

ANGST, AUTHORSHIP, CRITICS:

“The Snows of Kilimanjaro,” “The Crack-Up,” *Advertisements for Myself*

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IT IS NOT EASY BEING A GREAT WRITER. Nor is it easy—as various members of Norman Mailer’s family have testified—living with a great writer. The vocation of the serious author involves, along with a multitude of passions and perspectives, a good deal of *angst*. In using the term *angst*, I mean a deep sense of existential dread, but more particularly a peculiar experience of alienation that may be inseparable—it has been argued—from twentieth-century authorship. Hilary Justice has described a kind of “writer/author alienation” (260) experienced both by Mailer and Hemingway, and their differing responses to that alienation.¹

Hemingway saw this alienation as a paradox and sought to eliminate it through force of will and pedantry. Mailer, having learned from Hemingway (and writing not as a Modernist but Postmodernist), embraced the paradox and gave it center stage. . . . Their future success as novelists (which would in both cases be uneven) would depend for the remainder of their careers on how successfully each negotiated the inescapable alienation of writer from author that was intrinsic to mid-twentieth-century American authorship. (260)

Her description of Mailer as one who “embraced the paradox and gave it center stage” sounds familiar to those of us who value and teach his work. The phrase brings us face to face with the complex relationship between

Mailer's fiction and nonfiction, and between the writer and the public figure. Few contemporary writers have "embraced the paradox" as much as Mailer, but this "writer/author alienation" (Justice 260) would seem to be common to many twentieth-century authors. My conviction is that these three authors—Norman Mailer (1923–2007), Ernest Hemingway (1899–1961), and F. Scott Fitzgerald (1896–1940)—in struggling with that alienation, reveal a profound experience of *angst*, an *angst* that was both personal and cultural. Their literary responses were very different, as we shall see, but each writer was able to find a degree of *aesthetic distance* that transformed that *angst* into art.

To illustrate this claim, I want to compare Mailer's genre-bending work *Advertisements for Myself* (1959) with Hemingway's short story "The Snows of Kilimanjaro" (1936) and Fitzgerald's three essays known as "The Crack Up" (1936). There are some interesting parallels to note. In career arc, each writer had published about three major works—one of which now has classic status. In age, each man was between 36 and 39 years old. In their public role as authors, each felt challenged and embattled by the critics. In addition, these two historical moments—1936 amid the Great Depression and 1959 a decade or so into the Cold War—portray an America experiencing great uncertainty and on the cusp of enormous change. Personally and culturally, there was plenty of *angst* going round.²

HEMINGWAY AND "THE SNOWS OF KILIMANJARO" (1936)

In his short story "The Snows of Kilimanjaro," Hemingway began his long search for what Rose Marie Burwell has called "a form and style that would express his reflexive vision of the artist" (1), a search that occupied him to the end of his life.³ The story tells of Harry, dying on the African plain of gangrene, arguing bitterly with his wife, Helen. With regret, he remembers his life: what he had seen, what he remembered, and what he had *not* written,

He had seen the world change; not just the events; although he had seen many of them and had watched the people, but he had seen the subtler change and he could remember how people were at different times. He had been in it and he had watched it and his duty was to write of it; but now he never would ("Snows," 17).

“Snows” is a complex and beautifully told story, certainly one of Hemingway’s best. The structure, however, seems fragmented and the tone is dark.⁴ So, what is happening? This story is a tale not of what is but of *what might have been*. To use Jennifer Harding’s useful term, the story is all about *counterfactuals*.

The central theme of “The Snows of Kilimanjaro,” I believe, is the exploration of unrealized alternatives and the coincident judgments of these alternatives by characters, narrator, and implied author. The explorations of “what might have been”—which appear in some form in every section of “Snows”—unite the story’s fragments and provide the key to its total thematic effect, inviting the reader to participate in the process of judgment. (Harding 21–22)

In 1936, Hemingway was living in Key West, Florida. Michael Reynolds tells us that he “was in a period of reassessment, melancholy and morose . . .” (222). He felt battered by the critics and preoccupied with death. It was the middle of the Great Depression. Fascists and Nazis were on the march, and another cataclysmic War seemed imminent. As Hemingway was working on what would become “Snows” and “Francis Macomber,” the first two of Fitzgerald’s three “Crack-Up” essays appeared in *Esquire*. Reading them, Hemingway was “depressed and appalled,” partly because—rightly or wrongly—he believed Scott was alluding not only to his own breakdown but also to Hemingway’s “suicidal gloom” (Reynolds 222). True or not, Hemingway would have his revenge.⁵ Even so, the “Crack-Up” articles may have been the catalyst that Hemingway needed to write this masterpiece. Reynolds continues the story,

In April of 1936, shortly after reading Fitzgerald’s third installment in *Esquire*, Ernest finished his story of the dying writer in disrepair, “The Snows of Kilimanjaro,” in which Harry berates himself for the same kinds of failure that haunt Fitzgerald: squandering talent which never creates the fiction of which it was capable. . . . The result is a collection of short stories inside of a short story about a writer who failed his talent by not writing these very stories (Reynolds 222–223).

The larger setting is Africa—the continent described as the Cradle of Mankind. The veneer of civilization is removed, human illusions stripped away. The story is told with a simplicity and universality reminiscent of the parables of Jesus in the New Testament. As was his wont, Hemingway uses several natural symbols, emerging spontaneously it seems from the setting—plain and mountain, hyena and leopard, heat and snow, symbols that Carlos Baker has well described.⁶ Hemingway uses these symbols to portray a series of contrasts. The hot, humid plain where Harry receives his death-wound is contrasted with the cold, pure summit of Kilimanjaro. The “evil-smelling emptiness” represented by the hyena (15) is juxtaposed with “the dried and frozen carcass of a leopard” (3) found near the summit—a contrast to which we shall return.

The immediate setting is the African plain. The plain is the dwelling place of mankind, the natural landscape of human mortality, the stage upon which each of us faces life’s challenges. Inevitably, it is also a stage where each must face death. Carlos Baker reminds us that Hemingway was a master of “cultural synecdoche” (206), so it may not be too farfetched to see in “The Snows of Kilimanjaro” a retelling of the Garden of Eden parable—with a new Adam and Eve, and a new Fall from innocence.⁷ In “The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber”—a story that appears *quantum-entangled* with “Snows,” the hunter Robert Wilson quotes Shakespeare’s *Henry IV, Part II*, “we owe God a death and let it go which way it will, he that dies this year is quit for the next” (150).⁸ For both Harry and Francis, this would be the year.

How do we read “The Snows of Kilimanjaro,” meaning not only the title but the controlling image of the story? Sometimes, we may underestimate the crucial role of *place* in Hemingway’s work, what his character Colonel Cantwell called the “accidents of terrain” (Kennedy 325). Here is Gerald Kennedy’s helpful summary,

As a writer, Hemingway was of course intensely interested in human conflicts and challenges, but he perceived in the physical order an ultimate, irreducible truth that he strove to capture. He understood how deeply “accidents of terrain” had shaped his work and how important “dreams of places” were to the construction of his stories and novels. As suggested by “The Snows of Kilimanjaro,” that most geographical of his fictions, he also recognized that place is the organizing principle of memory and

so conceived the last reveries of Harry, the dying writer, as a series of topographical visions. To the end, doing country (or doing city) remained arguably the crux of Hemingway's poetics, the generative principle of narrative itself. (328–329)

Kennedy perceives that in Hemingway “place is the organizing principle of memory” (328). This claim rings true: we may think of the title and epigraph for Hemingway’s *The Sun Also Rises* (1926) or we could reflect on the archetypal nature of so many *settings* in Hemingway’s work.⁹ We might think about the complex relationship between inner and outer landscapes, remembering Mailer’s poignant description of Hemingway, that his “inner landscape was a nightmare” (“Punching Papa,” 170).¹⁰ Maybe it was. It needs to be said, however, that whenever we encounter landscape, it is always as *pictured* through our senses, as *refracted* through our own perspective, as *recreated* from our own memories.

So Kennedy writes of Harry’s “topographical visions” in “Snows.” These are a series of five vignettes, printed in italic type, describing places, people, events, sensory impressions, hints and allusions that represent “what might have been.” They do not yet exist as stories, as developed plots and narratives. They are merely the *possibility* of story. They exist only in Harry’s fevered imagination—they are the thoughts of a dying man. Containing the raw material for a dozen stories, all remain unwritten.

In other words, returning to Harding’s term, these five vignettes printed in italics are *counterfactuals*, one of three different sets in this story. But even the non-italic sections—the bitter arguments between Harry and Helen—also deal with “what might have been.” Harry wonders—if I had taken better care of the initial wound, this would not have happened. But it *did* happen. Helen reasons—if we had never come to Africa, this death-wound would not have happened. But it *did* happen. Hemingway’s story is full of such counterfactuals. Indeed, it is as if Hemingway has written the whole story in the *subjunctive mood*, written with an excess of content, with dozens of potential stories yet to be told. As told by the normally minimalist Hemingway, this “excess of content” seems unusual—at the very least.

What of the story’s end? We discover that the *subjunctive mood* extends to the final act—and to the two endings. In the first ending, Harry is rescued from the African plain by Compton and flown past the snow covered mountain of Kilimanjaro, “as wide as all the world, great, high, and unbelievably

white in the sun" (27). This we could call the "happy" ending—beloved of Hollywood and the Hallmark Channel. Ostensibly, the flight and the mountain could represent immortality. But, we ask, immortality for whom? Not for poor Harry, for just before this scene we read that "the weight went from his chest" (25). Does the story itself, "The Snows of Kilimanjaro," possess a kind of immortality, one that is shared by its implied author, Ernest Hemingway? Perhaps it does.

Then, with a jolt, we realize the truth. The triumphant flight past the pure white snows of Kilimanjaro is yet another "might have been" for poor Harry. The first ending, the "happy" ending, is abruptly followed by a second—where Helen discovers her husband's lifeless body. After Harry's fantasy ride to Kilimanjaro, the story ends in stone-cold naturalism, with the hyena's uncanny cry and Helen's beating heart ("Snows," 28).

What is the significance of another animal, the leopard, mentioned in the beginning in the epigraph? Surely that—even at the point of death—this skilled hunter was still climbing, still searching for its prey. Ben Stoltzfus draws a contrast between Harry and the leopard: "The leopard near the summit is one of the objects in the chain of animal events, death, and sensory impressions that contributes to the particular emotion of the story. The epigraph states that no one has explained the presence of the leopard at that altitude, but Hemingway's story is the answer to the riddle and it explains the cat's presence" (224). Harry, by contrast, as a writer was neither climbing nor hunting. "Leopards hunt and they do what leopards do, whereas Harry, the would-be writer, does everything except write" (Stoltzfus 224). Both man and leopard die—as eventually do all living things—but they die for different reasons.

How do we reconcile the two endings, the first of which, although printed in normal font not italics, is in reality counterfactual in nature? Here again Harding is helpful.

By the end of the story, readers have not only learned what Helen and Harry regret, but have also been supplied with an opportunity to judge Harry's talent through the memories and thoughts conveyed in the italicized vignettes. The story ultimately privileges the counterfactual past, endorsing the notion that Harry *should have written his stories*. Harry, the narrator, and the implied author all seem to agree on this point, and readers are led

to share this evaluation as well. The false rescue ending encourages readers not only to understand Harry and Helen's regrets, but to experience a sense of disappointment for themselves. (32)

At this point, in 1936—and for while afterwards—Hemingway's life *was* different from Harry's. As both narrator and implied author, Hemingway recognizes the temptation that Harry represented, one that he would wrestle with until the end of his life. But in this story, at least—on any reading, a true masterpiece—Hemingway has learned his lesson from Harry's fatal mistake.

Rich in regret and counterfactuals, this story “flaunts the creative presence of an implied author who has made no such mistake—an author who has flirted with multiple narrative possibilities while maintaining a tight grip on the story's ultimate trajectory” (Harding 33), right up to the alternative endings. Hemingway feared Harry's fate, yet in this story he brilliantly demonstrated his “own final control of the text” (Harding 33). Like Fitzgerald, Hemingway had bared his soul, revealing his *angst*. Unlike Fitzgerald, he employed a complex *fictive* form to do so.

Sadly, however, his “final control of the text” (Harding 33), as illustrated in “Snows,” would not be the final act. Towards the end of his life, as serious physical illness, depression, and alcohol abuse took over, Hemingway would begin to breakdown, finally in 1961 taking his own life. Burwell has poignantly described this disintegration, linking Hemingway's complex narrative style with the metaphor he himself used to describe his task as an author—that of *the iceberg*. Burwell concludes with this description of the later postwar Hemingway,

Working throughout the postwar years at the four novels he could not bring to closure, Hemingway examined the life of the creative male from childhood through late middle age. He unified the narrative by invoking memory in a consciously Proustian manner, by twinning painters and writers as characters; by writing recurrently of the loss or destruction of the writer's manuscripts by his wife, and by focusing intensely on the growth and decline of the artist. Always Hemingway was aware that the narratives were very personal; and sometime he would speculate that they could not be published while he was alive. . . . In the

final months of his life Hemingway discovered that in venturing from the old narrative forms which had protected him from introspection, he had descended into the iceberg (Burwell 4–5).

So it was that, losing his “final control of the text” (Harding 33) and realizing his inability to write as he had done in an earlier period, experiencing serious physical and psychic pain, depression, and paranoia, Hemingway would on July 2, 1961 take his own life. But whatever his personal demons and however we understand his tragic end, it is Hemingway’s commitment to his art that should have the last word, and for which he will be remembered. For, as Ben Stoltzfus has written,

The one constant in his life was fidelity to writing and the subordination of almost everything else to it. When it comes to art, he is an authentic and original genius, and we admire the discipline that enabled him to create his masterpieces. . . . That is Hemingway’s essence, a Nobel laureate who altered the direction of twentieth-century writing. (218)

FITZGERALD AND “THE CRACK-UP” ESSAYS (1936)

Fitzgerald’s three revealing *Esquire* essays, “The Crack-up,” were not well received in 1936. Hemingway was “appalled,” and his reaction was typical. When, after Fitzgerald’s death, the larger 1945 book, *The Crack-Up*, appeared, critics and contemporaries were more respectful. This very useful collection, edited by Edmund Wilson, contains—along with the three 1936 “The Crack-Up” essays—some of Fitzgerald’s other significant essays, such as “Echoes of the Jazz Age” (1931), “My Lost City” (1932), and “Early Success” (1937), his Notebooks, letters to and from friends, and much more. His essays in particular present an interesting “autobiographical sequence.” Wilson points out in a preliminary Note,

The following pieces have been selected from the articles written by F. Scott Fitzgerald between 1931 and 1937. They make an autobiographical sequence which vividly puts on record his state of mind and his point of view during the later years of his life. (“Autobiographical Pieces.” *The Crack-Up*, 11)

This additional material shed a good deal of light on the original “The Crack-Up” articles, revealing, as Wilson claims, “his state of mind.” Apart from occasional quotations from these other essays, however, my focus here is mainly on the 1936 essays. My intention is to highlight *a particular moment*—the year 1936—and how both Hemingway and Fitzgerald in literary terms responded to the personal and cultural stresses they were experiencing. But there is no doubt that *The Crack-Up* collection, as a whole, paints a more complete picture of Fitzgerald’s state of mind, as well as—more importantly—his literary task.

So what was the response to the 1936 “Crack-Up” articles in *Esquire*? Scott Donaldson, writing in 2002, says, “Above all, and despite their evasions, one is never in doubt in reading them that they come from the heart, that they convey the very real depths of the author’s depression” (“Fitzgerald’s Nonfiction,” 179). Often in his work, Fitzgerald seems to express a sense of *angst*, but much of that *angst* seems focused in the three “Crack-Up” essays appearing in 1936. Are these essays merely an expression of “the author’s depression” (Fitzgerald’s Nonfiction,” 179), as Donaldson has said? Is there little else?

Patricia Hampl would go further, claiming that “The Crack-up” should be recognized as signaling “a fundamental change in American consciousness” (108). She sees these essays as a “sharp pivot,” a change in narrative style that was a forerunner of American autobiographical writing:

The publication of the ‘Crack-Up’ essays looks now like a sharp pivot, marking a fundamental change in American consciousness and therefore in narrative voice, an evident moment when the center of authorial gravity shifted from the ‘omniscience’ afforded by fiction’s third person to the presumption (accurate or not) of greater authenticity provided by the first-person voice with all its limitations.’ (Hampl 108)

We realize that such self-disclosure was rare in the 1930s, especially from a man. The language appeared antithetical to contemporary expectations of masculinity—expectations shaped by the hard-boiled novels of Raymond Chandler, the film persona of Humphrey Bogart, and the celebrity legends of Hemingway himself. In such a *macho* culture, it is not surprising that many were embarrassed by Fitzgerald’s revelations. After all, Fitzgerald had

not hidden behind a fictional voice such as Harry's; he had not used Joseph Conrad's complex double framing device found in *Heart of Darkness* (1902); he had not written under a *nom de plume* as George Eliot had done.¹¹ Yet, despite the suspicion and derision of contemporaries and critics, Fitzgerald was creating something new.

We can also recognize that this new confessional voice is as much *evasion* as revelation. In Fitzgerald's self-disclosure, there was much *literary art*, and a heavy dose of self-deception. At times, as writers or readers, are we all not guilty of such self-deception? As T.S. Eliot reminds us, "our lives are mostly a constant evasion of ourselves" (155).¹² It is interesting, therefore, that the opening sentences of the first essay are actually in second-person, not the supposed "greater authenticity provided by the first-person voice with all its limitations" (Hampl 108).¹³ Fitzgerald begins with the provocative claim, "Of course all life is a process of breaking down . . ." ("The Crack-Up," 69). Following these introductory sentences, there comes the oft-quoted aphorism of Fitzgerald, "[T]he test of a first-rate intelligence is the ability to hold opposed ideas in the mind at the same time, and still retain the ability to function. One should, for example, be able to see that things are hopeless and yet be determined to make them otherwise" (*The Crack-Up*, 69). There are, of course, many precedents for a first-person voice—confessional or otherwise.¹⁴ It is also true that while *something* is being revealed, "often in a wry, self-deprecating style" (Hampl 104), much more is being concealed. Fitzgerald makes no mention of his own alcoholism, his affair with a married woman, or of Zelda's schizophrenia.¹⁵ Rather telling omissions, one might say. In his 1980 article, Donaldson says, "As it stands, 'The Crack-Up' tells its truth only between the lines" ("The Crisis," 182). Indeed it does. But that is true of much of Modernist fiction and poetry, is it not?

I said earlier that there was much *literary art* in Fitzgerald's apparent self-disclosure in these essays. The "Crack-Up" confessions, while obviously related to a genuine experience of *angst* and breakdown at the time, possess a complex relationship to his literary creations—to characters such as Jay Gatsby in *The Great Gatsby* (1925) or Dick Diver in *Tender is the Night* (1934). As with Mailer, the line between his fiction and nonfiction is a complex, contested border. In an interesting 2013 article in *The Mailer Review*, comparing Fitzgerald, Mailer, and Dylan, Bob Batchelor writes,

Fitzgerald's insight into Jay Gatsby revealed, according to critic Alfred Kazin, the author's "tragic moodiness" and "a burst of self-understanding" that set the book apart from those of his 1920s contemporaries and writers ever since (Kazin and Solotaroff 122). It took a special comprehension of the lives of the wealthy and the lives of ordinary people to create such a broad swath. . . . Kazin's idea captures the strength and beauty of the novel and may actually reveal why it has such staying power. Fitzgerald, despite his claims of not really understanding Gatsby as he created him, desperately identified with the dreams the character espoused. He knew the pain of losing the girl and the joy in attaining her. (76–77)

Scott Donaldson agrees with this general point. "It is true of Fitzgerald," he writes, "not only that his characters are modeled on himself but that he sometimes becomes his characters after the fact" ("The Crisis," 185).¹⁶ Batchelor cites other critics who agree that Fitzgerald "virtually invented the confessional mode" of writing, and that his own life seems to mirror his greatest artistic creations, characters such as Jay Gatsby (78).¹⁷

It is also true that Fitzgerald is dealing with a profound sense of *loss* in "The Crack-Up" essays—whether we describe it as the loss of youth, innocence, naiveté or whatever. Moreover, that element of *loss* is characteristic of his best fiction: it is *not* restricted to the personal revelations of "The Crack-Up." In a foreword to an anthology of Fitzgerald's early short stories, Roxana Robinson writes:

What is more beautiful than the landscape of loss? What is more heartbreaking, more haunting, more romantic? F. Scott Fitzgerald saw the world as a place of unbearable beauty and unlimited glamour. He saw it as illuminated by the glory of the natural landscape, by the glitter of the people, and by the perilous, irresistible pull of love. He was a romantic, and the greatest of his writing is charged with feeling and haunted by a longing for something irretrievable. (xi)

Fitzgerald could write convincingly of such loss because he was such a perceptive *chronicler* of his age—in this respect, superior to Hemingway and

certainly comparable to Mailer. His clear-sighted perspective is illuminated by his 1931 essay, “Echoes of the Jazz Age,” where—looking back from the sobering vantage point of the Great Depression—he writes what could be the definitive *post-mortem* of the 1920s.

The Jazz Age had a wild youth and a heady middle age. . . . Finally skirts came down and everything was concealed. . . . It ended two years ago [1929], because the utter confidence which was its essential prop received an enormous jolt, and it didn't take long for the flimsy structure to settle earthward. And after two years the Jazz Age seems as far away as the days before the War. It was borrowed time anyhow—the whole upper tenth of a nation living with the insouciance of grand ducs and the casualness of chorus girls. (*The Crack-Up*, 21).

This wider perspective helps us to understand the standpoint of his 1936 “Crack-Up” essays. While Fitzgerald had appalled friends and critics alike, the essays did introduce an important confessional element into American narratives of the 1930's. Certainly, their immediate source was Fitzgerald's depression, his personal *angst*. But their larger themes—such as Robinson's haunting “landscape of loss” (xi) or his own description of the Jazz Age—were grounded in his genius and passion as a writer. In other words, the line between the personal confessions of “The Crack-Up” and the fictive creations of Fitzgerald's short stories and novels (including his essays on the Jazz Age, etc.) is not as obvious as Hemingway and others believed. His literary art, the ability to take his subjective *angst*, his own perspective on the culture, and make it into objective art was there from early on. Bryant Mangum, for instance, sees this “artistic detachment” as beginning with his 1920 short story, “Benediction”:

With “Benediction,” Fitzgerald seems literally to have discovered the principle of artistic detachment or aesthetic distance, a distance that will lead in his most mature work to that often-cited quality that Malcolm Cowley labeled “double vision”—simply defined, the ability to participate emotionally in experience while, at the same time, retaining the ability to stand back and view it objectively. (Mangum, “Introduction” xx)

In the 1936 “Crack-Up” articles, while the immediate *angst* is real and painful, Fitzgerald had not totally lost his “aesthetic distance” as a writer. It is true that the distance seems eclipsed, temporarily, by the deep stresses of 1936 and later. As he wrote in “Pasting it Together,” his second article, “in a real dark night of the soul it is always three o’clock in the morning, day after day” (75). However, as with Hemingway, Fitzgerald’s *angst* was an integral part of his humanity: it cannot be separated from his literary gift—a gift that was also his doom.

In conclusion, the *angst* expressed in the “Crack-Up” articles was disturbing, so the shocked reaction of friends and critics was not totally unwarranted. However, most failed to recognize that there was a degree of “artistic detachment or aesthetic distance” (Mangum, “Introduction” xx) even in his “laments” (Hampl 110).¹⁸ Today, with our contemporary understanding of memoir, confessional literature, and other creative nonfiction, we may recognize more clearly that aesthetic distance. We are able to see continuity between Fitzgerald’s self-creation in “The Crack-Up” and the creation of his fictive characters such as Jay Gatsby, Dick Diver, and others.

It seems undeniable that Fitzgerald was indeed “a romantic, and the greatest of his writing is charged with feeling and haunted by a longing for something irretrievable” (Robinson xi). But he was also a Modernist. We recognize that his peculiar genius was both to subjectively experience the *angst* and also—as an artist—to objectively analyze his experience, thereby creating art that was “charged with feeling.”

THE CULTURAL CONTEXT OF THE 1930S

What is the cultural context for Hemingway and Fitzgerald in the 1930s? Do authors reflect the struggles of their age or simply their own struggles? We would answer both, surely. The economic and social *angst* of the 1930s—considerable on any metric—cannot easily be divorced from one person’s psychological *angst*. We remember that this was the middle of the Great Depression, and although the Great War was two decades previous, another greater War seemed increasingly inevitable.

On a different level, the 18th Amendment had been repealed in December 1933, so alcohol was once more legal in America. Ironically, Hampl points out that, just as Fitzgerald’s “Crack-Up” articles were appearing, the first Alcoholics Anonymous groups were beginning to meet. There was no causal

relationship, but as Hampl suggests, “no cultural change happens in a vacuum” (108). At the very least, there was “a shared landscape” (108). Through these AA groups, America was introduced to a new kind of secular confessional, a different kind of personal storytelling—one that nearly a century later is still very much with us.¹⁹

What of the phrase “nervous breakdown” and the metaphor “crack-up”? A useful article, “Nervous Breakdown in 20th-Century American Culture” by Megan Barke and others, shows how the term opens “an interesting window on pervasive anxieties” (565). The phrase had been introduced in 1901 by Albert Adams in a “technical treatise, addressed to physicians,” but he used it with a decidedly “mechanistic emphasis” (568). The article continues,

Adam’s specific physical arguments had little impact, but his term quickly added to the lexicon available to discuss nervous ailments. Attention to ‘shell shock’ in World War I provided an additional ingredient, and by the 1920s, along with continued use of neurasthenia and stress or strain, nervous breakdown had clearly become part of a standard American vocabulary. (Barke et. al. 568)

They suggest that earlier generations often masked their anxieties by more freely using opiates, but that particular escape from stress was increasingly blocked from the 1890s onward.²⁰ As we have said, there was plenty of *angst* going around. The term nervous breakdown “began to cover a wide range of definitions,” embracing “a multiplicity of symptoms” (Barke et. al., 569). The very vagueness of the term no doubt increased its usefulness. While there were attempts to distinguish between mild and severe cases, such rational evaluations were not always successful: “Yet many descriptions of nervous breakdown belied this rational progression, insisting that the phenomenon always involved terrible pain: as F. Scott Fitzgerald wrote in ‘The Crack-Up,’ ‘Every act of life from the morning tooth-brush to the friend at dinner had become an effort’” (Barke et. al., 570).

Gradually, the usefulness of the term nervous breakdown—and the associated metaphor of a “crack-up”—diminished in American culture. In part, this was due to the impact of World War II, Korea and Vietnam, which increased understanding of the psychological effects of trauma on soldiers—and on their families (Barke et. al. 577). In part, this was also due to a new

series of drugs, including tranquilizers and antidepressants, available by the 1950s. In 1952, the American Psychiatric Association produced their first *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual* (DSM I). “Nervous breakdown,” the authors tell us, “was never listed” (578). They conclude, “Nervous breakdown’s history and its continued currency suggest a fascinating undercurrent to American worries about worry in the 20th century” (580).

It seems undeniable that both Hemingway and Fitzgerald suffered—severely at times—from what we have been calling *angst*. It is within that developing sense of dread—cultural “worries about worry” (580)—that we should place both “The Snows of Kilimanjaro” and “The Crack-Up.” Our understanding of their pain as authors and as men, and the vocabulary we employ to describe it, has of course changed from the 1930s. But their *angst* remains—with dimensions that are literary, medical, psychological, and cultural.

So how do we understand “Snows” and “The Crack-Up” today? Both authors were undergoing a significant and profound transformation—both in *spirit* and in *psyche*. Donaldson suggests there had been an “alienation from self” (“The Crisis,” 184), which seems plausible. War and the Depression had brought vast amounts of suffering and loss into people’s lives. The actions taken by each author are clear. Fitzgerald commits to be “a writer only,” less the Jazz Age playboy.²¹ Hemingway, for his part, decides he will not make Harry’s mistake: he *will* write the stories.

Initially, it could appear that Hemingway’s response in “Snows” is more successful in narrative technique, less bound by the particular context of the 1930s, and more *timeless* as a literary work. That view seems plausible. However, by including Fitzgerald’s other essays from the 1930s to form a wider “autobiographical sequence” (Wilson 11), his original 1936 articles reveal a mature perspective on that cultural context—the contradictions of America in the 1920s and 1930s—that go beyond anything Hemingway could have written.

So, despite differences of narrative form and intention, “The Snows of Kilimanjaro” and “The Crack-Up” share a common landscape—that of authorial anxiety and cultural depression. Both works were written under personal stress, both are revealing, and both proved therapeutic for their authors.²² To use a handy German phrase, the *Sitz im Leben* of both Hemingway and Fitzgerald in 1936 had far more similarity than either author was prepared to admit.

MAILER AND ADVERTISEMENTS FOR MYSELF (1959)

Two decades on, in 1959, in a genre-bending fusion of retrospective, self-creation, and future strategy, Mailer's *Advertisements* appeared. Norman Mailer believed his task was "nothing less than making a revolution in the consciousness of our time" (*Advertisements*, 17). This bold work would mark a new, controversial era in Mailer's life and work. *Advertisements* has been described by David Castronovo as "an act of defiance—filled with tantrums and inflated rhetoric—but nevertheless a landmark in our literature of protest" (179). From this moment onward, Mailer would never be "the modernist *deus absconditus* . . . vanishing into silence" (630) as Leo Braudy has described Thomas Pynchon. Mailer must be both observer *of* and participant *in* his times, both author and actor. Mailer would embrace that dual role with enthusiasm.

We have seen that Hilary Justice compared Hemingway and Mailer on the issue of "writer/author alienation." Hemingway, she says, tried to overcome that alienation "through force of will," whereas Mailer, writing as a Postmodernist, "embraced the paradox and gave it center stage" (260). Indeed he did. We realize, naturally, that Mailer's postwar world of 1959 was very different from the world of the 1930s. This is evident in the brutal opening words of Mailer's 1957 article, "The White Negro," reprinted in *Advertisements for Myself*²³: "Probably, we will never be able to determine the psychic havoc of the concentration camp and the atom bomb upon the unconscious mind of almost everyone alive in these years. . . . The Second World War presented a mirror to the human condition which blinded anyone who looked into it" (*Advertisements*, 338.) Both Fitzgerald and Mailer sought to understand and record their times, more so perhaps than Hemingway.²⁴ Richard Foster describes the many similarities between "The Crack-Up" and *Advertisements*.²⁵ Mailer seems to agree, confessing toward the end of *Advertisements for Myself* that, "Fitzgerald was an indifferent caretaker of his talent, and I have been a cheap gambler with mine" (477). Michael K. Glenday also sees the relationship between Fitzgerald and Mailer as close, claiming in his *Mailer Review* article that "Mailer saw Fitzgerald as seminal and exemplary" (121).²⁶

There is, of course, much more in *Advertisements for Myself*. Just as "Snows" had dozens of potential stories, so Mailer too has an *excess* of content. In structure and genre terms, Mailer was breaking new ground with

Advertisements. Its structure, Justice suggests, “. . . owes nothing to classical literary forms of Western canonical works” (266), for Mailer’s purpose “was to confront alienation head-on” (266).²⁷ Alex Hicks has suggested to me that “the big difference between *Advertisements* and the Hemingway and Fitzgerald stories is that the latter two are preponderantly diagnostic (if not *post mortems*) while *Advertisements* is aspirational and—as narrative rather than compilation—constructive” (personal correspondence).²⁸ The fact that Mailer continued to write and publish for nearly six decades after *Advertisements* certainly supports that suggestion. While the writing process did not change that much as the twentieth century progressed, the vocation of author did. More than many, Mailer realized that salient fact and acted upon it—first in his “The White Negro” (1957), then in *Advertisements* (1959), and later in *The American Dream* (1965) and beyond.

The title of *Advertisements for Myself* seems to connect Mailer’s work to Walt Whitman’s “Song of Myself,” the first poem in *Leaves of Grass* (1st Ed. 1855) a work that changed the direction of American poetry. Whitman “celebrated” a first person poetic voice, creating himself as a kind of bard—or, in the Old English poetic tradition, a *scop*. The poem opens thus,

I celebrate myself,
And what I assume you shall assume,
For every atom belonging to me as good belongs to you.
I loafe and invite my soul,
I lean and loafe at my ease. . . . Observing a spear of summer grass
(1st ed. 1855, lines 1–5)

It is important to realize that the “I” of the poem—the apparent hero—is not the same as Walt Whitman (1819–1892), even though a frontispiece in the 1855 First Edition of *Leaves of Grass* suggested the identification.²⁹ As Malcolm Cowley has written in his Introduction, “The hero as pictured in the frontispiece—this hero named ‘I’ or ‘Walt Whitman’ in the text—should not be confused with the Whitman of daily life. He is, as I said, a dramatized or idealized figure, and he is put forward as a representative American workingman, but one who prefers to loaf and invite his soul” (xv). Cowley argues that “Song of Myself” is “Whitman’s greatest work, perhaps his one completely realized work, and one of the great poems of modern times” (x). It is also, as many have seen, a significant forerunner to Mailer’s *Advertise-*

ments for Myself. Mailer would create other incarnations of such a “dramatized or idealized figure.”

Mailer saw clearly the problem of writer/author alienation in the mid-twentieth-century. However, in contrast to Hemingway, he “embraced the paradox and gave it center stage” (Justice 260). We can also see a contrast with the kind of heroes that Mailer creates in his writing, compared with the heroes of the earlier Modernist era. In an older article from the 1960s, Frederick J. Hoffman suggests that Mailer’s heroes, such as Sergius O’Shaughnessy, seem to be polar opposites to T. S. Eliot’s Prufrock. They act with passion, and they act without inhibitions.

Mailer’s writings explicitly state the terms of the modern revolt against conventional society. It is very different from past literary rebellions: it begins in the instinctual life, and it is free both from established conventions and ideological complications. Sergius O’Shaughnessy, Mailer’s favorite hero, as a personality stands at the opposite pole from Eliot’s J. Alfred Prufrock. He acts independently of all the inhibitions which allowed Prufrock to postpone action; his major impulse is both to murder and to create, to express passion through instinctive acts. He is the “marginal ego,” the dislocated and “disaffiliated” self, who tries to make a way of life from the energy and strategy of pure rebellion. (Hoffman 12)

In a recent article, Alex Hicks has made a strong case that we should see *Advertisements for Myself* as Mailer’s *Künstlerroman* or artist-novel—similar in scope to Joyce’s *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* and other examples. His thesis is “that *Advertisements for Myself* is better appreciated as a novelistic autobiography than as an anthology-like collection of writings,” and he finds support for this view from Bloom, Frye, Jonathan Lethem and many others (*Advertisements*). The quotation from Lethem is particularly powerful, “*Advertisements for Myself* is Mailer’s greatest book, simply because it frames the drama of the construction of this voice, the thrilling resurrection of his personality as his greatest asset after the public pratfalls accompanying his second and third novels” (Lethem xiv). Lethem saw Mailer “in the late fifties to have become a radar detector for the onset of . . . the post-modern cultural condition generally” (xii). I find the arguments of both Hicks and Lethem

cogent and persuasive, but I do wonder if elements of this *artist-novel* mode are not also found in Hemingway's "Snows" and Fitzgerald's "The Crack-Up"—albeit in a rudimentary form.

I am also reminded of Burwell's poignant description, quoted earlier, of the late Hemingway wrestling with the four narratives that he could not complete:

In their totality, the four narratives record Hemingway's fifteen-year search for a form and style that would express his reflexive vision of the artist. It is a search he had begun as early as the fall of 1936 as he wrote in 'The Snows of Kilimanjaro' of a dying writer's imaginative triumph over the distractions that have limited his art. There is a discernible movement towards what we have come to call *postmodern narrative* in these works. (Burwell 1-2)

Whenever we see an author creating as a character within his or her fiction an *artist*—any kind of artist—we should pay attention. In this literary phenomenon, we may see aspects of the *Künstlerroman* or artist-novel, certainly. But we may also regard it as a skillful use of aesthetic distance—as an example of Malcolm Cowley's "double vision"—that is "the ability to participate emotionally in experience while, at the same time, retaining the ability to stand back and view it objectively" (Mangum, "Introduction" xx). That ability, Mailer certainly possessed, as did, in an earlier age, Hemingway and Fitzgerald.³⁰

GREAT AUTHORS TRANSFORM ANGST INTO ART

These three authors were dealing with their own *angst* in their writing, but they also were creating art. In a dramatically changing America, Hemingway, Fitzgerald, and Mailer each faced the "inescapable alienation of writer from author" (Justice 260). Each was trying to work out what we could call a proper *authorial distance* in their narratives.

In his article on Hemingway called "The Life as Fiction and the Fiction as Life," Jackson Benson writes, "One's life, after all, is not a drama, nor should a drama ever be confused with a life. Both at bottom are mysterious, but each is different in kind from the other" (358). This is an important point in

interpreting the work of each author. Writing about Hemingway, but applicable, I would argue, also to Fitzgerald and Mailer, Benson says this:

Out of his emotions and needs, as well as out of a conscious desire to create and win approval, the author projects, transforms, exaggerates, and a drama emerges which is based on his life but which has only a very tenuous relationship to the situation, in its facts, that might be observed from the outside. That is to say, he writes out of his life, not about his life. So that one can say, yes, Hemingway's life is relevant to his fiction, but only relevant in the way that a dream might be relevant to the emotional stress that might have produced it. (350)

Benson has warned us of the dangers of the biographical fallacy.³¹ That warning is timely but needs to be balanced by an awareness of a proper authorial distance. There is always a complex relationship between author and work. The three authors used different narrative strategies, but their *Sitz im Leben*, I would argue, were similar. The crucial part of that life situation was simply being human. As great artists, they understood what human nature involved. They knew how to show that humanity in and through the art of fiction. That remains their lasting achievement.

For instance, only one of their works was set on a hot plain under Kilimanjaro, but all three were set in “a landscape of human mortality.” If part of our *angst* arises from our individual psyche, part comes from the awareness—indeed the *dread*—of both our human freedom and our mortality. Surely, Kierkegaard and Sartre have taught us that existential perspective, and Ben Stoltzfus has reminded us of the links between Sartre and Hemingway.³² So, whether creating fiction or nonfiction, each man wrote “out of his life, not about his life” (Benson 350). Struggling with an alienation both personal and cultural, each took his flawed humanity and transformed it into art.

How then should we interpret the tragic end of Hemingway? The *angst* that Hemingway fought against would eventually catch up with him. Yet the demons that Hemingway fought were both part of his humanity and an integral part of his genius. Jackson Benson, referring to the wound that Hemingway received on the Italian Front, makes this important point,

It may be that the wounding itself led to the dark thoughts that characterize Hemingway's best fictions (a canon in which the centerpieces would be "Big Two-Hearted River" and "A Clean, Well-Lighted Place"). But the shock of a lost immortality seems to have been magnified by an inherited depressive, paranoid personality. The latter was part of his genius, although it was an inheritance that at last he could not bear. (Benson 352)

I return to my opening thought: it is not easy being a great writer. Nor is it easy, living with a great writer. There is a profound *cost* to be paid—by the authors themselves but also by their wives, children, lovers, and friends. That appears undeniable. In these three works, Hemingway, Fitzgerald, and Mailer all sought to overcome their *angst* and translate it into art. The source of that *angst* was not only an alienation between writer and author (Justice 260), but also—and more profoundly, I suggest—an alienation between us as human beings. Their art, like that of all great artists, was a long search to "bridge the gulf," to overcome the estrangement, to communicate truthfully with other human beings. As was said of another great author, Vladimir Nabokov: "[I]t is a representative search, a heightened emblem of all our attempts to communicate . . . the distance between people, the distance separating love from love-making, mirage from reality—the desperate extent of all human need and desire" (Appel 456).³³

Vladimir Nabokov's infamous character, Humbert Humbert, suggests that we possess "only words to play with" (Appel 456). Indeed we do—mere words. Yet, using such frail and fallible words, employing flawed humanity and literary genius, these authors transformed personal *angst* into great art—creating works that shall abide, like Mount Kilimanjaro. In so doing, each has revealed to us genuine truth—a truth that may speak to our flawed but mutual humanity.

NOTES

1. In arguing her claim, Hilary Justice compares Hemingway's *Death in the Afternoon* (1932) with Mailer's *Advertisements for Myself* (1959), using the phrase "authorship and alienation." This suggested to me the theme of writer/author alienation, but I decided to use instead Hemingway's short story "The Snows of Kilimanjaro" (1936), published four years later, and to add Fitzgerald's "The Crack-Up" (1936). It seemed to me that "Snows" is a more successful work than *Death in the Afternoon*, and was also published the same year as Fitzgerald's articles. All three works, I be-

lieve, reveal this writer/author alienation, but I decided to use as my title “Angst, Authorship, and the Critics” to highlight other factors. The article by Justice, however, was the primary catalyst for my paper.

2. An earlier version of this paper was presented at the Seventeenth Norman Mailer Conference at Wilkes University, Pennsylvania, 10–12 October, 2019.
3. Hemingway’s long search for a “reflexive vision” culminated in the four works that he worked on until the end of his life but could not complete. Eventually, in various edited forms, they were published posthumously. “Together these four narratives form a serial sequence that was at times consciously modeled on Proust’s *Remembrance of Things Past*. . . . In their totality, the four narratives record Hemingway’s fifteen-year search for a form and style that would express his reflexive vision of the artist. It is a search he had begun as early as the fall of 1936 as he wrote in “The Snows of Kilimanjaro” of a dying writer’s imaginative triumph over the distractions that have limited his art. There is a discernible movement towards what we have come to call postmodern narrative in these works” (Burwell 1–2).
4. Kenneth Johnstone suggests that Hemingway wrote the story “to exorcise his guilt feelings for having neglected his serious writing” (223). He reminds us that Hemingway had published no novel since *A Farewell to Arms* (1929) and not much short fiction. The critics were not kind.
5. Angry because of Fitzgerald’s allusions to his own “suicidal gloom” (Reynolds 222), Hemingway mocks Fitzgerald in several places in both “Snows” and “Francis Macomber,” even after his editors asked him to tone down the attacks.
6. “The story is technically distinguished by the operation of several natural symbols. These are non-literary images, as always in Hemingway, and they have been carefully selected so as to be in complete psychological conformity with the locale and the dramatic situation. . . . Like the death-symbol, the image for immortality arises ‘naturally’ out of the geography and psychology of the situation” (Baker 193–194).
7. “He was . . . also beginning to attack the problem of cultural synecdoche, the means by which the novelist, presenting and evaluating the things he has known, summarizes dramatically the moral predicament of his time” (Baker 206).
8. There is some debate about whether Hemingway is being ironic or serious in using this Shakespeare quote. The young Hemingway evidently first heard it from his friend Chink Dorman Smith during the Great War (McKenna and Peterson 84).
9. To take just the ten stories in the Hemingway anthology, *The Snows of Kilimanjaro and Other Stories* (Scribner 1995), the settings are Safari, Café, Hospital, Hunt, Hospital, Café, War, Fight, and Safari. Each setting suggests by synecdoche that life is a safari, or a hospital or a café at night, etc.
10. Mailer, in his 1963 essay, “Punching Papa,” said that the truth of Hemingway’s “long odyssey” was that his “inner landscape was a nightmare” (170). Maybe it was, but the relationship between inner and outer landscapes—for any of us—is a complex one. We might assume that “inner landscape” is merely metaphorical, representing our psyche as some kind of physical space—a

plain, a mountain, a house. However, the word landscape is itself metaphorical—whether inner or outer. The *OED* calls landscape “a picture representing natural inland scenery,” contrasting it with seascape. In other words, landscape is a “picture” that is always being created and shaped by the human subject.

11. “For George Eliot, the act of novelistic good faith is contained in the seventeenth chapter [of *Adam Bede*], where she moves ahead in “time” to tell the reader of a recent discussion she has had with Adam Bede, long after the events of the novel. Thus she brings Adam out of the story, making him less totally defined by the frame of the plot, even while she also recalls to us her own role in the creation and articulation of the novel’s elements, not as Mary Ann Evans but as ‘George Eliot,’ the novelist” (Brady 628).
12. “Poetry may make us from time to time a little more aware of the deeper, unnamed feelings which form the substratum of our being, to which we rarely penetrate; for our lives are mostly a constant evasion of ourselves” (Eliot 155).
13. “Of course all life is a process of breaking down, but the blows that do the dramatic side of the work—the big, sudden blows that come, or seem to come, from outside—the ones you remember and blame things on and, in moments of weakness, tell your friends about, don’t show their effect all at once. There is another kind of blow that comes from within—that you don’t feel until it’s too late to do anything about it, until you realize with finality that in some regard you will never be as good a man again” (“The Crack-Up,” *The Crack-Up*, 69)
14. As first-person precedents to Fitzgerald voice in “The Crack-Up,” Hampl mentions Whitman’s “Song of Myself” (1855), Nick Carraway in *The Great Gatsby* (1925), Hemingway’s Nick Adams, and “before that the narrators of *Huckleberry Finn* and *Moby-Dick*” (108).
15. “Though he describes his psychological and spiritual breakdown, his utter collapse, often in a wry, self-deprecating style, he doesn’t spill many autobiographical beans. We don’t learn of his despair over his wife’s mental illness. He doesn’t divulge his bouts with drinking, his imprudent affair with a married woman, his money worries, his literary woes. Mother, father, those stock figures of personal narrative—never mentioned” (Hampl 104).
16. “Thus his retreat to Ashville, Tyron, Hendersonville in North Carolina during the two years of his personal depression virtually repeat Dick Diver’s drifting among the small towns of upstate New York. . . . He will now be ‘a writer only,’ he announces in the last of the ‘Crack-Up’ articles, just as Dick Diver finally became only a doctor, no longer a scientist or entertainer or bon vivant.” (Donaldson, “The Crisis,” 185).
17. Morris Dickstein discusses the author’s transformation from literary and celebrity prince to “representative man,” which led to him producing more “introspective” work. The result, Dickstein explains, was that the great novelist “virtually invented the confessional mode in American writing” (82). Because of the “Crack-Up” essays in *Esquire*, later writers felt free to explore the genre, including Norman Mailer in *Advertisements for Myself* (1959). Writing about Fitzgerald in late 1963, critic Malcolm Cowley assesses the author’s life as similar to one of his artistic creations, even greater than that perpetuated by Jay Gatsby. There is a certain duality, he concludes,

- between the study of Gatsby in high schools all over the nation and the author's life becoming "a legend like that of Poe or even that of Davy Crockett" (272)" (Batchelor 78).
18. "But in the 'Crack-Up' essays he stopped in his personal and professional tracks, and described the dark night of his soul, against all advice and prudence. He wrote his lament" (Hampl 110).
 19. "From here—the here of our own autobiographical age—it is possible to see a link between Fitzgerald's valiant attempts in his essays and the fledging personal documentation (self-narrative without guiding psychotherapist) that is the root of AA and the secret of its enduring success" (Hampl 108).
 20. "Medical attacks and legal prohibitions on opiate use, from the 1890s onward, surely reduced some of the chemical supports that had previously conditioned stress" (Barke, et. al. 575). From the 1960s onwards, other terms began to replace nervous breakdown, such as depression and PTSD. Our medical understanding of stress was changing, but so were social attitudes to mental illness and the vocabulary that we use.
 21. Fitzgerald claimed, "I have now at last become a writer only" ("The Crack-Up," 83).
 22. "Despite the false leads and evasions, however, Fitzgerald did uncover more of himself between the lines of these articles, and particularly of the last article, than anywhere else in his works. And, though the benefits did not surface immediately, the process did him good. "The Crack-Up" does not measure up to the best confessional writing, but it had something of the same therapeutic effect on the man who set it down on paper" (Donaldson, "The Crisis," 185).
 23. "The White Negro" (1957) essay is reprinted in *Advertisements for Myself* (1959) and also in *Mind of an Outlaw* (2013).
 24. Perhaps more than most other writers, Fitzgerald and Mailer each sought to understand the American culture of their times—whether the Jazz age, "an age of miracles" ("Echoes of the Jazz Age," *The Crack-Up*, 14), or the Cold War era of the 1950 and 1960s and beyond.
 25. "Mailer's confessional *Advertisements for Myself* . . . has much in it about the experience and meaning of 'crack-up'—the dissipation of intense ambition, energy, and conviction into drink, dope, distraction, and a sick liver" (Foster 222).
 26. "It is clear that in the bleak final reckonings of *Advertisements for Myself*, Mailer saw Fitzgerald as seminal and exemplary. Since his death, the landscape of American publishing had become meaner, yet Mailer was still able to find the mediations between Fitzgerald's fate and his own, for both had played fast and loose with regard to their given pot of artistic talent and both had been imperfect conservationists of the energy remaining to them" (Glenday 121).
 27. "Mailer states that *Advertisements'* purpose was to confront alienation head-on in order to "clear a ground" for his next novel, which was already underway (*Advertisements*, 8)" (Justice 266).
 28. I have appreciated the advice of Alex Hicks, via email and the sharing of articles and ideas, in the writing and revising of this paper.
 29. "Another calculated feature of the first edition is that the names of the author and publisher—actually the same person—are omitted from the title page. Instead the opposite page contains a portrait: the engraved daguerreotype of a bearded man in his middle thirties, slouching under

a wide-brimmed and high-crowned black felt hat that has 'a rakish kind of slant,' as the engraver said later, 'like the mast of a schooner.' . . . It is the portrait of a devil-may-care American working-man, one who might be taken as a somewhat idealized figure in almost any crowd" (Malcolm Cowley, Introduction, *Leaves of Grass*, vii).

30. These two perspectives—*Künstlerroman* and aesthetic distance—are not incompatible, of course. They are, perhaps, two sides of the same coin, and we should learn from both.
31. "When distinctions are blurred by the too simple merging of author with his/her fiction or the fiction with the author, some type of biographical fallacy results, as nearly all the recent critical biographies give ample evidence" (Benson 346).
32. Ben Stoltzfus, in his 2005 article, "Sartre, Nada, and Hemingway's African Stories," is helpful in reading both "Snows" and "Francis Macomber" in the light of Sartre's Existentialism. He concludes with this: "The African stories were written in 1936, and they embody the 'objective style' and the lived experience that Sartre admired and that he believed would express the new sensibilities of men and women in the twentieth century" (224).
33. Nabokov's search for the language adequate to *Lolita* is HH's search for the language that will reach *Lolita*; and it is a representative search, a heightened emblem of all our attempts to communicate. "A penny for your thoughts," I said, and she stretched out her palm at once (p.208). It is the almost insuperable distance between those thoughts and that palm which Nabokov has measured so accurately and so movingly in *Lolita*: the distance between people, the distance separating love from love-making, mirage from reality—the desperate extent of all human need and desire. "I have only words to play with," says H.H., and only words can bridge the gulf suggested by *Lolita's* palm" (Appel 456).

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