

Graduate Thesis Assessment Rubric (Literature)
Department of English, Faculty of Education, University of West Bohemia

Thesis Author: Jan Legat

Title: Female Characters and their Development in Novels of Ernest Hemingway

Length: 53

Text Length:49

Assessment Criteria	Scale	Comments
1. Introduction is well written, brief, interesting, and compelling. It motivates the work and provides a clear statement of the problem. It places the problem in context. It presents and overview of the thesis.	Outstanding Very good Acceptable Somewhat deficient Very deficient	This is very clumsy. I am confused by the aims of this project and the run-on sentences makes the prose unreadable.
2. The main part of the thesis exhibits a sustained, consistent level of analysis appropriate to the linguistic, rhetorical and thematic aspects of the literary work. The author employs appropriate direct references (in the form of citation) to the primary work and to secondary sources.	Outstanding Very good Acceptable Somewhat deficient Very deficient	The depth of research is to be admired, but the author doesn't seem to understand the aims of the criticism. This criticism cannot simply be waved away by saying, the characters are "real" or "normal" whatever that means.
3. The thesis shows critical and analytical thinking about the area of study and the author's expertise in this area.	Outstanding Very good Acceptable Somewhat deficient Very deficient	The author's analytical skills seem to be untrained at best.
4. The text is organized in a logical manner. It flows naturally and is easy to follow. Transitions, summaries and conclusions exist as appropriate. The author demonstrates high quality writing skills and uses standard spelling, grammar, and punctuation.	Outstanding Very good Acceptable Somewhat deficient Very deficient	The thesis is riddled with ambiguities which is largely a byproduct of faulty syntax and grammar.
5. The thesis meets the general requirements (formatting, chapters, length, division into sections, etc.). References are cited properly within the text and a complete reference list is provided.	Outstanding Very good Acceptable Somewhat deficient Very deficient	The Works Cited pages has a number of format mistakes.

Final Comments & Questions

One can't help but wonder how much contact the author had with his supervisor. There seems to be a fundamental misunderstanding about the role of biography and its relation to literary criticism. The author seems to think that because the characters are based on real people that this makes Hemingway's fiction beyond criticism. While I enjoyed learning about Hemingway's wives, lovers, friends, and maternal figures in a gossipy sort of way, the thesis does little to actually engage the literary criticism on its own terms. Take for instance the author's evaluation of that character of Maria in *For Whom the Bell Tolls*: "We can either agree with the opinion of the critics or we can see Maria as a young, deeply hurt woman who just wanted to find a way out of her own tragedy and regain sanity and balance in her life and belief in better world and therefore she fully devoted herself to love – for Pilar and for Robert" (29). I don't agree that this is an either/or proposition. Why should we see things differently than the critics? And how does the fact that the character Maria is based on a real person change critical perception? By definition fiction is not reality, and its relationship to reality is only of tenuous importance. I agree that Hemingway is an interesting writer when it comes to gender. He was valorized by male critics in the post-war period and demonized by the rise of feminism. As literary criticism moves from feminism to gender studies, critics may find Hemingway less a voice of patriarchal authority and more a gender experimenter. *The Sun Also Rises* seems to have a respect and admiration for gender bending that is somewhat lost in the subsequent novels. And yet, the posthumous novel *The Garden of Eden* seems ground breaking for its time. Was it not published in Hemingway's lifetime because the public was not ready for such a novel, or was it because Hemingway was worried it would conflict with the author's carefully constructed image of himself as a masculine ideal? I am not sure at all whether this thesis is deserving of a passing grade. Run-on sentences and ambiguous syntax only reflect the confusion in the author's mind toward his subject matter. In the future this twisted paragraph should undergo substantial revision: "This chapter is included as I want to prove that he did not fabricate his heroines and did not deliberately depict them unrealistically and/or badly. For all his life he was fascinated, beside other things, by women and as his stories, also his characters male or female were based on real people and real situations. Therefore, I consider shallow such critics who accused Hemingway of ridiculing women as he described women who really existed and behaved as they did. Of course, it would be foolish to think that he did not make some of their features up. But it is a part of writer's job" (8).

Supervisor/Reviewer: Brad Vice, Ph.D.

Date: 16-08-2013

Signature: 