

“Echoes of World War I Trauma in *Winner Take Nothing*.” Paper presented at the Ernest Hemingway Society Session, “Ambulance Driver: Hemingway and the First World War,” at the 29th annual conference of the **American Literature Association (ALA)**, in San Francisco, CA. May 2018.

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Abstract:

Echoes of World War I Trauma in *Winner Take Nothing*

Ernest Hemingway’s final collection of short stories, *Winner Take Nothing* (1933), has mostly been overlooked by scholars and critics alike, especially regarding the ways in which Hemingway’s World War I experiences continue to manifest themselves throughout his fiction. Most critical attention to Hemingway’s short fiction emphasizes *In Our Time* (1925) or *Men Without Women* (1927), and the scholarship on *Winner Take Nothing* focuses almost exclusively on “Fathers and Sons,” “The Light of the World,” or “A Clean, Well-Lighted Place,” neglecting the other stories or failing to address the collection as a whole.

In order to better understand *Winner Take Nothing*, I intend to examine Hemingway’s World War I experiences as depicted in various biographies, including Morris’s *The Ambulance Drivers*. Additionally, I will examine Hemingway’s explicit references to his World War I experiences in his personal correspondence and fiction, using a psychoanalytic method relying on trauma theory, which can provide a framework for approaching Hemingway texts that do not explicitly reference warfare. A closer examination of how Hemingway explicitly treats this material in his personal correspondence and fiction will reveal ways with which he continued to retell and relive these experiences *implicitly* even in his fiction written over a decade later. My aim is to discover how Hemingway’s World War I traumas echo throughout his literary career,

manifesting themselves specifically in the short stories of *Winner Take Nothing* but also allowing for further inquiry into other Hemingway texts that have been traditionally overlooked in terms of his World War I experiences.

Bio

Paul Blom is a PhD student and Teaching Fellow at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, where he teaches courses in first-year writing and studies twentieth-century American literature and its intersections with trauma theory. He received his BA in English with a minor in Creative Writing from Birmingham-Southern College in Birmingham, AL and his MA in English from DePaul University in Chicago, IL. He has extensive experience as a freelance writing tutor, editor, and copywriter and is currently on retainer as a creative writer with Creative Cabin Studios of Atlanta, GA and Visual Epidemiology, Inc. of New Haven, CT. His most recent publication, “‘A trap of our own making’: Mark Twain and the Mechanized Warfare of King Arthur’s Court,” appears in *War, Myths, and Fairy Tales*, edited by Sara Buttsworth and Maartje Abbenhuis (Palgrave Macmillan, 2017).