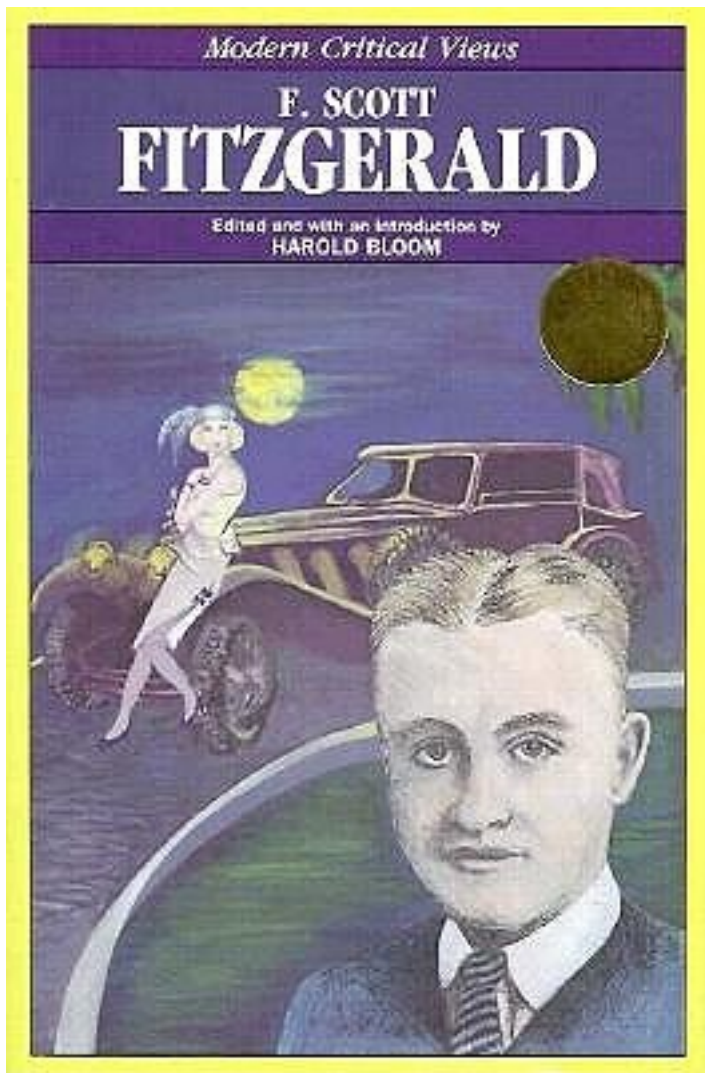


F. Scott Fitzgerald



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In this first complete chronological collection of Fitzgerald's writings for two Princeton publications, we witness the young writer's dramatic growth. His words capture the spirit of an America about to enter Jazz Age, and the abundant, often-whimsical samplings of artwork culled from back issues of *The Tiger* and *Nassau Lit* provide a delightful visual appeal found in no other Fitzgerald book.

作者介绍:

F. Scott Fitzgerald

Inseparably associated with a point in history he claimed to despise, F. Scott Fitzgerald is both the quintessential Jazz-Age writer and perhaps the era's harshest critic. However, the complexity and sheer timelessness of classics such as *The Great Gatsby* has ensured that Fitzgerald's work will never be regarded as mere period pieces.

Biography

The greatest writers often function in multifaceted ways, serving as both emblems of their age and crafters of timeless myth. F. Scott Fitzgerald surely fits this description. His work was an undeniable product of the so-called Jazz Age of the 1920s, yet it has a quality that spans time, reaching backward into gothic decadence and forward into the future of a rapidly decaying America. Through five novels, six short story collections, and one collection of autobiographical pieces, Fitzgerald chronicled a precise point in post-WWI America, yet his writing resonates just as boldly today as it did nearly a century ago.

Fitzgerald's work was chiefly driven by the disintegration of America following World War I. He believed the country to be sinking into a cynical, Godless, depraved morass. He was never reluctant to voice criticism of America's growing legions of idle rich. Recreating a heated confrontation with Ernest Hemingway in a short story called "The Rich Boy," Fitzgerald wrote, "Let me tell you about the very rich. They are different from you and me. They possess and enjoy early, and it does something to them, makes them soft where we are hard, and cynical where we are trustful, in a way that, unless you were born rich, it is very difficult to understand. They think, deep in their hearts, that they are better than we are because we had to discover the compensations and refuges of life for ourselves. Even when they enter deep into our world or sink below us, they still think that they are better than we are. They are different."

The preceding quote may sum Fitzgerald's philosophy more completely than any other, yet he also hypocritically embodied much of what he claimed to loathe. Fitzgerald spent money freely, threw lavish parties, drank beyond excess, and globe-trotted with his glamorous but deeply troubled wife Zelda. Still, in novel after novel, he sought to expose the great chasm that divided the haves from the have-nots and the hollowness of wealth. In *This Side of Paradise* (1920) he cynically follows opulent, handsome Amory Blaine as he bounces aimlessly from Princeton to the military to an uncertain, meaningless future. In *The Beautiful and the Damned* (1922) Fitzgerald paints a withering portrait of a seemingly idyllic marriage between a pair of socialites that crumbles in the face of Adam Patch's empty pursuit of profit and the fading beauty of his vane wife Gloria.

The richest example of Fitzgerald's disdain for the upper class arrived three years later. *The Great Gatsby* is an undoubted American classic, recounting naïve Nick Carraway's involvement with a coterie of affluent Long Islanders, and his ultimate rejection of

them when their casual decadence leads only to internal back-stabbing and murder. Nick is fascinated by the mysterious Jay Gatsby, who had made the fatal mistake of stepping outside of his lower class status to pursue the lovely but self-centered Daisy Buchanan.

In *The Great Gatsby*, all elements of Fitzgerald's skills coalesced to create a narrative that is both highly readable and subtly complex. His prose is imbued with elegant lyricism and hard-hitting realism. "It is humor, irony, ribaldry, pathos and loveliness," Edwin C. Clark wrote of the book in the *New York Times* upon its 1925 publication. "A curious book, a mystical, glamorous story of today. It takes a deeper cut at life than hitherto has been essayed by Mr. Fitzgerald."

Gatsby is widely considered to be Fitzgerald's masterpiece and among the very greatest of all American literature. It is the ultimate summation of his contempt for the Jazz-Age with which he is so closely associated. *Gatsby* is also one of the clearest and saddest reflections of his own destructive relationship with Zelda, which would so greatly influence the mass of his work.

Fitzgerald only managed to complete one more novel -- *Tender is the Night* -- before his untimely death in 1940. An unfinished expose of the Hollywood studio system titled *The Love of the Last Tycoon* would be published a year later. Still *The Great Gatsby* remains his quintessential novel. It has been a fixture of essential reading lists for decades and continues to remain an influential work begging to be revisited. It has been produced for the big screen three times and was the subject of a movie for television starring Toby Stephens, Mira Sorvino, and Paul Rudd as recently as 2000. Never a mere product of a bygone age, F. Scott Fitzgerald's greatest work continues to evade time.

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