



HEMINGWAY'S FLAPPER TRANSCENDING
HOLLYWOOD NORMS: BRETT ASHLEY
AND *THE SUN ALSO RISES*

By Sam Vaughn

THE NEW WOMAN

❖ THESIS: In Ernest Hemingway's *The Sun Also Rises*, Brett Ashley's past and self destructive actions ad depth and weight to her character, causing her to transcend the typical portrayal of the “new woman”



PORTRAYALS IN FILM

- ❖ Film portrays the flapper as self-absorbed and attention seeking with little to no motivation for their actions
- ❖ Cynthia in *The Plastic Age* is a perfect example of this
- ❖ “Doesn’t wait for any man”
- ❖ Reinvents herself to be with Hugh



BRETT ASHLEY

- ❖ Shares many similar characteristics with women in film
- ❖ Many critics apply these surface level characteristics to the full characterization of Brett
- ❖ Dr. Wendy Martin: “the new woman’s radical challenge to the traditional social structure is seen in Lady Brett Ashley, who has stepped off the pedestal and now roams the world”
- ❖ Hemingway frames her actions as signs of deep suffering rather than shallow sexual desire

JAKE'S NARRATION

- ❖ Jake was once, and most likely still is in love with Brett
- ❖ Causes him to give a biased narration
- ❖ “to hell with Brett. To hell with you , Lady Ashley”
- ❖ I looked and saw her coming through the crowd in the square walking, her head up as though the fiesta were being staged in her honor, and she found it pleasant and amusing”





OTHER CONVERSATIONS

- ❖ The depth of Brett's character is revealed through conversations held by other characters
- ❖ "During the war. Her own true love had just kicked off with the dysentery"
- ❖ "When he came home he wouldn't sleep in a bed. Always made Brett sleep on the floor. Finally, when he got really bad, he used to tell her he'd kill her. Always slept with a loaded service revolver. Brett used to take the shells out when he was asleep. She hasn't had an absolutely happy life, Brett"

ALCOHOLISM

- ❖ “She’s a drunk”
- ❖ “You’re always drinking my dear”
- ❖ She drinks to a point of self-destruction
- ❖ Not simply for social purposes, but to escape from the pain she has felt from the events of her past





NYMPHOMANIA

- ❖ “Ones attempt to overcome social or sexual self-doubt by demonstrating that she is attractive, desirable, and wanted”
- ❖ She does not change for the man she loves
- ❖ “I don’t think so. Id just tromper you with everybody, you couldn’t stand it”
- ❖ Her unsuccessful marriages, her engagement to a man with whom she is frequently unfaithful and her inability to commit herself to anything meaningful denotes a confusion in Brett’s mind that causes her low self worth and erratic behavior

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