

Ernest Hemingway's Modernist Practice in Sexuality

Eijun Senaha

Professor, Hokkaido University, Sapporo, Japan

Abstract

This presentation analyzes Ernest Hemingway's short story "Soldier's Home." It was composed in April, 1924 and was included in *In Our Time*, published by Boni & Liveright in 1925.

The protagonist is a young soldier Harold Krebs. He goes to the war from a college in Kansas and comes back from Germany to his hometown in Oklahoma. No one welcomes his return because they think it is so strange that he comes home so late. He finds out that everything in the town is the same as when he left. His mother is worried about him, because he doesn't want to find a job. His father doesn't show up in the story, and his sister Helen is the only one who admires him. Krebs is not interested in the girls in the town neither, because he thinks they are so complicated. All he wants to do is to play the clarinet, watch girls from distance, and read books about the war. The story ends with a conversation between Krebs and his mother about his future. He thinks that he is going to Kansas City to find a job, after watching his sister Helen play indoor baseball. He only "wanted his life to go smoothly."

In this conference, I would like to reveal that Krebs disguises his own homosexuality. Many critics have attempted to investigate the truth of this work by comparing and examining Hemingway's real experiences and the reality of the war and his hometown, within the theme of lies. However, the biggest lie in this work is that Harold continues to disguise his own sexual orientation. In other words, this work is a story of a gay man skillfully locked in a closet of the modernist's iceberg theory.

