

Re-writing History by Asking "What If...?"

What if two of America's most respected authors came together and engaged in a conversation for an hour? Martin Williams tries to answer this question in a hypothetical play called "Past Meridian." His answer is an hour of exhausting and intense dialogue between a recreation of Ernest Hemingway and Tennessee Williams. But they don't come together as authors, they come together as humans who have been riddled by their own struggles and left alone, so they believe.

Tennessee Williams was defined throughout the play as a man who had a somewhat contrasting life style between what was natural to him and what the south portrayed as natural to him. For example, Williams was gay. He first knew this when he loved a boy named Gordon at a summer camp. He was only 15 at the time and didn't know these feelings which he was having for he had never heard of such feelings. He was confused and disorientated because he was different from what the South stood for in this aspect. Yet, other than this, he did share much of the same values of his native homeland. He wore a yellow ribbon around his neck, a clean white shirt and tan pants, all straight and defined as was his southern accent. Finally, his father was an alcoholic who abused him, therefore he was loyal to his mother. All of these aspects define the character of Tennessee Williams.

Ernest Hemingway was a man who believes that he differs greatly from Tennessee Williams, but comes to realize that they share a common battle. Ernest Hemingway was depicted as a man who enjoys being a traditional man -- drinking beer and relaxing as a male on this earth. On the other hand Tennessee Williams is a very straight-laced and smooth-talking individual who is not fond of beer. In contrast to Tennessee Williams's mother, Ernest's mother was a mean and cruel woman. Ernest refers to Williams's mother as a "bitch" when Williams described his mother as "a woman who would bake the finest cookies in the south." But Hemingway and Tennessee Williams have one thing in common -- they both love men. Hemingway, like Williams, had a love in his life who was named Karl. Karl was the true bullfighter depicted in Ernest's book, "The Bullfighter." Hemingway describes him as a "beautiful man." Yet no one knows this bit of information which is kept in Ernest's closet. Now, Hemingway unlocks the key for one man, Tennessee Williams. All of these events add to a collision course between two great authors, or better yet, two confused men.

"Prime Meridian" is a play about two men who come to realizations with one another. Through monologues and battles they discover one another and ultimately come to a striking realization. These two men would be perfect for each other. To observe this play, one must definitely have an opened mind!