

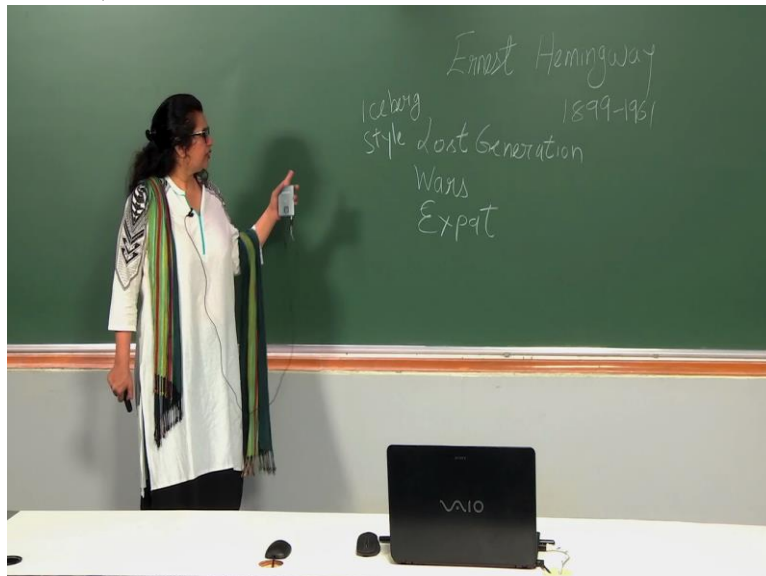
American Literature & Culture
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Mod 04 Lecture Number 21
Ernest Hemingway A Brief Overview (Lecture 15)

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Good morning, so in today's lecture, I am going to give you a quick introduction to Ernest Hemingway, one of the greatest novelists of all time, one of the greatest American novelists of all time. he is also, or he was also a Nobel Prize winner. He lived between 1899 and 1961.

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The key concepts here that you should know in relation to Ernest Hemingway are Iceberg Theory or style of writing, the phenomenon of the Lost Generation, wars and Americans as expatriates.

Hemingway was born on July 21 in 1899. He grew up in a well-known, respected and highly educated family in the conservative side of Illinois in America. His father was a physician. His name was Clarence Edmonds Hemingway and his mother Grace Hall Hemingway was a music teacher who also sang in the local church choir. He had 4 sisters and 1 brother and one of the most publicized aspects of his, life has been that he was married 4 times. He was an eminent novelist and a larger-than-life kind of a personality. , an early introduction to both music and sports had a strong influence on his writings. His first attempt at writing began in Oak Park High School where he wrote mostly on sports. His career here, as a journalist, helped him learn and develop his unique writing style.

In May 1918 he joined the Italian Army as a Red Cross volunteer and was enlisted as an honorary Lieutenant. On July 8, 1918 he was injured on the Austro-Italian Front and was decorated for heroism. Later he was wounded by a mortar shell and was hospitalized in Milan for many weeks where he fell in love with a person called Agnes von Kurowsky. It was a failed love affair which badly affected him and after the war in 1920s his career as a journalist flourished. So a man of myriad experiences, varied experiences, and all his colorful experiences influenced his writings.

In 1922 along with his first wife Elizabeth Hadley and this was upon the great Sherwood Anderson suggestion that he went to, he decided to visit many European countries, particularly to France to explore some possibilities for publication. All his experiences, early experiences are beautifully narrated in *A Moveable Feast*. He had an introductory letter to Gertrude Stein, Alice B. Toklas, James Joyce and Ezra Pound, all these are modernist writers and then he went to Europe particularly to Paris. He was in contact with these, or he was a group, he was a part of the group of these writers, Stein and Toklas and Joyce and Ezra Pound. He had extremely high regards for Ezra Pound. In his various expeditions to Africa, Europe and Cuba, and through these expeditions he, he gained or he gathered experiences which added rich assets to his literary career, rich layers to his literary career.

He went to five wars and was wounded badly as an 18 year old volunteer ambulance driver in the First World War, and he was among the first Americans to enter Paris during the Allies invasion of Europe in the First World War. He also covered and he was a reporter, so we have to remember, he covered the Greek Army retreat from Constantinople, so you have to see the kinds of experience that he had, the kinds of people he must have come across, the kinds of people he moved among. So in 1922, he covered the Greek Army retreat from Constantinople and he covered it for the Toronto Star and he was, he also covered the Spanish Civil War which took place between 1936 and 1939 for an organization called North American Newspaper Alliance and then he also covered the China War with Japan in 1941 for PM Magazine.

Post war events in Europe helped him in his serious political education and he wrote about anarchist, anti-Semitism, fascism, power politics, disarmament, German inflation and also most interestingly, Paris night life. He also wrote extensively about Spanish bullfights and German trout fishing all this for Toronto's Star Weekly. His deep involvement, particularly in the Spanish Civil War in 1936 is noteworthy. He raised 40000 dollars for ambulance and medical supplies. Indeed he sympathized with the loyalists and his 4 trips to Spain between 1937 and 1939 resulted in The Spanish Earth which was a film and The Fifth Column, a play which was published in 1938 and most importantly, , in his immortal novel For Whom the Bell Tolls in 1940.

He survived 4 automobile accidents and 2 airplane crashes in Uganda on consecutive days in 1954, producing, you know, these accidents even led to his obituaries in world's newspapers, premature obituaries of course but nevertheless. He won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1954 and Pulitzer for the great, The Old Man and the Sea. By 1959 and 60, Hemingway suffered a number of health problems, physical and mental. By this time, Fidel Castro's revolution had driven Hemingway from Cuba. He then moved to Idaho back in America in July 1961, on 2nd July rather he shot himself through a double barreled shotgun.

His major works are Up in Michigan, Out of Season and My Old Man. All these are early short stories and in 1923, his publication Three Stories and Ten Poems gave him some confidence to think beyond writing for the newspapers and then he went on to publish In Our Time, Men without Women and Winner Take Nothing which are today collected in First

Forty-Nine Stories. They are collectively called as the First Forty-Nine Stories. In *Men without Women*, 1927, it's a group of 15 stories including *Fifty Grand*, *The Undefeated*, and *Today is Friday*. Stories are presented in a world full of male gamblers, killers, fighters and drinkers.

The themes are again prize-fighting, bull-fighting, divorce, doomed love affairs and death, all these themes which you find recurring over and over again in Hemingway's works. His style received much critical acclaim but was also criticized for his conformity to the belief that he was interested in violence and brutality. When you read *The Sun Also Rises*, that is our primary text for this course, you are going to find these themes. Although in *The Sun Also Rises*, it is not that strongly foregrounded but nevertheless, it's prevalent and then you will find in the later writings how much he was fascinated by the themes of violence and bloodshed and also death.

Let's talk about how Hemingway started publishing. So until 1926, most of his works were published by Liveright Publications. At this time, Hemingway wrote *The Torrents of Spring*, a parody in which he ridiculed Sherwood Anderson's *Dark Laughter* which Liveright refused to publish since it was directed against someone well-known, famous contemporary author. The work did not add to his reputation as an author but helped him to move on to the next publisher, the Scribner's. Scribner's along with the publication of *The Torrents of Spring* won the rights for his next novel, *The Sun Also Rises*. *The Sun Also Rises* was published in 1926. We are soon going to do the novel.

It was originally titled *Fiesta*. And we are going to discuss various issues, themes in *The Sun Also Rises* when we start doing the novel so I also suggest that all of you start reading the novel. See, one of the ideas behind floating this course is that I encourage you, we all here encourage you to read a lot. Reading will give you ideas. Reading will help you in exploring works of literature with a greater critical insight. So idea is to make you read. We are going to do plenty of text.

So please have an e-copy at least with you and keep reading as I teach the novel. You will find some of the students who are taking the class; they come with copies of their own, so perhaps I may occasionally imply a page number. So let that not deter you. You read

according to your own pace and whatever is your edition of the book. I will keep repeating the chapter title and the page number several times and I will also tell you which point exactly I am on, so please be attentive to that.

So, *The Sun Also Rises* is a modernist novel. It is about a group of British and American expatriates living in Paris during the early part of twentieth century. The story is of a writer Jake Barnes who is emasculated by war. And he loves a beautiful young woman Brett Ashley who is a, and it is again a doomed, a failed love story. The characters in the novel are portrayed with a stroke of realism represented by people in Hemingway circle. These are all West Landers and they have loveless unconventional and morally shocking lives.

And all this them had a great appeal to the war wearied generation of the 1920s, better known as the, popularly known as *The Lost Generation*. Now this term appeared in the epigraph of *The Sun also Rises*. Ok, it is credited to Gertrude Stein who used it to address the expatriates like Hemingway, Fitzgerald, Dos Passos, Cummings, Hart Crane and MacLeish and all these, I am going to talk about the origin of this in, of this phrase *The Lost Generation* when we do the novel. Now they were a community, all these writers, modernists, the expats were a community of hard drinking, fast living, disillusioned young people in self exile, young writers in self exile in the post-War Paris.

Paris served as home to their literary activities. Hemingway was influenced, as I have already told you by these writers and artists of Montparnasse quartier where he met all these writers along with great artists such as Picasso and Juan Gris. Now this post-War generation who was out of America experienced the war and a sense of lost freedom. The period saw heavy industrialization, cultural change and violence. The values they inherited were no more relevant in the post War period. They now lived in an increasingly provisional, emotionally barren and materialistic world.

The major themes highlighted in their works included experiences of the First World War, Decadence and frivolous lifestyle of the wealthy and the death of *The American Dream*. The novel explores over a range of themes which includes death, renewal, women and love, masculinity and gender, class and race and of course cosmopolitanism. Hemingway makes

use of the concept of the unreliable narrator. The narration is objective, almost documentary, and unsentimental, just like that of his hero journalist.

Let me also introduce you to Hemingway's famous Iceberg Theory, the Iceberg theory, the dignity that is what he calls, the dignity of movement of an iceberg is due to only one eighth of being above water. An iceberg is always only one eighth above water and this was the style that he intended to follow. And the Iceberg Principle meant that the writer should write only one eighth of what is there and what lies beneath and the reader, it is up to the reader, the critics to interpret in the way they want to. So, what he means, what he is trying to say is the supporting structure and the symbolism operate out of sight in a work of literary text, Ok and it is out of sight with the facts floating about water or above water.

Hemingway's Iceberg Theory is also referred to as the theory of Omission. In continuation with his idea of the Iceberg Theory he used short and simple declarative sentences thus developing a style in which meanings were established through dialogs, actions and silences without stating anything explicitly. He refrained from using every conceivable device like symbolism, allegory, imagery and figures of speech. So, again telling of the Iceberg Theory, this economical and understated style was shaped in reaction to the First World War expressing a lost faith in the central institutions of the west, and the style of writing in the west, he didn't want to follow that, Ok, so challenging the notion of centrality.

Now Hemingway's style stands against the elaborated style of the nineteenth century writers. This is what lies behind the idea, or the principle of the Iceberg Theory. Coming to his one of his greatest novels A Farewell to Arms that followed The Sun also Rises. So Farewell to Arms was published in 1929, A Farewell to Arms, that's the exact title and title was borrowed from George Peele's poem A Farewell to Arms and symbolic of Hemingway's farewell to a period and attitudes and perhaps to a method. It is a story of an American ambulance driver and Britishners brought together at the time of the First World War.

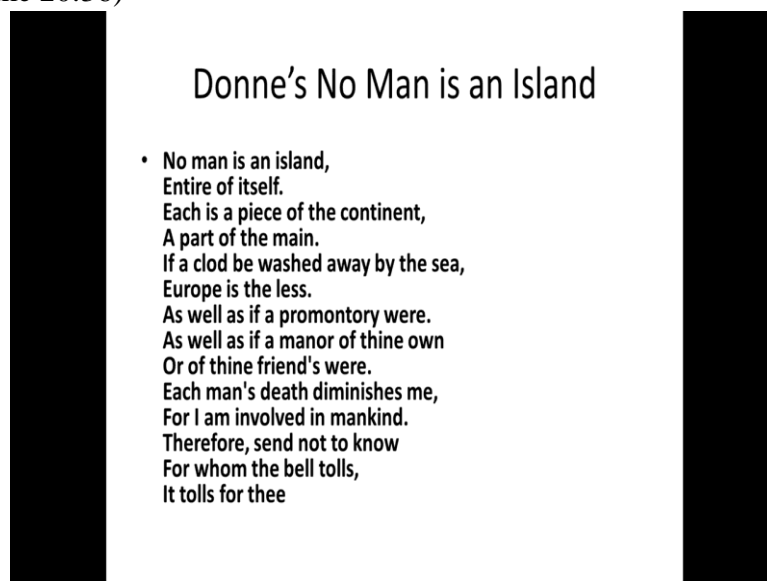
The hero is Frederic Henry and he is wounded and the heroine, the nurse is Catherine Barkley. Now there unwedded pregnancy is at the, is one of the major themes, major episodes of the novel, and also war, an episode in Italy at Caporetto and then also the lovers, how they try to escape the, the entire scenario and then Catherine's death in child birth. So no attempt

to lead a happily ever after is fulfilled. So again we are talking about the doomed love, the theme of doomed love in Hemingway's works.

So it went to become one of the foremost American war novel. It was soon followed in 1937 by *To Have and Have Not*. Hemingway had already published two heroes of the central character. Harry Morgan, he is a smuggler and he was later expanded and transformed into the novel as a major character. He is our hero, he smuggles liquor and men from Cuba into the US in order to feed his wife and children. While at work he loses one arm and is later gunned, or gut shot rather while killing 3 Cuban bank robbers. Title of the novel is ironic. It suggests that the real mark of a man's wealth is not money alone. The narrative again is polyphonic and we have already been talking about what is polyphonic, it is multi-vocal, several points of view are seen in the novel.

One of his greatest novels according to many is *For Whom the Bell Tolls* which was published in 1940. Now this novel, as is generally believed is not about Spanish politics as about the fate of the Republic and its people caught up in the Civil War. The title is taken from, a poem by John Donne, one of the metaphysical poem, poets from England. It speaks of the inevitability of the human predicament from which no one can escape and here I would like you to look at the origin of the title. Please look at the slide here.

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Donne's No Man is an Island

- No man is an island,
Entire of itself.
Each is a piece of the continent,
A part of the main.
If a clod be washed away by the sea,
Europe is the less.
As well as if a promontory were.
As well as if a manor of thine own
Or of thine friend's were.
Each man's death diminishes me,
For I am involved in mankind.
Therefore, send not to know
For whom the bell tolls,
It tolls for thee

Donne's No man is an Island. Please take a look, it may help some of you who take competitive exams and this is the origin of the title.

No man is an island; Entire of itself. Each is a piece of the continent, a part of the main. If clod be washed away by the sea, Europe is the less. As well as if a promontory were. As well as if a manor of thine own or of thine friend's were. Each man's death diminishes me, For I am involved in mankind. Therefore, send not to know For whom the bell tolls, It tolls for thee.

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Ok, the story For Whom the Bell Tolls is about, it is Robert Jordan's story. He is the hero, semiautobiographical hero who succeeds in his mission of blowing up bridge to check the advancements of fascists. He is fatally wounded and lies there waiting for his inevitable death. The novel is popular, or was popular in its day for its narrative style, characterization. It has very strong characterization. And you have also; you got to read this novel for the way women are represented. His next immortal novel is Across the River and into the Trees, 1950. The novel opened to very poor sales and critical reception but later the sales improved. It is about the hero Richard Cantwell, a retired Colonel who goes to Venice for duck-shooting where he falls in love with a 19 year old Italian countess called Renata. The novel is partially based on the episode of his life in Italy where he fell in love with the 19 year old Adriana Ivancich.

The pièce de résistance of his career, The Old Man and the Sea was published in 1952 which is based on his personal fishing experiences in Cuba. This is a very simple tale. It's a novella. It's a slim novel, it's a story of old fisherman losing battle with sharks over the carcass of his giant marlin, it's a fish. The old man here represents a Shakespearean hero, you know, a

tragic hero, larger than life hero who is a simple man as opposed to the Aristotelian tragic hero.

So he is a, he is a larger than life hero in the way his, we come across his will, the indomitable will. By that I do not mean he is an aristocrat, with just one tragic flaw, the way you have Aristotelian heroes. He is a hero of a different stature. The work was obviously influenced by the avant-garde movement and its experimental style is quite explicit in its modern narration. It's quite reaching symbolism, and it is not only the story of a fisherman struggling against sharks but also of the struggle of the whole of humanity against cruel forces of the world, of an artist against his critics, and of Hemingway himself against his unsympathetic critics and reviewers. The novel went on to win the Pulitzer Prize in 1952.

His other works include short stories based on his African safari, and he also wrote *The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber* and *The Snows of Kilimanjaro*. These are all novels of the landscape and we have to understand the vividness of his landscapes and sharpness of his narrative and constant building upon suspense. All these are, you know these are the experiments that he frequently conducted and these works are the culmination of these attempts. He successfully brought the landscape to come alive before the eyes of the reader and thus communicates a sense of the place. , he has also written a famous non-fiction, *Death in the Afternoon* which is mainly concerned with the art of bull-fighting and then *The Highlands of Africa* which discarded in favor of *Green Hills of Africa* is his second work of nonfiction based on his exciting adventures in Africa.

Hemingway's later works include, between 1957 and 1960, he worked on a series of sketches of his friends concerning the years from 1921 to 1926 in Paris and this was posthumously published in *A Moveable Feast* in 1964. Also among his posthumous publications is *Islands in the Stream*. It was a 1970 work which was originally in the form of 3 loosely connected narratives tentatively called *The Sea when Young*, *The Sea when Absent* and *The Sea when Being*. So quite an existentialist kind of a writer which he was, existentialist themes are quite frequent in his works. And the last of the three was published, that is *The Sea when Being* as *The Old Man and the Sea*.

So I hope you understand all these, various strands and threads that run through his works. You should also know how rich his works are in irony and symbolism. You are students of literature and if not, then you should be interested in irony and symbolism in order to appreciate literature better. Now Hemingway used natural symbols such as the mountain and the plain and the dark and light to express implicit meanings in his short stories and novels. He also used Greek Myths as symbols. However his symbolism is present only in the narrative and not in the story.

He does not violate the principle of realism and gives only subtle hints, suggestions and implications of symbolism in the narrative. Also remember how he uses or note how he uses the technique of objective epitomy in which the subjective condition of the character are conveyed not through the descriptive method but by describing a few objective details which shapes the conditions and feelings of a character. Now irony was particularly employed in the titles of Hemingway's works. By emphasizing disparity and understatement it helped in achieving maximum artistic effect.

We have to understand that his legacy lies in his contribution to American Literature, for the way he wrote his novels, the narrative style, the Iceberg style of writing, his economical style of writing and after his death, his fourth wife Mary, she established Hemingway Foundation in 1965 and in 1980 a group of Hemingway scholars formed Hemingway Society to encourage scholarship on Hemingway. The recent tragic attack in Paris in 2015 boosted the sales ironically of *A Moveable Feast* in order to honor the victims of the attack. Please look at the references here

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References

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- Oliver, Charles M. *Critical Companion To Ernest Hemingway – A Brief Reference To His Life And Work*. Facts On File. New York: 2007. Print.
- Srivastava, Ramesh. *Hemingway And His 'For Whom The Bell Tolls'*. Guru Nanak Dev University. Amritsar. Print.

on Hemingway

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Thank you very much and please be prepared with *The Sun also Rises*.