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WOMEN IN THE FICTION OF F. SCOTT FITZGERALD

A Pro Gradu Thesis

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WOMEN IN THE FICTION OF F. SCOTT FITZGERALD

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Pro gradu - työn tarkoituksena on tutkia F. Scott Fizgeraldin romaanien ja novellien naishahmoja sekä sitä, millä tavoin Fitzgeraldin kuvaukset ja käsitykset muuttuivat hänen uransa aikana. Tutkimusta Fitzgeraldista naispuolisista henkilöhahmoista on tähän mennessä tehty melko vähän, ja eräs tämän pro gradun tavoitteista olikin kerätä yhteen melko hajanaisia käsityksiä aiheesta. Hyvin usein on vain tarkasteltu Fitzgeraldin yhteyttä flapper-muodin syntyyn, sekä hänen vaimonsa Zeldan vaikutusta hänen työhönsä. Tärkeänä tavoitteena tässä tutkimuksessa siis olikin haastaa aiemmin vallalla olleet käsitykset Fitzgeraldin naishahmojen yksipuolisuudesta ja näyttää, että Fitzgeraldin tuotannon naiset ovat monipuolisia, ja että heitä tarkastelemalla voi saada myös hyvän kuvan 1920- ja 1930 - lukujen naisten elämään, ajatusmaailmaan, ja yhteiskunnassa vallalla oleviin käsityksiin naisista. Tutkielman lähteinä olivat Fitzgeraldin tuotanto, romaanit, novelleja ja esseitä, sekä muun lähdekirjallisuutena käytettiin hänen työstään kirjoitettuja artikkeleita ja kirjota, elämäkertatietoja, Yhdysvaltojen historiaa tutkivaa kirjallisuutta 1920- ja 1930 - luvuilla, ja muuta kirjallisuustutkimusta.

Pro gradun taustoissa valotetaan Fitzgeraldin elämää sekä Yhdysvaltojen historiaa hänen elinaikanaan, kuten taloudellista lamaa, kieltolakia, naisten asemaa, sekä nuorisokulttuuria. Tutkielman ensimmäinen osa käsittelee etelän bellejä, jotka edustivat Fitzgeraldille sotaa edeltävää aikaa, mutta jotka joutuivat sopeutumaan 1920-luvun yhteiskunnallisiin muutoksiin. Toisessa osassa käsitellään flapper-muotia, 1920-luvun vapautuneita nuoria naisia, joita kuvaamalla Fitzgeraldista tuli tunnettu. Kolmas osa käsittelee avioliittoa, mitä hänen kuvaamansa naiset joutuivat päättämään naimisiin mennessän, erityyppisten avioliittojen kuvauksia Fitzgeraldin tuotannossa, millaisia paineita 1920-luvun elämäntyyli toi pariskunnille, sekä äitiyden ja uskottomuuden ongelmia naimisissa oleville naisille. Neljäs osa käsittelee Fitzgeraldin tapaa tutkia yhteiskuntaluokkia naishahmojensa kautta, hänen muuttuvia käsityksiään yläluokasta, rahan viehätyksestä ja tuhoavasta voimasta, alempien luokkien edustajia, joita Fitzgerald alkoi todella tarkastella vasta uransa loppupuolella, sekä työtä, jonka tärkeyttä hän viimeisissä teoksissaan korosti. Vaikka hänen naishahmonsa usein kaipaavat itsenäisyyttä ja vapautta, se oli useimmille, kuten yleensäkin naisille hänen aikanaan, vain kaukainen tavoite. Fitzgeraldin naishahmoista löytyy hyvin erityyppisiä hahmoja, alkuaikojen helposti kategorisoitavista kaunottarista hänen viimeisten teostensa monipuolisiin yksilöihin.

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1.INTRODUCTION

F. Scott Fitzgerald was one of the most important writers of the period just after the First World War. He first became known as a spokesman of the younger generation with his first novel, *This Side of Paradise*, published in 1920. He was also one of the best known characters of the twenties, the so-called "Jazz Age". About ten years after his death, Scott Fitzgerald's literary reputation experienced a revival, and he remains of the most famous names in American literature.

One thing that made F. Scott Fitzgerald so famous in his days was his literary creation of the flapper, a liberated young woman who lived and enjoyed the Jazz Age. His wife, Zelda, was an inspiration for a number of his heroines and she was herself a celebrity of the period. In the early part of the decade they embodied the carefree atmosphere of the post-war days. Thousands of young women took up flappers as their role models, and although Fitzgerald did not invent the type, he helped spread the changes that were taking place in American society, especially those concerning the behavior of the young.

Many studies have been made about the subject of flappers and F. Scott Fitzgerald, and although his time as the writer of the young was relatively short-lived, he is mostly remembered for it. The subject of flappers deserves quite careful scrutiny precisely because it shaped so much of Fitzgerald's early career. However, a major aim of this study is to show that his women characters include much more than just fun-loving young women of the early twenties.

Few studies of women in F. Scott Fitzgerald's fiction have been made to this day. One of the most important ones is Sarah Beebe Fryer's book, *Fitzgerald's New Women: Harbingers of Change* (1988), but she concentrates on Fitzgerald's novels without looking at his short stories. A pro gradu thesis, *The Impact of Zelda Fitzgerald on the Fiction of F. Scott Fitzgerald* by Sari Paananen, written at the University of Jyväskylä in 1996, on the other hand, examines Fitzgerald's female characters through his wife. Most critics take quite a superficial look at Fitzgerald's female characters. His heroes, on the

contrary, have captivated the attention of several literary critics. I want to demonstrate that there is much more variation in women characters in his work than has been assumed. Even though his wife was a major inspiration for his writings, she was not, by far, the only one. For this study I have read all of F. Scott Fitzgerald's novels as well as a number of short stories and articles, and I attempt to show that his women characters cannot be restricted to flappers and images of Zelda. I am also drawing from earlier literary criticism to demonstrate what has been written on this subject before, while bringing forward my own views on the development of women characters in Fitzgerald's fiction.

The major aim of this study is trying to find if F. Scott Fitzgerald's views and ideas about women changed, and in what degree, throughout his career. It is important to keep in mind that he was only twenty-three when his first novel was published. At the time he was writing his last novel, he had gone through the mental collapse of his wife as well as his own alcoholism, and he was raising a daughter as a single parent. It would be absurd to assume that during the nearly twenty years of active literary professionalism his ideas and ways of portraying women, among other things, had remained unchanged. Since it is impossible to completely separate writers from their personal lives, in this study I am using information about the lives of Scott and Zelda Fitzgerald where it seems to bear relevance to his fiction.

The central goal of this study, then, is to look at the different types of women Fitzgerald portrayed in different times of his career. I am beginning with his Southern Belle heroines, about whom he wrote especially in the early part of his career. Secondly, I am taking a closer look at flappers and, particularly, I want to see how they stand in the overall work of F. Scott Fitzgerald. The third part is concentrated on love, marriage, infidelity, and motherhood, and the last section is concerned with women and wealth, and how Fitzgerald's views on women, work, and social classes developed. With these themes I want to explore Fitzgerald's changing views through the 20 years writing, through his depictions of main and secondary characters, looking at both novels and short stories. Another aim is to study the connection between changes taking place in American society at the time of Fitzgerald 's career and to explore the extent to which they are visible in his

fiction. A minor aim of this study is to challenge the view that Fitzgerald was only able to portray flappers and their carefree life style. The theme of his wife's influence comes up a times but rather than bringing Zelda on the center stage I want to, in fact, show that Fitzgerald's heroines are not merely thinly veiled portraits of her.

The twenties, partly with the emergence of the flapper, saw a distinct change in the position of women in American society. Besides winning the vote, there was a widespread assumption that women were rapidly gaining financial independence. Even if this has turned out to be a myth of the times, in their leisure time activities young women were definitely challenging old traditions. They adopted a freer code of behavior than their elders and expressed sexuality more openly than earlier generations. Flappers were real symbols of the festive Jazz Age spirit. Since F. Scott Fitzgerald can easily be considered a social writer depicting changes in manners, it is of special interest to explore the images of women in his fiction and see how they changed with the times. He was briefly elevated into a position of a spokesman for the young, including young women, so this gives another dimension to his fiction.

The twenties were an important time in the American history and the decade can be, quite validly, seen as a turning point in many respects. First of all, the nation became predominantly urban, and city culture received more and more importance in all aspects of life. The decade also witnessed a major change in women's history, as it is the first decade in which women were allowed to participate in political life. It saw a liberalization of the manners of the young, especially young women, who began to demand equal freedoms with men in social life. The twenties were the most prosperous time the country had ever known and the decade was followed by an economic depression in the 1930s. In the 1920s the prohibition of the sale and consumption of alcohol was attempted, an experiment, which ended in a bitter failure. All of these aspects are explained in further detail in background section in order to give the reader a better picture of the times that F. Scott Fitzgerald described in his fiction. Understanding these details is all the more important since Fitzgerald is the writer who is usually, and for good reason, connected with the twenties.

1.2. The 1920's and 1930's in The United States

1.2.1. An era of prosperity. The decade after the First World War was a period of an unprecedented economic boom in the United States (Shannon 1963:69). It was the era of the businessman, of optimism and belief that the country had finally been able to rid itself of poverty. The whole nation was in festive spirits: they "gave their energies to triumphant business, and for the rest they were in a holiday mood" (Allen 1931:156). From 1924 on the economic boom was at its strongest, and people concentrated on having fun with their money with a conviction that they had earned their good times (Shannon 1963:148). As one writer in 1924 put it: "The right to play is the final clause in the charter of democracy. The people are king - *et le roi s'amuse*" (Duffus 1924: 44). The decade became known, after the name of the president, as "Coolidge prosperity" (Allen 1931: 132).

The belief in the future prosperity led many Americans to try their luck at the stock market and by the end of the decade some writers observed that practically everyone from cleaning women to land owners were involved (Allen 1931: 246). In fact, Scott Fitzgerald was, surprisingly, one of the very few who had no interest in stock speculation and never took part in "The Big Bull Market" (Bruccoli 1981:290).

1.2.2. The Depression. The decade – long party came to an end with the great stock market crash in 1929 when only a few months earlier economics experts had predicted the era of prosperity to continue (Allen 1931: 279). Political leaders and economists still professed faith in the future but the prices kept on declining (Shannon 1963:149). Soon the effects of the Crash became apparent as families all over the country suddenly realized they had lost their life savings (Allen 1931: 281).

The crash brought Americans into the most severe economic crisis in their history. Those who still had money no longer invested it, and the result was an economic decline that had not been predicted even when the prices started going down. (Shannon 1963: 153-154) The depression was at its worst in the beginning of the 1930's. Business stopped moving and the result was overall

misery, unemployment, poverty and hunger (Shannon 1963:152). The festive mood of the twenties turned into a new seriousness that was reflected in all walks of life, beginning from a change of atmosphere in campuses where determined studying now took the place of 1920s style wild fraternity parties (Shannon 1963:235). Herbert Hoover became the president at the most unfortunate time possible, just before the Crash in the spring of 1929, when the future still looked bright (Shannon 1963:147). His administration did what it considered best but the result could only be called a failure (Allen 282-284). When Franklin D. Roosevelt became president in 1933 the banks had been closed and economy was at tis lowest point (Shannon 1963:167). He immediately started his famous New Deal program to make the nation recover from the Crash (Shannon 1963: 163). It did help the country significantly but the Depression was not really over until the break of the Second World War (Shannon 1963:205).

1.2.3. The position of women in society. The great change in women's place in society occurred in 1919 when the suffragettes' goal was at last achieved: women got the right to vote (Chafe 1991:20). However, the reformers were soon disappointed with their hopes when they realized that women's votes did not signify a major change in the country's political climate. Women in general did not vote actively and when they did, the usually followed the example of their husbands or fathers (Chafe 1991: 29, Allen 1931:79). The next generation of women did not find politics very interesting and the word 'feminism' had by the 1930's gained a negative, dull connotation (Chafe 1991:59; Katz-Stoker 1972:323).

In spite of their lack of enthusiasm in the voting stalls, young women were eager to pursue personal liberation. Most social commentators of the day observed and discussed the "revolution in manners and morals" in the United States (Chafe 1991: 64). The symbol of the liberated young woman was the flapper. She had her hair bobbed and wore short skirts, she lived for fun and enjoyed shocking her parents, and was not at all interested in being "ladylike" (Allen 1931: 92). As a matter of fact, this kind of freer behavior had been observed before the First World War among the working class girls. By the

mid-twenties their style and code of behavior had spread among the middle-class young women (Banner 1995:144).

In the twenties people widely believed that women had, in fact, won their liberation (Banner 1995:138). Social commentators discussed young women's behavior, living alone and working, and noticing the change in manners of the "new woman", they assumed it to be the result of an economic independence (Chafe 1991: 64). One article concluded:

> The fact is...that women to-day [sic] are shaking off the shreds and patches of their age-old servitude. 'Feminism' has won a victory so nearly complete that we have even forgotten the fierce challenge which once inhered in the very word. Women have highly resolved that they are just as good as men, and intend to be treated so. (Bliven 1925: 6)

At the same time, however, all the more importance was placed on youth, beauty and thinness for women, as the ideal body was more boyish than ever before (Riley 1987:202).

The image of a single, working girl became glamorous for the first time in the history of the nation, and the social commentators of the time drew a connection between new personal liberty and economic independence (Chafe 1991: 64). This was, however, a superficial change. While it is obvious that especially young women's manners changed and that they became more and more indifferent to old conventions, they were still very much bound to their families and consciously intending to marry and settle into a traditional family life (Chafe 1977: 30). It was the general impression that women took over more and more jobs, but as later studies have shown, the number of working women remained constant in the period just before and after the First World War (Banner 1995: 149). In fact, very little progress was made in the twenties towards economic equality between men and women (Chafe 1991: 65). Women's jobs paid less and were less prestigious that men's, and, contrary to the popular image of the day, most women worked because they had to, instead of earning "pin-money" to spend on their own amusement (Chafe 1991: 76).

By the end of the 1930's certain changes had come to stay. Some modes of behavior, such as women smoking or having a drink in public, had become a standard norm and the adolescent "petting party" had lost the aura of naughtiness it had had in the previous decade (Fass 1977: 270). During the

thirties women's manners, preoccupations and even fashions reflected the problems of the Depression. Flappers and their dedication to a life of fun no longer seemed desirable or exciting to the great public (Riley 1987: 212). When the times were difficult the problems of earning a living were more interesting than personal liberation (Banner 1995: 196). The Depression years brought two contrasting trends in regard to women's position. There was an added opposition against women working and taking jobs from men with families, as it was widely believed. On the other hand, the New Deal program gave some new opportunities for women in work and in political life (Riley 1987:224).

1.2.4. Youth culture. In the 1920's the United States saw its first real youth culture. As Fass has discovered, during that time youth became a "national obsession" (1977: 127). The manners and morals of the younger generation were eagerly debated in magazine articles and conversations, and the fashions of the young began to be imitated by different age groups. Youth became associated with glamour and smartness (Fass 1977: 128).

Several factors can explain the phenomenon, of which the most often cited is the Great War and the disillusionment with it. "It's the effect of the war!" was something of a slogan of the period (Welles Page 1922: 2). One explanation, suggested by Fass (1977:366), stresses the importance of earlier changes in families. In the beginning of the century they were, first of all, smaller than ever before, and parents could spend more time with individual children than their parents had been able to, raising them in a more nurturing atmosphere than before. These factors contributed to the new youth culture of the 1920s.

The number of youths going to high school and college rose significantly during the first decades of the century. The young spent more years in school and consequently, more time among peers than the older generations had. (Shannon 1963:110) As Shannon notes, referring to both high schools and colleges: "Higher education ... became mass education." (1963:113) With a greater number of young people in colleges, the emerging youth culture was able to spread in different layers of society. The influence of family and elders became gradually smaller and the young themselves took over defining the

limits of acceptable behavior (Fass 1977:307). The result was a noticeable change in the manners of the young, which alarmed the parents, teachers and social commentators. The opinions of young people on manners, morals, and ideals were certainly different than their parents but in their own view, the young were merely adapting to the changing post-war world (Fass 1977: 129).

The issue that most worried the elders was the young and sex. During the 1920's, talking about sexuality became more open and frank, and new terms introduced by Freud were often casually repeated in conversation (Allen 1931:82). The young had their own forums of sexual exploration: dating and petting (Fass 1977: 262). They permitted sexual exploration with several partners without making a serious commitment. (Fass 1977: 263) The young were very much preoccupied with kissing: when two young people liked each other they regarded it as perfectly natural to kiss at one point of the evening (Rowland Wembridge 1925:176). However, the parents neglected to see that the young had very clear limits to sexual behavior. Although kissing and different forms of physical fondling were regarded as acceptable, sexual intercourse was definitely not – this was the self-imposed standard of the middle-class American youth in the 1920s (Fass 1977: 262). No young woman who had any idea of rules and who was looking for a husband – and the young in the twenties had their aims clearly in marriage (Fass 1977: 262) – could have taken the risk of losing her virginity. If a couple was engaged the rules were bent a little because, for the young, love, marriage and sex went together. The young did not reject the morality of their parents but merely modified it: in their opinion, an engagement practically meant marriage, which in turn meant that an engaged couple was outside the youth's own rules and for them a different code of sexual behavior was permitted (Fass 1977: 273).

The young wanted an equal companionship between men and women. Young women wanted not to be on the pedestal but to step down and live with their husbands as their friends as well as their sexual partners (Bliven 1925: 4). They rejected the double standard of their parents' world and the idea that women should act differently from men because they were, supposedly, morally superior (Fass 1977:300). The young believed that in matters as varied as dress, drinking and smoking, and even sexual behavior, every individual should have the right to decide for themselves (Fass 1977: 298). In fashions as

well as behavior, everything came down to personal preference and taste. (Fass 1977: 285).

With the 1920s interest in youth culture, the fashions and manners of the young gradually spread over the whole nation (Fass 1977:128). In "Echoes of the Jazz Age" Scott Fitzgerald later compared the end of the twenties as if grown-ups had taken over a children's party (Fitzgerald 1986:11). The phrases, clothes and dances of college youth were considered glamorous and exciting, and much of the atmosphere of the late 1920's can be seen as a reflection of the national obsession and adoration of youth.

1.2.5. Prohibition. The twenties was also the decade that saw the legal prohibition of the sales of alcohol. The law known as the Volstead Act, became in effect in July 1919. (Bruccoli 1981: 99) The country had accepted the law "almost absent-mindedly" and without an organized opposition (Allen 1931: 205, 206). The irony lies, as Way has remarked, in the fact that the puritan ethic won a "legislative triumph ... at the very moment when its real power to control moral and social behaviour was crumbling away." (1980: 12) It soon became clear that majority obedience of the law could not be taken for granted (Mowry 1963: 89) and that its enforcement would be far more difficult than what had been predicted (Allen 1931:207, see also Coffey 1975).

At an era of a relative political passivity, Prohibition was the issue that most clearly divided voters. The rough division went according to the urban and agrarian lines: small town people more often supported the Volstead Act and cities opposed it (Mowry 1963:89). People began to take an increasingly negative attitude toward the law fairly quickly and, as the decade progressed, the opposition kept on growing (Allen 1931:208). Gangsters, especially in Chicago with the famous Al Capone in the lead, were taking over towns, corruption was growing in political offices, and the nation blamed Prohibition for the increasing lawlessness (Allen 1931: 215-220, see also Coffey 1975). Breaking the Prohibition law was considered a minor offence and the law was regarded as a joke (Fass 1977:315). In cities and among the young drinking even increased as a result of the Prohibition. A further change was that, whereas in pre-prohibition days drunkenness had been socially unacceptable,

it now became a "part of 'the game" to show the effects of "Ginification" in public". (Fass 1977:317). Drinking among young women increased as well. Before the war bars had been restricted to men but the speakeasies were equally open to men and women. Furthermore, members of both sexes could be seen carrying a flask with them (Allen 1931:91). It is also worth noting that Prohibition was largely responsible for the creation of nightclubs in big cities (Mowry 1963:109)

In politics, too, "wet" and "dry" became decisive definitions of candidates, and the 1928 presidential elections were to a great extent decided over the issue of the Prohibition. Herbert Hoover, the dry candidate, won after promising a thorough examination on the problem (Allen 1931: 213, see also Coffey 1975). When the study was completed the result was more than confusing: it concluded the experiment to be a failure but the law was still worth maintaining (Allen 1931: 214). When the Depression set in, the voices speaking against the Prohibition were already louder than the ones supporting it. Franklin D. Roosevelt, after winning the 1932 presidential elections, immediately reversed the Prohibition law with the almost unanimous support of the people (Shannon 1963: 136).

2. F. SCOTT FITZGERALD AND HIS WORKS

2. 1. F. Scott Fitzgerald

Francis Scott Key Fitzgerald was born in 1896 in St. Paul, Minnesota into a Catholic, middle-class family (Bruccoli 1981:13). The family, although considered respectable, had financial problems all through Scott's childhood (Bruccoli 1981:23). Years later Scott recalled vividly the day he when his father lost his job and from then on was " a failure the rest of his days."(as quoted in Meyers 1994:9).

In school Scott was mainly preoccupied with football, dreaming of fame and recognition in the field but he had little success (Bruccoli 1981: 25). He was, in fact, very unpopular in school, considered by his peers to be

"boastful..., a coward and a bully...". In addition, he did not do well with his studies and he did not get along with his teachers (Bruccoli 1981: 32).

At school he preferred writing his own stories to doing homework, and consequently his scholastic record was poor (Bruccoli 1981: 28). He found writing to be useful as a compensation for action: after behaving cowardly on football field he wrote a poem about the game. He remembered later thinking that "...if you weren't able to function in action you might at least be able to tell about it, because you felt the same intensity..." (as quoted in Bruccoli 1981: 33)

Scott was determined to study at Princeton University (Bruccoli 1981: 39) and explained his reasons: "I think of Princeton as being lazy and good-looking and aristocratic – you know, like a spring day." (as quoted in Bruccoli 1981: 40). However, his entrance examinations did not go well, but in the personal interview he managed to persuade the officials not to reject him on his birthday (Bruccoli 1981:43). Another problem in his way was money: only an inheritance left to his mother made the studies possible (Meyers 1994: 20).

In Princeton Scott wanted to be the "big man on campus" and to make his way to the top in the university social life. He turned to the college humor magazine in order to achieve his goal (Bruccoli 1981: 44). Another one of his interest was a student club that wrote and performed musical comedies (Meyers 1994: 21). He devoted more time to extra-curricular activities than studying and instead of following the advice of his professors, he preferred to read according to his own tastes (Bruccoli 1981: 51). The lyrics he wrote for the musical comedies brought him the popularity he had dreamed of but, on the other hand, his academic record was nearly disastrous (Bruccoli 1981:55).

During his sophomore year he fell in love for the first time, with Ginevra King (Bruccoli 1981:55). She was rich, beautiful and popular and "a sophisticated sixteen-year-old". (Meyers 1994:28) The romance ended partly because he was considered too poor for her and partly because she did not share the intensity of his feelings (Meyers 1994: 29).

Academically Fitzgerald's last two years in Princeton were even worse than the previous ones. He was too careless to do even the minimum work that was necessary and, as a result, his scholastic record was hopeless (Meyers 1994:31). He had to repeat his junior year, with equally bad results, and he

eventually left Princeton without graduating. The United States' participating in the First World War gave Scott a respectable way out and he volunteered for the army. (Meyers 1994:33).

Not doing much better as a soldier than he had as a student (Bruccoli 1981: 86), Fitzgerald was stationed in Montgomery, Alabama. In 1918 he met Zelda Sayre, a celebrated local beauty (Meyers 1994:42). She came from a respectable, though not wealthy, family, and was known for her wild behavior (Meyers 1994:44). They fell in love almost immediately and soon got engaged. To Fitzgerald, Zelda epitomized all his dreams: she was beautiful, sought after by several suitors, and had a daring nature. However, Zelda began to have doubts because of his insecure future and she eventually broke off their engagement (Meyers 1994:49).

Fitzgerald was crushed after the break-up and returned to his hometown. He had written the first version of his novel, *The Romantic Egotist*, while he was still in the army (Bruccoli 1981: 84). Publishers rejected it, but he received enough encouragement to continue writing (Bruccoli 1981: 88). He completely rewrote the novel and changed its title into *This Side of Paradise,* and the book was published in March, 1920 (Meyers 1994: 56). The novel was an immediate success and made Fitzgerald a celebrity over night. It brought him everything he had dreamed of: fame, wealth, and Zelda (Bruccoli 1981: 119). They were married later that same year (Meyers 1994: 67).

Fitzgerald's novel and early stories were among the first to be written for the young and about the young, men and women in or just out of college (Bruccoli 1981: 112, Cross 1964:20). He was able to see and understand the excitement of change that was beginning in the United States in the turn of the decade. He and Zelda became the unofficial royal couple of the Jazz Age. They took pride in their irresponsibility, and their pranks, such as Zelda jumping into fountains in New York, gained fame all over the country (Meyers 1994: 69). Their life soon became hectic and that put a strain on the marriage from early on (Meyers 1994: 71). They made their first trip to Europe in 1921 (Meyers 1994:73) and later that year their only child, a girl called Scottie, was born (Bruccoli 1981: 160).

Fitzgerald's second novel, *The Beautiful and Damned,* was published in 1922 (Bruccoli 1981:163). The reviews were mixed: some critics had expected

a novel more like *This Side of Paradise* while others considered it an improvement in his career (Bruccoli 1981:163). In 1923 Fitzgerald wrote his only play, *The Vegetable*, but when staged it was an utter failure (Bruccoli 1981:187). Discouraged, he never worked at theatre again (Bruccoli 1981:189). At the same time, the Fitzgeralds' life in New York proved to be too hectic and too expensive – they always seemed to spend money without really knowing where it went (Bruccoli 1981:192) – and they decided to move to France in 1924 (Meyers 1994: 108).

While they were living on the French Riviera, where Fitzgerald was writing *The Great Gatsby*, they began to have more serious problems in their marriage (Meyers 1994:115). Zelda fell in love with a French aviator and had a brief affair with him, and she even talked of divorce (Meyers 1994:117). In spite of their problems they stayed together and moved to Paris in 1925, the same year that *The Great Gatsby* was published (Meyers 1994:132). The novel received the best reviews Fitzgerald had got all through his career, although most critics did not see in it the classic it has later become (Bruccoli 1981:221). To Fitzgerald's disappointment it did not make as much money as he had hoped (Bruccoli 1981:220). All through his career he had to write short stories that paid for their expensive life style, and he was continually worried about the harm they might do to his reputation as a serious novelist. As one critic at the time said, Fitzgerald seemed to be "torn by the conflict between money and art" (as quoted in Meyers 1994:167). He considered novels as the work he should concentrate on and his short stories, even if a number of them are today considered masterpieces, as a means to make money.(Meyers 1994:79)

Paris in the mid-twenties was full of expatriate Americans, and through some of them Fitzgerald met Ernest Hemingway, then just beginning his career, who became one of his most important friends (Meyers 1994:134). As he did with other young writers he believed to be talented, he eagerly helped Hemingway's work get published in the United States (Meyers 1994:138).

The Fitzgeralds' life in France, too, turned out to be restless, and they escaped back to the United States (Bruccoli 1981:256). Fitzgerald worked in Hollywood in 1927 but his stay was not very successful (Bruccoli 1981:257). Zelda rediscovered her old ambition of becoming a ballet dancer and began taking lessons at the age of twenty-six (Bruccoli 1981: 260). She was also

writing some short stories although most of them were published under her husband's, or their joint name, for a better price. The competition in writing began to put an extra strain on their marriage (Bruccoli 1981: 261). In addition, Fitzgerald's drinking had developed into a serious problem. (Meyers 1994:115)

In 1928 they went back to Paris where Zelda practiced dancing ferociously (Bruccoli 1981:265). She was now the more active one of the two, dancing and writing, but she began both too late to become a real professional in spite of her talents (Bruccoli 1981. 274). The Fitzgeralds were fighting, and Zelda began to show some signs of instability (Bruccoli 1981: 291). In 1930 she had her first mental breakdown (Meyers 1994:192). They returned to the United States in 1931, when Zelda had turned from a beautiful, vivacious young woman into a tired and weary-looking one (Meyers 1994: 213).

In fact, Zelda's family had a serious history of mental illness, which they had kept a secret. (Meyers 1994: 43) At the hospital Zelda began working on, and quickly finished, her semi-autobiographical novel, *Save Me the Waltz* (Bruccoli 1981:324). Fitzgerald was angry at Zelda for using material he considered as his own (Bruccoli 1981: 325) but he eventually helped her with editing the novel (Bruccoli 1981: 327). The next year she wrote a play, *Scandalabra*, a "farce-fantasy" that turned out almost impossible to perform, as the dress rehearsal alone took five hours (Meyers 1994:230).

Fitzgerald began working on a new novel and, after revising the plan in 1932 he progressed quite quickly (Bruccoli 1981:340). *Tender Is the Night* was published in 1934, nine years after *The Great Gatsby*. Most critics praised it, although with some reservations, possibly due to the long years of waiting that had raised expectations extremely high (Bruccoli 1981:368). The sales were a big disappointment – even if they were quite good considering it was published during the severest Depression – to Fitzgerald whose income had drastically declined from the mid-twenties (Bruccoli 1981: 367). He tried working on another novel, stories and films but much of the material was wasted, and he got deep into debt (Bruccoli 1981: 393). In 1935 he suffered a breakdown of his own, while living alone in a small hotel room trying to save money, realizing he was unable to write. In the end he began writing about his

inability to do so, articles that were published as the "Crack-Up" – essays, portraying his humiliation (Bruccoli 1981: 405).

In 1937 Hollywood remembered F. Scott Fitzgerald – in spite of the negative publicity he received, the "Crack-Up" helped his career, too, reminding many people that he was still alive (Meyers 1994: 264) – and he was offered a screen writing contract (Bruccoli 1981: 417). He went to Los Angeles full of hope that he would be able to learn the craft, to obtain a secure position, and at last solve his financial problems (Bruccoli 1981: 424). Zelda was by now more or less permanently hospitalized, as she was to be for the rest of her life, and they were never able to live together again (Meyers 1994: 268).

In Los Angeles Fitzgerald met Sheilah Graham, an Englishwoman who was making a career as a gossip columnist (Bruccoli 1981: 431-432). They fell in love and lived together until the end his life (Bruccoli 1981: 435). During his time in Hollywood Fitzgerald got only one screen credit, and he had to discover that writing good fiction did not automatically mean writing well for the movies (Meyers 1994: 292). In addition, he did not believe in film as an art form and it usually showed in his work (Meyers 1994: 291). To his disappointment, in 1938, his contract was not renewed (Meyers 1994: 297). In one respect his stay in Hollywood was successful, however. He managed to pay off his debts, keep Zelda in a good hospital and Scottie in her school, as well as buying time for himself to write another novel (Meyers 1994: 285).

In the last year of his life Fitzgerald worked on a novel about Hollywood, wanting to prove himself and the world that he was still a first-rate novelist (Bruccoli 1981: 477). He had come to realize that he was an alcoholic and he went through a desperate fight to stay away from drinking (Meyers 1994: 310). In 1940 he suffered a fatal heart attack and died at home at the age of forty-four (Bruccoli 1981: 489).

His last novel was edited for publication and named by Fitzgerald's old friend Edmund Wilson. *The Last Tycoon* was published, in an unfinished form, in 1941 (Bruccoli 1981: 492). Zelda was never really cured of her illness and she lived as an invalid with her mother, occasionally returning to the sanatorium where she died in a fire in 1948 (Bruccoli 1981: 493-494).

In the obituaries, most remembered Fitzgerald as the representative of the Jazz Age, and some referred to him as a writer who was broken by his early success ("F.Scott Fitzgerald" 1971:471). In the forties, the public opinion seemed to be that Fitzgerald never fulfilled the promise of his early talent ("Not Wholly Lost" 1971:470). F. Scott Fitzgerald began to interest the public again in the fifties, when collections of his short stories, as well as two biographies, one by Sheilah Graham, were published. (Meyers 1994: 339) His literary reputation rose gradually after his death along with the interest in his life and work, and today Fitzgerald is widely regarded as one of the most important writers of the 20th century America.

2.2. The plots of the novels referred to in this study

This Side of Paradise. The novel tells the story of Amory Blaine from his childhood to his twenties. His mother is a wealthy and eccentric woman who, after their travels in Europe, leaves Amory to go to school in the United States. He studies in Princeton where he is a social but not an academic success. He falls in love, first with the beautiful and selfish Isabelle, and then with a relative he idolizes, a widow with two children, Clara. After failing his exams he leaves the university to join the army. After the war he meets Rosalind, a friend's sister, and they soon fall in love and become engaged. She, however, leaves him for a richer young man. Amory is crushed and he spends the summer in the countryside trying cure his broken heart. He meets Eleanor, a wild young woman with a strong and independent character. They spend an idyllic vacation but Amory discovers her self-destructiveness when she attempts to kill herself. After this episode Amory takes a trip to visit Princeton and hitches a ride with businessman with whom he debates on politics. In the end of the Amory, in a somewhat smug tone, declares that he knows himself, but that is all.

The Beautiful and Damned. The novel is a description of a happy marriage going sour. Anthony Patch is the grandson of a rich reformer, a frantic

defender of prohibition. Anthony lives alone in New York and spends his days talking and drinking with his friends. He meets Gloria Gilbert, a devastatingly beautiful but selfish young woman. They fall in love and get married, and settle down to being young, happy and careless. While they wait for Anthony's inheritance they live for having fun. During a wild party in their house Anthony's grandfather makes a surprise visit and finds it full of drunken guests. He dies soon after, cutting Anthony out of his will. Anthony and Gloria begin a legal battle to reverse the decision, and waiting for the settlement they begin to have financial as well as marital problems. Anthony tries to justify his unwillingness to work to the indifferent Gloria. When the war breaks out Anthony goes on a training camp to the South where he meets a poor young girl and has a half-hearted affair with her. His military career goes wrong while Gloria, in spite of her solitude, begins to enjoy living alone in New York. After the war they are briefly happy to be reunited, but soon their fights start again. As their money is steadily lost, Anthony begins to drink more, and even Gloria's famous beauty begins to fade. Her lowest point comes when she takes a screen test, dreaming of a film career, and is only offered a part of an older woman. In the end they win the law suit and get their millions but by then Anthony is mentally a broken man and Gloria looks weary and old. They leave the country in a doomed attempt to find their happiness again.

The Great Gatsby. The novel tells the story of Jay Gatsby, a mysterious man who lives in a magnificent villa just outside of New York. He is famous for giving great parties, rumored to be a spy and or a criminal, but no one really knows anything about him. The narrator is Gatsby's neighbor, Nick Carraway. He meets his beautiful cousin, Daisy, and her husband, Tom Buchanan, who live in the same area. They are rich and have a child but something seems to be wrong in their life. Nick finds out that Tom is having an affair with a married woman, Myrtle Wilson, and he is shocked to realize that Tom seems to feel no guilt about it. Through Daisy, Nick meets Jordan Baker, a famous golfer, and gradually falls in love her. One day Gatsby approaches Nick through Jordan and asks for help. Nick finds out that Daisy and Gatsby had been lovers in their youth. They had lost contact when he had been in Europe during the war, and in the meantime Daisy had married Tom. Gatsby had then

gained wealth, bought his house near Daisy and organized his parties for the sole purpose of attracting Daisy back. Nick agrees to set up a meeting, with the results in Daisy and Gatsby resuming their affair. During a hot day in New York Tom eventually finds out everything. After the ensuing argument, Daisy rushes out and drives off with Gatsby. She passes Myrtle Wilson on the way and she, mistaking the car for Tom's, runs toward it. Daisy hits Myrtle, fatally injuring her, and drives away. In the end Tom leads Myrtle's husband to believe that Gatsby had been her lover and responsible for her death. Gatsby still expects Daisy to come back when Myrtle's husband finds him and shoots him. Nick is disgusted to realize that Tom and Daisy are going on as if nothing had happened. Disillusioned with the East, Nick decides to return home.

Tender Is the Night. The novel tells the story Dick and Nicole Diver, who live in the French Riviera with their two children and surrounded by a group of American expatriates. A young actress, Rosemary Hoyt, meets them and is instantly charmed by their seemingly harmonious life, and soon falls in love with Dick. He is a psychiatrist and his wife is the heiress of a huge fortune. As Rosemary spends more time with them, she finds hints that something is wrong and finds out that Nicole is mentally unstable. The story goes back in time when Dick, a promising young psychiatrist, meets Nicole at a Swiss clinic where she is being treated. Her father had raped her once when she was a teenager, and the incest had driven her mentally ill. After meeting Dick she starts to write to him, and partly as a consequence, she gets better. The second time they meet Nicole is ready to be released. She falls in love with him, and he, touched by her youth and beauty, begins to love her. Even though Dick realizes the problems their relationship might run into, they decide to marry. Gradually her money begins to take more importance in their life and Dick begins to feel he had been bought. The marriage is already strained when Rosemary meets them. The last part of the novel tells of Dick and Nicole drifting apart and of Dick's deterioration. He stops working and begins to drink more. He becomes infatuated with Rosemary, which Nicole guesses, and eventually Dick has a brief affair with the young actress. Nicole becomes healthier, wanting a life of her own, away from Dick. Their last months together in the Riviera are increasingly unhappy. In the end Nicole falls in

love with another man, and Dick returns to the United States, and gradually disappears from her and their children's life.

The Last Tycoon. Fitzgerald's unfinished Hollywood novel tells the story of a film producer, Monroe Stahr. He is a hard worker who is in total control of his studio and who has artistic as well as commercial intelligence. However, Sthar is seriously ill and his exhausting life style is quickly wearing him out. One day he meets Kathleen Moore, a poor young woman, who looks like Stahr's dead wife, Minna. They have a brief romance that ends with Stahr's inability to commit to her, and she marries another man. When Stahr realizes he wants her back, it's already too late. Part of the story is told by Cecelia, the daughter of Stahr's competitor. She is in love with Stahr, and follows his romance with Kathleen jealously, as well as witnessing the rivalry between Stahr and her father. Fitzgerald's notes include story line of Stahr ordering the murder of Cecelia's father as a revenge against his attempt to take over the studio. He intends to call it off but is, himself, killed in a plane crash before he can do so. According to Fitzgerald's notes Stahr's funeral would have been the greatest show ever seen in Hollywood.

2.3. The plots of the short stories referred to in this study

Babylon Revisited. Charlie Waller returns to Paris after the Crash, hoping to win back the custody of her daughter. A drunken fight a few years earlier had caused his wife's death and driven Charlie into a sanatorium, and their daughter, Honoria, had lived with her aunt, Marion, ever since. Charlie is now recovered, owns a good business, but Marion, blaming him for her sister's death, does not want to let the little girl go. Charlie goes around town, seeing the old nightclubs now empty, and meets some people from his past he would rather forget. In the end, his old friends make a drunken visit to Marion's home, leading her to believe that Charlie's life style has not changed, and she decides to keep Honoria.

Bernice Bobs Her Hair. Bernice, an old-fashioned girl, is visiting her cousin, Marjorie. Marjorie is a flapper, a fast young woman who is determined to have

lots of fun, while Bernice still firmly believes in the mysterious feminine qualities her mother had taught her. She overhears a conversation in which Marjorie complains that Bernice is boring. She threatens to leave but changes her mind, and lets Marjorie teach her how to dress and act in a true flapper style. She teaches Bernice to say a line, which means declaring she is going to bob her hair – at the time considered extremely daring. Marjorie's teachings are so successful that Bernice begins to exceed Marjorie in popularity. Marjorie ruthlessly calls Bernice's bluff in front of others and Bernice is forced to have her hair cut. The bob looks terrible but even worse is that the next evening they are attending a dance organized by a woman who hates bobbed hair. Bernice is furious, and leaves in the middle of the night. On the way out she goes into Marjorie's room where she is asleep, cuts off her braids, and runs out of the house to catch a train back home.

The Camel's Back. Perry Pankhurst, asks Betty Medill to marry him but she refuses. Later that night he arrives at a costume party dressed as a camel. He pretends to be a stranger and flirts with Betty, who eagerly flirts back. At the end of the party they stage a fake wedding but it turns out the man who marries them is, in fact, a minister, and as Perry had a marriage license ready, he and Betty end up legally married.

Crazy Sunday. Joel Coles, a young screenwriter, makes friends with a famous director, Miles Calman, and his actress wife, Stella. Joel falls in love with her, although she only wants to be his friend. At the end of the story Joel and Stella find out that Miles is dead, and Joel is shocked to realize that Stella is asking him to spend the night with her. He realizes that Stella tries to pretend Miles is still alive, and that she had been his creation all along, never really her own person.

The Ice Palace. Sally Carroll Happer, a celebrated beauty from a small southern town travels north to visit her fiancé's family. She does not especially like the place because the people, as well as the climate, seem cold to her, and she begins to miss the sleepy atmosphere of her home. One day they go see a huge palace made of ice and inside it Sally Carroll gets lost. She

thinks she sees a ghost from the Southern past, and she cries, realizing she cannot live in the north and she returns to her old life.

The Jelly-Bean. Jim is a loafer in a small southern town who one day gets an unexpected invitation to a party. He meets Nancy Lamarr, a local beauty with a wild reputation, and is fascinated by her recklessness. He begins to dream vaguely of love and his old ambitions begin to rise again. At the end of the story he hears the surprising news that Nancy, having had too much to drink, had married a man at the end of a party. Jim's dreams die almost as soon as they are born and he goes back to his lazy life.

The Last of the Belles. Andy, a northern lieutenant, is stationed in Tarleton, Atlanta, during the war. He falls in love a local belle, Ailie, and becomes her trusted friend. Ailie has several suitors, and she falls in love with another northern man, Earl, who, however, comes from a lower class family. After the war Ailie realizes that it would be impossible to marry him because of their different background. In the Andy comes back for a visit, meets Ailie who has changed into a flapper and after a string of engagements is finally going to get married. Andy ends up thinking that when she is gone, there will be nothing for him in the South anymore.

Magnetism. George Hannaford and Tompkins are both successful actors in Hollywood, and a happily married couple. However, are both flirting with others, playing with people they do not really care about, and acting even with each other. They only find honesty with each other after an incident of an employee, in love with George, tries to blackmail him with fake love letters. Kay, who had earlier threatened him with divorce, shows George she believes, and tells him her flirting with another man was just because she had been angry, and their lives go back to normal again.

Myra meets his family. Myra, a twenty-one-year-old girl, travels to meet her fiancé's, Knowleton's, family but once there, nothing matches her expectations. The parents are eccentric and the father wants the young couple to live with them in their dark, cold house. One night she overhears a

conversation that reveals that she has been a victim of a prank. Her fiancé had hired to actors to play his parents in order to scare her away. Knowleton, unaware that Myra has found out everything confesses and explains he had heard a rumor that she was a famous husband-hunter and repenting, he begs her to marry him. Myra gets her revenge by arranging a fake wedding and running out of the train that will take Knowleton home to his real parents to tell them about his marriage.

The Offshore Pirate. Ardita, a pretty young flapper, is spending time at her uncle's boat, vaguely planning to run away and marry an older man. Their ship is captured by an "offshore pirate", who turns out to be a young man her uncle has hired to stop Ardita from escaping. The last phrase shows the story to be Ardita's daydream.

One Trip Abroad. Nicole and Nelson Kelly, a young married couple, move to Europe after inheriting some money. They travel and study a little, and soon their social life becomes more and more important. They both flirt with others, go to parties, and when they have problems, they seek harmony always in a new place. In Paris a penniless aristocrat cheats them of a small fortune, and in they end of the story they are at a Swiss mental clinic trying to recapture their health.

The Rough Crossing. Adrian Smith, a recently successful playwright, and her wife Eva travel to France for the first time. They decide to stay alone on the ship, but gradually begin to spend more time with others, and Adrian begins a flirtation with the prettiest girl on board. The ship runs into a storm at the same time their fight reaches its climax, and Eva runs out, screaming she want a divorce, and is almost washed overboard. In the end they decide to pretend everything was just a nightmare, and decide to live only by themselves in Europe.

"The Sensible Thing". George O'Kelly is a poor young man, in love with Jonquil Cary. She loves him, too, but decides not to marry him because he has not enough income to take care of her. Disappointed, George leaves the

country, and returns a couple of years later as a success. Meeting Jonquil, however, makes no change. They both realize that breaking up for practical reasons killed the youthful intensity of their feelings, and they will never have a future together.

Two Wrongs. Bill Chesney, a theatre producer, marries Emmy Pinkard, a young dancer. His career gradually begins to go down as he begins to drink too much. Emmy, disappointed, turns to her work and revives her dancing career. In the end Bill's health is broken, but he realizes that the only way to win Emmy back is to let her go and work on her career alone.

Winter Dreams. For all his youth Dexter Green loves the beautiful and rich Judy Jones from a distance. He builds a successful career in business, and plans to marry Irene, a nice girl from a respectable family. When Judy comes back to his life, he ends the engagement, but in the end Judy confesses she has never loved him. He never marries, and in the end of the story he hears of Judy's unhappy marriage and fading beauty.

A Woman with a Past. Josephine, a beautiful seventeen-year-old, goes from one school dance to another breaking hearts. Her pride receives a blow when a friend, less attractive than Josephine, becomes the center of everyone's attention for securing a better date than she has. She tries to make him fall in love with her instead, but for the first time ever Josephine fails. In the end she becomes, in turn, a victim of other girls' envy, and because of her wild reputation, she is forced to leave her school. In the end Josephine decides not to go on playing with other people's feelings any longer.

3. SOUTHERN BELLE

Having examined the era F. Scott Fitzgerald lived in, as well as his own life and works, we now move to studying his fiction and his female characters in detail. The first chapters will concentrate on his portrayals of southern belles,

and the later sections deal with flappers, and issues such as marriage and wealth as they relate to Fitzgerald's depiction of women.

3.1. The small town dreamer

The heroine of many, especially early, stories by F. Scott Fitzgerald is a young and beautiful girl from the South. Even though he wrote relatively few stories set in the southern states the belle can be regarded, nevertheless, as a distinct type in his fiction. Fitzgerald's interest in their world is made evident by the fact that wrote three stories that take place in the same small town, Tarleton in Georgia, "The ice-palace", "The Jelly-bean" and "The last of the belles". The heroines of each story come from the same group – they are, in fact, the three most popular girls in their town. There is perhaps more direct influence of Zelda in these characters than in any other, as Bruccoli, too points out: "Fitzgerald's Southern stories drew on Zelda and the responses to her world that were generated by his love for her."(Bruccoli 1981:110) After all, Zelda was a small town girl from the South and only by marrying him she was able to realize her dreams and escape the stifling atmosphere her town. Zelda's family was among the most prestigious in her town and it had deep roots in Southern tradition (Milford 1970:17). She first got a wild reputation while she was still in school but because of her family background her respectability was never really questioned. (Meyers 1994:44) It is quite clear that Zelda lived, from very early years on, in a contradiction between the traditional values she was brought up with and her unconventional character, and this confusion is reflected in Fitzgerald's southern belles. He seems to have had ambivalent reactions in regard to southern women: on the one hand he admired them as examples of American aristocracy, but, on the other, he also recognized the frustration a Southern girl, like Zelda, felt when her every move was bound by tradition.

The heroine of "The Ice Palace", Sally Carroll Happer, is a perfect example of a southern girl who spends her days in lazy dreams. Fitzgerald evokes the sleepy atmosphere of a small town beautifully: "...even the shops seemed only yawning their doors and blinking their windows in the sunshine before retiring into a state of utter and finite coma."(Fitzgerald 1951:63). In a typical

afternoon day she looks out the window and sees a young man coming for a visit:

> Sally Carroll gazed down sleepily. She started to yawn, but finding this quite impossible unless she raised her chin from the window-sill, changed her mind and continued silently to regard the car...(Fitzgerald 1951:61).

But underneath the lazy exterior she has dreams: "I want to go to places and see people. I want my mind to grow. I want to live where things happen on a big scale." (Ice Palace 1920: 63) These words reflect the thoughts and dreams Zelda had growing up: the small town was not enough for her and, instead, she wanted to live a glamorous city life (Bruccoli 1981:90). Fitzgerald recognized in her the calling of the exciting modern world and the deeply traditional life she had lead, as well as the difficulties of reconciling them, and he wrote her ambivalence in some of his heroines. Sally Carroll explains the two different sides of her character: "the sleepy old side" that ties her to her hometown and "a sort of energy" that makes her want to move on. (Ice Palace 1920: 64) In other words, her energy is pulling her into the post-war era where traditional southern women were disappearing. At least, this seems to be Fitzgerald's view. To him, the real Southern belles belonged in the golden days of the pre-war era and the world inhabited by 1920s flapper was not comfortable or familiar to them.

The realization of those dreams comes in the form of a husband, a wealthy young man from the north. Sally Carroll has a clear idea of who she wants to marry and why: "I'm the sort of person who want to be taken care of after a certain point..." (Ice Palace 1920: 73) Sally Carroll Happer had a number of counterparts in 1920s real life. The traditional southern belle really had very few other choices than to marry (Stavola 1979: 49). It was the only way into financial security and in order to do so she had to be "submissive yet calculating". (Stavola 1979: 49). The following little speech, given at Southern gentlemen's club dinner, illustrates perfectly the traditional role of southern women:

> To woman, lovely woman of the Southland, as pure and chaste as this sparkling water, as cold as this gleaming ice, we lift this cup, and we pledge our hearts and lives to the protection of her virtue and chastity. (as quoted in Stavola 1979: 49)

This was the role they had to adopt, being pure and adored at a distance, and it is precisely this game that Fitzgerald's heroines play in order fulfill their ambitions. A friend of Zelda's, from the time they went to school together, later remarked: "In the South women were not supposed to *do* anything. It was sufficient to be beautiful and charming..." (as quoted in Meyers 1994:45, emphasis original). In her book on belles in American literature, Nancy Seidel Lee comments on the southern men's attitude to women:

> ...the southern belle is the designated object or work of art of her culture; the emblem of her as a statue on a pedestal represents the projection of her society's attitudes toward women and sexuality... (Seidel Lee 1985: xv).

This attitude was quite simply that women were morally on a higher level than men, southern belles were beautiful and virtuous, and they represented the best of the Southern world. Fitzgerald's southern heroines, too, are always beautiful and charming and they cultivate their image quite consciously to attract men but they are also aware that they have to do so because it is the only way to live a more exciting life, in the future. They live in tradition and play by its rules but their dreams belong to the modern world, and this is what Fitzgerald portrays in many of his short stories.

The southern belles in Fitzgerald's stories look for a husband outside their own town. Sally Carroll explains that she cannot marry any of the local boys because she wants to go to places (Fitzgerald 1951:63). The heroine of "The Last of the Belles", Ailie Calhoun, turns her attentions to the North after spending some time there and she chooses her beaux accordingly (Fitzgerald 1951:242). In another story, "The Camel's Back", the heroine is immediately drawn to a man she thinks is from out of town: "Something stirred in Betty Medill – that age-old interest of the provincial girl in the visiting man." (Fitzgerald 1920:14). She never misses a chance to meet a possible future husband and is reported always to devote "at least half an hour to all visiting men." (Fitzgerald 1920: 16) Nancy Lamarr, the heroine of "The Jelly-Bean", expresses her yearning for greater things in life by saying: "I mean the boys here aren't really worth dressing up for or doing sensational things for." (Fitzgerald 1920:9) For these young women, only a wealthy man from the

North can offer a way of escape from home. Marriage was the goal in a belle's life, and such things as education were considered irrelevant. Seidel Lee comments:

> A young girl had few tasks other than to be obedient, to ride, to sew, and perhaps to learn reading and writing. ... a girl was to stay home until such time as a suitable ... marriage was arranged for her. If she was pretty and charming and thus could participate in the process of husband-getting, so much the better. (Seidel Lee 1985: 5-6).

There really were no alternatives available to belles, and as Seidel Lee points out, choosing a husband was, in fact, the only thing they had at least some control over. (Seidel Lee 1985:61) This is the way Fitzgerald sees the reality of Southern belles' lives: if their ambition exceeds the confines of their hometown they have to whatever they can to get out. He does not judge them for playing the age-old game of catching a husband but merely states that it is their only option to get on in the world.

The sleepy, southern side in a belle's character turns out not to be so easy to discard, after all. Sally Carroll, visiting Harry at his hometown, hates the cold climate and does not feel at home there. She finds it strange that all the young men she meets expect her to talk of nothing but Harry.

> In the South an engaged girl, even a young married woman, expected the same amount of half-affectionate badinage and flattery that would be accorded a débutante, but here all that seemed banned. (Fitzgerald 1951:71).

When Harry makes a disparaging comment about "degenerate" Southerners, she is filled with violent anger, as she feels personally insulted with her homeland (Fitzgerald 1951:75). The climax of the story comes when walk inside a huge snow castle, the ice palace of the title, and Sally Carroll gets lost. When she walks around in the cold and dark she confusedly thinks about her home and what she really is like. "This her – this Sally Carroll! Why, she was a happy thing. She was a happy little girl. She liked warmth and summer and Dixie. These things were foreign – foreign." (Fitzgerald 1951:80). When she finally gets out she realizes that she cannot marry and live in the north and goes back home. In "The Last of the Belles", Ailie eventually turns down her northern suitors and stays at home spending her nights among the younger and wilder crowd. She even announces in the end: "...I could never marry a

Northern man." (Fitzgetrald 1951:252). Even if belles have their dreams of an exciting life somewhere else they are still so much a part of their land and its customs that they find it impossible to leave. Fitzgerald understood both sides well: wanting to go out into the world but their inability to break away from tradition.

Even though Fitzgerald did not come from the South himself, he had a deep affection for it. He perhaps connected it with the ideal of American aristocracy he cherished in his youth, made apparent with his choice of university (p.14). Meeting Zelda only made his ties to the South stronger. He wrote "The Ice Palace" before Zelda had visited his native St. Paul, and anticipated her reactions with surprising accuracy (Meyers 1994:80). When they were staying at his hometown, Zelda was bored and she hated the cold climate (Bruccoli 1981: 161). The southern belle stories express many of the dreams he and Zelda shared when they were a young couple. Their ambitions of a great life in New York and Europe were something they discovered in common as soon as they met.

3.2.Princess in a tower

The essence of a southern belle is that she is somehow out of reach. Sally Carroll Happer, in the "Ice Palace", declares her dreams are too big for the locals. In the end she cannot marry her Northern fiancé, either, because she cannot settle into his cold land. In many of the southern stories the young man is left to love the girl from a distance. The young man in "Jelly-Bean" does not dare to talk to Nancy Lamarr until she comes to him and asks for help. The same scenario happens in "Winter Dreams", where Dexter Green follows Judy Jones around all of their youth. Eventually it she who initiates their romance and in the end leaves him with no word of explanation. One critic has quite accurately named the heroines of these stories as " ...the Golden Girl, who is wealthy, beautiful and untameable..." (Magill ed. 1963: 366) The heroine is always in the hero's reach for only a brief moment.

The stories with unattainable heroines finally developed into *The Great Gatsby*, in which Gatsby looks at the green light at Daisy's dock night after night. Just as Judy in "Winter Dreams" brings Dexter's dreams alive, so, as

some critics have suggested, is Daisy more real to Gatsby in his dreams than she is as a person (see Bewley 1954:132). The house where Daisy grew up amazes him: "There was a ripe mystery about it, a hint of bedrooms upstairs more beautiful and cool than other bedrooms, ... and of romances that were not musty and laid away already in lavender, but fresh and breathing ..." (Gatsby 1925:94) The words bring to mind a fairytale that is becoming true. When Gatsby makes the famous remark about Daisy's voice being full of money, Nick sees her in his mind : "High in a white palace the king's daughter, the golden girl..." (Gatsby 1925: 76). To Gatsby, Daisy is the unattainable ideal who, for a magical moment, comes near him. One of the levels that Fitzgerald brings into the character of Daisy is the romantic image of a girl seen from a distance, but he is not oblivious to the fact that it is precisely the distance that can hide the reality of the person.

Fitzgerald's belles are often also quite selfish and narcissistic, and for example numerous critics have reduced Daisy to a spoiled, little girl who just wants too much. One critic describes her as "... insubstantial as the ballooning white dresses she wears, as shallow as her white powder" (Massa 1982: 150). While it is true that in Fitzgerald's stories, and especially in the southern stories, the heroines often are self-centered, it would still be simplistic to argue that they are merely the embodiment of wanting too much. One can see that Fitzgerald opposes the kind of education belles receive at home that concentrates on their charm. For example, Sally Carroll has been brought to be lazy, and when she is hit by the cold world of the North, she is not able to cope with it. Seidel Lee sums up the education of a belle in her book: "The child who is treated as a beautiful object, begins to define herself as a beautiful object. ... when a woman's self-image is that of an object, not a person, she can expect others to treat her accordingly." (Seidel Lee 1985:105) Fitzgerald's belles, too, have always been assured that their beauty and charm are their defining features, so these are the traits they accentuate in their behavior. A belle essentially needs an audience, and Nancy Lamarr makes this clear when she laments that her hometown boys are really not a public worth the show. Seidel Lee quotes Simone de Beauvoir in a passage that all but seems to describe a belle's attitude toward themselves and people around her: "... a woman infatuated with her ego loses all hold on the actual world, she

has no concern to establish a real relation with others. ... when she talks, she is speaking a part, when she dresses, she dresses a part." (de Beauvoir, as quoted in Seidel Lee 1985:106).

Daisy, of course, comes from the mid-west but she is essentially much like a southern belle. She, too, escapes small town conventionality by marrying a rich man and arranging a spectacular wedding. She only reaches her "sophistication" she talks about after a few years of marriage (Gatsby 1925: 13). How much she had been the center of her hometown's attention in social life is made apparent when Nick, in a gently mocking tone, describes the town's despair at her absence. "Do they miss me?' she cried ecstatically. 'The whole town is desolate. All the cars have left the rear wheel painted black as a mourning wreath, and there's a persistent wail all night along the north shore." (Gatsby 1925:8). The scene may have been inspired by a telegram Zelda received from her old friends:

> Hurry back to Montgomery, as town is shot to pieces since you left. No pep, no one toe give the gossips a source of conversation. Country Club is intending firing chaperone, as there is no further need for her. (Misc. 260)

The scene is presented with warm humor, with Daisy and Nick making fun of her need for attention. Nevertheless, the reader can detect a more serious tone underneath her words, with which Fitzgerald suggests one of the problems of growing up as a southern belle, who is always at the center of the social stage. Seidel Lee explains the excitement and dilemma of a belle when she says:

> The heyday of the belle is short-lived; from a debut at sixteen or seventeen to the threat of spinsterhood at nineteen, her career last for the few short years in between. The excitement of those years is intense: a belle is the center of male and female attention; all her actions are designed to attain the end for which her childhood has prepared her and on which her future depends. ... A belle may well remember these days, as her life progresses into a more staid matronhood, as even more glamorous than they were. (Seidel Lee 1985:61)

When a belle has to live in the real world, where she is just an ordinary woman, she might not be able to deal with it. Daisy's problems with settling into married life are certainly a reflection of Fitzgerald understanding, through his wife's experiences, that living as a house wife is not an easy part to play after a successful, attention-filled career as belle. Daisy as a southern belle is introduced with details, such as her house, a "red-and-white Georgian Colonial

mansion."(Gatsby 1925:6) In Fitzgerald's fiction, the themes of the romance of the past, the traditions of the West and the old, lost South are often intertwined. The mid-west and the southern aristocratic way of life represent the traditional values that were disappearing in the hectic Jazz Age and for which Fitzgerald maintained a longing, in spite of his position as the writer of the younger generation.

The impression that Fitzgerald saw Southern belles as somehow unattainable is further intensified by the fact that Zelda complained of Scott thinking "she should be locked in a tower like a princess." (Meyers 1994:81). She included this idea in her own novel, as well, in which Alabama's husband wishes he could keep her "locked in an ivory tower" (as quoted in Seidel Lee 1985:37). Most of Fitzgerald's southern heroines preserve this quality of being just out of reach. Sally Carroll in "The Ice Palace" is even seen almost as if she were in a tower. When the story opens she is in her room upstairs, looking down at her suitor and the story closes with her in the exact same place. Men must look up to her and try to lure her down. Scott Fitzgerald's belles are the embodiment of a distant dream with whom the reality of romance, however, cannot be lived. It can be assumed that Fitzgerald poured into these stories much of the feelings he had for Ginevra King when he was young – after all their love affair lived the most intensely in his letters to her. Fitzgerald early fiction reveals his deeply romantic nature he had as a young man and how his themes on the difficulties of combining love with reality developed.

The southern belles, as has already been pointed out, had a very limited role in public life. The value of the girl was in direct relation to her beauty and charm – hence the name 'belle' (see Milford 1970:37). The traditional attributes of femininity, such as passivity and intuitiveness (Ramazanoglu 1989:47) probably lived longer in small southern towns than anywhere else in America. If a girl tried to rebel against old conventions she would soon be frustrated by the mere impossibility of the task (Milford 1970:25). It was easier to accept the role assigned to her and play the part of a pretty little thing, not too clever but infinitely charming. Seidel Lee points out that living in a society that cherished Victorian ideals was not easy for a woman, even if she accepted the life of a belle.

> A society that prefers its lovely women to be charming and flirtatious coquettes who never yield their purity can create a situation of impossible tension for the belle: she is asked to exhibit herself as sexually desirable to the appropriate males, yet she must never herself respond sexually.(Seidel Lee 1985:xvi)

Zelda herself tried to break the rules and she got in trouble for doing so. Only in this background can one fully understand the words she said when Scottie was born: "I hope it's beautiful and a fool – a beautiful little fool."(Meyers 1994:76). Scott later incorporated this sentence into *The Great Gatsby*, with Daisy telling Nick about the birth of her daughter, Pam:

> Well, she was less than an hour old and Tom was God knows where. I woke up out of the ether with an utterly abandoned feeling, and asked the nurse right away if it was a boy or a girl. She told me it was a girl, and so I turned my head away and wept. "All right," I said, "I'm glad it's a girl. And I hope she'll be a fool – that's the best thing a girl can be in this world, a beautiful little fool. (Gatsby:13).

The world where a girl could cope best by being pretty and a little bit silly was the world Zelda knew from her childhood, and it is also the world of Daisy's youth. The words cited above express very well the frustration Zelda felt growing up in a stifling small town atmosphere. In the old South a girl was certainly successful by being a "beautiful little fool." Even if Fitzgerald felt affection for the old south and admired belles as if they really had been princesses he came to understand the difficulty of growing up and always living according to tradition. His personal attitude toward the old South can be described as one of ambivalence. He admired the aristocratic ideals of the old families and the traditional manners of the belles; however, he saw their life as being prisoners of old customs. Fitzgerald seems to have genuinely believed that the coming of Jazz Age made old-world belles disappear and in his fiction they always live, or are tied to, the past. He welcomed the modern era, the 1920s, with enthusiasm but not without regret for losing the beautiful and distant pre-war days.

3.3. Symbols of lost times

In F. Scott Fitzgerald's mind southern belles quite clearly belonged to the pre-war era and into the world of tradition. He shared, at least partly, the view held

by many of his contemporaries that the days before the war had been better than the modern ones and that they had been "years of innocence, ... of small regrets and great expectations." (Rochester 1977:6) In addition, many southern writers had a tendency to idolize the past days of the southern way of life, and recreated myths around it, especially depicting belles as the perfect image of that world. (Seidel Lee 1985:xiv) Fitzgerald, although not a southerner, in way continued this tradition of examining the myths of the past. However, his fiction is a curious blend of looking into the history and describing everything new he saw in the world. Even though he became famous for depicting social change, he maintained a longing for tradition. As has already been noted, he considered the southern families to have come closest to the American aristocracy he felt was missing from the world he knew.

The presentation of Ailie Calhoun in "The Last of the Belles" reflects the connection between the belles and the lost South that had a romantic appeal for Fitzgerald:

> There she was – the Southern type in all its purity. ... She had the adroitness sugar-coated with sweet, voluble simplicity, the suggested background of devoted fathers, brothers and admirers stretching back into the South's heroic age, the unfailing coolness acquired in the endless struggle with the heat. There were notes in her voice that ordered slaves around, the withered up Yankee captains, and then soft, wheedling notes that mingled in unfamiliar loveliness with the night. (Fitzgerald 1951:241).

Ailie is a sought-after beauty who belongs to the highest society in her hometown. In a country club dance "her eyes roved here and there..., seeking something among the tall young officers. She attached several, choosing them with unfailing perspicacity..." (Fitzgerald 1951: 243). Ailie seems to know exactly her place and how to act according to her class. As Way points out, everything about her "implies a great social stability." (1980: 82) When another girl accuses Ailie of stealing her beau, she panics but responds quickly and with style. "It was her acquaintance with the traditional way of behaving against Kitty Preston's naïve and fierce possessiveness, or if you prefer it, Ailie's 'breeding' against the other's 'commonness." (Fitzgerald 1951:256) Ailie has obviously been raised to act like a traditional belle who never betrays emotion, who can take men's attentions gracefully and who would never

degrade herself in openly competing with another girl. She certainly has the virtues of a traditional belle, of keeping calm in all circumstances, but she also displays the less attractive qualities typical to a belle, such as indifference to others and self-absorption. Fitzgerald makes her selfishness obvious in a passage in which a young pilot is accidentally killed after vaguely threatening to commit suicide over his unrequited love for Ailie, and she, when hearing of his death, is simply concerned of what this incident will do to her reputation. (Fitzgerald 1951: 243-244)

Fitzgerald seems to suggest that had Ailie lived in the 19th century, she would have been the perfect image of a belle. As it is, her portrays becomes one of a girl who is a mixture of old and new, a belle and a flapper. Ailie belongs to the pre-war world but she is thrown into the 1920s to cope with the social changes happening around her. Surrounded by the officers from the North, who bring the modern life onto her doorstep, she begins to lose the intuitive powers of choosing right. She falls in love with a Yankee officer, Earl Schoen, even though he comes from a lower class. According to Ailie, he looks like a street-car conductor, but she is nevertheless attracted to his physical grace and his impudence. (Fitzgerald 1951:245) Earl, in spite of his background, is an officer, and therefore an acceptable beau. In addition, to Ailie all northern accents sound alike so she is unable place him socially by the way he talks. Still, Ailie and Earl come from two different worlds. In Ailie's South family and background are all-important whereas in Earl's North a man can make himself socially. After the war, when he comes back for a visit, these differences became painfully apparent: "Exteriorly Earl had about everything wrong with him that could be imagined." (Fitzgerald 1951:249). His social class is all too visible and in spite of the real affection Ailie has for him, she cannot marry beneath her because, as Way puts it, "her inherited attitudes reassert themselves." (1980:83) Ailie cannot let go of the traditional values that have directed her in carefully choosing her suitors in the past. In the she admits that she has not forgotten Earl, and that their different backgrounds made her end the relationship. "He was ... I was going to say the man I loved most, but that wouldn't be true. I never exactly loved him, or I'd have married him any old how, wouldn't I? ... At least I wouldn't have treated him like that." (Fitzgerald 1951: 251) Earl was the only one of his beaux who

was different from the majority and he is also the only one Ailie confesses thinking about years later. In spite of the regret she feels she is still so much a member of the Southern kind of aristocracy that she dismisses the love affair as "impossible" and chooses not to think about any further (Fitzgerald 1951 : 251). Nowhere in Fitzgerald's fiction has the difference between the South and North, traditional and modernity, been expressed with such poignancy.

After sending Earl away, Ailie discovers that returning to the old ways she knows is not very easy, either, mainly because the world she used to be familiar with is no longer the same it was before the war. In the end of the story Andy returns to Tarleton with a sudden attack of nostalgia. He meets Ailie again, as beautiful as ever, but he immediately senses a change in her.

> At once I saw she had a different line. The modulations of pride, the vocal hints that she knew the secrets of a brighter, finer antebellum day, were gone from her voice; there was no time for the now as it rambled on in the half-laughing, half-desperate banter of the newer South. (Fitzgerald 1951: 251)

Fitzgerald is suggesting that the coming of the Jazz Age changed the entire social environment, transforming the South and making it lose some of its distinctive quality. Ailie's experiences underline this development. The security that she has had from her past and her roots is gone and there is a tone of sadness with which Fitzgerald describes her acting as a flapper.

> We went to a rowdy party at the house of some young married people, and she was the nervous, glowing center of it. After all, she wasn't eighteen, and she was as attractive in her role of reckless clown as she had ever been in her life. (Fitzgerald 1951:251)

It is obvious that Ailie symbolizes the romantic, old South. One critic has commented on Fitzgerald's fiction that most of it was written at a time of transition. "... the 1920s bridge that gap between the older, simpler, more naïve and idealistic America and the bewildering, disparate, rootless, cynical America of the present."(Lewis 1985: 42) Fitzgerald's southern stories reflect this moving on from an older world, and the belles who find it difficult to adjust into the modern post-war society illustrate the sadness of change beautifully. The new world of the twenties is one where Ailie simply does not fit in, as Fitzgerald suggests:

> There was a new generation upon the floor, with less dignity than the ones I had known, but none of them were more a part of its lazy, feverish essence than Ailie. Possibly she had perceived that in her initial longing to escape from Tarleton's provincialism she had been walking alone, following a generation which was doomed to have no successors. Just when she lost the battle, waged behind the white pillars of her veranda, I don't know. But she had guessed wrong, missed out somewhere. Her wild animation, which even now called enough men around her to rival the entourage of the youngest and freshest, was an admission of defeat.(Fitzgerald 1951:252).

Fitzgerald is suggesting that the battle Ailie has lost is the same one that the older generation of the Jazz Age America lost. The young, leading the social change, took over and the older ones had to do what Ailie does: join the party.

An older and more mature Fitzgerald was able to write about his last belle with such insight. In the end of the story Ailie is engaged, planning a marriage not for love but desperately attempting to reach a solution of some kind. Her wedding and finally leaving her hometown are part of her scheme of trying to adjust to change. In the end Andy finally understands the basis of her character:

> Beneath her mask of an instinctive thoroughbred she had always been on to herself, and she couldn't believe that anyone not taken in to the point of uncritical worship could really love her. That was what she called being 'sincere'; she felt most security with men ... who were incapable of passing judgments on the ostensibly aristocratic heart.(Fitzgerald 1951:252)

Ailie is aware that men usually see her from a distance and that they attribute the qualities they admire to her, without really knowing her real personality. She knows that she is seen as a romantic vision and she is able to play with her role of a charming little doll. However, she knows herself, her good qualities and her shortcomings, and feels she is, in fact, very different from the idealized image men have of her. In addition to depicting in Ailie a belle that is caught between the change of two eras and two different worlds he also portrays a woman who uses her attractiveness without being entirely comfortable with doing so. His interpretation of Ailie's character underlines the tensions a belle had to live with, trying to catch a husband in any way possible while keeping up an image of an innocent girl who was not supposed to use her intellect. Seidel Lee continues:

> ... society's emphasis on the beauty of a belle can produce a selfishness and narcissism that cause her to ignore the development of positive aspects of her

> personality. Taught to see herself as a beautiful object, the belle accentuates her appearance and is not concerned with any talents that do not contribute to the goal her society has chosen for her: winning a man. (Seidel Lee 1985: 32)

Fitzgerald sees these problems, as he makes Ailie understand what she, the character, and he, the author, consider her shortcomings. Fitzgerald criticizes the way belles were raised by making Ailie afraid of letting anyone near enough to see her real self, as well as showing her selfishness and superficiality among the worst traits in her character. He may have admired the belles' culture, their "breeding" and their style, but he also saw how they were brought up into women who were not given a chance to fulfill their potential. In the description of Ailie, Fitzgerald shows a double cause for tension in belles' lives: the demands of a society that had high expectations of their women, and their bewilderment in the face of social changes in a world where the old rules no longer applied.

Belles were deeply rooted in the past and had been carefully taught the "traditional female wisdom' to conceal their inner natures and thoughts from the men they need to attract." (Lieberman 1972:336-337) Having been taught the lesson Ailie, too, can only reveal her real thoughts to someone who she does not consider as a possible husband. Ailie brings to mind Zelda as a young woman. She, too, encouraged others to see in her a completely different person from the girl she felt she was. She emphasized her carelessness in order to hide her insecurity, and quite possibly to escape the fact that as a belle, she did not consider herself to be a perfect success. (Stavola 1979:41).

This Side of Paradise, too, contains a passage that suggests Fitzgerald's view that southern belles belonged to the older world and that there was a transition going on:

> The "belle" had become the 'flirt,' the 'flirt' had become the 'baby vamp.' The 'belle' had five or six callers every afternoon. If the P[opular]. D[aughter]., 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.(Paradise 1920: 65-66, emphasis in the original)

Here the tone conveys an excitement over a change in manners that was taking place among the young in the United States. By the time he wrote "Last of the

Belles" in 1929 nostalgia for the past had taken the place of his youthful enthusiasm.

Southern stories gave Fitzgerald a chance to explore some of his most common themes, such as contrasting traditional and modern, North and South, East and West, city and countryside. He was also able to use Zelda's experiences and problems growing up as a small town belle, what keeping with Victorian ideals and encouraging myths over the South's glorious past could do to women who were considered the symbol of all things good and pure in their world. Fitzgerald was evidently aware of these tensions but he nevertheless shared the longing for the past as expressed by other writers before him, and he was attracted to portraying belles as the embodiment of South's romantic past. Still, his tendency to observe, describe and to an extent encourage social changes stayed with him through nostalgic portrayals of southern belles, and he, unlike most Southern writers at the time, blended description of belles with those of flappers. He saw a definite rupture with the war, and the changes that swept over the United States were, in his view, evident in the South just like anywhere else. The belles who happened to live through this time of transition were then caught up in a situation they could not quite handle. Fitzgerald seems to say that a girl who was brought up to be a belle could not just turn into a flapper overnight, and he leaves it to his readers to decide if they prefer the change or the tradition.

4. FLAPPER

4.1. The beginning of the flapper era

The young women who adopted freer modes of behavior than their mothers had been accustomed to and frankly enjoyed doing anything their elders disapproved of were called flappers. The image of a girl in a short dress, cigarette in mouth and dancing to jazz is the perfect symbol of the twenties. Fitzgerald helped popularize the type that was already developing at the time when he started writing (Way 1980:10) The older generation was alarmed, not

understanding the life style of the youth while stories and magazine articles helped to keep flappers in the mind of the public. In fact, the debate over the manners and morals of the young went on from 1910, reached its summit by the mid-twenties and was not over until 1930's when Depression and economic problems were more interesting to the public than the fads of the young. (Chafe 1991: 104).

Fitzgerald's biographer sums up the evolution of the word 'flapper':

> ... meaning a young harlot in the early nineteenths century, and then an immoral girl in her early teens at the turn of the twentieth century, to a young girl with her hair not yet put up in 1905, and finally to an unconventional young woman with short hair in the 1920s. (Meyer 1994: 59)

In literature, flappers did not appear out of nowhere, since free-spirited and independent young women had been of interest to earlier American writers, as well. The difference was that whereas previous writers had been more concerned with possibilities of tragedy in their situation, Fitzgerald portrayed them with admiration, celebrating their adventurous character (Way 1980: 58). He showed that a young woman should not feel shame for doing as they please but, instead, the more daring they acted the more attractive it made them. (Way 1980:11) The literary predecessors of flappers could be traced even further. In an interview in 1923 Fitzgerald describes a Thackeray heroine, Beatrice in *Henry Esmond,* a girl who "lived for thrills" as the first flapper (All women 1923:264). In another interview, Zelda chose Becky Sharpe, of Thackeray's *Vanity Fair*, as her favorite fictional character, only wishing "she had been pretty" (Home is... 1923:261). However, Fitzgerald complained about the creations of American writers of his day and stated as his reasons for bringing the new kind of girl into the limelight: "I'm sick of the sexless animals writers have been giving us"(Smith 1921:244). He later commented that he was not consciously creating a new type, and explained in an interview:

> I had no idea of originating an American flapper when I first began to write. I simply took girls whom I knew very well and, because they interested me as unique human beings, I used them for my heroines. (Mooers Marshall 1922:265)

Creating the flapper as a literary type was more than anything the reason why Fitzgerald became so immensely popular in the early twenties (Way 1980: 61). The heroines of *This Side of Paradise* became role models for the younger generation, with their defiant attitude and attractiveness that they used deliberately for their advantage. Rosalind, a character in the novel, whom Zelda called the "original American flapper" (Home is... 1923: 259) is described by her sister as "average – smokes sometimes, drinks punch, frequently kissed..." (Paradise 1920: 182). These activities that seem perfectly innocent to modern readers were enough to shock a generation of mothers who had been raised to believe that smoking was not ladylike, that a kiss meant an engagement and that women simply did not drink. F. Scott Fitzgerald revealed that the youth's innocence existed only in their parents' imagination. (Cross 1964:21) Way (1980: 10) remarks that Fitzgerald "wrote about current changes in behavior, feeling and moral outlook as if they were accomplished facts." These changes, such as the liberalization of youth's manners, had been going on and were accelerating, something that most members of the older generation had not been aware of until Fitzgerald's novel brought it to public consciousness. In one of his first interviews he explained that the youth had been changing in the two previous decades and instead of creating something new, he explained, he was merely depicting the kinds of young people he knew. (Smith 1921:244) The change in the nature of women's increasing social freedom, especially, was something that Fitzgerald understood before other writers did, and he was the first American writer to introduce flappers in his fiction. (Way 1980: 10)

The young had come to accept as perfectly natural certain modes of behavior that were unacceptable to their parents. In the often-cited passage in *This Side of Paradise* Fitzgerald remarks: "None of the Victorian mothers – and most of them were Victorian – had any idea how casually their daughters were accustomed to be kissed." (Paradise 1920: 64) This sentence sums up the gap between the generations: the parents had been raised to respect the Victorian double standard that kept women on a pedestal and allowed different liberties to men and women. A college professor in 1921 complained in an article how difficult it was to tell good women from the bad because they all dressed the same way, not understanding that making the line between 'good'

and 'bad' women disappear was precisely what the young wanted. (Fass 1977:309) The younger generation saw it as a natural right for women to have the same rights and liberties as men did, and considered the accusations of immorality unjustified. (Fass 1977:307). Amory, the hero of *This Side of Paradise*

> ...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...(Paradise 1920:65).

This passage evokes not only the change in the manners of the young, especially the young women, but also the atmosphere of a new-found freedom of the post-war youth and the happiness they felt for living in a time of change.

In an essay in 1923 Fitzgerald remarked that he did not even know he had written a book about flappers until a friend told him so. (How I would sell my books 1923:167) His early fiction was, however, clearly written for the young about the young and he let his admiration for the self-reliant type of young women show. Fitzgerald did write about social changes and, as some historians have pointed out, because his early work was published at a time when those changes were rapidly spreading in the country, "he found himself not only reflecting a change in manners, but helping to promote it." (Way 1981: 57)

In fact, in Fitzgerald's first novel and perhaps his most famous flapper story, "Bernice Bobs Her Hair", the word 'flapper' is not even mentioned, indicating his unawareness that his heroines were considered a labeled type. In the period between 1920 and 1922 he took up and embraced his role as a representative the young and he became conscious that his public consisted largely of girls who wanted to be like Fitzgerald flappers. In a short story in 1920, "The Offshore Pirate", the hero pleads to Ardita, the heroine:"...if you'll swear on your honor as a flapper – which probably isn't worth much – that you'll keep that spoiled little mouth of yours tight shut for forty-eight hours..." (Offshore Pirate 1920: 6), Fitzgerald's using the word indicates that he was much more aware of his position as the creator of flappers. Stories like "The Offshore Pirate", which painted a rather idealized image – accentuated

by the fact that the last sentence shows the story to be Ardita's day dream – of flappers doing as they please helped make their image all the more fashionable. A number of young women probably hoped that they had the audacity to yell at their uncle: "Will you stop boring me! Will you go 'way! Will you jump overboard and drown!" (Offshore Pirate 1920: 2), and then declare: "Don't you know by this time that I can do any darn thing with any darn man I want to!" (Offshore Pirate 1920: 4) Fitzgerald himself thought that he did not so much describe the average twenties flappers but rather: "My heroine is what the flapper would like to *think* she is – the actual flapper is a much duller and grayer proposition."(How I would sell 1923:168, emphasis original). The girls that Fitzgerald described probably were far from average but his early fiction still contains so much social observation that his flappers undoubtedly had their equivalents in the every day life of the 1920s.

As the decade went on, more and more young women all over the country adopted the manners of a uniform youth culture and wanted to define themselves as flappers. They wore the badge proudly and sometimes tried to defend their views to their mothers even if they often stated that the older generation simply did not understand. One historian has commented that the twenties was the first time in American history that saw the appearance of a generation gap, with the age of thirty separating them (Lipset 1972:172). Whether one accepts his claim or not, there is no doubt that a definite youth culture developed in the United States to an extent that had not been experienced in American history before. In an article in 1922 a young woman tried to makes the older generation understand the virtues of flappers, proclaiming that it requires "...brains to become and remain a successful flapper" (Welles Page 1922:1). The young saw a change in society and embraced it, while their parents fought a losing battle against it. As one student in 1927 wrote: "Perhaps it is only that the world changes, that everybody of our time is a little different from those of any other era, that youth shares in the difference instead of standing still."(as quoted in Fass 1977: 225)

As has already been noted, Fitzgerald's novels and stories not only told about flappers but also had an influence in spreading these changes nationwide. A letter to the editor in 1922 said: "The flapper is the girl who is

responsible for the advancement of woman's conditions in the world. The weak, retiring 'clinging' variety of woman really does nothing in the world but cling." (as quoted in Fass 1977: 291). She echoes the attitude of a Fitzgerald flapper in "Bernice bobs her hair", who complains that old-fashioned girls

> are responsible for all the tiresome colorless marriages; all those ghastly inefficiencies that pass as feminine qualities. What a blow it must be when a man with imagination marries the beautiful bundle of clothes that he's been building ideals round, and finds that she's just a weak, whining, cowardly mass of affectations! (Fitzgerald 1951: 47)

Fitzgerald's heroines were adopted as the role models of the younger generation. The ending of a witty poem, "Flapper" by Dorothy Parker suggests Fitzgerald's importance in spreading the fashions and the mentality of the young and making the phenomenon so famous all over the country.

> All spotlights focus on her pranks
> All tongues her prowess herald
> For which she well may render thanks
> To God and Scott Fitzgerald
> (Parker, Dorothy, as quoted in "Flapper culture and style" 1998: 3)

4.2. The symbols of the flapper

One of the most noticeable changes during the twenties happened in women's dress. The hemline became higher and higher until it finally reached the knee in 1927. Even though manufacturers occasionally tried to re-introduce longer skirts the buying public preferred the shorter style (Allen 1931: 85). The dresses were sometimes sleeveless and usually of a light fabric, and even though the waist was loose, the dresses were definitely designed to draw attention to the boyish body. The description of a typical girl in a 1925 article comments on this:

> Jane isn't wearing much this summer. If you'd like to know exactly, it is: one dress, one step-in, two stockings, two shoes. ....a step-in ...is underwear – one piece, light, exceedingly brief but roomy. (Bliven 1925: 1)

The writer goes on to describe the fashion as "the Great Disrobing Movement" (Bliven 1925: 4) and the twenties as "the new Era of Undressing" (Bliven

1925: 4). Indeed, the decade made a profound change in women's fashions especially in regard to what was considered appropriate. In 1910 the dresses were still long enough to reach the ground but in 1925 a girl showing her knees was able to shock only the most old-fashioned spectators. Scott Fitzgerald had a good eye for detail in this respect, as well, and it is easy to find in his fiction indicators of these changes. In "The Offshore Pirate" he describes Ardita's dress: "Her feet, stockingless, and adorned rather than clad in blue-satin slippers..." (Offshore Pirate 1920: 1). Stockings were, in fact, a major cause of discussion in the twenties. For the first time even respectable girls began to wear skin-colored stockings and in hot weather decided not to wear them at all (Bliven 1925: 2). In 1920 reading about a girl who "seemed to have permanently abandoned stockings"(Offshore Pirate 1920: 13) was enough to indicate that she had a somewhat wild character.

One critic has noted that in fiction women "only very rarely deal with ... their own bodies"(Koppelman Cornillon 1972:127). Fitzgerald brings forward a minor change in the way his heroines at least talk about their bodies and in *The Beautiful and Damned* he recounts, in quite an amused tone, the confusion of the male characters when hearing such talk. Anthony listens to his friend Maury's account of his meeting Gloria for the first time, and the subject of her conversation is a great surprise to both of them: "Mostly, though, we talked about legs. ... Hers. She talked a lot about hers. As though they were a sort of choice bric-à-brac. She aroused a great desire to see them."(Beautiful 1922:48) To Gloria there is no confusion about the possession of her own body. What amuses Fitzgerald, the reader and the two gentlemen engaged in the conversation is that, contrary to the popular opinion of the time, talking about bodies is much less embarrassing to the girl than it is to the man. Maury and Anthony's conversation continues along the same lines as Maury tells his friend more about the way Gloria talks:

> "Well, this girl talked about legs. She talked about skin too – her own skin. Always her own. She told me the sort of tan she'd like to get in the summer and how close she usually approximated it." "You sat enraptured by her low alto?" "By her low alto! No, by tan! I began thinking about tan. I began to think what color I turned when I made my last exposure about two years ago. I did use to get a pretty good tan. I used to get a sort of bronze, if I remember correctly." (Beautiful 1922:49)

The talk about such matters as skin, or a girl in a bathtub in "Bernice bobs her hair" makes a good line to begin a conversation, if only it did not embarrass the male listeners so much (Fitzgerald 1951:53). The flapper dress was designed to draw attention to the body and the girls who adopted the essence of being a flapper did not shrink from talking about it, either.

Another major change in women's fashions was the increasing use of make-up. Before the First World War it was worn only by prostitutes and actresses – who were, of course, in about the same class of respectability (Fass 1977:284). During and after the war this, too, changed, and young women began to use rouge, powder and lipstick first moderately and gradually more and more visibly (Allen 1931:88). In *This Side of Paradise*, when Amory and Rosalind meet for the first time, she exhibits her rouge and eye pencils to him. He is somewhat surprised to find such a frank admission of vanity in a girl he had, judging by what he had heard of her, imagined to be rather sporty and disinterested in her looks. (Paradise 1920: 186) But, as Allen (1931:89) points out, flappers who spent days in outdoor sports did not want to appear any unattractive in the evening. In 1925 a typical make-up was heavy, "not to imitate nature, but for an altogether artificial effect..." (Bliven 1925: 1). The new fashion of using make-up spread from the younger generation to their parents everywhere in the country surprisingly fast. (Allen 1931: 88).

The ideal body was thin and quite boyish (Allen 1931:86) – almost exactly as the description of Jordan Baker in *The Great Gatsby*. "She was a slender, small-breasted girl, with an erect carriage, which she accentuated by throwing her body backward at the shoulders like a young cadet." (Gatsby 1925: 9) Jordan is a champion golfer so her appearance, of course, reflects her physical strength. Even when she is reading Fitzgerald emphasizes her physique: "... she turned a page with a flutter of slender muscles in her arms." (Gatsby 1925: 14) At Gasby's party she still appears to be sporty: "...she wore her evening-dress, all her dresses, like sports clothes – there was a jauntiness about her movements as if she had first learned to walk upon golf courses on clean, crisp mornings"(Gatsby 1925: 33).

There has been some misapprehension that the twenties fashion in some way de-sexed women. The loose dresses were defended on the ground of practicality but the silk stockings, the bare knees and light fabrics worn even

during winter time were signs of a very frank accentuation of sex appeal. The slim waistline and modern, loose-fitting clothes were, in the context of the decade, considered sexually attractive, as well as the idea of women who were not wearing corsets. (Fass 1977:282). Trilling (1945:18) defines Jordan Baker in *The Great Gatsby* as "vaguely homosexual", apparently basing his view on the masculine terms that Jordan is portrayed. As seen above, Fitzgerald compares her to a young cadet, and when she says good-bye "her brown hand waved a jaunty salute" (Gatsby 1925: 35) - also because, being an athlete, she is extremely dedicated and competitive. When Nick first meets her, she refuses a cocktail because she is "absolutely in training" and goes to bed at ten in the evening when others still want to keep the party going (Gatsby 1925: 14). What must not be overlooked is that engaging in activities such as sports, wearing loose dresses that made corsets unnecessary and having hair cut short, even though not sexually charged at such, still brought to mind a freer spirit and implied on open attitude (Fass 1977:280). Appearance and behavior that seem unattractive in the eyes of critics in later times were considered sexually exciting at the time. Looking a little bit boyish was, in fact, glamorous.

The haircut was another badge of the flapper. It was cut short, or "bobbed", in the term of the day, and this style spread gradually from young women to all ages. Before 1920 the style was still unusual, and in *The Beautiful and Damned* Scott underlines Gloria's daring nature by having her bob her hair five or six years before it becomes fashionable. (Beautiful 1922: 124) One of Fitzgerald's early short stories is even named after the hair cut, "Bernice bobs her hair". The traditional heroine, Bernice, is coached by her fashionable and popular cousin into behaving like a flapper. The story includes a humorous account of people's reactions as Bernice is having her hair cut: the barber's mouth slides open by the surprise of her command and "outside a passer-by stopped and stared; a couple joined him; half a dozen small boys' noses sprang into life, flattened against the glass..." (Fitzgerald 1951:56). Bernice immediately regrets it since she, by nature quite shy, is the first one her contemporaries to have done something so radical. In a small town right after the war bobbed hair was still enough to condemn a girl's character. In addition, Bernice realizes Marjorie had set her up when she hears of a dance arranged in their honor by a woman who "in her paper on 'The Foibles of the

Younger Generation' that she read ... she devoted fifteen minutes to bobbed hair. It's her pet abomination." (Fitzgerald 1951:58) The passage evokes the twenties preoccupation with the manners and morals of the young and how much short hair on young women was taken to represent. In early twenties, before short hair became the accepted fashion, a bob really signaled a new kind of attitude to life. As Way sums up the story:

> She [Bernice] is not destroyed or ruined by the experience but she is hardened by it: she came to the city wearing the thick luxuriant hair of the womanly woman; she goes home with the bobbed hair of the hard-boiled self-reliant woman of the 1920s. (Way 1980: 57)

Even though Bernice is changed by her experience, she is not miraculously transformed. One can read her escape to mean that her quick experimentation in the world of flappers did not feel right, in the end, and she prefers to go back home where the old standards and values are still valid. However, as many of Fitzgerald's stories, "Bernice bobs her hair", too, is about the inevitability of change in the world and the difficulties in living with it.

Smoking for women was not considered proper, even though the habit had been fairly common for some time, at least in the upper classes. If a girl smoked she did it secretly. In public opinion it was one of those things that simply was not done (Mowry 1963:178). That Rosalind, the heroine of *This Side of Paradise*, sometimes smokes openly was another indicator that she did not fit in with the image of a traditional 'good' girl. Older generation readers might have been alarmed to find out that, in spite of her somewhat unconventional behavior, Fitzgerald describes Rosalind as just average. (Paradise 1920:182) For the young, smoking had become a matter of personal preference and not of conventional morality. If men had a right to do so in public it should not be denied to women, either (Mowry 1963: 178, Fass 1977: 296). Girls smoked defiantly if still somewhat awkwardly and self-consciously, as Fitzgerald describes the practice: "Ardita took a carved jade case from her pocket, extracted a cigarette and lit it with a conscious coolness..." (Offshore Pirate 1920:7). No girl would refuse a cigarette on grounds that it was not a proper thing for a woman, but only if she had tried smoking and did not like it (Welles Page 1922:1).

Drinking was another habit that spread from men to women. Earlier, just as with smoking, respectable women simply did not drink. Even having a drink in the company of women had been taboo, and bars were restricted to men. The speakeasies, on the contrary, were open to men and women, and both sexes could share a bit of bootleg liquor together, even though in the early twenties it was still considered extremely daring. (Carter 1977:99) The reader of Scott Fitzgerald's story "The Jelly-Bean" in 1920 needed only to know that the heroine, Nancy, liked highballs to realize that she was unconventional. (Jelly-Bean 1920:5) In the twenties young women began, like Nancy, to declare: "A little drink wouldn't hurt a baby." (Jelly-Bean 1920:9) It is worth noting that there is quite a lot of drinking going on in Fitzgerald's writings especially considering that they were written during the Prohibition years. In fact, there was a significant change in the drinking habits in the United States between 1919 and 1932, although the effect was not one that Prohibitionists had hoped for. Especially in the cities drinking became more, rather than less, common after the mid-twenties. Among the upper and middle classes drinking increased and the young, in this respect taking up the habits of their elders, began to openly scorn the law (Fass 1977:322). In *The Beautiful and Damned* most characters drink, and Fitzgerald makes a point about Gloria's friend not taking even a glass of champagne (Beautiful 1922:100). A further change in drinking habits was that appearing drunk became accepted, occasionally even fashionable, when it had been considered a taboo in earlier years. (Fass 1977: 315)

Every self-respecting flapper had to have a line. The adolescents played a subtle game of dating, and one was not properly equipped for battle without a line. It was a well-rehearsed sentence that the young used to attract each other, knowing perfectly well that it was not meant seriously (Fass 1977:287). Rather, it was sign of sophistication that proved its user knew how to play the game and Fitzgerald's early heroes and heroines, too, take pride in their ability to start a conversation with style. In *This Side of Paradise*, Amory, when first meeting Isabelle, tries his line on her:

> I've got an adjective that just fits you.' This was one of his favorite starts – he seldom had a word in mind, but it was a curiosity provoker, and he could always produce something complimentary if he got in a tight corner. (Paradise 1920: 72)

Isabelle responds as expected, giving her own start: "Did any one ever tell you, you have keen eyes?" (Paradise 1920: 73) Just as important as having a line was the ability to respond with style. In "Bernice Bobs Her Hair" one of the boys tries his line on Bernice: "You've got an awfully kissable mouth." Her reaction shows that she has no idea that a game is going on and that she should be able to take part in it:

> She distinctly jumped. She turned an ungraceful red and became clumsy with her fan. No one had ever made such a remark to her before. 'Fresh!' – the word had slipped out before she realized it, and she bit her lip. Too late she decided to be amused, and offered him a flustered smile. (Fitzgerald 1951:41)

Her reaction belongs to the world of her mother and the old-fashioned values she had been taught to respect. The young man in question, accustomed to enjoying the game he can play with modern girls, is annoyed with her and in turn, does not know how to take her reply. His behavior is in perfect accordance with the manners of the young in 1920s, which, however, are alien to Bernice. Fitzgerald understands both sides: he admires social skills and views them as essential in coping in society, but he can also sympathize with Bernice who had grown up in a different world and does not know how to cope with changes.

Most historians of the twenties have stressed the importance of a line to young men, who wanted to show that they were in the top class in social life. But as women, flappers, began taking up more and more liberties earlier reserved to men, they adopted the use of a line, too. A young woman in 1922 considered herself to be an unfit flapper precisely because she did not have one. (Welles Page1922:1) Marjorie, on her mission to turn Bernice into a modern girl, instructs her to use a line, among other things. After practicing Bernice tries it in a real situation and asks her dinner companion: "Do you think I ought to bob my hair...? " and explains her reason for considering it: "It's such a sure and easy way of attracting attention." (Bernice 1920:50) Just to make sure that everyone knows who they are dealing with, she goes on: "I want to be a society vampire, you see."(Bernice 1920:50) Lines could be invented from an actual situation, such Bernice's talk about bobbing her hair that evolves out of Marjorie's idea, or they could be picked up from a book.

Marjorie herself mentions taking at least one line from Oscar Wilde. (Bernice 1920:51) Gloria in *The Beautiful and Damned* opens conversations by talking about her legs (Beautiful 1922:48) Gloria's friend, Muriel, is a master in using the latest phrases, as well as knowing the latest songs and plays. A line such as "I can't make my feet behave when I hear that tune. Oh, baby!" made talking to strangers very easy (Beautiful 1922:84). There were a number of catch phrases in universal use among the youth in the twenties, such as "I adore to dance" (Welles Page 1922:1) and replying "I don't know" to anything in order to gain some time to think (Bliven 1925:4). The Jazz Age was also the age when fads the spread quickly throughout the country and were almost as quickly dropped, and the use of certain phrases belongs to this custom. (Fass 1977:227).

But all this, from short skirts to clever lines was only the outside. The most important aspect of being a flapper was the attitude toward life. Rosalind's declaration: "I'm bright, quite selfish, emotional when aroused, fond of admiration..." (Paradise 1920:18) does not sound like a traditionally virtuous girl, and this was exactly what Fitzgerald's public wanted to read. "She is quite unprincipled: her philosophy is carpe diem for herself and laissez faire for others." (Paradise 1920:183) It was the spirit that really made a flapper. She loved being daring, she liked experimenting and she lived for exciting love in others. She wanted to be a good sport who could not be shocked. One young woman in 1922 commented: "Of course a flapper is proud of her nerve – she is not even afraid of calling it by its right name. She is shameless, selfish and honest, but at the same time she considers these three attributes virtues." ("Flapping not repented" 1926:174) It is especially worth noticing that, according to the writer, such traits as honesty and frankness were not qualities expected in a traditional woman. Another point is the fact that flappers decided themselves, without listening to the advice given by their mothers, what they considered virtues. Way (1980:59) concludes: "...the essence of the flapper is that she is hard and unsentimental – excitable but cold-blooded, captivating but ruthless, outrageous but calculating...". For Fitzgerald, flappers represented all things new, modern and exciting, and his admiration of girls who were daring and shameless certainly shows in his fiction. However, it should be kept in mind that this is only one side to his writing. His

stories about belles, and his sympathetic treatment of old-fashioned and unpopular Bernice shows that his affection for tradition was just under the surface. It can be argued that even though he definitely supported changes in society, he also saw them as an inevitable and challenging part of life, and his heroines as well as heroes, all grapple with the problems of responding to these changes.

4.3. Love and sex

Most historians have noted that the twenties were a turning point in sexual behavior. The change was gradual, moving from the Victorian double standard toward freer sexual habits. (Fass 1977:260) The young did not completely reject the morality of their elders but instead, they redefined it according to their own standards. (Fass 1977:261) They made a " simple rediscovery – love is erotic." (Fass 1977:261) Even if the manners of the young seem quite innocent when looked at today, a profound change did take place in the twenties that lead the way to later attitudes toward sexuality. Earlier, especially among the middle classes, women were considered to be morally on a higher level and they were expected to show that in their behavior. Young women were supposed to wait for the right man to appear into their lives and maintain their innocence – even a kiss was considered immoral. (Allen 1931: 73) Compared to this attitude, it was thrilling to read in *This Side of Paradise* how "Amory found it rather fascinating that any popular girl he met before eight he might quite possibly kiss before twelve." (Paradise 1920:66) Way has noted on a curious contradictory attitude in Fitzgerald: he was the spokesman of the young and praised social change but he was still very much affected by traditional middle-class values and later confessed that he had a good deal of a puritan in him. (Way 1980:19) These two sides are also apparent when reading Fitzgerald's love scenes: even though he deals with sexuality, the manners of the young, and later with infidelity, even incest, his writing about sex is always veiled. His earliest heroes and heroines very much attach sex to love. Amory in *This Side of Paradise*, for instance, is not even tempted by the idea

of sleeping with a prostitute (Paradise 1920:122). Gloria in *The Beautiful and Damned*, in spite of her wild reputation, is a virgin until she marries and later, when disappointed in her marriage, she still finds the mere idea of infidelity impossible.

The phenomenon that most worried the parents was the petting party, by was 1920 "widely established as an indoor sport". (Allen 1931:75) Fitzgerald brought it to their attention by naming a chapter of *This Side of Paradise* "Petting", and describing very casually exchanged kisses between young people. In fact, there was some confusion as to how to define petting: it could mean a kiss as well as more intimate caresses. (Fass 1977:264) The older generation saw it as a distinctly promiscuous behavior while the young considered it as perfectly natural. (Fass 1977:265) They did see it as somewhat naughty and some of them enjoyed having a reputation as shockers and being considered "fast". But for the most part, it was simply a means to be "safe and yet not sorry" (Fass 1977: 264). Fitzgerald (Paradise 1920:191) illustrates the different conceptions on morality that existed between the two generations by describing a conversation between Rosalind and her mother. Rosalind tries to explain her code of morality, and Fitzgerald remarks it to be "...in its way, quite as high as her mother's". Rosalind tells her mother that she thinks her ideas are outdated: " ...you can't have everything now the way it was in the nineties." Fitzgerald is saying, through Rosalind, that even though the daughter's code of behavior is different from her mother's, it does not make her moral standard any lower. The passage points out that parents had their code and the youth had another one, and while the older generation was against the youth's more liberal conduct, the young, on the other hand, resented the double standard, which they considered false and unfair.

The young drew a distinct line between petting, which was considered harmless and fun, and sexual intercourse that in the moral code of the young was unacceptable (Fass 1977:266). The dating manners of the young were still marriage-oriented and they had rules by which a young woman was supposed to play in order to maintain her social position and to secure her chances of a good marriage (Fass 1977:262). Engaged couples were an exception to the rule: if a marriage was in sight, in the eyes of the young, sex was all right.(Fass 1977:273) A girl who had misunderstood how the game of

popularity worked could drift into a real sexual affair, not understanding that only frank talk was considered acceptable and that the way to maintain her chances was to keep her reputation pure. A good example of such a miscomprehension is Dorothy in *The Beautiful and Damned*: her chances are ruined when she, without much thinking of the consequences, loses her virginity in a casual affair with a local boy (Beautiful 1922:326). She makes the mistake of telling a friend about it, and as the rumors spread, she is reduced in the social hierarchy of her hometown. Fitzgerald portrays the dilemmas of young women in the twenties very well. Ideas of sexual liberation were in the air, but there was still a social code that dictated the rules a girl was supposed to follow. Gloria, the heroine of *The Beautiful and Damned* knows them perfectly. Even though she is at one point being referred to as a "public drinking glass" as so many lips have touched hers (Beautiful 1922: 182), no one ever really questions her morality, and she is thus able to keep her good name in the marriage market.

Only a girl who lived outside the youth network was able to really act as she pleased in terms of sexual life. As most young women still had a good marriage as their main goal in life - most young women, in fact, had no other choice - only a girl who was in a financially and socially independent position was really able to make independent decisions in her sexual life as well. In *Tender is the Night* Rosemary, who represents the younger generation, is different from the majority of young women of the decade in that she is economically independent. Her goals are directed at her work, making a career as a film actress, and consequently she is less dependent on others and their opinions. She is able to make decisions on her own at a very young age, and this manifests itself in the deliberate manner she pursues an affair with Dick The fact that he is married means little to her and she has no moral problems about the affair whatsoever. It is precisely because she has both financial and professional independence that she can easily do what she likes in her private life, too. Had she been an ordinary college girl her youthful infatuation for an older, married man would not have developed any further.

Fitzgerald shows an understanding of the expectations society had for young women, even though the decade was filled with talk of sexual liberation. His stories demonstrate that if a girl wanted to be socially accepted,

she had to follow certain rules, which were no less real than those of their mothers. He also shows that if a woman was in a position of financial independence, only then was she able to make independent decisions in her sexual life, as well. Sarah Beebe Fryer points out the difference between the seeming liberation and the real financial dependence in the life of a young woman in the twenties.

> They [women] had been dabbling with other liberties - smoking, drinking, experimenting with sex - since the start of the twentieth century. Despite suffrage and devil-may-care attitudes, however, women of Fitzgerald's generation remained economically dependent on men. Particularly in his early novels, Fitzgerald draws on young women who dream of a greater degree of liberation and financial autonomy than is actually within their grasp... they marry for security, so they naturally predicate their selection of prospective husbands in part upon a man's financial prospects. (Fryer 1988: 4)

When later generations read *This Side of Paradise*, they often find it difficult to understand why it was considered so shocking when it was published. The only sexual activity the heroines engage in is fairly moderate kissing. As one critic has remarked, "it was an oddly innocent intrigue that Amory – Fitzgerald reported." (Aldridge 1951: 32) But it must be kept in mind that in the Victorian era – and as Fitzgerald remarks in the novel, most of the parents really were Victorian – a kiss was a symbol of engagement, a serious relationship, and not "the sign of ... victory in a battle of infatuation fought by young teenagers" (Stavola 1979:83). The scene in which Amory and Rosalind kiss the same night they meet after only exchanging a few words and at the end of which she dreamily says "I've kissed dozens of men. I suppose I'll kiss dozens more" (Paradise 1920:188) must have been a rather disturbing read to the members of the older generation. It must also be remembered that at the time any allusion to sexuality in literature was still something of a taboo: "...so delicate a subject as the dawning of sexual desire was certainly not the subject of popular novels. If any dimension of sexuality was dealt with in the fiction of Fitzgerald's day, it was done quickly or was smothered in severe moralism or maudlin sentiment."(Stavola 1979:83) That Scott's teenagers kissed had shock value in itself; that he should write about them enjoying it and moving on to the next partner, was even worse.

In *The Beautiful and Damned* Gloria declares: "I think a woman should be able to kiss a man beautifully and romantically without any desire to be either his wife or his mistress."(Beautiful 1922:113). This emphasizes perfectly the younger generation's attitude toward kissing. It was considered natural and fun, but with the result that a kiss became almost desexualized. There was also an element of daring involved and often young women kissed their dates only to show that they were modern. (Rowland Wembridge 1926:176) Sex was one thing, and kissing was another. It had become somewhat unromantic, too. This is hinted at in the scene where Gloria, reading her old diary, finds the entry of her first kiss and she can only remember the setting where it happened but not the boy. (Beautiful 1922:148). In fact, the unending game of kissing could become rather boring: one heroine sighs, at the mature age of 21, " I've played around so much that even while I'm kissing the man I just wonder how soon I'll get tired of him." (Myra 1920:2) All this "playing around" was not very sexual in itself, as one critic comments: "It was an intrigue of manners merely, conducted by glittering children who could hardly bear to be touched..." (Aldrige 1951:32). Flappers liked to play and with many mates, but they did not like things to go serious. In *Tender Is The Night*, Scott portrays flappers with their endless kissing in a less intriguing light, comparing their attitude with a mature relationship between adults, when one of the characters says in a mocking tone:

> When I was in America last there were girls who would tear you apart with their lips, tear themselves too, until their faces were scarlet with the blood around the lips all brought out in a patch – but nothing further (Tender 1934: 317).

Young women's attitudes in the twenties towards love and sex, marriage and money, show that they were on a threshold of a new era, and Fitzgerald's flapper stories illustrate this perfectly. His early heroines thrive for independence and preach liberation, and yet their major decisions reflect old-fashioned values. Sarah Beebe Fryer points this out in her book:

> Fitzgerald's era was indeed a confusing time for women in America. On the one hand, they were beginning to perceive the possibilities of autonomy, self-actualization, and egalitarian relationships with men; on the other hand, to strike out on their own ... still entailed tremendous risks of economic disaster and social ostracism. (Fryer 1988:4-5).

Fitzgerald's writings show these conflicting forces in flappers' lives, with young women trying to live according to their own standards but still unable to completely break away from tradition. Rosalind tells her mother that life was different from the days of her parents' youth and yet, when she decides to marry, she chooses a reliable and wealthy man her mother approves of. Gloria claims to be a free spirit who doesn't care about other people's opinions but, in spite of her dreams of being an actress, she never makes a real effort to make it happen, and chooses to make her marriage her career instead, just as her mother had done. Flappers certainly opened the way to a new way of living for women, and Fitzgerald's early stories had a major influence in spreading the word for the young that times were changing. Yet he never lost sight of the fact that at no time in the 1920s did women make a complete break with the past.

4.4. End of the flapper era.

Flappers were becoming outdated fairly quickly. In an interview in 1922 Fitzgerald is introduced with these words: "The frank Mr. Fitzgerald undoubtedly set the fashion of holding the mirror up to the flapper. Some of us, in two years, have grown a bit weary of studying her reflection."(Mooers Marshall 1922: 255) With the amount of public attention dedicated to the problem of the younger generation there was bound to be some tiredness seeping into the subject. Petting parties and short skirts had lost their ability to shock, cigarettes were part of every day life for a number of women, too. The word 'flapper' was still a common term, although in 1925 the writer of the article "A Flapper's Appeal to her Parents" apologizes for using such an old-fashioned word, and then goes on to describe three different degrees of flappers, with variations. (Welles Page 1922:1)

Although F. Scott Fitzgerald had accepted the part of the spokesman for the younger generation – even if, as has already been noted, according to him it had happened accidentally – he began to turn away from the type of stories that originally made him famous. In a 1923 interview he claimed that flappers were going wilder, seeking more and more new experiences than ever before, showing that his interest in them had not yet altogether disappeared (Wilson

1923: 264). However, as a writer he was already looking further. One critic, Way, points out that Fitzgerald's days as the writer representing the younger generation was over by 1922. (Way 1981:11) The heroine of *The Beautiful and Damned* is definitely a flapper in the beginning of the book, with a wild reputation that had earned her the nick-name "Coast-to-coast Gloria" (Beautiful 1922:60). However, Fitzgerald's main interest lies in the marriage, and towards the end of the novel Gloria as a wife is far from a carefree young woman. Even though one article draws attentions to the reckless life style of Anthony and Gloria, declaring: "...the 'younger marrieds' ...out-flap the flapper!" (Mooers Marshall 1922: 255), the novel is, in fact, rather an attempt at tragedy than a story intended to shock its readers, although it might have been received as a scandalous novel when it was first published.

In *The Beautiful and Damned* Fitzgerald began to make fun of the flapper fashions with Gloria's friend, Muriel Kane, who lives for keeping up with fads. The desperate attempt began with her looks:

> ...her over-red lips, combined to make her resemble Theda Bara, the prominent motion picture actress. People told her constantly that she was a 'vampire', and she believed them She suspected hopefully that they were afraid of her, and she did her utmost under all circumstances to give the impression of danger." (Beautiful 1922: 83)

While Fitzgerald at least attempts to portray Gloria as a great original, he still makes fun of Muriel taking up every opportunity to imitate others. He seems to be commenting that while the first generation of flappers were different and truly daring, the girls that took up the act later were, were merely copying the more courageous ones, and were not particularly interesting anymore.

Fitzgerald also pokes fun at the lines that the young during the twenties loved to use. Fashion changed in words and expression as fast as it did with clothes and dances. Muriel's "conversation was also timely: 'I don't care,' she would say, 'I should worry and lose my figure." (Beautiful 1922:83). She brings to mind other Fitzgerald flappers who use fads to their own advantage, but with her character he shows what a girl who fails at her attempt could be like. "Her clothes were too tight, too stylish, too vivid, her eyes too roguish, her smile too coy. She was almost pitifully over-emphasized from head to foot." (Beautiful 1922:83) As the decade went on, practically every young

woman wanted to be a flapper, with varying degrees of success, a phenomenon that did not go unnoticed by Fitzgerald.

When Fitzgerald was writing *The Great Gatsby*, he had already moved so much away from the world of carefree flappers that they had only become minor characters, almost extras. As Way (1980:60) points out, they are only a part of the background noise in Gatsby's parties.

> There was dancing now in the canvas in the garden ... a great number of single girls dancing individualistically or relieving the orchestra for a moment of the burden of the banjo or the traps. (Gatsby 1925: 31)

Flappers are among the people who "conducted themselves according to the rules of behaviour associated with an amusement park."(Gatsby 1925:27) They seem only mildly amusing to the narrator who watches the on-going flirtation:

> ...girls were putting their heads on men's shoulders in a puppyish, convivial way, girls swooning backward playfully into men's arms, even into groups, knowing that someone would arrest their fall... (Gatsby 1925:33)

They do not excite very much interest, not in him nor in the reader. As the party goes on and more champagne "served in glasses bigger than finger-bowls" (Gatsby 1925:33) has been drunk, the more annoying and unattractive the scenes become. The hilarious mood changes into comic desperation, as Fitzgerald describes one of the many drunken girls in Gatsby's huge parties:

> ...during the course of the song she had decided, ineptly, that everything was very, very sad – she was not only singing, she was weeping too. Whenever there was a pause in the song she filled it with gasping, broken sobs, and then took up the luring again in a quavering soprano. The tears coursed down her cheeks – not freely, however, for when they came into contact with heavily beaded eyelashes they assumed an inky colour, and pursued the rest of their way in slow black rivulets.(Gatsby 1925:34)

In his later years Fitzgerald returned to flappers when he wrote his Basil and Josephine stories, going back to his own memories of growing up. With the Josephine stories he tried to bring his readers the mind of a wild young girl. The heroine was modeled after Scott's first love, Ginevra King. In the

short story "Woman with a past" her reputation as an adolescent man-eater is gently made fun of:

> She was exactly seventeen and she was blasé. Already she had been a sensation and a scandal; she had driven mature men to a state of disequilibrium; she had, it was said, killed her grandfather, but as he was over eighty at the time perhaps he just died. (Fitzgerald 1951: 364-365)

She goes from party to party and has already had a fair share of adolescent love affairs. When at a dance she runs out with a young man from Alabama and lets him kiss her it is only because she had never kissed a Southern boy before. (Fitzgerald 1951:372) Josephine always assumes that she should be, by some natural right, the center of attention. At one occasion she is deeply shocked to see her plain and less popular friend, Adele, receive more attention because Adele's date is socially a better catch than hers.

> She was discomforted by the unfairness of it. A girl earned her popularity by being beautiful and charming. The more beautiful and charming she was, the more she could afford to disregard public opinion. It seemed absurd that simply because Adele had managed to attach a baseball captain, who mightn't know anything about girls at all, or be able to judge their attractions, she should be thus elevated in spite of her thick ankles, her rather too pinkish face. (Fitzgerald 1951:368).

Josephine is so used to making young men fall in love with her that she is genuinely shocked when she is rejected for the first time. The depiction of Josephine is in many ways quite ruthless - after all, she is portrayed as being extremely self-centered - but still with a degree of sympathy and understanding. Fitzgerald's college girlfriend Ginevra King later commented, alluding to her youthful vanity and egoism: "I read with shame the very true portrait of myself in my youth in the Josephine stories." (as quoted in Meyers 1994:30) It is quite remarkable that Fitzgerald should have eventually understood so well the girl whom he had been blindly in love with and adored unreservedly.

The last time Fitzgerald described a flapper, one who had gained years but perhaps not wisdom, was in his short story "Babylon Revisited". Written in 1931, after the economic crash, it brilliantly conveys the atmosphere of the immediate post-boom years. Charlie Wales returns to Paris after a few years of absence and he is shocked to find the once lively places quiet and empty. He meets Lorraine, an old flame, "a lovely, pale blond of thirty." (Fitzgerald

1951:391) She is going around in Paris trying to keep up the party, saying: "My husband couldn't come this year ... We're poor as hell. So he gave me two hundred a month an told me I could do my worst on that."(Fitzgerald 1951: 391) Lorraine professes amazement at finding Charlie sober – the fact that his wife had died indirectly through them both drinking too much, which she obviously knows, seems to mean nothing to her. In a letter to she sends to Charlie she reminds him of the old days and of the pranks they used to pull.

> We *did* have such good times that crazy spring, like the night you and I stole the butcher's tricycle, and the time we tired to call on the president and you had the old derby rim and the wire cane. Everybody seems so old lately, but I don't feel old a bit. Couldn't we get together some time today for old time's sake? I've got a vile hang-over for the moment, but will be feeling better this afternoon and will look for you ... in the sweat-shop at the Ritz."(Fitzgerald 1951: 398, emphasis in the original)

Charlie, in turn, is amazed that he had actually behaved in such juvenile manner in his mature years. The character of Lorraine who, in her thirties and spending the last money she has on drink, tries desperately to feel like a carefree flapper in the early twenties, is almost pitiful and very unattractive. The story brings to mind Fitzgerald talking about a relative who, in her thirties, was still a flapper. He comments that she "probably had modeled herself on some unfortunate writings of mine..." (as quoted in Cowley 1945: 65).

As so many of Fitzgerald's stories show, recapturing one's youth is impossible and going through life with pleasure principle brings only misery in the end. As Fitzgerald wrote in his essay "Echoes of the Jazz Age", after 1922 the Jazz Age was not really an affair of the youth anymore. "By 1923 their elders, tired of watching the carnival with ill-concealed envy, had discovered that young liquor will take place of young blood, and with a whoop the orgy began." (Fitzgerald 1965:11) What had been charming and exciting among the young was quite distasteful when adopted by the older generation. Most historians and commentators of the day noted that the Depression brought the flapper era to en end – they did not have a place in a world where economic realities, instead of parties, dominated the every day life. Fitzgerald's writing, too, reflects this change. Naturally his fiction reflected what had happened in his life, the experiences that changed him as a person made his work in many ways different as well. Furthermore, Fitzgerald's

stories always showed him observing the society around him, and the United States in the thirties was not the happy country that had firmly believed in progress. Moving away from merely writing about flappers had to do with both him and the world he had known changing with the Crash. Fitzgerald still returned in his fiction to the 1920s, occasionally even to belles and flappers, but nevertheless with a different perspective. When looking at his women characters, we can see more serious stories about marriages, stories beginning rather than ending with the wedding, women who work and make careers, and dealing with money in more ways than just planning to marry some.

5. MARRIAGE

5.1. Planning a marriage

As noted in the previous chapters, F. Scott Fitzgerald's early heroines, flappers and belles, are very consciously looking to get married and make a serious business of it. Most of them are romantics, but only to an extent. When it comes to choosing a husband, practical issues come first. Considering his own background, it is hardly surprising that one of the reoccurring themes in Fitzgerald's early fiction is true love being cast aside because of the power of money. His romance with Ginevra King, when he was still in college, ended because he was considered too poor for her, and Zelda first ended their engagement because his situation in life was not financially secure enough. Fitzgerald incorporated his disappointment into *This Side of Paradise*: in the end of the novel Rosalind, after swearing an undying love, leaves Amory and marries a wealthier man.

In the context of the decade, the practical attitude of Fitzgerald's early heroines toward romance was not unusual. Most young women in the twenties were looking to get married, (Carter 1977:113) and most female students in college found it natural to stop working after the wedding. Many girls, however, had the impression that more and more women around them were

deciding to make their own living. The general assumption in the twenties, as has already been noted, was that women really had won their independence. The words of a flapper in 1925 echo this idea: "...not so many girls are looking for a life mealticket nowadays. Lots of them prefer to earn their own living and omit the home-and-baby act. Well, anyhow, postpone it years and years."(Bliven 1925:5) However, the reality of the twenties was that very few women were ready, or indeed were able, to devote their lives to making a career for themselves, and that the "home-and-baby act" was still a goal to most women even though it was fashionable to claim otherwise. The last sentence of the statement above reflects the popular mood more correctly. For the first time in American history girls were able to have fun before committing themselves to just one man for life, and a number of girls chose not to rush into marriage too soon. It is also worth noting that girls were all the more proud if they had several suitors to choose from. "Going steady" was a phenomenon that was born only in the fifties (Banner 1974:224). Fitzgerald, who in his early fiction captured the appearance and spirit of 1920's flappers, managed to portray their attitudes toward love and marriage, too, in his fiction.

Many of his heroines, even though they are looking to get married, are often reluctant make a serious commitment. The girls make and break engagements a number of times, and fall in and out of love even more. In one of Fitzgerald's early stories one young woman, recently married, quite complacently gives some advice to another girl: "...don't get married unless you're absolutely through playing round. It means giving up an awful lot, you know."(Myra 1920:2) Getting married with the right kind of man is the goal for both of them, but only after going out and having fun long enough. Fitzgerald seems to be pointing out that most girls, even if their number one goal in life was settling down and starting a family, wanted to enjoy life first. After all, having fun and living with a certain degree of independence was a possibility to them, as it had not been to earlier generations of women.

When a girl decides to get married, she goes about it knowing what she is doing. In Fitzgerald's fiction men play the role of being chosen or discarded: it is the woman who makes the decision. His women characters are rarely so blinded by love that they would not consider material reality. However, he does not portray these girls as unpleasant or greedy husband hunters. Instead,

he writes about girls who are smart and whose exploits he seems to admire, at least to an extent. In "Myra meets his family" one young woman instructs the heroine, who is considering marriage:

> Pick out the best thing in sight – the man who has all the mental, physical, social and financial qualities you want, and the go after him hammer and tongs … After you've got him don't say to yourself "Well, he can't sing like Billy," or "I wish he played better golf." You can't have everything. Shut your eyes and turn off your sense of humor, and then after you're married it'll be different and you'll be mighty glad. (Myra 1920: 2).

The passage suggests how Fitzgerald was aware that the constant falling in and out of love, and getting bothered by insignificant details of a suitor, was a good way of avoiding making a decision. Only when the time is right they can decide on someone, and often it seems to have more to do with the girl feeling she has gone out long enough, rather than meeting the great love of her life. Fitzgerald's early heroines, of course, are the most beautiful and smartest girls in town, and they could always say: "I may be a bit blasé, but I can still get any man I want."(Myra 1920:2) without exaggeration. Often settling down to a normal married life seems, in spite of the social esteem or money it might bring, a not very inviting prospect to a girl who is used to being the center of attention.

The heroine of the story "Myra meets his family" is a good example of a conflict between wanting to marry, just like everyone else, and not wanting to give up having fun quite yet. Myra is very aware of her attractiveness and she is deliberately trying to make a good catch. When meeting her fiancé's family for the first time she is shocked by their eccentric behavior. Still, she reminds herself of all the good things that the marriage will bring her, and so she keeps smiling and pretends nothing bothers her. In the end she discovers her fiancé had been trying to get rid of her by hiring actors to play the part of his parents, making everything so horrible that Myra would want to leave. When Knowleton, the fiancé, confesses everything to Myra and begs her to forgive and marry him anyway, she agrees but gets her revenge in turn by staging a fake wedding and running away, leaving Knowleton to tell his parents that he is married to a mysteriously disappeared girl. In the end, just when she is being offered everything she has worked hard for, she chooses to get even

with Knowleton instead of marrying him, a man who made a fool of her. Myra is looking for a wealthy husband but when it comes to a choice between money and pride, her inner integrity is stronger. And of course, a girl like her could always find someone better, and as was suggested in the beginning of the story, she might not be through with parties quite yet.

As has been said earlier, when choosing a husband a girl could not allow herself to ignore finances. In *This Side of Paradise* Rosalind comments on how her evenings at parties are her "business hours ... six to two – strictly" (Paradise 1920:186) and she even refers to herself as a company: "...it's just 'Rosalind, Unlimited.' Fifty-one shares, name, good-will, and everything goes at $25,000 a year." (Paradise 1920:187) Rosalind knows exactly what she wants in a marriage and that is the luxury of living without cares.

> ...I'm just a little girl, I like sunshine and pretty things and cheerfulness – and I dread responsibility. I don't want to think about pots and kitchens and brooms. I want to worry whether my legs will get slick and brown when I swim in the summer. (Paradise 1920:210)

Rosalind is a good example of a modern girl in the early 1920s, very different from her mother in her views, but traditional when making decisions. Sarah Beebe Fryer points out that while Rosalind is perfectly conscious of what she is doing, she nevertheless finds the situation of women she knows not really fair, either.

> Significantly, her joke about business reflects her sense that she is prostituting herself as she seeks a husband with sufficient resources; she will sell out, deliver "everything" - including her name and identity - for the right price. Like other women of her era, she is resigned to this fate simply because she has never been taught or expected to do anything else. Yet her sardonic remarks reflect her sense of injustice of the status quo. (Fryer 1988:25)

Rosalind may not be quite the fascinating and exciting character Fitzgerald probably intended, but she is a different kind of a heroine from earlier decades in American literature. Stavola (1979:97), in fact, remarks on Rosalind: "...she is fundamentally egocentric and without depth no matter what kind of lyrical phrases Fitzgerald uses to describe and glorify her." However, when it comes to the realistic attitude Rosalind has about marriage, she appears a perfectly believable representative of an upper-class girl in the United States

of her time. Fitzgerald makes it clear that girls like Rosalind act the way they do because there really is no alternative in their lives. Working for a living is not a choice, and with no fortune of her own, a good marriage is the only choice. One thing that makes Rosalind different from other, however, is the frankness with which she admits everything. Rosalind does not pretend to love Amory any less when she leaves him, and she is honest enough to acknowledge that she really is getting married for security. (Paradise 1920: 207)

The problem of bringing love and money together reoccurs regularly in Fitzgerald's fiction. In a short story, when a young man asks the girl to marry him, he gets an unexpected response: "Are you ready to marry me?" (Fitzgerald 1951:146) The conclusion is clear: there can be no hope of a wedding without the necessary financial means. Fitzgerald makes her heroines very realistic in this sense, even though he seems to hate the idea of money coming in the way of true love. He does not, however, condemn them for their attitude and instead, he seems admit that in the world he lived in, for many women, marrying money was the only option. His flappers might have been living the kind of golden youth many girls in the 1920s America were dreaming of and trying to lead, but their attitudes about marriage and money were realistic. This said, he still shows special admiration for girls like Myra who throw finances aside and do not put up with disrespectful treatment just to marry well.

5.2. Everyday married life

As a young man Fitzgerald was quite romantic and even conservative about marriage. Apparently losing Zelda at first left a lasting impression on him, and once married to her, his views were quite old-fashioned coming from the man who was considered a modern prophet of the Jazz Age. In 1922 his views on marriage, expressed in a magazine interview, were rather Victorian:

> I think ... that just being in love, really in love – doing it well, you know – is work enough for a woman. 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 encourages him – oh, I think that's the sort of work that will save her. It's not so easy, you know, being in love and making it go."(Mooers Marshall 1922:258)

The dread of household responsibilities is something that most Fitzgerald heroines have in common. True, most of them are rich enough to have maids so they never have to even think about housekeeping. When Anthony expects Gloria to send laundry downstairs for washing it seems to her an outrageous demand. (Beautiful 1922:165) In the end of *The Beautiful and Damned*, Gloria's having to worry about her home is a signal of their sliding down socially, suggesting Fitzgerald's lack of admiration for women who lived for housework. "She was being bent by her environment into a grotesque similitude of a housewife. She who until three years ago had never made coffee, prepared sometimes three meals a day."(Beautiful 1922:424). Some of the Fitzgeralds' own problems from the early days of his marriage are repeated in *The Beautiful and Damned.* Zelda was never taught the traditional arts of housekeeping, and she had no idea how to sow buttons, for example, and sending laundry out for washing simply did not occur to her. (Milford 1970: 96) It is worth noticing that this disinterest in keeping house was not a bad quality in Fitzgerald's opinion. On the contrary, it was the very carelessness that he found appealing. Even in the early thirties, at a time when public opinion began to turn against the idea of women working and living independently, there are no signs of this trend in Fitzgerald's writing. In his stories a girl like Rosalind, who does not want to be bothered with worries of everyday life, is quite admirable in knowing what she wants. In his later years, however, he grew to resent laziness, and he even believed that one cause for Zelda's illness was the fact that she began serious work too late in her life. The work he talked about in his forties was not directed at making a home but at a career. He expresses this quite clearly in a letter to his daughter: "She [Zelda] realized too late that work was dignity and the only dignity and tried to atone for it by working herself but it was too late and she broke and is broke forever" (as quoted in Bruccoli 1981:441). It is quite remarkable that the man who in his twenties had considered "being in love" enough for his wife, in his forties instructed his daughter to study sciences in order to secure a good job (Bruccoli 1981:410).

In Fitzgerald's fiction happy marriages are a rare phenomenon, with problems ranging from conflicting careers or infidelities to dishonesty and incompatible characters. The girls who marry full of romantic notions of a carefree life with the right man often cannot face the reality of marriage. Fitzgerald's first attempt to describe a Jazz Age marriage was *The Beautiful and Damned.* Gloria is no innocent when she marries and she is already a veteran of love affairs. She enters the marriage full of dreams and in her diary she comments: "I want to marry Anthony, because husbands are so often 'husbands' and I must marry a lover"(Beautiful 1922:146). She goes on to describe the kinds of men she would not want to marry:

> (1)The husband who always wants to stay in in the evening, has no vices and works for a salary. Totally undesirable! (2) The atavistic master whose mistress one is, to wait on his pleasure. This sort always considers every pretty woman 'shallow,' a sort of peacock with arrested development. (3) Next comes the worshipper, the idolater of his wife and all that is his, to the utter oblivion of everything else. This sort demands an emotional actress for a wife. God! It must be an exertion to be thought righteous.(Beautiful 1922:146-147)

In effect she wants her marriage to be a love affair that lasts all her life and she does not want to worry about any practical details. On the other hand, she is also choosing a husband on the grounds of financial security, as in the beginning of the novel Anthony is still the sole heir to a noticeable fortune. Their problem is that they cannot stay young forever and when they have to deal with life's realities they are unprepared for them. Apparently Gloria would even like to prolong her child-like state with Anthony indefinitely: "We talk and talk and never get anywhere, and we ask all our friends and they just answer the way want 'em to. I wish somebody'd take care of us."(Beautiful 1922:171) While most Fitzgerald heroines marry in order to be taken care of, Gloria would prefer to share her dependent state with her husband. One of Anthony's friends at one point laughs at their inability to make any decisions on their own. (Beautiful 1922:171) They are too concerned with their future prosperity to get their happiness out of the present day. As Stavola (1979:109) points out, a big part of their problem is that their ideals are simply impossible: a "world beyond time where natural and moral laws do not exist." Their attempt to stay young and beautiful forever is doomed in the beginning but that is beyond their own comprehension. To Gloria, her own beauty is the

only thing that never failed her, and the ultimate disaster comes when she discovers a wrinkle and she breaks in sobs: "I don't want to live without my pretty face!"(Beautiful 1922:404) Anthony and Gloria hang on to their youth, beauty, and dreams of their future wealth, instead of drawing strength from the very real companionship that they have with each other, at least in the beginning of their marriage.

Anthony and Gloria are also affected by the on-going party of the twenties, and their surroundings certainly contribute to their eventual ruin. Fitzgerald makes this clear as he describes their life style after a few years of marriage, the time when they still have some money left for partying:

> There would be two days of gaiety, two days of moroseness –an endless, almost invariable round. The sharp pull-ups, when they occurred, resulted usually in a spurt of work for Anthony, while Gloria, nervous and bored, remained in bed or else chewed abstractedly at her fingers. After a day of so of this, they would make an engagement, and then – Oh, what did it matter? This night, this glow, the cessation of anxiety and the sense that if living was not purposeful it was, at any rate, essentially romantic! (Beautiful 1922:305).

Jazz Age America makes their life style possible, which at any other time in history would have been frowned upon. Aldridge (1951:34) has remarked that the "internal currents ... are persistently less important than the disruptive circumstances which surround them." His point seems to be that *The Beautiful and Damned* should be read as a condemnation of materialism and hedonism predominant in the twenties, and that people like Anthony and Gloria would have solved their problems more easily had they not had Jazz Age life style ruining them. The novel certainly has the same sense of doom that is present in many other Fitzgerald's stories in which he criticizes the hedonistic life of the Jazz Age. Anthony's tendency to drink and Gloria's vanity are qualities that take over their lives and, together with their surroundings, they contribute to their deterioration. Although Fitzgerald's criticism of Jazz Age America is quite obvious, it should not be seen as the only level of the novel. Anthony and Gloria are characters living the twenties, not mere symbols of the excesses of the era, as Aldridge suggests. In Fitzgerald's fiction, *The Beautiful and Damned* marks a point of moving beyond flapper stories. Gloria is his first married a heroine, a girl who lived her youth as the wildest of flappers, and later finds it difficult to settle into the traditional role of a housewife.

In *The Great Gatsby* we encounter a different type of Jazz Age marriage. Daisy, although in love with Tom, marries him eventually because she wants to find some kind of a solution to her restlessness. She is soon disappointed, however, when she discovers her husband's infidelity. She proceeds to have an affair with Gatsby but she returns to Tom in the end of the novel. She chooses a familiar life with Tom, even if much of it is only "drift[ing] here and there unrestfully wherever people played polo and were rich together."(Gatsby 1925:6) In the end they "weren't happy ...and yet they weren't unhappy either."(Gatsby 1925:93) As Nick watches them sitting together after Myrtle's death he sees a married couple of a kind: "There was an unmistakable air of natural intimacy about the picture, and anybody would have said that they were conspiring together."(Gatsby 1925:93) They do share a companionship even if the scene in the end of the novel suggests the reader more of partners in crime rather than in love.

Most critics have concentrated their attention on Daisy's shallowness and emptiness, and others, such as Burnam (1952:107) have dismissed her altogether by commenting: "neither her character nor the quality of her emotional resources justifies any very exhaustive analysis". A non-analysis of this kind represents the poorest kind of literary criticism. Daisy's "sophistication" (Gatsby 1925:13) certainly is a pretense but that does not mean that it would be useless to make a study of her character. As one critic comments, her fake sophistication seems to point at the "decade's false values"(Massa 1982:150) that put an emphasis on hedonistic life style. It is fair to assume that the emptiness in Tom and Daisy's life suggest a comparison with the twenties, of people being too busy having fun to ever sit down and think what is really important to them. Daisy, in the end, does not have the courage to leave her husband and take a chance with Gatsby, or to confess her part in the fatal car crash that kills Myrtle. She prefers instead to pretend that nothing has happened, which makes her seem unsympathetic and cowardly. Dyson (1961:114) refers to this when he remarks that Daisy "vanishes from the novel at the very point when, if she existed at all, she would start being really there." Massa (1982:150) probably has the same theme in mind when she comments: "She is insubstantial as the ballooning white dresses she wears, as shallow as her white powder."

However, it cannot be overlooked that Daisy changes during her marriage. Most critics have taken her emptiness for granted and have not bothered to look at the evolution of her character. Daisy's friend Jordan tells Nick that as a young girl Daisy fell very deeply in love with Gatsby, and that she almost traveled to New York secretly to say good-bye to him as he was leaving for war, but she was caught and stopped. (Gatsby 1925:49). In the early days of her marriage Daisy is "mad about her husband" (Gatsby 1925:49) but she finds out about Tom's infidelities on their honeymoon when his affair with a hotel chamber maid is revealed (Gatsby 1925:50). It is apparently only after this first disappointment that she becomes wary and begins to suppress her emotions for fear of getting hurt again, and she chooses not to be controlled by her strong feelings anymore. Fryer comments: "Daisy has discovered that romantic love leads to emotional anguish. Thus, it is not surprising that Daisy's overwhelming emotion when she first sees Gatsby at Nick's house is fear." (Fryer 1988:52) Tom's wealth protects Daisy materially and his overbearing character relieves her from the responsibility of taking any real control of her own life. She adopts the attitude of a sophisticated and rich little thing (see Aldridge 1951:36) that makes her appear such a shallow person that she is usually seen (Bewley 1954:133). In the end she is too afraid to take a risk with Gatsby and unprepared to leave her protected life with Tom. Gatsby demands too much of her, he wants Daisy to live by her passions and take risks, something she is not able to do. (see also Massa 1982:151) Tom and Daisy's marriage belongs to the world of wealth, and that is what gives their relationship its peculiar quality, as Fitzgerald's description of them points out:

> They were careless people, Tom and Daisy – they smashed up things and creatures and then retreated back into their money or their vast carelessness, or whatever it was that kept them together, and let other people clean up the mess they had made... (Gatsby 1925:114)

Sarah Beebe Fryer gives the most detailed and deepest analysis of Daisy, something that many of the earlier critics found impossible or rather, unimportant.

> Nick's simple descriptions of Daisy reveal her genuine love for Gatsby, her intense fear of emotions in general, and her craving for stability. The juxtaposition of these forces suggests the severity of Daisy's conflict: her longing for personal freedom is brought out by her deep-rooted affection for Gatsby, but her fear of emotions and her

> need for stability make her cling to her unsatisfactory marriage to Tom. (Fryer 1988: 47)

It is possible to see Daisy as not so different from many other women of the era, in the middle of conflicting ideas of traditional marriage and romantic love, against the ideas of personal freedom that were so much talked about in the twenties. Daisy receives the upbringing of a southern belle and she tries to accept the traditional role of a good wife who looks away from her husband's infidelities. Still, she believes in love and romance, and when they return to her life with Gatsby, she lets herself go with emotions one more time. In the end, though, she finds she is not strong enough to walk out of the life she has built with Tom. Daisy is caught between conflicting needs and ideas, and Fitzgerald portrays her as doing her best to hide her inner confusion. It is only in sudden glimpses that the reader has a chance to see beyond Daisy's surface, such as her jealousy of Tom at Gatsby's party, when her seeing him flirt with another woman brings back the pain of his recurring infidelities. (Gatsby 1925:68) Another such instant is the scene where Daisy tells Nick about the birth of her baby and wishing her daughter will grow up to be "a beautiful little fool." (Gatsby 1925:13) In the words of Sarah Beebe Fryer (1988:34), "Daisy's remarks about the child's birth are pitiful, but they are rooted in the authority of bitter experience, and they are not shallow."

The Jazz age marriage in trouble comes up in Fitzgerald's short stories in an international setting, as well. Two stories, "One Trip Abroad" and "The Rough Crossing" deal with a similar situation. In both of them a young married couple travels from the United States to Europe in search of a harmonious life. However, they grow more and more restless as they get more involved in a life of endless parties. In "One Trip Abroad" Nelson and Nicole Kelly, after inheriting some money, move to Europe with vague plans of travelling and studying arts a little. Being newlyweds, they do not feel a need to seek other people's company. They genuinely love each other but after a while living alone in a strange land they need something more. Two years spent in Monte Carlo change them into people who look down at "tourists" and marvel at their own sophistication. In the following passage Nicole is

trying persuade herself that she is happy because of all the people and material goods that surround her.

> Nicole spoke excellent French; she had five new evening dresses and four others that would do; she had her husband; she had two men in love with her, and she felt sad for one of them. She had her pretty face. At 10:30 she was meeting a third man, who was just beginning to be in love with her "in a harmless way." At one she was having a dozen charming people to luncheon. All that.
>
> "I'm happy", she brooded toward the bright blinds. "I'm young and good-looking, and my name is often in the paper as having been here and there, but really I don't care about shi-shi. I think it's all awfully silly, but if you do want to see people, you might as well see the chic, amusing ones; and if people call you a snob, it's envy, and they know it and everybody knows it." (Fitzgerald 1957:150).

Nicole tries to suppress the feeling of emptiness by listing all the good things she has in life and by trying to believe that she really is better than most people she spends time with. Fitzgerald is clearly suggesting it is difficult to keep one's inner integrity while leading a life full of parties and going out all the time. What was interesting and exciting in young flappers in the early twenties is no longer so appealing in married women almost a decade later. No doubt Zelda's experiences influenced Fitzgerald's writing at this point: just like Zelda, Nicole finds the hectic Jazz Age life unbearable in the end, and both Nicole and her husband end up at a Swiss mental clinic just like Zelda did.

"The Rough Crossing" begins in the same manner. Adrian and Eva Smith, a recently successful playwright and his wife, leave New York for France, and the story tells about their two weeks at sea. They, too, decide that being alone will be sufficient and they are not going to spend any time with the other passengers. A couple of days later they grow bored and find their way to the bar where everyone else is. Adrian is the more social of the two while Eva is not that interested in people. She becomes seasick and while she has to rest in her cabin, Adrian spends most of his time with a pretty young girl he has met on board. Left by herself, Eva thinks of the reason of their voyage: "It was in the hope that there was some secret of graceful living, some real compensation for the lost, careless confidence of twenty-one, that they were going to spend a year in France."(Fitzgerald 1951:261) But as Adrian goes everywhere with Miss D'Amido, Eva accepts the flirtatious company of a young man and, bored, begins to drink too much

Both stories end in a disaster of a kind. In "One Trip Abroad", Nelson and Nicole move to Paris intending to be serious. They want to meet people who are real European aristocrats and, doing so, they fall victims to a penniless count, who cheats them of a great deal of money. After four years of marriage they are stranded in a Swiss clinic, both trying to recapture their health by leading a quiet life. They try to think of the reason for their misfortune, and Nelson concludes: "There've been too many people in our lives. ... We were so happy the first year when there weren't any people." (Fitzgerald 1951:162) In the end they are desperate to recapture their past happiness. "We can have it all again,' she whispered. 'Can't we, Nelson?' ... 'It's just that I don't understand what's the matter,' she said. 'Why did we lose peace and love and health, one after the other? If we knew, if there was anybody to tell us, I believe we could try. I'd try so hard." (Fitzgerald 1951:164) To Fitzgerald, at least part of the answer seems to lie in the hectic life style of "The Roaring Twenties". He himself had to wonder what went wrong with him and Zelda. People who had any kind of tendency toward self-destruction had to pay a high price for the extravagance of the Jazz Age.

"The Rough Crossing" ends in a similar mood. In the climax of the story, the ship hits a storm at the same time as the relations between Eva and Adrian are at their worst. Eva threatens him with divorce, runs out of their cabin, and is almost washed overboard by a giant wave. When the boats reaches shore everyone is worn out by the experience, and even the beautiful Miss D'Amido is "pale and wan."(Fitzgerald 1957:270) Eva and Adrian decide to forget all about the voyage, and Adrian declares: "The real truth is that none of it happened. ... It was a nightmare – an incredibly awful nightmare."(Fitzgerald 1957: 270) They decide, once again, that in future they will not meet other people and be content just with each other's company. By that time, however, the reader cannot accept the promise but instead, anticipates another catastrophe just around the corner. Fitzgerald's view seems to be that even a genuine love match had difficulties in surviving through the Jazz Age. It was a "generation deciding on pleasure" (Fitzgerald 1965:11) and living on the principle of fun could not lead to anything enduring. The women in "The Rough Crossing" and "One Trip Abroad", too, are trying to make most of the

world that is open to them, but find it difficult to combine endless parties with a working marriage.

The ending brings to mind the disastrous ending of the twenties when some people, after the Crash, began to look at their recent past unwilling to believe that it had really happened. The story can, then, be read also to represent the boom years. Way has, in fact, the noted that the passengers on board are like the microcosm of Jazz Age America. (1980:88) During the twenties, thousands of Americans traveled to Europe, especially to France, looking for a more exciting life. (Rochester 1977:119) The Fitzgeralds, in fact, moved several times between France and the United States in the late twenties and early thirties, each time wishing for the surroundings to bring them a more peaceful life. It is this search for harmony that motivates his fictional couples to search for a better life always in a new place.

It is worth noting that in these portrayals of marriages ending in disaster the husband and wife both contribute to their mutual ruin. The women are not described as victims, as they make their own mistakes. A good example is *The Beautiful and Damned* in which Gloria's dreams of pursuing an acting career are suppressed by her own lack of initiative rather than Anthony's opinions, just like his inability to earn a living is the result of his own inefficiency. However, the lack of support for each other in difficult times is what eventually destroys their chances for happiness. Later in *Tender is the Night* Fitzgerald goes even further in examining how two people who love each other and do their best to make things work can still end up with an unhappy marriage. Women in his fiction are never really the destructive forces behind their husbands, either. Rather Fitzgerald portrays individuals who are sometimes weak and who do not always see the right way of action. Fitzgerald's stories about marriages in trouble reflect the problems in his personal life, as well. He later talked about his and Zelda's mutual disaster saying that he did not think either of them was to blame as they went towards their destruction together.

> Perhaps 50 % of our friends and relatives will tell you in all honesty that my drinking drove Zelda insane - the other half would assure you that her insanity drove me to drink. Liquor on my mouth is sweet to her; I cherish her most extravagant hallucinations. (as quoted in Meyers 1994 210).

Tender is the Night portrays an unusual kind of a marriage in which the husband and wife are also a doctor and his patient. The other complication in the relationship is that Dick Diver is self-made man, a psychiatrist from a modest background, whereas Nicole Warren is an heiress to a huge fortune. As in so many other Fitzgerald's stories, finding a compromise between love and money is a problem for Dick and Nicole, too. Theirs is a love match and in the early days of their life together other people almost perceive them as just one person, an image they like to intensify by signing letters with a joint name, "Dicole" (Tender 1934:116). However, their backgrounds are so different that their marriage inevitably runs into trouble. Their life among dissipated American expatriates puts an extra stain on their marriage, too. More than any of Fitzgerald's novels, *Tender is the Night* portrays Jazz Age at its worst, with parties ending in violence, ugliness underneath pretty surfaces, and a sense of disaster hanging on all the characters. Nicole and Dick construct a seemingly harmonious life, hiding the fact she was a patient in a mental institution suffering from an illness brought about by incest and he was originally one of the doctors treating her. When Rosemary meets them for the first time, they seem to be a perfect couple, and she both falls in love with him and admires the life they lead together.

> Even in their absolute immobility, complete as that of the morning, she felt a purpose, a working over something, a direction, an act of creation different from any she had known. Her immature mind made no speculations upon their nature of their relation to each other ... but she perceived the web of some pleasant inter-relation, which she expressed with the thought that they seemed to have a very good time. (Tender: 27)

Rosemary is both too young and not interested enough to wonder about the reality of the Diver's relationship, and the reader, seeing them through Rosemary's eyes, is, at first, only allowed to see the exterior calm and balance. However, Fitzgerald hints early on that something is hidden underneath:

> [Rosemary's] naiveté responded whole-heartedly to the expensive simplicity of the Diver, unaware of its complexity and its lack of innocence, unaware that it was all a selection of quality rather than quantity from the run of the world's bazaar... At that moment the Divers represented externally the exact furthermost evolution of a class, so that most people seemed awkward beside them... (Tender: 30)

Later in the novel it becomes more and more apparent that Dick and Nicole's harmonious life is, to a great extent, just a façade, and keeping up the appearance of calmness and happiness is equally important to both of them. This becomes obvious when they go out at night even if neither of them really wants to. "It was a tradition between them that they should never be too tired for anything, and they found it made days better on the whole and put the evenings more in order." (Tender 1934:108)

In the end of the novel, when Nicole is getting healthier, she begins to feel the calmness stifling her and she begins to yearn for a way out, living as her own person instead of remaining what she feels is Dick's shadow. In a sense, after years of marriage and illness she is finally finding her own self in a way she should have done, had she been able to grow up as most girls.

> Nicole relaxed and felt new and happy; her thoughts were clear as good bells – she had a sense of being cured and in a new way. Her ego began blooming like a great rich rose as she scrambled back along the labyrinths in which she had wandered for years. She hated the beach, resented the places where she had played planet to Dick's sun. (Tender 1934:310)

Nicole had been dependent first on her father, who had caused her illness, and then on Dick, who had cured her. She had vague ambitions of making a career but because of her family fortune she does not need to work. When she gets married, finding work is not necessary, not forbidden but not encouraged, either. However, a sense of frustration of never being on her own, gradually comes out in her letters: "I am tired of knowing nothing and being reminded of it all the time" (Tender 1934:178). Nicole begins to yearn for something more permanent than traveling around with Dick, to be able to live more actively as her own person:

> I would study medicine except it's too late. We must spend my money and have a house - I'm tired of apartments... And I'll look over a whole field of knowledge and pick out something and really know about it, so I'll have it to hang on to if I got to pieces again. (Tender: 178)

In Nicole, Fitzgerald portrays a girl who did not get a chance to grow up as others around her did. She moves straight from adolescence, when her father takes care of her, into a hospital. She marries Dick right after being released

from the institution, and it is now her doctor-husband's turn to take care of her. Because of her illness she merely moves from one state of dependency to another. Even though she has a vast personal fortune, the financial matters are decided for her, too, since it is her sister who takes care of money in the family. Through these layers of people and circumstances making decisions for her, she begins to feel suffocated and wants to make a new life all on her own. However, even when she finally decides to leave Dick she does it only after beginning a relationship with another man, one who is completely different from her husband. In the end she moves on to her new life and in a sense she moves back in time, too. During her years of marriage her character as the heiress of the Warren fortune had been hidden, and Nicole seems at first completely different from her sister, who is very unsentimental. When Nicole is older, her Warren self emerges again, and she becomes harder, more selfish and more determined to get what she wants. This can be seen in the way she deals with her divorce. There is no great passion involved when she explains to Dick. "I've gotten very fond of Tommy... You don't care for me any more... It's all just a habit. Things were never the same again after Rosemary." (Tender 1934:331) The next day, she can already give the sum total of her marriage when she tells her sister: "Dick was a good husband to me for six years... All that time I never suffered a minute's pain for him, and he always did his best never to let anything hurt me." (Tender 1934: 335) Nicole thus briefs her marriage into what it gave her and does not even mention their children or what the six years of their life together did to Dick.

Another type of marriage in some of Fitzgerald's short stories is the show business marriage, in which the partners' careers are almost inseparable from their relationship with each other. One of the first is "Two Wrongs", a story about a theatre producer, Bill McChesney, and an aspiring dancer, Emmy Pinkard.. They genuinely love each other but nevertheless, their marriage is far from harmonious. In the end of the story Emmy begins to dance again seriously because "she wanted to use herself on something she could believe in..."(Fitzgerald 1951:299). It is noticeable that in this story, Emmy is the stronger of the two, and Bill acknowledges that "he had come to lean ...on Emmy's fine health and vitality"(Fitzgerald 1951:300). Emmy's work is, in a way, a counter-reaction against the disappointment in her marriage.

> Once she had worked just as hard and for as long a time on something else – her relations with Bill – only to reach a climax and misery and despair, but here there was nothing to fail her except herself. (Fitzgerald 1951:300).

Emmy has learned the lesson that she really only has herself to count on, and in the end she stays in New York to pursue her career while Bill realizes that letting her do so is the only hope he has of winning her love back. Emmy is, in fact, one of the first working female characters in Fitzgerald's fiction, and a positive example of a woman who finds the strength she needs in herself and her work. Fitzgerald undoubtedly also incorporated some of the admiration he felt for Zelda's dancing and her hard work, too, into the story.

A show business marriage of a completely different kind is portrayed in "Crazy Sunday". Miles Calman is one of the most respected directors in Hollywood and his wife, Stella Walker is a famous actress. She is extremely beautiful, and the narrator of the story, Joel, is surprised at her kindness. Almost by accident Joel becomes Stella's confidante: she has just found out about Miles's affair with her best friend while she, Stella, had "under considerable difficulties ... always been faithful to him."(Fitzgerald 1994 :138) But while she is pouring her heart out to Joel he cannot discard the idea that he is watching a performance. "Joel did not quite believe in picture actresses' grief. They have other preoccupations – they are beautiful rose-gold figures blown full of life by writers and directors..."(Fitzgerald 1994:138). Stella seems to him somehow invented: "She hovered somewhere between the realest of realities and the most blatant of impersonations" (Fitzgerald 1994:138). Joel and Stella become friends, he grows to love her, and Miles, seeing this, becomes jealous of their closeness. In the end the news of Miles' death reaches them when they are spending an evening together, and Joel is shocked to realize that Stella is begging him to stay with her that night.

> In her dark groping Stella was trying to keep Miles alive by sustaining a situation in which he had figured – as if Miles's mind could not die as long a the possibilities that had worried him still existed. It was a distraught and tortured effort to stave off the realization that he was dead." (Fitzgerald 1994:145)

As he watches Stella play the part Miles had arranged for her, Joel understands that their marriage had been one of a creator and a creation:

"Everything he touched did something magical to... He even brought that little gamin alive and made her a sort of master-piece."(Fitzgerald 1994:146) Their relationship had been so deeply affected by their careers that, in the end, we have no knowledge of her character without the influence of Miles. As Way (1980:94) describes it, "their marriage is a re-enactment of the Pygmalion myth." Stella had accepted the role of being Miles' "masterpiece" and while doing so, her own personality had been lost or forgotten. Fitzgerald's attitude is clear: he can show certain admiration for a man who can make an artistic creation of a woman, but he still finds it hard to approve of. It is possible to see why Stella, feeling the need for direction in her life, would agree to become someone else's, especially a talented man's, creation, leaving the responsibility of making all the decisions to someone stronger. However, Fitzgerald portrays a relationship like theirs as something unnatural and false, an arrangement that eventually makes both partners unhappy. To him, there seems to be nothing admirable in a woman who turns to her husband to find out her own opinions, nor in a man who wants a mere doll for his wife. All through his career, beginning from his first flappers, Fitzgerald was consistent in his view of women, never just placing a beautiful doll on a pedestal but instead, preferring women with their own minds and personalities. It is true that especially in his early stories, the heroines' preoccupations often consisted of being pretty and in love, but as has been noted before, he grew to believe that no woman should be brought up to just do nothing. His early heroines are often girls with wild characters and strong mind, who do what they want, and in Fitzgerald's later years, he turned more and more to problems in marriage and work.

Another Hollywood marriage, between an actor and an actress, is portrayed in the short story "Magnetism". George Hannaford and Kay Tompkins are so much of their profession that they are not quite sure when they stop acting (Fitzgerald 1951:224). George is attracted to another woman, a young actress, but has to admit to himself that his flirtation with her was merely acting, almost something that was expected of him. He then sees Kay in a romantic pose with another man, and with an actor's instinct, goes back and makes a noisy entrance as if to give them their cue to let go.

> But Kay and Arthur Busch were still standing close together, and it was lingeringly and with abstracted eyes that they turned around finally and saw him. Then both of them seemed to make an effort; they drew apart as if it was a physical ordeal." (magnetism:228)

The passage suggests a typical scene in romantic films and Kay, being an actress, knows how to excite jealousy in her husband. She tells him, with tears in her eyes, that their love is gone and that she does not really know what her feelings are. The whole scene is revealed to have been just that, a scene, in the end when George confronts her about it:

> She looked up almost in surprise. "In love with him? Oh, you mean this morning. I was just mad at you; you ought to have known that. I was a little sorry for him last night, but I guess it was the highballs."(Fitzgerald 1951:238)

Even though in the end peace is restored between them, the reader can only imagine their marriage to proceed in acts. The story can also be read as a comment to the falseness of Hollywood and the insincerity of actors. But however difficult the situation, the marriage between two professionals, equal in their work, still promises more happiness and success than a companionship between a caretaker and a dependent. This short story, although not one of Fitzgerald's most famous ones, is a good example of how he moved more and more to write about people and work, both men and women, in his later years.

As has been said earlier, Fitzgerald's writing about marriages changed significantly all through his career. He began with examining the effects of the twenties life style in *The Beautiful and Damned*, and moved to more complex relationships, including problems with infidelity, financial problems, different personalities and backgrounds, and work. It should be noted that, in spite of his quite conservative views in his youth, he never took part in the trend that "made the housewife - mother the model for all women..." (Leich 1988: 308). Instead, he attempted to portray different reasons for problems in every day life. Relationships in his stories are never easy, and his own difficulties in his marriage are certainly present in his stories. Still, reading his marriage stories as mere reflections of his life with Zelda would be far too simple.

5.3. Motherhood

One striking aspect of Fitzgerald's married women is their rather distant relationship with their children. This is apparent in *This Side of Paradise* in which Amory and Beatrice can hardly be said to represent a typical mother and son. First instance, he always calls her by her first name instead of 'mother' and their conversation seems at times incredible. When Amory comes back from school, her mother asks him: "Did you have two *horrible* years?" and he answers: "No, Beatrice. I enjoyed them. I adapted myself to the bourgeoisie." (Paradise 1920:23, emphasis in the original). The character of Beatrice is a kind of mother Fitzgerald as a young boy might have wanted: cosmopolitan, intellectual and eccentric in a charming way.

On the other hand, Rosalind's relationship with her mother seems much more credible, as it was probably based on Fitzgerald's experiences with Ginevra King's and Zelda's families, rather than the kind of fantasy figure that Beatrice is. Rosalind's mother is a good example of a woman who received a Victorian upbringing and who is confused at seeing her daughter act so differently from what she had been used to in her youth. She grew up in a world in which love was not a good enough reason to marry, and she can only advice her daughter to choose a man who will bring her security. Gloria's mother in *The Beautiful and Damned* is a similar character, a woman who sincerely wants the best for her daughter, but finds it difficult to talk to her. At one point she tells Anthony about her daughter's string of engagements, making men desperately in love with her, but, all of a sudden, not going to parties anymore (Beautiful 1922:79, 81). She is confused at her daughter's behavior, not understanding why she does not just marry and settle down. Nicole's mother in *Tender is the Night* is already dead when the novel opens, and she is mentioned only in Nicole's childhood memories. She, too, had been a Victorian mother, but harder and more demanding than Gloria's or Rosalind's. Nicole tells Rosemary about an incident when her sister, Baby, had just come out in society. Baby has been brought up to marry a rich young man,

and one evening, just before a court ball, she gets a severe stomachache. Her mother forces her to go out with an ice pack strapped on underneath her dress, and she is taken to see a doctor straight from the dance, diagnosed with appendicitis, and operated on the first thing in the morning. (Tender 1934:66) Nicole and Baby's mother does have a strong will and she does anything for her children - only to her, material security and social success are more important than their health. In the end, Baby grows up to be a very different kind of woman than her mother apparently wanted her to be. She becomes a strong businesswoman, handling her and Nicole's finances, and instead of marrying she stays alone, not having real love affairs and, at the end of the novel, not seriously even considering marriage anymore.

In *The Beautiful and Damned* Gloria and Anthony never seriously even discuss the possibility of having children but it is implicit that Gloria's dread of responsibility stretches on to babies, as well. To her, childbearing is something that only lower class unattractive women should engage in, and when she thinks she might be pregnant, she is horrified at the idea of losing her figure, and cries: "It *is* an indignity for *me*" (Beautiful 1922: 203 - 204, emphasis original).

In most of Fitzgerald's writings the heroines, as was the habit of upper-class women at the time, leave their children in the hands of nannies. In *The Great Gatsby* Daisy's only contact with her daughter seems to be the times when she has a chance to show off her pretty little girl. Daisy's wish about her child growing up to be a beautiful little fool has been often cited in various contexts and discussed earlier in this study as well, showing her frustration at growing up in a stiflingly traditional atmosphere. In several short stories, as well, women in Fitzgerald's fiction seem to show little affection for their children. In "A Rough Crossing" Eva's children are mentioned only once, and when she tells Adrian she wants to go see them, it is an excuse to get out of her cabin. In "One Trip Abroad" Nicole's baby is the center of her life for three weeks, no more. Right after giving birth she is already planning going to a ball against the doctor's specific orders. When Nicole and Nelson are being treated at a Swiss clinic, part of their daily routine is going to see the child being bathed. As was said earlier, leaving children in the care of nannies was normal at the time, especially in the upper social classes, so spending only a

little time with their children did not signify a lack of affection in mothers. On the other hand, it must be acknowledged that many of Fitzgerald's heroines show little interest in having children or starting families. Fitzgerald, of course, often described women striving for at least a degree of independence, and a strong urge for being a mother would have been a contradiction in their characters. The heroines in his flapper stories, for instance, may marry for financial reasons, but rather to be able to lead the kind of lives they want, rather than supporting lots of children.

In *Tender is the Night* Nicole's relationship with their children seems to be more distant than Dick's. Her medical history may account for this, in that she had been taken care of all her life, and in addition, her own mother had died when she still a young girl. However, when compared to other mothers in Fitzgerald's fiction, Nicole's lack of interest in her children does not stand out as exception, quite the contrary. There is good reason to wonder about Fitzgerald's view on motherhood, whether it stemmed from his own childhood or if it reflected a more general attitude he saw around him. After all, although hiring nannies was the norm at the time, it is possible to read another comment on the Jazz age as well in these stories. The hedonistic and partying life style that so many people around him engaged in did not make them very family- or child-centered. Still, this is not a sufficient explanation for the distant mother images in his novels. It is all the more curious as his work includes several sweet father – daughter scenes, such as Dick and Lanier in *Tender is the Night* and Charlie with Honoria in "Babylon Revisited". When Zelda was healthy her relationship with Scottie was not unusually distant. When she became mentally ill she was not, naturally, able to be with her very much, and it is very possible that this distance between them affected Fitzgerald's work as well.

Tender is the Night, however, portrays one very close mother-daughter - relationship: Rosemary and her mother, Elsie. The fact that Rosemary gets her biggest support in making her career as an actress from her mother, Elsie encouraging her daughter to work and live independently, sets them apart from most others and daughters at the time. In fact, Elsie Speers is one of the most positive character in Fitzgerald's fiction, and one that has unfortunately been overlooked by most critics. She is a somewhat idealized image of a woman

who sincerely loves her daughter while encouraging her to form her own opinions and ideas. It is significant that around the time when Fitzgerald began to resent women who raised their daughters to be idle, he also wrote into his novel a woman who brings up her daughter to "work, and not marry" (Tender 1934:50). Fitzgerald describes their relationship in the beginning of the novel:

> Her mother was her best friend and had put every last possibility into the guiding of her, not so rare a thing in the theatrical profession, but rather special in that Mrs. Elsie Speers was not recompensating herself for a defeat of her own. She had no personal bitterness or resentments about life... By not sparing Rosermary she had made her hard - by not sparing her own labor and devotion she had cultivated an idealism in Rosemary, which at present was directed toward herself... However, with Rosemary's sudden success ... [she] felt it was time she spiritually weaned; it would please her rather than pain her if this ... idealism would focus on something except herself. (Tender 1934: 21)

Elsie wants her daughter to experience things, be independent of everyone, including herself, and to be economically on her own. Fitzgerald portrays a woman who has seen and understands life, as well as people, better than any other character in the novel. She is not concerned with old moral values, and shows no outrage when she realizes Rosemary is seriously looking to have a love affair with Dick, a married man. She prefers her not to waste her emotions on just anyone, and without a word, Rosemary understands this from her, too. "...when she had seen approval of Dick Diver in her mother's face it meant that he was ' the real thing'; it meant the permission to go as far as she could." (Tender 1934: 40) Fitzgerald is certainly portraying an ideal parent in the character of Elsie Speers, expressed not in Rosemary's admiration of her mother, but with Dick's words: "She has a sort of wisdom that's rare in America" (Tender 1934:47). Instead of trying to control Rosemary she makes her go and do things on her own because it is good for her, which leads them to have a close relationship.

5.4. Infidelity

In the early part of his career Fitzgerald was still so modest that he rarely portrayed promiscuous women sympathetically. His early heroines may act

liberal, their conversation is quite open on the subject of sex, but they are not really sexual creatures. This is hardly surprising, considering that the United States was only emerging from the world of Victorian values. Fitzgerald's early heroines, as has been discussed earlier, have no moral problems with kissing but having a real sexual relationship appears unthinkable. In *This Side of Paradise* the only sexually active women come from the lower classes. In the end of the novel Amory assumes the blame for a friend of his, Alec, who has spent a night with a girl in a hotel. Under the law of the time an unmarried couple sharing a hotel room risked being arrested. Amory takes the responsibility because having his name in a paper would not cause a scandal for him, as he has no family. When he leaves the hotel with the girl in question he wonders vaguely what Alec had seen in her. The girl appears to be rather simple and silly, and Amory thinks that he, at least, would not want to sleep with her. (Paradise 1920:279) The prospect of a casual affair seems to have no appeal to him. As has been often noted before, for a writer who caused so much alarm because of his portrayals of the sexual behavior of the young in his days, Fitzgerald was incredibly chaste. As the twenties went on, a new openness emerged in literature, as well. Themes that were unthinkable subject matter in novels in the beginning of the decade became normal by the early 1930s, and infidelity was one of them. Even so, Fitzgerald never wrote very openly about sex and love scenes are always merely alluded to.

The same discreet line continues in *The Beautiful and Damned.* At the beginning of the novel Anthony has a casual relationship with a girl who thinks kissing is all right but does not want to go any further. The heroine, Gloria, is considered wild and she has earned the nickname "Coast-to-Coast Gloria" implying the number of love affairs and broken hearts all around the country (Beautiful 1922:60). However, Gloria, turns out to be the faithful type. She muses that all those kisses and love affairs in the past have left no taint of promiscuity in her (Beautiful 1922:181-182). Later the statement proves to be true when she lives alone in New York while Anthony is in the army. She comes in contact with Rachael, an old friend – a woman who had made Gloria angry by flirting too openly with Anthony – and as both their husbands are away because of the war, they go out together with a couple of lieutenants on leave. Rachael quite openly intends to spend the night with 'her' lieutenant

and expects Gloria to do likewise. Gloria is slow to realize what is going on, as the idea of cheating on her husband is so strange to her.

> "It's late, Gloria, said Rachael - she was flushed and her hair was dishevelled. "You'd better stay here all night."
>
> For an instant Gloria thought the officers were being dismissed. Then she understood, and, understanding, got to her feet as casually as she was able. ... But the lure or promiscuity, colorful, various, labyrinthine, and even a little odorous and stale, had not call of promise for Gloria." (Beautiful 1922: 367-368)

It is also possible to read some of Fitzerald's racial prejudices into this scene. As Stavola has pointed out, the novel "is amply laced with nasty remarks about the lower classes, Jews, Italians, Negroes..." (1979:121) Rachael, the only promiscuous woman in the novel is also the only Jewish woman. As opposed to Rachael's affair, which is portrayed as something tacky and distasteful, Gloria is just coolly walks out of the room. She tells herself that had she wanted to stay, she would have had no moral problems at all (Beautiful 1922: 368). However, even when Gloria meets an old flame and leads him to fall in love again – more to flatter her own self-esteem than because she might care for him – she only lets him kiss her once, out of pity (Beautiful 1922: 369). In 1922 Fitzgerald was ready to write about infidelity and characters thinking about the possibility, but his heroine is still morally flawless. In the novel Anthony, in fact, has a short-lived and sordid affair with a lower-class girl, but it is merely another sign of his deterioration.

In *The Great Gatsby*, a real change has taken place. Both Tom and Daisy have affairs, and to Daisy her disappointment in Tom and her old love for Gatsby justify hers. She is living by the rule of twenties youth, that love makes sex right and that love is really all that matters. In her affair there is also a sense of getting back at Tom. In the early days of her marriage she was, according to Jordan, mad about Tom, but she is soon disappointed when she discovers Tom's infidelity. By the time Nick meets her again she has very few illusions left. In Gatsby's party Tom tells her he will dine with some "other people" Daisy offers him her golden pen to take down any addresses, implying that she assumes him to be taking some girl's phone number. As Tom walks out of earshot Daisy looks around and announces others that "the girl is common but pretty" (Gatsby 1925:68). Although they are attending a party arranged by Daisy's lover, she is nevertheless openly jealous of her husband,

even if she disguises it as joke. When she hears Tom talking about a car deal on the phone she cynically assumes he is somehow arranging to meet his mistress. Even though Nick assures her that Tom's story is true – knowing perfectly well about Tom's affair – she guesses what is going on. When Tom walks out of the room, having finished his talk on the phone, Daisy walks over to Gatsby and kisses him in front of Nick and Jordan in a defiant gesture (Gatsby 1925:74). A number of short scenes manifest her jealousy of Tom and wanting to get even with him. Even though Daisy pretends and tries to relive the romance of her youth with Gatsby, finding justification for it in the fact that she is in love with him, getting her revenge on Tom for the past humiliations is an underlying reason for her pursuing the love affair with Gatsby. Jordan, the one who first tells Nick about Tom's mistress, expresses the essence of the matter when she comments that Daisy needs to have something in her life. One critic (Lehan 1966: 112) has commented about how unbelievable it is that a woman in Daisy's position would be attracted to a man as vulgar as Gatsby. He, too, has overlooked Daisy's earlier disappointments, and when an opportunity arises to feel loved and adored again, she takes a chance without any moral dilemmas, even if her courage fails when she should leave her husband.

Writing so openly about infidelity in *The Great Gatsby*, Fitzgerald was quite clearly influenced by his own life. At the time that Fitzgerald was finishing the novel, he found out about Zelda's affair, and they came close to a divorce (Bruccoli 981: 199). This was a huge shock to him, and obviously broke some illusions about love and marriage for him. However, it is quite remarkable that despite these problems, Fitzgerald was able to write about Daisy's attitude to infidelity. Still, the fact that Daisy's affair springs out of her first love and the desire to get even, shows that he was definitely not able to take adultery lightly.

Garrett (1985:104 in New Essays) has commented on the rarity of writing about infidelity in the twenties and especially the fact that it goes unpunished in the novel. This fact can perhaps account for the reception the novel got when it was published: its plot was considered scandalous as it dealt with issues such as infidelity, alcoholism, and greed. A Hollywood screen writing experience of Fitzgerald is a good example of the atmosphere of the era before

the Second World War. He was hired to write a script called "Infidelity". The work involved portraying the star, Joan Crawford, as an adulteress and a sympathetic woman, but that turned out to be impossible. The censors demanded change after change and when in became apparent that the leading lady would not be allowed to have an extramarital affair on screen without being punished for it, the whole project was dropped. In the end the film was never made, even though the title was changed into "Fidelity". (Meyers 1994: 296)

When Fitzgerald wrote *Tender is the Night* an even further change was apparent. Nicole goes about having her affair at the end of novel without any illusions about a love greater than life. "Nicole did not want any vague spiritual romance – she wanted an 'affair', she wanted a change." (Tender 1934:313). Even if she does not know the facts, she guesses the truth about Dick and Rosemary, and in part her involvement with Tommy Barban seems conciliatory. Nicole knows that Tommy is in love with her and she uses him, quite deliberately, to feel young and beautiful, to experience something exciting and different. "All summer she had been stimulated by watching people do exactly what they were tempted to do and pay no penalty for it..." (Tender 1934:313). The affair also helps her to move out of Dick's sphere of influence, which she has grown to resent, and to become her own person. As Fryer (1988:69) comments: " Eventually, wishing to be a New Woman in any way possible, she seeks to relieve her restlessness and dissatisfaction through romance, on of the few options traditionally available to women."

In fact, Nicole's attitude reflects the words of a woman Fitzgerald write about in his essay, "Echoes of the jazz age". A young married woman asked Zelda for advice on "having an affair the right away ... because don't you think it's sort of undignified when you get much over thirty?" (Fitzgerald 1965: 15). Fitzgerald gives this conversation as a good example of the general obsession about sex that became prevalent in the twenties. Allen, too, remarks on the increasing talk about sex at the time:

> ...intellectuals... believed in a greater degree of sex freedom that had been permitted by the strict American code; and as for discussion of sex, not only did they believe it should be free, but some of them appeared to believe that is should be continuous (Allen 1931: 194).

Brian Way (1980:140) notes in his book that "the trivialization of sex becomes a key element in [Fitzgerald's] understanding of the cultural decadence to which his characters are exposed, and of which they are a part." Fitzgerald was certainly not a defender of the double standard but in his characters do not find happiness in illicit affairs, either. Nicole's affair with Tommy is not really the perfect solution as it is a mere manifestation of her moving away from Dick. Fitzgerald openly criticized the hedonism of the Jazz Age, and for example in "Babylon revisited" as well as other stories, it is precisely the casual affairs that bring about the characters' downfall. This can be seen as a sign that he did not even try to hide the "puritan in him" even though his fiction shows him as a writer who tries to understand the reasons why people make mistakes.

6. SOCIAL CLASS

6.1. Aristocracy and America

Fitzgerald's attitude toward the rich and his idealization of aristocracy has been a subject of a number of studies. The myth of Scott Fitzgerald being a man whose main preoccupation with life was money and clinging to people who had it, was so pervasive that it led to some incredible theories about his fiction, as this example shows:

> ...this attitude of mind ... led over and over again to a reduction of narrative complexity, a simplistic formula that turned drama almost into melodramatic polarities. His own experiences had in a way led to this simplistic reduction. (Lehan 1966:170)

The only "simplistic reduction" is, of course, the assumption that Fitzgerald idolized money just because a great deal of his fiction deals with the upper classes, and that the surroundings in which he lived in some way made him a bad writer. It is true that Fitzgerald's heroines often are wealthy, and he certainly studied the faces of the American upper classes in his stories. In his early fiction he returned to the clash between love and money in a number of stories, but it should be noted that his heroines - as well as heroes - showed

much more variety as his career progressed. Rosalind in *This Side of Paradise* is in part so attractive to Amory precisely because her upper class background, and Gatsby, of course, sees a princess in Daisy and hears the money in her voice. In *Tender is the Night* on the other hand, Nicole is attractive in spite of, rather than because of, her wealth, and her sister Baby is hard and devoid of feeling because of it.

Critics have charged F. Scott Fitzgerald both of being an uncritical admirer of the wealthy classes as well as being overcritical of the ruthlessness of the very rich. The truth can probably be found somewhere between the two. It is true that the majority of his writing centers around wealthy classes, his heroines are usually rich, and at least his early fiction show lower class women as less intelligent and attractive than upper class girls. According to his own words, Scott had an ambivalent attitude to the rich and he said that all his life he had to relive the experience of being "a poor boy in rich boy's school" (Bruccoli 1981: 232). He was somewhat fascinated by wealth, not as an end in itself, but as a means for a better, heightened life, and in his early stories rich girls are symbols of a better life. He aspired to a kind of American aristocracy that seemed to him an impossible ideal. He felt that Americans simply did not have the kind of tradition or state of mind to create a proper aristocracy. While he intensely admired those who used their money to create harmonious and beautiful lives for themselves, he disliked even more strongly people who abused and dissipated their wealth. "It is not so much what the rich do as what they don't do that becomes more and more deplorable each year." (Jimmies 1971:190). In a 1924 essay he writes about the difference between American and British leisure class: "[American upper class] has frequently no consciousness that leisure is a privilege, not a right, and that a privilege always implies a responsibility (Jimmies 1971:188). His opinion was that Americans could only hollowly imitate European aristocracy and that as a class the American rich were a failure (see also Way 1980: 36). He bursts out his anger at the leisure class of his country:

> All that leisure - for nothing! All that wealth - it has begotten waste and destruction and dissipation and snobbery - nothing more. Three generations of chorus girls and racetrack touts and one generation of bootleggers have profited from it - that is all. (Jimmies 1971:192)

As for women of the upper classes, in spite of his many rich heroines, he has no more flattering words to say:

> The boy watches his mother's almost insane striving toward a social position commensurate with her money. He sees her change her accent, her clothes, her friends, her very soul, as she pushes her way up in life, pulling her busy husband with her. (Jimmies 1971: 191)

It could be argued that the only wealthy people that captivated his imaginations were those who used their money to make something, even if it was just to create the perfect surroundings for themselves, such as the real live models of the Divers did on the Riviera. As for people who were busy climbing the social ladder, the snobs who merely copied the European aristocracy's manners, Fitzgerald's attitude was a mix of anger and ridicule. In the end of *Tender is the Night* Fitzgerald pokes fun at the idea of Americans having aristocratic titles. When Dick has to help a friend out of trouble in France, he invents an impressive background for her and alludes to American companies as if they were royal thrones: "She is the grand-daughter ... of John D. Rockefeller Melon ... In addition she is the niece of Lord Henry Ford and so connected with the Renault and Citroën companies..." (Tender 1934:327) Fitzgerald shows no admiration for a class that worshipped money and business, even though he admitted to a certain amount of fascination for the members of the leisure classes.

In a number of Fitzgerald's stories money is the obstacle that comes between the girl and the boy in love. The theme is repeated in "Winter Dreams" in which Dexter has to earn a fortune before he can even think of approaching Judy Jones. In "The Sensible Thing" the hero is turned down and has to leave the country because he is not yet wealthy enough to support a wife. In *This Side of Paradise* Rosalind leaves Amory and marries a richer man. When he later hears of her getting married to a rich young man, he feels that the Rosalind he loved is now dead. When Amory thinks of Rosalind married, he sees her as "...older, harder- [a] beaten, broken woman..." (Paradise 1920:272) It is the indirect effect of money that brings about the change and consequently, makes Rosalind less loveable. Being wealthy is a part of the appeal of flappers as it makes their careless lifestyle and attitude

possible. However, when faced with the economic realities of life, they seem to lose some of their attractiveness, at least to young Fitzgerald.

However, Fitzgerald's wealthy heroines differ from the typical literary image of earlier rich women in that they are attractive and sexually desirable. In most stories before Fitzgerald's time the girl who excited true love was the poor one, and the rich girls were unappealing and only sought after because of their money (Way 1980). Judy Jones in "Winter Dreams", for example, excites love in men, not for her wealth, but because of her beauty and personality, as do almost all of Fitzgerald's flapper heroines. In *Tender is the night* Nicole's attraction is not based on her wealth, and only Baby Warren represents a more traditional type in that the men in her life are much more interested in her inheritance than her personality.

Money is certainly an underlying force in many of Fitzgerald's heroines' lives, in making their decisions and in the way it shapes their characters. Being a social observer, and having experienced the importance of social class in his youth, Fitzgerald could not ignore the effect of wealth on people. Gloria and Anthony, for instance, base their whole life on the expectation of an inheritance, and this leads to their inability to live in the present. Much has been written about the influence of money on Daisy, and how she symbolizes both its attraction and the corruption it brings. Way describes her appeal: "Daisy's charm involves a subtle fusion of two powerful sources of attraction, sex and money: one might say that, in her, money becomes sexually desirable." (Way 1980:101). Daisy's character has been discussed in earlier chapters, but the theme of money cannot be ignored, either. Her belonging to the leisure class makes her the kind of person who can just drive away from the scene of an accident and later pretend nothing has happened. Fitzgerald seems to be suggesting that it is precisely the social class that makes people act so selfishly.

Money as a destructive force is, then, a definite theme in Fitzgerald 's fiction. As was noted above, Amory thinks that Rosalind will change for the worse when she gets in touch with the material world. Judy, even though she can excite love, cannot completely love anyone herself, and Fitzgerald implies that her rich girl's upbringing has spoiled her character at a young age. In *The Beautiful and Damned* Gloria and Anthony are ruined in part because they

regard living without money as impossible and disgusting. The themes of love and money are brought together the most fully in *The Great Gatsby*. A part of Daisy's appeal is the fact that she has wealth and "the first 'nice girl' he had ever known" (Gatsby 1925:94). He points out her main attraction by commenting: "Her voice is full of money." (Gatsby 1925:76) Daisy is attractive but she seems, anyhow, a shallow individual who has not used her money for anything substantial. Lewis (1985:44-45) has proposed a valid analysis about the character of Daisy in relation to money. As the reader sees her through Nick and Gatsby, we can admire her, like Gatsby does, but we also see her more clearly without the glamour of wealth around her. In other words, the reader is able to share Gatsby's attraction to Daisy and her money as well as Nick's resentment. In the end money is also what makes her a destructive force and what eventually brings ruin to Gatsby. Fussell (1952:148) has pointed out that in a way Daisy is a traditional image of "la belle dame sans merci". Daisy, however, has been a victim of her own class because she was brought up to be "a beautiful little fool". Even though at least a part of her resents her social class and its life style, she is so used to the way things are, that she does not want or does not know how the change things.

In *Tender is the Night*, Nicole is another victim of the leisure class, quite literally, as she is raped by her father, a degenerate American businessman who tried to hide his guilt. However, as she begins to recover after an illness brought about by the incest, she accepts the money she has inherited and spends it without thinking too much about it. Her attitude is reflected in her shopping habits: "Nicole bought from a great list that ran two pages, and bought the things in windows besides. Everything she liked that she couldn't possibly use herself, she bought as a present for a friend." (Tender 1934:65). Way comments on Nicole and her sister's economic independence:

> ...it is Nicole and Baby Warren who exercise and control and set the social tone. ... they have absolute control over one of the most important economic functions of their society - consumption and spending. Unlike the flapper, who is in the dependent position of a spoilt child with unlimited pocket money, they hold their wealth firmly in their own hands.(Way 1980: 129)

Her careless spending is further emphasized when it is compared with Rosemary, who has trouble knowing what to buy with her recently earned

money. However, precisely because of her wealth Nicole can afford to be indifferent with money as it enables her to spend as well as to give freely. As Fryer points out: "Critics who berate Nicole on the basis of her materialism fail to note how easily she parts with her possessions" (Fryer 1988:65). In the beginning of a novel, Rosemary watches Nicole

> pressing upon her mother a yellow evening bag she had admired, saying, 'I think things ought to belong to the people that like them' - and then sweeping into it all the yellow articles she could find, a pencil, a lipstick, a little notebook, 'because they all go together. (Tender 1934: 44)

It is only towards the end of the novel that the image of Nicole as a rich woman is introduced explicitly. She thinks about the founder of their family wealth, her grandfather the horse-trader, and at one point she comments: "And being well perhaps I've gone back to my true self – I suppose my grandfather was a crook and I'm a crook by heritage, so there we are." (Tender 1934:314). Nicole finds herself wanting to act more selfishly and she associates this attitude with the family money. One critic concludes: " Beautiful but insane, she is the representative of modern America. ... Nicole's madness is a symptom of the disintegration of American society." (Cross 1964:85). Even though Nicole is much more than a poor little rich girl and not just a symbol of a social group, her background is, nevertheless, what largely makes her personality what it is, and through her, Fitzgerald comments on how money can affect people in different ways. With Nicole, money indirectly causes her illness as well as helps her treatment at an expensive clinic, it is involved in every major decision she makes, it plays an important part in her marriage, and finally it gives her security and self-confidence she has in the end.

Later in his career Fitzgerald moved further away from stories involving a wealthy girl who is the embodiment of the hero's dreams. Instead, the representatives of the leisure class become more and more ruthless and unsympathetic. As a cold person whose life evolves around money Baby Warren, Nicole's sister, in *Tender is the Night*, has no equal. When we first see her she is twenty-five, "tall and confident" (Tender 1934:166). She seems always in a hurry to have one affair or another concluded:

> ...Baby Warren wanted to talk to Dick, wanted to talk to him with the impetus that sent her out vagrantly toward all new men, as though she were on an inelastic tether

> and considered that she might as well get to the end of is as soon as possible. She crossed and recrossed her knees frequently in the manner of tall restless virgins.(Tender 1934: 167)

In her case, the atmosphere of wealth does not serve to make her desirable. Instead, it serves to make her a less sexual creature: "...there was something wooden and onanistic about her."(Tender 1934: 168) In fact, Baby is probably pursued for her money alone, a fact she apparently recognizes as she is unwilling to marry and give up her independence. She also symbolizes Fitzgerald's growing resentment toward people who think they are allowed to be rude just because they have money. The very first night they meet, Baby tells Dick her plan of taking care of Nicole. Her idea is for Nicole to move to Chicago, their hometown, and:

> ... "what could be better in her condition than if she fell in love with some good doctor – " A burst of hilarity surged up in Dick, the Warrens were going to buy Nicole a doctor – You got a nice doctor you can let us use? There was no use worrying about Nicole when they were in a position of being able to buy her a nice young doctor, the paint scarcely dry on him. (Tender 1934:169)

Baby Warren deals with people by treating them as if they were objects to be used and perhaps sold. When Nicole speaks kindly of Dick caring for her in their marriage, Baby comments coldly: "That's what he was educated for" (Tender 1934:335). She is always full of plans, and when she shows concern for Nicole, Baby's way of dealing with her is wondering how she could use her money to make her sister's life better. The thought of helping Nicole personally or even seriously trying to find out the cause of her illness never seems to cross Baby's mind. When it comes to her personal life, Baby cannot find anything real with all her wealth. In the end of the novel she is once again in the middle of a half-hearted affair:

> Baby [was] considering whether or not to marry the latest candidate for her hand and money, and authenticated Habsburg. She was not quite *think*ing about it. Her affairs had long shared such a sameness, that, as they dried out, they were more important for their conversational value than for themselves. Her emotions had their truest existence in the telling of them. (Tender 1934:335)

As Magill (1963:369) comments, "she remains without roots or direction in her life." Baby Warren has independence, money and a self-assured attitude but she still cannot make anything out of the possibilities in her life. She is too

cold and careful to fall in love, too rich to think about working, too selfish to help others, and in all her snobbery the best she can do is to mimic English aristocrats she blindly admires. In other words, she is the perfect example of the wasted American leisure class Fitzgerald despised.

Fitzgerald deals only once with European aristocracy, in *Tender is the Night*. At the end of the novel Dick and Nicole meet and Englishwoman named Lady Caroline Sibly-Biers, who is reputed to be the "wickedest woman in London" (Tender 1934:291) and who receives, unbeknownst to herself, a nickname "Lady Beer-and-Ale"(Tender 1934:295). She possesses the worst qualities a person can have: arrogance without personal charm to justify it and a superiority that is insulting to everyone around her. However, she still attracts attention and even admiration, as Nicole notes observing her: "Nicole found herself impressed, neither with the character nor the personality, but with the sheer strength derived from an attitude" (Tender 1934:293). In the last scenes of the novel she and Mary, an old friend of Dick's, get in trouble for dressing up as sailors, picking up a couple of girls as a joke, and then getting arrested for having no papers. They are released after Mary asks Dick for help, and he, together with another friend, pays off the policemen. On the way home Lady Caroline is outraged that she had been arrested and threatens not to pay anything. The scene ends with Mr Gausse, the French friend who has to bribe the policemen to get the two girls out of jail, "plant[ing]... his little foot in the most celebrated of targets." (Tender 1934:328) The inspiration for Caroline Sibly - Biers was Bijour O'Conor, an Englishwoman Fitzgerald had a brief affair with in the early thirties. Bijou came from an upper-class family but rejected the conventional lifestyle she had been brought up with, and, "...almost as alcoholic and self-destructive as himself [Fitzgerald], Bijou was far more reckless, a true bohemian without Fitzgerald's conscience and capacity for remorse" (Meyers 1994:204). Fitzgerald also states his disillusionment any country's aristocratic classes with the portrayal of Lady Caroline, as opposed to his admiration for European upper classes when he was younger. Fitzgerald brings out his opinion in Nicole's thoughts: "... she was fragile, tubercular - it was incredible that such narrow shoulders, such puny arms could bear aloft the pennon of decadence, last ensign of the fading empire" (Tender 1934:291). Just as American leisure classes copy the manners

of the European aristocracy, so do British upper class girls merely adopt the poses of American flappers, as Fitzgerald comments: "Her resemblance was rather to one of John Held's flat-chested flappers than to the hierarchy of tall languid blondes who had posed for painters and novelists since before the war" (Tender 1934:291).

In Fitzgerald's later fiction social class distinctions become more blurred, apparently reflecting the changes brought by the Depression. Whereas in Fitzgerald's earlier writings young girls were often attractive because of an atmosphere of wealth that surrounds them, in his last novel money has nothing to do with charm. Cecilia's father is one of the leading men in the film industry, which makes her, in a way, Hollywood's golden child - one of the guests at her fifth birthday party was Rudolph Valentino, she is told (Tycoon: 3). Fitzgerald's notes about her say that she is "... intelligent, cynical, but understanding and kindly toward the people, great or small, who are of Hollywood" (Tycoon:138). Not all critics agree on the use of Cecilia's voice, and Brian Way (1980:161), for example, comments on her: "...empty selfish nature, and her callow hardness - the premature cynicism of mind...". Even if Cecilia as the narrator is not perfect - after all, the novel was not even finished - it is still important to notice a marked difference between her and Fitzgerald's earlier heroines. Cecilia is wealthy, but that is not the essence of her character. Certainly, she is immature, being eighteen, but she has also grown up with a peculiar kind of intelligence, as she observes people in industry. Her cynicism comes out at times, for instance when she comments on life during the Depression: "... I knew that since 1933 the rich could only be happy alone together" (Tycoon:72). The novel gives a good picture of Hollywood in the thirties, where Cecilia, the rich girl, and Kathleen, the poor one, attend the same party as equals, and it is Cecilia who eventually grows jealous of Kathleen for winning the hero's love, and not vice versa. In early twenties, and in Fitzgerald's stories of that time, two women with such different backgrounds would not even have met. Hollywood, as Fitzgerald shows, is a world of its own where traditional class boundaries do not apply, as it has its own system of assigning value to individuals.

6.2. Lower classes

When Fitzgerald was writing *This Side of Paradise*, he had still so many illusions about the magnificence of wealth that any characters coming from the lower classes are not seriously discussed at all. The only characters with a poor background are girls Amory's friends use and make fun of. A good example of the kind of treatment these girls get is a scene in which Amory's friend finds an extremely unattractive girl in a restaurant and amuses everyone by treating her as if she were a beauty:

> The girl bobbed courtesies all around. Poor creature; Amory supposed she had never before been noticed in her life - possibly she was half-witted. While she accompanied them ... she said nothing which could discountenance such a belief. (Paradise 1920: 85)

Amory's reaction is to watch his friends have fun on the girl's expense and admire their style, and nothing in the scene suggest that Fitzgerald finds anything wrong with treating an ugly, poor girl in such a manner. Not one of the lower class girls in *This Side of Paradise* is even attractive, and most of them are not very intelligent, either.

In *The Beautiful and Damned*, Fitzgerald's condescending attitude toward the poorer classes is apparent. Before Anthony gets married, he has an affair with Geraldine, an usher, whom someone had "passed on" to Anthony.

> She demanded so little that he liked her, for since a lamentable affair with a débutante the preceding summer, when he had discovered that after half a dozen kisses a proposal was expected, he had been vary of girls of his own class. (Beautiful 1922:86).

Anthony's attitude towards girls depends entirely on their social standing, not unusual in the context of time. Anthony, too, makes a difference between girls he can think of marrying, and girls who have no right to expect a proposal. However, this attitude is curious to note in a writer who was praised especially for his descriptions of change in society – and that change included the blurring of signs denoting social distinctions. Fitzgerald's description of Geraldine makes her a silly little thing, foolish and sympathetic, and completely lacking the depth that Gloria is supposed to possess. Anthony

thinks about Geraldine with a mix of condescension and fondness, and through his words Fitzgerald shows his opinion on the sexual weakness of the lower class girls: "Anthony thought how moral was this waif at heart - how completely moral she would still be after the inevitable wave came that would wash her off the sands of respectability" (Beautiful 1922:88). In the early 1920s Fitzgerald apparently still found it hard to imagine a women with a poor background who might still be intelligent or interesting.

Another instance in *The Beautiful and Damned* in which Fitzgerald's observes social distinctions is Anthony and Gloria's visit to a somewhat less than respectable cabaret. (Beautiful 1922:70). They look at a young woman who is "pretending desperately" while flirting with her date. Her clothes and her hat are from a past season, which is glaringly obvious to Gloria and Anthony. They, especially he, are a little amused to realize the girl is desperate to give an impression that she does not really belong to a place like that, that really she usually goes to much better places. Gloria, who actually does frequent higher class places, muses that she feels at home in the somewhat seedy club: "I've got a streak of what you'd call cheapness. ...things like this and bright colors and gaudy vulgarity. I seem to belong here." (Beautiful 1922:73). This statement is in absolute contradiction to Anthony's and Gloria's condescension while observing the masses, taking their own superiority for granted. Later her statement proves even more incongruous when she finally decides to try and become an actress. She goes to an agency and has to wait in an office that "smelt as though it had been dead for a long time " (Beautiful 1922:370) She can take it for no more than five minutes. "As so often had been the case, her sense of smell worked against her good intentions"(Beautiful 1922:369). Gloria is a snob who cannot stand to be in contact with anything cheap or common, in spite of her protestations. Gloria even judges women on being "clean" or not, a vague expression she never explains, only alluding than some women, usually wealthy, are morally and hygienically more pure than lower-class girls or ordinary housewives (Beautiful 1922:185). Although Gloria does not cite social class as the only obvious criteria, it is implicit in her comments. "By uncleanliness she meant a variety of things, a lack of pride, a slackness in fibre and, most of all, the unmistakable aura of promiscuity" (Beautiful 1922:235). Fitzgerald draws a

connection between lower classes, a certain physical and mental ugliness, and loose sexual behavior. While writing *The Beautiful and Damned,* Fitzgerald still considered only upper-class women worth any attention, and being middle-class was a sign of ugliness and commonness.

The sense of smell indicating lower classes and lower standards reoccurs in *Tender is the Night.* Kaethe, Dick's colleague's wife, complains that Nicole always seems to pull herself back from touch, and this offends her.

> She did most of her work herself, and, frugal, she bought few clothes. An American shop-girl, laundering two changes of underwear every night, would have noticed a hint of yesterday's reawakened sweat about Kaethe's person, less a smell than an ammoniacal reminder of the eternity of toil and decay. ...to Nicole, hating the smell of a nurses' fingers dressing her, it was an offence only to be endured. (Tender 1934: 260)

Even though this attitude is explained by Nicole's history in the hospital, it is still the tone of her family and wealth that makes her pull back from the smell of work. On a hot day, when Kaethe makes a friendly gesture, Nicole pulls back automatically, "to the point of rudeness."(Tender 1934: 270) Perhaps it is Nicole the patient who does not notice her own reflexes but it is Nicole the Warren who is unaware of being unkind. A marked difference, however, is that while Gloria's snobbery is presented in an admirable light, in the later novel Fitzgerald tries to explain the reasons for both women's reactions.

In *The Beautiful and Damned,* Anthony, while he is in the army, has an affair with a poor local girl, Dot. She is portrayed fairly condescendingly as a rather simple and clinging type. The affair begins casually with Anthony almost drifting into it: "He did not go to her desiring to possess the desirable, nor did he fall before a personality more vital, more compelling than his own, as he had done with Gloria..." (Beautiful 1922: 324). There is no great passion between them, and Fitzgerald implies that it is because of her background. Already at school Dot had had a "rather unsavory reputation" even though "she had retained her technical purity until over a year later."(Beautiful 1922: 326) She has a couple of affairs that end with the men leaving town, and that leave with an increasingly unrespectable reputation. "...some of the boys she had known in high school now looked the other way when they were walking with 'nice girls', and these incidents hurt her feelings " (Beautiful 1922: 327). Fitzgerald seems to be merely describing an average situation in a small town

where rumors can mean everything. He does not judge the double standard by which Dot is a victim and he does not seem to consider her fate as particularly unfair. Rather, Fitzgerald seems to portray it as almost inevitable that this should happen because a girl from such a poor background cannot have much to say about her own destiny:

> As a rule things happened to Dot. She was not weak, because there was nothing in her to tell her she was being weak. She was not strong, because she never knew that some of the things she did were brave. She neither defied nor conformed nor compromised. (Beautiful 1922: 326)

In other words, Fitzgerald is painting a rather unflattering picture of a girl who has no idea what she is doing because she has no intellectual capacity to make decisions that affect her destiny. While Fitzgerald's early portrayals of flappers or belles do definitely not concentrate on their intellect, the upper class heroines, nevertheless, are always witty and smart. Dot and Geraldine, both lower class women in *The Beautiful and Damned*, are sympathetic but not very bright. It cannot be said for certain that this was Fitzgerald's ultimate attitude toward the poor at the time, but his portrayals of the lower classes in *The Beautiful and Damned* certainly suggest that he found it hard to find anything worth admiring among them. In his early fiction, the heroine was always a rich girl - often admirable for her insouciant attitude with money, but nevertheless from a distinctly wealthy background.

However, Fitzgerald, shows some sense of irony as regards differences in social class and their influence on relationships between men and women. He describes Dot's third affair, with a local rich boy: "Had she been born to a higher stratum he would have known her before. She had descended a little lower – so he met her after all." (Beautiful 1922:327) After Dot's descent she has no illusions of her value on the marriage market – which in the twenties, after all, was the primary source of income to women – and she is already outside the society of 'nice girls'. She can, therefore, have an affair, but one that would never be officially recognized. Again, Fitzgerald makes no judgement on a situation like this, which again suggests that in his youth he had not very seriously reflected on the differences between social classes. In fact, his attitude to lower classes at the beginning of his career at least seems to show how tied he still was to the values of the older generation.

The affair with Dot brings Anthony some comfort and an escape from his problems at first, but it goes sour when Dot turns out to be clinging and hysterical, needy and frustratingly stupid. It is ironic that in the work of a writer who is famous for portraying the destructiveness of rich women, in his second novel it is precisely that entanglement with a lower class woman which brings the central character to the brink of disaster. In the end Dot threatens to kill herself, demanding Anthony come and see her outside that army camp. When he returns he is stopped by the guards, and Anthony gives a false name. The day after he is caught and put to prison, which prevents him from becoming an officer (Beautiful 1922: 349). It is Dot, not Gloria, who ruins his chances of advancing socially. In the end of the novel Dot makes a surprise appearance, which finally pushes Anthony overboard into madness (Beautiful 1922: 446). Fitzgerald's first two novels show little sympathy to lower classes, and in fact, they deal with class differences quite superficially.

The Great Gatsby includes one significant character from the lower classes. Myrtle Wilson, Tom Buchanan's mistress, is a local garage-owner's lonely wife. When she is first seen she is portrayed as:

> ...faintly stout, but she carried her flesh sensuously, as some women can. Her face ... contained no facet or gleam of beauty, but there was an immediately perceptible vitality about her as if the nerves of her body were continually smouldering". (Gatsby 1925: 18)

Even though she represents a completely different type from the usual Fitzgerald heroine, he still portrays as attractive in her own way. However, there is an obvious difference from an upper-class woman: whereas Daisy's voice is described as "thrilling"(Gatsby 1925: 8), Myrtle's voice is "coarse". (Gatsby 1925:18) When Nick, Tom and Myrtle go to the apartment in New York Tom has arranged for them, the first positive impression is lost as Myrtle assumes an unflattering and pretending pose that she imagines will make her appear more upper-class. "Throwing a regal homecoming glance around the neighborhood, Mrs Wilson gathered up her dog and her other purchases, and went haughtily in." (Gatsby 1925: 19) As she begins to pretend she loses her one good and attractive quality, the vitality that Nick notices when they first meet. "Her laughter, her gestures, her assertions became more and more

violently affected moment by moment..." (Gatsby 1925: 21) Later critics have remarked on the two sides of her character:

> ...Myrtle ... is the quintessence of vulgarity. Her 'class' is no strong, peasant culture... Her only hope is to escape – and it is her one positive quality, her vitality, which leads her to seek happiness in a role other than that to which she is born. (Dyson 1961:114)

Myrtle, too, has had her disappointment: when she had married she had believed her husband to be financially independent, but after the wedding she found out she had married a man with no money (Gatsby 1925: 24). Eventually she does what she can, under the circumstances, to get something better into her life, and to her, an affair with Tom is a way out, a chance to move on. She tells Nick about her first meeting with Tom: "All I kept thinking about, over and over, was 'You can't live forever, you can't live forever" (Gatsby 1925: 24).

In *Tender is the Night* social classes are dealt with in more detail. Nicole and Baby Warren are very different examples of extremely wealthy women, while Rosemary is a girl who has to earn her own living. A contrast to both of them is Mary North, a social climber through marriage, "the daughter of a journeyman paper-hanger..." (Tender 1934:63). When the novel begins, her husband, Abe North, is a talented composer whose promising career is wasted in drink, who has to worry about his drunken escapades. She has made her way upwards, and Fitzgerald portrays her quite sympathetically.

> She was a brave, hopeful woman and she was following her husband somewhere, changing herself to this person or that ... and sometimes realizing with discouragement how deep in him the guarded secret of her direction lay. And yet an air of luck clung about her, as if she were a sort of token..." (Tender 1934:73).

After Abe's death, she is apparently determined to do better and succeeds in securing an honorary title of "contessa" by marrying an Asian aristocrat. "The journey that had begun in a room over the shop of a paper hanger in Newark had ended in an extraordinary marriage." (Tender 1934:279) Her husband is a "ruler-owner of manganese deposits in southwestern Asia. He was not quite light enough to travel in a Pullman south of Mason-Dixon..." (Tender1934:279). Mary's attitude toward her new family's Asian manners is ambivalent; greeting her guests, she "gave an apologetic, belittling giggle; yet

her voice, as she introduced her husband by his Asiatic title, flew proud and high." (Tender 1934:279) In spite of their own extravagant life style Dick and Nicole are amazed at Mary's new home's luxuries, and Fitzgerald comments: "...such rich as want to be thought democratic pretend in private to be swept off their feet by swank." (Tender 1934:279), suggesting very unclear lines between classes within the American expatriate society. Mary, even though something of an opportunist, is nevertheless one of the more likeable characters in the novel. She has moved on with determination in order to make a better life for herself, and there is something admirable in her attitude to life. She merely does what she has to in order to get along. However, irony is not spared in her case, either, as Dick's remark suggests: "Little Mary North knows what she wants ... Abe educated her, and now she's married to a Buddha. If Europe ever goes Bolshevik she'll turn up as the bride of Stalin." (Tender 1934:279)

In *The Last Tycoon*, the central female character, Kathleen Moore, is unlike any previous Fitzgerald heroine. She has risen almost literally from the gutter in London, and she has worked her way up in the world. As a young girl she appears on stage, and later becomes the mistress of a dethroned king, who educates her. Monroe Stahr, the central character, is a movie producer who first notices Kathleen's resemblance to his dead wife, and later falls in love with her. Kathleen has all the traits that Fitzgerald as a young man looked down upon: poor background, having to work for a living, a promiscuous past. Just like all Fitzgerald heroines, though, she is strikingly beautiful, as Cecilia notes: "Just a girl, with the skin of one of Raphael's corner angels and a style that made you look back twice to see if it were something she had on" (Tycoon: 72). When she tells Stahr that she had lived with a man for years he passes no judgments: "She was twenty-five or so. It would have been a waste if she had not loved and been loved" (Tycoon: 81). Still, she is private and offers no details until later. Fitzgerald in his mature years came to respect people who made their way up in the world, male or female. However, according to Fitzgerald's notes, Stahr would have had an ambivalent attitude toward her background, finding it difficult to share his life with a woman who is "poor, unfortunate, and tagged with a middle-class exterior which doesn't fit in with the grandeur Stahr demands of life" (Tycoon: 131). Kathleen, of

course, was based on Sheilah Graham, with whom Fitzgerald lived his last years. Sheilah was an Englishwoman from a somewhat obscure background, who moved to the United States to make herself a better life (Meyers 1996: 302). At the time that she met Fitzgerald, she was writing a Hollywood gossip column, and soon broke her engagement to another man for him. She was "ignorant about everything but the ability to survive.... But she gave him a sense of peace and well-being" (Meyers 1994: 304), and just like her, Kathleen brings a feeling of harmony into Stahr's life. Kathleen tries to be independent, and at one point she tells Stahr: " One reason I left England was that men always wanted their own way. I thought it was different here." (Tycoon: 75) However, she still tries to find a solution by marrying for security, and Fryer (1988: 97). points out: "Despite her noble contemplation of autonomy, her economic condition forces her to turn to men for support." Kathleen may be sexually liberated enough to pursue an affair with Stahr, but she is still, like most women at her time, financially dependent on the men in her life. The fact that her background is so different from Fitzgerald's earlier heroines is significant. She is the first and only lower class woman who dreams of real autonomy, even if financially she has not achieved it, and who has a kind of inner integrity lacking from Fitzgerald's previous characters with similar backgrounds. Fryer concludes:

> Nevertheless, Kathleen does clearly set herself apart from women of previous generations. In addition to her assumption of the right to engage in sexual activity outside of wedlock, she also feels free to speak out against what she perceives as unreasonable demands on her. (Fryer 1988:102)

6.3. Work

A significant change in Fitzgerald's fiction began to take place in the thirties. His early fiction usually dealt with the members of the leisure class, men and women who do not have to worry about money and who rarely had career ambitions. Gloria in *The Beautiful and Damned* has vague aspirations of becoming an actress, but she makes no effort to actually pursue a career, just

like Anthony's attempts to write or work never amount to anything real. Jordan in *The Great Gatsby* is a famous golfer, but in spite her fame, her career does not give her any real income. In some short stories written in the thirties, he gradually begins to seriously study people with careers. Still, female characters who work for a living are relatively few in Fitzgerald's fiction.

During the time Fitzgerald was writing *Tender is the Night* he began to show more and more interest in professional people. The degree to which this also affected women characters in his fiction has been less studied as a subject. One of the novel's main characters, Rosemary Hoyt, is an actress who has just risen to fame when the novel begins. She has recently made her first successful film and she is fast becoming one of the best-known faces in the industry and is only learning to enjoy the results of her work. Brian Way (1980:156) comments that her professionalism is "... the one quality that makes [her]... something more than a mere selfish, empty-headed, sentimental opportunist." Rosemary is young and youthfully sentimental, even if she does not necessarily strike the reader quite as being quite so empty-headed as Way describes her. It is true, however, that her work makes her a more compelling character, and sets her apart from Fitzgerald's earlier heroines.

Rosemary's naiveté has been discussed in earlier chapters. In the beginning of the novel she is only seventeen, so a certain amount of childishness in her relationship with her mother as well as Dick is only natural. However, she acts more maturely when she is working. In the middle of her holiday she goes to visit a studio in order to meet a director. The studio atmosphere is one she knows and where she feels comfortable, and as she meets the director for the first time, her reactions are very business-like:

> As he took her hand she saw him look her over from head to foot, a gesture she recognized and that made her feel at home, but gave her always a faint feeling of superiority to whoever made it. If her person was property she could exercise whatever advantage was inherent in its ownership.(Tender 1934: 32)

The tone here is not of a little girl but rather a young woman who knows what she is worth as an actress. She is neither thrilled nor appalled by men looking at her approvingly and her attitude is purely professional, since being pretty is a part of her job. Her work also determines the way she deals with money:

"Rosemary spent money she had earned - she was here in Europe due to the fact that she had gone in the pool six times that January day with her temperature roving..." (Tender 1934:65). If Rosemary's work requires it, she will do her job even if she is sick, and she cannot afford to be lazy. There is no trace in Rosemary of a young girl spending pocket money on fun. In spite of her youth, for a seventeen-year-old she has a remarkably realistic idea on the value of work and money. Her career is what defines her character, which Fitzgerald states simply: "Rosemary had been brought up with the idea of work" (Tender 1934:49).

The book contains a scene in which Rosemary's film, "Daddy's Girl" is shown to an audience. The film in itself is rather ridiculous with a simplistic plot, but Rosemary brings the flat story alive:

> But Rosemary triumphed. Her fineness of character, her courage and steadfastness intruded upon the vulgarity of the world, and Rosemary showing what it took with a face that had not yet become mask-like - yet it was actually so moving that the emotion of the whole row of people went out to her at intervals during the picture. (Tender 1934:80)

Rosemary is, then, both talented and conscientious with her work, and the money she earns herself gives her a freedom to make her own choices. In many ways her independence is a contrast to Nicole's dependence on others. As Fryer (1988:90) says, she "... makes her own money and chooses her own lovers, in the tradition of men."

Fitzgerald was interested in Hollywood from the early stages of his career. As has already been discussed, in *The Beautiful and Damned* Gloria's ambitions were directed toward the screen. Fitzgerald worked in Hollywood on a few occasions during the twenties until finally settling in there in 1936. He was often skeptical about films as an art form and his screen writing efforts were inevitably affected by his belief that film required simpler plots than novels (Bruccoli 1981:179). However, he grew to respect the real professionals of the industry, and the portrait of Monroe Stahr, for instance, was inspired by the producer Irving Thalberg, a Hollywood boy wonder, who died in 1936. (Meyers 1994:327). Rosemary's model was, in fact, a young actress named Lois Moran whom Fitzgerald met and fell in love with, in 1927. Just like Rosemary, Lois had lived in Europe when growing up, and spoke

French fluently. (Meyers 1994:169-170). Fitzgerald admired her dedication to her career and sometimes drove Zelda angry by comparing Lois' active life to Zelda's idleness. In the short story "Crazy Sunday" Stella Calman is a creation of her producer – husband rather than a persona of her own. The difference between these two actresses is that Rosemary builds her career by herself.

Rosemary's mother reminds her that she is different from most girls her age, in that she is in a position to decide on her life herself. "You were brought up to work - not especially to marry. ... whatever happens it can't spoil you because economically you're a boy, not a girl" (Tender 1934:50). She points out that Rosemary, already at seventeen, has the kind of financial independence that was just a dream to most girls at the time. One critic (Fiedler 1955:74) has drawn the conclusion from this "economically being a boy" that Rosemary is uncertain about her sexuality. A far more likely explanation is that in the 1920s a girl who was really economically independent was a rare phenomenon, a fact that has nothing to with an individual's sexual identity.

In *The Last Tycoon* we encounter another type of a working woman. Jane Meloney, a scriptwriter in her fifties, has made a lasting career in Hollywood – "she was reputed to have been on the set the day Griffith invented the close-up"(Tycoon:100). Fitzgerald brings out the prejudice that most career women still faced in the thirties.

> ...one could hear the fifty assorted opinions of Hollywood [about her] – 'a sentimental dope,' 'the best writer on construction in Hollywood,' 'a veteran,' 'that old hack,' 'the smartest woman on the lot,' 'the cleverest plagiarist in the biz'; and, of course, a in addition she was variously described as a nymphomaniac, a virgin, a pushover, a Lesbian and a faithful wife. (Tycoon : 36)

In spite of the mocking tone Fitzgerald describes the varying opinions, he is manifesting his old attitude that a woman has not really achieved anything if she is not married, that there is something odd about a career woman, and finally, a woman's value lies in her sex appeal. His description of Jane Meloney ends with a less than flattering tone: "Without being an old maid, she was, like most self-made women, rather old maidish."(Tycoon:36). The value he put on beauty has not disappeared, either, as the description of

Monroe Stahr's attitude toward her shows: "She had been a great friend of Minna's, and over a period of years Stahr had managed to stifle what amounted to a sharp physical revulsion."(Tycoon:36). But behind all the different estimates of Jane lies a pure professional in her field. "Her value lay in such ordinary assets as the bare fact that she was a woman and adaptable, quick and trustworthy, 'knew the game' and was without egotism." (Tycoon:36). Just like Fitzgerald grew to admire and respect male professionals, he eventually began to look up to women with careers, as well.

Jane is described as hard working and intelligent, and being a friend of her mother's, Cecilia finds her "loveable as a cheap old toy "(Tycoon: 101). Being a well-paid professional does not prevent her from being in trouble in her private life, however: "... her husbands all drank and beat her nearly to death."(Tycoon:101). The real-life inspiration for the character of Jane Meloney was the short story writer and columnist Dorothy Parker whom Fitzgerald had known already in New York, and who was famous for her witty style as well as her tumultuous private life (Meyers 1994:329). During the thirties she worked in Hollywood on a high salary, and her marriage at the time was not a serene one. (Meyers 1994:55) Jane Meloney is actually quite a admiring picture of her, emphasizing her wit, her dedication to her work and her self-assuredness, even though her lack of physical beauty is mentioned, too.

In his last years, when his daughter was in college, Fitzgerald was very much occupied with the idea of work, which shows in his writing, as well. A good example of this is the hero of *The Last Tycoon* who literally lives and will die for his work. Both his personal experiences and changes in society undoubtedly contributed in his changing views. When talking about Zelda's illness, he points out that she had been raised at a time when everyone, just like Fitzgerald himself as a young man, had believed that a woman's job was just to be pretty and a good wife. In his older days he grew to believe the exact opposite, as his letter to Scottie shows:

> For a long time I hated *her* [Zelda's] mother for giving her nothing in the line of good habit - nothing but 'getting by' and conceit. I never wanted to see again in this world women who were brought up as idlers. And one of my chief desires in life was to

> keep you from being that kind of person, one who brings ruin to themselves and others. (as quoted in Bruccoli 198:442, emphasis in the original)

The Last Tycoon is filled with references to education: Stahr commenting he's sorry he never had a chance to study (Tycoon:61); another character remarking to Cecilia that knowledge is power (Tycoon:10); and Kathleen, of course, receives her education from her lover, just like Sheilah Graham did with Fitzgerald (Bruccoli 1981: 446). As Fryer (1988:96), too, points out, "...education was considered more or less superfluous for most American women...." Fitzgerald, however, came to emphasize the importance of education, both in his last novel as well as his relationship with his daughter. Fryer continues:

> It is interesting to note that Fitzgerald's allusions to women's education ... underscore the frustrations of women in his earlier novels (and life experience), who longed for the sense of purpose that intellectual activity and professional achievement, but lacked the motivation, encouragement, and formal education to pursue them. ... Without education, the women of his era had virtually no choice but to marry just to assure their livelihood. (Fryer 1988: 96)

The women characters in Fitzgerald's last two novels show the distance he traveled from his early flappers. Rosemary and Jane are very different kind of women, separated by age, profession, and appearance, but who both manage to build meaningful careers. Kathleen, a woman who had to make life from nothing and makes no judgments on anyone, is at an incredible distance from the 1920s spoiled beauties with a defiant attitude and no cares in the world. At the time of his death, after writing bestsellers and classics, he was still evolving as a writer. F. Scott Fitzgerald had a career of twenty years, spanning from the ending of World War I, over the economic boom and the depression years, and through a number of personal triumphs and tragedies, all of which show and live in his work. His male and female characters show change and variety, which has been recognized, and his literary reputation lives strongly 50 years after his death.

7. CONCLUSION

In F. Scott Fitzgerald's early fiction the female characters are fairly easy to class. He portrayed flappers or southern belles, usually coming from a wealthy background, which made them appear all the more desirable. The stories in which a poor young man is rejected for not having enough money to support a wife also recurr. The themes of love and money and the difficulty of combining the two come up repeatedly.

Southern belles seem belong to an era before the war, for which Fitzgerald had a romantic longing. Even though he wrote about social changes, he had a nostalgic view of the pre-war days, especially the South. In his mind, the Southern families came closest to the ideal of American aristocracy for which he, especially in his youth, aspired. Nevertheless, he understood the difficulty of growing up bound by tradition and the frustration at the impossibility of acting against conventions. His southern belles are often confronted with the difficulties of choosing between love and money, North and South, tradition and the modern world. His heroines usually try to find a solution by marrying, but they are seldom seen to find real happiness. In his later stories Fitzgerald turned more to the theme of change, with southern belles symbolizing an older, simpler world, and how hard it was to adapt to the twenties.

Fitzgerald practically made his early career with the evolution of flappers. He became a spokesman for the younger generation and his early heroines were for a while role models to young women all over the country. While Fitzgerald had a fair amount of nostalgia for the pre-war days, he was still excited about the changes happening in the early twenties. He was among the first novelists to write about the young and their views, and he later claimed that he was not consciously trying to create the flapper as a literary type but instead he merely described young men and women he knew. Fitzgerald was a keen social observer, and issues such as sexual behavior and attitudes toward love and sex, smoking and drinking, and overall defiance of the older generation and its standards, and a redefinition of values and morality are all present in his flapper stories. Smoking and drinking became more common and gradually more accepted among women, too, and Fitzgerald describes these practices, as well as changes in fashion, talk, and dances in his stories.

More importantly, he wrote about the attitude the young had toward life, love and sex, and social change. Fitzgerald showed the older generation that the young welcomed everything new, that they did act in ways that their parents found unacceptable, but that they were no less moral or worse in doing so. In the twenties there was a sense that the world was different and that it belonged to the young, and Fitzgerald portrayed their happiness and excitement in the face of social change. However, he still examined the difficulties some people might have in adapting to a different, post-war world. Flappers were the symbols of the Jazz Age, and for a few years, Fitzgerald was its guru. However, this phase was only the beginning, and as his career progressed, his work shows a change in perspective and subject matter.

Zelda, Fitzgerald's wife, was a strong influence in the development of flappers and southern belles. She came from a small Southern town and had been frustrated by its stifling atmosphere, and in the first years of their marriage she became the most famous flapper in the country. Fitzgerald was undoubtedly influenced by his wife's experiences growing up, yearning for a more exciting life but living in a world of tradition. Zelda was unconventional and had little regard to other people's opinions, and Fitzgerald was fascinated by her attitude.

While Fitzgerald's first novel and stories were about the young, flappers or belles and the young men in their lives, he soon turned to writing about marriages. The contradictions between the couples, together with the pressures of the Jazz Age contribute to the difficulty of making the relationships work. Fitzgerald examined, first of all, women who had to marry in order to secure a living, and most of his heroines have no choice but to think about money when getting married. The theme of true love contrasted with economic realities is often present in his stories.

Later Fitzgerald turned to more complex issues around marriage, such as infidelity, different backgrounds, and work. *The Great Gatsby* is a study on the effects of the Jazz Age, on money, on a traditional upbringing of women, on love and infidelity. He portrayed women doing what they can create a meaningful life, and trying to get past disappointments. His heroines often yearn for independence, but especially Fitzgerald's earlier work seldom includes female characters with real financial autonomy, emphasizing the fact

that women in his era did not usually have any choice but to marry. *Tender is the Night* is about marriage between a doctor and his patient, whose relationship is further complicated by their different backgrounds. In addition to these novels, several of Fitzgerald's short stories examine different kinds of marriages, and through these stories it is possible to study his women characters in relation to love, infidelity, motherhood, and money.

Fitzgerald's earliest work portrays heroines predominantly from a wealthy background, be they flappers, belles, or young wives. His first novels and stories seldom deal with lower classes, and when he introduces girls from poor families, they are usually portrayed as either unattractive, not very intelligent, or simply not worth too much attention. Fitzgerald's youthful ideas of leisure classes are clearly visible in his earliest work in that wealthy background is an essential part of his heroines. His ideas can be seen to change towards the end of his career, and his later stories show much more variety in women characters as well. He began to portray women from lower classes more sympathetically, showing some understanding of the difficulties of trying to make their own way up in the world. *Tender is the Night* shows a significant change, as all the women in the book come from different backgrounds, giving Fitzgerald an opportunity to examine lower, middle and upper classes as well as American expatriate society.

A significant development in Fitzgerald's fiction is his depiction of women in relation to work and education. In his older years he began to emphasize the importance of education to women, and stressed the value of work. He encouraged his daughter to pursue a career, and while his fiction includes very few women characters who work, he later points out that real independence for women is impossible without financial autonomy. His earlier women characters aspire to a personal liberation and want to be free, but it is only in Fitzgerald's later stories that he portrays women who actively work to reach that goal. He recognized that economic independence for women was a rare phenomenon in the twenties and thirties, and from admiring girls who want to be taken care of, he came to respect any individual who found personal dignity through work.

Fitzgerald's women characters show a variety of lifestyles in the twenties and thirties, from traditional belles and the wildest of flappers in the early part

of his career, to mature women in charge of their own lives in his later stories. He examined the effects of social changes and tradition, as well as social classes, money and work, showing more and more insight as his career went on. Fitzgerald's flappers are girls who enjoy life to the fullest, and one can see them as role models for young women looking for personal liberation. Fitzgerald's views on wealth were ambivalent all through his career, which can be seen in his female characters, as well. Especially as a young man he often associated money with personal charm, but later he began to look more closely on the disruptive effects of wealth, too. His marriage stories often make a point on the difficulty of combining money and love, and he also recognized the difficulties of a match between different backgrounds. With all these different themes, ranging from tradition to Jazz Age, from love and marriage to money and work, Fitzgerald's women characters give the readers a good insight into the twenties and the thirties. They show a man who examined his own changing views as well as those of the people around him, and a writer who devoted just as much time and effort to create compelling female as well as male characters, a fact that for a long time remained unacknowledged. Fitzgerald's women characters breath and dream, appearing intensely alive to the modern reader, as well.

An idea for a further study could be to compare F. Scott Fitzgerald's women characters with those of other writers of the era, such Ernest Hemingway, or writers who were well known in the twenties and thirties but who are less famous today. Sinclair Lewis or Dorothy Parker would be good objects of study, the first because of his immense popularity in the twenties, and the latter because she was one of the most unconventional women writers of the era. Looking at their, or other writers', portrayals of women of their time and comparing them with Fitzgerald's work could make a deep and detailed study of how women were depicted in early 20th century literature.

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