Hemingway's THE GARDEN OF EDEN

Twenty-five Years of Criticism

EDITED BY

Suzanne del Gizzo & Frederic J. Svoboda

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Introduction

When *The Garden of Eden* appeared in 1986, roughly twenty-five years after Ernest Hemingway's death, posthumous publication of Hemingway writing was not a new thing. Scholars and the public already had seen works including *A Moveable Feast* (1964), acclaimed as a near-classic examination of the author's apprenticeship and first marriage in 1920s Paris; *Islands in the Stream* (1970), a not-quite-finished novel of World War II in Cuba that began very well but tailed off to the level of a book for boys; *The Nick Adams Stories* (1972), a compilation of previously published and unpublished stories focusing on Hemingway's most nearly autobiographical character; and *The Dangerous Summer* (1985), a bullfighting epic that had been radically edited down to become a series of three 1960 articles in *Life* magazine. These publications, though welcome and significant events, largely confirmed existing public and scholarly understandings of Hemingway as a writer deeply invested in masculinity, masculine pastimes, and a taut style characterized by authorial control. *The Garden of Eden,* however, was something different. Its publication was a watershed event that transformed Hemingway scholarship and forever changed thoughtful readers' perceptions of the author.

Like several of the works listed above, *The Garden of Eden* was not completed at Hemingway's death. Critical consensus is that he worked on it sporadically from 1946 until his suicide in 1961 (see John Leonard's "*The Garden of Eden:* A Question of Dates"), producing a sizable manuscript that runs more than 200,000 words. A daunting mixture of holograph and typescript pages with abundant notations and marginalia, the manuscript features five main characters participating in several interrelated plotlines but without a completely realized ending. After Hemingway's death, several scholars and editors attempted to prepare the manuscript for publication, including Malcolm Cowley and Charles Scribner Jr., all of whom failed (see K. J. Peters's "The Thematic Integrity of *The*

Garden of Eden"). It was not until a young editor, Tom Jenks, joined Scribners in 1985 that the task was finally accomplished. A reluctant recruit, Jenks turned down the project twice before tackling it. The result is the only published version of the manuscript, a trade book version of *The Garden of Eden* published by Scribners that runs approximately 70,000 words.

In subject matter, *The Garden of Eden* is most like *A Moveable Feast*. The novel tracks the young protagonist David Bourne, a rising young writer of fiction, and his highly intelligent but artistically frustrated wife, Catherine, beginning in spring on their honeymoon and ending that autumn. However, *The Garden of Eden* proves to be a darker and more troubling book in which Hemingway conflates aspects of all four of his marriages with material related to the life of Zelda Fitzgerald in an examination of sex and gender roles, insanity, the burdens of family, and the privileges and costs of authorship.

These themes are explored through seemingly superficial repetitive details such as the characters' compulsive suntanning, their erotic fascination with dressing alike, and their desire to have progressively more similar haircuts (and eventually hair color). This material echoes common elements of 1920s expatriate culture and reprises elements seen but not emphasized in Hemingway's other works, including *The Sun Also Rises* (1926), *A Farewell to Arms* (1929), and *For Whom the Bell Tolls* (1940), among others. *The Garden of Eden,* however, is far more overt in linking these activities to unorthodox sexual and gender roles, as, for example, when Catherine, after cutting her hair, renames herself "Peter" in bed and suggests some alternative sexual activities to David—whom she renames "Catherine"—or when David and Catherine's ménage expands to include a second woman in an initially bisexual relationship that eventually supplants the original marriage.

These sexual experiments are further complicated by the role of Africa in the novel. References to Africa provide a secondary storyline about David's childhood, which puts an emphasis on his masculinity and creative process, but they also contextualize the characters' desire to darken their skin as a sign of their sexual liberation and freedom from Western cultural norms within a discourse of primitivism. In addition to these rich and controversial thematic elements, Hemingway appears to have been experimenting with narrative form as he has the young writer, David, craft a story of an elephant hunt in Africa with his father within the main narrative of the honeymoon. This story within a story creates a self-conscious and reflective narrative structure evocative of metafictional and postmodern literary experiments. Thematically and stylistically, then, Hemingway appears to have been expanding his art and subverting his hyper-masculine authorial persona in *The Garden of Eden*.

Not surprisingly, *The Garden of Eden* has elicited strong reactions from readers, reviewers, and scholars since its publication. While many recreational

readers and Hemingway fans—and some scholars and critics—resisted the new image of Hemingway that the novel presented, many others were invigorated, sensing an opportunity to reimagine the iconic author in terms relevant to late twentieth-century concerns, including issues such as gender, sexuality, and race. Almost immediately they began comparative studies between the manuscript and the published version of the novel, explorations of the autobiographical roots of the characters and events, and the process of rereading and re-evaluating Hemingway's oeuvre and life in terms of the revelations in the text. The first wave of scholarship tended to focus on the status of the text itself. Critics scrutinized the work of editor Tom Jenks and questioned Scribners' motives for presenting this complex posthumous novel as a trade book with no scholarly apparatus. Over time, scholars have continued to lament the fact that they must work with the edited version of the text (or consult the complete manuscript in the Hemingway Collection of the John F. Kennedy Library). This limitation, however, has not diminished interest in thinking about, writing about, and teaching this important and transformative addition to Hemingway studies. Although scholars recognize the significance of the trade book's publication and are generally grateful to have a version of the text they may use for study and teaching, there is nonetheless a persistent call for a scholarly edition of *The Garden of Eden,* one that we would like to take this opportunity to repeat.

The limitations of working with the trade edition aside, the publication of the novel presented other significant challenges to critics. They found themselves tackling difficult issues such as the proper way to address a posthumously published work characterized by intricate representations of gender, sexuality, and race. In addition, many scholars had to wrestle with their sense of obligation to and investment in Hemingway's public image. Their work often led them into deeply personal territory in Hemingway's life and writing, not to mention their own. Given the sensitivity of the issues at hand, scholars had to be, in Toni Morrison's words, careful but not "too polite" as they presented scholarship that would occasion a radical shift in how readers understand Hemingway—his persona, life, and writing. In fact, we do not believe it is an overstatement to say that the publication of the novel and scholarly work on it represent one of the most significant and comprehensive editorial and critical interventions in the study of American literature in the past half century.

For this reason, although we have assembled a principally retrospective volume, we are pleased to begin the collection with a new essay by Tom Jenks, the editor who prepared *The Garden of Eden* for publication twenty-five years ago. After its publication, Jenks found himself an indispensible component of an aggressive publicity campaign for the novel. He soon understood that Scribners and scholars had different reasons for wanting to see *Garden* in print. His mandate to salvage

a coherent and publishable story from the manuscript was in many ways at odds with scholars' interest in the details of the manuscript, in particular its multiple plotlines and overlapping characters, as well as the palimpsest of revisions. In the wake of the novel's publication, scholars sometimes held Jenks personally accountable for what he excluded and were frustrated by his reluctance to explain his editorial decisions in academic detail. After months of attempting to answer countless queries from Hemingway aficionados and scholars longing for privileged glimpses into his editorial process or even into Hemingway himself, Jenks registered his frustration at the 1987 Modern Language Association meeting, where he politely vowed to remain silent on the topic for the foreseeable future. Since this volume celebrates the twenty-fifth anniversary of the novel's publication, we tracked down Jenks to discover if he was willing to break his silence. He was. As a result, this collection features his essay "*The Garden of Eden* at Twenty-five"; it is the only previously unpublished article in the volume.

In the retrospective part of the collection, we have gathered in one place what we believe to be the most important criticism published on *The Garden of Eden* to date in an effort to provide an overview of the trends in and the contours of the critical conversations over the past twenty-five years as well as to indicate possibilities for future scholarship. As with any attempt at such a collection, we had to make difficult decisions when selecting the articles and determining how to represent them. Our guiding principle was simple: we sought out articles that made discoveries or presented new ways of thinking about the novel that proved fruitful for the writers and scholars who followed. In an effort to capture the initial reaction to the novel, we begin the volume with mainstream reviews written by distinguished novelists E. L. Doctorow and John Updike. These reviews are followed by scholarly studies of the novel divided into four major sections: "Editing and Manuscript Issues"; "Narrative Structure and Technique"; "Issues of Gender, Sexuality, and Race"; and "The Fitzgerald Connection." In an effort to re-create the critical conversation on particular topics and areas of inquiry as it developed, we have organized the articles within each section chronologically. For this reason, we decided, where possible, to reprint article versions of scholarship, even when the essays were revised and included as chapters in books published later. The essay versions allow us to capture the dynamic of the critical conversations as they unfolded. We have, however, clearly indicated articles that eventually appeared in book publications in both the head note to the article and the annotated bibliography.

Reviews of the novel were generally positive. Despite reservations about the ethics and propriety of posthumous publication, most reviewers recognized that *The Garden of Eden* would occasion a major reconsideration of Hemingway and his work, one that would probably keep his (at the time) fragile reputation alive

amid the changing cultural priorities of the late twentieth century. Doctorow and Updike in particular appreciated his efforts while attempting to square what Scribners published with what Hemingway wrote. In "Ernest Hemingway: R.I.P.," (1986) which initially appeared as a review in the *New York Times,* E. L. Doctorow argues that *The Garden of Eden* is an act of artistic bravery on the part of the aging and established writer. Doctorow recognizes that Hemingway was taking tremendous risks with his established persona and literary reputation not only in the nuanced representation of gender and sexuality in the story but also in the critical exploration of David's exploitative creative process. Like many reviewers, Doctorow addresses the challenges of posthumous publication and the difficulty of interpreting the author's intentions: "But the truth about editing the work of a dead writer . . . is that you can only cut to affirm his strengths, to reiterate the strategies of style for which he is known; whereas he himself may have been writing to transcend them." Such musings temper Doctorow's critique of the weaknesses of the published text (in particular the lack of development in David's and Marita's characters) as he speculates how the manuscripts might (or might not) clarify some of these issues. But he singles out Catherine Bourne as an accomplishment, finding her Hemingway's best female character and a highlight of the novel.

John Updike agrees. Although he too questions the validity of the published version and ponders the implications and complications of posthumous publication, he recognizes the significance of the novel for readers' understanding of Hemingway, calling it "a fresh slant on the old magic" and "a new reading of Hemingway's sensibility." Like Doctorow, he recognizes that this novel offers an occasion to revise and reimagine popular perceptions of Hemingway. He also speculates about the biographical roots of the characters whom he reads as versions of Hemingway's wives. Other reviewers were more cautious, and some (probably best represented by Barbara Probst Solomon[2], who concluded that "Hemingway's publisher has committed a crime") were even hostile. Although positive reviews dominated, the reviews testify to the thorny nature of posthumous publication and the nearly impossible but unavoidable task of attempting to divine the author's intentions for the project, but ultimately nearly all reviewers recognized the value of having this text in print.

As can be seen in the reviews, questions of editing and the relationship of manuscript to published work quickly engaged critics and continue to do so. In "Manuscripts and Editing Issues," we have gathered scholarship that addresses the differences between the printed text and the manuscripts. Frequently, these articles provide excellent descriptions of the material that was cut from the published version of the novel, giving readers a fuller sense of the manuscript and the challenges Hemingway faced during its composition. Robert E. Fleming and

K. J. Peters survey what is lost in the published version of the novel. Fleming's (1989) classic article provides a valuable overview of the material cut from the manuscripts, with a particular focus on the inadequacy of the published ending, which he argues does not capture the sinister tone of any of Hemingway's drafted endings. Peters's (1991) detailed manuscript analysis discusses the cut characters and subplots as well as lost references to religion and to Rodin's *The Metamorphosis,* the provocative statue that forms a leitmotif in the manuscript but is eliminated from the published novel. In a later article, John Leonard (2003) questions the critical consensus that the novel was largely composed in the late 1940s and early 1950s and offers some informed speculation about Hemingway's composition process.

The unusual structure of the narrative also draws its share of attention. In "Narrative Structure," we have gathered essays that explore the intersection of form and theme. The authors in this section address how the structure of the novel links to broader concerns about Hemingway's changing style and the role of gender and race in the novel. Robert B. Jones and Beatriz Penas Ibáñez explore the innovative and arguably postmodern narrative. Jones (1987) considers the metafictional elements in the novel, both via the elephant hunt story that David Bourne writes and through the idea that the novel itself seems to be the "honeymoon narrative" that David is writing within the novel. Penas Ibáñez (1998) suggests that *Garden* is a stylistically innovative text in which Hemingway inscribes his well-known modernist style within a postmodernist text that demonstrates a self-reflexivity lacking in his earlier works.

James Nagel and Rose Marie Burwell examine what the structure of the novel reveals about Hemingway's attitudes toward the creative process. Nagel (1989) focuses on the elephant hunt story, which he calls the "heart" of the novel. He argues that Catherine's distracting and destructive "experiments" spur David to recall his childhood difficulties with his father and write the elephant hunt story. For Nagel, the writing of the hunt story is a triumph of David Bourne's creative process over Catherine's destructive tendencies; it demonstrates how he uses difficulties in his married life to create his art. Burwell (1993) is similarly concerned with the relationship between David's writing and his life, but she teases out some of the gender implications of the novel by examining how David Bourne (and, by extension, Hemingway) links the creative process to masculinity through the tension between the African stories and the honeymoon narrative. Like Nagel, she sees Catherine's behavior as a catalyst for David's writing, but one against which he must define himself and his creative products.

Without a doubt, however, the most vibrant, controversial, and transformative scholarly work on *The Garden of Eden* concerns the novel's presentation of gender, sexuality, and race. Mark Spilka's "Hemingway's Barbershop Quintet"

(1987) is an early contribution to the discussion published only one year after *Garden* appeared in print. Spilka combines a study of the manuscripts with biography and intertextual links to F. Scott Fitzgerald's *Tender Is the Night* (and to Rudyard Kipling), to highlight the centrality of gender in the text from the obsessive interest in haircuts to the presentation of David's creative process as he drafts and rewrites the African stories. This article is a clear precursor to Spilka's 1990 book-length study *Hemingway's Quarrel with Androgyny,* which was a milestone in consideration of the author's use of issues of gender in his works. Spilka struggled to find a language for Hemingway's nuanced presentation of gender, which led him to describe the characters and their sexual experiments as "androgynous," a term which was at first widely adopted by commentators and critics of the text, but later critics challenged the term as vague as they attempted more precise analyses of what Hemingway was doing with gender.

Nancy R. Comley and Robert Scholes (1992) build on Spilka's observations about the centrality of gender in *Garden*. Placing *The Garden of Eden* in the context of other Hemingway texts (including "Fathers and Sons," "Mr. and Mrs. Eliot," and "The Sea Change"), they suggest that for the author, truthful writing is associated with race and transgressive sexuality through the concept of primitivism, or what Hemingway called "tribal things." Carl Eby (1995) picks up on Comley and Scholes's observation about the relationship between sex and race, but he attempts to account for this relationship through a psychological study of Hemingway. In particular, Eby theorizes that Hemingway was a fetishist who was fundamentally confused about the boundaries of his ego, body, and gender as a result of his childhood experience of being twinned with his older sister, Marcelline. From this perspective, Eby understands the instability of gender and race in the novel as a symptom of Hemingway's fetishism, which in turn accounts for his fascination with sexual identity in particular.

Eby's observations about the instability of binaries in the novel (male/female, light/dark, white/black) are further explored by critics such as Ira Elliott (2000) and Cary Wolfe (2002). Elliott suggests that the complex play of binaries in Hemingway's novel indicates bodies in crisis, although, departing from Eby, he attributes this crisis to cultural rather than personal contexts. Wolfe offers a new and unique perspective on the novel rooted in a post-humanist approach. He suggests that the binary oppositions in the novel are commented upon—and perhaps also resolved by—Hemingway's interest in cross-species relationships, particularly between David and the elephant in the hunt story. Unlike other critics, Wolfe finds that David's work on the elephant story serves ultimately to distance him from his father's binary colonial thinking.

Steven C. Roe and Kathy Willingham combine Comley and Scholes's interest in gender and the body with Burwell's and Nagel's concerns about creativity in

the novel. Roe (1992) examines the cost of David's authorship, which he sees as exploitative and self-centered, comparing David's ruthless use of his life in his art to his father's elephant hunting for ivory and even (via hints in the manuscript) to the Bluebeard fairy tale, in which a man kills wives for disobedience and intruding upon his privacy. Ultimately, however, Roe finds that Hemingway is critical of David's writing process and sympathetic to Catherine, who appears to be sacrificed to it. Willingham (1993) similarly finds Hemingway to be sympathetic and sensitive to women in his portrayal of Catherine, but she goes beyond sympathy to suggest that in Catherine Hemingway explores uniquely feminist modes of artistic expression focused on the body that prefigure theories of *l'écriture feminine.* Daniel Kempton (1998) offers a counterargument to the association between sexual transgression and artistic creativity in *The Garden of Eden* inaugurated by Comley and Scholes; he suggests that an examination of lines deleted from the manuscript version offers less definitive support for that view.

J. Gerald Kennedy (1991), in a gesture elaborated upon later by critics such as Debra Moddelmog, explores the implications of *Garden*'s presentation of gender and sexuality for Hemingway's public image. Kennedy compares *Garden* to the memoir *A Moveable Feast* and discusses the reasons why Hemingway would present the young artist figure in such a radically different way in *Garden* despite its many similarities in themes and plotlines to *Feast,* which was written at roughly the same time. Moddelmog (1996) examines how commercial considerations and the power of the Hemingway persona probably made the published novel a less transgressive and complex version of the complete manuscript. She is particularly interested in how the published text, as well as a critical conversation funneled through the concept of androgyny and an easy association between race and sex, has obscured issues of sexuality, and in particular homosexuality, in the manuscript.

In "The Fitzgerald Connection," we gather two of a smattering of articles that focus specifically on *The Garden of Eden*'s indebtedness to F. Scott Fitzgerald, particularly his novel *Tender Is the Night* and his wife, Zelda. Robert E. Fleming (1998) examines *Garden*'s connections to *Tender Is the Night,* arguing that despite initial reservations, Hemingway came to regard it as Fitzgerald's best novel, so much so that he revisited its principle themes in *The Garden of Eden.* Nancy R. Comley (1998) also examines intertextual links between Hemingway's novel and *Tender Is the Night,* adding Zelda Fitzgerald's *Save Me the Waltz* as she draws many parallels in setting and characterization and argues that all of these works may be read as competing narratives of how to present female madness and male responses to it.

The scholarship on *The Garden of Eden* is rich and varied, and yet certain constant concerns emerge, most notably concern about the status of Hemingway's

masculinity and, by extension, his sexuality. Most writers in one way or another address the implications of the novel in this regard: Is Hemingway embracing his masculinity or distancing himself from it? Is a disciplined masculinity the wellspring of his creativity or does his creativity extend from his sense of the feminine? How should we (if at all) revise our sense of Hemingway's masculine persona? Is it defensive? A mask? *The Garden of Eden,* however, works because it frustrates attempts to answer these questions simply and because it asks us to consider the possibility that the answer may entail a "both-and" rather than an "either-or" response.

Although this collection focuses on essays written about *The Garden of Eden,* a number of book-length studies have been published that are vital to the critical conversation about the novel. Whenever possible, we have included essay-length pieces to represent (at least in part) the contribution of such books specifically to understandings of *The Garden of Eden.* Leading these book-length studies is Mark Spilka's groundbreaking *Hemingway's Quarrel with Androgyny* (1990), the first sustained effort to link works and biography to suggest the complexity of the novelist's concern with sex and gender roles. Also an early and vital contribution to the critical conversation was novelist and critic Toni Morrison's 1993 *Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and the Literary Imagination,* a book that explores the structuring but often invisible "Africanist" presence in white American literature. Although other scholars were in the process of probing the role of race in *Garden* (Comley and Scholes, and Eby, in particular) when *Playing in the Dark* was published, Morrison's work so powerfully revealed the integral role race played in Hemingway's sense of gender and in his attempts to critique Western norms that it quickly became the starting point for many subsequent scholars' discussion of the role of race.

Nancy R. Comley and Robert Scholes's *Hemingway's Genders: Rereading the Hemingway Text* (1996) extends the conversation on gender (and, to a certain extent, race) into the posthumous and unpublished works and explores Hemingway's association between gender and sexual experimentation and race. Rose Marie Burwell's *Hemingway: The Postwar Years and the Posthumous Novels* (also 1996) looks for patterns of unity in the author's life and the posthumous works, a direction since followed by a number of other scholars, most recently Hilary Justice in *Bones of the Others: The Hemingway Text from the Lost Manuscripts to the Posthumous Novels* (2006). Burwell also probes Hemingway's fascination with gender roles, although she argues that *Garden* ultimately reinscribes the author's concern with masculinity and heteronormativity.

In *Hemingway's Fetishism: Psychoanalysis and the Mirror of Manhood* (1999), Carl Eby directly confronts the novelist's psychology as it relates to gender and race (and specifically the erotic interest in hair that appears in *The Garden of*

Eden), drawing on a range of psychoanalytic theories and revelations about his early experience of being "twinned" with his sister. Eby's ability to use alternate theories without being dominated by them set an important example for later studies as various forms of theory increasingly have informed scholars' readings of the novel. Most important, through a careful study of Hemingway as a fetishist, Eby explains how Hemingway's masculinity could coexist with his desire for sexual experiences that initially appear to subvert it.

Debra A. Moddelmog's *Reading Desire: In Pursuit of Ernest Hemingway* (also 1999) examines the way Hemingway's hyper-masculine persona has impeded full discussion of the author's work and identity in both scholarly and popular forums. In particular, she claims that readers' and critics' assumptions about and investments in the author's popular image have precluded a full discussion of issues of identity—and specifically sexual identity—in his life and work. Thomas Strychacz's *Hemingway's Theaters of Masculinity* (2003) applies contemporary theories of gender as performed to an examination of the construction of masculinity in Hemingway's texts, building in part on the ways in which David Bourne must construct his own masculine identity in a novel in which no aspect of "male" identity seems to be taken for granted. Most recently, in *Ernest Hemingway: Machismo and Masochism* (2005), Richard Fantina extends Carl Eby's work and argues that Hemingway's career-long interest in male submission and female-on-male sodomy definitively does not extend either into an interest in homosexuality or into female dominance in social spheres. Fantina points out that although Hemingway's private and public behavior diverged, his masculinity is not necessarily contradictory; in fact, Fantina suggests that "Hemingway's embodiment of diverse models of masculinity may be his greatest legacy."

As is made abundantly clear through the book-length works on *Garden,* the richness of criticism of and scholarship on the novel can only be suggested by our selections. There are many excellent and insightful articles that we were not able to include. We thus have appended brief descriptions of most of the essays published in English as of this writing (as found via the MLA International Bibliography). We hope that these will serve the reader of this collection and also the continuing critical conversation regarding Hemingway's *Garden.*

Since 1986 a re-edited version of *A Moveable Feast* (2009) and two versions of Hemingway's second African safari—*True at First Light* (1999) and *Under Kilimanjaro* (2005)—have been added to the list of Hemingway's posthumously published works. Of all the posthumously published works, however, *The Garden of Eden* has proved the most durable and interesting, precisely because it calls into question so much of the received wisdom regarding Hemingway's persona, life, and writing, and because it encourages readers to question received wisdom both about Hemingway and about themselves. In fact, *Garden* is quickly becoming one

of Hemingway's most frequently taught works, due in no small part to the way it invites readers to understand his other writings and his role in American life in richer and fuller ways. A Google search suggests that at the college level *Garden* is now the fourth most frequently taught Hemingway work, behind *The Sun Also Rises, A Farewell to Arms,* and *In Our Time.* A similar search reveals that *Garden* is now taught as often as Edith Wharton's *The House of Mirth,* Henry James's *The Portrait of a Lady,* and William Faulkner's *The Sound and the Fury.*[1]

Anecdotally, we have found interest in the novel to be high in the classroom. Although initially students struggle with the seemingly superficial and repetitive emphasis on suntanning, eating, and haircuts, with a little guidance and encouragement, they find much in the novel that deeply engages them. In particular, Hemingway's candid struggle with issues of gender and sexuality speaks to students growing up with greater awareness of sexual and gender choices. They are also sympathetic to the gender politics—personal and professional—that may have prevented Hemingway, the iconic male author, from finishing and publishing *The Garden of Eden* during his lifetime. Women and men are intrigued by the character of Catherine and struggle with whether or not she is crazy and to what extent her behavior is attributable to the limitations on and expectations of women in the first half of the twentieth century, and to what extent those limitations and expectations may still be in place in today. Some are deeply moved by the elephant hunt story both in terms of the limiting definitions of masculinity that it reveals and in terms of what they perceive to be Hemingway's critique of exploitation and capitalism as the father kills the elephant in front of his young son in order to gain the wealth represented by its ivory tusks. As such the elephant hunt episode speaks not only to recent interest in masculinity studies but also to the intersection among postcolonial, economic, and ecological criticism.

Ultimately, students and other readers grapple with *The Garden of Eden* precisely because it represents Hemingway's own struggle with many of these issues and speaks to their suspicion that socially constructed identity markers are often limiting and false. The novel's lack of easy resolutions, clear-cut heroes, and a stable ground on which to base critical judgments makes it likely that vibrant discussions of *The Garden of Eden* will continue well into the future. This collection is our attempt to show what the critical conversation has entailed and to provide a launching point for the conversation to follow.

Notes

1. We are indebted to Carl Eby for the findings of this Google search.
2. Solomon, Barbara Probst. "Where's Papa?" *The New Republic* (1987): 30–34.

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The Garden of Eden at Twenty-five

TOM JENKS

In the quarter century since its publication, *The Garden of Eden* has been a worldwide best seller and the subject of innumerable articles, reviews, and essays both praising and critical. Hemingway started the novel in 1946 and never completed it, and the trade edition, which I edited and Scribners published in 1986, was formed from manuscripts that only approximately indicated what the author had in mind. It's not clear that Hemingway completely knew what he was doing in *The Garden of Eden,* or that he had a vision he could fully achieve, or that, if achieved, it would have been, by his own measure, good. The published edition can best be termed, in John Updike's smart phrase, a rounded fragment, and though I doubt that Updike ever saw *The Garden of Eden* manuscripts, I'm certain that his instinct and experience told him exactly what he was looking at—a semipolished portion of a rough and indeterminate work in progress. Observers have pointed out that the book could have been edited in many ways, and it's enticing to speculate about what Hemingway might have done had he finished the work. There are, in effect, as many imaginable versions of *The Garden of Eden* as there are individuals with points of view on it, but the most definitive version exists only in the entirety of the voluminous drafts themselves. One imagines an eventual scholarly edition, with annotations and essays appended. A step in that direction has been made by Frederic Svoboda and Suzanne del Gizzo, who have drawn together a collection of contemporary reviews and criticism for Kent State University Press to mark the twenty-fifth anniversary of the trade publication.

At the Modern Language Association convention in New York City, shortly after the book's publication, I gave a brief address in which I said I wouldn't talk about the book. Today I continue to hold that the work—any writer's work—should speak for itself. Editing is a mediumistic occupation, and an editor's place is offstage. It's unseemly and maladroit for an editor to step in front of an author,

but *The Garden of Eden* is exceptional in its genesis and in its representation of its author, and enough time has passed since its publication to allow for some useful reflections on its nature and the circumstances of its publication.

I hadn't known the novel existed until the summer afternoon Charles Scribner IV, also known as Charles Scribner Jr., invited me into his office and casually pointed out the manuscripts on the shelves of a cheap credenza. I hadn't been at Scribners long and didn't know Mr. Scribner at all. I don't remember having a conversation with him before that afternoon. It was 1985. Scribners had recently been sold to Macmillan, and Scribners' offices had been relocated from the legendary beaux arts building on Fifth Avenue in midtown to a modest building at Nineteenth Street, not far from the Flatiron Building to the north and Union Square to the south. The new offices were furnished in a utilitarian and temporary mode, pending an undetermined corporate fate within Macmillan, which wanted Scribners' reference works and its backlist of famous titles from the time of Maxwell Perkins. Soon the offices would move again—this time to small quarters in Macmillan, after substantial reductions in staff. Charlie Scribner and a colleague, the cultural critic Jacques Barzun, as well as poetry editor Harry Ford and a host of others at all levels would be gone, and Macmillan's paperback division would have Scribners' backlist on its balance sheet, leaving a remnant of the venerable house to find its way with little clout. Macmillan would later be absorbed into other corporations, and Scribner, as it is now called, would survive and flourish as an imprint at Simon & Schuster. Charlie Scribner could not have foreseen it all, but in retrospect it's easy to see that on the afternoon I first met him, the company needed a success to keep up its spirits and finances. He may also have viewed publishing *The Garden of Eden* as a legacy and a literary responsibility to complete before he retired from the business his family started in 1846.

During the time I knew Scribner he portrayed himself as less of a trade publisher than a reference publisher. It seemed that the old Scribner icon, a lamp of knowledge, beckoned him to be a keeper of the flame. If he was pained over the decline of his business, he concealed it, and I was naively unaware of the company's narrowing fate.

We chatted, and he casually suggested that I might be interested in editing the Hemingway manuscripts. The offer was made so lightly that declining it seemed of no moment, though it must have surprised him. A couple of weeks passed, and he called me to his office again and repeated his suggestion, and I declined again.

It never occurred to me to accept. Scribners had lately published *The Dangerous Summer,* Hemingway's nonfiction account of bullfighting, which *Life* magazine had serialized in shorter form in 1960. The book version didn't seem

particularly good, and what with other Hemingway posthumous works and Hemingway imitations, it seemed there was already enough bad Hemingway in the world. I said something to that effect and indicated that my interest was in working with living writers, especially new and emerging ones. I had in hand the manuscript of a first book, a remarkable story collection by an unknown writer, E. A. Proulx, as well as other books to edit.

Another week passed before Scribner summoned me a third time. Now he didn't ask if I would edit the novel but gave me two paper grocery sacks filled with manuscripts and enjoined me to read them. That night I schlepped *The Garden of Eden* home on the subway. Later I got into bed and started reading, determined to put the task behind me. But by morning I was convinced that the mass of material held a story worth publishing. The work was wildly uneven, and much of it was embarrassingly weak, though portions had sustained strength and suggested a new sort of Hemingway, one whom E. L. Doctorow would characterize in his review of the book as reaching for a fuller, more thoughtful, emotional range with a hint of feminine understanding. In both the draft and edited versions of the novel, it's easy to see the author's self-destructiveness, autoeroticism, and fantasies of redemption. But if he was lost in his own complexity, and if reading the novel is a bit like eavesdropping on a semiconscious conversation that Hemingway was having with himself, then the sympathetic reading is that he was, in part, trying to convert the bravado of his iconic persona into courage of the heart.

His failure to finish the novel may simply have been that other work, and life, intervened, or it may have been that he couldn't go further without relinquishing much of who he'd been and how he'd always written. In the manuscripts he seems to have been working to have it both ways—a creative tension that might have yielded what he had in mind, though the evidence in the manuscripts wasn't promising. Not only was the old Hemingway in force, but also his powers of concentration and revision were not sufficiently present to make me believe in the likely success of a transcendent vision. And though there's evidence he worked on the novel across fifteen years, the manuscripts read as if most of the work occurred during several relatively short periods, intermittently, and probably more near the time he started the book than later on. An image, easily evoked, of Hemingway steadily struggling across long years over *The Garden of Eden* is inaccurate. His engagement with the book seems to have been intense at points, but the impression given at length in the manuscripts is one of casual effort, waning strength, and self-indulgence.

My task in editing a trade edition was to show the writer at his best, on his own terms, with the material that most closely approached a finished form of art. Hemingway had brought the story line involving David, Catherine, Marita,

and David's writing to a reasonably high pitch. The core of the story existed in approximately four hundred triple-spaced manuscript pages from among the stacks of manuscripts Scribner had given me, and the 247-page published book came, for the most part, directly out of those four hundred triple-spaced pages, which is to say that the most presentable pages from *The Garden of Eden* manuscripts made their way into the book.

I edited *The Garden of Eden* as I would edit the work of a living author, the only difference being that Hemingway wasn't available to respond to queries or to make revisions. Thus the editorial intention to present the work in the best possible form required an added level of conscientiousness. Every decision was weighed and weighed again, many times, word by word, line by line, page by page. A decision to make any alteration was considered in relation to the integrity of the work being edited, the effect created by the alteration, the style and substance of the author's well-known works, and an awareness and appreciation of the gallery of observers who would eventually bear in on the result—Hemingway's family, his lawyer, Charles Scribner, the Scribners staff, other editors and publishers, Hemingway scholars, critics, and reviewers, all those with a professional interest in or special attachment to Hemingway, including, finally, all his fans and detractors.

But in the editing, the gallery had to be pushed back, out of range of having an influence. Editorial decisions could not be made on the basis of what anyone might eventually think or say about the method or the result. Rather than representing any special or particular view, an editor stands in for the collective view as a universal, albeit imperfect, reader. Moment to moment in the lines of a story, an editor must have a sense of the effect that each touch has on an average reader. A filament connects the writer and reader, and the editor must accurately know the nature and strength of the connection from beginning to end. If a viable story exists in a manuscript, the story line evinces itself and guides the editing. The edit proceeds organically from the inside out rather than by embossing a shape from the outside onto the story. Such work is intimate and, in the depth of doing it, hallowed.

Late at night, day after day, the degree of minute concentration in the edit brought on the presence of Hemingway's ghost. He attended the edit, neither blessing nor cursing it but drawing, as he had always drawn, life from the attention and bearing in with the brooding weight of his feeling and the strength of his sensation. If the edited version of *The Garden of Eden* represents an interpretation of the novel, it's an interpretation made without social, psychological, political, or any other theory involved but based simply on Hemingway's lyric expressiveness and the relative success of his words on the page as storytelling art.

I worked on the book alone, and in secrecy except for Mr. Scribner and two or three other Scribner chiefs who knew what I was doing. No one, including me, knew how the edit would turn out, and there was no point in telling anyone about it until we did know. Of course I thought the edit would succeed, or I wouldn't have undertaken it, but between envisioning the result and completing it lay an almost infinite number of decisions, and when I was done, other readers, including the Hemingway family, would weigh in on its publishability.

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During the time I worked on the book, I gave Scribner my work to review in two or three installments. He had said that Hemingway's heirs would allow only cuts and necessary minor alterations. He added that he knew I would have to make "battlefield decisions." When he read the edited pages, he was pleased by what he saw, though it was never clear to me that he grasped what was involved in editing fiction, much less a book like *The Garden of Eden.* It may be that he didn't need to grasp it but needed only the evidence of the result, or it may be that his experience with other posthumously published Hemingway works provided all the insight he needed.

Why had he selected me to edit the book? He didn't know me, and I doubt he knew much, if anything, about my prior work. It was true that I was confident, knowledgeable, bold, and just naive enough, too, and I suppose I'd been well recommended to him, but I suspect that he might have asked almost any editor working for him. Among *The Garden of Eden* manuscripts that Scribner handed me was a short, partial attempt at an edit done sometime in the past by a copy editor. I would describe the edit as an accordion job. Cuts had been made to compress the book, but there was no sense of narrative coherence, pacing, emotional integrity, or other elements that would be key to success. Scribner may have been generous in his willingness to give his employees opportunities, or he may have been practical in wanting to see if he could get the job done inexpensively, with staff on hand. He may have been indiscriminate, or he may have had a bit of genius. I can't say, but for a time we formed a team with a single project.

When I finished the edit, Scribner explained his strategy for gaining approval from Hemingway's heirs. Scribner thought he had the greatest rapport and chance for success with Hemingway's son Patrick. If Patrick approved of the book, he would talk with his older brother, Jack, and open a discussion about the estate granting permission for publication. Scribner phoned Patrick and told him that an edit had been done, and soon Scribner and I were on a plane heading to Bozeman, Montana, to show Patrick the book.

I didn't know much about Patrick, other than what I'd read in biographies of his father. Patrick had been a white hunter in Africa. His father had started him drinking at twelve, and as a teenager he'd been subjected to electroshock. I didn't know what to expect. We landed in Bozeman, and there waiting to meet us was Patrick, immediately recognizable by his broad Hemingway jaw. He greeted us warmly and took us to his home. On the way we passed open green hillsides where antelope grazed. Patrick's house was small, comfortable, and relatively modest. We gave him the manuscript and visited for a while. Now and again, Patrick gave an abrupt burst of laughter, disconcertingly unconnected to anything in the conversation but genial nonetheless. He and his wife had made dinner—spaetzle and filets of antelope that Patrick had shot.

I asked Patrick about his life with his father, and he mentioned boyhood visits to Finca Vigía and laughingly recalled inadvertently walking in on Hemingway and Martha Gellhorn one afternoon in their bedroom making love in a position that Patrick suggested they must have learned from a marriage manual. He made the observation with glee and a flick of irony about his father and stepmother. The dinner seemed a little surreal, perhaps because I was so bone weary from working on the book that it was all I could do to stay awake, though it was early still.

Scribner and I retired to a nearby motel, named, I think, the Top Hat, with cheaply wood-paneled rooms and paper sanitation strips across the toilet seats. We'd wait there until Patrick phoned to let us know his verdict. I don't recall much about the wait other than it was interminably tedious, the idea of the journey to Bozeman growing more preposterous the longer I waited in the stark motel room—who could say how long it might take Patrick to read the book or what his reaction might be?

Before giving Scribner the completed edit, I'd given it to Raymond Carver and to Tobias Wolff to read, because I wanted their reactions as a litmus test to guard against any chance that I'd succumbed to commercialism. But I didn't tell Ray or Toby that I was prepared to bury the edit if they thought the book wasn't worthwhile. I simply asked them to read it and tell me what they thought.

I heard back first from Toby. He spoke with hushed admiration and made a helpful suggestion regarding an adjustment in wording related to point of view near the end of the book. Ray responded exuberantly and laughed ruefully, noting that there sure was a lot of drinking in the book. Ray was a recovered alcoholic, and Hemingway got to him viscerally.

Both Ray and Toby wrote in a vein related to Hemingway's use of common everyday language; both knew his work and were deeply read in the works of other modern masters. No matter what happened in Bozeman, I trusted Ray and Toby's sense of aesthetic value in *The Garden of Eden*.

Late the next day Patrick called, and we went back to his house, wondering what he'd say. He was smiling and offhand. He'd heard about the book but never read it. He liked it. He would talk with his brother. Details and motifs in the book reminded him favorably of other Hemingway works. We enthused with him, and I talked about the gustatory appeal of the book and Ray Carver's thirsty reaction to all the drinking. Patrick grinned and bragged a little about his father's stamina, comparing him to Churchill as an indestructible "bottle-a-day man."

During a lull in the conversation, I mentioned that I wasn't sure what the cover art might be. In part I was testing Patrick's commitment—was he already envisioning a published book? He got up and went off into a den. After a while he returned with an art book open to Juan Gris' painting *Woman with a Basket.* Without a word, Patrick offered the art. Gris had been his father's favorite painter, and the mood of somber hedonism in the painting was perfect for the front cover. Later I arranged permission for the use of the image and oversaw the jacket design, suggesting a leaf from the woman's basket for a pattern on the back cover.

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In retrospect, and in light of the posthumous Hemingway publications after *The Garden of Eden,* I think Patrick would have said only yes to publishing *The Garden of Eden.* It's hard to know what criteria he applied. He found the book "sunny." I think he relied mainly on his faith in Scribner's and in his father's success. The trip to Bozeman was a pro forma diplomatic mission, in which Scribner's sense of occasion communicated more risk in the outcome than was actually the case.

A literary executor has the duty of preserving and extending the life of an author's works in accordance with the author's wishes. History provides notable examples of executors acting in spite of an author's wishes, sometimes beneficially so for the sake of literature, as in the case of Kafka, who asked his executor to burn manuscripts that were instead posthumously published and survived as important works—*The Trial, Amerika,* and *The Castle.* The executor, Max Brod, believed that Kafka told him to burn the manuscripts only because he knew Brod wouldn't do it. The impulses and issues in posthumous publication tend to be as complex or as simple as the writer in question. That's to say, a writer's life determines much of his afterlife. In Henry James's tale, *The Aspern Papers,* a "publishing scoundrel" in pursuit of a famed dead romantic poet's letters offers an image of misplaced passion, though the publisher turns out to be no worse than the woman who finally possesses the letters and tries to barter them for an offer of marriage from the publisher. The dead author is at the mercy of the living, his immortal fame tied to mortal uncertainties.

Hemingway left his family a remarkable inheritance based in copyrights, and though literary fame encourages a sense of collective ownership, Hemingway's works belong to his heirs until the works pass into the public domain on expiration of copyrights, which will soon begin to occur for his best-selling works published in his lifetime. The copyright on his early story collection, *In Our Time,* expires in 2018, that of *The Sun Also Rises* in 2021, and of *A Farewell to Arms* in 2024. By comparison, *The Garden of Eden* copyright extends to 2047. In the first twenty years following Hemingway's death, two posthumously published works appeared; in the ensuing thirty years, eight or nine more posthumously published works appeared. Further copyrights will likely be created via publication of new editions, possibly some scholarly ones, of Hemingway works, including, for instance, material excised from *Islands in the Stream* and from *The Garden of Eden.* There are also, if I remember correctly, a few story drafts—one titled "Black-ass at the Crossroads"—that, because weak or incomplete, have not seen light of day but may see it yet. And several thousand pages of documents from Hemingway's house in Cuba will no doubt yield additional publications. So long as the market for Hemingway holds and unpublished material remains, it makes business sense for Hemingway's heirs and publishers to strike what balance they can between commerce and art. And in light of Hemingway's gift for self-promotion and his penchant for living large, his posthumous publications seem inevitable and natural enough.

Back in New York, I was given the task of contacting Alfred Rice, the attorney who had handled Hemingway's contracts since 1944. Rice was said to be a curmudgeon and a tough negotiator, and he'd been around so long it was hard to believe he was still alive and working. I was put through to him on the first call—he sounded ancient and matter of fact. He said to send the contract over, and he'd take a look. Essentially, the contract repeated earlier Hemingway agreements, in which the author waived an advance in lieu of a remarkably high royalty—25 percent. Few, if any, other authors could command such a fee. But Hemingway's sales were so certain and so substantial that there had long been no risk in publishing him, and there would be none now.

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In the winter before the spring publication of *The Garden of Eden,* Scribners held its sales conference at a resort hotel in Puerto Rico. Random House held its conference at a neighboring hotel, and the confident affluence of the Random House sales force seemed to shame the anxious jocularity of the Scribners team. Our salesmen needed some good news, and they got it in the surprise announcement of *The Garden of Eden.* Hemingway's years writing the book, the

editing of the manuscripts, the gender-bending story of David and Catherine Bourne all made for a great sales pitch. The salesmen listened and fired questions that were all about not wanting a good story to end, because here, at last, was a book that would sell.

It had been fifteen years since the release of a new Hemingway novel, and not only was *The Garden of Eden* unexpected, but the GAP-like style and androgyny of the central characters seemed presciently in sync with the opening out of mid-1980s urban culture. The novel had an elephant hunt and all the expected masculine Hemingway elements and, at the same time, turned the expected inside out. The salesmen were excited, and as I finished up, another editor seated on the dais leaned over and whispered to me, "You're a star." But no, it wasn't me—it was Papa.

To announce the book publicly, I spoke with Edwin McDowell, who covered publishing news for the *New York Times.* His article was picked up everywhere. Well-orchestrated publicity won't necessarily sell a book, but the ghost who nebulously attended the edit grew in substance, acquiring the weight of anyone and everyone who heard about the book and reached for a renewed acquaintance with its author.

Meanwhile, Jack Hemingway had read the edited manuscript and sent in his corrections of his father's French. Those corrections were the only editorial input I received from the estate, and I had the corrections made, though making them was somewhat inconsistent with the overall copyediting of the book, which was done with restraint to allow as much as possible of Hemingway's idiosyncrasies of diction, spelling, grammar, and punctuation to stand.

As *The Garden of Eden* moved into production, Scribner once again called me to his office and this time gave me a typed note that was to appear in the front of the book. The note has been much remarked, and it reads as follows:

> As was the case with Hemingway's earlier posthumous work *Islands in the Stream,* this novel was not in finished form at the time of the author's death. In preparing the book for publication we have made some cuts in the manuscript and some routine copy-editing corrections. Beyond a very small number of minor interpolations for clarity and consistency, nothing has been added. In every significant respect the work is all the author's.

Scribner did not offer the note as an option that was up for discussion or for alteration but as a requirement made by the Hemingway estate. I don't know who wrote the note, though I assume that Scribner did. Its precedent can be found in the note at the front of *Islands in the Stream:*

> Charles Scribner, Jr. and I worked together preparing this book for publication from Ernest's original manuscript. Beyond routine chores of correcting spelling and punctuation, we made some cuts in the manuscript, I feeling that Ernest would surely have made them himself. The book is all Ernest's. We have added nothing to it. MARY HEMINGWAY

It's doubtful that Mary Hemingway wrote the note on her own, and it's odd that, in its personal nature, it leaves out Hemingway biographer Carlos Baker, who took part in editing the book. The intention in both notes is to make a gesture at acknowledging editorial work while affirming the books' authenticity.

Criticism of *The Garden of Eden* note is understandable, though in fact nothing was, or is, hidden about the editing. During publication, the story of the many pages of manuscript having been edited into a compact book was broadcast far and wide. The story achieved total media saturation—in newspapers and magazines and on radio and TV everywhere. And on the day the book was published, the manuscripts, in their entirety, which until then had been shuttered in the Kennedy Library in Boston, were for the first time opened to view, and on that day, scholars, reviewers, and general readers began to study and make comparisons of the published book and Hemingway's efforts. The editing of *The Garden of Eden* has all been in plain sight. That said, the publisher's note is open to question on three points.

The phrase "some cuts" may be variously interpreted and does not quantify how much material was left out. Likewise, the phrases about copyediting and "interpolations" may be criticized for vagueness and for seeming to minimize the amount of editing that was done. Finally, some observers—those whose certainty about what Hemingway intended in the novel may be greater than my own—tend to disagree with the statement that "in every significant respect the work is all the author's."

If the composition of the publisher's note had been mine to do, I might well have done it differently. It would have been easy enough to write a more precise note. However, I didn't resist the note Scribner gave the book, and I don't think his intention was disingenuous, especially given the open broadcast of what went into making the book. Though great swaths of the full manuscript of the book were left out of the published edition, and though a good deal of line editing and some structural rearrangement of passages occurred, the overall editorial approach was a scrupulous effort to change as little as possible while presenting a coherent drama that could stand as close as possible to Hemingway's estimable works. He did what he could with *The Garden of Eden,* and I did what I could—not for myself or for Scribner and his publishing house or

for Hemingway's heirs. In spite of my reluctance to perpetuate Hemingway, I did what I could for him, for the sake of the best in the work.

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I hoped for the book's success with readers but didn't anticipate some of the side effects. On the morning of publication, I received a phone call from a man from Tennessee who'd made a pilgrimage to Boston to be at the Kennedy Library when the doors opened and the manuscripts became available. The man from Tennessee wanted to visit *The Garden of Eden.* Other than that, he didn't seem to know what to say. Apparently he'd called because he wanted to share his reverent feeling for Hemingway. In the time that followed, countless others expressed their feelings. A reviewer who'd settled into the Kennedy Library to read the unedited manuscripts into a tape recorder, because photocopying was prohibited, called and feverishly read me parts of the manuscript and ranted incoherently about the injustice I'd done the book. Other readers—strangers who'd seen me on TV or in magazines and newspapers—approached me on the street and in restaurants to express their wonder about Hemingway. One woman read the book and decided then and there to cut and bleach her hair like Catherine Bourne's. The woman has worn her hair that way ever since, and she looks great. At a TV station in Cleveland, a middle-aged news anchor, off camera, wearing a newsman's trench coat, waxed romantic about how he wished he'd lived like Hemingway—the women, the adventure, the high life. Each reader I've encountered has expressed a personal reaction to Hemingway and his work.

His influence—particularly as a stylist—is all but genetically coded into generations of readers and writers but is somewhat on the wane with the infusion of diverse cultures and patterns of being in America. The old Hemingway American mode of going out into the world—to France, Spain, Africa, Cuba—and finding what he needed and using and glorifying it all in his own image has shifted some, but maybe not enough. In 2008 Horace Engdahl, the permanent secretary of the Nobel Prize jury, noted that American literature "is too isolated, too insular. They don't translate enough and don't really participate in the big dialogue of literature. That ignorance is restraining." Fairly or unfairly, Engdahl was touching on an assumptive arrogance inherent in a superpower. Hemingway's ascendency coincided exactly with America's.

In schools he is not taught as pervasively and centrally as he used to be, though his enduring popular appeal has not depended on academia in the way, for instance, that Conrad's has. Hemingway saw to his own fame. Today, with the pluralism of the Internet and with Warhol's fifteen minutes of fame shrunken to the fifteen seconds of a Tweet, I wonder about literary legacies of the future. Any

author with the ability to create a universally accessible digital archive of his or her body of published and unpublished works can potentially bypass libraries and academies as repositories, gatekeepers, and interpreters between writer and reader. Hemingway would have liked this idea of providing and promoting his own context, which anyone could enter, as compared to his being contained in and dependent on the context and opinions of others. Enterprising authors are already moving in the direction of creating digital immortality for themselves, and the future is likely to see less academic influence on the course of literature than in the past, just as publishers and bookstores are being replaced by more direct, immediate connections between writers and readers.

The danger, of course, is in lowered standards of quality and appreciation. In the literary sphere, the Internet tends to amplify the legitimacy of anyone's opinion about anyone else's work. Where all opinions count more or less the same, none counts greatly, and where popularity defines quality, the median, if not the lowest common denominator, becomes the standard. Yet I'm optimistic and have great faith in the human imagination and its creative reach toward meaning. A rewarding aspect of the publication of *The Garden of Eden* is the veins of humanizing discussion it opened up.

So, would I do it again? Would I do it the same way? I'm grateful to have done it, grateful for an occasion to reflect on it, and grateful once again that it's behind me. My interest has always been in stories, in the words on the page, and in the work with an author. Twenty-five years ago, I was following that interest, and I am following it now. To some extent, it takes me where it will.

Currently I'm reading and editing works by young writers who have a better than fair chance of finding and rewarding a wide audience. And, with a group of others, I'm dedicated to a nonprofit effort to encourage excellence in literary publishing for the digital era. I'm nearing the age at which Hemingway died, and with luck and persistence, I may do some worthwhile work for another couple of decades and know that it's been taken up by younger professionals. In this regard, a dictum of Hemingway's is useful: Always put in more than you take out.

Reviews

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Ernest Hemingway: R.I.P.

E. L. DOCTOROW

Doctorow (1986) offers a review of The Garden of Eden *that praises Hemingway's bravery as an artist who was attempting to remake himself, albeit not fully successfully, toward the end of his career. Doctorow speculates on how the manuscripts may enrich and shed light on the promising but thin published text. In particular, he praises Catherine Bourne as perhaps Hemingway's most fully realized female character.*

Early in his career Ernest Hemingway devised the writing strategies he would follow for life: when composing a story he would withhold mention of its central problem; when writing a novel he would implant it in geography and, insofar as possible, he would know what time it was on every page; when writing anything he would construct the sentences so as to produce an emotion not by claiming it but by rendering precisely the experience to cause it. What he made of all this was a rigorous art of compressive power, if more suited to certain emotions than to others. He was unquestionably a genius, but of the kind that advertises its limits. Critics were on to these from the very beginning, but in the forward-looking 1920s, they joined his readers to make him the writer for their time. His stuff was new. It moved. There was on every page of clear prose an implicit judgment of all other writing. The Hemingway voice hated pretense and cant and the rhetoric they rode in on.

The source of his material and spring to his imagination was his own life. Issues of intellect—history, myth, society—were beside the point. It was what his own eyes saw and heart felt that he cured into fiction. Accordingly he lived his life to see and feel as much as possible. There was no place on earth he was not at home, except perhaps his birthplace. His parents' middle western provincialism made independence an easy passage for him. He married young and fathered a child—the traditional circumstances for settling down—and took his family

with him to Europe in pursuit of excitements. He skied in the Austrian Alps, entrained to Paris for the bicycle races or prizefights, crossed the Pyrenees for the bullfights, and made urgent side trips to mountain villages for the fishing or shooting. In America, too, he drove back and forth from Idaho or Wyoming to Florida, never renting a place to live in for more than a season. He was divorced and remarried, with more children, before he bought a place of his own in Key West. But there was better fishing in Cuba, and a woman he secretly wooed there who was to become his third wife—and so on. It was Flaubert who said a writer has to sit quietly in one place, rooted in boredom, to get his work done. Hemingway lived in a kind of nomadic frenzy, but the work poured out of him. The stories and pieces and novels were done in longhand in the mornings, at whatever makeshift table he could find in a room away from his family.

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As his fame grew he was able, in this or that remote paradise he had found, to demolish his solitude by summoning friends or colleagues from other parts of the world. And they came, at whatever inconvenience to themselves, to fish or hunt or ride with him, but most important to drink with him. He had sporting friends, military friends, celebrity friends, literary friends, and friends from the local saloon. He was forever making friendships and breaking them, imagining affronts, squaring off in his heavyweight crouch. Most people are quiet in the world, and live in it tentatively, as if it is not theirs. Hemingway was its voracious consumer. People of every class were drawn to this behavior, and to the boasting, charming, or truculent boyishness of his ways, and to his ritual celebration of his appetites.

By and large he worked from life on a very short lead time. He wrote *The Sun Also Rises* while still seeing many of the people in Paris on whom he modeled its characters, and though it took him ten years to use his World War I experiences for *A Farewell to Arms,* by the time of the civil war in Spain he was making trips there knowing he was collecting the people, incidents, and locales for *For Whom the Bell Tolls,* a novel he completed in 1939, within months of the war's end. Only illness cut down his efficiency, or more often physical accidents, of which he had a great many; he ran cars into ditches and broke bones, or cut himself with knives, or scratched his eyes. But with World War II his ability to work quickly from life declined, and with it the justification of his techniques. Though he was prominently a correspondent in that war, the only novel he produced from it was the very weak *Across the River and into the Trees,* and that was not published until 1950. People noted his decline and attributed it to the corruption of fame, but in the last decade of his life he wrote *A Moveable Feast,* a memoir of his early days in Paris (published posthumously in 1964), and *The Old Man and the Sea,* and seemed to have found again what he could do.

Hemingway talked of suicide all his life before he committed it. In 1954 his proneness to accident culminated in not one but two airplane crashes in East Africa, where he had gone to hunt, and which left him with the concussion, crushed vertebrae, burns, and internal injuries that turned him, in his fifties, into an old man. From a distance the physical punishment his body received during his lifetime seems to have been half of something, a boxing match with an invisible opponent, perhaps. His mind was never far from killing, neither in actuality, as he hunted or ran off to wars, nor in his work. He went after animals all his life. He shot lion and leopard and kudu in Africa, and grizzly bear in the Rockies, he shot grouse in Wyoming and pigeon in France; wherever he was, he took what was available. And after he killed something, it was not necessarily past his attention. His biographer Carlos Baker tells of the day, in Cuba, when Hemingway hooked and fought and landed a 512-pound marlin. He brought it to port in triumph, receiving the noisy congratulations of friends and acquaintances. But this was not, apparently, enough. After a night of drunken celebration, at two or three that morning, he was seen back at the dock, all alone under the moon, the great game fish hanging upside down on block and tackle; he was using it for a punching bag.

Since Hemingway's death in 1961, his estate and his publishers, Charles Scribner's Sons, have been catching up to him, issuing the work which, for one reason or another, he did not publish in his lifetime. He held back *A Moveable Feast* out of concern for the feelings of the people in it who might still be alive. But about the novel *Islands in the Stream* he seems to have had editorial misgivings. Even more deeply in this category is *The Garden of Eden,* which he began in 1946 and worked on intermittently in the last fifteen years of his life and left unfinished. It is a highly readable story, if not possibly the book he envisioned. As published, it is composed of thirty short chapters running to about seventy thousand words. A publisher's note advises that "some cuts" have been made in the manuscript, but according to Mr. Baker's biography, at one point a revised manuscript of the work ran to forty-eight chapters and two hundred thousand words, so the publisher's note is disingenuous. In an interview with *The New York Times,* a Scribner's editor admitted to taking out a subplot in rough draft that he felt had not been integrated into the "main body" of the text, but this cut reduced the book's length by two-thirds.

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The hero of this radically weeded *Garden of Eden* is David Bourne, a young novelist and veteran of World War I, who is traveling with his wife, Catherine, through Spain and France in the 1920s. The couple are on their honeymoon. In their small black Bugatti, they drive from the seaport village of Le Grau-du-Roi, where their stay has been idyllic, to Madrid, where the first shadows

appear on their relationship. Catherine evinces jealousy of his writing. At the same time she demands experimentation in their lovemaking—she wants them to pretend that she is the boy and he is the girl. At Aigues-Mortes, in France, she has her hair cut short, and later she insists that he have his cut by the same hairdresser in a match to hers, so that he will look like her. David complies in this too, though not without some resistance and a foreboding of the ultimate corruption of the marriage.

Going on to La Napoule, near Cannes, they engage rooms in a very small hotel, where it is quiet because it is summer, the off-season in the south of France. One of the rooms is for David to write in. He has just published his war novel in America and received in the forwarded mail the press clippings and publisher's letter telling him he is a success. This news disturbs Catherine. The differences between them sharpen as she presumes to tell him the only subject worth writing about is their life together on their honeymoon.

One day, drinking at the cafe terrace of their hotel, they attract the attention of a beautiful young woman named Marita, who is very impressed by this darkly tanned couple with their newly bleached, almost white hair and French fisherman shirts, linen trousers, and espadrilles. She moves to their hotel. Catherine fulfills David's forebodings by commencing an affair with Marita. In further sign of her instability, she encourages David to embark on his own erotic relationship with the woman, who makes it easy by privately confessing to him that she has fallen in love with both of them. He succumbs. The ménage swims from the deserted beach coves of the area and sunbathes nude. David sleeps with one or the other as they designate in their time-sharing with him. Every day consists of a good deal of drinking—of martinis, which David himself mixes and garnishes with garlic olives at the small hotel bar, or absinthe, or Haig pinchbottle and Perrier, or Tavel, or carefully prepared Tom Collinses. The mixing and consuming of drinks is the means they seem to have chosen to adjust to the impact of their acts and conversation on one another.

It is Catherine who begins to come apart spectacularly under the strain. Becoming, in turn, bitter or remorseful, she either excoriates David for his relationship with Marita or condemns herself for making a mess of everything. As a defense against the situation, and what he perceives as his wife's clearly accelerating mental illness, he begins to write the story he has been resisting for years, the "hard" story, he calls it, based on his life as a boy in East Africa with his white-hunter father. This story gradually intrudes on the main narrative as the boy David sights the bull elephant with enormous tusks that his father and an African assistant are looking for; he reports his sighting and lives to regret it, as the father tracks down the great beast and destroys it. The climax of the novel has to do with Catherine's reaction to this story, which David has written

by hand in the simple *cahiers* used by French schoolchildren. A disaster then occurs which is the worst that can befall a writer as a writer, and the ménage breaks up forever, two to stay together and one to leave.

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At first reading this is a surprising story to receive from the great outdoor athlete of American literature. He has not previously presented himself as a clinician of bedroom practices. Even more interesting is the passivity of his writer hero, who, on the evidence, hates big-game hunting, and who is portrayed as totally subject to the powers of women, hapless before temptation, and unable to take action in the face of adversity. The story is told from David Bourne's masculine point of view, in the intimate, or pseudo, third person Hemingway preferred, but its major achievement is Catherine Bourne. There has not before been a female character who so dominates a Hemingway narrative. Catherine in fact may be the most impressive woman character in Hemingway's work, more substantive and dimensional than Pilar in *For Whom the Bell Tolls* or Brett Ashley in *The Sun Also Rises.* Even though she is launched from the naive premise that sexual fantasizing is a form of madness, she takes on the stature of the self-tortured Faustian and is portrayed as a brilliant woman trapped into a vicarious participation in someone else's creativity. She represents the most informed and delicate reading Hemingway has given to any woman.

For Catherine Bourne alone, this book will be read avidly. But there are additional things to make a reader happy. For considerable portions of the narrative, the dialogue is in tension, which cannot be said of *Across the River and into the Trees,* his late novel of the same period, for which he looted some of the motifs of this work. And there are passages that show the old man writing with the strength of his early work—a description of David Bourne catching a bass in the canal at Le Grau-du-Roi, for example, or swimming off the beach at La Napoule. In these cases the strategy of using landscape to evoke moral states brings victory.

But to be able to list the discrete excellences of a book is to say also that it falls short of realization. The other woman and third main character, Marita, does not have the weight to account for her willingness to move in on a marriage and lend herself to its disruption. She is colorless and largely inarticulated. David Bourne's passivity goes unexamined by the author, except as it may be a function of his profession. But the sad truth is that his writing, which we see in the elephant story, does not exonerate him: it is bad Hemingway, a threadbare working of the theme of a boy's initiation rites that suggests, to its own great disadvantage, Faulkner's story on the same theme, "The Bear."

In David's character resides the ultimate deadness of the piece. His incapability in dealing with the crisis of his relationship does not mesh with his

consummate self-assurance in handling the waiters, maids, and hoteliers of Europe who, in this book as in Hemingway's others, come forward to supply the food and drink, the corkscrews and ice cubes and fishing rods his young American colonists require. In fact, so often does David Bourne perform his cultivated eating and drinking that a reader is depressed enough to wonder if Hemingway's real achievement in the early great novels was that of a travel writer who taught a provincial American audience what dishes to order, what drinks to prefer, and how to deal with the European servant class. There are moments here when we feel we are not in France or Spain but in the provisional state of Yuppiedom. A reader is given to conclude that this shrewdest of writers made an uncharacteristic mistake in not finding a war to destroy his lovers, or some action beside their own lovemaking to threaten their survival. The tone of solemn self-attention in this work rises to a portentousness that the seventy thousand words of the text cannot justify.

But here we are led back to the issue of editing a great writer's work after his death. As far as it is possible to tell from biography, and from the inventory of Hemingway manuscripts by Philip Young and Charles W. Mann, Hemingway intended *The Garden of Eden* as a major work. At one point he conceived of it as one of a trilogy of books in which the sea figured. Certainly its title suggests a governing theme of his creative life, the loss of paradise, the expulsion from the garden, which controls *The Sun Also Rises* and *A Farewell to Arms,* among other books and stories. Apparently there is extant more than one manuscript version for scholars to choose from. Carlos Baker mentions the presence of another married couple in one of the versions, a painter named Nick and his wife, Barbara. Of the same generation as David and Catherine Bourne, Nick (is Adams his last name?) and Barbara live in Paris. And there may be additional characters. Presumably, the material involving them is in a less finished state and easily stripped away to find the spare, if skimpy, novel we have now in print. But the truth about editing the work of a dead writer in such circumstances is that you can only cut to affirm his strengths, to reiterate the strategies of style for which he is known; whereas he himself may have been writing to transcend them. This cannot be the book Hemingway envisioned at the most ambitious moments of his struggle to realize it, a struggle that occupied him intermittently for perhaps fifteen years. And it should have been published for what it is, a piece of something, part of a design.

For there are clear signs here of something exciting going on, the enlargement of a writer's mind toward compassion, toward a less defensive construal of reality. The key is the character of Catherine Bourne. She is in behavior a direct descendant of Mrs. Macomber, of "The Short Happy Life," or of Frances Clyne, Robert Cohn's emasculating lover in *The Sun Also Rises,* the kind of

woman the author has before only detested and condemned. But here she has grown to suggest in Hemingway the rudiments of feminist perspective. And as for David Bourne, he is unmistakably the younger literary brother of Jake Barnes, the newspaperman wounded to impotence in that first expatriate novel. But David's passivity is not physical and therefore more difficult to put across. He reminds us a bit, actually, of Robert Cohn, whom Jake Barnes despised for suffering quietly the belittling remarks of women in public. Perhaps Hemingway is learning to dispense his judgments more thoughtfully. Or perhaps David Bourne was not designed as the hero of the piece at all.

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With a large cast and perhaps multiple points of view, something else might have been intended than what we have, a revised view of the lost generation perhaps, some additional reading of a kind of American life *ex patria,* with the larger context that would earn the tone of the book. There are enough clues here to suggest the unmistakable signs of a recycling of Hemingway's first materials toward less romance and less literary bigotry and greater truth. That is exciting because it gives evidence, despite his celebrity, despite his Nobel, despite the torments of his own physical self-punishment, of a writer still developing. Those same writing strategies Hemingway formulated to such triumph in his early work came to entrap him in the later. You can see this beginning to happen in his 1940 novel *For Whom the Bell Tolls,* where implanting the conception of the book in geography and fixing all its action in time and relentlessly understating the sentences were finally dramatic strategies not formally sufficient to the subject. I would like to think that as he began *The Garden of Eden,* his very next novel after that war work, he realized this and wanted to retool, to remake himself. That he would fail is almost not the point—but that he would have tried, which is the true bravery of a writer, requiring more courage than facing down an elephant charge with a .303 Mannlicher.

Notes

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The Sinister Sex

JOHN UPDIKE

Updike (1986), in an early review of the novel, notes that cuts must have been made to achieve the published version but finds The Garden of Eden *far better achieved than most other posthumous works, with moments that are among Hemingway's best—and also a departure from the author's previous portrayal of men and women. He sees* Garden *as looking into life as lived day to day by men and women and notes:* "The Garden of Eden *adds to the canon not merely another volume but a new reading of Hemingway's sensibility." This is the slightly revised version of the review published in Updike's* Odd Jobs *(New York: Knopf, 1991).*

The heirs of Ernest Hemingway and his widow and three sons are all listed on the copyright page—and the staff of Charles Scribner's Sons have produced yet another text out of the morass of unfinished manuscripts which bedevilled the writer's last fifteen years. *The Garden of Eden* was begun, according to the Carlos Baker biography, "in the early months of 1946," and was "an experimental compound of past and present, filled with astonishing ineptitudes and based in part upon memories of his marriages to Hadley and Pauline, with some excursions behind the scenes of his current life with Mary." Within a year, "more than a hundred pages of *The Garden of Eden* were . . . in typescript, with nine hundred pages still in longhand." Baker, not generally given to harsh criticism of his subject's oeuvre, blames this "long and emptily hedonistic novel of young lovers" for contaminating with its fatuity and narcissism the published novel *Across the River and Into the Trees* (1950). In the early fifties, a cut-down version of *The Garden of Eden* reappeared as the first part of Hemingway's projected sea trilogy under the title *The Sea When Young*. In 1958, while working on the Paris sketches that would become *A Moveable Feast,* the author revised the recalcitrant novel down to forty-eight chapters and roughly two hundred

thousand words; Baker still complains, "It had none of the taut nervousness of Ernest's best fiction, and was so repetitious that it seemed interminable." The lamentable opus is last glimpsed as Castro is wresting Cuba from Batista, in late 1958: "The situation . . . was a constant worry. [Hemingway, off in Idaho] tried to forget it by rewriting parts of the Paris sketchbook and revising three chapters of *The Garden of Eden*."

The propriety of publishing, as a commercial endeavor, what a dead writer declined to see into print is, of course, dubious. The previous forays into the Hemingway trove have unfortunately tended to heighten our appreciation not of his talent but of his psychopathology; even the charming and airy *A Moveable Feast,* the first and most finished of the posthumous publications (1964), had its ugly flashes of malice and ingenuous self-serving. *Islands in the Stream* (1970) was a thoroughly ugly book, brutal and messy and starring a painter-sailor whose humanity was almost entirely dissolved in bar-room jabber and Hollywood heroics. The letters (1981), too, which Hemingway had wisely tried to safeguard from the scavengers, provided insights more alarming than appealing into his bellicose, infantile, sexist, and ultimately paranoid nature. Among the published letters is one addressed to an early scavenger, Charles A. Fenton, saying, "Writing that I do not wish to publish, you have no right to publish. I would no more do a thing like that to you than I would cheat a man at cards or rifle his desk or wastebasket or read his personal letters." Such old-fashioned gentlemanly thunder rings hollow in a hustling era of professional desk-riflers. The second-wave Hemingway biographies proliferate, whispering to us that Oak Park was not the forest primeval and that three weeks of distributing candy bars do not a warrior make; soon the old poser will have been stripped to his Freudian bones, much like Santiago's great dead marlin in *The Old Man and the Sea.*

However: Hemingway, after a semi-eclipse in the sixties, when his fascination with violence and war seemed desperately unworthy, now stands as a classic as surely as Hawthorne, and twenty-five years after his death his bearish claims to privacy are perhaps superseded by the claims his literary personality makes upon our interest. There is every reason—its hackneyed title, Baker's scorn, the forty years of murky fiddling that have passed since its conception—to distrust *The Garden of Eden;* yet the book, as finally presented, is something of a miracle, a fresh slant on the old magic, and falls just short of the satisfaction that a fully intended and achieved work gives us. The miracle, it should be added, does not seem to be Hemingway's alone but is shared with workers unnamed in the prefatory note, which blandly admits to "some cuts in the manuscript and some routine copy-editing corrections." Some cuts. "Some Chink," as Harry Morgan says to himself of the mysterious Chinese gentleman in *To Have and Have Not.* When last heard of, *The Garden of Eden,* according to Carlos Baker, consisted