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The New Man: Evolving Masculinity in F. Scott Fitzgerald's *This Side of Paradise,* "Winter Dreams," and "The Swimmers"

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by

ADRIAN NICOLE COURSEY

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ABSTRACT

The evolving culture and ethos of American capitalist modernity in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was marked by a nervousness, or neurasthenia. Strongly gendered, it was characterized among men by effeminacy and an anxiety about masculinity. Confronted by the eroding ideals of Victorian American self-reliance and independence, a stout-hearted willingness to labor to establish one's masculinity seemed an increasingly doubtful prospect for men in the new modern age. Under the twin influences of industrial capitalism and a market economy and a fledgling women's movement, affecting, especially, the work place, the American male felt nervous, anxious, and emasculated. In response to what Greg Forter calls the feminizing effects of bourgeois modernity, early twentieth-century America saw the emergence of a new form of manhood that is best described by Forter as "hard, aggressive, physically dominant, potent." Under the dispensations of the commercial civilization of industrial, materialistic America, manliness and definitions of manhood were now measured by riches, inherited or acquired through business activities; through athleticism that stressed such masculine attributes as physical endurance, integrity, self-control, and teamwork. Finally, this ambiguously reconceived masculinity was also defined by a complex web of man-woman relationships, based on power and dominance, which was different from the Victorian patriarchal partition of society along domestic and public spheres. Also important was how men established relationships, or bonded

with each other, which would enhance their public image as a man. This complex and fraught social history of masculinity, and its connections to the literary culture of the times, find their articulations in F. Scott Fitzgerald. In his life and in much of his works, Fitzgerald takes an ambivalent attitude toward the self-assertive, aggressive manliness of his times. In *This Side of Paradise*, "Winter Dreams," and "The Swimmers," the male protagonists attempt to exhibit the masculine traits of virility, aggressiveness, and potency, but fall short in some way, either because they are not wealthy, athletic, or do not display a manly dominance in their relationships. Thus, these men form new spaces for themselves in Fitzgerald's re-conceptualized masculinity, that is both informed and enriched by softer feminine attributes.

INDEX WORDS: Amory Blaine, Dexter Green, Feminine, Femininity, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Henry Marston, Manliness, Manly, Masculine, Masculinity, "The Swimmers," *This Side of Paradise*, "Winter Dreams"

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Dedication

To George Henry Coursey, Jr.

and

Dorothy “Dot” Grace Mobley Coursey

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Introduction

Defining the New Man

F. Scott Fitzgerald's perception of his own masculinity was startlingly troubled, characterized by the cultural mores and attitudes of a social class he felt alienated from, a certain level of wealth he never accrued, and a kind of physical virility he never achieved. Fitzgerald's attempts to reconcile his definition of masculinity with the perceived notions of masculinity in the early twentieth century were fraught, involving alcohol, bouts of insanity, depression, and suicide attempts of family members. In his writing, Fitzgerald exhibited all of the anxieties that his life and later marriage to Zelda Sayre produced. In *Fitzgerald's Craft of Short Fiction*, Alice Hall Petry says that Fitzgerald is "the most dramatic example in American literary history of an author whose private life is reflected, consciously or otherwise, in virtually everything he wrote" (4). Thus, Fitzgerald's texts can be viewed through an autobiographical lens, his life informing his texts much of the time.

The ambivalence that Fitzgerald has toward masculinity is reflected in the broader culture of the times, during which historians Jackson Lears and Peter Filene notice a crisis in masculinity. This crisis developed after the overly masculinized Victorian era, in which hard work and self-control were lauded. Consequently, American men at the turn of the century had difficulty in determining definitions and ideals of manliness in their careers and relationships with other men and women. These men increasingly felt disempowered as manly men by "a monopoly capitalism that reduced men to dependents in large bureaucratic structures" (Forter 2). The Victorian tradition, first in Britain and then later in America, defined masculinity and manhood through an assiduously cultivated code of hard work and self-control. The American frontiersman of the previous centuries embodied this code. Generally speaking, men were

expected to support their families monetarily, while leaving the domestic responsibilities to women. But, as the world moved first into post-Victorian years and then into early twentieth-century capitalist modernity, the social world took precedence over the domestic lives of men and the balance of the sexes in the workplace changed drastically, often causing anxiety in men who questioned their largely economic status as manly adults.

Gail Bederman, in *Manliness & Civilization*, discusses masculinity in the nineteenth century and the changes it underwent from the "Victorian ideology of moral manliness—strength, altruism, self-restraint, and chastity" to the "violence" of "the 'natural man'" in which violence was associated with nature, particularly the Midwest frontier (172). Bederman, writing about the life of Theodore Roosevelt, claims that the manly American man evolved from the "violence of race war" between the white Americans and Native Americans (180). However, once the American man established masculinity through his victory in the race war, Bederman notes that Roosevelt warned American men against the "emasculating tendencies of overcivilization," which Bederman later defines as the "effeminate loss of racial primacy and virility" (185-186). Though race is not an issue in this project, it is an important precursor to American masculine identity. To be superior to other races resulted in a superior attitude in other aspects of the man's life, such as "vigorous, manly out-of-door sports" and "the refus[al of] a life of ease" (qtd. in Bederman 186; 195). Bederman also relates Roosevelt's idea that participation in the military remained a place to prove one's masculinity because one could "retain the virile fighting qualities" developed during the white man's battles with the native Americans and American imperialism (186). This is still relevant in the early twentieth century because notions of the conquering man established during Roosevelt's time and the previous era of westward

expansion, which was closed by Fitzgerald's time, lingered into the twentieth century in such national figures as Theodore Roosevelt.

In *Him/Her/Self*, Peter G. Filene also discusses Roosevelt's notions of masculinity in his speech to a Chicago men's club concerning the "proper role" of men: "I wish to preach, not to the doctrine of ignoble ease, bt the doctrine of the strenuous life, the life of toil and effort, of labor and strife; to preach that highest form of success which comes, not to the man who desires mere easy peace, but to the man who does not shrink from danger, from hardship, or from bitter toil, and who out of these wins the splendid ultimate triumph" (76). Roosevelt, President of the U.S. at the turn of the twentieth century, continues this tradition of a Protestant work ethic, the strenuous life mentioned here, that other critics, such as Ann Douglas, discuss when defining the changing ideals of masculinity in the years leading up to Fitzgerald's own time.

As Ann Douglas has argued status in *Feminization of the American Culture*, economic expansion, urbanization, and industrialization (predominantly) of the Northeast in the late nineteenth century, all masculine goals, nonetheless affected men negatively. Reactions among men were often contradictory, revealing an "interplay of qualities": on the one hand, an "aggressive assertiveness and competitive vigor" which was seen as being "innately male" (mostly) among white, middle-to-upper-class men, who could no longer feel at ease using the Protestant work ethic of productive labor, a point that Greg Forter later makes in his *Gender, Race, and Mourning in American Modernism* (1).

On the other hand, "the hardened sense of masculinity" that Forter talks about conceals within it an indirect acknowledgement of the damaging (to men) "'feminine' ideal" of the Victorian era (Douglas 12). As the "first-wave feminists claims to the sexual and political rights of men" developed, men also felt threatened by "the emergence of gay subcultures whose

‘inverts’ raised the visible specter of a ‘femininity’ lurking in all men” (Forter 2-3). Thus, men attempted to counteract this “specter” by hardening themselves to feminine characteristics such as “moral compassion, self-restraint, and emotional sensitivity” (2). Ironically, though, with the threat to masculinity felt during this time, “the aggressive competitiveness” which men developed “was viewed with suspicion for its threat to social cohesion” (2). Thus, not only do the men of this time have to contend with a changing culture and definition of masculinity, even the defining characteristic of this new kind of manliness and masculinity becomes a problem for them. Therefore, men were expected to develop an “aggressive competitiveness” in the work place, yet under the changed dynamics of the capitalist market place, they were forced to obtain positions in which their bosses dictated their every movement, especially in office jobs in which an aggressive attitude is not always agreeable to management.

Accommodation and adjustment, traditionally feminine virtues, were defining a changed work place culture. On the monetary level, these men were beholden to the more economically powerful, who would often dictate how and when they worked and for whose maximization of profits. Thus, on both the economic and domestic levels, the modern American male’s sense of himself as being worthy of being a man (hard, aggressive, virile) on the face seemed an overly optimistic, if not increasingly dubious, idea. Forter contrasts this changed form of masculinity with the feminine traits—“moral compassion, self-restraint, emotional sensitivity”—of white women in the U.S., showing that the two forms—masculine and feminine—had been thrust on divergent paths toward the end of the nineteenth century (2). Previously, the masculine and feminine had been more interconnected in the domestic space in the Victorian era because the fear of being seen as feminine was simply not as developed as it was in the early twentieth century. These “softer virtues,” as Forter describes them, “could, in fact, be transmitted to men

only by women in the domestic sphere" (2), and men feared how these "softer virtues" might negatively impact their masculine persona in the public sphere.

Writing in such a cultural climate, Fitzgerald, like many men at the turn of the twentieth century, developed a fear that his peers would regard him and his work as feminine. Frances Kerr, in her article "Feeling 'Half Feminine': Modernism and the Politics of Emotion in *The Great Gatsby*," describes a "paranoia about being feminine that recur in early modernist discussions of art and the creative process. This fear and these features appear in reviews of Fitzgerald's first two novels" (405). However, Kerr also says that these anxieties regarding masculinity are not limited to Fitzgerald's early works, *This Side of Paradise* (1920) and "Winter Dreams" (1922), but persist throughout his career, as is evident in his later story "The Swimmers" (1929). In the early twentieth century, when Fitzgerald was writing and publishing his works, America was undergoing a transformation in how white, middle-to-upper-class men, especially, were being perceived in the wider domain of social and cultural politics of the time. Men were critically analyzing their own masculinity, and, principally, how their social peers perceived them. These men wanted to embody aggressive manliness, domination, and brute strength: "Men, accordingly, sought to expel the 'feminine' within them while embracing as positive traits those attributes that had previously been coded ambivalently—primal male force, instinctual vitality, aggression, and bodily strength" (Forter 3). They feared being seen as soft in comparison to the frontiersman of the nineteenth century. Thus, their awareness of the larger culture's expected norms for manliness and masculinity affected how these American men came to view themselves, too.

In conflict with men's fears of being seen by women and other men (and even themselves) as soft, Fitzgerald, "yearn[s] for a masculinity less rigidly polarized against the

feminine" (Forter 4). Instead of describing what masculinity was not, Fitzgerald defines masculinity as a single entity, exploring masculinity in his protagonists rather than simply juxtaposing it with femininity. If masculinity were not so "rigidly polarized" against femininity, attaining softer virtues would not be a threat toward Fitzgerald's protagonists' individual masculinities (4). Fitzgerald's stories attempt to establish and define this masculinity, but, as Forter states, "[c]anonical modernism was distinguished in part by its effort to rewrite, reclaim, and celebrate the feminine as a repository of residual and potentially resistant value" (4). Attempts to "rewrite, reclaim, and celebrate the feminine" in Fitzgerald's works is tricky, as some women are celebrated, such as in "Bernice Bobs Her Hair," yet others, like Judy Jones in "Winter Dreams," are only celebrated until they marry.[1] The manly characters Fitzgerald produces are filled with the softer feminine traits, not the hard, aggressive, virile masculine characteristics celebrated at this time. Fitzgerald yearns both in his life and literature for a feminine side that he could never wholly reconcile with the required definition of masculinity of his time and culture—a virile dynamism and affected individualism that was associated with an earlier pioneer life and with big business and military careers.

However, asserting masculinity in his work while confessing to his femininity in private declarations—"I am half feminine—at least my mind is," he said (Kerr 406)—often generates a discernible sense of anxiety in Fitzgerald's personal and public attitude toward manliness and masculinity. This dichotomy between his public and private lives in turn affects the gender politics that set the terms for men's and women's social exchanges in his fiction, especially, for my purposes, in *This Side of Paradise*, "Winter Dreams," and "The Swimmers." Women like Judy Jones in "Winter Dreams" and Isabelle in *This Side of Paradise* possess a dominant personality while Fitzgerald's men are more feminine.

Writing about *This Side of Paradise*, Edmund Wilson, Fitzgerald's mentor and college peer, noted that, "[l]ike a woman, [Fitzgerald was] not much given to abstract or impersonal thought…when [he] wrote the book, [he] was drunk…[and had] the capacity for pretty writing…[but lacked] both the intellectual force and the emotional imagination to [manage] material which he secrete[d] in such enormous abundance" (qtd. in Kerr 406). Fitzgerald responds to Wilson's criticism, stating, "I am guilty of its every stricture and I take an extraordinary delight in its considered approbation. I don't see how I could possibly be offended at anything in it" (*A Life in Letters* 50). Besides Wilson's remarks, other critics defined him in terms of the feminine. Edna St. Vincent Millay, for instance, referred to him as "'an ignorant old woman' whose talent was 'like a jewel' he was too 'stupid' to know what to do with" (qtd. in Kerr 405). Though we know that Fitzgerald saw this review, his reply is, at best, glib: "Did he say I was "old woman with jewel?" (*Life* 50). However, Kerr says that in light of "a number of statements to acquaintances" that Fitzgerald continued to "identify with men in a contempt for feminine weakness" (Kerr 406).

Fitzgerald's letter to Marya Mannes on October 21, 1925, presents another view from Fitzgerald on women:

> Women, and even intelligent women, haven't generally cared much for [*Gatsby*]. They do not like women to be presented as *emotionally* passive—as a matter of fact I think most women are, that their minds are taken up with a sort of second rate and inessential bookkeeping which their apologists call "practicallity" [sic] (*Life* 129).

However, the contempt Fitzgerald holds for women in his private life is distinctly different from the strong, assertive women he writes, such as Judy Jones ("Winter Dreams") and Jordan Baker

(*The Great Gatsby*), for instance. These women are independent—Judy Jones's assertiveness and interest in manly activities like golfing, and Jordan Baker's interest in tennis—until they marry at which time they seem to become the *emotionally* passive women that Fitzgerald seems to criticize. Despite this, much of his fiction demonstrates a curious split: the masculine and the professed virile traits of masculinity in his characters are often undercut and eventually tempered by softer feminine qualities and virtues.

We see these softer virtues for the first time in *This Side of Paradise*, especially in Amory's relationship with his mother, Beatrice, and we see them again in "Winter Dreams" and in *The Great Gatsby*: both Judy Jones and Jordan Baker participate in athletics, and their masculine qualities both attract and repulse Dexter Green and Nick Carraway. In the process, however, both men are feminine enough to demonstrate the diminished value of capital and hard-nosed business culture. And in the "The Swimmers" we see the protagonist Henry Marston return to America from France for money and position, only to go back to France three years later because he is unable to reconcile himself to the increasing monetization of American life.

Whether this theme of what constitutes masculinity for men in the twentieth century is ostensibly the "intellectual vigor of true manhood" or "feminine debility" (Kerr 406), or both, Fitzgerald typically begins his narratives by highlighting the gender issues and exploring constitutive aspects of manhood as they are framed by modernist discourse. It is only later in the stories that we see Fitzgerald question (and even problematize) the limitations of such definitions or what constitutes them. Thus, considering the men and their attendant manliness in Fitzgerald's narratives, the male protagonists are "viewed with suspicion for [their] threat to social cohesion." Threats to the social cohesion of each of these men's social classes are felt in their careers. Amory, Dexter, and Henry began to feel disempowered by the paradigm shifts in the economy,

leading to “a sense of dependence and disempowerment that many men felt as unmanning.” These feelings (of a sense of dependence and disempowerment) result from men’s lack of economic autonomy, self-sufficiency, and ownership of productive property. Manhood was now decisively “defined in opposition to *femininity*” in its shift “toward the term *masculinity*.” In the early twentieth century, Forter says that men were defined as masculine because they were not feminine. Before the term *masculinity* came into use, Forter asserts that men were defined by simply growing up, rather than being part of a gender binary (2). Fitzgerald’s characters attempt to reclaim feminine traits, such as Dexter’s tears for himself, Amory’s delicate (but not really) physical constitution, and Henry’s custody of the children, but are in some way marginalized in society, whether one is forced into a different kind of social class by circumstances (as in “Winter Dreams”), into the austere confines of a celibate religion (as in *This Side of Paradise*), or find themselves another country entirely (as in “The Swimmers”).

That Fitzgerald celebrates women in his fiction is certainly an arguable point. He seems to criticize them more than anything in his works by creating them with the passive emotions of such characters as Beatrice in *This Side of Paradise* and Choupette in “The Swimmers.” Beatrice is emotionally passive in her love for her son Amory, while Choupette allows Weise to threaten Henry with mental instability when he threatens to take his children from her. Fitzgerald’s female characters are rarely assertive once they are married seen in characters such as Judy Jones in “Winter Dreams.” Once Judy Jones marries, she loses her masculine characteristics, such as “run[ning] around” on men (“Winter Dreams” 253). Instead, she “[s]tays at home with her kids,” and is seen as “all right” in her looks and as a woman who has “fade[d] just like *that*” (253-254). Judy Jones is no longer the beautiful, youthful woman who has multiple dates, sometimes in the

same evening. Instead, her actions are quelled by her husband, and she joins the ranks of the domesticated wives.

However, emotional passivity and vulnerability do not always plague his male characters. Jay Gatsby is a bootlegger and a gangster during the Roaring Twenties; he is the ultimate man's man. His association with Wolfshein and the phone call from "C" in Chicago late in the novel make Gatsby seem powerful and virile: on his orders, people are killed. This type of power and control over others' lives, stemming from his gangster life, is at the root of masculinity. But Fitzgerald complicates the issue, as Gatsby clearly has feminine elements. He is often described in terms of his clothing, car, house, and cleanliness, among his other feminine traits, and ultimately ends up worse off than he began the novel, just like the female characters in the novel, Daisy Buchanan, Jordan Baker, and Myrtle Wilson. Gatsby's masculine gangster identity is subverted by his feminine identity: as Mencken shrewdly observed, "*he is a man who seems like a woman*" (italics in the original; qtd. in Kerr 409). Part of the mystery surrounding Gatsby concerns his ability to keep his feminine and masculine sides separate. On one hand, he is a man who seems more worried about his appearance than how others perceive any sense of masculinity; on the other hand, Gatsby is actually the virile, violent man that Bederman describes through his gangster identity. In the world of bootleggers and gangsters in Chicago in the Twenties, dressing sharply was a *sine qua non*; thus, Gatsby can seemingly conceal his feminine side, his concern with appearances, under a tough but polished masculine exterior. Similarly, Monsignor Darcy escapes femininity by joining the Catholic Church: he is able to hide his feminine side within the safe confines of an all-male institution. As Douglas notes, the church became a place where men could become more emotionally charged without the fear of

appearing too feminine. Clearly, traditional ideas of manliness and masculinity in Fitzgerald are scrutinized by the existence of what Kerr calls "the gender of emotion" (409).

Another aspect of masculinity that Fitzgerald explores in his works is the theme of wealth and how it affects one's sense of self: to be wealthy validated one's manhood. Wealth becomes one of Fitzgerald's prominent themes in the works investigated here, affecting his main characters' social standing and his self-confidence as a man. Amory's inheritance is in a state of decline by the end of the novel, and frustrated that he cannot be wealthy, he chooses to explore a new ideology, Socialism, in the concluding moments of the text. Dexter in "Winter Dreams" must work for his wealth. Though his family is not poor, they are not wealthy members of the upper-middle class, seen in his financial difficulties at the ambiguous East coast school he attends. Though he is mostly accepted by other older and wealthy men, his love interest, Judy Jones, continues to keep him at a distance and eventually marries someone with more money than Dexter. Judy Jones consistently rejects Dexter because he idealizes her, and perhaps because he does not possess the inherited wealth that she is used to. And in "The Swimmers," Henry Marston sees Charles Weise as little more than a poor white man with an overdone southern accent and too much money for his social class; and, yet, it is Weise who, because of his money, is able to court Choupette, Henry's wife. To problematize this view of the improatnce of wealth, Henry also makes a substantial amount of money in the market, which is ironic. Henry, like Weise, is a self-made man, but Henry holds himself to a superior standard; Weise cares about the public's perception of him whereas Henry leaves America for the simpler life in France. In some way, these characters are denied the privilege of wealth and the attendant perks of the upper-middle-class lifestyle (the leisure class) due, in part, to their lack of inherited money. Ironically, and typically for Fitzgerald, at the end of their respective narratives, Amory,

Dexter, and Henry each has decisively established the limitations of wealth and class privileges, and has succeeded in raising doubts about any manliness that may be associated with cash and class.

Interestingly, Fitzgerald creates several male protagonists who can never really achieve the virile, dominate characteristics prevalent in the early twentieth century. Through these characters, Fitzgerald explores issues surrounding manliness and masculinity, which, by the end of these narratives are revealed as ambivalent ideas. Amory, Dexter, and Henry attempt to be the ideal manly men, yet none successfully become the manly men of twentieth-century culture of American superiority that Bederman develops. His men fail to become the virile, aggressive men because they eventually exhibit an ambivalence about their masculinities. In the end, each—Amory, Dexter, and Henry—move on to other quests: socialism, adulthood, and to live the life of an expatriate. Fitzgerald never fully integrates all of these masculine traits into one aggressive, virile man, indicating, perhaps, that the idealistic masculine man was not a realistic proposition.

In his classical economic study of the leisure class in America (1912), Thorstein Veblen describes what he called "herd" manliness, which manifests itself in a "belligerent, stupid, and self-destructive behavior" (21) seen in Fitzgerald's Tom Buchanan. Amory, Dexter, and Henry are not "Toms," however. In fact, these male protagonists are not so involved in and complicit with the business world that they become part of Veblen's "herd" manliness, which ignore cultural knowledge in addition to business education. Instead, these protagonists define their masculinity in different ways than the big business men, who conquer and dominate their own lives, their women, and their businesses. Ostensibly, they define their masculinity by the chivalrous norms of the Victorian age, through wealth, athletics, and relationships with men and women. However, these aspects of their masculinity are not overly manly. Their interest in

athletics—golfing and swimming, for example—are not sports that require brute strength. Rather, they focus on finesse, precision, and careful eye-hand coordination for success, paradoxically, aspects of the Victorian era of military-style masculinity, which Bederman discusses in terms of American imperialism. Fitzgerald's men have ambivalent masculinities perhaps because of their sense of chivalry that may well be seen as soft, or feminine. Though they are concerned with how others perceive their masculinity, they aren't too aggressive in becoming the "herd" (and aggressive) man that the dominant culture of the times tended to extol.

This ambivalent masculinity is, in some ways, a result of the closing of the American Frontier. The aggressive, virile man is no longer necessary because there is no new land to conquer, settle, or dominate. Too, with the rise of the leisure class, men participated in the overcivilization that Roosevelt warned American men to be conscious about. Thus, men turned to business and economics to define their masculinities, eschewing their fighting, conquering past. The new territory that they must conquer does not require the hyper-masculinity that the frontier did. It requires a different kind of masculinity, perhaps the one that Fitzgerald suggests through his characters. Though the Victorian era masculinity was lost in the nineteenth century amidst western expansion, Fitzgerald suggests a return to this kind of masculinity, only focused in a new direction. Men were forced to redefine their sense of masculinity. During this process of redefinition, men like Fitzgerald's characters presented a chivalrous front that, in comparison to the virile men of the past few decades, seemed almost feminine. Though long gone, their culture still sought the aggressive, virile frontiersman, who still existed as the dominant, ideal man of the culture as seen in Theodore Roosevelt.

In these and in other works, then, Fitzgerald repeatedly puts pressure on the ideas, attitudes, and values associated with his culture's definitions of masculinity, even as he also

seeks to undercut the popular notions of what it means to be a man in the Twenties. In the chapters on *This Side of Paradise*, "Winter Dreams," and "The Swimmers" that follow, I aim to extend and complicate this idea of the hardened masculine man put forth by Forter and Douglas, arguing that Fitzgerald's male protagonists search for these virile, aggressive masculine characteristics; instead, these men—Amory Blaine, Dexter Green, and Henry Marston—end up validating and valorizing attributes that represent the softer, feminine virtues. To summarize, my project, then, is to reveal a disconnect that exists in Fitzgerald's fiction, which has not been adequately explored by critics so far: while mainstream masculine and feminine sensibilities and agendas of the times are presented, along with representative characters, each in its truthfulness, paradoxically, the narratives end up undercutting those masculine characteristics in favor of feminine attributes instead.

Chapter 1

This Side of Paradise

This Side of Paradise is Fitzgerald's first novel, published in 1920, and written over a two-year period from late 1917 to October 1919. *This Side of Paradise* stems from another novel attempt, *The Romantic Egotist*, which was written in a three-month period while Fitzgerald was in the military. After submitting *The Romantic Egotist* to Scribner publishing company, the editors rejected this attempt, citing, "[it] does not seem to us to work up to a conclusion:—neither the hero's career nor his character are shown to be brought to any stage which justifies an ending" (Bruccoli 84). They said that the manuscript was a "little 'crude,'" but that with revisions, they would "gladly give it" a second chance (84). Scribner would eventually become Fitzgerald's main publisher and Maxwell, "Max," Perkins as his editor and contact in the company, the only editor who supported Fitzgerald's novel through rejections by the rest of the editorial board (84).[2,3]

Keeping in mind the close connection between Fitzgerald's life-narrative and his fiction, we must first look at the events in Fitzgerald's life to this point, as much of his work was written as psychologically therapeutic relief for him. Instead of seeing a psychiatrist, Fitzgerald wrote about his troubles with his life, his romance, and his masculinity, in these works (Petry 4). Up to 1920, Fitzgerald's life was filled with disappointments and social exclusions. The family moved frequently, beginning in 1898, first to Buffalo then Syracuse. In 1903 they were back in Buffalo and five years later, the Fitzgeralds retired to St. Paul because of his father's layoff from Proctor & Gamble. Edward Fitzgerald's loss of career in March 1908 was one of the defining moments of his childhood. At the age of fifty-five, his father had few prospects of finding another career. Bruccoli briefly mentions Fitzgerald's remark on this specific event twenty-eight years later:

"That morning [my father] had gone out a comparatively young man, a man full of strength, full of confidence. He came home that evening, an old man, a completely broken man. He had lost his essential drive, his immaculateness of purpose. He was a failure the rest of his days" (20).

However, Fitzgerald gives a different view of his father earlier in his life, in his short essay "The Death of My Father," composed while at Princeton. The essay was written by hand, and edited, with the note, "Not to be corrected" in the upper left-hand corner of the page and was, perhaps, never meant to be published as it was "torn in two and then tucked away among a lot of miscellaneous scraps and notes" ("Death" 187). However, this tearing could have occurred after he "had used what he wanted of this fragment for *Tender is the Night*." In the essay, Fitzgerald says, "I loved my father—always deep in my subconscious I have referred judgments back to him, what he would have thought or done" (187). This loving image of his father differs from his later ideas of his father as a "broken man." If Fitzgerald saw his father as a weak figure, it was because, as he states, "[h]e came from tired old stock with very little left of vitality and mental energy but he managed to save a little for me." He also saw his father as a man "of the generation of the colonies and the revolution": a throwback to older times and genteel values (188). His father's generation was aware of the race wars and imperialism that Bederman discusses, and this history was part of their reality, too. To his father's generation, masculinity was defined by a man's ability to display his virility in war, rather than by softer virtues present in the early twentieth-century American culture.

Fitzgerald saw that a new class of men, made up of "young peasant stock," were pushing his father's generation out of the way ("Death" 188), making a place for the businessman, rather than the frontiersman, as a prototype of the masculine man of the times. The generation of Edward Fitzgerald was pushed out by the younger generation because of the differing ways of

life: the older generation was made up of the virile, aggressive man necessary to settling the frontier and fighting wars, while the younger generation of the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century valued aggressive business tactics and virility shown in sports: such qualities constituted the new manliness of Fitzgerald's days.

Ironically, Fitzgerald's male protagonists investigated here all lack a strong father figure. These weak father figures, vaguely reminiscent of Edward Fitzgerald, include Amory Blaine's father, Stephen Blaine, who is only seen in two pages of the novel. In the first instance, the reader sees Amory's father as an absentee one, described as "hover[ing] in the background of his family's life, an unassertive figure with a face half-obliterated by lifeless, silky hair, continually occupied in 'taking care' of his wife" (*This Side of Paradise* 9). The second time we see his father mentioned in the text is upon his death. As we have seen, this failed father figure relates back to Fitzgerald's own mixed feelings about his father, Edward Fitzgerald. On one hand, Fitzgerald saw his father as a defeated man who died working for his father-in-law. On the other hand, Fitzgerald also seemed to understand that his father could not keep up with the emerging youthful, energetic middle class. Edward was "dead" in Fitzgerald's life long before his actual death in 1931. Protagonists like Amory lack the kind of father figure that Fitzgerald described in his essay "The Death of My Father"—the hardworking, sacrificing father who is also out of touch with the younger generation of men.

Frequent moves in Fitzgerald's childhood left him little time to make friends or become socially popular or successful. He was excluded in much of grammar school from the social status that he sought with the most popular students. At the St. Paul Academy (1908-1911), he was not popular; his fellow students thought his performance conceited, meddlesome, and too high-handed. His sub-par academic grades at the Newman school (1911-1913) and at Princeton

(1913-1917) began early in his education at St. Paul and kept him from enjoying extra-curricular activities at college. At Princeton, he was again socially unsuccessful, and his poor grades kept him from becoming the President of the Triangle Club.

While attending the Newman School in Hackensack, New Jersey, Fitzgerald found a symbolic father figure, or at least "the first important person who responded to Scott and encouraged his aspirations," in Monsignor Cyril Sigourney Webster Fay, a Catholic priest (Bruccoli 35). Fay was a privately wealthy man, and was "Fitzgerald's ideal priest—a romantic, intellectual figure who made the Church seem glamorous" (33). Fay was also "a lover of ritual" and "wrote conventional religious poems" (34). Bruccoli says that "Fay soon became Fitzgerald's surrogate father," and that Fitzgerald "assembled a cast that included copied and invented characters…Monsignor Darcy is Fay" (34; 123). We can see these comparisons in Fitzgerald's descriptions of Fay and Monsignor Darcy, as he used much of the same language for both: "intensely ritualistic, startlingly dramatic," "Richelieu," and "very moral, very religious…appreciating life to the fullest, if not entirely enjoying it" (Bruccoli 34-35; *This Side of Paradise* 26). Fay was an intensely important father figure in Fitzgerald's life just as Monsignor Darcy was an important paternal substitute for Amory. Fitzgerald was impressed with Fay's style and class, and he was taken by the man's worldly self-assurance.

At the Newman School, Fitzgerald also discovered that he was not very popular with his fellow classmates: he "promptly established himself as the most unpopular boy at school. He was bossy and boastful; he irritated the teachers and students; he was regarded as a coward and a bully; he humiliated himself by running from a tackle in a football scrimmage. He was rebuffed when he tried to join groups of boys and criticized when he kept to himself…and did poorly in his studies" (Bruccoli 30). We certainly see these same qualities in Amory Blaine, and the same

drive to find a way to fit in with the other boys. Fitzgerald turns to sports to "expiate his first-year sins, and to a large extent he succeeded" (32). However, he continued to fail academic subjects and perform poorly in most of the subjects he managed to pass according to his report cards from the Newman School. Fitzgerald did gain some popularity with his athletics, but this popularity waned quickly with his entrance to Princeton in 1913.

Fitzgerald's days at Princeton were not much different from those at Newman. He was denied entrance at first but gained his acceptance into the school in a personal interview. Fitzgerald, however, was not alone in needing this exception: "of the 430 freshman, 66 percent were admitted with conditions" (Bruccoli 41). Arriving at this Ivy League school, he was already on the outside of the social scene, and was "up against the most complex system of social stratification he had yet encountered" (43). Though Fitzgerald brought friends with him from Newman, he "felt that he was a member of the lower class. He did not resent the existence of a rigid class system, but he wanted to be at the top of the Princeton social ladder" (43). We see this need throughout his life, and especially in the character of Amory Blaine, who must deal with these same social stratifications, solving them perhaps more delicately than Fitzgerald did in his own life. Through this autobiographical character, Fitzgerald would solve the dilemmas of his youth in happier, clearer answers than the solutions (heavy drinking, for one) found in his own life.

Fitzgerald married Zelda Sayre "eight days after the publication of *This Side of Paradise*" (Bryer xi) after a brief break in the engagement. Their engagement began without any formal announcement, and Zelda dated other men during this time since Fitzgerald was off in the army. After Fitzgerald's return from military service, he began their engagement in a more earnest manner, asking formally for Judge Sayre's permission to marry Zelda. Fitzgerald wanted this

marriage to happen as soon as possible; however, she wanted to hold off until he made more money than the army provided him, and, consequently, Zelda broke off the engagement in June 1919, ostensibly for other reasons. Fitzgerald's pleading was unsuccessful, and he returned to New York, drinking heavily, and finally deciding to finish his novel after Prohibition began on July 1. Gaining encouragement after reading Hugh Walpole, as he notes in a letter, he was convinced he could write a better novel than his first attempt, *The Romantic Egotist*. He says, "[a]fter that I dug in and wrote my first book" (Bruccoli 96).

This Side of Paradise is the result of Fitzgerald's determination to rewrite *The Romantic Egotist*. In fact, much of this first novel survives in *This Side of Paradise*, including "eighty pages of typescript" that were transferred directly from *The Romantic Egotist* (Bruccoli 99). Bruccoli says that Fitzgerald did write Amory Blaine, the main character of the novel as an autobiographical character: "Amory Blaine is a rather idealized Fitzgerald" (123). Amory experiences disastrous results in his relationships with young women, who, like Zelda, are interested in his financial means rather than his personality, or "personage"[4] in Amory's case. Like Fitzgerald, Amory's ideal girl was "one pursued by men" (Bruccoli 54). Also, Amory attends Princeton, goes to war (though he sees action while Fitzgerald did not), and returns home to find a job (though he quits shortly after being hired) and make something of himself. Fitzgerald begins the account of Amory's life while he is still at home with his mother, Beatrice, whom he regards with a cool disapproval, much like Fitzgerald toward his own mother, Mollie Fitzgerald,[5] who was "always waiting in waiting-rooms an hour early, etc. pulled forward by an irresistible urge of boredom and vitality (*Notebooks* 151).

Amory's father is conveniently absent from much of the novel, only mentioned in the beginning and upon his death shortly after. As mentioned earlier, this absentee father can also be

connected to Fitzgerald's own father, who he regarded as absent after losing his job with Proctor & Gamble. Fitzgerald characterizes Amory has having "inherited from his mother every trait, except the stray inexpressible few, that made him worth while" (*This Side of Paradise* 9). From the start, the narrator compares Amory to his mother more than the father figure, who comes later in the description. His father, Stephen Blaine, was "an ineffectual, inarticulate man with a taste for Byron…[who] handed down to posterity his height of just under six feet and his tendency to waver at crucial moments" (9). Amory, then, seems doomed from the beginning because Fitzgerald doesn't give him the requisites to be a manly man. He doesn't grow up with the wealth, social success, or athletic prowess that would have led to a successful masculine adulthood.

Having inherited many traits from his mother, Amory's masculinity lacks the traditionally defined characteristics. By Victorian ideals, masculinity was defined by physical labor, a Protestant work ethic, and, literally, creating a living for one's family. Because Amory begins his quest for masculinity without the guidance of a strong father figure, he must distance himself from his feminine traits, which linger long into his time at Princeton and into his adult life. He is told by his mother to worry about his nerves: "Dear, don't *think* of getting out of bed yet. I've always suspected that early rising in early life makes one nervous" (*This Side of Paradise* 10). These early warnings for Amory to be concerned about his nerves—certainly a characteristic ascribed to women more than men—at that time associates Amory with artificial feminine qualities, such as concern for his looks and clothing.

However, Amory has what he needs to develop his masculinity in spite of his feminine characteristics. He comes from an upper-middle-class white family and wants to be popular with his peers. He attends Princeton, earning an excellent education, and he has fewer financial

problems once he begins his working career. However, Fitzgerald's ideas of Princeton are quite different from the opportunities he gives Amory. In Fitzgerald's response to a letter from John Grier Hibben, the President of Princeton University during Fitzgerald's attendance, he states

> [*This Side of Paradise*] was a book written with the bitterness of my discovery that I had spent several years trying to fit in with a curriculum that is after all made for the average student…it seems to me its like the Captain of a Company when he has his men lined up at attention for inspection. He sees only the tightly buttoned coat and the shaved faces (*Life in Letters* 37).

This image of "the tightly buttoned coat and the shaved faces" indicates a specific kind of man that would be successful at Princeton. Fitzgerald and Amory diverge from this stereotypical "average" student, and instead he describes the student who lies on the edges of the social circles at Princeton. This divergent student, like Amory, does not fit the image of masculinity that Princeton tried to project.

Amory, however, does try to appear virile and dynamic, but these attempts mostly fail, in the same way that his first attempt at smoking caused him to "succumb to a vulgar, plebian reaction" (*This Side of* Paradise 11). As we will later see with Henry Marston in "The Swimmers," Amory also suffers from a weak physical constitution that can only be cured through the pursuit of manly activities and playing, such as football and other contact sports. It is not his only physical ailment that is alarming. When his appendix burst at the age of thirteen, "probably from too many meals in bed" (12), his mother "had a nervous breakdown" (13), leaving Amory in Minneapolis with an aunt and uncle. Setting a tone of disdain for such a seemingly effeminate young boy and a sense of utter narrative detachment from him, the narrator refers to Amory's reaction from his first cigarette as "vulgar [and] plebian" (11). Also, at the end

of these opening episodes, the narrator remarks, "there the crude, vulgar air of Western civilization first catches him" (13). The narrator, too, is ambivalent toward Amory, and this ambivalence can be found in phrases such as, "'Yes, Beatrice.' (Such a quaint name for his mother; she encouraged it)" (10). The narrator's tone at this point seems to be mocking Beatrice and her way of raising Amory in such a soft manner. Beatrice is constantly concerned with Amory's nerves and insists that he not exhaust himself at any point. She takes no pains to foster in Amory masculine pursuits such as participating in athletics or encourage a certain "aggressive assertiveness" in his character, as described by Forter.

Though Amory attempts to participate in sports despite his mother's attempts to coddle him, his athletic ineptitude becomes a mark of his underdeveloped masculinity: "his chief disadvantage lay in athletics" (*This Side of Paradise* 13). However, Amory's foray into sports resulted in "furious, persistent efforts to excel in the winter sports…with his ankles aching and bending in spite of his efforts" (13). Though we can see that he still suffers from a weak body, he continues in his efforts to succeed at some kind of sport. This sudden burst of effort is in response to his discovery that athletics were "the touchstone of power and popularity at school" (13). In effect, sports were the quickest way to prove one's masculinity, and Amory uses this path to become accepted by the social elite among the students at St. Regis's, though the socially privileged students refuse to accept him and Amory leaves St. Regis's with few friends.

Amory is described in feminine terms yet again after his first term at grammar school in Minneapolis. The narrator states that he possessed a "curious strain of weakness" that would cause "a harsh phrase from the lips of an older boy…to sweep him off his poise into surly sensitiveness, or timid stupidity" (*This Side of Paradise* 22). At this point in his life, Amory doesn't have a lot of confidence in his abilities. He is still floundering, attempting to find who he

is in terms of his peers, as any adolescence would. The narrator states that he "possessed neither courage, perseverance, nor self-respect. Vanity, tempered with self suspicion if not self-knowledge, a sense of automatons to his will, a desire to 'pass' as many boys as possible and get to a vague top of the world…with this background did Amory drift into adolescence" (22).

Amory goes off to St. Regis's at the age of 15.[6] Like Fitzgerald, he does not have a productive or glorious adolescence. He forms few friendships and is disliked by many of his classmates. However, when he visits Monsignor Darcy (the character inspired by Monsignor Fay in Fitzgerald's own life) Amory and Darcy "took to each other at first sight—the jovial impressive prelate who could dazzle an embassy ball, and the green-eyed, intent youth, in his first long trousers, accepted in their own minds a relation of father and son within a half-hour's conversation" (*This Side of Paradise* 26). This surrogate father and son relationship is probably the result of Amory's father's absence in his life. The narrator says, "[Monsignor Darcy] and Amory took to each other at first sight—the jovial, impressive prelate who could dazzle an embassy ball, and the green-eyed, intent youth, in his first long trousers, accepted in their own minds a relation of father and son within a half-hour's conversation" (26). However, Darcy is not exactly a model of traditionally conceived masculinity. As a priest, Darcy cannot really perform the tasks that are seen as masculine: gaining wealth, engaging in vigorous physical ability, and establishing romantic, dominating relationships with women.

Thus, Amory's masculinity remains ill-defined in his two years at St. Regis's. The narrator says, "he went all wrong at the start, was generally considered both conceited and arrogant, and universally detested" (*This Side of Paradise* 29). Much like Fitzgerald, he fails at this for one reason or another. Those around Amory find it hard to like him because of his attitude and personality. However, he does earn some merit in football, and can muddle through

the two years in that fashion. Not only do the students dislike him, his teachers also tire of him: "He was resentful against all those in authority over him, and this, combined with a lazy indifference toward his work, exasperated every master in school" (*This Side of Paradise* 29). Thus, we see that Fitzgerald has certainly written his Newman days into Amory's time at St. Regis, especially in the context of *This Side of Paradise* as an autobiographical text. However, Amory seems to have gained an illusion of masculine success. He develops tenuous social bonds with men (male bonding), and believes himself to be more popular in his social circle than he really is, however, creating this illusion of masculinity. Surrounded by other masculine men, Amory feels more masculine than the narrator reveals in his rather feminine appearance: "[h]e had a rather young face, the ingenuousness of which was marred by the penetrating green eyes, fringed with long dark eyelashes. He lacked somehow that intense animal magnetism that so often accompanies beauty…his personality seemed rather a mental thing…But people never forgot his face" (56). And yet, Amory "had arrived" in the elite circles of Princeton "by way of the *Princetonian*" and "[t]he minor snobs…warmed to him;" however, the narrator still describes Amory "in his own crowd" of which he would remain for the remainder of the narrative (65).

Amory attends Princeton much like Fitzgerald. He matriculates from a virtually unknown private school, St. Regis's, and, therefore, does not have the luxury of coming from the "feeder" schools that groom young men for entrance into Ivy League schools. Like Fitzgerald, Amory is friendless when he goes to Princeton, and Amory seems to have the same kind of resentment for these social distinctions that Fitzgerald did. Amory "resented social barriers as artificial distinctions made by the strong to bolster up their weak retainers and keep out the almost strong" (*This Side of Paradise* 42). Amory seems jealous of those socially above him because he has realized from a young age that to be a man means to be socially competent. Amory tells his

friend Kerry, "Oh, it isn't that I mind the glittering[7] caste system…I like having a bunch of hot cats on top, but gosh, Kerry, I've got to be one of them" (44). This resolve to be on top shows Amory's drive to dominate the social system at Princeton. His determination to dominate others is reflected in Forter's assertion that masculinity requires a certain "aggressive assertiveness and competitive vigor" that makes men "innately male" (1).

Amory is certainly an assertive individual, as he steadily attempts to climb his way to the top of the social ladder in other situations as well. While returning home to Minneapolis from Princeton, Amory "sat in the train, and thought about himself for thirty-six hours" (*This Side of Paradise* 54). Though assertive, Amory is also fairly conceited, which adds a negative edge to his assertiveness. In his freshman year of Princeton, Amory attempts to become a "hot cat" in his own social group, as he knows that only clubs and sports can make him popular and these were mostly off-limits to the freshman. It is clear that at this point Amory believes he has influence over the few friends that he has made at Princeton. He participates in athletics and competes with Dick Humbird[8] to be the most masculine in his group of friends. Humbird "was not a snob…His friends ranged from the highest to the lowest, but it was impossible to 'cultivate' him…He seemed the eternal example of what the upper class tries to be," and yet "Dick Humbird had, ever since freshman year, seemed to Amory a perfect type of Aristocrat" (70). This aristocratic attitude and image is what Amory seeks in the novel, as Amory "wouldn't have changed [Humbird]" (70).

Later in the novel we see that Amory competes with members of the social elite at Princeton, rather than actually entering into its prized ranks. He has ingrained Tom D'Invilliers, a member of Amory's social group and chairman of the *Princetonian*, with the kind of class consciousness that he never before possessed: "Wherever you go now you'll unconsciously

apply these standards of 'having it' or 'lacking it.' For better or worse we've stamped you; you're a Princeton type!" (75). Amory brags about this, and yet he has just admired Humbird for being exactly the opposite. Humbird didn't care who anyone was or their social standing: "Humbird could have lunched at Sherry's with a colored man, yet people would have somehow known that it was all right…Servants worshipped him, and treated him like a god" (70-71). The opposite characteristics, namely a lack of class consciousness, are exactly what makes Humbird more masculine than Amory, yet as we've seen in the D'Invilliers scene, Amory does not recognize this.

Amory is not the most manly, however, and his attempts at romantic relationships reflect that. Being desirable to women while being the dominant partner in a relationship is an important part of masculinity, as these masculine men must control every aspect of their pre and post-marital lives. Amory has trouble being the dominant member in romantic relationships, as his attempts at controlling women fail. Isabelle, his first love interest, is described as a story-book relationship. One moment she is seen running into his arms and kissing him, which the narrator describes as being "the crest of his young egotism" (*This Side of Paradise* 80). However, in the next moment, Isabelle says, "Ouch! Let me go!" as Amory drops his arms from her, ending the moment, because his shirt stud pokes her so hard that it leaves "a little blue spot about the size of a pea" on her neck (81). When Isabelle realizes that there is a bruise on her neck, she attempts to elicit sympathy from Amory, but Amory is too amused by this mark that he has left on Isabelle. Much like a hickey, which Isabelle describes as appearing "like Old Nick," the bruise humors Amory perhaps because it is a marker of his dominance over her. He has quite literally marked her as his, at least for the duration of the bruise on her neck.

Amory's humorous responses of "[m]assage it" and "'All the perfumes of Arabia will not whiten this little hand,'" ending with his statement, "Isabelle, darling, I think it'll—" infuriate Isabelle to the point that she screams "Don't touch me!...Haven't I enough on my mind and you stand there and *laugh*!" (*This Side of Paradise* 81). Isabelle continues to dominate this conversation to the point that Amory exclaims, "Oh, don't be so darned feminine," realizing at this point that he "had not an ounce of real affection for Isabelle" though he still wanted to kiss her a great deal (82). The narrator comments, "He wanted to kiss her, kiss her a lot…On the contrary, if he didn't kiss her, it would worry him…It would interfere vaguely with his idea of himself as a conqueror. It wasn't dignified to come off second best, *pleading*, with a doughty warrior like Isabelle" (82). Amory doesn't really seem to know what he wants, but he does have a need to conquer her by kissing her: it would be the manly thing for him to do. He refuses to allow her to win this little battle for domination of the other person. Amory realizes that he is going to miss out on the romantic evening that was supposed to end in consummating the relationship: "Amory watched the night that should have been the consummation of romance glide by with great moths overhead and the heavy fragrance of roadside gardens, but without those broken words, those little sighs…" (82). Amory believes kissing Isabelle will be the least of what he wants, but quickly realizes that a kiss is no longer an option either. He also believes that not kissing Isabelle will somehow diminish his image as a masculine conqueror. Thus, the evening ends with Amory returning to his room and Isabelle leaving him there. Though, the bruise on Isabelle's neck seems to be an indication that Amory has successfully conquered her, Isabelle quickly turns the tables and rebukes the rest of Amory's advances. She becomes the dominant woman and Amory folds under her, showing the reader that he is, yet again, only under the illusion that he has conquered this woman, as she states, "I'll be anything I want" (82). As

Amory leaves her parents' home, he says, "Damn her!...she's spoiled my year!" (84). Thus, Isabelle can be seen as the dominant woman here who can ruin Amory's "year" in a single night.

As a first representative of Fitzgerald's masculine man, Amory is mostly unable to develop into the virile, aggressive stout-hearted and independent Victorian man of the previous generation. He blunders around in winter sports, comes from a mediocre family, and fails in both romantic and personal relationships. Amory, however, isn't a completely failed masculine character. We see the beginnings of what many masculine men of this time period prized as masculine characteristics according to Forter and Bederman: social success, virility, athletic prowess, and an ability to control and dominate a romantic relationship. Amory is unsuccessful in his pursuit of socially "be[ing] on top" at Princeton, and ends in this novel pursuing yet another quest. He is not the frontiersman that Bederman describes in Roosevelt, but creates a sense of masculinity that is softer and less rigidly polarized against the feminine. He is not successfully wealthy or athletic, and is left at the end of the novel a single man espousing socialist political views to Garvin and Mr. Ferrenby, assistants to the University president, in a taxi.

Amory tells Garvin and Mr. Ferrenby that their class, "the class I belonged to until recently; those who by inheritance or industry or brains or dishonesty have become the moneyed class" never "make concessions until they're wrung out of you" (*This Side of Paradise* 229-230). Amory also says about young boys, "He shouldn't be artificially bolstered up with money" (232). Amory is "sick of a system where the richest man gets the most beautiful girl if he wants her, here the artist without an income has to sell his talents to a button manufacturer" (235). Amory's disdain for the social classes has increased through the course of the narrative, and has left Amory bitter toward the socially elite. Amory wants natural talents to rule the economy

rather than business tactics and money. However, he also says that he is "a product of a versatile mind in a restless generation…[and] would struggle against tradition; try, at least, to displace old cants with new ones" (236). Amory's unhappiness with the current state of social stratification and the economy might be due to his inability to become the kind of man who can be on top: the inherited wealthy class, the successful businessmen, or the successful romantic.

Thus, Amory embodies an example of the new kind of masculinity found in men at this time: the new man that I argue for is the result of men who were unable to become the virile, aggressive frontiersman of the Victorian era. Masculinity, especially at this point in Fitzgerald's literary imagination, seems to shift from the rigid pulls of the frontiersman to a softer masculine man, who can still be masculine without being virile and aggressive. This softer man isn't a true failure in himself; he only fails when compared to the manly men who projected an idea of masculinity derived from a previous generation. Men such as Amory are not hardened; they possess more feminine weaknesses and lack masculine characteristics such as the wealth, physical prowess, an ability to bond well with masculine men and yet be dominant perhaps in one's romantic relationships with women. If Amory is the idealized version of Fitzgerald (Bruccoli 127), then certainly that idealization seems to go against the grain of any idealization of virile manhood that Fitzgerald may have held at the time. Instead, from the beginning of the novel to the end, Amory tries to be conventionally manly (according to the Victorian definitions of manliness), but fails, as Fitzgerald emphasizes, through his characterization and plot events. Amory is no Dick Humbird, and eventually, he despises the very social classes he once tried so hard to enter, along with his ambivalence toward Humbird's manliness. Paradoxically, in the end Amory appears to be more feminine than conventionally manly: he is both defiant and dreary about his future, and his quest is for values instead of a focus on getting and spending.

Chapter 2

"Winter Dreams"

"Winter Dreams" was published in 1922, and written just before Fitzgerald's third novel, *The Great Gatsby* (1925).[9] This short story has many of the same themes and issues that can be found in *Gatsby*, such as the relationship of money to masculinity, athletic prowess, gender roles in marriage, the relationships among men, romantic commitment, what Bruccoli calls man's "aggressive assertiveness," and, especially, the sense of change and loss that haunts both narratives (173). Fitzgerald's softer man of *This Side of Paradise* looks forward to "Winter Dreams," in which Dexter Green also seeks to acquire masculine attributes such as money and the power and influence that one accrues from it; the public recognition that athleticism brings; and nursing the memory of a lost love. This last trait has particularly evolved from the softer virtues; men can grieve through tears, even if it is shed only for himself. Like Amory Blaine, Dexter Green is left a single, lonely, middle-class man, but unlike Amory, he has learned to grieve and openly express this sorrow.

After publishing *This Side of Paradise*, Fitzgerald married Zelda after a brief break in their engagement. They spent a few exciting first months as a married couple in New York. During this time, "their social activities were fueled by alcohol," and Fitzgerald already had a taste for it from his days at Newman and Princeton (Bruccoli 131). Zelda and Fitzgerald were a beautiful couple, "cast as the models for the new worship of youth" (131). They were admired for their looks and social skills in conversation, and Edmund Wilson stated, "their capacity for carrying things off and carrying people away by their spontaneity, charm, and good looks" (qtd. in Bruccoli 132). Though they were a successful and admired couple, Bruccoli states that Zelda found it increasingly difficult to "accept the subordinate role of wife to F. Scott Fitzgerald"

(133). She was a "Montgomery celebrity" before she married Fitzgerald, who was just one of many in a crowd of suitors. After marriage, their roles are reversed, however. We can see a version of Zelda in the character of Judy Jones in "Winter Dreams," and Fitzgerald as writing himself into the character of Dexter Green, who loses Judy on more than one occasion to men who are more wealthy or glamorous than he, and her marriage to a wealthy man seems to have a disenchanting effect on Dexter. He no longer sees the beauty in her, and we might relate this to the Fitzgeralds' own lives, of how he and Zelda viewed each other. The story seems to explore the way in which life might have turned out for a woman like Zelda if she were to marry a wealthy, popular man: she would lose the warm glow of beauty in the eyes of someone like Dexter or Fitzgerald.

We see even more of Zelda from the early days of their marriage in the flightiness and flirtation of Judy Jones. Bruccoli states,

> Zelda's attentions to Fitzgerald's friends sometimes upset him. She would neck with party acquaintances. Once she tried to sleep with Bishop, although her intentions were not sexual; another time she wanted Townsend Martin to bathe her. The pattern of quarrels and reconciliations established during their courtship continued. (139)

Judy Jones participates in similar flirtations. Like Zelda Sayre, she sees other men while dating Dexter. Dexter approximates Fitzgerald at this point in the way that he "worked his way up to the position of Zelda's number-one suitor" but Zelda/Judy Jones continued to date other men, infuriating Dexter/Fitzgerald (Bruccoli 89). Like Fitzgerald, Dexter also finds himself "one of a varying dozen" of men "who circulate about her. Each of them had at one time been favored above all others—about half of them still based in the solace of occasional sentimental revivals"

("Winter Dreams" 246). Bruccoli's statement certainly describes a Zelda whose behavior vaguely echoes that of Judy Jones, who was always off with a different man, upsetting Dexter, who thought that they were in a romantic relationship.

Written in just one month, September 1922, "Winter Dreams" reveals the connection Fitzgerald makes among manliness, masculinity, and money. Dexter Green's pursuit of these masculine connections is symbolized by the "glittering things" he searches for throughout the story, and, ultimately, is never satisfied by ("Winter Dreams" 240). Dexter hopes for the kind of masculinity Fitzgerald never gained in life, but he also fails in his pursuit of it: in fact, he finds it inadequate to meet his psychological and emotional needs. The "glittering things" are a product of Dexter's "winter dreams," which haunt him throughout the story and "unconsciously dictated" Dexter's decisions to strive for and eventually possess the "glittering things" in his own life (239-240). Dexter is obsessed not only with associations with these "glittering things and glittering people—he wanted the glittering things themselves" ("Winter Dreams" 240). For him, these "glittering things" signify happiness through the accumulation of money and a successful romantic relationship, which, in one way or another, is also associated with the traditional definition of masculinity. Through money and romantic relationships, men can display their virile manhood by being able to buy their social status and principles or dominate women in relationships. For Dexter, accumulating wealth is very important to his happiness: in one particularly disturbing episode, the narrator relates, "They had played [the song] at a prom once when he could not afford the luxury of proms, and he had stood outside the gymnasium and listened" (242). Here, we see that Dexter's happiness is affected by his lack of wealth. He cannot participate in the prom, held during his sophomore year at college, and must literally stand on the outside, listening to the happiness inside the gym.

Traditionally, the "glittering things" are associated with the youth, beauty, wealth, and happiness that Judy Jones represents within the text. Not only are these "glittering things" associated with youth, beauty, wealth, and happiness, but also with sports and marriage. Dexter, like many youths, wants to remain young, beautiful, and happy forever. He sees Judy Jones as a symbol for all of these qualities, as "her casual whim gave a new direction to his life" ("Winter Dreams" 243). Judy Jones seems to remind him of the youth he has forgotten in his pursuit of money and social privilege. As long as she is associated with the "glittering things," Dexter also sees himself as a "glittering thing." Dexter, though, can only define his own masculinity as a man of softer virtues, who doesn't need to remain youthful, beautiful, or wealthy to be successful. He has succeeded in becoming the new man of the post-Victorian era by achieving a niche for himself in the upper-middle class without having inherited wealth, vigorous masculinity, or having conquered a woman. He realizes that these "glittering things" are only illusions of masculinity; he has not really achieved any of the traits of masculinity, though he can still be a masculine man at the end of the narrative, albeit a decidedly softer one.

Thus, we can see the "glittering things" as specifically representative of all the masculine traits that Dexter pursues throughout the text, and are, in Dexter's mind, a means to achieving the masculinity he aspires for. Dexter believes that winning Judy Jones would demonstrate his masculinity, but his pursuit of her fails to gain him access to the life he wants and the virile image of himself he seeks. But when Judy Jones marries another man, Dexter realizes that the "glittering things" he had associated with Judy Jones are fleeting at best:[12]

> He wanted to care, and he could not care. For he had gone away and he could never go back any more. The gates were closed, the sun was gone down, and there was no beauty but the gray beauty of steel that withstands all time. Even the grief

> he could have borne was left behind in the country of illusion, of youth, of the richness of life, where his winter dreams had flourished. ("Winter Dreams" 255)

Dexter's "glittering things" and "winter dreams" are two parts of the same search for his masculinity. He places his idea of "glittering things" on Judy Jones, and his "winter dreams" send him to the East coast, away from the conventional mid-western values. Without the alluring image of Judy Jones, his dreams seem pitifully unrealistic, youthful, only illusions of the ideas of his youth that he clung to in his adulthood. At this moment, I argue that we see Dexter becoming a man, shedding the trappings of youth, glory, and "glittering things," that hold him back from seeing the world as it is: a world of work in which one does not have to acquire the image of a virile, "aggressively assertive" man found on Judy Jones's sun-porch. Dexter imagines that "he was the rough, strong stuff from which [these men] eternally sprang," and yet he "surrendered a part of himself to the most direct and unprincipled personality" of Judy Jones (244-245).

Dexter begins his career on the golf course as a caddy, i.e. he belongs to the lower-middle class with no inherited privileges. He realizes that he must become one of the golfers on the green, playing in a controlled nature, to gain social status and be regarded as being athletically manly since the golf course is one of the more popular sports of the time.[10] The golf course is also one of the most colorful sporting venues, where ideas of beauty and a country club masculinity can mix in a seemingly uncontroversial space.[11] This country club masculinity is defined by men who must focus on their clothing (as Gatsby does), on controlling nature, and an athletic ability dependent on precision rather than brute strength that characterize such virile sports as boxing or wrestling. Once he succeeds as a business man, Dexter is in the unique position of having lived both sides of this social and economic divide. He has been a caddy, the lowly carrier of bags and golf balls, and seemed invisible to the same businessmen he later golfs

with. He sees golfing as a path to achieving relationships with successful men who can help him appear to be manly, both to himself and to his social peers.

The businessmen that he golfs with certainly treat him differently than they would have if he were still a caddy. He doesn't even tell them that he was once a caddy in his youth because he seems to believe that they would view him as less of a man: "[Dexter] did not consider it necessary to remark that he had once carried Mr. Hart's bag over this same links…he found himself glancing at the four caddies…trying to catch a gleam or gesture that would remind him of himself, that would lessen the gap which lay between his present and his past" ("Winter Dreams" 240). Masculine men come from money, are groomed in wealth, and play the rich man's sport of golf, invoking a masculinity that is a means to mastering nature: severely manicured and landscaped greens, fairways, and tee boxes. We see this later in "The Swimmers," where Henry Marston, who also conquers nature, not through golfing but through the act of swimming.

However, Dexter never realizes that the country club elite looks down on him because of his laundry business. He owns the businesses that wash the clothes of these businessmen, acting, in essence, as a laundry service for the wealthy, which is certainly a step up from being a caddy, but still socially not quite acceptable. His golf companions do not see Dexter as one of them because he works in the service industry, not in the big business of market capitalism. Owning a laundry is only one step removed from working in the laundry, which Dexter likely has probably done. However, he is not the nineteenth-century Roosevelt frontiersman that Bederman defines, either. He falls in the middle—not quite part of the elite class or part of the past frontiersman. He is the new man, the man between the two extremes of socially successful and virile, aggressive man. Though he doesn't work in an office, he also does not accomplish the real work the

frontiersman would complete. Dexter's insider-outsider status gives him a unique position; however, he is able to understand the woes of a caddy as an ex-caddy himself, and yet he is able to play golf with the businessmen he admired as a caddy, who are unaware of Dexter's humble past.

Dexter Green's decision to quit his caddy job brings with it certain anxieties about relationships men develop with other men in the course of accumulating wealth. He begins making money early in life and, once he graduates from college, he chases Judy Jones. His pursuit of Judy Jones only ends when she marries another man and Dexter realizes that he had built her up to be a woman whom he must conquer. Like Amory Blaine, Dexter believes that he might gain a virile masculinity by conquering a woman, perhaps through marriage. At the end of the story, Dexter faces a bleak reality when he realizes that achieving the "glittering things" does not necessarily equate with being manly. Dexter is financially successful, and he can play golf at this club with those men who have formed a tight gender and social bond among themselves, but he remains an outsider to this group. He was "at bottom hard-minded…completely indifferent to popular opinion…he did not possess in himself the power to move fundamentally or to hold Judy Jones" ("Winter Dreams" 252). He, like Amory, also goes to war, but "welcome[es] the liberation from webs of tangled emotion" along with "young thousands" who also joined the war effort (252). Thus, Dexter turns to the military to wash himself of the emotional turmoil caused by his efforts to obtain a successful romantic relationship. And yet, as he turns to those very characteristics—virility, fighting—that Bederman defines in the frontiersman, he ends "Winter Dreams" crying for selfish reasons: "For the first time in years the tears were streaming down his face. But they were for himself now" (254).

In “Winter Dreams,” we are given an image of a man, Dexter Green, who can be masculine without being a conqueror of women, the virile man, or the aggressively assertive man. He may triumph over nature on golf courses, but overall this new man has a flexible masculinity that seems “country club” in nature. This country club masculinity is a kind of masculinity in which a man can be concerned with his looks, focus on precision in sports (rather than brute strength), and does not need to be aggressively assertive, though Dexter may have been in his string of successful laundromats. He can be seen with “tears…streaming down his face,” mourning his youthful foolishness and loss of his romantic idea, Judy Jones (“Winter Dreams” 255). Dexter “wanted to care, and he could not care…Even the grief he could have borne was left behind in the country of illusion, of youth, of the richness of life, where his winter dreams had flourished” (255).

Like Amory, Dexter does not need to conquer women to be manly. Dexter, on the whole, is like Amory—he occupies a middle ground between the two extremes of the wealthy, successful businessman and the frontiersman, which can no longer exist in the evolving industrial age of the early twentieth century. The virile, frontiersman is a man of the past. Men of the twentieth century must define their virility in other ways, such as being successful in their own social class or being content with mediocrity in business, relationships, and athletics. Fitzgerald seems to show that participation in athletics and accumulation of wealth can make a man masculine, but this is deeply ambivalent where the softer virtues triumph over the aggressive, self-reliance of the sturdy frontiersmen of the Victorian past that Bederman describes in Roosevelt. This vibrant, colorful story surges with emotions, especially the romance between Dexter and Judy Jones. The narrator says that their romance “continued, with varying shades of intensity…right up to the denouement” and (“Winter Dreams” 245). Yet, the story ends in a

bleak, gray world of steel and melancholia, devoid of the glamor and romance of the "glittering things" that are associated with Judy Jones. Dexter realizes too late that Judy Jones does not, in fact, embody in himself the youth and beauty that he treasured in her, and that the image of the ideal man's man, who is able to wrest the "glittering things" or assertively claim them as his own is no longer a viable quest. Yet again, we see that the male protagonist fails to establish a successful romantic relationship with a woman, and ends the narrative setting off on another quest, subdued, sad, and teary-eyed. Thus, in some of his middle and later period stories, Fitzgerald abandons wealth as a schema for being manly, and, instead, focuses on the softer virtues in manhood. He develops an ambivalence for romantic relationships and the quest for wealth displayed by Amory Blaine and Dexter Green. Henry Marston in "The Swimmers" shows that Fitzgerald has decided that money and marriage are not as important to one's definition of masculinity as he once thought it was.

Chapter 3

"The Swimmers"

In the years since the publication of "Winter Dreams" in the collection *All the Sad Young Men* (1926), the Fitzgeralds travelled extensively, staying in California for more than a year while Fitzgerald worked on an unproduced film, *Lipstick*, in 1927, his visit culminating in an ultimately platonic relationship with the actress Lois Moran (Petry 143). Zelda was jealous of Fitzgerald's feelings toward Moran. She believed Fitzgerald no longer loved her, and she began taking ballet lessons while they were in California. Through ballet, she hoped to revive Fitzgerald's romantic feelings for her, though she didn't realize that he never stopped loving her. From this point, Zelda practiced her ballet at a feverish pace, perhaps losing sight of her original intention in taking ballet lessons, which was to have Fitzgerald see her as a younger, more vibrant woman. Zelda was nearing her first nervous breakdown at this point. The Fitzgeralds returned to France in 1928 after a short stay in New York. It was during this difficult period in their lives that Fitzgerald wrote "The Swimmers."

"The Swimmers" was published on October 19, 1929, just before the Wall Street crash, seven years after the publication of "Winter Dreams," and during the calm just before Zelda's first break in the streets of Paris. Not only was Fitzgerald dealing with Zelda's increasing devotion to ballet and her deepinging mental fragility that led to her subsequent hysteria, but he was facing his own diseases and anxieties as well.[13] When the Fitzgeralds returned to France for a third trip in 1928, Fitzgerald believed that his tuberculosis was relapsing. X-rays revealed no issues with this disease, but important tests were never run to verify a reoccurrence of the disease in Fitzgerald.[14]

Fitzgerald wrote to Hemingway on 9 September 1929, just before the publication of "The Swimmers" that he retires early in Paris "with the tears flowing from my eyes or the gin rising to their level and leaking over, [and] tell interested friends or acquaintances that I hav[e]n't a friend in the world and likewise care for nobody, generally including Zelda…The rest of the time I stay alone working" (*A Life in Letters* 169). In this letter, we see that Fitzgerald is troubled by his work and an absent Zelda, especially, when he had been indulging in drinking. Fitzgerald's loneliness was brought on by Zelda's dedication to ballet and dance. Zelda often abandoned Fitzgerald for dance practices, leaving him to go out drinking and usually getting intoxicated alone. The party lifestyle they once enjoyed as newlyweds was over as Zelda distanced herself from Fitzgerald.

According to Petry, by the time Fitzgerald writes "The Swimmers," he develops a "greater appreciation of selfhood, and especially of the male self" (125). Fitzgerald realizes that no matter what his finances are, he cannot compel Zelda to be a faithful wife, just as Henry Marston cannot make Choupette remain loyal in their marriage. In the story, Henry gives up the material benefits of the American Dream (his position in the Virginia branch of his company) which gives way to a valorization of the American success story, buttressed by the Protestant work ethic, in which physical and spiritual strength have traditionally held a central position. Henry, in fact, trades money for happiness, a solution to the anxieties of masculinity that we haven't seen yet in Fitzgerald's texts, and returns to France. Fitzgerald never came to this conclusion, that money was not necessary to keeping Zelda faithful in his own life, but we can see it acted out in this story, as Henry and Choupette certainly reflect Fitzgerald and Zelda in a number of ways. Unlike Choupette's infidelity, Zelda's fling with the French aviator Edouard Jozan in the summer of 1924 was non-sexual in nature, though Fitzgerald was deeply scarred by

the affair (Petry 99). His perception of his masculinity never recovered from that event. Petry, like other critics, says, "Fitzgerald by early 1924 seems to have been using his writing to try to understand his increasingly troubled life, and in particular his marriage: where Zelda would have her psychiatrists, Fitzgerald would have his writing as the medium through which to face a barrage of increasingly challenging personal and professional crises" (101).[14]

Bruccoli states that "The Swimmers" is "flawed by a plot gimmick and—as Fitzgerald admitted—has too much material for its form" (277). In "The Swimmers," Fitzgerald attempts to sort out issues of masculinity vis-à-vis an adulterous wife, athletics (a motif in his stories), the relationships between power, money, and intellect. As we have seen in *This Side of Paradise* and "Winter Dreams," athletics is at least one basis of Fitzgerald's understanding of masculinity. A man can gain reputation and renown through athletics of any kind and thus athletics must be key in how a man (and others) perceive his masculinity.

A man's physical constitution is an important factor in defining his masculinity. Henry Marston begins "The Swimmers" as "an American man of thirty-five" when "[a] black horror suddenly descended upon him, and he went up to the wash room, where he stood, trembling a little, just inside the door…Henry Marston's trembling became a shaking" ("The Swimmers" 510). The "trembling and shaking" Henry experiences can be viewed as a form of hysterics[15] set off by the sudden inhalation of gasoline exhaust. Hysteria was mostly diagnosed in women before the twentieth century, thus, it has a feminine connotation, which might cause readers to see Henry as feminine, especially in light of the virile, aggressiveness expected of men during this time. This episode is not the first time that Henry has experienced a "trembling and shaking" episode. However, as the narrator states, "it would be pleasant if this were the end and nothing more need be done…and with a certain hope [Henry] sat down on a stool" ("The Swimmers"

510). Henry's nervousness seems to be a result of his inability to control his emotions, a quality attributed to women at this time. This "trembling and shaking" shows a weak physical constitution, as inhaling gas exhaust is not really something that might provoke such a reaction. Also, simply sitting down is "seldom really the end" for Henry's episodes, and he must become "too exhausted to care" for the shaking to finally stop (510-511). With his ineffectual strength, Henry's inability to control himself is certainly a failed aspect of his masculinity. Later, Henry regains his balance from his breakdown and returns to his job, appearing to be healthy, "alert and self-possessed as any other officer of the bank"; apparently, he has controlled this episode of hysteria (511).

The control Henry exerts over his body for this episode is short lived, however. When he goes home that same day, he makes the shocking discovery that his wife has been conducting an affair in their home. On entering, Henry notices "a man's hat and stick on the hall table and for the first time in his life he heard silence—a loud, singing silence, oppressive as heavy guns or thunder" (512). This "silence" seems to precipitate Henry's second nervous episode of the day. After having inhaled the gasoline exhaust at noon and received Judge Waterby's offer of a job in Virginia, with an increase in salary, Henry simply can't handle any other stressful events, and the discovery of his wife's indiscretion sends him into a month-long coma. When Doctor Derocco comes to examine Henry, Choupette tells him, "[m]y husband has been feeling unwell for some weeks… He has suddenly collapsed; he cannot articulate or move his limbs. All this…might have been precipitated by a certain indiscretion of mine…there was a violent scene [and] a discussion" (512). Choupette acknowledges that her indiscretion may have been the cause for Henry's collapse, but she also says that it was not all her fault; Henry had been "feeling unwell for some weeks" before this collapse. Henry's nervous episode at work precipitates this coma,

exacerbated by finding his wife in bed with a lover. This is an indication of his weak constitution. Henry's collapse is more reminiscent of a woman's reaction to an indiscretion rather than a display of anger or strength that one might expect of a man.

Henry's weak constitution contributes to his wife's overbearing behavior. Choupette may regret Henry's bed rest and semi-conscious state, but she quickly becomes her overpowering self when they go to the beach for a holiday. This holiday is comparable to the types of trips doctors at the time might have prescribed for nervous conditions in which the sufferer, usually female, would go on a holiday to the coast to relax and hopefully recuperate enough so as to prevent any future relapse. If we see Choupette as this authoritative female figure who has control over Henry, then Henry's adoption of the "Continental Attitude" seems more related to his weak constitution than his true feelings about the affair (513). This is confirmed later when Henry admits to himself that his reaction to the affair, overlooking such indiscretions from one's wife as the "Continental Attitude," was not his "true reaction":

> After that matter in Paris, it had seemed the bigger part to understand and to forgive, to cling to the home as something apart from the vagaries of love. Only now, glowing with a good health that he had not experienced for years, did he discover his true reaction. It had released him. For all his sense of loss, he possessed again the masculine self he had handed over…eight years ago. (517)

The weak constitution Henry suffers from in the beginning is certainly changed after he learns to swim. Through swimming, he is able to come out of the haze of his "Continental Attitude" and see that he does not have to forgive Choupette for the affair, nor does he need to cling to his marriage.

Swimming[16] is perhaps the most important masculine attribute in this story. Through swimming, Henry regains his masculinity, becoming decisive and firm in his opinions and decisions, especially those regarding his wife. This is in direct opposition to Henry's loss of his masculinity eight years earlier: "[f]or all his sense of loss, he possessed again the masculine self he had handed over to the keeping of a wise little Provençal girl eight years ago" ("The Swimmers" 517). Fitzgerald allowed Choupette to dominate him, especially in their household finances, but once he learns to swim and dominate the ocean, Henry reclaims this lost masculinity.

Once Henry learns to swim, he is no longer simply a man allowing his earlier physical deficiencies and Choupette to affect him. Rachel Collins discusses manifestations of American masculinity at the tail end of the frontier, though the idea of the frontiersman lasts long after the frontier is closed, as Bederman discusses Roosevelt finds his own masculinity. Collins states, "[a]dult masculinity, it seems, is intimately connected to the violent domination of the natural world" (47). Though this article discusses *My Antonia*, a novel written a few years before "The Swimmers" (in 1918), the larger discussion of frontier masculinity is certainly relevant to my argument here because Cather's novel deals with the domination of the Midwest (the frontier) before it was fully settled or cultivated. Dominating the natural environment is seen as essentially "masculine," a trait that was necessary for men to make a life for their families in the unchartered Midwest and the western territories. Likewise, Henry learns to dominate the sea through swimming, which shows him as being more physically masculine than he was before his nervous breakdown. Dominating nature has always been a physical, masculine trait. Henry asserts his masculinity through a physical attribute rather than through acquiring wealth, which is the standard by which masculinity was being evaluated in the late Victorian era and in the early

twentieth century. We see this nexus at work when we consider Henry and Charles Weise, Choupette's paramour in America. Henry's return to America brings with it more money, but he now also has physical strength and the ability to dominate nature when the lure of money seemingly fails to keep his wife faithful to him. Though Henry has more money, his wife still participates in affairs with men who have more money. Henry's higher salary in America, though more than in France, was not enough for Choupette. Weise only has his money, and when his money fails him, he, ironically, appears both helpless and weak, and his earlier self-confidence seems to have deserted him. He appears weak, and becomes feminized when placed, literally, side by side with Henry in the boat.

The domination of nature by man, as Collins states, is violent. Henry's swimming, both his near-death drowning experience and his learning to swim from the young Virginian girl, is a violent activity. To battle against such a force for exercise or fun certainly compliments Collin's idea of "violent domination of the natural world." By dominating the ocean, Henry asserts his masculinity in that he can conquer even the most violent and mysterious aspect of nature, the ocean. He "conquers" nature by learning to swim, which was something Choupette previously forbade in her family. She didn't want her husband or children getting into the water because she feared nature, especially the ocean. When her children ask if they will swim on their vacation for Henry's health to the seashore, Choupette cries, "And get drowned, my darlings?...But fancy, at your age. Not at all!" ("The Swimmers 513). She fears her family would not be able to leave the ocean if they entered it. We might even hypothesize that Henry's newly acquired strength, i.e. his belief in himself, could, she fears, diminish her power and hold over him, which is exactly what happens.

Swimming acts as a therapy for Henry's problems after he moves to America, especially when his marriage crumbles. Any time he becomes frustrated with work, he goes to the coast and swims until he figures out a solution or the issue becomes unimportant: "When difficulties became insurmountable, inevitable, Henry sought surcease in exercise. For three years, swimming had been a sort of refuge…There was a point when he would resolutely stop thinking and go to the Virginia coast for a week to wash his mind in the water" ("The Swimmers" 520-521). He becomes more skillful and muscular through his constant swimming, and regains the masculinity lost through his sedentary lifestyle in France. Now, Henry has the appearance of the masculine American man, and he readily asserts himself when Choupette and Weise attempt to bully him into giving up the custody of his children.

Henry previously believed that money could make one powerful. It is regarded as a crucial aspect to one's masculine identity, an attitude which is echoed in Weise's boastful comment, "money is power, Marston. I repeat, suh, money is power" ("The Swimmers" 523). Weise attempts to prove that money is power by producing documents stating that Henry "[is] of unsound mind, and unfit to have the custody of children" (523). Here, there is a struggle between money and physical strength, as Weise has bought and produced a lie—that Henry is mentally incompetent to care for his children—that could ruin Henry. Weise's statement, "money is power. You were abroad so long that perhaps you're inclined to forget that fact. Money made this country…It's money that harnesses the forces of Nature, creates the machine and makes it go when money says go, and stop when money says stop" is ironic because the readers know by now that money doesn't "harness the forces of Nature," but physical ability does (523). Henry has made money in off the stock market, but he never really tells anyone how much. In response to Judge Waterby's statement that he's heard Henry has made something "between a hundred

thousand and half a million," Henry says, "Somewhere in between" (518). Though Henry's made money in the market, he does not flaunt his money like Weise, expecting money to earn him everything, like a faithful wife and happy life. Henry's other masculine characteristics define his masculinity. However, Weise believes in the power of money to the extent that he believes he can force Henry to give up his children. However, Henry has found his American masculinity in swimming and is able to make Weise do as he says. We see that physical prowess "creates the machine and makes it go" and as Henry forces Weise to stop attempting to help Choupette gain custody of the children, the machine, Weise, the self-proclaimed symbol of power and money, "stops when [Henry] says stop" (523).

There is also another section in the story that associates masculinity with swimming, physical prowess, and money. Fitzgerald's narrator says, "perhaps money was a form of fin" ("The Swimmers" 521). Money allows for more fluid social mobility, and men like Weise can swim into the upper classes simply by attaining wealth. However, money is, after all, not a strict determinant of one's masculinity. Money cannot help Weise swim ashore when he is stranded on a boat with Henry. It also cannot help Choupette keep the custody of her children. Thus, Fitzgerald complicates the relationship of money and masculinity. He has undercut the argument that money is a determinant of masculinity. Henry is a man who leaves behind money and marriage, and returns to France having demonstrated that at the core of capitalist masculinity lies a paradox: The possession of money does not necessarily translate into any attendant possession of manliness.

Thus, "The Swimmers" complicates the nexus of masculinity and money seen in the previous two works, *This Side of Paradise* and "Winter Dreams." In the first two works, money is the driving force for Amory Blaine and Dexter Green. They are pushed by the ethos of their

social classes and themselves to become successful and wealthy and, thus, be masculine; however, both Amory and Dexter fail to attain any significant measure of wealth. However, Henry Marston can define his masculinity through swimming, a physical attribute that we see underemphasized in *This Side of Paradise* and "Winter Dreams." Though athletics appear in both stories, the playing fields end up being spaces that allow for male bonding. Henry gives up the money he makes in America because wealth no longer defines his masculinity. His physical strength in swimming is now his defining masculine characteristic. The ambivalence he develops toward wealth (and, ironically, but not surprisingly, returns to France for less money) evolves into ambivalence about his masculinity. However, by the end of "The Swimmers," feminine power has emerged forcefully. Henry takes swimming lessons from a young Virginian woman, and he boldly takes the custody of his children; he becomes both a father *and* a mother to them.

Conclusion

The New Man Defined in Fitzgerald

Definitions of masculinity have evolved since the nineteenth century. Between 1880-1920, the personality traits that constitute an image of manliness and masculinity changed drastically and began to widen in scope. The frontiersman was no longer a part of American culture as the frontier had been discovered, opened, and eventually closed. At this point in American history and culture, then, men had to find other ways to define their masculinity. Many turned to success in the domination of the new market economy, sought relationships among men and women, and an emphasis on the importance of physical prowess through athletics to prove their masculinity. However, Fitzgerald's men fail in one or more of these pursuits.

Amory, Dexter, and Henry fall short of the virile, aggressively assertive men of past decades. These near-misses of manly men might indicate that Fitzgerald intended to write masculine characters in his works, but for one reason or another, his characters end up creating a new kind of masculinity—a new man defined by traits other than money, athletics, and romantic prowess. These characters are softer, more feminine than past men. Fitzgerald ends up validating and valorizing the softer virtues, while questioning the values that constitute the earlier and traditional notions of manliness and masculinity. Amory validates himself as a man within his own social group, but to be the manly man, he must also be validated by men who dominate his social class, which never happens in the course of *This Side of Paradise*. Amory develops an ambivalence towards his masculinity. He finds himself alone at the end without a woman in his life: the final image of him is one of a young ideologue, espousing socialist ideas to a taxi driver. Thus, Amory's masculinity is never defined as hyper-masculine, but he is instead left searching for the new man that is characterized by the softer virtues. Similarly, Dexter Green and Henry

Marston seek to view themselves as masculine, after behaving as such, but each, paradoxically, ends up validating the feminine.

These decidedly softer men reveal a disconnect in Fitzgerald's fiction between the values that the culture saw as masculine and the softer virtues he extols in the masculine protagonists of his work. Dick Humbird, for instance, is one of the manliest men in the corpus of Fitzgerald's literary out-put, but dies in a car crash early in *This Side of Paradise*. Instead, readers are left with softer, feminine male protagonists, who are successful in other ways than through physical prowess, wealth, or their dominating relationships with women. In fact, the men in the texts examined here have difficulties in remaining in successful relationships with women. All three men end up single by the end of their respective texts.

Fitzgerald's valorization and validation of these softer virtues, and the fractured sense of the masculine in his work leads to a subversion of traditional masculine and feminine sensibilities and values. We see Fitzgerald subverting these sensibilities and values by choosing to make the softer, more feminine men his protagonists. Though he seems to hold contempt for these kinds of men (because they reflect his own self-loathing of feminine virtues), he certainly leaves them content at the end of their respective narratives. Amory sets out on a new quest, as does Dexter, who is consumed by sorrow, and Henry returns to France, divorced and now independently wealthy—though not ostentatious in his display of money—yet seemingly happy with this turn of events.

Many of the problems the men in Fitzgerald's texts face come from the aggressive and assertive women that Ann Douglas describes. These new women threaten the masculinity of Fitzgerald's men by challenging the very essence of what it means to be a man in the late Victorian era and early twentieth century: conceptualized as an assertive conqueror. The

conquering expected of men during this time involves both their work (mostly making money) and their marriages(where the men are expected to dominate the conjugal relationship). We see women, such as Judy Jones's beauty, her family's wealth, and her domineering self-confidence draw Dexter to her. In fact, these aspects of her self-hood are among the "glittering things" that captivate Dexter when he meets her. However, when Judy Jones marries, much of this "glitter," her allure and power over Dexter, are gone, and his image of her fades and is eventually lost. So, the men win out in the end, but not before their feminine softeness, too, is revealed; Dexter Green regrets this loss and sheds tears in "Winter Dreams."

Fitzgerald's struggle with his own masculinity, what it meant to be a man in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, greatly affected his writing. The struggle between his self-image and the popular definition of masculinity in his time, and the way others perceived his masculinity permeate his works, ending perhaps in an ambivalence about a virile masculinity that he could never fully attain. He would never become a man's man, and he seems to have realized that he has struggled fruitlessly throughout his life for this masculine image. His attempts to wrestle with his own masculinity through his writing shows that he could never reconcile the feminine in him with his politically desired masculinity. His male characters are a mix of masculine and feminine characteristics, something that Fitzgerald struggled with in his own life. He saw only masculine on one side of the spectrum and feminine on the other; he was never able to harmoniously coalesce the two. However, he seems to want to connect the masculine and feminine, or, like Virginia Woolf, move toward an androgynous mind void of the masculine/feminine binary. And, Fitzgerald's attempt to write hyper-masculine characters, "of one sex as distinct from the other," "is an effort" (Woolf 97). We see Amory, Dexter, and Henry struggle to come to terms with their masculinity. However, each concludes his respective

narrative ambivalent about his masculinity, but at the same time revealing his softer, feminine side in the process.

Each man is seen embarking on a new quest to achieve an idealized, and almost unrealizable) image of masculinity. Amory, Dexter, and Henry discover their particular niches in a new kind of masculinity in which they can exist as men, not hyper-masculine men. However, they also possess and often display such feminine qualities as emotionality, a caring and gentle nature, and a quest for loving and committed relationships—traits traditionally associated with the feminine in Fitzgerald's time.

Notes

1. In her article "Feeling 'Half Feminine': Modernism and the Politics of Emotion in *The Great Gatsby*," Frances Kerr quotes Fitzgerald as saying, "[w]omen are so weak, really—emotionally unstable—and their nerves, when strained, break," and to Fitzgerald's friend Andrew Turnball, "Fitzgerald was fond of noting that 'this is a man's world. All wise women conform to the man's lead'" (406). Though Fitzgerald also questions the femininity of his own mind, saying, "I am half feminine—at least my mind is" (406), he remains fearful of possessing feminine traits. Fitzgerald speaks out against women to his female peers such as Marya Mannes, Turnball, and his secretary, Laura Guthrie (406).

2. In fact, *This Side of Paradise* was published only after Perkins "in effect offered his resignation: 'My feeling is that a publisher's first allegiance is to talent. And if we aren't going to publish talent like this, it is a very serious thing…If we're going to turn down the likes of Fitzgerald, I will lose all interest in publishing books'" (Bruccoli 99). Perkins and Fitzgerald began a symbiotic relationship after publication of *This Side of Paradise*, and the two would continue this relationship for most of Fitzgerald's career. Fitzgerald is indebted to Perkins for pushing *This Side of Paradise* through to publication, and Perkins is likewise indebted to Fitzgerald for being "his first genius…launch[ing] his reputation as America's legendary literary editor" (Bruccoli 99).

3. In her article "History and Masculinity in F. Scott Fitzgerald's *This Side of Paradise*," Pearl James discusses the historical concepts of masculinity found in Fitzgerald's *This Side of Paradise*. She says, "becoming a man seems a difficult prospect" that is "*not* a natural possession," and that the flaws of *This Side of Paradise* are "a reflection of a larger cultural anxiety about the coherence of masculinity in the early twentieth century," which was "an

anxiety exacerbated by World War I" (James 2). According to James, Fitzgerald's characters are not failed "He-Men" because of any inability on their part, but because of a larger cultural issue in which masculinity is not a coherent topic. The softer virtues were found in men that were perhaps also masculine, threatening the social cohesion of society by blurring the gender lines, as Forter suggests. James also suggests that Amory's problematic masculinity is due to a homoerotic attraction and desire for Dick Humbird, which she develops in an argument centered on the epigraphs, quotes by Oscar Wilde and Rupert Brooke. James also argues that Amory's "'personage'—as opposed to having 'personality'—offers Amory a way to order his gender confusion. 'Egotism' and 'personality' become condensed ways of referring to a whole series of problematic feminine qualities Amory inherits from Beatrice: self-indulgence, emotional excess and hysteria, self-absorption, a body with unseemly appetites and desires" (21). These problematic feminine qualities are some of the points I aim to address in this project, showing that Amory is a failed manly man, and that he never rids himself of these feminine qualities despite his best efforts to become the "He-Man."

4. To Amory, Monsignor Darcy explains the difference between a "personality" and a "personage":

> A personality is what you thought you were, what this Kerry and Sloane you tell me of evidently are. Personality is a physical matter almost entirely; it lowers the people it acts on—I've seen it vanish in a long sickness. But while a personality Is active, it overrides "the next thing." Now a personage, on the other hand, gathers. He is never thought of apart from what he's done. He's a bar on which a thousand things have been hung—glittering things sometimes, as ours are; but he uses those things with a cold mentality back of them. (*This Side of Paradise* 92)

5. Fitzgerald's own mother, Mollie Fitzgerald, who informs the character Beatrice, had every right to be concerned with Fitzgerald's health. She had lost two children before Fitzgerald's birth to the flu epidemic. Thus, an overly concerned mother character, such as Beatrice, is perhaps expected from Fitzgerald. Beatrice is the type of mother figure Fitzgerald knew and disapproved of. Mollie would have Fitzgerald show up for doctor's appointments an hour early just to be sure that they would be on time. However, Mollie was a somewhat detached mother, perhaps because she had lost two children before Fitzgerald. She seemed to have always been waiting for the other shoe to drop, and Fitzgerald to suffer the same fate as his older siblings. Beatrice might be the mother Fitzgerald wanted, however, because she does introduce him to the social world.

6. St. Regis's is an interesting choice of school for Fitzgerald to choose for Amory. He uses the same choice of school in "The Swimmers" for Henry's sons. Fitzgerald is quite biased in favor of Ivy League and the preparatory schools in the northeast. Even Dexter Green in "Winter Dreams" must go to school on the east coast.

7. Fitzgerald uses this same term, "glittering," to describe the social successes that Dexter Green seeks in "Winter Dreams." Fitzgerald saw social success, synonymous perhaps with masculine success, as a "glittering thing" to be had in his life. Zelda is a "glittering thing" that he pursues and captures only by his publication of *This Side of Paradise*. The world as a glittering place with "glittering things" is an early trope in Fitzgerald's fiction that slowly diminishes through his later works. By the time of "The Swimmers," the glittering world is gone, replaced by a world in which physical strength is more important than money, which constitutes the "glittering things.: Moral strength and character tend to be lost in big business, as the twentieth century also gives birth to large-scale dishonesty in business practices.

8. Dick Humbird, the only hyper-masculine character of this novel, is, ironically, not the main character and dies early on in a car accident. Dick remains in the background of Amory's activities and does not, as Carrasquiera suggests, boost Amory's masculinity by associating with him. Though Fitzgerald wanted to write a hyper-masculine figure, he rids his novel of this character quickly.

9. While preparing *All the Sad Young Men* (1926) in which "Winter Dreams" is collected, Fitzgerald began to see himself as a "novelist who incidentally wrote short fiction as a kind of lucrative hobby" (55). Petry sees a decline in the quality of Fitzgerald's short stories by January 1920, too, as Fitzgerald told Maxwell Perkins, his Scribner editor, "I don't want to get broke in the middle [and] start in [on *The Beautiful and Damned*] and have to write short stories again—because I don't enjoy it [and] just do it for money" (qtd. Petry 55).

Fitzgerald's preferred and first title for *Tales of the Jazz Age* (1922), published four years before *All the Sad Young Men*, was *Sideshow* or *A Sideshow* (Petry 55). This title suggests Fitzgerald's feelings for short stories from around 1922 forward. They were no longer the main attraction, as novels would quickly become, in his writing. He wrote stories to support himself and his family, yet these stories often say more about Fitzgerald's life and career than do his novels, so prolific and varied are they. Unlike the novels, which took several years to write and were extensively revised, like *This Side of Paradise,* for instance, his short stories were written quickly and thus were perhaps less revised, reflecting a more formulaic and ill-developed kind of writing for Fitzgerald. They were written quickly for quick money. Later in life, these short stories helped him to care for his ailing wife whose medical bills were costly.

10. I argue here that golfing is the quintessential man's sport at this time because it was one of the sports that denied women access. Many golf courses did not even allow women to

play on their links, and until 2013 when Augusta National allowed a woman to play on its course, this was still true. Since they were private courses, they can deny membership to anyone regardless of gender. Since many men prefer to keep this sport a man's sport, I see the sport as being one of the few that has attempted to remain entirely male dominated, even though there is a Women's Pro Golf Association (WPGA) today.

11. Golf courses were an uncontroversial space for men to enjoy the beauty of controlled nature. Since most of these courses remained private long into the twentieth century, men could escape from the domestic world and their careers into a space that was void of women's judgment of their masculinity. The business world remained this way for a while, but women began procuring office jobs, and men had to find other places, such as golf courses. This space also acted as a place in which these men could develop relationships with each other, bonding and boosting one another's masculine images.

12. From that moment, "[a] sort of dullness settled down upon Dexter" as he realizes that the "glittering things" he searched so valiantly for in Judy Jones were not actually in her. She only symbolized them, but she never possessed them. Ideally, she would have continued to possess power over her husband, but he is an abusive drunk. Thus, Dexter seems to realize that the "dream was gone" (254). It is not Judy Jones who faded so much in front of Dexter as Devlin described her, but the dream of gaining his "glittering things" vicariously through her. Dexter in a "sort of panic" realizes that he never achieved the "glittering things" as he thought he would, but that these things are in fact "no longer in the world! They had existed and they existed no longer" (254). Dexter mourns the loss of this dream of an ideal masculinity that would have enabled him to "conquer" Judy Jones, but it never really existed, as the "glittering things" were largely an illusion. He realizes that no matter how successful he is in life, he will always be just a

step away from complete social success because of his failure to bond with men, compromising the socially elite group he aspires to join, as well as his inability to forge a committed romantic relationship with a woman.

13. In "'The Swimmers': Strokes Against the Current," Robert Roulston discusses the autobiographical nature of "The Swimmers." Roulston discuses the imagery of the turbulent Virginian coastline as a reflection of Fitzgerald's own "foundering" career (151-156). Roulston, though he does compare the story to Fitzgerald's own life, does not discuss the issues of masculinity and the problems that this story raises in terms of men's self-definition of masculinity at this time: that money is not a hard-and-fast defining requirement for masculinity after all. This is the gap that I attempt to fill with my analysis of Henry Marston as a specimen of the manly man of Fitzgerald's time.

14. In the summer of 1929, the Fitzgeralds returned to France again for their fourth stay abroad. Ernest Hemingway, a good friend, was also in Paris during this time, but kept his distance from Fitzgerald, not wanting criticism on his new text from a drunk, which, unfortunately, was Fitzgerald's reputation at this point in his life. His drunken reputation is what ultimately kept him from resuming the intimate friendship he experienced from 1925-1926. Fitzgerald was heartbroken that Hemingway and his wife kept their address a secret from him, and would only allow him to visit after Fitzgerald's pleading for them to have him over. Fitzgerald attempted to resume his intimacy with Hemingway, but this was impossible, and Hemingway scorned any critical advice Fitzgerald gave, though he followed some of it any way after the serialization of his novel. Bruccoli says,

> In June [1926], Fitzgerald finally had the opportunity to read *The Sun Also Rises* only after it had been sent to Scribners. In *A Moveable Feast* Hemingway denies

> that Fitzgerald's advice was useful to him; but the ten-page handwritten report that Fitzgerald prepared shows that Hemingway did act on Fitzgerald's editorial judgment in revising the proof of *The Sun Also Rises* (246).

Despite Hemingway's distaste for Fitzgerald's heavy drinking, he follows his advice in revising this novel.

In 1929, Fitzgerald questioned his masculinity the most after two accusations by Zelda. Zelda first complained that Fitzgerald's "penis was too small to satisfy her" (Bruccoli 275). Fitzgerald turned to Hemingway for "counsel" about its size, and after "checking it in the men's room, Hemingway assured him that he was normal and urged him to repair his confidence by sleeping with somebody else" (275). Zelda's second accusation concerned both Fitzgerald and Hemingway: "Zelda extended her attack on Fitzgerald's masculinity by charging that he was involved in a homosexual liaison with Hemingway" (275). Bruccoli says that this accusation "hurt him more than anything else she said" because Fitzgerald was overly concerned with exuding a masculine demeanor; being accused of homosexuality by his wife was perhaps the most horrific attack on his masculinity that he had experienced (275). This "homosexual" relationship that Zelda accuses him of is probably more closely associated male bonding. Hemingway and Fitzgerald, for the most part, got along well and were concerned with the same things: writing, masculinity, women, social status, and wealth.

15. Often misdiagnosed, male hysteria has been around since the seventeenth century (Kushner 785). However, often the term "hysteria" was associated with the feminine, and a dichotomy in medicine between the sexes caused male hysteria to remain undiagnosed for a long time (Kushner 785-786). Thus, many of the cases of hysteria were diagnosed in females rather than males. "The Yellow Wallpaper" (1892) by Charlotte Perkins Gilman describes a woman,

who is clearly suffering from a mental disorder, kept in an asylum where her husband only comes to visit on an occasional basis. Gilman's story is only one example of the "solutions" to the nervous disorders women experienced during the nineteenth century. Mark Humphries, in his article "War's Long Shadow: Masculinity, Medicine and the Gendered Politics of Trauma," shows that nervous illnesses, later encapsulated under PTSD, were rampant in returning soldiers, especially after World War I. However, this is around the time that male hysteria was actually being called "hysteria."

16. In "The Anxiety of the Diver: F. Scott Fitzgerald and the Swimmer Motif," Horst Kruse discusses swimming in *Tender is the Night* by examining a larger cultural motif of the swimmer, or diver, in two paintings: Pieter Brueghel's "Fall of Icarus" and David Hockney's "The Splash." Kruse questions, "what other human exertion dramatizes and emblematizes a futile effort as perfectly as that of the swimmer or the diver? A splash, a dive, even a swim, are but temporary efforts; they may cause ripples, but they can never leave a permanent trace on water" (58). Kruse also claims that "the ability to swim, to do a perfect dive, and to perform aquatic stunts is deliberately chosen by [Fitzgerald] to indicate integrity and competence on the part of his characters" (59). Thus, swimming in Fitzgerald, on more than one occasion, represents this masculinity in which integrity and competence become a part of the man, and that without swimming, the man is in some way incomplete.

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