"To Have and Have Not": World without a Hero

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TO HAVE AND HAVE NOT: WORLD WITHOUT A HERO

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ABSTRACT

This paper analyzes Harry Morgan's character and the world in which he operates in Ernest Hemingway's To Have and Have Not. Although considered a hero by many critics, Harry Morgan has neither the ethical nor the moral standards for that role as his actions in the novel make clear.

That Hemingway consciously stressed his protagonist's negative qualities has been generally misunderstood; and this study emphasizes both this artistic purpose in the novel and Hemingway's craftsmanship in achieving that purpose.

Hemingway provides three ancestors for Harry Morgan who illustrate the ambiguity of Harry's character. Within the text of the novel, General George Custer, Ghengis Khan, and Sir Henry Morgan the pirate, figure as Harry's prototypes.

Not only are Harry Morgan's actions corrupt, but the world in which he operates is similarly debased. This paper explores two major symbol patterns in the novel that support this premise and testify to Hemingway's care in structuring his work. By stressing the moral implications of the economic metaphors in the work, the importance of the author's use of the "jackpot" symbol is underscored. And the significance of the "sucker" symbolism further develops the ruthlessness of this morally bankrupt world.

After examining the relationship of the "yachting vignettes" to Harry Morgan's dilemma, the study concludes that Ernest Hemingway's novel is not the hastily thrown together pastiche its critics deplore; but is instead a carefully constructed literary creation.
TO HAVE AND HAVE NOT: WORLD WITHOUT A HERO
Ernest Hemingway in his novel To Have and Have Not depicts a moral world in economic terms. The people in this world are bought and sold, and the characters are measured in terms of their utility. In politics, business, friendship, and love, money is the medium of exchange, but the going price fluctuates with the needs of the buyer. Business, more often than not, smacks of the dirty deal or the double-cross, while the pernicious effects of this corrupt environment take their toll in human lives. Some individuals find themselves denying the relevance of moral or ethical standards as the general malaise of society affects their actions; but others who have no such standards to corrupt and whose moral worth already register in the debit column of a social balance sheet will move through this world with no real awareness that they themselves are debased or corrupt. Hemingway's protagonist Harry Morgan belongs to the latter category, and neither his character nor his actions withstand careful scrutiny.

Although considered a hero by many critics, Harry Morgan has neither the ethical nor the moral standards for that role as his actions in the novel make clear. That Hemingway consciously stressed his protagonist's negative qualities has been generally misunderstood; but the novel itself demonstrates this artistic purpose as well as Hemingway's craftsmanship in its execution. Thus, Hemingway deliberately provides Harry Morgan with three ancestors who illustrate the ambiguity of Harry's character. Concurrently, he employs two major symbol
patterns--one economic, the other naturalistic--to emphasize Harry's moral bankruptcy and his ruthlessness. Even the much criticized yachting vignettes attest to Hemingway's craftsmanship and his purpose, for both the Henry Carpenter vignette and the grain-broker's internal monologue cast additional light on Harry Morgan's character. This careful attention to Harry's ancestry, to symbolic patterns, and to the yachting vignettes suggests that To Have and Have Not is not the hastily thrown together pastiche its critics deplore; but is instead a carefully constructed literary creation.

One of the major preoccupations of Hemingway's critics has been the problem of finding a prototype for Harry Morgan, and they have searched diligently for his family tree in diverse times and places. Edmund Wilson, for instance, to Hemingway's discredit sees Harry Morgan as "a wooden-headed Punch, always knocking people on the head ... or, rather he confines the characteristics of Punch with those of Popeye the Sailor in the animated cartoon in the movies." In a more recent assessment John Hill similarly argues that "Machine-gun Kelly ... is Morgan's prototype." Both critics are sceptical of Harry Morgan's right to heroic stature, but neither believes that Hemingway himself understood the ruthless brutality of his creation; instead both believe that Hemingway's book is flawed by an unsavory hero.

Other critics, like Carlos Baker, see Harry Morgan in a far more heroic light. In trying to defend this novel, they try to align its protagonist with those other Hemingway heroes
whose valor and moral worth are widely accepted. Baker goes on to suggest that, "If one wanted a historical ancestor for Harry Morgan, however, he had only to look at some of the accounts of Wyatt Earp in the 1880's....Morgan is a typical nineteenth-century frontiersman in a twentieth-century frontier situation." And he goes even further in his defense of Morgan, whom he describes "as the type of the old self-reliant individualist confronted by an ever-encroaching social restraint--the civil disobedient, who like Thoreau, is opposed in principle to a corrupt federalism" (p. 211).

In his book Ernest Hemingway and the Pursuit of Heroism, Leo Gurko echoes Baker's basic position that Hemingway regards Harry Morgan as a hero. Similarly, he notes that "The man who relied entirely on himself, who looked upon the government as an enemy, who went forth to conquer the wilderness, push back the frontier, and settle the land, was Morgan's prototype" (p. 148). Gurko, however, is somewhat sceptical of Morgan as the noble frontiersman. He does justify Morgan's actions in the novel with the cavil that "Were it not for the general economic breakdown, he would have continued operating his boat, legally and uneventfully, as he had done before" (p. 147)--in other words, "The bad times bring Morgan down" (p. 147). But Gurko perceptively concludes that "Hemingway whittles [Morgan] down to a pure pragmatic instrument, all body and driving will but little feeling and no brain" (p. 150); "This [he feels] is the novel's gravest weakness" (p. 150). Having started with the premise that Hemingway intended to create a hero, Gurko,
recognizing Harry's deficiencies, logically finds fault with the novel in this key area.

Taking a somewhat different position on both Harry Morgan's ancestry and Hemingway's intention in creating him, Delbert Wylder asserts that much criticism of the book goes astray at this juncture. He attacks Baker's Wyatt Earp comparison in particular, for "If Harry Morgan is descended from any type of frontiersman, his lineage would seem to be that of the mountain man. He is reminiscent of someone like Charles 'Cannibal Phil' Gardner, who purportedly once ate his companion and another time his Indian wife when he was trapped by winter storms in the mountains." Wylder provides this genealogy for Harry to emphasize the idea that Harry Morgan is, in fact, not a hero at all, but is instead "an anti-hero" (p. 98). Wylder, however, notes that there "seems to be a vacuum without [a hero]" (p. 124) and that, although Hemingway creates a persuasive anti-hero, there is "no important symbolism to deepen and enforce the thematic content" (pp. 124-125).

It would seem, then, that critical opinion of *To Have and Have Not* often depends on the related issues of whether or not Hemingway was trying to create a hero, whether or not Harry is in fact that person, and whether the book is a failure because of or in spite of Harry Morgan. The desire to provide ancestors (or prototypes) for Harry Morgan springs directly from these issues, while each critic who suggests such parallels reveals his own conception of Harry's true nature and of Hemingway's intention in creating him.
There is no real necessity, however, to create imaginary ancestors, for Hemingway provides his own pedigree for Harry. Within the text of the novel, Hemingway describes a scene in Freddy's Bar after Harry has decided to take the four revolutionaries to Cuba: "Albert went out and Harry stood there at the bar looking at the nickel machine, the two dime machines and the quarter machine and at the picture of Custer's Last Stand on the wall as though he'd never seen them." Actually, it is George Custer who seems to be one of Harry's ancestors, for Harry possesses the recklessness, the brash individuality, and the ruthlessness of Custer. It was Custer who, refusing to wait for the other half of the attack force at the Little Big Horn, deliberately disobeyed orders and attacked the Indians alone, sacrificing his men and himself for his own vainglory. Like Custer, Harry took one too many chances and had to make his own last stand against the numerically superior Cubans. Hemingway reinforces the analogy, for Harry's ordeal on board his boat begins when "One of the Indian-looking Cubans was holding a pistol against the side his bad arm was on" (p. 153). During the actual escape from Key West, a revolutionary "was watching him. This one, one of the two Indian-looking ones" (p. 154), keeps Harry under surveillance so that he will make no hostile moves. Recollect that when Albert describes their first meeting with the Cubans, he notices "the young pleasant speaking one [Emilio]" (p. 103), and "The big faced one [Roberto]" (p. 103); but "There were two others with faces like Indians" (p. 103). Thus, when
Harry is eventually murdered, his slayer must be one of those two Cubans, for both Emilio and Roberto have already been killed.

The thrust of the analogy between Custer and Morgan is not to promote Harry as a heroic figure. The individualism that both men possess is discredited by the sheer folly of their plans to attack in situations where the odds were so seriously against them. The final responsibility for leading unsuspecting followers into a death trap rests on their shoulders. Granted that both men die with a certain courage; still Hemingway does not imply that either achieves heroic proportions.9

Hemingway provides another ancestor for Harry Morgan in the supposedly casual comments of Mrs. Laughton. "Oh, he had a beautiful face," the wife said. 'Like a Tartar or something. I wish he hadn't been insulting. He looked kind of like Genghis Khan in the face" (p. 136). This speech has been prepared for by Marie's description of Harry as he left their house. "[S] he saw him blonde ...with the broad mongol cheek bones, and the narrow eyes" (p. 128). The name Genghis Khan suggests a savage barbarian, cutlass flourished above his head, sweeping across the Asian steppe to pillage with his barbarian hordes. Owen Lattimore, however, describes another aspect of this Mongol's personality: "The guiding principles of Genghis Khan are unmistakable: to make alliances discreetly and to break them only after preparing arguments to put himself in the right, in order to become undisputed leader of the cavalry elite of all the nomad tribes."10
Harry Morgan uses a similar modus operandi in his own dealings with the Chinese. He allies himself with Mr. Sing, a Chinese businessman, in a venture to defraud some Chinese peasants of their money; but Harry breaks their partnership as ruthlessly as Genghis Khan broke his alliances with the other chieftans. In eliminating Mr. Sing, Harry presses "both thumbs well in behind his talk-box, and [he] bent the whole thing back until she cracked" (p. 54). A thoroughly ruthless Harry adds, "Don't think you can't hear it crack, either" (p. 54)--his behavior is every bit as barbaric as Genghis Khan's. Harry also knows how to prepare arguments to put himself in the right, for his explanation that he killed Mr. Sing "To keep from killing twelve other chinks" is accepted not only by Eddy, but by at least one contemporary critic. Hemingway's inclusion of Harry's resemblance to Genghis Khan, however, provides additional information on some of the darker regions of Harry's psyche and may well indicate that his actions as well as his explanations ought not to be taken solely at face value.

A third, and more obvious, ancestor of Harry Morgan is Sir Henry Morgan, the pirate. Carlos Baker cites the similarity of their names in Hemingway: The Writer as Artist. This buccaneer plied his trade off the coast of Cuba and Jamaica in the 1660's. Although he was licensed by the British as a privateer to aid the Crown in its activities against the Spanish, Henry Morgan was more interested in lining his pockets with Spanish gold and silver than he was in attacking the enemy. Morgan's exploits, though often marked by courage and daring,
included torture of his victims for monetary gain. On one particularly infamous occasion, he forced nuns and priests to carry siege ladders to the walls of a fortified town, while he and his men used these victims as living shields. When the town fell before his onslaught, he tortured survivors and then murdered many of them once he learned where their gold was hidden. These episodes cast a dark shadow over his character.

Although Harry Morgan does not share completely in the depravity of his similarly named ancestor, the resemblance between the two seafarers is evident. Harry, except for his charter with Mr. Johnson, engages in piratical forays with his boat. His robbery and murder of Mr. Sing, his transportation of contraband liquor, and his final trip with the Cubans illustrate the ruthlessness of his methods and the single-mindedness of his desire for money.

Harry Morgan's "ancestors," then, attest to the ambiguity of Harry's actions in this novel. His character is morally suspect, just as those of Custer, Genghis Khan, and Sir Henry Morgan are suspect. To the credulous, there has always been a certain glamor attached to these figures. All three have several admirable qualities such as courage and leadership together with a certain splendor deriving from the times in which they lived. However, these men left bloodied corpses and pillaged countryside behind them and a reputation for cruelty which lingers even today. Hemingway's deliberate inclusion of these "prototypes" for Harry attests to his own attitude toward his protagonist and serves as a reminder that Harry's actions should
be carefully scrutinized before applauding his much vaunted courage, bravado, and cunning.

In Harry Morgan the instincts of these ruthless forebearers reappear in a twentieth century protagonist. But the old order has changed and with it some of the reasons for a ruthless individualism. Custer, after all, went to his death in pursuit of fame and glory; Genghis Khan was seeking an empire; and Sir Henry Morgan, to some degree, was aiding his country. But Harry Morgan's career ended as it began in a continuous search for money. As Philip Young notes "Although Morgan has a very few points of resemblance to the hero, and is usually mistaken for him, he is really not our man."

If Harry Morgan lacks heroic virtues, so too does the world in which he operates. Harry is well suited to a world which debases and degrades individuals, and which offers little room for heroics. In the opening pages of the novel, Hemingway introduces this world and illustrates some of its characteristics:

You know how it is there early in the morning in Havana with the bums still asleep against the walls of the buildings; before even the ice wagons come by with ice for the bars? Well, we came across the square from the dock to the Pearl of San Francisco Cafe to get coffee and there was only one beggar awake in the square and he was getting a drink out of the fountain. But when we got inside the cafe and sat down, there were the three of them waiting for us.

(p. 3)

In this world bums and beggars are a normal part of one's waking expectations. The opening sentence assumes a rapport with the reader, who should "know how it is" because, presumably,
he knows concretely both Cuba as Hemingway depicts it and his own world where tight money and economic distress comprise reality. Hemingway's particular intimacy of style masks the deliberateness of the ambiguous pronoun reference in the third sentence ("the three of them") which places the Cubans, whom Harry will meet, in apposition with the beggars and the bums. Indeed, these three Cubans, although described as wealthy, are reduced to begging favors from Harry Morgan. "A thousand apiece" (p. 3) one says, putting a price tag on their lives, as Harry considers the terms of their deal. Thus, the first page of the novel introduces the economic metaphor that Hemingway uses to render the moral bankruptcy of an era in which people's lives can be bought and sold.

The first hard evidence of Harry's business methods appears in this first chapter. He tells the Cubans, "I make my living with the boat. If I lose her I lose my living" (p. 4), and he explains "I don't carry anything to the States that can talk" (p. 4). In the discussion which follows, Harry tries to maintain his air of moral innocence with a quick reply to the Cubans: "You propositioned me. I didn't offer you anything." (p. 4). Carrying "[s]acked liquor" (p. 5) supposedly does not compromise his standards; besides, "Men can talk" (p. 5). Those who try to defend Harry's moral honesty in this exchange might examine Pancho's answer. "'Can Chinamen talk?' Pancho said, pretty nasty'" (p. 5) is a thinly veiled accusation that Harry Morgan has done this kind of business before (which might also explain why the Cubans sought him out in the first place).
Morgan's reply, "They can talk but I can't understand them" (p. 5) represents Harry's tacit agreement that the charge is true. Since neither he nor anyone on the mainland can understand Chinese, Morgan has evidently been willing to transport this cargo.

Later, when Harry talks business with Mr. Sing, people are once again described as commodities. "How much are they worth a head?" (p. 33) Harry asks. He worries about the risk to himself and his boat, too: "And what I'm supposed to do doesn't have to be paid for, either. Eh?" (p. 33). But Harry's anxieties are quickly laid to rest as clever Mr. Sing merely raises the ante. Since Harry has put a price tag on himself, he is willing to sell his services at their highest market value; he quickly agrees to Sing's proposition once he learns what's in it for him. Evidently, Harry and Mr. Sing share the same business premises including a belief in the value of double-dealing. If Mr. Sing can sell out the Chinese, Harry can just as easily sell out Mr. Sing. It is ironic that poor Mr. Sing reminds Harry "Don't you see our interests are identical?" (p. 34) and again "Do you not see how our interests coincide?" (p. 35), for Harry sees only too well. In the moral world of the novel, this economic double-dealing represents yet another symptom of the way in which people profit at the expense of one another.

Not only does Harry Morgan regard others in terms of their cash value, he also sees them in terms of their utility. Actually the two concepts are related because one of the measures of economic worth has always been usefulness. Thus,
Harry will often value something (or someone) only as long as it is useful to him. It is worth noting that the first person Harry thinks about murdering is his friend Eddy. As long as Eddy is of use to him, Eddy will remain alive, but let that usefulness end and Eddy ends with it. "I was sorry for him and for what I knew I'd have to do. Hell, I knew him when he was a good man" (p. 43). When Harry temporarily changes his mind, he reasons, "I'm going to need him now" (p. 45); Harry later tells Eddy "I want you rum-brave. I don't want you useless" (p. 47). After deciding to spare Eddy, Harry realizes, "I'd have to pay a fine for bringing him in and I didn't know how to consider him" (p. 61). When it comes right down to it, if Eddy is going to cost Harry money, he may have to get rid of him.18

In the third section of the book, Harry applies the same criteria to Albert. "I'm sorry, Albert, I can't use you....I got no need for you now" (p. 122), Harry tells him after deciding not to include Albert on this trip. Morgan takes Albert aboard only when he realizes that the engine needs repairs and that he could use an excuse to be in the boat when the revolutionaries arrive. Albert can make himself useful by getting the necessary engine parts and by buying bait so that the store owners will know about the proposed fishing expedition. Poor Albert also considers himself in economic terms, as he tells Harry "I'd go cheap" (p. 122).

Ever practical Harry has worried about the effects of his decision to return the revolutionaries to Cuba. He
understands that bank officials and patrons alike are endangered by the Cuban's plan to rob the bank, for he tells 'Bee-Lips,' the lawyer, "You know how they've been financing this revolution with kidnapping and the rest of it" (p. 109). Bee-Lips replies, "They're doing it for a good cause" (p. 109); but Harry insists "this is here. This is where you were born. You know everybody works there" (p. 109). Any impression that Harry's main concern is for the lives of those employees ends when he tells the lawyer: "I'm figuring on keeping on living here" (p. 109). As usual, Harry's primary concern is himself, not his neighbors. Later, in his internal debate over whether to follow through with the deal, Harry ponders, "I could go down to the bank and squeal now and what would I get? Thanks. Sure. Thanks" (p. 148). Once again Morgan's thoughts reveal that his decisions are based on his own profit. After all, what would he get if he turned in the conspirators? Only thanks. Not the monetary reward which occupies his thoughts.

If Harry has any saving grace, it lies in his love for his wife and in the way he tries to live in this world on its own economic terms. He knows that this world supposedly operates on an exchange of cash values, and rather than be a beggar who can only claim his need as the basis for a transaction, Harry is willing to stake his life. He consistently considers himself in the same terms he applies to others. When at last he feels that "All I've got is my 'cojones' to peddle" (p. 147), he is still the trader, using himself as ruthlessly as he has used others. Earlier in the novel when his arm was injured,
he had thought: "I hope they can fix that arm....I got a lot of use for that arm" (p. 87). He needs his arm fixed the same way he would fix a crooked politician or a business deal—to get the maximum amount of use from it.

Curiously enough, Henry Carpenter, the guest aboard Wallace Johnston's yacht, and Harry Morgan share a similar approach to life. Morgan and Carpenter both try to operate in the moral world of the novel on its own economic terms—as traders rather than beggars. Henry Carpenter "gave value in good company for his entertainment" (p. 232), for just as Harry Morgan metaphorically peddles his 'cojones,' Carpenter literally peddles his to Wallace Johnston. Both men exchange the only thing they have left, themselves. To emphasize the parallel between the two men, Hemingway points out that "Wallace Johnston ...was Henry Carpenter's last stand" (p. 232), which immediately brings Custer to mind and Morgan's own last stand aboard the "Queen Conch."

Throughout the novel, Harry Morgan's chances for survival become riskier and riskier. In an economic world which removes the possibility of earning big money, the individual who wants to earn large sums almost inevitably turns to gambling. As the options dwindle, he plays against ever higher odds in an effort to reach his goal before his luck runs out. It has become almost a commonplace that in a big city slum where individuals have little chance to achieve affluence, games of chance such as the "numbers racket" flourish. Hemingway portrays a similar world, but those who, like Harry Morgan, stake
their lives instead of their money are playing an even deadlier
game.

In the discussion between Wallace Johnston and Henry Car-
penter, Hemingway provides a striking metaphor for the chances
of survival confronting those who stake their lives in this par-
ticular universe:

'But look. You lost three hundred.'
'I've lost more than that.'
'How much more?'
'The jackpot,' said Henry Carpenter. 'The
eternal jackpot. I'm playing a machine now
that doesn't give jackpots any more.

(pp. 230-231)

This machine which doesn't give jackpots is, of course, a slot
machine; and these lines provide another image for what is
wrong with the economic world of this novel. The machine has
been "rigged." It doesn't "pay off" any more. Henry Carpenter
has no way to win because there are no jackpots. Given such a
world, the chances that Harry Morgan takes with his own life,
are just as unlikely to succeed. Hemingway again reinforces
Morgan's similarities with Henry Carpenter by describing Harry
before his fatal trip: "Harry stood there at the bar looking
at the nickel machine, the two dime machines and the quarter
machine [all quite obviously slot machines] and at the picture
of Custer's Last Stand on the wall as though he'd never seen
them" (p. 123). The colloquial term for the slot machine sup-
plies yet another connection: it is known as "a one-armed
bandit."

Those critics, and they are numerous, who argue that To
Have and Have Not is a hastily thrown together pastiche have
not examined the careful way in which Hemingway connects one scene to another. They often focus on these "yachting vignettes" as evidence of Hemingway's failure to control the form of his novel. Oscar Cargill, for example, refers to them as "'candid camera' studies of the rich degenerates of the art and yachting colony at Key West which Hemingway ineptly thrust into the story with some ill-conceived notion of maintaining suspense while the Coast Guard ship is towing Morgan's boat to port."19 Another critic, Robert Pearsall, also asserts that "the pure vignettes of depraved yachting types have no relation to either plot, or even to one another."20 He echoes Delmore Schwartz's assessment that "These people are not related to each other, and their only relation to Harry Morgan is the fact that he is poor and they are rich, and they are near each other, spatially speaking."21 "Nor," Philip Young argues, "are the Johnny-come-lately explanations of how the Haves got their money very impressive."22

But the parallels, for instance, between Harry Morgan's predicament and Henry Carpenter's can readily be shown, and Hemingway used this particular vignette to reinforce the foolishness of Harry's gamble, which never had a chance to succeed. The comic element latent in picturing Harry Morgan himself as a one-armed bandit wryly underscores this point. That Hemingway conceives of neither man as forced into taking such desperate risks in an economic world which holds no jackpots is also reinforced in this vignette. An omniscient narrator in this section explains: "The money on which it was not worth
while for [Carpenter] to live was one hundred and seventy dollars more a month than the fisherman Albert Tracy had been supporting his family on at the time of his death three days before" (p. 233).

This information undercuts the impact of Henry Carpenter's dilemma in trying to survive on reduced funds and at the cost of his self-respect. Harry Morgan, too, need not have taken chances with his life. He did not find it worthwhile to exist on the $1200 he stole from Mr. Sing (even less the cost of his tackle and charter, Harry cleared an extra $375 profit$^{23}$); nor would he make adjustments in his lifestyle due to the hard economic times. The risks that Carpenter and Morgan took were motivated in part by a desire to live easily and well. Although Harry says that he had to carry the Cubans in order to feed his family, while the other "Conches" live on "grits and boiled grunts" (p. 193), Harry dines in style: "'What have you got to eat?' Harry asked. 'We've got a steak,' Marie said" (p. 125).

Yet, because the economic world delineated in this novel contains no "eternal jackpot," there is no real response that an individual can make to raise his actions to the level of the heroic. This society differs markedly from the one in which George Custer, Genghis Khan, or Sir Henry Morgan won a measure of fame and glory. The isolated man in this morally degenerate age can no longer make an impact on his world.

A central symbolic scene illustrating the implacability of a universe where people survive at the cost of destroying others is developed in the chapter in which Harry lies dying on the
Gulf Stream. Carlos Baker has suggested that this scene "serves to remind the reader of Hemingway that nature's quietude, nature's continuum, nature's great age, when these are compared with the fury and the mire of human veins, and the brevity of man's time on earth, are something like an echo of the passage from Ecclesiastes which was used as one of the headnotes to The Sun Also Rises." Alternately, Gerry Brenner in his reading of To Have and Have Not as a classical tragedy proposes that the drifting boat passage serves as "a relief scene." Delbert Wylder suggests that the Gulf Stream "provides the background for a successfully symbolic passage." He includes myriad readings for this scene: "The scene might suggest the continuum of nature [Baker's interpretation], or especially in this novel, the concept of 'nature red in tooth and claw,' or an ironic contrast between man's violence and the comparative calm of nature, or the insignificance of all the violence of man in the tiny boat now becalmed in the hugeness of the sea." But Wylder does not examine this symbolism or its implications in detail, and thus concludes that "there is not enough use of effective symbol."

There is more to the Gulf Stream passage than one at first suspects, however, and the key section follows:

at the point where his fingers almost touched the water, there was a school of small fish ...and each time anything dripped down into the sea, these fish rushed at the drop and pushed and milled until it was gone. Two gray sucker fish about eighteen inches long, swam round and round the boat ...their slit mouths on the tops of their flat heads opening
and shutting; but they did not seem to comprehend the regularity of the drip the small fish fed on and were as likely to be on the far side of the launch when the drop fell, as near it. They had long since pulled away the ropy, carmine clots and threads that trailed in the water from the lowest splintered holes, shaking their ugly, sucker-topped heads and their elongated, tapering, thin-tailed bodies as they pulled. They were reluctant now to leave a place where they had fed so well and unexpectedly.

(pp. 179-180)

This graphic scene represents nature's parallel to the economic struggle for survival. In the waters of the Gulf Stream, one creature survives because it can suck the life blood of another. The school of small fish and the sucker fish resemble the people who inhabit the world of the novel. Not only do they prey on one another in economic terms, but they feed symbolically on each other's blood. The image of one creature sucking on another permeates this novel and serves to emphasize the nature of the relationships between characters and their worlds.29

For example, the attorney Simmons has been appropriately nicknamed "Bee-Lips."30 The picture of a bee sucking on the sweetness of a flower to nourish itself is not inappropriate, for Simmons tries to suck other people dry. Harry accuses him of this kind of dealing with his client Juan: "Sure, you tipped them off to him and you got him indicted and now you're going to defend him... You probably got him in your pocket" (p. 91). "Bee-Lips" survives, then, by sucking the juice (money) from Juan, and he tries to deal with the revolutionaries and Harry in the same way.
Similarly, the young revolutionary Emilio describes the state of his country in the following terms: "Cuba has no foreign enemies and doesn't need any army, but she has an army of twenty-five thousand now, and the army, from the corporals up, suck the blood from the nation" (p. 167). The deliberate choice of language serves to emphasize that governments, like fish and humans, fasten on their victims (whole countries) and drain them dry.

Another example, which at first glance might appear far-fetched, falls in the scene where Harry receives the wound that will cost him his arm. Earl Rovit has noted that "The symbolic thrust of the novel is directed to wound-castrate [Morgan] (his arm must be amputated)." And David Gordon, writing in Literature and Psychology, also feels that Harry's "loss of his arm is clearly a form of castration." The imagery in this scene supports these two critics, for Hemingway seems to provide a sexual context for Harry's wound. Harry's boat, after all, is traveling in "Woman Key channel" (p. 78), and when he takes refuge against the "mangroves" (p. 85), he assesses the damage to his arm: "[Harry] felt very shaky now and he sat down on the steering seat and held his right arm tight between his thighs. His knees were shaking and with the shaking he could feel the ends of the bone in his upper arm grate. He opened his knees, lifted his arm out, and let it hang by his side" (p. 77); and here his arm seems to acquire phallic properties. When Harry steers the boat, he can "feel her bow rise and the green mangroves coasted swiftly alongside as the boat
sucked the water away from their roots" (pp. 85-86). A sym­bolically castrated Harry, who had sheltered in the mangroves, now moves into the current while the nourishing waters are sucked from the roots of his manhood.

The colloquial meaning of the word "sucker" also deserves attention, for in the Gulf Stream passage the fish themselves prove to be "suckers" both literally and figuratively. A "sucker" can be defined as "a person easily cheated or taken in;" and those fish "did not seem to comprehend the regularity of the drip the small fish fed on and were as likely to be on the far side of the launch when the drop fell, as near it" (p. 179). Hemingway uses the word in both contexts, stressing that the colloquial definition is merely an exten­sion of the word's meaning in nature. For example, Spellman, the crazy party-goer from New York, tells Richard Gordon that he likes Gordon's book because "I'm a sucker for anything on the social conflict" (p. 197). He feeds on the troubles of others just as the fish feed on the dead Cubans' blood. But Richard Gordon himself shares in Hemingway's indictment of those who feed parasitically on the social conflict, for his bad novels draw their plots and characters from a universe that he does not understand--much as the fish indiscriminately draw blood from any creature which comes into their orbit.

The Richard Gordon story is difficult for many critics to deal with because it seems to detract from the book's focus on Harry Morgan. As Robert Lewis notes, "The shifting back and forth between the Gordons and Harry, their paths never crossing,
is an ironic, possibly too obvious contrast of the complete sexual adjustment of Harry and Marie with the completely unsatisfactory adjustment of Richard and Helen.\textsuperscript{35} But, he adds, "Less obvious and more important is the comparison of Harry's physical destruction with Richard Gordon's psychic collapse."\textsuperscript{36} Lewis seems to be on the right track with his analysis, but one additional point can be made. Not only are Gordon's books dependent on the ideas of others, but his personality itself seems equally derivative. Richard Gordon's wife Helen fiercely attacks his character: "If you were just a good writer I could stand for all the rest of it maybe. But I've seen you bitter, jealous, changing your politics to suit the fashion, sucking up to people's faces and talking about them behind their backs" (p. 186). Richard is a typical denizen of this world, for he too feeds on others. His "sucking up to people" is reminiscent of the fish because he is a "hanger-on" to the life force in others, which he all too obviously lacks in himself.

Richard Gordon makes a poor showing when compared to Harry Morgan because Harry at least tries to render value for value. Gordon lacks any values worth trading, for his are all borrowed from others. He can neither make himself useful in bed with Mrs. Bradley nor with his own wife, and his failure in the artistic world springs from his lack of perception about the nature of reality. In the end, his assessment by Marie as "Some poor goddamned rummy" (p. 255) relegates him to the bankruptcy of the beggars in the square who have nothing of value to trade in this degenerate world.
A closer look at the yachting vignette on the tax-evading financier reveals yet another example of the "sucker" motif. The speculator knows that "The men he broke made . . . various exits but that never worried him. Somebody had to lose and only suckers worried. . . . You win; somebody's got to lose, and only suckers worry" (p. 238). Here the "suckers" are those who have been taken in by his promises, and who have depended on him. As he drinks his scotch, "the speculator is not a sucker now; except for death" (p. 238), and the point is that now he is the dupe, the one who has been cheated and 'sucked-in by death. In the world of the novel most of the characters exist on the level of the "sucker fish," and grim reality lies beneath the surface of Hemingway's puns.

This grain speculator is a particularly interesting figure because, like Henry Carpenter, he shares a great many similarities with Harry Morgan. Where Henry Carpenter's vignette served to emphasize Harry's parallels with Custer, the grain broker's life stresses his (and by extension Harry's) similarity to a pirate. His yacht, for instance, reminds one of a pirate's ship; it is "a handsome, black, barkentine rigged three-master" (p. 233). But more importantly, Hemingway adds that the grain speculator "felt as tough and regardless of consequences as any of the old brothers of the coast with whom in character and standards of conduct, he had, truly, much in common" (p. 233). During the seventeenth century, Sir Henry Morgan and the other pirates who sailed the Caribbean called themselves the "Brethren of the Coast." And it would seem that the speculator, like Harry Morgan, has a right to membership
in that fraternity. The old man shares the pirate's desire for plunder, although his "booty" comes from stock speculation; while his victims obligingly "step forward on to the third rail in front of the Aurora-Elgin train" (p. 237) or "made the long drop from the apartment or the office window" (p. 237-38), instead of "walking the plank."

Harry Morgan and the grain speculator have led the same kind of piratical existence that their buccaneer ancestor has led. Neither Harry nor the grain broker has ever worried about the men whose lives were destroyed (directly or indirectly) through his actions. Nor have they felt any qualms about enjoying their illegally obtained money. In fact, the following description of the speculator's character might just as easily apply to Harry Morgan's: "a lack of morals, an ability to make people like him without ever liking or trusting them in return, while at the same time convincing them warmly and heartily of his friendship; not a disinterested friendship, but a friendship so interested in their success that it automatically made them accomplices" (pp. 235-36). Harry's relationship with Mr. Sing and the revolutionaries, on the one hand, and his relationship with his friends Eddy and Albert, on the other, conform to this same basic pattern. Everyone trusts Harry--until it is too late; or until circumstances save them from his plans. Ironically enough, Harry's friends never understand his duplicity. Eddy certainly never guesses Harry's intentions, as his final comment makes clear: "Ah, Harry ... I always knew you were my pal" (p. 63). Similarly, Albert placed his trust in Harry's friendship, "He was a bully and he was bad spoken but I always
liked him all right" (p. 99). Likable Harry leads his friend to a watery grave, and Albert dies never realizing that Harry was in on the plan to rob the bank.

Harry seems to make "suckers" out of everyone who trusts him. Like the grain broker, he has ruthlessly used people for his own advantage. In the predatory world of the novel, Harry has fed off of others, just as the sucker fish have fed on the dead Cubans. Significantly, when Harry lies mortally wounded, he feels "as though he had been sucking on a hose to syphon a tank" (p. 180). Now it is Harry who is doing the "sucking;" but, unlike the fish, there is no nourishment for Harry. "He knew there was no tank although he could feel a cold rubber hose that seemed to have entered his mouth and now was coiled, big, cold, and heavy all down through him" (p. 180). Harry's life force is draining away, and as his conscious thoughts fade, Morgan seems to share the epitaph which Hemingway applies to the speculator: "[he] is not a sucker now; except for death" (p. 238).

Only at the end does Harry comprehend the futility of his behavior. The main thing he learns is that "Now the way things are" (p. 225), the individual must confront a hopeless situation--there are no jackpots. In that situation "One man alone ain't got. No man alone now....No matter how a man alone ain't got no bloody fucking chance" (p. 225). But this self-knowledge has come too late for Harry Morgan, who has no time left to act on what he has learned. Perhaps, too, there is a certain amount of irony in Harry's last words and in his remorse; certainly he only feels this emotion when his final gamble does
not pay off. Once he is shot, Harry thinks, "I guess it was nuts all right....I shouldn't have tried it. I had it all right up to the end" (p. 174). But it took only "One thing to spoil it. One thing to go wrong" (p. 173). Harry's thoughts parallel the dilemma of the grain broker whose "remorse was to think if only he had not been quite so smart five years ago. He could have paid the taxes then ...he would be all right now" (p. 236). Both men dwell on what might have been, and once remorse had "found the crack and begun to seep in" (p. 236), the speculator becomes a prey to worry and fear.

Whether Hemingway intended this parallel to reinforce the idea that Harry's "remorse," and subsequent rejection of his previous way of operating, should be viewed ironically remains open to debate. William Ryan, in his article "Uses of Irony in To Have and Have Not," suggests that Harry's dying words are indeed ironic: "Certainly it is comfortable to believe that after all his mistakes, Morgan discovers in the moment before death a truth of life. But this is unlikely in the world of Ernest Hemingway." No matter how these words are intended, however, Hemingway's book ends with a sense of futility at the center of this world, and a message which seems to be intended as much for the reader as for Harry.

The few instances of cooperation in this novel emerge in the actions of the minor characters. As Delbert Wylder suggests, Captain Willie and Professor MacWalsey practice a kind of brotherhood which contrasts with Harry's actions. Captain Willie, for instance, comes to Harry's aid to protect him from the government men:
Thanks, brother,' came the voice of Harry. 'That chap your brother?' asked Frederick Harrison ...

'No, sir,' said Captain Willie. 'Most everybody goes in boats calls each other brother.'

(p. 83)

Captain Willie's brotherhood stands in sharp contrast to the predatory habits of the bureaucrats. Similarly, Professor MacWalsey tries to help the drunken and battered Richard Gordon:

'I'm worried about him,' Professor MacWalsey said. 'You can't get him in without fighting him' the taxi driver said....Is he your brother?' 'In a way,' said Professor MacWalsey.

(p. 221)

Although MacWalsey's guilty conscience may be prodding him, his kindliness and compassion seem equally apparent.

These two men, who are willing to help others in spite of risks, feel a moral responsibility for their fellows. Hemingway invests them with a dignity and kindness which Harry Morgan never achieves. In fact, when his behavior is contrasted to theirs, Harry's actions appear even less defensible. Instead of excusing his protagonist's behavior in To Have and Have Not, Hemingway provides ample evidence of his ruthlessness, his chicanery, and his self-delusion. It is only when critics try to force Harry Morgan into an heroic pose that the frame which holds him begins to crack.

In To Have and Have Not, Hemingway has not written a "flawed" carelessly thrown together novel. Not only has Harry Morgan's character been carefully drawn, but the world in which he lives has been meticulously developed. Carlos Baker, recognizing the dimensions of this world, emphasizes that "The novel
as published contains Hemingway's notes towards the definition of a decaying culture, and his disgust with the smell of death to come." Transcribing those notes makes Hemingway's artistic purpose as well as his craftsmanship easier to understand.

The three highly ambiguous ancestors for his protagonist—General George Custer, Genghis Khan, and Sir Henry Morgan—are woven into the fabric of his novel. Both the economic and the sucker symbolism provide further cohesiveness to its structure, while combining with the yachting vignettes to intensify the bleakness of a world without a jackpot, a world where one creature survives by sucking the blood of another. Harry Morgan's last words emphasize dramatically that in the world he inhabits one man alone really doesn't have a chance.
NOTES


7 Ernest Hemingway, To Have and Have Not (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1937), p. 123. All subsequent page references are to this edition.


9 Ernest Hemingway in For Whom the Bell Tolls (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1940) provides evidence of his attitude toward Custer in a remembered conversation between Robert Jordan and his grandfather: "George Custer was not an intelligent leader of cavalry, Robert,' his grandfather had said, 'He was not even an intelligent man.' ... 'He just had great ability to get himself in and out of trouble,' his grandfather went on. 'and on the Little Big Horn he got into it but he couldn't get out' (p. 339).


11 Gerry Brenner, "To Have and Have Not as Classical Tragedy: Reconsidering Hemingway's Neglected Novel," in Hemingway in Our Time, ed. Richard Astro and Jackson J. Benson (Corvallis, Ore.: Oregon State University Press, 1974). Brenner reasons "to prevent treachery to himself or subsequent Chinese, Harry with no little justification murders Sing" (p. 70).
Notes to pages 8-19

12 Baker, p. 211.


14 Winston, pp. 70-72.

15 Winston, p. 57n.


17 Philip Young, Ernest Hemingway: A Reconsideration, Rev. ed. (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., 1966), p. 100. Young's critical stance is that Harry Morgan is "the man who teaches the hero" (p. 100).

18 Gerry Brenner's argument that "Harry's interior debate make unlikely a homicidal intent, even had Eddy not been saved by the presence of his name on the crew list" (p. 76) is unconvincing. Recall, too, that Harry did not remove his gun until he saw Eddy's name on the list (THAHN, p. 62).


22 Young, p. 101.

23 Actually Harry has lost only the $360 for replacing the tackle, since the $530 he would have received for the charter presumably covered his expenses and yet allowed a profit (THAHN, pp. 24, 25, 33). One wonders why Harry returned to running rum quite so readily and what became of the money he stole from Sing?

24 Baker, p. 220.

25 Brenner, p. 84.

26 Wylder, p. 125.

27 Wylder, p. 125.

28 Wylder, p. 125.
29 William Kenney in his thoughtful article "Hunger and the American Dream in To Have and Have Not," The CEA Critic, 36 (Jan. 1974), 26-28, suggests that "Predatory man surrenders to predatory nature" (p. 27) in the world of the novel. He has explored the "symbolic pattern of hunger and eating" (p. 27), but he does not mention the "sucker" symbolism, nor, of course, its implications.

30 James McLendon in Papa: Hemingway in Key West, 1928-1940 (Miami, Fla.: E.A. Seamann Publishing, Inc., 1972) explains that "Bee-Lips" was the nickname given to George Brooks, an attorney friend of Hemingway's, and that he was given the name "because of the curious way he wrapped his lips around the Chesterfields he chain-smoked" (p. 152). In the novel, Hemingway uses the name for his artistic purposes.


36 Lewis, p. 129.

37 Means, p. 207.


39 Wylder, pp. 102, 112-113.

40 Delmore Schwartz calls To Have and Have Not "a stupid and foolish book, a disgrace to a good writer, a book which should never have been printed" (p. 123). Other equally damning pronouncements have been made by John Hill ("By all standards, THAHN is a wretched book....Plot is non-existent; prose is dull; character development is nil; philosophy is absent; and structure is shoddy," p. 349), and by John Halliday, who in "Hemingway's Narrative Perspective," Sewanee Review, 60 (Spring 1952) calls it an "exhibition of technical irresponsibility" (p. 211).

41 Baker, p. 206.
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Hemingway, Ernest. For Whom the Bell Tolls. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1940.


