Few twentieth-century American writers have been as influential as Ernest Hemingway (1899–1961). Whilst contemporaries such as F. Scott Fitzgerald and William Faulkner may be as widely taught and studied as Hemingway, neither had an influence on other writers—or indeed, the cognate arts—as great as that of Hemingway. For example, the ‘hard-boiled’ school of detective fiction extending from the novels of Raymond Chandler and Dashiell Hammett to those of James Ellroy and Robert Parker is more or less inconceivable without Hemingway’s stylistic influence. Arguably, film noir is also Hemingwayesque in its laconic detachment. And quite independently of his creative writings, Hemingway’s life continues to exert a profound fascination for both student and the general reader.

Hemingway was the subject of extensive enquiry before his death and since then he has generated interpretative and critical commentary on a vast and bewildering scale, in part aided by the continuing publication of works left unpublished at his death (most notably The Garden of Eden in 1987). The dizzying quantity (and variable quality) of Hemingway criticism makes it difficult to discriminate the useful from the tendentious, superficial, and otiose. That is why this new Routledge title is so urgently needed. In four volumes, the collection meets the need for an authoritative reference work to allow researchers and students to make sense of a vast literature and the continuing explosion in research output. Users will now be able easily and rapidly to locate the best and most influential critical scholarship, work that is otherwise often inaccessible or scattered throughout a variety of specialist journals and books. With material gathered into one easy-to-use set, researchers and students can now spend more of their time with the key journal articles, book chapters, and other pieces, rather than on time-consuming (and sometimes fruitless) archival searches.

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