

The Power of Popular Discourse on Sex and Love in Hemingway's "Up in Michigan"

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Abstract

In my thesis I explore the historical contexts within which Ernest Hemingway set and wrote "Up in Michigan" (1921) in order to show how the short story can be read as a retrospective critique of the ideologies regarding normative gender and sexual roles in Victorian America. Published in expatriate Paris, the story centers on a female protagonist, Liz Coates, living in Michigan in the late 1800's, who due to a limited sex education is unable to predict or control a sexual encounter with her romantic interest, Jim Gilmore. Critics who have argued Liz is raped have access to an entire realm of contemporary feminist discourse that she does not. As I argue instead, Liz could not understand or define her experience as something akin to date rape because she did not have access to the essential vocabulary to do so. In fact, the literary culture of romance she did have access to—along with the sex education she did not—was detrimental to her ability to accurately understand Jim's desires and expectations. Hemingway was highly critical of conservative discourses on gender and sexuality in Victorian and early twentieth-century America. "Up in Michigan" clearly expresses the flaws in these powerful discourses on sex and love, which often resulted in the Victorian woman's failure to understand both her own sexuality and that of the men she lived with.

Miss Stein sat on the bed that was on the floor and asked to see the stories I had written and she said that she liked them except one called *Up in Michigan*.

“It's good,” she said. “That's not the question at all. But it is *inaccrochable*. That means it is like a picture that a painter paints and then he cannot hang it when he has a show and nobody will buy it because they cannot hang it either.”

“But what if it is not dirty but it is only that you are trying to use words that people would actually use? That are the only words that can make the story come true and that you must use them? You have to use them.” (Hemingway, *A Moveable Feast* 22)

The passage above from *A Moveable Feast* and Ernest Hemingway's repeated attempts to republish “Up in Michigan” are proof of the short story's importance to the author and his body of work.<sup>1</sup> When editing the story to make it less “inaccrochable,” he found that any revisions to keep the story “from becoming libelous...takes all its character away” (Smith 29). The revisions asked by editors were undoubtedly focused on the ending scene on the dock, where Liz Coates, a young, innocent woman shaped by her romantic ideals, is pressured into having sex with her love interest, Jim Gilmore. What makes the final scene so unsettling is that the reader is left in a total state of doubt as to what actually happens. While a first reading may lead us to judge the encounter as rape, a closer examination of the ambiguous dialogue and descriptions leave the reader unable to definitively say what has happened, which is why it has been possible for critics to argue Jim's innocence and guilt for decades. Regardless of where the reader's interpretation of the events lies, it is obvious that the sex experience has been a negative one for Liz. Even when

under the opinion that there was not a rape, it is still undeniable that Hemingway is depicting the disillusionment of a young woman who has been harmed both by Jim and her nonexistent sexual knowledge, which is much more a reflection of her social surroundings than it is of her character. Important to the story then is determining the influences on Liz and Jim that caused their divergent intentions and expectations that subsequently led to such a traumatic sexual encounter. We can see why Hemingway was so resistant to editing the scene at all as both Liz's dialogue and the third-person descriptions capture her perception of the event so accurately. Through both the content and style of the story, we are shown a sensitive portrait of the ways in which the most influential public discourses throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century affected the individual by inhibiting and distorting the perception of a "natural" sexuality. Throughout my thesis I will take an in-depth look at "Up in Michigan" and its embodiment of the miscommunication and isolation that resulted from the enforcement of 19<sup>th</sup>-century sexual mores and a strict gender binary system.

Taking place in roughly the late 1880's or 1890's,<sup>2</sup> "Up in Michigan" provides a cultural analysis that is clearly critical of the Victorian discourses that sanctioned proper gender roles and sexuality. The story exposes the ways in which societal ideals, which are created to be generalizable to the entire population, are oftentimes incapable of accurately describing the experiences of the individual. This disparity between a person's behavior and what is deemed normative thus creates the drive in the individual to mold themselves in an ideal public image, and many of those who fear they possess divergent qualities find ways to suppress their deviations. It is an important distinction to make for my thesis that normative behaviors as defined by society generally do not describe the majority of individuals' behaviors, but are instead the molding forces that pressure people to change or hide certain tendencies to appease the bell curve of public acceptance. I argue that Liz Coates experiences this repression in her

attempts to keep her sexual feelings below a conscious level. Showcased through Hemingway's style and word choice, Liz's avoidance of her own growing sexual feelings is a safeguard from having to acknowledge that she may be at odds with a Victorian feminine image that treated the unmarried sexual woman as deviant and in many cases dangerous. This cognitive dissonance creates an inability to explore and better understand the sexual feelings that underlie her infatuation with Jim, keeping Liz from being able to comprehend the sexual act both as it is taking place—which impedes her ability to stop it—and in the event's aftermath.

Many critics from Lisa Tyler to Marylyn Lupton have argued the status of rape or seduction for what occurs between Liz and Jim; however, this is not the debate that best enhances the meanings of "Up in Michigan." As Lupton points out, the modern reader must avoid inserting a contemporary feminist discourse onto the story. She notes that "it is unfair to inscribe Liz in the context of late 20<sup>th</sup>-century ideas of victimization," but it is also unfair to use definitions and categories that Liz herself did not have access to (Lupton 2). Even if the story by modern standards does depict something akin to date rape, it would not necessarily be beneficial to read it this way given that it is a story about Liz's perspectives and the cultural aspects that have shaped it. Instead of asking ourselves to define *what* happened, we can gain much more meaning by asking *how* "it" happened, and why. In relation to this, we are best served by asking why we may find it so difficult to label Liz's experience as rape or as something else. While in third-person, the story is told primarily through Liz's perspective, and it only seems intentional that our confusion as readers matches Liz's own inability to process the situation. Liz cannot comprehend the sex act or her own desires due to the barriers of language—and thus knowledge and understanding—set in place by Victorian American norms and discourses. These reasons behind Liz's confusion are perfectly represented in the omission of words and details that make

the story so difficult to interpret. This look at “Up in Michigan” puts aside the classic question of rape or seduction that is often at the center of its criticism, and in sidestepping this argument we are better able to discern the meaning of the story.

Hemingway’s commentary on sexuality and gender can be traced throughout most of his work; however, since the publication of *The Garden of Eden*, it has become increasingly important to consider his writing through a lens of sexuality and feminist studies. The influences of the novel do not stand in isolation, and especially given the expansive time period in which Hemingway sporadically worked on the manuscript,<sup>3</sup> the themes and meanings behind *The Garden of Eden* must be taken into account when considering the rest of his work. *The Garden of Eden* was for many Hemingway readers shocking in its explicit portrayal of gender and sexual fluidity. Debra Modellmog points to the importance of *The Garden of Eden* in its challenge to the concept of “normal” in both 20<sup>th</sup>-century and contemporary readers’ structuring of sexuality and gender (“Who’s Normal? What’s Normal?” 1). One of the questions posed by *The Garden of Eden*, “how are values and norms established in our society?” is an important underlying theme to “Up in Michigan,” and it’s worth noting that the same voice that questions early 20<sup>th</sup>-century gender and sexual binaries in *The Garden of Eden* is present in one of Hemingway’s earliest stories. As a number of critics have shown, much can be gained from looking back on the early works of Ernest Hemingway to understand the progression of thought that led to his final novel’s subject matter.

In structuring my argument, I will first look at the various public discourses of 19<sup>th</sup>-century America that I believe are reflected in Liz’s actions and behavior in the story. From here I will analyze key pieces of the story by drawing on the historical aspects earlier explored, thus showing the importance of their influences in the story’s overall structure and meaning. I will

then expand on “Up in Michigan” as an integral part of Hemingway’s work by connecting it to the stories of *In Our Time*, the collection of which it was originally meant to be a part. Published in 1925, the stories of *In Our Time* switch between two major themes of soldier stories and domestic couple stories. This sequence connects the inescapability of modern influences “in our time,” which have affected both the gendered notions that often impede romantic relationships and the experiences of those who have witnessed war. This latter section will help to show a larger critique made by Hemingway throughout multiple stories that looks to the ways in which people are constantly affected by contemporary standards and norms as well as those of the past. A reading that considers this entire thread of stories reveals the important question posed by Hemingway on whether we can ever truly escape or reject the influences of modern society and those of the past. Such an interpretation thus calls into question the meaning behind our human understanding of the “natural,” especially as it relates to the discourses on gender and sex.

Trying to map out the attitudes and views of gender and sexuality in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century is far from easy, and the inability to create distinct categories in which to label popular public perceptions highlights the aspects critiqued in “Up in Michigan” concerning the tumultuous and temporary nature of societal “truths.” There are however a few overarching distinctions that can be noted in describing the basis for many of the viewpoints of Victorian America. As is very important to the environment of “Up in Michigan,” men and women were socialized quite differently throughout this era, and as Carroll Smith-Rosenberg shows in *Disorderly Conduct*, the differences of gender were often isolating for heterosexual pairings:

If men and women grew up, as they did, in relatively homogenous and segregated sexual groups, then marriage represented a major problem in adjustment. From this perspective we could interpret

much of the emotional stiffness and distance that we associate with Victorian marriage as a structural consequence of contemporary sex-role differentiation and gender-role socialization. With marriage both women and men had to adjust to life with a person who was, in essence, a member of an alien group. (75)

In relation to the prevalence of homosocial relationships were the ideas on gender that magnified the differences between the sexes in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. With the shift in the 18<sup>th</sup> century to a two-sex model, men and women became “opposite counterparts,” as opposed to two variations of a single-sex model. Howard Chiang describes this turning point as when “gender, as it was conceived after the Enlightenment, changed from being the definition of sex to the socialization of sex” (Chiang 43). In literary, psychological, and medical sources from the time, we can understand how the Victorian model of separate homosocial environments emerged from an earlier system that put a greater emphasis on the innate differences of the sexes in defining normative gender roles.

Throughout the Victorian period, there was an overarching pattern in sexual discourses that highlighted the separation of the sexes; however, many of these various discourses about gender, sexuality, and their intersections that met each other with direct conflict. In addition, the public movements that attempted to bring sexuality into the public sphere were repeatedly met with resistance. This is most clearly represented by the Comstock Law of 1873, which sought to suppress indecent images and speech in the public sphere through heavy censorship (D’Emilio and Freedman 159). While many differing groups commonly fought Comstock’s suppression of free speech and published materials, this is often the most their interests ever aligned. Even within specific movements, sentiments shifted and factions formed, as can be seen by the

changes from female moral reform societies to the later social purity movements. Throughout the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, these later activists moved away from reforming the “fallen woman” to instead create a greater acceptance for female sexual equality in marriage. Before this though, the Female Moral Reform Society first restructured arguments that attacked prostitutes as the source of urban vice and seducers of innocent country men. Formed in 1834, these female reformers instead depicted these “fallen women” as once-innocent girls who at some point fell prey to lecherous men. The image of masculine sexual aggression was relied upon throughout the moral reform movements as a call to arms to protect the female body, the ethical standards of the public sphere, and future generations. As can be seen by the publications by the Female Moral Reform Society in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century,<sup>4</sup> a readily-held connection was formed between the uninhibited male body and the sexually degenerate women. In line with popular views that centered on the innate chastity of the normative young woman, female moral reformers took the stance that nearly no woman chose the path of prostitution but was instead introduced and forced into the lifestyle after experiencing the corruption of male seduction. Dubbed the “deliberate destroyer of female innocence,” adulterous men were viewed as the predominant reason behind female sexual transgressions, thus making them the focal point in the Victorian social war against prostitution (D’Emilio and Freedman 144). When female moral reformers entered brothels to aid and convert prostitutes, they would often ask the names of the men who first seduced the workers, seeing this as the catalyst for their current “degenerate” state. Another tactic used by these activists was to threaten publicizing the names of known male adulterers who were married, and in the late 1840’s they succeeded in pushing through anti-seduction laws in New York and Massachusetts (145). Key to this was seeing the male force as one that could and did manipulate “not [a woman’s] sensuality but, rather, the female’s trusting and affectionate



nature” (Smith-Rosenberg 116). But while female reformers were focused on protecting the “fallen woman” and asserting a single sexual standard for men and women, they also rejected the idea of sex outside of marriage. In these earlier movements, sexuality was still synonymous with reproduction, and there was very little room for the legitimacy of erotic passion for reasons other than childbirth until the later changes presented by the purity movements. In these earlier moral reform arguments, there was no option for single young women to explore their sexuality. Always in a negative light, the narratives closest to depicting this were centered on vice, rape, or degeneracy. The representation of the passionless woman was a useful rhetorical device for moral reformers; however it was constantly contradicted in the work they did. The inaccuracy of the overrepresentation of women as “victims of licentiousness” was exemplified in the noted resistance they faced by many of the prostitutes they attempted to save, many of whom rejected middle-class sexual morality (D’Emilio and Freedman 143-5).

By the 1870’s, however, the ideals held by the early moral reformers shifted in what became the social purity movement. Stemming from the push for a single-sexual standard for men and women, the social purity advocates sought to reform marriage relations, which involved greater relationship equality for wives and “attempted to break through the conspiracy of silence regarding the public discussion of sex” (150). These ideas led to social purity activists’ insistence for wives to separate coerced sexual relations from those they enjoyed and wanted, condemning the former as a serious crime. A shift occurred in which social purity movements began to detach from the older notions of sexuality being tied to reproduction alone, instead arguing for the recognition of sexual passion in wives. Social purity leaders in the decades leading up to the 20<sup>th</sup> century began to speak more publicly on female sexuality as originating from something other than the call to reproduce. Elizabeth Blackwell, an important leader in the movement, publicly

stated that “increasing physical satisfaction attaches to the ultimate physical expression of love” (154). This acknowledgement of love as an essential component to sex and marriage was radicalized and reshaped then by free love advocates like Victoria Woodhull who fought to remove sex and love from regulation by the public sphere. A basis in their fight for sexual equality for women, an end to prostitution, and voluntary motherhood was certainly similar to the social purity movement. A great divergence though came in their fight to dismantle marriage, not just reform it. While not proponents of multiple or frequent sexual partners, free love advocates focused their efforts on “the right of all men and women to choose sexual partners freely on the basis of mutual love and unconstrained by church, state, or public opinion” (161). The free love ideas of sex education and decreased sexual shame may initially sound beneficial for women like Liz Coates; however, the free love movement of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century was deemed anarchist and was often a target in Anthony Comstock’s crusade against vice. The negativity surrounding the movement placed the ideas perpetuated by those like Victoria Woodhull into a context of deviancy as a threat to the societal cornerstones of marriage, family, and modesty. While the Comstock Act was often ignored to a certain degree by the law,<sup>5</sup> free love advocates were repeatedly the subject of public trials, which helped to suppress their public influence as well as reassert their doctrines as deviant in the eyes of the American public. The discourses created by early female moral reformers, the social purity movements, and the free love advocates are vastly different in their views on the roles of women in marriage, sex, and reproduction; however, they are not isolated from one another, and in many ways the older viewpoints spurred the newer arguments.

The transition of the social purity movements of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, however, was not representative of a simple progression in the liberalization of sexuality. As can be seen by the

age of consent reform that took place in the last decades of Victorian era, many of the discourses throughout the entire century resulted in very ambivalent attitudes toward female sexuality. As one of the largest women's organizations of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Women's Christian Temperance Union was instrumental in pushing through state legislation that increased the age of consent across the United States. Between 1886 and 1895, a majority of states heightened restrictions on the age of consent laws at the urging of these female reformers, sometimes moving the legal age of consent from 10 years to somewhere between 14 and 18 years (153). Important to Hemingway's story, though, is the fact that these new legal standards often forced Americans to question where they stood in regard to their perceptions of female sexuality and desire. In many of the subsequent court cases involving statutory rape, public perception clashed with the beliefs of the purity movements, and the question of sexual autonomy in young girls was a conflicting and uncomfortable point to be analyzed. While it was shocking for the jury to hear, this transitory climate made it possible for a defense attorney in an 1896 statutory rape case to argue that the young girl be viewed not as a victim but as a participant, saying that "Her body is at her own disposal and she is capable of assenting to acts of sexual intercourse..." (Ullman 30). The jury was not convinced in this particular case and proceeded with indictment; however, a later case in the same city more fully showed the gray areas that courts and the public alike struggled with. This 1910 case against twenty-five-year-old John Salle showed the often uncomfortable and confusing position judges and juries were placed in when determining guilt and innocence in certain instances of statutory rape. When the jury heard repeated testimonies that the fourteen-year-old girl was a willing and influential participant in sexual intercourse with Salle, they were left to decide to what extent she had acted independently and how this reflected on Salle's level of guilt in the crime (35-37).<sup>6</sup> The young girl was blatantly badgered on the

stand, indicative of the interrogator and jury's opinions on her active role in the crime. Furthermore, the reluctance shown by the judge when handing down the five-year sentence to Salle showed the sympathy felt by the courts for the young man. The uneasiness felt throughout this trial exemplified the clash between the changing views on female sexuality at the turn of the century. As eroticism and passion began to be recognized as normal parts of the female's sexual role, old beliefs were challenged and displaced; a young girl's innocence was no longer always automatically presumed as a status governed by natural law. While I do not argue that Hemingway was familiar with these specific court cases, they are important insights into how state regulation interacted with social discourses like those of the purity movements. Most importantly, though, in looking at these trials by jury is seeing how the intersection of law and hegemonic norms affected the viewpoints of the individuals living within their public reach. These statutory rape cases show that the effects of the various social influences on communities were complex, causing many different attitudes among many different people. Throughout the court records, though, the various opinions can be unified by the public anxiety surrounding the emergence of the sexual woman in the public sphere. The differences in the female-led movements of the 19<sup>th</sup> century show just how public discourse and an understanding of "natural" sexuality can evolve throughout just a few decades, highlighting the instability in any one time period's understanding of societal norms. The predominance and restructuring of these movements throughout the Victorian era are very important in providing the historical framework that created the hegemonic influences that shaped Liz Coates' conceptualization of normative femininity.

In addition to the social activists above, the physicians of the Victorian period were integral to the changes in perception of female sexuality and the reaffirming of traditional gender

roles. The medicalized discourses of the 19<sup>th</sup> century overhauled societal understandings of gender and sex by replacing religion as the bedrock for regulating sexuality. As Hemingway wrote “Up in Michigan,” he was immersed in feminist and sexological discourses that more openly acknowledged not only the female’s right to equity in sexual pleasure, but that pleasure as being biologically legitimate and natural, regardless of reproduction. With the 1920’s birth control movement, women’s desires and rights to pleasure were further removed from the discourses that tied motherhood and reproduction to sexuality. A clear disparity can be seen then between these 20<sup>th</sup>-century public ideas and the earlier medical discourses that inform the background of “Up in Michigan.” Dating back to the studies of the humors in pre-Enlightenment societies, the female’s physical and mental state has often been viewed as controlled by her reproductive organs, especially in regards to the process of menstruation. Given the medicalization of conditions such as hysteria, the Victorian era can be noted as having a somewhat more extreme perception of the reproductive organs’ causes of instabilities in women. Such arguments made by physicians established an essentialist root to the social construction of gender by closely tying all behavior to the reproductive differences of men and women. While men were seen as in complete control of their sexual urges, “impulses that particular men could at particular times [choose] to indulge or repress,” female sexuality was understood in quite opposite terms (Smith-Rosenberg 183). The woman was depicted as bound to her ovaries and uterus in ways that defined her everyday behavior, her sexual urges, and her social roles. The extremes in sexuality caused by a woman’s anatomy were beneficial in allowing the Victorian woman to take on a multitude of public images, where she could represent “both higher and lower, both innocent and animal, pure yet quintessentially sexual” (183). A common metaphor used by Victorian medical professionals in describing this tumultuous state of female sexuality

was the ebb and flow of tidal waters, exemplified in colonial physician Alexander Hamilton's<sup>7</sup> warnings to the "dangers" inherent to female sexuality:

Many a young life is battered and forever crippled in the breakers of puberty; if it crosses these unharmed and is not dashed to pieces on the rock of childbirth, it may still ground on the ever-recurring shadows of menstruation, and lastly, upon the final bar of the menopause ere protection is found in the unruffled waters of the harbor beyond the reach of sexual storms. (184)

This water-based imagery by no means escapes the larger themes of "Up in Michigan," which takes place on the lakefront of Hortons Bay. In line with the above representation of feminine behavior, the prominent medical discourses of the time capitalized on the biological differences between the sexes to reinforce a strict gender binary system. The published work of such physicians was instrumental in maintaining Victorian barriers that split acceptable public behaviors along a male-female divide. One such example was the medical arguments that opposed higher education for women. The unchaperoned co-ed environments were a cause for anxiety in and of themselves, but many physicians also argued that women faced dangers by pursuing academics on the grounds of anatomical differences. Many physicians warned that women who focused too much energy on the cultivation of their minds would displace the energy needed to maintain their reproductive organs. This would cause infertility, poor health, and in some cases gender inversion. This "energy theory" was used by doctors to warn against many other "unfeminine" activities, like factory work, charitable activities, and going to dances and parties (Smith-Rosenberg 187).

The medical discourses that removed self-control from female sexuality can be seen as carrying over into many other discourses that feared in particular women's vulnerability to sexual exploitation and the entrapment of vice, best conceptualized in the Victorian anxieties over urban and immoral influences. While such rhetoric highlights the lack of sexual autonomy that seems in accord with the 1830's moral reform depiction of the fallen woman, medical professionals—and the many groups that accepted their studies as proof—utilized this line of thought to also explain moral degeneracy in women as being internally caused. This explanation of uncontrolled female sexual urges helped to strengthen the claims made by physicians that challenged female moral reformers on the correct way to deal with the problem of prostitution. In such an argument, licentious, predatory men were not the cause of prostitution, and in fact the sexuality of many fallen women was to some extent unavoidable. Thus many doctors argued, to the outrage of female reformers, that the best way to deal with prostitution was not to eliminate it but control and monitor it under state regulation. This movement temporarily succeeded, with prostitution regulation bills being considered in several states and enacted in St. Louis, Missouri, in 1870. However, moral reformers, suffragists, and other women activists were able to overturn the bill and public acceptance of it, partially under the belief that the prostitute was “the ultimate victim of women's economic dependence” (D’Emilio and Freedman 149). This was just one of many ways biology was used to configure the public views on female sexuality, but as the legal history here points out, this did not guard such arguments from contradiction and counterarguments.

The medical depiction of a tumultuous female sexuality was useful in that it allowed for such a wide range of portrayals of the Victorian woman, a malleability that was very valuable as a tool of rhetoric. Similarly, in the discussions posed for childhood sex education, young children

were often depicted as both sources of purity and base sexual desire, which allowed them to become another perfect vehicle for depicting the dangers and contagiousness of urban vice. The 19<sup>th</sup>-century anxieties surrounding youth sexuality are very important to understanding the sexual awakening of Liz Coates as her depiction is hinged on youthful innocence and ignorance. As Havelock Ellis detailed in *Sex in Relation to Society* (1910), the onset of sexual feelings in children was of great concern to both psychologists and the purity movements in Victorian America. At odds in these discussions were two conflicting images: the child as an emblem of innocence and the child that is unable to control—or understand—his or her natural, “animalistic” desires. In this model the child was ironically both what needed to be protected and what one must protect their own child against. It was, as many purity leaders warned, the schoolyard full of deviant youths that was responsible for catalyzing sexual impulse in prepubescent children, leading to masturbation and other feared behaviors. While it is not in line with the today’s popular perception of closed-mouthed Victorians, a common preventative for deviancy in children was early sex education, a responsibility which fell predominantly on the mother. Social purity activists of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century argued that it was important to give children a “moral education” on all the realities of sex, love, and reproduction before they had a chance to learn it from questionable and deviant sources. Free love advocates took a similar stance on sex education. Victoria Woodhull argued that both young women and men “should be taught all there is to know about its uses and abuses, so that he or she shall not ignorantly drift upon the shoals whereon so many lives are wrecked” (D’Emilio and Freedman 163). The fear of the development of an uninhibited and uninformed sexuality was often centered on Victorian anxieties surrounding masturbation, and the dangers that “onanism” posed to young boys and girls. It was feared that this behavior would lead to further degeneracy, leaving the child



incapable of ever fostering a greater sense of moral will. Masturbation would then become “the one absorbing and uncontrollable passion of life,” often leading to prostitution and “excessive fornication” (Egan and Hawkes 451). Whether in referring to masturbation or more general harms created by sexual ignorance, it was often noted by both social reformers and medical experts that the harms were often greater for women, whose stakes in public acceptance were much more closely tied to the ideals of chastity and suppression of desire.

Ellis described that while sexual ignorance can be dangerous for both young boys and girls, there is a difference due to the split natures of their opposite socialization that make the damages to the female child “more subtle and less easy to repair” (Ellis, *Sex in Relation to Society* 62). This idea is of great importance to the structuring of Liz’s sexual understanding in “Up in Michigan,” and Ellis’ fuller explanation of the specific dangers to young girls seems to be in direct dialogue with Liz’s experiences:

They are studiously taught concealment, and a girl may be a perfect model of outward decorum and yet have a very filthy mind. The prudishness with which she is brought up leaves her no alternative but to view her passions from the nasty side of human nature. All healthy thought on the subject is vigorously repressed... It is opposed to a girl's best interests to prevent her from having fair and just conceptions about herself and her nature. Many a fair young girl is irredeemably ruined on the very threshold of life, herself and her family disgraced, from ignorance as much as from vice. When the moment of temptation comes she falls without any palpable resistance; she has no trained educated

power of resistance within herself; her whole future hangs, not upon herself, but upon the perfection of the social safeguards by which she is hedged and surrounded. (63)

As Havelock Ellis' influences are accredited to the very end on the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup>, it is important to separate his thoughts here from the Victorian discourses that are being critiqued in "Up in Michigan." Ellis was very critical of the attitudes set forth by the anti-masturbation crusades mentioned above, showing that their condemnation of autoeroticism did not stop this behavior in children but instead forced this behavior into a shameful and hidden corner. This, he argued, was the cause of trauma and future social issues in the child. As can be seen in his opinions on masturbation, the work of Havelock Ellis was influential in the early 20<sup>th</sup>-century views on sexual expression and normative behavior, and these progressive viewpoints can be seen as aligning well with Hemingway's own attitudes in constructing "Up in Michigan." Viewing moderate sexual indulgence as healthy and positive, Ellis' volumes from the *Studies in the Psychology of Sex* took major hold of the American public in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>8</sup> Ellis was a proponent of sex-based differences like many other medical experts; however, he restructured these arguments to show that the female was just as sexual as the male. Instead of using biology to marginalize female sexuality, Ellis explained that the female merely displayed her sexual urges in different behavior patterns, with her desires being more diffused than male sexual urges. He rejected the views of female sexuality as lacking the strength of male sexuality, criticizing such distinctions as crude and revealing the "ignorance of the real facts of the matter" (Ellis, *Love and Pain; The Sexual Impulse in Women* 228). Important to understanding the sexuality of Liz Coates, Ellis explained that a woman's modesty during courtship was more "the chief secondary sexual character" than it was actual reluctance

(D'Emilio and Freedman 225). He went on to describe the courtship behavior of women by saying,

The seeming reluctance of the female is not intended to inhibit sexual activity either in the male or in herself, but to increase it in both. The passivity of the female, therefore, is not a real, but only an apparent, passivity, and this holds true of our own species as much as of the lower animals. (229)

These published studies by Ellis were beginning to influence American conceptions of gender and sexuality in the time period just after that in which “Up in Michigan” takes place. Hemingway’s close following of Ellis’ writing during the time in which he wrote “Up in Michigan” must be taken into account when analyzing the short story.<sup>9</sup> We can see how the progressive attitudes on sexuality displayed in the volumes of *Studies in the Psychology of Sex* help to form a retrospective critique of the Victorian sexual sanctions that inhibit Liz’s sexual exploration and understanding in the story. Ellis’ theories on female sexuality at once dispelled the argument that female passive behavior was the result of an inherent “passionlessness” and criticized the censorship and moral rigidity that led to damaging sexual repression. Both of these overarching ideas help to structure the social critique made by “Up in Michigan,” highlighting that the causes of Liz’s trauma are not just the burden of Jim but that of an entire array of limiting and controlling Victorian sexual discourses.

“Up in Michigan” is rife with allusions to the various discussions engaged in by physicians, sexologists, and purity movement advocates that shaped the public’s perceptions of sexuality and gender. Even though some may not be directly reflected in the story, the history of

discourse that has been presented above is pertinent to understanding the overall public views and ideals that were accepted throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century and up until the story's publication in 1921. To highlight the importance of tracing these historical references throughout the story, a quote from Havelock Ellis' *Studies in the Psychology of Sex: Analysis of the Sexual Impulse: Love and Pain; the Sexual Impulse in Women* may stand as a model for the critical engagement with discourse that Hemingway achieved in "Up in Michigan:"

It may not be out of place to recall at this point...the fact...that the judgments of men concerning women are very rarely matters of cold scientific observation, but are colored both by their own sexual emotions and by their own moral attitude toward the sexual impulse. The ascetic who is unsuccessfully warring with his own carnal impulses may (like the voluptuary) see nothing in women but incarnations of sexual impulse; the ascetic who has subdued his own carnal impulses may see no elements of sex in women at all. Thus the opinions regarding this matter are not only tinged by elements of primitive culture, but by elements of individual disposition. Statements about the sexual impulses of women often tell us less about women than about the persons who make them.

(193)

Such a quote stands out as resonating with the ways in which "Up in Michigan" explores the questions of who creates norms and who is affected by them. Much of Ellis' work is in harmony with Hemingway's own attitudes that critique the older constructions of gender and sexuality; however, to attribute Ellis' quote to Hemingway's critical approach to popular discourse is of

course to some extent ironic and contradictory. It is a complication which I believe Hemingway is more fully able to explore through multiple stories, and one in which I will explore later. But before a much more complex argument on our inability to escape societal influences and the technological advancements of modern society, this idea of Ellis' may more simply help to define the story of Liz Coates. Using Ellis' ideas, we can better understand the processes behind how various discourses come to be accepted by the public, and what results from the discourses that do not accurately define the lives of the individual. These definitions, however, become truth to those who must live within such institutions and thus shape the ways they must live. Powerful discourses are often the intangible forces that govern our daily lives. Whether we yield to our conception of normative roles or fight against it, these influences are responsible for our actions and thoughts. The influences of hegemonic discourse are entirely unavoidable in our modern world, even in the seclusion of Hortons Bay.

In combining the various images of female sexuality in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and that of the New Woman of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Liz Coates becomes Hemingway's perfect retrospective critique on the passive image of Victorian American women. For those who are only privy to Liz's external behavior, she embodies the 1830's moral reformer's image of the trusting and affectionate woman with little to no sexual desire. The careful attention Hemingway affords to describing her as "neat" reminds us that nothing in her public appearance would denote the true sexual urges she may possess. From an externally-focused lens, the story becomes a perfect example of the ideas perpetuated in moral reform journals like *The Advocate* of virginal women being violated by male dominance and lechery. Such an argument is easy to make based on an isolated and superficial reading of the dialogue on the docks, where Liz's utterances of "don't" are countered by Jim's only line in the scene: "I got to. I'm going to. You know we got to" ("Up

in Michigan” 85). Even this one line epitomizes the different attitudes upheld throughout the Victorian era that caused contradictory sexual attitudes. While the first two short sentences easily depict Jim as the forceful brute that social purity and moral reform activists fought against, the change in the use of pronoun to “we” creates new inferences into the meaning of Jim’s words which in some ways seems to satirize the Victorian single-sexual standard of purity. If the single-sexual standard existed as a popular late 19<sup>th</sup>-century ideal, then on the other end is mutual sexual liberation, or even degeneracy. It is still easy to view this sentence as merely an excuse by a man who wants to have sex, but perhaps in saying, “You know we got to,” Jim is speaking to a mutual sexual desire that both Liz and Jim are undergoing. It’s certainly worth considering, especially since the unknown vocal inflexions of Liz’s words, “Oh, Jim. Jim. Oh,” could entirely change the interpretation of her desires (85). Liz’s tone and her possible alternative intentions must be taken into account, especially with the knowledge of Havelock Ellis’ descriptions of play-resistance and “the female blush” being courtship behavior that is meant to increase sexual pleasure in both the woman and man. The lack of detail in the scene leaves open the possibility that Jim is reacting to physical cues from Liz, and he is not being quite as coercive as a first reading might imply. In such a reading, one might further explore the distinctions Ellis made for female sexuality to better understand Liz’s reactions to the sexual act. Ellis described that important to achieving full pleasure in sex, the woman required a much slower progression towards sex and “extensive foreplay” (D’Emilio and Freedman 225). From what is described in the story, the sexual encounter is rushed and we can only assume that any foreplay stopped with Jim’s brashness and big hands. Given this, it is arguable that Liz’s trauma after the sexual encounter is more the result of the pain and lack of satisfaction that she was not prepared for, especially in comparison to her autoerotic, “fun” moments in which Jim was idealized in her

mind. This argument is further strengthened by the structure of the passage in which Liz and Jim have sex, which uses Liz's internal thoughts and desires to complicate and even contradict Liz's dialogue. The phrases "She was frightened but she wanted it. She had to have it but it frightened her" are placed right in between Liz's resistant expressions. The above phrases are clearly sexual in nature, and the complication they create in a superficial reading of Liz's dialogue cannot be ignored. Furthermore, this interpretation adds new meaning to the later passage, "She was cold and miserable and everything felt gone" ("Up in Michigan" 85). The phrasing "everything felt gone" at first seems to denote the loss of a young girl's virginity, thus recalling the bleak Victorian narratives on the fate of the "fallen woman." While this may be one intention, the ambiguity of the phrase along with the content of the story allows us to consider this "everything" as also being the idealization by Liz that this experience would be sexually fulfilling. The limitations in her sexual knowledge are not immediate barriers to her expectations to achieve sexual gratification, as can be implied in the description that she "didn't know how he was going to go about things but she snuggled close to him," along with the repetition of the vague phrase "she wanted it" (85). The multiplicity of meaning created by the omission of detail allows for a much more nuanced meaning to the end of the story that shows the complexity behind Liz's emotions and disillusionment.

The Victorian discourses that removed sexual desire from normative young and unmarried women are further critiqued by Liz's portrayal, which is largely ambiguous in defining the strength of her sexual desires. The reader is only aware of Liz's sexual desires from the internal dialogue of her attractions that are never exposed to public gaze. The third paragraph of the story lists all the things she "likes" about Jim, which are all physical attributes, many of which allude specifically to his male virility, like the dark hair on his arms that make her "feel

funny” (81). Marylyn Lupton notes Liz’s attention to Jim’s sexual potency as is alluded to by his success in hunting. It is suggestive enough the way the deer are described, “their thin legs sticking stiff over the edge of the wagon box,” but when the big buck is described again and by no mistake as stiff, it becomes the focal point of the first conversation Liz has with Jim when she asks him, “Did you shoot it, Jim?” (83). We are already given signs that Liz is developing a strong sexuality hidden from public expression just a few lines before this in the private scene in Liz’s room during which I argue masturbation takes place. The predominance of Victorian anxieties surrounding masturbation is impossible to ignore in this scene. In line with Havelock Ellis’ views, Liz is shown by this scene to possess strong sexual urges that are successfully hidden from public perception. The lack of any explicit mention of masturbation could very well be a reflection of Liz’s own denial of her maturing sexuality; she is unable to admit such a “vice” to herself out of fear of both its degenerate label and the cautionary discourses that linked masturbation to dismantling entire lives. These anxieties, however, do not stop Liz from engaging in autoeroticism but instead create the need for an ambiguous narration that reflects her refusal to recognize her actions. This instance in the narrative represents one of the multiple functions of Hemingway’s strategic omission of detail. As Ellis stated, the intense feelings of shame created by societal influences cause something of a cognitive dissonance in regards to sexual urges. In moments like this in which Liz explores her sexuality, she creates a barrier between her actions and a conscious admittance of her curiosities, which is epitomized in the phrase, “If she let herself go it was better” (82). This passage is often cited as a scene of “subconscious autoeroticism” and not masturbation; however, the historical prominence of masturbation anxieties in the time in which “Up in Michigan” takes place cannot be overlooked. More so, the narrative shows that while unconscious sex dreams may also be occurring, more is



happening to Liz than just this, as is suggested by the line, “she didn’t sleep at all, that is she didn’t think she slept because it was all mixed up in a dream about not sleeping and *really* not sleeping” (82-3, my emphasis). We are also shown that Liz is engaging in something more deliberate than subconscious autoeroticism the night after Jim returns from his hunting trip, when she doesn’t want to go to her room yet “because she knew Jim would be coming out and she wanted to see him as he went out so she could take the way he looked up to bed with her” (84). Her sexual feelings for Jim become even more intensified in the extremely suggestive line that follows: “She was thinking about him hard” (84). The distance Liz creates between her underlying sexuality and her acknowledgement of desire is again alluded to in smaller, more innocent ways, such as Liz’s desire to bake something for Jim being curtailed by her fear of Mrs. Smith “catching” her (82). Liz’s possible episode of masturbation is one of the clearest challenges to the “natural” state of female innocence that is informed by early moral reform discourse. Far removed from urban influences in Hortons Bay, the only societal influence alluded to in this scene is the sexual shame that marginalizes Liz’s sexual exploration. Liz has been born into a system that not only discourages overt signs of sexual desire but deems the submission to erotic desires by young women as a grave social crime. It is then societal sanctions that cause her passive public image, not an innate female passionlessness.

Liz’s sexual knowledge is limited not just out of the lack of resources in her small town, but because she has grown up with an understanding that any exploration of her sexuality outside the confines of marriage does not exist as a viable option. Because of this, Liz is in a constant struggle throughout the story to suppress her growing sexuality, and she does this largely by ignoring its overall existence. She fears the possibility of deviancy, which is why she can only enjoy her “fun” thoughts of Jim when “she let herself go.” This fear of openly recognizing her

sexuality is reflected in Hemingway's stylistic focus on the omission of detail and repetition. In the beginning of the story, a stream of simple sentences, all starting with "she liked it," shapes our understanding of Liz's attraction to Jim:

Liz Liked Jim very much. She liked it the way he walked over from the shop and often went to the kitchen door to watch for him to start down the road. She liked it about his mustache. She liked it about how white his teeth were when he smiled. She liked it very much that he didn't look like a blacksmith. She liked it how much D. J. Smith and Mrs. Smith liked Jim. One day she found she liked it the way the hair was black on his arms and how white they were above the tanned line when he washed up in the washbasin outside the house. Liking that made her feel funny. (81)

The repetition of the phrase "she liked it" creates an obsession in Liz's desires that stands in direct contrast to the use of "like," a word choice with noncommittal and lackluster connotations. This structure that pairs an unravelling, repetitive list of Jim's attributes to a controlled word choice is our first hint that Liz's semi-conscious attempts to suppress her desires for Jim are failing. The sexual undertones to Liz's attractions are channeled through the use of "it" in the above paragraph, and this connection to her sexuality is carried throughout the story and is most notably utilized again in the final scene on the dock. "It" is unessential to the grammatical structure of each sentence, which leads us to understand that there is an important difference between Liz liking "that way he walked" and "liking *it* the way he walked" (my emphasis). "It" in this context becomes a stand-in for any clear identification of the sexual-based pleasure Liz gains from watching and thinking of Jim. The narration at this point seems to be reflecting Liz's

own internal thoughts, and the ambiguous “it” can be seen as her own safeguard from ever having to consider these feelings as being sexual. This can only make sense given the sexually charged, albeit immature, description, “liking that made her feel funny.” We can only conclude that these funny feelings are sexual in nature, especially since this statement is almost immediately followed by an account of Liz having “fun” thoughts about Jim at night, which as previously stated is a suggestion of masturbation. The sexual nature of “it” is further strengthened in that nearly all the attributes that appeal to Liz are purely physical, and even specific sentences in the above passage hold overt sexual significance, such as Liz’s excitement in seeing the untanned areas on his arms that would normally be covered. The insertion of “it” stylistically stands out in each sentence in the sequence, thus creating an awareness of the word when used throughout the rest of the story. Because we are already conscious of “it” and its connotations, when used again at the story’s end, “it” stands out and recalls the complexity of Liz’s sex-driven impulses, blurring the lines of consent and our understanding of what to make of the sex experience. Our understanding of what actually takes place on the dock is largely dependent on the dialogue, which ultimately riddles any conclusion with ambiguity. The seemingly straightforward statement by Liz, “It isn’t right,” shows just this (85). Given the earlier passage that described Liz’s increasing awareness of Jim’s attributes, Liz’s use of “it” here creates an ambiguity of meaning, which then spurs a multiplicity of meaning. When Liz says, “It isn’t right,” we are unable to determine whether she is referring to what Jim is doing to her or to her own sexual impulses that led her to this moment. While on the surface this statement seems to support the interpretation that Liz is truly trying to stop Jim—thus supporting the claims of date rape—it also can be read as a last-ditch effort for Liz to police her own desires. Nancy Comely and Robert Scholes claim that the meaning of “it” oscillates between Liz’s own

desires, the actual act of sex, and Jim's penis. There is no clarification in its repeated use, and readers are left to decide the meaning, or even if there is only one. Again, the multiplicity of meaning created by "it" adds incredible complexity to the seemingly simple insertion of "She was frightened but she wanted it. She had to have it but it frightened her" (85). Furthermore, when Liz cries out, "It isn't right," we can't even confidently say what "right" means to Liz in this moment. Recalling her immediate geography between the town's school and the church, we get a sense that in some part the meaning of "right" is a confused entanglement of the external influences in her life that govern morality, both for her actions and for Jim's.

Being informed by 20<sup>th</sup>-century discourses—some of them feminist—that redefined female sexuality, Hemingway critiques the older arguments concerning what created deviant behavior, or even what deviant behavior actually was. Liz is depicted as anything but deviant—even in her sexual desires—and as the title so explicitly points out, she is even removed from the most commonly cited source of sexual corruption: urban life. She does not have the benefits of the New Woman's knowledge, but instead lives a quiet, domestic life in the country. Why else would this be Hemingway's chosen character if not to show female desire as stemming from something other than the cited anxieties of the industrialized age? Liz exists on the brink of a major shift in the discourses on heterosexuality and the female gender. Her life has been molded by purity movement rhetoric and physicians who magnified the biological differences of the female, and yet she lives just one generation before the major public emergence of birth control activism and the campaign for greater equity between men and women in heterosexual pleasure. We are unable to answer definitively whether or not Liz could be considered self-aware of her sexuality, for while it is clear that she is attempting to understand her own desires, she is still engulfed in and suppressed by an aging discourse that totes passivity and labels the sexual

woman as deviant, imbalanced, and ill. The story's proximity to the sexual liberation and feminism of the 1920's begs the question of whether if Liz had been born just a little later, the ending would have been different. It is here that we may consider the importance of the separation of sex from reproduction that enhanced the argument for women's right to sexual pleasure in the 1920's and earlier. This assertion of female sexual autonomy can best be equated to an explicit "I want" or "I don't want" conversation, which is entirely absent from Liz's interactions with Jim. It stands to reason that a more disseminated and positive recognition of a single female's sexuality would have led Liz to be able to explicitly state her desires for the night, supplanting the vague "It isn't right" with an understanding and explanation of *what* isn't right. Marylyn A. Lupton argues that Liz's "indeterminate speech, coupled with inaction, constitute culpability" (Lupton 1). I would not go so far as to assign culpability to Liz; she does of course explicitly use the words "no" and "don't" when trying to dissuade Jim. However, it is important to note that similar to Lupton's claims, there is something reflected in the way Liz speaks to Jim on the docks that shows her confusion in the moment, and perhaps her own inability to determine what she actually wants to happen. In all reality, Liz most likely did not want to have sex with Jim at this moment but was unable to reconcile this thought with her sexual attractions towards Jim that had been growing towards consciousness since the beginning of the story. The perceived disparity of these two feelings is what creates the indeterminate speech and inaction of which Lupton speaks. In addition, it is much more arguable to say that the "indeterminate speech, coupled with inaction," is not the cause of a botched tryst but is instead the result of normative gender scripts that leave Liz at a clear disadvantage for asserting her desires over those of her male partner.

The lack in sexual autonomy created by 19<sup>th</sup>-century discourse is further scrutinized in the water imagery used in “Up in Michigan.” Alluding to the medical discourses that utilized female reproductive organs in their depictions of female sexuality and gender construction, Liz’s sexuality is tied to water from the beginning of the story. The scene in which Liz looks out onto the ore barges floating in the lake is representative of her latent and yet pressing sexuality. Liz cannot immediately tell that the ore barges are moving, “but if she went in and dried some more dishes and then came back out again they would be out of sight beyond the point” (“Up in Michigan” 82). From the limited and careful phrasing of Liz’s passions for Jim, we can assume that she is discouraged from acknowledging her sexual feelings by either self-restraint or social sanctions. But even if they are suppressed or perceived to be controlled, her sexuality is constantly and gradually manifesting in her life, as is evident in the suggestive description of her “dream about sleeping and really not sleeping” (83). Similarly, the phrasing used when Liz watches Jim—“Liking that made her feel funny” (81)—infers that she does not actually control her desires for Jim, but is “made” to feel that way. We see the growing strength of Liz’s sexual urges when she begins walking to the docks with Jim, where the increased movement in the water imagery—“the water was lapping in the piles”—is immediately followed by the description of Liz being “hot all over from being with Jim” (85). Her sexuality matches the tidal pull of the lake, and yet we are not given the impression that this water imagery or Liz’s sexuality is tumultuous or unstable. In fact, the description of the ore barges shows that the natural pull of the water is beneficial in delivering societal needs to the public. What we do see, however, is the water’s obstruction made by human intervention. The barges are the first sign of this, but it is also significant that Liz is pressured into having sex on the dock planks that were built directly over the water. It is ironic that when lying on the dock, the only sexuality she does

not have control over is that of her male partner. The manmade planks of the dock are described just as harshly as the sexual encounter, and are in fact stylistically connected directly to Jim's sexual imposition: "The hemlock planks of the dock were hard and splintery and cold and Jim was heavy on her and he had hurt her" (85). The construction of the dock is carefully utilized in this section, and with it the allusion to "tidal" rhetoric for the female body folds over into a critique of human intervention on the "natural." From the description given, the wood of the dock has hurt Liz almost as much as Jim has, showing that the miserable events of the night do not fall solely on Jim's shoulders: the socialized structures that caused the different expectations in Liz and Jim must also share the blame. Only after Liz is entirely disillusioned by the harshness of her first sexual experience does she become aware that her environment is cold and wet, a final ode to the archaic influences of the humors on the perception of the female body.<sup>10</sup>

The medical and female reform discourses that shaped perceptions on female innocence and sexuality become condensed in "Up in Michigan" as Liz attempts to understand what the sexual interaction meant. While the statutory rape cases and age of consent reforms involved girls presumably much younger than Liz, the innocence and juvenescence of Liz's attractions for Jim draw connections to these trials and are partly responsible for why the story is so disconcerting to read. "Up in Michigan" in many ways poses the same questions juries faced in deciding how to view the evidence that sexual desire existed in these otherwise exemplary innocent young girls. In looking at the sections removed from the published story, we can see that this may have been a question Liz posed herself. In the first typescript, the story ends with Liz going up to her room after the incident, where she "felt ashamed and sick and cried and prayed until she fell asleep. She woke up frightened and stiff and aching... 'What if I have a baby?' she thought... She thought about having a baby until it was morning" (Benson 146-7).

Her thought of possibly being pregnant is much more profound than a practical fear of her future, given that up until the 1820's a woman's state of fertility was often connected to her sexual desire and pleasure. It was not uncommon throughout the 18<sup>th</sup> century to use the pregnancy of a rape victim as evidence for the defense. The idea that conception was only possible—or at least aided—by female pleasure has been argued and largely accepted since Roman antiquity, and was widely accepted, or at least considered viable, until the early 1800's. By this time, however, most credible legal and medical professionals looked upon this old-world view as vulgar, “an extraordinary dictum of the ancient lawyers” (Laqueur 162). However, as Thomas Laqueur notes in his studies, even though doctors and lawyers of the early 1800's discredited the connection between sexual desire and pregnancy in rape cases, it is very likely that such discourses were very slow to reach the American public, and it is more likely that Liz would still have been influenced by the views and attitudes of the earlier generations. This idea is only strengthened by her rural location, the isolation of which was often noted as an impediment to the dissemination of new information from urban areas. It is very possible that when Liz asks herself, “What if I have a baby?,” she is not thinking solely about her future prospects, but is instead questioning how a pregnancy would define the sexual experience she is currently unable to fully understand. Informed by pre-Victorian attitudes on rape, the hypothetical question posed by Liz quickly becomes an insight into a latent fear she may not be able to ask herself directly: “Did I want any part of this to happen?” An internal question such as this could quickly be identified by modern scholars as typical of self-blaming behavior experienced by rape victims, and even the audience of the 1920's—more clearly influenced by the discourses that further separated female sexuality from reproduction—would most likely scoff at this “ancient” notion that targets assault victims. This, however, may just be the point of the passage. By creating a space in which readers can



reflect on and criticize the discourses of the past, they are forced to see how respected theories and empirical evidence once looked upon as absolute truths become unstable and even absurd as time passes. Nothing could epitomize this more than the rapid changes in what “natural” meant to reproduction and sexuality in the forty years leading up to the 1820’s.<sup>11</sup> In such a world essentialist arguments are much less possible to believe in, and any absolute truths of sex, gender, and sexuality are severely diminished. But, as “Up in Michigan” shows, such findings and discourses do not need to be true to construct a complete reality for those who live within the affected social environments. Individuals do not even need to be exposed directly to these ideas to experience their profound effects. Whether or not these discourses accurately reflect Liz’s sexuality, they are still able to alter how she experiences and understands her own sexuality and that of others. While these removed passages must be looked at cautiously, they can still be of use in determining Hemingway’s influences while writing the story and the tone he wished to create. Especially when analyzing Hemingway’s early stories, which he claimed to construct using his theory of omission, it is possible that this section was omitted not because it would change the interpretation of the story, but because he believed it was unnecessary and that removing it would strengthen the meaning and “make people feel something more than they understood” (Smith 3).<sup>12</sup>

The Victorian constructions of gender acted as a way of separating men and women, and this binary is shown throughout both “Up in Michigan” and the stories of *In Our Time* to be causal of the miscommunication that results in different-sex relationships. Important to this critique is the magnification of gendered activities and public spaces that was discussed at this time. Important to the social purity movements of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century was the Women’s Christian Temperance Union and their fight to close saloons (D’Emilio and Freedman 152). The

argument that alcohol—especially for men—was a catalyst for immoral behavior was not new to this time period; however, the WCTU furthered the argument by attacking the saloon as a male-dominated space that excluded women, expanding the gaps of inequality that already existed between the sexes. Allusions to feminist temperance discourse resonate throughout the story: it is of course Jim’s drunkenness that is commonly seen as a reason for his sexual aggression. But overall the power of the hypermasculine and exclusionary act of drinking can be felt throughout “Up in Michigan” as a tool that separates the sexes along gendered lines. In addition, the atmosphere created by social drinking among the male characters magnifies the power of controlled space and the solidarity of a group. Neither Liz nor Mrs. Smith ever drinks alcohol; meanwhile whiskey seems to be an important aspect of the men’s camping trip. Even after they return to Hortons Bay, Jim gathers what remains of the whiskey the men went through while hunting so they can continue to bond over drinks after dinner. Liz and Mrs. Smith do not join them, and the lack of any explanation as to why they don’t shows that there is an unspoken rule that excludes the women from this ritual. As one of the men is careful to say, the whiskey “tastes good to a man” (“Up in Michigan” 83). In addition, no separate bonding experience ever takes place between the only two women in the story, and as the men gather to talk in the living room, Mrs. Smith and Liz separate from each other without exchanging a single word. Many of the other stories of *In Our Time* utilize alcohol to magnify the social separation of men and women; this feeds into the overarching critique on gender construction that can be traced throughout the book, thus anchoring “Up in Michigan” as the intended first story of the sequence.<sup>13</sup> “The Three-Day Blow” revolves around the intimate conversation between Nick Adams and his friend Bill that takes place while pouring glass after glass of whiskey. There are intense homoerotic implications to their conversation, but the importance of their homosocial relationships is

primarily channeled in the constant stream of alcohol. After each time that Bill pours the whiskey, Nick tops the two glasses with water. In this oddly intimate ceremony, the two liquids mix together naturally. After the repeated—and therefor important—references to Nick’s water combining with Bill’s whiskey, Bill explains why Nick had to end his relationship with Marjorie: “You can’t mix oil and water and you can’t mix that sort of thing any more than if I’d marry Ida that works for Strattons” (*In Our Time* 123). Bill’s superficial reference to Marjorie’s personality and family ties is overshadowed by the context within which the two men are drinking. It strengthens the separation of the sexes, magnifying the concept that homosocial relationships carry an intimacy and mutual understanding that a heterosexual pairing can never achieve. “The Three-Day Blow” is immediately preceded by the story in which Nick leaves Marjorie, which is marked by Nick’s inability to effectively communicate the reasons behind his discontent. He is unable to say anything deeper than, “It isn’t fun any more,” and very little is resolved before Marjorie leaves (110). Furthermore, as Marjorie rows away in their boat, Bill emerges to join Nick on the beach. We can only assume that Nick has talked extensively with his friend about his decision to end the relationship when Bill asks without any pretext, “Did she go all right?” (111). We are meant to understand a depth to Bill and Nick’s relationship that was not available to the pairing of Marjorie and Nick, and perhaps the importance of the title, “The End of Something” is not focused on the end of the heterosexual relationship itself, but the fact that in the end, the bonds of same-sex friends were able to outlast it. If the *In Our Time* stories are connected to “Up in Michigan,” it would make perfect sense in a late-Victorian setting that Nick would so heavily rely on a homosocial relationship to explore his emotions. In this way we can read “The End of Something” not as a laudation of close male bonding, but instead as a warning to the dangers of displaced communication caused by the separate socialization of women and men.

While “Up in Michigan” is important as a consideration for all the couple stories of *In Our Time*, there is a clear and strong connection between Liz’s experiences and those of Nick Adams. Nick is able to complement Liz’s story by showing the effects of a strict gender binary from the male perspective, and as the bridge between the two major story types within the book, his stories are able to pull together the effects of industrialized war and societal sexual ideals in direct comparison. Originally intended to be the opening piece for *In Our Time*, Liz’s story would have come almost directly before “Indian Camp,” the second short story in the published version.<sup>14</sup> The two stories can be viewed as coming-of-age tales, but more important is the strong emphasis on powerful sexual discourses that transfers between the two. It is no coincidence that “Indian Camp” centers on Nick being ushered into adulthood and a new perspective on gender by his father, a doctor. A direct influence in his son’s life, Nick’s father and physicians like him had shaped Liz’s understanding of gender and sexuality, as well as the opinions of those who would analyze and judge her behavior. A result of the major shifts in public power from clergy to medicine, doctors of the nineteenth century became the cornerstone to the essentialist argument for strict gender separation. As previously stated, physicians often used in particular the differences in the biological roles of reproduction to defend a strict binary system for the male and female genders, citing the uterus and ovaries as ruling forces in women’s lives. The effect of these opinions on actual behavior was perhaps best exemplified in the aforementioned medical arguments against college education for females.<sup>15</sup> It is very significant then that Nick’s rite of passage, overseen and controlled by his father, revolves around the trauma he incurs from watching a woman give birth. Nick must watch as a woman is held down and cut open, literally exposing her reproductive organs to the manipulation of a doctor. This brash and direct awakening in youth to the separations formed between men and women complements Liz’s story

where we do not see the origins of the ways in which hegemony first helped structure her understanding of a gendered world. There is a striking similarity in Liz's experiences to the trauma that results from overt intervention in Nick's early life, showing that his tangible influences are just as powerful as those of the "soft" influences of discourse.

"Up in Michigan" opens the story sequence by exposing the disparities between the discourses that govern society and the individuals affected by them. "Indian Camp," then, is in direct dialogue with this project by showing a doctor's complete detachment from the woman he is treating, as well as her entire community. It cannot be ignored that Nick's father does not talk to any resident of the reservation, and in fact there is no dialogue from any of the Native Americans over the course of the story. This silence is only broken by the screams coming from the woman in labor, which Nick's father ignores: "I don't hear them because they are not important" (16). There are of course practical reasons for the emotional detachment of a doctor from his patient just as there are for him not wanting to touch her blanket for the sake of sterility. There is, however, a dual function to these descriptions that shows the symbolic separation of those in control of discourse from the groups of people they influence. The doctor's disassociation from his patient's community can partially be explained by the implied language barrier, but this of course only strengthens his symbolic inability to understand the people—particularly the women—he diagnoses and treats. The disparities of race, sex, and social class is magnified as the doctor talks exclusively to Nick and George, the only other white men in the story. From this we see the complication that often arises from the discourses created by those in power. The speakers in control of public opinion are often far removed from the experiences of the general public, especially the working class, people of color, and women. The story also capitalizes on Hemingway's attitudes towards primitivism by drawing such distinct lines

between this white male, who personifies contemporary medical discourses, and an Indigenous American community. As Nancy Comely and Robert Scholes point out in their essay “Tribal Things: Hemingway’s Erotics of Truth,” one of the important repeated themes seen throughout Hemingway’s body of work “has to do with a relationship between the truths of sexuality and truth in general” (Comely and Scholes 269). They go on to say that “the bond between sexuality and truth for Hemingway was a matter of the primitive or primal. For him the link between sex and truth was based on their common opposition to the lies and deceits of culture” (269). “Tribal Things” immediately connects the “lies and deceits of culture” to a passage in another short story, “Fathers and Sons,” where Nick Adams as a young boy is warned by his father against the dangers of masturbation and sex. Knowing that Hemingway was influenced by the modernist fascination with primitivism—which for him certainly included Indigenous American culture—it is then very easy to see in “Indian Camp” the friction created between sexual truth and cultural impositions as a young Nick is shown by his father that pain and reproduction are “naturally” linked conditions of the female. This connection between the primitive and truth drawn by Comely and Scholes makes it all the more significant that Nick’s father literally does not speak the same language as the “squaw bitch” (*In Our Time* 17).

While Victorian doctors and female moral reformers often clashed, modern scholars can note both as being flawed in a misunderstanding of variant social groups, such as the attempts to impose a middle-class sensibility of sex onto the working class. The experiences of those who most influenced public perception were so vastly different from many of those influenced by their rhetoric, the irony of which is continually alluded to throughout *In Our Time*, but first brought to our glaring attention by “Up in Michigan” and “Indian Camp.” These two stories further shape the book’s attitudes on gender and sex by showing that both sexes are heavily

affected, even when the discourses refer exclusively to the female. We come to understand Hemingway's critique of gender construction as more than a "women's issue" in the aftermath of the Caesarian operation in "Indian Camp." It may be a woman who is held down and cut open, but it is her husband who is unable to live with her pain. He commits suicide even though she survives, validating Nick's father's opinion that men are "usually the worst sufferers in these little affairs" (18). The effect of the birth and the surgery have immediate and gruesome effects on the father, but throughout *In Our Time* we are able to see the effects of this experience permeate Nick's entire life.

"Up in Michigan" may predate the other couple stories of *In Our Time* by several decades, but this too is important in Hemingway's depiction of the power of discourse in society. The normative attitudes of the past never fully leave us behind, and to some extent we are unable to ever reject their influences. With Liz Coates' story at the beginning of the sequence, the reader is better able to reflect on the power that even "outdated" and partially forgotten norms have on the behaviors and attitudes of the later generations of characters. Through this story sequence, we can easily see the effects of past discourses throughout *In Our Time* as having damaging and isolating effects on the heterosexual relationships of the book. In many cases Hemingway outright mocks these older values. In "Mr. and Mrs. Elliot" for instance, we see the constraining influences of history through a humorous lens in the cuckolded husband who connects male impotence to the ideals of the single sexual standard enforced by the purity movement.<sup>16</sup> A much more serious light though is shed on the pervasiveness of discourse in "The End of Something," which explicitly connects Liz's experiences to a new generation of male-female relationships. This story opens with a long description of a deserted Hortons Bay, now nothing but scenery for a young Nick Adams and his girlfriend Marjorie. She may be assertive and can fish as well as

Nick, but dichotomous gender norms still affect Marjorie's life, as can be interpreted by Nick's initial frustrations: "You know everything. That's the trouble" (34). While she is vastly different in representation from Liz, Marjorie still faces an impediment to her goal of love due to the inability to communicate with her male counterpart, key to which are their differences along a male-female social binary. For Marjorie, the idealization of love is enough to make her happy in the relationship, but for Nick, it simply "isn't fun anymore" (34). Needing to end the relationship in such a terse manner highlights the difference in the gendered expectations of the characters. Paul Smith points out that Nick's terse explanation for his break-up and "his refusal to romanticize" are results of his "resistance to Marjorie herself." Smith goes on to say, "Hemingway's male characters in these stories...often retreat into abstraction when confronted with the more romantic and imaginative visions of his women" (Smith 37). The social constructions of gender are shown to still be intertwined with a concept of the "natural" separation of the sexes when Nick later describes to Bill why he left Marjorie: "I couldn't help it. Just like when the three-day blows come now and rip all the leaves off the trees" (*In Our Time* 47). To Nick's understanding, there is an insurmountable difference between him and Marjorie that could only be described in terms of a natural phenomenon. Even though the time period in which "The End of Something" takes place has begun to move away from such an essentialist viewpoint<sup>17</sup> of gender, the characters of the story are still inevitably affected by these stubborn ideologies. Couples may have progressed by the 1920's, and women were certainly gaining new ground in the fight for sexual autonomy, but people are never isolated from the past. For example, the 1918 book *Married Love* by Dr. Marie Stopes, which progressively argued for mutual sexual satisfaction for married couples, reveals its indebtedness to earlier medical



discourses that suppressed female sexuality by using the same water-based imagery to describe the female's "fundamental pulse:"

Its simplest and most fundamental expression, however, is generally immensely complicated by other stimulations which may bring into it diverse series of waves, or irregular wave-crests. We have all, at some time, watched the regular ripples of the sea breaking against a sand-bank, and noticed that the influx of another current of water may send a second system of waves at right angles to the first, cutting athwart them, so that the two series of waves pass through each other. (42)

History is not a one-way retrospect but is instead a dialogue, with the modern and the past constantly interacting and shaping each other. Perhaps this is why Nick and Marjorie's relationship falls apart on the other side of Hortons Creek, presumably right across from the docks where Liz experiences her ultimate disillusionment from romantic ideals. Here on the beach we see that Nick and Marjorie's relationship has failed because of the miscommunication caused very much by the same gendered discrepancies that caused disillusionment in "Up in Michigan." This connection gives an incredibly heavier meaning to Marjorie's first line in the story, which refers to what is left of Hortons Bay: "There's our old ruin, Nick" (*In Our Time* 32).

"Cat in the Rain" is another 20<sup>th</sup>-century couple story from *In Our Time* that shows the continued complications that resulted from pervasive Victorian American discourses. Important to its connection to "Up in Michigan" is the distinct feminine voice of the story, which provides an intimate portrait of an American wife in Italy. Even when liberated by a masculine haircut and

complete removal from her American life, the female character still faces isolation and miscommunication within her unhappy marriage. In his analysis of the story, Warren Bennett rejects the trivializing critiques that have labeled “Cat in the Rain” as a simple story of marital dissatisfaction and instead defends it as an important story to the structure of *In Our Time*, “subtly executed and powerfully suggestive in its characterization and imagery” (Benson 245). It forms a very important bridge between the discourses on sex and gender critiqued in “Up in Michigan” and the portrayal of progressive 20<sup>th</sup>-century Europe. Just as in “The End of Something,” the isolation and miscommunication within this newer romance shows that the social world that affected Liz Coates’ self-perception and romantic assumptions is still present in the lives of contemporary men and women. While “Cat in the Rain” shows a woman outwardly appearing to be freed from a strict gender binary, her freedoms and happiness are still impinged upon by social pressures of femininity and marriage. The reasons for the wife’s lack of fulfillment are unclear—perhaps unclear even to herself—and as such she begins to express her frustrations through an easier outlet, using the feminine tropes of discontent she does have access to: “I want to eat at a table with my own silver and I want candles. And I want it to be spring and I want to brush my hair out in front of a mirror and I want a kitty and I want some new clothes...I want a cat. I want a cat now. If I can’t have long hair or any fun, I can have a cat” (*In Our Time* 94). The husband trivializes her unhappiness, agitating his detachment from his wife and her “feminine” problems. The story leaves the reader with an unspoken understanding that the wife is unsettled by a problem much more intangible than a marriage spat. While her husband may be an important piece to this, the wife seems to be questioning what options she has for changing her life or building an identity, prospects that seem grim to the American wife. She channels these emotions through a cat she sees outside her hotel window and immediately

assigns the animal a female persona. The description given is clearly through the wife's perspective as she watches the cat crouch under a table in the rain, "trying to make herself so compact that she would not be dripped on" (91). We are shown that it is impossible to avoid getting wet in the downpour, and when the wife goes outside in a failed attempt to rescue the "poor kitty," this unavoidable fact becomes ominous in the wake of the repeated warnings from husband and hotel staff alike: "Don't get wet."<sup>18</sup> The wife has continually had to "make herself compact" to fit into the strict structures of marriage and femininity, and a sense of futility is further supplanted onto the cat when she says, "It isn't any fun to be a poor kitty out in the rain" (93). Never named and identified primarily through her marital status, "the American wife" is as displaced as a cat in the rain, and as Bennett states, her husband will "allow her no expression of her true identity and no true place in their marriage" (Benson 256). Even when removed from the 19<sup>th</sup>-century American discourses by time, space, and her boyish haircut, the wife of the story is still unable to fully escape the normative attitudes that shaped life for Liz and Jim in Hortons Bay.

Discourse's depth of power is perhaps best captured in an ecocritical reading of "Up in Michigan" that parallels Sarah Mary O'Brien's analysis of "Big Two-Hearted River." In her article "I, also, am in Michigan," O'Brien uses pastoralism, Leo Marx's concept of "the machine in the garden," and Donna Haraway's "The Cyborg Manifesto" to examine Nick Adam's trauma and isolation as a soldier returned from war. In this approach she argues that Hemingway uses Nick's retreat into the wilderness to show just how inescapable the effects of civilization are on humankind, and in this exposes the inevitable dissonance that exists between the natural world and that which is funneled through our human—and thus civilized—understanding. O'Brien argues that the swamp Nick encounters while fishing represents a truly wild space in nature, and

as he stares into it, it comes to reflect his “wild” subconscious. His mind, though, a product of civilization, inadvertently causes the swamp to become a reflection of society. Ironically, the swamp functions as “the machine,” and becomes proof of Nick’s inability to escape the society that created him. Hemingway represents this not only in the scene in which Nick looks into the “tragic” swamp, but in the imagery throughout the story that depicts the permanent effects of urbanization on nature. As Nick hikes past the deserted city of Seney, he observes the burned landscape from old slash-fires and notices the grasshoppers “had all turned black from living in the burned-over land. He realized that the fire must have come the year before, but the grasshoppers were all black now. He wondered how long they would stay that way” (136). Nick picks up a grasshopper, and as he turns it over, he realizes that it is not covered in ash but has in fact turned black. O’Brien examines this, writing, “Like the grasshoppers and the land itself, Nick is profoundly altered by historical reality—by the industrial-scale environmental devastation of his homeland, and by the war. That is to say, he is permanently damaged by his own, human culture and the physiological evolution that made such human culture possible” (O’Brien 83). Even though Nick has entered this pastoral retreat to escape his own society, everything he perceives in this environment is filtered through his mind and is thus perceived through his societal understanding. In this way, any idea of humankind returning to a “natural” or primitive state is impossible. This ecocritical approach shows the omnipotence of and ambivalence toward the influences of modern society that Hemingway tried to capture throughout *In Our Time*. While the “machine in the garden” is much more evident in “Big Two-Hearted River,” we see traces of this much more subtly in “Up in Michigan.” By viewing the stories together as part of the same sequence, we can use Nick Adams’ story to amplify the critique on gender and sexuality presented in Liz Coates’ story. A joint-reading of the two stories

helps to magnify the contradictions formed by the Victorian discourses alluded to throughout “Up in Michigan,” many of which were focused on defining a “natural” state of human sexuality and gender construction. O’Brien’s reading is thus extremely valuable in understanding “Up in Michigan” as a core piece in constructing the overarching themes of gender in *In Our Time*. “Up in Michigan” comes to parallel Nick’s inability to escape the effects of culture from a female perspective. Such a reading adds symmetry to Hemingway’s intended structure of *In Our Time*, which had “Up in Michigan” as the first story in the sequence and “Big Two-Hearted River” as the last. Liz’s traumatic experience with sex connects her story to that of Nick Adams, and one might say that her behavior in the wake of the final scene on the dock is consistent with Nick’s shell-shocked characteristics. Her systematic motions like fixing her hair and putting a jacket over Jim reflect the “goal-directed and limited” focuses of Nick on his fishing trip as he attempts to block out memories of the war (70). The swamp, however, forces Nick’s anxieties of war and returning home to consciousness, and he learns that his new life, affected by the war, is unavoidable. O’Brien describes “Big Two-Hearted River” as ultimately revealing “an indefinite but pervasive sense of alienation and insecurity” in Nick as he stares into the “tragic” swamp. This description is almost completely interchangeable with Liz Coates’ emotions as she stares into the mist that comes over Hortons Bay in the ending scene. The description of the mist is repeated twice in the last pages of the story, and given the minimalist style, any such repetition calls for a second look. Much like Nick’s swamp, the mist is Liz’s painful reminder that a life impinged by the constructs of the feminine is inescapable, even up in Michigan. Mist is the perfect—and ironic—natural reflection of the hegemonic influences that control gender and sexuality: it is quiet, creeping, and unstoppable in its intangibility.

Just as the effects of war on returning soldiers is pervasive and unmentioned in Nick Adams' story, so are the reasons behind Liz and Jim's miscommunication and divergent romantic expectations. As the title "Up in Michigan" implies, Liz and Jim live in relative isolation in an area depicted as more wild and uncultivated than civilized. Their home stands as a land removed from regular socialization, yet Jim and Liz's obedience to the gender norms set in place by the outside world show the utter pervasiveness and potency of the dominant discourses at play in the world around them. "Up in Michigan" is a story that shows us the effects of powerful discourses without ever mentioning them, a perfect mirror to Hemingway's intentions for "Big Two-Hearted River." Hortons Bay is notable in its detachment from outsiders and urban influences, and Liz further epitomizes this in her isolation from any peers or family. The reader is not privy to the outside world and sees only Liz's relative solitude, yet we still feel the influences of popular culture in her romanticized thoughts that reshape classic love narratives. Such an influence is most clearly seen when Jim drunkenly gropes Liz in the kitchen, which induces her fairytale-like thought, "He's come to me finally. He's really come" ("Up in Michigan" 84). We may particularly find a connection between this thought and romance literature since just a moment before this Liz is described as "pretending to read a book and thinking about Jim" (84). We understand that there are many underplayed or invisible influences molding the way Liz envisions romance much earlier in the story when we are told "She liked it very much that he didn't look like a blacksmith," a depiction that allows Jim distance from a working-class image that was so often the antithesis of romantic gentility in popular literature of the time. We may want to look at the ways Liz mentally removes Jim from his working-class identity as a way to conform her own experiences to a *Jane Eyre*-esque narrative, where a modest, working, and parentless girl much like Liz experiences great romance with very little

actual interaction with her lover. Unfortunately for Liz, though, her story follows a path much more like that of an 18<sup>th</sup>-century seduction plot like *Fantomina* or a less successful *Pamela* as her Mr. Rochester quickly turns into something more similar to a rake figure. The ambiguity and subtle description of Liz's book allows us to consider both of these classic literary forms as influencing Liz's perspectives both before her walk with Jim and after the sexual encounter. The harsh reality of Liz's first experience with intercourse is the collapse of her "natural" sexuality onto the prescribed definitions of heterosexual interaction. This unstable binary is rife with contradictions, and as O'Brien notes, our inability to return to a "natural" understanding of sexuality forces us to accept—albeit still critique—the social world we live in. The final scene of "Up in Michigan" fully anchors the story's rightful place within the story sequence of *In Our Time*, and in this connection to the larger collection, the ambivalent ideas surrounding gender construction presented in the text deepen and become an instrumental piece in the overall discussion of the book.

Ernest Hemingway wrote to his editor Maxwell Perkins in 1938 to explain why he could not cut out any of the details from "Up in Michigan." "It is an important story in my work... It is not dirty but is very sad. I did not write so well then, especially dialogue. But there on the dock it got suddenly absolutely right and it is the point of the whole story and the beginning of all the naturalness I ever got" (Smith 29). As we have seen, the entire idea of "naturalness" as described by Hemingway's writing is anything but simple, which is precisely why the events of this early short story are perhaps impossible to define in concrete terms. In understanding Hemingway's "natural," contradiction and the indescribable must be accepted as unavoidable, only ever able to be captured accurately by the omission of detail he is so famous for. While an understanding of a true "natural" may be complex in Hemingway's work, we can easily understand that this

overarching concept of a natural sexuality is at odds with the stringent normative discourse alluded to throughout “Up in Michigan.” While many of the Victorian sensibilities outlined in this thesis are not specifically mentioned or directly implied, they nonetheless shape an important understanding for the background and meaning of the story. Through this historical lens, we can see that Hemingway intended for Liz Coates’ story to be a complex critique on normative attitudes and gender construction, impossible to reduce to a simple “dirty” story. The story does not ultimately ask us to make a judgment of rape or seduction. “Up in Michigan” instead encourages critical engagement with the discourses of the past, as well as those that still affect our ideas of gender and sexuality today. While he may be most noted for his war-centered novels, the “domestic” stories present throughout Hemingway’s career offer an incredibly important insight into the world of gender relation as constructed by social influences. It would be inappropriate to say definitively that Hemingway merely opposed or reaffirmed the codes of gender and sexuality of his time period. Critics have often commented on his hypermasculine persona, showing that in many ways, he was as much a product of his time as he was a critic of it. The complexity of Hemingway’s life and writing show that neither the author nor his body of work could ever comfortably fit into an absolutist category of feminist or misogynistic. At best we can say that Hemingway was a critical observer and participant within early 20<sup>th</sup> century American and European society, and he lived within the institutions that regulated gender and sexuality while simultaneously critiquing their structure, as well as that of previous generations.

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<sup>1</sup> After first publishing “Up in Michigan” in *Three Stories and Ten Poems* (1923), Hemingway unsuccessfully tried to get the story published in *In Our Time* in 1925. When this book was reissued in 1930, he tried to edit “Up in Michigan” as that it could be included, but these attempts failed. Later in 1938, he refused to edit the story when putting together his first forty-nine short stories for his editor (Smith 28).

<sup>2</sup> The specific mentioning of James G. Blaine, a well-known Republican political figure from 1863 to 1892, stands as reference for the time period in which “Up in Michigan” takes place. Blaine quickly lost fame after his death in 1893, which would make it unlikely that he would be a topic of conversation outside of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century.

<sup>3</sup> Hemingway worked on *The Garden of Eden* roughly from 1946 to 1958 (Leonard 64).



<sup>4</sup> The *Advocate of Moral Reform* was a popular female reformer journal throughout the 1830's and the next several decades. In the 1835 articles that attributed women's fall from grace to men, *The Advocate* warned that it would publish the names of known male adulterers. In one such article they warned young men, "beware what you do when you come into the city" (D'Emilio and Freedman 144).

<sup>5</sup> The overall rate of arrests for Comstock Act violations was low, but the rate of convictions was even lower. The courts often acquitted the accused or brought indictments that never went to trial (Tone 35-6).

<sup>6</sup> In the mentioned case, the female victim Almary Jones admitted on the stand that she lied about her age, telling Salle she was 16. After this they met with friends at a bar before heading to a hotel, where a female friend explained to Jones that she could earn ten dollars for going to a room with Salle. Jones's lack of cooperation on the stand was perceived as evident of her active role in the plans to engage in sex with Salle. Furthermore, the palpable aggravation of the jury and questioners during Almary's testimony showed the gray areas of the case in which this young girl was not viewed as an innocent victim (Ullman 32-8).

<sup>7</sup> From the 1792 work *A Treatise on the Management of Female Complaints*. While slightly predating the time period in which I am concerned, this quote shows that these beliefs were prominent from very early in the entire 19<sup>th</sup> century, and continued to be so throughout the rest of the century (Smith-Rosenberg 183-87). Alexander Hamilton was a colonial physician that wrote on widely on medicine, but had several works analyzing the state of female reproduction. Another work by him was *Outlines of the theory and practice of midwifery* (1806).

<sup>8</sup> The *Studies in the Psychology of Sex* were published between 1887 and 1910 (D'Emilio and Freedman 224). While he was English, the censorship in his home country led to the publishing of his works in the United States, creating a strong influence on American sexual standards.

<sup>9</sup> "Like many other modernists, Hemingway was fascinated by sexology, Ellis's works in particular. In the early 1920's, Hemingway urged his close friends as well as Hadley Richardson, whom he was courting, to read Ellis's *Studies in the Psychology of Sex*" (Moddelmog, "Sex, Sexuality, and Marriage" 362).

<sup>10</sup> The humors denoted the natural female body to be damp and cold, whereas the male body was hot and dry, thus dictating their sex-based differences in personality and behavior.

<sup>11</sup> Samuel Farr in 1785 clearly explained that "without an excitation of lust, or enjoyment in the venereal act, no conception can probably take place (Laqueur 161). By 1823, however, one doctor definitively stated that not only was an orgasm unnecessary for conception to occur, but even in a case where the female victim experienced an orgasm, it was possible that this "turgescence" was involuntary and not indicative of a desire for her attacker (162).

<sup>12</sup> In reflecting on writing his 1923 story "Out of Season," Hemingway said, "...I had omitted the real end of it which was that the old man hanged himself. This was omitted on my new theory that you could omit anything if you knew that you omitted and the omitted part would strengthen the story and made people feel something more than they understood" (Smith 3).

<sup>13</sup> "'Up in Michigan' would have been the first story in *In Our Time*, if Hemingway's publishers had been willing to include it. When he collected his first forty-nine stories for publication in 1938, he put 'Up in Michigan' in front of the first story from *In Our Time*, with the other stories from that volume following their original order" (Smith 33).

<sup>14</sup> While it may not have immediately preceded it, the two stories mentioned are separated by one of the war stories. If the two "themes" of stories are separated between war and domestic stories, then "Up in Michigan" would immediately precede "Indian Camp."

<sup>15</sup> Physicians at this time often supported the idea that higher education for women would displace energy needed to maintain their reproductive organs to their brains, causing infertility and even gender inversion in some cases. These doctors stated that between this threat to women's health and the questionable moral atmosphere of a co-ed environment, college was no place for women.

<sup>16</sup> Hubert Elliot prides himself on his abstinence, "so he could bring to his wife the same purity of mind and body that he expected of her" (*In Our Time* 85). This however is only shown to lead to mutual dissatisfaction on their wedding night and is further mocked when Mr. Elliot's notions of "living straight" are upended by the inferences to Mrs. Elliot's lesbian affair, which is arguably masked by the Victorian history of homosocial relationships.

<sup>17</sup> Especially in Expatriate Paris, where Hemingway was during the writing of many of the *In Our Time* stories, the social climate had changed drastically in the perception of gender and sexuality, allowing for a much more fluid sensibility. See "*Hemingway, Gender Identity, and the 'Paris 1922' Apprenticeship*," Patrick Blair Bonds.

<sup>18</sup> In one page, the wife is warned not to get wet in three separate conversations (*In Our Time* 92).

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