Born in Oak Park, Illinois (a suburb of Chicago), on July 21, 1899, Ernest Hemingway was the second of six children. His father, Clarence, a general practitioner of medicine, taught his son to hunt and fish, and, like his mother, was a strict disciplinarian. When Hemingway graduated from high school, he wanted to volunteer for the war effort, but his father arranged for him to work for the Kansas City Star as a reporter instead. In 1918, at the age of 18, Hemingway finally did join the war effort. He signed up with the Red Cross ambulance service and was assigned to the Italian Front as a Second Lieutenant. Hemingway served only a brief tour of duty before he was seriously wounded when an Austrian shell exploded just a few feet away from him. By the time he was well enough to return to the front, the fighting had stopped, so Hemingway returned to the United States and resumed his career as a reporter, by this time for The Toronto Star Weekly. Two years later, in October 1920, Hemingway went to Chicago where he met his future wife, Hadley Richardson, as well as Sherwood Anderson, who would have a profound effect on him. The newly wed Hemingways moved to Paris in late 1921 armed with letters of introduction to the Parisian literary scene written by Anderson. Thanks to these letters, Hemingway met James Joyce, Gertrude Stein, and Ezra Pound, all of whom would greatly influence the fledgling author. Shortly thereafter Hemingway embarked on a vigorous literary career. He published short stories and poetry, including Three Stories and Ten Poems (1923) and In Our Time (1925) as well as the satire The Torrents of Spring (1926) before releasing his first successful novel, The Sun Also Rises. Titled Fiesta in England when it first appeared, the novel captures the responses of expatriate characters to conditions in the period between two world wars.

Events in History at the Time the Novel Takes Place

Prohibition. The Eighteenth Amendment, one of the most controversial in United States history, took effect on January 17, 1920. Designed to frustrate the consumption of alcoholic beverages and eliminate the vice with which it was associated, this amendment forbade the manufacture, sale, and distribution of "intoxicating alcohol" in America (legally defined as any beverage with an alcoholic content greater than 0.5 percent, excluding sacramental or medicinal uses). Many Americans associated drinking alcohol with im-
morality. Even before it became illegal, several groups, such as the Women's Christian Temperance Union and the Anti-Saloon League, lobbied the government at the local, state, and national levels to make its sale unlawful. Temperance leaders felt disgusted by the way people acted while drinking and were concerned about the increasing numbers of saloons and bars springing up across America. Not only did these establishments promote intoxication; many of them also became known as dens of gambling and prostitution. If the law forced the saloons to close their doors, reasoned the reformers, and prohibited the consumption of alcohol, two goals would be achieved: people would stop drinking, and the vice connected with intoxication would disappear as well. According to one social worker of the day, outlawing the manufacture and sale of alcohol promised to "nearly wipe out prostitution and crime, improve labor, and 'substantially increase our national resources by setting free' vast amounts of human potential" derailed by the use of alcohol (Nash, p. 782). As it turned out, Prohibition (1920-33), the era in which the manufacture and sale of alcohol was in fact outlawed, did not stop Americans from drinking. One historian says it "just turned half the country into criminals who spent their money with bootleggers [traffickers in the illegal sale of alcohol] and in speakeasies [clubs that served bootlegged alcohol]" (Reynolds, p. 62). Indeed Prohibition was a dismal failure. "By the time the amendment was repealed in 1933, no one was certain which had cost the government more money—the ineffective enforcement of the law or the lost tax revenues from legitimate sales" (Reynolds, p. 62). Far from improving morality, the ban lent an air of intrigue and excitement to drinking. Critics could even argue that by glamorizing the speakeasy, Prohibition actually made alcohol more tantalizing to people, especially the younger generation, to which Hemingway and his crowd belonged.

Americans in Paris. In 1924 there were 32,000 permanent American residents in Paris, and an additional 12,000 tourists visited the so-called City of Light in July (Douglas, p. 108). The city boasted American jazz clubs and cinemas; Paris newspapers advertised American cigarettes; and major U.S. newspapers, such as the New York Herald Tribune, put out thriving Paris editions. Actually most of the Americans in France did not even speak French; so large was the English-speaking population that there seems to have been no need.

Some expatriates were attracted to the Continent by favorable currency exchange rates in postwar France. "From 1924-1926, the dollar value in francs made it possible for American writers to live quite well on their limited budgets" (Martin, p. 74). Other Americans went abroad because they felt that life in America was too provincial to provide an experience exciting enough for them. They were drawn instead to the glamorous images of life in Europe. Paris was, after all, one of the cultural capitals of the world in the 1920s. Not only was it home to a thriving literary community, but the other arts flourished there as well, and artists from around the world flocked to the City of Light. Igor Stravinsky (from Russia) and Erik Satie (France) led the way in music; Georges Braque (France), and Juan Gris and Pablo Picasso (from Spain) were pioneers in the visual arts; Sergey Pavlovich Diaghilev (from Russia) and Isadora Duncan (from the United States) broke new ground in the world of dance.

Such a burgeoning creative environment was not only conducive to artistic innovation; it also came with freedom from the moral restrictions of the United States (i.e., Prohibition). Some Americans lived abroad to circumvent Prohibition while others left home in protest not necessarily or only against Prohibition. The postwar political relations of the United States disturbed some of its citizens. Also, many resented the re-
sistance to new forms of creative expression, a resistance they encountered even in progressive cities like New York, which often elevated a work's entertainment value and potential profit over its artistic innovation. Rejecting U.S. trends, whether they involved Prohibition, politics, or the conservative artistic environment, expatriates flocked to Europe to drink openly, create freely, and express their disdain not only for the American government but also for its, in their opinion, narrow-minded populace.

Nativism. By the early 1920s, "about half of the nation's population was first- or second-generat ion immigrant." (Douglas, p. 304). Consequently native-born, white Americans began to feel increasingly anxious about immigrant encroachment. Instead of welcoming immigrants as a never-ending supply of cheap labor, they started to feel threatened by the influx of uneducated foreigners who had no knowledge of the English language or American culture.

To fend off what it saw as the threat of foreign domination, the Ku Klux Klan (KKK) experienced a rebirth. A secret organization founded in the post-Civil War era, the Klan had then practiced violence against the newly freed black slaves. This time the KKK targeted not only blacks but also white, non-Nordic immigrants, Jews, and Roman Catholics. Its rebirth did not last long in New York or Boston—largely because of their large immigrant populations—but it flourished in smaller, less heterogeneous environments.

Although the Klan's methods were notorious, it was not alone in its practice of racial and immigrant hatred. Anti-Semitism and other forms of cultural intolerance riddled other sectors of society and the expatriate communities of Europe as well. At one point, automaker Henry Ford "tried to keep America vigilant against the threat Jews posed, not just to America but to Western civilization" by publishing "protocols of the Elders of Zion," a false document professing to be the Jewish "master plan" for gaining control of the free world (Reynolds, Novel of the Twenties, p. 52). The Sun Also Rises contains evidence of the same paranoia and anti-Semitism. That such sentiments are littered throughout Hemingway's novel is hardly surprising given the current of racism that coursed through parts of American society at the time. For example, in the first chapter Jake observes that Robert Cohn's nose was "certainly improved" by getting "permanently flattened" in a boxing match, ascribing to Cohn a stereotypical Jewish nose. Later the novel describes a "nigger drummer" as "all teeth and lips" (Hemingway, The Sun Also Rises, pp. 11, 69). In this regard, the novel is a product of values generally held by the society that gave rise to it, however offensive or unwarranted such values may be.

Portrait of a "lady." The main female character in The Sun Also Rises, Lady Brett Ashley, hails from Great Britain, the main male character, Jake Barnes, from America. In the post-World War I years, the status of both British and American women changed dramatically. Breaking away from the Victorian role of "angel of the hearth," women who had been solely responsible for the home and family entered new political, economic, and cultural arenas. The war had given a generation of women an education and the opportunity to test their abilities in the workforce. Also women won the vote in 1920. Newly enfranchised, they could now register their political views in the ballot box.

With this loosening of past restrictions, a new ideal came to dominate the decade—the image of the flapper. No longer confined to the house, the ideal "modern" woman could be found drinking, smoking, and dancing in public. She cut and bobbed her hair, shortened her skirts, tightened her sweaters, and maybe even threw off her stockings. And she mingled freely with men of her choice. Birth control and abortion were growing accessible, allowing for greater sexual freedom, and divorce was becoming a more viable option for the unhappy wife. Unlike women of the earlier Victorian era, the so-called "New Woman" no longer considered marriage a vital prerequisite for sexual satisfaction, social status, or financial stability. Such was the ideal, the image of feminism in the twenties.

In practice, the new freedom promised to women by the image proved elusive. Most states still outlawed the sale of any birth-control device, and their divorce laws nearly always gave men the advantage. While more women joined the work force, they commonly filled secretarial and other service posts, good training, it was thought, for housewives. In politics, women tended to vote as their husbands did, if they voted at all. Early in the 1920s they scored successes in getting congressmen to pass bills such as the Child Labor Amendment (1924). But then Congress began to rebuff female political suggestions, showing less concern for women's needs in the late 1920s. The Sun Also Rises appeared at the cusp of this about-face, when the image of the flapper boded well for women's
rights advocates. Little did they know at this point that the image would “promise more freedom and equality for women than they actually achieved” (Nash, p. 774).

The Novel in Focus

The contents—epigraphs. Beginning the novel are two epigraphs. The first—“You are all a lost generation”—Hemingway attributed to Gertrude Stein in a conversation with her, though according to his notebooks, the words were not spoken by Stein herself to Hemingway and his generation, but rather were said to her by a French garage mechanic: “c’est une generation perdue” (The Sun Also Rises, p. vii). Apparently, the mechanic was trying to explain to Stein that younger mechanics were easier to train than those between the ages of 22 and 30, who had gone off to the war and wouldn’t work anymore: “No one wants them. They are no good. They were spoiled” (Wagner-Martin, p. 6). The First World War left a generation of survivors disillusioned, demoralized, and disenchanted with government, religion, and conventional moral codes. The question raised by the novel is whether the members of this “lost generation” can ever be saved; whether they might be able somehow to find meaning, if not redemption, in the world around them. Hemingway’s second epigraph, from which the title of the novel is taken, is excerpted from a famous passage in the book of Ecclesiastes in the King James Bible:

One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh; but the earth abideth forever . . . . The sun also ariseth, and the sun goeth down, and hasteth to the place where he arose . . . . The wind goeth toward the south, and turneth about unto the north; it whirleth about continually, and the wind returneth again according to its circuits . . . . All the rivers run into the sea; yet the sea is not full; unto the place from whence the rivers come, thither they return again.

(epigraph in The Sun Also Rises, p. vii)

This longer passage shifts attention away from Stein’s “lost generation” to the abiding earth and to cycles of nature. Despite the hopelessness of the “lost generation,” Earth survives and endures. Perhaps not everything is lost after all.

The contents—the plot. The novel is divided into three books, narrated retrospectively by Jake Barnes, an American newspaper correspondent living in Paris. It recounts a trip to Pamplona, Spain, that Jake and his friends took during the summer of 1924 or 1925. Accompanying Jake are his vacationing American friend, Bill Groton; his would-be lover, Lady Brett Ashley; her bankrupt and alcoholic fiancé, Mike Campbell; and the fifth-wheel, a Princeton Jew named Robert Cohn.

The first section of the novel takes place in Paris and centers on the lifestyle of the American expatriate: drinking in the many bars, clubs, and cafés of Paris’s Latin Quarter. One particular evening receives more attention than the rest. On this occasion, out drinking with his friends, Jake encounters Brett Ashley. The two leave the bar together. Apparently Jake and Brett have known each other since the war. They love each other, but it is painful for them to be together because a war wound has left Jake impotent. Moreover, Brett, about to divorce, intends to marry yet another man when the paperwork is finalized. On this same night, Robert Cohn, disillusioned with his own overbearing mistress, also falls in love with Brett; he believes he can win her over with a romantic escape to San Sebastian, Spain, (a rich seaside resort, unlike Pamplona, an old inland city).

The second section of the novel centers on Jake’s annual trip to Spain for the bullfights and

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THE FESTIVAL OF SAN FERMIN

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The second section of the novel centers on Jake’s annual trip to Spain for the bullfights and
the festival of San Fermin. Jake and Bill travel together, and, on their way, they stop for a fishing expedition in rural Spain. Brett, her fiancé Mike, and the love-struck Robert Cohn meet them in Pamplona, where they stay at the Hotel Montoya. A long-time friend of Jake's by the name of Montoya is known for his afición, or passion, for the bullfights and the authentic bullfighters (as opposed to those fighters who look good but possess no real skill). Of the group of expatriates, Jake alone shares this passion. During a week of carousing, however, Jake betrays this afición (and his friend Montoya) by introducing a promising young bullfighter, 19-year-old Pedro Romero, to Brett, who is more interested in his tight green pants, which “he must use a shoe horn [to put on],” than his worth as a matador (The Sun Also Rises, p. 181). Unsurprisingly, Romero and Brett have an affair. Knowledge of it upsets Robert Cohn, a former boxing champion at Princeton. He calls Jake a “pimp” and knocks him out, then finds the couple and savagely beats Romero on the eve of his big fight. Despite his bruises, Romero fights with skill and courage, and after the festival ends, Brett leaves for Madrid with him, while the rest of the group disbands.

In the novel’s third section, Jake, who has taken a detour to San Sebastian on his way back to France, receives a telegram from Brett, asking him to come to Madrid. Brett has decided not to be “one of those bitches that ruins children” and has left Pedro Romero (The Sun Also Rises, p. 247). Without him, however, she has no money to return to Paris and needs someone to come retrieve her. When Jake arrives, they have a long conversation about why the relationship with Romero would not have worked out: he wanted her to grow out her hair and be “more womanly,” in other words, to settle down, something she was unwilling (or unable) to do (The Sun Also Rises, p. 246). The novel ends on a note of futility and frustration. Brett says, “Oh Jake... we could have had such a damned good time together,” and Jake responds with the sardonic reply, “Yes... isn’t it pretty to think so” (The Sun Also Rises, p. 251).

The aftermath of the Great War. According to one critic, “one of the most persistent themes of the twenties was the death of love in World War I... [and] Hemingway seems to have caught it whole and delivered it in lasting fictional form” (Spilka, p. 73). The war had been over for several years by the time Hemingway wrote The Sun Also Rises, yet it maintains a strong presence throughout the novel. This is not surprising, since “World War I was a mechanized horror unprecedented in human history, a war of ‘futility’ that exacted casualties hideous in the nature and number—and for no reason anyone could understand” (Spanier, p. 83). One would expect an event of such large-scale horror to leave lasting psychological and physical scars.

The result for a number of men in real life, as for Hemingway’s Jake Barnes, “was a world without heroes. The heroes did not return from the trenches of World War I... Those who remain alive are the walking wounded” (Reynolds, Novel of the Twenties, p. 22). The old systems of value, religion, honor, and sentiment were felt to be hollow after the experience of the trenches and the veteran hospitals. Who are the “walking wounded” of Hemingway’s novel? Jake himself serves as the most obvious example. A pilot flying for the United States on the Italian front, he was shot down and left impotent. His injury is both physical and psychological. Physically, it has not lessened his ability to feel desire. So emotionally, it is a constant source of anguish for him, especially where Brett is concerned. Although they love each other, they can never consummate their relationship. They can, in other words, never completely connect, and so the novel suggests, they can never be truly happy together.
Jake and Brett had first met in Italy, where she worked as a nurse's aid in Milan's British hospital. Brett's life has also been turned upside-down by the war. Her first "true love" died of dysentery in an attempt to avoid the draft, and the man whom she married instead, Lord Ashley, was a sailor who suffered from the psychological disorder shell shock.

When he came home, he wouldn't sleep in a bed. Always made Brett sleep on the floor. Finally, when he got really bad, he used to tell her he'd kill her. Always slept with a loaded service revolver. Brett used to take the shells out when he'd gone to sleep.

(The Sun Also Rises, p. 207)

Given this description of Brett's "hell of a happy life with the British aristocracy," and given her futile love for Jake and the horrors she witnessed in the army hospitals, her promiscuity becomes more understandable (The Sun Also Rises, p. 207). Such conduct might be a way for her to block out thoughts of her past (and present) unhappiness.

Mike Campbell, Brett's alcoholic fiancé, is also a World War I veteran. He too tries to avoid thinking about the war by drinking and making light of the whole experience. For example, while in Pamplona, he recalls an invitation to a dinner with the Prince of Wales that required him to wear his medals. The requirement was a problem because Mike had never sent for the medals he had been awarded. In fact, he did not even know which ones he had received. To get medals for the occasion, he borrowed some from a tailor. Later on that evening, after the dinner had ended, he found them in his pocket and proceeded to give them out to random girls as if they were party favors or souvenirs with little regard for their real significance.

A number of the novel's minor characters have also been touched by the war (for example, Count Mippipopolous and the English fisherman Harris). A witness to the destruction and devastation of the Great War, each of these characters continue to suffer its effects. There is a clear difference between the characters in the novel who have been in the war, and those who have not. Those who have participated seem to comprise some sort of "in-crowd." They share similar values and perspectives, and they recognize each other right away. For example, when Brett introduces Count Mippipopolous to Jake, she tells him, "he's quite one of us" (The Sun Also Rises, p. 40). The count, we learn, has shared in similar experiences, having fought in seven wars and four revolutions; he has arrow wounds that run straight through to show for his troubles (The Sun Also Rises, pp. 66-67). Harris too shares a bond with Jake, telling him after the pre-fiesta fishing excursion in rural Spain, "You don't know what it means to me to have you chaps up here . . . I've not had much fun since the war" (The Sun Also Rises, p. 134).

Ultimately the war affected not only the lives of these characters, but also the way that they see the world around them. Jake imparts a heightened sense of his surroundings to his readers. He furthermore regards these surroundings as a soldier might, using a military frame of reference; the language of the battlefield infiltrates the fiesta. In Pamplona the festival "exploded," and the regular wicker chairs and tables of cafés were "replaced by cast-iron tables and severe folding chairs. The cafe was like a battlefield stripped for action" (The Sun Also Rises, p. 157). Jake sees the everyday world through the perspective of his prior wartime experience.

Even Jake's style of narration might be a result of this experience. In the novel, the characters follow a rote, mechanical sequence of events: they get up in the morning, go to cafes, eat, drink, go home, and then finally sleep. This depiction might bear a striking resemblance to life in the trenches, where the soldiers rose, repaired, ate, dug, stood watch, then went to sleep. Such a rudimentary lifestyle, combined with the horrific events that seemed to continue nonstop, forced men to live entirely in the present moment, without regard for the before or the after. It is perhaps this attitude that explains the characters' lack of concern for consequences and Jake's lack of narrative introspection.

Sources and literary context. In Great Britain, novelists such as James Joyce and Virginia Woolf had begun to experiment with the form of the novel as early as 1913. It took American writers a bit longer than their British counterparts to produce a "modernist" novel. Such a novel would break with the literary traditions of the nineteenth century, that is, with a linear, largely chronological storyline, and coherent, realistic descriptions of characters and settings. Not until the mid-1920s did the United States catch up with their British counterparts through works such as F. Scott Fitzgerald's The Great Gatsby (also in Literature and Its Times) and Hemingway's The Sun Also Rises, which prepared the way for more radically experimental novels like William Faulkner's The Sound and the Fury (1929; also in Literature and Its Times). In fact, many critics
thought of Hemingway’s novel, with its ironic
tone and stark, seemingly objective descriptions,
as a sort of manifesto for the modern American
novel.

The Sun Also Rises is noted for its misleadingly
simple prose style and realistic dialogue. Aiming
to represent experience directly, Hemingway’s
writing favored nouns, perhaps because they
came the closest to communicating the per-
son/place/thing itself, free of interpretation or in-
flation. Hemingway also avoided complex
sentences, largely due to his training as a jour-
nalist and the influence of Gertrude Stein. His
language and syntax are stripped down to their
bare minimum, and his short, matter-of-fact
sentence structure results in prose that withholds
a sense of cause and effect. As a result, there is lit-
tle awareness of consequence or emotional sig-
ificance promoted by the novel. Readers are left
to determine the significance of events on their
own. These features make Hemingway’s style
stand out in sharp contrast to the rest of the fic-
tion written by his contemporaries, both British
and American.

Not only was the style of Hemingway’s novel
unusual for its time; his narrator, Jake Barnes,
was remarkable as well. Unlike the traditional
late-nineteenth century narrator who told read-
ers exactly how to think and feel about the events
of the novel, Jake merely relays events as they
occur. His voice is characterized by its ironic
understatement and flat, unemotional descriptions.
Refusing introspection, Jake narrates his
thoughts as they occur too, but he does not spec-
ulate on implications or consequences. Instead,
he tells us only the facts, coldly and objectively,
or so it seems.

The Sun Also Rises is a roman à clef, a fic-
tionalized story based on real people and events.
Hemingway himself explained:

I believe that when you are writing stories about
actual people . . . you should make them those
people in everything except telephone ad-
dresses. I think that is the only justification
for writing stories about actual people.

(Hemingway in Reynolds,
“Recovering Historical Context,” p. 44)

The Hemingways made three trips to Spain
for the bullfights in the early 1920s. The Sun Also
Rises is based primarily on the events of their
third trip in 1925. In fact, Jakes Barnes was even
called “Hem” in the early drafts of manuscripts.
Lady Brett Ashley is modeled after a woman
named Duff Twysden, Mike Campbell on Pat
Guthrie, Robert Cohn on Harold Loeb, and Pe-
dro Romero on the actual bullfighter Nino de la
Palma. Hemingway’s wife, Hadley, was also on
the trip, but strangely, although she has a role in
early manuscripts of the text, she does not ap-
pear in the finished version of the novel. Her ex-
cision perhaps foreshadowed the Hemingways’s
divorce.

Many events in the novel’s plot have a solid
basis in actual events. Twysden and Guthrie were
engaged, and she had an affair with Harold Loeb
while awaiting a divorce from her husband. Like
his fictional counterpart Jake Barnes, Hemingway
was jealous of their affair, but unlike Barnes,
most critics agree, he and Twysden did not have
a romantic relationship. This trip, in contrast to
the Hemingways’ two previous vacations, did not
go as planned. For example, when the group ar-
rived for their pre-fiesta fishing expedition in
rural Spain, they found that loggers had polluted
the stream. Then at the festival in Pamplona, the
chemistry was off between Hemingway and his
friends, and events occurred much the way Jake
Barnes narrates them. The primary exception is
the seduction of the bullfighter. In actuality,
there was no connection between anyone in
Hemingway’s group and the Pedro Romero fig-
ure, Nino de la Palma.

Reception. The critical response to Heming-
way’s novel was overwhelming. Reviews largely
fell into three main categories. In the first camp
were those who felt disgusted with the novel,
largely because of the lifestyle it portrayed: sex, drinking, and a lack of religious faith. The Cincinnati Enquirer, for example, called it "a most unpleasant book" (Stephens, p. 31). Such critics were disturbed that they could not locate an admirable hero in the novel and, more importantly, that there was no punishment for vice; Brett, for example, does not suffer on account of her promiscuous behavior. Such depictions of open sexuality, especially when combined with the novel's free-flowing alcohol and failure to mention religious beliefs, caused quite an uproar. The fear was that the book would corrupt young readers by encouraging immoral behavior.

Other reviewers criticized the novel for its lack of plot and shallow characters. The Dial complained:

If to report correctly and endlessly the vapid talk and indolent thinking of Montparnasse café idlers is to write a novel, Mr. Hemingway has written a novel. His characters are as shallow as the saucers in which they stack their daily emotions, and instead of interpreting his material—or even challenging it—he has been content merely to make a carbon copy of a not particularly significant surface of life in Paris.

(Stephens, p. 45)

In other words, said The Dial, Hemingway's characters lack emotional depth, and the novel is simply a transcription of the typical expatriate lifestyle of idleness and dissipation. Another critic writing for the Chicago Daily Tribune protested, "the book is [so] concerned with such utter trivialities that your sensitiveness objects violently to it" (Stephens, p. 39). In addition to the lack of plot and character development, reviewers objected to the novel's glamorization of this lifestyle. Even those who disliked the book praised Hemingway's formidable talent, in a regretful fashion. The Chicago Tribune critic remarked on "the wasting of a genuine gift" for writing (Stephens, p. 39). In short, the reviewers were frustrated with Hemingway for squandering his ability on what they regarded as meaningless drivel.

Other critics admired the novel. A reviewer for the New York World thought it contained "some of the finest and most restrained writing that this generation has produced" (Stephens, p. 38). There was praise too for Hemingway's realistic dialogue, which was "alive with the rhythms and idioms, the pauses and suspensions and innuendos and shorthands, of living speech" (Stephens, p. 34). Significantly, even those who praised the novel did not necessarily admire its story content or characters, as shown in this review from The Boston Evening Transcript:

[The author] has lifted [his characters] out of the muck and mire in which they wallow with such desperate gusto, into the pages of his narrative, some of the mud and slime still clinging to their heels and clothing. To their woeful situation, he has managed to impart a poignant and achingly beautiful love affair between Brett and Jake has a sordid and futile loveliness unlike that in any recent novel.

(Stephens, p. 37)

Hemingway, concluded this cadre of reviewers, had done an exceptional job of presenting the sentiments and disillusionment of a generation. The final picture may not have been a pretty one, but it was well drawn nevertheless.

—Erin E. Templeton

For More Information


