The Feminine, Feminist, Female and Fitzgerald: A Critical Study of women Characters in F. Scott Fitzgerald's Novels and Short Stories

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The Feminine, Feminist, Female and Fitzgerald: a Critical Study of Women Characters in F. Scott Fitzgerald’s Novels and Short Stories

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In Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Distinction “Honours in English” and the Degree Bachelor of Arts in the Department of English.

by
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CHAPTER ONE: An Introduction

It is impossible to understand the past. In spite of this, historians try to capture what life was like under certain social expectations in much the same way that literary critics do. Due to the filters of self-reference, objectivity leans towards skewed results. I cannot shed my current political agenda when researching a period of history; my perception of past and present convolute into a swirl of social, philosophical, religious and political forces.

Keeping this problem of objectivity in mind, when I decided to research the changing identity of women at the beginning of the twentieth century, I realized my findings, however well researched, would be from the perspective of a student looking backwards seventy years. Once I realized this, I decided primary sources from an author that lived and wrote during this period of radical social upheaval would be the most beneficial. That artist became F. Scott Fitzgerald.

During the nineteen-twenties and thirties, he was a meticulous recorder of social events and, according to Sarah Fryer, his, "close attention to detail and nuance makes his writing important not just as literature, but also as social history" (Fryer 104). Additionally, James Mellow states that, "Fitzgerald was also one of the more autobiographical
novelists of his generation, and from each vaguely defined phase of his life and career he managed to draw a single novel, each one summarizing the lessons of his experience" (Hellow 129). As Michel Foucault hypothesized, a writer is merely a reflection of the social milieu s/he sprang from; therefore, it seems logical that Fitzgerald is a skilled enough chronicler to use in an examination of the changing female identities during the twenties and thirties.

Of course, this does not mean that my question of objectivity is solved. Rather, the emphasis has shifted from examining social history, to examining a product that sprang from the "zeitgeist" of that turbulent era. I will be using Fitzgerald’s work as a mirror since, as Brian Way whose study on Fitzgerald focuses on his fiction and its social context notes, Fitzgerald "recognized sooner than anyone else, that the nature of [women’s] advance had changed radically with the coming of the Jazz Age" (Way 10). Not only did Fitzgerald reflect the new trends in women’s social identity, but he was also, "a spokesman for his generation... that dared to question the moral assumptions of the established order, and loudly proclaimed the emancipation of twentieth century American youth from the inhibiting restrictions of the past" (Cross 22).

My study, then, while focusing primarily on the change in women, can be expanded to include "men who are confused
in their own right" (Fryer 17). I will be using Fitzgerald's short stories and novels as a blueprint for how men and women acted and dealt with the radical changes in what it meant to be either male or female during, and after, the Jazz Age. I realize that I still have not escaped self-reference; however, it seems to me that probing a product of the times will render as accurate a picture as I can paint.

While trying to understand how females reacted to the new roles they could partake in, I will be using various forms of feminist criticism. This predominantly female-based theory will allow me to analyze a male text interpretation of female actions; using feminist criticism will enable me to examine Fitzgerald's work in ways that my white, male, middle-class eyes may have otherwise overlooked. In Elaine Showalter's essay, "Towards a Feminist Poetics," she states that, "the task of feminist critics is to find a new language that can integrate our intelligence and our experience, our reason and our suffering; our skepticism and our vision" (Showalter 141). I hope to see Fitzgerald's females in a light that I may not have if I had not used this form of theory.

Since no two people agree what the parameters of different schools of criticism are, I will state later in this paper what I perceive feminist criticism to entail.
This is important to observe since how I look at this theory will affect how I apply it to Fitzgerald’s texts. In other words, how I use this tool will effect how the sculpture is chiseled.

Now that I have explained why Fitzgerald’s writing was chosen to represent his generation and also why feminist criticism will be applied to it, it seems appropriate to now outline the construction of this paper. Before analyzing characters through feminist criticism, it is important to acknowledge that Fitzgerald’s females construct themselves from cultural and social perspectives; also, due to both Fitzgerald’s gender and my own, it would be a gross oversight not to examine how these two filters react and interact with women. After the male perspective has been established, my personal view of feminist criticism will be outlined and hypothetical categories of women will be thoroughly investigated. Once this has been reviewed, a critical examination of Fitzgerald’s women, and the categories they represent, can be accomplished. At the end of the paper, three distinct categories of the female identity will have been identified and an understanding of how Fitzgerald portrays them will have been achieved.
"Ding an sich," (The thing itself). Kant coined this phrase when he tried to get at the essence of touching an object. Obviously, an object cannot be physically transplanted into someone's mind; therefore, an examination through the senses must be settled for---this, however, skews the perception of that object.

This type of reasoning can also be applied to metaphysical investigations. When trying to understand a thought or period of time, many variables change the focus of a concept; perception is, therefore, altered. When trying to understand the changing roles of women at the turn of this century, many variables cloud the lens---the camera eye becomes a filter.

In this paper, there is not one filter the reader gazes through, but two. Both Fitzgerald and myself bring certain ideas within our cultural baggage that cloud the perception of gender roles that was prevalent during Fitzgerald's life---what exactly constructs these gender roles will be conducted later in the paper. How gender roles are viewed by males is vastly differently than they would be if females view them. Recognizing this, however, we can briefly look at what comprises these two filters and, by better understanding them, perhaps a more through investigation of gender roles can be achieved.
It is important to establish a general outline for male thought and the development of that thought. How males think is of vital importance since both the primary source and the interpreter of those sources are both male. Later in this paper, a female perspective of male discourse will be examined, but, for now, an outline by a man of male thought will be investigated. Of course, any conclusions made in this brief outline are sweeping generalizations at best.

Nevertheless, in order to inspect the male episteme, Robert Bly’s book *Iron John* will be used as a tool to dissect what composes these two filters—in other words, Bly outlines a general male perspective. His book does not lambast women or try to undermine the identity formed by them; rather, it is an attempt to understand how men think and react in society. Bly states, "I want to make clear that this book does not seek to turn men against women, nor to return men to the domineering mode that has led to repression of women and their values for centuries" (Bly x). In short, the development of male thought should become more understandable through an exegesis of Fitzgerald’s early life; this examination of his life, the drive to become an individual, the necessity of physical and emotional wounds, and his dependency on women will be examined so that male thought can be more readily understood.

Like other males, the young Fitzgerald wanted to become an individual that was separate from his family. He
denounced the normality of his background and liked to think he was misplaced in his upper middle-class Minnesota family. As an adolescent Fitzgerald refused to acknowledge the black Irish side of his mother—it was tainted blood that reminded him he was not extraordinary. Often, males forsake their family background if it is not colourful enough; Fitzgerald like other men, invented a flashy tradition. This, in turn, exposes his strong desire to become an individual that is detached from his family. By ignoring a family background, a re-birth of sorts occurs.

For example, in Fitzgerald’s short story, "Absolution," Rudolph Miller changes his name to the more European and affluent sounding, Blatchford Sarnemington. Perhaps a better example of this need to shed an unromantic past, can be found in Fitzgerald’s novel, The Great Gatsby. Here, a young Jimmy Gatz is dissatisfied with the normality of his life and, when he meets millionaire Dan Cody, he undergoes a metamorphosis: "his [Gatz’s] parents were shiftless and unsuccessful farm people—his imagination had never really accepted them as his parents at all...so, he invented just the sort of Jay Gatsby that a seventeen-year-old boy would by likely to invent, and to this conception he was faithful to the end" (99). In recognition of this, Bly states that young males "already guessed that [they] were sons of kings and queens and somehow had landed mistakenly in our prosaic
and dumb family" (Bly 57). Herein, the drive to become an individual becomes more apparent; often a mother stands in the way of this particular desire and it is at this point problems occur.

While Fitzgerald tried to become an individual, he often both demeaned and attempted to please his mother. She presented a roadblock to his plans---this does not suggest that all mothers do, but in Fitzgerald's case, his mother did. Later in young adulthood, Fitzgerald wrote about this struggle for individualization in his first novel, This Side of Paradise. Indeed, Amory Blaine, the main character, is an autobiographical sketch of a younger Fitzgerald; while Blaine loves his mother and strives for her approval, he enjoys being away from her at a private school called St. Regis. Like Blaine, Fitzgerald also attended a private school out East. While away from his mother, whenever Blaine accomplishes anything noteworthy, he writes home and is showered with lauds; but, due to geography, he is still detached from her. In this, he is both an individual on his own terms, but receives the love and affirmation of good work when his psyche requires it.

This need to break from parents and become an established individual makes it more understandable why young males shut mothers and fathers out of their lives---parents are a constant reminder of "suppression." In
Fitzgerald’s work he is kinder to mother figures than fathers. This is probably due to the negative image Edmund Fitzgerald gave to him. His father, "gave his son his literary taste and his romantic nostalgia and set him a model of drink and failure—and of the romance of failure" (Brooks 2282). As Fitzgerald grew up, his father came to symbolize deluded Victorian dreams that men gave to their sons (Cross 4). In return for fallen dreams and the broken relationship between Fitzgerald and his father, he made all adult father figures look ridiculous. Bly comments that, “Hollywood writers, rather than confront their father in Kansas, take revenge on the remote father by making all adult men look like fools” (23).

Indeed, if fathers are portrayed at all in Fitzgerald’s work they are dead, evil, or simply non-existent (Mellow 75). For instance, in Tender is the Night, Dick Diver sums up a credo that could hold true for all of Fitzgerald’s men: “Good-by my father—good-by, all my fathers” (205). Here, Diver renounces both the past dreams of America’s men and also the patri-relationships that have molded his current political agenda.

Like so many other young males in the search for personal identity and individuality, Fitzgerald shed his parents’ control and gravitated towards what is known as a male mother. Here, young males think control of their destiny is theirs’, but the comfort and stability of an
adult is still nearby. Unlike parents, a young male could leave the male mother at any time; this type of non-commitment is attractive since both knowledge can be gained, and no ties seem to attach. In Fitzgerald's life his male mother was Father Fay; he met this priest while attending Princeton and he "supplanted Edmund Fitzgerald in Scott's life" (Allen 37). While at college, and even into World War I, Fitzgerald kept a close correspondence with Fr. Fay that grew into a strong friendship. So strong, in fact, that he dedicated his first novel This Side of Paradise to him. Bly states in his book that, "the arrival of the male mother...helps a man rebuild the bridge to his own greatness or essence" (182). This happens under the guise of feigned freedom—the male mother is not as threatening as a parent's.

Not only is Fitzgerald and Blaine adopted by a male mother, but so is Jimmy Gatz in The Great Gatsby; in essence, they all deny the worth of their fathers and accept the male mothers. Joan Allen agrees with this attachment to an older man: "Jay Gatsby figuratively kills his father when he denies his name and looks to Dan Cody as a his surrogate father" (Allen 68). Most males need to be recognized as individuals, but, at some point during early adulthood, they need an initiation into manhood.
As boys grow into men, adult men are not there to offer advice or ceremonious usher in a new age. Menstruation offers a distinctly new era in a girl's life that is recognized by not only women, but society (Bly 87). Since men do not have such a distinct initiation, young men often court danger and receive either physical or emotional wounds. These wounds, at least among the male community, show growth and can offer acceptance—this is important since it is at this point that individual males may begin to see themselves as adults.

These wounds—into—adulthood can be inflicted by the male mother, society or even peers. Even at the cost of poor grades, this deep need for acceptance drove Fitzgerald to join football. This need for acceptance also drove him to join Princeton's literary Triangle Club. Acceptance into the male society, even at staggering costs, is of monumental importance—any scars received in the struggle are worn proudly. It was this deep need for community among men that may have driven Fitzgerald to join the ranks of soldiers during World War I. It was also this type of insecurity that drove him to throw wild parties even if it meant financial bankruptcy. Towards the end of his life, he realized the initiation he was looking for eluded him. Everything seemed meaningless just before he died, and all of the ideals he believed in fell around him like a house of
cards. Even his friendships seemed unfulfilling for the initiation process. Fitzgerald stated that he once "believed in friendship...[but] now even that seems like a vaudevillian's cheap dream of heaven" (Allen 478). Bly agrees that males often substitute physical and emotional scars for initiation (Bly 29). These wounds, at least amongst the male community, show growth and grant acceptance.

This need for emotional scars may explain Fitzgerald's deep attachment to his wife, Zelda. Their rocky marriage sported an abundance of affairs, fights, and even public bouts of sexual mudslinging. Ironically, Fitzgerald may have stayed with Zelda because she gave him what men could not--the scars for advancement into manhood. Their competition hurt them equally. Scott Donaldson, in his book, Fool for Love, recognizes this competition perfectly: "in all [of Fitzgerald's] work he created no lovers whose emotional attachment was honest, mutual, and permanent; no unions in which partners equally shared burdens and blessings. Instead they engage in competition" (116).

Even though their marriage was mutually destructive, the Fitzgerald's staunchly maintained they were in love with each other (Petry 13). They gave each other what they needed; Zelda wanted the rich lifestyle, and Fitzgerald, insecure and wanting acceptance, may have needed the
emotional scars. Even if Fitzgerald did not psychologically
need the scars from Zelda, there are other reasons that
might have kept him with her.

Since Fitzgerald could not find acceptance directly in
the male community, he turned to strong women in the hopes
they could lead him to understanding himself. This is not
to say that Fitzgerald preferred a woman who was completely
in power; rather, he once stated that he, "believed that it
was a man's world and that a woman should not directly
ursurp [men's] position of leadership" (Donaldson 123). As
Bly states, men "are life-preserving but not exactly
life-giving. Ironically, you often see them with strong
women who radiate energy" (Bly 3). Fitzgerald wanted a
strong woman that offered positive life-giving energy, but
also one that needed to be taken care of. According to
Matthew Bruccoli in his work, The Notebooks of F. Scott
Fitzgerald, Fitzgerald once wrote, "when I like women I want
to own them, to dominate them, to have them admire me"
(146). Zelda was tremendously active, but financially she
acted like child. Her desire for posh luxuries granted
Fitzgerald the ability to take care of her. In fact, Zelda
once said that, "money brings happiness...the right kind
of perfume and a smart pair of shoes are great comforts to
the feminine soul" (Mellow 189).

Fitzgerald searched for initiation and acceptance all
his life; he tried to find it from his peers, male mothers
and even from the women around him. Due to this vain search for his male identity, he, fortunately, came up with scores of short stories and several novels. Due to Fitzgerald, contemporary readers have an outstanding social biography of the times. Inadvertently, Fitzgerald has captured three distinct groups of women in his literature, and, while trying to understand himself, he has blueprinted salient changes in women's social makeup.

His writing is often mistaken as pro-rich and anti-female, but a closer inspection shows both an insecure writer and a man upset with social mores of affluence; Fitzgerald was also acutely aware of the new trends in the roles females could act in society. If Fitzgerald appears convoluted at times, it probably has much to do with the statements noted above and also the changing roles of women. As Jacques Lacan said, our absence brings about our presence. In other words, our identities are formed by comparing ourselves to those around us—the absence in others composes our identity.

We all have slanted views of ourselves and will never completely understand who we are; Fitzgerald felt the same way, except that he was grappling with post-Victorian ideology, struggling to understand his political views,
trying to pin down his relationship with other males while at the same time also participating in a wavering social viewpoint of how women should act.

This brief investigation of how men think and react to women will hopefully bring about a better understanding of how Fitzgerald probably thought. Males, through this limited examination, appear to have a strong desire to become an individual, need wounds for admission into adulthood, and may turn to women if males do not offer a sufficient initiation. It is exceptionally important to note once again that while Bly's work is certainly useful, it represents only one view of the male development into manhood.
CHAPTER THREE: A Male View of Feminist Criticism

Critical theory, while following the crude outlines of a structure, is often difficult to pin down. Feminist criticism is as equally elusive. In fact, it is often belittled for its lack of structure. In "Towards a Feminist Poetics," Showalter states that "the absence of a clearly articulated theory makes feminist criticism perpetually vulnerable to attacks—not even feminist critics seem to agree what it is that they mean to profess and defend" (127). What is presented in this paper is a unique version; while it may share congruences with other theorists, it is by no means an absolute. What is presented here serves the purpose of the paper and draws largely on the work of many women, especially that of Elaine Showalter.

Bringing my own episteme, and how I view feminist criticism, to both past literature and a bygone historical epoch, will alter the past. In "Dancing Through the Minefield," Annette Kolodny states that "feminist literary theorists implicitly introduce the observation that...choices and evaluations of current literature have the effect either of solidifying or of reshaping...the past" (132). This, of course, is why a considerable amount of time was used to explain the male filters and why Fitzgerald was chosen as a representative for women's roles. Sarah Fryer, a critic on Fitzgerald's women, notes that she "captures the American woman in the midst of the changing
society of the period between World War I and World II in all her glory and confusion" (Fryer 17).

Through feminist criticism, an exegesis of gender roles can be conducted in Fitzgerald’s prose; in turn, an understanding of the cultural developments will be gained. In Kolodny’s “Dancing Through the Minefield,” she encourages society to re-examine cultural norms: "For what we are asking be scrutinized are nothing less than shared cultural assumptions so deeply rooted and so long ingrained that...we have ceased to recognized them as such" (147). By examining these roles we trace their development and understand the process that constructed the dialectic symbol. Post-structural theorist Paul DeMan called this the nostalgia of the symbol; he believed we have forgotten the process that went into making a symbol:

Whereas the symbol postulates the possibilities of an identity or identification, allegory designates primarily a distant in relation to its own origin, and, renouncing the nostalgia and the desire to coincide, it establishes its language in the void of temporal difference. In so doing, it prevents the self from an illusory identification with the non-self, which is now fully, though painfully, recognized as a non-self. (Adams 210)
This association with the non-self is something women have had to deal with and overcome in past centuries. Indeed, the non-self has not been replaced by the self, and according to Lacan, can never be achieved; nevertheless, both sexes continue the search. The symbol DeMan writes about can also postulate the constructed paradigms for women over the course of this century; while they may be liberating and diverse, they also alter identities due to the uncertain process behind the product.

Elaine Showalter, in an attempt to more fully understand the intermixing of gender roles and the lost non-self of women, constructed a simple diagram of these two overlapping circles. While Oxford anthropologist Edwin Ardenär invented the diagram, she adapted it to serve her purpose of more fully understanding the progress of female identity.

The shaded area in the middle represents the space where both men and women understand each other and share cultural beliefs. Where the circles overlap, is where combined knowledge overlaps. Many gender roles originate from, and dance around, this area of Showalter’s diagram.
Actually, the progression of this paper linearly tracks through these two circles. In other words, this paper starts from the far left with an examination of how males think, and, as examples will be cited from Fitzgerald’s fiction, the area where the circles overlap will be covered; finally, the far right, also known as the “female”, will be examined at the end.

The shaded crescent to the far left is where men venture; this space, while belonging solely to men, is understood by women due to patriarchy over the centuries. This crescent holds all the myths and realities of what it means to be male in our society and, since women have been forced into the construct of listening to males, this area is accepted and firmly a part of our cultural background. Earlier in the paper this crescent was already explained; everything within this area constructs the filters Fitzgerald and I are peering through.

Finally, the unshaded crescent to the far right is the area where only females are culturally allowed; in the past, patriarchy has tried to make this appear illusory because once women realize this area exists, they can start formulating an identity of their own—women started to seriously explore this previously undiscovered country at the beginning of this century. In other words, men who are terrified of women as equals do not want this crescent
explored because they have no control over it; unlike the male crescent that is a part of society, this area is not and its existence ultimately undermines patriarchal authority.

It is because of the ambiguity of this crescent that both Fitzgerald and I cannot completely understand the female episteme--neither one of us can experience life as women can; nevertheless, we can explore it and draw some generalizations. What Fitzgerald and I do understand are the shaded areas; remember, it is here that the two genders overlap and share knowledge. In fact, Fitzgerald realized this when he said, "I am half-feminine-- that is, my mind is... my characters are all Scott Fitzgerald. Even the feminine characters are feminine Scott Fitzgeralds" (Mellow 37).

Once again, Fitzgerald proves to be a good source for examining these roles since he understands that they were not inseparable. Thus, Fitzgerald is able to examine, "the impact conventional male chauvinism had on women of his era" (Fryer 71). This is by no means a vindication of his chauvinism; rather he recognized both the overlapping and the power of patriarchy.

Showalter also outlined three distinct groups that mark the development of women's identity: the "feminine", "feminist" and "female." While these categories are
exclusory, as labels are by definition, they offer a neat structure into which Fitzgerald's characters can be placed. Even though Showalter designed these hypothetical categories strictly for women, they can be expanded to include males. The reasoning for this rests in the overlapping of many gender roles that was discussed earlier. Men can be placed into some of these groups as easily as women because of the outlined shaded areas of Showalter's circles; remember, both genders share many congruences. After these three groups have been outlined, each will be more thoroughly examined and characters will be placed into them. It is important to remember these categories are not strict; characters placed in them often contain many qualities prevalent to other groups--for the sake of this paper, however, the characters will be labeled as "feminine," "feminist," or "female," even though a character may embody attributes found outside of the group in which they were placed.

The first group that Showalter outlines is called "the feminine"; she believes it spans from an unknown time until 1980. As stated before, the attributes of the characters in this group are mainly that of submissiveness. This stems from the beginning of industrial oppression to control individual output and input. Women that grew up before and during this time appeared submissive and apparently allowed men to construct their identity. In "What Kind of Husbands
do 'Jimmies' Make?' Fitzgerald said that "Women, however, are always just what men make them. In 1840, women were required to faint to show their delicacy--in 1924, women were required to dissipate to show their sportsmanship" (187).

Women caught in society at this time became what men required them to be--they sacrificed their identity. This began early in life when their fathers told them what to be. As Fryer stated in her book, women at this time were "striving always to please their egotistical young husbands. just as they learned to live with their father's belittling attitude towards them as they were growing up" (61). The system, even as it does today, told women what to believe and they, for the most part, complied.

The next category of women is entitled the "feminist" and, according to Showalter, it began in the 1880's and lost momentum in the 1920's. Of course, an era does not just stop; rather, it carries over into the next. Women in this role presented a grave threat to those men still firmly entrenched in the thought that it was a man's world and a woman should not be involved in it. Feminist women joined the ranks of men and began to compete in traditionally male-dominated venues. The way this was accomplished was to
adopt those attributes normally associated with the male: strength, dominance, and assertiveness.

Fitzgerald acknowledged this type of woman and understandably was secretly frightened of them. Women who adopted the male role to achieve what they wanted began to undermine the traditional roles society had been comfortable with. Fitzgerald saw these women as giving up their femininity. Sarah Fryer claims that "Fitzgerald’s customary point of view was that successful career women invariably had to sacrifice their femininity in the quest for what were supposedly masculine forms of achievement" (98).

Aside from the obvious threat to Fitzgerald’s male psyche, he might have been skeptical of this type of woman due to his background. Fitzgerald grew up under the Augustine ideology that sex was evil and women tried to tempt men into sin (Allen 10). Coupling this childhood ideology with the women’s movement during his early twenties, it becomes more clear why he was afraid, but yet drawn to, this type of woman.

Fitzgerald eventually grew used to this group, and indeed, married Zelda, who was a flapper that embodied many of the above qualities. After all, she was domineering, flaunted males and the social mores of the time, and generally did as she pleased. In the anthology of Fitzgerald’s collected essays, The Notebooks of F. Scott Fitzgerald, he wrote that “Women have only one role, their
own charm—all the rest is mimicry" (73). This statement, while being exceptionally chauvinistic, holds a lot of merit; if we examine the first two categories of women, we discover that both groups mimic either what men tell them to be, or they mimic the attributes of what society holds to be distinctly male. The third group, the "female," rejects the mimicry; it is here that women establish an identity of their own.

The final group Showalter outlines is called "the female"; as she states, it began in the 1920's and runs to the present. Unlike the other two groups, this one can only be understood by females since it is a realm in which males cannot participate; it is much like the masculine crescent of Showalter's overlapping circles except that it has not been accepted into society until recently. In the Ardener circle, this category would be the unshaded crescent to the far right.

This category can only be experienced after one or both of the previous two. Once a woman discovers she has assumed either the qualities a man wants, or the traditional qualities of a man, she realizes her identity is not her own. When this occurs, she enters the realm of the "female"—here she constructs her own identity. Men typically do not understand this area of female culture. In "Towards a Feminist Poetics," Showalter says that
"gynocritics begins at the point when we free ourselves from the linear absolutes of male literary history, stop trying to fit women between the lines of the male tradition, and focus instead on the newly visible world of female culture" (131).

Since these three groups developed over the span of Fitzgerald's life, he came into contact with all types of women. Theorist Michel Foucault believed that authors are a mirror of their society and background; therefore, the women in Fitzgerald's literature represent these three groups. Perhaps better than other writers of this time, Fitzgerald realized the diversity of women. For instance, he was raised by the "feminine" qualities of his mother, was married to the "feminist" Zelda, and fell in love with the "female" Sheliah Graham towards the end of his life. With this type of biographical contact, his characters are often as diverse and changing as actual women of the time.
CHAPTER FOUR: The Feminine

The first of the three Showalter groups to be examined will be the "feminine." This particular category spanned from approximately the beginning of the British Industrial Revolution to the 1880s. Even though, according to Showalter, this era lost momentum forty years before any of Fitzgerald's work became published, it was so deeply ingrained in society's agenda that women were still influenced by the characteristics of this group.

Many of the staunch Victorian concepts of femininity applied to women of this group; it was expected that "feminine" women were delicate, beautiful, overly-maternal, and submissive—they should not be bothered with the ugliness of the industrial and economic world. In short, they were treated like objects that needed to be taken care of through luxury. Due to the above, women of the time were often forced to marry out of economic necessity: "As women, they knew that any marriage they make must be a compromise, for their society does not yet allow women to establish their own independent identities; their fates are inextricably bound to the martial choices they make" (Fryer 20).

During Fitzgerald's young adulthood, he believed these requirements and recognized that many women in society demanded wealth from a man. As stated earlier, this was probably due to his upbringing by a mother who was herself enmeshed in a Victorian background. Later in his life,
Fitzgerald began to look beyond this group, and realized the existence of the other two Showalter categories; however, these will be explored later.

This group, with its rigid parameters of femininity, is often found in both Fitzgerald's early and middle works of fiction. To begin with, many of the women in Fitzgerald's short stories fit into the parameters of this "feminine" group. For instance, Jonquil Cary in "The Sensible Thing" is beautiful, aloof, pursued by many men, and demands prospective husbands to be financially stable—a typical attribute of the "feminine." She, "fends off the proposal of George O'Kelly until he is ready for her. By this code word—also used by Rosalind Connage to Amory Blaine and Zelda Sayre to Fitzgerald—Jonquil meant that her suitor must first establish himself financially" (Donaldson 104). The protagonist, George O'Kelly, is deeply in love with Jonquil, but he "was so new to poverty that had any one denied the uniqueness of his case they would have been astounded" (Fitzgerald 290). Even though Jonquil says, "George I love you with all my heart, and I don't see how I could love anyone else but you," she later states that marrying him would not "seem to be the sensible thing" (Fitzgerald 295). The reasoning for this rests in George’s inability to cater to her needs of financial security.
Jonquil, while exuding femininity and also an air of submissiveness to her suitors, demands certain standards of luxury; in other words, she wants to be taken care of. This feeling is typically a part of the construct of women in this particular group. Of course, the degree of financial stability changes from character to character in Fitzgerald's texts.

One of Fitzgerald's women that is of the "feminine" group, yet not overly concerned with wealth and its importance to marriage, is Kismine Washington in "Diamond as Big as the Ritz." Through her, an understanding of Fitzgerald can also be gained. While most of the women he portrays in this group require financial affluence, it is not absolutely necessary. Kismine's father, Broddack Washington, literally owns a diamond as large as the Ritz Hotel and is disguised as a mountain. Anyone who ever gets inside his mansion is not allowed to leave because Broddack does not want the United States government to discover his treasure. To solve this problem of incoming visitors, he simply kills them after their company gets tiring. The main character, John Unger, visits the mansion and falls in love with Kismine. When the time comes for Unger's visit to "end," Kismine and he sneak out amidst an air strike by the United States Air Force. Kismine's disregard for wealth in marriage becomes apparent at this point because she has sunk
into poverty after the escape. Later she says to Unger, "How strange it seems to be here with one dress and a penniless fiancee!" (Fitzgerald 216). While she talks about being a good wife and still exhibits the qualities of femininity found in women of this group, a need for wealth is not present. Even though wealth is not overly important to her, she is a part of this group because she allows men to construct her identity as a woman.

Aside from the qualities of assuming what a man wants a woman to become, another aspect of this group is the maternal; rather than child-bearing, what is implied here is a need to take care of people. In Fitzgerald's acclaimed short story, "May Day," he couples these two aspects through the character of Edith Bradin. She has recently graduated from Yale and is going to an alumni dance where she knows she will meet her old lover, Gordon Sterrett. She has not seen him for several years and entertains the thought of his affluence as an artist. In short, she wants to take care of Gordon: "there was a helplessness in him that she wanted to protect...she wanted to get married" (Fitzgerald 114). When the two finally meet and Gordon says, "I'm as poor as a church-mouse...I'm a failure," Edith changes her mind (Fitzgerald 118). According to Fitzgerald, this maternal aspect of love towards a man probably will not come forth in
the "feminine" woman unless financial stability is readily apparent.

Of course, Fitzgerald does not believe that by adhering to the qualities of the "feminine" group happiness occurs. In the past three examples, the women who have been exposed have only reached the stage of deciding whether or not to marry a certain individual. In one of his best works of short fiction, "Winter Dreams," he goes beyond the stage of the woman's decision and explores how her choice affected her later. The setting is a golf course near Black Bear Lake, and the main character, Dexter Green, is caught by the "arresting beauty" of Judy Jones. Like Jonquil, she has a plethora of suitors constantly milling around her, and she expects that the one she eventually marries will be exceptionally rich. In fact, if a man falls for Judy and is not wealthy, her interest quickly wanes. In the story Judy says, "There was a man I cared about, and this afternoon he told me out of a clear sky that he was poor as a church-mouse. He'd never even hinted it before...my interest in him wasn't strong enough to survive the shock" (Fitzgerald 226).

Since Judy has been raised under the construct of male thought, she is deeply hurt when she is not happy. She has invested in many of the values Showalter describes as the "feminine"; nevertheless, she does not understand why
happiness has not found her. Frustrated, she states, "I'm more beautiful than anyone else...why can't I be happy?" (Fitzgerald 232). At the end of the novel, Dexter and Judy do not get married. Instead, she marries the wealthy Lud Simms and becomes dead-locked into a marriage where she is both an aged mother and an unloved wife. Judy has followed the outlines to happiness that men set for women of the "feminine" group, but she still remains unhappy. Certainly, she lives in extreme affluence, but she is miserable even though she emulates most of the qualities found in the "feminine" group.

Several women in Fitzgerald's novels also fit into this particular Showalter group. In The Beautiful and the Damned, Gloria Patch loses her identity in the wake of her husband, Anthony. This involved novel, which strongly parallels Fitzgerald and Zelda's marriage at the time, portrays Gloria as submissive, beautiful, materialistic, dependent, and eager to please Anthony at whatever cost. The best example of her willingness to please her husband at the expense of herself and her own morals rests in her decision after she discovers she is pregnant. Even though they are married and the child is Anthony's, she decides to get an abortion. Her reasoning for this is not based on ethical or even personal grounds, but, rather, on her crazed desire to stay beautiful for Anthony. The life of her child
is of secondary importance; herein, we see Fitzgerald's biting social commentary on society's view of beauty. It is unfortunate that this side of Fitzgerald is generally overlooked when studied in classes, and it is little wonder that he is often seen as incredibly chauvinistic and pro-rich.

Another character that exemplifies the traits of the "feminine" is Rosemary Hoyt in *Tender is the Night*. She is a budding, young actress who has starred in several internationally known movies. At the beginning of the novel she becomes close friends with the protagonist, Dick Diver. Even though Dick is married, their platonic relationship skirts on the edge of something more. Due to both Dick's biological seniority and his identity as a male, Rosemary becomes submissive to him and wants his advice. In the novel Rosemary "like most women...liked to be told how she should feel, and she liked Dick telling her which things were ridiculous and which things were sad" (58). Rosemary is certainly a part of the "feminine" category at this point because Dick is constructing feelings for her. The narrator's voice rings of chauvinism, but, as the book progresses, the tone changes and so does the character of Rosemary Hoyt; later in this essay, she will also be examined as a woman who fits into the category of "feminist."
While the above examples may clarify the type of women that was predominant at the turn of this century, there is one character that embodies the group better than the rest. In possibly his best novel, *The Great Gatsby*, Daisy Buchanan epitomizes the "feminine." Within this novel Daisy, a beautiful woman, falls in love with Jay Gatsby, but he is too poor to support her, so he leaves to fight World War I. Daisy is delicate, beautiful, sought after by many men, and marries rich because society told her to.

Daisy is, however, astute at understanding the roles society places on women. This is perhaps best seen when she gives birth to her first child. After the delivery, she eagerly asks the sex of the baby. When she finds out it's a girl, she gets very depressed and says, "I hope she'll be a fool—that's the best thing a girl can be in this world, a beautiful little fool" (16). Daisy realizes girls do not have the same opportunities in life as boys do. This is probably due to her self-realization of the process; she has gone through the cycle herself and, like Gloria Patch and Judy Jones, realizes how unfulfilling it is.

This confusion over the ideology she once believed in eventually draws Daisy back to Gatsby; when she discovers how painful her life with her husband is, she wants change.
Even though Tom gives Daisy vast amounts of wealth, she is treated like an object. Tom's indifference makes her desire the past; hence, she falls in love with Gatsby. In many respects he is the antithesis of Tom: he worships Daisy, is interested in all she has to say, offers a mysterious side of his life to her that she does not understand, and, in short, appears to offer dreams. When the confrontation between these two diametric men occurs, Daisy must choose one or the other. She frantically pleads with them to stop arguing and then says she loves them. Tom symbolizes the man that offers her the qualities of the "feminine," and Gatsby, on the other hand, offers her the "feminist." This struggle symbolizes Daisy's confusion over the differing ideologies presented to women at the time. In recognition of this, Sarah Fryer says that "Daisy's confusion over her relationships with the two principal men in her life reflects the gender confusion that was rampant during Fitzgerald's era" (Fryer 55). In the end, after a car accident Gatsby takes the blame for, he is eventually shot by Wilson who is a crazed auto-mechanic. Daisy returns to Tom.

As stated earlier, men can also fit into this particular Showalter group because many of the qualities of
this group are also exhibited by men; in the diagram of the
two overlapping circles, the "feminine" category fits into
the shaded area where the two circles overlap—hence the
genders can overlap as well. Interestingly, these men who
are "feminine" typically exhibit the attributes of
submissiveness, but not necessarily a need for wealth. More
important, aside from the above qualities, they also share a
maternal need to take care of women and children. While
this may be a social construct, it is important to note that
few of Fitzgerald's women portray maternal instincts—there
are far more men that have this attribute.

For example, in Fitzgerald’s short story "Head and
Shoulders," Horace Tarbox, after he wins the hand of actress
Marcia Meadow, sacrifices his dreams to make her and their
yet-to-be-born child happy. According to Robert Bly, men
often place other women's troubles before their own. He
states that a man "is often more in touch with women’s pain
than with his own, and...will offer to carry a women's
pain before [checking] with his own heart to see if this
labor is proper in his situation" (64). This instinct to
carry another's pain is the kind of maternal quality found
in "feminine" men.

In the story, Tarbox, a child prodigy, becomes a
trapeze artist in order to provide for his family. While he
is working, Marcia studies books and eventually surpasses
him intellectually; by the end of the story she has written
a book on Sandra Pepys—essentially they switch roles. Ironically, just as Daisy and Judy Jones were disappointed in the male construct of the "feminine," so is Tarbox. He, like many of the above women, discovers how unfulfilling his life is. At the end of the story, Marcia meets Horace's hero, Anton Laurier. He is jealous that his dreams were deferred and Marcia picked them up. He says to Laurier, "About raps. Don't answer them! Let them alone—have a padded door" (Fitzgerald 24). This talk of raps on the door is how Marcia entered his life, and now, after he has assumed the maternal and "feminine," he wishes she never entered his life.

Another male in Fitzgerald's texts that sacrifices his dreams to carry another person's pain is Dick Diver in Tender is the Night. Diver, a psychiatrist, falls in love with one of his patients, Nicole Warren, and, because of his feelings for her, he tries to both love her and heal her. He, much like the maternal Tarbox, allows her to become what she wants in spite of the fact that it drags him down both as a person and a doctor. Nicole, who later becomes his wife, notices her effect on him and says, "I think it's my fault—I've ruined you...you used to want to create things—now you seem to want to smash them up" (267). In short, like Judy, Tarbox, and Daisy, Dick finds disillusionment behind the grand design of the "feminine"
and his ruin becomes clear to those about him.

Another example of Dick’s maternal need to care for others is apparent in his treatment of the young Rosemary Hoyt. While they were lovers at first, the older Dick became more like a father figure. In fact, once Hoyt’s mother, Mrs. Speers, leaves her in Dick’s care, Rosemary does not miss her: “[Rosemary] was conscience-stricken because she did not miss her mother at all” (76). Essentially, Dick has replaced her as a maternal force. Later in the novel, he and Mrs. Speers assumes the same plane in Rosemary’s mind when she says, “You and Mother are the only two people in the world I care about” (219).

Much like Nicole, Rosemary began as a lover and then Dick felt this need to take care of her. This maternal sense of the “feminine,” while at first helping both women, eventually ruins Dick. Interestingly, this need of the maternal may be a form of patriarchal oppression. While Dick helps them, he may be serving a need of his own. In other words, by taking care of women, he is putting them in a position of needing him. This need, while definitely still a part of the “feminine,” may be enacted to keep his power intact. In the end, it backfires as the two women rise above him. Dick is ruined.
Finally, the only male character that cares intensely for a child is Charlie Wales in Fitzgerald's short story, "Babylon Revisited." In this text, Wales is an autobiographical outline of Fitzgerald: he is a recovering alcoholic, his wife is dead (Zelda was in a mental institution at the time the story was written), he is virtually bankrupt, and his daughter is under the care of foster parents. As Wales is trying to piece his life together, he travels to Paris in order to talk to his daughter's guardians, Marion and Lincoln Peters. When he meets this married couple, he says, "I'm awfully anxious to have Honoria [in my home]. . . I want to ask you to reconsider the matter" (Fitzgerald 624). This lonely father wants to love his child again. More than any other short story, Charlie's maternal instinct is selfless and the piece rings of Fitzgerald's pleading desire for a reprieve from his past mistakes—it is a public apology since he realizes there is a great void between him and his own daughter, Scottie.

In spite of Wales' efforts, they decide not to let him have Honoria because they do not believe Wales is telling the truth regarding his recovery from alcoholism. When he learns that he cannot have Honoria for at least another half year, he falls deep into self-pity.
He would come back some day; they couldn't make him pay forever. But he wanted his child, and nothing was much good now, besides that fact. He wasn't young any more, with a lot of nice thoughts and dreams to have by himself. He was absolutely sure Helen wouldn't have wanted him to be so alone. (Fitzgerald 633)

This is one of Fitzgerald's most moving works of fiction and it encompasses all of the qualities of the "feminine." Wales is a spent man that must conform to the qualities of the "feminine" in order to gain back his daughter. He must be submissive, show that he is both financially and socially capable of caring for her, and must also exhibit a strong sense of the maternal. It is indeed ironic that the most positive image of the "feminine" radiates from a man.
CHAPTER FIVE: The Feminist

The second hypothetical Showalter group spans approximately from the 1880s to the 1920s. Like the "feminine," this group is also a part of the shaded area of the overlapping circles; consequently, this means some qualities of the "feminine" will be present; however, the majority of attributes derive from the "feminist."

The qualities prevalent to this category are those traditionally associated with males. Women in this group typically assume "male" characteristics in order to get ahead by playing by male rules.

Like the "feminine," women in this group, while certainly challenging male power and discourse, were no closer to gaining an identity for themselves than "feminine" women. The reason for this lies in both the "feminine" and "feminist" willingness to become what men said they should be. Like "feminine" women, the "feminist" merely assumed male attributes. In either case, both groups were not constructed by women.

Throughout his work, the most recognizable women to fit into this group are the flappers—often they exhibit a flaunting of social mores (especially those traditionally associated with women), a desire to do as they wish, and they are generally strong characters that men are often attracted to and afraid of.
In Fitzgerald's short story, "Head and Shoulders," Marcia Meadow fits into the above category. At the beginning of the story, Marcia, in her rather ironic job as an actress, is charming and exceptionally "feminine." Once she is pregnant, she gives up acting, both literally and figuratively, and, as the "charm" of her femininity dissipates, she becomes more "feminist." At the end of the story, Marcia has effectively replaced her husband's role.

Since women were not eagerly accepted as writers during Fitzgerald's life, there were few women that participated in writing. When Marcia assumes the role of a scholar, she is, at the time this story was written, walking on ground typically reserved for males.

By no means does the above say that women should not be scholarly; rather it is an example of how a woman, at the time of the "feminist" group, was perceived by society. A better example of a "feminist" lies in another character from a Fitzgerald story. In his short story, "Bernice Bobs Her Hair," Marjorie Harvey exhibits both the qualities found in the "feminine" and the "feminist"; even though some "feminine" attributes are present, she is predominantly a "feminist" flapper. In this story, Marjorie's cousin Bernice, is a prudish young woman raised under the staunch femininity of Victorianism. As the story progresses, the reader learns of Marjorie's adroitness in dealing with men.
and of her contempt for other women. In fact, the reader learns that Marjorie does not like the company of women at all; Marjorie "had no female intimates--she considered girls stupid" (Fitzgerald 29). Marjorie's need to abandon women who psychologically remind her of feminism exposes her "feminist" construct; she also exhibits her "feminist" attitudes through her need to be around men rather than women.

This does not imply that she has forsaken all "feminine" qualities. Indeed, like "feminine" women, Marjorie relies heavily on her good looks. The reader learns this when she says, "If I'd been born irretrievably ugly I'd never have forgiven my parents for bringing me into the world" (Fitzgerald 34). Here, Marjorie's "feminine" side is apparent and, as the story continues, the reader understands that she uses her good looks to flaunt social mores--her willingness to become the hunter and not the hunted in romantic relationships exemplified her "feminist" qualities.

Like other feminists who try to expose "feminine" women to "feminist" thinking, Marjorie does the same for Bernice. Her cousin is exceptionally shy and believes the qualities of the "feminine"; Marjorie, in a quasi-Pygmalian way, tries to update Bernice in the art of becoming a flapper. In short, Marjorie symbolizes a "feminist" who tries to succeed both by male rules and also tries to undermine the
traditional roles of women by exposing an alternative lifestyle.

Through Fitzgerald's short stories, the reader also understands how men reacted to "feminist" women; men typically hid their true identity from these women so that they would both not be hurt, and they could also establish power over feminists. Regardless, to protect their power and get ahead, Fitzgerald men often deceived feminists into loving them. Elaborate lies were constructed to lull these women into believing a false identity, and then the disguise would be lifted at the end to expose a man that a "feminist" originally shunned at the beginning of the story.

One example of this type of deception can be found in Fitzgerald's story "The Offshore Pirate." The main character, Ardita, knows she does not need men: "she had implicit confidence in her ability to take care of herself under any and all circumstances" (Fitzgerald 78). Not only is she confident in herself, but she states that she is "not afraid of anything in heaven or earth" (Fitzgerald 79). The defiance towards men that is common among Fitzgerald’s feminists is readily apparent here; furthermore, Ardita, whose last name is never mentioned, shuns men in whom she is not interested. When Toby Moore is rejected by Ardita, he disguises himself as a Carlyle, a convict, and then hi-jacks her boat. After an extensive deception, he admits
that he is really Toby, and Ardita welcomes him with open arms. In fact, she says, "I want you to lie to me just as sweetly as you know how for the rest of my life" (Fitzgerald 96). Here a man must hide his true identity; moreover, after this has been accomplished, the lies must continue to be perpetuated. In short, it appears that Fitzgerald believes men cannot be honest with this type of woman.

Another woman that exemplifies this Fitzgerald archetype is Rags Martin in "Rags Martin-Jones and the Prince of Wales." Like Ardita, Rags will not go out with John Chestnut. She claims that not only is John boring, but all American men are boring: "Americans don’t have any imagination...as soon as I looked over the Americans on the boat, I knew I could never marry one" (Fitzgerald 277). Like Ardita, she is implying that men in this country are too unassertive and weak for her.

Realizing this, John, like Toby, disguises himself and convinces Rags that he is the Prince of Wales. He stages an assassination attempt on his life, and Rags falls in love with him at the end of the story. Like "The Offshore Pirate," in order for a man, especially an American man, to gain this type of woman, deception is an essential ingredient. In both cases a mild, and, in many ways, "feminine" male, has to become powerful in order to be on
the same plane as a "feminist"; however, since it is
feigned, it does not seem that it will last.

Aside from the "feminist" characters in Fitzgerald's
short stories, many others can be found in his novels. One
eexample of this type of woman is Rosalind Connage in This
Side of Paradise. Trying to figure out which group to place
Rosalind in proved difficult—in many cases she is both
"feminine" and "feminist." It is important to reiterate
that these Showalter groups are not strict—fluctuation
between one or more can occur. Like many of the "feminine"
women discussed earlier, she uses her beauty and appears
submissive on the surface. Additionally, marriage is
important to her as she does not want the burden of becoming
a complete "feminist." When the protagonist, Amory Blaine,
asks her to marry him, she says, "I'm taking the hardest
course, the strongest course. Marrying you would be failure
and I never fail" (179). Even though the above statement
may appear to be "feminine" at first, it has tones of a
"feminist."

Rosalind is very much the "feminist" flapper in her
promiscuity and her playing the social game by male rules.
Often she is the aggressive initiator in romance, and, after
the male is hooked, she slides neatly back into a woman who
feigns submissiveness—she doesn't really want to be
dominated though. In a discussion with Blaine, Rosalind
states she is not the "feminine" woman who believes in the 
Victorianism of her mother. This becomes clear when she 
says, "I'm not really feminine you know—in my mind" (161). 
This implies that she is "feminine" in body, but her mind is 
strictly "feminist." Rosalind, more than any other 
character, is an intricate intermixing of these two 
differing schools of thought; she is the embodiment of the 
confusion women often felt at this time of history.

Another woman who also radiates many "feminist" 
qualities is Jordan Baker in The Great Gatsby. Unlike 
Rosalind, Jordan rarely, if ever, uses the "feminine" to 
advance her position as a "feminist"; furthermore, she does 
not rely on men and does not believe in the values of the 
"feminine" Victorian era—this is reflected in her career as 
a professional golfer. Nick Carraway, the narrator of the 
novel, notices Jordan’s staunch independence when he says, 
"there was Jordan beside me, who, unlike Daisy, was too wise 
ever to carry well-forgotten dreams from age to age" (136). 
Remembering earlier that Daisy was placed into the 
"feminine" category, the contrast between these two women 
becomes more obvious. In fact, Daisy and Jordan are the 
only women that hold a great deal of limelight throughout 
this Fitzgerald novel; this sets them against each other to
the point that the reader can see the clash of ideologies between women of the time.

A woman who adopts traits traditionally associated with males in order to get ahead in the world is Rosemary Hoyt’s mother in Tender is the Night. Mrs. Speers, while exhibiting little maternal love for Rosemary, exudes a great desire to launch Rosemary’s acting career. In other words, she is the impetus for Rosemary’s success and often decides with whom Rosemary associates. Indeed, at the beginning of the novel when Rosemary first meets Diver, she says to him that her mother, "decides business matters. I couldn’t do without her" (24).

Like other feminists, Mrs. Speers uses beauty, coupled with “male” qualities, in order to get ahead; here, the reader finds an aged mother using her daughter’s beauty to get ahead socially. Mrs. Speers is more like a manager than a mother: “Her mother was pleased that [Rosemary] had done so accurately what she was told to do, but she wanted to launch her out and away” (25). Here, Mrs. Speers is using her daughter as an instrument to get both of them ahead; through these two characters, an interesting combination of both the "feminine" and the "feminist" can be seen.

Rosemary does not remain strictly "feminine" throughout the course of the novel; towards the end, she has evolved
into a "feminist" that plays the social game by male rules. Indeed, when Dick meets her after a long period of separation, Rosemary says, "I was just a little girl when I met you, Dick. Now I'm a woman" (209). Rosemary, at the end of the novel, still values her mother's opinions but makes decisions on her own—she has grown up. Here, Fitzgerald believes the "feminine" is childish, and it is the adult woman who acts "feminist." Indeed, it takes more courage to be a "feminist" because one has to fight society and assume responsibility for decisions that otherwise would not have to be worried about. It is important to remember, however, that while it takes courage to be a feminist, the construct is not made by women—it is still male.

Like the "feminine" group that was outlined earlier, men also fit into this category. To quickly review, the reason for this lies in the shaded area of Arden's overlapping circles. This particular Showalter group can still contain the presence of males—it is the "female" group, which will be discussed later, that is devoid of male consciousness.

Men that fit into this group possess those qualities which seem so much a part of the male construct. Perhaps the male character that best assumes these attributes is
Amory Blaine in *This Side of Paradise*. Men at the time were typically not maternal and did nearly everything for their own advantage; they were taught to be competitive and selfish. Amory realizes this trait and, at the end of the novel, he sadly questions if it is correct: "This selfishness is not only part of me. It is the most living part" (233). With this type of questioning, the reader begins to wonder if Fitzgerald believes "feminist" qualities are not only wrong for women but also for men.

Opposite to Amory, most of Fitzgerald's men are not so easily defined. There are two other characters that are inextricably yoked together as a conflict between "feminine" and "feminist"---they are Nick Carraway and Jay Gatsby in *The Great Gatsby*. Rather than split them into their respective groups, it seems that they are one entity that symbolizes Fitzgerald's own psyche. To begin with, Nick is not only a narrator but also a compassionate man that exhibits a maternal instinct to take care of people and their problems. In the novel, Nick is eager to solve other people's dilemmas: he wishes to help Daisy with her marriage, he wants to help Gatsby, and he is also concerned about Jordan.

Gatsby, on the other hand, is a dreamer. He strives for what he wants until he either gets it or is destroyed. Gatsby exhibits the qualities of what it meant to be a man
in the 1920's and, in his fantasy of winning Daisy back, he assumes the qualities of a strong male who does not back down. Unlike Nick, he cares more about himself and more about winning Daisy back; she is little more than an object to him, and, like an object, he cares little about her feelings.

Consequently, Nick and Gatsby are both bound together because neither completely owns the limelight of the novel, and they offset each other as forces. Rather than one main character, there are two. While the story is certainly about Gatsby, it is told through Nick's eyes; it also seems that Fitzgerald is trying to reconcile the problems within himself. As a man, he is unsure which is better—the "feminine" or the "feminist." Indeed, "Nick and Gatsby respectively embody the two warring strains of their creator's personality. If Gatsby is an expression of the conspicuous consumer, the dreamer...then Nick is the moralistic, though imperfect chronicler of the carnival's follies" (Allen 105). Here it becomes more understandable why they are presented together—they represent the differing factions of Fitzgerald himself.

Perhaps the ending of the novel offers some light to how Fitzgerald feels regarding which is better for him to be in touch with. At the end, Gatsby, the dreamer and feminist, dies. Nick, who is more "feminine," moves back to the midwest. This does not imply that Fitzgerald has come
to a resolution; rather, this problem arises again in some of his later works of fiction.

The "feminine" and "feminist" clash again later in Fitzgerald's unfinished novel, _The Last Tycoon_. Monroe Stahr is a Hollywood mogul that embodies both the "feminine" and "feminist." Unlike Rosalind Connage, who is "feminine" on the outside and "feminist" inside, Stahr is just the reverse. He is gruff and "manly" on the outside, while his interior, which few characters recognize, is more "feminine." This pretense of being a strong male to the world is perceived by nearly everyone he comes in contact with: "There was nothing to question or argue, Stahr must be right always, not most of the time, but always" (70). Since he is in a power position, he is forced into setting up the illusion that he is a strong male.

Conversely, his interior is more soft. When he falls in love with Kathleen Moore, the love is much deeper than physical. In fact, it is a type of love that is previously unseen in other forms of Fitzgerald's literature. Critic James Mellow agrees with this: "There is, in _The Last Tycoon_, a new maturity even in Fitzgerald's treatment of the love affair, the one between Stahr and Kathleen" (484). Indeed, this separation from physical love and a desire to
be taken care of by Kathleen as an equal, has strong undertones of not only a "feminine" male, but also that of a male who is coming into contact with his masculinity. Nevertheless, Stahr is still afraid to publicly expose his "feminine" side; however, privately he is very satisfied with his construct. Stahr, who is Fitzgerald's last male character, certainly has a conflict of ideologies in his psyche, but, as the novel progresses, he sorts out what is acceptable for him, and what is not—if the novel was completed, Stahr would most likely resolve the conflict.
CHAPTER SIX: The Female

Although most of Fitzgerald's women fit into the first or second hypothetical group, there are a few characters that fit into the third. This particular group began approximately in the 1920's and, according to Showalter, spans until the present. The attributes of the "female" category is different; in the diagram of the two overlapping circles, this category rests to the extreme right. What makes this group unique compared to the first two is that it is constructed by women and not men.

Typically, a woman does not enter this area of the overlapping circles until one or both of the previous groups has been experienced. In other words, in order for a woman to enter this category, a shirking of the male construct of "female" identity must be undertaken. Due to this, males cannot partake in this particular area of the circles; this is not a form of segregation because, as stated earlier, the crescent to the far left is composed solely of male identity and is devoid of female input. On paper it averages out with mathematical equality, but, in practice, this egalitarian dream falls very short.

The reason for this rests in a patriarchal society. Males in the past have oppressed their values on society. Conversely, the unexplored country of the "female" has been shunned. Little has been known about it until the beginning
of this century because males have been afraid to grant women equality. This is understandable since men knew little about it, and it appeared to offer a threat to male power.

Typically "female" women are strong-willed, know what they want from life, achieve it without assuming the qualities of a male, and generally do not rely on men for their well-being. Compared with other categories, there are fewer women in Fitzgerald's fiction that are a part of this group; nevertheless, examples of this type of woman are in his fiction. To demonstrate this category, "female" women in Fitzgerald's work will be examined.

One example of the "female" is Bernice in Fitzgerald's popular short story "Bernice Bobs Her Hair." Her "feminist" cousin Marjorie transforms Bernice from a shy "feminine" woman to a "feminist" flapper--Marjorie is a catalyst for Bernice. In the middle of the story, Bernice becomes a "feminist" who uses her good looks and plays the social game by male rules. At the end of the story, she changes again from a "feminist" to the "female." After she has her hair bobbed, the transformation is not only physical but mental; this new look for Bernice carried consequences (Fitzgerald 46). At this point Bernice is in the "female" category because she realizes how unfulfilling the "feminist" group is.
At the end of the story, Bernice sneaks into Marjorie’s room and bobs Marjorie’s hair while she is sleeping. What Bernice does with Marjorie’s cut pony tails is of symbolic significance: “She was passing Warren’s house now, and on the impulse she set down her baggage, and swinging the braids like pieces of rope flung them at the wooden porch, where they landed with a slight thud. She laughed again, no longer restraining herself” (Fitzgerald 47). When Bernice tosses the braids onto Warren’s porch, she symbolically throws the male construct of women’s identity back at men. Since Bernice realizes that she can now construct her own identity without the aid of men or other women, she feels unrestrained.

Out of all of Fitzgerald’s short stories, this one seems to be the most popular among contemporary readers. The reason for this may be due to its strong theme; without realizing it, a female reader may associate with Bernice because she has become what other women are trying to become—that is, a construct of womanhood as defined by women.

While this may be one of Fitzgerald’s more popular stories, it is also the only one that contains an example of a character who is of the “female” group. There are two possible reasons for this incongruity: first, since this group began in the mid-1920’s and runs until present day, Fitzgerald probably only began to recognize its existence
later in life. Secondly, within the parameters of a short story, character development is limited; therefore, if any characters are going to be in the "female" group, they would most likely appear in novels.

It is important to remember that the characters which are about to be explored in his novels are filtered through male eyes. Since men cannot fully comprehend this hemisphere of the "female," Fitzgerald can only conjecture. In spite of this, he possesses a remarkable talent to capture the confusion women felt when crossing over to the "female." Sarah Fryer acknowledges this when she says that, "despite his reputation for being unsympathetic towards his female characters, young women... invariably embody ideals of self-realization that their mothers did not share and confront role conflicts characteristic of women on the threshold of a new era of freedom" (Fryer 70).

Kathleen Moore in Fitzgerald's novel The Last Tycoon embodies many attributes of the "female" category. The main character, Monroe Stahr, quickly discovers that she cannot be treated like other women with whom he has previously associated. Kathleen does not bow to patriarchy, nor does she adopt the imposed qualities it demands on women for self-advancement. In a discussion with Stahr regarding his dead wife, Kathleen says, "I'm quite a different type from Minna Davis" (78). Indeed, Minna who mirrors Zelda Fitzgerald, was a flapper; here the reader finds that
Kathleen does not need men or their construction of what a woman should be. In fact, she left England because she felt men there did not allow her to be what she wanted; "Men," as she puts it, "always wanted their own way" (91).

Stahr realizes she is a different kind of woman and falls deeply in love with her. Unlike other male characters, Stahr exposes a love for Kathleen that is not based on wealth nor beauty—he loves her for herself. In this sense he is the first character to love a woman for who she is and not what she represents. Perhaps this, in turn, exposes Fitzgerald's awareness that women of the "female" category are more beautiful and mysterious because they are more in tune with their identity—the male idea of womanhood has been lifted, and Stahr for one is awestruck.

Yet another example of a woman that enters the "female" category is Nicole Warren-Diver in Fitzgerald's novel *Tender is the Night*. Much like Daisy Buchanan, Nicole is introduced as a dependent woman who survives on her good looks. In fact, at the beginning of the novel she is so dependent on her husband, Dick Diver, that she allows him to mold her personality. This can be seen symbolically through Diver's profession as a psychiatrist—he is inside her head. Nicole firmly believes, at least at the beginning of the novel, that she needs men to construct her identity. As Fryer said in her dissertation, "Indoctrinated since birth,
she fully believes that she cannot survive without the help of men" (90).

As the novel progresses, Nicole's need for Diver's attention and guidance lessens; not only does she drop the patient/doctor relationship, but also the dominating-male/passive-female relationship with Diver. Towards the end of the novel, Nicole realizes how much her identity is not a construction of womanhood when the narrator states, "she knew that for her the greatest sin now and in the future was to delude herself. . . either you think that or else others have to think for you and take power from you, pervert and discipline your natural tastes, civilize and sterilize you" (289-90). Through this epiphany, Nicole enters the realm of the "female" and drops her dependency on Dick. A short essay on Fitzgerald found in American Literature claims that "In the end Nicole is cured— that is, she no longer needs Dick to sustain her, and so can leave him for a lover, a virile soldier of fortune. Dick disappears to follow a downward spiral in the hinterland of upstate New York" (Brooks 2293). At the end of the novel the reader learns that Dick, "no longer controls her" (301). Nicole has shirked her need for males both physically and mentally— she has begun to establish a political agenda of her own.

Through her rejection of Diver, Nicole has begun to explore the new realm of the "female." Perhaps better than
any other woman in Fitzgerald's work, she mirrors the progression many women had begun to take in the earlier 1930's: "Nicole Diver, ... takes small but significant steps towards her own personal freedom in a world dominated by men" (Fryer 49). In the end she leaves Diver and begins a new life with Tommy Baraban—here she is happier as she does not allow Tommy, or any other man, to construct her identity.

It is interesting to note that both Kathleen and Nicole are characters that appeared later in Fitzgerald's work. This follows since, according to Showalter, the "female" category did not gain momentum until the 1920's. The appearance of these characters and the maturity they are treated with shows a willingness on Fitzgerald's part to explore a new type of woman. With the above in mind, the myths of his chauvinism, at least those later in his life, seem to be dispelled. If Fitzgerald had not died, it is likely he would have more fully explored the "female" category and also tried to understand its construct better.
CHAPTER SEVEN: A Retrospective

A better understanding of not only the women in Fitzgerald's work can be gained after examining the three Showalter categories, but also how predominant a particular group figured into his male psyche. Since he lived during a time of social upheaval, his characters represent vignettes of certain archetypes of women. These groups, of course, are the "feminine", "feminist" and "female."

Often Fitzgerald's representation of these groups and the social construct of contemporary readers belittles his work as either misogynistic or chauvinistic. This essay was not written as a vindication of his chauvinism, but an analysis so that contemporary readers might better understand his women and the situations they were placed in.

The "feminine" group which spanned from an unknown time until the 1980s, contained those qualities predominantly coupled with Victorianism; consequently, since Fitzgerald was raised by women of this group, they appeared very early in his fiction. Hence, women like Daisy Buchanan, Jonquil Cary and Kismine Washington are present in his short stories and novels.

After Fitzgerald left the "feminine" women who raised him and began to explore the world, he was confronted with the aggressiveness of the "feminist" women. Of course, the construct of "feminine" women did not leave him; when he entered Princeton, he met Ginerva King who seemed to embody
this powerful new social force of the "feminist"—his view changed. Indeed, his wife Zelda fits into Showalter's "feminist" category.

After he graduated from Princeton and he began to associate more freely with "feminist" women, more and more characters began to appear in his fiction as "feminist" paradigms. Due to his exposure to this type of woman, he created such women as Marcia Meadow, Rags Martin, Jordan Baker, and Rosalind Connage. Often this type of woman elicited mixed results from his portrayal—he both praised and condemned women of this group. He was confused whether he should embrace them or not.

The final category, the "female," received less coverage by Fitzgerald. The reason for this stems from two differing reasons. First, this group did not gain momentum until the beginning of the 1920s; and since it takes several years before ideas to become a part of society, they did not become apparent to him until years later.

Secondly, Fitzgerald was not around women who exhibited these particular traits until later in life. Kathleen Moore, in his novel The Last Tycoon, is blueprinted after his lover Sheliah Graham. In fact, she "strongly influenced Fitzgerald's portrayal of the primary woman in his last novel" (Fryer 94). It is likely that, if Fitzgerald had lived to finish this novel, Kathleen would be an excellent
paradigm of what it meant to be a woman in the "female"
group—even in its unfinished state, it offers a fine model
of the "female" group.

With the above recapitulations in mind, it is easier to
understand why society views Fitzgerald as a chauvinist. If
readers recognize that the contemporary view of women was
not expressed in his literature until much later in his
life, an understanding of his social commentary may be
better noticed. Often it seems as if readers forget that
Fitzgerald was struggling, like other men of his time, to
understand these changing women. If his work is viewed as a
social biography and as a evolution of "female" thought, it
would probably be welcomed into literary circles with more
vigor. Unlike other authors, the synergy of Fitzgerald's
work stands better than as separate units—his report of
society, the chronological development of "female" thought,
and, finally, how his fictional texts function together
contain themes that can be read for generations to come.


__________.*This Side of Paradise*. New York, New York: Charles Scribner’s Son, 1943.

"What Kind of Husbands do 'Jimmies' Make?"


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