

Psychoanalysis in the
sun also rises by
ernest hemingway
and tender is the
night ...

[Literature](#)



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

The Sun Also Rises and Tender Is the Night are two books written between the 20s and 30s. Even if the story is different they have common characteristics. This essay will analyse the anxiety of the characters through the two books.

The Sun Also Rises written in 1926 by Ernest Hemingway is about a group of American and British expatriates. They travel from Paris to Pamplona where they are going to watch the bullfights. According to Jeffrey Meyers, The Sun Also Rises is recognized as Hemingway's greatest work. The novel is considered as a roman à clef because it " has the extraliterary interest of portraying well-known real people more or less thinly disguised as fictional characters." The birth of psychoanalysis began with the work of Sigmund Freud. It was initially used to diagnose neurotic conditions, but soon after the rise of post-structuralism the same methods were found useful in literary theory. Psychoanalytic theory also uses Freud's work in connection with other theorists, such as Carl Jung, his student, in order to create the organized school of literary. The diagnostic practices of psychoanalysis allow critics to interpret literature that depends heavily on the mental processes of characters, such as the work of Ernest Hemingway. Thanks to Hemingway a better understanding of the human mind and the effects of trauma in the modern society have been observed. Using the work of some major theorists such as Sigmund Freud, Joseph Campbell, Lionel Trilling, and Jacques Lacan helped to analyze the general PTSD (Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder) that caused the alienation of WWI veterans that earned them the title of " the lost generation". It also helped to understand the specific damages that hinder Hemingway's protagonist, Jake Barnes, from living a normal life in post-war

society. Famous Hemingway characters written into this novel serve as the perfect examples to analyze neurotic conditions induced by trauma that Freud's original work was used to diagnose, and the psychoanalytic theory becomes the tool for diagnosis of the characters. According to Cole, "Hemingway's novel primarily addresses the psychological trauma of WWI, and the effects on veterans that attempt to re-assimilate into post-war culture". Individual damage is examined through Jake, who suffers from castration (to render impotent or deprive of vitality especially by psychological means) caused from a war injury. This prevents him from normal sexual relationships with his love interest, Lady Brett Ashley. Jake's mental health brings up the question of the effects of realizing Freud's theoretical castration anxiety, which manifests itself, among other things, in Jake's obsession with Spanish bullfighting. The war has not stopped, and men and women have not only suffered physically but also mentally. The increasing awareness of PTSD is the result of well-researched medical reports, but wide-spread publication of literature that addresses the lives of veterans attempting to assimilate back into American society reaches a larger audience. The interpretation of this literature through psychoanalytic theory helps to inform the public on the issues that continue to affect modern culture.

Tender is the night is the story, largely autobiographical, of the decomposition of a being made to be loved, too romantic to be able to resist its time, too tender, despite its apparent casualness, to know how to age wisely. It is more particularly the story of Dick and Nicole's love, which we get to know through the amazed eyes of a young actress who cannot resist

<https://assignbuster.com/psychoanalysis-in-the-sun-also-rises-by-ernest-hemingway-and-tender-is-the-night-by-f-scott-fitzgerald/>

Dick's charm. This very united couple hides a secret. Nicole was treated by Dick, a psychiatrist. Her love for Dick made their union a necessity.

But behind the pomp and union of this couple, hides a completely different reality. The second part of the novel illuminates the first by taking up the story of Nicole and Dick, by the very mouth of the latter. If Dick thus seems to us an inaccessible god at the beginning, he quickly becomes familiar and one quickly understands the generosity but also the fragility of this man who married a somewhat difficult woman.

Fitzgerald's talent is not so much to tell a story – even if it is a beautiful love story, very sad – but to reproduce an atmosphere, that of excess, of money, mixed with creation and genius in France in the 1920s. Between Paris, Switzerland and the Riviera, the novel gives us a glimpse of the life of this lost generation, a generation of writers wandering across Europe seeking inspiration and oblivion. Inspiration for their works and forgetting the atrocities of the Great War.

Throughout the novel, we learn that Nicole was a patient of Dick's, and things begin to fall apart. Dick becomes an alcoholic and Nicole falls in love with someone else. This novel has a very bleak outlook on psychiatry, much more than what we are prepared for. Dick is a terrible psychiatrist, renowned only for writing textbooks. He does not have a lot of interaction with his patients until Nicole arrives. He meets her while she is living at a clinic in Switzerland. He goes to talk to Dr. Franz Dangeu, a man who eventually becomes his partner in another clinic and meets her. She falls in love and writes him a series of letters, some of which are barely coherent. By the time

he comes back to the clinic, Dr. Dangeu's suggestion is that her transference to him is great and that they should get married. It's completely irresponsible, and every mental health decision in the novel is like that. He sees his few patients as allegories and characters, not actual people. Even Nicole is not a real person, just an idea to protect. He never does any actual therapy with her (though we see it with Dr. Dangeu), and never actually helps her. The fact that he's her therapist comes as a surprise to everyone in the story, and rightly so. Dick is not the best person to be her therapist because they confuse private life and professional life. Dick is supposed to be her doctor and not her partner. Since they're a couple they should have picked another psychiatrist for Nicole, it's better for her mental state. She's a really interesting character, a complex but at the same time a complete person whose illness is only a small part of her.

F. Scott Fitzgerald's female characters are a projection of one or another side of Zelda, but that none of them can successfully portray his wife with veracity. Nicole Diver's portrayal begins with her childhood history, when her father raped her after her mother's death. She remains a child in the Diver marriage largely because she transfers her feelings of paternal authority to Dick Diver. Dick plays in some way two roles in the book, one of the partner and the other of the father. At the end of the novel, she seems to outgrow Dick. She is actually only placing herself in bondage to another, less worthy, man. She lives out the song which she plays to Dick on the hospital grounds before their marriage, for the lyrics conclude: "Just like a silver dollar goes from hand to hand, / A woman goes from man to man."

Nicole Diver's illness is drawn from Zelda Fitzgerald's own case history, a fact which weakens her in many ways because Fitzgerald seems unable to distance himself sufficiently from his own wife to draw a credible fictional creation. Nicole is revealed first by her letters to Dick, letters which initially exhibit serious instability, then gradually lead to her confession that she would like someone to love her, a sign that she has improved because usually when a woman is raped she doesn't feel anything for men anymore.

When Nicole has an affair with Tommy, she completely changes. The affair releases her sexual energy, and she approaches Dick for a major confrontation. At this point in the novel, Fitzgerald describes Nicole as being filled with arrogance because of her wealth and a detestation of Dick's past attempts to minister to her, she has used Dick the physician, flaunting her wealth and beauty before him. What makes her character even more confusing is that after she has finally triumphed over Dick, she tries in the last Riviera scene to go back to him but is restrained by Tommy. Either she has not rejected Dick as completely as she thought she had or, what is more likely, she is an inveterate victim, a pawn of men who hand her, like a shining silver dollar, from one hand to the next.

Classic books are classic for a reason, and *Tender is the Night* certainly lives up to its reputation. It encapsulates one very biased viewpoint of psychiatry at one point in time, a very clear view of a very angry point of view. The novel is an interesting look at psychiatry from the upper class, white point of view in a time dominated by psychoanalysis, and for that, it's worth reading.