

Week 7



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

R. Preeti 17/10/2007 A Farewell to Arms Describe the transformation that the WWI hero Fredric Henry experiences during his war adventure. Does it live up to his expectations? How does fate spoil his plans?

Hemingway portrays Henry as a stoic and masculine young man, who is a soldier fighting for his country. However, unlike war heroes, he is not someone who is infused with ideals with patriotism or confers upon himself the crown of honour and glory, for fighting for his motherland. He is shown as a unfeeling soldier. However, through the novel, his character becomes round and he is trapped in a relationship of intense love and devotion--- something that cannot be expected from a character like his. The war adventure certainly does not live up to his expectations, as he is wounded on his leg and just when he recovers, he is attacked by a bout of jaundice, that spoils his vacation plans. Finally, he leaves the war behind and moves on to lead a new life. Evidently, fate had something else in store for him.

2. How do modern weapons change the role of the war hero?

In the earlier times, wars were glorious events, as they signified undying love for one's motherland and the voluntary ability of sons of the land to surrender their precious lives for their nation. However, today, it has been reduced to mere numbers! Machines and war equipment operate instead of men, though the opponents are men. It is simply not a one-to-one equation and this reduces the sanctimonious characteristic that was once attributed to war heroes!

3. In A Farewell to Arms, Ernest Hemingway in reaction to WWI rhetoric, writes, " I was always embarrassed by the words sacred, glorious, sacrifice and the expression in vain. We had heard them, sometimes standing in the rain almost out of earshot, so that only the shouted words came through,

<https://assignbuster.com/week-7-essay-samples-3/>

and had read them, on proclamations that were slapped up by billposters over other proclamations, now for a long time, and I had seen nothing sacred and the things that were glorious had no glory and the sacrifices were like the stockyards at Chicago if nothing was done to the meat except to bury it. There were many words that you could not stand to hear and finally only the names of places had dignity. Certain numbers were the same way and certain dates and these with the names of places were all you could say and have them mean anything." What do you think he means? Do you agree or disagree with his sentiments?

The author attempts to convey the fact that for a soldier, after a point of time, the value for life and the very essence of it is diluted, due to war experiences. One moment a counterpart is alive and the next minute, he is lifeless. If this is what life is, it tends to be looked down upon, by soldiers, who are in the midst of gory killings and shots being fired at someone with flesh and blood. Perhaps, Hemingway wants to highlight the sheer futility of war, that deducts value from valuable human lives!

4. What are Henry's conclusions concerning his war experience and his romantic encounter with Agnes? Develop with specific citations and analysis of the text.

Henry does not look at war as a means to attain immortality by fighting for his country nor does he harbour lofty ideals of patriotism. He is a rather cold and unfeeling stoic, who does not experience the emotions that a war churns out. However, his romantic liaison gets the better out of him---he becomes emotional and also exudes vulnerability and true love, which is indeed a very powerful emotion.

5. How do we see the role of women changing during this time period?

Hemingway gives us a good amount of insight into the changing role of women, during the war period. Since Catherine is British by origin, it would be accurate to talk about the British patriarchal society, that did not offer women much scope for women to air their opinions or take up something heroic, leave alone playing a role in a war. However, during the world war, women stood up on par with their male counterparts to put in their best foot forward, for their country.

6. After viewing the images below and perhaps consulting a few outside sources, make a few tentative observations on the evolution of society's experience of war as viewed through paintings, literature, newspapers, photographs, cinema, and television.

Today, in the age of information, we do obtain a day-to-day and hourly review of what has been happening on the war front, in case of a war. However, the earlier days did not experience this instant conveyance of information. This made wars a great ordeal and the total lack of communication between society and the occurrences at the war front made them greater events of heroic display. Today, it is just another job at the war front!

REFERENCES

Hemingway, Ernest, *A Farewell to Arms*, New York : Scribner's, 1929

Website: www.sparknotes.com