in their cave hideout are dimly lit in the classic *film noir* style, most likely to convey the mood of growing disillusionment among the rebels in Pablo's band as their leader falls further into alcoholism and insanity. The film noir style was also a sound stylistic choice to satisfy Hemingway's demand for realism. As

Paul Schrader explains, during and after World War II, “the public’s desire for a more honest and harsh view of America would not be satisfied by the same studio streets...the realistic trend succeeded in breaking film noir away from the domain of high-class melodrama, placing it where it more properly belonged, in the streets with everyday people” (583). This stylistic approach was perfect for adapting a novel about the gritty realities of life as part of a guerilla warfare group, since to film such a story as a classic Hollywood romance-at-war tale would have proven almost laughable. Last, the film noir genre’s “almost Freudian attachment to water,” which seems to “increase in direct proportion to the drama,” is a perfect way to heighten the dramatic tension in the guerilla camp, as they wait for the treacherous Pablo to return in the snow, where his tracks will most certainly give away their secret location. In short, the addition of *film noir* genre elements by Nichols and Wood to Hemingway’s original were a wise choice that made the novel translate more easily to film.

Also present in the film adaptation of *For Whom the Bell Tolls* are significant doses of 1940s pro-feminist women’s film. This stylistic addition was a natural fit for the adaptation, considering that Hemingway’s original novel contains characters, Pilar and Maria, who may be read to represent the two women’s film archetypes: the superwoman and the superfemale. Molly Haskell defines a “superwoman” as someone with “a high degree of intelligence or imagination...who adopts male characteristics in order to enjoy male prerogatives or merely to survive” (505). In contrast, the “superfemale” is “a woman who – while exceedingly feminine and flirtatious, is too ambitious and intelligent for the docile role society has decreed she play,” so as a result she exerts her creative energies in efforts to control those around her (Haskell 505).

Pilar, portrayed in the film by the excellent Greek classical actress Katina Paxinou, may be classified as a “superwoman,” in both the novel and the film, because she has taken over her common-law husband Pablo’s role as the leader of the guerilla band, after the atrocities of war cause his courage to fail him. Paxinou, who won the Academy Award for Best Supporting Actress in the role, contributes her biographical history of being a third-generation descendant of Greek guerilla fighters to create a sense of strong, yet wounded, dignity that is perfectly suited to her role as Pilar (Wood, “Additional Materials”). In her first line of the film, Pilar enters asserting her authority among the men she leads, yelling at Rafael and calling him “You lazy unspeakable son of an unmentionable Gypsy” (Wood). Pilar’s opening line is only one of many in the film adaptation that retains Hemingway’s original, creative way of cursing. Hemingway’s technique not only bypasses censorship restrictions, but also shows that Pilar has adopted men’s ways in order to function as their leader. Sadly, however, Pilar must assert her authority as a female in charge of men by denouncing her own heritage, because as audiences learn moments after her admonishment of Rafael, Pilar is also a Gypsy. Perhaps out of this dual sense of being a woman and also a member of a repressed social class, Pilar learns that she is doubly oppressed and must over-assert her opinions to be heard.

Still, Pilar seems to have enjoyed a colorful past as the girlfriend of many handsome bullfighters, despite her claim that she “was born ugly” (Wood). In a lengthy and touching scene, Pilar asks the young and attractive Maria, “Do you know how it feels to be ugly all your life, but to feel in here [she touches her heart] that you are beautiful?” (Wood). Although she quickly recovers by taking the man’s route of bragging about her

sexual conquests with bullfighters in her youth, even this recuperative bravado is tinged with sadness, as Pilar tells Maria of her two greatest fears, of “being old and ugly” and “to see the panic in the face of a boy when I say I might kiss him” (Wood). This scene, wonderfully acted by Paxinou, demonstrates the paradox of being a superwoman in 1940’s women’s cinema. Although a woman may be physically strong enough to operate machine guns and emotionally strong enough to command her husband’s band of guerilla fighters, she is still hampered by the chief self-esteem weakening fear that women of any age are susceptible to: the fact that much of her power over men comes from sexual energy, and, once that is lost, she will be rendered helpless in situations where she used to be powerful.

In contrast, Ingrid Bergman’s Maria is a “superfemale” because she chooses to control her vulnerable situation as the rescued ward of a band of rebel fighters by withholding her sexuality until she finds a man, Robert Jordan, whom she deems worthy to be her protector. As Maria quickly tells Jordan upon first meeting him, “I am the woman of no one” (Wood). Yet, even though Maria presents herself as very strong, viewers learn over the course of the film and novel that she has been the victim of a brutal gang rape by Fascist troops who have murdered her mother and father in front of her. Although she tells the story bravely, claiming that she would have yelled “long live the Republic” just as her father had done before he was shot, Maria is never given the chance to assert her political position. Instead, Maria is treated only as a sexual object. After she is raped by the soldiers, Maria feels that she will never be respected by most men for her intelligence, only exploited for her beauty. As a result, she craftily uses her beauty to gain the trust and admiration of Jordan, after she learns that he is an educated

man who is likely to fall in love with her not only for her body, but for her mind. The innocent, clean-scrubbed beauty that Bergman brings to the role of Maria, when coupled with the actress's customary steel-will, helps to express on film the fact that the Maria of Hemingway's novel is much more than she appears to be.

The overall effect achieved by Bergman and Paxinou's excellent portrayals of their characters is that audiences are able to see a more feminist side of Hemingway's original tale than they may have been able to grasp in the novel. Also, the woman's film stylings present in the adaptation may be due in part to director Sam Wood, who had experience in directing women's films before and after *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, including movies such as *Kitty Foyle* (1940), starring Ginger Rogers, and *The Devil and Miss Jones* (1941) with Jean Arthur. Perhaps one of the most easily discernable visual manifestations that a film is feminist oriented is the presence of the "female gaze" as described by Eva-Marie Jacobssen in her response to Laura Mulvey's well-publicized writing on the "male gaze." Jacobssen, like most critics, stops short of Bracha Ettinger's assertion that women can return or even initiate a gaze toward a male object of interest. However, her statement that Hollywood movies are often "a conscious and unconscious effort to preserve the patriarchal order" and that "to preserve the male gaze is to preserve a patriarchal order of society" is useful here to examine how differently the film version of *For Whom the Bell Tolls* presents the "female gaze."

Pilar frequently gazes disparagingly at Pablo and the other men from higher positions that suggest her authority. Yet, when she gazes at the young bullfighter-turned-soldier Joaquin, who rejects her sexual innuendos, Wood places Pilar in a lower position, forcing her to gaze up at the male object of her affections, suggesting a lack of control.

Further, in almost every scene in which Maria and Jordan express their emotions for one another, from the infamous sleeping bag scene to Jordan's final good-bye, the camera lingers on Bergman's reaction from a higher position, suggesting that her character, Maria, maintains a sense of control over her emotions and the relationship. These staging choices indicate a wide spectrum of emotions that may be evoked from well-written female characters, which demonstrate that the female gaze is just as powerful and complex as the male gaze.

Further, Wood's adaptation causes those familiar with the Hemingway canon to recall other strong female characters present in his fiction that helped shape the idea of what the 20th century New Woman could be. Pilar's character might be viewed as a much older and more mature version of Brett Ashley from Hemingway's first novel, *The Sun Also Rises*. Both women had an exciting youth, pursuing and being pursued by many lovers, including bullfighters, who represented an ultimate sense of masculinity in the Hemingway oeuvre. By the time Hemingway reached his early forties, his sympathies for the plight of women seemed to become more mature as well, allowing his writing to appreciate Pilar not only for the physical magnetism retained from her youth, but also for the emotional strength and resilience that she earned through experience in war and with men. Also, Maria might be viewed as character very similar to Liz from Hemingway's early short story, "Up in Michigan," albeit one produced by a much more mature writer who has a clearer understanding of and sympathy for a young woman who has been the victim of rape. Through giving both Pilar and Maria more time on his pages to speak their minds and express their feelings about their respective lives, Hemingway demonstrates that his concern for women and their status in society actually increased in

intensity and depth of perception as his writing matured. Sam Wood's choice to include lengthy sequences in the film of Pilar recounting the violent acts of war that she engaged in and of Maria relating the circumstances of her rape to Robert Jordan serve to empower both women by giving them a substantial voice that cannot be overlooked by audiences. The final product is a film that does something the best film adaptations should always aspire to do: deepen the audience's total understanding of not only the author's original work, but also the society in which they live.

The Western is the last and most subtle genre whose conventions seem to have influenced Sam Wood's adaptation of *For Whom the Bell Tolls*. As mentioned earlier, Dudley Nichols, the screenwriter of *Bell*, also penned *Stagecoach*, arguably the most definitive Western of the old Hollywood era. Through careful reading of *Bell* through the lens of genre, viewers can pick out the various Western archetypes and stylistic elements present in *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, all of which are detailed in John Cawelti's seminal text on Westerns, *The Six-Gun Mystique*. Robert Jordan is the "mysterious outsider," who comes onto the scene to restore order. Pilar, as a common-law wife and a woman with an extensive sexual past, represents the "saloon girl." Maria, of course, embodies the opposing good-girl or "schoolmarm" archetype, who is the natural object of the stranger's affections due to her innocence and need for rescue. Anselmo is the wise sidekick, or "professional" whose handicap is age, but this doesn't prevent him from assisting Jordan on his quest with his special knowledge of the territory. Pablo is a typically complex Western town villain, one who has some sympathetic tendencies, but who somewhere made a wrong moral turn to the dark side and must be removed by the outsider because he poses a threat to the stability of the community. Plus, the austere

setting of rural Spain mimics the desert Southwest, with the Spanish-speaking guerilla fighters in Spain standing in for the Spanish-speaking Mexicans, present in many American Westerns. Last, *For Whom the Bell Tolls* was filmed in California's Sierra Nevada Mountains, not in Spain, with a final gunfight scene staged very similarly to the countless American Westerns filmed in that area (Phillips 41). All of these similarities to Western genre films prompted director Jerry Wald to become interested in remaking *For Whom the Bell Tolls* as a Western during the 1970s (Laurence 174).

One has to wonder, based on Wald's intriguing revisionist interest in the novel, what themes might be brought out in a new adaptation of *For Whom the Bell Tolls*? Could the already-present elements of women's film and Western be combined to create two completely new, empowering, female archetypes: the superwoman/schoolmarm and the saloon girl/superfemale? Would this give rise to an exciting new genre, the Women's Western? A film produced in this manner of adaptation would certainly give viewers and readers of the Hemingway canon a completely new way to view the author's work, and might prompt interest in the possibility of viewing Hemingway as a feminist author. Again, the possibilities for this novel in future adaptations are endless, but point to the best function that a film adaptation can perform in relation to the original work on which it is based: to reinterpret and revive interest for a new generation.

As it stands, Sam Wood's adaptation of *For Whom the Bell Tolls* remains one of the best visual interpretations of a Hemingway novel. Even Hemingway, who famously derided most film versions of his work, was happy with Gary Cooper and Ingrid Bergman's performances in their roles (Phillips 47). Further, the production team on the film appears to have been so synchronized on the film that director Sam Wood could

even intuit Hemingway's original ending. According to Carlos Baker, Hemingway "professed to be reluctant to kill his hero after having lived steadily in his company for seventeen months" (349). As a result, in the original manuscript, Hemingway composed an epilogue for the novel, in which General Golz and Karkov meet together in Madrid, "discussing Jordan's blowing of the bridge and his subsequent disappearance" but not his death or the recovery of his body (Baker 350). Although he had no access to this epilogue, because it was edited out before printing, Dudley Nichols nevertheless wrote an ending to the film that closes in from the injured Jordan to the point at which the audience looks directly down the barrel of his machine gun, including the audience in the tolling of the bell that Hemingway intended for every man to hear in the deaths of others. This ambiguous ending comes just after Jordan's final monologue, the only lengthy one in the film presented in its entirety in full Hemingway-esque clipped style, lifted directly from the last pages of the novel. Jordan's exit line before the shot pulls out to the end of the machine gun barrel, "She's going home with me," referring of course, to Maria, captures perfectly the intertwined desperation and disillusionment of Hemingway's original character (Wood).

By the end of the film's production, Hemingway had learned his lesson about being a fiction writer in Hollywood. Filmmaking is a collaborative effort. If he wanted to see the fullest extent possible of his original vision, Hemingway would have to maintain an active presence in the filmmaking process, insisting on cast members and fighting for historical accuracy, even after his film rights were sold. For the remainder of his life, Hemingway continued to use his celebrity clout to have his say in the production of films based on his works, and the quality of those films improved dramatically because of his

influence. Despite the standard Hollywood treatment given to it, Sam Wood's adaptation of *For Whom the Bell Tolls* succeeds in retaining the structural and thematic integrity of the original, creating a cohesive work of cinema that pulls its entire production team, for the first time, inside the circle of the Hemingway ouroboros.

To Have and Have Not (1944)

Although Ernest Hemingway considered *To Have and Have Not* to be "his worst novel" because "he had written it for money," the book has been adapted for film three times (Phillips 50). This situation raises two inevitable questions. First, what keeps bringing filmmakers back to the work? And second, why has each adaptation been so well received by audiences?

The novel certainly did not start out as a top-rate cinematic property. Hemingway sold the initial film rights to Howard Hughes in 1941, for the low price of \$10,000 (Laurence 85). Unable to put together a production team, producer Hughes then sold the rights several years later to Jack Warner of Warner Brothers for \$92,000 (Phillips 51). The reason for the increase in price was simple. During the interim, Paramount's adaptation of Hemingway's *For Whom the Bell Tolls* had been a runaway success, both with audiences and at the Academy Awards. Also, Hemingway's increased media presence during World War II as a journalist and uber-masculine lifestyle brand made any project carrying his name a profitable commodity. Given the increase in Hemingway's value as a celebrity, no one in Hollywood was surprised when director Howard Hawks was able to generate a ten-fold return on Warner's investment with his

adaptation of *To Have and Have Not*, especially with a big-name star like Humphrey Bogart in the leading role of Harry Morgan, and his much younger girlfriend, Lauren Bacall, playing Harry's love interest, Marie. The only person unhappy with the adaptation's success was Hemingway himself, who, after Hawks told him what he made off of the picture, "did not speak to me for three months" (Phillips 51).

Although Hemingway did not consider the novel to be among his best, *To Have and Have Not* still contains four of the author's most prevalent themes: male individualism, the value of comradeship, reciprocal relationships between the sexes, and psychological alienation. Hawks's adaptation of the novel is certainly revisionist; however, most of his points of revision are based in sound historical, socio-cultural, political, and psychological manners of adaptation relevant to the time period of the film, as well as the tastes of audiences and censorship concerns of studio executives at Warner Brothers. Further, the changes to the text made by screenwriters Jules Furthman and William Faulkner added both visual symbolism and stylistic consistency that were missing from the original. Last, the inclusion of tough-guy star Humphrey Bogart and Hawksian woman heroine Lauren Bacall expanded awareness and comprehension of Hemingway's standard code hero and New Woman archetypes and allowed audiences to blend the public persona of Hemingway the author with his semi-autobiographical characters, making the Hemingway cinematic ouroboros readily apparent.

Frank Laurence has written extensively on how Warner Brothers' trademark "gangster film" genre style was a perfect fit to visually articulate the "tough guy" persona that Hemingway and his characters had acquired by 1944 (82). Typical characteristics of gangster film heroes include "the desire for recognition and success, a tough, crude

façade, hints of gentleness and sensitivity beneath the toughness, and an intimation that the gangsters are victims of circumstance” (Beaver 112). Certainly, Hemingway’s original Harry Morgan bears all of these qualities. Morgan is highly motivated to succeed in his smuggling business in order to provide for his wife and three daughters. Yet, he shows his sensitive side through intimacy with his wife, Marie, and his kindness to Eddy, his perpetually drunken friend. Last, Harry clearly articulates in the novel that his turn to a life of crime is because he is one of the “have not’s” of society, when he says, directly to the reader in first person, “I don’t want to fool with it, but what choice have I got...I didn’t ask for any of this and if you’ve got to do it, you’ve got to do it” (*Have Not* 105).

In terms of film history, the production of *To Have and Have Not* at Warner Brothers under the direction of Howard Hawks was a great combination. Warner Brothers had built a studio chiefly on gritty crime dramas, including Hawks’s *Scarface* (1932), a classic of the genre. In all likelihood, Hemingway had seen at least a few of these pictures, since their impact on the original novel seems apparent, given the close association of Harry Morgan with the gangster archetype. Also, one might speculate that Hemingway, with his avid interest in the local history of Cuba, considered his rumrunner, Harry Morgan, a latter-day analog of the seventeenth century English pirate, Harry Morgan, one of the most infamous privateers ever to have sailed the Caribbean. Given Hemingway’s exploits during World War II as captain of his own boat, *Pilar*, patrolling the Caribbean for possible Nazi ships while the film of *To Have and Have Not* was in production, audiences received plenty of information to connect the Captain Morgans of both the pirate era and the popular novel with the sea-faring author, creating a perfect storm of publicity.

Additionally, Hemingway and Hawks shared an interest in making drastic changes to the plot and characters in order to make the project as film-friendly as possible. According to Hawks, “We decided that the best way to tell the story was not to show the hero growing old, but to show how he had met the girl and, in short, show everything that happened before the beginning of the novel” (qtd. in Phillips 85). In truth, this agreement is not as far from the scope of the novel as it may seem. During the final pages of Hemingway’s novel, Marie copes with Harry’s death by remembering how wonderful their relationship was when they first met. Particularly, Marie recalls how Harry made her feel beautiful with her new hair, saying:

I walked down the Prado to the café where Harry was waiting and I was so excited feeling all funny inside, sort of faint like, and he stood up when he saw me coming and he couldn’t take his eyes off me and his voice was thick and funny when he said, “Jesus, Marie, You’re beautiful.”
 And I said, “You like me blonde?”
 “Don’t talk about it,” he said. “Let’s go to the hotel.”
 And I said, “O.K., then. Let’s go.” I was twenty-six then.
 And that’s how he always was with me and that’s the way I always was about him. He said he never had anything like me and I know there wasn’t any men like him. I know it too damned well and now he’s dead. (*Have Not* 259-60)

Marie’s memories of her courtship with Harry show the couple as a typical Hollywood romance, in which two people have an instant attraction that somehow magically defies all odds and lasts for decades, even after both are no longer young or attractive. For Hawks, as a filmmaker looking to appeal to a wide age demographic of audience members, the choice to set the romantic dimension of the film earlier in the characters’ lives was sound. Younger audience members would find it easier to identify with the attractive heroine, played by Lauren Bacall, while older audience members, who were more likely to have read the original novel and known Harry and Marie as a more mature

couple, would find the sense of nostalgia for their earlier romantic lives appealing, and would relate to Bogart's character.

Still, one cannot ignore that, in the original novel, Hemingway demonstrates far more sympathy for the emotional life of a middle-aged housewife than the standard Hollywood movie mogul. Hemingway's novel is filled with passages that capture not only Marie's feelings, but also Harry's lasting affection for his wife, who is clearly past her physical prime, but who nevertheless retains a strong sense of attractiveness for him. Hemingway further demonstrates his sympathy for Marie by causing the novel's unappealing, philandering writer character, Richard Gordon, to sneer at Marie and negatively speculate about her love life, saying:

Look at that big ox... What do you suppose a woman like that thinks about? What do you suppose she does in bed? How does her husband feel about her when she gets that size? Who do you suppose he runs around with in this town? Wasn't she an appalling looking woman? Like a battleship. Terrific.
(*Have Not* 176)

The overall effect of this passage is to hint to the reader that the "have not's" of society, such as Harry and Marie, actually have more meaningful emotional bonds that cause a romantic relationship to endure after physical attraction wanes. In contrast, Richard, as a "have" of society, possesses no true sense of love or fidelity for either his wife or his mistress. Unfortunately, this part of Hemingway's social commentary about relationships between the sexes was omitted because of the choice to cast a much younger actress for Marie in Hawks's adaptation. As such, its absence remains one of the more significant thematic flaws in the film, and possibly shows that Hemingway, although many have tried to prove otherwise, was much less chauvinistic than the tastes of Hollywood dictated during his lifetime.

Instead of using the novel's middle-aged Marie as the basis for her screen counterpart, director Hawks looked much closer to home to find her visual inspiration. At the time he made *To Have and Have Not*, Hawks was married to Lady Nancy "Slim" Keith, a socialite well-known for being the original California Golden Girl. As Keith summarized her life story:

I had been married to the film director Howard Hawks; I had been married to the great literary agent and impresario Leland Hayward; I was now, thanks to my marriage to Sir Kenneth Keith, bearing a title, the Lady Keith. Along the way, I had discovered Lauren Bacall, and Howard Hawks had used my image to create hers in *To Have and Have Not*. I had made the best-dressed list innumerable times, I had shot with Hemingway, traveled with Capote, and been wooed by Gable. (qtd. in Jefferson)

As the model for Marie in the film, Slim's image set the standard for what would come to be called the "Hawksian woman," a character type who frequently appeared in her husband's films, and who bore a striking resemblance to Hemingway's New Woman archetype, set by Brett Ashley in *The Sun Also Rises*, who was in turn inspired by Hemingway's real-life acquaintance, Lady Duff Twysden. In *Sun*, Hemingway described Twysden's fictional alter-ego by saying, "Brett was damn good looking. She wore a slipover jersey sweater and a tweed skirt, and her hair was brushed back like a boy's. She started all that. She was built with curves like the hull of a racing yacht, and you missed none of that with that wool jersey" (*Sun* 29-30). Like her real-life counterparts, the fictional Lady Brett shared with Lady Twysden and Lady Keith the tendencies to collect rich husbands like jewelry, set fashion trends, and inspire writers and filmmakers. As a result, Lauren Bacall's Marie in Hawks's adaptation of *To Have and Have Not* should be read as an incorporated adaptation of both Hemingway's other New Woman characters

and also the live-action love interests of the film's director and original author, representing a complete circle of Hemingway's celebrity author ouroboros.

The next question to answer, after one understands why the Harry and Marie characters were altered in adaptation, is to determine how such incorporation alters Hemingway's original theme from the novel that marriage works best as a reciprocal relationship which provides positive emotional reinforcement for both partners. Many Hemingway scholars, such as Thomas Hemmeter and Kevin Sweeney, disagree with this reading, claiming that "rather than challenging Harry's feelings of isolation, Marie, by her own dependence, actually reinforces Harry's alienation" (66). This reading is flawed, because it wrongly supposes that Hemingway wrote Marie to be a typical subservient housewife of the Depression era. In actuality, Hemingway shows Marie not as a woman totally dependent on her husband for a sense of identity, but instead as a woman who, although she loves her husband deeply, is able to act independently and on self-preserved instinct. Rather than going to Harry's funeral at the end of the novel, and accepting her socially-acceptable role as a mourning widow, Marie stays home to sort out a new life direction, saying:

I couldn't go to the funeral. But people don't understand that. They don't know how you feel . Because good men are scarce. They just don't have them. Nobody knows the way you feel because they don't know what it's all about that way...Nobody's going to tell me that and there ain't nothing now but to take it every day as it comes and just get started doing something right away. That's what I got to do." (*Have Not* 261)

Contrary to Hemmeter and Sweeney's reading of Marie as a drain on Harry's emotional resources, Hemingway's novel depicts a resilient Marie, who is determined to rebuild her life without her soulmate. Read in this way, Hemingway's original Marie is a complex

woman, who is strong enough to justify the reader's sympathy while she endures the worst tragedy of her life.

In his film adaptation of the novel, Hawks obviously chooses this more positive reading of Marie's character through the way in which he directs Lauren Bacall in the role. The film contains a lengthy sequence in which Marie and Harry pass a bottle of wine back and forth between their rooms as they exchange witty barbs charged with sexual innuendo. Ultimately, Marie wins the debate by figuring out that Harry is reluctant to become emotionally involved with a woman because he fears emotional vulnerability. Once she gains this admission, and she is sure of her upper hand in the situation, Marie takes the wine bottle back for the final time, saying "This belongs to me and so do my lips" (Hawks). Only after she uses her intellect to solicit the desired response from Harry does Marie engage him sexually. Finally comfortable enough that Harry has exposed his emotional vulnerability, Marie at last trusts him enough to allow him to assume the traditionally dominant male role in their relationship. As a signal of her agreement to engage in a reciprocal relationship, Marie utters one of the most famous lines in film history, "You know how to whistle don't you? You just put your lips together and blow" (Hawks). Harry immediately picks up on Marie's hint that a woman is not to be whistled at like a dog to be summoned, but instead as an awesome presence to be admired and respected. Hawks ends the scene with a shot of Harry whistling in approval at Marie, whom he has found to be his intellectual and emotional equal, in addition to being sexually attractive. This ending articulates Hemingway's original theme of the benefits of reciprocal marriage very well, by showing the audience that Marie is Harry's equal by choice, not out of necessity.

Although Hemingway's ideas on marriage were easy to fit into the gangster film genre to produce a film marketable to a World War II era audience, his politics proved much more problematic. By its title, *To Have and Have Not* is intended as a novel of social commentary about the cultural differences between the affluent classes and the working classes. The struggle between Harry and Johnson, the wealthy businessman who charters Harry's boat for a fishing expedition, is the most obvious example in Hemingway's original novel of this conflict. While on the trip, Johnson hooks a large black marlin, which he loses, along with Harry's expensive fishing rod, after ignoring Harry's directions on the most correct and sportsmanlike way to reel it in. As Gene Phillips states, "Johnson's behavior bears out Hemingway's conviction that when a man cheats at sports as Johnson did in the way he handled the big fish, he is unlikely to live up to his obligations in other areas of his life" (55). Even though Hemingway's theme is morally sound within the context of his canon of code hero behavior, it was not timely for World War II audiences. As Frank Laurence explains, *To Have and Have Not's* political undertones "showed little promise as movie material since it was too much a proletarian novel of the thirties...now there was a war going on, and no one was interested in seeing a movie about the class struggle between the 'haves' and the 'have not's,' let alone about a minor revolution in Cuba" (87). As a result, Hawks's production team had to find a more relevant political theme for the times.

Perhaps this was another reason that Hawks relied so heavily on gangster film staging in his adaptation of the novel. Gangster films, with their assumption that society could take anything a man had earned away from him at any time, without just cause, provided a substantially similar outlet for Hemingway's original differences between the

idle rich and working class. Describing the enduring appeal of gangster characters in American cinema, Robert Warshow explains:

Thrown into the crowd without background or advantages...the gangster is required to make his way, to make his life and impose it on others. Usually, when we come upon him, he has already made his choice or the choice has already been made for him, it doesn't matter which: we are not permitted to ask whether at some point he could have chosen to be something else than what he is. (578)

As a man who pilots a charter fishing boat, Harry is in a social situation similar to many gangsters in the early scenes of their films. The nature of Harry's work puts him in constant contact with spoiled rich people who are not as skilled as he, and who are constantly dependent on his expertise in order to enjoy as recreation that which Harry relies upon to earn a living. This puts Harry in a natural situation of opposition against men like Johnson, and the expected amount of hostility and resentment results.

Further, Warshow states, "We are always conscious that the whole meaning of his career is a drive for success: the typical gangster film presents a steady upward progress followed by a very precipitate fall. Thus brutality itself becomes at once a means to success and the content of success...the unlimited possibility of aggression" (579). Warshow's explanation for a film gangster's violent behavior also helps justify the reasons behind Harry's violent outbursts, which are toned down from the novel, but still present in the film. Throughout the novel, Harry frequently claims that the only thing a man like him has to make his way in the world is his *cojones*, meaning that only by violent demonstrations of his physical power can he show his true power against a world of richer men who seek to emasculate him. In short, just like the protagonists of most gangster films, the only way that Harry can prove his worth in the world is through acts of physical aggression intended to intimidate those who are financially superior.

Employment of this underlying gangster film psychology also relates to the historical undercurrent of pirate lore that runs through the novel and its adaptation. Hemingway's original Harry Morgan was named after the legendary seventeenth century Caribbean pirate, Henry Morgan. In many ways, Harry can be viewed not only as a gangster, but also as a latter-day pirate, considering the fact that he operates under his own code of ethics while engaging in rum-running and other illegal activities on the high seas that put him at odds with the government. Like gangsters, pirates often gain sympathy from movie audiences because of their rebellious lifestyle, which is usually depicted as appealingly risky and glamorous on film. Given that he was prone to prowling the Caribbean on his own heavily armed vessel during World War II, it is not too far of a stretch to suppose that even Hemingway fancied himself one of these dangerous rogues, and subconsciously imitated the lifestyle of a film pirate, Hollywood's gangster of the high seas.

Certainly, Howard Hawks sought to model his adaptation of *To Have and Have Not* in the style of another film that combined these elements of genre. From the beginning, Hawks sought to make his film a vehicle for Humphrey Bogart, who after the release of *Casablanca* (1942) was the biggest star at Warner Brothers. According to Laurence, because of Hawks's intention to recreate the earlier film's success, "*To Have and Have Not* seems at least as much an adaptation of *Casablanca* as of the Hemingway novel" (89). In truth, the two films share many similar elements. In addition to Bogart as star, both films share similar elements of romantic intrigue, exotic locales, daring criminals, anti-Nazi paranoia, political subterfuge, a lust for money, and female love

interests with shady pasts in their plotlines. Today, *Casablanca* could almost be considered a subgenre itself, with its first spinoff as this Hemingway adaptation.

Regardless, Hawks's choice of exotic locale was not solely to clone *Casablanca*. The change of setting for his adaptation, from Hemingway's original Cuba to Martinique, was purely due to fear of political repercussions against Warner Brothers, because "Hawks was told the only place in the Caribbean he could locate the story was the island of Martinique, since that was French territory and out of the jurisdiction of the Office of Inter-American Affairs" (Laurence 88). As a result, Hawks, together with screenwriters Furthman and Faulkner, rewrote the story as set in Martinique, with the chief political conflict being between the pro-Nazi, Vichy French and the Free French deGaullists. Although the alteration may seem farfetched at first, it is not too much of a stretch when one considers that, in *Casablanca*, Rick, Humphrey Bogart's character, occupies a precarious political situation of neutrality between the Vichy and Free French factions that is exactly replicated in the actor's portrayal of Harry Morgan in *To Have and Have Not*. In sum, Hawks's team overcame a potential production obstacle the right way: by incorporating logical elements from a thematically similar film that would resonate with audiences who recognized Bogart from his earlier role.

William Faulkner deserves primary credit for this coup, since he was the one who initially suggested the Vichy plotline (Phillips 52). Considering that he was working against time to complete each day's shooting script only hours before it was put before the cameras, Faulkner's work on the film is impressive. Even more impressive was the Pulitzer Prize-winner's willingness to cooperate with the actors in the film, who often chose to improvise over his carefully-crafted lines. As Phillips notes, "Faulkner seems to

have enjoyed these give-and-take sessions very much, for he later said that ‘the moving picture work which seemed best to me was done by the actors and the writer throwing the script away and inventing the scene in actual rehearsal before the cameras turned’” (53). Humphrey Bogart seems likewise to have felt that Faulkner was open to hear his suggestions on the script, because once, when he was presented with a scene in which he felt that Faulkner had written too much dialogue, he presented the writer and Hawks with the overwritten, six-page scene inquiring, “I’m supposed to say all that?” (qtd. in Phillips 54). Bogart’s ability to be open with his director and screenwriter on the film shows through in the quality of emotion that he is able to bring to his performance of Harry, creating one of the actor’s best dramatic performances.

Perhaps also, Bogart was able to create one of his most genuine screen characters in the film because of the presence of Lauren Bacall as his love interest. The May-December romance of Bogart and Bacall is one of Hollywood’s greatest love stories, and the Warner Brothers publicity team took full advantage of this first occasion to show the two stars in love in posters advertising the film. Coincidentally, Hemingway was also engaged in a very picturesque romance of his own during the original drafting of *To Have and Have Not*, as well as while Hawks was creating the adaptation. Journalist Martha Gellhorn was twenty-eight when she met the thirty-seven-year-old author, whom she married four years later. Gellhorn was clearly on Hemingway’s mind as he wrote the novel, evidenced not only by his dedication of the book to her, but also through repeated references to the appeal of Jewish women (Martha was of ethnic Jewish descent) throughout the text. Based upon Hawks’s close working relationship with Hemingway during filming, it is not extraordinary to suppose that the director made the connection

between the author and his younger bride with the real-life romance of his leading actors, and incorporated both relationships into his portrayal of Harry and Marie onscreen.

This give-and-take sense of camaraderie amongst the cast and crew of the adaptation, combined with Hemingway's willingness to allow alterations to his original novel in the interests of communicating his major themes more effectively to audiences while remaining within the conventions of censorship and genre relevant to the era make *To Have and Have Not* an effective work of cohesive cinema. Nevertheless, Hollywood would go on to produce two additional remakes of the novel on film, *The Breaking Point* (1950) and *The Gun Runners* (1958). Each of these films would use additional changes to Hemingway's original novel along with further incorporations of new Hemingway lore to create adaptations that depicted the book in completely different ways, but that was each a commercial success in its own right. Perhaps Hemingway was too quick to judge *To Have and Have Not* an inferior novel. Regardless, today Hawks's adaptation of *To Have and Have Not* represents a prime example of how the ouroboric cycle of literary celebrity can be mined to produce a cinematic classic.

The Killers (1946)

According to his last wife, Mary Welsh, "The only film made from his work of which Ernest entirely approved was *The Killers*" (qtd. in Phillips 73-73). The film, based on his early short story of the same name, appeared first in ephemeral form, and later in Hemingway's 1927 collection, *Men Without Women*. Perhaps at least on some level, Hemingway found the film most pleasing because of the \$36,750 that he received for the

film rights to the story – setting a record for the highest price ever paid by the film industry for a piece of short fiction (Server 114). On a higher level, Hemingway was likely pleased by the amount of consideration and artistic respect paid to him by the film's producer, Mark Hellinger. According to screenwriter Richard Brooks, "Hellinger worshipped writers...at the end of the day you'd gather in his office for a drink. He liked nothing more than to sit with a writer and have a drink. Hellinger was a good man" (Server 115). Hellinger's willingness to heavily involve fiction writers in the creative process of adapting their works for film most likely began a solid, cooperative relationship with Hemingway that gained the writer's trust and confidence in the production. Further, Hellinger insisted on casting lesser-known actors in the starring role, as if to suggest that "he figured the star of the picture was Ernest Hemingway, and if there was another star it was going to be himself" (Server 120).

The film also made stars out of its two leads: Burt Lancaster and Ava Gardner. At the time *The Killers* was produced, Lancaster was best known as "part of the Armed Services Forces commission, entertaining the troops through the North Africa and Italian campaigns" (Server 120-21). Lancaster's attachment to military history, coupled with his former athlete's physique left over from his days as a circus gymnast, made the actor a perfect fit for the role of a tough, muscular Hemingway code hero. In contrast, for the role of *femme fatale* Kitty Collins, Hellinger wanted a woman who could believably coerce "a man to steal, go to prison, and die for her" (Server 120). By all accounts, everyone associated with the film adaptation of *The Killers* agreed that the young Ava Gardner was indeed that kind of woman.

The Killers is quite obviously a fine example of the late *film noir* genre prevalent in the half-decade following World War II. As Gene Phillips explains:

The dark, shadowy atmosphere of the film...coupled with the equally somber, cynical vision of life reflected in its tale of betrayal, disillusionment, and death, mark the film as an example of late film noir. This trend in American cinema was in full flower when Siodmak's film was made, and the pessimistic view of life that characterized film noir – an outgrowth of the disillusionment spawned by World War II and its aftermath – is clearly in evidence in *The Killers*. In keeping with the conventions of the genre the film is characterized throughout by an air of grim, unvarnished realism. (73)

This style of filmmaking was typical of *Killers* director Robert Siodmak, a Jewish immigrant from Germany who crafted films in the then-typical German style of stark sets and bleak countenance. Siodmak's views on film style and shot selection was rarely questioned by his studio executives at Universal, because at the time, Siodmak was "deemed the most talented specialist in suspense films since Hitchcock" (Server 119). A master in this post-noir style of "heavy shadows, controlled lighting, and striking camera angles" inspired by German Expressionism, Siodmak's films also typically featured both "a non-heroic hero" and "a Medea figure who can draw him by her witchlike powers into evil" (Kaminsky 127). As a result, Siodmak's films were often all about psychology, and a man's inner struggle to come to terms with the consequences of his actions. The story could be set in virtually any historical context, had no political agenda, and usually involved only one social class: the urban underworld. Therefore, any critical discussion of Siodmak's adaptation of *The Killers* should focus primarily on the psychological manner of film adaptation.

Behind the scenes, uncredited screenwriter John Huston also greatly influenced adaptation of *The Killers*. Huston, director of film noir classic *The Maltese Falcon*, was

an ex-boxer, newsman, and war veteran who was largely considered in Hollywood circles at the time to be a “son of Hemingway” type (Server 115). Huston’s pictures, such as the Hellinger-produced gangster film *High Sierra*, often depicted men dealing with moral crises. Together with Anthony Veiller, another Army veteran-turned screenwriter, Huston carefully crafted Hemingway’s original story around a central thematic question: “What could bring a man so low that he would surrender himself to violent death?” (Server 117). This theme screens in Siodmak’s adaptation of *The Killers* as a modern, *film noir* meditation on good and evil, centered around two paradoxes that are best worked out using the Socratic method to untangle Hemingway’s meaning from the Hollywood ouroboros of cinematic celebrity culture.

According to Gene Phillips, this fundamental struggle between good and evil is present in all of Hemingway’s Nick Adams stories, creating a moral dialectic between Young Nick Adams and Old Nick Adams. The code hero in Hemingway’s print version of “The Killers” is Ole “Swede” Anderson, a washed-up boxer patiently awaiting his assassination after turning to a life of crime. From watching the two evil Chicago assassins who seek to murder Anderson, “Nick gradually grows in maturity from adolescence to young manhood, for it is by observing their behavior under stress that he learns how to face the harsher and more perplexing aspects of adult life” (Phillips 67). Hence, the Young Nick Adams can be thought of as a sort of universal innocent, unwise to the evil present in everyday life; whereas the Old Nick Adams represents the sum total of experiences witnessed by the average man on his course toward a jaded acceptance of immorality.

As a result, “Nick is exposed to life as in a Greek tragedy. The small town is not safe. No one is safe from fate and no one can do anything about it except face it with dignity, as Swede does” (Kaminsky 126). In this teacher/student relationship between Anderson and Adams, the Swede is clearly a victim of fate. Siodmak trusts that his audience will see, through the eyes of Nick Adams, how the Swede’s guilty conscience erodes his morality and eventually his will to live. The real question presented by the adaptation, therefore, is what role, if any, a man has in controlling his own fate? Siodmak’s film seems to trust the audience with the ability to determine the Swede’s level of responsibility for his demise. Using a series of flashbacks to create a sense of Socratic method-styled inquiry, Siodmak leads his audience to the conclusion that Anderson is a victim of fate beyond his control because he was blinded by love for Kitty Collins. In contrast, Kitty Collins has a much higher level of culpable mental state regarding her self-serving schemes, and Siodmak’s film trusts that his audiences will judge her more harshly.

Siodmak’s sense of Socratic logic works well in conjunction with Hemingway’s often-discussed Iceberg Theory of writing, in which the reader must intuit the internal conflicts of characters that lie beneath their superficially tough emotional facades. Much like the moral makeup of any average man or woman, in the Socratic Method, there is most often no clear-cut “right” answer to any moral question, but rather a series of if/then logical statements which lead to a number of plausible hypotheses and conclusions. This abyss of moral gray area creates what is commonly known as a Socratic paradox: an affirmative statement which can never be conclusively proven, but instead only

rationalized through a series of judgment calls that must be made in order to lead one closer to the truth.

Siodmak's adaptation of *The Killers* presents two Socratic paradoxes: Ole Anderson's statement that "I did something wrong – once," and Kitty Collins's desperate plea, "Kitty is innocent!" Throughout the film, Siodmak uses a series of flashbacks to provide alternating solutions and hypotheses that test the validity of these statements through the corroborating testimony of other characters. With Anderson's statement, viewers are continually asked to question whether Anderson committed any wrong at all, and if so, how many different types of moral wrongs he has committed. The film offers many possible solutions, ranging from Anderson's only moral wrong being that he loved Kitty Collins, in Shakespeare's parlance, not wisely but too well, to a series of wrongs that included perjury, robbery, and betrayal of his friends. For Collins's exclamation, viewers are presented with the question of whether Kitty was innocent not only of causing the death of her husband, but also of the crimes of the heart leading up to his death that included the deception and betrayal of Ole Anderson.

Considering that Hemingway's most-often repeated quotation about morals is that "Morality is what you feel good after and immorality is what you feel bad after," it is little wonder that the author was pleased with Siodmak's Socratic approach to filmmaking, which leaves the audience to ponder where to place blame with Anderson and Collins according to their own moral codes. Clearly, Anderson and Collins each "feel bad after" the lifetime of decisions that they have made, but at the end of the film the question still remains of whether justice was done to them regarding the means of their punishments. Ultimately, Anderson is executed for betraying his criminal cohorts, and

Collins is sent to prison after her role in the robbery is revealed. Rearden, the insurance agent responsible for investigating Anderson's murder before paying off his life insurance policy, plays the role of Socrates or Devil's Advocate to an audience of Nick Adams-like students, as he slowly gathers evidence about Anderson's life in an effort to determine whether a life of crime has any real reward. Both Hemingway and Siodmak trust that, looking through this lens, their audiences will come to the correct conclusions.

To explore Anderson's Socratic paradox of "I did something wrong – once," further, one must consider each circumstance in which the fighter may have committed a moral wrong based upon choices he made in the film. Generally speaking, there are five possibilities for Anderson's moral errors presented through Siodmak's flashback sequences. First, Anderson could have committed a moral wrong in the boxing ring by taking a fall for money during one of his matches. Cheating at sports is commonly a sign of moral weakness in the Hemingway canon. However in the film, Anderson does not engage in such un-sportsmanlike conduct. Instead, Anderson fights valiantly with a broken hand until he is so punch-drunk he does not know that the bout is over. In contrast, the original real-life inspiration for Hemingway's short story, a boxer named Andre Andreson, would have failed by the same moral standard set in the film adaptation of Hemingway's re-telling of his story. Andreson was murdered on April 1, 1926, in Chicago, after throwing a series of fights for money (Phillips 71). In consequence, Anderson can be judged morally correct on the issue of sportsmanship, because he exhibits the behavior typical of a Hemingway code hero by never giving up even though he knows he is beaten.

The second possibility is that the “something wrong” involved loving Kitty Collins and taking the fall for her theft of some jewelry early in the film. According to Stuart Kaminsky, heroes of films noir demonstrated “a romantic heroism, a streak of knightly valor stemming from the constant belief of U.S. popular culture that a good man can somehow hold the world together, right wrongs, and reaffirm existence” (128). The visual token of Anderson’s knightly sense of valor is demonstrated in his keeping of Collins’s green handkerchief. Often in courtly romances, a chivalrous lover will keep a token of love from his lady, such as a handkerchief or scarf, as a reminder of their bond. Inspector Rearden’s revelation that Anderson wore Collins’s scarf over his face while helping to rob the shoe factory is symbolic. Both literally and figuratively, Anderson used his love for Collins to cover up his moral failing of loving her too much and hide from the realities of his conscience. Since Anderson displays awareness and shame for his shortcoming of allowing his love for Collins to cloud his judgment, this cannot be the fault for which he is punished either.

A more likely possibility for Anderson’s punishment by death in the film is the third possibility: that the “something wrong” involved his turn toward a life of crime after his release from the prison term he served on Collins’s behalf. Anderson’s problem is that he needs money to attract and hold Collins’s attention, away from Big Jim Colfax, the man that Collins found to support her while Anderson was in prison. However, as a washed up boxer, he has no way of getting the money he needs to hold onto the girl he loves. Anderson’s dilemma becomes an if/then statement: if he really needs money to get the girl, then he will sacrifice his moral code to make that happen. Anderson’s decision here is the point of his corruption, of which the film audience is made abundantly aware.

Sacrificing one's moral code for love by becoming a thief, rather than just taking the blame for one's beloved who is a thief, is morally reprehensible. For this, Anderson must be punished. Yet, as Siodmak said, "the ideal hero for a gangster picture is someone who has failed in life and has therefore committed a crime...If you give such a person a good enough motive for the crime, the audience will be on his side" (qtd. in Phillips 72). As a result, even though Anderson is punished by death for his crimes, his death is made to seem like a noble act of coming to terms with his faults, making him a still-honorable code hero.

The fourth possible "something wrong" is a corollary to the third. Anderson's choice to double-cross his criminal cohorts, taking the heist money after a tip-off from Collins, may be analyzed similarly to his choice to steal in order to attract and hold Collins's attention. The typical Hemingway code hero places value on his relationships with male friends. In Hemingway's world, there is even honor among thieves, if the bonds of their friendship are genuine. Therefore, when Anderson double-crosses Colfax in order to steal his girl, Anderson allows his love for Collins to improperly supersede his natural instinct to protect his comrades. This choice ultimately leads to his death at the hands of Colfax's assassins, in a final settling of the moral score in a game that Anderson thought he had won long ago.

Last, Siodmak's adaptation forces audiences to consider whether Anderson's "wrong" involved his preoccupation with suicide. In the film, Inspector Rearden must unravel the mystery of why Anderson chooses to make his former landlady, Mary Ellen Queenie, the beneficiary of his life insurance policy. When Queenie reveals that she prevented Anderson from committing suicide one night after Collins left him, audiences

are intended to believe that Anderson's choice to avoid self-destruction was a solid moral decision. As Phillips states:

By electing to take his medicine for consorting with criminals in the first place and by facing death with dignity and courage, Ole Anderson, the once honest boxer, redeems his recent past. Ole is, therefore, as sympathetic a figure in the film as he is in the short story, and implicitly remains the fallen code hero who regains his status in death. (72)

The final result of Anderson's actions is that by the end of the film, in a split decision, audiences should be able to find moral justification for the majority of his actions and to reach a final verdict that Anderson has completed his penance on Earth for his crimes. Still, the lesson remains that every man must ultimately pay the price for following an evil lover's siren song.

Of course, this conclusion brings into question the second Socratic paradox of Siodmak's adaptation. Was Kitty Collins an innocent person, and if so only in part, why were some of her wrongs justifiable? To begin this discussion, one must first determine what the term "innocence" means within the context of the Hemingway canon. Usually, whenever a Hemingway character does something purely for the selfless motivation of love, almost anything he or she does can be justified. Yet, based upon Collins's actions, it is hard to believe that she ever truly loved Anderson for any reason other than he was willing to act as her fall guy. In her initial meeting with Hellinger to discuss the role, the producer told Ava Gardner to think of Kitty Collins as "a nice girl," who allowed herself to accept the easy way of life. She came from a good family but linked up with the wrong people who supply her with the wrong cues in life" (qtd. in Server 121). Further, Hellinger explained to Gardner that the romance between Collins and Anderson was doomed to frustration because both had met too late in life, after too many adverse

circumstances had tainted both characters' views of what love could be. At that point in her life, Gardner had already failed in her first marriage to Mickey Rooney and her then-current marriage to bandleader Artie Shaw was crumbling. It was little wonder that Gardner found much to relate to in the role of Kitty Collins. As so many *femme fatales* cast in the Hemingway adaptation canon, Gardner became trapped in the artistic ouroboros of life imitating art imitating life. The actress would play Kitty Collins for the remainder of her life, through another failed marriage to Frank Sinatra and countless other romantic disappointments.

Regardless of any sympathy audiences then or now might have for Gardner, the fact remains that her character, Kitty Collins, only feigned affection for Anderson in order to serve her own selfish purposes. As a result, Collins cannot be considered innocent of any of the crimes that follow this action. Because she was guilty of stealing Anderson's heart for the wrong reason, it naturally follows that Collins must also be found guilty in the court of audience opinion for all of her other crimes in the film. From stealing the brooch that resulted in Anderson's jail time, to double-crossing her secret husband Colfax, and finally in trying to get the dying Colfax to absolve her from her role in the cover-up surrounding the robbery, Collins is guilty of multiple crimes that cannot be justified under the catch-all cause of unselfish love. By the film's end, the only logical conclusion for audiences to derive is that Collins deserves to be punished with jail time for the worst crime of all: exploiting both men who truly loved her.

Kitty Collins's duplicitous nature is indicated by three visual symbols used throughout the film in association with her. The first of these symbols is the color green, which comprises the background of Collins's scarf that Anderson carries and is also

present in the name of The Green Cat, a club where she meets Rearden to tell her side of the story. Green is a color of both positive and negative meaning, signifying both luck and greed. Also, green is the color of absinthe, a hallucinogenic liquor that can induce a range of emotions, from giddiness to sickness. Collins's character is all of these things at once, her love intoxicating men with the feeling of good fortune that she has chosen them, only to give way later on as they find they have been deceived by her intense self-preservative instincts.

The harp, seen in the film as the motif on the aforementioned green scarf, may be taken as a second visual symbol of Collins's dangerously deceptive nature. Circe, the Greek temptress with whom Collins is constantly compared in the movie, is closely associated with the harp to accompany her siren song. Also, "playing the harp" is a colloquialism used frequently in gangster pictures to indicate someone who has just been killed. Read together, Collins's association with harps in the film indicates that she is a temptress capable of luring men to their deaths. Last, Collins is often compared to cats in the movie, frequents The Green Cat nightclub, and is last seen escaping through a bathroom window like a cat after her meeting with Rearden goes awry. Throughout his fiction, Hemingway often used cats to indicate a sense of vulnerable, yet fiercely independent, femininity in works such as "Cat in the Rain" and *A Farewell to Arms*. Also, Gardner's biographer Lee Server has noted that Siodmak and other directors often sought to play up the actress's cat-like qualities, to create "a haunting erotic presence out of such things as the shift of her eyes and the feline sprawl of her exquisite body" (126). This combination of Gardner's natural appearance with one of Hemingway's most common symbols is a great example of how carefully screenwriters Veiller and Huston

must have worked with director Siodmak and producer Hellinger to make a film adaptation that represented a strong balance of creative control to create a piece of cohesive cinema.

Siodmak's adaptation also uses visual symbols to relate common Hemingway themes with Ole Anderson's character. In an early scene, Nick Adams comes to warn the Swede that two assassins are on their way to kill him. Instead of looking at Adams, Anderson simply stares at the wall while he expresses his readiness to die. As Frank Laurence has mentioned, "in a simple way the wall is metaphoric. The Swede is a man up against the wall, or facing a future that is a blank wall...he says there is no way to fix it because he got it all wrong" (187). In the Hemingway canon, a code hero often appears near the end of his life as a man with his back to the wall against the world. One example is *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, which ends with Robert Jordan sitting with a broken leg and his machine gun propped against a tree, waiting for the enemy army to find him. In many ways, these metaphorical walls are the realities that every man must face as he takes stock of his life and prepares to die. The lone man against this monolith of "otherness" can also be related to the other major visual symbol associated with Anderson in the film, which is the idea of Rearden as a doppelganger. While Anderson spends most of the film gradually entangling himself further into a world of crime and romantic intrigue, Rearden stands on the other side, slowly unwinding Anderson's checkered past from its web of deceit. As a result, Rearden symbolizes a future of clear-cut answers and satisfying resolutions that audiences might choose for themselves, whereas Anderson remains trapped by his confusing criminal past.

Last, Siodmak's creative use of lighting and staging are also employed in symbolic ways that make such stock *film noir* tropes resonate more meaningfully. Siodmak's employment of contrasts between light and dark to highlight Ava Gardner's face greatly heightens the sense of duality in her character's personality between innocence and wickedness. Siodmak insisted that all of Gardner's close-ups were done without makeup, making her, according to the film's cinematographer, Elwood Bredell, "the first adult actress who had ever agreed to be filmed without makeup: All we did was rub a little Vaseline into her skin for a sheen effect" (qtd. in Server 123). A literally glowing temptation, Gardner's Kitty Collins is at once ghost and angel.

Siodmak's style of lighting, or rather, the absence of it, is also utilized to great effect during the nighttime scenes of the film. Hemingway's fiction often employs what has come to be called the Nada Concept. Most often, Hemingway uses a fear of the dark or nighttime to symbolize the restlessness of the dark nights of self-doubt within every man's soul. As Kaminsky has rightly pointed out, with Siodmak's lighting on the film, "there is no essential difference between the darkness of the outside and that of the inside" (131). Siodmak's staging choices on the film also support this reading. The sets of the film are constructed in such a way as to call attention to the unreality and artificiality of each scene, to make sure that the audience knows where reality ends and making pictures begins. Like the Gustav Dore engravings in Dante's *Divine Comedy*, Siodmak's stark black and white tableau-making serves once again to highlight the differences between right and wrong choices that determine people's lives. These staging and lighting choices cause *The Killers* to screen exactly as Hemingway must have intended his story to read, as a modern morality play brought to light out of the dark bowels of the

criminal underground. Apparently, cinema audiences in 1946 were receptive to this documentation of daily struggle between good and evil. The film was a great box office success and critical reviews were almost unanimously favorable, providing the foundation for future success of stars Lancaster and Gardner. Particularly, critics praised Gardner's performance, hailing "her extreme beauty and for her effective embodiment of the *femme fatale*" (Server 129). However, the most uncanny thing about Gardner's performance in *The Killers* is that she seemed, both on-screen and off, to be the living embodiment of the New Woman Hemingway had spent his career writing about. Not surprisingly, the author and his favorite actress struck up a friendship that would last until the end of his life, and also spawn two additional film collaborations of their work in *The Snows of Kilimanjaro* (1952) and *The Sun Also Rises* (1957). Gardner and Hemingway remained friends until the author's death in 1961. Watching Gardner star in films based on his writing brought Hemingway his greatest satisfaction with adaptations of his work. Hemingway introduced the ever-adventurous Gardner to his world of safaris, life on the Caribbean, and bullfighting, even introducing the actress to Luis Miguel Dominguin, the matador who would steal her away from the love of her life, Frank Sinatra (Server 291). Too old to realistically pursue a romance with Gardner himself, Hemingway seemed content to re-enact their real-life relationship as if from the pages of *The Sun Also Rises*, playing Jake Barnes to Gardner's Brett Ashley, as once again the ouroboros of literary celebrity encircled the author together with the woman who became his final muse.

Under My Skin (1950)

In his essay, “On Writing,” Ernest Hemingway says that a fiction writer’s job is neither to write biographies, nor to wholly invent characters, but instead “to digest life and create your own people” (qtd. in Phillips 98). Hemingway’s statement certainly applies to his first published short story, “My Old Man” (1923), upon which Jean Negulesco based his film adaptation, *Under My Skin* (1950). Although critical accounts of both the film’s creation and the story’s genesis are surprisingly sparse, most agree that Hemingway used the history of turn-of-the-century racing celebrity Tod Sloan as the basis for Dan Butler, the tragic Hemingway code hero of the tale. Hemingway’s use of actual people to inspire his fiction is not unusual, and is almost a trademark of the author’s writing.

What makes “My Old Man” unique among Hemingway stories is that it has an almost prophetic quality. Although Hemingway had never seen a jockey killed during a race at the time he wrote the story, a week after the story’s completion a jockey named George Parfremont was killed at the same jump as Hemingway’s fictional character Dan Butler, causing the author to remark “that was just the way it looked” in his mind’s eye while writing (qtd. in Phillips 98). Hemingway’s actual inspiration for Dan Butler was a jockey named Tod Sloan, an equally tragic celebrity figure of early racing culture who also died young after his career was ruined by rumors that he conspired with underworld figures and bet on his own races. Further, John Garfield, the actor who played Butler in *Under My Skin*, also died a premature death by heart attack at age 39, only two years after completing the film. The similarity between the deaths of Garfield and his fictional

counterpart, Butler, are uncanny. Most biographers of Garfield's life point to the actor's continuous struggles with the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) as the cause of the stress-induced heart attack that ended his life. In a similar fashion, pressure from mobster Louis Bork to throw races is what ultimately kills Dan Butler in Negulesco's cinematic retelling. As a result of these coincidences linking the men whose stories together make up the character of Dan Butler, scholars should read *Under My Skin* as a film text with a high level of biographical incorporation, as well as strong historical and socio-political influences that expand the boundaries of the Hemingway ouroboric circle.

An examination of Hemingway's story about failed jockey Dan Butler, one must start with the real-life biography of Tod Sloan. Although his racing career was rather short, lasting only from 1889-1901, Sloan changed the sport dramatically during that time. Sloan is usually given credit for inventing the most popular riding style in racing used to this day. Called the "monkey crouch," this revolutionary style involves the rider leaning forward on the seat while keeping the legs bent and tucked forward. Largely because of this innovation, Sloan quickly became one of the most celebrated jockeys of his day, racing throughout England and America. According to Sloan's 1915 autobiography, *Tod Sloan By Himself*, Sloan's proudest accomplishments were winning the Ascot Gold Cup in 1900 while riding Merman, a horse owned by actress Lily Langtry, and being invited to race for the Prince of Wales's team in 1901.

Much of the rest of *Tod Sloan By Himself* is devoted to details about his rise from humble beginnings as the frail son of a Civil War soldier from Indiana, where his mother died when he was five and he was sent to live with relatives, to the racing world's first

international celebrity. The volume generally reads as a cautionary tale of overnight success, and is filled with stories about Sloan's beautiful women, dangerous associations with mobsters such as Diamond Jim Brady, and his wardrobe that was lavish enough to require a full-time valet. Sloan's lowest career ebb came at the 1899 Epsom Derby, when his horse, *Holocauste*, stopped abruptly, broke a leg during the final stretch of the race, and had to be euthanized. Speculation swirled around the incident, because though *Holocauste* had an early lead in the race, Sloan appeared to be holding the horse back for most of the final neck-to-neck stretch directly preceding the accident. Unfortunately, accusations about Sloan's mob connections and his willingness to bet on his own races continued to mount, and he was banned for life from racing late in 1901, without ever actually racing for the Prince of Wales's team.

Influences of Sloan's racing career can be seen in both Hemingway's original story and its film adaptation. In Hemingway's story, Butler is an aging American jockey in Paris, who lives at the *Maisons-Lafitte*. Sloan's tragic horse, *Holocauste*, "was the best of his generation at age two, winning the *Criterion Maisons-Lafitte* at a canter," and gained many other wins, before cracking his leg in a race at Chantilly, and breaking it completely in the ill-fated Epsom Derby, after which he was immediately euthanized (*TBHeritage.com*). Like his real-life inspiration, Gilford, Butler's death horse in the story, also suffered a fracture that left "his front off hoof dangling" and was shot immediately afterward ("Old Man" 160). *Holocauste*'s accident marked the beginning of the death of Sloan's career, whereas Gilford's accident actually caused Butler's death. In short, what Hemingway did in this early short story was substitute an actual death in fiction for a metaphorical one in the real world.

Unfortunately, Negulesco's adaptation completely misses this important historical metaphor that Hemingway must have drawn from Sloan's biography. Instead of either horse and/or jockey perishing after the fateful race, both live to the end of *Under My Skin*, providing a saccharine and unsatisfying Hollywood ending to the film. However, the film is not a total loss, and is in fact a fair example of the interpretation style of filmmaking. Negulesco sets the film in Paris, just after World War II, to take advantage of audiences' more likely familiarity with that war than World War I, which was the time period in which Hemingway's original was set. This intelligent choice to shift the time Hemingway's tale allowed Negulesco and screenwriter Casey Robinson to make many solid interpretive decisions that preserved other major themes present in the original story, and also from the biographies of Hemingway and Sloan.

For example, according to his autobiography, Sloan remained a public figure even after his forced retirement from racing. He performed in vaudeville theater and opened in Paris during 1911 what later became the famous Harry's New York Bar, between the Avenue de l'Opera and the Rue de la Paix. After overspending forced him home to the States in 1920, Sloan attempted a film acting career. Due to failing name recognition, Sloan was unsuccessful as an actor, and he died of cirrhosis of the liver in 1933 in Los Angeles, a monument to the boom and bust of the first decades of the twentieth century.

Dan Butler, the protagonist in both the short story and film, similarly is a jockey definitely on the down-side of his career. In the film, Butler has been forced reluctantly to maintain his connections with organized crime, represented by the ominous presence of Louis Bork and his constant demands for money. Although the film is clear that Butler took a bribe, but regretted it, and later chose to accept no more offers to rig his own races,

in Hemingway's story, Butler's bribery is only hinted at on the final page. After Butler dies in the story, his bribery is alluded to in the whispers of men who knew him. One man says, "Well, Butler got his, all right," and another replies, "I don't give a good goddam if he did, the crook. He had it coming to him on the stuff he's pulled" ("Old Man" 160). Since the film detours away from the powerful emotional impact contained in Hemingway's original ending, the film audience is deprived of the author's intended resolution. Good men who make the bad decision to cheat have to pay for it in the end. Even if they later redeem themselves, the consequences of their shady dealings will always catch up with them, and most likely end up hurting those they love.

The ending of "My Old Man" is made tragic not necessarily by the death of Dan Butler alone, but instead by the reader's knowledge that Butler's son, Joe, has lost faith in his father's integrity. In the Hemingway canon, a man's integrity is inextricably intertwined with his manhood, which was to the author an important virtue. This sense of stand-up manliness seems, in the Hemingway oeuvre, to be the most important legacy a father can leave his son. Therefore, when young Joe learns at the end of the story that his father, whom he admired greatly, was corrupt, he says, "Seems like when they get started, they don't leave a guy nothing" ("Old Man" 160). This statement means that losing faith in his father's integrity as a man leaves Joe even more destitute than Dan Butler's actual death. Without belief in his Old Man, Joe is truly alone.

Interestingly, all three men involved in bringing Dan Butler to life - Hemingway, Sloan, and Garfield - shared Joe's position as a young man who wanted to believe in his father's manliness, but found themselves unable to do so for similar reasons. In his biography of Hemingway, Carlos Baker carefully chronicles the disgust the author had

for his father, Dr. Clarence Hemingway's, failure to stand up to his over-dominating wife. Ultimately, Dr. Hemingway committed suicide, leaving Ernest to assume the role of head-of-household at twenty-nine, and also the struggle for dominance against his mother that went along with it. In contrast, both Sloan and Garfield grew up in single-father homes, where they lived in under-privileged circumstances before being sent to live with relatives. These similar situations put both Sloan, the man who inspired Dan Butler, and Garfield, then actor who would play the character on-screen, in the same situation as Joe Butler, connecting the inspiration for Hemingway's original story to its cinematic adaptation through shared personal experience. As a result, Joe Butler, on film as well as on the page, can be read as a proto-Nick Adams character, and one of the earliest evidences in the author's career of the Hemingway ouroboros.

The film team behind *Under My Skin* seems to have been well-versed enough in Hemingway and Sloan lore to incorporate it into the film in other ways that did not concern its Hollywood ending. In life, Hemingway was a frequent patron of Sloan's New York Bar, socializing among its crowd of regulars that included mostly former World War I soldiers and American expatriate writers. Also, in the original story, Butler and the other jockeys sit around at the Café de Paris all day, drinking and gossiping just like Hemingway's more literary crowd in bars on the same streets. As a result, the film as a whole stands as a somewhat consistent artistic vision of all collaborating creative parties.

However, in what screens today as an ironic twist of fate, Jean Negulesco's choice to cast tough-guy actor John Garfield as Butler in the adaptation almost makes up for his failed ending, when one considers the tragic ending of Garfield's life in comparison to Hemingway's original story. Like both Joe Butler, Hemingway's pre-Nick

Adams era innocent, and real-life inspiration Tod Sloan, John Garfield grew up poor and shuffled off to the homes of relatives after suffering the death of his mother in early childhood. However, Garfield's rags-to-riches tale was set for the stage, rather than the racetrack. Watching Garfield in the role of Dan Butler, one cannot help but wonder what happened to his career after starring in two well-received Hemingway films, *Under My Skin* and *The Breaking Point* (1951). The reason why Garfield did not become another Humphrey Bogart is one of the saddest stories in Hollywood politics. As his daughter Julie said about her father's legacy, "It was almost as if Hollywood was so ashamed of what was done to him that they almost made him disappear" (Weintraub).

Today, Garfield's history in Hollywood is generally viewed in two ways. First, Garfield is a performer whose work broke new ground in the field of Method acting, paving the way for later stars from Marlon Brando to Robert DeNiro. Garfield is also remembered as an actor whose career and life were destroyed by HUAC and the Hollywood Blacklist. Born Jacob Julius Garfinkel in 1913 on New York's Lower East Side, Garfield was:

one of the first dark-haired, working-class ethnic outsiders to turn into a Hollywood star, following the path of actors like James Cagney. Garfield's chip-on-the-shoulder style and his rugged looks often cast him as a social outsider on the screen: a boxer, a gangster, a soldier. The persona affected actors from the 1950's onward. (Weintraub)

All of these physical characteristics and personality traits made Garfield a perfect candidate to become the screen articulation of a Hemingway code hero: strong, quiet, intense, and fortified with a self-created sense of honor. After working his way up through the New York scene in the famous Group Theater company, Garfield was offered a contract with Warner Brothers, where he rose to fame in the 1940s playing a myriad of

tough-guy characters including a sexy drifter in *The Postman Always Rings Twice* (1946), a morally-compromised boxer in *Body and Soul* (1947), and lawyers of shady character in *Gentlemen's Agreement* (1947) and *Force of Evil* (1948). However, Garfield's success in these roles pigeonholed him as an actor. According to Robert Nott, author of his biography, *He Ran All the Way*, Garfield was frustrated with Hollywood:

John Garfield faced the same challenge every film actor faced during the heyday of the studio-system style of filmmaking. He was under contract to a studio that had the right to cast him in any movie it saw fit...The forces that prevented him from getting high quality roles were really the result of the combined willpower of Warner Brothers, the studio system in general, and the general public, which also had its own perception of how Garfield, or Cagney or Bogart should appear on screen. (qtd. in Gould)

As a result of this sort of monetarily-motivated typecasting, John Garfield developed a very particular on-screen persona as a “sensitive tough guy, an urban sharpie who has doggedly pulled himself up from poverty while somehow retaining a tarnished soulfulness” (Gould). However, although Garfield's morally-questionable screen self made his career, it is difficult to wonder in hindsight whether it did not also make him a very visible target for the HUAC witch-hunts.

In 1950, Garfield was accused of being a Communist and called before the HUAC committee to testify. Although he was offered complete immunity if he would name names of others in Hollywood he suspected of being Communists, Garfield failed to do so. Never one to carry strong political affiliations, in all likelihood Garfield was targeted because of his Jewish ancestry and because he demanded that his friend, African-American actor Canada Lee, receive equal treatment on projects in which both of them were cast. The HUAC committee also held against Garfield the fact that his wife, Roberta, was a registered member of the Communist party. Refusing to testify against his

wife or colleagues, Garfield said in his official statement before the HUAC committee, “I have nothing to hide and nothing to be ashamed of. My life is an open book. I am no Red. I am no Pink. I am no fellow traveler. I am a Democrat by politics, a liberal by inclination, and a loyal citizen of this country by every act of my life.” Still, Garfield’s protestations were of little avail. HUAC officials were looking for a high-profile, very visible name to add to their growing blacklist of writers and directors, and thereby increase public suspicion of a Communist presence in Hollywood.

As a result, John Garfield lived the last two years of his life like the *film noir* characters he often portrayed, as a wrongly accused man on the run. As his daughter Julie recalls:

He didn’t know what happened to him in the end. He didn’t understand why they were hounding him. He was scared. It killed him, it really killed him. He was under unbelievable stress. Phones were being tapped. He was being followed by the FBI. He hadn’t worked in eighteen months. He was finally supposed to do *Golden Boy* on CBS with Kim Stanley. They did one scene. And then CBS cancelled it. He died a day or two later. (qtd. in Gould)

From Julie Garfield’s account of her father’s struggles, it is easy to find the actor’s inspiration to portray Hemingway character Dan Butler. Although he claimed no affiliation with the Communist party and said that he engaged in no Communist-sponsored activities or fund-raising efforts, Garfield had once, on behalf of his wife, signed a roster in support of a Communist-affiliated event in which Roberta participated. This evidence came up in HUAC hearings, and continued to haunt Garfield during his final two years of life.

The circumstances leading to the demise of his fictional counterpart, Dan Butler, are surprisingly similar in the film *Under My Skin*. Butler made an agreement with

mobster Louis Bork to actively lose a race he was expected to win, so that Bork and he could win money betting against the odds. However, Butler, partly out of conscience and partly out of circumstances, fails to throw the race as scheduled, and Bork loses the high stakes bets he made. As a result, Butler spends the remainder of the film on the run from Bork, who demands that he repay the money by throwing more races. Butler's refusal to do so restores his integrity, but almost costs him his life. In contrast, John Garfield's choice to sign the pro-Communist petition on behalf of his wife could be viewed in the same light as Butler's small moral compromise. Both men did something that they knew could have detrimental consequences in the future without thinking much about it. However, in Garfield's case, even though he regained a firm sense of moral integrity by not lying about his friends to HUAC in an effort to save himself, the stress of dealing with the mafia-like governmental entity ultimately proved to be the death of him. This common background makes Garfield's life story akin both to Hemingway's story and the life of jockey Tod Sloan that inspired it. The final meaning that might be derived by comparing these tales is that even though Hollywood creates new tragedies on screen every day, it is ill-equipped to handle the tragedies that inspire such fictions in everyday life.

Regardless, it is easy to see how the production team of *Under My Skin* may have drawn on the real life of John Garfield in order to emotionally flesh out their adaptation of "My Old Man." Early in the film, Garfield's character, Butler, is constantly peering out windows and looking over his shoulder, anxiously awaiting the arrival of Bork and his henchmen. Butler's attitude of paranoia in this sequence seems to imitate the sense of paranoia that Garfield must have felt during the Red Scare as he was harassed by HUAC.

Further, immediately before the first confrontation scene with Bork, Butler has a conversation with his son Joe, saying that he can't go back to America because it "is on the fritz!" (Negulesco). For the remainder of the film, every time young Joe tries to talk up the possibility of returning to America, Butler exhibits nervous behavior, which in turn only causes the boy to defend his homeland even further, insisting fervently that "America's the best country in the world!" (Negulesco). What seems to be happening in this ongoing exchange between father and son about America is that Butler seems painfully aware that America is unsafe for him, and possibly others, at the time. In contrast, his son, because of his naivety and blissful acceptance of patriotic rhetoric, is perfectly willing to accept that nothing is amiss in America during the early 1950s. In short, the discussions between Joe and Dan Butler about America most likely reflect the HUAC-era paranoia of the cast and crew during that historical period, and, as such, are appropriate thematic additions to flesh out the sparse character details of Hemingway's original story.

Last, the addition of French actress Micheline Puelle as nightclub owner Paule to the film adaptation of Hemingway's story can be read as much more than a simple inclusion of a stock *femme fatale* character. Trained as a stage actress, the Paris-born Puelle began her film career in the early 1940s, playing typical romantic-comedy ingénue parts. However, during the post-war years of her mid-twenties, Puelle starred in a number of literary adaptations for the French market in "more weighty parts, now as the mature, and often sophisticated, woman of the world" (Cousins). After marrying American actor William Marshall, Puelle made her American debut in *Under My Skin*. Puelle's character, Paule, adds further socio-cultural and historical depth to the production mostly because of

her scenes with Butler, in which she compares the emotional heartbreak of hearing young Joe talk about his mother's death to the gruesome scenes that she witnessed during the German occupation of Paris.

When Butler suggests wrongly that she has had an easy life which has made her overly sympathetic to Joe's situation, Paule replies, "What do you think it is like to see a kid with his heart showing?" (Negulesco). This statement should be read with double meaning. Viewing her as a substitute mother figure, Joe opens himself up emotionally to Paule, allowing his metaphorical heart to show. In contrast, Paule compares this response to the young soldiers whom she knew during the war, who had physically been ripped open, leaving their hearts to show. The overall message behind this comparison is that, according to Negulesco's adaptation of Hemingway's story, the young fighting men of the world wars were like innocent children. They believed in fighting for their countries with all of their hearts, only to have their physical bodies destroyed many times because of their patriotism. This theme is possibly why Negulesco changed the name of his adaptation of "My Old Man" to *Under My Skin* – because under the skin of every soldier and person back home supporting him or her is a heart prepared to break. This reading seems logical in the context of Hemingway's work, in which the author continually calls into question the worthiness of war in light of its great human cost.

The ultimate result of Negulesco's choice to blend biographical elements with undercurrents of socio-political and historical commentary on the post-World War era is a film that remains mostly thematically consistent with Hemingway's original text. In many ways, *Under My Skin* is very much a film of the early 1950s, because it perfectly captures the post-noir air of paranoia that permeated America during the Red Scare. Yet,

the film also retains Hemingway's original theme of how innocent young men can be mis-educated in the ways of the world when those in whom they trust are proven to be corrupt. The film's only major flaw is its too-upbeat Hollywood ending, which loses the sense of desolate resonance and resignation to fate that makes Hemingway's works so clearly modernist. Still, the parallels between Tod Sloan's autobiography and John Garfield's struggles with HUAC behind the scenes of the film stand as strong reminders that Hemingway code heroes exist in everyday life, even though most fade so quickly into the shadows of celebrity that audiences don't even notice they have gone.

The Breaking Point (1950)

Michael Curtiz's film, *The Breaking Point* (1950) is the second adaptation of Ernest Hemingway's novel, *To Have and Have Not*. At first, studio executives were skeptical as to whether another adaptation was warranted so soon after *To Have and Have Not* (1944), with Humphrey Bogart and Lauren Bacall's iconic turns in the piece so fresh in the public memory. However, screenwriter Ranald MacDougall "convinced Warner executives that a screenplay that was more faithful to the book and had less in common with *Casablanca* could be just as viable as the Hawks version had been" (Phillips 59). Ironically, *Casablanca*'s director, Michael Curtiz, was chosen to direct *The Breaking Point*. However, as Gene Phillips states, "this was all to the good since, having made *Casablanca* once, he was as interested as MacDougall in making a movie that stuck to Hemingway's story line and was not in any way similar to *Casablanca*" (59). Further,

Curtiz's choice of John Garfield over Humphrey Bogart in the newer adaptation assured that this version would be different, and more personal.

Having lobbied hard for the part of Morgan, Garfield seemed determined to make this role, the second to last of his career, his best. At the time he made *The Breaking Point*, Garfield was being harassed by the HUAC, making him a man who knew what it was like to be "a man alone" fighting against an insurmountable authoritarian enemy. Garfield's portrayal of Harry Morgan is more nuanced and complex than Bogart's. A gentle family man at home, Garfield's Morgan is a veteran who suffers from post-traumatic stress disorder and depression, making him capable of moral compromises and violent acts throughout the film. MacDougall's script enhances these differences by incorporating different parts of Hemingway lore, making Morgan not just a tastemaker or a tough-guy, but instead a man trapped between external and internal conflicts. What results from the efforts of these three collaborators is a film that attempts a conversion of the latter half of Hemingway's original novel, but that ends up as an interpretive adaptation by incorporating parts of Hemingway and Garfield biography, along with elements of the gangster film and Western genres.

Almost all of *The Breaking Point*'s primary areas of focus are on the lesser-explored areas of Hemingway's original novel that were avoided in Bogart's *To Have and Have Not*. First and foremost, the film emphasizes the importance of Harry's relationship with his wife and family. Whereas in the Bogart adaptation, Morgan was not married and had no children, Garfield's Morgan is a devoted family man, whose best character seems brought out when he is around his two young daughters. In one early scene, Morgan and his wife Lucy are arguing about their ongoing money struggles.

Suddenly, their girls pop into the kitchen asking for money to go to the movies. Although Lucy tells them no, Morgan gives them the money, providing them with a distraction to get out of the house so that they will not have to listen to their parents argue. This scene is one of many in the film in which Morgan demonstrates that he will do anything to provide for his family and their happiness, even if it means compromising his own morals. In later scenes, the film shows how much Harry and Lucy are willing to do to earn money honestly. As Gene Phillips points out:

To avoid a loss of audience sympathy for Harry, the movie goes to a great deal of trouble to demonstrate that he is driven to act as an accessory to a robbery solely for the sake of bailing his family out of debt. This is established in a montage sequence in which Harry reduces the daily rate for renting his charter boat from \$40 to \$25, and his wife is shown working far into the night earning money by mending sails while Harry guiltily lies awake nearby. (60)

This choice by MacDougall and Curtiz, to focus on the mundane struggles of a working class family, is in keeping with Hemingway's original novel. However, it represents a strong contrast from the earlier Bogart adaptation of the novel, which is far more stylish, witty, and sophisticated. By putting Harry Morgan in a situation in which he is forced to swallow his pride and work for a lower wage, and also watch his wife labor long hours for unfair wages, the film sets up a contrast between the haves and have not's of society that is both very Marxist and very much part of the Hemingway oeuvre.

In their essay on "Marriage as a Moral Community" in *To Have and Have Not*, Thomas Hemmeter and Kevin Sweeney point out that in Hemingway's original novel, "Although Harry generally values his marriage, the relationship fails to overcome his moral alienation. Rather than challenging Harry's feelings of isolation, Marie, by her own dependence, actually reinforces Harry's alienation" (66). Even though in the film Morgan

experiences the same sense of alienation, one must notice that the important difference between the novel's Marie and *The Breaking Point's* Lucy. Lucy is pro-active in her efforts to help her husband. Rather than just talking to him about their financial troubles, she offers a possible solution: to sell the boat and go to work on her father's lettuce farm. When Morgan refuses this option, Lucy chooses to go out and take in work. However, by doing this, Lucy causes more tension in the marriage by assuming the masculine role of provider, thereby emasculating Morgan, who seems to feel usurped by Lucy's take-charge attitude. Morgan stated that watching his wife work longer hours than he did at work she hated, "broke my back" (Curtiz). Therefore, *The Breaking Point* should be read as pushing Hemingway's common theme of masculine alienation, even when in a marriage, further than the author does. By showing Morgan as a man unable to accept help from the most likely candidate, his wife, without serious damage to his ego, Curtiz's adaptation explores the psychological dimension of gender interaction in his film more than Hemingway does in his original novel. The outcome of this exploration is that, oftentimes, a man feels completely alone because his pride, not just his circumstances in the world, prevents him from accepting help from those most ready and able to offer it.

Still, audiences of the film should not ignore Curtiz's decidedly pro-worker stance either. In *The Breaking Point*, Hemingway's original location is moved from Cuba to the fishing village of Newport, California. Although the reasons for moving the location of the film likely included budgetary concerns, given that the film was shot in black and white, an ancillary reason was probably that filming a working class tale in Cuba in 1950 would have been a politically risky venture. During the era of HUAC-era paranoia, a film that pointed out the struggles of the proletariat and offered a solution of going back to a

more hands-on, agricultural-based means of subsistence as a way of regaining a sense of individual worth and manhood would have been viewed as suspect, and possibly pro-Communist.

Further, Curtiz's choice to cast John Garfield, then embroiled in serious legal troubles with HUAC, as the lead actor to articulate these struggles would have cast even more negative light on the production. At the time, Garfield was considered somewhat of a maverick in his field. According to Bernard Weintraub, "Garfield was one of the first actors to set up his own production company, which made some of his most significant films, including *Body and Soul*, in which he insisted that Canada Lee, the black actor, appear with him. For John Garfield to advocate Canada Lee was an enormous step." Garfield's interest in casting Lee in the production was both professional and personal. Lee and Garfield had become friends while working together in productions at the Pine Brook Country Club, the summer home of the Group Theatre of New York. Additionally, Garfield worked diligently in all of his later productions to advocate for the casting of African-American actors, including Juano Hernandez as his on-screen best friend Wesley Park in *The Breaking Point*.

Hernandez's performance in the role of Morgan's First Mate Park, who symbolizes the better parts of Morgan's conscience in the film, was extremely well-received by critics. Bosley Crowther of *The New York Times* called Hernandez's performance "quietly magnificent," and said further that, "As a matter of fact, the suggestion of comradeship and trust that is achieved through the character played by Mr. Hernandez, and the pathos created by his death, is not only a fine evidence of racial feeling, but it is one of the most moving factors in the film." However, this feeling of

“comradeship” between a black man and a white man on film in 1950 carried with it dangerous political implications for the actors involved. In one early scene which today comes across as endearing, Morgan encourages his two young Caucasian daughters to walk to school with Park’s African-American son. As both fathers encourage the children to be not shy, the girls join hands with Wesley, Jr., while they wait for the bus to school. Although in hindsight, the friendship between the two families is rightly viewed as positively promoting racial equality, during the HUAC era it was most likely read as yet another of Garfield’s choices to officially push the social envelope toward a Communist agenda.

Later in the film, Morgan is forced to watch as the gangsters, whom he is supposed to assist in a robbery, shoot Park in front of him. While he can do nothing at the time, Garfield’s facial expression of pent-up anger, stress, and beingtrapped in a social situation in which he can do nothing to help his friend speaks volumes. In *The Breaking Point*, Harry Morgan is not only “a man alone,” who “stands no chance” in his own world, but he is also a man who is aware that his life would be infinitely more difficult if he were African-American under similar circumstances. This unarticulated theme is furthered by other scenes in the film that non-verbally communicate the symbolic death of Park as Morgan’s social conscience. In the final scene, after a presumably dying Morgan is carried away surrounded by white friends and family, young Wesley Jr. is left completely alone to wander the pier looking for his father, whom the audience knows to be murdered and floating somewhere in the bay. Wesley Jr. becomes the film’s symbol of what is left behind if a man gives up his moral values and social conscience, allowing his true friends to die under meaningless circumstances. Without a strong sense of social

responsibility concerning class and race, men are left to wander as vulnerable as lost children, and just as apt to fall prey to involvement in amoral or illegal activities because of this absence.

The Breaking Point makes it very easy to trace actual events of Harry Morgan's moral decline; however, it is much more difficult to pinpoint exactly how Morgan came to be put in this position of childlike vulnerability in the first place. One possible explanation that has been little explored by critics is that both the original novel *To Have and Have Not* and its subsequent film adaptation suggest that Morgan suffers from post-traumatic stress disorder, caused by his service in World War II. In *The Breaking Point*, Morgan argues with Lucy over whether he should go through with the robbery as planned or give up, sell his boat, and go to work on her father's lettuce farm. The argument concludes with Morgan storming out and saying, "This is my business. It's a job like any other job. I did worse in the Philippines, and I got a medal for it" (Curtiz). These lines demonstrate that Morgan, a veteran, has done many things in war that he regrets. Still, cracks appear in his weathered-veteran veneer, beginning after he kills the villainous Mr. Sing in self-defense and also after Wesley Park is murdered. What seems to be going on is that Morgan uses his military service to give him courage and justification for violent acts that he feels he must commit and witness in order to survive; however, internally he remains hurt and shocked at the atrocities of which he is capable.

This masking behavior is a classic demonstration of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) frequently exhibited by veterans. According to the National Institute of Mental Health:

PTSD is an anxiety disorder that some people get after seeing or living through a dangerous event. When in danger, it's natural to feel afraid. This fear triggers many split-second changes in the body to prepare to defend against the danger or to avoid it. This fight-or-flight response is a healthy reaction meant to protect a person from harm. But in PTSD, this reaction is changed or damaged. People who have PTSD may feel stressed or frightened even when they are no longer in danger. (*nimh.nih.gov*.)

Morgan shows symptoms of PTSD many times over the course of the film. In a scene with the shady lawyer, Duncan, Morgan completely overreacts when he feels that Duncan is going to cheat him out of some money. He shoves Duncan against the wall and accuses him of secretly plotting to double-cross and kill him. Many times in the film, Morgan is shown sweating profusely over small conflicts with other characters, including the harbor police and Coast Guard officials. Last, Morgan hides guns all over his boat while preparing for the gangsters to arrive, because he suspects that they might murder him if the plan goes awry. Although the people with whom Morgan is dealing are of character questionable enough to cause a person to always be on guard, Morgan's chief reactions to his circumstances, obsessive worrying usually followed by sudden and intensely violent reactions, show that his time in the military has left him a physically tough, but emotionally damaged man, who possibly suffers from an early form of PTSD.

Also, Morgan's choice to continuously put himself in potentially perilous situations shows that he has come to thrive on dangerous circumstances and needs the adrenaline rush that they provide in order to feel alive and effectual. These choices are also likely to be results of his military service, during which period he came to feel that being under intense stress and fear for his life in order to survive was normal. Many of Hemingway's characters in other novels, such as *The Sun Also Rises*, *A Farewell to Arms*, and *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, share Morgan's eager engagement in potentially life-

threatening activities, almost as if they are trying to recreate the intense feeling of liveliness that they felt in the military, when their lives were truly threatened.

This sense of reckless urgency is frequently described by psychologists today as “adrenaline addiction.” As counselor Patrick Lencioni explains the addiction: “Always overwhelmed, adrenaline junkies seem to have a constant need for urgency, even panic, to get them through the day” (3). Lencioni also points out that adrenaline addiction is particularly insidious because “unlike other addicts, whose behaviors are socially frowned-upon, adrenaline addicts are often praised for their frantic activity...and so they often wear their problem like a badge of honor, failing to see all the pain it causes” (3). Perhaps the original source of adrenaline addiction for so many Hemingway characters is their author himself. A veteran of World War I, during which he was blown up and almost killed, Hemingway seemed to spend the remainder of his life actively seeking out other circumstances in which he could cheat death. From acting as a war correspondent who took an active role in combat, to engaging in amateur bullfighting, and even in his often-hectic personal life, Hemingway seemed to strive on the sort of high-stress level that today can be interpreted as adrenaline addiction. Curtiz’s production team seems to have incorporated Hemingway’s behavioral tendency into the film, by greatly expanding the action sequences and exploring the emotional conflicts even further than the author’s original novel. In short, the final product is a film that moves faster and is much more emotionally intense than the novel that inspired it, largely due to incorporation of Hemingway mythology.

Stylistically, the film incorporates not only additional biographical lore about Hemingway, but also many of the common tropes of gangster films, which were still

widely popular in 1950. The main plot line of *The Breaking Point* ultimately leads Morgan to participate in a genuine gangster robbery, in which his boat is supposed to be used as the getaway vehicle. Along the way, he meets many of the standard gangster film characters: Leona, a *femme fatale*, Duncan, a duplicitous attorney, and a mob boss accompanied by heavies. Morgan, in this scenario, is the gangster-in-training, or anti-hero, whom the audience gets to see make the mistakes that will lead him down the road to ruin. The most important part of Morgan's personality in this role is his paradoxical awareness and fear of being "a man alone." As Robert Warshow has noted, "No convention of the gangster film is more strongly established than this: it is dangerous to be alone. And yet the very conditions of success make it impossible not to be alone, for success is always the establishment of an individual preeminence that must be imposed on others, in whom it automatically arouses hatred: the successful man is an outlaw" (580). Morgan fits this description perfectly: he is a man who, because of his intense drive to succeed, alienates himself from the very people he wants to help.

Morgan's alienation as a gangster anti-hero becomes complete when his wife, Lucy, utters the most frightening words any married man can hear, "I'm sorry I ever married you" (Curtiz). These words, which come at the end of an argument between the pair in which Morgan attempts to justify his choice to engage in criminal activity to help pay the family's overdue bills, effectively shut him off from his family. When Lucy tells him further that, even if he comes back alive from his dangerous mission, she and the girls will be gone, Morgan knows that he has lost every reason he previously held for going into a life of crime. Oddly enough, this situation only insures that he will go

through with his plans, because now he has become a man with nothing to lose, who is completely alone.

The importance of female characters in gangster films cannot be ignored. Most often, they come in two forms: the damsel in distress and the *femme fatale*. In *The Breaking Point*, MacDougall's script splits Marie, Morgan's wife from Hemingway's original novel, into two women who each embody one of these archetypes. Lucy, as the woman who faces financial ruin, is the damsel in distress. Even though she is already married to Morgan, their relationship is tenuous because she constantly challenges her husband's bad judgments. In contrast, Leona is the *femme fatale*. Leona sees Morgan as the sort of man she gave up to live a life in the fast lane, only to later understand that such a life brings little lasting satisfaction. As is typical in most gangster films, the gangster-in-training remains alone, despite receiving plenty of attention from both women. As Hemmeter and Sweeney have stated:

Harry sees Lucy and Leona only as projections of a private *mise en scene*, allowing him to distance himself from the moral dialog these two women initiate. He ignores his wife's sexual identity, driving her to dye her hair blond to attract him. He also keeps his distance from Leona and cannot respond to her need to be loved as a real person." (71)

By maintaining emotional distance from both women, Morgan effectively creates a situation in which he can only be "a man alone." There are many possible reasons why he does this, but most likely Morgan is afraid that both women are his moral superiors, and would frown upon his choice to engage in truly criminal activity. As a result, when he is finally scheduled to meet up with the gangsters, he does not want either of the women in his life, or even his male friend Park, to witness his moral downfall. In short, if Morgan

wishes to self-justify his bad choices, he wants to be sure he is the only person who must suffer their moral consequences, so he chooses to act completely alone.

Of course, the concept of a man acting alone against sinister forces is common to another genre of films, the Western, which also seems to have influenced construction of *The Breaking Point*. However, most of the characters commonly found in this California sea-coast Western in some way reverse what is expected from their archetypes. First, Morgan, the hero of the piece, dresses all in black, whereas the various enemies he faces, from Coast Guard officials to underworld figures, dress in white or at least light-colored clothing. This choice to put Morgan in black possibly signifies that he is an anti-hero, not a pure hero. In contrast, pitting Morgan against the white-clothed Coast Guard official could show that, at least in part, some of Morgan's actions are not morally justifiable, and his character in fact has a dark side. The gangsters, clad in various shades of light gray, represent the various personal and ethical compromises they made to reach their current stations of moral corruption.

Clothing color is also important in regards to Duncan, the corrupt attorney who lures Morgan into a life of crime with the promise of easy money. Duncan, who always dresses in white, is a typical Western genre "drunken professional" character. As John Cawelti explains "the drunken professional is a doctor or lawyer who, we are given to understand, had a promising eastern career that went sour" (50). From descriptions of Duncan's history and law practice in the film, audiences are given to understand that he is exactly this type of person, who has decided that easier money can be made in assisting criminals than in pursuing justice.

Also, there seems to be a reversal of symbolic color scheme concerning the two women in the film who take up the traditionally opposing roles of dance-hall girl and schoolmarm, other characters common to Westerns. As Cawelti explains the dichotomy in most Westerns, “the blonde...represents genteel, pure femininity, while the brunette...symbolizes a more full-blooded, passionate and spontaneous nature, often slightly tainted by a dubious past” (48). However, in *The Breaking Point*, Lucy, Morgan’s demure wife, begins the film as a brunette, while Leona, the other woman who attempts to seduce Morgan, is a blonde. What the reversal in hair color versus character here appears to symbolize is that no one is always what they appear to be. Although she looks innocent, Leona has actually suffered romantic disappointments in her past that have left her somewhat predatory in her instincts toward men, until she meets Harry Morgan. Morgan, because of his apparent strong moral focus at the beginning of the film, attracts Leona’s more domesticated brunette roots, and causes her to reexamine why she chose adventure over love. In fact, brown hair seems to symbolize a natural, down-to-earth quality in *The Breaking Point* that is indicative of unadorned, inner beauty that even the other woman must appreciate. This idealization of the natural is possibly why Lucy begins the film as a brunette. Still, when she sees that the blonde Leona turns her husband’s head, she decides to win his heart back by bleaching her hair blonde, in an attempt to capture the false sense of innocent appeal that Lucy thinks Leona embodies. The result is not what she hopes to achieve, since Morgan, although he attempts to save her feelings, expresses a preference for Lucy in her naturally brown hair color. The overall message of this reversal of Western hair color symbolism seems to be that

truthfulness is the greatest virtue a woman can possess to attract a man, and gain his respect as a moral guide.

This theory seems to hold when one considers the fact that Morgan's best friend in the adaptation, Wesley Park, is a darker-skinned African-American. Normally in Westerns, when the sidekick of the hero is of an ethnic minority, that character is present to provide mere comic relief. However, Park serves as the only completely stable moral conscience of the film, suggesting the sort of father and provider Morgan could aspire to be if he were completely morally upright. Of course, as the only truly honest character in the film Park must die in order to capture the sense of moral bleakness present in Hemingway's original novel: that no truly good man can survive in a corrupt world.

What results from this displacement of Morgan's better moral side into a supporting character is the same split of personality that is achieved by making Hemingway's original Marie into two female characters. After Park is murdered, Morgan's darkest tendencies are unleashed, and he lashes out violently killing all of the gangsters aboard his boat. The fact that Morgan is shot in the stomach and left arm can be read as symbolically significant of his moral retransformation back into a whole person after his external moral conscience, Park, is killed. A stomach wound usually produces a slow death. Therefore, Morgan's stomach wound can be read as the slow bleeding out of his value system, as the harsh realities of poverty sap his will power to earn an honest living. However, because he is at heart a good man, Morgan must eventually part with the more evil side of his personality, symbolized in the film by amputation of the arm on his left, sinister side. Tragically, Morgan must also lose the most honest and innocent parts of

his character, signified by the death of his best friend Park, along the road to his transformation.

Perhaps this is why Curtiz leaves the ending of *The Breaking Point* open. In Hemingway's original novel, *To Have and Have Not*, Morgan unquestionably dies of his wounds in the end, showing that he has finally paid the consequences for his moral misdeeds. However, in *The Breaking Point*'s ending, audiences are left to wonder whether or not the critically wounded Morgan lives or dies. Although this ending has been often criticized, it is actually consistent within the context of the film, and also with Hemingway's original work. After he is shot, Morgan repeats several times the mantra of both works, that "a man alone has no chance, no chance at all" (Curtiz). Yet, the Harry Morgan of *The Breaking Point* is a man who only perceives himself to be alone, when in fact, he has the support of family and friends, who surround him as he lies in his sickbed during the film's last scene. What results is a film with a final message that suggests a man is alone with no chance, only if he chooses to ignore the support of those who seek to help and warn him that he is following the wrong path in life, just as Morgan does in Hemingway's original novel, *To Have and Have Not*. This takeaway point is the cohesive bond that holds *The Breaking Point* much more thematically closer to the novel than its previous Bogart and Bacall adaptation, even though the earlier film has endured longer in America's collective cinematic conscience.

The Snows of Kilimanjaro (1952)

Henry King's *The Snows of Kilimanjaro* (1952), is the most highly incorporated adaptation of Ernest Hemingway's work. Upon first seeing the film, Hemingway was not pleased and remarked, "I sold Fox a single story, not my complete works" (qtd. in Phillips 14). Hemingway's ire was somewhat justified from a copyright standpoint. Producer Darryl Zanuck purchased the film rights to the single "Snows" story for \$75,000, and assigned the screenwriting responsibilities for the project to Casey Robinson (Phillips 14). Robinson, who had previously scripted *Under My Skin*, an adaptation of Hemingway's short story "My Old Man," was considered at the time to be a master of literary adaptation and somewhat of a Hemingway aficionado. The resulting product was an adaptation of "Snows" that included significant plot, character, and thematic elements from the author's life story as well as from five other Hemingway works: "The End of Something," *The Sun Also Rises*, *A Farewell to Arms*, *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, and "The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber." Fortunately, these inclusions of Hemingway's canon are carefully selected and thematically consistent enough to create an adaptation in the interpretive style that represents a mostly consistent artistic vision.

Hemingway's original short story, "The Snows of Kilimanjaro," first appeared in *Esquire* magazine in August 1936. The story, which chronicles the regrets and death of a failed Hemingway-esque writer named Harry, was originally intended by the author as a sort of cautionary tale to himself. After reading his friend Scott Fitzgerald's series of *Crack-Up* essays in the February, March, and April 1936 issues of *Esquire*, Hemingway

could not help but include a reference to what he felt was Fitzgerald's distasteful display of self-pity and fawning over the rich in his next published story, "Snows." In the original version of "Snows," Hemingway refers to Fitzgerald as his friend Julian in a derogatory way, saying:

He remembered poor Julian and his romantic awe of them and how he had started a story once that began, "The rich are very different from you and me." And how someone had said to Julian, "Yes, they have more money." But that was not humorous to Julian. He thought they were a special glamorous race and when he found out they weren't it wrecked him just as much as any other thing had wrecked him. ("Snows" 53)

Justifiably, Fitzgerald was troubled by Hemingway's slighting, and wrote to his friend to "Please lay off me in print. If I chose to write *de profundis* sometimes, it doesn't mean I want friends praying aloud over my corpse" (qtd. in Baker 290). Hemingway's choice to upbraid his friend for showing too much self-pity in print is ironic when one considers "The Snows of Kilimanjaro" is very much the same sort of confessional writing as the *Crack-Up* series, only Hemingway chose as usual to thinly conceal his autobiography behind a veil of fiction. Also, the two friends, though they shared similar insecurities about their failings in life and career, articulated them differently. Fitzgerald told their editor, Max Perkins, that Hemingway's self-doubt was similar to his own. "Ernest is every bit as nervously broken down as I am," Fitzgerald added. However, "His inclination is toward megalomania, and mine toward melancholy" (qtd. in Baker 290-91). As a result, the original short story of "Snows" is best read in the same confessional, autobiographical style as Fitzgerald's *Crack-Up* essays, albeit with Hemingway's expected level of exaggeration.

The film adaptation of *The Snows of Kilimanjaro* certainly seems to take this approach to interpreting the story. The film debuted in August 1952, only a few months after Hemingway won the Pulitzer Prize for his then most recent novel, *The Old Man and the Sea*. Many critics then and now considered Hemingway's win to be a sort of lifetime achievement award, a sentiment which primed audiences to receive an adaptation of "Snows" that served as a sort of tribute to the author's life and canon of works. With *Snows*, director Henry King made his first foray into the Lost Generation oeuvre, but it would not be his last. Apparently fascinated with the era and its writers, King would go on to direct the next Hemingway adaptation, *The Sun Also Rises* (1957) as well as two Fitzgerald-centered features, *Beloved Infidel* (1959) and *Tender is the Night* (1962). With each film, King seemed to become increasingly involved on a personal level with these projects, even ultimately choosing to cast his wife, Jennifer Jones, in *Tender*.

King drew upon his working relationship with actor Gregory Peck in his casting choices for *Snows*, putting Peck in the lead role of Harry Street. For the extremely versatile Peck, playing Harry Street was a chance to further expand his growing repertoire of characters beyond the love interests and tough-guy gunslingers he had played up to that point in his career. Although he had starred previously as white-hunter Robert Wilson in the Hemingway-based adaptation *The Macomber Affair* (1947), Peck's performance in *Snows* seems more truthful, perhaps because of the biographical connection added by the production team. Casey Robinson wrote in a second wife for the Harry Street character who was not included in Hemingway's original. Robinson's Scandanavian socialite Liz bears a strong physical resemblance to Peck's then-wife,

Finnish-born real estate mogul Greta Kukkonen, and might be considered an inspiration for the character.

Although briefly alluded to in the italicized portions of Hemingway's original story, Harry Street's first wife in the adaptation, Cynthia, is largely invented by Robinson as well. Played by Hemingway's favorite actress, Ava Gardner, Cynthia screens today as a precursor to Gardner's assumption of her later Brett Ashley role in *The Sun Also Rises* (1957). Wearing very similar green emerald jewelry to her character Kitty Collins from *The Killers*, Gardner maintains a sense of character continuity from this earlier role as she allows Cynthia to become more secretive and duplicitous over the course of the film. Further, Robinson's choice to add an abortion plot to his screenplay of *Snows* might possibly reflect some difficult personal choices that Gardner was making in her real life. During the time of filming, Gardner was married to singer/actor Frank Sinatra, and the two quarreled often over the two abortions that resulted from their on-going struggle for dominance as head-artist of the household. Interestingly, Gardner's struggle to balance out the needs of a family and dual-career household with Sinatra seem to be mimicked in the relationship dynamic between Harry Street and his wife Cynthia. Her portrayal of Cynthia represents yet another example of the ouroboric circle of art imitating life that can commonly be expected in the most truthful cinematic performances of works adapted from print.

Despite significant additions to the plot of *Snows*, King's adaptation maintains many of the essential themes of the original. The film opens with a voiceover reciting Hemingway's epigraph exactly as it appears in the story, while images of Mt. Kilimanjaro and scenes of the African countryside go by in the background. The epigraph

also appears later in the film, when Harry's mentor, Uncle Bill, gives the passage to him as his deathbed legacy. In this second appearance, Harry is directed to read the epigraph as a riddle, which he recites in a Paris bar:

Kilimanjaro is a snow-covered mountain 19,710 feet high, and it is said to be the highest mountain in Africa. Its western summit is called the Masai Ngaje Ngai, the House of God. Close to the western summit there is the dried and frozen carcass of a leopard. No one has explained what the leopard was seeking at that altitude. (*Snows*)

After reading his legacy riddle, Harry seems puzzled as to what the solution might be. Although his friends in the bar offer cursory solutions, the real meaning for the audience is clear. The leopard is a stand-in for Harry, and in turn, every man. For Hemingway, a man's life is made worth living through a continuous series of quests that give purpose to life. These quests might be to obtain the love of a woman, to find success in art or career, or simply to hunt and kill big game. Throughout the film Henry King uses visual and verbal metaphors involving hunting to evoke the sense that, in order to be satisfied in life, every man must stay hungry and keep hunting for the next adventure. The resonant theme in Hemingway's original story and the film version is that a man's life will continue until he runs out of quests, and the only journey left is toward his own final rest, salvation, and possibly, if he is lucky and has done enough to be remembered, immortality.

Henry King's adaptation of *Snows* employs many cinematic devices to support his articulation of Hemingway's main theme implied in the solution to the leopard riddle. Numerous flashback sequences are used to show all of Harry's former quests, usually performed in pursuit of a female. This metaphor of life-as-a-humble-quest is supported by King's choice of wardrobe for lead actor, Gregory Peck. In the film, Peck is perpetually seen wearing the same gray herringbone tweed suit. The suit becomes a sort

of armor for Peck's character Harry Street, protecting him from the pretensions of the rich as he grows increasingly successful as a writer. In his later film, *The Man in the Gray Flannel Suit* (1956), Peck would be given a similar wardrobe to evoke the sense of his character as a man part of the machinery of society who refuses to lose his soul within it.

Here in *Snows*, even Harry's second wife Liz notices and comments on the suit's significance. As Harry leaves their final cocktail party together after receiving a letter from his first love, Cynthia, Liz remarks, "You look like such a fool...like a knight questing for the Holy Grail" (*Snows*). This statement can be linked to another quip from Hemingway's original story, in which Harry blames his third wife, Helen, for providing him with a comfortable lifestyle that ruins his career, saying "Your damned money was my armour" ("Snows"). The difference between these two statements about a man's personal armor that he uses as a defense mechanism against the world point toward the central thematic split between King's adaptation and Hemingway's story. In the story, Harry used money as his defense against the world, and when he reached a health crisis that cannot be remedied by money, he dies. However, in the film, Harry uses love as his armor, making his lifestyle choices based on the women he cares for, more so than for his own career or gain. As a result, the love of Helen, Harry's last wife, saves him from death. In short, the moral to be learned from comparing the story and its adaptation is that if one must choose between embarking on a quest for love or money, then love is the better choice.

Although Hollywood chose to allow Harry Street the redemption of having his quest for love rewarded in the end by allowing him to live, Hemingway's original story

does not end as optimistically. In Hemingway's story, Harry dies knowing that the current relationship with his wife is a lie, when he says to Helen, "I love you really. You know I love you. I've never loved anyone else the way I love you...He slipped into the familiar lie he made his bread and butter by" ("Snows"). This discrepancy has caused most critics to judge King's ending to *Snows* harshly. However, King's ending does represent a consistent artistic vision within the context of his adaptation. In King's *Snows*, Harry Street is a sentimental man, one who is often disappointed by love, but who is nevertheless capable of giving it one more try, especially after Helen proves her loyalty by saving his life with an emergency operation to let the swelling out of his infected leg. In contrast, Hemingway's Harry is completely jaded by the world, and incapable of having any genuine feelings toward Helen at all. Failing to find any saving grace in true love, Hemingway's Harry dies of the wound produced through his own self-neglect. Therefore, even though the ending of King's film is thematically inconsistent with Hemingway's original, it still should be read with an open mind toward the fact that it preserves thematic consistency within the context of Harry's character as envisioned by Hollywood.

One theme that does represent a complete cohesiveness among all collaborators on both the story and its adaptation is the idea that the Hemingway Hero represents vitality. As Hemingway describes Harry in the story, "He had sold vitality, in one form or another, all his life" ("Snows"). Hemingway might as well have been talking about his own image. By the 1950s, Hemingway had become a household name, not only for his writing, but also for his public image, perpetuated by the growing men's magazine industry. As David Earle has stated, "These magazines forwarded the idea of Hemingway

as a world-wise traveler and gourmet, an expert on food and cocktails, on women and culture, even offering advice directly from the man himself. They sold the Hemingwayesque idea of masculinity, expertise, consumption, and travel” (103). This image of Hemingway as a cultural symbol of masculine vitality seems to have spilled over into the author’s creation of Harry in “Snows,” and in turn, King’s film adaptation of the story. In both works, audiences see Harry engaging in typical Hemingway-esque activities, such as hunting, drinking, watching bullfights, writing, and enjoying the company of beautiful women. Therefore, even though Hemingway’s original line about selling vitality does not appear in King’s adaptation, it maintains a visual presence through every scene of Harry Street’s story.

Another major theme from Hemingway’s original text that King articulates particularly well through implementation of visual symbols is Harry’s alternating emotions about death. Several times over the course of the film, hyenas are heard crying and seen skulking stealthily closer to what audiences suppose will be Harry’s deathbed. Also, Harry sees buzzards circulating overhead and comments on them several times. Both of these natural harbingers of death appear in Hemingway’s original story to suggest the imminent presence of death that is literally right next to Harry as he lies sweating and on his field cot. Although it would have been easy to oversimplify these images and to merely show Harry’s fear of death, such an approach would have been thematically inconsistent with Hemingway’s original story. Instead, King’s film shows Harry repeatedly growing bored with the prospect of death, even repeating the line from Hemingway’s original story that Harry is “getting as bored with dying as with everything else” (*Snows*). For his part, Gregory Peck plays the complexity of Harry’s emotional

conflict about his impending death very well, using mostly non-verbal facial expressions and gestures to indicate Harry's dual sense of uneasiness and ennui. King's choice to show Harry as stoic about the idea of death resonates perfectly with Hemingway's common theme of silent, manly acceptance of one's fate, creating cohesiveness between the film adaptation and original story.

Hemingway's trademark stoicism is also illustrated in the flashback scenes of King's adaptation that appear to have been inspired by the author's early Nick Adams story, "The End of Something." In this story, a young Nick Adams breaks up with his girlfriend Marjorie while on vacation at Horton's Bay. The circumstances of the break-up are very non-dramatic, and conclude with Marjorie rowing silently away. To compare, in one of the flashback scenes early in *Snows of Kilimanjaro*, a young Harry Street breaks up with his girlfriend, who also rows away across the bay after a decidedly more heated argument. Still, the action that takes place after the conflict in both works is the same. Harry returns to the lodge and begins a discussion with his friend, Bill. In the *Snows* film, Bill is Harry's uncle and mentor, and their conversation is much longer and more meaningful than in "The End of Something."

During their lengthy conversation in *Snows*, Uncle Bill tells Harry that the key to manhood is to "keep hunting," meaning that one should never rest on the laurels of accomplishment, but instead always be on the lookout for another adventure. After giving him this bit of advice, Uncle Bill gives Harry a Springfield rifle, which Harry then takes with him on safari in a later flashback sequence. The inclusion of the Springfield is, in all likelihood, intentional by screenwriter Casey Robinson. Hemingway favored the Springfield in his own African hunting, and specifically mentioned the brand in another

short story, "The Short but Happy Life of Francis Macomber." In the story, Macomber uses a Springfield rifle to kill the water buffalo, a task that finally gives him the confidence in his own manhood to stand up to his over-dominating wife. The Springfield rifle, therefore, becomes in the film what it was in Hemingway's original stories, a symbol of man's quest for adventure in search of his identity.

However, symbolic use of firearms was not the only standard that Casey Robinson borrowed from the Hemingway canon to flesh out the script of *Snows* to feature film length. Ava Gardner's character, Cynthia, seems to be an almost carbon-copy of Lady Brett Ashley from Hemingway's first novel, *The Sun Also Rises*. An enigmatic figure, Brett was drawn from Hemingway's real-life acquaintance with Lady Duff Twysden, providing yet another example of life inspiring Hemingway's writing, only to return to life again when portrayed onscreen.

Like Brett, Cynthia was in Hemingway's parlance, "damn good looking," as she immediately caught Harry's attention in the Paris bar where they met (*Sun* 29). Cynthia shares also with Brett a certain amount of independence mixed oddly with a definite need to be loved and supported by the men she selects. The mention of Harry's first book, *The Red Hat*, is most likely an allusion to Brett's tendency, in *The Sun Also Rises*, to appear in flamboyant hats that were sure to get her noticed. Further, Cynthia's spur-of-the-moment decision in the film adaptation of *Snows* to leave Harry for a Spanish flamenco dancer in Madrid is very similar to Brett's choice to engage in an affair with bullfighter Pedro Romero in *Sun*. Robinson's incorporation of all these details indicates that the screenwriter had a strong awareness and understanding of the New Woman and her place in the Hemingway canon, which is reflected in the final film adaptation of *Snows*.

Yet, Lady Brett Ashley was not the only Hemingway New Woman to appear in *Snows*. The maternity sequence of *Snows* is very reminiscent in plot and tone to Catherine Barkley's ill-fated pregnancy in *A Farewell to Arms*. Despite the brave face that Catherine and Cynthia put on while pregnant during inopportune times, both women are actually rendered quite emotionally vulnerable during such times. On the surface, Catherine appears tougher than Cynthia, because she is able to face death during childbirth willingly, while Cynthia chooses to avoid the life-complicating dilemma of an unexpected pregnancy by having an abortion. However, Cynthia proves her bravery in another way, by joining the Red Cross as an ambulance driver in the Spanish Civil War.

Robinson's choice to transfer the act of Red Cross service from a male character, Frederic Henry, in *A Farewell to Arms*, to Cynthia, a female character, in his adaptation of *Snows*, can be read as quite feminist. By giving Cynthia an active, militaristic duty to perform, Robinson is effectively placing her in the position to be not only a New Woman, but also a Hemingway code hero. Given the fact that she gives her life for the cause, Cynthia may be read as having much more in common with code heroes such as Robert Jordan from Hemingway's *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, than their far more passive romantic interests. After World War II, in which women were actively involved not only in overseas service with the Red Cross, but also in the military itself as WACs and WAVEs, the target audience for a new Hemingway film adaptation would have been much more receptive to a woman taking an active role in the war effort, instead of merely providing support from the home front. Read in this manner, Robinson's decision to make Cynthia the war hero who dies on the battlefield is a very empowering plot move that serves to keep current the edgy spirit of Hemingway's typical New Woman characters.

Further, Robinson seems to have co-opted the entire Spanish Civil War plotline from *For Whom the Bell Tolls* and applied it to his adaptation of *Snows*. The general tone that wars are senseless and tend to be fought by people who will die for a cause very remote to them is preserved in the interpretive transference from one Hemingway novel to another onscreen. In *Snows*, Harry Street's involvement in the Spanish Civil War seems to be mere happenstance – he joined the Army in an attempt to find Cynthia. After Harry finds Cynthia trapped underneath an overturned ambulance on the battlefield, he arranges for her to be carried away on a stretcher. When he tries to follow her, Harry's Spanish commander shoots him in the back. This choice to show the heartlessness of Harry's commander to a man trying to accompany his fallen love off the battlefield is a very convincing way to convey Hemingway's often-discussed disdain with government-sponsored military action that is expressed in *For Whom the Bell Tolls*. In Hemingway's hyper-masculine world, a man who shoots another in the back is no man at all.

Scenes of shooting as a visual symbol of masculinity abound in *Snows*, and several of them work together to recreate an entire sequence that seems to have been adapted from another Hemingway short story, "The Short but Happy Life of Francis Macomber." However, significant alterations are made to Hemingway's original Macomber plotline in order to make it fit into the thematic arc of *Snows*. First, the Robert Wilson "white hunter" character from "Macomber" is interpreted as a helpful and non-threatening character when presented as Johnson in *Snows*. Whereas Robert Wilson has an affair with Margot Macomber, and attempts to undermine her relationship with Francis, Johnson offers both Cynthia and Helen helpful and friendly advice on how to maintain their relationships with Harry. This thematic variation is in keeping with the

main story arc of *Snows* in adaptation – that Harry is supposed to have his masculinity reaffirmed, not destroyed, by his various brushes with death.

Also, it should be noted that Casey Robinson has deftly used the Springfield rifle as a connecting visual symbol of masculine vitality in the Macomber-esque sequence. The Springfield rifle that Harry is given by Uncle Bill, his masculine mentor, is the one with which he shoots the rhino as it charges toward Cynthia. This action makes the Springfield Harry's symbolic weapon of manhood in the film. An interesting corollary to the symbolism expressed by Harry's use of the Springfield rifle is that Cynthia is barely able to shoot her rifle at all, whereas her fictional inspiration, Margot Macomber, is a good enough with her weapon at a significant distance to shoot her husband in the back of the head and make it look like an accident. The reversal of abilities from the "Macomber" story is yet another piece of evidence that King's adaptation of *Snows* intends to reaffirm Harry's choices in this circumstance because his masculine protective instinct is strong. By killing the rhino that could have killed his wife, Harry is facing fate head on and proving himself up to the challenges it presents. What results from this Macomber-reversal sequence in *Snows* is the sense that in Hemingway's world, part of being a man is being able to fearlessly face the physical and emotional challenges of the most dangerous hunt a man can engage in: the pursuit of a woman he loves.

Not surprisingly, Robinson's script of *Snows* also contains what appear to be numerous allusions to Hemingway's private life with his wives. The montage of shots that visually describe Harry's life in a small Paris apartment with his first wife Cynthia call to mind Hemingway's modest existence in that city with his first wife, Hadley Richardson. Many details in this sequence, including Harry's choice to leave the news

service to write full-time, seem to be lifted directly from the pages of Hemingway's biography, which was just as well-known through newspapers and magazines in the 1950s as it is today through more scholarly sources. Next, Hemingway's quarrel with his third wife, Martha Gellhorn, over his choice to cover World War II as a war correspondent is reflected in Harry's arguments with Cynthia over the same subject. Hemingway's personal relationship with his second, richer wife, Pauline Pfeiffer, appears to be implied by the inclusion of Harry's second marriage to Liz in the film adaptation of *Snows*. Last, the amicable, yet world-weary, dynamic between Hemingway and his fourth wife, Mary Welsh, is preserved in King's portrayal of Harry and Helen's relationship. Mary, who loved the outdoors and travelling as much as her husband did, was a fitting final spouse for Hemingway.

Apparently, director Henry King thought so too, since Susan Hayward, the actress he cast in the role of Helen, looks and speaks very similarly to her real-life counterpart, Mary Hemingway. The overall effect of all of these references to Hemingway's actual spouses in *Snows* is to create a film that blurs the lines between where the author's life ends and his fictional characters' lives begin. This approach is fitting because in Hemingway's often highly auto-biographical fiction, the line between reality and fantasy was never clearly drawn in the first place.

Perhaps this blurring between what actually happened in Hemingway's life and what the author thought should have happened, as expressed in his fiction, was the reason that King and Robinson felt justified in changing the ending of *Snows*. Rather than having Harry die full of "rot and poetry," the adaptation team of *Snows* allows Harry a second chance at life, facilitated by his quick-thinking wife, Helen ("Snows" 43).

Hemingway's audiences and Hollywood were not ready to see their literary hero ascend the spiritual heights of Kilimanjaro, while despairing that his contributions to the world had not been significant enough. Instead, when Hemingway's Hollywood audience sensed their hero faltering in the text of the original "Snows," they preferred to uphold his image of stoic endurance. In the still-shaken, post-World War II America of the early 1950s, America still needed heroes, even after those heroes felt that they no longer wanted to play the roles that they had created. This is why the thematically inconsistent ending of *The Snows of Kilimanjaro*, while a great departure from the original story, is still consistent within the context of the film. By 1951, Hemingway may have been tired of being Hemingway, but he had already inspired a second generation of young men to buy into the lifestyle of vitality that he had sold all his life. No matter how weary he might be, the leopard had to keep searching, as the ouroboros of literary celebrity came full circle to include a new generation.

Chapter VI

Papa's Grace under Genre Pressure, Part Two:

Hollywood's Adaptations of Ernest Hemingway's Works, 1957 – 2008

The Sun Also Rises (1957)

The Sun Also Rises (1926) has what must be the longest connection to the film industry of any Ernest Hemingway novel. According to Gene Phillips, the director of *Sun's* film adaptation, Henry King, met Hemingway in 1923, while he was still working on the novel. As King recalls, his first meeting with Hemingway was “in a honky-tonk on the Rue Fontaine which I discovered while I was researching a picture in Europe, in a tavern where Hemingway frequently used to go. The girl that was the source of Lady Brett in the novel was there with him at his table that night” (qtd. in Phillips 120). Perhaps because of this early acquaintance, King held Hemingway in high esteem for the rest of his career as a director. Disappointed that the author had disapproved of his adaptation of *The Snows of Kilimanjaro*, King was determined to produce a better film with his second Hemingway effort. To this end, King enlisted the help of the author himself, along with star Ava Gardner and screenwriter Peter Viertel, to recreate the best shooting script possible. However, the film's producer, Darryl Zanuck, hampered the production with poor casting choices and a cloying Hollywood ending that betrays the cynical heart of Hemingway's original. As a result, King's adaptation of *The Sun Also Rises* is a highly incorporated interpretive rendering of Hemingway's original novel that nevertheless suffers from inconsistencies in the artistic vision of film team collaborators due to an imbalance of creative command.

Hemingway's original novel, *The Sun Also Rises*, is one of those books that can truly be called the voice of a generation. Written to capture the general sentiments of disillusionment and hopelessness that pervaded the generation of young veterans after World War I, the novel has served as a touchstone for like-minded youth ever since. Often referred to as the Lost Generation, the original group that inspired Hemingway's novel was named by Gertrude Stein's mechanic, whom she overheard saying to an inept young employee, "All of you young people who served in the war, you are all a lost generation" (qtd. in Phillips 122). Even though he engaged in the same hedonistic behavior himself, Hemingway tended to regard his generation with disdain. He claimed to have chosen the quote from Ecclesiastes that opens the novel because he had "a great deal of fondness and admiration for the earth, and not a hell of a lot for my generation" (qtd. in Phillips 122). Instead, in this first novel, Hemingway established a pattern of idealizing men and cultures who exhibited a strong moral code.

In *Sun*, this moral code had a very specific inspiration that forms the underlying theme of the novel, which Hemingway derived from observing patterns of masculine behavior in Spain. Explaining the concept years later in *Death in the Afternoon*, Hemingway said, "In Spain, honor is a very real thing. Called *pundonor*, it means honor, probity, courage, self-respect, and pride in one word" (91). Hemingway's interest in *pundonor* is displayed in *The Sun Also Rises*, which might be read as a meditation on what might happen to a man who loses his sense of personal honor and self-worth by allowing his emotions to get the better of him. This self-allowed violation of a man's honor by impulsive behavior, particularly when inspired by love or lust for a woman, forms the central theme of Hemingway's original novel.

Of course, the Circe at the center of *The Sun Also Rises* is Brett Ashley, portrayed in Henry King's film adaptation by Ava Gardner. The original Brett Ashley was inspired by Lady Duff Twysden, a then-32-year-old British semi-aristocrat with whom the younger Hemingway became fascinated during his twenties in Paris. Twysden's mysterious ability to attract and hold the attention of almost any man near her is the chief characteristic that links her with her Hollywood alter-ego, Gardner. At the time she began filming *Sun*, Gardner was at the peak of her career and came highly recommended by infatuated screenwriter Peter Viertel for the part. As Gardner biographer Lee Server explains:

Aside from the fact that she had not yet been widowed by an English lord, there was very little else about the actress that did not seem custom designed to embody Hemingway's creation, including but not limited to her physical allure, her capricious love life, her often desperate *joie de vivre*, and her intimate knowledge of bullfighters. (342)

Apparently, Gardner herself agreed, and claimed that she "always felt close to Papa's women" (qtd. in Server 342). However, eager as she was to play Lady Brett because of the personal connection she felt to the part, after she viewed the script, "her enthusiasm turned to uncertainty" (Server 343). To her credit, Gardner made the best decision possible when she found the adaptation's script unacceptable: she took it to Ernest Hemingway hoping he could fix it.

Gardner gave Hemingway a copy of the script to redo, because "For your own pride you have to read it and change things. Everyone in the script runs around saying *c'est la guerre* and peachy things like that" (qtd. in Phillips 123). Hemingway read the script and agreed with his close friend Gardner. The author tried to meet with Viertel and Zanuck, claiming that he would sue if the film were made from such a bad script. Sensing

a disaster, director Henry King also exercised astute artistic judgment and offered a compromise. King told Zanuck that he was not a Hemingway scholar, but that “I knew this book; and it seemed to me that neither of the writers who had worked on the script so far had read the book carefully. So I said that I was going to see that the next person who worked on the script was going to get inside the novel” (qtd. in Phillips 124). These moves toward compromise greatly improved the adaptation’s script and represent the best sort of collaborative efforts by creative interests to produce a quality adaptation.

However, many Hemingway film scholars, such as Gene Phillips, blame the film’s inability to capture the spirit of *Sun* on film on what they perceive to be poor casting decisions on the part of Darryl Zanuck, by choosing actors who were too old for their parts. True, Zanuck was most likely seeking marquee name recognition and what he felt would be certain box office success when he filled the male roles in the film with veteran actors including Tyrone Power as Jake Barnes, Eddie Albert as Jake’s buddy Bill Gorton, and Errol Flynn as Brett Ashley’s fiancé Mike Campbell. Still, each of these actors arguably had enough personal connections to draw upon with the characters they played to give acceptable performances.

Tyrone Power, who portrayed the impotent soldier Jake Barnes, suffered the breakup of his first marriage, to French actress Annabella, reportedly because of the couple’s inability to conceive a child together. Also, Power was a veteran, serving as a Marine pilot in WWII in the South Pacific, another situation which allegedly took its toll on his first marriage, largely because his wife felt that he returned from the war a much different man (*IMDB.com*). These life circumstances provide a background of melancholy disillusionment that show in Power’s performance, which is given with a

well-played sense of detachment that readers have come to expect from the Jake Barnes character.

Oddly enough, in his real life, the actor playing one of the most irresponsible characters in the film had the most in common with Hemingway's articulated goal of a strong moral code grounded in a connection to the earth. Eddie Albert, who portrayed Jake Barnes's easy-going fishing friend and former Army buddy Bill Gorton, was also a veteran, serving in the Navy in the South Pacific during WWII. Further, Albert has the most in common with Hemingway's love of the outdoors and its healing properties, which is articulated in the fishing sequences of both the novel and film. Albert was "a tireless conservationist, crusading for endangered species, healthful food, cleanup of Santa Monica Bay pollution and other causes," including speaking out in Congressional hearings against the use of pesticides near marine birds, leading to the banning of DDT ("Albert"). Watching the fishing sequences with this in mind, it is easy to understand why Albert's performance in the calm outdoor scenes of the film adaptation seem to come more naturally to him than to Power. The Minnesota-born Albert shared with fellow upper-Midwesterner Hemingway a sportsman/conservationist's love of the land and its ability to restore the men who seek its tranquility and who find in it a sense of permanence that fosters internal fortitude.

Perhaps the best casting decision made in the adaptation of *Sun* was the choice of Errol Flynn as Mike Campbell, Brett Ashley's drunken, bankrupt fiancé. In his early career, Flynn was defined by a suave, debonair, and devil-may-care attitude toward women and life that spilled over into his work. Flynn's public persona, both on-screen and off, was so identifiable that decades later scholar Benjamin S. Johnson would write a

treatise, “An Errolesque Philosophy on Life,” that turned the actor’s name into an adjective to describe that type of lifestyle. However, by the time *Sun* premiered in 1957, Flynn was somewhat of a fallen idol, having allowed his career to dissolve into excessive drinking and drug use in the decades following his career-defining role as the title character in *The Adventures of Robin Hood* (1938). Still, Flynn’s life-dissipation in the two decades following *Robin Hood* made him a perfect fit for Hemingway’s Campbell character. Although Flynn was nominated for an Oscar in the part, many critics countered the assertion that Flynn’s portrayal of Campbell was spectacular, and instead claimed that the actor was merely playing himself.

One might argue that, in a Hemingway film, such self-portrayal is permissible. Given the fact that Hemingway himself most often wrote only thinly veiled autobiography, it is easy to accept Flynn’s work in the role as a natural extension of the Hemingway celebrity ouroboros. This is especially true if *Sun*’s director, Henry King, is to be believed when he describes how hard Flynn worked to achieve the correct emotional tone for his portrayal of Campbell. Accepting Flynn’s superficial veneer as a hard drinker and womanizer, King claimed:

Underneath, he was a serious, hard-working actor. He showed in his soliloquy about temporarily losing Brett to Romero near the end of the picture the way a man really feels when his girl has left him. The scene was in the back of his mind from the first day of shooting. Acting did not come easily to him; he tended to rush through a long and difficult scene just to get the agony over with. But we would talk for hours about Mike’s state of mind in that scene. I told him not to worry about projecting the emotions of the scene because once he had thought his interpretation through, the emotions would take care of themselves; and that is what happened. (qtd. in Phillips 130)

Still, Hemingway was not impressed, and though he didn't see most of Flynn's performance, he is rumored to have smirked, "Any picture in which Errol Flynn is the best actor is its own worst enemy" (qtd. in Phillips 131). In his criticism of the film, Phillips is partially correct to argue that Hemingway was much too quick to dismiss films based on his work "with a derogatory quip – whether he had seen all of it or not – causes one to suspect that he somehow felt required to knock almost any movie adaptation of his work in order to preserve his literary status" (131). However, Phillips ignores a possible ulterior motive that Hemingway may have possessed for deriding Flynn's performance. By that time in his career, Hemingway had well-established that bad press generates more news than good press, and so by expressing displeasure in the films, he insured that people would see them, and thereby enhance his reputation by going out and reading the book to compare and see if he was wrong.

Whatever the case, both Phillips, in his professional criticism of the film, and Hemingway, in his personal critiques of it, were right about Zanuck's poor decision to cast Robert Evans as Pedro Romero. For the role of Romero, director Henry King wanted to use a real bullfighter, Miguel Delgado, but "Zanuck said he looked more like a waiter than a bullfighter, and cast a young actor named Bob Evans instead" (qtd. in Phillips 132). The choice of Evans angered Hemingway not only because of the young actor's lack of authenticity in the role, but also because of the haphazard manner in which Zanuck selected him, without regard for any personal connections that Evans might have to the role. Instead of selecting a Spanish actor, which Hemingway would have preferred, Zanuck chose Evans simply because he looked right for the part, after meeting him in a

nightclub. This arbitrary casting decision shows in the film, as Evans clearly struggles with a Spanish accent and also to find himself in the role.

Zanuck's impulsive casting also leads to an unnatural extension of the role of Georgette, the prostitute Jake Barnes invites to accompany him during the novel's first nightclub scenes. According to screenwriter Peter Viertel in the commentary accompanying the DVD version of the film, Zanuck had read the novel, and had "some sort of visual hope for the thing," but "all that went out the window," after Julianne Greco was cast as Georgette. According to Viertel, Zanuck was introduced to Greco by Mel Ferrer, who portrayed Robert Cohn in the film. Zanuck liked her immediately and began an affair with her during filming, leading in turn to Zanuck's writing extra scenes for his new girlfriend, which "distorted the whole thing." Ironically, what seems to have happened with Greco's casting is that Zanuck inadvertently assumed the role of Robert Cohn, and compromised the overall artistic vision of his work in order to accommodate his desire for a woman. In short, he broke the very code of *pundonor* that Hemingway tried to express in his original novel, and the film adaptation of *Sun* suffers because of it.

Another problem with *Sun* is that the adaptation loses some of the spirit of Hemingway's original because it was produced in Mexico, not Spain. According to Phillips, Hemingway was "a stickler for realism" and "worried that audiences would notice that the film was shot in Mexico instead of Spain where the story was set" (118). The plot of *Sun* centers on the Festival of St. Fermin in Pamplona, which Hemingway and his friends attended in 1923, and he began writing about only two weeks later (Phillips 120). The choice to film in Mexico seems to have conflicting accounts regarding causation. In DVD commentary for *Sun*, Peter Viertel claimed that they were forced to

make the movie in Mexico by the studio, “who thought that the production would get out of hand if allowed to go to Spain.” It made it really impossible to reproduce the atmosphere of Pamplona in Mexico. In contrast, Phillips claims that Mexico was chosen because Pamplona, at the time the film was scheduled for shooting, “was four feet deep in snow” (132). Regardless, the choice to use the city of Morelia, Mexico, with the bullring repainted to look like Pamplona, and intercut with actual scenes of Pamplona bullfights, does make the entire production appear more Latin American than Spanish, and thus loses a great deal of Hemingway’s desired geographical significance.

Still, Henry King and the remainder of his interpretation of *Sun* manage to salvage the main underlying ideology of Hemingway’s work, and translate it effectively from the Lost Generation of WWI to the similarly disaffected climate of post-WWII America. As Phillips notes, “the impotency of Jake comes across in the film, as it does in the novel, as symbolizing the incapacity of the disillusioned postwar generation to feel and love deeply; Jake’s abiding respect for Romero also comes through in the film, as does his consequent recognition of the bullfighter as the norm of conduct against which he judges himself and his companions, Mike Campbell, Robert Cohn, and Bill Gorton” (125). Henry King’s efforts to convey this code of conduct as a timeless essential to manliness is evident from the very first scene in the film. In the opening sequence, King’s camera eye pans to the right, with the set decoration changing from Paris in the 1920s to the 1950s, while a voiceover intones, “Our story deals with another Paris...in a bohemian world of poets and writers.” This visual movement puts Hemingway’s past into the then-present 1950s, and immediately afterward follows up with a scene in which the audience first learns about the causes and effects of Jake Barnes’s impotency. The overall effect of

this opening sequence effectively translates the problems of the Lost Generation, and the desires of its veterans to regain a sense of masculine identity after the trauma of war, into a context that 1950s audiences would have easily understood.

The matter of Hemingway's sense of natural versus organized religion was a bit more complicated to translate from page to screen. As Phillips states, "Hemingway's ethical code...amounts to a kind of natural religion rooted in the pantheistic concept that the most intimate contact one can have with God on this earth is to be found wherever nature has remained uncontaminated by the encroachments of modern mechanized society. Such communion with nature purifies Hemingway's heroes" (125). This sensibility is shown in King's film through the fishing sequences with Jake Barnes and Bill Gorton, and also in the scenes in which Barnes goes away to swim and think alone after Brett leaves with Romero.

Still, even though Hemingway's sense of natural religion and its restorative properties is preserved among the male characters, Brett Ashley's similarly relaxed sense of natural morality is not conveyed as truthfully on film as in Hemingway's original novel. As Edward Murray notes, "Hemingway's Brett is depicted as a pagan goddess reigning over a wasteland, but in the movie, Brett prays devoutly at the altar for Romero" (qtd. in Phillips 126). Further, in the book, she continually renounces God, and although she says in the film there are things that they have "instead of God" she seems to seek divine approval anyway (King). The possible reason for this is that, in the 1950s, audiences and censors might have been prepared to accept male characters seeking spiritual solace in the outdoors, but they would have been less receptive to a female character carving out an individualized sense of morality based on sensual desires rather

than organized religion and its dictates for passive femininity. As a result, in the adaptation of *Sun*, one finds that Hemingway's conception of acceptable standards of female behavior in the 1920s were much more feminist than Hollywood's of the 1950s, or any earlier era.

Finally, the most problematic thematic discrepancy between *Sun* as a novel versus the film is that the book ends in despair, whereas the adaptation ends with hope. The novel concludes with Barnes telling Ashley, "Wouldn't it be pretty to think so," regarding their possibility for happiness as a couple if he were still sexually whole (*Sun* 251). In contrast, the film ends with Ashley saying, "There must be some hope for us somewhere" (King). The difference between these two endings is that the novel ends in cynicism, dismissing the possibility of wholeness either in individual relationships or international security after a World War, whereas the film blithely dismisses these grave concerns in hopes of conveying a feel-good Hollywood ending. This choice by *Sun*'s production team results in a loss of emotional resonance of Hemingway's original novel that makes it so indelible in the minds of his readers.

Without a penis, Jake Barnes is rendered physically unable to consummate his love for Brett Ashley. This physiological lacking is also responsible for Barnes's spiritual impotency as well, rendering him unable to find purpose in his life after the war, due to an overwhelming sense of self-doubt. This sense of complete despair, for Hemingway characters, is the only unpardonable sin, because it is the direct opposite of the self-confidence that comes with honor, or *pundonor*. By taking away this idea of ultimate defeat of a character that the author has caused his readers to feel such compassion for, the film adaptation of *Sun* loses the aura of epic tragedy that made the novel a

generational touchstone. In short, the hopeful ending of King's film breaks the cycle of Hemingway's ouroboros, by robbing audiences of the story's natural conclusion.

In sum, Henry King's adaptation of *The Sun Also Rises* suffers from an imbalance of creative control stemming from Darryl Zanuck's arbitrary casting and Hollywood's perennial need for happy endings. Still, the film stands as a reminder of how effective cooperation between actors, writers, and original author can be in interpreting a novel on screen for a new generation.

A Farewell to Arms (1957)

David Selznick's production of *A Farewell to Arms* (1957) is a close, faithful conversion of Hemingway's original novel. It is much more reflective of Hemingway's themes than Frank Borzage's 1932 adaptation of the work. Still, Hemingway was suspicious of the second film production of his novel, mostly because of Selznick's involvement in the project. As Gene Phillips explains the situation:

More than two decades later, just when Hemingway was beginning to feel that his novel's reputation had survived this initial attempt to bring it to the screen, he was chagrined to hear that producer David O. Selznick had purchased the screen rights from Warners and was bent on making his version of *A Farewell to Arms* the epic picture of WWI, just as his production of *Gone With the Wind* was the great cinematic epic of the Civil War. To this end, Selznick hired Ben Hecht, one of the many uncredited scriptwriters who worked on *GWTW*, to do the screenplay.

(Phillips 26)

Hemingway's worst fear, that his novel would be turned into *GWTW* set in Europe, became reality. Today, the influence of Selznick's Southern epic is clearly evident both in the war sequences and personal scenes of character interaction throughout the film.

Still, even though the conventional tropes of the historical epic genre are at work, and tilt the entire project toward the spectacular, Selznick's conversion of Hemingway's novel manages to retain a great deal more of the spirit of the author's work than the earlier Borzage version.

This result is ironic, considering Selznick's opinion on the role that an author and his work should play in directing the final film product. When asked about how much of Hemingway's actual words and dialogue he would preserve in his adaptation, Selznick replied that Hemingway's novel "was not Holy Writ, and he had no intention of becoming a slave to it" (Phillips 27). Further, Selznick made it clear from day one of production that there was to be no "Papa-worshipping groveling on this picture" (qtd. in Laurence 65). Instead, Selznick was the film's self-declared dictatorial creative force. And yet, the film remains the most faithful of adaptations to *A Farewell to Arms* currently available. Seen today, the film appears to be a battle of wills between Hemingway and Selznick, that ultimately concluded in a laying down of arms on both sides, allowing a very well-done adaptation to come into existence in the no man's land between where both creative geniuses were firmly entrenched.

Selznick's reluctance to allowing Hemingway to become too involved in the project may have been justified based upon early interactions between the pair in the creative process. In the beginning, Selznick attempted to offer Hemingway \$50,000 of the profits from the film, even though he was not legally bound to do so, because the author had previously sold his rights with the 1932 version. After seeing the casting decisions made for the film, Hemingway rudely dismissed Selznick's offer and gave the film a dim prognosis. Apparently, Hemingway thought that Rock Hudson was too young

to play the war hero, Frederic Henry, and Jennifer Jones was too old to portray Henry's love interest, British Red Cross nurse Catherine Barkley. Hemingway's criticism of the casting of Jones must have particularly irked Selznick, because Jones was Selznick's wife, and he often risked his own career in order to secure her plum roles.

Further, Hemingway's poor opinion of the film was not improved after he saw the final product. The author reportedly walked out of a screening of *Farewell* after only a half hour, and said that if the film managed to turn a profit, Selznick should have the \$50,000 changed into nickels and "shove them up his ass until they came out his ears" because watching a movie that bad was "like pissing in your father's beer" (qtd. in Phillips 32). Apparently Hemingway's prediction was correct. The film turned only a small profit and became Selznick's final picture. At last, the director's obsession with creating increasingly expensive star vehicles for his wife proved his downfall, and Selznick was never again able to secure funding for another project.

Yet, half a century later, after Selznick's overzealousness to make cinema audiences see his wife as the next Vivien Leigh has had some time to wear off, the film that he created screens as a much richer and more nuanced production than it was originally given credit for. Selznick's adaptation of *Farewell* is highly metaphorical. The producer's vision of the work centers on the idea of comparing and contrasting the actual, external war taking place in Italy during WWI, with the emotional, internal war that goes on inside a person as he or she is falling in love, but trying to resist that feeling. This take on how to translate Hemingway's work for the screen was completely at odds with the author's. Always a stickler for realism and accuracy, Hemingway was deeply troubled by Selznick's attempts to make the film's physical backdrops, whether in the Alps or in the

Italian countryside, as dramatically picturesque as possible. Selznick recognized Hemingway's unproductive preference for exact realism early on during production: "If a character goes from Café A to Café B, instead of Café B to Café A, or if a boat heads north instead of south, Hemingway is upset" (qtd. in Laurence 63). As a result, Selznick simply chose to ignore the author's scathing commentary on his film process.

Perhaps the reason why Hemingway held such strong beliefs about the locational actualities of the production was because the novel, *A Farewell to Arms*, was so closely based on the author's own life. Hemingway's original tale was highly incorporated with details from his experiences in the Italian Army and Red Cross during WWI, and also with the alleged love affair that he had with his nurse, Agnes von Kurowsky. In the novel, the real-life relationship between Hemingway and Kurowsky is transformed into the characters of Catherine Barkley and Frederic Henry. However, the fictional relationship stands as a sort of wish fulfillment, since Kurowsky claims that her relationship with Hemingway was never consummated.

To his credit, Selznick did seem to appreciate Hemingway's personal connection to the work, and even added details to the film's plot line that make Frederic Henry even more like his real-life creator. In the film, Henry is a writer, whereas in the novel, he is an architect. This is a silent nod to the fact that Hemingway as a young writer fictionalized his own life in his account of Frederic Henry. Also, this choice uses the creative process of adapting a work for film to complete the Hemingway ouroboros, as the soldier whom the writer reforms back into the soldier who would become Hemingway.

The two chief themes of Hemingway's original novel are also preserved in Selznick's too-often maligned film version. The first of these themes is how Hemingway

calls into question the validity of war as a means of resolving conflict between nations. In the novel, Hemingway suggests repeatedly that war is more of a way for power-hungry leaders to assert their authority than for two opposing peoples to confront each other and settle their differences. Ultimately, Hemingway seems to say that the human cost of such action is too great, and oftentimes a nation's choice to engage in armed conflict is simply not justifiable, given the potential rewards.

Pursuant to this line of reasoning, Selznick was right to encourage his audience to draw a visual comparison between *A Farewell to Arms* and *Gone With the Wind*. In *Farewell*, Frederic Henry takes up the role of Rhett Butler in *GWTW*, as a man who claims to "have always had a soft spot in his heart for lost causes, once he knows they are really lost" (Fleming). Rhett Butler would have made a great Hemingway code hero. Clearly Frederic Henry, in both the novel and the film, behaves in this same way, taking up arms for the nation of Italy, even though it is already defeated before the war even begins. This sentiment lends a sense of quixotic absurdity to the idea of being a hero, since a traditional hero is supposed to win his conflict and vanquish his foe, whereas the typical Hemingway code hero, like the typical Confederate soldier, enters into a conflict based only on his own principles, even though he knows he will most likely fail. This idea of finding heroism in valiant failures has caused Gene Phillips to correctly note, "Hemingway demonstrated that heroism may be a condition of absurdity" (74). This theme is made readily apparent in every scene with the Frederic Henry character in Selznick's adaptation.

In the opening foreward of his 1957 film, Selznick begins his explanation of Hemingway's intention to question the validity of war in general, rather than to denounce the Italian effort during WWI in particular. The foreward on the first screen states:

We tell a story out of one of the wildest theatres of World War I – the snow-capped Alpine peaks and muddy plains of northern Italy. Here between 1915 and 1918 the Italians stood against German and Austrian invaders. No people ever fought more valiantly, no nation ever rose more gallantly out of defeat to victory. But our story is not of war alone. It is a tale also of a love between an American boy and an English girl who bade their tragic farewell to arms while the cannon roared. (Vidor)

This foreward was probably included to assuage patriotic audiences and critics, and also to preserve the general pro-Italian sentiment that nevertheless runs through Hemingway's original novel, even as he criticizes the nation's political officials for endorsing such heinous acts as the executions on the retreat from Caporetto. This entire political dimension was glossed over in the 1932 version, most likely because it was too volatile to discuss at the time. By 1957, film audiences were more sophisticated, largely because of pictures like *GWTW*, to accept mixed messages from Hollywood about the validity of a government's involvement in war.

Marriage, the other universally revered social institution that Hemingway calls into question in his novel, is also treated more according to the author's original views in the 1957 adaptation. However, even in the 1950s, the choice of a couple to have a child together out of wedlock was still too much for mainstream audiences to accept without significant qualification and explanation. As a result, Selznick had to partially compromise Hemingway's creative vision in order to salvage the overall collaborative effort of the film. Phillips explains:

Selznick made some of the same kinds of commercial concessions to the public taste as Borzage had inserted. Selznick too inserted a spurious wedding scene...Selznick has the lovers quietly exchange their vows in the most unlikely of settings: at the racetrack amid the noisy jubilation that accompanies the announcement over the track's public address system of another Italian victory.
(Phillips 29)

However, it is arguable that Selznick's changes were not completely unwarranted, if one considers the producer's take on Hemingway's marriage views in a symbolic context.

Marriage, it seems in the Hemingway world, is at best two people taking a chance against fate and the surrounding circumstances of the world, which seek to stifle their desire to express love on their own terms. Viewed in this light, a spurious wedding at a race track is not too farfetched of a way to give visualization to the bond between Henry and Barkley on screen.

Still, many critics balk at Selznick's attempts to make *A Farewell to Arms* into a super-spectacle on the scale of *Gone With the Wind*. True, the evacuation of Caporetto does look almost identical to the evacuation of Atlanta sequence from *GWTW*. This coincidence caused critics like Gene Phillips to say that Selznick's creative vision "not only ran counter to that of the spare 1932 version of the book, which got its story told in a compact eighty minutes, but also to Hemingway's own concept of his novel, which emphasized the personal love story of his principals more than the wartime background against which that story was set" (26). Although this reading of the film attempts to prove that the lengthy and elaborate war scenes weigh down the production, a different perspective might suggest that they merely serve as a demonstration of Hemingway's famous iceberg principle.

Even though the actual number of pages in the novel during which Hemingway directly discusses the war is small, the background spectacle of the war is quite large in its emotional capacity. The war story acts as a macrocosm of the inner turmoil that people who are in love often feel in microcosm when they are at war with themselves, fighting against the rising tide of emotions that threaten to overwhelm their reason. This concept seems very likely what is going on in the minds of the two principal characters, Barkley and Henry, who seem to be people in control of their emotions, but who nevertheless get overwhelmed by love. Barkley was very controlled in her love for the boy who died, claiming that she chose not to have a sexual affair with him or marry him before he left for war: "I thought it would be worse for him if we were lovers. Then of course, he was killed and that was the end of it" (Vidor). In contrast, Henry has numerous sexual encounters with women for the short term but, until he meets Barkley, withholds his true emotions from any of them. It would have been very difficult to show this internal emotional conflict on screen. Therefore, it makes sense that Selznick's production makes up the gap between what readers can learn from hearing the internal conflict within the characters' minds by showing the actual, physical conflict of war around them in great detail.

Selznick's intention was to make the film an epic, on both the personal and spectacular levels. He spent five million dollars to shoot in the Italian Alps and fill the film with lavish battle sequences including 11,000 extras (Laurence 65). Particularly, Selznick gave the retreat from Caporetto and the burning of the city "his most lavish worry," insisting on exact replication of the mix of people from that area of Italy, from pairs of infant twins to elderly blind people, and repeats the scene from *Gone With the*

Wind about the dilemma of needing to move patients, that is not in the book (Laurence 69). This emphasis on the human drama unfolding during times of war further proves that Selznick intended for the extravagant war scenes to be viewed as greater metaphors expressing the individual tragedies of war written large.

Historically speaking, the retreat from Caporetto was an excellent event to use to demonstrate both the futility of individual effort in modern warfare and the fact that governmental motivations for armed conflict were not always pure. Caporetto was one of the most devastating events of WWI. The Italian losses, 11,000 killed, 20,000 wounded, and 265,000 taken prisoner, were enormous and the ludicrously harsh disciplinary regime of Italian Commander Luigi Cardona crushed the morale of Italian troops, many of whom deserted immediately afterward (Simpkins 352). According to historians, the Battle of Caporetto became a synonym in Italian culture for a terrible defeat, and this failure of the Italian government to protect its people is still used today by anti-government propagandists in arguments against the credibility of the Italian state (Townley 16). The historical significance of Caporetto as a metaphorical context for human defeat at all levels due to governmental inadequacy justifies the manner of adaptation used by Selznick in creating his artistic vision for *Farewell* on film.

Still, it would be incorrect to say that Selznick's vision was solely responsible for creating all the visual metaphors used in the film. Screenwriter Ben Hecht and director Charles Vidor continually employed visual symbolism to convey psychological meaning throughout their work on bringing *Farewell* from page to screen. In particular, five uses of props and scenery stand out from the film as examples of effective visual metaphor.

First, unsheathed swords are often employed to suggest to the audience that sexual intercourse has occurred in the film. The closeup of Henry's sword on the floor in the greenhouse as he initially makes love to Barkley implies that theirs is a holy union, despite its unconventionality. The sword has found the chalice which will become the vessel that carries his child. Similarly, the two rowing sequences in the film seem to act as opposite but mirroring bookends. The initial sequence, with Henry rowing calmly as Barkley swims along beside, denotes the peaceful tranquility with which they began their journey on love's waters, while the frantic rowboat flight to Switzerland near the end of the film foreshadows the tragic death of mother and child that concludes the film. Taken together, the two sequences can be read to suggest that a flood of romantic emotion, left unchecked, can prove dangerous and even fatal.

Another excellent use of mirrored symbol to denote change of emotional environment in the film occurs with the two hemorrhage sequences. Early in the film, Henry lies in the lower bunk of an ambulance while a man hemorrhages to death in the bed above him. Later, in the movie's ending sequence, Barkley dies of a hemorrhage following an unsuccessful Caesarean operation. In the first instance, another man's blood is literally falling on Henry, metaphorically showing the Lieutenant's moral responsibility to his fellow soldiers. In contrast, Barkley's death by hemorrhage is indirectly a result of her affair with Henry that produced a child under dangerous circumstances. Read side by side, the inference here is that Barkley's death is also Henry's moral cross to bear, implying that he should have been more responsible in keeping his sexual desires in check, at least enough to prevent an unexpected pregnancy.

Two of Hemingway's favorite visual symbols, rain and cats, are also translated in successful ways to convey meaning in this adaptation of *Farewell*. Rain falls on the windows as Henry and Barkley make love for the first time, offering the audience a sense of foreboding because it gives Jones the opportunity to express Barkley's fear of the rain because she "sees herself dead in it" (Vidor). Later, as Henry walks away from the hospital where Catherine has just died, his tears mingle with the rain falling on his face, as if the whole of the sky is joining in his personal grief and making it universal. Last, cats, although they do not appear in Hemingway's original novel, are seen scurrying away in the rain as Barkley walks Henry to the train station, heading off to battle. Hemingway often used cats in his fiction to symbolize the contradiction between female physical independence and emotional vulnerability. The most clear use of this kind is Hemingway's famous short story, "Cat in the Rain." Here, in Vidor's visualization of Barkley's attempt to keep a brave face even though she feels emotionally bereft at Henry's departure, it makes perfect metaphorical sense to have Hemingway's often-used cats hurry across the wet street into the darkness.

For her part, Jennifer Jones uses facial expressions and vocal tone to convey Barkley's inner turmoil throughout the film. Her performance is particularly good in her meeting scene with Henry, and later in the mirrored bedroom scene, where she fears that she has become a whore, even though her motivations for beginning the affair were based on true love. Vidor's direction and Hecht's script of *Farewell* is much more explicit about the nature and details of the affair between Barkley and Henry than the 1932 adaptation of the novel. However, their heightened allegiance to emotional honesty may have cost the film some degree of mainstream acceptance in the still morally-rigid socio-

cultural climate of the 1950s. Even though both Barkley and her baby die, and Henry is clearly left devastated at the end of the film because of their affair, The Catholic Legion of Decency “designated the movie ‘morally objectionable in part for all audiences’” (Phillips 31). In the Legion’s view, the film lacked a sufficiently clear moral compensation for what it termed “the picture’s unrelieved emphasis on illicit love” (Phillips 31). The Legion’s displeasure with the film arguably may have cut down on the number of audience members willing to accept a storyline that encouraged them to sympathize with a couple coping with the aftereffects of an extramarital affair. Still, the choices of Vidor and Hecht to preserve Hemingway’s original intent, that the couple’s choice to define love on their own terms warrants social acceptance, stand today as a perfectly reasonable adaptation decision.

Similarly, Rock Hudson’s portrayal of Frederic Henry is also well-done, and the actor accurately conveys Henry’s internal struggle through facial expression and vocal delivery. Hudson’s performance in the more emotionally intense scenes of the film goes a long way in conveying the spirit of Hemingway’s character without resorting to recitations of actual dialogue or thought processes from the novel. However, some critics still deride the over-dramatization of some of these scenes, particularly the one of Henry’s desertion from the Italian Army following the execution of his friend Rinaldi.

Frank Laurence claims, “The execution of Rinaldi is theatrics, even to the blindfold bit. It is sensationalism, too, in that the movie seems excited for the chance to show an execution that Hemingway left off screen” (Laurence 74). This reading is unnecessarily harsh. By putting the execution onscreen and making it especially horrific, Selznick’s team is more clearly able to justify Henry’s choice to desert the Italian army,

by showing that it was not only a morally noble act, but one of self-preservation. Other critics say that Hudson's overall performance of the character is too much. Phillips states that "Frederic's ruminations about death and defeat in the final hospital scene seems to be a cry of genuine anguish in the book, but appear self-conscious and overwrought in the movie" (Phillips 31). This interpretation is also arbitrarily dismissive, and represents a lack of acceptance for an actor's choice in personal style of delivery when in character. Hudson's gesture and pacing throughout this sequence create an even more intense sense of foreboding that culminates in a satisfying climax with Catherine's deathbed scene that leaves the audience with an adequate sense of closure when leaving the film.

Although the balance of creative command on the film was skewed by David Selznick's insistence on dominating the production, critics have generally been too harsh on his adaptation of *A Farewell to Arms*. Today, the film screens as one of the better examples of the conversion adaptation style. The film effectively translates many of Hemingway's historical, socio-cultural, and psychological themes from the original novel as a work of cohesive cinema.

The Gun Runners (1958)

From the very beginning of his work on *The Gun Runners* (1958), director Don Siegel was skeptical as to whether audiences wanted or needed a third film adaptation of Hemingway's novel, *To Have and Have Not*. Considering that two well-received cinematic versions of the book, *To Have and Have Not* (1944) with Humphrey Bogart and Lauren Bacall, and *The Breaking Point* (1950) starring James Garfield and Patricia

Neal, had already been on the market within the preceding decade and a half, Siegel considered the market to be saturated. However, Siegel contracted to direct the film anyway, stating later:

I realized how utterly ludicrous it was for me to remake *To Have and Have Not* and *The Breaking Point*, both of which had superior stories, both of which had superior money, both of which had superior time. I thought it was absolutely stupid to remake *To Have and Have Not* and *The Breaking Point*...I was very much against it, but I needed the money...I'm sure the picture isn't any good."
(qtd. in Laurence 106-07)

The irony in Siegel's emphatic statement, that he knew it was wrong to take on the project but that he did it anyway because he needed the money, is that the director was in a similar position to the hero of his self-maligned film. Sam Martin, or Harry Morgan in the original novel, was a man who compromised his morality in an effort to remain financially solvent and independent. Don Siegel compromised his artistic integrity to make an adaptation that he knew would be subpar, in hopes of gaining enough money to finance future independent film projects. Nevertheless, the film that resulted from Siegel's efforts did not turn out as horribly as he feared, due to the efforts of Patricia Owens as Sam's wife, Lucy, and Eddie Albert as the villain Hanagan. Siegel's low-budget, interpretive adaptation screens today as a mostly cohesive work of collaborative cinema that, while not as strong as the two previous versions, still manages to capture the major themes from Hemingway's original novel, while also incorporating a few additions from the author's canon.

Given Siegel's reluctance to begin the project, one must wonder what external conditions made such an unappealing project appear financially lucrative. Glenn Erickson has explained the real reason for the production in his article for *TCM.com*:

The answer lies in the way 1950s Hollywood was restructuring itself as the power of the studios waned. Former executives, agents and stars formed independent production companies, raising money on their own and contracting with studios mainly for distribution. Big stars like James Stewart and Bogart brokered sweetheart deals with the majors, but the equally marketable Burt Lancaster and John Wayne ran their own production companies. Because studios needed product to fill their distribution schedules, independent producers with the right connections were suddenly in demand: the industry now depended on the art of The Deal rather than a mogul's whim.

Founded by Ray Stark and Eliot Hyman, Seven Arts, the company that produced *The Gun Runners*, grew so rapidly in this freer filmmaking environment that it managed to buy out Warner Brothers after only ten years, creating the first independent studio/major distributor film company (Erickson). Seven Arts was helped by entrepreneurially-minded directors like Don Siegel. After paying his dues for years making lower-budget films like *The Gun Runners*, Siegel was financially able to put together his own independent productions with stars he believed in, like Clint Eastwood, with whom Siegel produced many films. Given the rest of Siegel's early resume, which is filled with similar tales of blue-collar toughs like Sam Martin, one might think of Hemingway's code hero as the literary grandfather of Eastwood's *Dirty Harry*.

In creating *The Gun Runners*, Siegel had to overcome other obstacles besides a small budget. With two previous adaptations of Hemingway's novel still relatively fresh in the audience's collective conscience, Siegel had to devise some sort of scheme to make his new version stand out. Apparently, Siegel decided to do so by using the old Hollywood trick of stirring up a bit of controversy surrounding the production. According to Frank Laurence, Siegel had his production team run several newspaper stories stating that Hemingway was lobbying against the film, "on the grounds that it implied his support of Castro's movement to overthrow the Batista regime and that he himself was

involved with operations in contraband weapons” (106). After conjuring a little false political controversy, Siegel also issued some publicity statements intended to call attention to Gita Hall, a Swedish model who made her film debut in *The Gun Runners* as Hanagan’s girlfriend, Eva. During the film’s production, Siegel had Hall publicly announce that she was changing her name to Gita Hall Hemingway, “to indicate her lasting pride at being linked with a movie made from one of this great writer’s books” (Phillips 63). This last ploy was too much for Hemingway, who had his attorneys threaten a lawsuit to stop Hall’s proposed action, which in turn created even more of the controversial buzz that Siegel desired.

As it turned out, Siegel needed all the help from the popular press he could get for the film, which was almost unanimously panned by critics, who claimed that “*The Gun Runners* was little more than a crass exploitation of the Hemingway book, which did little credit to anyone associated with it” (Phillips 65). Stating that the film was simply an amalgam of the two previous adaptations of Hemingway’s novel, critics also derided almost every new idea in the picture, from the casting of war hero Audie Murphy as Sam Martin to the upbeat ending that seemed completely out of sync with the bleak tone of Hemingway’s original. The recognition of copying from previous versions was accurate, considering that Siegel and his main screenwriter, Daniel Mainwaring, admitted to studying MacDougall’s script for *The Breaking Point* and borrowing from it as much as they could without fear of copyright infringement (Laurence 107). However, Siegel and Mainwaring’s choice to move the setting of the film back to Hemingway’s original choices of Key West and Havana, together with strengthening the female characters into

more assertive foils for Sam, were choices that demonstrated an attention to incorporating details from the Hemingway canon that most critics overlooked.

In *The Gun Runners*, Lucy behaves much more like an early-career, Hemingway-style woman who is fiercely protective of her man, in the mold of *A Farewell to Arms*'s Catherine Barkley, instead of the passive wife depicted in earlier adaptations of *To Have and Have Not*. Further, although they repeated the character of Hanagan, who had been invented whole-cloth for *The Breaking Point*, Siegel and Mainwaring also made the villain's girlfriend, Eva, into a more outspoken, overtly sexual and self-preservative Hemingway woman, reminiscent of *The Sun Also Rises*'s Brett Ashley. These nods to earlier Hemingway texts create richer dialogue for the female actresses in the production to work with, resulting in much more nuanced characterizations than previous adaptations allowed.

Additionally, the choice to reset *The Gun Runners* in Key West and Havana allowed Siegel and Mainwaring to make their adaptation more topical and to interpret the border-crossing tension present in Hemingway's original novel within the context of a new generation's even more worrisome political climate. The choice to cast war hero Audie Murphy in a film set in revolution-era Communist Cuba during the 1950s can be read as "giving the film a pro-American, anti-Communist slant," even though the filmmakers "had no way of knowing how the struggle would turn out: their film was released exactly four months before Fidel Castro's victorious entry into Havana" (Erickson). Still, audiences watching the film today with the benefit of historical retrospect cannot help but wonder what interpretation Siegel and Mainwaring had in mind regarding Hemingway's reaction to the volatile politics in Cuba. The generally

negative manner in which Siegel's film portrays Cuban government officials certainly invites further exploration into Hemingway's feelings on the subject.

On the surface, Hemingway was quite glib about Cuban politics. The author spent most of his time during the Cuban Revolution away from the country, travelling to Idaho, Spain, and New York, while saying in letters home that he was having "a lot more fun than sitting on my ass in Cuba taking Cuban politics seriously" (Baker 546). Yet, there is reason to believe that Hemingway, who did not live to see the ultimate result of Castro's takeover, initially supported the dictator. Carlos Baker provides insight into Hemingway's hopes for the Revolution:

As an old student of revolutions, Ernest took the position that any change in Cuba was better than none. Batista's gang had looted the rich island naked, and Ernest estimated that he had made off with \$600 to \$800 million. If Castro could run a straight government, it would be great, but he was up against a hell of a lot of money. Some of the United States interests like United Fruit were well and responsibly administered; others had made "terrific deals" with Batista and were very "un-OK." "I wish Castro all luck," said Ernest. "The Cuban people now have a decent chance for the first time ever." His only regret was that he had not been on hand to see Batista pull out. (543)

Statements like these, made by Hemingway during the Cuban Revolution, suggest that the author did in fact take Cuban politics more seriously than he boasted to casual acquaintances. During his travels in the military and for recreation, Hemingway had ample opportunity to see injustice among the social classes all over the world. The fact that Hemingway chose to set *To Have and Have Not*, a generally socialist novel about how a working class man has little chance to get ahead in the world, in Cuba suggests that Cuba's class disparity was worse than in other cultures. To its credit, *The Gun Runners* is the only adaptation to date that even hints at the possibility of Hemingway's political hopes for the success of Castro's new regime that underlie the novel.

Considering that the film was a product of McCarthy-era America; it is not surprising, however, that Siegel and Mainwaring chose to express mostly disfavor for the new Communist government. Regardless, *The Gun Runners* is notable for being the first Hemingway film adaptation to openly express political sentiment of any kind, thereby opening the doors for future discussion in less hostile times.

Instead of delving too deeply into precarious political waters, Siegel's film focuses on the psychological conflict, chiefly within the character of Sam Martin, the renamed Hemingway hero known in the novel as Harry Morgan. Thomas Hemmeter and Kevin Sweeney have made the thought-provoking observation that *The Gun Runners* frames Sam's struggle with other life problems in terms of sexual conflict. In the film, Sam is provided with two blondes, Eva and the nameless floozy at Freddie's Bar, who attempt to win him away from his wife. Throughout the film Sam dismisses both of these women. According to Hemmeter and Sweeney, "his main concern is to keep his boat – a concern explicitly tied to his masculinity – his abrasive relationship with the blonds represents a parallel fight to keep possession of his wife. As in Hawks's film, to make the right choice in his dealings with women is to win the larger battle: Sam wins his boat as well as Lucy" (69). This observation demonstrates that Siegel's film is thematically consistent with a recurring theme in Hemingway's writing: that a man who allows a woman to make him compromise his morals is no man at all.

Viewed in this context, the seemingly incongruent happy ending of Siegel's adaptation makes more sense. In *The Gun Runners*, Sam Martin commits far fewer violations of his self-imposed moral code than Harry Morgan does in the original novel, *To Have and Have Not*. Sam Martin has no knowledge that he is smuggling guns until he

is already in the act of assisting Hanagan load the boat, and he kills no one for personal gain, only as a last resort of self-protection. In contrast, Harry Morgan is completely aware that he is wrongfully smuggling illegal aliens and shoots them simply to avoid having witnesses when the plan goes awry. Therefore, it makes sense, within the Catholicized framework of Hemingway's system of punishment and reward, that Sam Martin would be wounded but allowed to return to his wife, whereas Harry Morgan must die and lose possession of his wife forever. By interpreting Siegel and Mainwaring's alterations in this way, *The Gun Runners* can still be viewed as thematically consistent within the Hemingway canon, although its plot departs from the original novel.

However, Siegel's adaptation wisely stops short of making Sam Martin an uncomplicated Hemingway code hero. Although Sam is less criminally involved than Harry Morgan, he still deludes himself into believing that he has no culpable mental state that would cause him to suffer the consequences of dealing with a shady man like Hanagan. Sam's guilty conscience is given voice through Hanagan's girlfriend, Eva, who tells him that he should have asked more questions before taking Hanagan's money, saying "When they buy you for something, they buy you for everything" (Siegel). Eva's quip, which is repeated several times in *The Gun Runners*, might be read as key to the entire film. Whereas Hemingway's original novel and the two earlier adaptations center on the statement, "a man alone has no chance," Siegel's catchphrase focuses instead on how interactions between men, no matter how small, can lead to extreme consequences that may alter the course of his life. On the surface, this seems to be a shift of focus; however, it actually reinforces the desperation of the Sam Martin/Harry Morgan character's situation. Not only does a man have no chance when he is completely alone,

but he also has no chance when he puts too much faith in others, who may prove untrustworthy. The only way for a man to survive with integrity is to take some sort of middle ground between total moral isolation and dangerous interdependence. In this no-man's-land between extremes is where the mettle of a Hemingway code hero is tested, and hopefully proven.

What is interesting about Siegel's film is that the catalyst who causes Sam to question where he stands on this moral battlefield is always a woman. Lucy makes Sam realize the possible consequences of assisting Hanagan in some sort of illegal operation by telling him that he could lose what he loves most, namely their relationship, by going through with it. Also, Eva causes Sam to question how little he has sold himself out for by telling him that she agreed to become Hanagan's co-conspirator under similar circumstances. By himself, Sam would most likely never have given a second thought to giving up his moral code, because he has already resigned himself to the belief that he can do no better. As Hemmeter and Sweeney sum up the issue, Siegel's adaptation "presents strong women's voices that defy this voice of alienated resignation and expose the moral dishonesty that lies behind it" (73). In short, the women in Siegel's adaptation perform like the women of Hemingway's early fiction, who often take up the role of code hero when the men in their lives falter.

This function of the women as catalysts for self-revelation is most obvious in the scenes of interaction between Sam and his wife, Lucy. A very attractive and sexually aggressive woman, Lucy is not afraid to tell Sam that she could walk away from the relationship if he becomes the sort of man whom she could no longer respect. Sam expresses his awareness of this situation when he says, just before he leaves to be

interrogated by the police captain, "If it were real trouble, you'd walk out on me" (Siegel). However, Lucy also makes sure that Sam knows she wants to hold him to a high standard, because if he disappointed her, she would be lost too. Lucy replies, "If it were real trouble, I wouldn't know where to walk to" (Siegel). After his return from the police station, Lucy squeezes the truth out of Sam, mostly because he knows that it is futile to lie to her. The couple's ability to hold one another accountable, while still respecting the other's right to make judgment calls that each must live with, is seen in the dialogue that ends the sequence. Lucy says, "Now you know why I was out on the dock last night... I can smell trouble. Don't press your luck Sam, you're my world with a fence around it." (Siegel). Sam replies "You think I want to sleep alone? That's what they make you do in jail" (Siegel). From this exchange, Sam learns that being married to Lucy is a privilege and a responsibility. This portrayal of marriage as a give-and-take interdependence replicates the dynamic of most of Hemingway's best-suited romantic couples, such as Catherine Barkley and Frederic Henry in *A Farewell to Arms*. Although Hemingway's writing in stories like "The Killers," and "Snows of Kilimanjaro" often warns against a man allowing a woman to make him compromise his ideals, the author presents in equal measure in his novels a contrasting relationship, in which an honest woman actually makes a man more steadfast. Siegel's choice to allow Lucy to set the boundaries for the relationship, and then hold Sam to those boundaries when he starts to waver, is thematically consistent within the context of the Hemingway oeuvre.

Although these scenes of interaction between Sam and Lucy are strong, the rest of Siegel's film is unfortunately uneven in its artistic merits and production values. In his defense, Siegel was not totally to blame for the fact that the film appears rushed,

especially toward the end. Due to the low budget, the film was shot entirely in California, even though the story was set in Cuba. Also, Siegel had to hurry through a mere twenty days of shooting, filming each scene in chronological order directly from the script, because he had no time for retakes. This rushed atmosphere resulted in a shortened ending. Scott Hale, the film's dialogue director, noted that "since the picture was being shot in continuity, from beginning to end, Don in desperation simply had Audie kill everybody; and that was the end of the picture" (Phillips 64). Also, the director and screenwriter were working against a producer, Clarence Greene, who demanded final creative control over the project. Not wanting to have the hero die in the end because he "preferred invincible heroes," Greene insisted that the script be changed, so that Sam was not mortally wounded, but instead had a chance to morally redeem himself (Laurence 108). These arbitrary judgment calls, coupled with time and budget constraints, hampered Siegel's project and screen today as thematic inconsistencies resulting from latent creative conflicts during production.

However, Audie Murphy's performance in the film is too often unjustly maligned. Murphy, the most decorated soldier of World War II, had a great deal in common with both Hemingway and the hero of *To Have and Have Not*, Harry Morgan, upon whom Sam Martin was based. Like Hemingway, Murphy was determined to become a soldier. Rejected by both the Marines and Navy on account of his height, Murphy was finally allowed to join the Army Infantry. Murphy's adventures in the Army became the stuff of legend when he, again like Hemingway, became the cover subject of a special edition of *Life* magazine in 1945. Seeing the cover, James Cagney encouraged Murphy to get started as an actor, despite the war hero's protests that he had "no talent"

(*Arlingtoncemetery.mil*). Still, Murphy's popular appeal made him a huge box-office draw, and films like *To Hell and Back*, based on Murphy's own autobiography, allowed the soldier-turned-actor to become a star simply by playing himself, in a manner very similar to the way that Hemingway constructed his own public persona. Unfortunately, also like Hemingway, Murphy suffered from post-traumatic stress due to his wartime experiences and "said that he could only sleep with a loaded pistol under his pillow" (*Arlingtoncemetery.mil*). In addition to his strangely similar life circumstances to Hemingway, Murphy would have found a lot in his own Texas sharecropper upbringing to relate to the blue-collar struggles of the character Sam Martin that he portrayed in *The Gun Runners*. What Murphy represented in the role was exactly the sort of realism that Hemingway had requested in previous casting decisions, but had never been able to convince the studio executives was correct.

Murphy's choice to portray Sam Martin as a straight-faced, stoical man of few words seems perfectly in alignment with Hemingway's vision of the character. Yet, critics like Gene Phillips have called Murphy's choice to under-emote in the role "uninspired," and that "one wonders if he could have played a character as complex as Hemingway's Harry" (65). What makes this observation unfounded is that the role of a stone-faced ex-veteran from a poor background is virtually the only type of role that an untrained actor like Murphy could play, because essentially he was playing himself. If critics had sought the sort of complete authenticity that Hemingway intended for all of his films, Murphy's performance would have been found satisfactory, since any reactions he had to the part would have been genuine.

Further, Murphy's choice to portray Martin as an honest innocent, unwise to the machinations of more worldly men, is a perfect foil for Eddie Albert's smiling villain, Hanagan. Whereas Murphy's natural uneasiness at being in front of the camera translates into his awkwardness at the thought of engaging in criminal activity, Albert's grinning ease is perfectly suited to his role as the sort of man who was so comfortable with his shady lifestyle that he could have breakfast in bed while talking about killing men for money. A well-seasoned actor, Albert was also a WWII veteran; however, his military service consisted mostly of espionage missions, which involved, among other things, Albert's posing as a circus trapeze artist for a Mexican circus as part of the Navy's effort to uncover Nazi threats close to U.S. borders (*USAToday.com*). In their scenes together, the two actors give a sense of realism to their characters that far surpasses most other Hemingway adaptations, simply because of their naturally differing backgrounds.

In sum, although *The Gun Runners* was, as Gene Phillips states, "a curious amalgam of some of the elements of the novel mixed together with newly invented ingredients," the film is not the universal failure that many critics claim (63). Despite working with a small budget under short time constraints, Siegel was nevertheless able to create a mostly cohesive film that reflected the best efforts of creative collaboration that could be expected considering the circumstances. If not for the fact that two previous adaptations of the same Hemingway novel had been produced without these handicaps, critics might have been able to regard Siegel's film more favorably for the sense of realism and thematic consistency with the Hemingway canon that the production seeks to convey.

The Old Man and the Sea (1958)

From its collaborative beginning, one would suppose that John Sturges's adaptation of Ernest Hemingway's novel, *The Old Man and the Sea*, should have been the purest distillation of the author's original creative vision ever filmed, especially considering that Leland Heyward, Hemingway's agent, offered to produce the film adaptation of the novel himself, with Hemingway signed on as technical advisor (Phillips 138). However, after six years in production, the most costly adaptation of a Hemingway film to date still does not screen as the most articulate filmed version of a Hemingway text. Perhaps this discrepancy is due to the fact that although the press attempted to cast Hemingway as the production's prime moving force, in actuality the picture was nothing greater than any other standard Hollywood effort. More likely, Sturges's adaptation of *The Old Man and the Sea* (1958) stands as a persistent reminder of the fact that when the actual author of a text is too actively involved in the filming process, the result can ironically stray even farther from the intentions of the original than if he had been more removed from the enterprise, or at least more open to collaborative effort.

During the filming of *The Old Man and the Sea*, the Warner Brothers publicity department made every effort to suggest to the public that Ernest Hemingway was the primary creative force behind this adaptation of his Pulitzer Prize-winning novel. According to Frank Laurence, publicity photos "showed Hemingway sighting through a movie camera, as if he had some actual charge over the camera operations" (11). Hemingway was also stated to have made his acting debut in the film, in the crowd

backing the arm-wrestling match between Santiago and the unnamed black sailor.

However, this publicity was greatly exaggerated. Although Hemingway's wife, Mary, appears in the crowd of a bar scene late in the film, Hemingway's image was left on the cutting room floor (Laurence 13). Even so, Hemingway's presence in the film was much more prevalent than in previous adaptations of his work. Hemingway was reported to have received \$150,000 for the film rights, and an additional \$75,000 to act as a technical advisor on the film's "combat shots" of fishing for Santiago's giant marlin (Laurence 15). For his part, Hemingway claimed that his involvement in the picture did not reflect an interest in Hollywood, but rather an interest in keeping his most-awarded work "honest and straight" for the screen (qtd. in Laurence 16). Yet, Hemingway's active involvement actually ended up slowing down the production, resulting in far less authenticity than if the rest of the production team had been allowed to construct these shots on their own.

In her excellent essay on the film, Linda Dittmar refers to Hemingway's obsession with maintaining absolute realism in the filming of *The Old Man and the Sea* as "larding the text" (54). What Dittmar means is that the author's involvement in the filming process caused an undue emphasis to be placed on supposedly realistic technical details that resulted in an under-treatment of the novel's most significant themes. Further, Dittmar aptly notes:

Hemingway's writing resists filming precisely because its minimalism is taut with repressed content that is not readily translatable into film. One way or another, the film's response to this problem involved a larding process whereby Hemingway's original text – spare, withholding, and ultimately ineffable, became saturated with extraneous materials that end up depleting, not enriching, it. (54)

Dittmar's statement begs the question of what the central themes of *The Old Man and the Sea* are, and how they might have been obscured by the production's over-attention to

technicality. Those themes, which will be explained at length here, can be summed up as four R's: remembrance, resilience, religion, and realism.

As Dittmar states, *The Old Man and the Sea*:

Depicts an existential struggle for self-definition. Santiago's tragic condition is that his heroic will to commitment faces inevitable defeat. Social concerns are marginal to the solitary man asserting his right to a place in creation, and human interest episodes would only deflect attention from the wonder Hemingway inspires toward the universe and its creatures. (58)

Hemingway's emphasis on one man's struggle against both himself and the natural world necessitates that any film adaptation's focus be placed squarely on the actor who plays Santiago and also his chief antagonist, the giant marlin. As a result, much of the film's criticism has focused on the casting of Santiago, the depiction of the fish, and Hemingway's reaction to both.

Initially, Hemingway had wanted the Italian director, Vittorio de Sica, for the film adaptation, because of de Sica's previous success in super-realist pieces such as *Bicycle Thieves* (1949). However, Warner Brothers was unwilling to comply with this request, and instead initially allowed Fred Zinneman to assume the director's role. Also, Spencer Tracy, then a major star for MGM, was loaned to Warner Brothers in an effort to secure a sure box office performance. The choice of Tracy for the lead role of Santiago was made over Hemingway's objections. The author was happy with the choice of Tracy to perform Santiago's internal monologue, which appears in the film as voiceover, but Hemingway was skeptical of Tracy's ability to portray an accurate vision of the thin, poor, Cuban fisherman on screen. Hemingway's reluctance to accept Tracy's casting began the first of several power struggles between the author and the rest of his production team, leading ultimately to many technical inconsistencies within the final film.

In constructing the original story about Santiago and his marlin, Hemingway claimed that his goal was “to write a story about a real old man, a real sea, and a real fish” (qtd. in Phillips 144). Instead, what resulted in Sturges’s film adaptation was “an inauthentic Santiago, an artificial ocean, and a phony fish” (Phillips 144). Part of the blame for these discrepancies was the fact that, even though the finished film uses a high level of incorporation of details from Hemingway’s life, very few of these technicalities add much to the audience’s understanding of the novel’s original themes.

For example, Sturges’s film, perhaps more than any other Hemingway adaptation, uses a great deal of Hemingway’s actual language as lifted directly from the text and translated into voiceover delivered by Tracy. Explaining his reasoning behind preserving so much of Hemingway’s original language, Sturges claimed, “We put the words against a background that seemed commiserate with them. We used them simply to hear them: to let Spence say them. It seemed to me that what happened on the screen wasn’t as powerful as what was said – literally the words” (qtd. in Phillips 146). Yet, as Gene Phillips points out, this reliance on dialogue often comes across as redundant, not to mention the fact that “the unlettered Santiago and Manolin could in any case hardly have been sufficiently articulate to give adequate expression to the nuances of their thoughts and feelings” (146-47). What Phillips means is that if the goal of Hemingway’s production team was to produce as realistic a portrayal as possible, then one of the most inauthentic things that they could do was to put the author’s highly-stylized words directly into the mouths of his illiterate characters. Although such material is necessary for a literary audience to hear, it comes across as completely false for viewers, who if they had any familiarity with the real world that Hemingway and company were trying so

desperately to portray, would know better than to believe that a fisherman and his apprentice spoke in high modernist verbiage.

Returning now to the major themes of the original text, Sturges's film does do an excellent job of incorporating Santiago's dreams of lions into audiences' then-current familiarity with Hemingway's life and reputation as an African big game hunter. The adaptation begins with Santiago dreaming of lions, as in Hemingway's novel. Both Tracy's voiceover and Sturges's montage of nature shots depict exactly the content of Santiago's dream:

He dreamed of Africa when he was a boy and the long golden beaches and the white beaches, so white they hurt your eyes, and the high capes and the great brown mountains. He walked along that coast now every night and in his dreams he heard the surf roar and saw the native boats come riding through it...He no longer dreamed of storms, nor of women, nor of great occurrences, nor of great fish, nor fights, nor contests of strength, nor of his wife. He only dreamed of places now and of the lions on the beach. They played like young cats in the dusk and he loved them as he had loved the boy. He never dreamed about the boy.

(Old Man 24-25)

This scene is one of many in *The Old Man and the Sea* in which Hemingway superimposes what are most likely his own remembrances upon the character of this aged Cuban fisherman. Although it is possible that Santiago, in his fictional youth, could have sailed to Africa, it is more likely that Hemingway is using the old man as an avatar for his own memories, especially considering that the subject matter about which Santiago no longer dreams comprises much of the content of Hemingway's biography. The playful lions and restful landscapes imply that both Santiago and his author are older men who have grown content with their individual histories, and, as a result, have made peace within their worlds. Sturges's choice to bookend his adaptation of Hemingway's novel

just as the author did, with scenes of Santiago dreaming of lions, calls audience attention to autobiographical connections between author and character.

Although Sturges's adaptation eschews virtually any direct political commentary in its manner of adaptation, it preserves most of the religious symbolism present in Hemingway's original. Generally speaking, Hemingway was very reluctant to reveal any intentional symbolic meaning placed within his characters, saying "If I made them good and true enough, they would mean different things. The hardest thing is to make something that is really true and something truer than true. Then the parts become symbols" (qtd. in Dittmar 56). Yet, readers cannot ignore the obvious symbolic implications of *The Old Man and the Sea*. The old fisherman's name, Santiago, is Spanish for "saint" and the boy, Manolin, seems to have a name derived from Jesus's description as a man of linen, or one who sacrifices for others. However, Hemingway is not content to rest on the familiar associations of Holy Father and Son, but instead continually reverses and intermingles the roles of old man and boy to complicate this religious symbolism. Manolin is both an innocent whose constant faith restores his father-figure Santiago and who also behaves as a fatherly caretaker for the old man, bringing him food and monitoring his health. In contrast, the normally very paternal Santiago also indulges in boyish daydreams about baseball and reckless, childlike behaviors, such as throwing his only knife and paddle away in frustration at an attacking shark. This role reversal is mirrored in the film by straightforward scenes of visual religious symbolism, such as Manolin carrying a lantern to light the old man's way to the harbor, and the weary Santiago stumbling under the weight of the very cross-like mast from his ill-fated boat. Taken altogether, Sturges's film does a very fine job of translating

Hemingway's blending of Christian religious symbolism into visual metaphors that demonstrate how few differences there are between the younger and older parts of the Holy Trinity.

Ultimately, both Hemingway's novel and Sturges's film suggest that an individual's resilience, or his ability to overcome inevitable fate, is the true measure not only of what kind of man he is, but also how close he is to God. Dittmar explains Santiago's motivations simply:

A man who wants to go on with the humble work he was born to do, a man who mostly dreams of graceful lions playing on a sandy beach, and whose one public triumph occurred when he arm-wrestled against a worthy opponent – surely, readers come to feel, surely such a man has earned the right to catch his fish. (57)

Hemingway's Santiago has a very unique sense of pride in his life's work that is neither self-deprecating nor self-aggrandizing. Instead, he is simply a man who is truly self-aware. Under the normally accepted Christian order of things, Santiago should be rewarded for his humility by being allowed to take home the marlin for which he has waited so long. However, even though Santiago by name is a walking Christian symbol, he is denied a Christian reward both in Hemingway's novel and in the film. Regardless, Santiago's stoic, one might even say saint-like, acceptance of nature's cruel denial of what should have been a just reward for his persistence proves the character as a Hemingway hero, his resilience making him above standard rewards.

Although the themes of remembrance, religion, and resilience are preserved in the move from novel to screen, Hemingway's emphasis on realism in the original text suffers in Sturges's film adaptation. This problem is at least partially Hemingway's own fault, ironically because he insisted on trying to make the film too realistic. After being given

partial control of the shooting script, Hemingway began making many demands about including scenes from the novel in the film that were simply unnecessary, such as watching Santiago get up to pee outside his shack every morning, merely for the sake of portraying the authentic everyday life of a fisherman (Laurence 28). The result of Hemingway's difficult demands was that Warner Brothers' studio team eventually lost patience with the author and took away much of the control over the production that Hemingway had in the beginning. As a result of his overemphasis on nonsensical details, Hemingway lost the ability to fight for realistic touches that actually could have added to the production, such as filming the boat scenes in Cuban waters rather than in a studio tank (Laurence 35). Still, Sturges's efforts to preserve as many meaningful realistic nuances as possible resulted in some of the most film's most visually intriguing scenes, particularly the sequence in which Santiago and the other fishermen depart each day by lamplight. These lights, which seem to symbolize the individual hopes of each man as he sets out on a merciless sea that could literally take him anywhere on his life's journey that day, were authentic details from Cuban fishing villages that took on additional symbolic meaning in Sturges's adaptation.

In the end, audiences are left today with an adaptation of *The Old Man and the Sea* that is not a poor motion picture *per se*, but one that certainly reflects its tumultuous production and leaves viewers wondering what might have been, if the production team had been more able to work together to produce a cohesive work of cinema. The first possible way that Sturges's production might have been a better representation of Hemingway's text is through the casting of a different lead actor in the role of Santiago. Hemingway's choice for the lead was to use "a real Cuban fisherman, someone like the

Cojimar fisherman Anselmo Hernandez, who was a model for Santiago in some ways” (Laurence 20). However, Warner Brothers executives were not interested in creating an unsellable documentary about the life of a poor Cuban fisherman. Instead, they attempted to craft the film in such a way as to maximize the economic potential of making the book into a cinematic vehicle with a major star. Initially, Hemingway accepted the casting of Spencer Tracy, but after he refused to lose weight or learn a Cuban accent, Tracy lost Hemingway’s approval (Phillips 143). Yet, Hemingway was not unhappy with Tracy in the role of Santiago simply because of the actor’s lack of prep. According to Linda Dittmar:

Hemingway saw Tracy’s physique as an affront to his notions of manhood and heroism. Tracy’s inability to diet, his rumored bouts with alcoholism, and his fear of flying embody weaknesses Hemingway could not abide – especially given his own aging. Tracy represented to him what he dreaded most: the decline of will and ability that he too was facing. (55)

In creating Santiago, Hemingway had once again written an avatar to express his own feelings. However, Hemingway was not as emotionally secure as his fictional character. Seeing Tracy, who looked so much like his aging self, in the role must have been a shocking reminder to Hemingway that he, like everyone else, was mortal. Unwilling to cope with this visual manifestation of his impending old age, not as a lean code hero, but instead merely as a portly actor masquerading as such, Hemingway would likely have watched the dailies with a sense of devastation that his public image had changed, no matter how hard he fought against it.

Whereas Hemingway’s dissatisfaction with Tracy in the lead role was mostly a manifestation of the author’s insecurity about aging, his rejection of Sturges’s choice to use artificial fish in a movie about fishing was completely legitimate. Seeking to fill the

film's second lead role with just the right giant fish, Hemingway requested funding from producer Leland Heyward to take an expedition and film crew down to Peru in an effort to land a marlin worthy of the novel's thousand-pound original. Unfortunately, according to Hemingway, "We fished every day for a month in those heavy seas with no luck" (Phillips 143). After losing thousands of dollars to Hemingway's effort to locate a prize-quality fish, and even more money in unsuccessful attempts to film some of the movie's other aquatic scenes, Heyward released Fred Zinneman, the adaptation's first director, and pulled Hemingway's second crew from Peru. Taking over the reigns as director, Sturges moved production of the boat scenes to the tank on the Warner Brothers' studio lot, and sought out other sources for Santiago's giant marlin.

Eventually, Sturges bought documentary footage of a record marlin catch from professional Texas fisherman Alfred Glasell, which he "spliced awkwardly into the film, with the Tracy superimpositions visibly retouched into the Glasell backdrop" (Dittmar 55). Still needing better close-up footage of the marlin, Sturges commissioned a foam rubber model of a marlin to be made, which Hemingway detested, and reportedly remarked "No picture with a fucking rubber fish ever made a dime" (qtd. in Phillips 148). Looking back on the film years later, even Sturges was disturbed with the distracting lack of realism that his phony fish scenes contained, causing the director to claim, "Technically, it was the sloppiest film I ever made" (Phillips 146). Sturges and Hemingway's disdain for the film's special effects is warranted. The foam fish and sloppy editing date the film, and take a great deal of attention away from Tracy's soliloquies, which are intercut with these unrealistic scenes.

The final film's general lack of technical realism is even more disappointing when one considers the effort that screenwriter Peter Viertel took to create an especially realistic script that was true to the spirit of Hemingway's original. Hemingway insisted that Viertel could not portray Santiago accurately until he experienced Santiago's life circumstances first-hand. According to Frank Laurence, Hemingway had Viertel spend the night in a mosquito-infested fisherman's cabin with no screens, and then abandoned him in an open boat for hours on the ocean, so that the screenwriter could experience the sensation of being lost at sea (27). Unfortunately, Hemingway's Method acting approach to screenwriting failed. Even though he "was being a good sport about suffering these various indignities," when Viertel became very seasick, Hemingway lost all faith in Viertel's ability to produce a script that would accurately reflect Santiago's experiences (Laurence 27). Although he eventually produced one of the closest conversions of a Hemingway work to date, Viertel's efforts at producing a realistic chronicle of several days in the life of a Cuban fisherman seem overshadowed by technical difficulties.

Upon release, Hemingway's prediction about the film's low likelihood for success came true. The film was a financial disaster at the box office, hampered by ample bad press concerning the crew's inability to work together to produce a cohesive work of collaborative cinema. In an effort to promote interest among high school students studying the novel, Warner Brothers sent:

To teachers, librarians, and principals all over the country examination copies of a study guide they could buy for a few cents for their students to use. This pamphlet, in the series Photoplay Studies endorsed by the National Education Association, described *The Old Man and the Sea* as "one of the finest motion pictures ever made." (Laurence 36)

This final effort to recoup the studio's losses on the most costly Hemingway flop ever produced serves today as a reminder that even when a production team seeks to involve a work's original author, over-attention to textual detail can actually harm a film's ability to convey realistic experiences and genuine emotions.

Adventures of a Young Man (1962)

A.E. Hotchner, the screenwriter for *Adventures of a Young Man* (1962), once said about his friend Ernest Hemingway, "Part of the mystique about Ernest stems from the manner in which he blurred the demarcation between fiction and fact. Fiction is a magnification of reality, he once observed, and when he told a story (and a splendid storyteller he was), it was hard to know whether it was fantasy laced with fact, fact seasoned with fiction, or fantasy" (Hotchner vii). By incorporating generous amounts of biographical detail about Hemingway's life into his adaptation of the author's Nick Adams stories, Hotchner creates what may be the most revelatory film about how the author's life influenced his fiction. Hotchner began his acquaintance with Hemingway in the spring of 1948, when the young journalist was sent to Cuba by *Cosmopolitan* with an unusual assignment: to ask Hemingway to write an article on "The Future of Literature." Naturally, Hotchner was at first intimidated by the task. Explaining his trepidation regarding the task, Hotchner wrote in his biography of the event:

From the time I read my first Hemingway work, *The Sun Also Rises*, as a student at Soldan High School in St. Louis, I was struck with the affliction common to my generation: Hemingway Awe. In my schoolboy fantasies I had identified with Nick Adams (he was approximately my age and was the protagonist of many Hemingway short stories) as he made his way through a murky world of punch-

drunk fighters, killers, suiciding Indians, dope addicts and whores, and the rigors of war on the Italian front. During the Second World War, as an Air Force officer in France, I had been further awed by War Correspondent Hemingway's military exploits. (Hotchner 3-4)

However, Hotchner's fear of meeting and working with his idol were unfounded. As he proceeds through his autobiography documenting his evolving friendship with Hemingway, Hotchner uncovers the most likely reason why generations of young writers have been drawn to the author. Through Hotchner's eyes, readers can see Hemingway in one of his more underappreciated roles, as a mentor to those who sought to emulate and expand upon the type of freewheeling writer's lifestyle that he had spent his career creating the mold for. In short, from reading Hotchner's autobiography together with his adaptation of *Adventures of a Young Man*, one can at last understand why so many writers remain eager to step inside his ring of literary celebrity, and make their own fiction like Hemingway's: truer than if it really happened in life.

In a move that seems quite out of character, given his general aversion to film adaptations of his works, Hemingway was initially eager to take an active role in translating the Nick Adams stories from page to screen. The first attempt at adapting the Nick Adams stories was for a sixteen part CBS series in 1951. Hemingway spoke with his friend Hotchner about writing the adaptations, and seemed willing to participate in the process by providing opening voiceovers for each episode. Hemingway even went so far as to record three sample attempts for these introductions, but seemed unhappy with the results. Hemingway, who never enjoyed public speaking, wrote to Hotchner in a letter accompanying what the author considered to be the best of these demo reels, "I'm spooked about the whole thing, Hotch. If there was some way we could sell the stories

without me talking or mugging, I would give anything” (qtd. in Hotchner 75). Although the television series was eventually produced to mixed reviews without Hemingway’s voiceovers, Hotchner continued to seek out a better way to translate his friend’s works for film.

Eventually, through ongoing negotiations with determined producer Jerry Wald, Hemingway signed onto an agreement with 20th Century Fox for Hotchner to adapt ten of the Nick Adams stories as one continuous motion picture, which began production during the last year of Hemingway’s life and was released in the year after his death. The adaptation produced is a fairly faithful conversion of Hemingway’s original Nick Adams texts. Nevertheless, while Hotchner’s work, brought to life by a star-studded Hollywood cast, is textually accurate for the most part, it fails to clearly articulate several common Hemingway themes. Although critics of the film tend to blame this failure on the unreadiness of Richard Beymer, who does seem a bit overwhelmed in the leading role of Nick Adams, the real culprit is Hollywood’s general tendency to over-romanticize Hemingway’s work, in favor of leaving his grittier material on the cutting room floor. In spite of these tendencies, the film can still be read to understand the interconnectedness of Hemingway’s early life and work, both as the *kunstlerroman* of an artist coming into his voice and a *bildungsroman* of a young man growing to maturity.

The film begins with a facsimile of Hemingway’s voice, as if the spirit of the recently deceased author continued to linger about to narrate the outdoor scenes of his fondest memories. The voiceover intones, in a meditative, Hemingwayesque baritone:

In the place where you are born and where you grow up, you begin to learn the things that all men must know. Although they are the simplest things, it takes a man’s whole life really to know them. And if you are to be a writer, the stories

that you make up will be true in proportion to the amount of this knowledge of life that you have. So that when you make something up, it is as it would truly be, with the good and the bad, the ecstasy and the remorse, the people and places, and how the weather was. (Ritt)

This passage creates the sense that the film is going to screen as a sort of collective memoir, not only of Nick Adams, but also of the author who created him, and the generation of writers that he inspired. As such, each vignette of Nick Adams's life serves as a lesson that all men must know in order to fully come into a psychologically satisfied state of self-awareness.

The first, and perhaps most emphatic, lesson that *Adventures of a Young Man* imparts from the Hemingway oeuvre is that a man must not allow himself to be dominated or intimidated by anyone. This theme is first articulated on screen through what appears to be an adaptation of the short story, "The Doctor and the Doctor's Wife." In the sequence, Nick's father, Dr. Adams, played by Arthur Kennedy, allows himself to be bullied by a local Native American tough guy and then goes home to be intimidated yet again by his scolding wife, portrayed by Jessica Tandy. This unhealthy dynamic supposedly mirrored the tempestuous relationship between Hemingway's own parents, and between the author and his mother, whom he greatly resented. According to Gene Phillips, "Hemingway said of this story that his own hatred for his mother was non-Freudian, and that she was an all-time bitch," and that the first psychic wound of his life had been occasioned by his discovery as a lad that his father was a coward" (82). The author's sentiment is echoed in Nick's exclamation to his father in the scene, "I wish you wouldn't let people take advantage of you all the time" (Ritt). However, Dr. Adams seems unfazed by Nick's attempt to make a man out of him. The older Adams finishes

the scene by encouraging Nick to appease his mother by practicing his music before being allowed to go hunting.

Once again, this small detail is gleaned from Hemingway's own life. The author deeply resented the fact that his mother used the fifty-thousand dollar inheritance left to him by his father's death to build a music room in her home. According to Hemingway's own admission, "mother was a music nut, a frustrated singer, and she gave musicales every week in my fifty-thousand dollar music room. When I was in school she forced me to play the cello even though I had absolutely no talent and could not even carry a tune" (qtd. in Hotchner 116). Further, Grace Hemingway also used Ernest's lack of musical ability as a means to lord over the young man, and forced him to forgo activities that he enjoyed in order to indulge her fantasy of his becoming a competent musician. As Hemingway remembered, "She took me out of school one year so I could concentrate exclusively on the cello. I wanted to be playing football out in the fresh air and she had me chained to that knee-box" (qtd. in Hotchner 116). Considering Hemingway's emotional connection to the struggles he had with his own family, it make sense that Hotchner, in his adaptation, chose to place a scene based on "The Doctor and the Doctor's Wife" just before the sequence based on "The End of Something." Read together, this sequence shows the psychological connection in Hemingway's mind between his overbearing mother and his lifelong fear of being dominated by the women in his life.

In "The End of Something," a more world-wise, post-war Nick Adams breaks up with his girlfriend Marjorie. Nick fears commitment and also that if he does continue in the relationship, he is destined to a life of drudgery and compliance just like his father.

When Marjorie confronts him as to why he is no longer interested in their relationship, Nick says, “It isn’t fun anymore. Not any of it...I feel as though everything has gone to hell inside of me. I don’t know Marge. I don’t know what to say” (“End” 204). What Nick means in Hemingway’s original story has more to do with his inability to reconnect with his old life after what he has experienced in war, with a fear of commitment only as a secondary concern. In contrast, in Hotchner’s adaptation of the story, Nick breaks up with his girlfriend Caroline before going to war, but after witnessing his father lose face while trying to appease his mother.

This decision to place the breakup before his war experiences in the film demonstrates Hotchner’s desire to revise a major theme in Hemingway’s short story, using details from the author’s personal life. Whereas the real-life Hemingway seems to have been motivated in many of his relationships with women by negative reactions to his parents’ marriage, the fictional Nick Adams makes his romantic decisions based upon his own experience that make him more mature than his friends. In short, whereas the author himself, and Hotchner’s adaptive Nick, make choices based on fear, Hemingway’s original character decides his fate based on rationality. Although not a flaw *per se*, this definite thematic difference between the story and film demonstrates an inconsistency between collaborators on the film.

The next sequence in the film, based on the short story “Indian Camp,” displays a similar sense of thematic inconsistency between Hemingway’s original and Hotchner’s adaptation. In Hemingway’s original story, the father of an Indian mother kills himself in the bunk above where Dr. Adams performs an emergency Caesarean section on the woman using very primitive implements and no anesthesia. However, in the film version,

the Indian father is merely drunk and belligerent during the delivery. Hemingway's inclusion of the suicide provides an entry to a very important discussion between Nick and Dr. Adams at the end of the story. The talk reads:

“Why did he kill himself, Daddy?”
 “I don't know, Nick. He couldn't stand things, I guess.”
 “Do many men kill themselves, Daddy?”
 “Not very many, Nick.”
 “Do many women?”
 “Hardly ever.” (“Indian” 20)

Read in the context of the fact that “Indian Camp” was published in 1923, five years before Hemingway's father would kill himself, and almost forty years before the author would take his own life, the exchange seems eerily prophetic. Given the fact that Hemingway committed suicide while the film was in production, Hotchner most likely chose to omit the passage out of deference to his friend.

Still, this omission stands today, in the context of reading *Adventures of a Young Man*, as a mistake, considering how much the inclusion of this moment between father and son could have informed the audience about Hemingway's thematic fear of death, and how that fear changed over time in relation to the author's realization of his own mortality. For Hemingway at the time he wrote “Indian Camp,” suicide was the ultimate sign of cowardice, showing that a man had completely given up on his ability to control his life or the world around him. However, as Hemingway aged and began to see that he would never fully recover from his various long-term illnesses, suicide clearly became a possible source of relief that the author craved more than he feared death or damage to his reputation. One can only speculate as to how an older Hemingway might have revised the story for the screen, given his latter-life battles with depression. Yet, this type of

speculation, which probes an author's motivations, is exactly the sort of place where a screenwriter can fill in the gaps of a story to best supplement the original author's themes in a new context for a new audience.

Hotchner could have used Hemingway's meditation on death as a defeat or an escape to make an excellent transition into a later part in his adaptation, in which "The Battler" is translated for the screen. Apparently, "The Battler," a story in which Nick Adams encounters a mentally disturbed former boxing champion while hitchhiking, was a very poignant story for Hemingway during his later years. Once, in a discussion with Hemingway, Hotchner recalls that he was working on a manuscript for *Adventures of a Young Man* when he inadvertently quoted a line from "The Battler" to the author. The line, "You've got a lot coming to you," comes from an exchange among Ad, the old boxer; Bugs, Ad's African-American caretaker; and Nick. It reads:

"Where you say you're from?"

"Chicago," Nick said.

"That's a fine town," the Negro said. "I didn't catch your name."

"Adams. Nick Adams."

"He says he's never been crazy, Bugs," Ad said.

"He's got a lot coming to him," the Negro said. ("Battler" 51-52)

Hemingway's hyperawareness of the context of hearing this line during his 1960 conversation with Hotchner is more than mere paranoia. When Hemingway wrote the line as a young man, he was predicting that Nick, like himself, would likely encounter many broken, or "crazy" men during his lifetime, and would hopefully learn to do better for himself from seeing their negative examples. However, the older Hemingway, who by 1960 had already undergone psychiatric treatment to try to reverse the negative psychological effects of head injuries sustained during multiple accidents, would have

taken the line more personally. Perhaps, after a lifetime of living on the edge and seeking out his own pleasurable experiences at the expense of others, Hemingway felt somewhat guilty, almost as if his mental illness was a sign that he got what was coming to him for a lifetime of driving others insane. This speculative reading would have added much reflection and poignancy to the story, yet once again. Hotchner avoids it. Instead of meditating on Hemingway's self-reflective statement that "A champion can't retire like anyone else," Hotchner's adaptation of "The Battler" sequence in the film serves mainly as a showcase to display the immense acting range of Hotchner's friend Paul Newman, in his well-played role as the ruined fighter, Ad Francis (Hotchner 298). As a result, Hotchner's eagerness to protect his deceased friend's legacy actually creates thematic weaknesses in the film that prevent the audience from fully appreciating the prophetic quality that Hemingway's early works had in relation to the tragic end of the author's life.

To his credit, Hotchner's adaptation of the Nick Adams stories begins to become much more thematically consistent with Hemingway's original creative vision during the second half of the movie. Hotchner displays a firm grasp on the common Hemingway theme that "a man alone has no chance" (Ritt). This line, which Hotchner apparently lifted from another Hemingway work, *To Have and Have Not*, is voiced by Bugs in the transition between "The Battler" sequence and what appears to be a series of vignettes meant to explain Hemingway's entry into journalism by way of enlisting in the Italian Army during World War One. In *To Have and Have Not*, Harry Morgan is a basically good man who succumbs, out of a desperate need to provide for his family, to a life of crime in hopes of earning easy money. The novel can be read as a consideration of a

man's capabilities, if he allows his morality to slide down a slippery slope of justifying his actions to fit his circumstances.

Hotchner picks up this theme of how a man must learn to define his own sense of morality to protect his integrity from the influence of shady characters that he will encounter in life during the burlesque sequence of his film adaptation. In those scenes, a young Nick Adams, who has been hitchhiking for quite some time, encounters Mr. Campbell, the drunken promoter of a burlesque show that is run by Mr. Turner. Campbell gives Nick the job of making sure he doesn't overdrink so much that he would be unable to meet Turner the next morning. Inevitably, Campbell does overdrink and oversleep, and when Turner arrives, he fires Campbell and hires Nick in his place, because Campbell is a man who "can't slide," or in other words, can't learn to bend his morality just enough to complete whatever his lifestyle requires (Ritt). Trying to teach Nick a lesson from the experience, Turner says, "You see to it that they call you Sliding Nick," meaning that Nick should learn to be the kind of man who knows just how much vice he can tolerate while still keeping his dignity and moral code intact (Ritt). This theme, of a man having to define his own morality based on the sum total of his experiences, is classic Hemingway, and Hotchner does well in preserving it throughout the film.

Further, Hotchner captures the manner in which the real-life Hemingway happened into the newspaper business in a unique way, by blending the author's personal history with his own in the film. Both Hemingway and Hotchner held ties to St. Louis, Missouri. Hemingway's first three wives were from the city, while Hotchner grew up there, before moving to New York to work as a journalist after World War II. Perhaps Hotchner's experiences as a young man from St. Louis who moved to New York as an

aspiring journalist inspired him to incorporate his own biography into Hemingway's already semi-biographical Nick Adams character. After being turned down by a prominent New York publisher, Nick decides to join the Italian Army in order to gain enough life experience to be a good writer. Nick's trajectory in this film adaptation represents a blending of biographical detail far more than in Hemingway's original stories and can be viewed as the most complete example in the Hemingway film canon of full incorporation of the lives of both the author and the screenwriter responsible for adapting him.

Hotchner also incorporates a great deal of detail from Hemingway's novel *A Farewell to Arms* into *Adventures of a Young Man*. This choice is solid, because Hemingway's Nick Adams character in many ways can be seen as a younger prototype for the author's later protagonists, including Frederic Henry from *Farewell*. However, Hotchner does not merely add details from *Farewell*, but instead traces Hemingway's epic of war and first love back to its earliest origins. In a Nick Adams tale called "A Very Short Story," Nick falls in love with a nurse while he is recuperating in a military hospital, providing the genesis of what Hemingway would later retell as the romance between Frederic Henry and Catherine Barkley in *Farewell*. Of course, both stories have even deeper biographical roots, in Hemingway's own relationship with Agnes von Kurowsky, the Red Cross nurse who took care of him after he was injured in Italy during World War I. This careful attention to biographical detail helps Hotchner capture one of Hemingway's most prevalent themes from his early work. Gene Phillips explains the significance of Hemingway's most popular plotline: "the hero loses the first person to whom he has been able to commit himself in a lasting love relationship and is left

desolate and sobered by his experiences of love and war” (84). This sentiment is perhaps best summarized by Hemingway’s maxim, “Man can be destroyed, but not defeated” (qtd. in Hotchner 304). In the context of Hotchner’s adaptation, Hemingway’s statement can be taken to mean that even though a man may experience many personal tragedies, over time those struggles only make him stronger, and help to galvanize his character so that he will be able to face future misfortunes more stoically.

The closing scenes of Hotchner’s adaptation of the Nick Adams saga blend elements of Hemingway’s short stories, “Soldier’s Home” and “Big Two Hearted River.” In these stories, a young veteran must try to overcome what would be described today as post-traumatic stress. In the final scenes of *Adventures of a Young Man*, Nick returns home to find that his father has killed himself, and that his mother has carefully avoided telling him this truth. Nick takes Mrs. Adams’s choice to withhold this information as a personal affront, an affirmation that once again, his mother is trying to deny him full access to his manhood. When Nick goes to the cabin by the lake where his father shot himself, he finds a letter that his father wrote to him just before he died. However, upon inspection, Nick becomes furious when he determines that his mother has opened and read it, out of a jealousy that Dr. Adams cared more to write to Nick than to her.

This drama of the letter has a close parallel to Hemingway’s own life, which he related to Hotchner over the course of their friendship. As the author explained to his friend, “The thing that bothered me the most was that I had written him a letter that was on his desk the day he shot himself, and I think if he had opened that letter and read it, he wouldn’t have pulled the trigger” (qtd. in Hotchner 115). Although the contents of the letter are not known, it is highly possible to infer from it that the younger Hemingway’s

correspondence was some sort of encouragement to his father, or perhaps even a plea or plan for Dr. Hemingway to finally be able to stand up to his dominating wife and overcome the financial problems that plagued him during the months leading up to his death. Regardless, Hotchner's inclusion of the letter drama in the film serves as a final incorporation of the author's actual life into this adaptation of his semi-autobiographical character, Nick Adams. Its presence seems to suggest that both author and screenwriter believed in the power of words not only to convey information, but to heal psychological wounds and to even save lives.

The final images of *Adventures of a Young Man* capture Nick Adams as he returns to fish in the same river that he and his father enjoyed in the beginning of the film. This placement of fishing scenes as bookends for the tale of Nick's maturation prompts the audience to consider how much Nick has changed as a result of his experiences since the last time he was at the river. Once again in this closing sequence, Hotchner picks up on a common Hemingway theme that was best demonstrated in *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, which is that even though a man's life may change significantly in a mere matter of months, the natural world surrounding him remains constant, an eternal source of healing to which he can return when he needs strength. This sense of the restorative power of nature is one of Hemingway's most positive themes, and the ending of Hotchner's adaptation gives it equal weight to the author's more pessimistic viewpoints, most likely in an overall effort to offer catharsis to Hemingway fans still coming to terms with the author who, to the outside world, had seemed invincible.

Hemingway himself best articulated what evidently became A.E. Hotchner's approach to adapting his friend's work: "Fiction is inventing out of what you have"

(qtd. in Hotchner 199). In his adaptation of the Nick Adams stories, Hotchner reinvented the character using careful incorporation of historical and psychological details that revealed just as much about Hemingway and Hotchner as Nick Adams. Although the film suffers from some thematic inconsistencies, it stands today as one of the most deliberate efforts by a screenwriter to create a consistent, cohesive, conversion of Hemingway's incorporated works for the screen.

The Killers (1964)

Ernest Hemingway is, more than anything else, a modernist writer. As a result, any film production team seeking to adapt a Hemingway text for the screen must stay within the modernist ethos in order to create a work of cohesive cinema that adequately represents a combined artistic vision. However, in his revisionist adaptation of Hemingway's short story, "The Killers," director Don Siegel, using Gene Coon's screenplay, chooses to approach the author's heavily modernist subject matter from a clearly postmodern perspective. Unlike Robert Siodmak, who first adapted Hemingway's "Killers" for the screen in 1946, Siegel and Coon eschew almost any incorporation from the Hemingway biography or canon. Instead, they rely mostly upon postmodern methods of storytelling, which were becoming popular by the time of his adaptation in 1964, in an attempt to revise Hemingway's tale for a new generation. Unfortunately, the choice to remove the modernist ideological framework of the original and replace it with a more postmodern approach removes most of the symbolic significance present in

Hemingway's story and leaves behind a film that is philosophically almost the exact opposite of its textual inspiration.

In order to understand why Siegel and Coon's adaptation of "The Killers" is so different from Hemingway's story, it is first necessary to point out some of the key differences in modernism and postmodernism. In his essay, "Toward a Concept of Postmodernism," Ihab Hassan defines postmodernism as being the opposite of modernism by using a comparison chart. In this chart, Hassan claims that some of the key features of modernism include a sense of romanticism that nevertheless is symbolic and purposeful in working toward a certain goal (3). Modernists normally adhere to a master code of morality to achieve this goal, and if the order established by that morality is disturbed, they become paranoid, anticipating the negative intervention of fate by a wrathful God (Hassan 3). In contrast, Hassan claims that postmodernism's chief attributes are the exact opposite. For postmodernists, the world lacks a generalized sense of ordered morality, making attempts at forming a code of behavior futile (3). According to Hassan's reasoning, no definite sense of punishment or fate can be defined in a postmodern world, because the universe is perpetually in flux (3). What this dichotomy means in terms of the Hemingway canon is that the author's typical code hero behaves as a modernist. The Hemingway protagonist has a specific behavioral code to which he adheres, and this code usually causes his life to progress with a definite purpose toward some goal. However, if the Hemingway code hero allows himself to become distracted from his purpose in life, fate will somehow intervene to punish him. Eventually, his progress toward that goal will be derailed and he will perish.

In the original text of “The Killers,” the Swede, Ole Andreson, has somehow lost his direction in life, and is content to wait, even after Nick Adams warns him, for the gunmen to kill him as punishment. Robert Siodmak’s film adaptation of the story offers an explanation for Anderson’s choice to die. He has lost the love of his life, Kitty Collins, even after he compromised his moral code to keep her, by throwing a fight and taking blame for a theft she committed. The overall message expressed by both versions is that if a man sacrifices his principles in order to fulfill short-term goals and romantic desires, eventually fate will catch up with him, and he must be ready to accept his inevitable punishment when it comes. Both of these chronicles of the Swede’s demise are modernist in scope. However, as will be shown by comparison, Siegel and Coon’s adaptation reverses this very structured order of the Hemingway universe, to produce a film of “The Killers” in which random violence replaces the rightful justice of fate.

From the very beginning, director Don Siegel attempted to put distance between their production, Hemingway’s story, and its 1946 *film noir* adaptation. According to Stuart Kaminsky, Siegel wanted to reduce comparison of the two versions by calling his film *Johnny North*, but the studio, which owned the rights to the use of Hemingway’s name, refused” (131). The change of Hemingway’s lead character’s name from Ole “Swede” Andreson to Johnny North was only the first of many changes that differentiate the two film adaptations. Siegel’s film was originally intended to be the first television movie. However, the finished film was deemed by studio executives to be too violent, in light of then-recent circumstances and “because of President Kennedy’s assassination, it was pulled from television showing” (Kaminsky 131). Kaminsky goes on to explain how the film was a sign of its time:

By 1964, into the Cold War, after Kennedy's death, literature and film were dealing with men who had fallen back into corporate indemnification for protection against the confusion of the world. The films of the period increasingly dealt with the fight to salvage self-respect and identity, to find some meaningful antisocial values in the face of the corporate onslaught, the fear of the 1960s, of population fears, and of mass society. (130)

Of course, Hemingway would have had no way to predict the Cold War or the schizophrenic atmosphere of fear that it inspired in the public that America's time might be running out. The influence of these events on the 1964 adaptation is therefore out of context with the original.

This generalized fear about the imminent demise of America is given voice through Lee Marvin's character, Charlie. As Charlie, one of the killers from the title, assassinates each victim, he refuses to hear their dying declarations, saying simply, "I haven't got the time" (Siegel). This refrain is completely different in many ways from the Swede's often repeated phrase in the first *Killers* adaptation, which is "I did something wrong, once" (Siodmak). First, by taking the film's catchphrase from the Swede and giving it to Charlie, Siegel is effectively shifting the focus of his film away from the Hemingway code hero and toward a villainous Other. Throughout Siegel's film, the audience hears much more about Charlie's thoughts than Johnny North's, who is the Swede-replacement in the 1964 version. This alteration takes away the central focus of Hemingway's story and its original film adaptation, which is that a man resigns himself to a lifetime of guilt when he betrays his moral code. In contrast, the killer Charlie is a character who has no moral code, only a morbid curiosity about why his victim, Johnny North, was so ready to die. By replacing Hemingway's modernist master code with a postmodern chronicle of a hired assassin who lives in a perpetual state of randomly

violent anarchy, the film ceases to be a cohesive effort of creative collaborators, and instead becomes Siegel's commentary on his era.

This absence of a fundamental struggle between good and evil, which is present in all the Nick Adams stories, is made even worse by poor casting and costuming choices for Siegel's film. To begin with, the boyish Nick Adams character from the story and original film is replaced by an old blind man at the school for the blind where Johnny North teaches auto mechanics. Although both characters perform the same plot function of warning the Swede/North about the assassins who are coming for him, the meaning conveyed by the presence of each messenger is completely different. In the 1946 film, Nick Adams remains the apprentice hero from Hemingway's story, who learns by Ole Andreson's negative example what can happen to a man who compromises his morality in an effort to win a woman. In contrast, the 1964 film's old blind man appears quite senile, unable to learn any sort of lesson, or act as an apprentice. Instead, the old blind man seems to be a literal signification of Siegel's interpretation of a world that has gone blind to the fact that codes of morality even exist. Perhaps this is why Johnny North teaches in a school for the blind, because he wants to blind himself to his troubled past. If this is the case, Siegel's take on the character is almost the exact opposite of Hemingway's original Swede, whose obsessive self-consciousness would not let him forget any of his past.

Next, Gene Coon's choice to shift the script's chief point of view from Johnny North/Ole Andreson to Charlie Strom, the killer, seems to have more to do with comparative star power of the actors playing the roles than any thematic significance. Although arguably a more capable actor in general, John Cassavetes, who portrays

Johnny North, was not as big of a box office draw as Lee Marvin at the time *The Killers* was made. Clearly from the film, the more subtle Cassavetes is overshadowed in his scenes with Marvin, who gives one of his better performances as Charlie, the clinical, business-suited killer. This upstaging of North's troubles by Charlie's morbid curiosity about why his target succumbed to death without so much as a whimper makes the film more of a playful, mysterious, postmodern mind game than a carefully paced chronology of modern moral decline.

Angie Dickinson's character, Sheila Farr, who replaces Ava Gardner's Kitty Collins from the 1946 adaptation, is unfortunately miscast, improperly played, and ineffectively costumed. Despite her appeal as a movie star during her 1960s heyday, Dickinson simply does not fit the mold of the typical Hemingway woman. Dickinson's onscreen personality and appearance in the film is of a straightforward Hollywood star: fair-haired and fun-loving, with a light, uncomplicated manner. Dickinson's ray-of-sunshine persona is accentuated by the fact that her character is perpetually costumed in bright shades of yellow throughout the film. The problem with these choices is that the average Hemingway female is more of a *femme fatale*, a good girl gone bad because of her desire to live the high life, but who still desires to be thought of as the innocent, vulnerable person, very capable of falling in love at any moment, whom she is at heart. This feline duality of character is perfectly portrayed by Gardner in the original film, where she is costumed in sensual gowns that display her provocative dark side, and yet contrast sharply with her angelic face and girlish voice, which reveal Kitty's innocent heart within. Although Dickinson arguably could have given a similarly effective performance if directed differently, the far less complex gold-digger Shelia Farr whom

she portrays on screen is far from the type of woman a Hemingway hero would have been willing to die for.

Last, Ronald Reagan is completely miscast as villainous Jack Browning, the character who replaces Big Jim Colfax from the 1946 adaptation. To his credit, Reagan does the best he can with a role for which he is unsuited, choosing to play Browning with a very calm, detached air. However, the soon-to-be political figure, here in his final film role, had never played a villain before. Reagan seems to strain when scenes require him to slap around his girlfriend, Shelia, or to take on the part of dominant criminal mastermind over Charlie or Johnny. If he had been younger, Reagan might have been better cast as Johnny/Ole, given the actor's soft-spoken, somewhat resigned on-screen demeanor. However, his scenes playing against Lee Marvin's more formidable assassin, Charlie, stretch the boundaries of believability that this mild-mannered miscreant could organize any kind of crime.

Problematic casting aside, Siegel and Coon's *Killers* also suffers from a lack of subtle symbolism present in Siodmak's adaptation of the story. After the presence of a hero with a strong moral code, perhaps the second most dominant feature of any Hemingway work is the author's use of the iceberg theory. Generally speaking, Hemingway's lead characters have a tendency to erode gradually over time, as their conscience is steadily eaten away by small acts of immorality until their former self becomes unrecognizable. Yet, in the better film adaptations of Hemingway's works, the audience is usually provided with some sort of recurring visual symbol that stands as a static reminder of the man the fallen code hero used to be. In Siodmak's *Killers*, one of the most prominent symbols is Kitty Collins's handkerchief, on which is stitched a harp.

The handkerchief gains meaning as a symbol of the tragic romance between the Swede and Kitty. Since medieval times, the gift of a lady's handkerchief has signified the bond of courtship between the damsel-in-distress and her protective champion. In the 1946 *Killers*, these roles are fulfilled by Kitty, who continuously puts herself in perilous circumstances through her own greed and selfishness, and Ole, who must continuously rescue her from them. The harp stitched on the handkerchief carries additional meaning, that despite her claims of innocence, Kitty is actually a Circe figure, whose siren song will inevitably lead her lover Ole to ruin.

Since Siegel and Coon's revisionist adaptation represents a postmodern approach to Hemingway's tale, it is impossible to include any such recurring symbolic clues that might help the audience track the characters' moral demise. Most often, postmodernism is a non-symbolic approach to storytelling. Its open form leads to a more deconstructionist, Dadaistic use of visual metonymy, in which the traditional metaphorical value of recurring, romantic symbols has no place. As a result, Farr's romance with North seems much more detached and aloof than the intimacy shared by Collins and Anderson. One sign of this increased detachment is the difference in lyrics and delivery of the two signature songs in each film. In the 1946 film, Anderson falls in love with Collins after hearing her sing, "The More I Know of Love," whereas in the 1964 remake, an anonymous vocalist sings "Too Little Time," while North and Farr dance. The lyrics of Collins's song suggest an awareness of the paradoxical pleasure and pain of growing closer to someone, which foreshadows her tumultuous relationship with Anderson. However, the words of the song sung by a third party in the later film imply a more emotionally distant relationship, which will have insufficient time to develop given

the circumstances. Perhaps this is why Shelia Farr leaves behind no mementos for Johnny North. Unlike her earlier *femme fatale* analog Kitty Collins, Shelia Farr's more fast-paced, violent, postmodern world of the 1960s leaves no time for the development of a sentimental love story.

It is exactly Collins and Anderson's sort of quick-boiling/slow-simmering, romantic undercurrents that many of the most memorable love stories in the Hemingway canon are based upon. In the original texts and film adaptations of *The Sun Also Rises*, *A Farewell to Arms*, and *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, each love affair begins with a moment in which the code hero's male gaze is acknowledged and reciprocated by the female object of his affection. The remainder of each work is spent in unveiling the iceberg of unspoken feeling underneath the still waters of their unwavering glances that initially bind them together, even though waves of adversity threaten to tear them apart. Yet, rather than trusting the audience to read the actor's facial expressions and gestures to intuit the presence of something below the surface level of interaction, for some reason Siegel's film seems to feel the need to spell out with absolute clarity the reasons why Farr and North would continue to be attracted to one another. Instead of learning that Kitty Collins is a high-maintenance woman who cannot be controlled by any man merely from Ava Gardner's dress and body language, viewers of the 1964 *Killers* hear Sheila Farr say directly to Johnny North, "Nobody drives me," and "I like fancy things" (Siegel). This need to state the obvious plagues Siegel's adaptation, and removes much of the mysterious, unspoken allure of the 1946 film, not to mention defeating the whole purpose of Hemingway's iceberg theory, which is that emotions felt most deeply are often the ones best left unspoken.

The emphasis on action and plot movement in the 1964 *Killers* also leaves one other important Hemingway theme on the cutting room floor. That theme is best described by a favorite Hemingway quote from Turgenev: "The heart of another is a dark forest" (*Short Stories* xii). Throughout his life and work, Hemingway had a fear of darkness, both actual and metaphorical. In the case of his story, "The Killers," Hemingway expressed this fear through Ole Andreson's inability to sleep at night in a dark room, due to his restless conscience. In other works, such as *The Sun Also Rises*, Hemingway heroes like Jake Barnes also wrestle with their doubts in sleepless nights of paranoid self-analysis. Due to this persistent use of contrast between the clear and clouded sides of a man's soul, almost every film adaptation of a Hemingway work has used dim lighting and night scenes to correlate with times in which the hero's strength and confidence is at its lowest ebb.

However, in Siegel's *Killers*, every scene is as brightly lit as a sunny California day. Although Gene Phillips has argued that this is simply another of Siegel's ironies, that "evil is just as likely to strike in broad daylight as under the cover of darkness," this choice simply doesn't work, when one considers again the differences between Hemingway's modernist story versus Siegel's postmodern adaptation (77). Hemingway's use of darkness, as echoed in the 1946 film version, underscores places in the story during which Ole Andreson and the world have turned their backs on each other. In one particularly well-done scene from the 1946 adaptation, Burt Lancaster, playing the Swede, lies facing the wall in almost perfect darkness while his assassins sneak up to kill him. This scene, which is lifted directly from the story, demonstrates the complete internal darkness that the Swede feels in the moments just before his death. Ole Andreson

is a man who has betrayed not only his own moral code, but who has also sacrificed the ethics of his sport, boxing, in an effort to win the love of a woman who double-crosses him. In Hemingway's world, an athlete who rigs a sporting event is considered to be of the lowest possible moral character, a violator of the purity that only comes from fair competition. As such, he deserves to wallow in the dark night of his soul until he is executed, which is exactly what Lancaster's Swede does.

However, in Siegel and Coon's film, Johnny North is a poor substitute to display Hemingway's essential sporting man's struggle. Rather than making a definite choice to turn his back on the ethics of his sport, North is rendered unable to drive competitively by a random crash at the track, brought on by a few too many nights of partying late with Sheila Farr. North suffers very little, if any, of the existential crisis that the Swede does as a result of not being able to compete any longer in his chosen sport, due to his own moral failing. Only a brief mention of his regret is displayed in a scene with his mechanic, and this comes in a well-lit hospital room, where North is recuperating from his injuries surrounded by people to attend to him. This situation, of an athlete who, through little fault of his own, ruins his career but nevertheless still has at least one friend and a host of medical staff waiting to help him transition into another life, stands in stark contrast to Lancaster's Swede, who must face his world after boxing mostly in lonely darkness. In short, if Siegel was attempting to use postmodern irony to show that evil could occur in broad daylight, the result failed to achieve the emotional depth that only modernist darkness could convey.

Finally, it is important to note that although director Don Siegel is the production team member most responsible for the meaning lost through odd staging and

casting choices, screenwriter Gene Coon is the ultimate source of a script which purports to adapt a Hemingway story, when in reality it creates an entirely different work. Siegel, who went on to direct such films as the original *Dirty Harry* (1971) and John Wayne's final film, *The Shootist* (1976), certainly seems capable of creating a cinematic world in which a man who lives by a Hemingway-esque moral code slowly has his conscience eroded away through adverse life experience. However, Gene Coon, who is best known for his work on the original *Star Trek* series for television, spent the majority of his career in the far more restricted world of 1960s sci-fi television, in which budgetary concerns and ratings dictated production far more than creative collaboration. Considering that he was working within the confines of having to fill exactly ninety-three minutes of screen time, to allow room for commercials, it is a wonder that Coon's screenplay managed to come as close as it did to the themes of Hemingway's original story, even though it was ultimately banned from television because of excessive violence.

What remains of the 1964 *Killers* is best described by two then-contemporary film critics at the time of release. Writing for the *Christian Science Monitor*, Louis Chapin claimed, "It seems that everybody's supposed to know who Hemingway is, but nobody's really expected to read him" (qtd. in Laurence 178). Chapin's observation is accurate, considering that by 1964, Hemingway has been deceased for three years, but his highly-publicized reputation as a literary tough-guy had pervaded American culture so thoroughly that the mere mention of his name evoked a specific sort of manly-man image, regardless of the fact that the author's actual work was far more complex. Further, the *New York Times*'s Eugene Archer said, "Hemingway is the victim in all of this. All that remains of his original story is the author's name, big and enticing in the

advertisements, giving discredit where it is far from due” (qtd. in Laurence 178).

Archer’s comment is right on target. In the five decades since his death, Ernest Hemingway, the master stylist and emotionally sensitive writer, to quote Hank Williams, Jr., has been “standing in the shadows of a very famous man”: Ernest Hemingway the literary celebrity. Unfortunately, Siegel and Coon’s adaptation of *The Killers* is one of many instances in which the much bigger ouroboros of Hollywood has negatively eclipsed and overshadowed Hemingway’s actual work.

Islands in the Stream (1977)

Franklin J. Schaffner’s adaptation of Hemingway’s *Islands in the Stream* was the first film to be made from the author’s posthumously published works. The novel itself was issued from the author’s estate under the guidance of his widow, Mary Hemingway, who pieced it together from notes on what would have been his four-part epic of the sea. For the first time with the print edition of *Islands in the Stream*, a story about an aging artist, his blended family, and his attempts to cope with a lifetime of regrets, Hemingway seemed to be writing directly with an eye toward his legacy in a straightforward, yet sympathetic fashion. Given Hemingway’s choice to present his life through fiction this way, the choice of Schaffner and his production team to replicate this sentiment throughout their adaptation makes for a great deal of thematic consistency among collaborators, even if it does not produce a completely cohesive piece of cinema in the arc of its storytelling.

The genesis of this consistent vision begins with the friendship between Hemingway and Denne Petitcherc, the screenwriter who adapted *Islands in the Stream*. Petitcherc was the ideal man to play real-life apprentice hero to Hemingway's Papa persona. Petitcherc's father had abandoned him in a department store in his native Washington when the writer was only five. Later, Petitcherc claimed that this sense of abandonment greatly influenced his writing work, and caused him to write "stories with a strong father-son bond, because he had no idea what that was like" (Petitcherc). While still a young reporter for the *Miami Herald*, Petitcherc wrote Hemingway a fan letter defending the author's use of short, declarative sentences against a recent negative newspaper review. Petitcherc was shocked when Hemingway called him up in the newsroom a week later, with an invitation to go fishing in Cuba. The two would remain friends for life.

According to the *New York Times*' obituary of Petitcherc, on one of these fishing trips Hemingway mentioned an unfinished book that he thought would make a good movie. Nine years after Hemingway's death, that book would eventually become the novel *Islands in the Stream*. Hemingway, usually a very diligent writer, stalled out on completing revisions for the novel "perhaps because Hemingway found the work so intimately biographical that the task proved increasingly too difficult and delicate" (Phillips 148). What resulted in Petitcherc's film adaptation is the persistent feeling that the work primarily represents Hemingway, through his fictional alter-ego Thomas Hudson, in his favorite role as code hero, with his sons as apprentice heroes. What makes *Islands in the Stream* so interesting from a critical viewpoint is that the real-life

inspirations for these apprentice heroes were not only Hemingway's biological sons, but his artistic descendants, including Petitcherc and many others, as well.

One of these other intellectual descendants of Hemingway was the star of *Islands in the Stream*, George C. Scott. Growing up in Michigan, Scott wanted to become a writer like his idol, F. Scott Fitzgerald. However, after high school Scott joined the Marines, where his duties included several years as a gravedigger at Arlington Cemetery, where Scott claimed that he "picked up a solid drinking habit that stayed with me from then on" (Scott). After his Marine service ended, Scott attended the University of Missouri School of Journalism, where he also became interested in acting for the first time. During the subsequent career, Scott developed an on-screen reputation for playing gruff, tough characters, and an off-screen persona to match, which included a string of failed marriages and outbursts of temperament. In short, Scott's entire life leading up to his portrayal of Hemingway hero Thomas Hudson prepared him for the role, and made the actor a real-life apprentice hero who continued the Hemingway ouroboros on film.

Wisely, director Schaffner built upon these similarities between author and actor by having Scott costumed to look as much like Hemingway as possible. Throughout the film adaptation of *Islands*, Scott sports a large white beard, various guayabera shirts, and the sort of dark tan seen in photos taken of Hemingway during his Cuban years. Combined with Scott's natural gruff vocal delivery and mannerisms, the overall effect of this portrayal is circular. George C. Scott, inspired to become the artist he was by men like Hemingway, effectively becomes Hemingway onscreen by playing Thomas Hudson, a Hemingway character, who is merely an autobiographical avatar of the writer himself.

Despite the close personal and biographical parallels among author, screenwriter, and lead actor that helped create a moving portrayal of Thomas Hudson, many meaningful details in Hemingway's original novel were left out of the adaptation. Considering that Schnaffner's adaptation is otherwise a fairly faithful, conversionist narrative, these deletions and recharacterizations must be carefully examined. First, the majority of what has been called Hemingway's barroom dialog has been minimized or deleted. Mostly gone are the portions involving Thomas Hudson's reliance on drink and picking up random women in order to cope with the intense feelings of loneliness that he experiences while living by himself with his memories on the island. Only one red-headed woman, whose character goes unnamed in the film, is left in the early scenes to represent the type of life Hudson lives alone. In all likelihood, these omissions are made to maintain the focus of the central plot of the film, as adapted by Petitclerc, which is centered squarely on the relationship of Hudson to his three sons and the regret he feels at his inability to be more of a constant presence in their lives. Also, the preservation of Hemingway's posthumous image as a stoic, code hero himself might have been tarnished if Petitclerc had chosen to convert the text more closely. Considering the close, father-son dynamic between the two friends, Petitclerc would not have wanted to present that image.

However, the absence of Hudson's attempts at self-medication in the novel contribute greatly to the reader's sense of the character's intense sense of regret and despair, which so closely mirrored these same feelings in Hemingway's own life. Perhaps the most noticeable of these omissions, which could have provided more insight into the psychological state of both writer and character, is the absence of the conversations that Hudson has with his black-and-white cat, Boise. According to Carlos Baker's biography

of the author, Hemingway actually owned a tuxedo-marked cat named Boise, who lived with him as part of his innumerable collection of felines in Cuba. In the novel, Hudson referred to Boise's parallel as "Boy," partly as a shortening of the cat's name, and partly in honor of the fact that Hudson had acquired the cat when one of his two younger sons requested to be allowed to keep him after finding Boise as a kitten eating leftover shrimp in a bar. Of course, by the time that readers meet Boise, Hudson's sons have been killed, and the cat is one of the only things that Hudson has to remember them by. As a result, the first sixteen pages of the Cuban section of Hemingway's novel are spent in monologue, both internal and external, of Hudson talking to the cat about his regrets regarding the loss of his sons and wives. The despair that Hudson feels when he is unable to talk to any living being other than his cat, about the loss of his sons and his ex-wife in a car crash, is echoed in the ironic tone of these pages, as Hemingway records his alter-ego's thoughts:

Now the boy was gone and the kitten had grown into an old cat and had outlived the boy. The way he and Boise felt now, he thought, neither wanted to outlive the other. I don't know how many people and animals have been in love before, he thought. It probably is a very comic situation. But I don't find it comic at all.

(*Islands* 208)

Hemingway's portrayal of the bond between man and animal here is very typical of his later writing. In *The Old Man and the Sea*, a short novel which was pulled out of material originally intended from the same sea-epic series that spawned *Islands in the Stream*, the old fisherman Santiago shares a similar bond with the massive marlin that he wrestles in an epic battle. As the fish grows weary in the fight of its life against the fisherman, Santiago begins to project his own emotions onto the animal. The fishing line that binds the two together becomes an odd sort of paternal umbilical cord, as the psychological

struggles of man versus animal meld into a single whole, demonstrating Hemingway's ever-increasing awareness of the individual man's interconnectedness not only with the whole of humanity, but also with the entire natural world.

This same sentiment is echoed in *Islands in the Stream*, when Hudson's middle son, David, hooks a huge swordfish. The battle of wills that ensues between boy and fish reaches epic scale, with his father, Hudson, urging him on as code hero to the boy's apprentice. After a day's struggle, the fish breaks the line and gets away, leaving the exhausted boy to sob, "It sounds crazy, but in the worst parts, when I was the tiredest, I began to love him. I'm sorry we lost him, but I'm glad he got away" (Schaffner). In this scene, the boy David learns one of his first important lessons on the journey from boyhood to manhood in the Hemingway world: that nature and man are inextricably intertwined, and as one being dies, or suffers, so do we all. Young or old, all men's destinies are as ever-changing, yet just as eternal, as the sea.

This type of occurrence is also what Hemingway attempts to depict in the interaction between Thomas Hudson and his cat, Boise. Boy, as he is repeatedly called, becomes the mirror of Hudson's repressed grief not only for the loss of his sons, but also for the loss of his role as a father figure, or Papa, once those sons have exited his life. However, as the cat becomes almost a surrogate son and co-mourner in the passage, Boy may also be taken to represent the lost boyhood of both Hudson and his author, Hemingway. When he is with his sons in the novel, Hudson seems to be reliving his own boyhood through fishing, boating, and other father-son activities, which also parallel Hemingway's relationships with his own sons in most accounts of their lives together. Although much has been written about Hemingway's highly publicized Papa persona,

very little consideration has been given of the man who actually spent a great deal of his adulthood living out every adventure-loving boy's wildest dreams of going on safari, becoming a soldier, and seeing the world. Through Hemingway's depiction of the relationship between Hudson and his favorite cat, readers can sense the boyish Tom Sawyer-and-Huck Finn side of the author who often touted *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* as America's greatest book.

However, Hudson's dialog with Boise the cat also reflects the very grown-up feelings of romantic regret that the more adult side of Hemingway's personality had to come to terms with, as a direct result of his choices to live a man's life based upon reacting to immature impulses. Later in the scenes with Boise, Hudson expresses regret about how he has been unable to hold onto either of his wives, mostly because of his own selfishness and independence. Near the end of this sequence, Hemingway again records Hudson's desperate sense of loneliness as he struggles with the truth that the failure of his marriages has largely been his own fault:

"I never had a girl that waked when I did," the man said. "And now I haven't even got a cat that does. Go on and sleep, Boy. It's a damned lie, anyway. I had a girl that woke when I did and even woke before I did. You never knew her, you've never known a woman that was any damn good. You had bad luck Boise. The hell with it. "You know what? We ought to have a good woman, Boy. We could both be in love with her. If you could support her you could have her. I've never seen one that could live on fruit rats very long though." (*Islands* 216)

Notice that Hemingway's word choice to describe the females in his life changes over the course of this passage from "girl" to "woman." This change is significant, because it reflects the sense of maturity that the older Hudson has in retrospect when reflecting upon his past romantic relationships versus the way he felt as a younger man when he was

actually involved in them. Hudson's boyishness is reflected in the petty, immature resentment of never feeling as if a girl really understood him, recalled in the little action of waking up simultaneously. However, when Hudson tells Boy to go on back to sleep and confesses that it is a lie, because he knows that at least one girl did have this deep sense of connection with him, Hudson is effectively trying to put away his childish need to have a girl who could read his mind. The girl Hudson is referring to is his first wife, whose real-life parallel is obviously Hadley, Hemingway's first wife. Read with that fact in mind, the discussion between man and cat becomes yet another in Hemingway's long list of fictional apologies to the woman whom he most often regretted letting get away.

By the end of the passage, Hudson acknowledges that this sort of boy-and-girl love is irretrievably in the past, and that he and the cat, a representative of his young adulthood need to be understood, should compromise and find a more mature love. This change is reflected by Hudson's statement that both he, as a grown man, and Boy, or his boyish side, could be in love with a good, mature woman. Still, Hudson realizes that even in his adulthood, he still may lack the emotional maturity to support a real relationship with a grown woman, who needs more than basic affection, or fruit rats, to sustain her. By the end of Hudson's discussion with the cat, Hemingway has basically confessed through the character that he regrets that his own immaturity caused an end to what he believed to have been the love of his life, if he had only recognized it.

The omission of this passage with Boise the cat, and other scenes like it, causes the film adaptation of *Islands in the Stream* to lose some of its most powerful self-reflectiveness. This loss is significant for viewers familiar with Hemingway's biography, because it creates an ideal situation for fans to catch a glimpse of the author whose life

inspired his characters. To be fair, however, the film does attempt to retain some sense of this internal struggle through the emphasis placed on Audrey's portrait. Audrey, Hudson's first wife, is clearly intended to be the Hadley-equivalent in the adaptation. In the film, Hudson paints an actual portrait of Audrey, which he shows her when she arrives at his island home with the news that the only one of his three sons from their marriage has perished in the war. Although he collected and displayed a great deal of art at his home in Cuba, the only portrait Hemingway painted for Hadley was a very self-pitying one of himself. In hopes of winning back both Martha, his then-current wife, and the sympathy of Hadley, his first wife, Hemingway often wrote both women long letters about his lonely existence at his farm in Cuba while he was writing *Islands*. According to biographer Carlos Baker, "With Martha and his sons away, Ernest complained that the large and empty Finca was lonelier than limbo...He drank a great deal, listened to records on the Capeheart player, and then fell asleep on the floor while the cats hunted mice in his luxuriant beard. Such, at any rate, was the self-portrait he painted to engage Hadley's sympathy" (384-85). By including scenes of interaction between Audrey and Thomas Hudson, Petitclerc's script retains a great deal of the vulnerable intimacy of Hemingway's original work that shows audiences a very different side of the author than the popular press often portrayed.

Besides these psychological explorations into the characters of Thomas Hudson and his author, Schaffner's film uses a high level of incorporation to pull out many other relevant historical details from Hemingway's life that point to his construction of the original text. Gene Phillips states that Hemingway's choice to use his own sons as inspiration for Hudson's boys "make up a kind of collective apprentice hero" (149). This

interpretation makes sense when Hudson's three sons are considered as representing the three chief parts of a typical Hemingway apprentice hero, such as Nick Adams. The oldest son, Tom, represents Nick's sense of duty, both to his family and his country. David, Hudson's middle son, demonstrates Nick's grit and determination. The youngest, Andrew, most personifies Nick's paradoxical struggle between innocence and darkness within himself, which he must eventually outgrow on his way from apprentice to Hemingway code hero.

Most likely, Hemingway drew these characterizations from his own three boys, Jack, Patrick, and Gregory. Jack, Hemingway's only son from his first marriage to Hadley Richardson, was the family war hero, serving in military intelligence during World War Two. However, unlike his fictional counterpart, Jack survived the war. Middle son Patrick followed closely in his father's footsteps as an outdoorsman, becoming a professional safari guide and big game hunter as an adult. In the film, his fictional counterpart David foreshadows Patrick's actual life in his epic struggle against a huge swordfish that screens like a much younger version of *The Old Man and the Sea*. Ironically, youngest son Gregory, Hemingway's second and final child by second wife Pauline Pfeiffer, never seemed to transition out of his father's paradoxical boyhood characterization, and he died in jail after a tumultuous life that included multiple marriages, brushes with the law, problems with drugs, and a sex change operation.

Still, even though they became estranged late in life, Gregory Hemingway always considered his father to be a very loving man and agreed with his portrayal as youngest boy Andrew in *Islands in the Stream*. In her memoir of life with one-time husband Gregory, Valerie Hemingway repeated Ernest's description of his youngest son's

character, which Gregory used for his own epitaph: “He was a devil too, and deviled both his older brothers, and he had a dark side to him that nobody except Thomas Hudson could ever understand. Neither of them thought about this except that they recognized it in each other and knew it was bad and the man respected it and understood the boy's having it” (214). What makes Hemingway’s choice to replicate his own sons so closely in *Islands in the Stream* so interesting is that not only do the boys represent the three parts of Hemingway’s typical apprentice hero, but also the three sides of the author himself. If one had to sum up the personality of Ernest Hemingway in a few words, it would be difficult to say more than he was a man with a high sense of duty to his country and family, who loved the thrill of adventure and the outdoors, but who also struggled his entire life to reconcile the darker and more innocent sides of his character. Of course, this description could be used to explain the character of most middle-class American men. Perhaps this blended characterization is the key to Hemingway’s enduring appeal: he is an American Everyman to the exponential power.

The problem for a filmmaker, though, with casting Hemingway as Thomas Hudson and in turn Hudson as Everyman, is that it is virtually impossible to portray the demise of such a larger-than-life representative personage. One death cannot stand for every death, and yet some sort of ending must be made. This problem is the most likely reason that in both the novel and its film adaptation, the ending seems disjointed and abrupt. However, it could be argued that the only way to end such a life is through circumstances that are almost too random to be believable. Certainly, this is the way that *Islands’* director, Franklin Schaffner, chose to end his most notable film, *Patton*. In his collaboration with actor George C. Scott in the title role, Schaffner’s version of the

seemingly invincible general's life ends when Patton is killed in a freak automobile accident. After making it through numerous harrowing experiences on the battlefield, it seems a cruel, yet fitting, irony that the General's life would end when his duties were complete, and when he least expected it. The inference seems to be that if General George Patton had to face Death head on, he would have been able to defeat it. Instead, Death had to sneak up on him, when he least expected it, similarly to the way the hyena, a representative of Death, sneaks up on Harry in Hemingway's short story, "The Snows of Kilimanjaro."

Hemingway seemed to agree with this sort of ending for a code hero that "death was just a dirty trick," which happened just as duties were completed and a time of well-deserved rest drew near (*Farewell*). Otherwise, the code hero, always prepared in battle-ready mode, would remain invincible. The death that Hemingway devised for Thomas Hudson, aboard his own boat and under enemy fire while completing a dangerous mission, seems more in keeping with the author's public persona than the one he created for himself through his suicide in 1961. Yet, given reports of Hemingway's daring exploits during his patrols of the Caribbean aboard the *Pilar* and also his time in self-directed military service in Europe when he was supposed to merely have been covering World War Two for the press, one has to wonder whether the author would have preferred a more Thomas Hudson-esque ending for his actual life. Regardless, viewers of the film adaptation of *Islands* who are well-educated enough in Hemingway history to know about Hemingway's WWII service are invited to remember their hero's death as similar to Patton's: a quick, simple coda after his duties were done, not by his own hand, leaving a sea of unanswered questions behind. Even though it comes across upon first

viewing as abrupt, Petitclerc's choice to preserve Hemingway's disjointed final chapter in the life of Thomas Hudson works when considered as a parallel intended to incorporate George C. Scott's portrayal of the demise of General Patton inside the circle of the Hemingway celebrity ouroboros.

Last, the film adaptation of *Islands* can be read not only as Hemingway's final attempt to explain to his readers through fiction what he had learned over a lifetime of experience, but also a summation of how Hollywood and the general public chose to receive this explanation. In the final lines of the film, Joseph, Thomas Hudson's friend and house servant, tells the dying Hudson, "I love you, you son of a bitch, you never understood about anybody that loves you" (*Islands*). After viewing the film, audiences can see that this utterance is true. The double tragedy in the film ending of *Islands* is that it confirms that both Hudson and Hemingway lived their lives so intently bent on trying to do things that would win the admiration of the world at large that neither ever stopped long enough to notice that they had already won the love of those closest to them. The inconsistencies in the film's storyline mirror their internal struggles. Sadly, both kept fighting battles for self-acceptance long after the war for public esteem had been won.

The Old Man and the Sea (1999)

From time to time in Hemingway criticism, attention is paid to the author's inspirations from the visual arts. Very often, this attention is directed at how the work of painter Paul Cezanne influenced Hemingway's writing style. According to Meyly Chin

Hagemann, the genesis of this association stems from Hemingway's own admission in *A Moveable Feast*:

I was learning something from the painting of Cezanne that made writing simple true sentences far from enough to make the stories have the dimensions that I was trying to put in them. I was learning very much from him but I was not articulate enough to explain it to anyone. Besides, it was a secret. (87)

Considering Hemingway's claimed interest in the visual arts, it is surprising that only one animated film adaptation of his work has ever been made. That film, Alexander Petrov's forty-minute adaptation of *The Old Man and the Sea* (1999), is truly extraordinary. An Oscar-winner for Best Animated Short, Petrov's film is intriguing not only for its unique, hand-painted, oil-on-glass technique, but also for how it seems to reconnect Hemingway with his inspirations from Cezanne and with the common people and landscapes that the author strove so earnestly to portray with absolute realism. What results is a remarkably cohesive work of cinema, that incorporates the collaborative creative visions of Hemingway, Petrov, and Cezanne, enclosing all three men in a sort of universal artistic ouroboros.

As a young man in Paris, Hemingway was a steady museum-goer, particularly to displays of Paul Cezanne's works. Lillian Ross noted in her *Portrait of Hemingway*, "I can make a landscape like Mr. Paul Cezanne. I learned how to make a landscape...by walking through the Luxembourg Museum a thousand times with an empty gut" (60). Always proud of his lean years and how they connected him with the common man, Hemingway sought in many of his works to depict the men whom he felt were the salt of the earth as close to the earth itself. The ultimate articulation of this artistic mindset was in the final novel published during Hemingway's lifetime, *The Old Man and the Sea*. In

the novel, the hero, Santiago, is not simply a common fisherman, but a symbol for the constant struggle between human determination and the uncontrollable natural world. Yet the question remains as to exactly what types of stylistic secrets that Hemingway learned from Cezanne were incorporated into his works. In his article on Hemingway and Cezanne, Ronald Berman has claimed that evidence of this influence can be categorized into three basic ideas: "First, that the painter's intellectualism was an important part of his total effect. Second, that he provided a new kind of technical language for art. Third, that the artist was himself a model for independent thought" (25). The remainder of this discussion will show how Petrov's film adaptation of *The Old Man and the Sea* validates Berman's three theories, by tracing common themes and origins in the men's works.

Beginning at the end of the chain of creative intellectualism, it is important to examine the background of Petrov's production first. Before the production of *Old Man*, Petrov was widely known in Russia for his unique style of hand-painted animation, which was in effect a new technical language. When Petrov became interested in producing an adaptation of Hemingway's novel, Martine Chartrand, a producer at the National Film Board of Canada, convinced the animator to produce a proposal and storyboard for her to market to gain production money. Pascal Blais Productions, a Canadian animation company that normally specialized in commercial work, became interested in the project and agreed to produce it. Immediately afterward, Bernard Lajoie, co-founder of the company, approached some Japanese investors to secure additional funding, and found IMAGICA Corporation willing to participate on one condition: that the film be produced in an IMAX-friendly format. Lajoie designed a special camera and studio so that Petrov could complete the project using his unusual techniques. The first of its kind, the new

studio at Pascal Blais became the model for Petrov's innovative, independent art form. In a study of the film, Alyson Carty and Chris Robinson describe Petrov's method:

Petrov works on different levels of glass, animating a character on one level, while simultaneously animating a background on another and so on. Light is shone through the levels of glass and a photograph is taken. Petrov then manipulates the slow drying oil paint and another photograph is taken. This process was repeated 29,000 times to complete *The Old Man and The Sea* and the utmost accuracy was essential.

Petrov's painstaking techniques were the result of years of classical training at the Vonorezh Art School and film classes at the Moscow Institute. Feeling that his work had a more truthful, connectively visceral quality the closer he became physically to his media, "Mr. Petrov long ago forsook brushes for his own hands: with a few deft movements of his fingers, thumbs, or even the heel of his palm, he creates faces, hands, legs, trees, sky, and the shifting moods of a Russian lake during the spring thaw or a Caribbean sea at sunset" (Bohlen). According to Bernard Lajoie, Petrov's unconventional style created the sensation of "sitting in a museum looking at a painting, and suddenly the painting tells us story" (qtd. in Bohlen). This sensation of painting such a realistic animated film seems to be at last the ultimate articulation of what both Cezanne and Hemingway were trying to achieve: art that was so true that it no longer imitated life, but actually came to life.

In order to understand the connection between Cezanne and Hemingway, it is first necessary to compare the biographical parallels between the two artists that provide the underpinnings for their work. According to Mary Cassatt and other contemporaries in the art world, Cezanne, in real life, had a contradictory personality that was similar to Hemingway's:

As Cassatt observed, there was something surprising, even contradictory, about Cézanne. He spouted profanities yet could recite long passages of Virgil and Ovid in Latin. He scorned priests but went faithfully to Mass. He hated the official Paris Salon but kept submitting his work to its judges. He haunted the Louvre, copying sculptures and paintings into his sketchbooks, yet critics said he couldn't draw. He was obsessed with tradition and obsessed with overturning it. He felt himself a failure . . . and the best painter of his time. (Trachtma 1)

A wayward Catholic, Hemingway was a writer whose editors often had to remove profanity from his works, yet he revered the classics. Hemingway kept company with the Lost Generation writers of Paris, and then made fun of them in his works and memoirs. Last, Hemingway claimed to draw inspiration for his writing from the Impressionist painters, even though contemporaries like William Faulkner often chastised his spare style. Perhaps most similar of all, Hemingway strove constantly to be the voice of his generation, while struggling with ever-increasing paranoia and self-doubt as he aged. If he were looking for artists with similar backgrounds to serve as models for his own work, Hemingway would have found much to relate to with Cezanne.

Also like Hemingway, Cezanne was committed to capturing the natural world and its common people, or in his words, “to make paint bleed” (qtd. in Trachtma 1). Particularly, Cezanne was a rebel in his early days, who wanted to shock the Paris art world with “a style that he called *couillarde*, or ballsy, suited to his early subjects – murders, rapes, and orgies. The young Cezanne wanted to make people scream...He attacked on all fronts, drawing, color, technique, proportion, subjects...he savagely demolished everything one loves” (Trachtma 1). For those familiar with Hemingway's early writings, this approach sounds very familiar. Hemingway lambasted literary mentor Sherwood Anderson with a mock-romantic parody novel, *The Torrents of Spring* (1926),

which took its title and subject matter from a Russian writer whom Hemingway admired and often imitated, Ivan Turgenev. Further, Hemingway's other early novels, such as *The Sun Also Rises* (1926), featured plotlines centered on illicit love affairs and other subject matter that was deemed by Hollywood film producers to be too explicit to represent visually for almost three decades after publication. In short, Hemingway was in many ways his generation's equivalent to Cezanne, albeit in the verbal arts instead of the visual.

These parallel worldviews led both Hemingway and Cezanne to create work that was stylistically similar in its Impressionistic simplicity. Known for his depictions of the outdoor landscape and its ability to convey in literature the characters' emotions, Hemingway is often supposed to have drawn some of his artistic interest in depicting an emotive natural world from Cezanne. According to fellow writer D. H. Lawrence, Cezanne, like Hemingway, "built up a landscape essentially out of omissions" in a way that scholar Max Nanny claimed "has much in common with Hemingway's iceberg technique of leaving out whole contexts of meaning" (80). Also Nanny goes on to state that "Cezanne recommended that in painting nature ought to be recomposed 'by means of the cylinder, the sphere, the cone' that is, by means of basic geometrical shapes" (80). Taken together, what this means is that Cezanne and Hemingway shared the belief that distilling their respective art forms to the simplest building blocks, such as rudimentary shapes or simple words, was often the best way to convey truth about the world in its purest form.

Cezanne and Hemingway's shared reliance on simplicity of form to convey realism and naturalism can be seen clearly throughout Alexander Petrov's animated adaptation of *The Old Man and the Sea*. Petrov's adaptation, despite its unconventional

method, is clearly an example of the conversionist style of film adaptation. Although much is omitted for the sake of fitting into under an hour of running time, not a single line of dialogue in Petrov's film is different from Hemingway's original novel. Further, Petrov's painting style is very Impressionistic, using short strokes and finger-blending of colors to capture the lightness and darkness that create emotion in his scenes, much in the same ways as Cezanne did. Also, Petrov was not afraid to employ Cezanne's shocking use of color contrast to accurately portray less-than-savory subject matter. The scene in which Santiago discovers the extent of damage that the sharks have wreaked on the marlin's bloody corpse is made even more poignant by Petrov's use of stark red color for the marlin's spilled blood against a background of calm green and blue seas. This same red hue was used on Santiago's ragged hands, enhancing audiences' emotional connection between the wounds of fisherman and the destroyed brother he loved, but nevertheless killed.

Perhaps the most interesting visual metaphor in Petrov's film, in terms of connecting his adaptation to Cezanne's painting style through Hemingway's novel, is the continued employment of circles to suggest the narrative thread connecting Santiago's memories of the past to his present struggle with the marlin. As stated above, Cezanne frequently employed basic geometric shapes to suggest interconnection among natural objects. Hemingway repeats Cezanne's stylistic choice by staging Santiago's struggle with the marlin, and later the sharks, as a continual series of circles. Hemingway begins with a metaphorical circle. Santiago eats a bait fish for strength so that he can hold onto the great marlin until the fish tires and he can draw it close enough to the boat to stick in the harpoon. By replacing the marlin's link in the food chain with its fisherman,

Hemingway further suggests that Santiago and the marlin are brothers in nature, even though the old man must eventually kill the fish. The marlin's death circles comprise the bulk of Santiago's battle with the fish. Hemingway's last literal employment of circles in the text comes when Santiago sees the sharks "swimming in circles" as they close in to tear apart the dead marlin (*Old Man* 114). All that remains in the center of the circle when the sharks are finished is a half-fish and a half-ruined fisherman with him.

Returning to a metaphorical use of circles to complete the sequence, Santiago apologizes to the fish, saying:

Half fish...fish that you were. I am sorry that I went too far out. I ruined us both. But we have killed many sharks, you and I, and ruined many others. How many did you ever kill, old fish? You do not have that spear in your head for nothing
(*Old Man* 115)

Hemingway's choice to have Santiago state explicitly that he and the fish are alike in their combat methods and natural struggle against life's adversities, represented by the sharks, completes the metaphorical circle of connection begun when the fisherman ate the bait fish intended for the marlin. To paraphrase Christopher Marlowe, that which creates both man and fish, namely the courage to face any opponent regardless of the odds, is what destroys them.

Petrov's film goes even further with Hemingway's circle metaphor, by depicting through an actual series of brilliantly colored circles the patterns of the old man's memory as he dozes while the dying fish completes his revolutions around the boat. Petrov's camera circles through the rotations of a sea bird that Santiago watches in the sky and then dives down under the water to capture the circling marlin. Next, Petrov's circles widen to enclose the old man's memories of lions playing on the beach and his

triumphant arm-wrestling contest before pulling back to Santiago in his skiff, who thinks, just before the marlin jumps to signal their final battle, “I had rather be that beast down there, in the darkness of the sea” (Petrov). These scenes demonstrate Petrov’s awareness of Hemingway’s theme in *The Old Man and the Sea* that the struggles of men and nature are all interconnected in the grand scheme of life.

In their review of the film, Carty and Robinson draw further parallels between the works of Hemingway and Petrov on the story of Santiago the fisherman, using the concept of hands to indicate the two creative tasks, saying:

It's all in the hands. In 1952, 53-year-old Ernest Miller Hemingway of Oak Park, Illinois shrugged off the decay of his own weary, abused body, an increasingly scarred mind, and the pulsating aches of his five tools of anguished expression to compose his tale of an old Cuban who battles his own decay, a crippled left hand, and a giant marlin. In 1997, 40 year old Alexander Petrov of Prechistoe, Russia struggled against a strange environment (Canada), a new and intimidating technology (IMAX), and with the use of his finger tips, transformed Hemingway's ode to masculinity from splashes of oil paint into a vibrant, coherent, fresco in motion.

This metaphorical approach to criticism of the adaptation is appropriate because both men used a very hands-on approach to make their works as realistic as possible. Whereas Hemingway’s knowledge of the daily struggles of the working class in Cuba was based on his interaction with blue-collar people while living at the Finca Vigia, Petrov’s understanding of individual human struggle came from a lifetime of working in Russia, another Communist society with a history of oppressing its working class. The fact that Petrov was able to so easily comprehend and translate Hemingway’s work, based merely from reading the novel, comparing it to his own experience, and then applying that

understanding to create his own adaptation demonstrates the universality of Hemingway's themes and cements the international importance of the novel.

This is not to suggest, however, that Petrov was alone among Russians in his artistic interest in Hemingway. For decades, Russian literary scholars have wrestled with how best to interpret America's premier writer about the importance of stoic individualism within the context of communist ideology. Not surprisingly for a highly agrarian country, many Russian critics have praised Hemingway's treatment of Santiago's feelings of connectedness to the natural world of the sea and its creatures. However, others, such as Ivan Kashkin, the foremost Russian Hemingway critic, have spoken harshly about *The Old Man and the Sea* for Hemingway's choice to ignore "important post-war problems," and the author's "excessive preoccupation with technique, reliance on inner dialogue, and even impressionism" (qtd. in Prizel 445). According to Yuri Prizel, Russian critics during the Soviet years almost unanimously spoke out against Hemingway's works for failing to address political concerns of the proletariat more directly. Yet, the proletariat itself seemed to view Hemingway's treatment of Santiago's struggle as a common man against an inhospitable world more favorably. As an example of favorable public opinion of Hemingway's treatment of Santiago as the symbol of Everyman, Prizel cites an open letter of three students from Moscow University to the Soviet Press, published in 1956, saying:

The Old Man and the Sea made a very favorable impression on them. Their interpretation was somewhat naïve and standard. Santiago, for instance, signified for them the struggling workers, while the sharks were evil forces (one thinks immediately of the "sharks of capitalism" a famous slogan of Stalin's days). Their only complaint was that the author did not express his own opinion of Santiago and instead let the reader decide for himself whether to like him or not. (446)

Apparently, from this letter, it seems that Hemingway's themes were able to be interpreted as favorable to Soviet ideology, even if the author's iceberg theory approach to politics was not as overt as the average Soviet citizen was used to hearing.

Since 1970, Russian literary critics have sought to emphasize the lyricist and humanist qualities in Hemingway's novel more than they have attempted to pigeonhole the work as a testament to a lonely man facing an inhospitable, capitalist world. As Kashkin stated in his later career, "Hemingway was not a bard of death and violence, as Western critics claim, but a sad, tragic humanist" (qtd. in Prizel 450). This ability to appreciate the individual tragedy of human life has since surpassed uncovering hidden political ideology as the primary way of interpreting Hemingway in Russia today.

What makes this critical approach relevant to a study of Petrov's adaptation of *The Old Man and the Sea* is that it is highly ironic, considering Petrov's reception in Russia both before and after he received an Academy Award for the film. Before receiving an Oscar, arguably the world's most capitalistic symbol of artistic achievement in the film arts, Petrov's work was largely ignored in his home country, and the filmmaker found it virtually impossible to secure funding for his projects without leaving Russia. However, after receiving the validation of an American award, "he was almost crushed on the platform at the Yaroslavl train station by a crowd of friends, fans, television cameras, and flower-wielding officials" (Bohlen). Petrov's response to the overwhelming reception had to be voiced by his wife, Natasha, because the filmmaker was too shy to address the crowd. She reportedly began with an obvious question: "Now you are falling all over us, but where were you before when we needed you?" (Bohlen). After recovering from the initial shock of his hometown's changed opinion about the

value of his work, Petrov has since been more able to reflect on the changes in his public reception in Russia:

In the eyes of a simple people, it is all a victory for Russia, something like a prize for football, or a sports prize...Russia has gone through a long period when its authority was weakened, and people feel bad about that. That's why any prize, any victory, revives them. For me, this was all unexpected. I accept the Oscars with irony – no, that's the wrong word, with understanding. It is an exceptional prize, but it is not something on a state level. (qtd. in Bohlen)

Fittingly for someone well-versed in the Hemingway oeuvre, Petrov chose a sportsman's metaphor to describe his victory in the field of artistic achievement. The real irony of Petrov's film is that the animator's choice to adapt Hemingway's work about how the individual efforts of a common man can make him seem heroic actually transformed the filmmaker himself into a national hero.

Yet, like Hemingway's hero, Santiago, who landed the giant marlin only to lose his prize to sharks before returning home, Petrov's Oscar has proven to be an empty award in some respects. Neither before nor after receiving the Oscar has Petrov been able to secure any funding from Russian investors for his projects. At present, production on Petrov's latest proposed film, an adaptation of a Russian novel, has been halted due to lack of funding. Even so, like a typical Hemingway code hero, Petrov has accepted Russia's unwillingness to promote its foremost animator with quiet stoicism. Like Santiago, who mentored the young boy Manolin in the art of fishing, Petrov volunteers his time teaching children the craft of animation at the Sea Gull Film Club in Yaroslavl, while waiting for his next big financing fish to shoal in. When asked if he plans to work abroad again, perhaps in Canada or the United States, where he has been able to find financial and critical success in the past, Petrov has denied the possibility, saying "I

always wanted to come home. And I did. That seems to mean something to people, that I returned because it means there is something to return to. I hope it was the right decision” (Bohlen). Given Petrov’s choice to assume the role of Russia’s spokesperson through his work, one cannot help but believe that he will, like Santiago, finally find luck again.

Regardless, audiences are lucky to have this excellent adaptation of Hemingway’s novel. The best film adaptations are those which cause the readers to think even more deeply about the work than ever before, to consider new ways of thinking about an old text because of visual cues provided by the filmmaker that offer a new way of seeing the original. Petrov’s version of *The Old Man and the Sea* is a cohesive piece of highly incorporative cinema that not only represents a consistent artistic vision between filmmaker and author, but also between author and his previous visual inspirations. In Petrov’s adaptation, a painted-on-glass animated film imitates Hemingway’s novel, which was written in a style that imitated Cezanne’s still paintings. This concentric circle of inspiration creates a constructive ouroboros, as the great fish of artistic endeavor and her generations of fisherman continue their perpetual struggle in pursuit of one common goal: a realistic, truthful portrayal of man’s ability to control his place in the universe.

The Garden of Eden (2008)

Although Ernest Hemingway began what has become his final novel in 1946, *The Garden of Eden* was not published until 1986, forty years after his death. Within the context of the Hemingway canon, *Garden* is an anomaly. The novel gives very little consideration of some of Hemingway’s most common themes, such as war or mainstream

masculinity. Instead, the novel focuses on Hemingway's less-considered territory of defining gender roles and the maturation that results from such exploration. However, *Garden* subverts the author's traditionalist views on these topics and replaces them with a much more complicated ideology and plot that is centered on the female protagonist, Catherine, as she redefines her sexual identity through lesbian and bisexual relationships. This shift challenges long-accepted critical interpretations of Hemingway's works. As Robin Silbergleid explains, "if Hemingway has long been taken to task for alleged misogyny – for creating female characters that are weak, subservient, and downright uninteresting – Catherine's struggle provocatively opens up the novel to feminist analysis" (101). The fact that Hemingway's unfinished, long-unpublished novel seems sympathetic to Catherine's explorations forces critics today to reconsider preconceived notions about the author's views on sexuality as much more feminist than ever supposed.

It makes sense that the Hemingway estate would have suppressed publication of *The Garden of Eden* for several decades, considering that readers might reject such a novel from America's foremost literary authority on traditional masculinity. However, in today's more open-minded socio-cultural climate, not only has the novel found a considerable audience, but its themes seem very timely for adaptation into film. Unfortunately, director John Irvin's adaptation of *The Garden of Eden* (2008) failed to find an audience, grossing only \$22,083 in a three-week, independent release and receiving mostly negative reviews (*IMDB.com*). The problem with the film is not its subject matter, which would have been too controversial for a mainstream film adaptation in earlier decades (but which should have found an audience among the millennial generation), but instead an over-reliance on Hemingway's dialogue, which results in

stilted performances from all actors in the production. As such, the film stands as a testament to how a faithful, conversionist adaptation can create a non-cohesive piece of cinema that makes a novel seem dated, when in actuality it was ahead of its time.

In written form, *The Garden of Eden* was highly incorporated with many details from Hemingway's life. According to daughter-in-law, Valerie Hemingway, the author created many of the details about the protagonist, troubled writer David Bourne, from his everyday life:

Like David, every morning Ernest got out of bed, sharpened those pencils, took out his copybooks, and wrote, wrote happy, tired, hungover, ebullient, depressed, whatever his mood it was cast off, discarded, and as the creative juices began to flow, he entered another world and if we were lucky and it was good enough he left it to us to enjoy forever. (108)

To its credit, Irvin's film adaptation goes a long way to uphold Hemingway's dedication to the cathartic values of persistent engagement in the writing craft. Through David Bourne's voiceovers and writing scenes in the film, audiences are allowed a glimpse into how Hemingway may have relied on his work to help him define a sense of masculine identity and purposefulness.

Yet, Hemingway's writing rituals are not the only parts of the author's biographical life reflected in both his novel and Irvin's film. One of the most traumatic events of Hemingway's early career occurred when his first wife, Hadley, lost all the manuscripts to his earliest collection of short stories in a Paris train station. To the young Hemingway, the loss of this briefcase full of manuscripts represented not only the loss of his life's work up to that point, but what the author apparently perceived as a breach of trust between himself and his wife, who had failed to protect the work that meant so much to him. As Valerie Hemingway explains, "Hadley was devastated, but Ernest was

even more so. It was a situation akin to when a couple loses a child. There is a pervasive unspoken rebuke that eventually undermines and erodes the marriage” (108).

Hemingway’s sense of devastation from this event was reflected many times in his later writing, but nowhere with as much acrimony as in *The Garden of Eden*.

In the novel, David Bourne’s wife, Catherine, intentionally burns both the manuscripts for his upcoming novel and the press clippings from his previous one. Catherine’s reason for this action seems to stem from jealousy and a loss of control over her husband. Although Catherine, like Hemingway’s first two wives, supported her husband financially so that he could write, she became resentful at the notoriety he gained as a result of his writing. In what appears to be an effort to regain a sense of dominance over her husband, Catherine has an affair with another woman. At first, Catherine flaunts Marita in front of David. Later, Catherine offers her to him as a substitute wife, thereby freeing herself of what she perceives to be her wifely obligations so that she can engage in further sexual experimentation without remorse. When David and Marita come to prefer each other to her, Catherine punishes them, by destroying what both of them love most: David’s work and the public acclaim that he gained from it. Given her complex scheme of revenge, Catherine should not be read or screened as a simple translation of Hemingway’s animosity toward his first wife for the loss of his early manuscripts. Instead, Catherine is better considered as a composite of the author’s conflicted feelings toward three different women: Hadley Richardson, Pauline Pfeiffer, and Zelda Fitzgerald.

Like David Bourne, Hemingway began an extramarital affair with a fashionable, rich, androgynous woman while he was in the process of writing his second novel. The

parallels between Pauline Pfeiffer, Hadley's wealthy best friend, and the fictional character, Catherine Bourne, were obvious to those close to Hemingway. As Valerie Hemingway states:

Catherine had some of the element of Pauline in her, an heiress, whose money freed the writer to live a more extravagant and carefree life...Pauline had experimented with dyeing her hair blonde in 1929 both as a declaration of sexual freedom and as a birthday surprise for Ernest. Catherine was also reminiscent of Hadley, the wife who loses her husband's precious stories. The loss of the writer's work through his wife's actions was an experience Hemingway would never forget and probably never forgive. (109)

Both during and after his marriage to second wife, Pauline Pfeiffer, Hemingway expressed a great deal of regret over leaving Hadley for her best friend, Pauline. This sense of remorse can be sensed even from the title of his novel, *The Garden of Eden*, which begs the inference that a state of happiness between a couple will inevitably be destroyed when they succumb to temptation. What makes the novel critically interesting, in light of Hemingway's biography, is how the author displaces his real-life guilt through making the fictional wife, Catherine, the cause of David's moral decline. By making Catherine the "Devil," as she is so often called in the novel, Hemingway seems to argue that he was an innocent man who, like David Bourne, was lured into an extramarital affair through the sinister machinations of his wife and her lover.

Of course, this attempt is transparently false, and Hemingway must have known it would appear so, judging from the conversation between Bourne and his friend in the novel, Colonel John Boyle. When Bourne reveals his willingness to engage in an open marriage so that Catherine can explore her bisexuality, the Colonel says, "Remember everything is right until it's wrong. You'll know when it's wrong...If you don't it doesn't matter. Nothing will matter then" (*Garden* 65). A few pages later, after Bourne and

Catherine have bobbed and bleached their hair to match, Bourne looks at himself in the mirror and thinks, “You like it. Remember that. Keep that straight. You know exactly how you look and how you are,” after which Hemingway adds the editorial comment, “Of course, he did not know exactly how he was. But he made an effort aided by what he had seen in the mirror” (*Garden* 85). From this exchange, readers can draw the provoking conclusion that both character and author were lying to themselves about their respective marriages and their roles in the destruction of those relationships. Of course, the psychologically intriguing, yet unanswerable question is exactly why such lies were maintained. Perhaps if Hemingway had finished *The Garden of Eden*, a more definite conclusion could be reached. As it stands, the behavior of the fictional character Bourne and his real-life inspiration reads simply as the efforts of both men to reaffirm their senses of identity as honorable men when the ways in which they chose to deceive themselves proved otherwise.

Returning to the idea of Catherine as a composite of women Hemingway knew, it is important to consider not only Hemingway’s guilt concerning his relationships with Pauline and Hadley, but also his general disdain for the relationship between his friend Scott Fitzgerald and his wife, Zelda. Once again, Valerie Hemingway offers insight into Hemingway’s process:

Catherine was a composite of several people. Zelda Fitzgerald comes to mind foremost. Ernest frequently spoke with anger at her jealousy over Scott’s writing, and all the ruses she performed to distract and obstruct him, and of how weak Scott was to allow it. David Bourne was definitely not Scott. (108)

As a man who valued his own psychological independence in romantic relationships, Hemingway was deeply troubled by Fitzgerald’s seeming co-dependence on a wife who

consistently attempted to undermine his career. If one considers, as stated above, that Hemingway thought so much of his work as to consider it equal to having a child, a wife who tried to stop a writer from working would be the equivalent in Hemingway's mind to a wife who secretly took birth-control when the husband thought the couple was trying to conceive. This subversive, abortive attitude would have represented the ultimate betrayal to Hemingway, who most likely considered it part of a wife's duty to offer emotional support for her husband's career. Further, any man who allowed such a thing to happen would have lost the important sense of occupational purpose that Hemingway often expresses through his fiction as an essential component of masculine identity. As a result, in *The Garden of Eden*, Hemingway continuously has David Bourne return to diligent practice of the craft of writing as a way to restore his sense of self after Catherine calls it into question by means of encouraging his engagement in her bisexual affair.

In his film adaptation of the novel, John Irvin does an excellent job of visually representing David Bourne's struggle to create a sexual identity for himself through writing. Irvin draws a visual connection between the concerns of fictional character and author by casting Jack Huston, an actor who looks very much like Hemingway, in the role of David Bourne and then styling him to look exactly like a young version of the author. For his part, Huston gives a satisfactory, if somewhat subdued, portrayal of Bourne-as-Hemingway. However, Mena Suvari seems overwhelmed with the role of Catherine, and plays the character as a purely evil, self-centered, and smugly manipulative individual. Suvari's choice to portray Catherine Bourne as one-dimensional goes counter to Hemingway's construction of the character as a composite of three living, multi-dimensional women, who also inspired the somewhat more vulnerable Catherine

Barkley from Hemingway's second novel, *A Farewell to Arms*. Although she is far more assertive, Hemingway's Catherine Bourne inherits much of the earlier Catherine's emotional co-dependence. Each time the later Catherine takes another step toward androgyny, whether it is through cutting her hair or attempting more masculine techniques in the bedroom, she asks David for reassurance of his affection for her, saying "And you love me just the way I am? You're sure" (*Garden* 12). This need for acceptance in her marriage, when contrasted with her confidence that she can perform both male and female for the world outside her relationship, makes Catherine Bourne a character with whom readers can sympathize through her struggle to define sexual identity even at the risk of losing her seemingly ideal coupling. The fact that Suvari's performance, and screenwriter James Scott Linville's script, reflect none of Catherine's internal struggle is one of the greatest flaws in Irvin's adaptation, because it creates a thematic inconsistency between Hemingway's novel and the film.

However, the static portrayal of Catherine Bourne is not the only problem with Irvin's adaptation. The most troublesome issue with Irvin's adaptation of *Garden* stems from Hemingway's original novel, which is structured as a parallel narrative. As Silbergleid explains:

At the center of Ernest Hemingway's posthumous novel *The Garden of Eden* sits the story within the story, the manuscript that the protagonist, David Bourne, writes about his boyhood experiences elephant hunting with his father. It's a story about a boy coming to terms with his relationship with his father and about a man trying to define his masculinity; a story that taps into multiple discursive sites, including race, gender, and species. It's a story that, to me, anyway, holds the key to the novel; a story that works as meta-narrative, focusing the "theme" of the book on storytelling itself. (97)

Even within the context of today's literary climate, which has been conditioned by several decades of postmodernism to accept meta-narrative as a thematic concept, Hemingway's *Garden* remains hard to unpack. The flashback sequences, which depict an African safari that David Bourne and his father went on when David was a boy, can be read many different ways, ranging from a simple trauma narrative that forces an early emotional maturation for David to a complex scheme of sexually charged references that relate to David's later marital troubles. In all likelihood, Hemingway was in the process of employing his iceberg technique by interjecting several layers of meaning at various levels of thematic depth for readers who chose to find them. However, because he never completed the novel, Hemingway's placement of the African flashbacks remains somewhat inconsistent in the novel. Although some of the African episodes, such as the killing of the bull elephant, appear at meaningful times within the context of the then-present day story of David and Catherine, others seem dropped in at random intervals, suggesting that Hemingway's structuring of the novel was never fully completed.

This inconsistency is magnified in Irvin's adaptation. Making a story-within-a-story translate smoothly from page to screen is never easy; however, when the original work was not consistent within itself, the problem becomes infinitely worse. The result in Irvin's film is that every time an African episode is interjected, it seems completely disjointed, as if part of entirely another film. This sense of disruption was observed by the *L.A. Times*'s Mark Olsen, who says:

Every time the film switches over to dramatize a story that the writer is working on, a hunting adventure of a boy and his father, the momentum stops dead in its tracks. The true heart of the film is the tempestuous relationship between the writer and his wife and the way the presence of their mutual lover brings it to a

boil, so why Irvin and Linville would be so thoroughly distracted by elephant hunting in the desert is anyone's guess.

Olsen is correct to point out that the drama between David and Catherine is the focal point of Hemingway's narrative. However, his observation that Irvin's manipulation of the African narrative is disruptive forces reviewers of the film to reconsider how he might have made the transitions into and out of these sequences more smoothly. One possibility would have been to make the African scenes shorter, and the cuts between real-time and flashback more directive as to exactly what each one was supposed to add to the viewer's understanding of the central plot.

For example, although it is earlier in sequence than in Hemingway's novel, a stronger visual metaphor could have been made if Irvin had intercut the beginning of young David's struggles with his father in Africa into the scene in which an older David tries to explain to the Colonel that he married Catherine, but he "didn't marry her family" (Irvin). This claim comes on the heels of the Colonel's telling David that Catherine's father intentionally killed himself and Catherine's mother in a car crash. A rapid cut to a scene of the cause of David's animosity with his father, and how it shaped his present-day life, placed just after David's denial that a person's family history affects later relationships, might have helped to heighten the sense of irony at David's being a haunted man who disclaims such influences.

Additionally, a more explicit visual presentation of the actual automobile accident could have provided a clear visual tag that Irvin might have chosen to pick up later to end the narrative thread, considering the fact that in Hemingway's original, unfinished notes, the author intended for the novel to end with Catherine's death in a car crash. This type of

ending would have been more creatively consistent with Hemingway's theme in the novel that a person is the sum total of his or her unalterable past experiences which translate into a life narrative. Instead, the actual ending of Irvin's film, which concludes with an almost baptismal image of David Bourne diving into the ocean, has no thematic consistency or sense of resolution whatsoever with Hemingway's novel. In sum, Irvin's slavish devotion to the exact dialog and chronology presented in Hemingway's incomplete novel causes the African episodes to detract from, rather than supplement, viewers' understanding of the central narrative.

Considering Irvin's choice to present Hemingway's narrative as a close conversion of the original text, it seems odd that he chose to eliminate one of the most obvious visual connective devices that the author put into the plot to link the African episodes to the main storyline. Catherine's obsession with acquiring as dark a tan as possible escalates at the same pace with which she continues to make changes to her hairstyle and sexual preference. Given the persistent literary association in such Hemingway stories as "The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber" with Africa as a dark continent in which the passions of married women run as wildly uninhibited as the animals pursued on safari, it is curious that Irvin does not seek to build more upon the symbolic connection between the content of David's African stories and his wife's efforts to acquire an increasingly darker skin tone. Although it is possible that Irvin was attempting, out of a sense of political correctness, to censor Catherine's preference to continually darken her skin tone as an endeavor parallel to exploring her bisexuality, that choice seems inconsistent, given the already highly controversial content of the remainder of the storyline. When viewed with this in mind, Irvin's choice to eliminate

Catherine's tanning ritual appears to be just another nonsensical thematic inconsistency between the film and Hemingway's novel.

In the end, John Irvin's adaptation of *The Garden of Eden* incorporates many important historical and biographical details from Hemingway's life and work. However, it neglects other psychologically important themes that could have been presented more clearly through better implementation of visual tags and a more updated script that is less afraid to stray from the author's hard-to-film language. Still, with its much more open discussion of the author's less mainstream sexual viewpoints, *The Garden of Eden* is an important film that represents a possible starting point for more liberally-minded Hemingway adaptations in the future.

* * *

Since 1957, film adaptations based on Ernest Hemingway's works have followed the general Hollywood trend away from strict genre pieces and toward more eclectic films that reflect a combined artistic vision of all collaborators. Although the author's actual influence on an adaptation of his work reached its highest level with *The Old Man in the Sea* (1957), cinematic versions of Hemingway's novels have actually incorporated more of the author's biographical information after his death. As a result of decreasing restrictions by the Hemingway estate on portrayals of the author and his works, combined with increasing levels of tolerance on socio-cultural issues, future adaptations of Hemingway's works promise to reveal even more insights into the author's life and work that will doubtlessly broaden the circle of his authorial celebrity ouroboros.

Chapter VII

Conclusion: Notes and Examples Regarding Cohesive Cinematic Adaptation

Over the course of the preceding chapters, numerous critiques of films adapted from the works of F. Scott Fitzgerald and Ernest Hemingway have been provided in order to demonstrate the most effective approaches for transferring a novel by an iconic author to the screen. Through the six-question method of film adaptation analysis, several theories have emerged regarding such tasks, but the most important goal of cohesive cinematic adaptation is to produce a film that is a consistent creative vision among all collaborators. For example, a film such as Jack Clayton's *The Great Gatsby* (1974) might exhibit some issues with pacing, but it remains superior to an earlier adaptation of *Gatsby* (1949) by Elliot Nugent, because the former film is more thematically consistent with Fitzgerald's original novel. Nugent's film, which was too heavily influenced by *film noir* and gangster tropes common in the 1940s, loses the sense of tragedy captured by Clayton's adaption, which focuses on the interpersonal relationships between the characters instead of a certain cinematic style. Clayton's awareness of Fitzgerald's general sentiment, that action is character, makes the latter film more consistent with the novel.

However, the balance of creative command is not limited to directors, authors, and screenwriters. In an overall effort to create cohesive cinema, the contributions of individual members of the production team, particularly lead actors, are also very important. Films such as *For Whom the Bell Tolls* (1943) featuring Gary Cooper, *The Breaking Point* (1950) with John Garfield, and *The Sun Also Rises* (1957) starring Ava

Gardner, all benefit from both the actors' choices to personally incorporate their own creative visions into their portrayals, and also the audience's collective awareness of their real-life reputations and filmographies. When there is an inconsistency in casting or portrayal of a lead character, such as with Mena Suvari's choice to portray Catherine as a one-dimensional character in *The Garden of Eden* (2008), an adaptation can lose a great deal of emotional resonance in the transference from page to screen.

When the work that is the basis for adaptation is written by a celebrity author, then that author's biographical story and textual canon should be incorporated whenever possible as the primary source for additional content. When an adaptation includes relevant details from the original author's life to flesh out the storyline, such as in Richard Brooks's *The Last Time I Saw Paris* (1954), audiences who are familiar with the author are provided an opportunity to feel a deeper connection to the work through watching the biography they know brought to life. In contrast, an adaptation which departs too much from the author's biographical sphere, like Richard Wolstencroft's *The Beautiful and Damned* (2008), runs the risk of alienating audiences by showing them a side of an author, whom they thought they knew, in an unflattering light. Only with a careful balancing of biography and fiction can a film adaptation become incorporated into the ouroboric circle and extend the creative life of a literary celebrity.

The style of a film adaptation is also crucial to determining whether a new version of an established work will be welcomed by audiences familiar with the original. Elia Kazan's *The Last Tycoon* (1977) adds new layers of meaning to the familiar novel through Kazan and star Robert DeNiro's choices to make visual significance out of details often overlooked by the work's readers. Yet, other close conversions, such as John

Sturges's *The Old Man and the Sea* (1958) suffer from being too faithful to the actual language of the text, resulting in plodding plot sequencing. The most important factor in creating an appealing conversionist adaptation is to present the author's words visually, in order to capture the freshly-written wonder of the original. An equally difficult stylistic choice is to create a viable revisionist adaptation that completely rewrites the author's story in order to bring out some new angle that the production team has found within the text. Although Johnny Hines's *Conductor 1492* (1924), an adaptation of Fitzgerald's short story "The Camel's Back," performs this task successfully, it remains a risky enterprise that works perhaps best with short stories, which benefit from the inclusion of much more information simply due to a shortage of filmable content.

Instead of either the strict conversionist or revisionist styles, the greatest success in film adaptation can often be had through the use of interpretation. Serving as a middle ground between the two extremes, a director's choice to modernize a text for a new generation - while staying true to most of the author's thematic content and original dialogue - interpretation is currently the stylistic choice that enjoys the greatest box office and critical success. David Fincher's *The Curious Case of Benjamin Button* (2008) is an excellent example of how a production team can work with and around the original text to make an adaptation that may be a greater work of art than the original, in terms of its thematic appeal for a modern audience.

Within each of these three approaches, film adaptations that pay close attention to the four manners of a work, both in their original context and today, often create the most cohesive works of cinema. By carefully scrutinizing the historical, socio-cultural, political, and psychological parallels of human behavior, movies like Henry King's *The*

Snows of Kilimanjaro (1952) can either capture a moment in time and solidify audience understanding of a writer's canon, or like Alexander Petrov's *The Old Man and the Sea* (1999), may give audiences a whole new way of looking at both the text and its author. Either way, extensive research regarding the contextual manners of a work only adds to the thematic resonance of a film adaptation.

The last factor to consider when creating a new film adaptation is the nature of the original work itself. The most logical line of reasoning is that novels must be shortened on film, so that their content does not stretch over the two-to-three hour confines of an average commercial product, whereas a short story must be expanded in order to fill the same amount of time. This logic is followed here in the new treatment of Hemingway's previously adapted novel, *The Sun Also Rises*. However, the other example that follows will show that sometimes it can be best to allow a work to retain its equivalent structural length in the transference from page to screen. For this reason, a previously unfiled Fitzgerald short story, "The Cut-Glass Bowl," will be presented as a treatment for a short film called *American Brilliant*. A large production company with a big budget is supposed for the Hemingway treatment, whereas a smaller team with lesser capital to invest is projected for the Fitzgerald treatment, in order to make best use of the strengths in both types of filmmaking. Both treatments, presented here in the Appendix, will follow the middle stylistic path toward the four manners mentioned above, and interpret the texts for today's generation in the most thematically consistent ways possible, in hopes of creating the most desirable of all film adaptation goals: a cohesive work of cinema.

Almost one-hundred years ago, Gertrude Stein became famous for borrowing a quote from her mechanic, who said in reference to F. Scott Fitzgerald, Ernest Hemingway, and others of their post-World War I, expatriate group, “You are all a lost generation.” However, another great author might be mentioned to counter Stein’s quip. As J.R.R. Tolkien was quoted in another well-known film adaptation, “Not all who wander are lost” (Jackson). The so-called Lost Generation writers might be better described as the Wandering Generation, a group of young writers who began searching to redefine individual American identity at the beginning of a new century. This task was especially difficult, given that the world had just fought its first war in which people could kill without ever coming face-to-face with their enemies, ironically rendering both victory and defeat similarly anonymous. Eventually, the two authors whose work has been analyzed here found their way back to the beginning of their quests for self-identification, creating well-defined public personas that changed the entire concept of what it meant to be a celebrity, and leaving in their wake a circular journey that many generations of writers since then have been inspired to follow.

Today, film is the primary medium by which leaders of youth culture continue to redefine the ways in which people interact with one another and thereby, form their own senses of individual identity. Film adaptation is the way that many viewers learn the history of cultures that preceded their own. As the postmodern world continues to offer up new virtual realities with increasing levels of anonymity, it comes as no surprise that fresh adaptations of works by Fitzgerald and Hemingway continue to appear from Hollywood on a regular basis. The reasons for their original quests to redefine what it meant to be

young and American retain perennial cultural relevancy. By setting out on their own meandering paths toward fame through self-discovery, the Lost Generation writers insured that, no matter how confusing the modern world might become, eventually history will come full circle, and no one who has sense enough to wonder what else might be possible in the world is ever truly lost. Well-constructed film adaptations can ensure that the spirit of their work will continue for future generations.

Appendix

American Brilliant – A Treatment

The film begins with Carleton Canby and Evelyln Piper in a very fancy Boston antique shop. They are picking out her wedding china and glassware. The sales woman is intoning the “stone-age” monologue as they walk along, and Carleton is making fun of her. Carleton is “in the friend zone,” but doesn’t really think Evelyln will go through with the wedding. To him, the whole thing is ridiculous.

The two of them should look very out of place. Carleton is in his Kurt-Cobain style flannel and Evelyln in her goth-like black, complete with nose-ring. The time setting of the story begins in the 1990s, instead of Fitzgerald’s 1890s, and it should be obvious from the décor. Despite her attempts to look 1990s-alternative, Evelyln has the trappings of heading into acceptability. Her artistry is a rebellious phase, whereas Carleton’s is for real. Her black is designer label, and bag, sunglasses, and engagement ring spell that she is from a different, richer world than he.

While she is browsing in the shop, Evelyln spies a beautiful cut-glass bowl that she wants, but it is too expensive and impractical. The owner tells her it is of the American Brilliant style. She knows that Harold Piper, her rich fiancée, will never let her have it. Harold is an investment banker. Still, Carleton takes a picture of her in front of it with his camera. Carleton talks about the possibility that he could make her such a bowl.

Afterward, they go for coffee. Evelyln asks about the tattoo on Carleton’s wrist – the Eye of Horus. Carleton goes into a long spiel about mysticism and Egyptian

mythology and Evylyn gets bored and irritated. Finally, she tells him that he is an impractical, faux-intellectual bore who will amount to nothing, and that is why she can't get back together with him, even though she is pregnant with his child. Although Carleton knew about the child, he is surprised at Evylyn's plans to marry Harold, simply for financial security and social status. At this moment, Carleton says the fateful line from the story about Evylyn being "hard and cold and easy to see through," before getting up and storming away. Evylyn watches him longingly, but does not follow.

Back at his apartment in the next scene, Carleton develops the pictures of his day out with Evylyn in the homemade darkroom closet of his shabby apartment. The apartment is filled with examples of his glass handiwork, all of which are marked on the bottom with his trademark Eye of Horus as the signature. Carleton looks at the picture of Evylyn in front of the cut-glass bowl and decides that it will be his next project. There are also examples of Evie's painting that she has given him in the room. The style of Evylyn's work is reminiscent of Zelda Fitzgerald's, and, if possible, Fitzgerald's work should be requested for loan on the film and incorporated into the décor. We see Carleton sketching and researching methods of making the bowl as the scene fades out.

The camera's eye opens next on a scene of Carleton at the Diablo Glass School in Boston, where he attends. Several shots of Carleton working on various glass blowing projects follow. Notice the brilliance and the color of the glass. Many interesting parallel shots can be made here for the later significant moments at which the bowl glimmers in different settings. Effort should be made to make Carleton look like Hephaestus at the forge, to reinforce the notion of him as a craftsman, versus Harold, the businessman.

After the other students leave, Carleton works late into the night on the bowl project. It is a clear glass infused with red, which he plans to cut with hearts and birds, to match Evylyn's wrist tattoo that she got on the day he got the Eye. Wanting it to be the biggest and most amazing bowl possible, Carleton blows and blows. Suddenly, a bubble pops in the glass and burns Carleton's eye. He falls back in pain, but reaches out instinctively to stop the bowl from falling and breaking, burning the skin of his left hand and wrist in the process. Carleton staggers around to set the bowl down on the forge and blood runs out of his eye through his fingers into the bowl. Viewers will notice how the blood intermingles with the red dye into the mix of the bowl. Carleton's blood and his art, the bowl for Evylyn, are now one in the same, as with their child.

Several weeks later the audience sees a mostly-healed Carleton, now wearing a patch over his left eye. The patch should look very similar to Dale Chihuly's, the famous glass artist, who also lost an eye. Carleton is carrying a very large package to the door of the mansion in Boston's Back Bay where Evie (her nickname, used interchangeably at the actors' discretion) is to make her home with Harold. Carleton looks down at the wedding invitation and its note from Evie, wishing him to come or at least speak to her. They haven't spoken since the day at the museum. The date on the invitation reads August 22, 1992. – The day of Evie's wedding and, in thematic consistence, Vulcan's day.

Harold calls for a servant, but no one answers the door. Harold takes the bowl in himself, and Evie unwraps it. When we see Carleton's outstretched hand, his Eye of Horus tattoo is heavily scarred, almost burnt off. Harold almost recognizes him, but Carleton's injury has changed his face so much that Harold can't tell for sure. Harold

hefts the bowl out of the box with Evie watching. It is huge, magnificent, and beautiful, the light cutting up through all the beveled and stained glass windows of the great Victorian house. There is no name attached to the card, but instead a message about Fate, as in the end of Fitzgerald's story. When Evylyn untapes it from the bowl, she sees the Eye of Horus and knows who it is from. Evylyn catches her breath, and Harold is disturbed by this gesture, but chooses to say nothing.

The action flashes forward to a scene of Howard and Evie's anniversary the next year. Young Donald, the son, is playing in the floor. A servant answers the door. Although the face is obscured, from the scarred hand that extends the small package, the audience can tell it is Carleton. When Evie opens the box, inside is a beautiful, blown glass bluebird, with a note that says, "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth" the first verse from Ecclesiastes Chapter 12. When Evie turns the bird over in her hand, she sees the Eye of Horus mark. Donald reaches for the bird and she hands it to him. She goes to the bathroom and rubs the makeup off her wrist, revealing the bird tattoo. She begins to cry and reaches in the cupboard for a bottle of Valium. Hearing Harold's voice as he enters the house and calls to her, Evylyn goes out to meet him. Evylyn takes the glass bird from Donald and sits it on a bric-brac shelf before kissing Harold in welcome, as the scene fades out.

A short montage follows of Evylyn receiving gifts over the next seven years, each with a verse from Ecclesiastes. It becomes clear that Carleton is sending her a new piece each year to correspond with the verse, as if he is her husband, and it is their anniversary present. A monologue of the verses runs through Evylyn's head as she looks at each piece on the formal dining room shelves. The montage ends with Evylyn's eyes coming to rest

on the bowl, just before she carries a tray of refreshments in to the ladies of her book club. The camera focuses in close on Evylyn's wrist as she holds the tray. The audience can see that Evylyn has had the tattoo of the bird removed, but the scar of its silhouette is still present. Evylyn glances at the calendar and realizes it is the day that this year's delivery is due.

Evylyn is 27 and still beautiful, and the camera romances this beauty in close-up. Evylyn presides over the ending of a book club meeting in her home. They are reading *Tender is the Night* by Scott Fitzgerald. All the women leave except Mrs. Fairboalt, who is clearly trying to nose into Evylyn's personal life. Fairboalt notices Evie's paintings, which look suspiciously like Zelda Fitzgerald's, all around the room. Fairboalt also appraises Carleton's glass figures, and mentions in a leading way that they remind her of the work of a young man Evylyn used to see. They have the conversation from the original story concerning the whereabouts of Carleton Canby, and then Fairboalt leaves.

As she is leaving, Fairboalt sees the hooded figure of Carleton coming up the walk, carrying his yearly package. She is so distracted by it, that she does not notice Freddy Gedney coming into the house in his military uniform. Carleton recognizes her though, and he ducks into an alleyway. Fairboalt nosily tries to follow him, thinking he is a prowler. Carleton dodges her and works his way back around to the front of the house, where he can see through the window the scene unfold inside between Freddy and Evie.

The conversation between Freddy and Evie happens as it does in the story. They discuss the amicable ending of their affair, due to the fact that they have been the source of gossip at the country club all summer. As Freddy is about to leave, they hear Harold coming up the front walk. Evie rushes Freddy into the formal dining room, where the

glass pieces and huge bowl are stored. As in the story, Freddy bumps against the bowl, which rings loudly, like some sort of death gong, resonating all over the house. The sound emphasizes the forbidding and cold atmosphere, full of hardwood floors and marble, that often characterize the homes of the rich, and are decorated by others than those who live there.

Harold hears the gong of the bowl. Carleton is still watching still watching the scene take shape through the window. Harold goes in, uncovers Freddy, and the scene of accusation unfolds as it does in the story. Freddy is thrown out and Harold storms off to the library, slamming the door behind him. Evie begins crying. Just then, the doorbell rings, and Evie answers, with Donald beside her. It is Carleton, delivering the package. His hood is pulled far down over his face, and she strains to see his face. Carleton looks down, staring at Donald, who is a miniature copy of him. Still, Evie sees the remains of the burnt tattoo, and her tears turn to surprise in recognition. Carleton looks up in time to see this, and then turns and runs away, with Evie calling out after him.

Giving up, Evie goes inside and opens the package. Inside is a little glass ghost, referenced in the seventh verse of Ecclesiastes 12 as an ascending spirit. Angry, Evie throws and smashes the small ghost. It lies broken on the floor in front of the bowl, the spot where Harold discovered her affair with Freddy. The scene fades out with her crying.

The next scene cuts to several years later. Evie is 35 and looking in a mirror at her reflection, which is obviously older. She pops several pills that she takes with a gin and tonic. The mirror seems to be this past year's offering from Carleton, because when she reads the card it says "Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher; all is vanity," the next verse

from Ecclesiastes in the series. Evie goes to lie down and then suddenly a maid bursts in, to say that Julie, Evie's young daughter by Harold, has cut her thumb. Evie rolls her eyes at first, thinking it is another minor household disaster, but then she hears Julie wailing, and the servant tells her she is afraid it is blood poisoning.

Evie rushes downstairs to comfort Julie and finds that the injury does look like blood poisoning. Evylyn rings for the doctor. While she is on the phone, Harold, staggering a bit out of drunkenness and the weight of the object, goes by carrying the cut-glass bowl. When Evie asks what he is doing, Harold slurringly tells her he is going to make a big punch. The couple argues about the trivialities of that night's upcoming millennium party. As Harold sits the bowl down and leaves to procure punch ingredients, the camera focuses on the little bloody spot where Julie cut herself on the inside lip of the object. When Harold returns, slopping liquor and juice everywhere, Julie's blood is washed up into the mixture with the other ingredients.

At the millennium party in the music room, Harold engages in an argument with the nouveau-riche Mr. Ahern. Viewers will notice that Evie's paintings no longer hang in the room. Her presence in the home is slowly being erased, in favor of Harold's interests. During the argument, Ahern insults Harold's brother, Milton Piper, for Piper Brothers' continually downward-spiraling fortunes. The argument escalates and ultimately ends with Harold taking a swing at Ahearn.

Harold misses, but Ahearn cold-cocks him soundly. Harold is slumped on the floor and rubbing his jaw when Evie comes into the room. The Ahearns rush past her on the way out. Evie tells Harold that the doctor said Julie does indeed have blood poisoning and will have to lose her hand. Just afterward, the television exclaims "Happy New

Year,” as the camera alternates between close-ups of the devastated parents and pairs of hands, around the room and on television, clapping ironically. The scene fades out.

The next sequence begins with Evie sitting at the table in the breakfast room where the cut-glass objects are kept. She is looking at her daughter Julie’s reflection in Carleton’s mirror. Julie is a sullen girl in her early teens, dressed in all-black, goth-style clothing, very similar to what Evie wore in her younger days. Evie makes an effort to start a casual conversation with her, but Julie says nothing. As Julie gets up to leave the room, we see that she has gotten her nose pierced, just at Evie did when she was young. When her mother tries to make the connection, saying that she had similar alternative fashion sense and reaches out a hand to stroke her face, Julie swats away Evie’s hand with her left arm. The camera follows the motion down the girl’s arm, which is by now missing the hand from the earlier blood poisoning incident. Mother and daughter lock eyes in a silent battle of wills, and Julie storms off into the library. She slams the door behind her, just as her father did several years before when he discovered Evie’s affair.

Just after Julie leaves, a maid comes in as Evie is staring despairingly at the cut-glass bowl. She looks up into the mirror to see Martha, the maid, bringing in a letter. It is from the war department. Evie and Martha exchange glances, fearing what is inside, because Evie’s son, Donald, is away in Afghanistan. Through the mirror’s reflection, the audience sees Evie reading the letter. Donald has been killed in action. Evie drops the letter into the cut-glass bowl and covers her mouth crying as the doorbell rings. Martha goes to answer it, and a hand, the hand with the scarred Eye of Horus, reaches out with a single folded-over note.

Martha takes the note back to Evie, who is too distraught to read it, so Martha reads it to her. It displays the final quote from Ecclesiastes Chapter 12, “For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.” Evie stops and looks up at the calendar. It is August 22, 2010. Martha leaves Evie to her thoughts. As Evie stares at the calendar page, a montage of shots of scenes in her life plays. These scenes are intercut, and the audience sees for the first time with a series of parallel shots, what Carleton has been doing all this time. The audience sees Carleton in his glass shop, only a few blocks away in the tourist district, watching from distance over the years as Evie’s life unfolds. The camera gradually leans toward following Evie’s life through Carleton’s point of view, moving faster and faster until the present day.

In the last scene, as Carleton walks away from Evie’s door, he begins to run. Running as fast as he can, Carleton approaches a high bridge, where he crawls out onto the ledge. The camera cuts back to Evie, now suddenly filled with a burst of adrenaline to do what she has to do. From the historical montage, which was intercut with shots of the bowl, the audience knows that Evie decides to blame the bowl and take out her aggression on it.

The intercuts between Evie’s story and Carleton’s lead just up to the point where she teeters on the edge of the back gallery steps holding the enormous bowl, while Carleton stands on the edge of the bridge across town, just about to jump. Carleton gathers volition and steps out from the ledge first, folding himself into a dive heading straight for the shallow water below. Carleton’s fall seems fast, in comparison to Evie’s, which is done in slow motion at first, but gains momentum as she reaches the bottom of

the staircase. The parts of broken bowl fall in a glittering cascade down in ever smaller pieces beside Evylyn, where finally the broken woman comes to rest at the foot of the stairs.

The last shot pulls back from the circular waves left by Carleton's plunge, with a swift cut back to the now-dead Evie, who is lying dead at the bottom of the stairs. The bottom of the bowl, still mostly intact but cracked, lies next to her head. Evie's wounds are swiftly spilling blood into the cracks of the Eye of Horus as it lies on the sidewalk, bringing the design into sharp relief and creating the connection in the audience's collective mind among the interconnected "cracked plates" of these lives.

As the shot pulls back wide into a circular street view, we see passers-by beginning to gather in a circle around Evie, still lying on the sidewalk, while others further away continue on with their lives as if nothing has happened. At bird's eye view on top of the house, with Carleton's bridge in distant view, the scene fades to final black.

American Brilliant – Analysis

This treatment seeks to interpret Fitzgerald's short story "The Cut-Glass Bowl" for a twenty-first century audience of an independent short film. Due to budgetary concerns that normally accompany small productions, most of the film is purposefully shot in the interior of a single, upper class home in Boston. Beyond budgetary matters, this choice also contributes to Evylyn's overall sense of being trapped within the walls of her lavishly decorated Back Bay prison, in a marriage to a man that she does not love, all for the sake of maintaining her social status. This socio-cultural theme, of a young,

beautiful woman choosing a life of financial security over one with a poorer, more sensitive and artistic man whom she loves, recurs in many of Fitzgerald's works, including *The Great Gatsby*, and is incorporated once again here for the benefit of those familiar with the author's canon. Also, it reconnects the story with one of Fitzgerald's inspirations for it: Edith Wharton's novels of upper class marital dissatisfaction.

The treatment makes several other notable nods toward both Fitzgerald's biography and body of work. The choice to make Evylyn's painting style resemble that of Zelda's is relevant for the association that it will cause the audience to make with Zelda's life as a woman who reluctantly repressed her own creativity to stand in the shadow of her professional husband. The psychological turmoil experienced by Evylyn, Carleton, and Harold replicates similar emotions experienced by the characters in a later Fitzgerald novel, *Tender is the Night*, which Evylyn's book club is reading. Further, many historical details about Boston and the art of creating American Brilliant-style cut-glass objects are added to give the production a sense of realism and historical accuracy, which often is included in Fitzgerald's texts.

The updating of the characters' wardrobes and behavior to fit the era of the 1990s to present day is done not only to make them relevant for audiences not familiar with Fitzgerald, but also to reinforce the author's persistent theme of social currency and fashion as indicators of both youthfulness and wealth. Liberal amounts of mythology, both Greek and Egyptian, are included in the treatment as nods to Fitzgerald's heavy use of such symbolism throughout his lifetime of work, culminating most clearly with *The Last Tycoon*.

As with any adaptation, the members of the production team should become well-versed in Fitzgerald biography and scholarship in order to make creative decisions that will contribute to viewers' understanding of the text on film, rather than merely adding extraneous content. For example, the choice to structure the delivery of Carleton's glass objects around the verses from Ecclesiastes was inspired by Peter Hayes's article in the *Edith Wharton Newsletter*, in which he claimed that Fitzgerald drew the story's plot devices from Henry James's *The Golden Bowl*, which was in turn inspired by Ecclesiastes 12:6 (2). The choice to incorporate Fitzgerald's sources into the final film text completes the ouroboric cycle of literary celebrity, and will enhance understanding of Fitzgerald's original short story.

The Sun Also Rises – A Treatment

The film begins in black and white, with the camera sitting in a ringside view at a college boxing match. The time frame is present day, and the filming style resembles watching a reality-style television show done by an Italian Neo-Realist director. The camera work is a bit shaky on purpose, to give the sense of added realism, but with a more professional gloss of staging. Robert Cohn, although we do not know that it is him for a few moments, is pummeling a much larger African-American boxer as the opening monologue begins describing him. The voice is Jake Barnes's voice, and should begin with the lines, "Robert Cohn was the heavyweight boxing champion of Princeton. Do not think that I am very much impressed by that as a boxing title, but it meant a lot to Cohn."

The actor who plays Cohn should be in his late twenties, not over six feet tall, of a darker, ethnic complexion, extremely muscular and well-built; but with a much better body than face. Cohn's overall countenance should be of someone who thinks he is a bit smarter than everyone else around him, the sort of man that others tend to dislike immediately, but aren't exactly sure why. In overall appearance and bearing, he should have the same sort of self-satisfied, somewhat lecherous, and generally jock-ish air as Mike Sorrentino from *Jersey Shore*.

The camera follows Cohn around the ring, in a close-up, *Raging Bull* style, until Cohn knocks down the other boxer. When the other boxer falls, Cohn celebrates too much and enrages his competitor. The other fighter comes back with a vengeance, eventually knocking Cohn out by the time Jake's monologue reaches the point about Cohn's nose being crushed. As Spider Kelly, Cohn's coach, pulls him up into a seated position, the camera sees the world through Cohn's punch-drunk, blurred vision. Kelly half-drags Cohn to the locker room as the scene fades.

The next scene begins with an argument between Cohn and his girlfriend, culminating in Cohn's getting slapped by her. The future ex-Mrs. Robert Cohn is described in Jake Barnes's ongoing monologue, which gives commentary about how Cohn ended up marrying her, intercut with the actual actions of Cohn and his first wife. This scene is followed by a montage of shots all concerning women yelling at Cohn. The montage gains speed as Cohn walks steadily through a quick series of cuts that visually describe his life from running a Mental Floss-type webzine in California, to the success of his first screenplay, and how he ultimately ended up seated at a table in a Paris café with Jake Barnes and Cohn's latest mistress, Frances Cline. This whole series should

move very fast, to contrast with the slow motion of Cohn's boxing match. The intention is to show how the more meaningful events of a man's life that define who he is are remembered in careful detail, whereas everything else rushes by in a quick passage of years.

The montage ends with Cohn picking up Jake's line from the novel about knowing a girl in Strasbourg who could show them around. Frances slaps Cohn and walks out, in a scene very reminiscent of the slap from his first wife that began the montage. Both the slaps make Cohn's vision, and the camera's point of view, woozy and blurred, as when he was knocked out. However, Cohn recovers more quickly this time and resumes his conversation with Jake. This quick recovery shows that Cohn has become hardened against emotional injuries.

The conversation between Cohn and Barnes does not miss a beat. After his recovery from Frances's abrupt exit, Cohn launches into an excited explanation of why he and Barnes should go to South America. Instead of referencing *The Purple Land*, the R.G. Dun Report, and Horatio Alger books, they discuss the appeal of Brazilian models, the *Wall Street Journal*, and the men's pickup manual, *The Game*. The scene ends with Jake saying he has to go up to his room and send off some emails to the *New York Times* headquarters in order to meet his deadline. Jake is the Paris correspondent for the *Times* online service. The audience learns this from the letterhead on Jake's emails. The scene fades out to the sound of his typing on a laptop late into the night. Barnes stands up to type, a favorite practice of Hemingway's.

Jake Barnes, as the audience becomes more aware of him through the camera's careful survey, is also in his late twenties and very good-looking and well-built in an all-

American sense. A Channing Tatum or Chris Evans (*Captain America*) type, Jake has a quiet, calm bearing. The overall impression is that he is the sort of young man that every family wishes their daughter might bring home, making his injury even more tragic as the audience discovers it later. The first hint of it is the t-shirt Jake wears, which sports the Affliction brand name in gothic script across his upper back.

Through Barnes's eyes, the audience sees the beautiful, fashionable girls of Paris in the next scene, and from watching his pained reaction to wanting them and not being able to have them, the audience wonders why. Eventually, the prostitute Georgette comes up and sits down, and they converse. Georgette is dressed according to the style of prostitutes everywhere, so that her occupation is obvious. Her teeth are rotten, as in the novel, but the implication is made that she has meth-mouth, rather than a venereal disease.

As Georgette yammers on, Barnes fortifies himself with enough drinks to take her to hang out with the Braddocks and others that are gathered in a dance club. The club is one of Paris's Euro-Pop style discos, with pulsating, David Guetta-style techno music. Clearly from his expression, Barnes is "over" these sorts of places, but is going through the motions because that is where his friends gather. Everyone dances and gets sweatier and wilder in a discotheque/rave style, giving the general appearance of a Ke\$ha video come to life.

When Brett Ashley arrives amid all this confusion, linked arm in arm with a young, gay male companion on either side, everything around her pulsates to an almost standstill in slow motion, with the soundtrack's bass line leading the scene's action to a stop. Brett is very beautiful in an aristocratic, English way. She is wearing a very short

red dress that shows off her perfect figure. A British actress in her late twenties or early thirties, with a very aristocratic face that contrasts sharply with her devil-may-care manner should be chosen. Although the part would be ideal for a Keira Knightly type, this could also be a perfect time to introduce a new actress, someone who turns heads and makes the audience wonder, “Who is that girl?”

Also, notice that Brett’s red dress is the first color we see in the film. As she walks through the room toward Jake Barnes, and we see her through his field of vision, the whole world of the inside of the club comes colorfully to life. This will be a trademark of the film. In scenes where Brett or other symbols of things that Barnes is passionate about appear, the world takes on color. Otherwise, it is drably black and white. The club sequence ends as Jake and Brett leave in a cab together. Brett asks Jake to light her cigarette as they stand on the sidewalk waiting for a cab. As Brett gets inside, the color fades from the scene as if dissipating in a cloud of her cigarette smoke.

Inside the cab, however, the world is still colorful, and the audience sees Brett and Jake kiss for the first time on film. Brett describes her “miserable” situation to him, and the audience learns as Jake does about the history of Brett’s life and marriages up to this point. Brett wishes that she could marry Jake, but is going to marry Mike Campbell instead, because Jake is unable to perform sexually. The key line of this scene comes when Brett says, “Don’t we pay for all the things we do though? When I think of the hell I’ve put chaps through. I’m paying for it now.” The scene ends as Jake says good-bye to Brett after dropping her off at her hotel.

The camera follows Jake on the walk back to his apartment in the wee hours of the morning, taking in as many notable Paris landmarks as possible along the way to set

the scene. Once inside, we see Jake take off the Affliction t-shirt and then stop to look in the mirror. As Jake takes off the rest of his clothes, the audience can tell that he is naked, though the vital parts remain hidden by shadow and camera angle. From the troubled look on his face as he stares down into the mirror, and the scars around his upper legs and lower torso, the audience can infer his injury. Part of the horror in the scene comes for imagining what his might look like, such a handsome young man ruined in this terrible way.

Jake lies down on the bed, and as the novel says, he begins to think too much, reliving the events in his life that have brought him to this point. Through a flashback montage in Jake's mind's eye that fades into a dream as he falls asleep, the audience sees quickly how the injury occurred. Jake was in the Army in Afghanistan and stepped on a land mine in a desert sandstorm. When he wakes up, Jake is in an American hospital in Italy, and Brett is standing over him. The scene is reminiscent of *A Farewell to Arms* and other Hemingway dramas in which a soldier falls in love with his nurse. Jake is awakened from the dream as the fight downstairs in the hotel overtakes the sound of enemy soldiers coming into the hospital, turning Jake's into a nightmare.

Although in the dream, Brett had become Georgette as Jake's bliss turned into horror, it is the real Brett who comes bursting into Jake's room. She stands over him in the bed, as in the good part of the dream, and he pulls her down to him in an embrace. Since they cannot do anything sexually, they just talk. The scene ends in the early morning as Jake watches Brett leave without saying a word. Although it had colored when she came in, the room goes back to black and white as soon as Brett closes the door. The hollow colorlessness should be significant.

The exact details of the meetings on the next day between Jake and various men should be minimal, and serve only to set up the confrontation scene in Harry's New York Bar. There, Frances makes fun of how Cohn will not marry her, as the unhappy couple argue in front of Jake. From the way in which Jake rolls his eyes at Cohn, the audience can tell that Jake is losing respect for his friend because Cohn allows his girlfriend to humiliate him. The audience should be encouraged to lose respect for Cohn too at this point, through the tone and body language of the actors. Eventually, Jake has enough and makes his excuses to leave.

As a counterpoint to his disgust at watching Cohn be humiliated by Frances, Jake walks down the street to the bar in the lobby of Brett's hotel to wait for her. Brett is already there, flirting with Count Mippipopolous. The Count is quite clearly a very rich man in his late sixties or early seventies. He should be played as a cameo by an older actor who could pass for Greek, and who also has a reputation as a ladies' man in the eyes of the American public. A grinning, self-satisfied type, like the sort Burt Reynolds has played often in his later career, would be ideal, especially if he could replicate some of Cohn's phrasing and mannerisms, albeit in an older, drunker version.

Jake cannot get in a word edgewise as the Count's tales of war valor grow wilder and more far-fetched. The Count lifts up his shirt to reveal what he claims are arrow wounds that he received in Abyssinia. Jake rolls his eyes again, much in the same way he did at Cohn, but does not quite catch the irony yet that it is he who is being made a fool of by love this time.

All through the scene with the Count, there is no color around Brett, which is odd considering how she lights up the world most of the time. The scene begins to turn as

Michael comes down the stairs to meet Brett, distracting the Count, who goes over to him. The actor who plays Mike should be Scottish and still handsome, a few years older than the other men, but with a nasty, possessive sort of temperament. The character type Gerard Butler is known for would fit.

Brett looks a bit perturbed at losing her audience, and turns her attention to Jake for the first time in the scene. In a nod to various films noir, Brett asks Jake for a light. When Jake obliges, the flame colors, but the rest of the room stays black and white. This change symbolizes the spark that is still true between them, amidst the phony performance that Brett feels forced to put on in front of other men in her life so that she can earn her livelihood. Jake and Brett talk quickly and earnestly about her going to San Sebastian. Jake urges her not to marry Mike, even though she says the marriage is already a foregone conclusion.

When Michael calls over to her that it is time to leave, Brett puts out the cigarette, extinguishing all color in the room and signifying how easily her real affections can be quashed out of service to her monetary needs. As Brett and Michael leave, Jake and the Count exchange glances while they watch the cab go. The Count laughs at the irony of the scene, and Jake mutters "to hell with you, Lady Ashley," as the camera pulls out to wide street view, following both men as they walk off in opposite directions and the scene fades out.

The next scene comes up as Jake is printing out tickets that he has bought online for a boxing match there in Paris. The names of boxers who are still viable, but a bit past their prime like Oscar de la Hoya, should be used in order to show that they are now

going overseas to finish out their careers somewhere that they are still wanted. The inference here, of course, is that these boxers are very similar to Robert Cohn.

Bill Gordon comes into the apartment while this is going on and he talks to Jake about boxing and their past friendship a bit, so that the audience gets an idea of who Bill is, because they haven't seen him before. The actor who plays Bill should be some sort of known comedian in his mid to late twenties, as he will be brought in to offer a counter-balance of levity to Cohn's growing depressive obsession. An ideal choice would be someone who has played with the lead actor before and that the audience can build upon the association of the two as buddies, such as Jonah Hill, would be ideal.

Jake gets a text from Brett with the line that begins Chapter Eight of Hemingway's novel, "Darling, Very quiet and healthy. Love to all the chaps," and then her added line "See you tonight at the match." Jake looks up from the screen and asks Bill if Cohn is still coming, and Bill says that he is. They exchange looks. Both of them have heard that something went down between Cohn and Brett in San Sebastian, but they don't know exactly what. The scene ends with Bill and Jake getting into a cab heading to the boxing match.

When they get to the match, Brett and Mike are already there, and Mike is very drunk. He makes the remark about Brett being "a fine piece" just as all of them stumble in. Bill is fairly drunk now too, and he makes a row with one of the souvenir men who are walking the aisles. As a nod to the novel, the man is selling stuffed dogs, and Bill makes a joke out of it. They are so loud coming in that they can be heard down on the floor.

Cohn, who is down on the floor talking to one of the boxers and his trainer, recognizes their voices and looks up. His eyes meet Brett's, and for just a second, viewers can tell that she has some affection left for him, but then she remembers that she is ashamed and looks away. When the fight ends, Cohn's fighter has lost, and he helps carry the young man out of the ring, much as Spider Kelly helped him out years before. As he passes Brett, she turns the other way to intentionally avoid him. Even though he is drunk, Brett lingers so long watching Cohn during the match that Mike becomes upset. From this point on, Mike hates Cohn. The sequence ends with the camera following Cohn from the ring into the locker room, out of sight.

The next day, everyone except Cohn meets for breakfast in the lobby of Brett and Mike's hotel. They are all sitting in the same place as before with the Count, but because of Mike is much less self-assured of his position with Brett than he was before, and stays very close to her, as if guarding a possession. Brett and Mike are going on to Pamplona from Paris, while Jake and Bill go fishing in Bayonne.

At one point during their breakfast, Brett makes an excuse to take Jake aside, where she explains to him more fully what happened with Cohn. Brett doesn't want to see Cohn anymore because she is ashamed of hooking up with him. Jake is clearly losing interest in Brett's excuses, and when she asks him to light her cigarette, he says no. Instead, he calls to Bill and they head out to the car, this time leaving Mike and Brett on the sidewalk watching the two men leave.

The next few scenes evoke a buddy movie. The countryside goes by as Bill and Jake talk about life back in Michigan when they were growing up together. Bill is less ambitious, and works at the local television station in St. Paul, where his Dad worked

after leaving his Mom. Still, Bill talks about his fear of never escaping from the boring life that his father led. Jake talks about his own father some, saying that it is better to have an absent father than one with whom things ended as they did. As in Hemingway's life, the implication here is that Jake's father was a surgeon who committed suicide after a lifetime of ridicule from his overbearing wife. At any rate, the men fish, drink, and drive back to Pamplona through the beautiful countryside in just time for the fiesta.

The scenes of the fiesta should be fast and dizzying, beginning with fireworks that Bill and Jake can see in the distance as they come into town. If at all possible, footage from the actual events of the Festival of San Fermin should be used for added realism to get the hot, sweaty effect of the Spanish streets full of dancers in mid-July. Despite all this action swirling about them, the interpersonal drama, not the background events, should be staged so that they are in the foreground of viewers' concern at all times.

As they unpack at the Hotel Montoya, Jake gets a text from Mike, saying that they are going to be a bit late because Brett passed out drunk on the train. After they finish, Jake and Bill go down to talk bullfighting with Montoya, only to find Cohn there, camped out at the bar and waiting for Brett. Jake and Bill try to avoid him, but Cohn works his way into the conversation anyway and they tolerate him. Brett and Mike arrive several hours later. We know this, because as Cohn begins to dominate the conversation in an attempt to seem like an aficionado, Jake gets bored and keeps checking the clock on his phone. Finally, he gets a text from Brett saying that she and Mike are there, and Jake goes out to meet their car.

From the parking lot to the inside of the hotel bar, Mike and Brett are constantly bickering back and forth. Mike is the sort of guy who is handsome in a solid sort of way

and can be quite charming, but when he is irritated can turn into a very vindictive person filled with rage. Through his responses to Brett's verbal jabs, the audience sees his bad behavior right away, and wonders how Brett can tolerate it. Regardless, Brett endures it for the time being, and Jake follows suit.

When they get inside, Bill tries to diffuse the tense silence that follows when Mike sees Cohn waiting there. Bill suggests they all go watch the running of the bulls scheduled for that afternoon, and everyone complies. Mike orders his and Brett's luggage sent up to their room, and everyone leaves to go watch the bulls. As they leave, Mike takes hold of Brett very fiercely, as if daring the other men to touch her, while Cohn shoots Jake a knowing glance as a compatriot man whom Brett has used and discarded. When Jake realizes that he has this refusal to accept rejection in common with Cohn, he appears disgusted with himself and hurries to leave.

At the running of the bulls, everyone gets drunk, and the audience learns a lot of valuable information. Mike tells how he became a bankrupt in two ways, "gradually and then suddenly," and that his bankruptcy was brought on by friends. This is also the portion of the film in which Mike makes fun of Jake for being a "steer" and draws the connection between Jake and Cohn. Brett tries to make peace while Cohn looks smug because he knows that everyone by now has heard that he and Brett were lovers. Mike tries unsuccessfully to run Cohn off, but only ends up looking like a drunken, overly-possessive fool. Finally, everyone has enough to drink and goes back to their respective hotels, with Cohn following in the distance. Jake hears Mike and Brett laughing about it all as they go up to bed, and he goes in his room and shuts the door.

The next scene opens abruptly as noon-day fireworks announce the beginning of the fiesta, waking Jake up. He gets dressed and looks in the mirror again, talking about what a fool he is and how he really isn't all that different from Cohn, who "follows Brett around like a steer." The camera follows Jake as he gets on the laptop and looks up the names of surgeons in Paris. Clearly, Jake has decided he wants to do whatever he can to try to repair his injury.

The next cut shows Jake as he leaves the hotel and goes into the street, walking into the mass excitement and confusion that is the street parade in honor of San Fermin. There are *riau riau* dancers swirling around him, and as he looks up to see the religious statues pass, he sees Brett in the mayhem of the procession. Brett is sitting on top of a wine cask being carried on the shoulders of many Spanish men. She is staged to look like a female version of Bacchus. As Brett passes, she blows Jake a kiss as the parade turns a corner. Bill breaks the wonder of Jake's reverie in watching her when he comes up with two wine skins. The friends comically shoot wine into each others' mouths. Then, they follow the parade to the bull arena.

When they arrive at the arena, Brett and Mike are there, along with the hotel owner/aficionado Montoya and Cohn, who is seated a few seats away at a vantage point that allows him to watch Brett without being too conspicuous. However, when the toreros enter the ring, Brett's attention becomes clearly fixed on Pedro Romero, a very handsome young bullfighter. The actor who plays Romero, if at all possible, should be a native Spanish actor, of slight frame and wiry muscular build, and with a recklessly handsome face. The pairing of Romero and Brett should look more physically and aesthetically correct than when she stands alongside any of her other suitors.

When Bill and Jake arrive, Mike feels safe to leave Brett with them to ward off Cohn while he goes to get drinks. Montoya and Jake try to explain the bullfight to Brett. She smiles and nods, but has eyes only for Romero. Montoya gives Jake a look, knowing that this will mean trouble for all of them.

As he is surveying the crowd, Romero sees Brett watching him, and he is instantly attracted to her. When Romero turns his back to the crowd to face his first bull, the camera follows Brett's gaze down into the ring, as if looking over Romero's shoulder. Viewers will notice that Romero's cape has picked up the color of passionate red that is always associated with Brett. Upon his first *veronica*, or turn with the bull, the world goes again from black and white to color.

The scene with Romero in the bullring should be staged in shots as much as possible to look like the opening boxing sequence with Cohn. The action in the bullring is very close, gritty, and seems to make the world spin as Romero moves in the ring. The camera should be as close in as possible, perhaps even embedded in the clothing of the actor who plays Romero, in order to get as close to the bull as possible. In the background, the audience hears Jake and Montoya discuss how dangerous it is to make these close passes.

By the end of the fight, no one has noticed that Cohn has crept up close behind them, and when Romero finally stabs the bull with his sword, Cohn rushes off to be sick. From the look in his eyes, and a flashback or two used to connect the experience with his boxing days, the audience can tell that this sort of brutality was too much for Cohn. Mike re-enters with drinks in hand just as Cohn rushes past, and Mike thinks mistakenly that he has run Cohn off.

The bullfight ends with Romero cutting off the ear of the bull and bringing it to Brett, who invites the young torero for drinks with the rest of them later that evening. Romero complies graciously, and for the first time, Mike's face has a look of genuine worry. This look is different from the false bravado he shows when he is supposedly protecting Brett from Cohn's advances. Romero is a real threat for Brett's affection. Mike knows it and is afraid.

That night, in the bar of the Hotel Montoya where they are staying, all of the men gather around Romero and Brett at a table. The scene is crowded and arranged in such a way that suggests the soon-to-be lovers are holding court. As the men slowly lose interest and drift into smaller groups of drunken, bravado-filled, bullfight discussions, Brett pulls Jake away from the rest. Brett mentions that she "feels such a bitch" but that she simply must find a way to sneak away with Romero to spend the night. Jake has a look on his face that shifts from hopefulness that he might have been the one Brett chose, to resentment at Romero's good-luck, and then finally to acceptance that at least he was the one she chose to confide in.

Jake returns to the men, leaving Brett and Romero alone together, and flirting at a corner table. The escalation of their flirtation is intercut with the escalation of a heated argument going on between Cohn and Mike across the crowded room. Jake works his way between them, hoping to stop the fistfight that will inevitably come, after a final insult that Mike hurls at Cohn about being Jewish. Suddenly, just as Brett asks Romero if "he always kills his friends," meaning the bulls he fights, Cohn takes a big swing at Mike. Cohn hits Jake by mistake as Jake attempts to intercede. Cohn is still a powerful puncher, and he knocks Jake out cold. Jake goes flying over the table.

Instantly ashamed at what he has done, Cohn looks down at Jake, and then over at Brett, who is in the process of leaving through the back door with Romero. Cohn turns and runs like a schoolboy from a playground fight, while Montoya and the bouncers try to restore order in the melee that breaks out. Jake regains consciousness just in time to see Cohn running down the street. Bill and Mike help Jake to his feet and hail him a taxi. Mike sees Brett get into another taxi and drive away with Romero. Mike looks hurt because Brett does not look back.

At the opening of the next scene, Jake wakes up in his room to the sound of a text from Mike, saying to come down for lunch when he gets ready. Jake cleans up quickly and heads downstairs, where he walks into a conversation between a waiter, Mike, and Bill. The waiter declares that men are animals just as much as the bulls, and that they both destroy each other for sport, with bullfighting as a prime example.

When the waiter leaves, Mike tells Jake what happened the rest of the night. Apparently, Cohn followed Brett and Romero to their hotel, where Cohn waited, listening outside the door, for them to finish making love. Then, Cohn burst in and used his considerable boxing ability to beat the young man senseless. Mike's voiceover narration of the tale is told over scenes showing how it happened. Even though Romero has stolen his fiancé, Mike has apparently recovered enough to have a grudging admiration for the boy, who took such a beating for Brett. Mike and Bill laugh about the way in which Brett rejected Cohn's proposal of marriage to her afterward, but Jake does not find it funny at all.

Upon hearing this last revelation, Jake gets up abruptly and asks where Cohn is. Bill tells him that Cohn is probably back at the Hotel Montoya, and Jake goes off to find

him. When Jake walks into Cohn's room, Cohn is lying facedown on the bed, sobbing like a little boy. Jake gets him to straighten up, and tells him he has no hard feelings about what happened the night before. Cohn tells Jake that he is his "only true friend" and Jake thinks to himself what a sad man Cohn must be to think that. Eventually, Cohn gets up and finishes packing, saying that he is going back to the States because he knows he has been beaten. Cohn wishes Jake luck with Brett as Jake leaves Cohn to rejoin the others at the bullfight.

Jake arrives back at the bull arena just in time to see Romero begin with his last bull for the day. The young man's face, in close-up, is badly swollen and disfigured. Particularly, Romero's nose has been flattened and ruined, just as Cohn's was so many years ago. As Romero makes the passes with his bull, the crowd boos to see him step away a bit, wincing in pain from what seem to be broken ribs. The camera work should maintain the intensity of Romero's first bullfight, but should also create a woozy, punch-drunk sensation, done in order to simulate the feeling Cohn experienced in his first major defeat as a college boxer.

After Romero finishes with the bull, he goes over to Brett and painfully hands her his *muleta*, or cape. The audience should be able to notice that, although Romero and the arena were in full color, when Romero hands her the cape over the edge of the ring, everything changes to black and white. This tonal shift should signify that, having satisfied her sexual curiosity for Romero, Brett is already tiring of the young bullfighter, as she has tired of every other man in her life. Jake sees the difference in the expression on her face as she smiles less convincingly at Romero, and for the first time the audience can tell that Jake is really beginning to get over his feelings for Brett.

The friends watch Belmonte battle his bulls while Romero changes. Romero is too weak for the festivities afterwards, Brett tells Jake, but the new couple is going away together to Madrid immediately after the fight. Brett receives a text from Romero saying that he is ready to leave. Kissing Jake goodbye on the cheek, Brett says nothing to Mike even though he stands face to face with her as she passes. After she leaves, all three settle into a sort of melancholy drudgery of watching Belmonte finish his last kill.

Although Belmonte is skilled, from the close-ups of his face, it is easy for the audience to see that he is quite old and not particularly handsome. As the men leave the arena, they see Belmonte packing up his gear by himself. Later that same evening, Jake notices out of the corner of his eye that Belmonte is drinking alone, but Jake does not have the heart to ask him over to their table. Belmonte does not seem troubled by his solitude. He drinks and leaves quietly, leaving Jake to ruminate in internal monologue about his future as a single, older man, until Bill makes a joke snapping him back.

The next morning, Bill, Jake, and Mike all meet for breakfast at the train station. Bill is going back to America, Mike to Scotland, and Jake to Paris. Jake is the last to leave. Just before he departs, he sees Belmonte board a train to Madrid. According to his custom, Belmonte simply tips his hat and departs. Jake admires how cleanly and simply Belmonte cuts losses and goes on.

In the next scene, Jake gets off the train, oddly enough, in Madrid, not Paris. As Jake looks down at the text from Brett asking him to come urgently because she is in trouble, the audience sees a couple of scenes in flashback. Jake was relaxing by a pool in Paris when he received the first text that Brett needed him in Madrid. Jake scrolls through his phone and looks at his appointment book, seeing that he is scheduled for a follow-up

appointment with a doctor. From the flashback sequence, the audience learns that Jake has been spending part of his time recuperating from reconstructive surgery that has made him at least partially functional as a man again. Jake calls the doctor's office to reschedule, saying that an emergency has come up, and the nurse sets him a later date.

The scene shifts back to present day, as the camera follows Jake through the streets to his arrival at Brett's hotel. After the gruff landlady shows him up to her room, Jake finds Brett lying facedown on the bed crying, in the exact position in which he found Cohn several weeks ago. Jake coaxes Brett to a seated position and gets her to tell him the story. Brett has sent Romero away because she is not ready to settle down and be a good wife to him, or possibly anyone else. There are a quick couple of shots in flashback, during which the audience sees the newly hardened Romero call Brett a whore and storm out. Nevertheless, in her version of the story to Jake, Brett makes it seem as if she was the one to call things off with Romero, because she doesn't ruin children. From the look on Jake's face, it is clear that he doesn't wholly believe Brett's version of the story, but he still cares enough for her to pretend to believe it all anyway.

Jake comforts Brett, and they gather what remains of her things. They take a cab to the train station. Jake buys Brett a ticket back to what is left of her family in England, where she will return with no money and no title. Just before she leaves, Jake tells Brett that he has had an operation that will make him whole again. At first, Brett genuinely reacts to the news, saying that it is wonderful, and Jake accepts the reaction, kissing her. However, Brett ruins it by continuing to talk, letting Jake see her desperation to hold onto him now that he is her only way out of a return to England with no money. Jake breaks

from her embrace and walks off in the other direction as the other passengers begin boarding around Brett.

Brett calls out after Jake, in a last effort to change his mind. “Oh, Jake! We could have had such a damned good time together,” Brett pleads. Jake stops and turns, taking a couple of steps toward her. Brett seems to think he is returning, but instead Jake stops and smiles, uttering the last line of the novel, “Yes. Isn’t it pretty to think so?” Jake tips his hat, in a replication of Belmonte’s gesture from the earlier scene, turns and continues on his path to the Paris-bound train. Brett remains completely alone on the platform. The train to London leaves without her.

The Sun Also Rises – Analysis

This rendition of *The Sun Also Rises* blends Italian Neo-Realist filmmaking with today’s reality-television style in order to foreground one of Hemingway’s primary concerns with adaptations of his work: how to convey a sense of realism. Also, the use of color to indicate moments of passion in the film is intended to call attention to one of the author’s less-explored sides, that of visual art aficionado, that has only received attention in only two adaptations of his work so far, *Islands in the Stream* (1977) and *The Old Man and the Sea* (1999). The treatment’s continued repetition of the spinning motif as indicative of passion that is out of control is intended as a visualization of the circle of life suggested by Hemingway’s epigraph for the novel from Ecclesiastes, which may be included in the text of the film, at the director’s discretion.

Since this treatment is imagined for a major motion picture release, suggestions for actors, or at least actors similar to known stars, have been made, with careful attention to the possible personal connections that each suggested actor might bring to his or her role. For example, Mike Sorrentino might at first glance appear to be an odd choice to play Robert Cohn. However, considering his current position in celebrity culture as a self-congratulatory, super-muscular ladies' man that people love to hate, Sorrentino is actually a perfect physical and psychological fit for the character. Like Errol Flynn in the first film adaptation of *The Sun Also Rises*, sometimes an actor who is not known for stellar technique can achieve great success in a role that allows him to simply play himself.

Also, various socio-cultural and historical details have been updated in order to make the film resonate with twenty-first century audiences. One often-voiced complaint of critics on the aforementioned adaptation of *Sun* is that the actors playing the parts were too old. In order to capture Hemingway's theme of youthful exuberance run amok in the novel, it is necessary to use younger actors and also present-day details, such as Jake's Affliction t-shirt and text-messaging, to replace out-of-date cultural references that could mystify younger viewers. Still, Hemingway's theme of ever-changing youth culture is set against a backdrop of old Europe's immutable past wherever possible. By including such scenes as the parade of San Fermin and the bullfights of Pamplona, the adaptation would retain the author's sense of historical grounding, and offer a meaningful contrast between old and new that viewers would recognize, regardless of their level of familiarity with Hemingway's original novel.

The one great editorialization in the treatment, that Jake actually has a reconstructive operation that would allow him the possibility of a sexual relationship with Brett, is added as a modern touch that further serves one of Hemingway's textual themes. In the novel, all of the men with whom Brett sleeps are eventually emotionally castrated by her. However, Jake, because of his injury, is able to maintain a sense of psychological independence from Brett, and is therefore the only character in love with her whose sense of masculine honor survives intact to the end of the book. In today's world of medical miracles, Jake would have, in all likelihood, pursued some sort of surgical option to restore his ability to function sexually. However, if the operation was successful, Jake would be made just as emotionally vulnerable as the other men to Brett's advances. By providing Jake with the opportunity to be seduced by Brett, an opportunity that he rejects, this treatment reinforces Hemingway's conception of Jake as a code hero whose personal willpower is stronger than that of ordinary men.

Finally, small details about Hemingway's life, such as his love of the outdoors, the story of his father's death, and his preference to stand while typing, are incorporated into the treatment in order to help link the adaptation to the author's biography. Once again, although these details may not be significant to those unfamiliar with Hemingway's personal life, they nevertheless help to subtly extend the circle of his celebrity author ouroboros to include a new generation.

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