

THE CHILDREN IN F. SCOTT FITZGERALD'S FICTION

by

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B. S., Kansas State College of Pittsburg, 1968

A MASTER'S REPORT

submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree

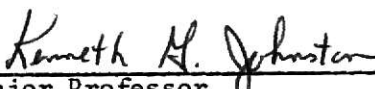
MASTER OF ARTS

Department of English

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY
Manhattan, Kansas

1982

Approved by:


Major Professor

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I. INTRODUCTION

On April 3, 1920, the self-indulgent F. Scott Fitzgerald married Zelda Sayre, whom he later would describe as "one of the eternal children of the world."¹ She was one of the young women of the 1920's whom Fitzgerald sketched for an interviewer: "'flirting, kissing, viewing life lightly, saying damn without a blush, playing along the danger line in an immature way--a sort of mental baby vamp.'" I prefer this sort of girl, he told the interviewer. "'Indeed, I married the heroine of my stories.'"² Little wonder then that the Fitzgeralds were ill-prepared for the responsibilities of parenthood when their only child--Frances Scott Fitzgerald (Scottie)--came into the world on October 26, 1921.

Zelda, it is quite clear, did not fit into the traditional pattern of motherhood. While the baby was in her womb, she "rode in a gondola and ate Venetian ices."³ On the eve of the baby's birth in St. Paul, Minnesota, it was discovered that there was "not a diaper on hand."⁴ A new acquaintance stepped into the breach and took the parents-to-be on a last-minute shopping tour. Nor had Zelda picked out a name for a baby girl. After the child was born, the chores of motherhood bored Zelda, so Scottie was often left in the care of a nurse or a governess, who provided the only stabilizing influence in the child's chaotic life.⁵ "'Children shouldn't bother their parents, nor parents their children,'" Zelda told an interviewer shortly after Scottie's birth.⁶ Zelda's biographer and childhood friend, Sara Mayfield, notes that Zelda terminated three other pregnancies by abortion.⁷

Meanwhile Scott relentlessly pursued the glitter and luxuries of life, exploiting the lives of those closest to him for the sake of his writing

career. Arthur Mizener in the introduction to his biography of Fitzgerald, The Far Side of Paradise, says that Scott's work--his writing--took priority over everything else; it was "more valuable than anything else in his life."⁸ When his child was born, he stood at Zelda's side with note pad in hand, jotting down her every word in hopes that he might find some material for his fiction. When Zelda declared, "I hope it's beautiful and a fool--a beautiful little fool," he recorded that and later used it in The Great Gatsby.⁹ If Zelda was the eternal child, then Scott was the eternal adolescent--at least during the decade of the irresponsible twenties. He squandered vast sums of money during riotous all-nighters and week-long parties fueled by alcohol. Friends tell of a time they found him being bathed by two bellboys in New York.¹⁰ He seemed always to be dissatisfied and bored, even with his child--or especially with his child--since it was the wild and wily Zelda, rather than the baby, who excited his imagination. When Scott did spend any time with little Scottie, it was frequently for selfish reasons. He made her play straight man for his jokes which she found not funny at all.¹¹ "He spent hours staging battles with the soldiers he avidly collected at the Nain Bleu toyshop--with Scottie on the losing side," comments Matthew J. Bruccoli in his 1981 Fitzgerald biography, Some Sort of Epic Grandeur.¹²

By the time Scottie outgrew her need for a nanny, her mother was a mental case and her father an alcoholic. The Fitzgerald domestic scene was in chaos. According to a private nurse caring for Scott, he once threw an inkwell at Scottie during an alcoholic rage. But Zelda, who lived on the other side of the house, had nothing to do with Scottie. As the nurse explained, "'She was her father's child.'"¹³ Mizener comments that Scott

had "a special feeling of responsibility for his daughter because she had no mother--a feeling which was only increased by his awareness of what he put her through when he was drinking."¹⁴ Scott tried to write a series of Gwen stories "about a widower raising his teenage daughter." The girl, Gwen, according to Bruccoli, "was based on Scottie." But the Saturday Evening Post only accepted two of the Gwen stories and advised Scott not to write any more. "The material was too thin," Bruccoli believes, "because Fitzgerald did not respond intensely to Scottie's interests."¹⁵

While an adolescent, Scottie lived with Scott's agent and his family, the Harold Obers, who reared Scottie as their foster child when she was not in a private boarding school or at summer camp. When she was ready for college, her father was living in Hollywood and Zelda was confined in a mental institution at Ashville, North Carolina. "Your home is Vassar," her father wrote. "Anything else is a mockery of a home."¹⁶ In 1939, Scottie upset her father by criticizing the way she was reared. In a nationally published magazine, she compared her generation with that of her parents:

We were left pretty much to ourselves and allowed to do as we pleased. . . . We've had to . . . establish our own code of morals. The fact that we've turned out as well as we have is more to our credit than to our parents. . . . Our parents try to check up on us when they feel that we're getting to the "dangerous age," when we're old enough to decide for ourselves, but they smile indulgently at the younger set's "innocent" parties, which are twice as harmful in their smugness and precociousness.¹⁷

Scott, who tried to shoulder the responsibilities of parenthood during the 1930's by writing frequent letters filled with parental advice to his daughter, was angered by Scottie's published remarks. Though Scott had not

been the responsible parent, he expected Scottie to be the "dutiful daughter." He chastised her to the point of denial.

In the future please call yourself by any name that doesn't sound like mine in your writings. You must have wanted fifty dollars awfully bad to let them print such a trite and perverted version of your youth. . . . This isn't in the nature of quarreling but you certainly owe me an explanation because I see no earmarks of the "dutiful daughter" about any of it.¹⁸

From his own life and experiences, Fitzgerald gleaned the material for his fiction. Not surprisingly, then, he often focused on irresponsible parents and their children. A substantial number of child characters people Fitzgerald's stories and novels. Most readers will readily recall nine-year-old Honoria Wales in "Babylon Revisited" and eleven-year-old Rudolph Miller in "Absolution," for they have considerable roles. The less prominent child characters are not so well-remembered. Most of these children are kept in the background, and in many cases only briefly mentioned. Nevertheless, the children in F. Scott Fitzgerald's fiction--often unwanted, exploited, and/or pampered--frequently serve the vital function of enhancing the characterization of the adults in his short stories and novels. For the purpose of this study, I am limiting my discussion to infants and youngsters up to the age of thirteen, which Fitzgerald believed to be "boyhood's majority." Prior to this age, according to Fitzgerald, were "the days when nothing had to be paid for."¹⁹

II. THE UNWANTED CHILD

The unwanted child in Fitzgerald's fiction may be an abandoned, a neglected, or an ignored child. Or he may be a child that the parents choose

not to have. These children reveal the parents' appalling irresponsibility and narcissism, especially the mother's. Oftentimes the mother is bored with domestic chores and takes a lover, or runs off with a lover, or simply abandons her children in search of some excitement in life. If she is accustomed to being the center of gravity, she may feel that life is passing her by and that she must seize it before it is gone forever with the irretrievable passage of time. In several stories the father neglects both the wife and child(ren) because he is an alcoholic, a workaholic, or a philanderer. In others, when the child becomes an obstruction to the parents' dreams of happiness, he is ignored to the point of denial or even banished from the family circle. Then a nursemaid or a family relative shoulders the responsibility of washing, feeding, teaching, and, in general, rearing the child.

"Dearly Beloved" is a beautifully executed short-short story about a black railroad porter who had illusions of being the great golf champion of Chicago and a well-read philosopher. Lilymary falls in love with, and marries, this dreamer named Beauty Boy. Needless to say, their dreams do not become a reality. Beauty Boy loses a leg in a railroad accident. Their "baby flourished but he was not beautiful like his parents; not as they had expected in those golden dreams."²⁰ In their struggle to survive, they abandon the child. "They had only spare-time love to give the child so the sister more and more and more took care of him" (385). The abandoned baby is a symbol of their abandoned dreams. They become ordinary people struggling just to maintain an existence. Eventually they break in the struggle and die of influenza. Death brings relief, and in heaven all their illusions become a reality. But there is no little boy. He did not fit in

with their illusions of beauty and fame, so they do not miss him. They vaguely sense they are missing something, but they just don't know what it is. "They couldn't remember so after a puzzled time they would give up trying . . ." (386).

The stillborn child in "Two Wrongs" is also symbolic. The child's death marks the end of a meaningful relationship between the conceited producer, Bill McChesney, and his wife, Emmy. Prior to this tragic event, Bill decides he ought to be Marquis of McChesney in London. He has taken up heavy drinking and chasing titled ladies. "'He was with three ladies-- Lady this, Lady that, Lady the other thing--'"²¹ while his pregnant wife and little son, Billy, keep the home fires burning. The great Bill McChesney is out on the town chasing Lady Sybil when his wife is delivered of a stillborn child. "She had fallen down at the door of the hospital, trying to get out of the taxicab alone" (204). When Bill finally drags himself home the next morning after a night of revelry, he is directed to the hospital. Emmy tells him: "'I'm done with you . . . but it was awful when I thought you were dead. Everybody's dead. I wish I was dead'" (204). She stops loving him and puts all her energy into dancing lessons. A short year later, she goes off with her instructor to become a famous dancer, while Bill McChesney departs alone to take a cure for tuberculosis in Denver. Little Billy stays with the mother. Without self-pity, Bill McChesney accepts the blame for the failure of his marriage and thus redeems himself to a certain extent. "He realized perfectly that he had brought all this on himself and that there was some law of compensation involved" (210).

For the protagonist to assume manfully the burden of guilt is a unique ending for a Fitzgerald story.²² But Charlie Wales, at the end of "Babylon

Revisited," also knows he can not deny his past behavior "of utter irresponsibility" during the boom.²³ "The snow of twenty-nine wasn't real snow. If you didn't want it to be snow, you just paid some money," recalls Charlie (341). He regrets his former wild and free life that has cost him his wife, his daughter, and his dignity. In reply to the barkeeper's comment, "'I heard you lost a lot in the crash,'" Charlie responds, "'I did . . . but I lost everything I wanted in the boom'" (340). When he and his wife, Helen, "had senselessly begun to abuse each other's love, tear it into shreds" (334), he learned the real meaning of dissipate--"to make nothing out of something" (325). During this period of utter irresponsibility and mind-blurring dissipation, he forgot his parental obligations and abandoned his daughter to the care of her mother and a French nurse. After the death of his wife, he relinquishes custody of his child to his sister-in-law. Now the sobered Charlie returns to Paris two years after his personal "crash" to regain custody of his daughter, Honoria--to reclaim his honor. He recalls "the most wildly squandered sums, as an offering to destiny that he might not remember the things most worth remembering . . . his child taken from his control, his wife escaped to a grave in Vermont" (326). At lunch he introduces himself to his daughter:

"I want to get to know you," he said gravely.
 "First let me introduce myself. My name is Charles
 J. Wales, of Prague."
 "Oh, daddy!" her voice cracked with laughter.
 "And who are you, please?" he persisted, and
 she accepted a role immediately: "Honoria Wales,
 Rue Palatine, Paris." (327)

Charlie is playing a very serious game with his child, for he realizes that they are strangers to one another. He'd like to have Honoria back, but his

sister-in-law, Marion, isn't ready to relinquish custody. There's nothing Charlie can do now, but wait and maintain self-control. He must continue to prove to himself and to Marion that he will be a responsible father. Charlie, a mature Fitzgerald hero, accepts the responsibility for his former behavior rationally. Responsibility, in the Fitzgerald sense, is defined by one critic as "the courage and discipline to accept and clean up after the consequences of your own actions."²⁴ Like Bill McChesney, Charlie recognizes the "law of compensation" at work.

This law seems unduly severe in "The Cut-Glass Bowl." Evylyn pays and pays and pays for her marital infidelity, her domestic irresponsibility. She is Mrs. Harold Piper who, when the story opens, has been seeing Freddy Gedney "five afternoons a week for the past six months."²⁵ When her husband finds out, Evylyn casts out her illicit lover, but a "shadowy, unpenetrable barrier dropped between" husband and wife (132). So now Evylyn spends her time visiting with her women friends, reading classics, and sewing "where she could watch her two children to whom she was devoted" (133). A sudden change of character transforms Evylyn from an "empty" shell into a dedicated housewife and mother. Julie is her baby and Donald is six or seven years older. The story follows Evylyn through middle age. As the years pass, her husband turns to drink, her daughter becomes a pathetic introvert; and her son, Donald, is killed in the war. Finally Evylyn herself is killed, trying to get rid of the "cold and hard and beautiful" cut-glass bowl with a demonic spirit. When Evylyn decides to be a faithful wife and devoted mother, fate intervenes and things turn out differently from her "little dreams" (152,153).

Luella Hemple's two-year-old baby in "The Adjuster" is another example of the neglected child. Loitering at a table for two on the horse-shoe

balcony of the Ritz, Luella confides to her friend, "'Even my baby bores me. That sounds unnatural, Ede, but it's true. He doesn't begin to fill my life. I love him with all my heart, but when I have to take care of him for an afternoon I get so nervous that I want to scream. After two hours I begin praying for the moment the nurse'll walk in the door.'"²⁶ Luella's husband, Charles, is aware of her intense selfishness, but it is this very selfishness and her "childish beauty" that have an "irresistible appeal" for him. This is his weakness in what has "otherwise been a strong-minded and well-organized career" (175). Nothing satisfies Luella--not her regal palace, her fine imported furnishings, her numerous servants, her adoring husband, her beautiful baby. When the regimen of the home becomes chaotic because of inept or slovenly servants and there's no one to train them or oversee the cooking, cleaning, or child care, Charles takes the blame on himself, while Luella gets more and more bored with life and cries herself to sleep because she knows, "'It's the baby that keeps us together'" (163). About the time that she is ready to walk out and find some excitement in life, her over-burdened husband has a nervous breakdown. She's forced to stay. She struggles to become a responsible home-body. Dr. Moon, the family physician, who symbolically acts as Luella's conscience, tells her, "'We make an agreement with children that they can sit in the audience without helping to make the play . . . but if they sit in the audience after they are grown, somebody's got to work double time for them, so that they can enjoy the light and glitter of the world'" (189-90). For the first time, because her husband's illness keeps her at home, Luella discovers that the servants are lax, that the "nurse doesn't know her business" (177); but she's too late in finding out. The baby dies. Through her tragic experiences and

her valiant, though unwilling, struggle, she finds peace. Dr. Moon proclaims, "'You don't realize it, but you've grown up'" (189). She discovers that, if there is to be any "light and glitter" or warmth (190), it will come from within herself, instead of from some outside attraction. Luella gets the chance to start over: her husband gets well; and she gives birth to two more children, who, one can be sure, will receive tender loving care from their responsible, devoted mother. At age twenty-eight, there was "a mature kindness" about Luella's face (192).

In "Lees of Happiness," Roxanne Curtain is also transformed from "such a little girl . . . [with] adolescent laughter,"²⁷ who doesn't know how to do anything except look beautiful, into a responsible housewife when a stroke reduces her husband to a vegetable. She has no children--a reflection of her former irresponsibility. Because she and Jeffrey were having such a grand time traveling and partying, they just weren't ready for the responsibilities a child would bring. Unexpectedly, a blood clot breaks in Jeffrey's brain. "He lay down on the couch like a child, weeping piteously and begging to die" (284). He's not allowed the gracious dignity of dying. He'll never see, never move, never think again. "'He'll just breathe,'" the specialist tells her (135). "So responsibility came to Roxanne" (285). She learns to nurse, to cook, to clean, to shop, and to pay the bills with never a complaint or even a frown. Roxanne has only one regret. "She felt sometimes that with Jeffrey she was losing her children also, those children that now most of all she needed and should have had" (285).

In stark contrast to the new Roxanne is Kitty, the wife of Jeffrey's friend, Harry Cromwell, who, unfortunately, does have a child. On the one occasion that Roxanne visits Kitty, "her eyes were held in uncanny

fascination" by Kitty's filthy pink kimono. "It was vilely unclean. From its lowest hem up four inches it was sheerly dirty . . . for the next three inches it was gray. . . . It was dirty at the sleeves, too, and at the collar . . . her neck was dirty" (128). Kitty's child draws attention to her gross irresponsibility as a mother: "A little boy toddled into the parlor--a dirty little boy clad in dirty pink rompers. His face was smudgy--Roxanne wanted to take him into her lap and wipe his nose; other parts in the vicinity of his head needed attention, his tiny shoes were kicked out at the toes" (286). The mother tries to escape blame for the child's neglect, but her excuse, limited to the boy's soiled rompers, serves only to point up her wider neglect of her domestic responsibilities: "'I haven't had a minute all week to send the laundry out'" (287). Kitty's "deep core of egotism" is underscored by her "one-sided rattle of conversation" (286) and her "amazing collection of lingerie . . . filmy marvels of lace and silk, all clean" (287-88). Her self-characterization comes to a glorious ironic conclusion: "'Harry doesn't care about going out,'" Kitty tells Roxanne. "'He's perfectly content to let me play nursemaid and housekeeper all day and loving wife in the evening'" (288). But shortly after Roxanne's visit, Kitty packs a "suitcase full of lace underwear" (289) and goes back East to her mother. There's a divorce and Harry, an apparently responsible father, gets custody of the child.

Three variations on the abandoned child motif appear in "John Jackson's Arcady." John Jackson is a prominent businessman and community leader--admired by everyone for his humility, generosity, and kindness. His wife had run off with another man ten years ago, leaving him with a pre-adolescent son to rear, a difficult chore in a "motherless home."²⁸ The son,

Ellery, has been barred from many houses in the town, and now, some years later, after having been given a second chance, has been expelled from the university for "his conduct at the sophomore dance" (144). The father feels beaten by life. Giving himself over to despair, Jackson decides that he has gotten nothing out of life. He disowns his delinquent son, locks up the house and locks out his son. Then he returns to the town where he was born in search of his "lost youth." The responsibility Jackson wants his son to accept, he himself rejects. Jackson finds his "first love" ungloriously married to a garage mechanic and he "kissed her as if she were a child" (151). Under the illusive rays of the moonlight, Alice considers abandoning her three children--"two little girls . . . playing around [an] . . . occupied baby carriage" (152)--for the dream Jackson represents. When Jackson returns for her at noon the next day "holding his own lost youth in his arms," he claims, "'I haven't slept like I slept last night since I was a little boy'" (154-55). On the other hand, Alice is more mature, at least in the stark reality of daylight. She has not slept like a baby. "'I didn't sleep at all,'" she claims. "'I realized about two o'clock or three o'clock that I could never go away from my children--even with you.'" The very thought of it appalls her, now, as she repeats, "'Never, never! . . . Never, never, never! . . . I'm just a small-town woman, after all. It seems somehow awful to be talking here with you, when my husband's working all day in the dust and heat'" (156). When Alice reminds Jackson that he, too, has responsibilities, a son, he's shocked back into reality. "'A son!' The fact seemed so far away that he looked at her, startled. 'Oh, yes, I have a son'" (156).

In "Gretchen's Forty Winks" the father is so busy working that he has no time for his wife or child. Roger Halsey is so determined to "get-ahead"

that he forgets he even has a baby and drugs his wife to keep her "on hold." This man has trouble "adapting his voice from the urgent key of the city to the proper casualness for a model home."²⁹ When he comes home, Gretchen is upstairs with the nursemaid and baby, engrossed in "one of their interminable conversations . . . of 'Don't!' and 'Look out, Maxy!' and 'Oh, there he goes!'" (239). When Gretchen invites him to "'Come see baby,'" he swears softly and replies, "'I can't see baby now'" (240). The truth is, he never takes time to see baby. Though Gretchen enjoys having a good time and the things money can buy, she is also a concerned wife, afraid that Roger may crack under the strain of uninterrupted work, all day and half the night and right through the Christmas holidays. In six weeks' time he hopes to secure enough accounts to assure "a quarter of a million dollars' worth of business during the year" (249). At home he hides his portfolio so burglars won't steal it and puts his prints in the office safe. He has more concern for the prints--"a labor of love" (250)--than for his own wife and child. Fitzgerald makes it clear that Roger's neglect of wife and child is part of the same pattern of irresponsibility. "'You talk as if I were a child,'" Gretchen complains when Roger becomes irritated with her lack of confidence in his ability to "get ahead" (251). He also disapproves of his wife going to the movies and horse-back riding with their mutual friend, George Tompkin, so he drugs her to keep her at home. Then a knock on the bedroom door startles him. "It was the nursemaid. He had forgotten her [and the baby's] existence" (260). A day and a half later when Roger brings his wife the news--"'I've got the account--the biggest one'" (263), he himself is likened to a child, an analogy which in the context of the story connotes selfishness and irresponsibility. The reader is left to ponder the imbalance between his devotion to his career and his neglect of his wife and child.

In "Intimate Strangers," our initial attention is drawn to the irresponsible mother, but there's a philandering father here, too. Sara, who is twenty-one and married to a French marquis, leaves a nursing child and a little girl when she runs off with a stranger to a mountain cabin. "She felt life crowding into her, into her childish resourceful body with a child's legs and child's restiveness. . . ." ³⁰ Her lover, Killian, also has left a devoted wife and children. Sara makes a sincere emotional commitment to her lover, but Killian does not commit himself. To him it's just one of many "wild times" (625). Sara is aghast when she finds "a torn calendar in the lean-to where the wood was, a calendar with a chromo of Madonna and Child. When she first saw it, stricken and aghast, Sara's face did not change--she simply stood very still--and rained. After that she didn't look toward the calendar when she went after wood" (612). Within a week Sara is back with her French marquis and her children. Her brief interlude of irresponsibility is over. ³¹

In "Crazy Sunday," set in Hollywood, the child is "off stage," but nevertheless has a brief role in the script: to reveal the childish vanity of woman. Stella, a beautiful motion picture star, is married to a film director. This Fitzgerald golden girl has just had her first baby, so she has a tremendous need to be reassured about her own charm and beauty. She must have "'some new man's unqualified devotion to prove to herself she hasn't lost anything.'" ³² Naturally she is jealous of any relationships, imagined or real, her husband might have. Triangular and multi-triangular relationships develop amid fear, jealousy, suspicion, anger. Although the three main acts of "Crazy Sunday" take place in the parents' home, the child is never seen.

"Magnetism" is another Hollywood story that, in some respects, is quite similar to "Crazy Sunday." A baby, a brand new baby, is in the house, but the parents are so self-centered that the baby is only mentioned, then tucked away in the care of a nurse, never to be seen with the parents again. The baby is viewed as an object, a burden, an obstacle to their happiness: "Now that her son was the property of a strict and possessive English nurse, Kay, free again, suddenly felt the need of proving herself attractive. She wanted things to be as they had been before the baby was thought of."³³ A scene at the opening of "Magnetism," in which a group of children are role-playing, provides indirect commentary on the negligent parents:

Children, with their knees marked by the red stains of the mercurochrome era, played with toys with a purpose--beams that taught engineering, soldiers that taught manliness, and dolls that taught motherhood. When the dolls were so banged up that they stopped looking like real babies and began to look like dolls, the children developed affection for them. (220)

These children, playing mommy and daddy, are more responsive toward their respective charges, than are the adults in the story. They play with their dolls--so much so that the dolls get banged up. The children get attached to them, unlike the adults who keep their baby "dolls" on the shelf or out of sight.

Gloria Gilbert and Anthony Patch in The Beautiful and Damned go one step further than the vain women of Hollywood by simply not having any children. This irresponsible couple decide early on not to have a baby, at least not for three years,³⁴ but the reader comes to realize that Gloria will never agree to pay the price of motherhood. Having a child, Gloria believes, would destroy her beauty, and thus she is panic stricken when she thinks she is pregnant.

"I value my body because you think it's beautiful. . . . To have it grow ugly and shapeless? It's simply intolerable. . . . And then afterwards I might have wide hips and be pale, with all my freshness gone and no radiance in my hair. . . . I thought I'd have a child some time. But not now." (203-04)

Anthony says to her: "'You'd think you'd been singled out of all the women in the world for this crowning indignity'" (204). (His words are reminiscent, though a reversal, of the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin, who was singled out for "this crowning glory.") Gloria replies angrily: "'What if I do! . . . It isn't an indignity for them. It's their one excuse for living. It's the one thing they're good for. It is an indignity for me'" (204). Luckily, for the would-be child, the pregnancy turns out to be a false alarm. (That's one way of reading it, but was it just a false alarm? Gloria's remarks, as we shall see shortly, immediately before and after her visit to her friend to resolve the question of her pregnancy, leave open the possibility that she was actually pregnant and that she aborted the child.)

The narcissistic Anthony, who frequently parades before a mirror, both before and after his marriage, is absolutely indifferent to the prospect of becoming a father.

"Do you want me to have it?" she asked listlessly.
 "I'm indifferent, [replies Anthony]. That is, I'm neutral. If you have it I'll probably be glad. If you don't--well, that's all right too."
 "I wish you'd make up your mind one way or the other!" [retorts Gloria].
 "Suppose you make up your mind."
 She looked at him contemptuously, scorning to answer. (204)

Anthony's only concern is that she maintain her dignity and make a decision

without his help. "'Well, for God's sake don't lie there and go to pieces. . . . See here, Gloria, I'm with you whatever you do, but for God's sake be a sport about it'" (204). Anthony knows very well that Gloria does not want a child. Because he is confident of the decision she will make, there is no need for him to commit himself. He well knows her views on the ugliness of matronly women and her aversion to all babies.

"'I refuse to dedicate my life to posterity. Surely one owes as much to the current generation as to one's unwanted children,'" Gloria writes in her diary shortly before her marriage. "'What a fate--to grow rotund and unseemly, to lose my self-love, to think in terms of milk, oatmeal, nurse, diapers'" (147). After marriage Gloria is bored to "nervous distraction" after visiting several friends "in different stages of having babies." "'I loathe women,' she cried [to Anthony] in a mild temper. 'What on earth can you say to them--except talk "lady-lady"? I've enthused over a dozen babies that I've wanted only to choke'" (185). But there is one woman she likes: Constance Merriam, "tall and fresh-looking and stately" (185). Constance is married, but childless. She belongs to the class of people Gloria likes around her "'doing nothing at all'" (66). Constance Merriam is the woman that Gloria, "'being true to me,'" goes to see when she believes she is pregnant (205). The next day, smiling broadly, she tells Anthony, who has returned from a visit to his grandfather, "'It's all right.'" "'There's no doubt?'" asks Anthony. "'None!'" replies Gloria. "'Couldn't be!'" All their fears of having an unwanted child vanish. Anthony and Gloria "rejoiced happily, gay again with reborn irresponsibility" (209). But later that evening, after Anthony carries her romantically up the stairs, he broods upon the day, "vaguely angry with her, vaguely dissatisfied" (210).

Seven years later, Gloria and Anthony still do not have a baby, nor is it likely that they ever will.

She knew that in her breast she had never wanted children. . . . She wanted to exist only as a conscious flower, prolonging and preserving itself. . . . Her ironic soul whispered that motherhood was also the privilege of the female baboon. So her dreams were of ghostly children only . . . symbols of her early and perfect love for Anthony. (392-93)

At the end of the novel, their love has become only a tolerance; Gloria's beauty, only an illusion; Anthony's well being, only material. Bruccoli credits Fitzgerald for having cast Anthony and Gloria with an "integrity of irresponsibility," as "victims of philistia."³⁵ Anthony now has a full-time physician to take care of him as if he were a child. How fortunate that his grandfather's inheritance allows Anthony, as a broken invalid, to purchase a full time care-taker, since Gloria's rule of life--"'Never give a damn. . . . Not for anything or anybody . . . except myself'"--has not changed (203).

In most of these stories depicting unwanted, neglected, ignored, or abandoned children, the mother reaps the greatest scorn for her worthlessness as a homemaker and mother. Fitzgerald shows no mercy for egotistic, self-centered women like Kay, Sara, Evlyn, Kitty, and Gloria--women too busy pursuing their own pleasure to clean the house, cook the meals, wash the laundry, or care for children. The father's primary duty is to earn a living, but Fitzgerald has identified three types of fathers guilty of family neglect: the workaholic, the alcoholic, and the philanderer. One critical article expounds on the psychological reasons underlying the rejection of responsibility by Fitzgerald's adult characters.

Fitzgerald's heroes long to succeed, to enjoy, and even to love; but they fear getting too close to making an emotional commitment to that for which they consciously long. . . . It appears that the hero's conscious desires are self-destructive because such desires for the benefits but not the responsibilities of the adult world--are in conflict with his unconscious desire to regress to a "safe" symbolic childhood world where there is no threat of marriage and parenthood . . . which implies an acceptance of responsibility and drudgery and dullness.³⁶

The long line of abandoned, neglected, ignored children--the unwanted children in Fitzgerald's fiction--exemplify the gross irresponsibility of his adult characters.

III. THE EXPLOITED CHILD

The exploited child in Fitzgerald's short stories and novels is used and/or abused by the adult characters for several reasons. Sometimes the adult uses the child to boost his/her already inflated ego. At other times the adult may draw sustenance from the child's youth or innocence. In one story a small child gives her father the opportunity momentarily to relive his own childhood. In other fictional works the adult chooses to hide in the protective company of his children where he relaxes, forgetting the responsibilities and demands of his adult world. Often the exploited child is used as a pawn: the adult may use his power over the child to vent frustrations, to punish another, or to mask his own shortcomings. Or the adult may force the child to follow a strict schedule of activities in order to gain freedom from the responsibilities that the child's presence necessarily creates.

In "The Baby Party," two-and-a-half-year-old Ede is the exploited child. When the baby is invited to a birthday party next door, the proud egotistic mother is eager to display her child's superior beauty, charm, and intelligence. Edith, the mother, deliberately arrives a half-hour late so that little Ede, in a new pink dress, can make a dazzling entrance. But Edith now begins to worry that her husband, John, will arrive too late to share her pride in their "darling" child. "She wanted him to see Ede with the other children--to see how dignified and polite and intelligent she was."³⁷ By the time John does arrive, little Ede has grabbed little Billy's teddy bear and knocked him down for the second time and laughed "a triumphant laugh with victory in it and challenge and contempt" (98). The mothers of the little antagonists shout insults at one another, and the fathers engage in a childish fist fight, shake hands, and depart friends.

As Edith is dressing John's wounds, she suggests getting a doctor, but he resists. "'I don't want this to get all over town'" (106). Rather than being seriously hurt by the fisticuffs, John actually feels revitalized. The small child "reinfuses vitality in the father,"³⁸ says John Higgins, who has published the only comprehensive study of Fitzgerald's short stories. Actually, little Ede has given John the opportunity to revert to childhood for a few moments, but he does not want the whole town to know that he acted like a child.

The father is not interested in Ede's own life and liveliness. In fact "the very vitality of the child irritated him" (91). He views the child as a definite nuisance to his own desires and interests. This baby, who "interrupted his rather intense love-affair with his wife" (91), is the reason they live in a suburban area where the air is clean, but the servants

are less competent, and the commuting is quite unpleasant. His only interest in the child is as a "definite piece of youth" (91), which will extend his life through posterity. Later, the same evening, he picks up his sleeping daughter, "holding her tightly" but careful so as not to wake her. "He bent his head until his cheek was against her bright hair. 'Dear little girl,' he whispered. 'Dear little girl, dear little girl'" (108). He knows why he had fought: "He had it now, he possessed it forever" (108). Through the life in his child, the father has eternal life. "When John Andros felt old he found solace in the thought of life continuing through his child" (91).

In The Great Gatsby Daisy Buchanan also uses her child for a show-and-tell object, but Daisy's exploitation of her child is more vulgar and disgusting than Edith's exploitation of her little girl. When Nick Carraway tries to ask Daisy about the child, she narcissistically continues to talk about herself. Finally she tells him what she said when her baby was born: "'I hope she'll be a fool . . . a beautiful little fool.'" ³⁹ The one and only time she is seen with the child in the entire novel is when she shows her to Gatsby, who never "really believed in its existence before" (117). Daisy has just sent Tom Buchanan, her husband, out of the room on an errand so she could kiss Gatsby. Her friend, Jordan Baker, calls her a "low, vulgar girl!" (116). The tag is appropriate also for her next act: Daisy, who is now reclining on the sofa, does not get up when the nurse brings in Daisy's three-year-old child for a short exhibit. With the least effort a mother could possibly exert, she displays the child to Nick, Jordan, and, most important, Gatsby.

"Bles-sed pre-cious," she crooned, holding out her arms. "Come to your own mother that loves you."

The child, relinquished by the nurse, rushed across the room and rooted shyly into her mother's dress.

"The bles-sed pre-cious! Did mother get powder on your old yellowy hair? Stand up now, and say--How-de-do."

Gatsby and I in turn leaned down and took the small reluctant hand. Afterward he kept looking at the child with surprise. I don't think he had ever really believed in its existence before.

"I got dressed before luncheon," said the child, turning eagerly to Daisy.

"That's because your mother wanted to show you off." Her face bent into the single wrinkle of the small white neck. "You dream, you. You absolute little dream."

"Yes," admitted the child calmly. "Aunt Jordan's got on a white dress too."

"How do you like mother's friends?" Daisy turned her around so that she faced Gatsby. "Do you think they're pretty?"

"Where's Daddy?"

"She doesn't look like her father," explained Daisy. "She looks like me. She's got my hair and shape of the face."

Daisy sat back upon the couch. The nurse took a step forward and held out her hand.

"Come, Pammy." (116-17)

Daisy is not about to exert the energy it would take to answer the child's simple question: "'Where's Daddy?'" Daisy, who is angry at Tom for his infidelity, wants to retaliate. She has been seeing Gatsby regularly, but this is the first time she has invited him into her home. A confrontation is imminent--a confrontation which she had deliberately planned, and she includes her three-year-old child in this brutal game. This is especially cruel because the child is not usually included in any family activities. Daisy, who identifies with the child's youth and beauty, denies the child any paternal resemblance. It is, of course, Tom, whom she really wants to hurt. An examination of The Great Gatsby manuscript shows that the nurse addresses the child intimately as Pammy, just as she does in the published

version; but in the manuscript, Daisy calls the child Pamela, which is more formal. The manuscript also has Daisy sit "upon the couch away from the child," after the child questions, "'Where's Daddy?,'" whereas the published version says "Daisy sat back upon the couch." In either case, she puts more distance between herself and the child. It also gives the nurse her cue. She knows the mother is through with the child.

In Tender Is The Night the Diver children, Lanier and Topsy, provide protection and sustenance for their father, Dick Diver. In the early stages of his marriage, Dick is a very protective father, who devotes much time to the children and is proud of their upbringing. When Dick scolds the cook for drinking the vintage wines and an argument ensues, his first concern is that the children are not upset or frightened by the scene. "'Get the children away from the house till I settle this,'" he calls to Nicole, his wife, for the screaming cook is threatening him with a kitchen knife and a hatchet.⁴¹ At the Agiri Fair, when Nicole, a schizoprene, runs hysterically away from the family, Dick begins to pursue her but returns to put the children in the care of "a young woman behind a white lottery wheel" (189). When he finally catches Nicole, he says, "'I left the children with a gypsy woman in a booth. We ought to get them'" (190). But Nicole doesn't make a move and he repeats: "'Let's find the children'" (191). As Dick hunts for Lanier and Topsy, "Nicole stood apart, denying the children, resenting them as part of a downright world she sought to make amorphous" (191). Dick's attempts to keep the family together are hopeless. On the way back to the clinic, Nicole grabs the steering wheel causing the car to overturn. The car comes to rest perilously against a tree on the mountain road. Dick's first concern is to rescue the children, but Nicole is "laughing hilariously, unashamed, unafraid, unconcerned."

She laughed as after some mild escape of childhood.

"You were scared, weren't you?" she accused him. "You wanted to live!" . . .

The strained faces of the children, looking from parent to parent, made him want to grind her grinning mask into jelly. (192)

Dick tells Lanier to take his little sister's hand and climb the hill to the inn a hundred yards above them. The concerned boy asks, "'What will you do, Dick?'" Then, without even looking at their mother, the two children start off. Dick calls after them, "'Be careful crossing the road up there! Look both ways!'" (193). On another occasion, when the Divers are house guests, Lanier suspects that he is asked to bathe in some dirty bathwater. This insults the host family and puts new strains on the Diver family unit, but Dick is able to bring them back together.

"I insist," insisted Lanier on the train, "that it was dirty bathwater."

"That'll do," his father said. "You better forget it--unless you want me to divorce you. Did you know there was a new law in France that you can divorce a child?"

Lanier roared with delight and the Divers were unified again--Dick wondered how many more times it could be done. (265)

As Dick's character and ideals deteriorate, he turns to his children "not protectively but for protection" (280). One critic notes that "as Dick loses control and becomes indifferent . . . Dick passes from the childlike to the childish."⁴² Now Dick spends time with his children only after he has had several drinks too many and has nothing else to do. Nicole guessed that something was developing behind Dick's "almost unnatural interest in the children" (267). She had seen him draw "inspiration from the new bodies of her children" (283). He "loafed gratefully about the 'nursery slope'"

with them (172). At the time of his divorce, he wanted to remember his children well. "When he said good-by to them, he wanted to lift their beautiful heads off their necks and hold them close for hours" (311). He thinks of his children only as beautiful possessions--as his creations. These were the children he had "brought up rather than brought out. . . . He was satisfied with them both" (257).⁴³ The prophesied divorce between parents and their children now becomes a reality. After Dick gets to America, he does not send for the children as he had promised. This is a real tragedy because their mother has never cared for them. Lanier and Topsy are sent to London to live with their aunt, Baby Warren. "Alien from touch" (172), she is the ultimate exploiter. It is her money that is partially responsible for bringing Dick Diver to ruin. Baby Warren's ready cash, as James E. Miller points out, dictates every important decision in Dick Diver's life, until he is no longer useful to the Warren family.⁴⁴ Since it is Baby's nature to use others ruthlessly for her own selfish purposes, we can surmise she will exploit the Diver children, too.⁴⁵

In "Babylon Revisited" Honoria Wales is used as a pawn. She is in the custody of her jealous and unstable aunt, Marion Peters, who uses the child to punish her father. Marion is jealous of Charlie Wales' easy wealth, but that is too mean a motive for her conscious sensibilities, so Marion blames Charlie for her sister's death. "It had all happened at a point in her life where the discouragement of ill health and adverse circumstances made it necessary for her to believe in tangible villainy and a tangible villain."⁴⁶ Marion's excuse for not giving Charlie custody of his daughter is his former irresponsibility. She claims to lack confidence in his ability to limit himself to one drink a day. Charlie, who is "awfully anxious to have a

home . . . awfully anxious to have Honoria in it" (330), doesn't stand a chance against Marion. She revels in her power over him without regard for the child. Because she holds legal guardianship of Honoria and has made Charlie her tangible villain, she thwarts Charlie's attempts to regain his "tangible, visible child" (235).

The fact that Marion has a home, a husband, and two children of her own helps to emphasize her extreme selfishness in denying a widower the joy of his only child. Her apparent financial jealousy seems unfounded for her husband is a banker and she has a maid to answer the door and to cook the meals. (It is true that Charlie's income is again double that of Lincoln Peters.) Nevertheless, she uses Charlie's innocent nine-year-old child as a whipping stick. Honoria must also suffer the injustice of her aunt's prejudices. In the climactic scene, Marion, silhouetted against the warm flame in the fireplace, has one arm about her son and the other arm about her daughter, while Honoria, in Lincoln Peter's grasp, is being swung "back and forth like a pendulum from side to side" (339). In the Peters' home, Honoria is an innocent victim of the changing tide of a custody struggle unfolding in a climate of "instinctive antipathy" (324) between her aunt and her father. She is truly a hostage to her father's irresponsible past and to her aunt's irrational and debilitating jealousy.

Nine-year-old Honoria's astounding maturity and tact serve to underscore the childishness of the adults in the story. She remains quite in character when she announces, "'I don't really need much taking care of any more. I do everything for myself'" (328). She stays in control of her emotions at all times. She understands perfectly the strained relationship between her father and her aunt. At the Peters' home "her tact made her

conceal her excessive happiness" after she has been told she can live with her dad. "Only on his lap did she whisper her delight and the question 'When?' before she slipped away with the other children" (337). She bobs politely to Lorraine Quarries and Duncan Schaeffer, "ghosts out of the past" (328), even though Lorraine is obviously drunk, acting horribly childish, and ridiculing her father. At the vaudeville show "Honorina proudly refused to sit upon her father's folded coat. She was already an individual with a code of her own" (329). Honorina knows her own mind. She refuses a second vegetable at lunch, though her father encourages her to have two. Being concerned about her father's finances, she disapproves of his playing the "Santa Claus father." She also knows that such extravagance will be frowned upon by her legal guardians, the Peters.

"What are we going to do?" Honorina asked her father.

"First, we're going to that toy store in the Rue Saint-Honore and buy you anything you like. And then we're going to the vaudeville at the Empire."

She hesitated. "I like it about the vaudeville, but not the toy store."

"Why not?"

"Well, you brought me this doll." She had it with her. "And I've got lots of things. And we're not rich any more, are we?"

"We never were. But today you are to have anything you want."

"All right," she agreed resignedly.

When there had been her mother and a French nurse he had been inclined to be strict; now he extended himself. . . . (327)

Even though Charlie deeply loves his child, he also has intentions of exploiting Honorina. Charlie believes that having Honorina back in his home will restore his honor, his dignity, and his respectability. To have his daughter under his responsible roof will serve as tangible proof he has

been absolved for his irresponsible behavior toward his wife, whom he locked out in the snow of '29. Charlie seems to believe that by getting Honoria back he will be winning back the love and approval of his deceased wife, and Honoria does replace her mother to a degree. She reaps the love that would have gone to the wife. She is given the attention and protection which he had failed to give his wife in those years of dissipation and irresponsibility. Charlie, desiring perfect communion with his daughter, "watched Honoria's eyes leave their table, and he followed them wistfully about the room, wondering what they saw" (329). When he takes her back to the Peters' apartment, he makes doubly sure that she is not locked out in the cold: "'When you're safe inside, just show yourself in that window.' . . . He waited in the dark street until she appeared, all warm and glowing, in the window alone and kissed her fingers out into the night" (330). Charlie needs "someone to love" (335), to fill the void left by the death of his wife.

Charlie is not "young any more, with a lot of nice thoughts and dreams to have by himself" (341). "He drew confidence from his daughter" (323). The once attractive Lorraine looks "trite, blurred, worn away" to Charlie now, as he compares her to Honoria (337). "'It was a relief to think, instead, of Honoria, to think of Sundays spent with her and of saying good morning to her and of knowing she was there in his house at night, drawing her breath in the darkness" (337). Charlie dreams of feeling very safe and secure with his "old pie" (323) sleeping under the same roof, where he can share in "Honoria's childhood" (332) and put a "little of himself into her before she crystallized utterly" (329).

In "Her Last Case" Amalie Dragonet, a girl of nine, is rejected and exploited by her father, who has been divorced for some time. Amalie, who

has been living in various hotels with her governess, can hardly remember the room she had as "a little girl" at her father's old historic mansion in Virginia.⁴⁷ Her father, Ben Dragonet, is a proud and stubborn man disturbed by voices from the past. He prowls and broods during sleepless nights and turns to drinking. But he has recently found peace and solace in the company of his latest nurse, Bette Weaver. When Amalie is returned by her mother to her father's Virginia mansion, the girl confides in Bette: "'I heard mother tell father she'd trade me for something. . . . I heard her talk about the same thing to the man that's her friend now. . . . She hates me! . . . I wouldn't care . . . but father doesn't want me either'" (585). The father rejects the child to punish his ex-wife who "isn't afraid of anything" (587). "'No child of yours can have a place in this house,'" he tells her (586). But when his new love, Bette, learns that he will not let his sensitive, timid daughter live in his house, she decides she cannot stay there either. How can she care for a man who rejects his own child? A short time later, Ben uses the child again to win back Bette's affection. He accepts his daughter to please Bette, to stop her from leaving. He installs Amalie in his house as his "little hostess" (588), promises her a horse, and sets her on his knee. He uses his child as a pawn in his relationship with both women, in his strategy of love and hate.

In "Absolution" eleven-year-old Rudolph Miller is abused by his father who vents his frustrations on the child. Rudolph's father, Carl Miller, came "with the second wave of German and Irish stock" to this land of "great opportunities,"⁴⁸ but Miller does not experience success. He's the local freight-agent--a dull, insensitive, unthinking man who blindly follows the doctrines and ceremonies of the Roman Catholic Church and, at the same time, mystically worships James J. Hill, the "Empire Builder."

Hill was the apotheosis of that quality in which Miller himself was deficient--the sense of things, the feel of things, the hint of rain in the wind on the cheek. Miller's mind worked late on the old decisions of other men, and he never in his life felt the balance of any single thing in his hands. His weary, sprightly, undersized body was growing old in Hill's gigantic shadow. For twenty years he had lived alone with Hill's name and God. (118)

Miller, an isolated and frustrated man, has no intimate relationship with his son or his wife. He's stubborn and irrational and suspicious. "Somewhat gross, he was, nevertheless, insufficiently hard-headed and unable to take fundamental relationships for granted, and his inability made him suspicious, unrestful, and continually dismayed" (118). One Saturday, Miller orders his son to go to confession; however, Rudolph gets preoccupied playing with friends, so after supper the father grabs Rudolph by the back of the neck and yells, ""You go now. . . . Don't come back till you go"" (111). In the confessional Rudolph tells a lie which renders him unfit to receive communion on Sunday morning. The child attempts to avoid his father's inevitable fury for not receiving communion by drinking some water just before Mass, but his father catches him in the act and verbally degrades the child. "'First you begin to neglect your religion,' cried his father, fanning his own fierceness, 'the next thing you'll begin to lie and steal, and the next thing is the reform school! . . . You better kneel down and ask God to forgive you for your carelessness'" (121-22). Rudolph is now faced with another decision. He can "tell all" and face a "ferocious beating" or he can receive communion and face eternal damnation. "Of the two the former seemed more terrible--it was not so much the beating he dreaded as the savage ferocity, outlet of the ineffectual man, which would

lie behind it" (122). When Rudolph, driven by his "wild, proud anger," dashed the empty tumbler "passionately" into the sink,

his father uttered a strained, husky sound, and sprang for him. . . . He cried out sharply when a hand grasped his pajama shoulder, then he felt the dull impact of a fist against the side of his head, and glancing blows on the upper part of his body. . . . Carl Miller half dragged, half threatened his son up-stairs. (122-23)

Father Schwartz also vents his frustrations on Rudolph, and in so doing exploits the boy's spiritual crisis. The boy goes to the priest for help that afternoon. Initially Rudolph experiences a false sense of protection and security in the priest's presence. "He knew that as long as he was in the room with this priest God would not stop his heart, so he sighed and sat quietly, waiting for the priest to speak" (127). But Father Schwartz, who is physically and emotionally exhausted from trying to fight his own battle with the heat of human passion, ignores the child's spiritual needs. Rudolph finds the priest mysteriously preoccupied with his dream of a fantasy world where things "go glimmering." The real world outside his study is depicted in tempting shades of yellow: the blonde Swede girls calling out "exciting things" (132) to young men under the moonlight, the vast fields of fertile wheat trembling in the wind, and the bright yellow sunlight shining down on this lost prairie town. Even Rudolph, who sits in a "square of sunshine" (127), disturbs him--this "beautiful little boy with eyes like blue stones, and lashes that sprayed open from them like flower-petals" (127). When the priest comes closer, Rudolph draws away in fear. He is terrified of this irresponsible priest who has told him, "'Stop worrying about last Saturday'" (129). "'This man is crazy,' [Rudolph]

thought, 'and I'm scared of him. He wants me to help him out some way, and I don't want to'" (129). The priest advises Rudolph to go to an amusement park but "'stand a little way off from it in a dark place. . . . Don't get up close,'" he warned Rudolph, because "'if you do you'll only feel the heat and the sweat and the life'" (130). Rudolph, observes Brian Way, is on the brink of adolescence, "torn between new, half-understood, romantic emotions and old idealisms."⁴⁹ With the priest's encouragement, Rudolph gladly forgets the old virtues. Rudolph enters the forbidden world where he is Blatchford Sarnemington. It is a world, remarks Henry Dan Piper, in which Rudolph is "beyond good and evil, responsible only to his own imagination."⁵⁰ The frustrated priest describes a temptingly gorgeous carnival world. Rudolph, his "inner convictions . . . confirmed," is now convinced that "there was something ineffably gorgeous somewhere that had nothing to do with God" (131). With the priest's encouragement, Rudolph accepts, without reservation, this world of romantic fantasy.

In "On Schedule," Noel, the twelve-year-old daughter of widower, Rene DuCary, is placed at the bottom of his priorities. His work comes first, and his daughter last. Since the death of his wife, Rene has discovered that "work really was the best thing with which to fill a life."⁵¹ The time he should spend helping Noel on lessons is replaced with "moments of severe strictness" (444). He wants freedom to devote all his time to his work without being bothered by the needs of a child. At the same time, he wants Noel to be "a well-brought-up child" (443). He plans to accomplish both tasks by setting up a strict schedule for her to follow. It accounts for "every hour of every day" (452), but it does not take into account the unexpected, unexplained, or Noel's rights as an individual. Without even

explaining the schedule to her, Rene demands that she follow it to the last minute or face what he considers to be degrading consequences: a practical education in "sewing, cooking, domestic economy" (439). He refuses to listen to Noel's practical suggestion of taking French with the other children at her school. "'All we need,'" he tells her, "'is complete cooperation'" (440). "'This schedule is the most important thing in our lives.'" But to himself, he thinks: "'The schedule is my protection'" (443). The schedule he has devised for Noel shields him from making decisions, hour by hour, day by day, concerning the welfare of his daughter. It also protects him from a sense of guilt for having neglected his child.

Rene becomes wrathful when reminded by a well-meaning friend, Mrs. Hume, that "'any child needs personal attention'" (446). She knows Rene needs a break and offers to take Noel for a week. "'It's really poor little Noel I'm thinking of as much as you,'" she pleads (446). But Rene refuses to listen to Mrs. Hume. Shortly thereafter, Noel loses her schedule and after school wanders about in a "blast of real winter" (451). The father searches for his daughter to retrieve some scientific notations he had written on the back of the schedule. He looks for her at school and at home to no avail. He feels momentary concern for his daughter: she might have gotten "lost . . . kidnapped, or . . . a big chill, or . . . run over" (451). Mrs. Hume had suggested that such things could happen to a young neglected child. But he is more worried about his jars of water at the laboratory that might freeze and break in this "blast of real winter." He forgets about Noel and rushes back to his lab. Meanwhile Noel has walked to the home of Mrs. Hume, who takes Noel to the lab and attempts a second time to make Rene realize that he, alone, is responsible for Noel's care,

protection, and guidance. But Rene is so preoccupied with his jars that Mrs. Hume gives up in exasperation: "'It's too much . . . I suppose you'll all end by sleeping here tonight--probably in the jars'" (454). "'Why don't we?'" responds little Noel. "'Look on the schedule, daddy, and see if that's the thing to do'" (454). And the story ends on this humorous note. Little Noel is too young and too sheltered to be critical of her father's treatment. She does not wonder, as does Becky, the father's nineteen-year-old fiancée, "'how much of herself she was giving up in the complete subservience of every hour of every day to another's judgment" (452).

The exploited children in Fitzgerald's fiction serve to enhance the characterizations of the adults. The father in "On Schedule" exploits the dependency of his child, and in so doing reveals his own aloofness, selfishness, and insensitivity. The father and the priest in "Absolution" use the boy Rudolph as a convenient punching bag or as an emotional sounding board while disclosing their own deep-seated frustrations. The father in "Her Last Case" uses his child as a pawn in his love/hate relationships, thus exhibiting his appalling insensitivity and opportunism. The insecurity of Charlie Wales and the neurotic jealousy of Marion Peters are underscored in "Babylon Revisited" as these two intense rivals move little Honoria about like a pawn in a chess game. Dick Diver in Tender Is The Night seeks sustenance from his children as he loses control of his life and starts down the long spiral of deterioration. Daisy Buchanan in The Great Gatsby exploits her little girl in order to retaliate against her unfaithful husband; the scene in which she puts her child on exhibit reveals her narcissism, vanity, and insecurity. And in "The Baby Party" the mother's pride and egotism are highlighted as she manipulates her little girl at the party,

while the father exploits the insult to his daughter's honor to recapture a moment of youth, to hold at bay, for a few moments, his fear of growing old.

IV. THE PAMPERED CHILD

Fitzgerald wrote a handful of works in which he portrayed a character as both child and adult. They include Amory Blaine in This Side of Paradise, Judy Jones in "Winter Dreams," Diana Dickey in "Diamond Dick and The First Law of Woman," Fifi Marsden in "The Unspeakable Egg," and Anson Hunter in "The Rich Boy." These characters, all from wealthy families, are pampered or spoiled as children; consequently, they develop a sense of superiority in early childhood that remains embedded in their personality through adulthood. Their wealth gives them status; their status gives them confidence; their confidence gives them control over situations and people that they cannot handle in a responsible manner. Even if they fall morally, socially, or financially below the majority, they still maintain a superior attitude and often behave in an irresponsible manner. They feel no guilt and accept no blame for the consequences of their thoughts or actions. In these fictional works the pampered child becomes the egotistic, self-indulgent, irresponsible adult.

There is one other Fitzgerald character, and only one, who is portrayed as both child and adult in the same story--Dick Henderson in "The Family Bus." He, too, is a pampered child. Dick fits the pattern of the other five with one exception: as an adult he accepts responsibility. His suave confidence and superiority remain intact despite the depletion of his family's wealth.

In This Side of Paradise, Amory Blaine is an only child pampered by a self-indulgent mother. He "inherited from his mother every trait, except the stray inexpressible few, that made him worthwhile."⁵² Between the age of four and ten, he traveled with his mother in state: "two maids, the private car, or Mr. Blaine when available, and very often a physician" (6). When Amory had whooping cough, four specialists were called in; when he had scarlet fever, fourteen physicians and nurses attended him. When his appendix burst, "probably from too many meals in bed . . . the great ship [bound for Italy] slowly wheeled around and returned to New York to deposit Amory at the pier" (7-8). While other little rich boys were with their governesses, "Amory was biting acquiescent bell-boys in the Waldorf . . . and deriving a highly specialized education from his mother" (4). She encourages his calling her Beatrice, his sleeping late, his breakfasting in bed. It amuses her when Amory tries her whiskey and her cigarettes. Mrs. Blaine orders hot baths to relax the nerves of her little boy.

At age thirteen, "Amory wondered how people could fail to notice that he was a boy marked for glory" (17). His self-assessment at age fifteen is pure aristocratic egotism.

Physically.--Amory thought that he was exceedingly handsome. He was. He fancied himself an athlete of possibilities and a supple dancer.

Socially.--Here his condition was, perhaps, most dangerous. He granted himself personality, charm, magnetism, poise, the power of dominating all contemporary males, the gift of fascinating all women.

Mentally.--Complete, unquestioned superiority. (18)

He had a "desire to influence people in almost every way, even for evil" and he had a "sense of people as automatons to his will" (19). At St. Regis,

the exclusive prep school, Amory was "conceited and arrogant, and . . . resentful against all those in authority over him" (27). At Princeton he "decided to be one of the gods of the class" (43). When he complains to a buddy about the social levels, Kerry reminds him, "'We came to Princeton so we could feel that way toward the small colleges--have it on 'em, more self-confidence, dress better, cut a swathe--'" (45). "'It isn't that I mind the glittering caste system,' admitted Amory. 'I like having a bunch of hot cats on top, but gosh, Kerry, I've got to be one of them'" (45). Amory indulges in despicable, irresponsible behavior with the Princeton boys--lying, stealing, drinking, deceiving, cheating, loitering. On a return trip from a gay party in New York, the young men, in various degrees of sobriety, have an accident that kills one of their group. Yet at the end of his sophomore year, Amory thinks: "'There was little in his life now that he would have changed. . . . Oxford might have been a bigger field. Silently he admired himself'" (89). His entire junior year is "purposeless and inconsecutive." He admits, "'My own idleness was quite in accord with my system, but the luck broke'" (98). He fails the exam and is barred from the Princetonian board and the Senior Council.

One colleague sizes him up as an even match for Rosalind--Rosalind who "abuses [men] and cuts them and breaks dates with them and yawns in their faces" (170). Rosalind claims, "'I'm just a little girl. I like sunshine and pretty things and cheerfulness--and I dread responsibility. I don't want to think about pots and kitchens and brooms. I want to worry whether my legs will get slick and brown when I swim in the summer'" (196). After Rosalind throws Amory over for a rich old boy, Amory goes on a three week drunk during which he proclaims anew his philosophy: "'Seek pleasure where

find it for tomorrow die'" (199). He thinks, "'It's essentially cleaner to be corrupt and rich than it is to be innocent and poor.' . . . He thought cynically how completely he was lacking in all human sympathy. . . . He made no self-accusations: never any more did he reproach himself for feelings that were natural and sincere" (256-57).

In "Winter Dreams" Judy Jones, age eleven, is haughty, commanding, and confident. She's the pampered daughter of the wealthy Mr. Mortimer Jones. When she arrives at the Sherry Island Golf Club with her nurse carrying "five small new golf-clubs,"⁵³ she is baffled by the caddy, fourteen-year-old Dexter Green, who refuses to jump to her immediate aid. As a child, Judy Jones, obviously expects to have the upper hand in any situation. She tells her confused nurse, "'Oh, that's all right. I'll fix it up'" (60). When Dexter refuses to be her subordinate, she takes her anger out on the nurse in her service.

Miss Jones and her retinue now withdrew, and at a proper distance from Dexter became involved in a heated conversation, which was concluded by Miss Jones taking one of the clubs and hitting it on the ground with violence. For further emphasis she raised it again and was about to bring it down smartly upon the nurse's bosom, when the nurse seized the club and twisted it from her hands.

"You damn little mean old thing!" cried Miss Jones wildly.

Another argument ensued. Realizing that the elements of comedy were implied in the scene, Dexter several times began to laugh. . . . He could not resist the monstrous conviction that the little girl was justified in beating the nurse. (61)

When Judy Jones "dropped her bag and set off at a haughty mince toward the first tee," Dexter quits his job rather than grovel after her. Dexter knows he'll not get another job anywhere else paying thirty dollars a month,

but, "he wanted not association with glittering things and glittering people--he wanted the glittering things themselves" (63).

Nine years later, Judy Jones, as a grown woman, hits T. A. Hedrick in the abdomen with a golf ball and maliciously comments: "'I'd have gone on the green except that I hit something'" (65). Dexter, who is enchanted by the wealthy Miss Jones's "direct and unprincipled personality," joins the ranks of her suitors (73). She keeps a string of men about her. "Whenever one showed signs of dropping out through long neglect, she granted him a brief honeyed hour, which encouraged him to tag along for a year or so longer" (74). It is entirely her game. "She was entertained only by the gratification of her desires and by the direct exercise of her own charm" (75). When Judy hears of Dexter's pending engagement to Irene Scheerer, she throws herself at him with the sole purpose of drawing him back into her circle of admirers. Dexter yields to the irresistible Miss Jones again. "'By his yielding he subjected himself to a deeper agony in the end and gave serious hurt to Irene Scheerer and to Irene's parents" (85). The brief affair, at the price of a broken engagement, lasts just one month, but Dexter completely forgives Judy. He is unable to resist her "poignant, unforgivable, yet forgiven turbulence" (79). "Ever since he was a proud, desirous little boy" (73), he was drawn unmercifully by his illusive dreams toward the wealthy world Judy Jones represents. "No disillusion as to the world in which she had grown up could cure his illusion as to her desirability" (77).

In "Diamond Dick and The First Law of Woman," Diana Dickey is spoiled beyond the point of irresponsibility to the point of lawlessness. At age ten, she throws a fit because the family will not call her "Diamond Dick."

Her family calls a neurologist for Diana and she ends up getting her way.

She assumes the identity of a Bonnie character of the Bonnie and Clyde type.

"Miss Caruthers," she would sneer crisply,
"what's the idea of no jam? Do you wanta whack
the side of the head?"

"Diana! I'm going to call your mother this
minute!"

"Look at here!" threatened Diana darkly. "If
you call her you're liable to get a bullet the
side of the head."

Miss Caruthers raised her hand uneasily to her
bangs. She was somewhat awed.

"Very well," she said uncertainly, "if you
want to act like a little ragamuffin--"

Diana did want to.⁵⁴

Diana's mother is also intimidated by her daughter, who has revolted
"against the softness of life" and has patterned her life on her fictional
hero--Diamond Dick. He was "a law unto himself, making his own judgments
with his back against the wall. . . . In the unvarying rightness of his
instincts he was higher and harder than the law. She had seen in him a
sort of deity . . . and the commandment he laid down for himself . . . was
first and foremost to keep what was his own" (80).

At nineteen Diana keeps "half a dozen dates a day with half a dozen
men" (71), although she is now married to Mr. Charley Abbot of Boston and
Bar Harbor, "'a young aviator of position and charm'" (70). Because of a
war injury, Charley doesn't remember marrying Diana and she does not bother
to remind him. When she returns to her family home, she will not even admit
having been engaged to Charley Abbot, let alone having been married to him.
For five years she dates, until she hears Charley has gone to ruin and is
about to marry Elaine Russell. Then she lies, forces her way into Elaine's
apartment, slaps Elaine and knocks her against the wall, pockets her love

letters, waves a loaded revolver, and threatens to kill both Elaine and Charley.

In "The Unspeakable Egg," pampered Fifi Marsden, age ten, leaves the sand dunes of Long Island after a brief visit with her doting aunts, who are left "sad and futile and broken and old" by her departure.⁵⁵ Years pass, and wherever Fifi goes, there is a "sadness and longing that followed in her wake" (126), especially on the countenances of the young men after she begins dating. She gets engaged, and plans a wedding. But she irresponsibly flees from the altar, leaving Mr. Van Tyne, an absolutely perfect gentleman, in the lurch. Fifi hides out with her aunts on Long Island. She moves in with little or no explanation, upsetting their entire household.

"I'm afraid I've broken the heart of the nicest man I ever met in my life, but it can't be helped. Immaculate! Why, what's the use of being immaculate when, no matter how hard you try, you can't be half so immaculate as your husband? And tactful? . . . after a certain point, I want to have all the tact in my family, and I told him so. I've never left a man practically at the church door before, so I'm going to stay here until everyone has had a chance to forget." (128)

Even when the aunts suggest that Fifi take a trip to Europe with her mother, she declines. "'I like it here where everything's rugged and harsh and rude, like the end of the world. If you don't mind, I'd like to stay longer.' . . . She stayed longer, and seemed to grow more and more melancholy" (129). A short time later, she upsets her maiden aunts by associating with a "strange derelict of a man" (129) she has met on the sand dunes. "In their hearts all was turmoil and confusion. They would have been no more surprised had Fifi brought in a many-headed monster out of the

Atlantic" (130). Again the aunts try to contact Fifi's mother, but she has gone to White Sulphur Springs for the week, so they call a psychiatrist instead. Fifi is saucy and haughty toward the doctor. George Van Tyne, the millionaire playing derelict, apologizes to the old maids. "'I owe you more apologies than I can ever make,' he confessed, 'for having sacrificed you to the strange whim of a young girl'" (140-41). On the other hand, Fifi offers neither apology nor explanation, even though she has known all along that the "derelict" is her immaculate Van Tyne.

In "The Rich Boy," Anson Hunter is the eldest of six children whose parents have amassed fifteen million dollars. They live on a big estate in Northern Connecticut where it is difficult for the conscientious parents to keep an eye on their children. The family wealth gives Anson an inbred sense of superiority.

Anson's first sense of his superiority came to him when . . . the parents of the boys he played with always inquired after his father and mother, and were vaguely excited when their own children were asked to the Hunters' house. He accepted this as the natural state of things, and a sort of impatience with all groups of which he was not the center--in money, in position, in authority--remained with him for the rest of his life. He disdained to struggle with other boys for precedence--he expected it to be given him freely, and when it wasn't he withdrew into his family.⁵⁶

Anson has no idealism or illusion. He has no goals, no ideals, no morals. He "accepted without reservation the world of high finance and high extravagance, of divorce and dissipation, of snobbery and of privilege. . . . It was as a compromise that his life began" (5). "Life has given him so much already," comments Brian Way, "that he cannot believe that any of the

remaining prizes are worth a serious effort."⁵⁷ Conservative, proper Paula Legendre, falls in love with convivial, bawdy Anson Hunter; and Anson falls in love with her admiration of him. "He dominated and attracted her" (13). Even when Anson calls on Paula in a drunken state, "with every card in her hand Mrs. Legendre was unable to establish any advantage over him. He made no promises, showed no humility, only delivered a few serious comments on life which brought him off with rather a moral superiority at the end" (12). Because Anson's behavior is "reckless of everything but pleasure," Paula makes "certain behavioristic demands," but Anson lacks those qualities necessary to bring about reform--namely the gift of humility and a sense of guilt. "His despair was helpless before his pride and his knowledge of himself" (14). When she finally stops mentioning other men in her letters, Anson becomes interested enough to go see her, even though "he was sure she still loved him" (16). The visit reassures him of his sole possession of her heart, so he sees no reason to ask her to marry him.

Meanwhile Anson commands quite a following since he maintains "outward forms" (20), though inwardly he is corrupt. Mothers trust him with their daughters; ministers trust him with their Sunday-school charges; classmates trust him with their wives. "His attitude toward girls was not indiscriminately protective. It was up to the girl--if she showed an inclination toward looseness, she must take care of herself" (21). Only "a cold shower and a quick change" separated Anson's Sunday-school teaching from his night of revelry (20). He took "pleasure in helping people and arranging their affairs" (16). He advised young married people "where to live and how. . . . Not a season passed that he did not witness the collapse of an affair that perhaps he himself had fathered" (33). "'I'll never marry,' he came to

say" (33). "'Life . . . has made a cynic of me'" (21). When his Aunt Edna takes a lover, thus threatening the solidity of his family and the basis of his superiority, Anson puts an immediate stop to the affair. In less than one day he bullies them both into "frantic despair." As a result, her lover jumps off the Queensboro Bridge and kills himself. Anson credits his success to "resourcefulness and a powerful will--for his threats in weaker hands would have been less than nothing--" (40).

Anson becomes "the responsible head" of his family when Mrs. Hunter retires to "a select Episcopal heaven" (41). With the death of the mother, "the quiet, expensive superiority of the Hunters" comes to an end. The Hunter estate, "considerably diminished by two inheritance taxes," is no longer a notable fortune. The big summer house in Connecticut is sold; next summer the family will rent a smaller place in Westchester County. "It was a step down from the expensive simplicity of his father's idea" (42). But there is no diminishment in Anson's sense of superiority. The narrator explains about the very rich: "Even when they enter deep into our world or sink below us, they still think that they are better than we are" (2).

A fussy pessimism pervades Anson when he finds that "friends" he had formerly bought with some "unusual kindness" (20) no longer need him. Even Paula is happily married, now. "'You see,'" she tells Anson, "'I'm in love now--at last'" (52). Her revealing confession sends Anson's egotistic spirit to a low ebb. A short time later, when Paula dies in childbirth, he shows no emotion. Just as Dolly Karger "meant nothing to him" (27), so Paula, in her own right, means nothing to Anson. The story concludes with Anson's spirits on the rise again when a "girl in a red tam" aboard the ocean liner feeds his vanity.

Some one was in love with him, responding to him like filings to a magnet, helping him to explain himself, promising him something. . . . There would always be women in the world who would spend their brightest, freshest, rarest hours to nurse and protect that superiority he cherished in his heart. (56)

In "The Family Bus" Dick Henderson, a willful boy at age six, whines until he gets his own way. His way is to play with the gardener's daughter, Jannekin Melon-Loper, age five. Dick thinks of the little girl as his Janny Jannekin. Whenever he goes someplace in the family bus, he always wants Jannekin to ride with him. "'Why ca' I ha' Ja'kin? . . . Oh, waa-a-a!'" Dick wailed. 'Oh, waa-a-a! I want Ja'kin!'" It doesn't take much for Dick to get his own way. "'All right,'" his mother says. "'All right. This one more time, Dick.'"⁵⁸ There is always one more time. It disturbs Mrs. Henderson that her son plays with a lowly servant's child, but she doesn't have much control over her children. "Dick's parents were very incompetent as parents in the postwar world that they failed to understand" (493). Though Jannekin never goes to the Henderson house, she and Dick often meet "about the place," usually in the garage. "They had a game they played sometimes where they stood cheek to cheek for a moment and breathed deeply; it was as near as she would come to letting him kiss her. Once she had seen her older sister kissing a man, and she thought it was 'ookey'" (489).

One rainy night, when Dick is about ten or eleven, his older brother is killed in an auto accident.

Dick grew up suddenly, never again to be irresponsibly childish, trying to make his mother see his own face between herself and the tragedy,

voluntarily riding in to call for his father at the office and exhibiting new interest in the purposes of the mature world, as if to say, "Look, you've got me. It's all right. I'll be two sons. I'll be all the sons you ever would have wanted." (495)

The tragic death of Dick's brother teaches him to accept responsibility-- a trait that will become more pronounced as he grows into adulthood. After the accident, the Melon-Lopers move away and grow rich while the Hendersons grow poor. Years later, Dick and Jannekin meet at Tech school in Michigan where he is seriously and responsibly pursuing an education. Dick's egotistic superiority and self-indulgence, however, are still in evidence, though his family wealth has diminished. When Dick lets it be known that he "meant to go East to college," he is taunted by a frat brother. "'It doesn't do the fraternity any good when you play the East Hill snob. . . . You think you're different from anybody else'" (497). Dick is still an "overproud boy . . . absorbed in his dual dream of himself and of machinery" (499). His superior attitude costs him plenty in popularity. On one occasion he is baited by a classmate:

"Look here, Dick. Some of us feel that perhaps we've misjudged you. Perhaps you're not such a bad guy, but your early associations with a bunch of butlers and all that stuff sort of--sort of warped you."

"We never had any butlers," said Dick impatiently.

"Well, footmen then, or whatever you call them. It warped you, see?"

Under any conditions it is difficult to conceive of oneself as warped . . . it was preposterous, and with an expression of disgust, Dick started to rise, but Edgar persuaded him back in his chair. (500)

When Dick is finally released, he discovers "his car--his beautiful car-- was not where he left it" (501). He finds it up the street covered with legends:

PARDON MY SILK HAT
 WHAT AM I DOING IN THIS HICK TOWN?
 ONLY FOUR CYLINDERS, BUT EACH ONE WITH A FAMILY TREE
 STRAIGHT GAS FROM THE EAST HILLS
 MARNE TAXI--MODEL 1914
 WHY BALLOON TIRES WITH A BALLOON HEAD?
 And perhaps the cruelest cut of all:
 YOU DON'T NEED A MUFFLER WITH A CULTIVATED VOICE (501-02)

The enraged Dick thinks, just two years ago when dollars weren't so scarce, "he would have phoned the chauffeur or rented another car" (502). He is soothed by Jannekin, who gets him started talking about himself. He boasts in an "irrepressible rush" about his mechanical genius (503). After college, Jannekin travels about Europe, while Dick works in a Detroit automobile plant. Years later when they meet again, Dick is disgusted with her pose "as the ringmaster of the local aristocracy" (506). When Dick walks up to her and declares: "'I'm going on an expedition, Janny Jannekin, and you're coming with me right away,'" she turns to the guest she has been visiting with and laughs: "'These Motor Boys--he mistakes me for a spare part'" (509). Dick displays the same superiority over Jannekin now, as he did when she was five and poor, and he was six and wealthy. As "proud as Lucifer" (511), Dick drives the chassis of the old family bus down the street of his home town with Jannekin at his side. (Lucifer, the fallen angel, thought he was better than God. Here the implication refers to Dick's financial--not moral--plunge.)

F. Scott Fitzgerald himself experienced a rather pampered and sheltered boyhood, although his parents were not wealthy. What financial security he

enjoyed in his youth, according to Kenneth Eble, "was of a shaky sort." He was "an inheritor of a sense of family superiority without much visible evidence to support it."⁵⁹ He believed that his mother's indulgence had weakened his character. Mrs. Fitzgerald "was devoted to her only son and spoiled him," reports Arthur Mizener. As a child, Scott "had a hard time understanding that other children did not exist simply as material for his uses." "'I didn't know till fifteen that there was anyone in the world except me,'" he once confessed.⁶⁰ And just as Scott blamed his mother for his arrogant, irresponsible behavior, he blamed Mrs. Sayre for Zelda's narcissistic self-indulgence. Scott felt Zelda was a "charming excuse artist." He believed Mrs. Sayre gave Zelda "nothing in the line of good habits--nothing but 'getting by' and conceit."⁶¹ It is not surprising, then, that Fitzgerald, the writer, frequently dwelt on the theme of "as the twig is bent," and traced the pampered children in his fiction into irresponsible adulthood.

V. CONCLUSION

An overview of the twenty Fitzgerald short stories and four novels discussed in this study show a remarkable shift of responsibility for the child from the mother to the father.⁶² In the stories written during the 1920's, the mother is harshly blamed for her failure to tend hearth and home, and child. But beginning with "Two Wrongs" (November 1929), the father is held chiefly to blame. This shift precedes, by a few months, Zelda's first breakdown. According to Mizener, Scott had a premonition of her mental collapse from "a number of disturbing signs."⁶³ In many

of the stories written in the 1930's, the mother is either dead or hospitalized. All of the works about pampered wealthy children who become irresponsible adults are written during the early '20's. "The Family Bus," which depicts the main character as a responsible adult despite his pampered childhood, is written in 1933.

Zelda's mental breakdown in April 1930 forced Scott to face up to the fact that he alone was now responsible for his daughter's upbringing. He was well aware of his earlier fumbling attempts to rear Scottie. As Milton Stern writes, Scott was fighting an "inner war against his own self-indulgences and the consequences of irresponsibility."⁶⁴ In his relationship with his daughter, Scott alternated from strictness, to neglect, to abuse--erratic behavior aggravated by his addiction to alcohol. Shortly after Zelda's collapse, Scott also "spent several weeks in a Swiss sanatorium" according to Piper, "in the hope of restoring his frayed nerves."

Meanwhile, certain members of the Sayre family had accused him of having been the cause of Zelda's collapse, and had even raised the question of his fitness to care for nine-year-old Scottie during her mother's illness. Fitzgerald's remorse, and his resentment of these imputations played a significant part in the shaping of "Babylon Revisited."⁶⁵

Much of Scott's child-rearing was done by letter. In an Esquire article published in 1965, Scottie comments on her father, her method of coping with her "difficult parent," and her response to the countless letters she received filled with unsolicited advice.

The fact that my father became a difficult parent does not surprise or offend me. . . . What I

couldn't ignore in the way of objectionable behavior, such as an inkwell flying past my ear, I would put up in the emotional attic as soon as possible. . . . I had to. . . . If I'd allowed myself to care, I couldn't have stood it. . . . I developed an immunity against my father, so that when he bawled me out for something, I simply didn't hear it.

Malcolm Cowley said in a review in The New York Times once that "Fitzgerald wasn't writing those letters to his daughter at Vassar; he was writing them to himself at Princeton." This is the point, really. I was an imaginary daughter, as fictional as one of his early heroines. . . . What he offers is good advice, and I'm sure if he hadn't been my own father that I loved and "hated" simultaneously, I would have profited by it.⁶⁶

A few days before Scott died on December 21, 1940, he wrote Scottie: "You have got two beautiful bad examples for parents. Just do everything we didn't do and you will be perfectly safe."⁶⁷ As Scott admitted, he was "a moralist at heart," who was compelled by an irresistible force "to preach at people in some acceptable form rather than to entertain them."⁶⁸ One of the texts that he preached again and again was the failure of parents. "The lesson," observes Eble, "is, of course, Fitzgerald's own."⁶⁹

END NOTES

¹ F. Scott Fitzgerald, Correspondence of F. Scott Fitzgerald, ed. Matthew J. Bruccoli and Margaret M. Duggan (New York: Random House, 1980), p. 499.

² F. Scott Fitzgerald, In His Own Time: A Miscellany, ed. Matthew J. Bruccoli and Jackson R. Bryer (Kent, Ohio: The Kent State University Press, 1971), pp. 244-45.

³ F. Scott Fitzgerald, Correspondence, p. 592.

⁴ Sara Mayfield, Exiles From Paradise: Zelda and Scott Fitzgerald (New York: Delacorte Press, 1971), p. 73.

⁵ F. Scott Fitzgerald, Bits of Paradise: Twenty-one Uncollected Stories by F. Scott and Zelda Fitzgerald, selected by Matthew J. Bruccoli and Scottie Fitzgerald Smith (New York: Scribner's, 1973), p. 4.

⁶ F. Scott Fitzgerald, In His Own Time, p. 261.

⁷ Mayfield, p. 79-80. Matthew J. Bruccoli, the leading authority on F. Scott Fitzgerald, confirms Mayfield's testimony as to Zelda's abortions in Some Sort of Epic Grandeur, p. 163. He adds: "When Zelda suffered a mental breakdown in 1930, her sister Rosalind asked Fitzgerald, 'Do you think Zelda's abortions could have had anything to do with her illness?'"

⁸ Arthur Mizener, The Far Side of Paradise (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1965), p. xvii.

⁹ Mizener, p. 66.

¹⁰ Mizener, p. 102.

¹¹ F. Scott Fitzgerald, Bits of Paradise, p. 5.

¹² Matthew J. Bruccoli, Some Sort of Epic Grandeur, The Life of F. Scott Fitzgerald (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1981), p. 237.

¹³ William Katterjohn, "An Interview with Theodora Gager, Fitzgerald's Private Nurse," Fitzgerald/Hemingway Annual (1974), p. 80.

¹⁴ Mizener, p. 289.

¹⁵ Bruccoli, p. 401.

¹⁶ F. Scott Fitzgerald, The Letters of F. Scott Fitzgerald, ed. Andrew Turnbull (New York: Scribner's, 1963), p. 58.

¹⁷ Frances Scott Fitzgerald, "A Short Retort," Mademoiselle, July 1939, p. 41.

¹⁸ F. Scott Fitzgerald, Letters, p. 59. Scottie had published her essay under the name of Frances Scott Fitzgerald.

¹⁹ F. Scott Fitzgerald, Taps at Reveille (New York: Scribner's, 1935), p. 49.

²⁰ F. Scott Fitzgerald, "Dearly Beloved," in Bits of Paradise: Twenty-one Uncollected Stories by F. Scott and Zelda Fitzgerald, selected by Matthew J. Bruccoli and Scottie Fitzgerald Smith (New York: Scribner's, 1973), p. 385. All subsequent page notations of "Dearly Beloved" in the text refer to this edition.

²¹ F. Scott Fitzgerald, "Two Wrongs," in Taps at Reveille (New York: Scribner's, 1935), p. 198. All subsequent page notations of "Two Wrongs" in the text refer to this edition.

²² John A. Higgins, F. Scott Fitzgerald: A Study of the Stories (Lincoln, Nebraska: St. John University Press, 1971), pp. 87, 122. Out of a study of 160 Fitzgerald short stories, Higgins lists only four Fitzgerald heroes who mature to the point of rejecting self-pity and accepting the burden of responsibility. Besides Bill McChesney in "Two Wrongs" and Charlie Wales in "Babylon Revisited," Higgins lists Basil Duke Lee in the Basil series and Doc Janey in "Family in the Wind" as mature protagonists. The records of Fitzgerald's Ledger show that "Two Wrongs" and "Babylon Revisited" were written in 1929, the year of Zelda's mental breakdown.

²³ F. Scott Fitzgerald, "Babylon Revisited," in Taps at Reveille (New York: Scribner's, 1935), p. 337. All subsequent page notations of "Babylon Revisited" in the text refer to this edition.

²⁴ Milton R. Stern, The Golden Moment, The Novels of F. Scott Fitzgerald (Chicago: University of Southern Illinois Press, 1970), p. 308.

²⁵ F. Scott Fitzgerald, "The Cut-Glass Bowl," in Flappers and Philosophers (New York: Scribner's, 1920), p. 125. All subsequent page notations of "The Cut-Glass Bowl" in the text refer to this edition.

²⁶ F. Scott Fitzgerald, "The Adjuster," in All The Sad Young Men (New York: Scribner's, 1926), p. 162. All subsequent page notations of "The Adjuster" in the text refer to this edition.

²⁷ F. Scott Fitzgerald, "Lees of Happiness," in Six Tales Of The Jazz Age (New York: Scribner's, 1922), p. 280. All subsequent page notations of "Lees of Happiness" in the text refer to this edition.

²⁸ F. Scott Fitzgerald, "John Jackson's Arcady," in The Price Was High, The Last Uncollected Stories of F. Scott Fitzgerald, ed. Matthew J. Bruccoli (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1979), p. 145. All subsequent page notations of "John Jackson's Arcady" in the text refer to this edition.

²⁹ F. Scott Fitzgerald, "Gretchen's Forty Winks," in All The Sad Young Men (New York: Scribner's, 1926), p. 240. All subsequent page notations of "Gretchen's Forty Winks" in the text refer to this edition.

³⁰ F. Scott Fitzgerald, "Intimate Strangers," in The Price Was High, The Last Uncollected Stories of F. Scott Fitzgerald, ed. Matthew J. Bruccoli (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1979), p. 609. All subsequent page notations of "Intimate Strangers" in the text refer to this edition.

³¹ In my discussion of "Intimate Strangers," I have dealt only with the first half of the story where Sara and Killian act irresponsibly in light of their parental obligations. In the latter part of the story both Sara's and Killian's first marriage partners are deceased and their children are grown. Sara and Killian are reunited, this time in marriage.

³² F. Scott Fitzgerald, "Crazy Sunday," in Taps at Reveille (New York: Scribner's, 1935), p. 174. All subsequent page notations of "Crazy Sunday" in the text refer to this edition.

³³ F. Scott Fitzgerald, "Magnetism," in The Stories of F. Scott Fitzgerald, ed. Malcolm Cowley (New York: Scribner's, 1951), p. 226. All subsequent page notations of "Magnetism" in the text refer to this edition.

³⁴ F. Scott Fitzgerald, The Beautiful and Damned (New York: Scribner's, 1922), p. 183. All subsequent page notations of The Beautiful and Damned in the text refer to this edition.

³⁵ Bruccoli, p. 155.

³⁶ Jan Hunt and John M. Suarez, "The Evasion of Adult Love in Fitzgerald's Fiction," Centennial Review, 17 (Spring 1973), 162-63.

³⁷ F. Scott Fitzgerald, "The Baby Party," in All The Sad Young Men (New York: Scribner's, 1926), p. 96. All subsequent page notations of "The Baby Party" in the text refer to this edition.

³⁸ Higgins, p. 130.

³⁹ F. Scott Fitzgerald, The Great Gatsby (New York: Scribner's, 1925), p. 17. All subsequent page notations of The Great Gatsby in the text refer to this edition.

⁴⁰ F. Scott Fitzgerald, The Great Gatsby, A Facsimile of the Manuscript, ed. Matthew J. Bruccoli (Washington, D.C.: Bruccoli Clark, 1973), p. 166.

⁴¹ F. Scott Fitzgerald, Tender Is The Night (New York: Scribner's, 1934), p. 266. All subsequent page notations of Tender Is The Night in the text refer to this edition.

⁴² Thomas Deegan, "Dick Diver's Childishness in Tender Is The Night," Fitzgerald/Hemingway Annual (1979), p. 129.

⁴³ Fitzgerald, Letters, p. 554-55. In a letter to Helen Hayes, Fitzgerald explains the technical difference he perceived between children "brought out" and children "brought up." He writes: "This country is filled with geniuses without genius, without the faintest knowledge of what work is, who were brought up on the Dalton system. . . . It is an attempt to let the child develop his ego and personality at any cost to himself or others. . . . The world, especially America, has swung so far in the opposite direction that I can't believe it is good for one American child in a hundred thousand. Certainly not for one born in comparatively easy circumstances. . . . I think a child absolutely demands a standard. . . . The human machinery which controls the sense of right, duty, self-respect, etc., must have conscious exercise before adolescence, because in adolescence you don't have much time to think of anything."

⁴⁴ James E. Miller, F. Scott Fitzgerald: His Art and His Technique (New York: New York University Press, 1967), p. 143.

⁴⁵ The 1934 edition of Tender Is The Night begins with Rosemary's idealized view of Dick Diver. When this publication did not receive the acclaim Fitzgerald felt it deserved, he planned to restructure the novel with the events of Dick Diver's life in chronological order. Using Fitzgerald's notes, Malcolm Cowley edited this revised version in 1952. The passages involving children in the Cowley edition are the same as in the original 1934 edition.

⁴⁶ F. Scott Fitzgerald, "Babylon Revisited," in Taps at Reveille (New York: Scribner's, 1935), p. 333. All subsequent page notations of "Babylon Revisited" in the text refer to this edition.

⁴⁷ F. Scott Fitzgerald, "Her Last Case," in The Price Was High, The Last Uncollected Stories of F. Scott Fitzgerald, ed. Matthew J. Bruccoli (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1979), p. 582. All subsequent page notations of "Her Last Case" in the text refer to this edition.

⁴⁸ F. Scott Fitzgerald, "Absolution," in All The Sad Young Men (New York: Scribner's, 1926), p. 118. All subsequent page notations of "Absolution" in the text refer to this edition.

⁴⁹ Brian Way, F. Scott Fitzgerald and the Art of Social Fiction (London: Edward Arnold Ltd., 1980), p. 81.

⁵⁰ Henry Dan Piper, "The Untrimmed Christmas Tree: The Religious Background of The Great Gatsby," in The Great Gatsby: a study, ed. Frederick J. Hoffman (New York: Scribner's, 1962), p. 324.

⁵¹ F. Scott Fitzgerald, "On Schedule," in The Price Was High, The Last Uncollected Stories of F. Scott Fitzgerald, ed. Matthew J. Bruccoli (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1979), p. 441. All subsequent page notations of "On Schedule" in the text refer to this edition.

⁵² F. Scott Fitzgerald, This Side of Paradise (New York: Scribner's, 1920), p. 3. All subsequent page notations of This Side of Paradise in the text refer to this edition.

⁵³ F. Scott Fitzgerald, "Winter Dreams," in All The Sad Young Men (New York: Scribner's, 1926), p. 59. All subsequent page notations of "Winter Dreams" in the text refer to this edition.

⁵⁴ F. Scott Fitzgerald, "Diamond Dick and The First Law of Woman," in The Price Was High, The Last Uncollected Stories of F. Scott Fitzgerald, ed. Matthew J. Bruccoli (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1979), p. 70. All subsequent page notations of "Diamond Dick and The First Law of Woman" in the text refer to this edition.

⁵⁵ F. Scott Fitzgerald, "The Unspeakable Egg," in The Price Was High, The Last Uncollected Stories of F. Scott Fitzgerald, ed. Matthew J. Bruccoli (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1979), p. 126. All subsequent page notations of "The Unspeakable Egg" in the text refer to this edition.

⁵⁶ F. Scott Fitzgerald, "The Rich Boy," in All the Sad Young Men (New York: Scribner's, 1926), p. 3. All subsequent page notations of "The Rich Boy" in the text refer to this edition.

⁵⁷ Way, p. 86.

⁵⁸ F. Scott Fitzgerald, "The Family Bus," in The Price Was High, The Last Uncollected Stories of F. Scott Fitzgerald, ed. Matthew J. Bruccoli (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1979), p. 489. All subsequent page notations of "The Family Bus" in the text refer to this edition.

⁵⁹ Kenneth Eble, F. Scott Fitzgerald (1965; rev. ed. Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1977), p. 18.

⁶⁰ Mizener, p. 3-4.

⁶¹ Fitzgerald, Correspondence, p. 499; Letters, p. 33.

⁶² At first I had planned to discuss these stories in chronological order in this study, but such an arrangement proved to be less emphatic than a thematic order.

⁶³ Mizener, p. 230.

⁶⁴ Stern, p. 315.

⁶⁵ Piper, F. Scott Fitzgerald, A Critical Portrait, p. 165-66.

⁶⁶ Frances Scott Fitzgerald Lanahan, "My Father's Letters: Advice Without Consent," Esquire, October 1965, pp. 95-7.

⁶⁷ Piper, F. Scott Fitzgerald, A Critical Portrait, p. 257.

⁶⁸ Fitzgerald, Letters, p. 63.

⁶⁹ Eble, p. 131.

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THE CHILDREN IN F. SCOTT FITZGERALD'S FICTION

by

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AN ABSTRACT OF A MASTER'S REPORT

submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the degree

MASTER OF ARTS

Department of English

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY
Manhattan, Kansas

1982

The children in F. Scott Fitzgerald's fiction--often unwanted, exploited, and/or pampered--frequently serve the vital function of enhancing the characterization of the adults in his short stories and novels. Most of these infants and youngsters, up to age thirteen, are kept in the background, and in many cases only briefly mentioned, but they help to emphasize the blatant irresponsibility of the adults. The portrayal of the unwanted--abandoned, neglected, or ignored--child emphasizes the mother's worthlessness as a homemaker. She is often conceited, frequently bored with domestic chores, and usually expects to be endlessly entertained. The father of the unwanted child character may be an alcoholic, a workaholic, or a philanderer. The exploited children are used by narcissistic parents to boost already inflated ego; by jealous adults, to punish others; by insecure parents, to escape responsibilities; and by neurotic adults, to vent frustrations. The pampered child in Fitzgerald's works often becomes the egotistic, self-indulgent, and irresponsible adult. He has an inbred sense of superiority that allows himself and others to justify or forgive any faults. The text Fitzgerald preaches again and again is the failure of parents. He conveniently gleaned material for his short stories and novels from his own life and experience.