FOREGROUNDING TECHNIQUE IN HEMINGWAY'S FICTION: STRUCTURAL READINGS OF FIVE NICK ADAMS STORIES

by

LISA NARBESHUBER
B.A., University of Toronto, 1985

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT

OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

MASTER OF ARTS

in the Department

of

English

We accept this thesis as conforming
to the required standard

[redacted]

Dr. Herbert F. Smith

[redacted]

Dr. Edward R. Zietlow

[redacted]

Dr. Evelyn M. Cobley

[redacted]

Dr. Wesley T. Wooley

[redacted]

Dr. Jean E. Veevers

University of Victoria

Supervisor: Professor Herbert Smith

ABSTRACT

The thesis provides a structuralist prolegomenon to a study of the Nick Adams stories by Ernest Hemingway. The first chapter introduces the methodology of this study and outlines Hemingway's approach to literature, emphasizing his awareness of technique in the paintings of Cezanne. The three chapters that follow structurally analyze three Nick stories: "Nick sat against the wall," "The Doctor and the Doctor's Wife," and "The End of Something." The final chapter considers "Big Two-Hearted River" structurally from the perspective of "On Writing," which was originally a part of it. A structuralist reading is particularly useful for these stories because they are "proto-fictions," as much about the process of writing as they are "about" Nick's adventures or the experiences of their author. Some left unfinished, others distributed variously in Hemingway's In Our Time and The Nick Adams Stories, they mediate between Hemingway's personal experiences and his more formal fictions, as the character of Nick is a partial projection of Ernest Hemingway on his way to the creation of Jake Barnes and Frederic Henry.

In concluding the thesis with "On Writing," and by referring to Hemingway's theories throughout, I examine how the author explicitly desires to do more than write about actual events. Contrary to the opinion of many critics, the concern of each story is not as much with plot or the recording of events as with the devising and building of forms and patterns. By searching out the patterns and structures within these stories, we can discover structural relationships among many of Hemingway's works.

One of these structures is Hemingway's technique of omission. It encourages the reader to locate the omitted idea, character or scene and thus become involved in the active "construction" of the story. The story's structure leaves gaps which the reader must fill in, while at the same time it guides and controls the reader's response to, and construction of, the text. Within the thesis, I argue that a certain intimacy or closeness is felt by the reader who deciphers the codes or structures or gaps within the text. The seemingly straightforward story becomes evocative; the seemingly simple scene becomes profound.

Examiners:

Dr. Herbert F. Smith

Dr. Edward R. Zietlow

Dr. Evelyn M. Cobley

Dr. Wesley T. Wooley

Dr. Jean E. Veevers

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Plate 1

"Cour d'Une Ferme"

by Paul Cezanne

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank Herb Smith for his direction throughout the entire writing of this thesis. I am also grateful for the suggestions made by Ed Zietlow and Evelyn Cobley during the final weeks of composition. Finally, thanks to my outside reader, Wesley Wooley, and my external reader, Jean Veevers.

for mom and dad

Introduction

It is not so much what Hemingway says as how he says it that stimulates me to read and reread his stories. On the surface action level, Ernest Hemingway's Nick Adams stories appear simplistic, and yet I find the reading experience a remarkably moving one. Within the thesis, I concern myself with how and why and where Hemingway stimulates an emotional response in the reader. I am less occupied with determining an underlying meaning for the stories--though in many cases I do--and more concerned with the stories' techniques of communication.

Most interpretative methods privilege an underlying meaning in the text. As Robert Scholes argues, hermeneutic critics seek authorial or intentional meaning; the New Critics seek the ambiguities of textual meaning; the "reader response" critics permit readers to make meaning. On the other hand, the structuralist critic "looks for generic or discursive structures that enable and constrain meaning" (110). Arriving at a specific meaning is secondary to locating structural principles. In fact, under semiotic or structural inspection neither the author nor the reader is free to make meaning. The words on the page are not the story as such. Rather, The story draws its nourishment from the immediate culture and its literary tradition--its context. The words on the page do not speak

their own meaning, but are referential. Scholes uses the example of "once upon a time" to illustrate this point. The traditional introductory phrase, "once upon a time," anticipates and stimulates linear textual movement which can hardly be stopped without the concluding partner phrase, "they lived happily ever after," or some equivalent, to turn it off (112). The associative workings of conventionally realistic modern or postmodern literature are no less insistent (Scholes 112). "Nick sat against the wall," by its position in relation to the other texts, along with a few key words, phrases and characters, ("a separate peace," Nick, Rinaldi) allows me to supply the World War I setting and the fact that this is a critical, central event in the education of Nick Adams.

Within a structuralist analysis the reader's role is active in that she or he looks beyond the literary meaning of the word, scene or phrase to its referent. The reader in a sense creates as soon as she or he imagines the word or scene or character which the writer has left out. In the case of Hemingway the inferential reading process is made explicit. Incidental details are highlighted, whereas significant events or scenes or characters are deliberately omitted. Hemingway's practice of omission makes his stories especially conducive to a structuralist reading. Events and characters within one Hemingway text may surface in another; one story may continue from, or elaborate upon,

another. A reading of a story alters as the stories' context changes.

Certainly, I have overlooked possible structures and inferences within the stories. Like any reading of any text, my findings are far from complete. In turn, the structures that I identify, and the conclusions which I draw, may not have been perceived by another reader or by the writer. My ultimate "constructions" of the stories are bound and constrained by my personal biases and understanding of other Hemingway texts and knowledge of life in general. At the same time, they are bound and constrained by the text itself which sets limits to the legitimacy of any reader's constructions.

Hemingway's foregrounding of technique in the Nick Adams stories enables me to explore the dialogue between text and reader, looking for how the text involves the reader and where it sets limits on her or his response. The thesis is not so much theoretical, as it is demonstrative. The individual chapters are concerned with particular Nick Adams stories and the ways they may be interpreted or read. The approach used throughout is inevitably bound by my specific contextual position and, insofar as these readings are united by a common approach, that approach is structuralist.

Chapter 1 introduces Hemingway's philosophy of composition and his indebtedness to the artwork of Paul

Cezanne. Hemingway's admiration for Cezanne's techniques reflects his concern with the structure over the recording of actual events. A Cezanne landscape is similar to a Hemingway story in that both exhibit a conscious ordering of images and scenes. The construction of the painting or story directs and regulates the viewer's or reader's response. While the structure of a Hemingway story guides and controls the reader, it also leaves out facts which stimulate the reader into action--the reader is enticed to identify the missing link.

In Chapter 1, I also introduce four Nick Adams stories: "The Doctor and Doctor's Wife," "The End of Something," "Big Two-Hearted River" and "On Writing." A more extensive reading of each of these stories, along with a reading of the vignette, "Nick sat against the wall," will make up the body of the thesis. All of the stories are metafictional in that they exhibit the reading process, the interaction between the text and the reader, the role of the author/creator and the cooperative role of the reader/creator.

In Chapter 2, I discuss "Nick sat against the wall" as a central, critical episode within The Nick Adams Stories and Hemingway's fiction as a whole. Nearly every sentence within the piece can be traced in some way to other Hemingway texts. The vignette introduces the idea of the audience as an assistant in the creating process. The

emphasis is on the "showing" rather than on the "telling" of events; the narrator draws the scene and lets the reader draw the conclusion. The response of the reader is discussed to a greater degree with each story.

Chapter 3 discusses "The Doctor and the Doctor's Wife." Within this story Nick, as the peculiar absent-present character, undermines the real-world quality of the story. His presence highlights the fact that the story is not a mirror of real events, but a fabrication. The reader cannot escape the awareness that she or he is creating, not just consuming the text. The story as a whole offers varied points of view from which the actual reader is encouraged to choose. The storytelling by Doctor Adams undermines the concept of an omniscient author and a definite, correct interpretation, while Mrs. Adams represents the active, questioning audience. The evasive narrator of events encourages the constructive powers of the reader. Together the Doctor and Nick show that the creation of the story is a collaborative activity shared between reader and author.

Chapter 4 deals with "The End of Something" as a particularly evasive story. The explicit evasiveness of Nick, the narrator and the author results in a special intimacy between text and audience: the reader must work to get closer to the text and to be "in the know." Like Mrs.

Adams, Marjorie mirrors the inquisitive reader attempting to comprehend and interpret the narrative.

Hemingway's technique of evasion in "The End of Something" and "The Doctor and the Doctor's Wife" becomes his theory of omission in "Big Two-Hearted River" and "On Writing." Within "Big Two-Hearted River" the concept of the evasive narrator is taken to the extreme as facts are altogether omitted from the text. The story is widely regarded as Hemingway's most ambitious effort to transpose Cezanne's visual techniques into literary terms. On one level, "Big Two-Hearted River," like all the Nick Adams stories, can be understood and appreciated by a reader concerned with finding a conventionally realistic interpretation of the text. On another level, Hemingway may be said to imagine, to invent, a fictional world which is more than a copy of the real one. Hemingway worked to construct what he called an ideal, timeless work of art, through a conscious ordering of words and images. Through his intertextual patterning and his practice of omission he incorporates the reader in the active construction of the text. "On Writing" is the original, deleted conclusion to "Big Two-Hearted River." By comparing and contrasting the two works within the final chapter of the thesis, I follow the author in the process of composition as he refines the original diegetic narrative into a concise, controlled mimetic one.

"Big Two-Hearted River," like the other Nick stories, implicitly reveals the author's literary philosophy. "On Writing" explicitly discusses his literary theories. Hemingway's intentions do not explain his writing techniques, just as his life does not provide a definitive interpretation of his stories. And yet, discussion of his theories and his life can provide further insights into his practice of writing and expand our interpretations of his fiction. Within the thesis, Hemingway's life and thoughts will be regarded as additional texts to be contrasted and compared with the Nick Adams stories. After all, the characteristics of other Hemingway protagonists, especially Jake Barnes and Frederic Henry, find their roots in the character of Nick Adams. In addition, Carlos Baker's biography and Philip Young's studies point out that Nick Adams more than any other character relates most directly to Hemingway's life. It may be possible and even profitable to read a single Nick Adams story in isolation from other Hemingway texts, but the best way to understand, and for that matter enjoy, one story is to examine it in as inclusive a context as possible.

Chapter 1

In a 1924 review, Edmund Wilson wrote that "like Goya [Ernest Hemingway] is concerned first of all with making a fine picture. He is showing what life is..." (341). The New York Times Book Review agreed that Hemingway "looks out upon the world without prejudice or preconception and records with precision and economy, and an almost terrifying immediacy, exactly what he sees" ("Preludes to a Mood"). As soon as Hemingway began to publish his short stories, reviewers were quick to note that "his method is realistic ..." ("K.J."). Certainly, Hemingway's treatment of subject matter and technique of narration can be characterized as following realistic conventions: within his stories, the familiar, ordinary aspects of life are depicted in a matter-of-fact, straightforward, detached manner.

Realism has been and remains a somewhat elusive, vague term, but all theories of realism, however sophisticated, rest on the assumption that the story imitates reality, and that that reality is more or less stable and commonly accessible (Fowler 200). Realist literature attempts to project an objective view of life with complete accuracy and frankness. While in Paris in the early 1920's, Hemingway worked on the Nick Adams stories and furthered his realistic style.[1] The unobtrusive narrator, the lack

of authorial commentary, the real world setting and characters, the absence of descriptive adjectives and adverbs and insistence on natural speech inflections within his short stories all contribute to an air of realism.

The identification of Hemingway as "our outstanding realist" (Rotham 338), however, limits critical understanding of his literature. The conventionally realistic rendering of the stories, the lack of commentary and the emphasis on a natural rather than a social or a political setting has caused readers to judge his fiction as unaesthetic and unintellectual or at least anti-intellectual (Atkins 19). In a review of 1927, Lee Wilson Dodd praises Hemingway's, "spare, hard undeviating precision," but calls it a "restricted endeavor," lacking in intellectual, ethical and moral worth (322). Similarly, Edgar Johnson argues that Hemingway is "incapable of understanding the things he despised" (qtd. in Atkins 19). Elsewhere, Stephen Spender explains that he is disappointed with Hemingway's stories because "he has confined himself to presenting the reader with a situation, violent, horrible or beautiful, as a child might come up and leave a stone, insect or flower in your hand" (qtd. in Atkins 87).

Nevertheless, later critics like Lillian Ross and Robert Weekes have pointed out that Hemingway's fiction can give the superficial and misleading impression of being crude and uncomplicated when, in fact, his stories strive

for something more than imitation. It is true, all of his stories relate in some way to a reflection theory of literature, but they can not fully be understood in terms of a specific theory of realism. Hemingway argued that the construction of fiction is "not a representation" (PR 239), but something much more involved, "a whole new thing" (PR 239). In the case of Hemingway, as is the case of most significant artists, his craft is both the preservation of and breaking from tradition. He acknowledged his indebtedness to the old while striving for something original, a new theory, a new approach to literature:

> In writing you are limited by what has already been done satisfactorily. So I have tried to learn to do something else. (PR 236)

There were critics, even from the beginning, who sensed something more. Percy Hutchinson of the New York Herald Tribune, for one, wrote:

> What is Hemingway's uniqueness that rivets the attention of the reader and commands his acquiescence? To say that it is his realism is not sufficient. Others have been realists before Hemingway. To come on this arresting thing one must defend further; for, although to speak of Hemingway's realism is roughly sufficient,... there is more to "Men Without Women" than reporting, more than colloquial speech in staccato.... (27)

Hemingway imposed designs and structures on his stories in order to create an ideal, something "truer than anything true and alive" (PR 239). The posthumous fragment "On Writing" explicitly outlines his theories through the narrator's commentary. The other Nick Adams stories

implicitly suggest the author's theories through the composition or structure of the story. Each of the Nick stories is in itself "on writing." They are not a reflection of the real world. His stories go beyond mirroring real events to involve the reader in the creation of the story. Through the author's imposed designs and structures the reading experience becomes ideally personal and intimate. The emphasis within the story moves from imitation of actual events to the formation of intertextual patterns.

Hemingway's stories may have been compared to the brutal, shocking realism of Goya, yet Hemingway credited Cezanne as his greatest influence in writing fiction. In "On Writing",

> He, Nick, wanted to write about country so it would be there like Cezanne had done it in painting.... Nobody had ever written about country like that. He felt almost holy about it. It was deadly serious. You could do it if you would fight it out. If you lived right with your eyes. (NAS 239)

In a 1961 interview, Hemingway maintained:

> I can make a landscape like Mr. Paul Cezanne. I learned to make a landscape ... by walking through the Luxembourg Museum a thousand times with an empty gut...." (qtd. in Hagemann 88)[2]

The basis of Cezanne's art was his new theory of studying nature. Cezanne's aim was not truth to appearance, especially not photographic truth, nor was it the "truth" of Impressionism, that reality is sensation (de la Crois and Tansey 670). Instead, he strove for lasting

structure, the depth and distance, the shape and solidity, behind the fleeting and formless images of colour that are seen in impressionistic paintings: "I want to make of Impressionism something solid and lasting like the art in the museums" (qtd. in de la Crois and Tansey 675). He rejected the random approach of the Impressionists, and worked to bring an awareness of structure into his impressions of nature. Cezanne never reduced natural objects to geometrical abstractions as the Cubists did, but the monumentality of his images suggests that they were stripped of the accidental variations of individual appearance. He examined with special attention the properties of line, plane and colour, and their interrelationships: the capacity of planes to create a degree of depth, the intrinsic qualities of colour and the power of colour to alter the depth and direction of lines and planes (de la Crois and Tansey 675).

The still life was the ideal model for Cezanne's methods; a limited number of objects could be selected by the artist and arranged in a cohesive order. Within his still lifes, the individual objects lose something of their private identity as bottles or fruit and approach the condition of cylinders and spheres. Cezanne's remark that the painter should "treat nature in terms of the cylinder, and the sphere and the cone" implies that natural forms should be presented in terms of their simplest and broadest

dimensions. Distortions exist, yet not accidentally. Cezanne rearranged the parts of his composition to make the patterns of their representation conform to the proportions of his picture surface (de la Crois and Tansey 675). The application of his methods to the painting of landscapes was one of his greatest challenges. In painting a landscape the problems of representation are complicated by the need to choose from a variety of disorganized natural forms and to order them into a pictorial structure which would provide unity.

Cezanne's landscape, "Cour d'Une Ferme" (plate 1), hung in the Luxembourg museum at the time when Hemingway made his regular visits there (Hagemann 88) and is a good example of his techniques of composition. Within the landscape each object or form exhibits a compositional or structural purpose. Even those elements which are first seen as "nothing," that is background areas or compositional space, have a function in the painting's structure. "Ferme" is made up of familiar, identifiable objects, except for a yellow panel on the right side of the picture and a brown shorter shape on the left. These two forms lack any recognizable identity, yet they undoubtedly appear solid and heavy. "No surface ornamentation detracts from their strictly spatial function" (Hagemann 96). They weigh down the areas they cover and appear closer to the viewer than the other identifiable elements. Thus, the

nameless forms not only frame the scene, but also create a sense of closeness and intimacy. The viewer peeks within the box-like structure at the scene enclosed. The vertical movements of the nameless frame give the illusion of elongating the picture along with the viewer; the observer stands at a one-to-one relationship with each object in front of her or him.

In addition, what may first appear as "nothing" has transformed an empty "negative space" into a positive form (Hagemann 94). The inner edges of the right and left bordering forms connect with the bottom foreground of the picture--the ground before the house. This massive "negative space" leads the eye deeper into a deep space, to the front door of the house. The house and, more particularly, the front door occupy the centre of the painting. The foreground and the lines of the trees overhead converge to this central interest in the picture's composition. The viewer is almost beckoned to enter. Objects and shapes structurally work together to make the viewing experience seem personal and intimate.

The relationship of figures and forms within a Cezanne painting is much like the organization and relationship of words and sentences within a Hemingway story; objects--or words--may be known separately, but when seen--or read--together they participate in each other's existence. Cezanne worked to keep the viewer's eye focused on the

canvas by establishing panels which appear as part of the landscape or as nothing at all, but which actually function to frame the landscape. Similarly, the structure in a Hemingway story controls reading activity: introductory and concluding episodes or scenes work as a frame to hold together the story's main events and call attention to key-words that tell what is happening.

"The Doctor and the Doctor's Wife," for example, can be divided into three distinctive scenes: the altercation between Dick Boulton and Dr. Adams, the altercation between Dr. and Mrs. Adams, and Dr. Adams's departure with Nick. The central episode--the importance of which is confirmed by the title--is framed by the introductory and concluding episodes, both of which anticipate or contribute to, or at least point and converge on, the main event in the story's space. The story is broken up into these three movements, which behave much like visual-spatial planes. The opening scene directs the reader from the out-of-doors, through a gate, to the interior of a darkened house and the central scene of conflict. The closing paragraphs move the reader out of the dark space, back to the outside, to the visual foreground.

"The End of Something" is composed of a similar three-part structure. If we consider the title for a moment, "The End of Something" not only suggests the end of the love affair between Nick and Marjorie, but also the end

of Nick's childhood and the end of the mill. Three "ends" are found in the structure of the story as well. The introductory paragraphs discuss the old ruin of the mill and the disintegration of the town which leads to and anticipates the break-up between Nick and Marjorie, the climactic episode of the story. With the departure of Marjorie, the last scene focuses on Nick, his rejection of his friend Bill, and his implicit initiation into a more independent, less child-like position. As with "The Doctor and the Doctor's Wife," the framing episodes point to the central critical episode and function to heighten its emotional impact. While the opening paragraphs prepare the reader for what comes next, the closing paragraphs affect the reader's response to the central scene retrospectively.

Hemingway realized the necessity of emphasizing structure or dimension while he was writing "Big Two Hearted-River." Within the original conclusion to the story he writes:

> I was learning something from the paintings 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. (AMF 13)

Ironically enough, in reworking these simple true sentences on writing, he was forced to exclude them and keep them "a secret" (AMF 13) in order to adhere to them and create a more impersonal, ordered, resigned tone. He turned from discussing a theory of art and fiction to practicing it.

He slimmed down the text by eliminating the discursive, pensive narrative, the accompanying character and subsequent theoretical discussions. In doing so, he illuminated the structural pattern of the story, the mundane rituals of a young man alone on a river, a river whose simple components and regular inhabitants are now foregrounded, given form, solidity and increased significance:

> The river became smooth and the swamp looked solid with cedar trees, their trunks close together, their branches solid. (NAS 198)

Regardless of how one reads its metaphoric dimensions, the pattern or structure of the fishing is made clear. With the rewriting of the conclusion, Hemingway returned to the point in the narrative where Nick hooked and landed "one good trout" (NAS 195). In accordance with Cezanne's argument that "each side of an object or a plane is directed towards a central point" (Chipp 19), Hemingway reworked the scene so that the landing of "one good trout" becomes the central event of the story. The structural pattern in the narrative up to this point establishes two opposing scenes: "Hooking and releasing the small trout--too little tension [NAS 191] and hooking and losing the larger trout--too much [NAS 193]" (P. Smith 285). These two events lead and point to the middle scene in which Nick works and lands the one good trout. In the original conclusion Nick's disciplined ritual of fishing is

interrupted by his random, troubling thoughts. When Hemingway rewrote the conclusion he maintained the emphasis he had placed on the activity of fishing, and so concentrated on the structural pattern which had been set up. Rather than merely thinking about fishing, Nick returns to the physical activity of fishing. "He did not care about getting many trout" (NAS 195-96), but the continuation of fishing is necessary for maintaining a balance within the story's structure and for emphasizing the emotional impact of the central scene. He hooks and loses one trout (NAS 196) and then hooks and catches the next (NAS 197). These concluding, opposing events not only balance and neutralize each other but together balance and neutralize the two original fishing attempts. Both sets of strikes converge to the centre--the hooking of one good trout.

Besides highlighting beginnings and endings and so building frames, Hemingway deliberately left out components of the composition. Cezanne employed his own technique of omission: objects were included whose identities were omitted in order to make their spatial qualities somehow purer and more powerful. Hence, the spatial relationship of these objects, the demands of the composition, become more important than the objects themselves. The artist and writer must decide which essential ingredients to leave in a work. Everything else becomes ornamentation. Some

elements enhance the impact of the structure; others only detract. The artist and writer must leave out as carefully as they leave in.

Hemingway excluded those things deemed "unnecessary to conveying experience" (PR 236) including incidental details, descriptive commentary and journalistic "tricks." In addition, he left out what may be regarded as basic components to the make-up of any well crafted story. Every story has a setting, yet Hemingway did not hesitate to leave it out: "The story was about coming back from the war but there was no mention of war in it" (AMF 76). Every story necessarily has a conclusion, yet Hemingway did not hesitate to disregard it:

> It was a very simple story called "Out of Season" and I had omitted the real end of it which was that the old man hanged himself. This was omitted on my new theory that you could omit anything if you knew that you omitted and the omitted part would strengthen the story and make people feel something more than they understood,... they will understand the same way they do in painting. (AMF 75)

Through the omission of "important things or events" (AOSS 88) the reader becomes a participant in the story's composition. The frame is more powerful and significant since it must be identified by the reader. The reader's need to identify the frame, to fill in the textual gaps and to interpret the situation, controls and regulates the whole process of interaction and communication between the text and the reader. In fact, as Wolfgang Iser argues, "it

is the implications and not the statements that give shape and weight to meaning" (111).

Like a painting, Hemingway's stories lack commentary. The narrative does little to offer an interpretation. The detached narrator, like an objective newspaper reporter, appears to be witnessing events and noting discussions. What is omitted or concealed stimulates the reader into action, to make projections and interpretations. And yet, "this action is also controlled by what is revealed" (Iser 111). What is not said stimulates the reader's response and what is said guides and regulates that response. The relationship between the text and the reader becomes seemingly exclusive, private and personal as the writing process, in effect, becomes a shared experience. The reader who senses what has been left unsaid and realizes certain connections feels as Julian Smith describes it, "initiated into a cult" (136). Iser concludes that, "as the unsaid comes to life in the reader's imagination, so the said 'expands' to take on greater significance than might have been supposed" (111). Even trivial episodes within a Hemingway story can seem surprisingly profound.

All texts require some filling in--with Hemingway, this process is made obvious. The Hemingway short story, unlike the traditional short story, resists being a completed text. While the O. Henry short story, for example, ends with a naive reader's gasp of surprise, irony

in the Hemingway story is less pointed. The O. Henry short story tries to be a finished text reduced to a trick, but the Hemingway short story remains relatively open-ended, touches on other texts and is ever expanding. The open-endedness of the stories encourages associations, and what may be left out of one text may, in fact, surface in another. One piece often brings to mind, or refers to, another. The invitation to seek associations and create structures extends far beyond an individual story and unites Hemingway's art as a whole. His fiction is remarkably consistent in subject matter, themes, events, tone and characters.[3]

The stories which surround a story function as a wider structural frame. The placement of a story within a collection is crucial in creating a total, or at least a fuller, more concrete effect. No doubt Hemingway had deliberate plans in mind when he ordered his various collections of short stories. However, it appears that such designs did not centre around the creation of a "bildungsroman," a novel of a maturing young man, which was what Philip Young had in mind when he set out to compile The Nick Adams Stories. As far as a chronological ordering is concerned, the stories in Hemingway's collections are, more often than not, "in jumbled sequence" (NAS 5). Philip Young notes:

> In Men Without Women, Hemingway's second collection of stories, Nick appears first as a

> soldier in Italy, next as an adolescent in Summit, Illinois, then in turn as a younger boy in Michigan, a married man in Austria, and a soldier in Italy. (NAS 5)

Young rearranged the stories in what he considered to be the chronological sequence of Nick's life as he passed from childhood through adolescence to war and marriage. It is at the expense of a poetic design that he turned to compiling The Nick Adams Stories. Hemingway's arrangement of stories is more in line with a collection of verse than a novel. In Our Time, for one, is said to be a masterpiece of juxtaposition (Wagner 55). Following the examples of Joyce's Ulysses and Pound's Cantos, Hemingway omitted any smooth and easy transition between one piece and the next. Rather, he placed, so it seems, one concrete image against another. Those stories which are centred on family relations are situated between war-centred vignettes in order to achieve a kind of structural counterpoint. The idea is to intensify not only the reading experience of the tragedy-based vignettes, but also the submerged, unspoken tragic dimensions of the stories.

Chapter 2

"Nick sat against the wall" is a critical piece, if not the core work, among the Nick stories. The episode, Nick's spine wound, is not only a climactic episode in itself, but a climactic event when considering the education of Nick Adams in general, and the events, the stories, to follow. Philip Young aptly placed the vignette as the central piece within his compilation of The Nick Adams Stories. The stories as a whole can be viewed as converging to this episode. The stories following like "Big Two-Hearted River" ("the story was about coming back from the war but there was no mention of war in it." AMF 76) expose or refer to this central scene. "A Way You'll Never Be" investigates both the psychological and the physical effects of Nick's wounding, as do "Now I Lay Me" and "In Another Country" which were originally two parts of a single story (Young, "'Big World Out There': NAS" 38). The previous Nick stories tend to foreshadow and lead up to the vignette. Stories such as "Indian Camp," "The Battler" and "The Killers" deal with the horrors of death and violence, so in a sense they prepare Nick as a victim of violence. "Night Before Landing" records Nick's crossing to France in May of 1918. This piece, abandoned by Hemingway in 1925, was part of a novel called "Along With Youth" which was meant to center on Nick's experiences in

the First World War. Instead, it would be in the half-page, untitled, understated vignette, "Nick sat against the wall," where Hemingway would ultimately record the facts of Nick's wounding.

In spite of its brevity, almost every line within the vignette brings to mind other Hemingway works, including those stories and novels outside the Nick chronology. Nick Adams's "patriot" Rinaldi shows up in A Farewell to Arms as Frederic Henry's cynical friend and patriot. Nick, Frederic and Jake Barnes of The Sun Also Rises all suffer from war wounds. Of course, the episode is a personally climactic one for Hemingway himself. He was wounded like Nick Adams and Frederic Henry while serving in the Italian army, on the bank of the River Piave, near Fossalta.

On a more poetic level, a repetition of images among Hemingway's works converges to this central piece. Within In Our Time, for example, chapter V ends with a cabinet minister shot while sitting against the wall of a hospital; chapter VI ("Nick sat against the wall") begins by focusing on Nick sitting wounded against the wall of a church. These two vignettes frame "The Battler" which begins with Nick getting up from a similar posture. Initially, chapter V may appear unrelated to the character of Nick, and yet the continuity of posture links this vignette with the more obvious Nick stories. The repeated image of the wall achieves secondary meaning; it evokes a similar sense of

isolation, separation and unyieldingness among these pieces, which culminates in "Nick sat against the wall."

In another sense, "Nick sat against the wall" can be regarded as a central work on how to write a story, just as all of the Nick Adams stories are in themselves on writing. Such a reading involves a structuralist approach rather than an explicatory or "new critical" analysis; it requires analyzing the composition of the text rather than deciphering a specific "meaning." Patricia Waugh remarks, about modern fiction in general: "The traditional fictional quest has ... been transformed into a quest for fictionality" (10). The vignette is about the difficulty and break-down of that very quest. Significantly, the piece never attains the value of a "short story" but remains a nameless vignette or interchapter, breached by "a disappointing audience" (NAS 143).

The first sentence introduces the most important ingredient to storytelling, the author: "Nick sat against the wall of the church where they had dragged him to be clear of machine-gun fire in the street" (NAS 143). Of course, Nick is the object of the actual author's vision, but Nick is also the creator of his own vision. "Nick looked straight ahead" (NAS 143) and we see only what he sees. Hemingway creates Nick who creates a vision. In this regard Nick becomes a representative author at work. He has experienced a traumatic event: "He had been hit in

the spine" (NAS 143) and now tries to view the event in retrospect. Nick has been dragged by others. Already there is an implied need for assistance. The receiver of the story is then established and dramatized through the character of Rinaldi. In contrast to Nick, who sits back against the wall and looks straight ahead, "Rinaldi, big-backed, his equipment sprawling, lay face downward against the wall" (NAS 143).

The image of a character sitting back against a wall looking outward is a recurring image throughout the Nick stories which demonstrates the character's acute awareness of what is going on around him. Note Frederic Henry in A Farewell to Arms who "was standing against the wall" (169), whereas both the priest and Rinaldi within the novel, turned away and evasively "looked out of the window" (68,70,71) or "looked at the floor again" (170); Frederic Henry is able to face the senselessness of war, whereas the priest cowers within a blanket of absolute religious faith and Rinaldi, "tired from thinking so much" (177), is unable to withstand the pressure: "'This war is killing me,' Rinaldi said, 'I am very depressed by it'" (173). In contrast to "looking straight ahead," lying "face downward against a wall" often spells disaster for a character. The Indian woman's husband in "Indian Camp," for example, "Lay [dead] with his face toward the wall" [NAS 20]; Ole Anderson in "The Killers" repeatedly "looked at the

wall,... rolled over toward the wall,... talking toward the wall" (NAS 67) and gives up on life; and the scared Carper in "Night Before Landing," "rolled over against the wall again," perpetually drunk (NAS 149): "'He's not like us,' Leon said. 'Listen, Nick. You and me, we've got something in us'" (NAS 142). In general, the Hemingway hero is differentiated from the other characters by his awareness of life and ability to confront the reality of the situation.[4] Nick is able to look ahead with his back against the wall and reflect upon the past events and actions.

Consistent with other Hemingway stories, the vignette in not diegetic, but mimetic. It does not so much tell the reader about Nick; rather it shows or reveals or dramatizes the character. The scene is presentational--drawn without descriptive commentary, descriptive adverbs or adjectives. At one point, we read, "Nick looked straight ahead" and he does so "brilliantly." And yet, "brilliantly" is not so much a descriptive adverb, as a comment on the state or quality of Nick's condition. The word seems odd within the context of a war-wounding, but within the context of creating a work of art it fits. In fact, a structural pattern has been forming which has led to such a declaration. We are told that Nick sits against the wall of a church; in spite of the sweat and dirt, "the sun shone on his face" (NAS 143); he looked ahead brilliantly.

Something exceptional or miraculous is happening to him in which the result is brilliance. In short, the author, having experienced a significant event, is inspired, almost divinely inspired, to produce or invent a work of art. Nick's spine wound is a noteworthy deviation from the actual author's wound. Hemingway was wounded in the leg, but the immobilizing spine wound emphasizes Nick's physical weakness and suggests a movement away from the physical to the spiritual; unable to perform physically, his energies are concentrated within a metaphysical realm.

As an artist, Nick does not simply record the historical event, but transforms and recreates the experience. He looks ahead, selects and reconstructs the external world metaphorically. This creation of a fictional world is in a sense a betrayal of experience, but "only so betrayed can it be dealt with at all" (Barth 112). Doris Lessing demonstrates in The Golden Notebook that the artist's need to conceptualize, to categorize and to structure reality is a way, in fact, to preserve sanity. Nick, like Frederic Henry, may be able to look "straight ahead," yet he necessarily fictionalizes and structures actual events in order to control them before the events overwhelm and control him. He projects his thoughts and feelings of war and wounding onto the broken wall of the house. The scene takes on significance that goes beyond the real world to extend into the world of art:

> The pink wall of the house opposite had fallen out from the roof, and an iron bedstead hung twisted toward the street. Two Austrian dead lay in the rubble in the shade of the house. Up the street were other dead. (NAS 143)

This is the sum of Nick's vision. It is only two sentences in length, and yet it reverberates with multiple associations which bind it to most other Nick stories. In this condensed reconstruction, the author sets up a web of cross-references and repetitions of words, images and themes which embrace other Hemingway texts. The image of the iron bedstead is foreshadowed in the following two stories of In Our Time. Luz in "A Very Short Story" and Kreb's mother in "A Soldier's Home" each "sat on a bed" (NAS 63,73). In retrospect, then, the mutilated bedstead of chapter VI not only displays the destructive power of war, but the destructive power of war on love and the destructive power of love itself. The damaging effects of war and the damaging effects of women are intricately woven. In "A Very Short Story," a soldier bitterly records how his lover jilts him after the war. In "A Soldier's Home," the soldier Krebs is forced to lie and to feign love in order to meet with his mother's approval. Within the vignette, if the house itself fails to bring to mind women, the pink interior encourages traditional associations of femininity. In this case, the "pretty" images associated with women are disturbingly "twisted" and "fallen" and juxtaposed by a picture of the dead who lay "in the shade

of the house." Just as the war had caused the destruction of the house, so the house shades the destruction of men.[5]

These verbal relationships within the vignette which extend beyond the vignette work to construct rather than reflect the author's notion of reality. In effect, Nick constructs or builds upon what is "fallen" (NAS 143). Such a contradiction also suggests the author's necessary formation of binary opposites. We are told that the image itself is "opposite" (NAS 143) from Nick. More impressively, following Nick's vision of death and destruction, we are given his ironic, contradictory discussion or interpretation: "Things were getting forward in the town" (NAS 143). Through ironic narration, the author intensifies the tragedy. The emotion is not labelled; rather, there is a tension resulting from the discrepancy between what is said and how it is said that is meant to stimulate an emotional response in the reader.

We are given Nick's commentary on the writing process so far: "It was going well" (NAS 143). Still the process is incomplete. The conclusion is yet to come: "Stretcher-bearers would be along any time now" (NAS 143). The construction of a literary text is not an isolated process reserved for the author, but requires the assistance of an audience for its completion: "Nick turned his head and looked down at Rinaldi. 'Senta, Rinaldi, Senta. You and me [the writer and the reader], we've made

[constructed] a separate peace'" (NAS 143) or a separate piece, the text. However, there is difficulty on the receiver's part: "Rinaldi lay still in the sun, breathing with difficulty" (NAS 143). Nick interprets the situation: "'We're not patriots'" (NAS 143). Still, "Rinaldi was a disappointing audience" (NAS 143) for Nick. Rinaldi is a part of Nick's vision, but Rinaldi "lay face downward against the wall" (NAS 143) and so, in a sense, refuses to participate in Nick's vision of a separate peace. The word "audience" explicitly points to Nick as the creator and Rinaldi as the receiver, the audience. For the actual reader and the actual author, Rinaldi's presence expands the text by placing Nick's perspective and creative efforts in a different light; Rinaldi indirectly reevaluates and taints Nick's vision of a separate peace.

In the end, "Nick turned his head away, smiling sweatily" (NAS 143), indicating the duality of writing. It is both pleasurable (he smiles) and difficult (he is sweaty). "It was really more fun than anything," Nick admits in "On Writing," but "It was so damn hard to write well, too" (NAS 238).

Chapter 3

Similar to "Nick sat against the wall," each of the Nick Adams stories shows how literary fiction is produced. Hemingway created fictional texts and simultaneously made a statement about the creation of that fiction by highlighting the storytelling process, the role of the teller and the role of the reader. In "The Doctor and the Doctor's Wife," Nick is once again found in a posture of awareness: "sitting with his back against a tree" (NAS 26). However, in this case, he is ambiguously described as both aware of his surrounding and engrossed within the isolated activity of reading. In contrast to the vignette, he only enters the story at the very end and is not found looking straight ahead recreating a vision, but alone with a book in hand. But it is no accident that he is found reading. Rather than mirroring the activities of the author at work, he is seen to characterize the actual receiver of the story, the reader of "The Doctor and the Doctor's Wife" who observes the events of the story, who sits and reads while textually absent from the action.

The difficulty with "The Doctor and the Doctor's Wife" is precisely that Nick is so far out of the action. Carlos Baker and Philip Young, along with Benson, Rovit, Killinger and Montgomery assume that Nick has seen the exchange between Dick Boulton and Dr. Adams, as well as that between

Dr. and Mrs. Adams. These critics regularly conclude that Nick is disturbed by his father's cowardice or follow Baker's view that the story shows "Nick's sympathy with his father's shame and anger." More recent criticism by Carl Ficken, Bhim Dahiya, Chaman Nahal and others specifically points to the obvious textual inconsistencies of this reading. Never is it mentioned in the text that Nick is anywhere around when Dick Boulton and Dr. Adams argue, and never is it mentioned that Nick sees or hears the exchange within the house. It is made clear that he is nowhere near the lake where Dick Boulton, Billy Tabeshaw and Eddy were to cut logs, or anywhere near the house where the domestic scene takes place.

The question remains, why would the earlier critics, most of whom are authorities on Hemingway, draw such conclusions? The reason is, of course, that it always somehow <u>feels</u> as if Nick is there, at the scene, observing. Nick is not part of the conflict. He has nothing to do with the sequence of events. The basic plot is devoid of his presence. And yet, in the end, in spite of the undeniable facts, the story seems like Nick's story. In effect, Nick is the vital ingredient which Hemingway chose to omit. The absent-present Nick is akin to the invisibly present narrator. From another perspective, Nick follows the role of the reader invisibly observing the sequence of events within the modern text and ultimately responsible

for drawing conclusions. Nick does not enter the story on his own accord, but must be sought out by his father; he is prevented from falling into the role of passive consumer. Similarly, the reader of the fiction is required to help construct the text and to complete the story. Hemingway's fiction prevents the reader from falling into the role of passive consumer by making the characters ambiguous and the scenes incomplete. The reader is encouraged to work through and work out the story.

The sense of Nick's omniscient, omitted presence is subtly, unobtrusively achieved at the beginning and end of the story, through structures. Dr. Adams has been construed by the more recent critics as the protagonist of the story since he is not only the one single character who is physically present in every scene but also the one character who is actively involved in the conflict of the events. Nevertheless, the doctor is initially defined in terms of Nick, and, like all fictional characters, he is literally a verbal construct, a sign on a page, before he is anything else. When the doctor is first mentioned he is not referred to as "Dr. Adams" or "the doctor" or "Henry" or "dear" or "Doc," but rather he is labelled in the opening sentence as "Nick's father." This identification is reinforced two more times in the introductory passages when "Nick's father always assumed that this was what would happen ..." (NAS 22) and when "Dick Boulton turned to

Nick's father" (NAS 23). Such naming in fiction describes as it refers, so that we are made to feel that Dr. Adams is first and foremost Nick's father. At the outset, then, the existence of Nick is explicitly made known through his relationship with Dr. Adams, while the existence of Dr. Adams is merely a corollary to or subordinate to the existence of Nick. As fictional constructs, Dr. Adams exists as "Nick's father" while Nick always exists as himself, "Nick."

The association of Nick as the central consciousness, is reconfirmed at the end of the story. This time both parents are referred to as "his father" and "his mother," whereas Nick is still called "Nick," never "the doctor's son" or "his son" or "her son." In addition, the triple repetition of "Nick's father" in the opening scene is mirrored by the triple repetition of "his father" in the closing. Consequently, the absent hero works as a further frame to the story. Just as the artist uses frames in order to organize experience, so Nick as a structural frame works to organize the experience of the text. Like the actual reader of the story, he will make judgments and draw conclusions. And just as Cezanne included framing forms within his paintings whose identities were omitted, so Hemingway provides an absent hero in order to make the character's presence and ultimate actions seem more central, objective and omniscient. Since Nick has been

uninvolved in the scenes of conflict, he appears above and better than it all. He appears more than a literary fictional character and much like an omniscient narrator. The narrative presentation maintains a respectable distance from him and never ventures into his mind. We learn of Dr. Adams that he is "very uncomfortable" (NAS 23) when he is accused of stealing, that he is "irritated" (NAS 25) when he sees the pile of unopened medical journals and that he is "very fond" (NAS 25) of his gun. We pick up on the thoughts of Dick Boulton: "He [Dick] knew how big a man he was. He liked to get into fights. He was happy" (NAS 24); but with regard to Nick, the narrator never exposes the boy's thoughts. Nick stands outside the central episodes, just as the reader stands outside the story, so that both witness the events from like vantage points.

As a representative reader of the story, Nick exists necessarily in a state of alienation. His omitted presence works to undermine the naturalism of Hemingway's text and works to frustrate the actual reader's real-text assumptions. Critics bound to real-text assumptions insist that Nick is both physically and spiritually absent until the very end and insist that he is relatively irrelevant to the makeup of the story. Those who accept Nick's importance argue that he must be physically present during the climactic events of the story, eavesdropping on his father's activities. Neither of these readings is endorsed

by the text; still critics hesitate to acknowledge Nick's omitted presence. They are reluctant to expose a level of illusion within a text which is characterized by its conventionally realistic tone and subject matter. Not only is the story situated in the real world, but the conversations and the narrative itself are characterized by natural speech rhythms and inflections. The story never altogether abandons the real world. It can be comprehended and enjoyed by a wide readership which is active in formulating a "meaning" for a traditionally realistic text. However, beyond the traditional base, the story proceeds to an unconventional realm which either must be rationalized or accepted.

Ultimately, the conventions of realism are violated by the imposition of Nick's fictional aspect. The unconventional aspect of the story reflects upon and taints the otherwise highly realistic narrative presentation. Hemingway endorses a picture of reality, while questioning that view. In order to come to terms with this new fictional dimension, the reader, in turn, must look at the story from a new vantage point. The story does not necessarily provide a conventionally realistic order and meaning, and so the reader is forced to acknowledge that this is a created and structured work of art. Nick's supernatural dimension highlights the fact that this is all make-believe, constructed and structured.

Even without Nick's ambiguous presence, the piece itself mimetically demonstrates the fictionality of all writing; stories are not reflections of life, but creations of an author. They alter with the telling and differ within differing contexts. Within "The Doctor and the Doctor's Wife" the same basic story or conflict is told three times over from three different perspectives. Each time the emphasis is slightly different and the end result changed.

As introduced in chapter I of this paper, the structure of the story as a whole converges to the scene between Dr. and Mrs. Adams. In this central episode the doctor delivers the final rendition of a conflict which was first told by the narrator and then dramatized by characters. In the third paragraph the conflict of the dramatized story is foretold:

> The logs had been lost from the big booms that were towed down the lake to the mill ... and if nothing were done about them sooner or later the crew of the Magic would ... tow them out onto the lake to make a new boom. But the lumbermen might never come for them because a few logs were not worth the price of a crew to gather them ... If no one came for them they would be left to waterlog and rot on the beach. (NAS 22)

What we are delivered is a piece of seemingly verisimilar writing. The tone is detached; the narrator reports the facts. The possibilities are established and presented in syllogistically balanced juxtaposition. No conclusions are drawn: it could be that the lumber company will return for

the logs, but it is also possible that the logs may be abandoned for practical reasons and have been left as driftwood. Nevertheless, the author has chosen to present the logs as abandoned, at the end. Rhetorically, the last word in any argument carries the most weight. On closer inspection, then, the passage implicitly supports the latter alternative simply because it comes at the end. The significance of "firstness" and "lastness" will become especially important when considering the beginning and end of the story as a whole.

Meanwhile, the following scene reconstructs the story of the logs, this time allowing characters to endorse one view or the other. In this case the two alternatives are dramatized. On the one hand, Dick Boulton recognizes the logs as first and foremost the property of the mill and, therefore, interprets the doctor's activity of collecting the logs as theft. On the other hand, Dr. Adams "always assumed" (NAS 22) that the logs would be abandoned and considers them to be nothing but free driftwood. The debate demonstrates how people interpret a given situation. When offered a set of alternatives it is only natural to choose one and eliminate another. Reality becomes subjectively constructed. Dr. Adams acknowledges only that possibility which works to his advantage: the logs could be driftwood, but he interprets that they are driftwood. Nonetheless, in his defense, neither party can be sure

whether or not the lumber company will want to retrieve the logs. Either conclusion is possible. During the debate the text does not take the side of one man over the other. In effect, it endorses contradictory points of view. It shows the reader that events and stories are not bound by one isolated "correct" interpretation. Life itself is not so reductive, definitive and secure.

While the scene affirms the inadequacy of an exclusive interpretation it also affirms the power of language itself. Dr. Adams may be aware of the incriminating alternative inferred, but the activity of retrieving the logs does not become "uncomfortable" until the distasteful possibility is verbally presented, until the half-breed Dick Boulton publicly exposes the stamp of "White and McNally" on the retrieved logs:

> "You'd better not saw it up then, Dick," he said shortly.
> "Don't get huffy, Doc," said Dick. "Don't get huffy. I don't care who you steal from. It's none of my business." (NAS 23-24)

As a half-breed, Dick Boulton is a foil to the doctor's established identity. Dick shares contradictory characteristics which divide the Indian community from the white community and so disrupts the oppositional social balance which is prevalent within The Nick Adams Stories. The white community lives on one side of the lake, whereas the Indian camp is on the other side. The white man is the doctor, whereas the Indian is the patient; but the Indian

is a manual laborer for the white man. In short, the whites could "get ahead," but "there was no successful Indians" (NAS 35). They "drank pain killer and walked through the woods alone at night" (NAS 35) and lost money. From the point of view of the bigoted white, the half-breed obscures this pattern: Dick Boulton "was very lazy [characteristically Indian] but a great worker once he was started [characteristically white]" (NAS 23). He is not typically unsuccessful, and so "many of the farmers around the lake believed he was really a white man" (NAS 23). Dick's entrance threatens the established structure of the communities, dictated by society. He causes the full-blooded Ojibway, Billy Tabeshaw, to sweat and Dr. Adams to turn red.

Personally, his dual nature works to his advantage. As a white man, he realizes that "polite," white society veils truths by simply not mentioning them; but as an Indian he need not abide by the unspoken rules of avoiding embarrassing truths, embarrassing situations, "scenes" at all costs. As an "uncivilized" Indian he does not care if the intentions of Dr. Adams are deceptive, but there is a part of him which knows the doctor will be sensitive to such a suggestion. And since he is part white, he does not hesitate to expose the doctor to the demeaning suggestion. He feels more of an equal to Dr. Adams than other Indians, and refuses to adhere to a subservient role: "Dick left the

gate open. Billy Tabeshaw went back and fastened it" (NAS 24).

Within the hierarchical structure "Doc" is too familiar a name for the Indian to be using while he questions the man's integrity. Dick's continual repetition of the label works to slight Dr. Adams's social label. The doctor attempts to reestablish the hierarchical balance with threats. However, instead of regaining his diminished status, Dr. Adams merely lowers himself to Dick's level by descending to the primitivism of physical violence. Dick, too, obscures the role playing by not only answering the doctor, but by using understatement in his speech ("'Well Doc,' he said, 'that's a nice lot of timber you've stolen'," NAS 23), and by not returning his anger with violence:

> "If you call me Doc again, I'll knock your eye teeth down your throat."
> "Oh no, you won't, Doc." (NAS 24)

The confrontation signifies to the reader the powerful subsistence of oppositional structures while at the same time it shows the instability of binary oppositions; it disrupts and broaches the primitive-sophisticated social dichotomy developed between the opposing camps. As an Indian, as "opposite" from the white doctor, it is expected that Dick will answer in opposition. Rather than responding with physical violence, he ends the discussion by verbally threatening and verbally defeating the doctor.

Only through the doctor's "cowardly" departure is the dichotomy secured. His exit demonstrates that he is too "civilized" to resort to primitive methods of deciding an argument. And yet, Dick still appears more "civilized": unlike Dr. Adams, Dick never directly resorted to threats of violence, and unlike Dr. Adams, he delivers the final, decisive word.

As the one scene passes into the next, the event, the story, is reconstructed explicitly from the doctor's point of view. Dr. Adams plays the part of the author while his wife falls into the role of audience. She senses conflict and out of conflict arises the need of the receiver to produce meaning. Like any reader of events she wants to know why:

> "What was the trouble about, dear?"
> "Nothing much."
> "Tell me, Henry. Please don't try and keep anything from me. What was the trouble about?"
> "Well, Dick owes me a lot of money for pulling his squaw through pneumonia and I guess he wanted a row so he wouldn't have to take it out in work." (NAS 25)

There is nothing in the narrative that would prove his assumption false; this could be Dick's motivation for wanting a row. Dr. Adams's "rewriting" of the preceding events not only sheds light on the Adamses' relationship, but also exemplifies another possible version of the incident. Dr. Adams has chosen to add and to edit the incident, omitting Dick's accusation from his explanation, in much the same way that Hemingway, or any storyteller for

that matter, chooses to alter actual events with the telling, to serve his purpose. Dr. Adams now is an individual who draws a scene with a specific audience in mind.

He delivers his personal narrative burdened by the thought of his thwarted pride and diminished ego. Just before he talks with his wife, he notices "a pile of unopened medical journals on the floor by the bureau. They were still in their wrappers, unopened. It irritated him" (NAS 25). The journals have nothing to do with the actual plot of the story at its simplest level, just as "negative space," within a Cezanne painting, appears as "nothing" or as not really part of the actual picture. And yet, the "negative space" affects the viewer's or reader's perception of the scene. Within the context of the preceding events the private, incidental detail is significant: the sight of the unopened medical journals, like the publicized title of "Doc" earlier, is a threat--a silent threat--to the doctor's integrity as a professional.

Within the context of his humiliation, he plays the part of the evasive narrator, reluctant to give his story. In a positive sense, this confounding of simple expectation--not telling all--is a way of stimulating the receiver to a fuller exercise of her imagination. The presence of Mrs. Adams offers an experience of reading: to read a text is not to pass through to some product, but to

respond to it. Thus, Mrs. Adams on her part draws her own conclusions and gives her own interpretation of the story delivered: "'Dear, I don't think, I really don't think that any one would really do a thing like that'" (NAS 26). Again there is nothing in the narrative to denounce this deduction. As the receiver of the story, she merely adds to it by offering a different perspective, another possible version, another layer of interpretation. She interprets the given event within a context figuratively and literally different from her husband's. She brings to the story her faith in the Scriptures and her subsequent belief that no person "would do a thing of that sort intentionally" (NAS 26).

One effect of repeating the conflict three times and exposing varied interpretations is to show the provisionality of any story. As the characters pass through the gates (NAS 22,24,26), the reader, too, moves through to different worlds with different perspectives of reality framed by different contexts. The story considered as a whole provides multiple narrators and multiple interpretations, and so deliberately fails to supply its readers with a definite point of view. The intrusive comments of Mrs. Adams in particular serve to undermine the closure of the final ending and the definitive interpretation. Each scene is complete with a beginning and an ending, but the earlier scenes affect the following

scenes, while the later episodes add to and alter the preceding events retrospectively. There is closure with every scene, but the closure is never absolute: the gates which divide the scenes not only close, but are there to be opened. Fiction is seen as unstable and incomplete.

The example of Dr. Adams unsettles our convictions as to the realism of the story as a whole and the authority of the omniscient narrator who delivers it. The knowledge forced upon the reader is that the actual author of "The Doctor and the Doctor's Wife" is its inventor and not a recorder of events that happened, that this is at best a metaphor for the author's sense of reality. The events and people here cannot be identified with those in the real world, although Dr. and Mrs. Adams may bring to mind Hemingway's own parents and childhood. Those people and those events are always recontextualized in the act of writing. An author may borrow facts, events and people from the real world, but it is still up to the author to decide what to mirror and what not to mirror. The author must decide where the story should begin and end, and how it should be structured.

In "The Doctor and the Doctor's Wife," the story follows the path of Dr. Adams as he passes from one scene to the next, confronting various judgmental individuals along the way. He is alienated and humiliated by an employee and his wife, and yet he is accepted by his son.

Hemingway has significantly chosen to conclude the story with Nick's entrance and simple gesture of acceptance. Mrs. Adams's request forces Nick to react and make a choice:

> "Your mother wants you to come and see her," the doctor said.
> "I want to go with you," Nick said. His father looked down at him.
> "All right. Come on, then," his father said. "Give me the book; I'll put it in my pocket."
> "I know where there's black squirrels, Daddy," Nick said.
> "All right," said his father. "Let's go there." (NAS 26)

Nick's handing of the book to his father not only signifies the end of the story, that he is finished reading at least for a time, but that the creation of the story has been a collaborative activity shared between the author and the reader. Dr. Adams has created a story, Nick in effect reads it and responds to it, so that in the end both end up "handling" the text. Of course, in any work of fiction the reader never really creates literary meaning freely. All writing is bound by restrictive, but necessary, selection and isolation procedures. As we have seen, the ordering of alternatives within this story's introductory narrative and the ordering of events throughout suggest rhetorical designs. The reader contributes to the creation; the writer suggests while the reader verifies.

Nick helps to conclude the story by supporting his father's struggle for personal autonomy. In modernist

fiction the quest of the hero for personal autonomy can be continued only through opposition to existing social institutions and conventions, and necessarily involves individual alienation (Waugh 10). In this case, Dr. Adams rejects the crude "uncivilized" world of the Indian camp, as well as the refined "civilized" world of his wife's household. He is on his way to a dwelling divorced from the established structures when Nick proposes a place "where there's black squirrels," a place which foreshadows Nick's idyllic isolated retreat in "The Last Good Country" and "Big Two-Hearted River." Together, then, they construct or will construct for themselves a separate peace.[6]

Chapter 4

From beginning to end, "The End of Something" is characterized by its evasiveness. The story is framed by an explicitly evasive title. "Something" could mean anything and it is up to the reader to "fill in the blank." Such a title is both frustrating and enticing for the reader and is reflective of Nick's evasive, hesitant state of mind within the story. Nick as the central character must be pushed into explaining his desire for "the end" and, even after he does so, his reasons remain vague and obscure. The story has been criticized for this lack of resolution and its lack of "plot" (Wagner 61). It begins literally at "the end," and even at the end of "the end" there is a sense of incompleteness. The inconclusiveness draws attention to the fact, as Nick will learn, that nothing is finished. Hemingway reworks and undermines the familiar conventions of storytelling in order to expose the storytelling process and the reader's role in that process. By giving away the ending at the beginning and by supplying an evasive hero, the story encourages the reader to ask "how" and "why" rather than passively noting what happens next. The emphasis is on the reader's participation in the creation of fiction.

As the story begins the reader settles into the highly realistic outer-frame. For the most part, the outer-frame

describes the setting as it was "in the old days" (NAS 200) and only reserves a few lines for the description of the town "ten years later" (NAS 200). The present condition of the mill is implicitly associated with Nick and Marjorie since the fallen mill-town and the couple are introduced in the same sentence:

> Ten years later there was nothing of the mill left except the broken white limestone of its foundations showing through the swampy second growth as Nick and Marjorie rowed along the shore. (NAS 200-201)

On a realistic level, the history of the mill, as described within the first two paragraphs, has nothing to do with the "plot" of the story, the end of the relationship between Marjorie and Nick. And yet, the involved description of the mill suggests its importance. For this reason, there is a need on the part of the reader to interpret the mill symbolically. Within the context of the story, it is not so much a reflection of real life, as a metaphor for reality. The mill must stand for something else; it must represent something other than what it is literally. For the reader, reality exists beyond the detached narrative of the opening and must be reached through it. It is implied even at this point, then, that people can only achieve a metaphor for reality, that the reality of the entire story, and every story, is a metaphor for what is real.

Marjorie immediately mirrors the need of the reader to interpret the mill symbolically. She, too, draws parallels

between the aged mill and her relationship with Nick. She is happy with their relationship ("She loved to fish. She loved to fish with Nick" NAS 201), and so the mill healthily and enthusiastically becomes "our old ruin" (NAS 201). From her perspective, it evolves into a positive symbol of romance, something which "seems more like a castle" (NAS 201). With regular shifts in the structure of knowledge and power, the mill as a model of reality is continually being reappraised and resynthesized. It is not a stable symbol. An individual's background, knowledge and personal biases affect her or his understanding of a given symbol. Interpretations vary with various people. New experiences will alter the observer's perception. Thus, Marjorie's interpretation is offered as one of many possible interpretations. From the reader's point of view, the mill will take on more tragic associations. No doubt, the relationship between Marjorie and Nick was once romantic, but with the emergence of Nick's dissatisfaction with the affair, the symbol of romance becomes a symbol of destruction.

In contrast to Marjorie's natural enthusiasm, Nick's response to the mill is laconic: "'There it is,' he said" (NAS 201). He refuses to offer or acknowledge any symbolic dimension: "Nick said nothing" (NAS 201). In this regard, Nick suggests a failed creator, unable to draw the associations and structures necessary for composing a work

of art. Nick himself seems aware of his faulty creative faculties. While Marjorie notices that the fish are feeding, the one thing Nick says repeatedly is that "they aren't striking" and "they won't strike" (NAS 201).

Within "The End of Something," fishing becomes a performance equivalent to the creation of the text. The activity of fishing and the activity of writing exhibit like characteristics throughout The Nick Adams Stories. They are both enjoyable and difficult; they each take skill and time and determination. In "On Writing" there is more discussion of fishing than of writing, still Young significantly entitled the piece "On Writing." Those passages on writing are intertwined within the passages on fishing. Fishing and writing are the two activities in which Nick professes an undying love. At one point in "On Writing" he declares that "All the love went into fishing.... He had loved it more than anything" (NAS 235). On the other hand, later in the piece he insists that it is writing which "was really more fun than anything.... It was simply ... the greatest pleasure. It had more bite to it than anything else" (NAS 238). In "Summer People," his prayers for good fishing overlap his prayers to be a great writer (NAS 228) but as he says in "On Writing," "it was hard to be a great writer...." (NAS 238). Within "Big Two-Hearted River" and "On Writing," Nick dramatizes the like difficulties of fishing. Catching a trout of the

right size requires intense concentration and becomes the greatest challenge. In The Old Man and the Sea, the fisherman is to the fish as the writer is to the writing. The old man fears that he is too old to make the catch (write well), and if the catch is made, if he becomes one with the marlin, his "true brother" (83), it may be devoured by sharks (readers and critics) and lose its flesh, its beauty and its significance.

The first half of the central scene with Nick and Marjorie focuses on the fishing sequence. This is the one time in The Nick Adams Stories where Nick is not fishing by himself. Rather, fishing is pictured as a joint effort between himself and Marjorie. She is seen to fish competently, with Nick occasionally offering instruction along the way. All appears fine during the opening sequence; still a tension pervades the scene. Like Marjorie, the reader knows without being told that something is wrong: "'What's wrong, Nick?'... 'I don't know,' Nick said" (NAS 202). The uneasiness and tension are never made explicit, but formed implicitly through the structure of binary opposition. Marjorie is happy and enthusiastic; Nick is laconic and unresponsive. Something is wrong.

Nick does not know what is wrong, but he does know that the moon is coming up. She, too, admits:

"I know it," Marjorie said happily.

> "You know everything," Nick said.... "You know everything. That's the trouble. You know you do.... I've taught you everything. You know you do. What don't you know anyway?" (NAS 203)

The word "know" is repeated obsessively by Nick and occupies nearly every sentence of their conversation. More than anything else, Nick is disturbed by what Marjorie knows and how much she knows. We learn from the action in the story that her knowledge includes the art of fishing which permits her to be a member of his fishing endeavors. The repetition also suggests that they "know" each other in the biblical sense. Knowledge points to intimacy on various levels between Nick and Marjorie.

Nick now appears threatened by her companionship and this knowledge which he has taught her. The problem is that, for Nick, fishing is a private aesthetic ritual, a movement toward a separate peace. This movement toward a personal autonomy necessarily involves a movement away from others, including Marjorie. It becomes an escape from the domesticating influence of women. Love for a woman interferes with love for fishing and, by association, the creative acts of the artist. In "On Writing," the work of the author is similarly described as an aesthetic ritual: "He felt almost holy about it" (NAS 239). It, too, involves alienation: "It was a thing you couldn't talk about" (NAS 239). Hence, from Nick's point of view, Marjorie represents a threat to his creativity, a threat to his aesthetic formation of a separate peace and a separate

piece. When she is around he "knows" that the fish won't strike. Ultimately, he feels that a choice must be made. In "On Writing," "he admitted by marrying that something was more important than fishing" (NAS 234).[7]

In "The End of Something," the relationship, as Bill later suggests (NAS 213), is serious enough for marriage. Hemingway wrote the piece around the time that his marriage with Hadley Richardson, his first wife, was dissolving. The Marjorie in the story is usually identified with Marjorie Bump a seventeen-year-old summer waitress who knew Hemingway in Upper Michigan during the summer and fall of 1919 (Meyers 48). However, biographers Michael Reynolds and Jeffrey Meyers note that the fictional Marjorie has more in common with Hadley Richardson than with Marjorie Bump, and so suggest the breaking of a more serious relationship for more mature reasons. Hadley was an extremely well-educated, reputable woman. Within the story, Marjorie, too, proves her worth and dignity by departing without making a scene. Most significantly, the climactic exchange between Nick and Marjorie reads much like a letter which Hadley had sent to Hemingway during their courtship:

> Why did you say to me ... in the car last night when I said I didn't know anything that I knew too much? (qtd. in Reynolds 148)

Like Hadley within the letter and like Mrs. Adams in "The Doctor and the Doctor's Wife," Marjorie in "The End of

Something" must also question in order to formulate an explanation. As with Dr. Adams, Nick resists offering an explanation and must be coaxed. The question "What happens next?" is replaced by the question "Why did it happen?" The teller does not deliver an explanation or a tale to a passive audience; rather, the evasive narrator of events only stimulates his audience's curiosity and encourages further questioning. The audience in this regard functions to participate in the telling process. Through the teller's comments and the receiver's questions, the explanation is constructed by both. The conversation builds upon a rhetorical, dialectical, Platonic structure. Nick insists, "I don't know" (NAS 203), but Marjorie interprets, "Of course you know.... Go on and say it" (NAS 203-204). Nick finally admits, "It isn't fun any more. Not any of it" (NAS 204). He could have said that he did not love her any more, but instead gives the peculiar, noteworthy explanation--twice--that "It isn't fun." Within The Nick Adams Stories "fun" is associated with two other activities, fishing and writing. Marjorie specifically asks, "Isn't love any fun?" (NAS 204) but more generally Nick says that "Not any of it" is fun, not love, not fishing and, by association, not writing.

At one point in "Summer People," Nick declares that "He knew he was going to be a great writer. He knew things, and they couldn't touch him. Nobody could" (NAS

219). At the close of "The End of Something," Nick rejects his friend Bill as well: "Bill didn't touch him, either" (NAS 204). For Nick, writing requires "knowing" which requires not being "touched." In his pursuit of a separate peace and in his desire to become a great writer, he succeeds in physically segregating himself from others. This is also the case in "Big Two-Hearted River": "Nick was happy.... Now it was done. It had been a hard trip.... He had made his camp.... Nothing could touch him.... He was there, in the good place" (NAS 184).

Nevertheless, by the end of "The End of Something" we are left with a portrait of a failed artist. He is not left sitting, back against a wall, looking straight ahead, reflecting upon events or constructing a vision of events past, rather he "lay down with his face in the blanket by the fire" (NAS 204) and remains for the duration of the story "lying, with his face on the blanket" (NAS 204). It is implied, that Nick, as a creator, is lost without the cooperative assistance of an audience like Marjorie; writing is not an isolated activity, but requires a reader to help in its construction. Both the writer and the reader are creators who ultimately share the same knowledge. Just as Marjorie is taught to fish, so the reader is taught the text. And just as Marjorie expands their relationship by adding her own perspective, so the

reader, in effect, expands the text by contributing her or his knowledge and discoveries.

In spite of Nick's request, the story's structure secures Marjorie's presence. Structurally, Nick and Marjorie are conceived as and remain binary opposites. At the close, Nick tries in vain to divorce himself from Marjorie and the unpleasant reminders of the recent past. And yet, ironically, his evasion has only brought him closer to her. She still exists as a vital presence for Nick, an omitted presence. Not only does he still hear her in the distance, but now he literally occupies the space where she once was. Earlier, "Marjorie sat on the blanket with her back to the fire and waited for Nick" (NAS 203). Then together, yet separate, "They sat on the blanket without touching each other and watched the moon rise" (NAS 203). Then after she leaves they remain together, though separate, under the same moonlight. Within the narrative her existence works to frame his presence:

> She was afloat in the boat on the water with the moonlight on it. Nick went back and lay down with his face in the blanket by the fire. He could hear Marjorie rowing on the water. (NAS 204)

The expulsion of Marjorie was after all not the answer. The end of something has not meant the beginning of something else. The story is left unresolved, at least until the following story, "The Three-Day Blow," where the "plot" continues.

Chapter 5

Among Hemingway's Nick Adams stories, "Big Two-Hearted River" is the most acclaimed. Philip Young, Joseph Flora and Earl Rovit consider it one of Hemingway's finest fictions. F. Scott Fitzgerald thought it was one of the most hauntingly beautiful pieces of prose in the English language (Oldsey 220). Hemingway himself described it as "the best thing I have done by a long shot" (Selected Letters 144). He appropriately placed it at the end of In Our Time; an accumulation of motifs and images reverberates in this final isolated journey of Nick's. Charles and A.C. Hoffman affirm: "the story is not only that toward which the whole has been moving but also that in which the whole is contained" (104). Young explains that it embodies "the quintessential Hemingway style: simplicity, forged under great pressure, out of complexity" ("'Big World Out There': NAS" 39). It demonstrates as much as anything the practice of Hemingway's craft and, more specifically, his theory of omission: "the war, all mention of the war, anything about the war is omitted" (AOSS, 88).

For The Nick Adams Stories, Young retrieved the original conclusion of "Big Two-Hearted River" and entitled it "On Writing." Unlike "Big Two-Hearted River," few critics have bothered to examine or to include this posthumously published work in their discussions on

Hemingway's stories. And yet, it both explicitly and implicitly outlines what Hemingway was trying to accomplish in "Big Two-Hearted River" and, in turn, his fiction as a whole. As indicated by the excluded segment, he was to omit from "Big Two-Hearted River" much more than discussion on war. In rewriting his original conclusion he omitted Nick's thoughts on marriage, thoughts on other writers and memories of past experiences and places. Most markedly, he omitted his theory of writing. Just as "the story was about coming back from the war but there was no mention of war in it" (AMF 76), so the story was "on writing" but there was no mention of writing in it.

"Big Two-Hearted River," more than any other Nick story, is a celebration of the creative imagination. It affirms the constructive power of the mind in the face of chaos. B. J. Smith identifies the burned-down devastation of Seney with the theft of Hemingway's early work, originals and carbons, from a railway station in Paris. In the chapter "Hunger Was Good Discipline" of A Moveable Feast, Hemingway likens the loss to a war wound:

> It was true all right and I remember what I did in the night after I let myself into the flat and found it was true. That was over now and Chink had taught me never to discuss casualties; so I told O'Brien not to feel so bad. It was probably good for me to lose early work and I told him all that stuff you feed the troops. (74)

On one metaphoric level, then, "Big Two-Hearted River" becomes the story of the author's recovery from the damage of work lost--which he learned never to discuss--and the artist's attempt at or quest for a new beginning.

Reminiscent of "Nick sat against the wall," Nick accordingly is cast in the role of artist-observer. We are told more than once:

> Nick sat down against the charred stump and smoked a cigarette.... Nick sat smoking, looking out over the country.... As he smoked, his legs stretched out in front of him. (NAS 179-180, my emphasis)

Nick is not wounded. Nevertheless, he is artistically, acutely aware and hypersensitive to all forms of life after his encounter with the mass destruction of war. Nick is linked with the fire-ravaged countryside. He not only leans against a charred log, but is continually pictured smoking, just as the burned-over landscape smokes. The blackened landscape mirrors his psychological condition. As a metaphor, the realistic or naturalistic setting is not a reflection of naturalistic reality, but a recreation or a symbol of the structure of Nick's mind. Nick's observations are not objective, but are projections of his struggle to stay in control of himself. He notices the trouts' struggle to hold themselves in the current because they reflect the inner conflicts of his mind. Just as the trout are "keeping themselves steady ... holding themselves" (NAS 177) in the current, so Nick tries to find

some balance after his experiences of war. The trout "seemed to float down the stream with the current, unresisting" (NAS 178), paralytic. Nick, too, passively wanders through the woods and merely tries to "stay afloat." He feels the effects of war and, on another metaphoric level, the artist feels the loss of his manuscripts. It is now necessary for him to locate and to build upon the virgin country, to return to his work and "begin afresh with brand-new standards of truth and simplicity" (C. Baker 84).

Beyond the blackened, burned-over outer world, Nick finds and builds upon a place yet untouched. The reader's imagination is engaged and stretched as the detailed narrative follows what Nick "watched" for every measure of the way. Nick's movements and thoughts are rendered with excruciating detail; a mundane action is represented in a highly specified manner. Even a sleepy blink is dramatized with immediacy and exactitude:

> His neck and back and the small of his back rested as he stretched. The earth felt good against his back. He looked up at the sky, through the branches, and then shut his eyes. He opened them and looked up again. There was a wind high up in the branches. He shut his eyes again and went to sleep. (NAS 182)

The story never flaunts its language in the manner of James Joyce's Ulysses for example, but the exhaustive attempt to describe anything and everything does more than create an illusion of reality, it is a reminder of the presence of

the narrative. The precise, exact language of the text draws attention to the physical and visual construction of Nick's separate peace, while it draws attention to itself. Not only does the scene take shape, but each sentence within the description, the structure of the narrative itself, becomes highlighted. In this respect, the text is self-conscious. It comments on the construction of language and the practice of writing fiction.

Nick laboriously finds and builds a camp. He has camped and fished many times before, but he does not passively fall into a familiar routine. He remains acutely aware of his every movement. His mix of difficulty and pleasure reflects the writer's and the reader's mix of difficulty and pleasure with writing and reading the text. Reading is no longer easy, no longer a comfortable, passive experience. Demands for attention are brought to bear on the reader. The reader, like Nick, is forced to control, organize and structure a world separate from the empirical world in which she or he lives. Nick's escape to and building of his retreat in the woods is an allegory for the reader's, as well as the writer's, escape into the fictive world and construction of the literary text. Nick creates a world "as real as, but other than the world that is," to use John Fowles' words in The French Lieutenant's Woman (86). From the newly created world, the reader journeys backward and forward into other texts which echo like

people, places and events. The emphasis is on the detailed formation of the camp, the imaginative processes of the writer and the reader--the storytelling--instead of on the product, the finished camp--the story told.

The story always remains grounded in the real world, and it is from the real world that Nick constructs his ideal, his separate peace, and that Hemingway constructs his fiction. No doubt, the story evokes events in the author's life along with previous Nick stories. The opening, in particular, is reminiscent of Nick at different times and places. He watches a train going "out of sight" (NAS 47,177), walks along railroad tracks and crosses a bridge just as he did in "The Battler." The description of the devastated town brings to mind the wasteland in "A Way You'll Never Be" and the decayed mill-town introducing "The End of Something." The image of the swamp, the campfire, Nick's extreme hunger and enjoyment of camp-cooked food further link "Big Two-Hearted River" with "The Battler." Later, the explicit description of the grasshoppers evokes such war stories as "A Way You'll Never Be" and "Now I Lay Me."

The story is differentiated from the other Nick stories, as well as the author's real-life experience, by Nick's absolute isolation. Carlos Baker reports in his biography that the story is based on one of Hemingway's fishing trips to the Fox River of Michigan's Upper

Peninsula. Hemingway confirms this fact in his unpublished introduction, "The Art of the Short Story":

> The River was the Fox River, by Seney, Michigan, not the Big Two-Hearted. The change of name was made purposely, not from ignorance nor carelessness but because Big Two-Hearted River is poetry. (88)

He went with Al Walker and Jake Pentecost while he was recuperating from his war wounds. The earliest manuscript fragment of the story begins by following the actual event: "They got off the train at Seney. There was no station" (qtd. in Oldsey 219, my emphasis). However, as Hemingway soon realized, the appearance of more than one character would have ruined the emotional and mystical effect of the excursion. In order to heighten the drama, Hemingway makes the return to the "good country" a solitary venture. It becomes more evocative of the traditional perilous journey or quest and appears more dangerous, difficult, and significant when undergone in isolation: "Nick did not like to fish with other men. Unless they were of your party, they spoiled it" (NAS 192).

When alone in "the good place," Nick's intimate, almost spiritual relationship with nature ("Already there was something mysterious and homelike" NAS 183) is not disturbed or distracted by other characters: "He was settled. Nothing could touch him" (NAS 184), except nature:

> Nick reached down his hand to touch him, his arm to the elbow underwater. The trout was steady in

> the moving stream, resting on the gravel, beside a stone. As Nick's fingers touched him, touched his smooth, cool, underwater feeling, he was gone, gone in a shadow across the bottom of the stream.
>
> He's all right, Nick thought. He was only tired.
>
> He had wet his hand before he touched the trout, so he would not disturb the delicate mucus that covered him. If a trout was touched with a dry hand, a white fungus attacked the unprotected spot. (NAS 191-92)

Within the preceding paragraph we are told that Nick moistened his hand before removing the hook, and yet the narrator repeats that Nick "had wet his hand before he touched the trout" (my emphasis). His sensitivity and need to protect is emphasized. Like the body of the trout, his postwar condition is a delicate and fragile one. In fact, he is explicitly connected with the environment in which he enters, views and constructs, just as the old man in The Old Man and the Sea becomes one with the marlin. As soon as the trout "tightened, facing up into the current[,] Nick's heart tightened as the trout moved. He felt all the old feeling" (NAS 178). He talks to the grasshoppers (NAS 180) and falls in line with their movements: before his first fishing attempt, "The grasshopper took hold of the hook with his front feet, spitting tobacco juice on it" (NAS 191); later, Nick takes hold of the hook and spits on it and the hopper for good luck (NAS 192).

Such controlled repetition plays an important part in the prose of "Big Two-Hearted River." Nick's repetitive, ritualistic movements are supported by the mythic, perilous

journey frame; together the mythic and ritualistic dimensions reinforce the fictionality of the story. By establishing some fundamental literary experience, like the perilous journey archetype, the story achieves a literary currency that can not be dated. Hemingway desired to achieve a dimension of timelessness, to create a work "which would be valid in a year, or with luck and if you stated it purely enough, always ..." (DIA 2). The familiar traditional quest, just like the folk epic, the fable and the fairytale, is beyond fashion and beyond reality; it is part of a mythic ideal.

The notion of "Big Two-Hearted River" as pure artistry is reinforced by the short story, "Now I Lay Me," where the act of fishing becomes a fiction within a fiction and is never even alluded to as reality. The river Nick returns to in "Big Two-Hearted River" parallels the one he admittedly invents in "Now I Lay Me":

> Some nights, too, I made up streams, and some of them were very exciting, and it was like being awake and dreaming. Some of those streams I still remember and think that I have fished in them, and they are confused with streams I really know. I gave them all names and went to them on the train and sometimes walked for miles to get to them. (NAS 146)

Hemingway sought more than a "true simple declarative sentence" (DIA 2). Under his reformed literary philosophy he intended to take reality and reconstruct it:

> you make something through your invention that is not a representation but a whole new thing truer than anything true and alive, and you make it

> alive, and if you make it well enough, you give it immortality. (PR 239)

His concern was not with "the element of timeliness which gives certain emotion" (DIA 2) that he found in journalistic reporting. Gertrude Stein once pointed out that "remarks are not literature" (207). Remarks were left for the journalists who report upon isolated, temporal experiences. Hemingway's interest was in timelessness and "the real thing, the sequence of motion and fact which made the emotion" (DIA 2). In other words, the reader is not told the emotion; rather, through the recreation that is fiction she or he experiences it.

Following the archetypal pattern of the perilous journey, the hero is on his own, communing only with nature and himself. Most of the narrative is in third person, but at any point "he" or "Nick" could be transposed to "I" without altering the effect of the text. As Nick's focus becomes more intense the objective narrative becomes even more personal and conversational. The third person narration eventually progresses to first person:

> He'd bet the trout was angry. Anything that size would be angry. That was a trout. He had been solidly hooked. Solid as a rock. He felt like a rock, too, before he started off. By God, he was a big one. By God, he was the biggest one I ever heard of. (NAS 194)

and frequently incorporates second person:

> Of course, you could fish upstream, but in a stream like the Black, or this, you had to wallow against the current and in a deep place, the

> water piled up on you. It was no fun to fish upstream with this much current. (NAS 196)

On a realistic level, we know since he is physically alone that he must be talking to himself. And yet, as the mythic and highly structured quality of the story reminds us, this is a work of literature which after all has been created for a reader. The journey as a fictional literary journey is not one of complete isolation, but is a joint venture with a reader. The story has been written to be read. Thus, Nick on a fictional level directly talks to "you," the reader. The fictional text includes the reader as a member of Nick's fishing "party," and the story becomes a monologue delivered by Nick to the reader.

As the story progresses, the reader becomes even more than a member of Nick's fishing party. The narrative is such that the reader has stepped into the hero's skin. All information within the story is delivered via Nick through Nick's eyes: "Nick looked" and "Nick watched" and "Nick sees" are repeated constantly with the effect that the reader is always vicariously seeing and experiencing what Nick sees and experiences. "He turned and looked" (NAS 178) so in reading, the reader turns and looks; "Nick followed it with his eyes" (NAS 179) so the reader must follow suit. Authorial commentary, exposition and explanation of motivation are eliminated and replaced by the dramatic and structured presentation of sensory life. The emphasis is on "showing" rather than "telling"--the

story is mimetic rather than diegetic. It is not delivered but experienced so that as Hemingway said, "it will become a part of his or her [the reader's] experience and seem actually to have happened" (PR 236). The narrative invites the reader to participate in the action, to react to the environment and to be a part of nature as if she or he were Nick. And yet, since the reader remains aware of the story's deliberate constructedness, it paradoxically forces the reader to remain at a distance and to read with a certain detachment.

Nick comes to terms with his world not through personal commentary, but through structured epiphanies. He tries to avoid discursive thinking: "He felt he had left everything behind, the need for thinking, the need to write, other needs. It was all back of him" (NAS 179). He simply wants to make his camp and land his trout, difficult and challenging feats but, like writing, rewarding and enjoyable: "It was hard work walking uphill. His muscles ached and the day was hot, but Nick felt happy" (NAS 179). In turn, the reader understands the story better not through the author's or character's exposition, but through the controlled experience of Nick's compounding epiphanies:

> "Chrise," Nick said, "Geezus Chrise," he said happily.... It had been a very fine experience. He had been that hungry before, but had not been able to satisfy it.... There were plenty of good places to camp on the river. But this was good. (NAS 185)

The tension mounts, and Nick is ready to burst with suspense as he nears his goal:

> Nick was excited. He was excited by the early morning and the river. He was really too hurried to eat breakfast, but he knew he must. (NAS 188)

He loses the large trout when "the strain was too great" (NAS 193) and the excitement too much:

> Nick's hand was shaky. He reeled in slowly. The thrill had been too much. He felt, vaguely, a little sick, as though it would be better to sit down. (NAS 193)

There is a need to be calm and restrained in order to be creative and productive in fishing as in writing: "He did not want to rush his sensations any" (NAS 194).

As a result, Nick is obsessively precise and deliberate in his camping and fishing. Only with precision and confidence can he gain control of his senses and hook "one good trout." His need to detail, to limit and to structure experience reflects his need to organize his inner faculties and to preserve his sanity. He senses his limitations and saves traveling to the swamp where "fishing was a tragic adventure" (NAS 198). Much has been written about the suppressed tension of "Big Two-Hearted River," especially around the image of the swamp. Bernard Oldsey observes that Nick is "perfectly at ease, until he notices how the river narrows and enters a swamp" (220). Carl Ficken adds that the narrative perspective "becomes most complex as the story draws to a close, as Nick comes closer to the swamp" (106). Many critics see the swamp as a

threatening, tragic force to be avoided. Philip Young argues that the swamp is where "the river narrows" which may remind Nick of the different width of the river at Fossalta ("'Big World Out There': NAS" 39). Jackson Benson even identifies the swamp as an emasculating "female swamp" in contrast to the "male trout" (300-301). In a more positive sense, B.J. Smith regards the swamp as "the ultimate test for the mature artist,... a vision captured by the artist at the height of his skills" (31), an inevitability. Although Nick presently fears these waters, in "On Writing" he wonders how "Cezanne would do this stretch of river and the swamp" (NAS 240). Charles and A.C. Hoffman write that it is through real and symbolic action "that Nick can achieve the needed ... control to hold his own ... and face the more dangerous, treacherous cross-currents of the swamp" (106). It is left for another time when he would be more experienced and secure in his skills: "There were plenty of days coming when he could fish the swamp" (NAS 199).

The author, too, is exact and precise in his narration in order that he may gain control of his text. The author's new artistic perception would require the unhurried, finely ordered deliberateness of his journey back to the river. Hemingway wrote in retrospect:

> The modern novelist ... must have sound judgement and an accurate sense of proportion to select and reject among ponderous masses of material, and to

> arrange all with due subordination of parts and with a true perspective. (qtd in Wagner 54)

In the case of "Big Two-Hearted River," Hemingway elevates the "trivial" and disregards the "essential." He may be exact in drawing mundane events; and yet, he is at the same time vague in supplying a specific time and place within the story. In both his precision and his ambiguity, in both his realism and abstraction, the result is the same: the reader is drawn into the text. While the precise, immediate descriptions cause the reader to feel as if she or he is actually experiencing the events, the omitted boundaries of context, time and setting encourage the reader to participate actively in the story-making process.

In Green Hills of Africa Hemingway writes that "There is a fourth and fifth dimension that can be gotten" (33). Such dimension reaches beyond the story itself to include other stories, other texts, and even the reader. What makes "Big Two-Hearted River" so impressive is its deliberate correspondence with the reader, a correspondence without narrative commentary and with structuralist discourse. The author continually surrounds Nick with sensory objects which the reader sees only through Nick's eyes. Nick needs to gain control of his thoughts, and so narrows his field of vision to the immediate play of fishing and camping. Consequently, the reason for his exploration is never fully revealed. He "chokes off" (NAS 187) confusing memories and concentrates on his present

activities. Attention is focused on how Nick constructs his camp, not so much what is constructed or why. The reader experiences everything that Nick experiences, and from this experience must fill in the blanks and finish the text.

"On Writing" provides an interesting contrast to "Big Two-Hearted River." It almost seems remarkable that these two works originally made up a single story. At times the style, the tone and the emphasis are radically different between the two pieces. Critics tend to agree that the inclusion of "On Writing" as part of "Big Two-Hearted River" would have detracted from the point of "Big Two-Hearted River" as direct, impersonal and resigned.

In the original conclusion, Nick's fishing attempts are overshadowed by his stream-of-consciousness. The story turns from a presentational account to a discursive one. Nick loses his hold on his thoughts, and the text becomes overwhelmed with his memories. Recollections of fishing lead to thoughts of books which progress to memories of friends:

> It was no fun to fish upstream although all the books said it was the only way. All the books. He and Bill had fun with the books in the old days. (NAS 233)

In turn, "the old days" naturally bring to mind a multitude of memories from Bill to Paris to Ezra Pound. The associative workings of the mind are suggested here as

Nick's seemingly discordant thoughts are connected by single words:

> That was good for a laugh. There were so many things good for a laugh. In the States they thought bullfighting was a joke. Ezra thought fishing was a joke. Lots of people think poetry is a joke. Englishmen are a joke. (NAS 234, my emphasis).

Even a name has a variety of random and temporal associations:

> Bill's dentist is as bad the other way about fishing. Bill Bird, that is. Once Bill meant Bill Smith. Now it means Bill Bird. Bill Bird was in Paris now. (NAS 234)

We read, "Remember when" (NAS 234) and the text maintains a personal, conversational tone. The names and events mentioned are exceedingly personal to the narrator and blatantly reflect the author's own life. In fact, only two individuals, Ernest Hemingway and Hadley Richardson, are disguised in the story. They are referred to as Nick and Helen in order to be consistent with the other Nick stories. Otherwise, Bill Smith, Kate, the Ghee, Ezra, Joyce, Cezanne, Sherwood Anderson, Gertrude Stein and Cummings obviously point to actual people. Walloon Lake, Horton's Creek, Daedalus, Bloom, Ulysses, The Enormous Room and "My Old Man" similarly refer to actual places, stories, books and characters within books. Ultimately, the emergence of highly private and random associations blunt the universal, ideal, timeless effect of "Big Two-Hearted River." For "Big Two-Hearted River," the reader may match

Nick and the journey with some general type and pattern. On the other hand, the recalled experiences in "On Writing" are far from universal and far from ageless. The specific characters and specific events are exclusive to a certain time and a certain place. Within "On Writing," then, the timeless, mythical frame is complicated by a limited, historical one. The provisional construct of Nick's journey occurs in the realm of fiction for the reader now; while the historical frame alienates the reader from the events which occurred then.

"On Writing" is complicated further by a narrator who is aware of Nick's existence in and out of the fiction, who both associates and dissociates Nick with the text: "Nick in the story was never himself" (NAS 238). The Nick within the fiction is different from the one outside the fiction, situated within the context of fiction as opposed to the context of the real world. "He made him up" (NAS 238). Since "he" and "him" refer to Nick, Nick made himself up. The real world Nick is transformed into a fictional Nick. Nevertheless, we know that both Nicks are, in fact, fictional characters created by the actual author: Hemingway creates Nick who creates Nick. Within the other Nick stories the process is less recursive: Hemingway creates Nick. The references are more autobiographical within "On Writing," and yet Hemingway has distanced himself further from the text. He tries to explain his

personal writing techniques and influences within the context of fiction and through his fictional characters. He tries to practice his theories while discussing them.

Nick remembers, and his thoughts become progressively discursive. Recollections of fellow writers lead to his theory of writing; thoughts of Helen lead to thoughts of marriage; memories of fishing bring about his philosophy of fishing. Indeed, the Nick Adams stories in general embrace and build upon these issues of fishing, marriage and writing. Among the stories, Nick is frequently seen fishing; he is married or often observes the interaction of married couples; he is also a writer or has the potential to be a writer--he reads and is a keen observer of events--and, of course, the stories themselves exhibit a structure and a writing technique.

In "On Writing" fishing, marriage and writing are no longer dramatized in this manner. Nick's understanding of these issues is no longer subtly suggested. They do not evolve as the story progresses. Nick directly discusses these topics and gives his personal opinions. Among other things, he remarks: "It was no fun to fish upstream...." (NAS 233); "he admitted by marrying that something was more important than the fishing" (NAS 234); "You had this fake ideal planted in you and then you lived your life to it" (NAS 235); "The movies ruined everything" (NAS 237); "He wanted to be a great writer" (NAS 238); "Cezanne could do

people, too. But that was easier...." (NAS 240). Nick delivers these blanket statements without argument, that is, the story, to support them. The reader does not actively experience the text. It is no longer a living, dramatic presence. The story consists of dead, timely opinions. Hemingway ironically explains: "Talking about anything was bad. Writing about anything actual was bad. It always killed it" (NAS 237). Rather than a building up of forms and images to create the fictional body, we have a dissection or a breaking down of ideas that is analysis and commentary.

Eventually, just as Nick loses control of his thoughts in the "On Writing" segment, Hemingway loses the hold on his fiction. He must remind himself and the reader of the fictional context in which he writes by emphasizing Nick's presence. Rather than writing "He ...," the author writes, twice, "He, Nick ..." (NAS 238,239) to ensure that there is no confusion between Nick and the author. Hemingway tries to stress that this is a fictional story about Nick, not a theoretical essay by Hemingway. This mix of fictional and real-life contexts becomes ever problematic for the author. The story becomes increasingly self-reflexive, increasingly recursive and increasingly ironic. After his discussion of Cezanne, we see Nick trying to capture and write about the scene he is writing about:

> Nick, seeing how Cezanne would do the stretch of river and the swamp, stood up and stepped down

> into the stream. The water was cold and actual. He waded across the stream, moving in the picture. (NAS 240)

The water is "actual," but the stream is a "picture," a reproduction, fiction. We watch Nick transcribe the real world into fiction and place himself, "moving," within the reproduction. Still, the "actual" water is not actual, but has been created by the actual author. Hemingway creates Nick creating.

It is made increasingly clear that everything that is happening, or that is about to happen, has already happened. Nick wants "to get back to camp and get to work" (NAS 240). The return back signifies the end of the journey and the end of the story. And yet, he wants to "get to work" on the story that has just been written. The end points to the beginning, and so the story denies closure. It is always yet to be written, and already has been written. The future becomes the past, and the past will be the future. The story becomes entrapped in a system of endless circularity. The cycle is never complete and never can be complete.

The word "hold" or "holding" is repeated continually in the final scenes. There appears a need for the author to regain his "hold" on the story and to find some sort of closure. "He was in a hurry and the rod bothered him" (NAS 240), but finally he is able to hold the rod--a symbol of the fictional world--"out before him" (NAS 240). He is in

control of his art. The line is repeated twice: "He was holding something in his head" (NAS 240,241, my emphasis). He is no longer caught up in his recursive and discursive memories: "He was not thinking" (NAS 240), but becomes involved in the immediate activity of saving a rabbit. There is a play with the word "ticks" here. Nick removes the "ticks" from the rabbit (NAS 241), just as Cezanne had removed the "tricks" from his painting (NAS 239).

Within "On Writing" Nick remarks that "Cezanne started with all the tricks. Then he broke the whole thing down and built the real thing. It was hell to do" (NAS 239, my emphasis). The comment suggests that starting "with all the tricks" is a necessary part of the creative process. Thus, the writing and the excision of the "On Writing" segment with its "tricks," its emotional adjectives and temporal opinions, can be viewed as a positive, creative act. Hemingway began with the "On Writing" segment and "broke the whole thing down;" he revised and edited the piece. He took out himself, his personal views and experiences, and produced the final version of "Big Two-Hearted River." Within the editing process, the excluded segment turns into the unmentioned "negative space," the omitted portion, which "would strengthen the story and make people feel something more than they

understood" (AMF 75); the piece is no longer explanatory, but evocative and suggestive.

Hemingway not only eliminates Nick's interior monologue but also the final two scenes where Nick sees how Cezanne would do the country and where he frees the rabbit from ticks. He avoids the complex mingling of actuality and imagination. The focus remains exclusively on Nick's fishing failures and successes and the return to the camp. In the final version of "Big Two-Hearted River," Nick assumes the role of the reader at the end. He does not want to "get to work" (NAS 240); instead, "He felt like reading" (NAS 198). Thus, the writer/creator and the reader share like vantage points. Their roles and characteristics are confused. As in other Nick stories, it is suggested that the creation of the story has been a joint venture. Nick as a creator becomes a reader, and the reader, by implication, becomes a creator.

Conclusion

Philip Young wrote that for twenty-five years readers never really understood "Big Two-Hearted River" (Ernest Hemingway: A Reconsideration 43). F. Scott Fitzgerald admired it, but was puzzled. He considered it a "simple" story and "nothing more" (Sojka 85). Readers, like Fitzgerald, allowed their preconceptions of Hemingway as a conventionally realistic writer to confine their reading to the surface action. In realist writing, the reader formulates an interpretation by referring the words of the text to objects in the real world. In order to construct a more complete "meaning" it is necessary to follow the sequences of verbal relationships, cross references and repetitions of images which exist in addition to the narrative codes of causality. Patricia Waugh writes that "the more a story insists on its linguistic condition, the further it is removed from the everyday context of 'common sense' invoked by realistic fiction" (100). Readers anticipating a realistic narrative were therefore confused by the story's insistence on its unconventional and highly structured condition. Hemingway's extreme interest in the artwork of Cezanne reflects his concern for and awareness of the interdependence of images. Attention was focused on the relationships among images and words.

Linda Hutcheon writes in her book The Narcissistic Narrative that the writing of fiction about fiction "began to run rampant in the 1960's" (1) and that "in the criticism of the seventies, the term 'postmodernism' began to appear to refer to contemporary self-conscious texts" (2). And yet, in the early 1920's, the great modernist, Hemingway was displaying features of postmodernism within his stories. Interestingly, it is within his posthumously published work, "On Writing," where his writing appears most contemporary or postmodern: the visibly inventing narrator ("Nick, seeing how Cezanne would do the stretch of river and the swamp, stood up and stepped down into the stream"), the dehumanization of character ("Nick in the story was never himself"), infinite regress (Hemingway creates Nick who creates Nick), and critical discussion of story within ("writing about anything actual was bad"), are some characteristics of postmodernism as defined by Patricia Waugh (22). Even outside of the deleted segment, Hemingway's stories frustrate real-text, modernist expectations; they exhibit postmodernist characteristics by including ambiguous characters, like Nick in "The Doctor and the Doctor's Wife," and by subtly foregrounding the complex interaction and communication between writer and reader.

Frank Kermode writes that no consumption "can be wholly passive, no production wholly active" (112).

Hemingway's Nick Adams stories demonstrate that the construction of the story is a reciprocal activity between the writer and the reader. All texts make demands upon the reader. The author writes for an audience who will respond to and therefore add to the text. In the case of Hemingway, his stories allegorize or highlight their own fictional designs. Commentary along with other basic narrative features is deliberately excluded in order that the reader may fill in the spaces. The open-endedness of the Nick stories stimulates the reader into completing the text. The reader, like Mrs. Adams and Marjorie, brings to the text additional or different knowledge. Interpretations vary as people vary. The reader creates meaning, and yet this creation is regulated by the story's structure. The text builds upon patterns which guide the reader's response. The author makes suggestions, and the reader makes complete.

Notes

[1] No doubt, several of Hemingway's contemporaries had an influence on the development of his prose style. Critics immediately spotted one of his earliest stories, "My Old Man" as an Anderson imitation (Benson 280). While in Chicago, Hemingway was influenced by Sherwood Anderson's selection of real world themes, subject matter and setting. Ezra Pound furthered Hemingway's realistic narrative by convincing him to "distrust adjectives" (AMF 135). Harold Hurwitz concludes that Pound's influence is most apparent in Hemingway's "early work, which he helped to make tighter and sharper ... by eliminating superfluous adjectives and adverbs and by tutoring him in the techniques of economy and precision". Gertrude Stein, on her part, taught Hemingway about what he called "the abstract relationship of words" (qtd. in Hoffman 100). For Stein, the relationship of words on a page is as significant in creating meaning as a word's individual definition. She encouraged him to replace his "remarks" (Stein 207), or journalistic reportage, with natural speech inflections and repetitions of words in order to stimulate more effectively a sense of immediacy. Charles Fenton uses the example of "Up in Michigan" to discuss Stein's influence on Hemingway's fiction:

> "Liz liked Jim very much." Here, in the lead sentence, it says no more than one says casually about a dozen people each day. Then, by repetition, Hemingway strengthened and qualified it. He showed the variety and sensation of her liking. He displayed its immediacy. This was the quality Gertrude Stein had attempted to involve in The Making of Americans. (213)

[2] Hemingway would continue to make much of writing as Cezanne painted as if he were the originator of the idea. In actuality, the concept came from Gertrude Stein. She repeatedly said, she had learned about writing from a Cezanne which she acquired in 1905, and that by looking at it was inspired to write Three Lives (Hagemann 90). Just as Cezanne struggled with the juxtaposition of objects in space within his paintings, Stein in effect struggled with the juxtaposition of words and sentences on the blank page.

During the "Paris years," it was not untypical for writers to draw from experiments in music, painting and sculpture. Emily Watts writes:

> In Paris of the last generation, creative minds in all areas of art met and exchanged ideas; all of art participated, or at least aspired to participate so to speak, in a single art. It was

> a time when poets became librettists, painters became poets, musicians became painters.... Articles concerning music, the pictorial arts, and literature appeared in the same periodicals ... and these were read by writers, painters, and musicians. (3-4)

[3] More often than not, the various Hemingway heroes and Hemingway himself have the same wounds, the same experiences, and the same likes and dislikes. Nick Adams, Jake Barnes of The Sun Also Rises, and Frederic Henry of A Farewell to Arms write, or have written, for a living. Nick and Jake like to fish, as does the author. Hemingway's identification with Jake is confirmed in the early manuscripts of The Sun Also Rises where "Hem" is used instead of "Jake" (Benson 290). The author's other nickname "Wemedge" also surfaces in the Nick stories, "The Three-Day Blow" and "Summer People." Also, just as Hemingway is said to have suffered long nights of insomnia after he returned from the war, so his heroes are inflicted by sleeplessness: Nick in "Now I Lay Me" is kept awake by thoughts of his childhood; Jake Barnes lies awake recalling his hospitalization in Milan; and Frederic Henry dreaming of Catherine is troubled by a broken sleep. In addition, Nick's friend and advisor Bill in "The End of Something" and "The Three-Day Blow" becomes Jake's old friend, Bill Gorton, in The Sun Also Rises. These two fictional Bills have been identified as the real-life Bill Smith, Hemingway's close friend and best man at his first wedding (J. Smith 144). Similarly, Leicester Hemingway disclosed that both Billy Tabeshaw and Dick Boulton of "The Doctor and the Doctor's Wife" were actual men put into fiction under their given names (S. Baker 29). At some point or other, Nick, Jake, Frederic and Hemingway each falls in love with an older woman, a nurse, who cares or has once cared for him during the war. In each case, the love affair somehow fails with the end of the war: Agnes von Kurowsky does not follow Hemingway back to the States to marry him; Luz jilts the unnamed soldier, who could be Nick Adams, in "A Very Short Story"; Jake Barnes and Lady Brett Ashley would have been unable to have a normal marriage because of his sexual wound; and Catherine Barkley dies in childbirth before she and Frederic Henry can be married. In short, the associations among these Hemingway texts are numerous.

[4] It should be noted that my evaluation of the Hemingway hero is opposed to Philip Young's articulation of the Hemingway hero. Whereas Young identifies the Hemingway hero as "too tortured, too thoughtful, too possessed" (Ernest Hemingway: A Reconsideration 68) and too weak to face life, I focus on a pattern of awareness and insight

which shows the hero confronting the situation. Nor is my description of the hero like Young's "code hero." According to Young such code heroes as the prizefighter, the gambler and the professional hunter follow a code of behavior which provides strength and control needed to get through life. My reading of such Hemingway heroes as Nick Adams and Frederick Henry is more in line with Bhim Dahiya's analysis. This Hemingway hero is an artist who is able to reconstruct and therefore control what is going on around him.

[5] The image of the house had special associations for Hemingway that carried over into his fiction. Within the Hemingway household it was his mother who not only designed, but financed the building of various homes occupied by the family. Hemingway's recollection of his mother's housecleaning, of "those jars from the attic being thrown in the fire and how they popped in the heat and ... the snakes burning" (C. Baker 7) is reproduced as Nick's earliest memory in "Now I Lay Me" (NAS 146). The house in that story, like the one in "The Doctor and the Doctor's Wife," is a place organized, controlled and dominated by a woman; and it is a place where Nick witnesses the emasculation of his father by his mother. In "A Way You'll Never Be" the image of the "low house painted yellow" (NAS 161) becomes a recurring image which Nick fears but cannot forget. It is associated with the traumatic scene of his wounding as well as the assertion of women.

It should also be noted, however, that Hemingway brings the feminine softening effect to his second collection of short stories, Men Without Women. Stories such as "Hills Like White Elephants" explicitly sympathize and defend a condition of women.

[6] Hemingway's remark that the story was based on an actual incident "about the time he discovered that his father was a coward" (Young 38) has undoubtedly contributed to critics' frequent condemnation of Dr. Adams. However, Baker's biography suggests that Hemingway's feeling of antipathy toward his father developed after the story was written. It should also be noted that Dr. Hemingway, who for the most part "would not tolerate such filth in his home," is said to have particularly liked this piece (Young 38). The final words of the story suggest forgiveness and sharing between father and son.

[7] Nick's attitude is supported by Hemingway's similar fears and concerns as a young, married, budding author in Paris. In The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas, Hemingway's bitterness is noted. After having spent the day discussing literature with Gertrude Stein "all of a sudden he announced that his wife was enceinte and then

with great bitterness, and I, I am too young to be a father" (201). Marriage involved commitment, family and interference with his career as a writer.

Works Cited

Atkins, John. The Art of Ernest Hemingway: His Work and Personality. 1964 ed. London: Spring, 1952.

Baker, Carlos. Hemingway: A Life Story. New York: Scribner, 1969.

Baker, Carlos. Ernest Hemingway: Selected Letters, 1927-1961. New York: Scribner, 1981.

Baker, Sheridan. Ernest Hemingway. New York: Holt, 1967.

Barth, John. The End of the Road. New York: Doubleday, 1967.

Benson, Jackson J. Introduction. The Short Stories of Ernest Hemingway: Critical Essays. Ed. Jackson J. Benson. Durham: Duke UP, 1975. xi-xv.

Benson, Jackson J. Overview. "Ernest Hemingway as Short Story Writer." The Short Stories of Ernest Hemingway: Critical Essays. Ed. Jackson J. Benson. Durham: Duke UP, 1975. 272-310.

Chipp, Herschel B. Theories of Modern Art. Berkeley: U of California P, 1968.

Dahiya, Dr. Bhim S. "Serving Humanity: Frederick Henry." The Hero in Hemingway: A Study of Development. Chandigarh, India: Bahri, 1978. 47-71.

de la Crois, Horst and Richard G. Tansey. Gardner's Art Through the Ages. 5th ed. New York: Harcourt, 1970.

Dodd, Lee Wilson. "Simple Annals of the Callous." Rev. of Men Without Women, by Ernest Hemingway. Saturday Review of Literature 19 Nov. 1927: 322-23.

Fenton, Charles. The Apprenticeship of Ernest Hemingway: The Early Years. New York: Farrar, 1954.

Ficken, Carl. "Point of View in the Nick Adams Stories." The Short Stories of Ernest Hemingway: Critical Essays. Ed. Jackson J. Benson. Durham: Duke UP, 1975. 93-112.

Flora, Joseph M. Introduction. Hemingway's Nick Adams. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State UP, 1982. 1-17.

Fowler, Roger. "Realism." A Dictionary of Modern Critical Terms. London: Routledge, 1987.

Fowles, John. The French Lieutenant's Woman. Boston: Little, 1969.

Hagemann, Meyl Chin. "Hemingway's Secret: Visual to Verbal Art." Journal of Modern Literature Feb. 1979: 87-112.

Hemingway, Ernest. Death in the Afternoon. New York: Scribner, 1932.

Hemingway, Ernest. "Ernest Hemingway." With George Plimpton. Writers at Work, The Paris Review Interviews. The Paris Review 2. New York: Viking, 1963. 215-239.

Hemingway, Ernest. "The Art of the Short Story." The Paris Review 23.79 (1981): 85-102.

Hemingway, Ernest. A Farewell to Arms. New York: Scribner, 1929.

Hemingway, Ernest. In Our Time. 1925. New York: Scribner, 1970.

Hemingway, Ernest. Men Without Women. New York: Scribner, 1927.

Hemingway, Ernest. A Moveable Feast. New York: Scribner, 1964.

Hemingway, Ernest. The Nick Adams Stories. New York: Bantam, 1972.

Hemingway, Ernest. The Old Man and the Sea. New York: Scribner, 1953.

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

Hoffman, Charles G. and A. C. Hoffman. "'The Truest Sentence': Words as Equivalents of Time And Place in In Our Time." Hemingway: A Revaluation. Ed. Donald R. Noble. Troy: Whitston, 1983. 101-113.

Hurwitz, Harold. "Hemingway's Tutor Ezra Pound." Modern Fictional Studies 17.4 (1971-72): 476.

Hutcheon, Linda. Narcissistic Narrative: The Metafictional Paradox. Waterloo: Wilfred Laurier UP, 1980.

Hutchinson, Percy. "Mr. Hemingway Shows Himself a Master Craftsman in the Short Story." Rev. of Men Without Women, by Ernest Hemingway. New York Herald Tribune:

Books 16 Oct. 1927: 9,27.

Iser, Wolfgang. "Interaction between Text and Reader." The Reader in the Text: Essays on Audience and Interpretation. Ed. Susan R. Suleiman and Inge Crosman. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1980. 106-110.

"K.J." Rev. of Three Stories and Ten Poems, by Ernest Hemingway. Transatlantic Review Apr. 1924: 246.

Kermode, Frank. "Recognition and Deception." Essays on Fiction, 1971-82. London: Routledge, 1983. 92-113.

Killinger, John. Hemingway and the Dead Gods. Lexington: U of Kentucky P, 1960.

Lessing, Doris. The Golden Notebook. 1972 ed. London: Joseph, 1962.

Meyers, Jeffrey. Hemingway: A Biography. New York: Harper, 1985.

Montgomery, Constance Cappel. Hemingway in Michigan. New York: Fleet, 1966.

Nahal, Chaman. Narrative Pattern in Ernest Hemingway's Fiction. Rutherford: Farleigh Dickinson UP, 1971.

Oldsey, Bernard. "Hemingway's Beginnings and Endings." College Literature 7.3 (1980): 213-38.

Pound, Ezra. The Cantos of Ezra Pound London: Faber, 1954.

"Preludes to a Mood." Rev. of In Our Time, by Ernest Hemingway. New York Times Book Review 18 Oct. 1925: 8.

Reynolds, Michael. The Young Hemingway. New York: Blackwel, 1986.

Ross, Lillian. Portrait of Hemingway. New York: Simon, 1961.

Rotham, N. L. "Hemingway Whistles in the Dark." Rev. of Men Without Women, by Ernest Hemingway. Dial Apr. 1928: 336-38.

Rovit, Earl and Gerry Brenner. Ernest Hemingway. Rev. ed. Boston: Twayne, 1986.

Scholes, Robert. "Decoding Papa: 'A Very Short Story' as

Work and Text." Semiotics and Interpretation. New Haven: Yale UP, 1982.

Smith, B. J. "'Big Two-Hearted River:' The Artist and the Art." Studies in Short Fiction: Notes 20.2-3 (1983): 129-32.

Smith, Julian. "Hemingway and the Thing Left Out." The Short Stories of Ernest Hemingway: Critical Essays. Ed. Jackson J. Benson. Durham, Duke UP. 1975. 135-47.

Smith, Paul. "Hemingway's Early Manuscripts: The Theory and Practice of Omission." Journal of Modern Literature June 1983: 268-88.

Sojka, Gregory S. Ernest Hemingway: The Angler as Artist. New York: Lang, 1985.

Stein, Gertrude. The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas. London: Bodley, 1933.

Wagner, Linda Welshimer. "The Development of Craft." Hemingway and Faulkner: inventors,masters. Metuchen: Scarecrow, 1975. 52-71.

Watts, Emily Stripes. Ernest Hemingway and the Arts. Urbana: U of Illinois P, 1971.

Waugh, Patricia. Metafiction: The Theory and Practice of Self-Conscious Fiction. London: Methuen, 1984.

Weekes, Robert Percy. Introduction. Hemingway: a Collection of Critical Essays. Ed. Robert P. Weekes. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice, 1962.

Wilson, Edmund. "Mr. Hemingway's Dry-Points." Rev. of Three Stories and Ten Poems and in our time, by Ernest Hemingway. Dial Oct. 1924: 340-41.

Young, Philip. "'Big World Out There': The Nick Adams Stories." The Short Stories of Ernest Hemingway: Critical Essays. Ed. Jackson J. Benson. Durham: Duke UP, 1975. 29-45.

Young, Philip. Ernest Hemingway: A Reconsideration. Pittsburgh: Pennsylvania State UP, 1966.

VITA

Surname: Narbeshuber Given Names: Lisa
Place of Birth: Greenwich, Conn. Date of Birth: 4 April 1962

Educational Institutions Attended, with Dates of Entering and Leaving:

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO, ON.	1981 TO 1985
UNIVERSITY OF VICTORIA, B.C.	1986 TO 1988

Degrees, Diplomas, Etc., Awarded, with Dates and Names of Institutions:

B.A.	1985	UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

PARTIAL COPYRIGHT LICENSE

I hereby grant the right to lend my thesis (the title of which is shown below) to users of the University of Victoria Library, and to make single copies only for such users or in response to a request from the Library of any other university, or similar institution, on its behalf or for one of its users. I further agree that permission for extensive copying of this thesis for scholarly purposes may be granted by me or a member of the University designated by me. It is understood that copying or publication of this thesis for financial gain shall not be allowed without my written permission.

Title of Thesis:

Foregrounding Technique in Hemingway's Fiction: Structural Readings of Five Nick Adams Stories

Author 

LISA NARBESHUBER

5 APRIL 1988