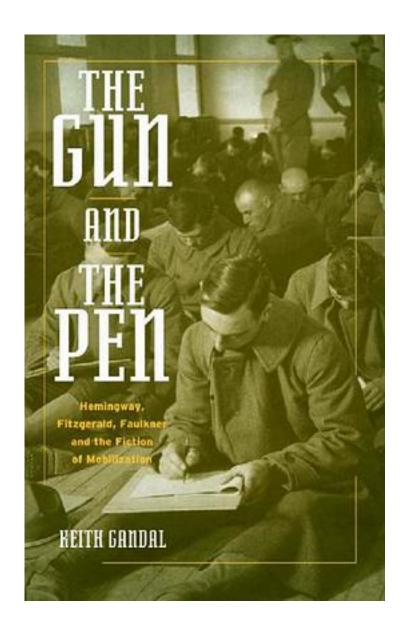
## The Gun and the Pen



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In this groundbreaking work of literary and historical scholarship, Keith Gandal shows that Ernest Hemingway, F. Scott Fitzgerald, and William Faulkner were motivated, in their famous postwar novels, not by their experiences of the horrors of war but rather by their failure to have those experiences.

These "quintessential" male American novelists of the 1920s were all, for different reasons, deemed unsuitable as candidates for full military service or command and the result was, Gandal contends, that they felt themselves emasculated--not, as the usual story goes, due to their encounters with trench warfare, but because they got nowhere near the trenches or the real action. By bringing to light previously unexamined archival records of the Army, The Gun and the Pen demonstrates that the frustration of these authors' military ambitions took place in the forgotten context of a whole new set of methods employed in the mobilization for the Great War--unprecedented procedures that aimed to transform the Army into a meritocratic institution, indifferent to ethnic and class difference (though not racial, or black-white, difference). For these Lost Generation writers, the humiliating failure vis-a-vis the Army became a failure to compete successfully in a rising social order and against a new set of people. And it is that social order and those people--these effects of mobilization, and not other effects of the war--that the novels considered here both register and re-imagine.

Gandal's incisive readings of the famous fiction of this era against the backdrop of ethnicity, meritocracy, and sexuality closes with a coda on selected works from the 1930s, including prose by Djuna Barnes, Nathaniel West, and Henry Miller. Provocative and original, The Gun and the Pen restores these seminal novels to their proper historical context and proffers a radical revision of our understanding of the impact of World War I on twentieth-century American literature.

作者介绍:

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