



The Sun Also Rises, by Ernest Hemingway

In A Nutshell

Originally published in 1926, *The Sun Also Rises* was Ernest Hemingway's first big hit. Less than ten years after the end of World War I, the novel helped define his generation: disillusioned young people whose lives were profoundly affected by the war. Hemingway himself wasn't a soldier (his vision wasn't good enough to enlist in the army), but he saw plenty of action through his exploits as an ambulance driver in Italy, where he was wounded and was actually awarded a medal from the Italian government for his valor. Hemingway bore the physical and emotional scars of the war for the rest of his life, just like the troubled characters he created in *The Sun Also Rises*, and the novel expresses the uncertainty and aimlessness of this "Lost Generation" (see What's Up With the Epigraph? for a full explanation of this term).

The Sun Also Rises endures as one of the most popular and significant books to emerge from American literature of the 1920s – along with Hemingway's friend F. Scott Fitzgerald's masterpiece, *The Great Gatsby* (published only a year earlier in 1925), which examines postwar life stateside, *The Sun Also Rises* is generally regarded as a definitive guide to life in the hedonistic, confusing, and fascinating post-WWI era.

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Big Picture Study Questions

- 1 In what ways are the male and female characters in the novel similar? How are they different? What might Hemingway be saying about sexuality and love in the post-war world?
- 2 Compare and contrast Cohn, Mike, and Jake. Consider their wartime experiences, relationships with women, etc. How are they similar? Different?
- 3 Is Brett a sympathetic character?

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