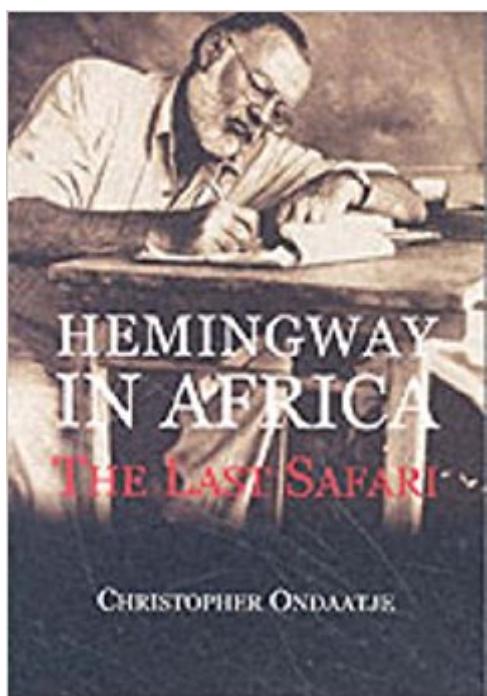


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# Hemingway In Africa



## Synopsis

Africa was an obsession for Hemingway throughout his life. Long before he wrote his first published book review (of an African novel), *The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber*, *The Green Hills of Africa*, or his posthumous novel, *True at First Light* (based on his final safari in 1953), he had been enthralled as a ten-year-old by newspaper accounts of the African expedition undertaken in 1909 by his boyhood idol, Theodore Roosevelt. In writing *Hemingway in Africa*, Christopher Ondaatje followed the trail of Hemingway's two major African safaris - through Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda - and analyzes Hemingway's writings to uncover a startling amount of new material, both documentary and literary, on this rarely discussed, vitally important aspect of Hemingway's life and work. With broad insight into one of the themes that defined Hemingway's career, *Hemingway in Africa* provides a compelling look into the life of the author for whom dangerous exploits were 'in the final analysis an effort to relieve the intensity of existing at the edge.'

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Ondaatje is one of my favorite writers. In *Hemingway in Africa* he takes the reader on a journey that Hemingway himself did not reveal. The photographs are wonderful and the writing is engaging. I truly enjoyed this unique book. Highly recommended. Also Recommended: *Woolf in Ceylon*, *Traces of Eden*

Its a good book on Hemingway's time in Africa. I have studied virtually everything about

Hemingway, youth, life and death. By the by ~ he killed himself with a WC Scott Monte Carlo Shotgun, not a Boss.. Anyway i have read his work and his biographies and this is good....

The best thing about this book are the repro photos of Hemingway and his contemporaries. Sadly, the author's own photos, scavenged from his previous trip files, are mostly poor stock. The same can be said of his writing. There are no new nor creditable insights into Hemingway here, in fact you will mainly learn about author Ondaarje's own quirks and predelictions, ad nauseum. Ondaatje is not a hunter, knows nothing of hunting, and yet presupposes his ability to dissect "Hemingway in Africa" when in fact hunting was the sole motivator for Ernest's 1933 trip to the dark continent. It's like a medical biography penned by a chimney sweep. You will get very little insight into Ernest Hemingway as the book wanders hither and yon. Even worse, the book is full of factual errors and shaky assumptions as Ondaatje waddles over the landscape searching Hemingway's trail. Ondaatje had previously been in Africa for a book on British explorers Speke and Burton. It is apparent he decided to capitalize on that experience and become a literary critic. He has failed miserably. Buy the book for the pictures, nothing else....

Readers of literary biographies will likely find more of interest in this book than I did. I am not qualified to comment on the author's analysis of Hemingway as a literary figure. The author of the book did not strike me as being qualified to delve deeply into the motivations of Hemingway as hunter. As a hunter myself and an avid reader of safari books penned during the colonial era in Africa I found this book to be a disappointment. If your interest is African safaris or hunting in general I would pass on this title. If your interest is in Hemingway as a person and particularly as a writer then you may appreciate the book. One minor point: I found the glossy pages of my hardcover edition to be a trial to read due to the glare. Better to have put only the photos on glossy pages.

I enjoyed Christopher Ondaatje's book from beginning to end. It is well worth the price, and the sheer weight of the book is impressive, for although it is not a big book in height or in number of pages, when you pick it up you feel the tension in your wrists and lower arms, for each page is extremely thick, creamy and rich, and most of them have photographs placed in them. Physically it is a luxury object. And it certainly tells us a lot about Hemingway, particularly a facet of his life that I had never cared to peer too deeply into, thinking that his mania for hunting game revealed a side to his character even more contemptible than the others. But oddly enough reading this book had the opposite effect, and one winds up with a queer sympathy for Hemingway, and his adventures in the

wild both during his early (30s) trip with Pauline Pfeiffer his second wife, which resulted in the stories, "The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber" and "The Snows of Kiliminjaro"--and then much later (20 years later), he and Miss Mary embarked on an ill-fated sequel to this safari that caused them both much grief and physical pain and he wound up writing the God awful TRUE AT FIRST LIGHT and during which he clearly went a little insane. All of this Christopher Ondaatje followed, the exact same footsteps, and his journey into the heart of Africa seems to have caused him no cavils at all. I expect you'll like this book. It reveals a lot of truth and a lot of delicacy of perception.

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