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FITZGERALD IN THE LATE 1910s:

WAR AND WOMEN

A Dissertation

Submitted to the McAnulty College and Graduate School

Duquesne University

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for  
the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

By

Richard M. Clark

August 2009

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Richard M. Clark

2009

FITZGERALD IN THE LATE 1910s:

WAR AND WOMEN

By

Richard M. Clark

Approved July 21, 2009

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# ABSTRACT

FITZGERALD IN THE LATE 1910s:

WAR AND WOMEN

By

Richard M. Clark

August 2009

Dissertation supervised by Professor Linda Kinnahan

This dissertation analyzes historical and cultural factors that influenced F. Scott Fitzgerald's portrayal of women in three of his early works. In "Sentiment—and the Use of Rouge," This Side of Paradise, and "Head and Shoulders," women act as usurpers and destroyers, infiltrating male territory and taking on traditionally male roles. Fitzgerald reacts to changes in the status of women that had been occurring since the late 1800s. But the late 1910s, when the author composed these works, witnessed a hastening of women's progress and an intensification of the male anxiety resulting from these changes. Repercussions of the war in Europe did much to exacerbate men's fears. Here, I examine the many ways in which the war influenced American culture and how Fitzgerald, something of a self-appointed voice of his generation reflected the male panic resulting from changes in gender relations. To do so, I attempt to recover and reconstruct the zeitgeist of the late 1910s through an extensive reading of period print media.

Chapter 1 treats “Sentiment,” one of the few Fitzgerald works to deal directly with the war. American periodicals published many articles dealing with European—and especially British—reactions to the war. “Sentiment” dramatizes controversies surrounding changes in fashion, “war babies,” “khaki fever,” and eugenics. In chapter 2, I discuss Fitzgerald’s portrayal of the automobile in Paradise. Fitzgerald documents the new freedoms that young men and women of the 1910s enjoyed and the role the “devil wagon”—as period sources called the automobile—played in this liberation. The print media of the 1910s celebrated the motor vehicle’s role on the battlefield and the woman driver’s contributions to the war effort, thus creating an association between women, cars, and battlefield death. In the novel, the car becomes a vehicle of moral and physical destruction. Finally, I read “Head” as a commentary on gender role reversals during the war, when women invaded traditionally male territory in the workplace. This usurpation of male roles went all the way to the White House: Edith Wilson secretly made important political decisions as her husband Woodrow lay incapacitated after a stroke.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Abstract.....	iv
Introduction.....	1
1 “What could she mean?”: Sex and “Sentiment—and the Use of Rouge”.....	18
2 Dick Humbird and the Devil Wagon of Doom: Cars, Carnivores, and Carnality in <u>This Side of Paradise</u> .....	67
3 Sandra Pepys and the Presidentress: Women, Work, and Role Reversal in “Head and Shoulders”.....	115
Conclusion.....	165
Works Cited.....	175
Appendix.....	189

## Introduction

This dissertation undertakes to dig for the roots of Fitzgerald's bitter portrayal of women in three of his early works. In "Sentiment—and the Use of Rouge," This Side of Paradise, and "Head and Shoulders," women act as usurpers and destroyers, infiltrating male territory and taking on traditionally male roles. Women seduce and discard men, drive them into oblivion, and, perhaps worst of all, demonstrate that they can support themselves financially. Fitzgerald reacts to changes in the status of women that had been occurring since the late 1800s. A powerful, well-organized women's lobby, along with greater opportunities in education and the workplace in a rapidly industrializing country, spearheaded this movement. But the late 1910s, when the author composed these works, witnessed a hastening of women's progress and an intensification of the male anxiety resulting from these changes.

As any scholar studying the period would point out, repercussions of the war in Europe did much to exacerbate fear. Here, I examine the many ways in which the war influenced American culture and how Fitzgerald, something of a self-appointed voice of his generation, reacted to and reflected—whether consciously or unconsciously—the male panic resulting from changes in gender relations. To do so, I attempt to recover and reconstruct the zeitgeist of the late 1910s through an extensive reading of period print media. In the preface to his 1969 study of '60s radicalism, The Making of a Counter Culture, Theodore Roszak warns that, "if one gets down to scrutinizing the microscopic phenomena of history [...] one tends only to see many different people doing many different things and thinking different thoughts" (xi). Certainly, Roszak's concern has merit, but he qualifies this statement by adding, "that elusive conception called 'the spirit



of the times' continues to nag at the mind and demand recognition, since it seems to be the only way available in which one can make even provisional sense of the world one lives in." He recommends embracing "these persuasively ectoplasmic Zeitgeists" but "with a certain trepidation, allowing exceptions to slip through the sieve of one's generalizations in great numbers, but hoping always that more that is solid and valuable will finally remain behind than filters away" (xi). Like Roszak, I seek the dominant opinions and reactions. Newspapers and magazines offer a means through which to understand, to make some semblance of sense, of a bygone era. I choose sources like the New York Times and miscellanies like Current Opinion and Living Age, which reprint articles from other popular periodicals, to reproduce the mainstream American conversation of the day. The entire country heard this conversation, not just an educated elite like Fitzgerald's Ivy League peers; and the ambitious young writer sought popular success and the money it would bring: he wanted his novels to sell and to publish his stories in the most widely read magazines of the time, as his longstanding professional relationship with The Saturday Evening Post would attest. Fitzgerald, too, filtered out the "exceptions," as Roszak calls them, and paints portraits of the middle-class everyman dealing with the everywoman of his time.

I found Roszak through Rob Kirkpatrick's 1969: The Year that Changed Everything, a study, like mine, of a period marked by war and great cultural upheaval. Kirkpatrick "set[s] out not just to tell the story of 1969 in America, but also to examine the zeitgeist—literally, the 'time spirit'—of this iconic, tumultuous, cataclysmic year" (xvii). I attempt to perform a similar feat with the tumult and cataclysm of the First World War era in the United States. I peruse the types of news stories and features read

by Fitzgerald—indeed every American—and examine how they must have affected him. In other words, I look at how the hopes and fears of a “lost generation” manifest themselves in Fitzgerald’s early works. So, here, I hope to conjure the spirit of 1917–1919 in an attempt to comprehend a soon-to-be quite famous young author’s angst-ridden depiction of gender relations.

In the process, I offer a new slant on Fitzgerald’s much-maligned and oft-ignored early work. Scholars have relegated “Sentiment—and the Use of Rouge” and “Head and Shoulders” to the dustbin of Fitzgerald’s oeuvre, and nobody has provided a thorough examination of the role of the automobile in This Side of Paradise, especially in relation to gender and war. I hope that this study will spur interest in Fitzgerald’s forgotten tales and alert history-minded critics to possible new directions for Paradise scholarship because, as I essay to demonstrate in the pages that follow, the non-canonical tales have much to contribute to our portrait of the author and his times. We have precious little scholarship on Fitzgerald’s reaction to World War I, but the three works I deal with in this dissertation provide a window into his thinking. In addition, these texts offer a view of the war from the homefront, specifically that of an able-bodied, military-age male noncombatant, a perspective forgotten amidst that of male fiction writers who did get overseas, and even the works of female writers whose works involved with World War I have enjoyed something of a scholarly renaissance in recent decades.

Scholars, and even Fitzgerald himself, discarded, maligned, and ignored these works. “Sentiment—and the Use of Rouge,” originally appeared in the author’s college literary magazine, but he never attempted to rewrite or republish the tale, instead harvesting a few passages from the story for his first novel, This Side of Paradise. That

novel, the topic of my second chapter, enjoyed great popular and critical success during the author's lifetime, selling approximately twice the number of copies that his most respected work, The Great Gatsby, sold upon initial release. But Edmund Wilson's 1922 assessment of the novel dominated scholarly thought for the next several decades: "I have said that This Side of Paradise commits almost every sin that a novel can possibly commit: but it does not commit the unpardonable sin: it does not fail to live" (29). And the critics focused on the laundry list of sins that Wilson delineated, not the qualities that made it come to life. Only in the 1960s, when Sy Kahn began to put the book's themes in cultural context and Clinton Burhans attempted to make sense of the novel's structure, did scholars begin to examine more than Paradise's formal flaws. In my final chapter, I discuss "Head and Shoulders," a story met by little more than indifference in academic circles. Even its author designated it "trash" (Fitzgerald, F. Scott Fitzgerald: A Life 42). But these works, as I shall claim in the three chapters that form the body of this study, have much to offer. "Sentiment," Paradise, and "Head and Shoulders" provide unique perspectives on the sexual revolution of the period. I hope to fill a void in Fitzgerald scholarship, offering the first substantial readings of "Sentiment" and "Head." "Sentiment" depicts social changes in Great Britain during wartime, demonstrating the impact of articles from English periodicals on American readers. "Head" portrays the anxiety over the perceived numerical rise of female workers in the wartime workplace. I do not discuss the stories in relation to other, more "important" works, instead reading them closely and fully, devoting entire, lengthy chapters to them. With my chapter on Paradise, I add to a growing body of historical criticism of that book—but take a new approach, examining the role of the automobile in the novel. A close look at the car's

function in the text reveals something of a confluence of changes in the late 1910s—entailing technology, war, and women—that form the basis for Fitzgerald’s fraught view of gender relations. These works deserve attention because of the illuminating historical commentary they represent. The excerpts from newspapers and magazines presented here reveal an author who realized his desire to become a voice of his generation through his accurate portrayal of the war-era zeitgeist.

\* \* \*

During the period, the prospect of war and, later, the war itself, dominated the American media, as the nation debated its responsibilities to a European conflict, engaged in battle, and dealt with the aftermath. Princeton University, which Fitzgerald attended from fall 1913 through fall 1917, mirrored the country’s turn toward engagement. In 1915, Princeton President John Grier Hibben advocated military education on a very limited scale; but, in 1917, his attitude changed along with the government’s: Hibben indicated that “military instruction on campus [...] would henceforward ‘be given more prominence and the academic work lightened considerably.’ Hibben also accepted a gift of two ‘flying machines’ so that the students might form an all-Princeton ‘aviation corps’” (Kennedy 147). The university’s mood changed drastically during Fitzgerald’s years there: “the emphasis on campus life and the folic-filled development of the undergraduate had shifted completely toward the outside world, including international affairs, and maturity” (Daniel 35). Ultimately, except for Annapolis and West Point, Princeton contributed more students to the war effort than any other college in the country (Deffaa 11–12). Fitzgerald enlisted and entered basic training in 1917, but the armistice ended combat operations just as his unit was to leave for Europe in 1918.

However, Fitzgerald's treatment of the war has, as James H. Meredith points out, garnered "a comparative shortage of scholarship" (164). I wish to fill this gap in Fitzgerald studies by examining the socio-political climate of the war-era—especially the rhetoric of wartime periodicals—and how it figures in Fitzgerald's characterizations of women in his 1917 undergraduate work, "Sentiment—and the Use of Rouge," his first novel, This Side of Paradise, and "Head and Shoulders," a tale Fitzgerald wrote in 1919, just after his military discharge.

Sandra M. Gilbert calls World War I "a climactic episode in some battle of the sexes that had already been raging for years" (283). Men endured the horrors of modern combat while women filled their vacated positions in the workplace, gaining unprecedented freedom and rights. News articles of the period, which focused on the novelty of women entering positions previously closed to them, heightened the antagonism between men and women. In his works, Fitzgerald engages in this battle of the sexes. Meredith notices that, while writers like Hemingway, Dos Passos, Cummings, Sassoon, and Graves, who witnessed firsthand the horrors of war, accentuate "the naturalistic brutality or the bitter irony of war," Fitzgerald takes a different approach, "eschew[ing] the grit and gore" (165). The war does not hold a central place in his fiction but instead emerges as "another part of the social fabric of the modern world": "Fitzgerald's work concentrates on the bitter peace rather than the bloody war." Having not seen action, he avoids describing actual combat and instead centers on the war's effect on gender relations. And his embittered—and embittering—female characters are a part of the "bitter peace."

While Fitzgerald scholars have produced very few studies of the war's influence on the author, many have discussed his attitudes toward women and sexuality and the cultural forces underlying these attitudes. According to Brian Way, "women had been steadily gaining more social freedom in America since about 1910," and Fitzgerald noticed quite early that "the nature of their advance changed radically with the coming of the Jazz Age" (10). He defined the new New Woman of the 1910s–1920s through his scandalous "flappers," a character type that Fitzgerald more or less invented in his early fiction. Sarah Beebe Fryer points out that America's values shifted after the war, but "the expectations imposed on women during that era did not change as rapidly as behaviors," and Fitzgerald's flappers "behave selfishly, impulsively, and inconsistently" because of their "uncertainty about their purpose in life" (6). In her study of the flapper in Fitzgerald's works, Ruth Prigozy concurs, describing Fitzgerald's female characters' "[d]estructive behavior" as a frustrated reaction to a society that grants women much greater freedom but has yet to provide the opportunities that feminists will win for future generations of women (141). John Aldridge notices a "disturbing preoccupation with sexual guilt" in Fitzgerald's fiction (33), a tendency Kahn attributes to the moral tenor of the period: for young Americans of the 1920s, "'morality' and 'sex' are interchangeable terms. Frequently, the judgment of 'right' and 'wrong' behavior rests almost exclusively on sexual behavior. Evil is identified with sex: there the devil wields his greatest powers" (178). Fears about war and women converge during the period, shaping Fitzgerald's portraits of very anxious, confused young men in his early works.

\* \* \*

In chapter 1, I offer the first substantial study of “Sentiment—and the Use of Rouge,” one of the few Fitzgerald works to deal directly with the war. Meredith states that the First World War functions as a dividing line in Fitzgerald’s fiction (173)—the world appears to change drastically in its wake—and “Sentiment” dramatizes this break with the past. No extensive reading of this tale exists, and most of the critics who mention the story deride it, but I believe it deserves scholarly attention, for “Sentiment” provides Fitzgerald’s earliest portrayal of the war’s effect on gender relations. John A. Higgins claims that “Sentiment” functions more as a “discussion” than a story; I won’t quibble with his assertion. But I feel this particular discussion—about war and women—warrants analysis. Fitzgerald wrote the story as the war ravaged Europe and as the United States finally shed its neutrality. Set in England, “Sentiment” depicts shocking changes in sexual mores through the eyes of Clay Harrington Syneforth, an English officer on leave from the front. To his horror, Clay realizes that heavy makeup, risqué dance steps, and, most terrifying, casual sex have become the norm in England. The popularity of makeup resulted from “the new female self-confidence” of the war era (Marwick 113). Women, now often working and sometimes living away from home, “felt the need of rouges and creams” (113). To Clay, his younger sister Clara’s heavy makeup “merely accentuate[s] her youth” (145). Clara’s using makeup to enhance her youthful appearance indicates a break with Victorian fashion, for, during that period, young women often attempted to appear older. By embracing her youth, Clara heralds the youth culture of the 1920s, indicating new thinking about adolescence.

Jazz dances also indicated a loosening of sexual strictures. Attendees at a ball perform “the most extreme steps from over the water” (146), or dance steps that

accompany American jazz music, which enjoyed a growing popularity in England in the late 1910s. Because of the complexity of these steps, dancers tended to stay with the same partner all night long, “rather than hazard their toes to an untutored outsider” (Marwick 143). The war also transformed notions about casual sex. As one commentator pointed out, “Life was less than cheap; it was thrown away. The religious teaching that the body was the temple of the Holy Ghost could mean little or nothing to those who saw it mutilated and destroyed in millions by Christian nations engaged in war” (qtd. in Marwick 108–09). Amidst such circumstances, should a woman “refuse appeals” for sex from a “hero here today and gone tomorrow” (109)? Clay also expects to find solemnity but discovers what to him constitutes wild indulgence. For Clay, the revelry rings false, an opinion shared by period commentator C. Gasquoine Hartley. According to Hartley, women at an Armistice Day celebration go through the motions to meet new social expectations—they merely act the part of the liberated, sexualized wartime woman. But such an interpretation ignores the strides women made during the war: they experienced the freedoms that accompanied living-wage jobs and a lack of male supervision. Eleanor emerges as the prototype of Fitzgerald’s flapper/femme-fatale character; she seduces Clay, reversing traditional gender roles. This reversal extended to the battlefield—where men endured the horrors of a modern war far removed from the chivalric combat their forefathers described—and paralleled changes in the English workplace. From 1914 through 1918, the number of women workers in British industry, transportation, commercial fields, government, and education rose dramatically while the number of women in domestic service declined (Marwick 91–92). The story demonstrates Fitzgerald’s awareness of the war’s effect on gender roles in England,



knowledge no doubt gleaned from American periodicals saturated with news from the British home and battlefronts.

“Sentiment” reflects the mainstream media’s presentation of the various cultural controversies spawned by the war. Eleanor states that she has fallen under the “spell” of sacrificing chastity for the comfort of soldiers (153), a reference, perhaps, to “khaki fever,” the main symptom of which was an inability to resist a man in uniform. Her mention of English society’s hiding the relaxed sexual morals beneath a “sentimental mantle” alludes to period commentators’ asking English citizens to embrace rather than shun “war babies,” the illegitimate progeny of English soldiers. Her concern for “the next generation in France” (154) underscores European fears about the war’s effects on eugenics. Domestic periodicals weighed in on controversies like these, introducing the perceived changes in sexual behavior to the average American reader. These changes, according to period commentators, could be quite disquieting: racy tabloids from England, the popular American magazine Living Age reported, would lead Americans to believe that “English society, so far as women go, [was] on the verge of degeneracy” (“An American Opinion” 189).

In the story’s final section, a dying Irish soldier’s Christian moralizing becomes a sad parody of the dying Victorian values to which Clay clings; the Irishman’s stream-of-consciousness musings indicate a new direction in literature and culture. The straightforward, rational—i.e., conventionally masculine—narrative gives way to hysteria, just as the Victorian patriarchy is usurped by a new order, with women taking men’s places in the workplace and demanding universal suffrage. In this chapter and those that follow, I attempt to capture the American reaction to changes wrought by the

war through a reading of such period sources as Current Opinion, Living Age, The New York Times, The Atlantic Monthly, Harper's, and show how Fitzgerald responds to cultural phenomena through his characters' dialogue and actions.

I deal with Fitzgerald's first novel, This Side of Paradise, in chapter 2. Unlike the two other works I treat in this dissertation, Paradise has a substantial critical history, but I believe that untrodden paths of interpretation remain. Paradise addresses a common male fear of the period: that women and sex lead to moral oblivion. In the novel, the car brings about moral and physical destruction. Usually dismissed as juvenilia, as a mere prelude to the great works to come, Paradise has only begun to draw scholars interested in the novel's historical implications rather than its formal flaws. While Fitzgerald, a supply officer in the 67<sup>th</sup> infantry in 1918, did not see action in World War I, Amory Blaine, the main character of Paradise, does "get over." Fitzgerald relegates Amory's war experience to a brief "Interlude" between Books One and Two of the novel, but the specter of The Great War haunts the narrative and helps to clarify the nature of Amory's strange—and often misogynistic—reactions to women and sex. In the final chapter of the novel, after several ill-fated encounters with the late 1910s New Woman, Amory concludes that "beauty," and especially "the beauty of women," is "inseparably linked with evil" (258).

Critics have pointed to the author's latent Catholicism, his "Puritan conscience," and his resistance to the changing gender roles in the 1910s and 1920s as reasons for the unflattering portrait of young women in Paradise. I agree, but, because scholars have covered these issues thoroughly, I wish to focus on the rise of the automobile and its importance in the novel as a vehicle for these changing roles. A few critics have

mentioned the function of the automobile in certain episodes in Paradise, but nobody has fully explained this very important issue and symbol. Early in the novel, Amory compares the automobile to a shark. Less than a year and a half before Fitzgerald began composing Paradise, sharks attacked and killed four swimmers in New Jersey. The attacks became a media phenomenon, and grisly descriptions of the maulings dominated national headlines for weeks. Taking into account the car's role in the loosening of sexual strictures during the period, I believe the shark becomes a particularly apt metaphor in a novel that constantly links sex and destruction. Automobiles provided young couples with an advantage they couldn't attain at home: a moveable and private place to engage in sexual activity.

Courtship practices had already begun to shift from calling, which entailed a couple's meeting at woman's parents' home, to dating before the automobile became a factor, but the car sped up these changes. In Paradise, Fitzgerald documents the new freedoms that youths of the 1910s enjoyed and the role the "devil wagon"—as period sources called the automobile—played in this liberation. When Amory's college friend, Dick Humbird, dies in a drunk-driving accident, the perilous mix of the motor vehicle and the 1910s adolescent becomes clear. In death—and his ghostly return—Dick comes to represent sexual misbehavior, morphing from charming big man on campus to monstrous debauchee: he returns as the devil, haunting Amory during his encounters with a chorus girl and a prostitute.

In addition, the print media of the 1910s continually linked cars with the liberated woman. Technological advances made the car friendlier to the female driver, and here again she infiltrated formerly male-only territory. Automakers aimed advertising at a

female audience, emphasizing the new innovations. A 26 November 1911 New York Times article, “Auto Improvements for Women Drivers,” informed women that they could “driv[e] with greater confidence.” And confidence—or female self-assertiveness—became something of a buzz word: in August 1914, The New York Times profiled a female driving instructor who, in her lessons and in the article, prodded women to adopt a new “confidence in driving.”

Period articles also linked the motor vehicle with the war in Europe, where it transported troops, food, and ammunition, which in turn led to much higher death counts. As an article in the February 1915 Scribner’s Magazine stated, “The motor, in short, has ‘speeded up’ the war in a way that could never have been dreamed of by former generations” (Freeston 186). The media made much of the car’s role on the battlefield and especially of the woman driver’s contributions to the war effort, thus enhancing the association between women, cars, and battlefield death. According to Kimberly Chuppa-Cornell, articles about women’s war work demonstrated changes in how the country perceived women: “The decorative and pampered lady who had supposedly typified women drivers before the war gave way to the industrious and hardy motor corps woman in many postwar articles” (470). Articles in newspapers detailed the feats of women risking their lives in combat zones to tend to wounded and deliver supplies, and they showed how women drivers contributed to the war effort on the homefront. Again, women moved into a traditionally male arena, war work—and used cars to carry them. In Paradise, the automobile, with its link to the sexually promiscuous woman, brings both moral death and actual death in armed combat. At the end of Paradise, Amory finally learns the meaning of evil: “The problem of evil had solidified for Amory into the

problem of sex [...] Inseparably linked with evil was beauty [...] Amory knew that every time he had reached toward it longingly it had leered out at him with the grotesque face of evil. Beauty of great art, beauty of all joy, most of all the beauty of women” (258). This realization indicates the protagonist’s maturity and the object of his quest: self-knowledge.

Chapter 3 treats “Head and Shoulders,” which, like “Sentiment,” has received scant scholarly attention. While critics have derided the tale, and the author himself called it “trash” (Fitzgerald, A Life 42), “Head” offers a unique view of the controversy surrounding the working woman and reflects male angst over women’s gains in the wartime workplace. The story further shows the great anxiety over gender role reversals during the war and its aftermath. In reality, American men didn’t have much to fear, for returning soldiers would, for the most part, reclaim their positions. And, as with the sexual mores I described in chapters one and two, the war simply hastened changes that had been occurring since the 1890s. But the media, as always, focused on novelty, celebrating the woman war worker in countless articles and creating the perception of a great gendered shift in the labor force. Period sources did present statistics that indicated discrepancies between perceptions and reality. A Current Opinion article from Feb. 1919, “What Shall Be Done with Women Who Have Replaced Men in Industry?” demonstrated “that the number of women war-workers in factories is much smaller than has been generally supposed and that large numbers have been transferred from other occupations” (emphasis mine, 124). But this hardly mattered amidst the deluge of features on working women. A greater number of women did indeed enter the workforce during the war, and some filled positions traditionally held by men. But, as one historian

points out, women's progress was "largely an illusion" (Kennedy 285), as the number of women workers increased by only 6.3% between 1910 and 1920 (Greenwald 13).

Moreover, because the United States experienced much lower casualty rates than European countries, the shift was quite brief. France and England, which lost 1,390,000 and 900,000 men, respectively (Willmott 307), would have a much greater and more lasting need for female workers. Federal agencies did their part in exacerbating male angst, prodding men to enlist in the military or leave positions the government would officially designate "woman's work," in the hope that embarrassment would increase male participation in occupations essential to the war effort.

"Head" reflects the theme of gender role reversal that permeated the media of the period. Solipsistic Princeton student Horace Tarbox focuses so tightly on his studies and dreams of academic stardom that he pays no attention to the war. Yet, while Horace may ignore the war, he can't avoid its impact on gender roles. After marrying Marcia Meadow, an actress, he struggles to find a job. Marcia refers to them as "head and shoulders": eventually, he will support them with his "head"; but, for the time being, her "shoulders" (in her act, she shimmies) bring in more money (77). To support his household during Marcia's pregnancy, Horace begins performing as a gymnast and earns an adequate salary. Marcia takes up the pen and composes a bestseller. A newspaper article describes the couple as "Head and Shoulders" but with a reversal of traditional roles: successful novelist Marcia is Head; gymnast Horace is Shoulders (85).

As Fitzgerald wrote "Head," stories circulated—through the media and the Washington rumor mill—about the most frightening example of feminine infiltration into male territory. After President Woodrow Wilson suffered a stroke, First Lady Edith

Wilson appeared to take a much more active role in national affairs. Wilson's inner circle did not want to reveal the true nature of Wilson's illness, instead calling the president's malady "nervous exhaustion" and prescribing the rest cure. The constant mention of Wilson's need for "rest and quiet" and his nervousness make the president look like an overburdened heroine in a Victorian novel or, perhaps, the narrator of Charlotte Perkins Gilman's "The Yellow Wall-Paper," who endures the rest cure, a remedy employed almost exclusively on female patients during the period. Rampant rumors about the president's illness and Edith's role in official executive business spread countrywide, and newspapers reported her increased visibility. A Washington Post article depicted Edith as the president's primary conduit to the outside world: "With the exception of the news furnished him by Mrs. Wilson the President has learned very little of national and international developments" ("Good Day" 574). An article in Chicago Daily Tribune bore the subtitle, "Mrs. Wilson Helps to Transact Business of His Office," and reported that Edith read "papers of an official character" to her husband, "who then issued directions for the disposition of the matter" ("President Gains"). Famously, Senator Albert Fall (R-New Mexico) declared to the Foreign Relations Committee, "'We have a petticoat government! Mrs. Wilson is President!'" (qtd. in Smith 112). In a 1931 essay, Fitzgerald would call Edith Wilson a "female Rasputin" who exercised far too much power ("Echoes" 14). Edith and Marcia, both women of questionable education, step into the void left by husbands unable to perform their duties—Wilson, as president, and Horace, as primary breadwinner. At the end of the story, Horace expresses regret that he ever answered Marcia's knock on his door. In doing so, he becomes something of

a spokesman for a generation of men who questioned whether a return to wartime “normalcy” were possible.

The appendix to the dissertation comprises an exhaustive annotated bibliography of studies treating This Side of Paradise. Because “Sentiment—and the Use of Rouge” and “Head and Shoulders, have received so little scholarly attention, I include a brief critical history of these texts within the body of their respective chapters. Although This Side of Paradise hasn’t garnered the attention of Fitzgerald’s more respected works, I have located dozens of articles and books and cannot offer a full overview of this scholarship in chapter 2. I hope that scholars will find this annotated bibliography valuable.

This study points in new directions for Fitzgerald scholarship, both in the ignored texts it treats and in the topics on which it focuses. An archival approach, I believe, brings the period into focus, and provides a means for modern readers to view the zeitgeist from the author’s perspective. Ultimately, I offer reasons why Fitzgerald portrayed women as he did, in these early texts and throughout his career, and why Fitzgerald and other commentators saw the war as a great dividing line in history. I believe the answers to the questions I pose lie in the media of the period, a barrage of essays, news articles, and government propaganda that both voiced and conjured the fears of a very nervous generation of young men.



## Chapter 1

“What could she mean?”:

Sex and “Sentiment—and the Use of Rouge”

Building on Milton R. Stern’s argument in *Tender Is the Night: The Broken Universe*, James Meredith states that, like many other period commentators, Fitzgerald depicted World War I as “a dramatic break from the past” (173).<sup>1</sup> Although neither Meredith nor Stern mentions “Sentiment—and the Use of Rouge,” the story represents a prime example of this tendency in Fitzgerald’s works, offering a significant early portrayal of the war’s effect on gender relations. Written and published as the war raged in Europe and the United States moved toward engagement, the story finds Lieutenant Clay Harrington Syneforth returning home to England on leave to discover that sexual mores have completely changed during his time at the front. Expecting to discover sadness and austerity at home, Clay notes instead a surprising and disconcerting revelry. In his absence, makeup, jazz dances imported from the United States, and casual sex have become the fashion. Fitzgerald presents these trends as emblems of a revolution in mores, a great shift spearheaded by women, who, according to period commentators, seemed not to grasp the solemnity of wartime and instead indulged in luxury and amusement. For Clay, the women’s exuberance lacks authenticity, an interpretation echoed by period commentator C. Gasquoine Hartley, who describes the raucous festivities at an Armistice Day celebration as artificial. According to Hartley, the female revelers simply play a role that war culture has written for them. But their excitement may have been genuine: during the war, many women for the first time enjoyed the

freedoms that accompanied living-wage jobs and independence from husbands and fathers.

Using archival sources and historical studies, I will show how “Sentiment” evokes these cultural movements. Fitzgerald strove to become the voice of his generation, and “Sentiment” represents an early example of his close engagement with and reproduction of the zeitgeist. His characters mirror the media’s presentation and the public’s perception of men and women of the age. The interaction between the central couple, Clay and Eleanor, demonstrates the anxieties that accompany a period of great change in gender roles and sexual mores.

In the story, the wartime New Woman finds her embodiment in bold Eleanor Marbrooke, the prototype of Fitzgerald’s flapper/femme fatale, who explains to Clay that the war has caused the shifts in sexual behavior. Historians and period commentators echo Eleanor’s view, indicating that traditional sexual mores collapsed beneath the weight of staggering casualty figures: as women watched men go off to war—many likely never to return—chastity itself seemed to have become a luxury. Much to Clay’s surprise and chagrin, Eleanor claims the aggressor’s role in their tryst, maneuvering a reluctant, passive Clay into a sexual encounter, a role reversal that parallels men’s experiences on the battlefield, where they endured combat far different from their fantasies of chivalry and heroics, and women’s on the homefront, where they assumed the traditional male role of breadwinner. Eleanor’s description of the cultural climate in wartime Britain indicates Fitzgerald’s awareness of other social controversies spawned by the war. Eleanor states that she has fallen under the “spell” of sacrificing chastity for the comfort of soldiers (153), a subtle reference to “khaki fever,” the epidemic of young

British women pursuing men in uniform. Her mention of English society's covering relaxed sexual morals with a "sentimental mantle" alludes to period commentators' emotional pleas prodding English citizens to accept the many illegitimate "war babies." And, in expressing concern for "the next generation in France" (154), she underscores European anxiety over the eugenic implications of the deaths of millions of able-bodied young men. Although the prudish Clay scoffs at these changes, he succumbs to temptation, and his moral death in the tryst with the "[d]amned witch" Eleanor Marbrooke prefigures his actual death in a French no man's land (150). In the story's final section, a dying Irish soldier's diatribe against the English conception of God and attitude toward war functions as a sad parody of the dying Victorian values to which Clay clings; the Irishman's stream-of-consciousness ramblings announce a new, topsy-turvy world in literature and culture. The straightforward, rational—i.e., conventionally masculine—narrative gives way to hysteria, just as the post-Victorian patriarchy finds itself usurped by a new order, with women taking men's places in the workforce and demanding universal suffrage. Likewise, Eleanor seduces Clay, reversing traditional—i.e., Victorian<sup>2</sup>—gender roles in the sexual encounter.

"Sentiment," which first appeared in the June 1917 issue of Princeton's Nassau Literary Magazine, demonstrates Fitzgerald's awareness of the war's impact on sexual mores even before he entered military service and just as the United States began to mobilize. The story reflects the period's—and the author's—anxiety over the changing role of women, especially as manifested in sexual behavior. Women were wearing heavy makeup, which had been out of vogue for a century; milling about unchaperoned at dances; and, most fascinating—and disturbing—of all, engaging much more readily in

premarital sex. All of these circumstances manifested the “real moral let-down” that Amory Blaine notes in the Princeton chapters of This Side of Paradise (61). England provides a more fitting backdrop for the story, for that country had been at war for nearly three years. British periodicals publicized the new mores and the conditions that caused them, and, as the American periodical Current Opinion<sup>3</sup> stated in July 1915, “The moral laxity consequent to war in all the fighting nations [did] not escape the attention of American newspapers” (“War Morality” 44).

For the most part, critics have ignored “Sentiment,” and no adequate reading exists. As is the case with much of Fitzgerald’s early work, scholars who do address the tale concern themselves mainly with its quality—or lack thereof. Donald A. Yates dismisses “Sentiment” as a story “full of literary allusions and ‘big’ questions. It is the least successful of this late period for it clearly reveals Fitzgerald to be, in philosophical matters, a decidedly immature thinker” (32). Conversely, Matthew J. Bruccoli lauds the tale as “[t]he most ambitious of the four Lit [Nassau Literary Magazine] stories in terms of Fitzgerald’s development as a social historian—that is, as a moralist” (Some Sort 69). Yet, other than these pronouncements, neither critic spends more than a sentence or two discussing it. John A. Higgins devotes a few paragraphs to “Sentiment” but concurs with Yates, calling “Sentiment” the “weakest” of the Princeton stories (9), for “it is not really a story at all but a discussion” with an “implausible ending” and sections that “fail to cohere” (10). Neither Joan M. Allen nor Benita Moore appears to be particularly impressed with the tale, but they join the few critics who offer an interpretation rather than a curt dismissal. Both focus on the story’s Catholic references. Allen believes the tale provides clear evidence of Fitzgerald’s “impulse to preach at people rather than to

entertain them” (54) but also offers a very brief, but insightful, commentary on Clay’s “tangible, practical,” and very British religious beliefs (55). Moore finds the story “interesting” in that it shows the young author sifting through “questions and feelings about death, the war, the Irish, Catholicism and changing moral standards,” but she doesn’t believe Fitzgerald presents them “entirely successfully” (91). The story reflects “Fitzgerald’s questioning of Catholic faith and morals” during his college years and the influence of Irish-Catholic writer Shane Leslie, who had become friend and mentor to the young writer (89). Fitzgerald links “[t]he ‘rouge’ of relaxed standards” in the first two-thirds of the tale to “the blood of war” in the final third (93). Robert Sklar and Robert and Helen H. Roulston also devote some attention to “Sentiment,” finding the tale worthy in its frank portrayal of wartime changes in British society and yet deficient in setting and period detail. For Sklar, the story lacks “authenticity” but makes up for it with “candor” (23). He reads the tale as a critique of nineteenth-century mores: the titular cosmetic represents the Victorians’ “genteel sentimentality,” which “puts on reality a falsely pretty face” (24). Like Sklar, the Roulstons decry Fitzgerald’s inability to include flourishes of local color, finding the story’s setting “all wrong for Fitzgerald,” who had no direct experience with English society: “Sentiment” suffers from a dearth of the “authoritative touches,” such as “slang, popular music, clothing, and décor,” that would “make Gatsby so vivid” (19). Yet the Roulstons do credit the author for recognizing that 1917 England provided a better backdrop for a story about war’s effect on cultural traditions: in England “[t]hree years of trench warfare had made concern over virginity and immodest feminine attire seem quaint.” Sklar and the Roulstons have a point: “Sentiment” does not evoke the English social scene as would the author’s mature work treating New York

high society in the middle-twenties. But, as Brucoli notes in his introduction to the Cambridge edition of Gatsby, Fitzgerald often ignored realistic details:

He was an impressionistic realist—not a reportorial or documentary realist. As a social historian, Fitzgerald utilized real places and real details for the denotations and connotations these references generated in informed readers [...] As an impressionist, Fitzgerald sought to convey, by means of language and style, the emotions associated with actual and fictional settings. (xliv–xlv)

West agrees with Brucoli, calling Fitzgerald “essentially a romantic fabulist, not a realist,” and adds that the author’s fiction doesn’t “need to be absolutely congruent with reality” (Introduction xlv). Although “Sentiment” may ignore the minutia, the story portrays the changes in British sexual mores with uncanny accuracy. Despite the fact that Fitzgerald possessed no direct knowledge of England, he certainly knew about the upheavals the Great War had wrought upon that country—and would soon wreak upon his own.

Here, I hope to fill in this blank in Fitzgerald studies by offering the first extensive reading of “Sentiment.” I have little interest in the question of quality; the story deserves scholarly attention for its colorful and thought-provoking portrait of and revelations about the war era. Perhaps, as Higgins observes, “Sentiment” does function more as a “discussion” than a story, but I believe it’s an important discussion, one well worth analyzing.

“Sentiment” doesn’t deal with the military heroism that the propaganda of the period accentuated; instead, it focuses on what the public would have viewed as the war’s

regressive effect on society—especially in terms of sexual morals. Amid the deluge of texts and images celebrating patriotism and the esprit de corps of the English military, depictions of the seamier side of wartime England seeped through. “An American Opinion of English Society,” an article attributed to “An American Correspondent” in the 20 January 1917 issue of the popular American magazine Living Age, discussed risqué British tabloids that led Americans to believe that “English society, so far as women go, [was] on the verge of degeneracy” (189). Readers in the United States had great interest in news from England and devoured

accounts, however meagre, either in the shape of war-correspondents’ dispatches or letters from the trenches or in the chapters of such admirable books as those of Mr. Boyd Cable, of the rare courage and high spirits, the reckless daring, the indescribable democratic spirit which has blossomed to the glory of England among the flower of her manhood, old and young. (189)

While such works “have thrilled [American readers], opened [their] purses, given [them] intense personal concern in the daily fighting” and “carried many of [them] into the trenches or Red Cross ambulances,” Americans found a far different portrait of the English homefront in the “English weekly illustrated journals,” which featured “silly stuff written by lady journalists” and “half-naked photographs of women who bear the names of the men to whom we take off our hats.” The appalled correspondent “wish[ed] that there were someone in the Censor’s Department” who could “prevent these journals from finding their way into the mail-bags” and wondered if the tabloids offered an accurate account of late 1910s England: “Are they the mere fabrications of little, ill-paid

journalists trying to imitate the colloquialism of the people whom they only gaze at from the area railings, or are they indeed what they purport to be and do they reflect the present spirit of London society?" The article singles out "the so-called smart set" (190), upper-class English "women who bear honored names" yet have no scruples about "rubbing shoulders at dubious restaurants with the riff-raff of stageland and worse" (189).

Fitzgerald, too, addresses the weakening of morals among the "faster set" ("Sentiment" 146) of the English aristocracy and makes much of the "general lowering of standards" to which "An American Opinion of English Society" refers (190). The article suggested that English women should receive the same kind of supervision afforded to English soldiers on leave:

It is a pity that the officer who has been appointed to go round and see that young lieutenants on leave from the trenches behave themselves in public places is not accompanied by an official lady who shall do the same thing by those of their sisters and mothers and aunts and cousins who seem to be utterly lost to all sense of dignity and decency. (190)

If only such a system were in place when young lieutenant Clay Syneforth meets his moral doom in a sexual encounter with Eleanor Marbrooke, one of the "very un-English ladies" that the American Correspondent reviled ("An American" 189–90).

Fitzgerald begins the tale by explaining that twenty-two-year-old Clay has returned to England in early 1917 after two years at the front. Clay harbors "rather a horror of seeing the gaps" that his many dead friends have left in "his England" (144). But he arrives in a foreign country; this England is no longer his England, and the men's absence seems to have emboldened women. The first hint of change comes from his



eighteen-year-old sister Clara's "new manner." Clay finds her "perhaps a bit loud and theatrical" and believes her to be "pretty enough not to need so much paint" (144), which, to him, "seem[s] so useless" (145). His mother wears makeup, too, but "he was used to it" and "would have been shocked had she appeared in her unrouged furrowedness"—but Clara's makeup "merely accentuate[s] her youth." When he tells Clara she has "too much stuff on [her] face," she checks the mirror and disagrees; his mother tells him that he doesn't understand "exactly what the standards are": heavy makeup has become fashionable for young women. After Clara informs him that all of the women at Mrs. Severance's dance will be, in Clay's derogatory terms, "striped like this," he says he would rather not attend. The name "Severance" is significant: Clay will find at the dance that England itself has become severed from its past. "Sentiment" marks the first fictional statement of what Stern calls "Fitzgerald's vision" of the Great War as a "breaking point" not only in America's history but in Western history generally (Tender 6).

As Fitzgerald reveals, makeup had returned to fashion during the period. Social historians note a "freer use of cosmetics" (Robb 50), and Arthur Marwick explains that "the stress and excitement of war," which opened greater financial opportunities for middle- and working-class women, led to a "return to heavy use of cosmetics" not witnessed since the pre-Victorian era (112). The popularity of makeup resulted from "the new female self-confidence" of the war era (113). Women, now often working away from home—even living away from home—and subject to the public gaze day after day for the first time, "felt the need of rouges and creams" (113). Clay's reaction reveals his Victorianism; according to Angeloglou, for Victorians, "[r]ouge was the viper. This one

word described all the abhorred paint” (97). While defiant young women of the late 1800s had begun wearing light makeup, by the first decade of the twentieth century, heavy makeup was still taboo. According to Nellie Steward, an actress of the period, as late as 1908 in the United States, “[m]ake-up was used exclusively for stage purposes and actresses were the only women who knew anything of the art, or who would dare to be seen in public wearing anything but the lightest film of rice powder” (qtd. in Angeloglou 109). As it did with many movements in culture, politics, and fashion, the war “very much accelerated a process” that had begun in previous decades (Angeloglou 119).<sup>4</sup>

Just as Clara’s makeup emphasizes her youth, so it also represents a departure from Victorian fashion. Because of the typically heavy, high-carbohydrate American diet, lack of exercise, and the strictures on cosmetic use, the late-Victorian woman’s complexion appeared “ravaged rather than radiant” (Angeloglou 110). In fact, young women of the period often tried to appear older: Gibson Girl Camille Clifford, whom Angeloglou describes as “one of the most famous beauties of 1902,” used corsets, black velvet clothing, and other means in order to “look like a dowager in late middle age” (110). By emphasizing rather than masking her youth, Clara not only demonstrates the sharp break with prewar fashion but also functions as a harbinger of postwar youth culture. Joseph F. Kett calls 1900–1920 “the era of adolescence” in the United States: “Attitudes and concepts which had appeared within the middle class in the 1880s and 1890s now pushed beyond the perimeters of that class in the shape of efforts to universalize and to democratize the concept of adolescence. A biological process of maturation became the basis of the social definition of an entire age group” (Kett 215). While his study focuses on the United States, Kett sees a similar phenomenon in

continental Europe and Great Britain. These changes in attitudes toward youth ended in what Kirk Curnutt, whose essay on Fitzgerald's relationship to youth culture draws heavily from Kett, calls "a century-long 'youthquake'" (29). Americans began looking at adolescence differently in the 1890s, when forces of urbanization and industrialization "eroded familial oversight over children" (Curnutt 28). Mandatory schooling, child-labor legislation, and organizations like the Boy Scouts and YMCA filled the void, separating teens from adults and placing them in "age-specific cohort groups that encouraged intra-generational identification" (30). New psychological theories viewed adolescence as a stage distinct from childhood and adulthood, and, unlike previous generations, which tried to make teens behave like adults, "modern thinkers promoted an indulgent attitude that encouraged teens to formulate their identities through peer affiliations." Fitzgerald became the spokesperson for twenties youth, documenting this "distinct subculture" and its lingo, fashions, and behavior (30). Age no longer commanded the respect it once had, and Fitzgerald's Clara embodies this new thinking, for she seems to revel in her youth.

Despite the familiar formal setting of the Severances' home—couples dance beneath a "carved, gilt ceiling" (146)—Clay witnesses an affair quite different from the "staid, correct occasions" that Mrs. Severance hosted before the war (145). The break in tradition implied by the host's name dominates the scene. As Clara warned, the female guests have "overpainted" their faces (146). Gone are the "curate-hunters," who once held "long conversations with earnest young men on incense and the validity of orders"; instead, the "faster set," sparsely represented at antebellum dances, now prevails. For Clay, the guests "all blent, some how" into an even faster set (145). The dancers follow "the most extreme steps from over the water" (146), a reference to the popularity of

American jazz music in war-era England. According to Marwick, jazz music infiltrated Britain before the war, and, during the war, the steps that accompanied the music followed, initiating “a great craze for dancing” (143). The new dances were complex, and, as a result, men and women paired off for the night “rather than hazard their toes to an untutored outsider.” Because soldiers’ leaves were often brief, couples wished to spend as much time together as possible, and thus the prewar tradition of men and women avoiding consecutive dances with the same partner disappeared (Marwick 143). Yet British misgivings about the new music went beyond concerns about racy dance moves and couples not changing partners: “American ragtime and jazz, and the dancing styles they inspired (such as the foxtrot and Charleston), raised fears of cultural pollution, especially given their identification with blacks” (DeGroot 239). In a journal entry dated 15 November 1918, British novelist and literary critic Arnold Bennett described the scene at an English ballroom:

Packed with dancers. Coon band. A few couples sitting on stairs. A few drinks. Some women in a great state of sexual excitement. Others not. The dancing custom of pressing the abdomens of the partners together is really very remarkable indeed and shows an immense change in manners if not customs. The whole affair was a fine incitement to fornication.

(676)

With his use of a racial epithet and his focus on the erotic nature of the dancing, Bennett captures the typical Victorian reaction to wartime cultural changes.<sup>5</sup>

Clay imagined he would discover “a land of sorrow and acetisisim [sic],” but, while the affair features “little extravagance,” he feels “that the atmosphere had fallen to

that of artificial gayety [sic] rather than risen to a stern calmness” (Fitzgerald 146). Even without extravagance, the revelry of the dance certainly would have surprised a soldier on leave. According to Gerald J. DeGroot, the wealthy engaged in leisure activities as much or more than they did before the war: “Everyone is entitled to an escape from war’s cruel realities, but among the rich, moderation was rare and hypocrisy ran deep. While they indulged, they expected others to maintain a Spartan approach” (227). Wealthy government officials lived in luxury while calling on the populace to take austere measures. Wartime indulgence in luxury items and entertainment became a cultural controversy. Bernard Vaughan, a “celibate priest,” took time out from his diatribe against birth control in the 14 October 1916 Living Age to castigate the “money-making classes” for their “wasteful extravagance” (74). He focused his ire on women who spent money on “such articles and fancies as costly cosmetics, as furs and jewelry, as dainty footwear, and perky headgear—all so out of place—indeed, during war-time, vulgar” (74). The “American Correspondent” who authored “An American Opinion of English Society” asked about the women of the English aristocracy, “Has carelessness become so fixed a habit with them that they can still play at Babylon within sound of guns?” (189). The writer offered no quarter to those who argued that English citizens needed respite from the grim news from the front: “The plea that it is necessary to ‘keep bright’ put forward by the little nervous journalistic parasites who live by their weekly comments on the orgies of these very un-English ladies holds no water” (189–90). In 1917, the London Times concluded that “there are whole circles of society in which the spirit of sacrifice is unknown [...] There should be no exceptions to the rigorous rule of self-denial which has been willingly undertaken by the great mass of our people” (qtd. in DeGroot 227).

In this indulgent context, Clay's calling the revelry "artificial" becomes especially pertinent, analogous to the atmosphere at an Armistice Day celebration that C. Gasquoine Hartley described in her 1920 study, Women's Wild Oats: Essays on the Re-Fixing of Moral Standards. Though the female revelers take an active role in the Victory Night festivities, their enthusiasm, to Hartley, was decidedly artificial, their "merriment" nothing more than "make believe" (18):

All the jostling, excited people, and especially the disheveled women and the crowds of rioting girls, appeared as tormented puppets, moving and capering, not at all from will and desire of their own, but agitated violently and incessantly by some hidden hand, forced into playing parts they did not want to play, saying words they did not wish to speak, cutting antics for which they had no aptitude or liking [...] Everyone seemed playing a part, goaded with the urgency of seeking an escape from themselves. (13)

The women appeared "wildly excited" but, at the same time, "unhappy"; they were "hiding from [themselves], and hiding also from everyone else" (17). Their behavior was an attempt "to fool men—to smother God in their hearts. Just a play, a pretense, yes a pretense of power, especially that" (17–18). Hartley, like Clay, found the changes disappointing; she couldn't believe "that the new freedom, the new England would be made by such women" (18). She described their "riotous celebrating" as "Waste!" and believed "the problem of unstable women, clamorous and devouring" imperils England's future. She hoped that "this squandering of the Woman's gift [...] must cease now that peace has come."

Both Clay and Hartley diminish the changes they see by calling them “artificial” or “make believe”; indeed, Hartley describes women who enjoy such revelry as unnatural or unhappy. Yet the revelry at the Severances’ dance may not be as unreal as Clay believes: while soldiers and those who lost loved ones endured the tragedy of war, for many women, the war “represented the first rupture with a socioeconomic history that had heretofore denied most women chances at first-class jobs—and first-class pay” (Gilbert and Gubar 276). And the women at the armistice celebration might have been “tormented” and “agitated”—but not for the reasons Hartley cites. Gilbert and Gubar offer evidence of women who appeared quite content with the social changes, even going so far as to wish the war would last longer:

[A]t least one feminist noted the accuracy of a cartoon in Punch depicting two women who “did not think the war would last long—it was too good to last.” As David Mitchell observes, “When the time came for demobilization,” many women “wept at the ending of what they now saw as the happiest and most purposeful days of their lives.” (276)

Clay is also concerned with the lack of formality at the dance. Guests come and go “most informally,” and “there was strangely an impression of dance-hall rather than dance.” From a traditional point of view, the impropriety marks it as something of a lower class affair. He notices too the “dearth of older people,” perhaps a reference to the breakdown of the chaperonage system during the war. Citing a letter from a young woman quoted in C. S. Peel’s memoir How We Lived Then 1914–1918, Marwick reports that “those pillars of Edwardian upper-class virtue” busied themselves with canteening and other wartime activities, and elderly chaperones didn’t want to walk home late at

night; in addition, the hosts of the dances didn't want another mouth to feed and water (109).

More than anything else, however, the features of the women at the dance dismay Clay. He sees "something in the very faces of the girls, something which was half enthusiasm and half recklessness, that depressed him more than any concrete thing" (146). The guests are "so loose—so socially slovenly," but "no one seems to care" (146). He enters a conversation with Eleanor Marbrooke, erstwhile fiancée of his brother Dick, who died in combat. With Eleanor, Clay will become more intimately acquainted with the transformations in British social mores.

Eleanor immediately makes clear to Clay that the war has caused changes. Were it not for the war, she claims, she and Dick would be "comfortably married," but even if he had survived, she doubts that they would still be engaged (147). Whether they were in love or not "wouldn't be the question" because "perhaps he wouldn't marry me and perhaps I wouldn't marry him" (147). As Eleanor dances with a soldier, Clay marvels at "how close she dance[s]"—undoubtedly referring to the "pressing" of abdomens that scandalized Bennett—and ponders her words: "What could she mean?—except that in some moment of emotional excitement she had—but he couldn't bear to think of Eleanor in that light" (147). He must have misunderstood—he must talk more with her. No, surely—if it had been true she wouldn't have said it so casually" (147). He reads the implication: Eleanor is sexually active. Clay doesn't understand how she could reveal herself "so casually" because he lives in a bygone era: since he's been at the front, sex has become casual—and women have become the sexual aggressors.<sup>6</sup>



Thus Eleanor seduces Clay, and she decides where and under what circumstances to have sex with him. This gender role reversal, with the woman calling the sexual shots and the man submitting passively, even reluctantly, obviously reflects historical changes in wartime England. Women replaced men in the workforce while men experienced combat far different from what they imagined and what they were led to believe. From 1914 through 1918, women workers in industry rose from 2,179,000 to 2,971,000; in transportation, from 18,000 to 117,000; in commercial fields from 505,000 to 934,000; in government positions, including education, from 262,000 to 460,000 (Marwick 91–92). Only the number of women in domestic service declined (1,658,000 to 1,258,000).<sup>7</sup> Meanwhile, at the front, men discovered the horror of the first truly modern war. Instead of the parry and thrust of Arthurian swordplay, they endured the filth of the trenches.<sup>8</sup> Stanley Cooperman points out that combat “became a passive rather than an active procedure”; most soldiers were killed while “groveling on the earth, fighting desperately among themselves for shelter, or playing interminable games of cards in the trenches or rear-echelon posts” (63). Such actions led to “a psychic emasculation” (64). According to poet Louis Simpson, surviving a heavy bombardment involved a soldier’s “lying face down” in the trench “and contracting [his] body into as small a space as possible” (qtd. in Fussell 46). Although, as Paul Fussell points out, Simpson speaks of trench life during the Second World War, “he might be recalling the first. While being shelled, the soldier either harbored in a dugout and hoped for something other than a direct hit or made himself as small as possible in a funk-hole” (Fussell 46). Simpson’s use of the word “contracting,” an antonym of erection, holds great significance, for such “contracting”

could only exacerbate soldiers' feelings of impotence. At home, women assumed masculine roles in the workplace and the bedroom; in the trenches, men were feminized.<sup>9</sup>

These changes, and the war's influence upon them, become much clearer when Clay and Eleanor leave the dance. She ignores his protests and has her chauffeur take them to his bachelor apartment. After the couple arrive at Clay's flat, Eleanor makes clear that the past is gone, literally and symbolically. Looking at a photograph of Dick, she laments, "Poor old handsome, with your beautiful self all smashed" (149). She focuses on Dick's body, his "beautiful self," adding that he "didn't have much of a soul, such a small soul. He never bothered about eternity and I doubt if he knows any—but he had a way with him, and oh, that magnificent body of his, red gold hair, brown eyes" (149). Her attraction to Dick appears to have been mainly physical; even before the war, her interest in men leaned toward the sexual. These feelings might have lain dormant, but, with the onset of war and the concurrent smashing of Victorian values, Eleanor can act on her sexual impulses. Now freed from her engagement, she can enter purely sexual relationships, as she will with Clay. She tells him to build a fire and, at first, looks on as he "obediently" does so, saying, "I won't pretend to busybody around and try to help" (149). But, finally, she kneels beside him and, as if to signal another kind of flame to come, strikes a match; it's no longer enough for the woman to stand by and watch—she must do her part, as she has in military hospitals, munitions factories, farms, and so forth, throughout Europe. She sets fire to a newspaper from 14 August 1915, and an article about a German zeppelin raid goes up in flames. Eleanor tells Clay that her younger sister, Kitty, died in such a raid. The past and innocence are lost: the woman leaves her station on the parlor sofa to join the man in the work of building the fire; an English child

with “yellow hair” and a “little lisp” dies in an air raid; and Eleanor lights a fire, literally and figuratively, as she proceeds to seduce Clay.

Their conversation elucidates Clay’s inability to adapt to the rapidly changing social climate. Eleanor quickly diverts the discussion from dead siblings, telling Clay, “[W]e’re not on death tonight. We’re going to pretend we’re happy. Do you see? [...] we are happy. We are! Why you were almost whimsical awhile ago. I believe you’re a sentimentalist. Are you?” He admits that he is “for the first time in my life.” She states firmly that she is not, for “a sentimental person thinks things will last, a romantic person hopes they won’t [sic]” (150). Of course, sentiment is Clay’s main problem: he “thinks things will last,” as Eleanor puts it, but the war has changed everything, and he can’t seem to come to terms with this fact. These “things” are the stuff of Victorian tradition: he desperately clings to a lost age. Eleanor, conversely, hopes things won’t last: despite the loss of her fiancé and her sister, the war liberates her. As a woman, she’s benefited from the changes, the severance from the past.

As the seduction proceeds, Clay learns exactly how much things have changed and how old-fashioned and prudish he appears to modern eyes. He voices concern over their being alone in his “bachelor apartment”: “Will you tell me why in the name of this mad world we’re here tonight? Do you realize that this is—was a bachelor apartment before the bachelors all married the red widow over the channel—and you’ll be compromised?” (150). She tells him not to use such “small petty words”: “Compromise! What’s that to words like Life and Love and Death and England. Compromise!”

In her dismissal of Victorian gender ideals, Eleanor expresses a sentiment typical of English women of the period. The threat of a compromised reputation no longer mattered in the face of war. Traditions, religious and social, crumbled. R. A. Hamilton explains these transformations in her memoir of the period:

Life was less than cheap; it was thrown away. The religious teaching that the body was the temple of the Holy Ghost could mean little or nothing to those who saw it mutilated and destroyed in millions by Christian nations engaged in war. All moral standards were held for a short moment and irretrievably lost. Little wonder that the old ideals of chastity and self-control in sex were, for many, also lost... The great destroyer of the old ideal of female chastity, as accepted by women themselves, was here. How and why refuse appeals, backed up by the hot beating of your own heart, or what at the moment you thought to be your heart, which were put with passion and even pathos by a hero here today and gone tomorrow.

(qtd. in Marwick 108–09)

For Eleanor, the word compromise and its implications belong to Victorian convention, a past she aligns with Clay and the last vestiges of the serving class: “‘I don’t believe anyone uses that word except servants.’ She laughed. ‘Clay, you and our butler are the only men in England who use the word compromise. My maid and I have been warned within a week’” (150). Eleanor tells Clay that they have “‘just tonight’”—“‘no past or future,’” a familiar scenario for many English officers and their lovers—and a common excuse to have sex in 1917 (151).

When he looks at her, he sees “what she intended, beauty heightened by enthusiasm”—an enthusiasm for sex, no doubt, but also for sex with a soldier in particular. She desires “a military shoulder to rest [her] head upon” (151), which may refer to the “khaki fever” controversy that scandalized England early in the war. The phrase originated among people and organizations charged with combating the problem, or, in Woollacott’s words, “those who were responsible for dealing with what they perceived as the problem” (329). To such authorities at least, young English women couldn’t resist a man in uniform and therefore “behaved in immodest and even dangerous ways” (325). In a section entitled “Problems of the Day,” the November 1916 issue of The Englishwoman described the dangers of khaki fever:

Headstrong, impressionable, undisciplined girls, hardly more than children, have made themselves a nuisance by running after soldiers without any thought more than silly or perhaps vulgar flirtation, and, by turn tempters and tempted, have often ended by entangling themselves and their soldier friends in actually vicious conduct. (qtd. in Woollacott 331)

The April 1915 Police Review mentioned the “unprecedented scale” of the problem facing military and civil authorities “dealing with girls and women susceptible to the influence of khaki” (qtd. in Woollacott 329). DeGroot points out that “the fall-out from [khaki fever] continued for the rest of the war” (232) and offers a passage from Sylvia Pankhurst’s The Home Front:

War-time hysterics gave currency to fabulous rumour: From press and pulpit stories ran rampant of drunkenness and depravity amongst women of the masses. Alarmist mongers conceived most monstrous visions of

girls and women, freed from the control of fathers and husbands who had hitherto compelled them to industry, chastity, and sobriety, now neglecting their homes, plunging into excesses, and burdening the country with swarms of illegitimate children.

Volunteer groups like the Women Patrols Committee and Women Police Service formed in the wake of the khaki fever epidemic, “patrolling cinemas, ports, camps, parks and any areas where soldiers congregated” (DeGroot 232). According to Woollacott, these organizations, led by middle-class women, “used fears of changing female behavior represented by khaki fever as an opportunity to claim authority to carry out ‘women’s’ policing” and “[t]o promote their own inclusion in the career of police work” (327). “Sentiment” features many such subtle references to cultural trends; if, as the Roulstons argue, Fitzgerald eschews touches of English local color, he makes up for this omission with a detailed depiction of the spirit of the age.

When the inevitable fade-to-black comes at the end of section I of “Sentiment,” Fitzgerald emphasizes Clay’s passivity and vulnerability. The third-person narrator states, seemingly with no irony intended, that “Clay was no saint,” despite his having been “rather decent about women” (151). But he feels “helpless” and experiences emotions that “were not complex.” Eleanor morphs into a “warm creature of silk and life,” and Clay submits: “He knew what was wrong, but he knew also that he wanted this woman.” Clay succumbs and finds himself in a moral no man’s land. For Fitzgerald and his generation, the war represented a sharp break with the historical past; in “Sentiment,” intercourse with Eleanor personalizes that break for Clay. The world has changed, and he must, too. You can’t repeat the past.

Of course you can't. But Clay doesn't seem to get it. The day after Eleanor seduces Clay, she again acts aggressively when, heavily veiled, she slips past his "inspiring and impeccable father" to join Clay on the train that will return him to the front (151). Clay says goodbye to the past, embodied by his father, representative of a generation that filled its sons' minds with images of the glory of war, and climbs into a compartment with Eleanor, who has just torn down everything his father's staid generation stood for. The future, in the form of the New Woman, skulks by, going unnoticed, right beneath the older man's nose. Knowing that Clay will place undue significance on their tryst, Eleanor tries to explain more fully the changes that have taken place since he's been away. She worries that he will think of her "as rather exceptional" (152), telling him that such behavior was once relegated to the "fast set" of the upper class, but, with the advent of war, it has become the norm. Promiscuity "was spreading slowly" and "normally" before the war, but it became commonplace "when men began to go away and not come back, when marriage became a hurried thing and widows filled London, and all traditions seemed broken" (153). According to Eleanor, "It started in cases where men were called away hurriedly and girls lost their nerve. Then the men didn't come back—and there were the girls" (153). In claiming that women have acceded to temptation because they might miss their chance and forever tarry, Eleanor echoes the sentiment Hamilton expressed in her memoir:

If these young men, alive today and dead tomorrow, if these young women who, as they read the casualty lists, felt fear in their hearts, did not seize experience at once, they knew that for many of them it would elude them for ever. Sex became both precious and unimportant: precious as a

desired personal experience; unimportant because it had no implications—except to mothers of ‘war’ babies. (qtd. in Marwick 109).

Clay emits a “gasp,” shocked to learn that such behavior ““was going on at the beginning”” (153). Eleanor tells him that, in order to do their part for the war effort and to support the troops, women ““either put on trousers and drove cars all day or painted their faces and danced with officers all night.”” She has fallen ““as much under the spell as the most wishy-washy typist who spends a week end at Brighton with her young man before he sails with the conscripts.”” She describes the “spell” as ““self-sacrifice with a capitol [sic] S. Young men going to get killed for us.—We would have been their wives—we can’t be—therefore we’ll be as much as we can. And that’s the story”” (154). Eleanor’s conception of self-sacrifice indicates the great shift in mores during the war—a shift that extended to the very meanings of terms like self-sacrifice. For Sklar, “Fitzgerald is redefining for himself the vocabulary of the genteel tradition” through Eleanor’s words (24). Traditional thinking would have defined self-sacrifice as “giving up life to preserve morality”; for Eleanor, conversely, “morality must be sacrificed to life—and perhaps to lust” (25). For centuries, women were asked to sacrifice ambition and career to comfort husbands and rear children in a moral atmosphere. Now, in the face of war, they try to play the same role as comforter in a much different setting. Dead husbands and lovers will produce no children, and the only comfort women can provide is sex, and the only sacrifice, chastity. Perhaps at first, the war-era New Woman closed her eyes and thought of England, as she allegedly had in Victorian times; but, without the prospect of matrimony or children, sex became a freeing experience, a mode of self-



expression and a means for assuming power in gender relations. Eleanor is about to wield that power.

Clay expresses surprise that sexual mores loosened almost immediately with the onset of war, but, again, Eleanor's claim hits the mark: the khaki fever epidemic actually peaked when the war began, for, at that time, before war had exacted its toll on the male population, women had no other means to take part—more and more positions in the war effort and the workplace needed to be filled as the war continued and battlefield casualty figures mounted. Later, as women entered the workforce in increasingly larger numbers, khaki fever subsided. For Woollacott, women's interest in soldiers "seems understandable in light of their own disqualification from participation in the war effort. Barred, in the early stages of war, from joining up themselves, the closest they could come to war activity was to hang about on the fringes of the male domain of war preparation" (332). Writing in 1920, Hartley claimed that khaki fever arose because "the ownership of a soldier-lover" was the "easiest way" for a woman to "have a stake for herself" in the war (qtd. in Woollacott 332). As more and more men died and others were sent to the front to replace them, women's opportunities expanded. When the English government could no longer afford to exclude women from the workforce and the initial sensation and excitement of the war abated, so did khaki fever (Woollacott 332). In "Sentiment," Fitzgerald never mentions Eleanor taking part in any kind of war work; she seems to have chosen to support the war by offering her body to soldiers.

Eleanor's statement that English society had "to weave a sentimental mantle to throw over" the new sexual openness also holds true (153). "It was there," she tells Clay, "and it had to be excused." In fact, many in England urged citizens to look more

kindly upon “war babies,” as illegitimate children of soldiers came to be called. The war babies story broke in April 1915; Ronald McNeill, whom Marwick describes as a “Conservative M. P.,” reported in a letter to the London Morning Post that a great number of pregnant, unmarried women had suddenly appeared in districts where troops were stationed (107). Even though illegitimacy statistics for 1915 do not support McNeill’s assertion—the numbers actually indicated, in Marwick’s words, “the highly moral combination of an exceptionally low illegitimate birth rate and a phenomenally high marriage rate”—the story became a sensation in Great Britain.<sup>10</sup> But, in this case, once again, perceptions have more relevance than contrary facts and statistics, and thus the allegation spurred an international debate over the treatment of unwed mothers and their progeny.

McNeill’s call for English citizens to embrace illegitimate children rather than shun them garnered many responses in England and America. An unsigned article in the 8 May 1915 issue of The New Republic cited McNeill’s letter (referring to him as “M’Neill”), agreeing that “for the immediate needs of the expectant mothers there is no choice” but to treat them in “as kindly and self-respecting way as the world knows” (“War Babies”). These children “were not conceived because their mothers or their fathers wanted them,” but “nothing [would be] be gained by making life difficult for them,” for “[t]hey [were] as innocent as innocence itself, and any punishment visited upon them [would be] barbarous.” However, the author reminded readers that the babies would “suffer”: they would be “born of harassed mothers” and raised in an impoverished, “lonely” home or in a “mechanical institution.” Moreover, according to the article, “it is surely the greatest folly to pretend that illegitimacy is desirable or a

service to the race.” Illegitimacy was a “crime against the children,” a “handicap” that would most likely remain even if “all the social stigma were abolished” (“War Babies”).

The article reported that the controversy received an official response. England had passed a resolution sponsored by Lady Cecilia Roberts “protesting against ‘attempts now being made in the press and elsewhere to confuse public opinion on the subject of ‘war babies.’” But confusion persisted, “vascillat[ing] between the two poles represented by those who [were] afraid of ‘setting a premium on immorality,’ and those who, like the French deputies, [were] for abolishing the whole distinction of illegitimacy and welcoming every baby as an addition to the grievously depleted human stock.” While the author of The New Republic piece appeared to understand the circumstances, he/she worried about “decency” and responded to those concerned about wartime population depletions:

A race cannot be strengthened by mere multiplication. Only the wholesale barbarism of war and capitalism and imperialist expansion would ever have made mere quantity a standard of morals. That is why the sentimental appreciation of war babies is so disheartening.

In this passage, the author referred to the “sentimental mantle” Eleanor mentions. The July 1915 issue of Current Opinion offered excerpts from a Contemporary Review article that criticized the “sentimentalism” of wholeheartedly accepting unwed mothers (“War Morality” 44). Ethel Colquhoun described the war babies phenomenon as a predictable result of Britain’s “having secured the flower of its manhood” and sending them “far from their homes and among admiring women.” However, while the “consequences” should be “provided for,”

women as a sex will be badly served if ill-judged sentimentalism elevates these 'war-mothers' into heroines. Each case will need to be treated on its merits, but if marriage is to retain any place in our social system, public opinion must continue to make the position of an unmarried mother inferior to that of a wife.<sup>11</sup>

The war babies controversy represents the clash between Victorian values and new issues arising from the war. Clay and Eleanor, respectively, exemplify the two sides of this culture war. To Clay's question regarding the status of "old ideas, and standards of woman and that sort of thing," Eleanor replies that they are "dead and gone," and perhaps this will be for the best: "It might be said that for utility it's better and safer for the race that officers stay with women of their own class. Think of the next generation in France" (154). Her statement reflects British anxiety over eugenics during the period: what would become of the "next generation" in England, considering the paucity of fit—i.e., upper-class—fathers?

Eugenics became a concern within the first year of the war. In the May 1915 issue of The Popular Science Monthly, J. Arthur Thomson pointed out that, unlike ancient war, which "was probably in many cases a sifting out of the less strong, the less nimble, and the less courageous" (416), modern war tended to attract and destroy "a larger portion of the more chivalrous, the more virile, the more courageous" (418). This tendency would lead to "an impoverishment of the race" (418): "When many brave unmarried soldiers are killed, we are justified in saying that the natural inheritance of the country is the poorer through the loss of many who should have enriched the next generation by more than their example" (419). Anticipating that England would require

an army of three million, Thomson estimated that nearly half of British men aged 18–45 would serve in the war; and, “if the fitter join[ed] the army in larger numbers and [were] thinned in larger proportions, war must be regarded as a dysgenic eliminator.” He noted that the English army at the time “include[d] some of the best brains we have got” (419) and, with a long and bloody war, “some degree of impoverishment [was] certain” (420): “Let us not seek to conceal the fact that war, biologically regarded, means wastage and a reversal of eugenic or rational selection since it prunes off a disproportionately large number of those whom the race can least afford to lose.” Since only British men were fighting and dying in large numbers, women would “remain, as they usually are, a eugenic safeguard,” but certainly war would also increase an already “unwholesomely large number of unmarried women” (419). The “eugenic position” on marriage between women and male recruits “should be one of approval, if the ages are suitable, if the records are good, and if there is a certainty of adequate state-provision for the possible widows and children” (424). Thomson viewed marriage as a postwar solution, even a patriotic duty, and waved the flag in the hope of inspiring couples to marry young and be fruitful:

Among the revaluations after the war may we not expect some change of public sentiment in regard to eugenic ideals, some more marked disapproval of selfish forms of celibacy, some more cordial encouragement of those desirable people who marry chivalrously while it is still springtime with them, without waiting till the bridegroom has secured twice the income his father had? There is patriotism in dying for

our country; there is a conceivable patriotism in marrying for her and in bearing children for her. (424)

Ultimately, Thomson understood that preserving England's "social heritage" might necessitate war and concluded on a positive note: "We cannot end without expressing the hope that even if the natural inheritance of our race must suffer impoverishment through the tragic sifting of this most terrible war, we shall win through in the end with our social heritage enriched" (427). Even the devoted eugenicist worried that his argument might be misconstrued as antiwar.<sup>12</sup>

Like Thomson, the writers and editors of the Eugenic Review pointed out quite early what they viewed as a potential eugenic disaster. In October 1914, the journal argued that modern innovations in weaponry and logistics would make the war "almost entirely dysgenic": "The horror of a great war—the greatest the world has ever known—is upon us, and the eugenic and dysgenic effects of war are about to be put to the supreme test of actual experience. All we can do is to put forward every endeavor to mitigate the racial injury to the utmost of our power" (qtd. in Soloway 140). The Review insisted that those "of strongest character, possessing the most love of adventure, the greatest initiative, the keenest and fittest" would perish in much greater numbers (141). Certainly, whether Britain prevailed or not, "the cream of the race [would] be taken and the skimmed milk [would] be left." Especially alarming was the overwhelming number of enlistees from the country's finest schools: Leonard Darwin, Charles's son and adherent of eugenic philosophy, and Oxford zoology professor E. B. Poulton "estimated that over 60 percent of the undergraduates from some Oxbridge colleges were in the forces, and there was unanimous agreement at the Headmaster's Conference in late 1915 that losses

among former students of exceptional scientific and mathematical ability were already very grave” (qtd. in Soloway 141). England’s Eugenic Education Society swung into action, formulating what Soloway considers a “morbid, three-pronged campaign” to alleviate the dysgenic effects of the Great War:

(1) to persuade men to marry and conceive children before they went off to war; (2) to assure that in the event of their deaths their widows and posthumous offspring were provided with substantial allowances; and (3) to encourage the marriage of spinsters and widows to wounded or ‘broken soldiers’ who, however maimed and disfigured, were still capable of propagating healthy heirs. (144)

The Society lobbied lawmakers to suspend marriage license fees and to create programs that would provide for children left fatherless by the war. Propaganda held a prominent place in the campaign: “eugenicists led the way in trying to persuade the public, particularly women, that, however horrible, the wounds suffered by ‘broken soldiers’ were not transmissible and most men were still capable of fathering splendid progeny” (145). In the January 1917 Quarterly Review, geneticist Ronald A. Fisher advised women who married disfigured or disabled veterans “that the injuries of war last but for one generation, and that their children will receive as a natural dower, a constitution unimpaired, and the power to become all that their father might have been. Their father’s courage may grow again in a new and uninjured body” (qtd. in Soloway 145).<sup>13</sup>

Writing in the June 1916 issue of Atlantic Monthly, Ellen Key, a Swedish activist whose Love and Marriage became a prominent influence on American free love philosophy in the 1910s, delved more deeply into how eugenic issues and the

implications of various solutions submitted by scientists and politicians would affect women.<sup>14</sup> Key detailed the concerns over the war's effect on gender relations and the implications for the current generation's offspring:

The first year of the war was nearing its close when a middle-aged American woman, visiting in my home, said to me, "Nowhere will the war bring about a more radical change, more unexpected changes, than in the relations between the sexes. What way out will be found by the millions of women who more than ever must give up all hope of realizing their longing for love and children?" (837)

Key focused on the means by which Europe would repopulate, concluding that "[a]fter the war, woman's prospects, from the point of view of her natural duty—motherhood—will be dark indeed." More women would shun marriage and children and "lead immoral lives"; many others would "bear illegitimate children," and their progeny would suffer: "Those women who have chosen among the men who are rejected from military service quite often have defective children." One solution, which Key attributed to "[s]ome one in London," was to create a "society for the marrying of wounded heroes" (838). This "appeal to women's self-sacrifice and patriotism" would both "make the lives of these men bearable" and produce children who would inherit "their fathers' qualities of heroism." Key also cited an "Indian prince studying sociology and ethnology in Oxford," who suggested polygamy as a solution: allowances should be made so the few "physically, psychically, and morally sound" men who remain after the war could marry two women; certainly, the prince avers, women would rather make such a sacrifice "for the sake of patriotism" than never marry (839).



Key's article demonstrated how romantic ideals of love, sex, and marriage gave way to practical measures and disappeared amidst the fog of war.<sup>15</sup> Fitzgerald's Eleanor takes this practical approach, viewing her tryst with Clay as a patriotic duty. But Clay adheres steadfastly to his idealism even as "[b]ubbles of conventional ethics" burst around him. He wants to "cling to whatever shreds of the old still floated on the moral air," but "Eleanor's voice [comes] to him like the grey creed of a new materialistic world" (154). Although "his brain [is] in a whirl," he tries to find something meaningful and lasting in their affair: "Do you remember [...] what you said last night about love being a big word like Life and Death?" But she dashes this notion, too, saying that her phrase is just "part of the technique of—of the game; a catch word." For her, "Love is a big word, but I was flattering us. Real Love's as big as Life and Death, but not that love" (155). She makes the distinction between love and sex, a difference Clay can't seem to grasp. Her words signal the end of the Victorian age; sex has no deep meaning in the face of the Great War and thus simply becomes part of the "game."

The scene quickly shifts to the battlefield, where Clay and an Irish soldier, Sergeant O'Flaherty, both mortally wounded, struggle to the comparative safety of a shell crater in the middle of no man's land. There, the dying men discuss an entirely different "game." O'Flaherty says, "Blood on an Englishman always calls rouge to me mind. It's a game with him" (135). With this statement, Fitzgerald links this third section of the story with the previous two. Of course, O'Flaherty refers to the rouge that morticians used to lend color to a corpse's face, but it also connects the battlefield to the homefront, where men are losing yet another war, the war between the sexes. The men who have been feminized in battle, huddling in holes, torn apart by shrapnel as they sit passively,

are feminized in death, adorned with the rouge that Clay found so unsettling on the young women's faces at the dance. Ultimately, death has become little more than a game, just like the game Eleanor played with him in his flat and in the rail car.

The Irish soldier's comment on the English equating war with games has roots in English literature and in stories from the front. Fussell notes a "conception of war as strenuous but entertaining" in Rupert Brooke's letters from 1914–15 (25): Brooke, whose "Tiare Tahiti" supplied Fitzgerald with the title for This Side of Paradise, calls his war experiences "all great fun" (qtd. in Fussell 25). For Fussell, Sir Henry Newbolt's "Vitaï Lampada," "a public-school favorite since 1898," comprises "the classic equation between war and sport" (25). In the first stanza of the poem, a cricket player uses the words, "Play up! play up! and play the game," to exhort his team to victory; in the second stanza, he uses the same words to inspire his imperiled military unit. In his widely read propagandistic Lord Northcliffe's War Book, the eponymous London Times publisher argued that the English made better soldiers because games like football had taught them to "embark on little individual enterprises" (qtd. in Fussell 26); Germans, in contrast, had "not played individual games. Football, which develops individuality, has only been introduced into Germany in comparatively recent times." According to Northcliffe, the British approached combat "with the same cheery enthusiasm as they would show for football." English soldiers demonstrated this "sporting spirit" on the battlefield by "kick[ing] a football toward enemy lines while attacking [...]" It soon achieved the status of a conventional act of bravado and was ultimately exported far beyond the Western Front" (Fussell 27). Fitzgerald, through O'Flaherty—Irish and, no

doubt, Catholic, like the author—pokes fun at the British tendency to conceal the war's horrors through sports metaphors.

Fussell sees a similar attempt to disguise the true nature of war in language and jargon of the period. "Sentiment" clearly seems to comment on this linguistic confusion: the rouge that O'Flaherty mentions represents not only the feminization of soldiers in the trenches but linguistic concealment and disguise through metaphor and euphemism. In 1917, mutinous French soldiers were said to engage in "'collective indiscipline'" (qtd. in Fussell 177). War injuries became "Blighty wounds": "Blighty, connoting home, comfort, and escape, [was] felt to remove a large part of the terror of wound" (Fussell 177). Soldiers also used many euphemisms for death, including "'to be knocked out,' 'going out of it,' 'going under.'" Passive voice emerged as a popular method of describing embarrassing or terrifying actions. A soldier who threw away his grenades while fleeing a German bombardment stated that "'the Mills bombs were dropped along the way'" (qtd. in Fussell 177). A British lieutenant who opened fire on British soldiers preparing to surrender reported, "'Of a party of forty men who held up their hands, thirty-eight were shot down'" (qtd. in Fussell 178). Describing a mission to reclaim fallen comrades, a soldier wrote, "'We were given small bags to collect what remains could be found of the bodies, but only small portions were recovered'" (qtd. in Fussell 177).

O'Flaherty rambles on about the foolishness of the English attitude toward war and death, recalling words from a Y. M. C. A. lecture:

"Tan-gi-ble," the fellow was sayin' "we must be Tan-gi-ble in our religion, we must be practicle" an' he starts off on Christian brotherhood an' honorable death [...] An' you got lots a good men dyin' for that every

day—tryin’ to be tan-gi-ble, dyin’ because their father’s a Duke or because he ain’t. But that ain’t what I got to think of. (156)

While O’Flaherty concerns himself with larger spiritual issues, Clay’s mind wanders to speculate about Clara’s virtue and his tryst with Eleanor—he sent her a marriage proposal, but she declined, and “he couldn’t understand at all” (157). Clay cannot extricate himself from the Victorian past, cannot adapt, and he’s about to be snuffed out along with his unfashionable mores. He wonders about his sister’s honor as O’Flaherty mocks the English concept of “honorable death,” realizing that “he had stopped living in the station at Rochester,” where he and Eleanor parted (156). The death of his Victorian values prefigures his actual death in battle.

Significantly, the story ends in stream-of-consciousness rambings, announcing the death of the old—Clay and his Victorian values—and the shift to the new: the fragmented narrative style that became a staple of modernist fiction. Clay’s final thoughts define the changes that the war has wrought:

Damned muddle—everything a muddle, everybody offside, and the referee gotten rid of—everybody trying to say that if the referee were there he’d have been on their side. He was going to go and find that old referee—find him—get hold of him, get a good hold—cling to him—cling to him—ask him—. (159) <sup>16</sup>

The referee, another sports metaphor representing God or a representative of Victorianism—or even the chaperone who had disappeared from wartime dances—has been “gotten rid of,” but Clay still thinks he can cling to him. For Allen, Clay’s thoughts are an attempt to find the simple, comforting incarnation of God that O’Flaherty had

described, “[b]ut [Clay] is too inhibited by the stiff-upper-lip code of his class to be in touch with his own elemental spiritual needs” (55). “His idea of religion has been a tangible, practical one” (55)—and one not nearly spiritual enough to alleviate his suffering as he lies in the crater waiting for death. In his final moments, Clay seeks “O’Flaherty’s God,” a God he “felt as if he knew” but whom he’d never called God: “he was fear and love, and it wasn’t dignified to fear God—or even to love him except in a calm respectable way” (158). But, instead of taking O’Flaherty’s advice to “[s]ettle up with God” because “you’re through with England,” Clay can’t stop thinking about and trying desperately to comprehend the changes he witnessed while on leave. Like Amory Blaine, whom he prefigures, Clay is part of the war generation that has “grown up to find all Gods dead, all wars fought, all faiths in man shaken” (Fitzgerald, This Side 260).

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Such a view of the war was pervasive among writers of the 1920s. In his study of the war's effects on British society, Samuel Hynes calls it "the Myth of Great War." He uses the term "myth" not in the sense of "a falsification of reality" but of "an imaginative version of it, the story of the war that has evolved, and has come to be accepted as true" (xi). People of the period saw the war as a "force of radical change in society and its consciousness." These changes were "so vast and abrupt as to make the years after the war seem discontinuous from the years before, and that discontinuity became part of English imaginations." Whether this view of the war is a "myth" or not is irrelevant to my argument: Hynes's description certainly applies to Fitzgerald's perception of the war.

<sup>2</sup> I use the term "Victorian" throughout this study to describe 1800s and early 1900s English and American society, even though the 1900s and 1910s might be described better as Edwardian or, in reference to the United States, not by the name of an English monarch at all. I do so because Fitzgerald used the word Victorian as a catch-all term for his parents' generation. In *This Side of Paradise*, Amory Blaine blames the Victorians for the Great War.

<sup>3</sup> Since I use the now obscure *Current Opinion* quite a bit in this dissertation, I wish to provide some background. The periodical began publication in July 1888 under the title *Current Literature: A Magazine of Record and Review*. In 1913, the publishers changed the name to *Current Opinion*. In his exhaustive, multi-volume account of American magazines, Frank Luther Mott calls the 1910s incarnation of the periodical "a kind of monthly *Literary Digest*—a good miscellany" that published poetry, short fiction, and drama "but above all an epitome of the current scene," including "many short pieces from

current periodicals and newspapers” (509). Current Opinion’s circulation numbers peaked in 1910 (approximately one hundred thousand) but fell steadily after 1911 to fewer than forty thousand in 1918; in 1925, it merged with Literary Digest (510). I employ Current Opinion extensively throughout this project because its articles feature excerpts from major periodicals—both American and European—and effectively represent the conversation on social issues in 1910s America.

<sup>4</sup> Angeloglou reports that, in the early 1900s, American women were “less prudish” about cosmetic use than British women, and Graves and Hodge state that American women popularized lipstick, rouge, and eyeliner in England after the war. Until that time, “unashamed use of facial pigment in Britain had not gone very far along the usual course that daring female fashions had always taken [...] and even with American encouragement it did not reach its goal for another ten years” (39). But American women, too, found restrictions in the 1910s (113). In The Perfect Hour: The Romance of F. Scott Fitzgerald and Ginevra King, His First Love, West describes the rules for cosmetic use at Westover, a posh finishing school for girls in Middlebury, Connecticut. While the girls were allowed to use light face powder, lip rouge was prohibited (12).

<sup>5</sup> I cite Bennett (1867–1931) as a voice of Victorian morals. Fitzgerald was familiar with Bennett’s work and, in This Side of Paradise, associates the English writer with Victorianism. Amory Blaine lists Bennett among writers who once held his interest but fell out of his esteem after the war. After reading authors like Joyce, Frank Norris, Harold Frederic, and Dreiser, Amory finds that Mackenzie, Chesterton, Galsworthy, and Bennett “had sunk in his appreciation from sagacious, life-saturated geniuses to merely diverting contemporaries” (195). Bennett, along with many other popular English

writers, wrote propaganda for the British war effort and joined Chesterton, Galsworthy, Wells, et al., in signing an “Author’s Manifesto” entitled “Famous British Authors Defend England’s War: Fifty-three of the Best-Known Writers of the Empire Sign a Vigorous Document Saying That Great Britain Could Not Have Refused to Join the War Without Dishonor” that appeared in the October 18, 1914, New York Times (Buitenhuis includes a facsimile of the full-page ad in The Great War of Words: Literature as Propaganda, 1914–18 and After, 19). Bennett emerged as an increasingly important figure in the British propaganda machine and, in October 1918, became Deputy Minister of Information (see Buitenhuis, 137–39).

<sup>6</sup> Although Fitzgerald doesn’t allude to it, the greater effectiveness and availability of contraceptives, starting in the 1880s, helped to smash traditional attitudes toward premarital sex. But the war clearly served as accelerant: Sir Robert Bruce Lockhart claims that, in 1911, when he left England, “contraceptives were hard to buy outside London or other large cities. By 1919 every village chemist was selling them” (qtd. in Marwick 107). While disseminating information about birth control was punishable by imprisonment and fines under the Comstock Law in the U. S., European governments were much more lenient. According to the 10 April 1915 issue of Harper’s Weekly, European laws on contraception stood “in striking contrast to” U. S. laws as they were “directed against distasteful advertising but not against private advice or public propaganda. In England the applicant must state in writing over his or her signature that he or she is married or about to be married” (Hopkins 342). In fact, pharmacies sold contraceptives “everywhere in Europe,” and England became the training ground for Margaret Sanger’s birth control activism. In 1914, after fleeing the United States to



escape indictment under the Comstock Law, Sanger traveled to England and came under the tutelage of Havelock Ellis, who, along with others, convinced her to concentrate her activism on contraception. While “New York radicalism had been too vague and unstructured to do more than further agitate her ambition,” she found in England “world-famous personalities with a definite program for reform and more or less definite ideas about how to implement it” (Kennedy, Birth Control 30). In January 1915, armed with a letter of introduction from prominent English radicals, Sanger arrived in Holland where she learned about the latest birth control methods from Dr. Johannes Rutgers, who ran a state-funded birth control clinic. However, despite the relative lenience of English law, birth control still sparked great controversy in the country. In 1922, British authorities impounded Sanger’s Family Limitation (American authorities had jailed her husband William Sanger for distributing the pamphlet by mail), and the controversies over the marketing of contraceptives “went on being keenly debated in a manner which even at the time must have seemed bizarre” (Wilson 269).

<sup>7</sup> According to Marwick, women’s movement into the workforce began slowly, but the British media made a great deal of it: “contemporary accounts tended greatly to exaggerate it; for the press, starved by the censorship of most hard news, articles on the new role of women were highly marketable and served the patriotic purpose” of encouraging more women to take part in the war effort (90). The same held true for the American media (see my chapter on “Head and Shoulders” for much greater detail). Robb claims that, then as now, the public tends to focus on the “novelties and oddities,” and he argues that “[m]ost British women never worked outside the home during the war, nor were they expected to. Domesticity and motherhood remained a constant bulwark

against radical innovation” (61). Robb certainly has a point—the emphasis on novelties and oddities leads to Hynes’s “myth”—but statistics show a significant exodus from the home and entry into the workplace.

<sup>8</sup> English soldiers may have gotten a false sense of the trenches before embarking for France. Sample trenches were constructed in Kensington gardens: “These were clean, dry, and well furnished, with straight sides and sandbags neatly aligned” (Fussell 43). Wilfred Owen dubbed them “the laughing stock of the army” (qtd. in Fussell 43). In reality, the English never achieved the “precise and thorough trenches” of the German military; English trenches “were decidedly amateurish,” not to mention “wet, cold, smelly and thoroughly squalid” (Fussell 43).

<sup>9</sup> The idea that soldiers’ experiences in World War I differed significantly from those in previous wars may be yet another example of perception eclipsing reality. As John Mueller states in his study of the Great War’s effect on attitudes toward war, “The First World War is often seen to be unusual because it was so unromantic” (10). He cites as evidence Roland Stromberg’s assertion that “romantic illusions vanished in the grimness of trench warfare and mass slaughter” as the war “was to destroy forever the heroic image of war.” But, as Mueller points out, “[m]ud, filth and leeches were not invented in 1914 but are standard correlates of warfare, and ‘mass slaughter’ is the whole point” (10). In fact, innovations in medicine and hygiene may have made things easier. For example, the modern soldier would have found an affliction like dysentery less of a problem than the medieval knight did, “but this perennial wartime affliction somehow was taken to give evidence of the war’s degradation and repulsiveness only in the modern case.” Ideas that the Great War was somehow unique may derive, at least in part, from

postwar novels like Erich Maria Remarque's All Quiet on the Western Front. Certainly, all wars produce literary works that depict the misery of combat, but World War I literature achieved sales figures unlike those of any previous war: "That is, the war was not new because it affected the writers, but because it touched the postwar readers" (Mueller 11). Mueller describes certain historical and cultural movements that truly set the Great War apart. First, an active and effective antiwar movement, which, by 1900, "was growing substantially," forced Americans and Europeans to view war differently: "It was not the first horrible war in history, but it was the first in which people were widely capable of recognizing and being thoroughly repulsed by those horrors and in which they were substantially aware that viable alternatives existed" (12). Second, the Great War flared up in the wake of a relatively peaceful century; not only did this *pax Europa* make the war "a special shock," but it led pro-war commentators to believe that, as technology improved, wars would be significantly briefer (Mueller 15). The length and intensity of the First World War shattered this notion, leading to more shock and disillusion. According to Freud in 1915, "we pictured [the war] as a chivalrous passage of arms, which would limit itself to establishing the superiority of one side in the struggle, while as far as possible avoiding acute suffering that could contribute nothing to the decision"; he found instead that "[n]ot only is it more bloody and more destructive than any war of other days...; it is at least as cruel, as embittered, as implacable as any that preceded it" (qtd. In Mueller 16). Third, Adam Smith's views on capitalism—free trade, not plunder, paved the path to prosperity—demonstrated the economic drawbacks of war, which eroded enthusiasm for armed combat significantly (Mueller 16). Last, the use of poison gas and the improvement of weaponry conjured apocalyptic images, and

the prospect of total annihilation was sobering (17). England would exploit antiwar sentiment in its attempts to draw the United States and its pacifist president into the war as an ally: as Britain's Prime Minister H. H. Asquith stated in 1917, "they were 'waging, not only a war for peace, but a war against war,'" a statement that might have appealed to a pacifist (qtd. In Mueller 21); in addition, the British would do a fine job of portraying the Germans as monsters, "exaggerat[ing] stories about atrocities committed by the German soldiers against Belgian civilians" and the effects of German's use of poison gas.

<sup>10</sup> The rate did increase in 1916 and, when the Great War ended, had risen thirty percent over the prewar period.

<sup>11</sup> The Current Opinion article offered an excellent overview of the controversy. U. S. newspapers reported that the German government had "encouraged soldiers to take war-brides for the sake of the race" and provided for the care of illegitimate children and their mothers (44). The French had "practically do[ne] away with illegitimacy" and were offering war benefits to both wed and unwed mothers. The article juxtaposed these tidbits about the acceptance of European war babies with mention of state-sanctioned prostitution. English "authorities" colluded in the "excesses of the soldiers," which "recalled traditional provisions formerly made for English soldiers when on foreign soil." For the author of the article, illegitimacy and prostitution were closely related issues. In addition to its outline of the various European powers' handling of the war babies phenomenon, Current Opinion offered several voices in the debate from both American and British periodicals. A New York Times article mocked the "'scandal' of the unsanctioned war-baby," pointing out that the Church of England "encouraged young women to become war-brides to fulfill their duty to the race": "The woman who bears

England a ‘war baby’ does make a sacrifice for England, and England does not know what to do with her or how to legitimize her offering. It is tragic” (45). Frances Evelyn, Countess of Warwick, writing in the New York Sunday American, called the war itself a much greater evil than illegitimate births: “To my mind there is more immorality, more glaring offense to the creator, in one battlefield of dead and mangled humanity than has gone to the creation of all the unfortunate children who will come crying into our tear-stricken world before the year draws to its end” (qtd. in “War Morality” 45). For Evelyn, “Those who replenish the earth are better than those who destroy it and the love of a man and a maid, even though it be foolish, selfish and unwise, is finer than the hate of man for man and the rending of limb from limb.” She proposed that governments provide “ample facilities for those who wish to marry before going to the war” and for unwed mothers and their children and called for the “abolition of a penalty” levied against a “man who marries his unmarried wife” and “for the legitimization of the children whose fathers now at the war come back and marry their mothers” (45). But the British Women’s Temperance Association claimed that soldiers’ illegitimate children “could not be considered apart from” civilians’: “any public money would end in the public endowment of illegitimacy.” According to American reformer Jane Addams, when European governments called on women to have children for patriotic reasons, they were asking women to “forget everything that [they] have been taught to hold dear” (qtd. in “War Morality” 45). If “[t]hat is the war’s message to the world of women,” Addams continued, “[i]s it wonderful that they resent it, shudder at it?”

<sup>12</sup> Thompson’s thinking contrasted with that of European “[s]cientists of eminence,” as the November 1915 issue of Current Opinion called them, who “insisted that Darwinism

is a justification of the form of violence displayed in warfare among nations” (“Sir Ray” 333). The article quoted German General Friedrich von Bernhardi: “[t]he most conspicuous militarist exponent of this conception of Darwinism”—“from the beginnings of life, war has been the basis of all healthy, normal development. Struggle is not merely the destructive but the vitalizing principle. The law of the stronger holds good everywhere. War gives a biologically just decision, since its decision rests on the very nature of things” (333). In his prewar treatise Germany and the Next War, Bernhardi quoted Heraclites—“War is the father of all things”—as proof that the “sages of antiquity long before Darwin recognized” that “without [war] an unhealthy development will follow, which excludes every advancement of the race, and therefore all real civilization” (18).

<sup>13</sup> Statistics back up the argument for war’s dysgenic effect. J. M. Winter concludes that the idea of a “lost generation” of British elites “is not a myth”: “The most severely depleted social groups were the most privileged, whose marriage patterns were inevitably distorted by the absence of so many marriageable young men” (465). The wealthy elite tended to enlist in greater numbers. According to Winter,

There is no doubt that the sons of the “best” families rushed to the colours in August 1914. Harold Macmillan, aged 20 at the outbreak of war, fresh from Eton and Oxford claimed that the “major anxiety” of his peers “was by hook or by crook not to miss” the war. Despite an attack of appendicitis just before the war had been declared, he passed his physical examination and entered the King’s Royal Rifle Corps. Sir Oswald Mosely, of Winchester and Sandhurst, echoed Macmillan’s words. “Our

one great fear,” he wrote of his generation, “was that the war would be over before we got there.” (452)

The soldier’s fears echo American Ivy Leaguer Fitzgerald’s lifelong lament that he “didn’t get over” (Brucoli, Some Sort 106). Although working-class men could hardly be regarded as slackers—“the deluge of working-class recruits surprised even the most patriotic observers”—their casualty numbers lagged behind those of the upper-classes, at least in part due to “the appallingly low standards of health in many working-class districts” (Winter 454–55). Most likely, according to Winter, ill health “saved the lives of many industrial workers” because it kept them off the front lines. In addition, enlistees from the elite classes often served as officers, who perished in greater numbers: statistics show “that 14 per cent of the officer corps against only six per cent of the rank and file were killed in the first year of the war. This surplus of officer deaths continued, although at a slightly lower level, throughout the war” (458). As a result, upper-class women “faced the real possibility of enforced spinsterhood at the end of the war. They may have decided to marry men of different social status and age than those whom they would have married had there been no war” (465). Eleanor assesses the situation in France correctly: since the country endured greater casualties, these “adjustments,” as Winter calls them, certainly occurred. The “somewhat lower” proportion of working-class men killed in the war meant that working-class women probably did not meet “with as severe a problem” (465). Ultimately, while the theory of a “lost generation” holds true, perception turned it into sensation: “in the inter-war years it became a legend which, though it had a basis in fact, took on a life of its own.”

<sup>14</sup> Key professed that relationships should feature “an increasingly soulful sensuousness and an increasingly sensuous soulfulness...in a union in which neither the soul betrayed the senses nor the senses the soul” (qtd. in Trimberger 104–05). In addition, morality in a sexual relationship was rooted in “whether it enhanced the life of the individual, not whether it led to marriage” (Trimberger). Ultimately the women’s movement would “surpass in fanaticism any war of religion or race” (qtd. Banner 123). But some of Key’s views conflicted with those of radical feminists of the period. She contended that “men and women had different natures and that motherhood should be the center of a woman’s life” (Banner 124) and that “[a] woman with children would need at least ten years free of any continuous outside work” (Trimberger 108). Bearing and rearing children “was a more important means of exercising creativity than writing a novel or producing a work of art” (108).

<sup>15</sup> I should point out that, while Key presented these views, she didn’t adopt them and remained idealistic and conservative to the last. She concluded that the “many little war-children adopted by mothers who have lost their own children, or by women who have never known what motherhood means” indicated that “women have been able to glean some sweetness from the bitterness of war” (844). These “joys,” however, were “meagre” and “artificial” compared “to all the natural, life-giving, promising human relationships that have been crushed under the iron hoofs of the black horse of War!” (844).

<sup>16</sup> Fitzgerald resurrected this passage in Paradise, where he deals with the issues he raised in “Sentiment” in much greater depth. According to Moore, Clay’s dying



utterance offers evidence of Fitzgerald's "religious confusion," a major theme in both "Sentiment" and Paradise (95).

## Chapter 2

Dick Humbird and the Devil Wagon of Doom:

Cars, Carnivores, and Carnality in This Side of Paradise

In Beach Haven, New Jersey, on the first day of July 1916, beachgoers gaped in horror as “the fin of a fish” approached twenty-five-year-old Charles Epting Vansant (“Dies after Attack”). While “blood sprea[d] over the surface of the sea” (Everson), lifeguard Alexander Ott raced to Vansant’s rescue but arrived too late. According to Jack Ott, Alexander’s son, as the lifeguard pulled Vansant onto the beach, ““blood was pumping onto the sand”” (qtd. in Fernicola 7). Vansant died several hours after the attack. Five days later, bathers in Spring Lake, New Jersey, witnessed a similar scene. As lifeguards responded to a swimmer in distress, “a woman cried that the man in the red canoe had upset” (“Shark Kills Bather”). But the man had no red canoe. When the lifeguards reached him, Charles Bruder, a bellhop at the Essex & Sussex Hotel, “cried out that a shark had bitten him and then fainted.” As the rescue party brought Bruder to shore, they examined the carnage: “[H]is left leg had been bitten off above the knee and the right leg just below the knee. The shark had nipped his left side, for there were marks of teeth beneath the arm.”<sup>1</sup> A doctor was summoned, but “before one arrived [...] the man was dead” (“Shark Kills Bather”). Thirty miles away, denizens of Matawan, New Jersey, “had been sympathetically affected by the reports of the death[s] of Charles E. Vansant and Charles Bruder. But those places were far away, and the tragedies had not touched them closely” (“Shark Kills 2 Bathers” 1). The good folks of Matawan would feel more than sympathy on 12 July 1916. To their everlasting regret, they scoffed at

reports of shark sightings in Matawan Creek. When twelve-year-old epileptic Lester Stillwell began “screaming and yelling and waving his arms wildly” as his “body was swirling round and round in the water,” fellow swimmers mistook his throes for a seizure, but rescuers would find Stillwell’s body “so terribly torn by the shark” that “he died of loss of blood” (“Shark Kills 2 Bathers” 1). The shark also mauled Joseph Dunn, badly injuring his leg as he fled after the initial attack (3). Twenty-four-year-old Stanley Fisher dove into the creek and retrieved Stillwell’s body, but, before he get to the shore, the shark struck again: “Those who reached him found [Fisher’s] right leg stripped of flesh from above the hip at the waist line to a point below the knee. It was as though the limb had been raked with heavy, dull knives” (3). Fisher “died before he could be carried to the operating table.”

In the summer of 1916, these terrifying incidents became a national sensation, dominating front pages for weeks and even coming up in a 14 July meeting between President Wilson and his cabinet, who resolved to dispatch the Coast Guard “to use every means necessary for driving the sharks away or killing them” (“Cabinet Discusses Sharks”). That same day, in the House of Representatives, New Jersey Congressman Isaac Bacharach proposed “an appropriation of \$5,000 to aid in the search for man-eating sharks along the New Jersey coast.”

The shark emerges as an important image in This Side of Paradise,<sup>2</sup> the novel Fitzgerald began writing about sixteen months after the New Jersey attacks. As he and his college friends return from a “gay party” in New York City (Fitzgerald, This Side 85), Fitzgerald’s protagonist Amory Blaine compares the automobile to a shark, a fitting metaphor, considering the role of the car in liberalization of sexual mores during the

period and Fitzgerald's anxiety over these changes. Even more explicitly than in "Sentiment—and the Use of Rouge," Fitzgerald equates sex with evil in Paradise—and automobiles gave young couples of the 1910s something they couldn't attain in their parents' parlors: a private space in which to experiment with sex. In Paradise, the automobile becomes a crucial factor in Fitzgerald's melding of sex, beauty, and evil. Much like the aquatic "man-eater" (as period articles described the shark) killed four swimmers, the "devil wagon," as the New York Times and other periodicals referred to the car,<sup>3</sup> destroys Dick Humbird, the widely admired campus big man who posthumously transforms from a model of aristocratic glamour to a symbol for debauchery. In addition, newspaper and magazine articles published around the time Fitzgerald composed Paradise associated motor vehicles with emancipated women, who, because of advanced automobile technology, took up the wheel en masse, and the war in Europe, where motorized vehicles facilitated troop and arms movement—and killing. Thus, the automobile, with its link to promiscuity, becomes a vehicle of moral death at the hands of beautiful, evil women and literal death in armed combat. And so again, as in "Sentiment," Fitzgerald presages battlefield death with moral compromise. At the end of Paradise, Amory returns to his alma mater, Princeton, alone and on foot. Standing on solid intellectual ground, buttressed and hardened by years of bitter experience, he makes sense of the connection between women and evil, having an epiphany that, in the context of the novel, indicates the protagonist's maturity. The man-eating women he has met along the way maimed but did not kill him, and he achieves self-knowledge, the quest object in this modernist bildungsroman.

Fitzgerald alludes to the emergence of the automobile in courtship practices earlier in the novel: when Amory describes an attractive female prospect, he adds that she's "got a car of her own and that's damn convenient" (52). Of course, cars and car accidents play an important role in many of Fitzgerald's works. Kenneth G. Johnston notes that "[t]he automobile and the dream girl are inextricably linked in Fitzgerald's fiction," listing more than a dozen works in which cars play important roles in the male protagonist's romantic affairs.<sup>4</sup> Car accidents and accidents narrowly avoided loom large in The Great Gatsby especially; Johnston adds,

The auto accidents, or near-accidents, in the novel—Daisy's hit-and-run, Jordan's near miss of a workman, and the accident of the drunken guest who drives into a ditch fifty feet from Gatsby's door and Tom Buchanan's outside of Santa Barbara—all convey the carelessness, recklessness, and irresponsibility of the times, as well as of the individuals immediately involved. (Johnston 48)

In Driving Women: Fiction and Automobile Culture in Twentieth-Century America, Deborah Clarke, too, finds a strong link between women and automobiles in Fitzgerald's oeuvre, but she views this connection as far more sinister than Johnston: "women and cars" add up to a "deadly combination" (57). The critic notes that Fitzgerald derives the name Jordan Baker from "two cars marketed to women, the Jordan Playboy and the Baker Electric" and that Nick describes Jordan's driving as "'rotten.'" In addition, Nick associates Jordan's poor driving skills with "her dishonesty, recalling her various lies and rumors of moving a ball in a golf tournament at the same time he is accusing her of bad driving" (57). Moreover, of course, "when Daisy is at the wheel, people die," for she

drives the automobile that kills Myrtle. Considering this evidence, Clarke asserts, “If women are constructed through automobility in Fitzgerald’s world, one sees scant hope for the future of humankind.”

Paradise reflects period angst over the car as a means of feminine individualism and sexual expression. Clarke asserts that women learning to operate motor vehicles represented nothing less than the dawning of “a new era” (10). With the car, women could escape the home and “dr[ive] into the public sphere, exercising control of the latest technology.” For Clarke, the popularity of the automobile in the early 1900s fits well with the rise of modernism: “The car conveys not just technological power but individual autonomy, granting the driver control over speed, time, and direction. This makes it an apt vehicle for modernist individualism but with a gendered twist: that autonomy was available not only to men but also to women” (12).

Fitzgerald celebrates this modernist individualism in Paradise—his protagonist’s journey ends in an apotheosis of self-awareness: in the final line of the novel, Amory Blaine, standing alone, gazing at the Princeton campus, exclaims proudly that he “know[s] [him]self” and nothing else—and that appears to be enough (Paradise 260). Self-knowledge becomes something of a Holy Grail in Paradise. But this celebration of autonomy and freedom appears to apply only to men. Sexual aggression in women—like any penetration of the male sphere—meets nothing but fear and derision. The car’s association with sexual—and especially feminine—freedom, I believe, makes it as much a horror as the collection of witches and vampires that serve as female characters. Virginia Scharff locates a 1905 story in Motor magazine that assigns the car a particularly fitting moniker: “The Wonderful Monster” (20). The tale portrays the dangers “of the

power of both cars and male drivers to awaken incendiary urges in women” and describes its main female character’s attraction to the car in erotic terms (21):

To think of “The Monster,” as she called it, was to long for it. That great living, wonderful thing with its passion for motion seemed to call and claim her as a kindred spirit. She wanted to feel the throb of its quickening pulses; to lay her hand on lever and handle and thrill with the sense of mastery; to claim its power as her own—and feel its sullen-yielded obedience answer her will. (qtd. in Scharff 21)

The fear of (“monster”) and attraction to (“wonderful thing”) the car indicate a kind of thralldom, which resembles Amory Blaine’s reaction to beautiful, emancipated women: they frighten him, but he can’t resist their charms. At the end of the novel, Amory concludes that beauty in women is “inseparably linked with evil,” yet he spends his young life coveting and pursuing physically appealing women.<sup>5</sup>

Time and time again, period articles link the automobile to women, and in particular, to women confidently taking up residence in a formerly male-only territory. “Auto Improvements for Women Drivers,” which appeared in the 26 November 1911 New York Times, shows that automakers saw women as a vital segment of the market: they “[we]re catering to the vote of the feminine side of the household” by “supplying vehicles far better adapted to their needs.” The language here—the appeal to the “vote of the feminine side”—links the female driver specifically to women’s suffrage and, therefore, to the rise of the woman during the period in general. Moreover, automakers altered the vehicles in an attempt to bolster the woman driver’s “confidence”: newly designed car doors better “protected and shielded” the driver, and a woman could drive

“know[ing] that the winds and gusts which constantly threatened to play with lap robes and skirts to her annoyance are shut out by the doors.” With these innovations, she could “driv[e] with greater confidence.” A 12 August 1914 New York Times article, suggestively titled “Woman Teacher Talks Confidence,” profiled Miss Francis J. Thornton, “one of the few women instructors of automobile driving in the United States.” Thornton, “who [was] brought up practically in the seat of an automobile,” discussed demeaning attitudes toward women drivers:

“In the early days of automobiling [...] there was much opposition to the idea of women driving motor cars because it was that they were too frail to drive a ‘devil wagon.’ Despite the opposition, however, there were a few women drivers, and these were looked upon as being mannish because they undertook to do what at that time was believed to be a ‘man’s job.’”

She cites the positive economic impact of the female driver: “[T]he fact that a woman can drive a car means a great saving in chauffeur hire as well as in carfares.” But, of course, she does not mention the negative impact on all of those suddenly unnecessary male chauffeurs. Again, the woman’s gain comes with a man’s loss: she will usurp the working man’s place at the wheel just as she would in industrial jobs during World War I. In addition, her argument becomes one for feminine self-assertiveness, a call for a new “confidence” that would have rattled traditionalists: “The main point that I impress upon my pupils is confidence in driving, and I have noticed the good results this point has accomplished.” This new confidence behind the wheel mirrors the feminine



assertiveness in the sexual matters that Fitzgerald documents in “Sentiment” and Paradise.

A September 1915 New York Times article evinces the fear of this emboldened female driver. When a West Farms Court Magistrate issued a fine for reckless driving to a woman, he added, “In my opinion, no woman should be allowed to operate an automobile. In the first place, she hasn’t the strength, and, in the second place, she is very apt to lose her head” (“Women at the Wheel”). The magistrate spoke for a bygone era. In a letter to the editor published in the Times later that month, S. E. Armstrong, the “county physician of Bergen County, N.J.” responded to the judge’s claims. In three years at his position, Armstrong asserted,

I saw the results of many automobile accidents and in no case was a woman driver of either car where two automobiles were involved. It seems to me that if the magistrate’s opinion of woman were to be regarded as sound, there should have been at least ‘one little woman’ out of all this considerable number of drivers too weak to control his car or who ‘lost his head. (Letter. “Accidents from Women Drivers”)

Because of advances in automotive technology, women could no longer be called “too weak” to drive a car—and the nation’s roads would become the latest site where women invaded traditionally male positions and activities.

In an article in the February 1915 Scribner’s Magazine, Herbert Ladd Towle detailed the rise of the woman driver, beginning the article by conjuring an image of the confident woman driver, and ending his description with a slap at the “callow” young man in the passenger seat:

Young girls, most of them, hardly out of their teens—they meet you everywhere, garbed in duster and gauntlets, manipulating gears and brakes with the assurance of veterans. Not always in the little lady-like cars, either. If you visited last summer a resort blessed with good roads, whether East or West, you saw ‘sixes’ of patrician fame and railroad speed, with Big Sister sitting coolly at the wheel, pausing at the post-office on their way for a country spin. And you wondered if the callow youth seated beside the competent pilot would ever have the gumption to handle a real car himself! (214)

The young man takes the passive role as passenger, the woman the active. The love scene between Clay and Eleanor in “Sentiment” features a similar hierarchy, as does Amory Blaine’s first sexual encounter with a young woman in Paradise. Eleanor seduces Clay, and he compromises his morals; thirteen-year-old Myra St. Claire demands a second kiss from a terrified Amory. Towle even suggested that the young man lacked “gumption,” a term that suggests the youth had no courage or, in other words, manliness or “drive”—a synonym for “gumption” (“Gumption”). Towle also detailed the advances that led to this revolution:

Cars are being perfected, not merely in delicacy of control, but in the total elimination of certain demands for strength and skill. Engine-starters—now next to universal, save on the lightest cars—are the most notable instance. You no longer need to crank or dexterously ‘snap her over’: you merely press a foot-plunger and an electric (or sometimes pneumatic) motor spins the engine merrily until the explosions start. (214)

In addition, “Gear-shifting, in the larger cars, demands real strength as well as knack. Some progress has been made of late in developing electric gear-shifts, operated by buttons on the wheel. You press the proper button at leisure; then at the right moment you unclutch for the briefest instant—and the gears shift automatically.” With these innovations, sales figures for cars purchased for women drivers were rising considerably. Towle polled automakers informally about “what proportion of their sales are for women’s use” (217). One anonymous source, who manufactured cars “above the average in both power and price,” estimated that, in Detroit, women accounted for sixteen percent of his sales, “and he thought the same proportion would hold good elsewhere” (217). A manufacturer who focused on “building enormous numbers of a light car particularly suited to women’s use, reported estimates from various branches ranging from one per cent in Fargo and two per cent in San Francisco to twenty-five per cent in Columbus and Minneapolis and thirty-one per cent in Oklahoma City. The average was better than ten per cent.” Another, which produced “a popular small roundabout, estimates that twenty-five per cent of his sales are for women” (217). Towle found even more impressive numbers in other places:

In Lenox, Mass., for example, a census of thirty-four car-owning families shows sixteen women drivers, of whom seven drive medium to high-power cars. In Stockbridge, near by, six car-owning families number—mothers and daughters—eleven feminine drivers, six of whom are above the small-car class! (217–18)

By 1917, women’s interest in motor vehicles had risen to the level of sensation. The 9 January New York Times reported,

Women nearly captured the National Automobile Show at Grand Central Palace yesterday. At certain hours of the day there were more women present than men, and at all times the increased proportion of women in the crowds was noticed and commented on with much satisfaction by automobile men as proof that the automobile had won its way as a woman's vehicle as well as a man's. ("Women in Throngs")

Automakers saw the possibilities in the women's market and continued to add "refinements" that would attract women consumers: "Wherever an accessory could be added that would attract women, this was done. In the choice of the upholstery, in installing toilet cases in the tonneau of the closed cars, and in other matters women's taste was considered." But women's interest didn't end with such superficial concerns; they inquired about mechanical issues, too:

Women not only crowded around the exhibits yesterday, asking questions about matters naturally interesting to their sex, such as upholstery, but many were interested inquirers about the mechanical parts and construction of the various cars. One demonstrator grew weary trying to make clear the mysteries of the "differential."

Salesmen began touting the physical and mental health advantages of driving: "Driving a car, it is asserted by automobile salesmen, is the best of exercise for women. The assertion has been made that it is the greatest steadier of women's nerves known and that it disciplines self-control" ("Women in Throngs). According to Clarke, "The car, as a powerful machine, may have been initially perceived as the province of men, but women were quick to claim its potential" (10)—and the attention auto manufacturers began

lavishing on the female consumer indicated that they recognized this. Moreover, as Clarke points out, the gendered terminology of auto parts and models solidifies its link to femininity:

Machinery had always been the province of men, but here was a machine that was both phallic and female. The car was personified as feminine, as evidenced by the famous Model T, the “Tin Lizzie.” Early terms for various automotive parts came from women’s clothing, such as the bonnet (still the standard term in Britain) and the skirts, or modesty panels, used to hide and protect the inner machinery. (23)

Clearly, women had infiltrated another traditionally male territory; just as they had become sexual aggressors and moved into the wartime workplace, women had taken men’s place in the driver’s seat.

This aggressive female arrives early in Paradise. As soon as his main character reaches puberty, Fitzgerald begins constructing the link between sexuality—especially in association with physical feminine beauty—and evil. In “A Kiss for Amory,” Fitzgerald offers a vision from the bitter Minnesota winters of his youth: the bobbing party, a popular amusement of the time that entailed a horse-drawn sled carrying a group of youngsters to a country club dance. Fitzgerald sets the scene in mid-December 1909 at the Minnehaha Club, a fictionalized stand-in for St. Paul’s Town and Country Club. There, thirteen-year-old would-be lovers Amory Blaine and Myra St. Claire, who have been separated from the rest of the party through Amory’s machinations, enjoy a clandestine encounter in “the little den of his dreams” (20). Like the setting for Clay’s tryst with Eleanor in “Sentiment,” a fire blazes while the “witch”—the girl always seems

to be super- or sub-human—and the sexual loom (Paradise 20, “Sentiment” 150). Readers witness the Fall of (a) Man. As Amory and Myra prattle and pose, Amory suddenly “lean[s] over quickly and kisse[s] Myra’s cheek. He had never kissed a girl before, and he taste[s] his lips curiously, as if he had munched some new fruit” (21). The symbolism is more than a bit heavy-handed, considering the novel’s title. Kissing Myra initiates Amory into the world of sexuality/evil, virtually synonymous terms in Fitzgerald’s Paradise/Paradise, and sets the tone for the rest of the novel.

Throughout Paradise, Fitzgerald describes women as predators—witches, vampires, or creeping, carnivorous beasts who conjure the devil—while portraying male characters as naïve victims of feminine wiles. Their aggression shocks the young protagonist, much like the 1916 shark attacks shocked the nation. After kissing Myra (20), Amory experiences “[s]udden revulsion...disgust, loathing for the whole incident,” and “[h]e desire[s] frantically to be away, never to see Myra again, never to kiss any one; [...] he want[s] to creep out of his body and hide somewhere safe out of sight, up in the corner of his mind” (21). The kiss makes Amory want to “creep,” a verb that appears often in foreboding passages throughout the novel and a movement associated with femme fatales like Eleanor Marbrooke of “Sentiment” and Eleanor Savage, who appears later in Paradise. He has been contaminated, initiated into sin—he, too, becomes a creeper. To Myra’s plea for another kiss, Amory responds “passionately”: “I don’t want to!” When the understandably angry, exasperated girl threatens to inform her mother of the indiscretion, Fitzgerald dehumanizes, transmogrifies her: she morphs into “a new animal of whose presence on the earth he had not heretofore been aware.” Adam/Amory becomes aware of Eve’s/Myra’s true—and horrifying—sexual nature. This “new

animal” surprises Amory, just as the shark surprised bathers—and scientists. According to Fernicola, “from 1891 to July 1916 the scientific world expressed the firm view that sharks will not attack a living man, at least not in temperate waters” (xxiv). For example, until the 1916 attacks, “the foremost authority on sharks” in the United States, American Museum of Natural History Director Dr. F. A. Lucas “doubted that any type of shark ever attacked a human being” (“Many See” 1). But, in light of the new evidence, the subtitle of the 14 July 1916 New York Times article containing Lucas’s comments announced, “No Longer Doubted that Big Fish Attack Men” (“Many See” 1). This new version of an old animal took the country by surprise, much like the New Woman blindsides Amory Blaine.

In fact, the shark’s mechanized surrogate in the novel, the car, delivers Amory to this ill-fated meeting. Eager to strike a romantic pose, Amory uses an automobile accident as an excuse for his late arrival at Myra’s house. When an alarmed Myra asks if anybody had been killed in the accident, Amory replies, ““Oh, no—just a horse—a sorta grey horse”” (18). In positioning himself to experience a sexual rite of passage—his first kiss—thirteen-year-old Amory describes a scene indicative of a technological and logistical rite of passage for the country: the horse, an outmoded source of transportation, succumbs to its successor, the motorized vehicle. Fast times lie ahead. In order to catch up with the sleigh carrying the bobbing party, Myra and Amory will take “the machine” (18)—her family’s limo—which throws the young couple together, literally: “Thick dusk had descended outside, and as the limousine made a sudden turn she was jolted against him; their hands touched” (19). A “thrilled” Amory muses over the perfect atmosphere the car provides: “There was something fascinating about Myra, shut away here cosily

from the dim, chill air; Myra, a little bundle of clothes, with strands of yellow hair curling out from under her skating cap” (19). As the bobbing party comes into view, Amory, no doubt wishing to get Myra away from the chauffeur’s prying eyes, implores her to tell the driver to pass the party and drive directly to the Minnehaha Club. The future, the motor car, outpaces the past, the horse-drawn conveyance, as Amory rides toward adulthood, in the form of the first fumbblings of sexual maturity.

The young couple’s using the automobile as a means to separate themselves from the group and, most important, from parental figures reflects new courtship practices during the period—practices in which the car would play a leading role. As I’ve argued in the previous chapter, a movement toward more liberal sexual mores had begun before the First World War—the war advanced this shift—and the early chapters of Paradise document these changes. Amory, like Clay in “Sentiment,” reacts with a mixture of surprise, chagrin, and exhilaration to the new behavior he witnesses. In “Petting,” a subsection of Book One set a few years after the Myra affair, Amory notes the changes in young women’s behavior in the mid-1910s—and offers his typically puritanical disapproval:

Amory saw girls doing things that even in his memory would have been impossible: eating three-o’clock, after-dance suppers in impossible cafés, talking of every side of life with an air half of earnestness, half of mockery, yet with a furtive excitement that, Amory considered, stood for a real moral let-down. (61)



The “petting party,” which entails much illicit kissing, becomes the “great current American phenomenon” during Amory’s freshman year at Princeton (61). For Fitzgerald, these parties evince a break with the Victorian past:

None of the Victorian mothers—and most of the mothers were Victorian—had any idea how casually their daughters were accustomed to be kissed. “Servant girls are that way,” says Mrs. Huston-Carmelite to her popular daughter. “They are kissed first and proposed to afterward.” (61)

The passage reflects a major shift in courtship practices—from “calling” to dating—in the first two decades of the twentieth century. Peter Ling describes the early twentieth-century fashion of the gentleman caller:

The convention of calling [...] was a bourgeois custom based on the concerns and capabilities of the middle classes. As a courtship ritual, calling involved three of the pillars of bourgeois life: the family, respectability, and in particular, privacy. The focal point of calling was gaining admittance into the private family sphere of the home which was the central expression of bourgeois practice. (18)

The “Victorian mothers” to whom Fitzgerald alludes exercised great power within this system: “As guardians of the home, women were the chief arbiters of who could call and who would never be invited. Daughters could invite male suitors to call but there remained a parental veto on who would be received. In this way, family honour and essential privacy could be preserved” (Ling 19).

Mrs. Huston-Carmelite’s ignorance about her daughters’ activities demonstrates the waning of her influence—more evidence of the great “youthquake” that I discuss in

chapter one—but her disdainful reference to the promiscuity of “servant girls” reveals the roots of the new practices in the lower classes. While upper- and middle-class parents could provide a private place for their daughters and their callers—a space shielded from the public gaze but still subject to parental supervision—the lower classes could afford no such luxury. According to Ling, “Cramped lodging houses made the social niceties of ‘calling’ ludicrously impractical” for working-class families (19). Newly arrived immigrants tried to perpetuate Old World traditions like “chaperonage and female seclusion” but to no avail, for crowding and the necessity of multiple incomes—even from younger female family members—precluded bourgeois-style courtship practices (19). As a result, the lower classes “pioneered dating as an expedient born of the opportunities offered and the comforts denied to them.” And, because their prying “parents failed to respect the principle of privacy they had preached,” upper- and middle-class youth would follow their poorer counterparts and seek privacy elsewhere (19).

Wealth allowed them access to all elements of city life:

These ‘bohemians’ began to perceive the possibility of a new freedom arising from the anonymity of crowded city streets. Paradoxically, the public places of the metropolis could be profoundly private, provided one avoided the stamping ground of one’s own social class. Thus, affluent youth figuratively “crossed the tracks” to enjoy a surer privacy amidst working-class crowds than they experienced in parents’ homes. A revolution in etiquette had begun. (Ling 19–20)

Clay finds something similar to Ling’s “cross[ing] of tracks” at the Severences’ ball in “Sentiment.” He reacts with dismay at what he perceives as a diminution of tradition; he

notes that guests arrive and depart “most informally,” and the ball itself bears “an impression of dance-hall rather than dance.” For Clay, it seems to have become something of a lower class affair. Moreover, the crowd at the dance has “blen[ded], some how” into a fast set (145) that embraces “the most extreme steps”—jazz dances associated with blacks—imported from America (146). The line between traditionally upper- and lower-class activities blurred during the first two decades of the twentieth century. As early as 1900, Ling points out, activities that dominated the upper-class social calendar in the nineteenth century—the opera, for instance—would “be deemed passé by a growing number of privileged youths” (19).<sup>6</sup>

Moralists of the period fought back against this shift in manners. An article from the 1 August 1904 New York Times presented Zion City founder and high priest John Alexander Dowie’s reaction to the new fashion of dating, in the form of a set of “courtship rules”:

“No young man may hereafter go out walking with a young woman after dark without the consent of her parents.

“The place to court is in the young woman’s home, where the old folks are handy and can be asked the question.

“If any young man wishes to court a Zion young woman, he must first ask her parents, unless he is a robber.” (“Dowie’s Courtship Rules”)

As the last line indicates, Dowie relegated to the criminal class anybody to didn’t follow his rules. Incidentally, in the same sermon, Dowie explained that the current heatwave in Chicago “[was] due to the presence in the air, of ‘millions of little devils,’ sent by the evil one to annoy sinners”—an evil propagated, no doubt, by the new courtship rituals. A

Cleveland church recognized the working-class courtship quandary and offered a practical solution for its poorer members: a “community parlor” (“Church Aid for Courtship”). The Rev. Dr. Charles A. Eaton, pastor of the Euclid Avenue Baptist Church, outlined his plan in the 7 April 1906 New York Times:

Every downtown church should have one [...] The churches cannot furnish home life to the very rich, but they can to the very poor.

Cleveland is a place of crowded homes, tenements, and boarding houses.

I always feel especially sorry for the boarding house people. They haven’t even the home life of the tenements. If they meet their friends elsewhere it must be in wineroms or other public places. Homeless young men and women have the same right to pleasant courtship as the more fortunate ones who life in comfortable houses.

Rev. Eaton doesn’t seem to recognize that young Americans might prefer meeting in the “winerom” and that “the very rich” would soon join “the very poor” in such “public places”—nightspots like the “impossible cafés” habituated by the scandalous young women Fitzgerald both lionizes and condemns in Paradise.

With these changes in courtship practices came new terminology, and Fitzgerald provides something of a lexicon in Paradise. He tells us that “[t]he ‘belle’ had become the ‘flirt,’ the ‘flirt’ had become the ‘baby vamp’” (61). But Fitzgerald uses the phrase “Popular Daughter” or “P. D.” to describe the most recent incarnation of the New Woman. The P. D. engages in much more intimate courtship rituals than her predecessors:

The “belle” had five or six callers every afternoon. If the P. D. by some strange accident has two, it is made pretty uncomfortable for the one who hasn’t a date with her. The “belle” was surrounded by a dozen men in the intermissions between dances. Try to find the P. D. between dances; just try to find her. (62)

Despite this “moral let-down,” Amory can’t deny the P.D.’s allure: he “[finds] it rather fascinating to feel that any popular girl he met before eight he might quite possibly kiss before twelve” (62).

The automobile sped up the movement from calling to dating, and, not surprisingly, the P. D. takes full advantage of the car’s offer of petting privacy:

But the P. D. is in love again...it was odd, wasn’t it?—that though there was so much room left in the taxi the P. D. and the boy from Williams were somehow crowded out and had to go in a separate car. Odd! Didn’t you notice how flushed the P. D. was when she arrived just seven minutes late? But the P. D. “gets away with it.” (62)

College-age Amory recounts a conversation with a girl in a limo: “‘Why on earth are we here?’ he asked the girl with the green combs one night as they sat in someone’s limousine, outside the Country Club in Louisville.” In a passage pregnant with meaning in a novel that equates women, sex, and evil, the woman replies, “‘I don’t know. I’m just full of the devil’” (62). The privacy of the “devil wagon” provides her with the opportunity to act out her fiendish proclivities.

As these passages indicate, the car provided young lovers with a private and, most important, portable space to experiment with sex.<sup>7</sup> As Ling states, “By combining

mobility and privacy, the automobile offered young Americans in the 1920s a ‘getaway’ vehicle from parental supervision. Consequently, students of American courtship attributed the rise of dating to the automobile’s arrival” (18). But, as Ling demonstrates, courtship rituals had already begun to shift from calling to dating. The car did not precipitate the shift; instead, “the automobile produced [...] a diffusion and intensification of this incipient pattern of dating” (Ling 24). In regards to sexual mores, the rise of the automobile functions similarly to World War I: it accelerates changes that had already begun to occur.

As he does with Jordan Baker in Gatsby, Fitzgerald uses the automobile to construct a frivolous female character in Paradise. Just as the car plays a crucial role in Amory’s abortive and horrifying tryst with Myra in Paradise, so it becomes an important factor in Fitzgerald’s portrait of Amory’s first true paramour, the promiscuous—by the period’s standards—Isabelle Borgé. A few years after the unfortunate incident with Myra, Amory embarks on an affair with Isabelle, a childhood playmate who has, since their last encounter, “developed a past” (61). In other words, as Isabelle’s cousin Sally informs her, tales of Isabelle’s loose behavior have spread—all the way to Princeton: “‘I guess [Amory] knows you’ve been kissed’” (64). They reconnect at a party at the Minnehaha Club, again in a private den, perhaps the very den Amory and Myra occupied years before. Fitzgerald locates this latest romantic encounter in the same setting to demonstrate the changes in Amory since his embarrassing performance at the bobbing party. Although a group of partiers interrupt Amory and Isabelle, he, like society at large—this encounter takes place after the onset of war in Europe—seems to have adapted somewhat to modern mores. The couple sit in the den while strains of “Babes in

the Woods” seep into the room, and Isabelle, the typical P. D., imagines her youth as a series of such encounters, assigning the automobile a prominent role in her youthful fantasies:

What a wonderful song, she thought—everything was wonderful to-night, most of all this romantic scene in the den, with their hands clinging and the inevitable looming charmingly close. The future vista of her life seemed an unending succession of scenes like this: under moonlight and pale starlight, and in the backs of warm limousines and in low, cosy roadsters stopped under sheltering trees—only the boy might change, and this one was so nice. He took her hand softly. With a sudden movement he turned it and, holding it to his lips, kissed the palm. (71)

Later in the novel, when he finally does kiss Isabelle on the mouth, Amory calls the experience “the high point of vanity, the crest of his young egotism” (88).

But a tragic incident, which, quite literally, haunts Amory for the rest of the narrative, punctuates his affair with Isabelle and links sexuality with monstrosity and the war between the sexes with the war in Europe. Again, the automobile plays a leading role: one of Amory’s Princeton classmates, Dick Humbird, dies in a car accident. Johnston believes that Fitzgerald uses the car in this instance “to convey the shattered dream”: a “future full of promise” dies with the “idealized” Dick Humbird during that fateful late-night drive (51). But I question whether Dick’s future holds such “promise,” for Dick becomes a symbol of the same kind of “carelessness, recklessness, and irresponsibility” that Johnston sees in the characters of Gatsby. In his posthumous

appearances in the novel, Dick is closely linked with sexually promiscuous women, chorus girls Phoebe and Axia and the prostitute Jill.

Although he appears only briefly, Dick emerges as a pivotal factor in the sex-beauty-evil equation. He becomes a model for Amory at Princeton:

Dick Humbird had, ever since freshman year, seemed to Amory a perfect type of aristocrat. He was slender but well-built—black curly hair, straight features and rather a dark skin. Everything he said sounded intangibly appropriate. He possessed infinite courage, an averagely good mind, and a sense of honor with a clear charm and noblesse oblige that varied it from righteousness. (78)

Other students “dressed like him, tried to talk as he did,” and, though “Amory decided that he probably held the world back [...], he wouldn’t have changed him,” for Dick “seemed the eternal example of what the upper class tries to be” (78). The first chink in Dick’s armor appears when Amory learns of his idol’s nouveau riche roots: “his father was a grocery clerk who made a fortune in Tacoma real estate and came to New York ten years ago” (78). After hearing this news, “Amory [feels] a curious sinking sensation.” All is not as it seems to Amory, and Dick will fall even further in his estimation in the section that follows, when the big man proves to represent a perilous path, one that leads—literally—to damnation. Clinton S. Burhans views Dick as crucial to the development of Amory’s character. At first, Burhans explains, Amory strives for campus popularity, but, when his academic career collapses under the weight of his miserable grades, Amory begins looking toward the “intellectual and spiritual potentialities”



embodied in Burne Holiday and Clara Page (607). Humbird represents Amory's initial, empty pursuits, as does Isabelle, the typical P. D.

Significantly, Fitzgerald associates both of these false models with cars. In "Crescendo!" the subchapter that follows "Under the Arc-Light," the section that describes Dick's demise, Amory and Isabelle's affair peaks: "It delighted Amory when Isabelle suggested that they leave for a while and drive around in her car. For a delicious hour that passed too soon they glided the silent roads about Princeton and talked from the surface of their hearts in shy excitement" (87). Although Amory "ma[kes] no attempt to kiss her" during the car trip, the couple's heartfelt conversation deepens their relationship and lays the groundwork for potential sexual intimacy.

"Under the Arc-Light" begins ominously. After a night of partying in New York City, Amory and friends drive back to Princeton in two cars. Amory senses "tragedy's emerald eyes glar[ing]" at him and begins to string together "the ghost of two stanzas of a poem [...] in his mind": "So the gray car crept nightward in the dark and there was no life stirred as it went by.... As the still ocean paths before the shark in starred and glittering waterways, beauty-high, the moon-swathed trees divided, pair on pair, while flapping nightbirds cried across the air" (85). Here, in Amory's mind, the automobile and shark converge. The car's color resembles that of a shark, and it "cre[eps]" like Fitzgerald's terrifying Eleanors—Marbrooke, in "Sentiment," Savage, in Paradise—as they use their wiles to seduce his male protagonists. Even Amory creeps when he wants to slither out of his own skin after kissing Myra. Because Fitzgerald tends to associate the automobile with debauchery, and debauchery leads to both moral and physical destruction in Paradise and "Sentiment," the shark, the "man-eater" responsible for the

brutal 1916 attacks, becomes a particularly apt metaphor. Thus Fitzgerald connects the automobile, a facilitator of moral death for young men at the hands of devilish, sexually aggressive women, to the shark, the bringer of a particularly gory brand of physical death.

Dick, the driver of the first car (Amory rides in the trailing vehicle), has drunk heavily but, despite the pleas of his passengers, Jesse Ferrenby and Fred Sloane, “wouldn’t give up the wheel” (86). When he comes upon Dick’s dead body lying in the street, Amory ponders the carnage, just as the rescue party at Spring Lake stood over the dying Charles Bruder after setting him on the sand:

The brow was cold but the face not expressionless. He looked at the shoe-laces—Dick had tied them that morning. He had tied them—and now he was this heavy white mass. All that remained of the charm and personality of the Dick Humbird he had known—oh, it was all so horrible and unaristocratic and close to the earth. All tragedy has that strain of the grotesque and squalid—so useless, futile...the way animals die.... Amory was reminded of a cat that had lain horribly mangled in some alley of his childhood. (86)

In death, Dick, the nouveau riche college boy who looks like an aristocrat but can’t live up to the fading tradition, becomes emblematic of the mixing of classes associated with the new courtship rituals. As his body lies on the pavement, Dick’s humble lineage shows: his prone position after the accident appears “so [...] unaristocratic” to Amory. In addition, because Amory describes Dick earlier as resembling “those pictures in the ‘Illustrated London News’ of the English officers who [had] been killed” (78), Dick

prefigures the many young American men who will die in the Great War. In fact, both Ferrenby and Sloane—Dick’s passengers on that fateful night—will die in combat. That Dick meets his death in an automobile has special significance to a novel that features war and women as murderers—literally or morally, respectively—of innocent young men. Frederik L. Rusch calls “the death-dealing automobile” in the Humbird episode “a key metaphor for what is wrong with our world” (32)—and, in Paradise, the evil, beautiful, sexually aggressive woman represents everything wrong. Put her behind the wheel or in the back seat, and she becomes doubly dangerous.

\* \* \*

Debauchery kills Dick while ammunition kills Ferrenby and Sloane. still, Amory’s comment about Dick’s resemblance to Illustrated London News photographs places Dick among the war dead. This connection—between war, women/sexuality, and the deaths of young men—makes perfect sense in the cultural context of the war years. In “Soldier’s Heart: Literary Men, Literary Women, and the Great War,” Sandra M. Gilbert argues that World War I functions as “a climactic episode in some battle of the sexes that had already been raging for years” (283). Enlistment propaganda drove wartime and postwar anxiety over gender roles, for it positioned women as encouraging young men to join the war effort; in many cases, the war posters positioned women as the reason to fight. Antagonism between the sexes certainly existed before the war, but the war gave the anti-feminists a rallying point. War posters often featured images of women in distress or imploring men to enlist, which, according to Gilbert, influenced wartime gender relations (291). She points to a British recruiting poster that depicts two women and a child looking through a window at marching soldiers; the words, “Women of

Britain say—Go!” adorn the poster. According to Gilbert, “The female censoriousness implicit in that slogan was made explicit by the fact that at times the vigorous, able bodied ‘war girls,’ who had once been judged wanting by even the weakest of young men, became frighteningly judgmental about their male contemporaries,” even handing out white feathers to male noncombatants (291).

American war posters used the same kinds of images—often with erotic undertones. An Army enlistment poster portrays Germany as a giant ape climbing onto the shores of America as he grasps a bare-breasted female figure in one arm and a club in the other. A poster sponsored by the Associated Motion Picture Advertisers depicts a stern Uncle Sam telling prospective recruits, “It’s up to you: protect the nation’s honor,” as he stands over a ravaged—and again scantily clad—woman. The authors of Persuasive Images: Posters of War and Revolution from the Hoover Institution Archives contrast this poster with a Navy recruitment poster featuring a sword-wielding goddess Columbia “calling men to take up the sword of justice to avenge civilian lives lost at sea”:

The high-mindedness of the Navy recruiting poster’s identification of national honor with female honor is subverted in the [Motion Picture Advertisers’] poster by the blatant sexual imagery of war as retribution for the rape of Columbia—a potent motivation for manly action promoted in the language of Hollywood. (Paret 54)

The general theme of American propaganda was that men were being called to arms “to protect virtuous American womanhood” (Zieger 151). According to Cooperman, the “provincial” American public was especially susceptible to such propaganda because, for

them, “the lives of women and children were still regarded as sacred, and anything which threatened such noncombatants was taken to be the result of savagery” (15).

Not only did archival sources from the mid- to late 1910s associate the war with women and the car with women, they also highlighted the motor vehicle’s prominent role in waging the modern war. Charles A. Selden’s “American Motors and the War,” which appeared in the February 1916 issue of Scribner’s Magazine, opens by underscoring how the motorized vehicle distinguished the Great War from previous wars: “Even the epigrams have failed to stand the test of the world’s greatest war. Napoleon’s remark that an army travels on its stomach must be revised to read that an army travels on its gasoline” (206). A year earlier, in the February 1915 Scribner’s, Charles Lincoln Freeston lauded the automobile’s contributions to the war effort: “The motor, in short, has ‘speeded up’ the war in a way that could never have been dreamed of by former generations” (186). He details the logistical advantages:

Never have the movements of troops been so rapid; for, instead of men having to wait for ammunition and food-supplies, these have been conveyed by motor-wagons which can travel, if need be, much faster than the armies themselves. Never, too, have the firing-lines been kept so continuously in action, for motor-lorries have brought up ammunition in constant relays; they have been driven right up to the very front, and shells and cartridges have been served out as fast as they were required. (186)

“The automobilists of the whole world” should view the motor vehicle’s role in the war “with aught but pride and satisfaction.” Car manufacturers had long “impressed upon the military and other authorities the indispensability of mechanical locomotion for war

purposes as well as those of peace.” All they required was “war itself to demonstrate[e] the truth of their contentions in full” and, Freeston adds enthusiastically, “what a demonstration!” (186). Freeston attempts to place the automobile’s role in the war in a positive light, emphasizing its ability to feed troops efficiently and get help to wounded soldiers more quickly:

One British soldier [...] testifies to the fact that food is regularly driven right into the firing-line and served out under a hail of shells. Another, describing a violent artillery engagement, states that the drivers of the motor-lorries worked untiringly, and undoubtedly saved many a wounded man who otherwise would never have got away. (193)

But Freeston adds to list of the motorized vehicle’s accomplishments its ability to get ammunition to the front.

And now we come to the vital question of ammunition and food-supply, without which no army could live a week. Imagination reels at the prospect of what would have happened to the opposing armies, operating in millions over such extended fronts, if they had not been able to count upon mechanical locomotion from the very opening of the campaign.

(191)

And he praises the automobile’s role in “enabl[ing] the Germans to make so rapid an onslaught through Belgium and France, until they received their historic check almost at the gates of Paris.” When the Germans did endure this check, “it was this factor [the motor] which enabled the allied forces to sustain the rigors of the initial retreat from the Mons” (191). Freeston doesn’t seem to notice—or prefers not to point out—that the

efficiency that the motor vehicle promotes increases the death toll greatly. Yet, whether he realizes it or not, his descriptions elucidate the automobile's contribution to the carnage.

Selden's article also focuses on and celebrates the automobile's positive innovations, but he acknowledges more explicitly the higher casualty rates that accompany logistical efficiency, though he cloaks the information in wordplay:

The gasolene [sic] makes better and surer provision for the army's stomach than it ever had before. The troops have suffered new horrors that soldiers of previous generations never dreamed of (asphyxiation, for example), but the familiar old story of scant food or bad food has no place in the present-day reports from the front, from any of the fronts, thanks to the unfailing supply made possible by the motor-truck convoys. Thanks also to the same new but perfected method of transportation, there is no shortage of the figurative food for cannon in an emergency calling for the quick shift of a body of men from one point in the line to another. And with them goes the literal food of the cannon in the shape of adequate stores of ammunition. (206)

Soldiers will have plenty of food—if they live to eat it. But Selden, like Freeston, from the beginning of his essay, posits motorized vehicles as a beneficent force: “Again, to enumerate at the outset all of the four chief things to be credited to the motor-truck, thousands of lives, otherwise lost, have been saved by the ever-ready ambulances which have wrought as wonderful an advance in the humane work of warfare as in its capacity for destruction.” By August 1916, several months before President Wilson declared war,

the United States military recognized the virtues that Freeston and Selden enumerate. The New York Times reported that the United States had begun experimenting with motorized vehicles in “a series of tests in the transportation of troops by companies, battalions, and regiments under conditions simulating actual warfare” at Fort Sam Houston (“Taking Infantry”). Major General Funston, Colonel Root, “and every officer who witnessed or participated in the tests” agreed “[t]hat the auto-truck ha[d] absolutely proved its efficiency and utility as the best means of rapid transportation to the firing line, as well as in the quick bringing to the front of supplies and ammunition.”

Freeston’s article indicates that, especially at the beginning of the war, the Germans took more strategic advantage of the motor car than any other country, tethering the car more tightly to a country that British propaganda of the period positioned as evil incarnate, the dreaded Hun that raped and murdered its way through Belgium and the French countryside. As Freeston boasts, motorized vehicles simplified Germany’s invasion of Belgium:

What the war has taught us more than anything else, perhaps, is the value of the fast-moving armored car with light guns. The Germans had provided themselves with large numbers of these before they invaded Belgium, and invariably sent them along the road as an advance-guard, effectually terrorizing the inhabitants and clearing the way for cavalry and troops. Belgium had nothing at first to withstand these raids, but set to work to build armored cars of its own, on native and American chassis, and these were increasing rapidly in number before the final laying waste of that unhappy country. (197–98)



Moreover, the Germans innovated the use of “the motor-plough” to dig trenches (196). These vehicles “[were] capable of cutting a trench four feet wide by four feet deep, and can even be used for the grewsome purpose of burying the dead!” (197). Motorized vehicles created the trenches that contributed greatly to the bloody, years long stalemate on the French countryside and were then employed to bury, in mass graves, the great number of fatalities they created thereby.

But the Germans play the victims in an episode that perhaps encapsulates the motor vehicle’s role in the war and the break between the nineteenth century and modernity. Freeston describes a “dramatic incident” involving “a group of half a dozen French motor-’buses, [...] each packed with fifty soldiers” that encountered German cavalry (194):

Just as they reached the head of a long descent a large body of Uhlans was seen ahead. The officer on the leading ’bus gave the order to charge, and the driver, opening his throttle to the full, sent the six-ton mass hurtling down the hillside, while the troopers opened fire from the windows. ‘Horses were hit and bowled over,’ the narrative proceeds; ‘the ’bus swayed ominously, its violent skidding doing almost as much damage as the rifle-fire from the interior. This daring act had broken the resistance. Spitting fire from the windows, the other vehicles followed with practically a clear course, for after an attempt to bring down the drivers and the officers the enemy fled across the country, leaving several men and horses on the field. (194).

Those using the horse as a vehicle—a relic of the nineteenth-century—fell victim to the automobile, just as Amory and Myra use her “machine” to outpace the horse-drawn bob early in Paradise. As Freeston adds, “even a motor-lorry is twice as speedy as a horse and could easily outpace cavalry” (199).

The media made a sensation of the automobile’s contribution to war and, especially, of women who operated motor vehicles in the combat zone, strengthening the connection between women, cars, and battlefield death. In her 1994 article in Historian, Kimberly Chuppa-Cornell points out that women drivers transported wounded and took part in relief work behind enemy lines:

Although men ran the majority of the ambulance services, women drivers played a prominent role in the work of the American Fund for French Wounded (AFFW), Le Bienêtre du Blessé, Société Franco-Américaine pour nos Combattants (the French-American Society for the Welfare of Wounded French Soldiers or Le Bienêtre), the Smith College Relief Unit, and the American Committee for Devastated France (ACDF). Each of these services relied on women drivers to perform their work in France. (465–66)

Relief organizations drew women “of culture and means,” fluent in French and “the intricacies of auto mechanics. Drivers usually performed their own maintenance work, including oil changes, small repairs, and cleaning” (468). The women of agencies like these became the “main source of food, supplies, and transport” for devastated French villages, “bolster[ing] the peasants’ spirits and ensur[ing] their survival.” (467). These women performed their duties at great personal risk. For example, during a frenzied

period of combat in June 1918, “Le Bienetre drivers...found themselves driving into unknown territory in the middle of a battle to deliver supplies” (470). Even the grave bodily risks inherent in armed combat were no longer solely the province of men.

And newspapers devoted much ink to the woman war worker, documenting, according to Chuppa-Cornell, a change in the way women were perceived: “The decorative and pampered lady who had supposedly typified women drivers before the war gave way to the industrious and hardy motor corps woman in many postwar articles.” Men served as fodder for advanced weaponry on the battlefields of Europe while women rose up and infiltrated men’s traditional places, making men appear increasingly expendable. The New York Times celebrated the new, highly competent and extremely confident woman who patrolled the battlefields. A 1916 article entitled “Women Brave Guns to Nurse Wounded” represents early documentation of women’s feats in combat:

Miss Kathleen Burke [...] who is lecturing here successfully on behalf of the Scottish Women’s Hospitals for foreign service after sharing extensively in their work in Serbia, France, Corsics, and on the various war fronts, told a Times reporter yesterday some interesting facts about this work of women, hitherto little known here.

The article emphasizes the danger in the women’s errand: “[C]ollecting the wounded is not at all as easy as running over to the railroad station to meet the trains. The women drivers of the ambulances go right up to the clearing stations within reach of the big guns.” Burke elaborated on the importance of women’s activities—and the role of motor vehicles—for her audience:

“They think nothing of getting a bit of shell through the bonnets of their cars,” said Miss Burke.

“Have any been hit?” she was asked.

“Oh, well, we have not lost any of them yet,” was her answer.

Miss Burke has cause for some personal gratification about this part of the service. The hospital has an X-ray automobile, which has saved a good many lives.

“We take the pictures as we take the wounded up, and they are developed in the car as it runs back to the hospital. By the time we get there we have decided which are the most critical cases, and the worst is taken straight to the operating table. The picture of his wound is ready for the surgeon before she begins, and so she knows exactly what she has to deal with.”

Moreover, as the United States mobilized for war, the woman driver served her country homefront. On 15 July 1917, the Times published an article outlining the mission and duties of the National League for Women’s Service: the League

has for its object, to use its own words, “to co-ordinate and standardize the work of the women of America along the lines of constructive patriotism; to develop the resources and to promote the efficiency of women in meeting their everyday responsibilities to home, to State, to nation, and to humanity; to provide organized, trained groups in every community prepared to co-operate with the Red Cross and other agencies dealing with any calamity—fire, flood, famine, economic disorder, &c., and in time of

war to supplement the work of the Red Cross, the army and navy, and to deal with the questions of woman's work and woman's welfare."

("Women's Motor Corps for Military Service")

Members would assist "in the taking of the military State census, and meeting various demands for war service which come through the war department or local military organizations." An April 1918 article in the Times further detailed the activities of "a branch of the National League for Women's Service" called the Women's Motor Corps, which had recently "resigned to form a separate body directly subject to Government call" ("Women's Motor Corps on Call Day and Night"). According to the article, Motor Corps members had to provide their own vehicles and "[were] organized upon the military plan. They [had] weekly infantry drills, and they practice[d] shooting, entering contests with the marines and other organizations." But, beyond the fact that this military organization featured the novelty of a female constituency, "the basic fact about them [was] not spectacular. It [was] just hard work." They drove to New York hospitals and "[took] convalescents for an outing" and performed "ambulance work," and "[s]everal of them [worked] for the Department of Justice Secret Service in ways that cannot be divulged." Women encroach upon the traditionally male world of war work—even taking positions kept secret for the sake of national security—and employed motor vehicles to power their infiltration.

\* \* \*

This association of women, war, and cars—in period sources and Paradise—helps to make sense of what at first appears to be a strange choice structurally on Fitzgerald's part: a chapter subsection entitled "Crescendo!" in which Amory and Isabelle enjoy

their first kiss, immediately follows “Under the Arc-Light,” the section depicting the car accident. For James L. W. West, Fitzgerald’s juxtaposition of the two episodes mars the novel’s structure: “the two scenes grate against each other unpleasantly” (Introduction xxiv). Dan Seiters, too, criticizes this structural choice, viewing it as an indication of the author’s immaturity. While Dick’s death “casts the car in a somber light” and as “an instrument of death,” it functions as “a learning experience” (16). However, Fitzgerald “fails to establish a pattern of death and tragedy, as he would have had he written This Side of Paradise after he learned to control his craft.” Directly after “Under the Arc Light,” Fitzgerald “has Amory and Isabelle drive through the countryside in search of romance” (16). But Fitzgerald’s organization may hold some logic, considering future sequences of chapters and subchapters in the novel: after the war “Interlude,” Book Two begins with a chapter entitled “The Debutante,” which details Amory’s love affair and bitter break-up with Rosalind Connage. Just as “Crescendo!” succeeds the scene of young Humbird’s violent demise, Amory’s greatest love affair and its very unhappy ending follows the brief section dealing with the war—the site of many young men’s deaths. In addition, in “Sentiment—and the Use of Rouge,” a battlefield scene succeeds Clay and Eleanor’s love scene—the story moves from the morally lethal battle of the sexes to the physically lethal military combat.

The automobile lives up to its “devil wagon” moniker, in a quite literal sense, later in Paradise. The dead Dick Humbird’s returning as a demonic apparition as Amory takes part in a drunken debauch in New York makes even clearer the connection between Humbird’s death in a car accident and Fitzgerald’s feminine brand of evil. Amory and a Princeton friend, Fred Sloane, meet two women, Phoebe and Axia, in the city, and, after a

night in a New York bar, the women invite the men to their apartment. While at the bar, Amory swears that he sees “a pale fool” staring at him; after the foursome repair to Phoebe and Axia’s flat, just as Axia places “her yellow head on his shoulder” and sexual “temptation cre[eps] over him like a warm wind,” he sees the man again and runs from the apartment (108). The ghastly figure follows him through the streets; Amory later realizes that “the devil or—something like him” follows him (114) and that the figure had “the face of Dick Humbird” (111). According to James E. Miller, the Humbird episode “connects sex not only with evil but also with death” (30). I believe that Miller’s argument can be taken a step further. As I mentioned above, when Humbird first enters the novel, Amory likens him to the photographs of deceased British officers in the Illustrated London News. Later, the devil, in the form of this dead young man, a representative of the many young men who would die in the war, appears during an evening of sexual temptation, strengthening the beauty-sex-evil equation and linking it not just to death but to World War I deaths specifically.

\* \* \*

Fitzgerald continues to bolster the link between women and the war in Book Two of the novel. According to Brian Way, the first book of Paradise tells the story of Amory’s Blaine’s “youthful enthusiasm and idealism”; Book Two, set in New York after Amory has returned from the war, portrays “the chaotic period of transition out of which the Jazz Age was born.” The stakes are certainly higher for Amory in Book Two. Unlike the Isabelle affair of Book One, the Rosalind affair becomes much more than a childish flirtation. Amory’s feelings for Rosalind demonstrate growth, a diminishing of the egotism that marked his dealings with Isabelle: “Amory had loved Rosalind as he would

never love another living person. She had taken the first flush of his youth and brought from his unplumbed depths tenderness that had surprised him, gentleness and unselfishness that he had never given to another creature” (194). Rosalind’s rejection nearly destroys Amory; Isabelle merely “spoil[s] [his] year” (93). According to Burhans, “Isabelle represents romantic love,” but “Rosalind is Amory’s first experience with deeply emotional love” (612). The terms Fitzgerald uses to characterize the novel’s romantic relationships change in the second book. In Book One, the narrator and characters describe courtship as a game, but, in the postwar chapters, love becomes a battle. As Isabelle enters the party at which she and Amory begin their affair, she experiences the same nervousness felt by “lumpy, husky young men on the day of the Big Game” (63). The narrator describes the young lovers as “playing” a “game,” “a game that would presumably be her principal study for years to come” (68). And Amory knows he is the “best game in sight” at the party. Otto Friedrich points out that Fitzgerald also uses terms associated with the battlefield to describe Amory’s interactions with Isabelle: “Isabelle is ‘a doughty warrior.’ Amory is ‘a worthy adversary’” (394). But military terminology becomes pervasive in the Rosalind episode. When Amory realizes that he has fallen in love with Rosalind, the stage directions declare the “battle lost” (173). Here, Fitzgerald explicitly links his love-battle with Rosalind to the military battles in Europe. When Mrs. Lawrence, a friend of Amory’s mentor Monsignor Darcy, asks Amory about his wartime experiences and comments that he “look[s] a great deal older,” Amory explains that his world-wearied appearance results from “another, more disastrous battle,” referring to his recent break-up with Rosalind (196).



But this linking of the Amory and Rosalind's tryst with the war becomes most apparent in the couple's first conversation, which takes place in her richly ornamented boudoir. The stage directions describe the decidedly feminine décor of Rosalind's bedroom:

The place is a large, dainty bedroom in the Connage house on Sixty-eighth Street, New York. A girl's room: pink walls and curtains and a pink bedspread on a cream-colored bed. Pink and cream are the motifs of the room, but the only article of furniture in full view is a luxurious dressing-table with a glass top and a three-sided mirror. On the walls there is an expensive print of "Cherry Ripe," a few polite dogs by Landseer, and the "King of the Black Isles," by Maxfield Parrish. (157)

Amory mistakenly enters the bedroom as Rosalind prepares for her coming-out party. Interestingly, during their initial conversation, Fitzgerald does not use the two characters' names to introduce their dialogue; he instead calls them "He" and "She," thus labeling Amory and Rosalind as everyman and everywoman and indicating that their affair exemplifies all postwar male-female relationships. When he realizes his mistake and apologizes for entering her bedroom, Rosalind announces that "This is No Man's Land" (163), alluding to the term World War I combatants used to describe the territory between the two enemy trenches, an area often littered with rotting dead bodies. By using such a phrase, Fitzgerald makes explicit his equation of the horrors of the war in Europe with the terrifying battle of the sexes. And this female destroyer tears Amory to pieces. Realizing that her prospects depend entirely on her husband's wealth, Rosalind rejects Amory

because of his financial problems and enters a loveless relationship with the rich Dawson Ryder.

The connection between women and evil becomes even clearer during Amory's rebound affair with the beautiful but suicidal Eleanor Savage. After a period of "convalescence" following his breakup with Rosalind (185)—which involves a lengthy drunken spree—Amory meets Eleanor Savage, who "was, say, the last time that evil crept close to Amory under the mask of beauty, the last weird mystery that held him with wild fascination and pounded his soul to flakes" (206). He happens upon her while walking through "the luxuriant fields" of Ramilly County, Maryland (205). For Burhans, "the last weird mystery" that Eleanor represents is actual sexual intercourse; he believes that the episode finally prompts Amory to link beauty, sex, and evil:

Before Eleanor, his incomplete knowledge of sex had enabled him to regard sexual appeal and beauty in women as separate qualities. He had found women's sexual appeal physical and associated with a sense of evil, but their beauty had remained spiritual and even divine. Eleanor's beauty, however, apparently leads him into a sexual relationship with her through which beauty in women becomes one with their sexual appeal and thereby associated with its connotations of evil. (617)

Like Myra, Eleanor Savage is described as "a witch"; she even bears "the tell-tale white line over her upper lip," irrefutable physical evidence of her demonic origins (Fitzgerald 210). And, most telling, Eleanor's eyes "glitte[r] green as emeralds," a feature that links her to Dick Humbird's death. "Under the Arc-Light" begins with a line that foreshadows Dick's imminent death: "Then tragedy's emerald eyes glared suddenly at Amory over

the edge of June” (84). Obviously, Eleanor can bring nothing but trouble. This emerald-eyed, sexually appetitive witch—Amory’s first experience with sexual intercourse—is nothing less than a sister to tragedy itself. The foreboding that accompanies Eleanor continues when Amory calls her “Madeline,” a reference to Poe’s horrifying, destructive revenant in “The Fall of the House of Usher.”<sup>8</sup> And, of course, Eleanor’s surname speaks for itself. Near the end of the chapter, Eleanor reveals her madness, riding her horse at full gallop toward the edge of a cliff, jumping off at the last moment while the horse plunges to its death. She then tearfully tells Amory of her “crazy streak” and that her mother “went mad—stark raving crazy,” and “Amory’s love waned slowly with the moon” (221). For Way, Fitzgerald’s overwhelmingly negative portrayal of women reveals that the young writer was “still unable to control and analyze” his “contradictory feelings”—his “fascination with” the modern woman and “his deep sense of revulsion at the thought of physical sex” (5). But Fitzgerald’s “contradictory feelings” mirrored the country’s, and the novel accurately depicts the confusion of gender roles and the anxiety over the woman’s place in postwar society.

In the chapter that follows the Eleanor episode, the appearance of an automobile foreshadows yet another struggle with sexual evil—and the return of something resembling Dick Humbird’s apparition. As Amory walks along the boardwalk in Atlantic City, his college friend Alec Connage—Rosalind’s brother—pulls up in a “low racing car” (225). Alec invites Amory into the car to share a “wee jolt of bourbon” and introduces him to Jill, “a gaudy, vermilion-lipped blonde” prostitute, and another couple. They take the car to the “deep shadows” of “an unfrequented sidestreet.” The

combination of booze, blonde, and automobile seems to remind Amory of college parties and dead friends:

“Do you remember that party of ours, sophomore year?” he asked  
instead.

“Do I? When we slept in the pavilions up in Asbury Park—”

“Lord, Alec! It’s hard to think that Jesse and Dick and Kerry are  
all three dead.”

Alec shivered. (226)

After accepting Alec’s offer of a room adjoining his and Jill’s at a nearby hotel, Amory gets out of the car to walk: “Declining further locomotion or further stimulation, Amory left the car and sauntered back along the boardwalk to the hotel.” Perhaps remembering the hard lessons of that college party, he leaves the car and the vehicle—the two ingredients in Humbird’s fatal accident—behind.

Again, the automobile ride precedes an encounter with evil. As Amory sleeps that night in the room adjoining Alec’s, hotel detectives burst in to question Alec, whose bringing Jill to Atlantic City for a sexual tryst constitutes a violation of the Mann Act. As the detectives pound on the door, and Alec and Jill panic, Amory notices “other things in the room besides people” (228). Over Jill, who lies frightened and distraught on the bed, “there hung an aura, gossamer as a moon-beam, tainted as stale, weak wine, yet a horror, diffusively brooding already over the three of them.” A more benign entity—“something else, featureless and indistinguishable, yet strangely familiar,” later revealed to be the spirit of the recently deceased Monsignor Darcy—counters the evil aura, and Amory decides to take the blame for Alec. For Tanner, the malignant apparition demonstrates

that, in the wake of his affairs with Rosalind and Eleanor, Amory's conception of sexual evil has weakened significantly: Humbird's terrifying ghost in "The Devil" becomes little more than an abstract "aura" (Tanner 75). But Amory's sacrifice, I believe, hints at his newfound ability to resist evil; he chooses the ghost of Darcy, a representative of the Catholic Church, the "only assimilative traditional bulwark against the decaying morals" (Fitzgerald, Paradise 259) and the Christian ethic of self-sacrifice it embodies.

Yet, though Amory's reactions to women at this point in the novel bear little of the angst that accompanied Myra's kiss, I believe this incident crystallizes the "conception" of which Tanner speaks. Amory's clear thinking in the hotel room is emblematic of his maturity, of his greater understanding; he can now recognize and make some sense of evil. In the novel's final pages, Amory travels the road to Princeton—this time on foot. Again, this bildungsroman presents its protagonist in a similar locale but now he has greater experience, and this experience has taught him to leave behind the motorized vehicle. Alone, with no woman at his side, and no devil wagon to steer—or destroy—him, Amory finally makes sense of the connection between sex, beauty, and evil:

The problem of evil had solidified for Amory into the problem of sex [...] Inseparably linked with evil was beauty—beauty, still a constant rising tumult; soft in Eleanor's voice, in an old song at night, rioting deliriously through life like superimposed waterfalls, half rhythm, half darkness. Amory knew that every time he had reached toward it longingly it had leered out at him with the grotesque face of evil. Beauty of great art, beauty of all joy, most of all the beauty of women. (258)

Then, walking through a graveyard, he encounters “a row of Union soldiers” and finds that he “want[s] to feel ‘William Dayfield, 1864’” (259). The modern man, severed from his past, harks back to a simpler time, even a simpler war, perhaps, and “think[s] of dead loves and dead lovers” (259–60). Again, images of war casualties succeed an episode that presents revelations about the nature of women and sex. In the paragraph that follows, Fitzgerald offers the novel’s oft-quoted encapsulation of his generation’s challenges:

Here was a new generation, shouting the old cries, learning the old creeds, through a reverie of long days and nights; destined finally to go out into that dirty gray turmoil to follow love and pride; a new generation dedicated more than the last to the fear of poverty and the worship of success; grown up to find all Gods dead, all wars fought, all faiths in man shaken.... (260)

The culprits in the deaths of these Gods are anybody’s guess, but I suspect we might find the fingerprints of women and war at the scene of the crime—or, perhaps, lurking nearby, preparing for the feeding frenzy.

Amory’s conclusion about women and evil leads to a measure of fulfillment. This newly enlightened Amory, older and wiser, gazes at the “towers and spires of Princeton” and “stretche[s] out his arms to the crystalline, radiant sky” (260). Beneath this clear sky, and with a clear head, he voices the crowning achievement of his young life in the novel’s final line: “‘I know myself,’ he cried, ‘but that is all—’” The connection between beautiful women and evil appears to be the revelation that leads him to this great gift of self-knowledge.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> An 8 July 1916 article in the Times offered a fuller account of Bruder's injuries:

Bruder's right leg had been taken off so that the bone struck out to a point halfway between the knee and the ankle. The foot and ankle had been bitten off and were missing. The flesh was ripped as high as the knee, and the bone was denuded of flesh. The left leg had been bitten off at the ankle, the lower ends of the two leg bones protruding from the flesh fully one-third of the length of the leg. There was a very deep circular gash above the left knee, extending down to the bone, and on the right side of the abdomen a piece of flesh had been gouged out. ("Shark Guards Out")

<sup>2</sup> Fitzgerald claimed to have "[b]egun novel" in a ledger entry dated November 1917 (qtd. in West 3). The poem containing the shark-automobile comparison appears in the first extant drafts of "The Romantic Egotist," an early version of the novel that became Paradise.

<sup>3</sup> The phrase "devil wagon" appears often in the New York Times throughout the first decade of the twentieth century and gradually disappears in the 1910s. Headlines of the period include "Prince Pu, from Devil Wagon, Sees Chinatown," "Mr. De Voe's Devil Wagon," and "The Devilish Devil Wagon."

<sup>4</sup> Johnston looks at entries from Fitzgerald's Ledger and briefly treats "A Night at the Fair," "Forging Ahead," "Winter Dreams," The Great Gatsby, This Side of Paradise, The Last Tycoon, "On Schedule," "The Smilers," "Presumption," "Trouble," "The Diamond as Big as the Ritz," "The Usual Thing," The Beautiful and Damned, "He Think He's

Wonderful,” “Forging Ahead,” Tender Is the Night, “The Family Bus,” and “First Blood.”

<sup>5</sup>According to Sy Kahn, such an attitude toward sex is a product of the period: for young Americans of the 1920s, “‘morality’ and ‘sex’ are interchangeable terms. Frequently, the judgment of ‘right’ and ‘wrong’ behavior rests almost exclusively on sexual behavior. Evil is identified with sex: there the devil wields his greatest powers” (178). Kahn believes this relationship between evil and sex in Paradise was the primary reason the book became such a sensation, for it “dramatized [Fitzgerald’s readers’] own youthful dilemmas” (179): “Like many of his readers, Amory idealized women but found it difficult to maintain his ennobled feelings when they were tested by flesh and blood [and] the frequent dilemma of the Puritan conscience” (178).

<sup>6</sup> An article from the 29 March 1908 New York Times Sunday Magazine Section offered a tongue-in-cheek reference to the difficulties of courtship at the opera:

[I]t would be impossible to pop the question in an opera box, except possibly during a Wagnerian cycle, when the lights are turned low and the music turned high, but one usually feels so depressed then that the courage and earnestness required for a first-class proposal are not at hand. (“It Is in Mid-Lent”)

<sup>7</sup> In a 1931 essay, Fitzgerald looked back on the automobile’s role in the changing courtship rituals during his college years:

The first social revelation created a sensation out of all proportion to its novelty. As far back as 1915 the unchaperoned young people of the smaller cities had discovered the mobile privacy of the automobile given



to young Bill at sixteen to make him “self-reliant.” At first petting was as desperate adventure even under such favorable conditions, but presently confidences were exchanged and the old commandment broke down. As early as 1917 there were references to such sweet and casual dalliance in any number of the “Yale Record” of the “Princeton Tiger.” (“Echoes” 131)

<sup>8</sup> Rosalind, too, has links to the undead. Two characters—her sister, Cecelia, and a jilted suitor, Gillespie—describe her as a “vampire” (159, 169). For more on the Poe allusions in “Young Irony,” see James W. Tuttleton, “The Presence of Poe in This Side of Paradise” in English Language Notes 3 (1966): 285–89. I’ve summarized Tuttleton’s article in the appendix to this dissertation.

## Chapter 3

## Sandra Pepys and the Presidentress:

## Women, Work, and Role Reversal in “Head and Shoulders”

Fall 1919. President Woodrow Wilson lay seriously ill, in far worse condition than his tight inner circle of doctors, family, and staff revealed. In his press releases and conferences, Dr. Cary T. Grayson, Wilson’s primary physician sang a familiar refrain composed of half-truths and evasions. Appointments were cancelled; Wilson’s cabinet met without him. Strange, almost childlike handwriting adorned memos and official documents. The epidemic of backroom gossip infesting the White House and the Capitol Building would spread throughout the country. The most dire and outrageous rumors resembled fact only vaguely; the more moderate hypotheses bore too much truth for a nation’s comfort. First Lady Edith Wilson, a woman of questionable qualifications and education, exercised ironfisted control over the flow of information to and from her husband’s sickroom. With the help, or, more likely, hindrance, of his “bedroom circle” (qtd. in Smith 118), an invalid president would lobby vainly for his Fourteen Points—when he finally regained consciousness. Meanwhile, European leaders struggled to collect the pieces of their shattered continent; the United States trembled with the repercussions from the Soviets’ successful Communist revolution; and suffragettes fought the endgame of their long battle for voting rights. Gender roles especially appeared to be in a state of flux: during the war, women occupied positions in traditionally male fields; the aftermath found the country wondering if it would ever get back to the “normalcy” of traditional—i. e., prewar—relations between the sexes. Amid this postwar political and cultural chaos, Fitzgerald composed “Head and Shoulders” in

November of 1919. In the tale, a married couple, Horace and Marcia Tarbox, experience role-reversal that disillusion Horace but delights Marcia—a manifestation of the pervasive masculine anxiety in the United States during and after its participation in World War I.

Most likely, the country, and especially its male citizens, had little reason to fear. The women who had given up domesticity for war work would return quickly to the home—voluntarily or otherwise—but I focus here, as in previous chapters, on perceptions. The media transformed the reality of relatively minor and mostly temporary shift in American labor into the sensation of a mass female exodus from hearth to heavy industry. Women had been moving into blue and white collar workplaces since before the turn of the century; the war, for a time, merely intensified this movement. Government agencies exploited anxieties about manhood during the period by challenging men to join the war effort, using humiliation as a tool. In 1917–18, the United States government enlisted women to take men’s positions in the workplace, where, according to many period sources, they performed quite admirably. Wartime personnel shortages required this shift, but the impact was felt far beyond the practical level, for the government redefined work, dividing it into two categories: essential and nonessential to the war effort. The United States Employment Service went so far as to label certain jobs “woman’s work” in an attempt to shame men into leaving occupations that the Service deemed not physically demanding enough and not essential to the war effort. If this challenge to the nonessential male worker’s masculinity succeeded, the Service would fill the vacated position with a woman. The female worker became a media sensation in the United States: although the number of women entering the

workplace in America was considerably smaller than that of the war-ravaged European powers, the American public, influenced by the press's focus on the novelty of working women, believed that women replaced men en masse. Moreover, nearly a year after the armistice, this seeming usurpation of male roles extended all the way to the White House: as Woodrow Wilson lay incapacitated after suffering a stroke on 2 October 1919, first lady Edith Wilson played a major role in decisions of great national import. Despite the White House's desperate attempts to control and spin the situation in Wilson's boudoir, rumor and innuendo brought the facts—and not a little fiction—to public light. Although Edith and the president's doctors withheld the exact cause and nature of Wilson's illness—"nervous exhaustion," claimed Dr. Grayson in an early press release ("Wilson's Condition 'Not Alarming'")—rampant rumors circulated that Wilson fared far worse than Grayson and other confidants claimed. According to John Milton Cooper, the "cover-up succeeded no better than most others have done in Washington," as Wilson's absence from the public eye undercut Grayson's statements to reporters and news leaked that the president had indeed suffered a stroke ("Disability" 82). Rumors about Wilson gained momentum as Fitzgerald wrote "Head." Later, the author would voice more explicitly his dissatisfaction with Edith's role/rule: in a 1931 essay, Fitzgerald would refer to Edith Wilson as "the female Rasputin who then made the ultimate decision in our national affairs" ("Echoes" 14). These perceptions—about the feminized workplace and what Senator Albert Fall (R-New Mexico) would call the "petticoat government"—formed the foundation of Fitzgerald's depiction of the marriage of Horace Tarbox and Marcia Meadow in "Head."

In the story, which first appeared in the 21 February 1920 issue of the Saturday Evening Post, solipsistic Princeton student Horace Tarbox becomes so immersed in his studies that he barely notices the war. However, while Horace can ignore the war, he can't avoid its impact on gender roles. After marrying the beautiful actress Marcia Meadow, he struggles to find a job. Marcia refers to Horace and herself as “head and shoulders,” respectively: eventually, he will support them with his “head”; but, for the time being, her “shoulders” (in her act, she shimmies) bring in more money (77). Desperate for work during Marcia's pregnancy, Horace begins performing as a gymnast and earns an adequate salary. Marcia takes up the pen, writing a bestselling novel. A newspaper article describes the couple as “Head and Shoulders” but reverses the roles from the couple's earlier use of the phrase: successful novelist Marcia functions as the “Head”; gymnast Horace becomes “Shoulders” (85). In the final line of the story, Horace laments that he ever opened the door of his flat to Marcia. While critics have mostly ignored this story, dismissing it as a fluff piece written for quick money—“Head” represents Fitzgerald's first appearance in the Saturday Evening Post, one of the most lucrative venues for short fiction in the period (novice author Fitzgerald earned a whopping \$400 for “Head”)—or limiting their examinations to biographical parallels, the story cries out for a historical reading. Whether “Head” represents the author's best work or not, I believe the tale demands attention, for, in it, Fitzgerald tells a story about the reversal of gender roles against the backdrop of a period when, with a decidedly unfeminine aggression, women pursued male jobs, equal pay, and the vote.

Like “Sentiment—and the Use of Rouge,” “Head” has garnered little scholarly ink, and most critics agree that the tale deserves its obscurity. John A. Higgins has no use

for it: “The story adds nothing to its author’s development; it merely indicates that at this time he really could not judge proportion in a plot. Meaningless in content, badly disproportioned in structure, it is one of his weakest stories” (19). For Higgins, Fitzgerald appears more interested in constructing “emotional and atmospheric college and young-love scenes” than telling a compelling story. Kirk Curnutt ranks “Head” among the least of Fitzgerald’s early tales. Along with “The Jelly-Bean” and “The Camel’s Back,” “Head” represent the “worst” works collected in Fitzgerald’s first two short story collections, Flappers and Philosophers (1920) and Tales of the Jazz Age (1922): these tales “seemed formulaic, commercial confections that pandered to their author’s post-adolescent fan base” (6). Fitzgerald agreed: in his inscription to the copy of Flappers that he sent to H. L. Mencken, he divided the collection’s tales into three categories: “Worth reading,” which comprised “The Ice Palace,” “The Cut-Glass Bowl,” “Benediction,” and “Dalrymple Goes Wrong”; “Amusing,” which included “The Offshore Pirate”; and, finally, “Trash,” where the author dumps “Head and Shoulders,” “The Four Fists,” and “Bernice Bobs Her Hair” (Fitzgerald, F. Scott Fitzgerald: A Life 42).<sup>2</sup>

Other critics find merit in “Head,” despite its failings, and some make brief comments that reach beyond pronouncements on quality. Henry Dan Piper forgives the story’s “triviality,” deeming the tale “more original” and “better-written” than “The Cut-Glass Bowl” and “The Four Fists,” both of which Fitzgerald placed with Scribner’s Magazine in the months before selling “Head” to the Post (66). Moreover, the story presents harbingers of things to come in its depiction of the university, in its plot twist, and in the “shy young” male protagonist and his romance with the “aggressive working-

girl.” Kenneth Eble finds Fitzgerald’s characterization of Marcia intriguing, believing that she represents “a very good example of Fitzgerald’s flapper type” who possesses “a combination of those contrasting qualities Fitzgerald also admired in his male alter egos: naïveté and knowingness, strong reserve and unquenchable wit, indolence and energy, gaiety and sadness, brashness and humility” (64). One cannot call the beautiful, witty Marcia a “dumb blonde”—“Fitzgerald seldom creates such a character without endowing her with a good mind”—or “prostitute with the heart of gold” (64). Sergio Perosa traces the story’s “theme of the reversibility of roles and transference of vitality” to Henry James and notes that the same issue would figure more prominently in Tender Is the Night. For contemporary readers, the “rather mediocre” tale’s value lies in “how the theme of the ‘education’ of a character is gradually replaced by the opposite theme of the ‘deterioration’ of a character” (34). According to Robert Sklar, beneath the façade of the “clever little story” of role-reversal flow dark undercurrents: “It is lightly anti-intellectual and takes for its theme the moral that life plays strange tricks. But there is a suppressed cruelty and despair in the situation” (67). For a deeper examination of the same themes, Sklar advises readers to view the 1930 film The Blue Angel, which exposes “the weakness of Fitzgerald’s treatment.” Although Meredith spends a mere paragraph on the tale, he alone finds historical implications in “Head”: Horace’s ignorance of and utter lack of concern about the war parodies those on the homefront who went about their lives as usual while war raged in Europe (175). The returning soldiers “were dismissive of civilians who had not fought in the war, especially those who ignored the desperate plight of those damaged by armed conflict” (196). Even though Fitzgerald did not see action, “his work nevertheless sympathizes with the veterans’ point of view.”

Other critics see biographical connections in the tale. While “Head” “was intended as pure entertainment,” Matthew J. Bruccoli remarks, “it has an ominous note—as though Fitzgerald were speculating on the consequences of his renewed hope of marrying Zelda” (102). Prigozy states that Marcia “is irresistible, but for Horace, who loves her passionately, her price is high: to live with Marcia, he must become the antithesis of his former self” (139). In a parenthetical comment, Prigozy suggests that, in “Head,” Fitzgerald questions his attraction to the flapper-type: “the flapper’s energy is, for those closest to her, enervating, and we are left to wonder if youthful passion is worth the price Horace—and presumably other young educated men (perhaps even the author)—must pay.” Bruccoli and Prigozy say little else about the tale, but Petry delves much more deeply into the biographical impulse behind “Head.” The story furnishes an early example of “how Fitzgerald attempted at some level to use his short stories to explore his misgivings about his career and marriage” (5). Although she offers by far the most lengthy and substantial study of “Head,” Petry, like most critics, begins by disparaging the tale: it reads “like an undergraduate sketch” populated by hackneyed characterizations. She labels Horace as nothing more than “the stereotypical egg-headed Ivy Leaguer” and, contra Eble, Marcia as “a stock character” who harks back to the “hookers with hearts of gold from turn-of-the-century melodrama” (17). But beyond the many flaws lie interesting biographical parallels: in “Head,” Fitzgerald “seems to use farce as a kind of smoke screen” to explore “concerns about his own imminent marriage and its possible impact on his career while simultaneously suggesting that none of it should be taken seriously” (16). The story’s “very real anti-intellectualism and mistrust of college study” reflect Fitzgerald’s disgruntlement over his academic misadventures at



Princeton, which weighed heavily on the author in 1919, for Zelda's parents would point to his failure to graduate when trying to persuade her to break off her engagement to Fitzgerald. Both Horace and Fitzgerald must take what they consider menial jobs; Horace works as a simple clerk, just as Fitzgerald lowered himself—in his estimation—by writing ad copy. The character's problem “is an imaginative projection of what might happen to Fitzgerald himself” when he married (18). Horace becomes a smash hit as a trapeze artist “but is simultaneously an increasingly embittered failure” (19). “Head” demonstrates Fitzgerald's realization that, if he marries, he will have to support his wife and, in order to do so, “may be reduced to being a performer, little better than a well-paid clown,” accepting a position similar to the one he held at the ad agency or mass-producing formulaic stories—like “Head”—for big money. Marcia's writing gets published, not Horace's, indicating that Fitzgerald may have feared that Zelda's writing—with its “striking ease, originality, and insight”—might surpass his own. Indeed, Fitzgerald had used passages from Zelda's letters and diaries in This Side of Paradise and “must have sensed that [...] Zelda's writing ability and ambition might well blossom into a career that would challenge, if not destroy, his own” (20). Ultimately, according to Petry, “Head” deserves more attention: it ranks as “one of the most meaningful he ever wrote—even though it is doubtful that Fitzgerald recognized the fears and problems with which it deals” (21). Yet, while Petry offers by far the most probing reading, she, like all of the other commentators, does not take the next, and, I believe, logical step, and link the reversal of male and female roles in the tale to the real role-reversals in the American workplace.

Fitzgerald begins the story by highlighting Horace's distance from the world around him but asserts simultaneously the tenuousness of this position. In 1917, as George M. Cohan writes "Over There," the hit patriotic song that would become the anthem of the American war generation, Princeton sophomore Horace writes esoteric academic papers; and, while the battle of Chateau-Thierry rages, he ponders when to begin composing a projected "series of essays on 'The Pragmatic Bias of the New Realists'" (61). War has its value, Horace supposes, in its making "young men self-reliant or something," but it has no place in his self-absorbed existence. Rumors of armistice affect him only indirectly: "Horace felt that he could never forgive the President for allowing a brass band to play under his window on the night of the false armistice, causing him to leave three important sentences out of his thesis on 'German Idealism.'" He reacts happily to news of the war's end, not because the carnage will cease, but because a long awaited new edition of Spinoza will be published. But, despite his massive intellect and self-absorption, Horace can't avoid life's complications: "And then, just as nonchalantly as though Horace Tarbox had been Mr. Beef the butcher or Mr. Hat the haberdasher, life reached in, seized him, handled him, stretched him, and unrolled him like a piece of Irish lace on a Saturday-afternoon bargain-counter" (61-62). After the war, as Horace works on his Master of Arts at Yale, fate arrives in the form of Marcia Meadow, an actress whose provocative dancing has caused a frenzy among the Ivy-League set. Promising boy meets beautiful girl, and in the typical Fitzgerald fashion, boy never realizes promise.

Doubtless, Horace's single-minded academic pursuits—in the liberal arts, especially—would be viewed during the period as nonessential to the war effort. As the

nation mobilized, the government and the media alike urged citizens to engage in supporting the war. Those who refused to engage became objects of scorn or the victims of “slacker raids.” With the help of local authorities and members of the American Protective League (a band of patriotic vigilantes), the Department of Justice oversaw the first such raid in Pittsburgh in March 1918 and continued with raids in other big cities. In New York and New Jersey, “armed soldiers and sailors joined a canvass that detained more than 50,000 apparently draft-age men who were often apprehended at bayonet-point” (Kennedy 166). Young men were rounded up in places like “hotels, cafés, saloons, dancehalls, poolrooms, the show ground of the Ringling Bros. Circus” (Harries 292). In May 1918, Enoch H. Crowder, the Provost Marshall General, implemented a “work or fight” policy forcing draft boards countrywide to “review the current occupations of all registrants and push the idle or less essentially employed” into higher draft classifications (Kennedy 166). In addition, the United States Employment Service implemented a plan to force—through the threat of humiliation—five million men into war industry positions. On 6 Oct. 1918, the New York Times outlined the plan, including its “most radical features”: “Women workers are to be marshaled to shame men who dodge essential duties. Lists of occupations in which men should be replaced by women are to be published in the daily papers, with the implication that men who persist in remaining in them will be confessed industrial slackers” (“Present Economic”). The service’s “drastic aim” was “that no man shall occupy a position that a woman can fill.” Community labor boards would study various jobs and “officially” label as ““woman’s work”” occupations that they believed women could fill easily (“Present Economic”). The plan would use “the pressure of public opinion” to get men to leave jobs designated

“woman’s work” and to take more physically demanding positions in the war industries. Assistant Director of the United States Employment Service in Washington, N. A. Smyth, stated,

“The employer who retains men of physical ability in these prescribed occupations and the employe [sic] who delays leaving such positions for essential work, will alike be unenviably marked in the community. When the lists have been prepared by the community labor boards and approved by the Federal Directors and Advisory Directors of the various States, it is believed that the force of public opinion and self-respect will prevent any able-bodied man from keeping a position officially designated as ‘woman’s work.’ The decent fellows will get out without delay; the slackers will be forced out and especially, I think, by the sentiment of women who stand ready, in order to bring the war to a victorious conclusion as soon as possible, to take their places.” (qtd. in “Present Economic”)

The service listed some jobs that would most likely be labeled women’s work: “sales clerks and floor walkers in every sort of mercantile establishment; clerical, cashier, and office staffs in mercantile, manufacturing, and financial houses, and the offices of transportation companies and other public utilities, waiters, attendants, and many other occupations” (“Present Economic”).

Smyth’s list does not include academics, but, in the 4 May 1918 issue of The New Republic, Alvin Johnson indicated that most scholars, in particular professors of philosophy, were viewed as something less than essential: he offered a savage indictment

of scholars who insisted on teaching subjects like philosophy without linking their lessons to the war. Entitled “To a Slacker,” the article features a speaker leveling accusations at a hypothetical professor of philosophy along with the professor’s defense. Because of the academic’s advanced age, “[i]t was [his] lot to remain in the professorial chair, expounding the eternal verities to the women, the inoffensive enemy aliens, the men rejected by the service” (18). But the speaker does not accept age as justification, for he will tolerate no “excuse for slacking.” The professor counters that he would take part in the war effort “were [he] a chemist or physicist or statistician”; as a philosopher, however, he can “mobilize only ideas” and argues that students “need the light of philosophy” in war as well as peacetime. Undeterred, the speaker insists that the professor wastes his skills, for this particular academic has a great intellectual gift: he has watched this professor “triumphing [...] over [his] peers” and “resolv[ing] what appeared inextricable tangles of real life.”

In “Head,” Fitzgerald depicts Horace as an academic type who devotes his great intellect to esoteric studies rather than to the vital issues of his day. In 1915, at thirteen years old, Horace takes Princeton’s entrance exams, earning “the Grade A—excellent—in Cæsar, Cicero, Vergil, Xenophon, Homer, Algebra, Plane Geometry, Solid Geometry, and Chemistry” (61). He has his choice of fields but, like the slacker of Johnson’s article, concentrates on philosophy, a subject that, seemingly, would have little practical value in wartime. In addition, age keeps both Horace and the slacker out of battle: the slacker is too old and Horace too young. But, for Johnson’s speaker, such work does have value: “Now if ever the world needs philosophy,” he argues, “to illuminate the way to a better world” (18–19). But, like Horace, the slacker remains aloof, focusing on “old problems

that could safely grow older” and ignoring “new problems, the most formidable problems of history” (19). Horace’s work, like that of Johnson’s professor, contributes nothing to the war effort because Horace makes no attempt to link it to current events; he simply does not care. According to Johnson, men like the slacker bring shame to their profession: the slacker’s “irresponsibility and consequent futility, not depth of thought nor difficulty of comprehension, [...] has made the term ‘academic’ a reproach.” Horace, likewise, gives the academic a bad name; Fitzgerald uses humor and satire, rather than the vitriol of Johnson’s article, to castigate the oblivious academic Horace, but his portrait is no less scathing. Significantly, Horace receives comeuppance in feminine form. He ignores history at his own peril, as does the object of Johnson’s ire in “To a Slacker.” The speaker in “Slacker” warns the professor that he can try to remain oblivious to the cataclysm, but the course of history may intrude on his life anyway—and his punishment may be much more violent than Horace’s: “Let the philosopher confine himself to his systems that know not the Great War, construct his formulae, adjust his mechanisms, until perchance a rude soldier burst in upon his speculations with the murderous reality of the sword” (19). As Petry states, at least some of the hostility toward academia in “Head” stems from Fitzgerald’s real-life failures at Princeton, but wartime disdain for academics who remained aloof to the war, such as that expressed in Johnson’s article, provided an impetus for Fitzgerald, too.

Yet, more than anything, women’s infiltration into traditionally male spheres influenced Fitzgerald’s portrait of the Tarboxes’ marriage. Before Marcia walks into his apartment, Horace has only a vague—and decidedly antiquated—conception of a woman’s function: “Women brought laundry and took your seat in the streetcar and

married you later on when you were old enough to know fetters” (63). Because Horace has largely shut himself away from the world, he does not realize that women have been performing tasks quite a bit more complex than laundry and have been replacing men in more than just streetcar seats. Like Johnson’s hypothetical “rude soldier,” Marcia “burst[s] in upon his speculations”—not with a sword, but with the “murderous reality” of the New Woman and her new role.

After Marcia leaves Horace’s apartment following their initial meeting, Horace finds a changed atmosphere. He has two chairs, which he has named Berkeley and Hume. When Marcia first enters, she sits in Hume. Obviously, with the chairs named after philosophers, Fitzgerald emphasizes Horace’s absurdity and the degree to which Horace has removed himself from war-era American society and lost himself in the world of long-dead men and stale philosophies. As Horace paces about the apartment, he notes that Berkeley remains unaltered, “waiting there in suave dark-red respectability, an open book lying suggestively on his cushions” (68). But Horace finds that “his circuit of the floor bring[s] him each time nearer to Hume.” Something has changed:

There was something about Hume that was strangely and inexpressibly different. The diaphanous form still seemed hovering near, and had Horace sat there he would have felt as if he were sitting on a lady’s lap. And though Horace couldn’t have named the quality of difference, there was such a quality—quite intangible to the speculative mind, but real, nevertheless. Hume was radiating something that in all the two hundred years of his influence he had never radiated before.

Hume was radiating attar of roses.

The woman has left her mark on Horace and his surroundings; things will never be the same. Not even his beloved Hume smells the same to Horace; his precious philosophers have been feminized. Thus begins Horace's degeneration from "unusually gifted" scholar (66) to well-paid sideshow act.

At first, Marcia plays the role of sideshow act and appears quite comfortable doing so. A "wicked actress"—her description—in a musical called "Home James!" (67), Marcia has become something of a sensation among the college set. She sings and performs "a shaky, shivery celebrated dance" (62). Despite his initial misgivings about Marcia, Horace goes to see "Home James!"; and, though watching Marcia dance produces in him "a warm glow," he finds her performance a bit risqué and asks her if she can refuse to shimmy without being fired (69). Not seeing the import of his question, she says simply that she enjoys dancing. But he persists: "I should think you'd detest it [...] The people behind me were making remarks about your bosom." Suddenly aware, not to mention offended, Marcia "blush[es] fiery red" and defends herself, saying, "The dance to me is only a sort of acrobatic stunt" (70).<sup>3</sup> At another performance, as Marcia dances, she notices that Horace looks away. Although she had "always felt that the way she [danced] wasn't suggestive any more than to some men every pretty girl is suggestive," she can't help but sense that Horace is "criticizing her" (73). Her reaction bears a strong resemblance to Amory's reaction to Myra's kiss in This Side of Paradise:

Unconquerable revulsion seized [Marcia]. She was suddenly and horribly conscious of her audience as she had never been since her first appearance. Was that a leer on a pallid face in the front row, a droop of disgust on one young girl's mouth? These shoulders of hers—these



shoulders shaking—were they hers? Were they real? Surely shoulders weren't made for this! (74)

As in Paradise, in which a “sudden revulsion sieze[s] Amory” after his first kiss (21), and in Genesis, sexual awareness and loss of innocence bring shame.

Horace, too, has an uncomfortable experience in self-realization and tries to correct the situation—for both of them—by proposing. After the first show that Horace attends, he meets Marcia at the Taft Grill. He cannot mask his uneasiness: “‘I feel idiotic in this place,’ confessed Horace, looking round him nervously” (70). Despite her anger at his remarks about her act, Marcia adopts a softer tone and asks, “‘Ever take an actress out to supper before?’” Horace responds “‘miserably,’” seeming to realize that his life has changed: “‘No [...] and I never will again. I don’t know why I came tonight. Here under all these lights and with all these people laughing and chattering I feel completely out of my sphere. I don’t know what to talk to you about.’” He will soon abandon the male sphere of academia—his Eden—forever. After proposing to Marcia, he tells her that his family “‘tried to make a monstrosity out of [him]’” and “‘allowed [him] to become a dried-up mummy’” (75). Since meeting Marcia, he explains, he can no longer dismiss love as merely “‘the ‘sex impulse.’” Like Marcia, he realizes the shame of his former self. They are evicted from their respective Edens—hers the stage, his academia—and must endure the travails of marriage.

Perhaps Horace hopes that, by marrying Marcia, he somehow can insert them into the traditional roles of husband and wife: eventually, she’ll stop dancing, and his intellectual pursuits will support her and the children she’ll stay home to raise. Now that he has left the artificial world of academia—“his idea of the value of academic

knowledge faded unmercifully” (76)—he believes that he can achieve some measure of “normalcy,” to adopt a term that would become synonymous with Warren G. Harding’s 1920 presidential campaign. But the break with the prewar past is complete. Women would officially gain suffrage through the Nineteenth Amendment in 1920 (the House and Senate had passed the amendment in the spring of 1919)—and relations between men and women would never be the same. The marriage cements the course the Tarboxes must take: they will switch roles, with Marcia becoming the head and Horace the shoulders.

\* \* \*

The theme of role reversal in the story reflects changes in the workforce during the period and the media’s treatment of these changes. In this section, through an examination of historical and period sources, I will reconstruct the cultural backdrop against which Fitzgerald wrote “Head and Shoulders.” Certainly, the war did effect change in gender relations and roles, especially in regard to the workplace. I will detail the shifts and transformations that spawned the great male anxiety that permeates “Head and Shoulders.” I will then provide statistics indicating the exaggerated and temporary nature of these changes. Ultimately, postwar male anxiety was founded to a great degree on perceptions. The great revolution in female labor began in the 1800s, when middle-class women began entering the workforce in greater numbers than ever before. With industrialization came improved technology, which reduced significantly the need for skilled workers. As a result of automation, women “constituted a fifth of the workforce” by the turn of the century (Schlereth 56–57). Fifteen years later, women held positions in a wide variety of industries and actually “dominated the labor force” in factories

producing textiles, clothing, and food (57). In addition, the rise of the corporation in the latter half of the nineteenth century created a demand for white-collar workers, and, according to Maurine Weiner Greenwald, “women came to compose a major segment of this new working class” (ix). McGerr points out that, late in the nineteenth century, middle-class families wanting another source of income began permitting their daughters to work as teachers and clerks (52). Not all of these female workers viewed their jobs as simply a contribution to the family’s fortunes: in 1893, a young woman applicant for a clerical position boasted, “I do not plead poverty, but ambition [...] I am tired of being dependent” (qtd. in McGerr 52). Discussing working women in Harper’s in 1917, Elizabeth Sears refused to “apologize for the fact that [she] worked for a living,” stating emphatically that women need money and, therefore, must work (qtd. in Diner 165). The rise of the woman worker fundamentally changed attitudes toward women and the concept of separate gender-based spheres. As Sears put it,

Developing personal and financial independence, and growing accustomed to traveling in the city without supervision, they challenged the exclusion of women from the public sphere. Men and women who had grown up with the Victorian ideal that the sexes should inhabit separate spheres and different physical spaces now readily defined a new heterosocial work culture and new gender roles. (164)

The greatest rise in female employment occurred during the first decade of the twentieth century, when the percentage of women workers jumped from 23.5 to 28.1 (Cooper, Pivotal Decades 203). Over the next two decades, the number of women workers continued to increase, but the percentage changed little. While the ratio may

have peaked, however, women entered a greater variety of more prestigious positions: “The feminization of schoolteaching advanced from the primary grades into secondary schools. More and more women became salesclerks in stores and secretaries in offices. Women college graduates already dominated the field of social work, and they were moving into civil-service positions” (203–04). In fact, women emerged as a definitive majority in fields such as “teaching, nursing, social work, home economics, and librarianship, professions thought to be a natural extension of the female domestic sphere” (Diner 178). By 1910, eighty percent of teachers, ninety-three percent of nurses, and seventy-nine percent of librarians were women (Diner 195).

Women still encountered obstacles. Predictably, period commentators worried about the social impact of women in the workforce. Many magazine articles argued that the working woman posed “threats to the home” (Cooper, Pivotal Decades 204) and “would undermine their traditional domestic role and weaken the American family” (Diner 164). Aetna Life Insurance considered the insurance business unsuitable for women and refused to integrate them into their offices until 1908 (164). Metropolitan Life employed more women than men by the 1890s, but, for moral purposes, the company separated men and women in the workplace and required that they use different entrances until 1914—“and different hallways, stairways, elevators, and cafeterias well after that” (164). While men could leave building during lunch break, women could not, but they were permitted to take a leisurely “walk on the roof.” As Diner notes and as these examples prove, “The ideology of separate spheres surely did not disappear in the turn of the century office” (164). Nonetheless, male and female office workers “redefined” gender roles during the period: “Men came to see competition for upward

mobility in a large bureaucratic organization as masculine. Women viewed salaried work as fully compatible with female virtue; and they came to value the independence which work provided” (164–65).

The First World War had the same effect on women entering the workforce as it did on fashion and sexual mores:<sup>4</sup> it sped up changes already occurring. In 1917, mobilization demanded increased production and created an insurmountable labor shortage. Immigration to the United States decreased significantly with the onset of war in 1914, and 1917 saw the enlistment and drafting of five million men into the armed forces, and, with them, a sixteen percent reduction of the American workforce (Diner 236). Women, along with African Americans from the South and Latin American immigrants, filled the vacated positions. With the technological advances accompanying industrialization, male and female workers had already become interchangeable, and, with the war, “the practice of substituting one group of wage-earners for another was vastly accelerated. In particular, white women took the places of white men,” and black women filled white women’s and black men’s positions (Greenwald xx). The war brought approximately one million more women into the labor force, and some took what had been exclusively male positions; the wartime demand for workers enhanced salaries, and women workers moved into better paying positions in great numbers (Diner 239).

While women stayed mostly in positions long regarded as women’s work, “the work patterns of white and black women changed markedly during the war. As a result of new wartime conditions, some women did manage to cross the otherwise rigid gender line into male jobs” (Greenwald 4). Diner reports that “one and a quarter million women worked in munitions plants and other war-related manufacturing jobs. More than half the

workers who made artillery shells were women.” In 1917, the New York Times reported that the percentage of women metalworkers rose from 4.6% in 1914 to 12.9% in 1918 (“Present Economic”). Approximately 100,000 women worked in munitions and airplane factories in 1918; only 3,500 worked in such factories in 1910. “In the chemical plants, on steam cars and electric cars, in elevators, as motor drivers, women have taken the place of men,” according to the Times (“Present Economic”). In such jobs, women performed traditionally male tasks: “They operated drills, bolt-threading, nut-tapping, milling, and car-bearing machines, as well as turret lathes, angle-cock grinders, hammers, and electric and oxyacetylene and welding tools. In steel works, rolling mills, and machine shops, women controlled cranes, riding high above the shop floors” (Greenwald 21). And, significantly, they earned male wages. The Times detailed the rise in women’s earnings: in an unnamed “Eastern metal work plant engaged in the manufacture of war supplies,” female foot press operators’ salaries rose from 17.1 cents/hour to 28.70; trimmers’ from 18.1 to 28.8; bench worker’s from 14.05 to 26; power press operators’ from 15.7 to 29.5; and inspectors’ from 16 to 34.9 (“Present Economic”). On average at this company, women more than doubled their hourly wages in 1915–1916. The Times found that such “increases are considered fairly typical throughout war industries in which women are employed.” Still, according to Marie L. Obenauer, Chief Woman Examiner of the National War Labor Board, ““this advance refers only to employments in which women were engaged as machine workers before the war and not to occupations in which women have taken the place of men”” (“Present Economic”). Women’s “most substantial gain(s)” occur “where women do the work of men,” for the National War Labor Board ruled that, “[i]f it shall become necessary to employ women on work

ordinarily performed by men they must be allowed equal pay for equal work” (“Present Economic”). The article makes clear that, when adjustments are made for cost-of-living increases and when compared to the salaries labor unions had won for male laborers, the rise in women’s wages “is not as large as it appears.” Nonetheless, female workers made great strides:

The gain is great, for it marks an official recognition of the principle of the economic independence of the woman worker, that she shall earn enough to support herself, instead of being, often the case heretofore, one of a family group of wage earners dependent in part for her support on the larger earning power of male members. (“Present Economic”)

Women also took vacated male positions in public transportation, working on streetcar lines as conductors at the same time that a “few women broke down the gender barrier and joined the ranks of longshoremen and stevedores, draymen, and teamsters.” Moreover, female teens left the confines of their parents’ homes to take jobs at the nation’s railroads. “When off-duty, these women used their rail passes to travel aboard trains to experience the excitement of speed and the freedom to roam” (Greenwald 31).

The war opened other, more prestigious, fields to women: suffering from the dearth of young men, many medical schools, including Yale and Columbia, began enrolling female students. When male doctors left hospitals to aid the war effort, women interns filled the void; and, “[i]n New York, twenty women lawyers received appointments as temporary judges to meet the wartime shortage” (Diner 258). Because government contracts stimulated the economy and precipitated a deluge of paperwork, booming businesses desperately needed female clerks, typists, and cashiers. The number

of women office workers therefore increased by 800,000 from 1910 to 1920, much of this attributable to the war (Diner 242). The Guarantee Trust in New York stated that, because of increased business, “Private Secretaryships and other junior clerical positions, formerly held by men, are now being filled by women” (qtd. in Diner 242). Women’s advancement into the white-collar world was especially important, for, unlike the demand for factory workers, the need for office workers continued after the war, and “women who advanced in the office hierarchy tended to keep their jobs. Although their opportunities remained circumscribed after the armistice, women office workers had used the wartime demand to solidify their presence in offices and to push upward, if ever so slightly, the limits on the positions they could hold” (243).

Wartime propaganda and periodicals offered glowing reviews of the woman worker. Greenwald states that women enjoyed “new respect and public recognition” for their contributions to the war effort. The U. S. Government and the press “told [women] the fighting men’s accomplishments abroad depended on the organized support and effective labor of women on the home front” (Greenwald 34). Greenwald points to war posters that appealed to women’s patriotism: one, entitled “Every Garden a Munition Plant!” asked women, “Will you have a part in Victory?”; another featured a female stenographer gazing at the silhouette of soldier in attack position and includes the words, “Stenographers! Washington needs you!”; still another showed an attractive young woman in a navy uniform and the words, “GEE!! I WISH I WERE A MAN. I’D JOIN THE NAVY” (37). “Daily newspapers reported women’s activities[,] and on Sundays full-page accounts with photographs sung women’s praises for patriotic dedication” (Greenwald 34). In a 1917 study, the National Industrial Conference Board found that



“the output of women compares favorably with that of men” (“Present Economic”). In two-thirds of the companies surveyed, “women’s production was equal to or greater than that of men in the operations on which both were employed.” The report showed that in one particular steel mill, women operating drill presses and milling machines were “from 25 to 50 per cent. faster than men.” The board noted a trend among the surveyed companies’ comments:

“A frequent commendation of women is that they are ‘more teachable’ and that they are ‘more conscientious and painstaking’ than men, although in some establishments they are reported to learn more slowly. A common experience was that they ‘follow instructions better’” (“Present Economic”)

On 24 February 1918, the New York Times published a laudatory article about traveling women salespersons who replaced men during the war. In general, these women demonstrated “[r]emarkable ingenuity and great resourcefulness in meeting unusual situations and solving perplexing sales problems” (“Road Saleswomen”). Some women exceeded their male counterparts’ production:

The amount of business they have brought in, which, in spite of abnormal conditions, was in a number of cases as much as 100 percent. greater than that obtained from the same districts by men this time last year, is a good indication of how cleverly the women solved the many questions that always come up in the course of a trip through any given territory.

John A. King of King & Applebaum, one of New York City's biggest dressmakers, made "extensive use of women as traveling representatives" during the war and praised their skill and tenacity:

"In any number of cases, where men would have been perfectly justified in quitting and going on to the next town, these women, by adopting entirely original methods, have stayed and finally succeeded in landing the business. Of course, some of this was possible partly because of their sex, though not all of it; but the fact remains that they got the business." (qtd. in "Road Saleswomen")

King offered stories as evidence: turned down by all the buyers in a particular town, a saleswoman went to female acquaintances in the town, showed them the merchandise, elicited their interest, and enlisted them to go and ask various merchants for the dresses. "[S]he got fairly good orders from several merchants" and the promise of future business. In another case, a saleswoman met with a disgruntled female buyer who had cut ties with King & Applebaum. Her pitches having failed, the saleswoman commented on the buyer's suit, which she recognized as the work of a New York tailor that she also patronized. The two began to discuss clothes, "such as women are fond of, the buyer warming up visibly. They wound up by having lunch together, and later in the afternoon our representative came away with a very nice little order and a lot of good will from the house." Realizing the obvious, King "found that one of the greatest advantages in having saleswomen is that, being women, they are better qualified to advise buyers in their purchases than men could ever be"; in addition, saleswomen could wear the merchandise to meetings with buyers. King also said he was incorporating his

saleswomen's written suggestions and advice about the best sales strategies into the company's "library of salesmanship," where they would be placed alongside "the works of recognized authorities."<sup>5</sup> These women, through innovation and tenacity, earned a place beside their male counterparts, Kin deeming their ideas as or even more valuable than traditional approaches, which had been composed exclusively by men and canonized in King & Applebaum's "library."

The January 1919 Current Opinion offered a piece that described the European woman worker in much the same terms. The article quoted New York Evening World reporter Martin Green, who wrote a piece about the labor situation in Europe:

"First—Except in positions demanding more than normal strength—mostly confined to manual labor—women hold their own with men in every factor but speed and they gain speed by experience.

"Second—Women are, to say the least, as intelligent as men and in delicate work requiring close application and accuracy they are preferred by many employers.

"Third—Women are more dependable than men as to regularity in reporting for work, despite natural handicaps. This is shown by the records of great institutions employing both men and women in England and France.

"Fourth—The necessity for the employment of women in industries and at tasks of labor in England and France has bettered working conditions and has created facilities for taking care for the children of working women which are little short of revolutionary.

“Fifth—Women, individually, are more persistent than men in forwarding a principle or cause working to their real or supposed advantage—as witness the Suffrage movement in England and the United States.” (“Gravity” 61–62)

But, according to Green, trouble loomed. What would Britain and France—and the United States, for he believed the situation in Europe “may be indicative of forthcoming events at home” (61)—do with its women workers when soldiers came home? French and British economists and government officials believed “that women who have taken the places of men in positions that yield good pay are going to insist on sticking to their jobs when their men come home.” He quotes French economics professor who served in France’s *Maison de la Presse* during the war:

“The war has given many French women their first taste of industrial independence. We have working in our factories indispensable to the war an army of women refugees from the north of France who never knew what it was to have a sou of their own before. Now they are receiving the equivalent of eight to ten American dollars per week. Will they go back to their devastated homes and take up their old lives? Perhaps—and perhaps not” (qtd. in “Gravity” 62)

The official points out that France would need women workers because the war decimated the male population. They would become permanent fixtures in industry, and, because of their ““contact with American women and American methods and American money,”” they might insist on suffrage. But, because the United States’ casualty figures

did not begin to approach those of European nations, the country would not need women workers when soldiers decamped.

In the United States, women realized what the war could do for their cause and thus harbored high hopes that war would help their efforts at equality. They “took the era’s patriotic propaganda seriously” (Greenwald 4). Kennedy quotes a speech delivered at a 1917 meeting of the Women’s Trade Union League: “Wonderful as this hour is for democracy and labor, [...] it is the first hour in history for the women of the world....At last, after centuries of disabilities and discrimination, women are coming into the labor and festival of life on equal terms with men” (285). In 1918, Survey saw far-reaching benefits for women: “among the gains of the war we might count the penultimate stage in the emancipation of women. A few things remain to be done, a few places have got to catch up; but broadly speaking, woman has become a citizen and a worker” (qtd. in Kennedy 285).

But the media—whether newspapers, magazines, or government propaganda—as always, accentuated the sensational: women rising up and asserting themselves in the workplace. Although periodicals cited the discrepancy between the statistics and perceptions, they still devoted much more ink to the sensation than to the reality. Certainly, more women did enter the workforce during the war and, without question, some of them took positions closed to them before the war. Nevertheless, Kennedy calls women’s gains in employment during the war “largely an illusion” (285), and Greenwald points to statistics showing that the Great War didn’t help women’s cause in the workplace as World War II would: the Second World War occasioned a 50% rise in female wage earners while, from 1910 to 1920, the number of women workers only

increased by 6.3 % (13). And, since the total number of workers, male and female, increased from 38,167,336 to 41,614,248, the percentage of women workers actually decreased by slightly less than a percentage point (approximately 0.85%) (Department of Commerce). Instead, World War I “primarily occasioned a shift within the female labor force.” Kennedy calls women’s opportunities in the labor force during the period “limited and brief” (285). Of the approximately one million women who performed war-related work—a figure Kennedy calls “relatively modest”—a small number “were ‘first-time’ hires, constituting net additions to the female labor force.” In fact, this group mostly comprised “single girls who moved up from less remunerative jobs to which they soon returned, or previously employed women, now married, who temporarily reentered the workforce to help their families keep pace with inflation” (Kennedy 285). In Pivotal Decades, Cooper states that only a small number of women took heavy industrial jobs, though “many women did drive trucks and buses and maintain farms” (308). Female labor made its largest strides in offices, where “the last barriers to female secretaries crumbled.” According to Schaffer, World War I “opened economic opportunities for women, enabling them to take jobs in government and private industry and making it possible for some to gain promotions and higher pay” (94–5). Yet he comes to a similar conclusion—and uses similar language—as does Kennedy, calling these “limited and temporary achievements” (95). Schaffer points out that, “even during the war, female employees were often confined to ‘women’s jobs,’ earned less than men for similar work, and were subject to sexual harassment” (95). But, for the media and for the American public in general, the advances, whether small or illusory, were the story.

Government employment agencies and media recognized that the public's perception of the number of women entering the workforce did not jibe with reality. Current Opinion's Feb. 1919 article "What Shall Be Done with Women Who Have Replaced Men in Industry?" cited information gathered by the Department of Labor showing "that the number of women war-workers in factories is much smaller than has been generally supposed and that large numbers have been transferred from other occupations" (124). The key phrase here is "much smaller than has been generally supposed"—whereas only a small number of women entered the workforce for the first time, the public believed otherwise. The article cites a study by Department of Labor Director Mary Van Kleek, who stated that a mere five percent of women who took jobs in the war industries had been unemployed before the war. The anonymous author of "Present Economic Status of Women" noted the same phenomenon, finding "no comprehensive statistics" regarding "[h]ow many women have been drawn into gainful employments by the war who had not hitherto been so engaged." Experts had come to a "consensus" that "the public has an exaggerated idea of the number of new recruits up to this time. What has given the impression of a vast induction of women into gainful employment for the first time is extensive shifting, in greater and greater degree, from one occupation to another." For example, domestic workers and clerical workers sought better pay in the war industries while teachers from rural areas took the newly open clerical positions (an "authoritative statement" showed that 100,000 teachers left their jobs). Estimates varied on how many women the war brought to the workforce, with reports ranging from 400,000 to 2,000,000. Marie L. Obenauer, Chief Woman Examiner of the National War Labor Board, believed "[t]he tendency has been to exaggerate the

number. I have seen the estimate placed as high as 2,000,000, which is certainly much beyond the fact.”

And the changes were decidedly short-lived. The United States did not endure the great number of casualties that France and England did: the U. S. mobilized 4,350,000, of which 50,000 died and 230,000 suffered injuries in combat; for France, the numbers were 8,660,000, 1,390,000, and 4,330,000; and for the British Empire 8,780,000, 900,000, and 2,090,000 (Willmott 307).<sup>6</sup> A report by a group that Current Opinion describes as “a large organization of employers” asserted that war reconstruction would require female workers and that “it is inconceivable that any agencies of the Federal Government should urge upon [women] or upon any other group of workers that they withdraw from gainful employment if they wish to make this contribution to the economic life of the nation” (“What Shall” 125). But these words would ring hollow. When the war ended, the U.S. did not need female workers as did France and Britain, and many women, “[w]illingly or not,” in Kennedy’s words, left the workforce: in 1919, the Central Federated Union of New York announced, “the same patriotism which induced women to enter industry during the war should induce them to vacate their positions after the war” (285). Ultimately, “the doors of industry had not swung wide to women in the war, and what tiny openings had been forced were closed again almost immediately at the armistice” (286–87). Most striking, of course, as I’ve shown above, when one accounts for the increase in the number of workers of both genders, women composed a smaller percentage of workforce in 1920 than in 1910. Schaffer also comments on this great feminine exodus from the workplace after the war:



[W]hen it ended, many of them, particularly those who had begun to perform “men’s work,” lost their positions. In New York City, for example, twenty women judges were forced to resign immediately after the Armistice, and women who worked on railroads during the war were replaced by returning servicemen, ousted through the application of laws designed to protect women from hazardous conditions or just summarily removed. (95)

Except for secretary positions, nearly all of the jobs women took during war went back to men (Cooper, Pivotal Decades 308). In early 1919, Van Kleek advised female war industries workers “to arrange for their early transfer to normal employment, unless” their factories plan to continue at wartime production levels (“What Shall”).

Certainly, women’s gains amounted to little relative to what the American public and women’s groups believed, but, again, perception is paramount: popular belief held that a great change had occurred. News from England and France, where women replaced men in much, much greater numbers, would have only enhanced this perception. In reality, little changed in the workplace, but Fitzgerald composed his tale of gender role reversal in an atmosphere where sustained advances for women appeared possible.

\* \* \*

Horace and Marcia’s marriage becomes a great “sensation in academic circles”: “Horace Tarbox, who at fourteen had been played up in the Sunday magazines sections of metropolitan newspapers, was throwing over his career, his chance of being a world authority on American philosophy, by marrying a chorus girl—they made Marcia a chorus girl” (76). Through Horace, Fitzgerald shows the sad state of the working man

after the upheaval of the war. Realizing his academic background holds little value on the job market, Horace settles for a \$25/week job as a clerk. Actress Marcia, now the primary breadwinner, makes six times his salary, a nod, perhaps, to the aforementioned wartime increases in women's salaries. "We'll call ourselves Head and Shoulders, dear," Marcia tells Horace, "and the shoulders'll have to keep shaking a little longer until the old head gets started" (77). Although the arrangement "hurt[s] his pride" and he "hate[s] it," Horace cannot argue with Marcia's logic: "Well," she replied emphatically, "your salary wouldn't keep us in a tenement. Don't think I want to be public—I don't. I want to be yours. But I'd be a half-wit to sit in one room and count the sunflowers on the wall-paper while I waited for you. When you pull down three hundred a month I'll quit." In This Side of Paradise, Eleanor Savage laments that she must abandon intellectual pursuits and go down with "the sinking ship of future matrimony" (219); in "Head," the gender roles are reversed, and Horace will forgo his dreams of academic stardom.

While conservative commentators posited the working woman as a danger to domesticity and morality, the real threat she posed, of course, was to the power of the patriarchy. Fitzgerald demonstrates this through Marcia, as she asserts her domination over the Tarboxes' marriage. She feels that Horace works too hard at his clerical position, reading late into the night, and "getting all stooped over" (78). He protests, "But, Marcia, I've got to—" She interrupts his defense, wielding her authority as the family's chief wage-earner: "No, you haven't, dear. I guess I'm running this shop for the present, and I won't let my fella ruin his health and eyes. You got to get some exercise." Her tone is maternal (she sounds like a modern mother telling her child not to

sit too close to the television screen), and her language declares ownership, as she calls him “my fella” (emphasis mine). Then, she strikes a deal that sets the stage for the story’s denouement: if Horace agrees to resume his gymnastic exercises<sup>7</sup>, she’ll read a volume of Pepys’ Diary.

The story exemplifies period worries over new opportunities for women during the war: once women enjoy the liberation of earning their own way, how will society ever get them back into the home? Or, as the title of a Current Opinion article phrased it, “What Shall Be Done with Women Who Have Replaced Men in Industry?” While many women left their jobs, voluntarily or otherwise, when the soldiers returned, nothing, not even pregnancy, can force Marcia out of the workforce. She knows she must stop dancing when she learns she’s five-months pregnant, but the deal she makes with Horace opens up a new avenue to her. Horace meets a promoter who wishes to book him as a trapeze artist; he puts aside his initial skepticism and, removing himself even further from his academic background, becomes a very lucrative sideshow act and can finally support his family. His sacrifice mirrors that of men who went off to war believing that, by doing so, they were helping to protect their country—and its women—from penetration by the dreaded “Hun.”<sup>8</sup> While Marcia worries about the great physical perils of his daring stunts, Horace, like many men of the period, proudly risks everything for the woman’s welfare: “‘It’s nothing,’ said Horace quietly. ‘But if you can think of any nicer way of a man killing himself than taking a risk for you, why that’s the way I want to die’” (81). Horace’s response indicates his growth: the selfish student who remained oblivious to the war now jeopardizes his physical well-being for the sake of his wife. Although pregnancy forces Marcia out of her job and into the home, she refuses to sit by idly:

under the influence of Pepys, she writes a highly autobiographical work of fiction called Sandra Pepys, Syncopated. She asks Horace to use his intellectual clout—he’s still the brains of this operation, even though she will realize his dream of becoming a successful author—to recommend the manuscript to popular columnist Peter Boyce Wendell, who had reviewed her acting performances favorably: “Tell him you got the highest marks in Princeton once and that you ought to know when a book’s good. Tell him this one’s a world beater” (83). Just as working women took advantage of the historical moment, moving into the workforce as automation reduced the demand for skilled workers and the war caused labor shortages, Marcia takes advantage of a literary movement. She’s an unskilled writer: her work features “constant mistakes in spelling and grammar” along with “weird punctuation” (83), but it strikes a chord with Wendell, who “happened at that time to be advocating the enrichment of the American language by the immediate adoption of expressive vernacular words” (84). Wendell becomes Marcia’s “sponsor,” composing an introduction to its serialization and using his substantial influence on pop culture to promote the work, “thunder[ing] his indorsement over the placid bromides of the conventional reviewers.” The literary tradition of the patriarchy—embodied by these “conventional” critics—will not stand in her way. The book captures the zeitgeist:

From its first published instalment [sic] it attracted attention far and wide. A trite enough subject—a girl from a small New Jersey town coming to New York to go on the stage—treated simply, with a peculiar vividness of phrasing and a haunting undertone of sadness in the very inadequacy of its vocabulary, it made an irresistible appeal. (84)

Marcia earns three hundred dollars for each installment, achieving the fame and fortune (the two go hand in hand for Fitzgerald) that Fitzgerald pursued so doggedly at the time. That the unskilled Marcia becomes a successful author seems to repeat an argument that “serious” authors and commentators had been making for decades. Marcia joins that “damned mob of scribbling women” Hawthorne reviled in the mid-1800s. Much had changed in the intervening years, but, for Fitzgerald, one thing certainly had not: women cheapen and degrade literature, popularizing it for the unlettered masses. Like the wartime industrial and office workplaces, the literary career no longer remained an exclusive club composed of “serious” laborers. To Horace, a devotee of dead-white-male classics of philosophy, Marcia’s success must appear especially egregious. Moreover, she earns literary fame as he dutifully supports his family—not unlike the men who gave up their livelihoods and even their lives to defend women from the dreaded Hun. Horace can only watch helplessly as she embarks on the career he wanted for himself.

An encounter with a flapper, the hyper-energized version of the previous generation’s New Woman, has changed things irreversibly for the man. Horace realizes that marriage has swept away his “own half-forgotten dreams” of achieving literary stardom:

He had meant to write a series of books, to popularize the new realism as Schopenhauer had popularized pessimism and William James pragmatism.

But life hadn’t come that way. Life took hold of people and forced them into flying rings. (83)

Of the man who aspired to such literary heights, he asserts aloud to himself, “it’s still me.” But, while his mindset may not have changed, events have altered the course of his life, and he knows he must be content with his lot: “Poor gauzy souls trying to express ourselves in something tangible. Marcia with her written book; I with my unwritten ones. Trying to choose our mediums and then taking what we get—and being glad.” The coup de grâce comes when Marcia earns the admiration of French philosopher Anton Laurier, Horace’s idol. Upon his arrival at the Tarbox residence, the adoring Laurier states, “But, yes. I must come. I have to come. I have read the book of Madame, and I have been charmed” (85). Her novel earns the admiration of the renowned philosopher, the academic, the authority, as did the traveling saleswomen of the 24 February 1918 New York Times article. The women’s texts earn the admiration of the executives at King & Applebaum, who include them in their hallowed “library of salesmanship,” juxtaposed with writings of “recognized”—and, no doubt, male—“authorities.” Women labor alongside—or replace—men in the workplace; their writings appear among the male writers in the sales library, replacing outmoded male philosophies about sales with new, highly innovative techniques. Marcia does the same with her feminized pop text; she supersedes the stodgy, traditional—“serious”—male writer in the literary labor force.

This role-reversal, women entering new fields and rising to heretofore-unimagined heights, may have found its apotheosis in the Wilson White House. Wilson fell ill in late September 1919 as he traveled the country by train promoting the League of Nations to the American public. After canceling the remainder of the tour, he returned to Washington. On 2 October, Wilson suffered a massive, nearly fatal stroke that completely incapacitated him for at least a week. In the weeks that followed, Wilson’s

doctors placed him on the rest cure, and his wife, Edith, his private secretary, Joseph Tumulty, and his personal physician, Cary T. Grayson, formed what the President's close friend and adviser Colonel Edward House called a "bedroom circle" (qtd. in Smith 118). Grayson concerned himself primarily with Wilson's health and seems to have taken little or no interest in policy; Tumulty's influence waned quickly, and he would see little of the president in the weeks following Wilson's stroke, for Edith, the daughter of a prominent Washington jeweler, long disliked the Irish-Catholic secretary because of his "commonness" (qtd. in Weaver 52)—and suspected (rightly) that Tumulty had advised Wilson not to marry her before the 1916 election. According to Smith, Tumulty told confidantes: "Mrs. Wilson is keeping me from the President" (124). An undue—and, indeed, frightening—amount of responsibility fell to the first lady with her decidedly unimpressive educational background: in her early teens, Edith spent an unhappy year at Martha Washington College before dropping out; she left the Richmond Female Seminary (popularly called Powell's School) after one year because her family couldn't afford the tuition. Undereducated Edith, like Marcia, filled the void left by her husband's inability to perform his duties—Wilson, as president, and Horace, as primary breadwinner.

During Wilson's recuperation, Edith emerged as the dominant figure in the marriage. After Wilson's initial breakdown in late September, Grayson issued a press release:

"President Wilson's condition is due to overwork. The trouble dates back to an attack of influenza last April in Paris, from which he has never entirely recovered. The President's activities on this trip have overtaxed

his strength, and he is suffering from nervous exhaustion. His condition is not alarming, but it will be necessary for his recovery that he have rest and quiet for a considerable time” (“Wilson’s Condition ‘Not Alarming’”)

The diagnosis of “nervous exhaustion,” with a prescription of “rest and quiet” appeared over and over in newspapers across the country, making Wilson look like an overburdened heroine in a Victorian novel—or, perhaps, like the protagonist of Charlotte Perkins Gilman’s “The Yellow Wall-Paper,” who describes herself as having “nervous depression—a light hysterical tendency” (166), “a nervous condition” (167), “nervous troubles” (169), and “a nervous weakness” (170 and 173).<sup>9</sup> On page 169 of the Penguin Twentieth-Century Classics edition of “Wall-Paper,” the words “nervous” or “nervousness” appear five times in the space of nine sentences. The narrator undergoes the rest cure devised by Dr. Silas Weir Mitchell; Grayson foists the same prescription, given almost exclusively to women during the period, on Wilson. On 7 Oct. 1919, the New York Times reported, “Grayson and those in charge of the case have prescribed an ‘absolute rest cure’ for the President” (“Wilson’s Condition Better”). Wilson accepted the treatment reluctantly: “‘No person,’ said one close to the President tonight, ‘least of all the President, likes to be kept on a rest cure, but he has on the whole been a good patient.’” The White House told reporters that Wilson “fully realize[d] his condition, and the importance of submitting to the absolute rest cure prescribed.” A week later, Grayson announced that Wilson’s situation remained the same:

“We will continue to insist that the President should have rest and quiet and nursing, and that the element of time should be devoted to this treatment. I will try to keep business away from the President. I may be



over-cautious in this matter, but I would rather err on the side of caution than to fail to be cautious in such a case.” (“Wilson’s Mind”)

Reiterated mentions of the rest cure might have conjured images of a mad President tearing apart his sick room—and such a story did indeed circulate. According to the rumor, Wilson “had gone insane and [...] his wife and Grayson were keeping him locked up. Bars that had been put up years before to protect windows from the Roosevelt boys’ baseballs were cited as evidence that the White House was harboring a lunatic” (Cooper, Pivotal Decades 351). The rumor was so pervasive that Edith Wilson mentions it in her memoir: despite Grayson’s insistence that the President’s “mind was as ‘clear as a bell,’” Mrs. Wilson complains, a “whispering campaign continued and the statement appeared in print that bars had been placed on the windows of his room, the implication being that they were to keep him from jumping out” (298).

The rest cure, according to Elizabeth Ammons’s study of “The Yellow Wall-Paper,” emerged as a treatment for women suffering from “hysteria” in the late nineteenth century (36). The doctor and his assistants “institut[ed] a rigid and highly symbolic therapeutic regimen of enforced idleness and induced, infantile dependence.” They would “forcibly” remove “all physical and mental responsibility” from the patient. Mitchell described the early stages of treatment:

At first, and in some cases for four to five weeks, I do not permit the patient to sit up or to sew or write or read, or to use the hands in any active way except to clean teeth....I arrange to have the bowels and water passed while lying down, and the patient is lifted onto a lounge for an hour in the

morning and again at bedtime and then lifted back again into the newly-made bed. (qtd. in Ammons 36)

She would not bathe or feed herself, and, while a “special nurse” would sometimes read to her or talk about “soothing topics,” the patient was permitted no contact with family or friends (Martin 737). Edith, of course, did see Wilson when he underwent the rest cure; she seems to have acted as this “special nurse.” The patient would lie in such a state for twenty-four hours a day, and the procedure could last months. Martin reports also that “[t]he day was punctuated by electrotherapy and massage, sponge baths with a ‘rough rub’ using wet sheets, and frequent feedings” (737). One of Wilson’s primary physicians during his confinement, F. X. Dercum, a preeminent specialist of the time and a devotee of Mitchell’s theories, describes the desired result of the rest cure in his Rest, Suggestion and Other Therapeutic Measures in Nervous and Mental Disorders: “Brain work having ceased, mental expenditure is reduced to a slight play of emotions and an easy drifting of thought” (qtd in Martin 737). By such means, according to Mitchell, the doctor would win the patient’s confidence and prompt “a childlike acquiescence in every needed measure” (qtd. in Martin 737). Infantilization was the goal.<sup>10</sup>

Period readers not only saw constant mentions of President Wilson’s nervousness and his travails with the rest cure, but they also noted Edith Wilson’s increased visibility during the President’s illness.<sup>11</sup> A 16 Oct. 1919 article in the Washington Post portrayed Edith as the president’s only source of information: “With the exception of the news furnished him by Mrs. Wilson the President has learned very little of national and international developments, although he is given a general summary of events” (“Good Day” 574). The subtitle of a 21 Oct. 1919 Chicago Daily Tribune article proclaimed,

“Mrs. Wilson Helps to Transact Business of His Office,” and reported that a recuperating Wilson requested “papers of an official character, which were sent over to the White House from the executive office. Mrs. Wilson read these papers to the president, who then issued directions for the disposition of the matter” (“President Gains”). When Senator Hitchcock could not get an appointment to meet with Wilson about treaty matters, exacerbating fears over the president’s condition, Tumulty told the Washington Post that Wilson had ““made wonderful improvement”” but ““Mrs. Wilson said that until after the physicians saw the President this afternoon she thought it unwise for him to hold a long conference with Mr. Hitchcock or anyone else”” (“Fails to See”). It was clear who was in charge. In October, Journalist H. H. Kohlsaet sent a note to Wilson, asking him to make some concessions to Republican lawmakers over the League of Nations, but the reply came from Edith: ““the doctors insist nothing be brought to him which is not absolutely essential”” (Weaver 67). Nathan Miller summarizes the situation at the White House: “Every message, every newspaper given the president passed through Mrs. Wilson’s hands and she decided whether it would upset him. If so, he did not see it” (30). Cooper points out that, though Edith was just trying to protect Wilson’s health, “by controlling access of people and information to him she probably did function to an extent as a surrogate president” (Pivotal Decades 351).<sup>12</sup>

Edith’s tight control of the flow of information—to and from the Oval Office—fueled the Washington rumor mill. The Wilson-friendly New York World reported that ““one thousand rumors”” circulated about Wilson’s illness (qtd. in Smith 96) and wondered about the ““vague generalizations”” in White House press releases: ““From the beginning of his illness to the present moment not a word has come from the sick-

chamber that can be regarded as frankly enlightening. Mystery begets mystification” (qtd. in Smith 100). Secretary Lansing called a cabinet meeting to discuss the possibility of declaring Wilson unfit, but Tumulty and Grayson refused to cooperate. On 14 Oct. 1919 the New York Times announced congressional suspicions:

It developed during the day that some Republican Senators, skeptical of the ability of the President to sign his own name to the four or five communications from the Executive that have reached the Senate since Mr. Wilson’s illness have subjected the signatures to a close scrutiny. One of these Senators stated that one of these signatures does not compare with others of the President. The signatures on the recent communications, this Senator said, gave the impression either that they had been written by some one else, for the President, or that, if done by the President, he was “suffering from acute physical disability.” The signatures, the Senator said, seemed “strained.” (“Senators Discuss”)

The controversy over the signatures continued throughout October. According to Smith, the senators suspected either Tumulty’s or Edith’s hand in the signatures, and their accusations were well-founded. Edith did indeed help Wilson sign bills during his illness:

The First Lady placed a pen in his hand and pointed it as he signed his name where she indicated. The effort completely exhausted him. But the signature was a parody of his usual firm stroke. The o’s of his first name were left open at the top and the slanting of the letters was completely foreign to his former fashion. As soon as the signatures were seen by

Senators familiar with his writing, debates in the cloakroom centered upon the question of who had forged the President's name. (Smith 112)

Longtime Wilson adversary Senator Albert Fall (R-New Mexico) went so far as to exclaim to the Foreign Relations Committee, “We have a petticoat government! Mrs. Wilson is President!” (qtd. in Smith 112). For Fall, Edith was a “Presidentress who had fulfilled the dream of the suffragettes by changing her title from First Lady to Acting First Man” (qtd. in Ross 218). The Senator, who would meet his political demise during the Teapot Dome scandal, also suggested that congress not meet until a true president sat in the Oval Office (Smith 112).<sup>13</sup>

Just as Edith's writing on official documents marked the tipping point for congress and the cabinet, so Marcia's writing in “Head and Shoulders” serves a similar purpose. Marcia becomes completely self-reliant as a creator, physically (giving birth) and imaginatively (her novel). She feminizes the act of writing, producing a novel that, despite its feminine flaws—disregard for the standards of grammar, style, and traditional concepts of narrative—becomes a bestseller and allows her to support her family. Moreover, she adopts and corrupts the name of a canonized dead-white-male author: Samuel becomes Sandra, and the book achieves a level of popularity that Pepys's diary never reached until long after the author's death. In the face of Anton Laurier's admiration for Marcia's book, an exasperated Horace can only lament to Laurier that he ever answered the door when Marcia first knocked:

“I want to advise you—” he began hoarsely.

“What?”

“About raps. Don't answer them! Let them alone—have a padded door.”

(86)

Here, Horace functions as the spokesman for all men of the late 1910s who wondered whether things would ever be what they were before the war, if women would return to their domestic chores after a taste of steady wages.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> For dates of composition, I have followed Appendix VII of Jackson R. Bryer's The Short Stories of F. Scott Fitzgerald, Appendix B of Bryant Mangum's A Fortune Yet: Money in the Art of F. Scott Fitzgerald's Stories, and Appendix 4 of the Cambridge University Press edition of Flappers and Philosophers, edited by James L. W. West III.

<sup>2</sup> Fitzgerald greatly underrated "Bernice," which has become one of his most anthologized stories.

<sup>3</sup> Her describing the dance as an acrobatic stunt becomes significant, of course, when Horace must forgo a scholarship to support his family by literally performing acrobatic stunts.

<sup>4</sup> See my chapter on "Sentiment—and the Use of Rouge" for more.

<sup>5</sup> In "Head," Marcia, like the female salespeople King describes, uses her relational skills to forge her writing career: she calls upon columnist Peter Boyce Wendell—a fan of her dancing performances—to get her manuscript read. Wendell will make her famous. The traditional, masculine means of success in the business world—self-reliance, individual striving—gives way to a new, feminized reliance on relationships to get ahead.

<sup>6</sup> These figures do not include deaths resulting from the influenza pandemic of 1918.

<sup>7</sup> In one of the many great contrivances in the story, the bookish Horace once showed promise as a gymnast.

<sup>8</sup> Posters of the period often portrayed Germans as monsters who ravaged women. A classic example depicts a giant gorilla stepping out of the Atlantic and onto the American shore while carrying an obviously distraught woman; the beast wears a German combat helmet and wields a club marked with the word "KULTUR." The female figure's breasts

are exposed and words “DESTROY THIS MAD BRUTE” and “ENLIST” frame the scene.

<sup>9</sup> I do not suggest that period commentators would have been familiar with Gilman’s story. I use the story here as an example: “Wall-Paper” presents quite clearly the period belief in the connection between woman’s frailty and her susceptibility to “nerves.” That said, the story never endured the obscurity that contemporary scholars have described. Julie Bates Dock reports that, after its initial publication in The New England Magazine in 1892, the story appeared in 1899 as a monograph, which was reissued in 1901 and 1911; after 1920, when William Dean Howells selected the story for inclusion in The Great Modern Short Stories, “Wall-Paper” appeared regularly in anthologies throughout the twentieth century (4). It did not, as Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar claim, go “unprinted and unread” for nearly five decades (qtd. in Dock), nor was it “so quickly relegated to the backwaters of our literary landscape,” as Annette Kolodny would have it (qtd. in Dock). In fact, readers and commentators of the 1910s might have been familiar with “Wall-Paper.” The May 1916 issue of National Food Magazine refers to the tale in an article called “Choosing Wallpapers.” The author makes a humorous point about the importance of selecting the right wallpaper by referring to the damage the yellow wallpaper inflicts on Gilman’s narrator:

Perhaps some of you remember a story called, “The Yellow Wallpaper,” by Charlotte Perkins Gilman. It is a good story and should be read by every householder. I will go farther and aver that every housebuilder who papers a house for sale or rent, ought to be made to read that story. If he refuses, he should be tied hand and foot and obliged to



listen while it is first read and then sung to him, for the man who wouldn't listen gladly would be just the man who would inflict a "Yellow Wallpaper" on a defenceless prospective tenant.

The Yellow wallpaper was a hideous, grimy, jeering face that forever leered upon you from the design on the wall and it made a woman mad.  
(qtd. in Dock 117)

I think I can safely say that National Food Magazine wasn't the most widely circulated periodical of its day—and I doubt nineteen-year-old Fitzgerald read it regularly—but the article's use of "Wall-Paper" indicates that the story enjoyed some standing in the pop culture of the period.

<sup>10</sup> Repeated descriptions of Wilson's infirmity must have underscored the myriad public attacks on Wilson's leadership and courage by Theodore Roosevelt, advocate of the "strenuous life" and robust American manhood. Roosevelt's scathing remarks about the Wilson Administration's dealings with Germany, Mexico, and Haiti appeared on the front page of the 29 August 1915 New York Times under the headline "Roosevelt Calls Wilson Policy Weak and Timid"; in the article, he savages Wilson and Secretary of War Lindley M. Garrison for not backing up ultimatums to Mexico and Germany and for being men of words rather than action. In the first chapter of his 1916 book Fear God and Take Your Own Part, Roosevelt called the decision of Wilson and then Secretary of State William Jennings Bryan to "shirk its duty towards Belgium" (23) at the beginning of the Great War "a combination of mean timidity and mean commercial opportunism" (24). Then, according to Roosevelt, Wilson and Bryan attempted to cover their lack of courage in "profuse outbursts of wordy sentimentality and loud professions of attachment

to impossible and undesirable ideals. One of the besetting sins of many of our public servants (and of not a few of our professional moralists, lay and clerical) is to cloak weakness or baseness of action behind insincere oratory on behalf of impractical ideals” (24). In a 31 August 1916 speech in support of Republican presidential nominee Charles Evans Hughes, Roosevelt claimed that, in regards to Belgium, “[w]hen it became his duty to reduce [words] to deeds in the concrete, Wilson immediately flinched” (qtd. in “Colonel Assails”). For Roosevelt, Wilson “lacked the courage and the vision to lead the nation” in the face of the “evil revival in this country of non-American and anti-American” sentiments among what Roosevelt calls “hyphenates”—German-American dissenters, in particular—during the war; Wilson’s “lack of affirmative leadership ha[d] loosened” Americans’ “moral fibre.” The image of the bedridden invalid of Fall 1918 could only have confirmed Roosevelt’s depiction of Wilson as a passive, ineffectual figure.

<sup>11</sup> The American public were already primed to believe the worst of Edith Wilson and Grayson. Smith states that, in the months preceding the Wilsons’ 18 December 1915 wedding, wild rumors circulated claiming that the couple “had conspired” to eliminate the President’s first wife, Ellen Wilson, “and that the loyal Dr. Grayson had poisoned the First Lady” (20).

<sup>12</sup> Although Edith downplayed her role during Wilson’s illness, Weaver argues that she “underestimated” her importance:

Though Mrs. Wilson did not make many important political decisions, she did have influence on many of them because she alone decided who could see the President. Mrs. Wilson permitted few people other than herself

and Dr. Cary T. Grayson, Wilson's personal physician, to see him for a period of four months. This practice continued with exceptions through March, 1920, the month of the final defeat of the League of Nations in the Senate. (51)

In fact, Edith's personal conflicts with many of Wilson's closest advisors may have played a role in the Treaty's ultimate failure: "Mrs. Wilson's refusal to permit Wilson to hear important advice from men like Colonel House, Joseph Tumulty, Robert Lansing, and Lord Grey caused Wilson's judgment about compromise on the Treaty to be impaired" (Weaver 51).

<sup>13</sup> Intriguingly, Cooper argues that Edith was no neophyte in policy-making. During their courtship, Wilson "wooed the sometimes bashful, sexually reluctant widow by letting her read drafts of important policy statements, such as the Lusitania notes to Germany, and by sharing with her confidential political and diplomatic papers" (Warrior 294). Those who cast aspersions on her and her role during Wilson's illness did not understand "how well prepared she was, through acquaintance with her husband's work, to be a surrogate president" (Cooper, Warrior 294).

## Conclusion

This study attempts to open a new conversation about F. Scott Fitzgerald while contributing to a growing body of historical criticism of the author's works. During the late 1910s, many forces converged to create an atmosphere of angst for the average American male. The war didn't really function as a great break between a Victorian past and a modernist future, but instead exacerbated fears over changes that had been occurring for decades, as the nation industrialized and more women moved into the workplace; as women demanded equality and demonstrated why they deserved it; and as technological advances, like the automobile, heralded a sometimes frightening new age. But, whether or not the war did operate as a line of historical demarcation, Fitzgerald and many commentators of the period viewed it as such, and, as I have essayed to demonstrate, perception mattered most. The media of the period largely created these perceptions, and I should like to believe that my research has helped to recreate the war-era zeitgeist in the United States and will aid scholars and students in understanding more deeply Fitzgerald's attitude toward women. The period articles and essays I've unearthed will provide a basis for new avenues of interpretation. Ultimately, the three texts treated in this study, "Sentiment—and the Use of Rouge," This Side of Paradise, and "Head and Shoulders," deserve attention because they represent the period's frustrated response to war and women.

These three works, important in their own right, also offer a forecast of works that Fitzgerald produced in his prime. The period that I study comprises the author's formative years, when his opinions on women and gender relations solidified. Accordingly, I believe, my study illuminates his later, better known and regarded works,

for the texts that I treat represent stops along the “winding road to west egg,” as Robert and Helen H. Roulston call their work on Fitzgerald’s pre-Gatsby period. Looking at “Sentiment,” Paradise, and “Head” in relation to the author’s most important and highly regarded work, The Great Gatsby, readers will note many similarities among the female characters. Certainly, the typical Fitzgerald femme fatale is already in place, in all her terrifying splendor. The difference, I believe, amounts to a matter of degree. While the women of the earlier texts certainly leave a trail of dead or despondent men in their wake, Fitzgerald endows them with some redeemable qualities and presents some excuses for their behavior. One finds a more selfish, less sympathetic view of femininity in Gatsby.

“Sentiment” presents a more nuanced view of woman than one finds in the author’s twenties work. Eleanor Marbrooke’s seduction may lead to Clay’s destruction, but the young woman has good intentions. By having sex with Clay, Eleanor believes she gives him what he wants, some small measure of comfort and pleasure before his return to combat. After all, as Eleanor states, in order to do their part for the war effort, British women ““either put on trousers and drove cars all day or painted their faces and danced with officers all night.”” She describes sex as a patriotic duty, as ““self-sacrifice with a capitol [sic] S. Young men going to get killed for us.—We would have been their wives—we can’t be—therefore we’ll be as much as we can”” (154). Period readers would have questioned her morals, but nobody would likely deny her compassion, her “sacrifice.” In contrast, Daisy’s motives in Gatsby appear entirely selfish: Gatsby emerges as little more than a pawn in a high-stakes game between her and Tom. She uses Gatsby to get her philandering husband’s attention and to avoid responsibility for running down Myrtle. After the accident, Gatsby stands guard outside the Buchanan’s residence,

just in case Tom “tries any brutality” (113); he becomes a pathetic knight errant, still chasing a false grail and protecting and defending a woman not worth his effort. Clay’s chivalric code breaks down after his encounter with a seductress; he, too, can’t let go of the past and is left pondering the “[d]amned muddle” (159) that the war has made of English society. He represents all of the young soldiers who enlisted because they believed in a cause—foolishly seeking some Arthurian brand of heroism and adventure—but found only the disillusionment of the trenches. But Clay has an advantage over Gatsby: his seducer, unlike Gatsby’s, presents no subterfuge. Eleanor explains the changes war has wrought on England in detail and with perfect honesty—she does her best to help Clay understand. Gatsby receives no such consideration from Daisy.

One can also argue that self-sacrifice figures in Rosalind Connage’s actions in Paradise. She dumps Amory in order to marry the wealthy Dawson Ryder, but Rosalind, too, may have an unselfish excuse. Yes, when refusing Amory’s invitation to “get married—next week,” she says, “Oh we can’t. I’d be your squaw—in some horrible place,” and adds, “Darling, I don’t even do my own hair usually” (180). These statements certainly seem to prove her younger sister, Cecelia, correct in calling Rosalind “awfully spoiled” (159). Yet the reader has already learned that the Connages have fallen on hard financial times. Her mother tells Rosalind that “[she’s] been a very expensive proposition” and points out that her “father hasn’t what he once had” (166). Rosalind says she’d rather not discuss money, but her mother insists: “You can’t do anything without it. This is our last year in this house—and unless things change Cecelia won’t have the advantages you’ve had” (167). In other words, the family’s fate depends on Rosalind’s choice of spouse. Cecelia has a “pug nose” (171), and we can assume,

therefore, that she won't attract the kind of wealth that Rosalind can. Considering the pressure her family exerts on her, can we really blame Rosalind for her choice? Even Eleanor Savage, the "witch" (210) who appears to take Amory's virginity, gains the reader's sympathy when she issues this diatribe against the plight of woman in the 1910s:

"Rotten, rotten old world," broke out Eleanor suddenly, "and the wretchedest thing of all is me—oh, why am I a girl? Why am I not a stupid—? Look at you; you're stupider than I am, not much, but some, and you can lope about and get bored and then lope somewhere else, and you can play around with girls without being involved in meshes of sentiment, and you can do anything and be justified—and here am I with the brains to do everything, yet tied to the sinking ship of future matrimony. If I were born a hundred years from now, well and good, but now what's in store for me—I have to marry, that goes without saying. Who? I'm too bright for most men, and yet I have to descend to their level and let them patronize my intellect in order to get their attention. Every year that I don't marry I've got less chance for a first-class man." (219)

This frustration, this rage against her sad fate excuses her behavior. Her near-suicide at the end of "Young Irony" kills Amory's interest in and attraction to Eleanor, but the reader can understand her anger. She, like Rosalind, must marry and marry soon or lose the opportunity for a "first-class" husband. Rosalind/Eleanor represent the teenage version of Daisy; they have yet to feel the impact of the most grievous sin a woman can commit in Fitzgerald's fictional world: marrying for money over love. The weight of Daisy's error appears to have sapped her of any empathy, but Gatsby, every mired in a

romanticized past, can only see her as she was before the war took him to Europe, before Daisy's youth drowned in the sinking ship of matrimony. The world changed during the war, and Daisy changed with it, but Gatsby's great dream clouds his vision.

In addition, Fitzgerald's use of the automobile in Paradise prefigures its importance in Gatsby. As I argue in chapter two of this study, cars, like women, act as destructive forces in Paradise, and period sources constantly link the rise of motorized vehicles to the war and to women. The horror inherent in allowing women to take the wheel comes to full flower in Gatsby. The woman driver does not directly cause any deaths in Paradise; the car functions more as a symbol of debauchery. But, in Gatsby, the automobile evolves into much more than a symbol of decaying morals and feminine sexual liberation. Daisy's reckless driving kills two: Myrtle directly, and Gatsby after the fact because she does not confess to her crime. Moreover, Jordan Baker emerges as the voice of the reckless female driver. When she nearly runs down a group of workers—her “fender flicked a button on one man's coat”—Nick admonishes her: “Either you ought to be more careful or you oughtn't to drive at all” (48). She tells him that “other people are” careful: ““They'll keep out of my way,” she insisted. ‘It takes two to make an accident’” (48). While Fitzgerald seems to excuse Rosalind's and Eleanor's behavior by portraying them as victims of the times, he holds no such sympathy for the self-absorbed women of Gatsby: Daisy and Jordan endanger everyone around them but take no responsibility—and make no excuses—for their actions.

Finally, in “Head and Shoulders,” Marcia Tarbox does nothing to earn the reader's—or even Horace's—derision, for she merely does what she must to ensure her family's security. While Marcia genuinely cares for Horace and encourages his



intellectual pursuits, practical matters, in the form of marriage and pregnancy, intrude, and her talents—dancing and fiction writing—command a greater salary. She worries about the physical impact of his clerical work and especially his gymnastics—she asks whether his special “stunt” will amount to a “spectacular suicide” (81)—and brings out the best in Horace: he emerges from his solipsism and sacrifices his career for his family. Although philosopher Anton Laurier’s interest in Marcia’s novel dismays Horace, his wishing that he never opened the door to Marcia comes as something of a surprise, for, other than a bit of professional jealousy, he seems quite happy with her. Ultimately, aside from Horace’s relatively mild exclamation of bitterness at the end of the story, “Head” offers a portrait of marriage as a truly loving partnership: both Horace and Marcia sacrifice for the good of their family. Gatsby, conversely, depicts Daisy and Tom’s marriage as a battle of wills between two entirely self-absorbed individuals. Daisy turns the tables on her husband, taking on the traditional male role of philanderer, just as Marcia usurps Horace as primary breadwinner—and as tens of thousands of women invaded male territory in the wartime workplace. Gatsby survives the war across the Atlantic only to get caught in the crossfire of the battle of the sexes at home.

Perhaps one must look to another little-known story to find a true antecedent for the heroines of Gatsby and Fitzgerald’s other later novels. The main female character in “The Pierian Springs and the Last Straw” displays no redeeming qualities. Tom, a first-person narrator in the Nick Caraway mold, watches as his libertine Uncle George, a successful author, mutates from a “romantic figure” to “a less sure, less attractive and somewhat contemptible individual” in a confrontation with his widowed lover, Mrs. Fulham (172). She becomes his muse; he has produced “a series of novels, all of them

bitter, each of them with a woman as the principal character. Some of the women were bad. None of them were quite good” (165). This description foreshadows Fitzgerald’s later works and suits Gatsby especially well. When Mrs. Fulham berates George publicly, calling him her “little lap dog,” he proceeds to remove her wedding ring from her finger, breaking the digit in the process. Tom believes the story should end here, with his uncle “remain[ing...] a rather tragic semi-genius, ruined by a woman” (173). But one month later, the couple marry, and George never “write[s] or in fact [does] anything except play a middling amount of golf and get comfortably bored with his wife.”

“Pierian” offers an example of a common pattern for Fitzgerald’s male characters: they pursue women doggedly, and love them deeply, but, for the most part, end up in misery. In “Pierian,” Mrs. Fulham turns the “romantic” George into something “contemptible”; she emasculates him: George loses his creative power and produces no more fiction. But the story doesn’t offer a full picture of Mrs. Fulham; the well-rounded portrayal of the female victimizer will come later. Her effect on the male protagonist—George never realizes his potential—resembles that of Daisy and other later Fitzgerald heroines; but, unlike these well-developed female characters, Mrs. Fulham remains mostly off-stage and enigmatic.

An interview with Fitzgerald published in the 1 April 1922 issue of the New York Evening World offers a key to the full portraits of unsympathetic female characters that appear in his later novels. Marguerite Mooers Marshall asked Fitzgerald “how far he considered the young married woman to blame for the ‘damnation’ of her own life and that of her husband” (256). Fitzgerald replied, “She’s very largely to blame [...] Our American women are leeches. They’re an utterly useless fourth generation trading on the

accomplishments of their pioneer great-grandmothers. They simply dominate the American man” (256). For Fitzgerald, domesticity represented woman’s only hope for redemption: “If she keeps her house the way it should be kept and makes herself look pretty when her husband comes home in the evening and loves him and helps him with his work and encourages him—oh, I think that’s the sort of work that will save her” (258). Unless women conform to a traditional view of femininity, they become “leeches” and “utterly useless.” Of course, the upper-class female leading characters of Fitzgerald’s novels—not to mention his wife, Zelda—would never fit the traditional mold.

Arguably, the main female characters in The Great Gatsby, along with those in The Beautiful and Damned and Tender Is the Night, can be viewed as “utterly useless.” Marriage to Gloria decimates Anthony Patch in Damned, leaving him at the end of the novel “a bundled figure seated in a wheel chair” on the deck of a cruise ship (447). He has his money and Gloria, but bitter memories dominate his thoughts. Despite his great wealth, he wallows in misery. Nicole Diver’s tempestuous past may excuse her behavior in Tender, but marriage to her leaves Dick Diver hopeless. Unlike young male protagonists like Amory Blaine and Horace Tarbox, who still have time to make something of themselves, Dick finds only ruin at the end of Tender. He will never fulfill his great promise as a doctor and finds himself relegated to a small-town general practice and a scandalous affair with a grocery store clerk. Gatsby, of course, meets an even worse fate than Anthony and Dick. Having sold his soul to finance a quixotic grail quest, he finds only an empty cup. Daisy uses him to exact vengeance on her adulterous husband, and Gatsby’s lifeless body ends up floating in a pool of wasted potential. While

Clay Syneforth of “Sentiment” dies on the battlefield, with at least the appearance of having sacrificed himself for a cause, Gatsby’s demise results from his tawdry affair with a married woman—death and dishonor. Gatsby’s battlefield heroics in Europe don’t prepare him for the far more complicated war between the sexes at home, and he perishes in “another, more disastrous battle,” as Paradise’s protagonist describes his encounter with the postwar American woman (196). In Paradise, Amory gains self-knowledge and, in “Head,” Horace still has his great intelligence—both men have a good portion of their lives ahead of them. Paradise ends with hope, and “Head” with humor; Amory and Horace learn valuable lessons and seem to have chance at a brighter future. But the female “leeches” of the novels that follow Paradise suck Anthony, Gatsby, and Dick dry. No hope remains.

Ultimately, Fitzgerald’s later work indicates a hardening of the author’s attitude toward women, as nuance gives way to the stereotypical femme fatale. His real-life experiences with wealthy, spoiled debutantes and southern belles—like his first great love, Ginevra King, and his wife, Zelda—certainly contribute to his negative depictions of femininity. King would marry a much wealthier man while Zelda broke her engagement to Fitzgerald because she doubted his ability to provide (they would reunite when Fitzgerald informed her that Scribner’s had agreed to publish Paradise). Both women served as models for Rosalind Connage in Paradise. The portrait of a man led away from his true calling in “Head” proved prescient for Fitzgerald; his career suffered because he chose to lead a life of hedonism with Zelda rather than to focus on more serious work—he would instead write many quick, unsubstantial stories to support their lavish lifestyle. As Fitzgerald wrote Gatsby, Zelda embarked on an affair with a French

aviator; he would refer to the incident in his notebook as a kind of breaking point: “That September 1924, I knew something had happened that could never be repaired” (113).

Fitzgerald’s romantic relationships with women certainly had much to do with the changes in his female characters. But the zeitgeist of his formative years—the barrage of texts and images that created the tenor of the 1910s—led to the disintegration of his goodwill toward women, facilitating his much more unsympathetic view of women in the 1920s. Media of the period celebrated the progressive woman at the expense of the traditional man, creating frustration and anxiety that led to the fraught portrayal of male-female relationships in Fitzgerald’s early works. These same articles and essays, coupled with adversity in the author’s own romantic life, led to the empty, unapologetic female destroyers in his later works.

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## Appendix

This Side of Paradise

## Annotated Bibliography of Scholarship

In this dissertation, I have paid a great deal of attention to the critical histories of the featured texts. “Sentiment—and the Use of Rouge” and “Head and Shoulders” have brief histories, and I could easily describe the various opinions within the chapters that treat those texts. However, while This Side of Paradise hasn’t garnered the amount of scholarly attention afforded to better-regarded works like The Great Gatsby and Tender Is the Night, the novel has a relatively extensive critical history. Instead of offering a very lengthy outline of Paradise scholarship within the body of my dissertation and unnecessarily diverting readers from my main lines of argument, I include here an annotated bibliography of commentary on the novel. Although many of the sources below deal with Paradise along with other Fitzgerald texts, I focus on the scholars’ treatments of Paradise. I have omitted period reviews, introductions to editions of Paradise, foreign language articles, very brief treatments of the novel—unless they offer something substantial to the conversation—and dissertations (abstracts are readily available online).

Aldrich, Elizabeth Kaspar. “‘The most poetical topic in the world’: Women in the Novels of F. Scott Fitzgerald.” Scott Fitzgerald: The Promises of Life. Ed. A. Robert Lee. New York: St. Martin’s, 1989. 131–56. See esp. 132–37. The “real subject” of Paradise is “the use of women in the making of a writer.” The female characters’ function in the novel is “to impress and attract” Amory and

then depart, for they “can contribute more” after they exit. After Amory and Isabelle part, Amory states that ““she had been nothing except what he had read into her””: he comes to understand his role “in the creation of the character of the beloved.” Clara’s “eternal significance is the enigma his latent greatness will unfold—again once she is in the past.” Although Zelda certainly forms the “emotional centre” of the work, Amory’s affair with Eleanor, whom Fitzgerald links to several of Poe’s female characters, represents the “peak” of what Aldrich terms “Romantic Attitudes.” Eleanor’s saying she will play the role of Psyche for Amory “is self sacrificial”; she volunteers to serve as a “poetic subject,” an offer one might find in Poe, who held that a beautiful woman’s death was ““the most poetical topic in the world.”” Fitzgerald fits into a tradition of male American fiction writers, including Poe, Hawthorne, and James, in his “use of a living model [...] as subject.” But the connection to Poe is most significant: he “provides us with a context for reading Fitzgerald, or at least Fitzgerald’s women,” as both writers depict women characters operating “within a literary culture understood to be inimical to them.” Poe’s “Oval Portrait” portrays art as “vampirish” and “exposes the lie of the artist’s exaltation of his subject which the naïveté of Amory Blaine espoused: in so far as she is model, she is not wife; in so far as she is the subject of art, she is not beloved of the artist, she is cannibalized.” As Nancy Milford has demonstrated, Fitzgerald didn’t stop at using Zelda as a model for his female characters: he placed Zelda’s actual words—from her letters, diaries, and other writings—in their mouths. Fitzgerald’s meeting and then losing Zelda during the course of composing

Paradise “refocused” the text; he drew from Zelda’s letters in his descriptions of Rosalind and for Rosalind’s dialogue. Fitzgerald’s using Zelda, and especially her illness, as subject matter for his novels “really can seem vampirish.” In all of his works, Fitzgerald takes as his subject “the transmutation or translation of living woman to symbol.”

Aldridge, John. “Fitzgerald: The Horror and the Vision of Paradise.” After the Lost Generation: A Critical Study of the Writers of Two Wars. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1951. New York: Noonday, 1958. 44–58. See especially pages 44–46. Traces the development of Fitzgerald’s “vision of Paradise” from Paradise through Tycoon. Amory’s description of the ““real moral let-down”” of the 1910s appears “oddly innocent,” ultimately nothing more than “an intrigue of manners.” Women lose “their curiosity after the first kiss” while young men find satisfaction in “shy clasplings and sentimental poetry.” But something darker, “almost undetectable even to Fitzgerald himself,” lurks beneath this façade, and Amory can never achieve “full possession of his enchantment”: he feels disgust after kissing Myra; the devil appears at Phoebe and Axia’s flat, and a horrific aura drifts about the hotel room in “Supercilious Sacrifice.” Such episodes point to “a disturbing preoccupation with sexual guilt in Fitzgerald” but also “even deeper disturbances in Paradise itself.” These “horrors” haunt Amory just as they would the insomniac Fitzgerald of “The Crack-up,” “bring[ing] with them the same conviction of failure” that foreshadowed Fitzgerald’s mental breakdown and his death: “they are horrors that touch at the core of Fitzgerald’s work and are implicit in his vision, his ‘tragic sense,’ of the life of his time.” In the novel,

Paradise is both “innocent” and “haunted,” but “not a perfect revelation of either.” Amory feels “horror, but at no time is it projected into the terms of the narrative” because Fitzgerald himself may not have understood it.

Allen, Joan M. “This Side of Paradise.” Candles and Carnival Lights: The Catholic Sensibility of F. Scott Fitzgerald. New York: New York UP, 1978. 62–83. The influence of Monsignor Darcy, Amory’s interest in “appearances of Catholicism,” and “the book’s Catholic language” play a role in Fitzgerald’s “most sustained overtly Catholic piece of fiction,” but what really marks Paradise as a “product of Fitzgerald’s Catholic consciousness” is Amory’s linking women, sex, and evil. All of the women in the novel function as “masked destroyers”—starting with his mother. Amory has an “essentially incestuous” relationship with Beatrice, who serves as a precursor to Eleanor Savage, “the embodiment of the evil that is Woman.” The main character’s “surely abnormal” reaction to kissing Myra reveals his “disturbed sexuality.” When Amory dreams about being married to the saintly Clara, he “awaken[s] in a cold panic,” indicating “that he cannot relate in an elemental way to a flesh-and-blood woman who is not a destroyer.” During his affair with Rosalind, Amory briefly puts aside his issues with sexuality, but the relationship falls victim to “the problem of money and its intimate involvement in sexual relationships.” With the help of the novel’s female characters, Amory finally realizes “his infinite capacity for evil.”

Brucoli, Matthew J. “A Collation of F. Scott Fitzgerald’s This Side of Paradise.” Studies in Bibliography 9 (1957): 263–265. Compares 1920 and 1954 editions of Paradise and lists corrections in spelling and usage, along with other revisions.

- . "Fitzgerald's Marked Copy of This Side of Paradise." Fitzgerald/Hemingway Annual (1971): 64–70. Offers list of marginal comments Fitzgerald made in his copy of Paradise.
- . Some Sort of Epic Grandeur: The Life of F. Scott Fitzgerald. 1981. Rev. ed. New York: Carroll & Graf, 1991. Standard biography of Fitzgerald offers brief commentary on the novel and details the story behind the publication of Paradise, its reception, the real-life models for the characters, and editor Maxwell Perkins's well-documented weakness as a proofreader. While Fitzgerald "was still a self-conscious or self-indulgent writer" when he wrote his first novel, "the warm voice of his prose" marks Paradise "as authentic Fitzgerald." The fragmented narrative and inconsistent point of view "resulted from Fitzgerald's inexperience." The "Devil" section may appear "unconvincing and faintly absurd," but Fitzgerald uses such supernatural elements to "dramatize Amory's sense of spiritual corruptibility" and his conflation of sexuality and evil. The novel ends with Amory asserting that he knows himself, but Brucoli finds this claim "arguable."
- Bryer Jackson R., ed. "This Side of Paradise." F. Scott Fitzgerald: The Critical Reception. The American Critical Tradition, No. 5. New York: Burt Franklin, 1978. 1–32. Compiles twenty-nine period reviews of Paradise along with a "Checklist of Additional Reviews."
- Burhans, Clinton S. "Structure and Theme in This Side of Paradise." JEGP: Journal of English and Germanic Philology 68 (1969): 605-24. Scholars have underestimated Fitzgerald's attention to structure and theme in Paradise. The first thirty pages of the novel serve as an introduction to Amory. The balance of Book



One documents Amory's changing goals: initially, the main character pursues popularity at prep school and college, but he fails as a student at Princeton and becomes more interested in his "intellectual and spiritual potentialities." While seeking superficial goals, Amory takes the shallow Dick Humbird as a model and pursues the vacuous Isabelle Borgé as a lover; when he begins seeking something more profound, Amory looks to the much more substantial Burne Holiday and Clara Page. The "Interlude" presents the war as a breaking point: the world "has forever changed," making his prewar "experience and education irrelevant."

Book Two parallels Book One. In the first part of the book, Amory pursues traditional goals like marital and financial stability, essentially taking middle-class American society as his model. But when he fails, he strives for "purpose and value," seeking "a final stripping away of illusions and poses." Rosalind embodies his conventional goals, but he takes a different path when he meets Eleanor, with whom he finds an "imaginative and intellectual and probably physical" love. When Amory sacrifices his reputation for Alec, he gives up Rosalind forever, and "the main body of the novel ends"; the final twenty-eight pages serve "essentially as a conclusion." Fitzgerald also links the books thematically. In both books, Amory progresses from "conformity to rejection" and from "dream" to "disillusion." The epigraphs, subtitles, and the "personality-personage dichotomy" reflect the central themes of Paradise. Brooke's and Wilde's quotations dovetail with the theme of learning through personal experience. The section headings "The Romantic Egotist" and "The Education of a Personage" indicate the "intended direction" of Amory's education: from

personality to personage. The sex-beauty-evil link unifies the novel's themes. After having sex with Eleanor, Amory can no longer separate feminine sexuality and beauty: "beauty in women becomes one with their sexual appeal and thereby associated with connotations of evil." Attributing Amory's linking of sex and evil to guilt and his latent Puritanism is "too easy": throughout Paradise, Fitzgerald underscores Amory's fears of any form of excess and "uncontrolled sensation, emotion, and imagination." Ultimately, Amory aspires to become a personage, practicing self-control and disavowing "self-indulgent aestheticism."

Cross, K. G. W. F. Scott Fitzgerald. Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1964. *Writers and Critics*. New York: Capricorn, 1971. See pp. 20–31. The "immaturely imagined" Paradise has many flaws, but "[i]t was the first novel to tackle with any degree of seriousness the problems confronting youth in post-war America." Amory's quest may appear "inconsequential and, at times, absurd," but the postwar generation would have identified with it. The novel's fragmented narrative "is less impressionistic than cinematic" and "mov[es] with the jerkiness of an early film"; any "coherence" the novel possesses comes from Fitzgerald's portrayal of Amory's attempt to understand himself and become a personage. Amory finally reaches this goal when he "reconciles himself to the misfortunes that befall him in Book Two." Without a family or a lover, Amory realizes that he wants to be "necessary to people" and thinks socialism can help him accomplish this goal.

Curnutt, Kirk. "Fitzgerald's Consumer World." A Historical Guide to F. Scott Fitzgerald. Ed. Kirk Curnutt. New York: Oxford UP, 2004. 85–128. See pp.

93–96. Uses Simone Weil Davis’s and Stuart Ewen’s theories of gender and consumerism—which define men as sellers and women as discerning buyers—to explicate the dynamics of Amory and Isabelle’s relationship. “[M]ass culture” forms Isabelle’s “romantic expectations,” and Amory must live up to them: “she knows what she wants, and she is shopping for the right supplier.” Amory’s shirt stud marks Isabelle’s neck—a “sudden intrusion of function over fashion”—dashing “her image of him as a debonair figure,” and she refuses to kiss him. Since the “kiss ‘seals the deal’” in the novel’s teenage romances, Isabelle’s refusal indicates that she “no longer ‘buys’ his image.” He then tries to force her to kiss him, moving from a “soft approach” to “the ‘hard sell.’”

- . “F. Scott Fitzgerald, Age Consciousness, and the Rise of American Youth Culture.” The Cambridge Companion to F. Scott Fitzgerald. Ed. Ruth Prigozy. New York: Cambridge UP, 2002. 28–47. See pp. 31–33. Looks at Paradise in relation to 1920s youth culture. Unlike most young-adult novels, Paradise doesn’t end with the hero assuming adult responsibilities; it ends with Amory in a transition stage, knowing himself but not knowing where he’s going. Books about young men by authors like Owen Johnson and Booth Tarkington depicted adolescents “as adults wanted to see them” while Fitzgerald portrayed them “as they saw themselves—as restless, hungry for experience, prone to temptation and excess.” Scholars have cited the influence of naturalism, Freud, and Joyce on Fitzgerald’s portrait of youth, but the novel also reflects the changing views of adolescence during the period.

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wastage is a central motif” in the novel: Amory sees youth “not as a formative period of promise but a momentary pleasure whose entire raison d’être is defined by its own inevitable passing.”

Donaldson, Scott. “The Political Development of F. Scott Fitzgerald.” Prospects: The Annual of American Studies 6 (1981): 312–55. See pp. 315–17. Offers brief discussion of Paradise as an example of Fitzgerald’s early thinking on political issues. Donaldson calls Amory’s lecture on socialism “unpersuasive”: Amory “does not condemn” the wealthy Mr. Ferrenby and indicates that he finds himself drawn to socialism because he’s currently poor. Most likely, Fitzgerald had Amory turn to socialism at the end of the novel for two reasons: to enhance the book’s shock value, for talk of socialism would certainly have rankled older readers; and to attempt to answer Scribner’s editors’ criticism that the novel reached no real conclusion. Amory’s ideas about politics reveal the influence of Shaw and especially Wells; Edmund Wilson recognized Wells’s hand in Paradise’s critique of commercialism and “its disillusioning sense that all ‘Gods are dead.’”

Eble, Kenneth. F. Scott Fitzgerald. Rev. ed. Twayne’s United States Authors Ser. 36. Boston: Twayne, 1977. See pp. 35–51. On pages 35–41, Eble discusses connections between events and characters in Paradise and their real-life models. Pages 44–51 present a critique of the novel. Paradise cannot “stand solely on its merits” but offers insight into Fitzgerald’s development as a writer. The narrative “does not really go anywhere”—the text simply presents a character going from one experience to another—but, nonetheless, Fitzgerald viewed the novel as a

“quest book.” The author presents scenes, then quickly moves to another: though “[a] roughly chronological order holds the scenes together,” Fitzgerald does not pay “close attention to juxtaposing scenes for effectiveness” or to progressing toward a dénouement. The novel’s best moments come in Book One when Fitzgerald uses more of his own experiences. In the second half, Fitzgerald “is more concerned with describing states of mind which have not yet clarified in his own life.” The “Interlude” does not represent the true breaking point in the book; the “real division comes at Chapter Four of Book One,” when Burne Holiday’s actions lead Amory in a different direction. Amory and Rosalind’s affair dominates Book Two; everything thereafter seems like an “appendix,” with Amory and Eleanor’s tryst offering little more than “unintentionally comic relief.” Amory’s discussion of socialism near the end of the book draws from Wells and Shaw and features little of the “sense of irony” that marks the early portions of the novel and Fitzgerald’s mature work.

Edwards, Owen Dudley. “The Lost Teigueen: F. Scott Fitzgerald’s Ethics and Ethnicity.” Scott Fitzgerald: The Promises of Life. Ed. A. Robert Lee. New York: St. Martin’s, 1989. 181–214. Treats Fitzgerald’s literary and philosophical influences, including H. G. Wells, Henry James, Arthur Conan Doyle, Compton Mackenzie, Sigourney Fay, and Shane Leslie, along with Fitzgerald’s Irish heritage and Catholicism. On pages 191–194, Edwards focuses on Paradise, offering an analysis of Fay’s impact on the novel. Paradise includes Fay’s words—virtually verbatim—from letters and personal conversations, and Fay “carefully corrected Fitzgerald’s fictional portrait of himself.” Fitzgerald’s

use of Fay's letters creates a problem: the young man that Fay—and his fictional counterpart Monsignor Darcy—addresses “appears to be a much more likable character than” Amory. Fay's love for Fitzgerald comes through in the letters; but, since “Fitzgerald did not love himself,” the novel's main character “splits into different people, that addressed by Darcy being more worth of literary as well as human attention.” Fitzgerald based “Young Irony” on a story Fay told him, and Fay made sure “that Fitzgerald got it right.”

Friedrich, Otto. “F. Scott Fitzgerald: Money, Money, Money.” American Scholar 29 (1960): 392–405. Features brief treatment of attitudes toward gender and race in Paradise on pages 393–95. Period commentators considered Paradise to be risqué, but, if we are to believe Fitzgerald, the flapper kept “her boyish virginity intact” until marriage and challenged established morals only through the “titillating talk that young girls have always used” and the “frigid kissing” that Fitzgerald's female characters “perform as a substitute for both sex and love.” In fact, the terms “affair” and even “making love” in Fitzgerald's works indicate nothing more than kissing. Although Fitzgerald portrays Axia and Phoebe as “diabolical” because they will “sell” themselves “for a few drinks,” he appears to have no problem with Rosalind offering herself for ““\$25,000 a year.”” The reader may be “tempted” to read Fitzgerald's attitude toward women in the novel “in terms of homosexuality,” because Fitzgerald's referring to lovers as ““adversaries,”” the sex-evil conflation, the depiction of women as available “only by deed of sale,” and the fact that Amory's strongest bonds are with other men

“certainly appears homosexual.” However, “Fitzgerald was too innocent for such sins.”

Fryer, Sarah Beebe. “Romantic Love: The Luxury No Woman Could Afford This Side of Paradise.” Fitzgerald’s New Women: Harbingers of Change. Studies in Modern Literature, No. 86. Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1988. 19–28.

Fitzgerald portrays men as idealistic and women as realistic in love matters, demonstrating “his intuitive awareness of the economic, emotional, and intellectual sanctions the American patriarchy imposed on many of the women of his generation.” Amory’s love interests disappoint him because they do not meet “his inflated romantic ideals.” He feels they are “toying unfairly with his emotions,” but women of the period “simply cannot afford to take romance as seriously as Amory does.” Isabelle, Clara, Rosalind, and Eleanor demonstrate their awareness of and frustration with women’s plight. When Amory tries to force Isabelle to kiss him, she refuses, showing “a strength of character new to women” of the period: she dictates the terms of the physical relationship, “assert[ing] her right to her own feelings, to a sense of identity independent of her male companion’s.” Amory wishes to marry the beautiful widow Clara, but she insists that she’ll never marry again: her husband’s death provides her with “a second chance for independence and self-actualization,” and “her determination to remain single rather than compromise herself” indicates a “strength of character.” Rosalind jokingly conflates romance and business, “suggest[ing] a clear correlation between women’s social activities and prostitution.” She marries the wealthy Dawson because she knows she’ll be unhappy with Amory;



and, though Rosalind “acts out of responsibility towards herself,” Amory condemns her. Eleanor rages about women’s subordinate role, demonstrating “Fitzgerald’s knack for serving unwittingly as a social historian.” Her near suicide shows her frustration in knowing “that she is doomed to waste her life in the company of men like Amory.”

Gallo, Rose Adrienne. “An Affair of Youth: This Side of Paradise.” F. Scott Fitzgerald. Modern Literature Monographs. New York: Frederick Ungar, 1978. Paradise offers a “searching vivid portrait of American youth” of the late 1910s, but the novel suffers from a “crude, episodic structure” and the immature writer’s inability “to evaluate the quality of Amory’s experience.” The link between beauty and evil has an important contradiction: while Amory comes to believe he must avoid beauty because it is evil, he also believes that “the essence of beauty, abstracted from its various forms, is harmony.” The contradiction arises from Amory’s “mistakenly perceive[ing] as beautiful and desirable that which, in essence, is distorted and ugly: the insipid Isabelle, the mercenary Rosalind, the half-mad Eleanor, the licentious Jill.”

Geismar, Maxwell. “F. Scott Fitzgerald: Orestes at the Ritz.” The Last of the Provincials: The American Novel, 1915–1925. 1943. New York: Hill and Wang, 1959. 287–352. See pp. 292–97. Brief study treats various aspects of Paradise without getting into detail about any of them. Geismar sees “more complex[ity]” in Paradise “than [its] glistening and entertaining surface might indicate.” The novel’s female characters “are undergraduate Madame Bovarys” while Amory “is actually a mixture of literary trends,” with echoes of works by

Gilbert and Sullivan, Nietzsche, and Compton Mackenzie. Even in the novel's early chapters, Amory's character offers "intimations of a vicious emotional circle" to which Fitzgerald's later male characters, "and Fitzgerald himself," will fall victim. Amory's relationship with Beatrice "is the only valid human relationship he has," and his preoccupation with money "comes almost to supplant his affection for [her]." Damned's Anthony Patch "seems to be a later Amory Blaine," but the "story is so much better [...] that it is no longer the same story."

Gillin, Edward. "Princeton, Pragmatism, and Fitzgerald's Sentimental Journey." F. Scott Fitzgerald in the Twenty-first Century. Eds. Jackson R. Bryer, Ruth Prigozy, and Milton R. Stern. Tuscaloosa: U of Alabama P, 2003. 38–53. Traces the influence of William James's pragmatism—especially its abhorrence of closed systems and "its related time-sense"—in Paradise. Gillin believes that Fitzgerald may have read pragmatist texts for philosophy courses at Princeton and provides evidence that Fitzgerald read James's Varieties of Religious Experience: Amory's self-questioning in chapter V of Paradise resembles a passage in "The Religion of Healthy-Mindedness"; and Fitzgerald's description of the devil echoes a passage from "The Sick Soul." The presence of James is felt throughout the novel. Nearly all of Amory's major personal problems during his college years result from a conflict between his desire to conform and the "Jamesian pragmatist's revolt from the constraints of 'closed systems.'" Amory achieves success according to the university's ideals but loses everything because of academic troubles: dissatisfied with conformity, he "half-accidentally chucked

the whole thing.” Later, when Amory sacrifices his reputation in order to shield Alec, he cuts himself off from the past, “becoming a ‘personage,’ one who pragmatically acts in the freedom from constraints of established creed, custom, or caste.” The escape from closed systems frees Amory, but Paradise offers a more negative slant on the pragmatist “time-sense.” The pragmatist lives in the moment, making “moral decisions” without the constraints of tradition: “Fresh instants of experience govern.” Throughout “The Debutante,” Fitzgerald concentrates on the fleeting nature of Rosalind and Amory’s relationship: when Amory tells Rosalind he loves her, she replies, “I love you—now.” When the relationship ends, Amory complains that “life had changed.” But Rosalind lives in the moment: she asserts that she hates responsibility, “a virtue embedded in time: not pragmatist instants of time, but the time that extends sempiternally backward through memory and forward through everlasting commitment.” Rosalind is a prime example of “the pragmatist New Woman who lived only in the most current moment of experience.” Ultimately, though Amory claims to be romantic and not sentimental, he “believes in a love that exists yesterday, today, and tomorrow” and “is, by his own definition, a sentimentalist.”

Good, Dorothy Ballweg. “‘A Romance and a Reading List’: The Literary References in This Side of Paradise.” Fitzgerald/Hemingway Annual (1976): 35–64. Notes the importance of Fitzgerald’s literary references in Paradise. The references relate to the novel’s themes: the texts Amory reads provide insight into his moods and attitudes at various points in the narrative. Fitzgerald’s knowledge of the texts he cites indicates that critics of Fitzgerald’s intellect—Alfred Kazin, Malcolm

Cowley, Edmund Wilson, and Glenway Westcott, for example—underestimate him. Good provides a list of all the texts and authors Fitzgerald references in Paradise, identifying the authors of the texts, representative works by the authors, and publication information.

Gross, Barry. “This Side of Paradise: The Dominating Intention.” Studies in the Novel 1 (1969): 51–59. Edmund Wilson errs in saying that Paradise has “no dominating intention.” The novel has “unity and force, and it is about something”: like all of Fitzgerald’s novels, Paradise is about the protagonist coming to understand that, in Fitzgerald’s words, “the redeeming things are not “happiness and pleasure” but the deeper satisfactions that come out of the struggle.” Because Paradise is a bildungsroman, the dominating intention is more obscure than in later works, and Amory doesn’t understand the nature of his struggle until the end of the narrative. When Amory tries to “classify himself” early in the novel, “[h]e is searching for order,” for “something definite.” As Darcy surmises, Amory’s prudery in regards to sex has its roots in his fear of indulgence and losing control, not in “convention”; he associates indulgence with sexuality and, in turn, with women, beauty, and the aristocratic license represented by Dick Humbird. The devil appears in the form of Dick, and the “false ideal” that Amory pursued, now pursues him. When Rosalind rejects Amory, he “realizes he has no place in the system he inherited,” and his supercilious sacrifice for Alec completely severs him from this system. Darcy’s distinction between the personality and the personage emerges as the most important mode of classification. The novel centers on Amory becoming what he

calls a “spiritually unmarried” man, one “divorced from his inheritance”—a personage—as opposed to a “spiritually married” man, who “is wed to the system he inherits” and “committed to the status quo”—a personality. The novel begins with a “questioning” of the system and ends with a “total rejection.”

Haywood, Lynn. “Historical Notes for This Side of Paradise.” Resources for American Literature Study 10 (1980): 191–208. Annotates the “more obscure and elusive” historical references in Paradise.

Hebel, Udo J. “‘Platitudes and Prejudices and Sentimentalisms’: F. Scott Fitzgerald’s This Side of Paradise and Sentimental Popular Culture.” Sentimentality in Modern Literature and Popular Culture. Ed. Winfried Herget. Tübingen, Germany: Narr, 1991. 139–53. Examines references to books, authors, and songs in Paradise, concluding that Fitzgerald uses allusions to popular sentimental texts to disparage the sentimental tradition. The works that Fitzgerald mentions were popular during the period but regarded as examples of “sentimentality in the pejorative—modernist—sense of the term.” The allusions have significance: Fitzgerald associates characters with certain literary or musical works, using the allusions “to characterize the fictional characters.” Fitzgerald deems simpleton Fred Sloane’s library “typical” and associates sentimental love poetry with Isabelle and Rosalind, who represent “the intellectually indifferent, outwardly-directed, and careless young female” so common in Fitzgerald’s oeuvre. In contrast, Fitzgerald connects Amory and the intellectual Burne Holiday to naturalist and socialist writers. The author uses literary allusions to demonstrate Amory’s maturity: young Amory favors popular writers, but, after meeting Tom

and Burne, he looks down on them. By presenting sentimental popular literature in a negative light, Fitzgerald joined young scholars of the period who disparaged pop culture and the genteel tradition.

Hendriksen, Jack. This Side of Paradise as a Bildungsroman. New York: Peter Lang, 1993. Many scholars classify Paradise as a bildungsroman, but they rarely discuss in any depth exactly how Paradise fits into the genre. An examination of aspects of the bildungsroman in Goethe's Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre, Joyce's A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man, Mackenzie's Sinister Street, and Paradise "reveals the uniqueness of each author" and shows that Paradise has more in common with Meister and Portrait than Sinister. In the first section, "This Side of Paradise: Criticism," Hendriksen presents a critical history of Paradise, focusing on how treatments by the Cleatons, Mizener, Hoffman, Aldridge, Miller, Piper, Perosa, Kahn, Tuttleton, Lehan, Sklar, Hindus, Burhans, Stern, Gallo, Allen, Stavola, West, Way, and Seiders relate to his thesis. "The Bildungsroman," draws from studies by Swales, Howe, Buckley, Moretti, Alden, and Hirsch to define the form. Section three, "Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre," reads Goethe's Meister as a prime example of the bildungsroman, noting similarities between it and Paradise. Like Amory, Wilhelm "is charmingly idealistic and naive," is unlucky in romance, lets his emotions get the better of him, and "has an attractive, inveterate desire to do the best he can for himself and others." Paradise's Clara Page bears a strong resemblance to Meister's "Beautiful Soul." The fourth section looks at Mackenzie's use of the bildungsroman. Sinister features themes common to the form and the typical "apprenticeship pattern" but deviates from the traditional

bildungsroman—as exemplified by Meister—in that it has no “specific purpose, or controlling idea” and its main character “lacks the inner drive of the Bildungsroman hero.” Even the apprenticeship pattern collapses “under the weight of” Mackenzie’s adherence to the tenets of the saturation novel. Critics have overestimated Fitzgerald’s debt to Mackenzie: “More unconscious similarities exist between Paradise and Meister, than conscious similarities between Paradise and Sinister Street.” Section five treats Portrait as a bildungsroman. Unlike Sinister, a prime example of the saturation novel, Portrait belongs to the novel of selection school. Paradise “is much more selective” rather than “‘saturated,’ like Sinister Street.” In section six, Hendriksen shows that, when viewed as a bildungsroman, Paradise’s oft-maligned structure becomes clear; critics who ignore this “misread the novel.” Amory resembles the conventional bildungsroman protagonist—Portrait’s Stephen and Meister’s Wilhelm—more than he does Michael Fane, the hero of Mackenzie’s Sinister. But Fitzgerald adds an “American twist” to the conventional apprenticeship pattern with his emphasis on the importance of social status and wealth. Paradise has thematic and structural coherence: Amory progresses “towards identity and autonomy” as “the complex sex-beauty-evil-death theme” develops and Amory becomes less arrogant and self-centered “through a series of disillusiones, which ultimately puts him on the right track.” Fitzgerald’s use of theater imagery also highlights Amory’s development. Throughout Amory’s “life as an egotist,” references to the stage and acting lend a “superficial, stage-like quality” to his experiences. But after Darcy’s death, Amory stands outside a theater as the

crowd exits: “The image is one of common, mediocre humanity. The theater no longer connotes gaiety or posing, or even action. The show is over,” and Amory begins to become a personage.

Hindus, Milton. “This Side of Paradise.” F. Scott Fitzgerald: An Introduction and Interpretation. American Authors and Critics Ser. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1968. 17–26. Points out various flaws in Paradise. The novel has “philosophy and ideas,” but they are “threadbare and inadequate,” and Amory’s claim to self-knowledge rings “hollow.” Its “principal defect” is that, instead of “enlighten[ing]” readers, Fitzgerald attempts to “dazzle” them, believing that they “[are] interested in the purely ‘social’ side of his subject apart from its human values.” Like his later novels, Paradise reflects Fitzgerald’s search for an American aristocracy and the conflict between his attraction to the wealthy and his “profound resentment” of them. But only the “Devil” episode and Fitzgerald’s “style” offer glimpses of the young author’s potential.

Hoffman, Frederick J. “Her Sweet Face and My New Clothes.” The Twenties: American Writing in the Postwar Decade. New York: Viking, 1955. 123–32. Discusses Paradise’s debt to Compton Mackenzie and the novel’s influence and popularity. Both Paradise and Mackenzie’s Sinister Street feature young men coming of age at elite universities and with the guidance of clergymen; both protagonists have comparable attitudes toward campus life, become disillusioned with tradition, and endure spiritual crises. The many college novels of the twenties—attempts, perhaps, to match Paradise’s impressive sales figures—bear the stamp of Paradise. The novel’s popular success “is a fascinating and puzzling



fact,” but, despite the preponderance of “clichés and scraps of attitudes” gleaned from many inferior books, Fitzgerald presents an accurate portrait of his generation.

Hoffman, Madelyn. “This Side of Paradise: A Study in Pathological Narcissism.”

Literature and Psychology 28.3–4 (1978): 178–85. Reads Paradise through the lens of Heinz Kohut’s and Otto Kernberg’s concept of pathological narcissism and Winnicott’s theory of True and False Selves. When Amory loses those who functioned as models or mirrors for him—especially Darcy, Amory’s “most flattering mirror”—he loses his identity and “suffer[s] the ‘emptiness’ of the narcissist described by Kohut and Kernberg who has lost all of his idealized mirrors.” Amory’s linking beautiful women and evil indicates “an awareness on some level that the narcissistic personality’s weakness for charisma in others represents a quest for reunion with the original narcissistic charismatic parent.” In pursuing charismatic women like Isabelle, Rosalind, Clara, and Eleanor, Amory seeks “reunion with the narcissistic Beatrice”; the evil he finds in beauty derives “from his compulsive need to shine and glitter as he once did” in his mother’s eyes. Instead of meeting the needs of her child, a narcissistic parent like Beatrice “fulfills her own needs [...]—mistaking them for the child’s.” As a result, Amory “develops what Winnicott calls a False Self.” Amory’s claiming at the end of Paradise that he knows himself and nothing else may indicate that he has, at long last, discovered his True Self—but it could also represent “a withdrawal into narcissistic isolation.” (Note: In regards to Amory’s army

service, Hoffman states that “[h]e serves two years in the States, through luck avoiding combat duty.” But Amory does go to Europe and sees combat.)

Hook, Andrew. “Cases for Reconsideration: Fitzgerald’s This Side of Paradise and The Beautiful and Damned.” Scott Fitzgerald: The Promises of Life. Ed. A. Robert Lee. New York: St. Martin’s, 1989. 17–36. Examines Fitzgerald’s critical history, concluding that the traditional view of Fitzgerald—an immature writer who never quite understood his talent—unjustly lives on and that critics have been most unfair to his first two novels. Fitzgerald should have defended himself against critical attacks but lacked intellectual confidence. While “excesses, the romantic extravagance, the sometimes failed lyricism, the name-dropping and intellectual pretentiousness” certainly mar Paradise and Damned, the novels still have “freshness and appeal.” Critical tradition viewed the novels’ “moral ambiguities” as “damaging flaws,” but Hook admires “the absence of simple judgements, the uncertainties and confusions, the sense of being bewildered by things.” Rosalind’s stating that she “‘dread[s] responsibility’” may make her seem more shallow “than Fitzgerald realizes,” but, for Hook, “the passage resists such a simple judgement.” Fitzgerald comprehends youthful needs and “is not in the business of condemning her.” Critics have claimed that nothing in the novel prepares the reader for Amory’s speech on socialism, but Hook admires its “unexpectedness and open-endedness.”

Huonder, Eugen. “This Side of Paradise.” The Functional Significance of Setting in the Novels of Francis Scott Fitzgerald. Bern, Switzerland: Herbert Lang, 1974. 21–37. Fitzgerald’s descriptions of Paradise’s various settings offer insight into the

novel's characters. The vague description of the Blaines' house in Lake Geneva shows "the lack of affection and close family ties between the occupants." After discussing Amory's academic failures at Princeton, Fitzgerald offers a description of the university's majestic spires indicates that the protagonist realizes the school's "moral and cultural significance." Amory first describes New York City as full of "style and glitter" and "tall white buildings," but the city becomes "filthy" after his sexual temptation at Axia and Phoebe's flat. The opulence of Rosalind's room signifies "her extravagance and hedonism," while the disarray "hints at [her] slipshod morality." Ramilly County, the site of Amory's first experience with sexual intercourse, morphs into "a landscape of evil."

James, Pearl. "History and Masculinity in F. Scott Fitzgerald's This Side of Paradise." Modern Fiction Studies 51 (2005): 1–33. Paradise reflects period anxiety over the feminization of American culture and features pervasive homoeroticism. Critics have blamed "the novel's (in)famous generic incoherence" on Fitzgerald's ambivalence about Amory's relationship to his class, but Paradise's defects actually arise from "cultural anxiety about the coherence of masculinity." In the novel, Fitzgerald presents "masculinity as an unachievable ideal, complicated without by contradictory cultural imperatives and within by homoerotic desires, experiences of loss, and feelings of inadequacy." The "loss of national virility" in the period stems from the emergence of the leisure class: Amory inherits his effeminacy from his father, Stephen, whose wealth allows him to spend much of his time engaging in the "effeminate pastime" of reading. Amory spends most of his youth with his mother, who only "enforces habits of leisure," further

feminizing him. To achieve masculinity Amory must link himself to history in the form of World War I, but, at first, he expresses disinterest in the war, paying more attention to writing and acting in a play for Princeton's Triangle Club—and playing a female character. The living arrangement at the university does little to help, for “evidence suggests that the homosexual atmosphere of boarding school and college life was itself a kind of open secret in this period.” At Princeton, Amory looks to Dick Humbird as a model American aristocrat, but his admiration has homosexual underpinnings. When Dick's ghost haunts Amory, the novel “takes on increasingly gothic proportions,” and, as scholars of gothic literature have noted, the “gothic often signifies homosexual panic.” The appearance of the ghost—or Devil—at the bar where Amory drinks with Axia and Phoebe resembles a gay pickup scene. When Dick's ghost appears again in the women's apartment, it functions not only as a moral reproach but as a rebuke “for disloyalty”: Amory's sexual attraction to Axia “recall[s] an unresolved desire for Dick to mind.” In addition, Amory sublimates his grief over Dick's death, expressing it as disappointment over his breakup with Isabelle. When Amory gives up Dick as a model, he turns to Rupert Brooke, another effeminate young man who tried to find himself as a soldier in the Great War. Darcy offers Amory another template for masculinity in his definitions of the personality and the far more manly personage, but “the effeminate and celibate priest” is a poor model. Rosalind is more masculine than Amory, and her jilting him highlights “his failure in other masculine arenas, such as financial and professional accomplishment.” Amory then tries to blame his disillusionment on the war to

cover “the more personal blow to his masculinity” leveled by Rosalind’s rejection.

Kahn, Sy. “This Side of Paradise: The Pageantry of Disillusion.” Midwest Quarterly 7 (1966): 177–94. Amory admits that he cannot completely vanquish his Puritan conscience, and it “shapes his imagination and his vision of reality and prepares him for a series of disillusionments.” Fitzgerald’s equating sex and evil in the novel would have resonated during an age when young people’s conceptions of “‘right’ and ‘wrong’ behavior rest[ed] almost exclusively on sexual behavior.” Isabelle’s reaction to Amory’s marking her neck with his shirt stud destroys his idealized vision of her, and he realizes he feels nothing for her: “Isabelle was never flesh or woman enough to impel the deep dilemmas of Amory Blaine.” But the scene in Axia and Phoebe’s apartment does: in describing the devil as having Humbird’s face, Fitzgerald “creates a vision in which the major themes of sex, evil, and death meet to shape the face and figure of the devil.” In the saintly Clara Page, Amory finds “a woman he can idealize,” but she is “essentially untouchable” and “remains unsullied and sanctified.” Amory returns from the war unscathed but “receives his sudden and lasting wounds” in “the battle of the sexes” he loses to Rosalind. Looking back on his sexual encounter with Eleanor, Amory finally makes the connection between sex and evil, “and the old puritanical notion that beauty is often the mask for evil fixes itself in his soul.” But Amory’s moral code—based in his Puritanism and his Catholicism—also protects him: “The Puritan need to identify and judge evil sobers and steadies him and dispels the colorful spectres of sensuality.”

Kazin, Alfred. On Native Grounds: An Interpretation of Modern American Prose

Literature. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1942. 316–18. Very briefly deals with impact of Paradise in the 1920s. The novel may have been “inconsequential,” but it offered “a taste of the poignance” present in Fitzgerald’s later novels and fit nicely with the new “tell all” trend of the postwar “flaming youth.” For all of its “trivial irony” and “its heroic pose, its grandiose dramatizations,” the novel reflects great anxiety about “the contemporary world, a world young men had never made.”

Kuehl, D. G. “Fitzgerald’s ‘Unbroken Series of Successful Gestures’: From Gestural Tableau to Emotion and Idea.” The F. Scott Fitzgerald Review 2 (2003): 116–133. See esp. pp. 119–21. Fitzgerald may have been “more adept at using gestural tableaux” than any modern American fiction writer, and his novels and short stories feature “six distinct, recurring gestures.” In Paradise, Fitzgerald repeatedly depicts “characters stretching out their arms horizontally toward one another, conveying acceptance, reception, and invitation, as well as longing.” Amory reaches out to Isabelle, facilitating a moment that represents the height of “his young egotism.” When Cecelia extends her arms to an imaginary dance partner, the cigarette in her hand “undercuts any romantic acceptance” and highlights her “pseudosophistication, cynicism, and mockery.” After her aborted suicide attempt, Eleanor can no longer “run into [Amory’s] arms” because they are not outstretched as they were earlier. When Amory and Myra ride beneath a “half crystalline” sky, he “make[s] a vague gesture”; the novel concludes with

a similar, but more “self-assured and confident,” gesture: Amory lifts his arms to a ““crystalline”” sky and asserts his self-knowledge.

Lehan, Richard D. “This Side of Paradise” F. Scott Fitzgerald and the Craft of Fiction. Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois UP, 1966. 63–77. Scathing critique of Paradise. The “very immature” novel doesn’t “hold the reader’s attention” or “build to a true climax,” features a “trite” plot and “is hopelessly sentimental.” Fitzgerald portrays his own experiences “unconvincing[ly],” but “the expression of postwar despair is even less convincing because it is the least sincere.” Paradise has none of the intricacy of Fitzgerald’s later works, and the characters’ emotions “are not controlled.” Fitzgerald couldn’t depict emotions realistically because the “novel is really very derivative”; in fact, its very “limitations” come from its model, Mackenzie’s Sinister Street. Ultimately, Edmund Wilson “gives Fitzgerald too much credit” when he calls Paradise ““a gesture of indefinite revolt””: “The objects of Amory’s revolt are not indefinite—they are inconsequential” and “sophomoric.”

Le Vot, André. F. Scott Fitzgerald: A Biography. Trans. William Byron. New York: Warner, 1983. Discusses the real life events and people fictionalized in Paradise’s characters, Fitzgerald’s life as he wrote and revised the novel, and the changes in mores and fashions that the novel documents.

Lyons, John O. The College Novel in America. Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP, 1962. See pp. 26–31. Places Paradise alongside other college novels of the period, such as Mackenzie’s Sinister Street, Johnson’s Stover at Yale, Marks’s The Plastic Age, Wiley’s The Education of Peter, and Stone’s Pageant of Youth.

Fitzgerald's novel offers "the first attempt" at depicting an "intellectual awakening" in a college novel and "started the detailed depiction of sin on campus."

Marquand, John P. "Looking Backwards 1: Fitzgerald: 'This Side of Paradise.'" *Saturday Review of Literature* 6 Aug. 1949: 30–31. Reassessment of *Paradise*

calls the novel "much better preserved than most of the rest of the Twenties" and "an exceptionally brilliant piece of work by a young Princeton graduate who was perhaps a genius." The novel's realistic portrayal of the younger generation's sexual behavior made it scandalous for adults of the period, but the book has nothing that would shock "a jaded reader of 1949." The characterizations in the novel may not be as clear as those in *Gatsby*, but the novel may find a place "on a permanent shelf of American literature."

McCay, Mary A. "Fitzgerald's Women: Beyond Winter Dreams." Ed. Fritz

Fleischmann. *American Novelists Revisited: Essays in Feminist Criticism*.

Boston: G. K. Hall, 1982. 311–24. See pp. 315–16. Letters to his daughter Scottie and the portrayal of women in his novels reveal that Fitzgerald detested women who did not work and whose lives had no "purpose." Because of his family's financial reversal, Amory must work, which "saves him from the parade of women he encounters whose empty lives would only destroy him." The "empty, tempting" Rosalind "would certainly have destroyed any purpose he found in life." Amory sees the "wild, reckless" Eleanor as evil because "she is weak." Fitzgerald feared that Scottie would become like Isabelle, Rosalind, and Eleanor and castigated her for misbehaving at prep school.



Mellow, James R. Invented Lives: F. Scott Fitzgerald and Zelda Fitzgerald. New York: Ballantine, 1984. Biography offers information on real-life persons and events fictionalized in Paradise—including Sigourney Fay, Shane Leslie, Henry Adams, Henry Strater, Stephan Parrot, Ginevra King, Zelda, and the stories behind the “Supercilious Sacrifice” and “Young Irony” episodes—along with details on the writing and publication process and the reception of the novel.

Messenger, Christian K. “Princeton and Amory Blaine.” Sport and the Spirit of Play in American Fiction: Hawthorne to Faulkner. New York: Columbia UP, 1981. 181–90. Treats Fitzgerald’s romantic portrayal of football in Paradise. A description of Amory’s heroics during a prep school football game echoes Crane’s Red Badge of Courage: “Amory’s poor voice is hoarse from barking signals and his bandage is in place, the scene a sharp reminder of Henry Fleming’s heroic appearance in chapter 17” of Crane’s novel. A scene in which the football team, led by Allenby, marches through the campus as a dazzled Amory watches “represents the apotheosis of the School Sports Hero as a figure of romantic dimensions,” while Fitzgerald’s use of military terms in the scene “sustains the legacy of the military imagery of 1890s school sports fiction.” Also, like 1890s sports tales, Paradise features a “Civil War orientation of football terminology: Princeton faces the “heavy blue and crimson” of Yale and Harvard, but the colors also evoke the Union army’s uniforms and soldiers’ blood, which is fitting because, unlike Yale and Harvard, Princeton traditionally attracted southern students. Dick Humbird’s death marks “the end of Amory’s idealization of the college hero” and the start of his probing “into the mysteries of

death and decay.” Near the end of the novel, Amory finds similarities between football and war, contrasting them with his experiences with Rosalind: “Football and war are ‘played’ straightforwardly and quake before Amory’s commitment to the mysteries of love and sexuality, and to the ‘labyrinths’ of his egotism in relation to other people.” In later novels, *Allenby* will morph into *Dick Diver* and *Humbird* into *Gatsby*.

Meyers, Jeffrey. Scott Fitzgerald: A Biography. New York: Harper Collins, 1994. See esp. pp. 56–63. Though “superficial and immature,” Paradise is “still lively and readable”; while “flippant,” it features “flashes of insight.” Fitzgerald does a fine job of portraying postwar disillusion, and his depiction of Princeton students “was a direct and deliberate assault on Woodrow Wilson’s staunch Presbyterian values.” Meyers also discusses real-life models for characters, provides a brief history of the term “flapper,” mentions the influence of Dostoyevsky on the “Devil” episode, and details the novel’s reception.

Miller, James E. F. Scott Fitzgerald: His Art and His Technique. New York: New York UP, 1964. See esp. pp. 16–44. Examines Paradise’s structure and Fitzgerald’s use of literary techniques and devices, themes, and point of view in the novel. When Fitzgerald wrote Paradise, he was very much under the influence of H. G. Wells’s theories of the saturation novel and Compton Mackenzie and Robert Hugh Benson, practitioners of the saturation technique. Miller speculates that Fitzgerald must have taken Wells’s side in the English novelist’s debate with Henry James, who preferred the novel of selection, for Fitzgerald’s “preference was definitely for saturation.” Paradise includes many elements of the saturation

novel as Wells described it: the novel centers on “the characterization of” its protagonist rather than “continuous action”; includes seemingly unnecessary detail; an intrusive narrator; and functions as “a vehicle for the discussion of social problems.” The novel has “no single plot line to unify” it; instead, the episodes are connected “in that they constitute collectively the education of the hero.” While Paradise certainly suffers from the flaws associated with the saturation technique, it has other drawbacks. Fitzgerald fails to remain objective. Blinded by Rosalind’s wealth and beauty, Fitzgerald—in the role of third-person narrator—describes her as “not spoiled” even though her actions and attitudes indicate the opposite. The dramatic “diction and imagery” of “Young Irony” indicates that Fitzgerald strives “for a far more serious effect than is actually achieved.” His failure “to remain detached” affects the thematic development in the novel. Paradise’s infamous “revolt” stays “on the periphery rather than at the center of the novel”: Fitzgerald’s depiction of risqué behavior rarely gets beyond kissing, and his linking of sex, beauty, and evil remains “ambiguous.” The novel is less about revolt than mere “restlessness.” Fitzgerald’s use of “author-intervention” leads to inconsistencies in point of view. Many times, the narrator describes Amory’s development rather than demonstrating it dramatically—telling, rather than showing the reader. Fitzgerald does use “interesting” literary devices to depict Amory’s thoughts as he tries to come to grips with the end of the Rosalind affair, his financial problems, and Darcy’s death. Moreover, the author handles stream of consciousness “admirably.” But he undercuts the

effectiveness of the drama form of “The Debutante” by describing the characters’ thoughts in the stage directions.

Mizener, Arthur. The Far Side of Paradise: A Biography of F. Scott Fitzgerald. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1951. Rev. ed., 1965. New York: Avon, 1974. See esp. 108–31. Details the writing and reception of Paradise, points out influences like Johnson’s Stover at Yale and Mackenzie’s Sinister Street, and assesses the quality of the novel. Despite its “inadequacies and affectations, it is not essentially a bad book.” Fitzgerald’s moral sensibility—his shock at what many of his peers did to demonstrate their independence—makes Paradise “much more interesting” than similarly themed books of the period. The novel displays the author’s “immature feelings” but depicts them “fully” and “convincing[ly]”; Fitzgerald’s “fine ear” for dialogue greatly enhances the realism. His “delicate sense of pitch and tone of English sentences” makes up for poor spelling and grammar. While “the immaturity of Amory’s love affairs is remarkable”—the book places a great deal of emphasis on kissing—“these lovers [...] are hauntingly and embarrassingly real.” The novel’s “value” lies in Fitzgerald’s ability to recapture the emotions of the time and place: ultimately, Paradise has more “historical” than “literary value.”

---. “F. Scott Fitzgerald 1896–1940: The Poet of Borrowed Time.” Lives of Eighteen from Princeton. Princeton, NJ: Princeton UP, 1946. 333–53. Rpt. in F. Scott Fitzgerald: The Man and His Work. Ed. Alfred Kazin. New York: Collier, 1951. 23–45. See pp. 28–30. The flawed Paradise shows “something of the intensity of felt experience” of Fitzgerald’s later works. See Mizener’s The Far

Side of Paradise: A Biography of F. Scott Fitzgerald, annotated above, for his much more detailed commentary on the novel.

Monk, Craig. “The Political F. Scott Fitzgerald: Liberal Illusion and Disillusion in This Side of Paradise and The Beautiful and Damned.” American Studies International 33.2 (1995): 60–70. Reads the optimism of Paradise and the pessimism of Damned as products of the different political climates when Fitzgerald composed the novels. Fitzgerald wrote Paradise as the United States mobilized for war, and it reflects the optimism of liberals, who believed the country “could serve as the guiding force of freedom for the whole world.” While Fitzgerald does not offer an “unqualified blessing” to American society, he, like other artists of the late 1910s, was more impatient than pessimistic and believed in the country’s potential greatness. The “sense of possible achievement” permeates Paradise. Amory realizes that he’s taken a poor model in Dick Humbird and looks to the activist Burne Holiday. Financial woes and the war show Amory “that for [his] generation, even established birthrights cannot be assured” and “the world known to [his] parents has been lost forever.” He loses faith in the power of the individual to effect change, pointing to Wilson’s being disparaged “both for being unrealistic and for” trying to realize his dreams. But Darcy’s death is a “turning point”: Amory sees that he must “embrace and accept change” and tries to make a new start by becoming a socialist, which “can be seen as a rekindling of the traditional liberal fascination with the ideals of socialism.” Fitzgerald’s liberalism differs from Wilson’s: the writer’s liberalism is secular, not based in a Christian ethic, and he lacks faith in educational institutions. But

his concluding “that the individual citizen could do much for mankind” fits with “the broader pre-war liberal conviction that the individual citizen could do much to help reshape mankind.” Damned reflects pessimism of liberals in the wake of Wilson’s failures and the election of Republican Warren G. Harding.

Moore, Benita A. Escape into a Labyrinth: F. Scott Fitzgerald, Catholic Sensibility, and the American Way. New York: Garland, 1988. See esp. “Out of the Little Room: ‘This Side of Paradise,’” pp. 160–84. “[O]n one level at least,” one can read Paradise “as a religious document” because its main character questions his Catholic faith. Through Amory, Fitzgerald investigates his own journey away from “the circumscribed Catholic world of his youth” and into a more complicated world that offers “a maze of conflicting claims where norms had to be discovered.” The crisis of faith manifests itself in an “intellectual-religious dilemma” evident in Amory’s reading: books by Shaw, Keats, Wilde, Wells, Norris, et al, “challenge” the “Catholic world-view” of works by Chesterton, Benson, and Mackenzie. Amory has difficulty establishing “a coherent system ideas” as “the code of the artist” begins to replace “the intellectual framework provided by Catholicism.” He also struggles to reconcile his faith with changing sexual mores of the period. In linking temptress Axia to dead Dick Humbird, Fitzgerald indicates that “Death and Sex are two faces of one experience, both horrifying and connected with abstract ‘pure Evil.’” Still, he also realizes that he won’t find the “answer to the ‘woman proposition’” in the “immateriality” of the “quasi-ethereal” Clara. While Eleanor’s materialism tempts Amory, he “is shocked by her atheism and her blasphemy.”

Moreland, Kim. "F. Scott Fitzgerald: Tender Is the Knight." The Medievalist Impulse in American Literature: Twain, Adams, Fitzgerald, and Hemingway.

Charlottesville: UP of Virginia, 1996. 118–160. Examines the influence of Henry Adams and medieval literature on Fitzgerald, and Fitzgerald's treatment of war, sexuality, and women in his works. On pages 120–21, Moreland sees Adams appearing in Paradise as Thornton Hancock, who functions as an agnostic "counterpoint" to the Catholic Darcy. Late in the narrative, Amory "feels that he has outgrown Hancock, along with all his earlier teachers"—much like Adams in The Education of Henry Adams—but Amory still "identifies both himself and Hancock as types of the 'spiritually unmarried man.'" In addition, Amory's statement about the rapid changes in modern life resembles Adams's "Conservative Christian Anarchy." Moreland briefly discusses how the war figures in Paradise on page 129. Fitzgerald borrows the three-part structure common in war novels and memoirs, though he devotes very little space to middle (war) section, and makes "jejune allusions" to battle throughout the book. His referring to Rosalind's bedroom as no man's land is "a particularly tasteless pun." On pages 150–55, Moreland comments on women and sexuality in Paradise. Like Gatsby's Daisy and Tender's Nicole—and Zelda in real life—Paradise's women characters "are blamed [...] for inhibiting successful knightly behavior." The "Supercilious Sacrifice" episode is a psychomachia. Through his sacrifice, Amory "vanquish[es]" the devil, and his "admission of false guilt [...]" paradoxically reassures him of his sexual innocence." Amory's adventures with "party girls" Phoebe and Axia and prostitute Jill conjure the devil, distinguishing

“these women, with whom he associates sexual activity and thus evil” from “the society girls he dates.” But they become indistinguishable as the society women “reject the role of belle [...] for that of vamp.” Characters describe Rosalind as “vampire,” and Eleanor resembles the demonic-temptress figures of medieval literature who lure men into sexual encounters. Clara escapes such treatment, functioning as the “medieval ideal” of woman.

Moseley, Edwin. “This Side of Paradise: Ordination, Mystery, and Sacrifice.” F. Scott Fitzgerald: A Critical Essay. Contemporary Writers in Christian Perspective. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1967. 7–13. Spiritual issues play a crucial role in Paradise. Throughout the novel, Amory poses “questions of faith, of formal religious affiliation, of the spiritual lurking somehow in the mundane.” Darcy’s attempts to steer Amory back to Catholicism “are mild and unimportant,” but “two important lessons” arise from them: first, Darcy advises Amory to become a personage, which functions as “a call to vocation, a kind of ordination”; and second, he teaches Amory that success lies in the “mystical element” that they share. Like all of Fitzgerald’s characters, Amory “make[s] religion of romance” and “separate[s] love from the physical,” attempting to place women “on a pedestal”: while a “spiritual love of God made Darcy celibate,” Amory’s “equally intense spiritual love of women kept” him celibate. As he becomes a personage, Amory also wishes to become “indispensable” to others and “arrives at a goal of sacrifice” when he destroys his reputation to protect Alec’s. The sacrifice should represent “the height of specialness, presented in the very terms of the supreme ordination, that is, God the Father’s designation of Christ the son



as sacrificial hero,” yet the “lowness, the youthful foolishness of the episode [...] inverts the mystery, the glory of sacrifice as a pivotal religious concept.” The novel ends without Amory having found his vocation, but Fitzgerald discovered his: in writing the novel, he became a personage and was “ordained as a priest of an entire generation.”

Perosa, Sergio. The Art of F. Scott Fitzgerald. Trans. Charles Matz and Sergio Perosa. Ann Arbor: U of Michigan P, 1965. See esp. pp. 15–29. Comments on the structure, technique, and quality of Paradise, compares and contrasts the novel with its unpublished predecessor, “The Romantic Egotist,” and discusses literary influences on Fitzgerald. Paradise owed its success not to “artistic worth” but to Fitzgerald’s capturing the late 1910s zeitgeist. Thematically and structurally, the book suffers from Fitzgerald’s inability to reconcile two of his main sources, Oscar Wilde’s Picture of Dorian Gray and James Joyce’s Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man. Many readers have noted the influence of Mackenzie’s Sinister Street, but “[t]he similarities [...] are more of a general atmosphere and of situation than of an informing idea.” Wells is a “much more important” influence, as Fitzgerald adopted his theories of the novel of saturation in structuring his novel. Fitzgerald also emulated Joyce’s impressionistic form; as a result, “even on the level of technique,” the novel “bears the signs of an unresolved dualism of inspiration.” However, in spite of its many defects, Paradise demonstrates that Fitzgerald “had already mastered a mature and fluent prose, sweet and modulated, light and harmonious.”

Phillips, Gene D. "The Lost Generation: This Side of Paradise and The Beautiful and Damned." Fiction, Film and F. Scott Fitzgerald. Chicago: Loyola UP, 1986, 81–99. Offers biographical sketch of Fitzgerald's early years, interpretation of the novel centered on Fitzgerald's Catholicism, and a description of Fitzgerald's film treatment for Paradise. Amory's still pining for Rosalind at the end of the novel indicates that, despite his statements to the contrary, he hasn't matured. Fitzgerald may have stopped attending Church services, but remnants of his youthful devotion to Catholicism remained, as demonstrated by his positive portrait of Darcy and the moral code in Paradise. In his treatment of Paradise for Paramount, Fitzgerald "turned his thought-provoking story into a piece of sentimental melodrama," complete with a contrived happy ending.

Piper, Henry Dan. "Fitzgerald's Cult of Disillusion." American Quarterly 3 (1951): 69–80. Discusses works that influenced Fitzgerald and locates the roots of Fitzgerald's and his generation's disillusionment in both the vogue of fin de siècle literature and World War I. The novel bears the influence of the letters and advice of friends Sigourney Fay and Shane Leslie, who were interested in the fin de siècle, and the writings of late-Victorians Wells, Chesterton, Brooke, and especially Mackenzie, who, along with the romantic poets, helped to shape Fitzgerald's prose style. As he completed and revised Paradise in 1919, Fitzgerald discovered "an American literary tradition of skepticism and despair" in the works of Mencken, Norris, and Dreiser and incorporated their influence into the novel.

---. "This Side of Paradise." F. Scott Fitzgerald: A Critical Portrait. Carbondale and Edwardsville: Southern Illinois UP, 1965. 37–63. Wide-ranging study details the writing and revision of Paradise, its impact on 1920s literature, Monsignor Fay's influence on the Fitzgerald and the novel, and the differences between Paradise and "The Romantic Egotist." Paradise sold well and spawned "dozens of imitations" but "was not an especially good novel"; its value lies in "what it reveals about Fitzgerald's development." It also marks the first American appearance of the Entwicklungsroman, a novel that sheds light on its protagonist by studying his or her formative years. Fay introduced Fitzgerald to Mackenzie's Sinister Street, the biggest literary influence on Paradise, but the novel also includes borrowings from Adams's The Education of Henry Adams, Joyce's Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man, Owen Johnson's Stover at Yale, and Shaw's plays. Fitzgerald discovered H. G. Wells while rewriting Paradise, and his works figure prominently in the later chapters of the book, especially "Supercilious Sacrifice" and Amory's socialist speech, which feature Wells's "flat journalistic prose and his interest in controversial social ideas." Also, in regard to sexuality, Amory "suffer[s] from the same ambiguous combination of attraction and disgust" as Wells's protagonist in The New Machiavelli. The manuscript of the surviving chapters of the more autobiographical but less interesting "Romantic Egotist" offers insight into Fitzgerald's revision process. Fitzgerald combines two episodes from "Romantic Egotist" (Piper includes generous excerpts) and "shape[s] the much more amusing episode" entitled "A Kiss for Amory" in Paradise. Piper also offers information on the changing views

on adolescence during the early 1900s and Fitzgerald's portrait of New York, which "created a brand-new image of [the city] in the popular consciousness."

Raubicheck, Walter. "The Catholic Romanticism of This Side of Paradise." F. Scott Fitzgerald in the Twenty-first Century. Eds. Jackson R. Bryer, Ruth Prigozy, and Milton R. Stern. Tuscaloosa: U of Alabama P, 2003. 54–65. To understand Paradise fully, one must investigate the Catholic issues in the novel. Amory's romanticism diverges from Wordsworth's or Emerson's because "it is a Catholic product, not one that is pantheistic or transcendental." While Amory's journey does not end with his embracing Catholicism, his latent faith surfaces in three areas of his life: his friendship with Darcy, his love affairs, and his experiences with evil. His romanticism "is always intertwined" with "Catholic imagery" and manifests itself in his realization that he can have a positive impact on society, that he must not squander his considerable talents, and that he has a desire to become a personage. Darcy elucidates two aspects of Catholicism for Amory: its "intellectual respectability" and "that grace can be found through a participation in the world and not only through an ascetic isolation from it." Amory's attraction to Clara is "erotic" but "infused with the sacred": "If a sacrament is an outward sign of God's providence and grace, then Clara surely serves as a sacrament for Amory." While Clara resembles a "pre-Raphaelite image, embodying a romantic nostalgia for medieval faith," her "opposite," Eleanor represents a "late-nineteenth-century Nietzschean atheism" that Amory rejects. "Aristocratic beauty and shallowness" meet in Rosalind, her "beauty [...] the illusory beauty of the world that is untouched by grace." Although the devil

appears as Amory nearly gives in to sexual temptation, his “appearance is not a sign that Fitzgerald simplistically associates evil with promiscuous sex.” Instead, evil in the novel is linked to Amory’s two primary weaknesses: his taking the aristocratic but empty Humbird—whom the devil figure resembles—as a model, and Amory’s “susceptibility to beauty in all its forms, no matter how insidious.” Though Amory remains “a skeptic” at the end of the novel, his desire ““to be necessary to people”” indicates that “he is beginning to overcome his egotism” with Darcy’s help.

Rivinus, Timothy M. “Euphoria and Despair: Youthful Addiction in This Side of Paradise and Novel with Cocaine.” Dionysos: The Literature and Addiction TriQuarterly 4.2 (1992): 15–29. Traces Amory’s alcoholism from its genetic roots in Beatrice, through his college drinking binges, to his drinking binge following his break-up with Rosalind. The “dominating, self-absorbed, wandering, heavy drinking socialite” Beatrice introduces Amory to alcohol. At Princeton, inebriation “seems to offer Amory a supermaterial, almost spiritual, liberation.” At the very end of the novel, when Amory states that he knows himself and nothing else, he speaks of “the search for self in relation to the greater whole so common in the experience of the addicted.” Paradise depicts the artist’s difficulty “connect[ing] with others” and also hints at Fitzgerald’s own addiction: Amory and Fitzgerald “turn to writing, to drinking partners, and to alcoholic sprees in their search for connection.”

Roulston, Robert. “This Side of Paradise: The Ghost of Rupert Brooke.”

Fitzgerald/Hemingway Annual (1975): 117–30. Fitzgerald’s treatment of Rupert

Brooke in Paradise illuminates the novel's strengths and flaws. The globetrotting scholar Brooke bears little resemblance to the inexperienced Amory, but Amory would have identified with Brooke's "impermanence" and "restless[ness]." In fact, Amory's emotional instability and his "fluctuating between frenzied activity and a craving for repose" may indicate that he is "manic depressive." For Amory, Brooke becomes "something of a martyr," someone to be not only "pit[ied]" but "env[ied]"—envied in that, by dying just before the war, Brooke will avoid Fitzgerald's greatest fear: aging. As the narrative progresses, Amory begins to reject the poet, "extricating himself from the decay of morals by renouncing the kind of sensual and erotic beauty" that Brooke celebrated. But this disavowal fails to convince: the erratic Amory seems incapable of achieving and maintaining "any kind of philosophical plateau." This brings to mind Edmund Wilson's argument that the novel "is not really about anything," that "it amounts to little more than a gesture...of indefinite revolt." However, Amory's ambivalence may be the point—and the reason behind the novel's success: his "blend of instability, earnestness, and histrionics [...] makes him" the perfect central character of a novel set during a period of rapid social change. In his initial identification with and his later rejection of Brooke, Amory attempts "to reconcile vestiges of nineteenth-century romanticism with the twentieth century, middle-class and Catholic sexual morality with amoral eroticism, traditional culture with new modes of thought and expression, and a yearning for a patrician manner with a left-of-center egalitarianism."

Roulston, Robert, and Helen H. Roulston. “This Side of Paradise: The Romantic Egotist’s Elusive Eden (1920).” The Winding Road to West Egg: The Artistic Development of F. Scott Fitzgerald. Lewisburg, PA: Bucknell UP, 1995. 24–40. Briefly reviews Fitzgerald’s life as he wrote Paradise and the novel’s critical reception, discusses literary influences (especially Mackenzie and Joyce), and looks at the reasons the novel became a sensation upon its release. Period readers lauded the novel’s innovative form: alongside books like Mackenzie’s Sinister Street, Paradise appeared “modern” with its “discordance and disjointedness” linking it to “cubism, jazz, Stravinsky.” The novel’s structure no longer appears very daring in light of more striking experiments by authors like Joyce and T. S. Eliot. Many reviewers called the book realistic, with the notable exceptions of Heywood Broun and Edmund Wilson. The dissenters were correct: “The book is pseudorealistic just as it is in some ways pseudomodernistic.” Paradise actually bears some resemblance to the “South Pacific romantic travel-adventure book”—exemplified by Melville’s Typee—which had recently come back into vogue; such novels portrayed exotic locales as both edenic and decadent. In “Young Irony,” Fitzgerald attempts “to convert rural Maryland into Polynesia.” The chapter also links two important strains in the novel: “the Circe motif” and “the fatal lure of hedonism.” Women in the novel function as temptresses, “luring Amory only to betray, disgust, or unman him” in the manner of the title character of Keats’s “La Belle Dame Sans Merci.”

Rusch, Frederik L. “Marble Men and Maidens, The Necrophilous People of F. Scott Fitzgerald: A Psychoanalytic Approach in Terms of Erich Fromm.” Journal of

Evolutionary Psychology 3 (1982): 28–40. Uses Erich Fromm’s theories of the necrophilous personality to explicate Fitzgerald’s works. Products of the selfish individualism inherent to Protestantism and capitalism, necrophilous people are obsessed with death and illness, and, in Fromm’s words, they “love mechanical gadgets more than people.” Hypochondriac Beatrice, the “necrophilous mother,” focuses on her child’s illnesses and failings, paying little attention to his happiness. Not surprisingly, young Amory displays symptoms of the necrophilous personality: just as necrophilous people often have difficulty “distinguishing between violent entertainment and real violence,” he views the war as a game, as amusement. Amory’s most important love affairs are with “necrophilous women.” Rosalind, described as “a sort of vampire,” finds herself ensnared “in the necrophilous trap of consumer mentality” and rejects Amory for the wealthy Dawson. Death-obsessed Eleanor attempts suicide, demonstrating greater awareness than Rosalind; Eleanor sees that “[h]er future is hopelessly tied” to the prospect of marrying a rich man. But Amory “is determined to change his life” and escapes his necrophilous fate. A friend tells him to read Tolstoy’s Anna Karenina, which “detailed the necrophilous propensity of Anna’s character” but also “affirmed life and hope through Levin,” and Whitman, the life-affirming opposite of Poe. At the end of the novel, Amory walks back to Princeton, “a symbolic rejection of the death-dealing automobile”—“a key metaphor for what is wrong with our world” in Fitzgerald’s fiction—that killed Dick Humbird. Amory’s socialist speech indicates that he now “reject[s] both war and death.”



Sanderson, Rena. "Women in Fitzgerald's Fiction." The Cambridge Companion to F.

Scott Fitzgerald. Ed. Ruth Prigozy. New York: Cambridge UP, 2002. 143–163.

See pp. 148–151. Paradise "explores the flapper and the male response to the flapper." In *Isabelle*, Fitzgerald presents a subject that greatly interested him: the "theatricality" of his generation's young women. She always seems to be playing to an audience. *Rosalind* provides an example of a Fitzgerald commonplace: his female characters are "practical" while their suitors are "starry-eyed." Eleanor represents the "dangerous side of women" without "identity or purpose." Noting the similarities between him and Eleanor, Amory "recognizes in her the dangerous potential of his romantic self." Axia embodies "the vulgar working-class" woman common in Fitzgerald's works, while Clara, her opposite, "resembles the lady of the medieval courtly love tradition."

Schiff, Jonathan. "Repressed Grief and Victorian Progress in This Side of Paradise."

Ashes to Ashes: Mourning and Social Difference in F. Scott Fitzgerald's Fiction.

Selinsgrove, PA: Susquehanna UP, 2001. 61–79. To discover "whether or not [Amory] progresses in the course of the novel," Schiff traces Amory's "struggle with empathy for" Beatrice. Although Beatrice coddles Amory, her depression "distances her from him" and fosters "a coldness in his personality"; this, coupled with her hypochondria, pushes Amory toward "self-reliance and compulsive caregiving," along with a "Victorian tendency to repress emotion." His future "relationships [...] recall those of his childhood." While he doesn't love *Isabelle*, he would like "to see her in need of his care," as shown by his desire to comfort her when she cries at a play. Widowed Clara doesn't look to Amory for support,

but he still wishes to help her and tries to understand her problems. However, “his possessive and impulsive behavior” during the Clara episode indicates he has made no real progress. Despite some initial reluctance, Amory develops deep feelings for Rosalind, but his childish reaction to their break-up shows that he has not grown. Finally, he begins to show signs of emotional maturity in his affair with Eleanor. When Amory refers to Eleanor as Madeline, she becomes “an uncanny sister arising from the dead”; since Fitzgerald’s mother lost two daughters before he was born, Eleanor “would help him to identify with the object of his parents grief.” Because Eleanor resembles Beatrice in many ways, she may also help Amory empathize with Beatrice’s “grief.” In “Supercilious Sacrifice,” Amory exhibits “outward-directed ‘feminine sensitivity’” as he plays the role of caregiver: “In assisting Alex [sic], Amory becomes a parent to him, as if accepting the caretaking role his mother encouraged in him.” Amory feels “his greatest sense of the importance of loss” at the end of the novel as he stands before a soldier’s tomb. This episode, along with his experience at Darcy’s funeral and his meeting with Mr. Ferrenby, reveals both romanticism and sentimentalism. The romanticism arises from a “sense of excitement,” the sentimentalism from “sense of connectedness with others.” The mix of romanticism and sentimentalism results from Amory’s “identifying with his mother’s sentimentalism and his father’s Byronic romanticism.”

Seiters, Dan. “This Side of Paradise and The Beautiful and Damned.” Image Patterns in the Novels of F. Scott Fitzgerald. *Studies in Modern Literature* 53. Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Research, 1986. 15–55. Analyzes transportation, communication,

light and dark, dirt-disease-decay, and water imagery in Paradise and Damned. Due to his “youth and inexperience as a writer,” Fitzgerald produces “few recognizable patterns” of imagery in Paradise. Automobiles bring both adventure (the Deal Beach excursion) and tragedy (Humbird’s death) and function “as a characterizing device”—but “Fitzgerald’s uses of the automobile [...] are too varied to form an image pattern.” Trains always indicate “major moves” in Fitzgerald, but they appear “too infrequently to set up patterns” in Paradise. Fitzgerald employs letters only “as machinery for exposition”; they communicate little to their recipients. Telephones appear in the novel, but, again, no image pattern develops. Though Fitzgerald makes few references to newspapers in Paradise, they function mostly as “supporters of the status quo” that “make no attempt to communicate.” In general, Fitzgerald’s light and dark imagery is inconsistent; only moonlight “remains constant enough to form a symbolic pattern.” However, “Fitzgerald uses the moon so conventionally that it does not clarify a theme” or help to structure the novel. The pattern of “dirt-disease-decay imagery” reveals that Amory “inclines toward hypochondria” but the “images are too muddled” to demonstrate any growth in Amory. Some of the best writing in Fitzgerald’s later works involves water imagery, but, in Paradise, it “signals Fitzgerald’s least effective writing and strangest syntax” because he fails to juxtapose the imagery “with action that will sustain its meaning.”

Shain, Charles E. F. Scott Fitzgerald. University of Minnesota Pamphlets on American Writers, 15. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1961. See pp. 20–23. Although Paradise became a succès de scandale in 1920, today the adventures of the

“conspicuous moralist” Amory “would not shock a schoolgirl.” The “uneven” novel offers “solemn attempts at abstract thought on literature, war, and socialism” and “has vitality and freshness only in moments.”

---. “F. Scott Fitzgerald.” Seven Modern American Novelists: An Introduction. Ed.

William Van O’Connor. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1964. 81–117. Rpt. of Shain’s F. Scott Fitzgerald, annotated above.

Sivaramakrishna, M. “The Problem of ‘The Will to Believe’ in Scott Fitzgerald’s This Side of Paradise and The Great Gatsby.” Osmania Journal of English Studies 8.1 (1971): 37–51. Reads Amory’s search for “the beliefs and traditions” that will “rescue his generation from [...] disillusionment” in the light of William James’s concept of the will to believe. Amory’s lack of “a will” renders his “ideas and beliefs” ineffectual. Amory’s claim that his generation finds “‘all gods dead, all wars fought and all faiths in man shaken’” is just a cover “for his incapacity to act.”

Sklar, Robert. F. Scott Fitzgerald: The Last Laocoön. New York: Oxford UP, 1967.

See pp. 31–57. Amory clings to the values of prewar American society but finds them useless in coping with the changes the Great War introduces. Paradise finds Fitzgerald “test[ing] the validity of the genteel conceptions of heroism he and his generation inherited” and “attempt[ing] to evaluate the experiences” of the 1910s, a decade that witnessed a questioning of traditional values. Amory appears eager to experience his first kiss, but physical contact with Myra horrifies and disgusts him, for “[i]n the genteel world that Amory still inhabits imagination gives more pleasure than the act.” The devil assumes the shape of Dick Humbird, who

represents Amory's ideal of the aristocracy, indicating that "Humbird has been condemned to hell," a seemingly "harsh fate for a young man who had been presented in such glowing terms." Fitzgerald's "obvious but artistically crude judgment on Dick" reveals the author's "tenuous [...] hold on his own abstract ideas of superiority, how closely tied he was still to the moral and economic stereotypes of the genteel culture." Amory's postwar distinction between the sentimentalist and romantic indicates the terms have been redefined: the "genteel romantic hero" of the prewar period becomes a sentimentalist, "one who founded his judgments upon social values and social arrangements he falsely assumed to be permanent." The new incarnation of the romantic makes "no ready-made judgments." Amory must now "redefine himself" according to "his own experience." Eleanor embodies an extreme of romanticism that "belie[ves] in nothing"; but this type of romanticism "turns its back on too much that Amory values," and he "rejects it." In taking the blame for Alec's indiscretion, Amory appears to embrace "self-sacrifice, the cornerstone of genteel morality, but, when he calls sacrifice "arrogant and impersonal," Amory indicates that he has "sacrifice[d] himself not in a gesture of genteel acceptance, but in a disdainful defiance of the genteel code." Sklar also treats the difficulties in finding the novel's meaning. Problems arise from Fitzgerald's inability to establish a consistent point of view: Amory "alternates without apparent reason between the form of soliloquy and the form of dramatic monologue," recalling a similar tendency in Hawthorne's Blithedale Romance. In a soliloquy, the speaker searches for point of view; the dramatic monologue's speaker "starts with one."

Smith, Susan Harris. "Some Biographical Aspects of This Side of Paradise."

Fitzgerald/Hemingway Annual (1970): 96–101. Interview with Fitzgerald's childhood and college friend Norris Jackson reveals similarities and differences between Amory Blaine and Fitzgerald. At Princeton, Amory, like Fitzgerald, longed for popularity and "disguised his insecurity with social bravado," but Fitzgerald was not as driven or as aloof as his main character. Amory also features elements of Fitzgerald's Princeton friend Walker Ellis.

Stavola, Thomas J. "This Side of Paradise: Amory Blaine." Scott Fitzgerald: Crisis in an American Identity. Barnes & Noble Critical Studies. New York: Barnes & Noble, 1979. 73–106. Uses Erik H. Erikson's psychoanalytic theories to probe Amory Blaine's character. Amory's ultimate goal is not unlike the goal Erikson attributes to Gandhi and Luther: "the aspiration to transform the world around him to confirm his own personality." Amory begins at a disadvantage. His parents' relationship "reflects an important shift in American parental authority, a shift with debilitating effects upon offspring": the father's power diminished while mother rose to a "place of dominance." Because Beatrice dominates the "weak, passive" Stephen Blaine, Amory clings to his mother, assuming "many of her key feminine traits." As the novel progresses, he "realizes the need to break this bond if he is to achieve a firm identity and survive in a world not controlled by a strong mother figure." His reaction to kissing Myra reveals his "unresolved Oedipal conflict": because of his unusually close relationship to Beatrice, Amory "treat[s] every woman he gets close to as his mother," and he feels revulsion at the "incipient incest" in Myra's kiss. But Amory's relationship with Darcy

provides him with a strong father figure and helps him to find direction; Darcy represents “a sense of rational order.” Humbird’s death shows Amory that “youth, popularity, and power” bow before “the harsh realities of life,” leading him to turn to the much more substantial Burne as a role model. Just as Burne’s influence eclipses Humbird’s, the “sanctified Madonna figure” Clara replaces the childish Isabelle and “helps [Amory] clarify his attitudes toward women.” But he turns again to a “new Isabelle” in the person of Rosalind, who leaves him “a foolish and impotent victim before the power of a beautiful woman.” Eleanor embodies “the emotional and evil force latent in Amory’s soul,” but her materialism and her “blasphemous attack upon the Catholic Church” help Amory discover his “basically religious spirit.” He connects Eleanor and Beatrice because “[b]oth were poseurs and neurotic materialists,” who “had seduced [him].” Amory begins to right himself when he sacrifices his reputation for Alec; the sacrifice “prepares him to realize certain truths about himself.”

Stern, Milton R. “This Side of Paradise: A Brummagem God.” The Golden Moment: The Novels of F. Scott Fitzgerald. Urbana: U of Illinois P, 1970. 3–106.

Comments on the quality of the novel, the influence of Compton Mackenzie’s Sinister Street, Paradise’s influence on Percy Marks’s The Plastic Age, Fitzgerald’s definition of evil in the novel, and his use of personal experiences. Although Paradise “is not a good book,” it provides “excellent material for the historian or sociologist” and includes “many lovely and promising passages.” Placing Paradise alongside Sinister and Plastic reveals its uniqueness. Unlike Mackenzie’s upper-class Englishman Michael Fane, Amory, as an American,

“does not enjoy the casual certainties” of an aristocrat. Both characters journey toward self-knowledge. For Michael, that means “finding a means of defining and expressing an established identity: it is a matter of vocation.” Amory, however, must “creat[e] an identity: it is a matter of advantages, finding which is one’s American vocation.” Contrasting Fitzgerald’s conception of evil in Paradise to that of Marks in Plastic demonstrates “the difference between the serious and the merely popular novel”: in Plastic, evil “is nothing more than the shallowest of unexamined clichés,” but Fitzgerald’s evil “lies in the spurious beauty of American wealth.” Dick Humbird represents Monsignor Darcy’s conception of the personality, attractive on the surface, but a false model. When the devil assumes Dick’s form, “[p]ersonality, in short, becomes evil.” Dick reappears in the novel’s “golden girls,” who exemplify “the degeneration of national vision, and the consequent failure and shallowness of American moral identity.” “Amory waits for Isabelle’s mask to drop,” not understanding that “Isabelle is only aware of herself as an appearance absorbed from the hints and admiration of others.” Rosalind appears to be an amalgam of personality and personage but ultimately “make[s] a whore’s, the personality’s choice,” preferring money to true love. Eleanor, “a complete cliché representative of the lost generation,” functions as Amory’s mirror, “the dramatized externalization of the struggle between Amory the personality and Amory the personage.” Fitzgerald is at his best when he writes from personal experience: the novel falters when he attempts to invent, as he does in his descriptions of Amory’s wealthy childhood



and Clara's luminous personality, which he tends to describe rather than demonstrate through conversation and action.

Stewart, Lawrence. "Scott Fitzgerald D'Invilliers." American Literature 29 (1957):

212–13. Deals with epigraph attributed to Thomas Parke D'Invilliers in Gatsby and reaffirms that Fitzgerald modeled the character named Thomas Parke D'Invilliers in Paradise on John Peale Bishop. Stewart also discusses an inscription Fitzgerald wrote on Gatsby in which he identifies D'Invilliers as "myself."

Tanner, Stephen L. "The Devil and F. Scott Fitzgerald." F. Scott Fitzgerald in the Twenty-first Century. Eds. Jackson R. Bryer, Ruth Prigozy, and Milton R. Stern. Tuscaloosa: U of Alabama P, 2003. 66–78. Draws from scholarship by Sklar, Burhans, Moore, Allen, Stern, Kahn, Aldridge, Eble, James W. Tuttleton, and Lawrence Buell in a study of Fitzgerald's use of the supernatural to portray Amory's "diminishing sense of evil." Supernatural elements appear in "The Devil," "Supercilious Sacrifice," "Young Irony," and in figures of speech throughout the novel. Fitzgerald refers to the supernatural because of his "Catholic sensibility" and his "American Puritan heritage." Both Fitzgerald and Hawthorne employ the supernatural for "moral aims," not "merely for the titillation of horror." The devil's appearances in Paradise may seem "quaint," but Fitzgerald's morality has roots in the prewar period—"a world probably closer to Hawthorne's than to ours." But Amory's sense of evil fades as the narrative progresses. Book One depicts its "development" in Amory's disgust after his initiation into sexuality ("A Kiss for Amory") and in his fear of giving in to

sexual desire (“The Devil”). In the letters included in the “Interlude,” Darcy tells Amory “that his generation is ‘growing hard’” and “losing its sense of evil”; and Amory claims that the war has led him to agnosticism. In Book Two, after his encounters with Rosalind and Eleanor, he realizes that his sense of evil has weakened significantly: the demonic figure of “The Devil” has “diminished to the aura over Jill” in “Supercilious Sacrifice.” The novel’s treatment of evil resonates today, in an era in which we have an “evaporating sense of evil.”

“This Side of Paradise.” Novels for Students: Presenting Analysis, Context, and Criticism on Commonly Studied Novels. Ed. David Galens. Vol. 20. Detroit: Thomson Gale, 2005. 212–229. Includes brief biography of Fitzgerald; plot summary; descriptions of characters and major themes (“Generational Conflict,” “Egotism,” and “Elitism and the American Aristocracy”); a section on style (“Dramatic, Poetic, and Epistolary Forms” and “Self-Conscious Narration”); historical context (“World War I,” “The Dawn of the Jazz Age,” and “American Modernism”); brief review of criticism; essays on Paradise by Scott Trudell (“Critical Essay on This Side of Paradise,” annotated below) and Barry Gross (“This Side of Paradise: The Dominating Intention,” annotated above), a period review by Margaret Emerson Bailey, and suggestions for further study and reading.

Trudell, Scott. “Critical Essay on This Side of Paradise.” Novels for Students: Presenting Analysis, Context, and Criticism on Commonly Studied Novels. Ed. David Galens. Vol. 20. Detroit: Thomson Gale, 2005. 222–224. Analyzes Monsignor Darcy’s role in Paradise. Amory and Darcy’s “ideological

connection” becomes more tenuous as the novel progresses, and, when Darcy dies, “Amory appears to renounce the priest’s religion and moral systems,” embracing instead self-reliance. For a young man of Amory’s generation, an important part of becoming a personage “is disavowing the generations that came before.” Amory and Darcy’s relationship serves as “a metaphor” for America’s relationship with Europe. Fitzgerald’s comparing Darcy to a Stuart king and a Turner painting identifies Darcy “as an American with firm European roots”: his death parallels the demise “of the transatlantic cultural elite” in the wake of World War I. “Supercilious Sacrifice” demonstrates the “importance of atheism to the intellectual context of the novel”: Darcy’s supernatural appearance during the episode indicates that Amory’s “is a religious sacrifice,” but Amory emphasizes the selfishness of his act, rendering the sacrifice “useless and misdirected.”

Tuttleton, James W. “The Presence of Poe in This Side of Paradise.” English Language Notes 3 (1966): 285–89. Fitzgerald employs Poe allusions to illuminate the beauty-evil link in “Young Irony.” Eleanor resembles many Poe characters. Both Eleanor and Poe’s Dupin have the ability to read others’ thoughts. Amory focuses on Eleanor’s facial features just as the narrator in Poe’s “Ligeia” focuses on Ligeia’s; both women have aquiline noses and mysterious eyes. Eleanor and Ligeia are very intelligent, seemingly more so than their male companions, and are interested in questions of immorality. Like Madeline in “The Fall of the House of Usher,” Eleanor has “a constitutional and family disease of the mind,” and Eleanor’s name recalls “Lenore,” a female figure in both “The Raven” and

“Lenore.” The “echoes of Poe [...] in their union of terror and beauty” enhance Fitzgerald’s portrayal of Eleanor as “the last time that evil crept close to Amory under the mask of beauty.”

Ullrich, David W. “Reconstructing Fitzgerald’s ‘Twice-Told Tales’: Intertextuality in This Side of Paradise and Tender Is the Night.” The F. Scott Fitzgerald Review 3 (2004): 43–71. Examines textual and thematic similarities between Paradise and Tender. In both novels, places named Geneva—Paradise’s Lake Geneva, Wisconsin, and Tender’s Lake Geneva, Switzerland, and Geneva, New York—figure prominently. The young, hopeful Amory lives at his parents’ Lake Geneva estate; Fitzgerald “exil[es]” an “older, defeated Dick Diver” to Geneva, New York. While Amory progresses from personality to personage, Dick starts out “as a ‘heroic’ personage” but becomes an “immensely appealing” but empty figure. Both novels question “notions of an ‘original self’” and portray “the conflict between free will and determinism scripted onto a set of family metaphors.” The immature Fitzgerald cannot construct a cohesive narrative of his three primary concerns in Paradise: the war’s effect on his generation; whether the “‘world’s intellectual conscience’” resides in the wealthy classes; and the connection between evil and sexuality. But, in Tender, the experienced novelist fuses these issues “into a coherent, fluid narrative.”

Van Arsdale, Nancy P. “Princeton as Modernist’s Hermeneutics: Rereading This Side of Paradise.” F. Scott Fitzgerald: New Perspectives. Eds. Jackson R. Bryer, Alan Margolies, and Ruth Prigozy. Athens: U of Georgia P, 2000. 39–50. Most critics approach Paradise as a bildungsroman, but the novel “is better understood

as the author's effort to interpret what he had personally signified as the symbol of symbols, Princeton University." Fitzgerald denounces Princeton as an educational institution—in the same manner that Henry Adams does Harvard in Education of Henry Adams—but the university “remained a key symbol of higher order, purpose, and meaning to Fitzgerald throughout his life.” While Adams posits “technology as the substitute for religion,” Fitzgerald looks to socialism “as a better solution for modern America than either the church or Princeton.” At the end of the novel, Amory makes his pilgrimage to Princeton, knowing that “his formal educational experiences as well as his chance at paradise have been failures”; he returns to “bang on paradise's gates and seek admission on new grounds” in a search for “the higher realm of justice, knowledge, and morality locked within Princeton's world.”

Way, Brian. “Fitzgerald's Early Work—A Study in Development.” F. Scott Fitzgerald and the Art of Social Fiction. New York: St. Martin's, 1980. 49–71. Looks for evidence of “Fitzgerald's development” in his early works, including Paradise. The “formless, pretentious, sentimental, self-indulgent and intellectually weak” Paradise contains “isolated moments of keen perception, the first signs of a capacity for acute social observation, and occasional gleams of an exquisite comic sense.” It includes simplistic versions of three elements that mark his mature work: his “complex attitude” toward the wealthy; poetic prose; and his interest in social mores. Through Dick Humbird, Fitzgerald attempts to “make sense of [his] contradictory reactions” to the rich, and the character serves as “forerunner” to Tom Buchanan of Gatsby and Anson Hunter of “The Rich Boy.”

Fitzgerald tries to imbue the novel's language with a "poetic quality"—usually with little success—but a few passages feature "a certain kind of power," though they also have "a suspect quality" that makes one hesitate "to say unequivocally they are good." However, in its portraits of petting parties and flappers, the novel shows that "Fitzgerald's skills as a social historian" had already developed.

West, James L. W., III. "Annotating Mr. Fitzgerald." The American Scholar 69.2

(2000): 83–91. Details the problems involved in annotating Paradise, a novel full of obscure literary and pop cultural references, mentions of minor celebrities, and New York and Princeton locales.

---. "The Corrections Lists for F. Scott Fitzgerald's This Side of Paradise." Studies in Bibliography 26 (1973): 254–64. Reprints lists of errors (compiled by Scribner's Magazine editor Robert Bridges, the New York Tribune's Franklin P. Adams, and Fitzgerald himself) in the early editions of Paradise. Despite the lists, many of the errors remained uncorrected. In 1938, Fitzgerald suggested including a "glossary of absurdities and inaccuracies" appended to a new edition of the novel, but Scribner's did not reprint the novel, and Fitzgerald's glossary hasn't been found.

---. The Making of This Side of Paradise. Philadelphia: U of Pennsylvania P, 1983.

Tells the story of the writing, editing, and publication of Paradise. Chapter 1, "Beginnings: November 1917–July 1919," uses Fitzgerald's correspondence with Shane Leslie, Max Perkins, and Edmund Wilson and excerpts from "The Romantic Egotist" to reconstruct the composition and revision of the twice-rejected manuscript. Chapter 2, "The Romantic Egotist" compares the surviving

chapters and fragments of “Egotist” to Paradise. “Egotist” and Paradise have much in common: “scenes, characters,” and “a precociousness and vitality,” but Scribner’s “was undoubtedly right in rejecting the novel,” and Paradise is “a better book.” Chapter 3, “The Education of a Personage” details Fitzgerald’s process of transforming “Egotist” into Paradise. The manuscript provides “complicated and fascinating evidence” about the process. Fitzgerald began by producing extensively rewritten drafts of the “Egotist” material but, feeling pressed for time, began integrating pages of the “Egotist” typescript into the new manuscript, creating problems with organization and coherence. In the finished novel, West finds remnants of Stephen Palm’s (the main character and narrator of “Egotist”) naïve voice, which clashes with Paradise’s third-person narrator’s “world-weary, ironic, even cynical” point of view. In addition, Fitzgerald incorporated many of his college writings in Paradise and included borrowings from Monsignor Fay’s and Shane Leslie’s letters and Zelda Fitzgerald’s letters and diary. The “Education” manuscript ends with a dash, but the novel ends with a period; West speculates about who made this change and why. The chapter also includes the text of Fitzgerald’s unused preface to Paradise. Chapter 4, “Grammarians, Typists, and Editors,” details the editing of Paradise. Fitzgerald had a proofreader peruse the manuscript before he sent it to Scribner’s. The proofreader corrected many mechanical and word usage errors but tended to be “picky and schoolmarmish,” too much of a stickler for correct grammar in dialogue and “something of a prude” when it came to the novel’s mildly risqué passages. Fitzgerald’s typist changed the text for the worse, ignoring underlined

words, including material the author marked for deletion, and, in one section, rearranging sentences and paragraphs. Finally, Perkins revealed his legendary difficulties with and distaste for proofreading, missing many spelling and grammar errors. The flawed text of the published work damaged the novelist's reputation. Chapter 5, "This Side of Paradise," documents the many errors in Paradise and Fitzgerald's mostly vain attempts to rectify them, the conservative Scribner's publication policies, which probably hurt the novel's sales, changes in the British edition, and American reprints of the novel through the decades. West also includes four appendices: "Physical Characteristics of the Romantic Egotist Fragments"; "Physical Characteristics of the Manuscript"; "Manuscript—First Edition Conversion Table"; and "Variants Between the First English and American Editions."

- . "The Question of Vocation in This Side of Paradise and The Beautiful and Damned." The Cambridge Companion to F. Scott Fitzgerald. Ed. Ruth Prigozy. New York: Cambridge UP, 2002. 48–56. Both Paradise and Damned feature four of Fitzgerald's primary themes: "the importance of vocation, the danger of idleness, the allurements of alcohol, and the enervating effect of money." The search for vocation is most important for Fitzgerald's male characters, but the author understood "that women too needed meaningful roles in life." For upper-class young women, the role entailed seeking a suitable husband. Amory considers writing as a possible vocation, but "one has trouble believing at the end of This Side of Paradise that Amory will write anything of consequence." Like Anthony



Patch of Damned, Amory views all effort as hopeless and his “[I]ack of vocation and purpose” leads him to alcohol abuse.

---. “The Second Serials of This Side of Paradise and The Beautiful and Damned.”

Papers of the Biographical Society of America 73 (1979): 63–74. Various American newspapers reprinted Fitzgerald’s first two novels, enhancing his popularity but offering badly corrupted versions of the texts. The Chicago Herald and Examiner and Atlanta Georgian ran installments of Paradise in 1921, and the New York Daily News in 1923. The newspapers had to alter the texts because of differences in newspaper typesetting but also censored and shortened the novel.

West includes facsimiles of the newspapers’ sensational ads for the novels.

Wilson, Edmund. “F. Scott Fitzgerald.” 1922. The Shores of Light: A Literary

Chronicle of the Twenties and Thirties. New York: Farrar, Strauss, 1952.

Boston: Northeastern UP, 1985. 27–35. Article originally appeared in March

1922 issue of Bookman under the title “The Literary Spotlight—VI: F. Scott

Fitzgerald.” Deals with Paradise only briefly, but Wilson’s comments have

shaped the critical response to the novel for more than eighty years. The book is

not only “highly imitative” but “imitates an inferior model,” Mackenzie’s Sinister

Street. It “is very immaturely imagined” and “one of the most illiterate books of

any merit ever published.” Wilson’s essay also includes the line that launched

dozens of critiques of the novel: “I have said that This Side of Paradise commits

almost every sin that a novel can possibly commit: but it does not commit the

unpardonable sin: it does not fail to live.”

Zhang, Aiping. Enchanted Places: The Use of Setting in F. Scott Fitzgerald's Fiction.

Contributions to the Study of American Literature 2. Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1997. Discusses Fitzgerald's use of bars (pp. 54–60), schools (79–93 and 98–108), and New York City (121–24 and 138–39) as settings in Paradise. Amory's trips to bars represent "different phase[s]" in his regression "toward the ultimate failure." Although Fitzgerald offers little physical description of the bars, the few adjectives he does use provide insight into Amory's feelings: he describes the Knickerbocker as "crowded," which "matches the chaos in Amory's mind"; he calls Shanley's "very dim," which signifies "the worsening condition of Amory's mind." In his chapter on schools, Zhang examines Fitzgerald's view of higher education in Paradise, his use of the bildungsroman, and autobiographical details in the prep school and college episodes. Fitzgerald deserves credit for "pioneering" the college novel and bildungsroman in America. He offers a "bipolar view" of higher education, depicting both "the disparity between what these famous schools mean to the career of a young man and what they actually deliver." Adams's Education seems to have inspired Fitzgerald's portrayal of "the 'miseducation' by family and school," but "Mackenzie's strong influence [...] is an undeniable fact." In both Paradise and the Basil Duke Lee stories, Fitzgerald fictionalizes his own experiences "to scathe the schools for failing their youngsters." His great "resentment" over his college years "followed his characters into This Side of Paradise." In his chapter on urban settings, Zhang discusses Amory's changing attitude toward New York: the city dazzles Amory

when he first arrives, but, after “The Devil” episode, it takes on a sinister dimension.