***Wings Of Fire:*** **Volume 4 (2026), No. 1**

# *Foreword to Issue 5: Hemingway/Fitzgerald*

GRANT F. SCOTT
Muhlenberg College

*Foreword to Issue 5, Hemingway/Fitzgerald, Wings Of Fire, 2026.*

Scott, Grant F. 2026. "Foreword to Issue 5: Hemingway/Fitzgerald," *Wings of Fire*. Volume 4, No. 1.

Until recently, we saved Ernest Hemingway and F. Scott Fitzgerald for high school students, who were routinely assigned *The Old Man and the Sea* and *The Great Gatsby*. In the last twenty years, however, Hemingway has fallen out of favor and all but disappeared from most high school curricula, though *Gatsby* remains a stalwart. This may have something to do with Hemingway's bad boy reputation and toxic masculinity, which have prompted his cancellation in the Woke era, or the fact that his novels never lent themselves to cinematic treatment quite so well as *Gatsby* (cue Baz Luhrmann). Whatever the case, the HemFitz canon is now severely limited in secondary education. This means that unless they stumble across them on their own, students have never read anything by Hemingway, certainly not *The Sun Also Rises*, *A Farewell to Arms*, or *For Whom the Bell Tolls.* Neither have they read one of the most influential works of American literary modernism, Fitzgerald's *Tender is The Night*, a novel, as few people know, that lies behind Nabokov's far more scandalous *Lolita*. Perhaps more tragically, students are never exposed to the authors' short stories, which are models of the form and surely some of the finest of the twentieth century, masterpieces like "Up in Michigan," "Indian Camp," "Hills like White Elephants," "The Killers," "Big Two-Hearted River," "Soldier's Home," "May Day," "Winter Dreams," "Absolution" and "The Rich Boy." And while there is little time for such supplemental texts as personal letters and literary biographies in high school, students are missing something when they don't delve deeper than Gemini or Wikipedia for an understanding of the eventful lives of these writers, or the dynamic backdrop of the Roaring Twenties. Both men helped to define, and are nearly synonymous with, the 1920s and the Lost Generation.

Ironically, given the recent fate of Hemingway's corpus, I think there is also a perception that, if read at all, both authors belong in a high school curriculum – a self-fulfilling prophecy, perhaps, since that's how *Gatsby* became famous. The novel never sold particularly well on its publication in 1925, and only became a bestseller once chosen as a primary textbook by school boards across the country. Although some colleagues were not entirely happy that I was devoting a senior seminar to such putative secondary school fare, the students were delighted. On the first day, most confessed that they had always heard the names Hemingway and Fitzgerald but never read much if anything of their work. And so we plunged into their texts, reading alongside them the two biographies and the various short stories that served as inspiration for the novels. I also wanted to show Hemingway's powerful influence on later writers, so we studied several short stories by Raymond Carver and Tim O'Brien. Sadly, we did not have enough time to supplement Fitzgerald in the same way, but we did manage to sneak in Zelda Fitzgerald's *Save Me the Waltz*, which served as a sobering counterpoint to *Tender is the Night*. In student presentations, we learned about Scott's blatant plagiarism of Zelda's material and his role as suffocating curator of her work and her creative imagination. Although we galloped through it at the end of the

semester, her novel became essential reading for an understanding of her view of their tumultuous marriage and as a psychological and literary response to her husband's more famous work. As we learned, the anxiety of influence actually ran in reverse. It was Scott who was constantly threatened by Zelda's achievement.

This issue of *Wings of Fire* contains eleven essays on a variety of topics, from the vexed epiphany in Hemingway's "Big Two-Hearted River" to the cinematic structure of Fitzgerald's *Tender is the Night*. Aptly, the reader will find a trio of essays devoted to Scott, a trio to Zelda and a quartet comparing specific works of Hemingway and Fitzgerald. All weave together topics we aired in lively class discussions.