

People of others and  
trying to find



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

People often mentally distance themselves from their peers due to flaws and irregularities that they may suffer from. In *The Sun Also Rises* Jake Barnes constantly seems to be distanced and unwilling to accept the people and environment that he lives in. The impotence that Jake Barnes physically suffers from leads him to suffer from mental impotence regarding the reality of his actions and the environment in which he lives. Aside from Jake's own actions, this impotence is reflected through supporting characters such as Brett and Cohn by the authors' use of the literary devices parody and irony. Jake Barnes is a veteran ex-patriot of WWI living in Paris, France. During the war Jake received a wound that led him into a life of physical impotence. While in a hospital Jake met and fell in love with Lady Brett Ashley whom he desires throughout the novel.

Jake is the editor of a newspaper in France, yet his life circulates around his journey to find meaning and acceptance into society. Jake is often measuring the morals of others and trying to find an appropriate way to go about his own life. Jake and the other characters, who suffer from similar mental impotency for one reason or another, are often found to be drinking and seeking sexual relations.

Through these actions Jake is attempting to numb himself to the reality that is the world he lives in yet does not understand. Jake goes to bars and drinks so that he might escape from the turmoil his meaningless life has become. Jake is often found to be making attempts to please Brett in any way possible, through this he reveals that he is attempting to gain her acceptance and affection but does not realize that many of these actions are only leading her

further from him. Jake feels unaccepted because that he cannot participate in a ritualistic part of the lives that his peers exploit, sex.

The use of parody in *The Sun Also Rises* allows for the reader to relate the characters' different experiences to their impotence. In one of the first scenes Jake is found riding in an open air horse drawn taxi with a prostitute whom he has picked up to keep him company and give the appearance that he is promiscuous. Just after this incident Jake is riding in an enclosed taxi with Brett participating in an emotional struggle. The first scene is romantic and flagrant with its appealing environmental descriptions and fancy carriage whereas in the second scene the surroundings depict construction and a more dismal environment, not at all romantic. This parody is relevant because that Jake did not want to be exposed to the rest of the world when his body did not accept Brett, yet in the carriage with the prostitute he was merely attempting to appear as if he were a part of the sexual atmosphere that he lives in. Jake spends the entire novel searching for the affection of Lady Brett, yet in many instances urges her to go and be with other men. Through such irony it is revealed that Jake wants more than anything to make Brett happy. When Jake's handicap does not allow him to be with Brett he attempts to please her by finding others that can do so.

By doing so Jake's emotions are only damaged to a greater extent yet he sees it as rational. Jake becomes jealous and angry after Cohn has an affair with Brett because that he believes that Cohn is the only one in his circle of friends who has not become disillusioned and daunted by society. *The Sun Also Rises* is the story of Jake Barnes' search for a way to go about living his life and find acceptance. Throughout the novel the reader is allowed to see

what is wrong with his life and what he is doing wrong in his attempts to fix it. Jake does not grasp that he has the ability to gain Brett's acceptance without being her sexual partner.