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"You've got a lot of courage to carry around a pink book," my friend said to me one day. She referred to the paperback of F. Scott Fitzgerald's *Flappers and Philosophers* clasped loosely in my hand, back cover awash in fuchsia, front adorned with the portrait of a lady staring moodily off into the distance. Some might have reckoned the design merely the isolated interpretation of the good people at Pocket Books, paying the matter no second thought. A quick scan over my other Fitzgerald books, however, revealed a steady trend. My Barnes &

Noble edition of *The Beautiful and Damned* bathed itself in soft pink hues, while others dressed themselves in violet elegance.

A commercially-minded reading of Fitzgerald might lend itself toward exploiting the stereotypically romantic side of his work. Compared to writing friend Ernest Hemingway's terse grunts on bullfighting, Fitzgerald comes off markedly more loquacious and sentimental. His short stories fill themselves with young insecure adolescents and haughty debutantes. Keeping this in mind, I never felt intimidated by the publishers' decision to feminize the exterior of Fitzgerald texts. When I was younger, I had enough blind faith in my masculine interpretation of Fitzgerald to disregard interpretations of him which said otherwise. I related strongly to the picaresque, boyhood image of Fitzgerald; men often play the role of hero in Fitzgerald's novels. Frequently, the conflicts of his novels involve said males feeling profoundly slighted by their female counterparts, forced to deal with the trauma of feminine betrayal. At times, his female characters can come across less deserving of sympathy. In *The Great Gatsby*, Daisy Buchanan ultimately chooses the boorish Tom over the titular Jay. In *Tender is the Night*, Dick and Nicole Divers' marriage disintegrates—she running off with family friend Tommy Barban. In Fitzgerald's final unfinished piece, *The Love of the Last Tycoon*, protagonist Monroe Stahr's fall from Hollywood production power is precipitated in part by the entrance of his star-crossed love interest Kathleen Moore. Though readings evoking empathy with or attributing moral

high ground to males hardly stand as the absolute aesthetic responses all readers glean from Fitzgerald, I did not have to look far to find people who interpreted him in "my" way. Even my own brother, who had read only Fitzgerald's "Winter Dreams" in high school, suggested discussing the story in this paper, since character Judy Jones "is a real [expletive]" to protagonist Dexter Green.

However, as my worldview continues to broaden and I meet vantage points completely antithetical to my own, I have to reevaluate the decision to clothe Fitzgerald in a flowery dress. Perhaps the front of *Flappers and Philosophers* contains an idly sitting woman not merely to sell a classic to the female demographic but because she truly belongs there. One critic has said that studying the "gender implications" of Fitzgerald's texts has made him question the notion of Fitzgerald as "anti-feminist" (Schiff 2659). Another critic argued that the earlier mentioned Judy Jones of "Winter Dreams" has been "consistently misread and woefully shortchanged" as "irresponsible," claiming she is "so subtle and probing that… hasty commentators miss the point entirely" (Martin 161, 160). When scrutinizing Fitzgerald from outside a hyper-masculine lens, I begin to concede that his male characters are not always blameless. Perhaps his female characters ought to be vindicated for their actions, empowered as they are through the demeanor and choice Fitzgerald grants them, even if he grants them such liberty unconsciously. Was Fitzgerald anticipating future decades' heightened standards for gender equality? When readers orient Fitzgerald's work in the context of

mid-twentieth century feminist ideals and ethics, his unwitting anticipation of feminist goals hardly seems an ill-fitting stretch.

Of course, if people posit that an author anticipates later feminist aims, then they must provide a better definition for how they intend to use the word and fully explain the cultural context, historical period, and particular movement from which they draw the term. Unless otherwise noted, the term "feminism" will refer in this paper to second-wave feminism. First-wave feminism refers to the movement which emerged in the mid-nineteenth century and spanned roughly until 1920, associated with figures such as Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott (Dicker 21, 29). While members of this wave would lobby and petition for equal educational opportunities for both genders, reproductive rights, Prohibition, and wardrobe liberties, they would predominantly fight for political equality in the form of women's suffrage, culminating in the United States with the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment in 1920 (Dicker 26, 31, 52, 54). This landmark achievement marked the close of the first wave.

In contradistinction, second-wave feminism began roughly in the early 1960s, as women began to realize the long-term effects of leaving their World War II factory jobs and returning to their roles as wives and housekeepers. Feeling suddenly unable to find satisfaction in the domestic sphere, many women pressed not only for the minimum political equality they achieved during feminism's first wave but also for sociological, economic, occupational, and

psychological equality as well (Dicker 57). Second-wave feminists touted the slogan "the personal is political" and strove to "extend the meaning of 'the political' to include areas of social life previously treated as 'personal' and positioned in the private realm of the household" (Mack-Canty 154). Such feminists sought a holistic equality that overarched all aspects of practical life and daily pertinent decision-making, not simply equality on an abstract, constitutional level. Their aims reached beyond the mere transcendence of Victorian gender norms from which the first-wave members endeavored to disentangle themselves.

Among important second-wave feminists, Betty Friedan stood out as the prominent leader of the movement. Few voices were louder or more influential than hers for spurring the second movement and fighting for female equality beyond the minimum. She shed light on the various cultural discrepancies that existed between men and women despite the successful attainment of women's suffrage. Occupational opportunities remained at a minimum for women, while the monetary compensation they received was laughably small compared to that of men. Though Friedan's actions while heading up the National Organization for Women could come off militant at times (such as the 1970 Women's Strike for Equality), readers should keep in mind the mid-twentieth century context in which she lived, one in which the term "domestic violence" did not yet exist in terms of husband-on-wife spousal abuse (Dicker 57-58). As recently as a few decades ago, women had not attained the legal protection they have today.

For the purposes of this paper, however, one must further differentiate use of the term "feminism" from its third-wave and "postfeminist" connotations. Those women born in recent decades of the 80s, 90s, or beyond, who believe second-wave feminism achieved its goals and therefore render any need for further feminist movements useless, have been dubbed members of the "[p]ost-feminist [g]eneration" (Dicker 107). Those who identify themselves as feminists today largely focus their efforts on issues of inequality involving women in particularized fields, women of other races, or women of other sexual orientations (Dicker 110, 124). Such women are said to belong to third-wave feminism.

Having feminism posited in its second-wave category, one must note that this paper will chiefly concern Fitzgerald's role as an anticipative, proto-second-wave feminist in his early works, such as his first novel, *This Side of Paradise*, and his first collection of short stories, *Flappers and Philosophers*. *This Side of Paradise* covers the young life of protagonist Amory Blaine. The first part of the novel progresses from his early migrant childhood experiences with his mother Beatrice and prep school woes to his intellectual and social development at Princeton and brief stint in World War I. Fitzgerald scatters boyish, romantic misadventures all along the way. The second half depicts the adult Amory falling in love with debutante Rosalind Connage, only to find their relationship break apart, leaving him restless and wandering, trying to make sense of his fractured world. The novel comes to a close with his

memorable epiphany "I know myself… but that is all" (260). Fitzgerald's corresponding book of short stories from this era, *Flappers and Philosophers*, features works dealing with similar themes of youth. Young men and women coping with the relational, social, economic, and political issues of coming of age in the late 1910s litter its pages.

People need not take too lengthy a pan over the shelves containing Fitzgerald studies at any college library to notice the overwhelming majority of scholarship on his famous novel *The Great Gatsby*. His late masterpiece *Tender is the Night* has also merited copious scholarship, recent examples of which include pieces by Michael Nowlin and Tiffany Johnson. Later short stories "The Rich Boy" and "Babylon Revisited" also receive due praise. However, the author's earliest work often does not receive such critical attention. When critics do turn their attention to *This Side of Paradise*, they tend to stress its historical value, relationship to the author's biography, and the vagaries of its composition (an example being James L. West's work). The scholarship the book typically receives often highlights the novel's blaring structural deficiencies or the errors that early editions contained due to negligent editing. Notable Fitzgerald critic Matthew J. Bruccoli writes that "[m]uch has been said about [his] illiteracy, and *This Side of Paradise* has been singled out as the worst offender" (263). In a study of Fitzgerald's imagery, Dan Seiters sees "few recognizable patterns" in the author's debut work, emphasizing Fitzgerald's "youth and inexperience" and "anxiety to get his novel published so that fame and fortune" would follow (15).

A corresponding disparity exists among his short stories; the later works receive far more praise despite his early stories' popularity. Andrew Turnbull summarizes such scholarly consensus: "The critics, on the whole, did not feel the collection [*Flappers and Philosophers*] fulfilled the promise of *This Side of Paradise*. They warned of slick commercialism, an adman's glamour, and Fitzgerald's cocky tone seemed of a piece with his errors in grammar and syntax" (234). However, his early work provides the strongest evidence regarding his often overlooked feminist sentiments; *This Side of Paradise* and some of his short stories were penned prior to his marriage to Zelda Sayre, keeping readers from simply explaining away his early female characters' strong wills or potentially cold demeanors as the mere mirroring of his tumultuous and "emasculating" marriage (Nowlin 63). Moreover, some of his early material was drafted as early as 1917, prior to the close of World War I, the advent of the Roaring Twenties, and the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment, giving readers a less culturally contaminated picture of the author than is commonly offered by *The Great Gatsby* (West 3). Ultimately, his early prose received far less revision and therefore contains far fewer walls built up between author and audience, affording readers a more candid (albeit raw and undeveloped) Fitzgerald.

When taking into account Fitzgerald's potential feminism, it becomes important to situate him in his Jazz Age historical context and to use this knowledge to explain the insufficiency of proving him a first-wave feminist. In the

post-Great War era through which Fitzgerald completed the majority of his writing, a profound moral "disillusionment" had permeated Western culture due to the recent devastation witnessed in World War I. Increasingly, people began to push the boundaries of previously implacable Victorian norms for sexuality and behavior, feeling traditional values had failed them (Newton-Matza 152). Of course, vast social structures such as Victorian morality can hardly be toppled as the result of a single war, however massive and unprecedented its scope. A disparity still existed between how men and women could behave sexually (150). Embracing the liberality of the new era and opposing traditional sentiment from the previous century, many young women of the early 1920s began bobbing their hair and wearing flat clothing antithetical to Victorian female dress: "the new woman, the flapper" (Prigozy 131). Flappers of the Jazz Age stood independent, "shameless, selfish, and honest… tak[ing] a man's point of view as her mother never could" (131). Fitzgerald's work was certainly influenced by the era in which he wrote. Despite having his early novel and short story collection published in 1920 before the zenith of the Roaring Twenties' opulence, I understand the foolishness of not acknowledging the complex interplay that Fitzgerald not only had on his culture but also his culture had on him (West 3). However, his conception of feminism that appears in his work should not be understood as predominantly first-wave feminism in nature. Proving such an assertion would be nothing more than nodding a yes to the question of whether he was profoundly influenced

by his time. By proving Fitzgerald as a prophet of the later values of second-wave feminism, one attributes a transformative agency to Fitzgerald, a level of heightened respect that calling him only a first-wave feminist would deny him. Considering the associations his early work has with the era of the flapper revolution circa 1922, the economic prosperity of the decade, or the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment, proving such works as bearing proto-second-wave feminist sympathies would demonstrate Fitzgerald's transcendence of his zeitgeist's mere influence (interestingly, some critics even have attributed the "creation of the flapper" construct as we understand it today as an invention of the author himself) (Way 61). When readers orient Fitzgerald's *This Side of Paradise* and *Flappers and Philosophers* retrospectively through the lens of second-wave feminist aims and ethics, keeping in consideration the insecurities Fitzgerald shouldered, they can interpret him in feminist terms.

Let us first consider the correlations between his stories and Betty Friedan's works. Friedan's most groundbreaking and memorable book remains her 1963 *The Feminine Mystique*. Friedan used this work as a mouthpiece to rail against mid-twentieth century American culture's expectation for young women to aspire only to be "[t]he suburban housewife… healthy, beautiful, educated, concerned only about her husband, her children, her home," thereby supposedly finding "true feminine fulfillment" (18). The scenarios of Fitzgerald's early works express an understanding of this lack of fulfillment which would come

to the public's attention decades later. His early characters exemplify a deep female longing for more from life.

Late in *This Side of Paradise*, for example, emotionally fragile Amory Blaine stumbles upon Eleanor Savage whilst sauntering about the Maryland countryside (207). Fitzgerald introduces this new character to readers in the midst of Amory's prolonged and chronic convalescence after Rosalind Connage breaks off their engagement. Eleanor serves as a love interest, therapeutic friend, and conversational other to Amory. Discussing poetry and philosophy, Eleanor not only posits her desires in juxtaposition to the lingering Victorian expectations of women in her day but also serves as soothsayer to the demands which would be placed on females by the advent of second-wave feminism:

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

> their attention. Every year that I don't marry I've got less chance for a first-class man.' (219)

Astutely, Fitzgerald employs Eleanor's character to address other issues of inequality women faced in the 1910s and 20s, issues which would remain present even by feminism's second-wave era. Friedan discusses the lengths women would go to in order to procure potential suitors: taking on multiple jobs, treating higher education exclusively as an arena by which to find a husband (16, 25). In some cases, women experienced extreme psychological and emotional duress due to the pressure society put on them to become housewives and mothers, requiring psychiatric treatment or therapy (19, 25). Eleanor bears witness to this pressure. At the apex of her confessional rant, she steers the horse that she has been riding toward a cliff and nearly falls over the edge, jumping off the horse just in the knick of time (221). Though this scene may appear markedly melodramatic to readers today, Fitzgerald was attempting to demonstrate the earnest desperation of women in his generation, revealing society's need for a wave of feminism more radical than that of the first-wavers of his time.

Although, with her hyperbolic language, Eleanor's character can come off as immature or unrealistic, if taken as a proto-second-wave exponent of feminine neurosis concerning the "problem that has no name" (Friedan 19), then readers do more than excuse her; they empathize with her. Some might deem that her characterization and overall demeanor nullify any feminist prophecy she represents. However, as James L.W. West III argues, Fitzgerald created

Eleanor's character in a "salvaged" portion of *The Romantic Egotist*, an unpublished novel which he completed prior to *This Side of Paradise* (68). If critics have complained of the disparity in quality between *The Great Gatsby* and *This Side of Paradise*, then one can understand the disparity which must exist between the latter and *The Romantic Egotist*. When Fitzgerald wrote Eleanor into existence, his writing had not yet developed the level of polish it would later receive; Eleanor's representing the "woman question" insightfully in spite of her flaws and her creator's inexperience speaks to her credibility.

Threads of proto-Friedan ideas also reveal themselves in Fitzgerald's early short stories. In fact, critics have said "[t]he women in *Flappers and Philosophers* who reject males and marriage… are among [its] most memorable characters" (Petry 29). In the collection's "The Ice Palace," Southern belle Sally Carrol Happer believes she will find matrimonial and womanly fulfillment through her engagement to wealthy northerner Harry Bellamy. Throughout her life she dreams of leaving her small Georgian town to see the world. When Sally goes north and stays with Harry's family, she realizes that the cold climate, the isolating and chilly personalities inhabiting the Bellamy house, and the prospect of idle domestic relaxation will not satisfy her. She struggles throughout the story to articulate feelings that Friedan would later characterize as "the problem that has no name" and ultimately flees suffocation and marriage to return to the airy, warm, unfettered expanse of her small hometown (47, 73). Likewise, in Fitzgerald's

story “The Cut-Glass Bowl,” housewife Evylyn Piper has nothing with which to occupy herself other than domestic responsibilities, an exceptionally humdrum husband, and nosy tea- and lunch-time chatter with other housewives (106-107). Driven to find some meaning or excitement, she briefly has an affair with another man (109).

Another crucial component by which Fitzgerald exposes himself as an unwitting proto-second-waver presents itself through the study of feminist ethics. By feminist ethics, I refer to the feminist response to traditional theories of ethics and decision-making processes, as defined by Carol Gilligan. In her landmark book *In a Different Voice*, Gilligan argues that the classic male-based theories of psychology cannot apply to all people, asserting that many women make decisions predicated upon more relationship-based approaches. The book reveals that traditional means of judging a decision as correct or incorrect, as essentially masculine or feminine, are incompatible with the way many people think. Gilligan ascribes the relational approach to females in light of gender formation at birth:

> For boys and men, separation and individuation are critically tied to gender identity since separation from the mother is essential for the development of masculinity. For girls and women, issues of femininity or feminine identity do not depend on the achievement of separation from the mother or on the progress of individuation. (8)

Thus, women can feel a holistic connection with the others in their world having found themselves on the

same team, so to speak, as their mother-figures upon birth, allowing them to take a less legalistic, more caring approach to solving problems. Men, however, see themselves as different from their mothers and therefore develop a discontinuous understanding of the world which upholds an individual's rights.

Third-wave and some second-wave feminists alike have disagreed with Gilligan's assertions. Cressida Heyes acknowledges that third-wave members feel "that Gilligan reifies and draws overly general conclusions about women from the experiences of only a small group" (143). Many feminists feel she imposes her "ethic of care" upon women, using "broad general categories" which "are inclined to erase historically, culturally, and politically salient differences" among women and men alike across different societies (Heyes 146-147). Feminists from both waves have questioned Gilligan's empirical methods, claiming that among the relatively small pool of subjects interviewed and studied, a noteworthy disparity still emerged in the data collected from members of the same gender. Third-wave feminists have also had particular complaints with the middle-class, Caucasian demographic of Gilligan's aforementioned research subjects. Some second-wavers distance themselves from Gilligan's work because her relationship-based descriptions of women's psychology sound similar to the domestic familial role Friedan rails so loudly against (210). In light of such hostility within the feminist camp itself, one might question the wisdom of examining Fitzgerald's underlying prototypical feminist

sensibilities through Gilligan's lens.

Though Gilligan's work may not sound like feminism, it belongs to the second-wave camp, with valid work contributing to the movement's aims. Heyes lumps Gilligan's work with the "'second-wave'… dominant feminist theories of the 1970s which brought feminist political movements into academia to challenge the literal and implicit exclusion and derogation of women" (142). Moreover, Heyes' definition of third-wave feminism defines itself in contrast to second-wave work such as Gilligan's. She claims that part of what keeps third-wave feminism's viable philosophical ascendancy "premature" stems from its members' hostility toward the "essentialist" theories Gilligan and her like-minded colleagues hold (142). Thus, examining the decision-making processes of Fitzgerald's male and female characters in light of Gilligan's masculine-individual and feminine-relational classifications remains important in demonstrating how he anticipates second-wave feminism.

Interestingly, Fitzgerald will often take female characters and give them "masculine" attributes in terms of traditional psychology, while his male characters he will often depict as "feminine" in nature. Perhaps without realizing it, Fitzgerald employs a deft understanding of psychology in order to purposively empower females and disenfranchise males, one which contemporary readers could correlate to Gilligan's controversial second-wave theories on gender constructs in moral development.

For instance, Amory Blaine never even differentiates from his mother Beatrice to earn his "masculine" identity.

Christened “delicate” and “charming” by his mother, by “five [Amory] was a delightful companion for her… [for] while more or less fortunate little… boys were defying governesses… [he was] deriving a highly specialized education from his mother.” Fitzgerald describes Amory’s “tangled” hair when peering at his mother as a metaphor of their connection, with implications far deeper than the boy’s tousled head (13, 12). Though Amory would develop something in the way of his own personality as he advances through adolescence and several prep schools, Amory struggles to become anything more than a composite character comprised of his new experiences and his mother: “[b]ut the Minneapolis years were not thick enough to conceal the ‘Amory plus Beatrice’” (37). Though Fitzgerald asserts countless times afterward that St. Regis and other future schools “painfully drill Beatrice out of him,” the close reader has a hard time believing it (37). Any separation he does achieve gets swiftly negated by a quick, compulsive attachment to other females: Isabelle, Clara, Rosalind, and Eleanor (63, 130,158, 206). Interestingly, the preceding list actually fails to include those females earlier in the novel with whom Amory connectively scaffolds his identity prior to his identity-separation from Beatrice, a separation which is debatable at best. As Catherine B. Burroughs says, “[w]hen loving women, Fitzgerald’s men often assume the posture of emotional dependents” (52).

Much evidence supports Amory’s inability to stand alone as his own man. After Amory and Isabelle have met only once, her cousin Sally claims that Amory’s “‘simply

mad to see [her] again'" (64). Though the author himself admits this description as an "exaggeration," Sally's words reflect the truth of the connection her cousin and Amory would swiftly form (64). Soon Fitzgerald himself begins narrating the descriptions of Isabelle and Amory as one entity: "[they] were distinctly not innocent, nor were they particularly brazen" (68). The protagonist cannot last any substantial time at Princeton without latching himself to a strong female. Later in the novel, after quickly falling for a widowed mother of two, Clara Page, Amory declares his love and his desire to marry her (137). Though she sensibly refuses, their dialogue reveals that in the short time they knew each other, Amory had already begun feeling that "any latent greatness" he had possessed was linked with her (137). Moreover, he admits to her that he has not a "bit of will," that he is "a slave to [his] emotions, to [his] likes, to [his] hatred of boredom, [and] to most of [his] desires" (135). Amory himself realizes his own lack of a self-sufficient, self-sustaining identity when alone. Of Amory and Eleanor late in the novel, Fitzgerald writes that the protagonist "had loved himself in [her], so now what he hated was only a mirror" (222). Amory does not perceive Eleanor as a person separate from himself but as a temporary extension of his self.

Opponents to my stance might argue that Fitzgerald finally grants Amory a masculine identity at the novel's close. Readers might think Amory's lonely final epiphany, "I know myself… but that is all," represents his belated separation and differentiation from the female other from which he perpetually derives his relational identity (260).

Fitzgerald drew inspiration from writers in his modernist cohort such as James Joyce, specifically drawing inspiration from the latter's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* in composing *This Side of Paradise* (Tanner 1). Amory even cites *Portrait* as a novel which leaves him "puzzled and depressed" while convalescing over Rosalind (195). One might argue Amory's epiphany parallels that of Joyce's protagonist Stephen Dedalus. When Stephen finds himself on the brink of a life in the priesthood, he suddenly realizes that "[h]is destiny was to be elusive of the social or religious orders… destined to learn his own wisdom apart from others" and crosses the bridge from clergy to poet, writer, and priest of no one but himself (Joyce 162). Here Stephen separates from all those he is psychologically connected with and propels forward in prototypical modernist fashion. Fitzgerald attempts to mimic this transformation with Amory by insufficiently naming *Paradise*'s final chapter "The Egotist Becomes a Personage." However, Amory has no creative path down which he can trod at the novel's finale; though "free from all hysteria" and finding "all Gods dead, all wars fought, all faiths in man shaken," no action is left within his power but to "sleep deep through many nights" (260). Fitzgerald nullifies any impotent masculinity Amory gains from his denouncement of the world by following his great speech with the whimper, "But- oh, Rosalind! Rosalind!... [i]t's all a poor substitute at best" (260). In terms of Gilligan's gender constructs, Fitzgerald's picaresque boyhood hero embodies the feminine. The author would continue this trend later in *The Great Gatsby*; critic Frances

Kerr reiterates H.L. Mencken's sentiments regarding Fitzgerald by asserting that Gatsby "is a man who seems like a woman," whose "manhood is negated" (409, 421).

In contrast, once readers see past her fur-wearing exterior, Amory's college flame Isabelle leans not toward the feminine. Fitzgerald writes that Isabelle feels "on equal terms" with Amory, strong-willed and "quite capable of staging her own romances" (64). Of her empowering allure, Fitzgerald writes that "her sophistication had been absorbed from the boys who dangled on her favor… [and that] her capacity for love affairs was limited only by the number of the [sic] susceptible within telephone distance" (65). Milton Stern attributes such personality "absorption" to her "irresponsible selfishness" (75). Instead of attaching herself onto others in a symbiotic or identity-deriving attachment, she harvests what she can from others for herself. It comes as hardly a surprise when their relationship ends, with their interplay serving as a foreshadowing of the characters and circumstances Amory will encounter later.

Deeper into the novel, Fitzgerald confers upon Rosalind Connage so many "masculine" attributes, that by Gilligan's generalized gender categories, she might as well be a man. Rosalind's character gets "what she wants when she wants it and is prone to make everyone miserable when she doesn't get it," whose "philosophy is carpe diem for herself and laissez-faire for others," feeling in herself "incipient meanness, conceit, cowardice, and petty dishonesty" (160-161). Rosalind appears from birth inherently differentiated from her mother and the people in her immediate

developmental environment: "[t]here are long periods when she cordially loathes her whole family." Rosalind seems utterly indifferent to anyone's attempt at forming an identity with her, never mind making one herself: "[s]he wants people to like her, but if they do not it never worries or changes her" (161). Despite having feelings for Amory and entertaining the connection he forms with her, she quickly severs it in order to accept the rich Dawson Ryder's proposal. She recognizes that in contrast to Amory, Dawson is "a strong one" and a real man, her match in selfish detachment. Rosalind admits that to marry Amory would make her a "failure, and [she] never fail[s]" (181). Gilligan discusses the fear of failure associated with masculinity and the fear of success associated with femininity due to the strain competition puts on relationships; once again Rosalind establishes herself as an embodiment of manhood (Gilligan 14-15). Second-wave feminists might disagree that her marriage demonstrates any progress toward their aims, namely, freedom from domesticity, but Rosalind's marriage does not constitute entrapment and isolation in the house. In her social and economic context, the marriage allows her to continue being "a little girl" (ironically), "dread[ing] responsibility," and not "want[ing] to think about pots and kitchens and brooms" (183). Surprisingly, her marriage with Dawson affords her more freedom, and she consciously makes her decision for her own benefit in this regard, no matter who gets hurt.

Isabelle's characterization stands antithetical to that of the subservient Victorian woman or the domestically

enchained mid-twentieth-century housewife. Rosalind's decision transcends the mere political equality women receive with the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment; their decision-making process allows them to stand toe-to-toe with men in the social or personal sphere. Fitzgerald grants her this equity by the ironic see-sawing of male and female characters' attributes. By reining in men and empowering women, he provides females with a chance to create better lives for themselves while curtailing men's historically broader options. This trend ensconced in the early Fitzgerald also manifests itself in his first stories collected in *Flappers and Philosophers*.

In "Head and Shoulders," young Ivy League prodigy Horace Tarbox meets and marries uneducated actress Marcia Meadow, leaving academia to support a family in New York. To survive, Horace performs a trapeze act whilst Marcia pens a novel. In an irony of role reversals, Marcia's published novel earns her the public's distinction as cultured, while Horace is deemed the unthinking breadwinner. At the story's conclusion, Horace cannot believe how things turned out: his wife has achieved Friedan-evocative extra-domestic public standing, while he finds himself the less career-oriented, Gilligan-reminiscent sustainer of family relationships (105). As the story's title suggests, Horace, who once proudly resided as "Head," becomes relegated to the lowly position of "Shoulders," while his wife occupies his former eminence.

"Bernice Bobs Her Hair" features female characters adopting male characteristics in order to assert their rights.

In this famous story, Fitzgerald presents Marjorie as dominating and man-eating, acting especially cruel toward her visiting cousin Bernice. In fact, Bernice explicitly brands Marjorie "hard and selfish" with "hardly a feminine quality" in her (146). Bernice represents the traditional female naïvely headed toward the orthodox domestic life for which she has been conditioned by American culture. Marjorie claims:

> You little nut! Girls like you are responsible for all the tiresome colorless marriages; all those ghastly inefficiencies that pass as feminine qualities. What a blow it must be when a man with imagination marries the beautiful bundle of clothes that he's been building ideals around, and fins that she's just a weak, whining, cowardly mass of affectations! (146)

Marjorie feels little affection or connection with Bernice despite their blood relation, feeling her cousin needs correction. Marjorie tricks and coerces Bernice into bobbing her hair, a scandalous hairstyle for conservative girls at the time (159-160). When Marjorie's lesson finally sinks into Bernice, the latter asserts herself and cuts Marjorie's hair while sleeping (165). In this way, Bernice places herself on equal footing with her hyper-masculine cousin.

Critics have suggested Fitzgerald wholeheartedly supports his character Marjorie in her efforts to fight for the evolution of womanhood. Berman reminds readers that "[r]elics of Victorianism are often described by Fitzgerald as mindless, negligible, or senile" (33). Considering Fitzgerald's nostalgic, romantic sensibilities, such as his

affinity for poet Rupert Brooke, one cannot simply reduce his approach to Marjorie as belonging to an overarching out-with-the-old-in-with-the-new philosophy (West 5). Fitzgerald's striving for gender equality would continue in his later work. Consider, for example, Froehlich's analysis of Jordan Baker's overtly masculine character in *The Great Gatsby*.

Some readers may still remain unconvinced of Fitzgerald's proto-second-wave feminism or even the first-wave feminism through which he lived, citing instances of hyper-masculinity in his male characters. Some may point to examples where Fitzgerald's characters wish to become more masculine or assert their masculinity over others. Certainly, readers can find examples of hyper-masculinity in the stories "Dalyrimple Goes Wrong" and "The Four Fists" from *Flappers and Philosophers*. In the former, hero of the Great War Henry Dalyrimple returns home only to unemployment. Disgruntled, taking work far below what he feels he deserves, Dalyrimple turns to a life of theft, stealing by moonlight from the houses of the rich (188-189, 192, 199). His life of crime instills in him a newfound assertiveness, which makes him more aggressive in his day job and earns him prominence in the community and the promise of a political career (which, in turn, prompts his exit from after-hours thievery) (204, 206, 209-210). Dalyrimple appears cold and indifferent to his connections to the community, and yet he gets rewarded for it. Likewise, successful businessman Samuel Meredith of "The Four Fists" involves himself in four different fights throughout his

life, each one prompted by his pursuit of a selfish aim, such as ascendancy over peers or an affair with a married woman, each one granting him experience for future endeavors (214, 217, 223). Though Meredith excessively flaunts his masculinity, he gets rewarded for it as Dalyrimple does.

One example of hyper-masculinity present in Amory Blaine in *This Side of Paradise* manifests itself in the character's football aspirations. In order to become "one of the gods of [his] class" at Princeton, he joins the football team (47). While such may not seem an excessive act of masculinity, the contrived circumstances surrounding Amory's football experience suggest a thinly-veiled attempt on the author's part to artificially inflate his protagonist's masculinity. Conveniently, Amory finds himself "playing quarterback" by his "second week" at school, performing well enough to be "paragraphed in the corners of the 'Princetonian'" newspaper. His football experience gets halted not by any poor performance on the field or exceptionally demeaning defeat which would compromise his masculine image of strength but instead by a knee injury that "put[s] him out for the rest of the season" (48). Cruel fate sidelines his athletic career, not unmanliness.

Others may still have hesitancy with regard to imposing proto-second-wave feminist interpretations on the self-seeking behavior of Rosalind or the cold, unfeeling demeanor of Marjorie. When people study Fitzgerald, however, they must take into account the glaring insecurities he harbored and how such feelings contributed to his overcompensating for the perceived lack of his characters'

total masculinity by caricaturing them. In particular, Michael Nowlin suggests Fitzgerald had deep insecurities concerning his masculinity which especially emerged in his attempt to reconcile his "vocation and identity" (59). His need for money would necessitate exorbitant short story writing, and yet the short story market to which he found himself chained was predominantly feminine (64). Writing in the modernist era, such a reality felt to him an artistic compromise, prompting guilt and shame over his slim creations (59, 66, 74). Given the climate in which he wrote, some critics have even referred to some of his stories' Southern settings as "feminine," evidencing how easily a writer could betray the modernist cause (Forter 306). A part of Fitzgerald coveted the overly masculine persona of writers like Hemingway, and such components of his psychology must be taken into account before dismissing his proto-second-wave virtues.

Fitzgerald's overcompensation also presents itself in his insistence that his characters see combat in World War I, despite having personalities largely incompatible with hardened veterans. James H. Meredith supports this observation: "[t]hroughout his adult life, Fitzgerald deeply regretted that he never clashed in combat among 'ignorant armies' because like the majority of unwitting young men of his generation, he believed that war was a necessary test of manhood" (163). Dalyrimple from the story cited earlier and Amory Blaine from *This Side of Paradise* stand out as examples. Critics have cited the difficulty they have had believing that Amory saw combat (West 55-56). Fitzgerald

also possessed a life-long insecurity concerning his economic status. As a boy, he would tell the apocryphal and imaginative tale of how a royal family left him as an infant upon his parents' doorstep (Long 9). Fitzgerald knew he was always just a boy from the middle class. Evidence suggests Fitzgerald felt insecure in his creative self when compared to his wife Zelda. Consistently, he put down her writing or, toward the end of their relationship, would claim she stole his material. In reality, Fitzgerald would take small portions of her writing, such as diary entries, and include them in his books (West 58). I do not report such theft here to prompt in readers any loss of respect or confidence in the author but merely to demonstrate the degree to which Fitzgerald's inferiority complexes and traumas affected his work. Failure to take into account such occluding factors would diminish his potential as a surprisingly anticipative feminist.

Such factors are important for scholars of Fitzgerald to reexamine periodically in light of the dynamic social contexts in which we live. As Fitzgerald's work continues to be assigned in contemporary classrooms, one must keep in mind his potential audiences and how they view women, gender, and feminism. Some might assume that reading Fitzgerald in a feminist light has become a fruitless exercise given the conceivably "postfeminist" world we have inherited today. However, such assumptions may prove false. In her research, for example, Pamela Aronson discovered that some young woman today are uncertain about whether or not they would subscribe to feminist labels and are largely unaware of current areas of "persisting"

social and gender injustice (903). Thus, examining Fitzgerald's books through feminist lenses remains an activity which can either supplement students' preexisting feminist knowledge or educate those who have no such preexisting feminist background.

It is impossible to plot the future course of feminist ideologies. Projecting Fitzgerald's relevance in the future also presents no guarantees. However, some things seem to be here to stay, namely, the varied responses men and women will have toward literature. The other day I talked with a female friend about Lost Generation writers. She remarked "It seemed so much a boys' club." To that, I replied, "[T]hat's what I always liked about it." I realized then the power our perceived gender has on our readings and the sensitivity with which we must approach this construct in order to appreciate literary texts to the fullest. The masculine interpretation which prompted my admiration for Fitzgerald serves as the force which might inhibit others from enjoying him. Moreover, a feminist-slanted interpretation, which would have originally evoked my hostility toward Fitzgerald, serves as a way others might come to love his work. We must offer due consideration to both conflicting sides of any given dichotomy; no one, man or woman, should feel excluded from Fitzgerald's rich prose.

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