

ECHOES OF CLOSETED DESIRE(S): THE NARRATOR AND CHARACTER VOICES OF JAKE BARNES

Contents

[NOTES](#)

[WORKS CITED](#)

Much more than "a compact white skyline on the top of a little cliff" (SAR 216), Madrid is the setting for the final performance of Jake Barnes in *The Sun Also Rises*. Sitting with his arm around Lady Ashley as their taxi enters the Gran Via, he at last acknowledges that he and Brett were never destined to be the sort of lovers welcomed into society. Brett bemoans the loss of such a model relationship, while Jake, in a very telling manner, rejects both the possibility and the desirability of any such arrangement:[1]

"Oh Jake,' Brett said,"we could have had such a damned good time together"

Ahead was a mounted policeman in khaki directing traffic. He raised his baton. The car slowed suddenly pressing Brett against me.

"Yes," I said. "Isn't it pretty to think so?" (222)

With Brett pressed against him and phallic power directing him, Jake dismisses -- in a very campy fashion--strict heterosexual prescriptions for desire.[2] His final words echo the "pretty thoughts" of those who "like to do a lot of things" but know, perhaps better than such sentimentalists as Brett, that they must steel themselves with "another bottle of rioja alta" before venturing out into the "hot and bright, and...sharply white" world (221-2).

Thus Jake Barnes gives final voice to his "lives" in Paris, Burguete, and Pamplona where he discriminates between heterosexual and homosexual desire but is rarely able to shift between his narrating role echoing the heterosexual--and his character role echoing the homosexual--without emphasizing that someone or something he desires is missing. Although his two "roles" are never clearly and concisely dichotomized, for convenience only and not to assert any consistent contrast, I am calling the more normative narrating voice sharing thoughts with Hemingway's reader, "Barnes," and the more antisocial voice speaking in dialogue with other characters, "Jake."

Now certainly any narrator can distance himself from and even comment on his role as character. He can relive, even erroneously, his past, can "operate independently" of the character sharing his name (Phelan Narrative 110, 112). Yet, as Judith Butler notes, the self's social presence is a "reiterated acting" or process instantiating and destabilizing the norms it acts (9-10). And most destabilizing to the "fixity" or "materialization" of the process that is selfhood is desire. For example, at the bal musette, the narrating Barnes shares with the reader an apparently frank and simple heterosexual desire:

Brett was damned good-looking. She wore a slipover jersey sweater and a tweed skirt.... She was built with curves like the hull of a racing yacht, and you missed none of it with that wool jersey. (SAR 27)

However, before he voices this desire, Barnes concentrates on "the gay men in detail; their appearance stands as the initial object of his gaze" (Blackmore 55). He asserts that he "wanted to swing on...that simpering composure" of the homosexual men who are dancing at the bal musette (25). His heteroglot language resonates with homophobia over "grimacing, gesturing" dancers, but it also resonates with an excessive attention to "white hands, wavy hair" etc. Certainly, Bakhtinian complications constitute both the Barnes who narrates and the Jake who speaks in dialogue; certainly, Bakhtinian complications help our understanding of any such "split." [3]

Yet, because Paris, Burguete, Pamplona, and the final cab ride in Madrid are performances of self in which his "roles" vary because of different desires, Jake Barnes is an excellent example of how expressing desire complicates not only any voice that would be at all inclusive,[4] but any notion of a character/narrator who would be at all unitary. Identity is an uneasy tension between the normative and the personal that serves to locate Jake Barnes in a closet from which he does not easily emerge. In fact, by the end of his story he scarcely comes to terms with any unifying concept of himself. His "presented identity" is, at most, only an emerging self-consciousness (Troiden 193, 204).

This does not, though, preclude the pensive Barnes from conscious "participation...in a psychic economy that defines itself against the historically available category of the homosexual" (Edelman 39). As soon as Robert Cohn leaves him at the Napolitain, Barnes quietly and assuredly reflects on "the poules going by" (SAR 20). In a manner that serves "to keep the always shaky construction of heterosexuality intact" (Bersani 36),[5] he revels in the cultural and economic privileges afforded the heterosexual mate who controls the gaze and directs events:

I sat at a table on the terrace of the Napolitain...watching it get dark...and the poules going by, singly and in pairs, looking for the evening meal. I watched a good-looking girl.... She went by once more and I caught her eye, and she came over and sat down at the table. (20)

He tells the reader that he "paid for the saucers...hailed a horse-cab.... put [his] arm around her" (21). As he perceives what he does, his position is culturally validated.

However, this control over and commodification of the woman is not so frank and simple as Barnes would have his reader believe. His "vague sentimental idea that it would be nice to eat with...a poule" (SAR 22) runs afoul of desire. Barnes may elect to say that he "caught her eye," that he "paid" that he "put her hand away," as if that is the end of it (21). But the character, Jake, is actually touched. It is difficult to ignore the distinct probability that, as a sex worker, Georgette is apt to purposely feel for his penis as a prelude to sex. Even if Jake then elects to tell Georgette "Never mind," as if what she feels is of no consequence, it does matter. This is an idealized masculine perspective, but one with complications and contradictions--all coming from one Hemingway character. After touching him, Georgette asks Jake, "What's the matter? You sick?" If he were without a penis it seems highly unlikely that a prostitute could not tell. It seems even more unlikely, in fact improbable, that Georgette would ask about illness instead of injury if she felt nothing between his legs. It is further unlikely that a Jake Barnes who was at all assured of his sexual identity would vacillate between such narrated reticence and such conversational ambiguity. True, Jake is not likely to admit that his penis is missing or dysfunctional; Barnes is less likely to admit being emasculated; and Hemingway is even more unlikely to openly broach the subject of a missing, mangled, or in-firm penis if he wants to be published.[6] Yet, all of them do broach the subject; and, neither disease nor war wound can explain so much self-incriminating information.

Only Georgette seems close to figuring it out: "Everybody's sick" (SAR 21). She, and Jake, whom she touches, are both sick according to specific social scripts. As a woman who should frankly and simply be used by men, Georgette is an object contaminated by use. As a man who should frankly and simply use women, Jake is contaminated by not using. They are both socially defined to interact with each other in certain prescribed ways. Any break in performing the "normal" is a sickness that Barnes tries to avoid with his selective narrative of events, and that Jake tries to dismiss with his indirect dialogue.

Such, however, is generally not the case with Jake's dialogue. He is, in truth, quite transgressive and socially "sick" when he, for example, introduces Georgette to the Braddocks party in Paris. He presents her as "my fiancée, Mademoiselle Georgette Leblanc" (SAR 23). Mrs. Braddocks asks if she is related to the singer, the lesbian lover of Margaret Anderson, whom all present would know, as would Hemingway (Wagner-Martin, "Racial and Sexual Coding" 40-1). In what is almost certainly a pique of perversity Jake acts in a manner certain to elicit challenge. Obviously knowing his remarks will be seen as mockingly associating the prostitute Georgette Hobin who is used by men with the lesbian Georgette Leblanc who is not, he associates himself with a lover of women who, like him, does not penetrate them in the normative fashion. Neither Mrs. Braddocks, nor anyone else observing this performance, can help but see Jake as triangulating himself out of a normative sex role. He willingly makes of himself a focal point demanding interpretation as either a sexually active male linked antisocially to lesbianism and prostitution, or as a sexually inactive male linked only superficially to any woman.

What might be a form of coming out is more accurately seen as self-destructive behavior caused by "internalized homophobia" or self-hatred for appearing "different" (Gonsiorek 475,473). After all, Barnes has thought his "vague sentimental idea" of dining with a prostitute, then complicated that thought by considering "how dull it could be" only to reflect on taking Georgette "into the room full of people" (SAR 22, 23). He may posit an aestheticized relationship with the entire scenario, but he implicates himself in the stories of the marginalized lesbian and the marginalized prostitute. Even if he is an unreliable narrator because not fully aware of what motivates him, or because aware and therefore attempting to appear a distanced and stereotypically masculine male,[7] it is implausible that Barnes misses, even in his insular, narrated musings, how he is perceived.

Having lost "the conviction of masculine invincibility and authority after the war" (Martin 66), Barnes nevertheless strives to narrate that ideal. What results, though, is an inconsistency between public and private identities that undercuts the possibility of Jake Barnes ever being a unified presence in his own story. He remains the site of shifting tensions between

sexual identities,[8] the site of conflict over perversion and normalcy,[9] as is apparent when Barnes narrates his views of the dancers at the bal musette. Even though he shares his homophobia with the gatekeeper of social norms, a "policeman standing by the door [who] looked at [him] and smiled," Barnes can neither turn away from nor cease thinking about the "crowd of young men," one of whom "danced big-hippily, carrying his head on one side, his eyes lifted as he danced" (SAR 25): "I know they are supposed to be amusing, and you should be tolerant, but I wanted to swing" (SAR 25).

His homophobia is now so aroused that it finds voice even in conversation with other characters. No sooner does the reader have it from Barnes' narrative that "[t]hey are like that" homosexual men who "would all dance with" the commodified woman and disrupt heterosexual control over her, than Robert Prentiss appears. Another observer, Prentiss does not dance with Georgette, or Brett, or the homosexual men; and yet he acts too much like "[t]he tall dark one, called Lett," and "the tall blond youth" when he addresses lake in person: "Oh, how charmingly you get angry," he said, "I wish I had that faculty" (SAR 25-6). Threatened now by the proximity and possibility of homosexual passion (Rudat, "Sexual Dilemmas" 4), lake sounds the same in dialogue as Barnes does in his more privately shared narration: "I just thought perhaps I was going to throw up" (26).

Interestingly, at a time and place when the well-read lake Barnes would likely know something of Freudian psychoanalysis and its interpretation of violent reactions to homosexuality as "reaction formations," he both muses and speaks in ways that cannot help but call into question his own sexuality (Blackmore 55).

It is a questioning, however, in which Barnes almost never consciously engages. Instead his narration most often tends to support clearly defined sex roles, as it does in the cab headed for "the Parc Montsouris":

Her head was back. I saw her face in the lights from the open shops.... Brett's face was white and the long line of her neck showed.... I kissed her. Our lips were tight together and then she turned away. (SAR 30)

But Hemingway's character, Jake, does the kissing:

"Don't touch me," she said. "Please don't touch me."

"What's the matter?"

"I can't stand it."

"Oh Brett."

"You mustn't. You must know. I can't stand it, that's all. Oh, darling please understand!"

"Don't you love me?"

"Love you? I simply turn all to jelly when you touch me."

"Isn't there anything we can do about it?" (30-1)

And Jake holds open the possibility of masturbation, oral sex, or other expressions of desire. Barnes, however, interrupts: "She looked as though there were nothing on earth she would not look at like that, and really she was afraid of so many things" (31). Whatever Barnes may be thinking of himself, and Brett's perception of him, Jake's impatient dialogue holds no hope for those demanding clearly demarcated desire. "And there's not a damn thing we could do," [Jake] said" (31).

Notwithstanding that Jake dismisses the possibility of a future with her, Brett wants some relationship with him: "But, darling, I have to see you. It isn't all that you know" (SAR 31). Two talking and touching characters express desire and disgust, hope and despair, and so complicate their relationship that it becomes unclear just what did happen to Jake Barnes in the war. Brett might be interpreted as seeing what happened to him as punishment for her active sexual life: "When I think of all the hell I've put chaps through. I'm paying for it all now" (31). If, however, he has lost his penis, instead of his desire for her, it seems exceedingly insensitive of Brett to interpret his wound as her punishment. Hardly the sentiments of the woman who calls Jake "darling" and has to see him.

Rather than understand this conversation so cruelly and reductively, I want to argue that there is some degree of

uncertainty over "what happened" in the war. Are we to believe that Jake Barnes, whether in his private thoughts or in his conversations, ever "supposed [it] to be funny," ever "laughed about," having his penis shot off or cut off or so mangled as to demand removal (SAR 31)? Hardly. In Hemingway's male societies it is asking too much to suppose such an event ever "seemed like a hell of a joke" (SAR 31). Instead, the "joke" is that the male-bonding of war, of bullfighting, of living the expatriate sporting life, leads Jake Barnes and others to come "home that way," the way of the dancers--but without the bravery to act antisocially. Perhaps the flaunting male dancers, perhaps the posturing Robert Prentiss, perhaps Brett with the lesbianism hinted at by her mannish attire (Modellmog 193-4), are less "maimed" because they have come out.

There is, though, some sexual gratification in the closet. Barnes informs the reader that he is lying "face down on the bed" waiting for Brett, who is visiting his Paris apartment. He "was having a bad time" (SAR 56). But when Brett returns to the bedroom after sending the Count for champagne, this suffering voice of the narrator falls silent. Brett "brings Jake out," elicits what he says by interacting with him erotically. She strokes him with affection, and a dialogue starts: "Do you feel better, darling? Is the head any better?" "It's better." (56). Loving interaction between the two characters is so satisfying that his headache is gone. He lies quietly with Brett, satiated after being backed up to the hoydenish lady. It is difficult to miss that Brett is able to "bring off" a fellow character, one with whom she shares dialogue, whereas the insular Barnes is unable so to accommodate Georgette in his narrating role.

Aware, however, that she is unable to live with Jake on the strict terms prescribed by society, Brett instead triangulates a relationship among herself, Jake, and the Count that serves to validate her ambiguous relationship with each man at the very time it brings the two men together within that ambiguous desire. After the Count exposes his wounds from Abyssinia, wounds that pass through his lower body and "come out, [a]bove the small of the back," Brett tells Jake, "I told you he was one of us. Didn't I?" (SAR 61). There is scant evidence that the Count is either emotionally involved or impotent: he is "an esthete, not a sensualist" (Brenner Concealments 45). He walks and dances well. The only way he could be made impotent from wounds " [b]elow the line where his ribs stopped," would be an arrow striking his spinal cord, most certainly impairing him further.[10]

A more logical explanation for Brett's comparing the Count to herself and to Jake is her need of a social context for antisocial desire. The Count is one of those who "have been around very much," in much the same manner as Jake: "I dare say Jake here has seen as much as you have," said Brett" (SAR 60). What Jake and the Count have seen and evidently share, and what Brett seems to also share, is an awareness that on one level they all behave and serve society as good soldiers, while on another each makes a pretense of behaving and serving to escape "punishment." They are all "soldiering" on a sexual battlefield where they at times perform normally and at other times act to escape notice. They are "living very much" and "enjoying everything" but keeping it a "secret" safely closeted, for example, in Jake's apartment.[11]

But outside that "closet," faced with the crowd at Zelli's, Barnes again muses on stereotypically normative roles for himself and Brett and the Count. Leaving after "getting the girl" he makes it plain that they are validated by society: "the drummer shouted and grinned at Brett.... As we went out the door I looked back and there were three girls at [the Count's] table" (SAR 64-5). Both the Count and Barnes "get the girl" on this narrative level. But on the dialogue level performed with Brett and the three girls, neither Jake nor the Count have or attempt to have sex. Jake says "Good night, Brett" (65), and he sleeps alone. Seemingly, the Count does likewise, given his apparently non-sexual relationship with Brett.

My point is not so much that Jake Barnes be seen as clearly split, rather that he be seen as conflicted, without the self-understanding to acknowledge that he is privately idolizing normative behavior but voicing the antisocial in dialogue.

Once on the fishing trip to Burguete and removed from the social constraints of Paris, Jake's dialogue is even more able to voice the antisocial. For example, starting a mock argument replicating various incongruous intimacies, Bill attacks "The Lost Generation" of writers in Paris, those like Jake--and Hemingway:

"You're an expatriate. You've lost touch with the soil. You get precious. Fake European standards have ruined you. You drink yourself to death. You become obsessed by sex. You spend all your time talking.... One group claims women support you. Another group claims you're impotent." (SAR 109)

Jake responds, saying that such a life "sounds...swell" (109). Even the reticent narrating voice that has heretofore tried to avoid being called "sick," now hopes that Gorton will continue his dialogue on sexuality: "I was afraid he thought he had hurt me with that crack about being impotent. I wanted to start him again" (109).

Bill, insisting that the way Jake has acted and spoken in the past makes him "a good guy," and that he likes, him, acknowledges the pervasiveness of homosexual possibilities, but admits to an equally pervasive social proscription of

them:

"Listen. You're a hell of a good guy, and I'm fonder of you than anybody on earth. I couldn't tell you that in New York. It'd mean I was a faggot. That was what the Civil War was about. Abraham Lincoln was a faggot... Sex explains it all." (SAR 109)

Jake answers, encouraging Bill to say more about how "fond" he is of him, about how "Abraham Lincoln was.... in love with General Grant" (109). Dialogically interacting, two men, however humorously, however satirically, reconsider the possibilities of relationships that are always present in and always threatening to a tightly held together or closeted society.

After fishing for part of the day they resume their repartee over lunch. Bill echoes the contemporary vituperation surrounding H. L. Mencken, the corrosive, socially satirical journalist: "Don't eat that, Lady' --that's Mencken" (SAR 115). He goes on to ironically align himself with an advocate for the social mores Mencken criticized: William Jennings Bryan, the successful prosecutor of the Scopes trial, the successful defender of Fundamentalism, the Cross-of-Gold Democrat. "He and Mencken and I all went to Holy Cross together" (115). Jake, not to be outdone, asserts that he "went to Loyola with Bishop Manning" and "to Notre Dame with Wayne B. Wheeler" (115). He and the Protestant Bishop Manning, who founded Brown University, are cohorts at Catholic Loyola, just as the Midwestern, Anti-Saloon-League lawyer, Wayne B. Wheeler, who worked his way through Oberlin, studies with him at Notre Dame. Two men sharing the socially validated, masculine pastime of fishing perform the philosophical poses and identities of various established and normative voices in such a convoluted fashion as to undercut what separates them. Antipodal positions join incongruously in the dialogue between Jake and Bill, climaxing with the homosocial, the homophobic, the Fundamentalist, the liberal, the imbibor, and the Prohibitionist literally and figuratively lying down together in an alcohol-induced stupor.

This deconstruction of society's binarisms does not last. With the approach of Pamplona, the setting of the third major performance in the novel, the heterogexism of Barnes' narrating mode reemerges. Established masculine privilege reasserts itself as he reflects on being a member of bullfighting's male elite:

Aficion means passion. An aficionado is one who is passionate about the bull-fights.... We often talked about bulls and bullfighters.... It was simply the pleasure of discovering what we each felt.... When they saw that I had aficion, and there was no password, no set questions that could bring it out, rather it was a sort of oral spiritual examination with the questions always a little on the defensive and never apparent, there, was this same embarrassed putting the hand on the shoulder, or a "Buen hombre." (SAR123)

Less embarrassed by the homoerotic, in fact directly questioning the uncontested assumptions of male bonding, Jake's dialogue informs Bill how the bullfight depends on the passive, receptive male: "They let the bulls out of the cages...and they have steers in the corral to receive them and keep them from fighting" (SAR 124). Without those who are seen as and valued for stereotypical feminine passivity, stereotypical masculinity could not perform. Without the steer, the bull would likely act out his aggressiveness on other bulls. Without the "abnormally" sexed, or "unsexed," the "normally" sexed would likely penetrate each other in the very act of being normal.

All this is more than tracing the bifurcation of Jake Barnes who often narrates one thing and then just as often reveals something else in dialogue. Of more importance are the tensions and contradictions that complicate each supposedly isolated desire. Barnes, gazing at the prostitutes at the Napolitain, and gazing at the steers in the bullring, espouses the views of overarching society. From this perspective the potently masculine is the most valued while the passively unmasculine has social value only through its relationship to established social roles:

[The bull] charged straight for the steers.... two steers turned sideways to take the shock, and the bull drove into one of the steers.... The steer was down now...he lay the way he had fallen.... the bull...made for the other steer.... the bull caught him, hooked him lightly in the flank, and then turned away and looked up at the crowd.... The steer who had been gored.... did not attempt to join the herd. (SAR 129-30)

However, from the perspective of interaction and dialogue, there are more than penetrators and penetrated. Yes, Jake often comes between Cohn and Mike, even between Brett and Cohn; but, for all Jake's passivity, Brett is attracted to him. She begins and ends the novel in his arms. Just as the nonnormative Jake gets the girl he does not "use," so too does he complicate what is normal. When Robert's jealousy disrupts the party in Pamplona, after the bulls are unloaded, Mike and Brett expect Jake's assistance. Jake's response, though, diminishes the likelihood that anyone can ever define how another must "behave" in order to remain within a social group: "Yes, I said, 'it would be nice for me to tell him'" (SAR 133). Is it "nice" because Jake, like Cohn, often desires without having sex? Is it "nice" because Jake, like the stereotypic

woman, performs an ameliorating role but in "his" case ends up with the girl? Is it "nice" because Jake, like the ideal man, is performing a role actually constrained by society? Is it "nice" because Jake, like Montoya, works to keep Brett from Romero, only to introduce her to him? Is it "nice" because Jake, like the dancers, subverts acceptable "behavior" by expressing antisocial desire for, in his case, Romero?: "He's a good-looking kid" (150); "He's a fine boy" (150); "He's a damned good-looking boy," I said. "When we were up in his room I never saw a better-looking kid" (152).

Even as Jake plays with indeterminate "niceties" in his dialogue, the usually normative voice of the narrating Barnes who had earlier assigned value according to penetrator and penetrated, now joins in the expression of antisocial desire. Barnes cannot resist Romero: "He was the best-looking boy I have ever seen" (SAR 149); "Romero's face was very brown. He had nice manners" (159). "I noticed his skin. It was clear and smooth and very brown" (168). "His hand was very fine and the wrist was small" (168). Both narrator and character now express a desire for the slender, masculine beauty of Romero. Both express a desire that complicates if not undercuts the social signifiers of heterosexist machismo.[12]

The story of Jake Barnes, in fact, changes. The narrating voice of Barnes now sounds more and more as if it were challenging the normative order of things. When he next shares with the reader his experience of the bullring, Barnes does not keep homoerotic machismo separate from homosexual desire: "The bull wanted it again, and Romero's cape filled again" (SAR 195); "The bull charged as Romero charged.... his left shoulder went forward between the horns as the sword went in, and...he and the bull were one, Romero way out over the bull....directly below us.... He profiled directly in front of the bull.... he became one with the bull" (196-8).[13] "It was nice to watch if you cared anything about the person who was doing it" (196). The most potent and valuable of the bulls is being penetrated by Romero, who is himself "possessed" by the narrator positioned above and behind him.

In an even more complicated move, Barnes has by this time eroticized Romero for Brett: "I had her watch how Romero took the bull away.... Brett saw how something that was beautiful done close to the bull was ridiculous if it were done a little way off" (SAR 153). Paradoxically, normative masculinity leads Barnes to fix Brett up with Romero--after he himself ogles the bullfighter: "I introduced them all around"; "I noticed his skin.... he was watching Brett.... I think he was sure"; "later, Brett and Pedro Romero were gone" (159,168,169). Acting as a member of the elite bullfighting club leads to expressions of homosexual desire that highlight the stereotypically "macho" matador for the sexually aggressive woman who threatens such a society.

All of which results in a social excommunication to which Barnes admits, almost as if renouncing his heretofore normative persona: "The hard-eyed people at the bull-fighter table watched me go. It was not pleasant" (SAR 169). "Montoya did not come near us" (206). He maintains this posture when he tells the reader about Madrid where Brett and Romero--both of whom he desires--have been having an affair: "I went over to the bed and put my arms around her. She kissed me, and while she kissed me I could feel she was thinking of something else" (217). It is not so important that Barnes is less desired or differently desired; instead, he now freely lets the reader witness "a manner of acting that is not adequate to [the] reality" he has until now embraced (Dollimore 69).

At the end of his story in his final self-performance, Jake Barnes comes close to embodying many of the contradictions he has expressed. He becomes, however, an echo of various desires:

"Oh Jake," Brett said, "we could have had such a damned good time together."

Ahead was a mounted policeman in khaki directing traffic. He raised his baton. The car slowed suddenly pressing Brett against me.

"Yes," I said. "Isn't it pretty to think so?" (SAR 222)

His narrative voice contextualizes his dialogue by describing the heterosexist, homophobic milieu in which he and Brett have all along been forced to perform. A "mounted policeman in khaki.... raised his baton" attempting to direct Brett and him. The voice of phallic power that is only prosthetic posturing is now drowned out by the echoes of Prentiss, Gorton, Georgette, the dancers, and Jake Barnes, who has not so much become one unified "out" person as he has become a cacophony of multiple desires on which the novel's final curtain falls.

NOTES

This essay owes much to conversations with Gerry Brenner, Debra Modellmog, and James Phelan.

1. Rudat in "Sexual Otherness" (177), claims that Hemingway is "punishing Jake" by having him echo the homosexuals he supposedly detests. I, however, see the narrator doing most of the detesting. As a character, Jake nearly "comes out" especially with his last line.
2. As Wagner-Martin says in her introduction to *New Essays on The Sun Also Rises* (16), "[w]hen Hemingway wrote *The Sun Also Rises*, he was trying to make a clear statement about...his rebellion against the codifying temper of the postwar years in America." But neither Hemingway nor Jake Barnes ever succeeds in fully presenting a self-concept that includes a variety of possible identities.
3. Brenner's "(S)talking Game" is an excellent example of how Bakhtinian dialogism helps explain Jake Barnes' narrative (38).
4. Bakhtin, in *Problems of Dostoyevsky's Poetics*, is interested in language not as linguistic phenomenon but as an extralinguistic result of "the dialogic interaction of those that make use of it" (183). See also *The Dialogic Imagination* 365. While language is certainly altered by its cultural and interpersonal use, I am arguing that Jake Barnes acts out what are, primarily, different voices because he cannot come to terms with embodying the double voices of desire.
5. See Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge* 21-76. See also *Discipline and Punish*, 170-228. Foucault sees the self affected by power which is discursive and intertextual. Jake Barnes is the contest between such discourses, each of which he performs.
6. I am aware that Hemingway both wrote and stated in interviews that Jake Barnes suffered amputation, not castration. However, to what extent should we accept Hemingway's word for Jake Barnes's psychology, or even his own psychology, or his control over his character, or his control of his and Jake Barnes' desire(s)? See also Modellmog (194) and Arnold E. and Cathy Davidson (106 n. 11).
7. See Phelan, *Narrative as Rhetoric* 4, 107-110. Phelan, mentioning Wayne Booth, discusses unreliable narrators as those who are incapable of being or unwilling to be fully forthcoming. See also Booth's *The Rhetoric of Fiction* 158-9, 274, 295-6.
8. See Phelan, *Reading People, Reading Plots* 15. Phelan shows how "tensions" between what narrators know and what they tell us move narratives. In an analogous manner Jake Barnes can be seen performing to resolve tension between desires. See also Cohn, *Transparent Minds* 145-53 for a discussion of "dissonant self-narration" and pages 153-61 for a discussion of "consonant self-narration." Although Cohn's focus is on the narrating act, her discussions of consciousness and narrators inform an understanding of the narrator as not more informed or self-conscious than Jake the character.
9. See Elliot 84. He also cites Dollimore's *Sexual Dissidence* 121.
10. Although Rudat argues well in "Sexual Dilemmas" (6-7) that the Count is wounded and thus impotent, it seems too implausible that an abdominal wound would hinder sexual performance without other side effects.
11. Rudat, in "Sexual Otherness," says that Hemingway might be placing Jake Barnes in a position to select either homosexuality or heterosexuality (175-6). I see Jake Barnes--as narrator and as character--removing away from dichotomous definitions of sexuality.
12. See Edelman for a discussion of how systems linguistically encoding the homosexual as "other" deconstruct (9). See also Strychacz 251, 255-6.
13. Modellmog notes that the bullfight sounds like "sexual foreplay and consummation" (195). I agree but want to add that Romero is himself a sexual object.

WORKS CITED

Baldwin, Marc D. "To Make It into a Novel...Don't Talk About It': Hemingway's Political Unconscious." *The Journal of Narrative Technique* 23 (Fall 1993): 170-187.

Bakhtin, M. M. *The Dialogic Imagination*. Ed. Michael Holquist. Trans. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist. Austin: U of Texas P, 1981.

----- *Problems of Dostoyevsky's Poetics*. Ed. and Trans. Caryl Emerson. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1984. Bersani, Leo. *Homos*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 1995.

Blackmore, David. "In New York It'd Mean I Was a...': Masculinity Anxiety and Period Discourses of Sexuality in *The Sun Also Rises*." *The Hemingway Review* 18.1 (Fall 1998): 49-67.

Booth, Wayne C. *The Rhetoric of Fiction*. 2nd ed. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1983.

Brenner, Gerry. *Concealments in Hemingway's Works*. Columbus: Ohio State UP, 1983.

----- "(S)talking Game: Dialogically Hunting Hemingway's Domestic Hunters," *The Hemingway Review* 16.2 (Spring 1997): 35-50.

Butler, Judith. *Bodies that Matter: On the Discursive Limits of Sex*. New York: Routledge, 1993.

Cohn, Dorrit. *Transparent Minds: Narrative Modes for Presenting Consciousness in Fiction*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1978.

Davidson, Arnold E. and Cathy N. Davidson. "Decoding the Hemingway Hero in *The Sun Also Rises*" *New Essays on The Sun Also Rises*. Ed. Linda Wagner-Martin. New York.: Cambridge UP, 1987. 83-107.

Dollimore, Jonathan. *Sexual Dissidence: Augustine to Wilde, Freud to Foucault*. Oxford: Clarendon, 1991.

Edelman, Lee. *Homographesis*. New York: Routledge, 1994.

Elliott, Ira. "Performance Art: Jake Barnes and 'Masculine' Signification in *The Sun Also Rises*." *American Literature* 67 (March 1995): 77-94.

Foucault, Michel. *The Archaeology of Knowledge and the Discourse on Language*. Trans. A. M. Sheridan Smith. New York: Pantheon, 1972.

----- *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. Trans. A. M. Sheridan Smith. New York: Vintage, 1979.

Gonsiorek, John C. "Mental Health Issues of Gay and Lesbian Adolescents." *Psychological Perspectives on Lesbian and Gay Male Experiences*. Ed. Linda D. Garnet and Douglas C. Kimmel. New York: Columbia UP, 1993.469-485.

Hemingway, Ernest. *The Sun Also Rises*. New York: Scribner's, 1926.

Martin, Wendy. "Brett Ashley as New Woman in *The Sun Also Rises*." *New Essays on The Sun Also Rises*. Ed. Linda Wagner-Martin. New York: Cambridge UP, 1987.65-82.

Moddelmog, Debra A. "Reconstructing Hemingway's Identity: Sexual Politics, the Author, and the Multicultural Classroom." *Narrative* 1 (October 1993):187-206.

Phelan, James. *Narrative as Rhetoric: Technique, Audiences, Ethics, Ideology*. Columbus: Ohio State UP, 1996.

----- *Reading People, Reading Plots*. Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1989.

Rudat, Wolfgang E. H. "Hemingway on Sexual Otherness: What's Really Funny in *The Sun Also Rises*." *Hemingway Repossessed*. Ed. Kenneth Rosen. Westport, CT: Praeger, 1994.

----- "Sexual Dilemmas in *The Sun Also Rises*: Hemingway's Count and the Education of Jacob Barnes." *The Hemingway Review* 8.2 (Spring 1989):2-13.

Sedgwick, Eve Kosofsky. *Between Men: English Literature and Male Homosocial Desire*. New York: Columbia UP, 1985.

Strychacz, Thomas. "Dramatizations of Manhood in Hemingway's *In Our Time* and *The Sun Also Rises*." *American Literature* 61 (May 1989):245-260.

Troiden, Richard R. "The Formation of Homosexual Identities." *Psychological Perspectives on Lesbian and Gay Male Experiences*. Ed. Linda D. Garnet and Douglas C. Kimmel. New York: Columbia UP, 1993.191-217.

Wagner-Martin, Linda. "Introduction." *New Essays on The Sun Also Rises*. New York: Cambridge UP, 1987.1-18.

----- "Racial and Sexual Coding in Hemingway's The Sun Also Rises." The Hemingway Review 10.2 (Spring 1991): 39-41.

~~~~~

By J.F. Buckley, Ohio State University

---

Copyright of **Hemingway Review** is the property of Hemingway Society and its content may not be copied or e-mailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or e-mail articles for individual use.

**Source:** Hemingway Review, Spring2000, Vol. 19 Issue 2, p73, 15p

**Item:** 3287563

[Top of Page](#)