

**A STUDY OF ADULTERY BEHAVIOR IN F. SCOTT FITZGERALD'S  
*THE GREAT GATSBY***

**MASTER'S PROJECT  
BY  
AREE RUANGSUKSUD**

**Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the  
Master of Arts Degree in English  
at Srinakharinwirot University  
May 2007**

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**AN ABSTRACT  
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Srinakharinwirot University. Advisor Committee: Dr. Prapaipan Aimchoo,

Asst. Prof. Dr. Nitaya Suksaeresup, Dr. Walaiporn Chaya.

This research aimed to study adultery behaviors of the main characters of F. Scott Fitzgerald's novel *The Great Gatsby*, Daisy Buchanan, Myrtle Wilson and Tom Buchanan,.

The findings showed that two female characters committed adultery because of wealth and love while the male characters committed adultery because they wanted to show off their power and personal excitement. Finally, one of the female characters was killed by a car. The rest of the characters felt guilty but act as if they did not care about anything. Two of them moved to another town.

It is also found that the theme of the novel is universal and it is still relevant even though the novel was written in the early twentieth century. The desire to possess material things in human beings never decreases. It increases even more, and it is likely that man is farther away from morality.

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ของ

อารีย์ เรื่องสุขสุด

เสนอต่อบัณฑิตวิทยาลัย มหาวิทยาลัยศรีนครินทรวิโรฒ เพื่อเป็นส่วนหนึ่งของการศึกษา

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งานวิจัยฉบับนี้มีจุดมุ่งหมายเพื่อศึกษาพฤติกรรมตัวละครเอกเช่น เดซี่ บูเคนัน เมอร์เทิล วิลสัน และ ทอม บูเคนัน ในนิยายของเอฟ สก็อตต์ ฟิตซ์เจอร์รัลด์ เรื่อง เดอะ เกรท แก๊ตสบี้

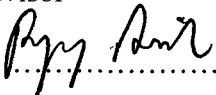
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จากสังคมเดิมไปอยู่ที่อื่น

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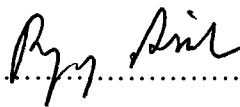
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Master's Project Advisor

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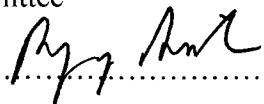
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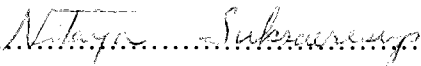
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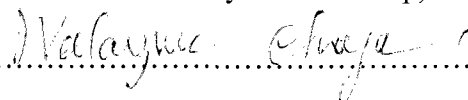
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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
<b>1 INTRODUCTION</b>	
Background.....	1
Purpose of the Study.....	4
Significance of the Study.....	4
Scope of the Study.....	5
Definition of Terms.....	5
Procedures.....	6
<b>2 REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE</b>	
F. Scott Fitzgerald's Biography.....	8
Related Research on F. Scott Fitzgerald's Literary Works .....	12
Related Research on Adultery Behavior.....	18

## TABLE OF CONTENTS (Continued)

Chapter	Page
<b>3 AN ANALYSIS</b> .....	21
Synopsis of F. Scott Fitzgerald's <i>The Great Gatsby</i> .....	21
Adultery Behavior of Daisy Buchanan.....	23
Adultery Behavior of Myrtle Wilson.....	29
Adultery Behavior of Tom Buchanan.....	33
<b>4 CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDIES</b> .....	36
Conclusion.....	36
Suggestions for Further Studies.....	40
<b>REFERENCES</b> .....	42
<b>VITAE</b> .....	47

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### Background

America in the 1920s was the decade of prosperity, social changes, and personal liberation. The economy of America after World War I grew rapidly. Everyone seemed to have money because there are many factories increased rapidly for people to work in. People could earn more money while the prices of the products were still cheap. Henry Ford, the owner of the car factory said that "Get the price down to the buying power."(George Donelson Moss, 120). By Ford's words, it showed that people of any class in the society were able to make a lot of money. By the mid-1920s, a typical middle-class of household owned an automobile, a radio, a phonograph, a washing machine, a vacuum cleaner, a sewing machine and a telephone (Moss, 119). Most of all, cars were the supreme symbol of the 1920s version of the American dream, with its promise of mobility, freedom, and social equality. If ones could not afford a new car, they surely could buy a used car.

In the 1920s, people could do whatever to satisfy their needs. The younger generation mistrusted the older generation, especially young women. They set themselves free, and they shocked the older generation with their new short bob hair cut. They wore short clothes to expose their legs and knees. They went out without a man to look after them, went to night parties, drove motor cars, smoked in public and held men's hand without wearing gloves. A flapper was a new word to define the women in this decade. Men and women in this decade were able to do anything upon their desires. They had destroyed old social conventions, and this became one of the causes which led them to commit immoral behavior. F. Scott Fitzgerald had clearly expressed social condition of the people in 1920s in one part of *The Great Gatsby* (52-53).

There was dancing now on the canvas in the garden; old men pushing young girls backward in eternal graceless circles, superior couples holding each other tortuously, fashionably, and keeping in the corners-and a great number of single girls dancing individualistically or relieving the orchestra for a moment of the burden of the banjo or the traps. By midnight the hilarity had increased. A celebrated tenor had sung in Italian, and a notorious contralto had sung in jazz, and between the numbers people

were doing 'stunts' all over the garden, while happy, vacuous bursts of laughter rose toward the summer sky.

A new type of party as mentioned in Gatsby's party above was called a petting party. It was a gathering of young men and young women in the party. They drank, danced and also expressed their love openly with their partners because attraction was the point of this type of party. If they needed more privacy, they would express their love in a car. This party allowed men and women to get to know each other better before they settled in an exclusive relationship. The petting party was the party which gave connotation of the people in the 1920s. It paved the way for people to commit adultery, especially when married persons joined in this party.

This study attempted to show that the three main characters in F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*: Daisy Buchanan, Tom Buchanan, and Myrtle Wilson were influenced by the psychology of committing adultery. Through the application of psychological analysis, the audiences would better understand the factors that influence adultery committing persons.

## Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to examine factors that lead the characters in F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*; Daisy Buchanan, Tom Buchanan, Myrtle Wilson to commit adultery.

## Significance of the Study

The significance of the study is the following:

1. The study enables the audience to understand causes or factors that lead the characters in F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* to commit adultery.
2. The study can be used as a guideline to help the audience analyze causes of other types of behaviors in this novel and in other novels as well.

## Scope of the Study

This study focuses only on sex, love and wealth as factors that lead the characters to commit adultery in F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*.

## Definition of Terms

Adultery is an affair of a married person with someone other than his/her lawful spouse.

It is believed that sex, love and money may lead them to commit adultery.

Love triangles refer to a romantic relationship involving three people. While it can refer to two people independently romantically liked with a third, it usually implied that each of the three people has some kind of relationship to the two. Love triangles are extremely popular in romantic fiction. *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald is classified in this type. The characters in this novel got involved with love triangles. For example, Myrtle loves Tom but Tom does not love her, and George loves Myrtle. Another example is both Tom and Gatsby love Daisy.

## Procedures

The procedures of the study are as follows:

### 1. Accumulation of Information

Information was collected on following topics:

1.1 F. Scott Fitzgerald's biography

1.2 Previous research on F. Scott Fitzgerald's literary work

1.3 Related research on adultery behavior

### 2. Information analysis

2.1 The primary text of "The Great Gatsby" was examined.

2.2 The three main characters in *The Great Gatsby* namely Daisy Buchanan, Tom

Buchanan and Myrtle Wilson were analyzed in terms of psychological behavior

tempted to commit adultery.

### 3. Report of Findings

Findings of the study were discussed.

### 4. Conclusion and Suggestions for Further Studies

Conclusion was drawn from the findings and suggestion was made for further studies.

## CHAPTER 2

### REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter is divided into three parts. The first part is F. Scott Fitzgerald's biography including his life, education, marriage life and literary works. The second part is previous research on F. Scott Fitzgerald's literary works and *The Great Gatsby*. The last part focuses on related research on adultery behavior.

#### PART I: F. SCOTT FITZGERALD'S BIOGRAPHY

F. Scott Fitzgerald was born on September 24, 1896 in St. Paul, Minnesota, USA. He was named in honor of his second cousin, Francis Scott Key Fitzgerald, the author of the National Anthem. His father, Edward was a businessman and his mother, Mollie McQuillan, was the daughter of an Irish immigrant who ran a wholesale grocery business. The family lived

comfortably on the outskirts of the city's most fashionable residential neighborhood, Summit

Avenue (Kate Maurer, 2)

Fitzgerald attended the prep school and dancing classes where the elite sent their children. In 1908, Fitzgerald entered the St. Paul Academy. He was excellent in debate and athletics. In 1911, his parents sent him to the Newman, a Catholic prep school in Hackensack, New Jersey. In 1913, he entered Princeton University. Although, his literary achievements began to grow, he would not prove himself a top scholar. By 1917, he was on academic probation, so he joined the army. He was commissioned as a second lieutenant in the infantry. Here in the army camp, he wrote his first novel entitled "The Romantic Egotist." But the Charles Scribner's Sons rejected it and requested for resubmission upon revision.

(<http://www.sc.edu/fitzgerald/biography.html>, 12 Apr. 2006)

In 1918, while assigned to Camp Sheridan near Montgomery, Alabama, he met and fell in love with the 18-year-old debutante Zelda Sayre, who was the youngest daughter of an Alabama Supreme Court judge. They engaged in 1919. After being discharged from the army in February 1919, he moved to New York and worked with an advertisement agency. He hoped

to earn enough money, so he and Zelda could be married. Zelda had been tired of waiting for him to earn his fortune and broke their engagement (Maurer, 4)

Fitzgerald quitted the advertising business to return to St. Paul to rewrite "The Romantic Egotist." In September of 1919 Scribner's editor Maxwell Perkins accepted *This Side of Paradise*, the novel was now called, for publication. One week after its publication, Scott and Zelda were married in New York. And they became the New York celebrities. Over the years, they traveled between the United States and Europe especially France. They had only one child named Frances Scott Fitzgerald who was known as Scottie. Throughout their marriage, they went through periods of heavy alcohol consumption. The Fitzgeralds' was plagued by financial difficulties, although *This Side of Paradise* did well. In order to maintain their extravagant lifestyle, Scott spent much time working on short stories that ran in widely distributed magazines ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/saveMe\\_thewaltz](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/saveMe_thewaltz), 12 Apr.2006).

Although Scott remained married to Zelda until the end, their marriage was redefined by Zelda's mental illness. He worked hard to keep his wife comfortably hospitalized. However, he eventually met and fell in love with Shielah Graham, a movie columnist, with whom he spent the last few years of his life. Fitzgerald had clearly been an alcoholic since his college days,

and became notorious during the 1920s for his heavy drinking. This left him in poor health by the late 1930s. He suffered two heart attacks in the late 1940. He was ordered by his doctor to avoid strenuous exertion and to obtain a first floor apartment, which he did by moving with Shielah Graham. On the night of December 21, 1940 while awaiting a visit from his doctor, he collapsed clutching the mantelpiece in Graham's apartment and died at the age of forty-four.

Over the course of his career, Fitzgerald wrote four complete novels, while a fifth, partially completed at the time of his death, was published posthumously. *This Side of Paradise* (1920) marked the beginning of his career as a novelist. He completed *The Beautiful and Damned* (1922), a book first serialized in *Metropolitan Magazine*. *The Great Gatsby* (1925) has become the most well known. Fitzgerald worked on his fourth novel *Tender in the Night* (1934), sporadically for almost ten years after publication of *The Great Gatsby*. At the time of his death in 1940, he was working on *The Love of Last Tycoon* but published posthumously as *The Last Tycoon* (1941). Besides his novels, he got a lot of money from writing which consisted of more than 150 stories. He also earned his living as a screenwriter in Hollywood (Maurer, 5)

It can be said that F. Scott Fitzgerald was one of the greatest writers of the twentieth century because one of his works *The Great Gatsby* has functioned as a historical record of a rapid social change after World War I.

## **PART II**

### **RELATED RESEARCH ON F. SCOTT FITZGERALD'S LITERARY WORKS**

There are many studies on F. Scott Fitzgerald. In *Liberated Women in American Fiction of the 1920s*, Walden indicated that novels in the twenties of American historical and cultural contexts, focused on how the changing social conditions and sexual roles affected literary themes. The authors' gender is designated as an important variable at the same time. Walden also accounted for male and female author's reactions to women's changing sexual practices. It is done by contrasting and analyzing the punitive treatment of sexually active female characters in Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*, William Faulkner's *The Sound and Fury*, Hemingway's *A Farewell To Arms*, Dreiser's *An American Tragedy*, to the more forgiving treatment of female sexuality in Cather's *My Antonia*, *A Lost Lady*, Ellen Glasgow's *Baren*

*Ground and They Stooped to Folly*, and Edith Wharton's *The Old Maid*. All of the above-mentioned novels are responded to sexually liberated female characters which are viewed as a reaction to the changing twenties' social and moral climate ( Mirell L. Walden, 1)

Similar to *Fitzgerald's New Women: Harbingers of Change*, Fryer indicated that the main woman characters in Fitzgerald's five novels reveal his intuitive grasp of the confusion many women experienced in 1920s of the American society's transition, a strict patriarchy to equality between male and female. Fitzgerald not only presents romantic relationships, but he also demonstrates a seemingly perpetual struggle between men and women (Sarah Beebe Fryer, 1).

Likewise, in *Modernizing Love: F. Scott Fitzgerald and the Fictions of Romance*, Wilson indicated that F. Scott Fitzgerald's works center on the romantic relations between women and men in the context of modernist culture. He also provided works with traditional notions of courtship, engagement, marriage and adultery. In *This Side of Paradise* and *The Beautiful and Damned*, he exposes courtship rituals as cynical exercises in commodity culture, paving the way for the adulteration of romantic and marital attachments. In *The Great Gatsby* and *Tender Is the Night*, he represents adultery less as moral transgression than as a means of

psychological and social progression, contributing to the modernist cultural work of criticizing marriage and dramatizing adultery as a more normative part of American culture. Fitzgerald's innovations in the formal arrangements of romance reflect the functional arrangement of romance in American life, culminating in his final narrative fragment in *The Love of the Last Tycoon*. (Doni Marie Wilson, 1).

In *The American Eve: Gender, Tragedy, and the American Dream*, Long indicated that America has recreated the Garden of Eden (as portrayed in the Bible) to provide as the mythology of the American dream. Nathaniel Hawthorne's *Scarlet Letter*, Herman Melville's *Moby-Dick*, Mark Twain's *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*, William Faulkner's *The Sound and the Fury*, present the idea of the garden. But there is no Eve or her sin in this garden because Eve in the new garden fights for her new role. Hester Prynne in *Scarlet Letter* embellishes her scarlet letter and does not leave Boston. In *Moby-Dick*, the feminine forces defeat the monomaniacal masculinity of Ahab, a protagonist in the novel. Huck, in Mark Twain's *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, is chased off to the territory despite the beckoning of Feminine River by Miss Watson, the Widow Douglas, and Aunt Sally's threat of civilization. Daisy in *The Great Gatsby* retreats unharmed into her house

after Gatsby's death. Caddy, in William Faulkner's *The Sound and the Fury* tours Europe after Quentin's suicide. This five novels deal with the American dream. But each dream fails because Eve will not go away (Kim Martin Long, 1).

In *The American Literature in Early-Mid of the Twenties: Historical Critic (The Eighth Section-Part One and Part Two)*, Chantana Chaichit indicated that *The Great Gatsby* is the masterpiece work of F. Scott Fitzgerald. He created Jay Gatsby who is innocent to be a representative of the people in the Mid-West of America. Because of Gatsby's purity and innocence, he is burnt by the American dream believing that money can buy everything even love and hope. Fitzgerald also created Nick Carraway to reflect a type of a gentleman who graduated from a top University of America. Nick presents his general mind in a realistic way. Chaichit also stated that Fitzgerald could express the high-class society which was full of luxury, greed, selfishness, shallowness and lie because he had taken part and shared in this kind of society. *The Great Gatsby* is one of the best sources of American reflection of the society in the 1920s.

There are some studies discussing about *The Great Gatsby*. Several discuss about the change of women's roles and the consequences. In *Social Stratification: The Great Gatsby as social commentary*, Maurer stated that *The Great Gatsby* is regarded as a social commentary. It made comments on a variety of themes including justice, power, greed, betrayal, and the American dream. Money or wealth is the conflict of this novel. Jay Gatsby and Tom Buchanan are rich, but they are not placed in the same group. Tom Buchanan is categorized in the old money group in which his family belongs to because the family has had money for many generations. The new money group is a group of people who get rich after World War I like Gatsby. Although, the old money group members do not like the new money group members, they join the new money group members in order to take advantage from them. The Gatsby's party and Gatsby's funeral show the relationship between the old money group members and the new money group members. Maurer also stated that the social condition in 1920s presented through *The Great Gatsby* seemed clear to lead to the stock market crash in 1929.

(Maurer, 76-78)

In F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby: Legendary Bases and Allegorical*

*Significances*, Raleigh stated that the characters in this novel represented the irony of

American history and corruption of the American dream. America is like a new world which is known as the land of opportunity. Nick is a representative of the old world while Gatsby is a representative of the new world. The old world people are reasonable, experienced, enthusiastic, real and traditional. The new world people are imaginary, innocent, and dreamy. Both Nick and Gatsby are two of the best types of humanity which are the moralist and the radical. (John Henry Raleigh, 99-103)

In this study the researcher aimed to analyze adultery behavior of the characters in F.

Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*.

### **PART III: RELATED RESEARCH ON ADULTERY BEHAVIOR**

The marriage to only one husband or one wife is called monogamy. Peggy Vaughan states that when people marry they prefer to be only one husband or one wife for their spouses. As marriage and family are regarded as a basis of the society, a story of adultery often shows the conflict between social pressure and individual struggle for happiness.

*(The Monogamy Myth: from <http://www.dearpeggy.com>, 10 Apr. 2006)*

Pepper Schwartz suggests that there are seven major reasons that someone might engage in a love affair out of marriage. He also states that there is not only one predominant cause. The seven major reasons are emotional incompatibility, boredom, sexual incompatibility, anger, flattery, a way out, and love (Pepper Schwartz, 309). While Diane Neumann gives primary 10 reasons of having an affair and it is found that there are 4 reasons of her match to Schwartz's. Those 4 reasons are excitement, romantic love, sex, and escape. (From <http://www.infor@divorcmed.com>, 30 Mar, 2006)

The causes or factors of having a love affair mentioned above are discussed by the western writers. It can be concluded that the reason in having a love affair of the westerners mainly concerns with emotion.

It is found that women in Thai society have different reasons of having a love affair.

Supawadee Manutpiyalert studied *Minor Wife: Process of Decision Making and Adjustment*. The push-factors during the decision making process which led females to become minor wives were analyzed. The study used an in-depth interview with 6 minor wives as the source of information. She concluded that the major factor which pushed the females to be minor wives was love and money. However, they needed love from their partners more than money.

Similarly, Roojaya Chatchawarlayanggool, studied *The Relationship between Marital Quality and Extramarital Sex: A Case Study of Pranangklae and Bamrasnaradura Hospital Nonthaburi Province*. She analyzed the factors of extramarital sex of 1,000 married Thai men who were the patients of Pranangklae Hospital and Bamrasnaradura Hospital by questionnaires. She found that emotional incompatibility was the major factor which led them to commit extramarital sex.

In the study "Causes of Becoming Mistress in 20 Thai Women" Nongpanga Limsuwan found that love was the main reason (75%) for becoming mistresses. But 25% of them accepted that they became mistresses because of money. In "Causes of Having Mistress in 20 Thai Men", studied by Nongpanga Limsuwan and Ponnachai Kongsakorn, it was found that

close relationship between married men and other women who are not their legal spouses is the major reason that makes them have mistresses. These men also revealed that they could have sex relationship even though they did not feel love.

Moreover, Nongpanga Limsuwan found that 85% of the mistresses in her study had personality problems that pushed them to be mistresses. Their obvious personality problems were dependent, depressive, poor self-esteem, immature, impulsive and histrionic (Nongpanga Limsuwan, p. 22). Likewise, 20 Thai men who had mistresses had personality problems too. Their major personality problem was lack of self-confidence.

In summary, it was found that females could commit adultery because of three main factors: love, sex, and wealth. In contrast, males could commit adultery for sex mainly. The personality problems are also the factors that lead a person to commit adultery. The study of adultery behavior as discussed above both by the western writers and Thai writers can be applied to study adultery behavior of Daisy Buchanan, Tom Buchanan and Myrtle Wilson in *The Great Gatsby*.

## CHAPTER 3

### AN ANALYSIS OF ADULTERY BEHAVIOR IN F. SCOTT FITZGERALD'S *THE GREAT GATSBY*

In this chapter, the researcher analyzes and explores the adultery behavior of the three characters, Daisy Buchanan, Tom Buchanan and Myrtle Wilson by applying the concept of adultery behavior. The analysis of adultery behavior is divided into four parts: synopsis of F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*, adultery behavior of Daisy Buchanan, adultery behavior of Tom Buchanan and adultery behavior of Myrtle Wilson.

#### PART I: SYNOPSIS OF F. SCOTT FITZGERALD'S *THE GREAT GATSBY*

*The Great Gatsby* is about the American dream and the downfall of those who attempt to reach its imaginary goals. Actually, the attempt to capture the American dream is common in many novels. In *The Great Gatsby*, Gatsby can acquire happiness and his dream through wealth and power. To get happiness, he must reach into the past and relive an old dream, and in order to do this, he must have wealth and power. Jay Gatsby, the main character of the

story, is the character who longs for the past. Surprisingly he devotes most of his adult life trying to recapture it, and finally he dies in its pursuit. In the past, he had a love affair with the extravagant Daisy. Knowing that he could not marry her because of the difference in their social status, he left her to venture in business in order to earn money to reach her high standards. As soon as he acquired wealth, he moved close to Daisy because he believed that she still loved him. He loved her so much that he took the blame for Myrtle's death. He was sure that he could capture his dream with wealth and influence. For Gatsby, his American Dream is not material possessions, although it may seem that way. He only wants to be rich so that he can fulfill his true American Dream, and win over the women he loves, Daisy.

## PART II: ADULTERY BEHAVIOR OF DAISY BUCHANAN

Daisy Buchanan or formerly Daisy Fay is a spoiled daughter of a rich family from Louisville in the West. In her teenage, she was very popular among many men because her house is next to a military camp called Camp Taylon. Many young officers of the camp were attracted by her beauty. Nick Carraway, her cousin revealed her appearance and personality through the description:

“Her face was sad and lovely with bright things in it, but bright eyes and a bright passionate mouth, but there was an excitement in her voice that men who had cared for found difficult to forget: a singing compulsion, a whispered ‘Listen,’ a promise that she had done gay.” (The Great Gatsby, 15)

From the description above, it is clearly shown that many men fall in love with Daisy. According to chapter 2, love is one factor that drives one to commit adultery. This factor is well applied to Daisy. When she was eighteen years old, she was in love with a young officer named Jay Gatsby. Their love could not end with a marriage because Gatsby was not wealthy

at that time. Daisy has expressed her love to Gatsby through the description of Jordan Baker, her close friend:

'Here, deares'.' She groped around in a waste-basket she had with her on the bed and pulled out the string of pearls. 'Take'em downstairs and give'em back to whoever they belong to. Tell'em all Daisy's change' her mine: Say: "Daisy's change' her mine!"' (83)

From this description, it is shown that Daisy is still in love with Gatsby, though finally she married Tom Buchanan. And because of love, she returns to Gatsby in order to follow a desire of her heart.

Nick also mentions about love between Daisy and Gatsby after they see each other again. Gatsby's butler told Nick that Gatsby had dismissed every servant in his house. Nick has check about what he heard with Gatsby:

'I hear you fired all your servants.' Nick asks.

'I wanted somebody who wouldn't gossip. Daisy comes over quite often-in the afternoon.' Gatsby answers. (119-120)

From the conversation of Nick and Gatsby, it is clear that the relationship between Daisy and Gatsby is more than an ordinary level. To go to Gatsby's place and stay with him in

privacy can be assumed that Daisy has already committed adultery. And Gatsby wants to protect her, so he fired all of his servants. Then he employs a new set of servants who do not know anything about Daisy's background.

In 'The Great Gatsby,' Daisy spends her time pointlessly. She always appears doing nothing, but chatting or hanging around with her friend. According to Schwartz and Neumann's ideas, excitement is one of the reasons of those who commit adultery. In Neumann's idea, having an affair is exciting; it is a new lover's desires; they have intense eye contacts and a lot of kisses, the secret meetings colored by the danger of getting caught. Their affair is driven by a desire to put excitement and an adventure into the life that that has been feeling bored. It can apply to Daisy that she commits adultery because she wants to get rid of boredom or committing adultery brings her excitement. Whenever she meets Nick, she always questions:

'What'll we plan?' 'What do people plan?' (18)

'What'll we do with ourselves this afternoon?, and the day after that, and the next thirty years?' (124)

Obviously, this excerpt shows that Daisy never plans anything in her life. It was possible that Daisy had a lot of free time, so she can meet Gatsby quite often. To meet Gatsby

brings her excitement because Tom does not know about the meeting between his wife and Gatsby.

In Thailand, Supawadee Manutpiyalert and Nongpangar Limsuwan state that women have affair because they want money. It shows that women who commit adultery are poorer than her lovers. Money or wealth is the first target for those who violate a moral rule. It could be concluded that money or wealth is one of the factors that lead one to commit adultery.

In 'The Great Gatsby,' it appears that formerly Daisy Fay was from a wealthy family in Louisville. Jordan Baker has described clearly about the wealth of Daisy's family:

The largest of the barners and the largest of the lawns belonged to Daisy Fay's house.

She dressed in white, and a little white roadster ... (81)

From the excerpt above, it is shown clearly that Daisy's family is very rich. Not only the largest of the barners and the largest of the lawns are presented for the family's, white dresses on Daisy could be shown wealth as well. The white color is a symbol of rich people in a high class society. Throughout the novel, Daisy always dresses in white and Jordan Baker does too.

Nick has mentioned their dresses in chapter 1 of the novel that both Daisy and Jordan are in white outfits.

For Daisy, to commit adultery because of wealth seems a strange reason for her. The readers knew that she was from a rich family and she married a very wealthy man like Tom. It is obviously shown that Daisy admires Gatsby's wealth. The readers can see her admiration through Nick's description:

'That huge place there? she cried pointing.

I love it, but I don't see how you live there all alone.'

With enchanting murmurs, Daisy admired this aspect or that of the feudal silhouette against the sky. She admired the gardens, the sparkling odour of jonquils and the frothy odour of hawthorn and plum blossoms and the pale gold odour of kiss-me-at-the-gate.'

(97)

While we admired, he brought more of soft rich heap mounted higher-shirts with stripes and scrolls and plaids in coral apple-green and lavender and faint orange, with

monograms of Indian blue. Suddenly, with a strained sound, Daisy bent her head into the shirts and began to cry stormily.

'There're such beautiful shirts,' she sobbed, her voice muffled in the thick folds.

'It makes me sad because I've never seen such-such beautiful shirts before.' (99)

From the above excerpt, it showed that Daisy wants to reunion with Gatsby because she knows that Gatsby's wealth can guarantee her physical comfort, convenience and happiness. Daisy has been leading a convenient and comfortable life because her family and her husband are wealthy. Even though, she is in a high-class society and is used to having luxurious things, she still admired Gatsby's belongings. She can evaluate Gatsby's possessions and know how expensive they are. By the discussion, it can be concluded that wealth or money is a factor that drives Daisy to commit adultery.

Although, all factors including love, excitement and wealth are the factors that drive Daisy to commit adultery, it seems that love has a greater impact on her. Daisy is a sensitive person. She expresses her emotion openly and easily. For example, when she hears a bird sing, she assumes that it must be a nightingale coming over on the Conard or White Star Line.

And she concludes that it is very romantic. (22) Another example is when Gatsby shows her a pile of beautiful shirts, it makes her cry because of their beauty. However, the other two factors which are excitement and wealth partly support the love factor and all of these factors lead Daisy to commit adultery.

### **PART III: ADULTERY BEHAVIOR OF MYRTLE WILSON**

Myrtle Wilson is a woman in the mid-thirties. She married a poor mechanic named George Wilson. She is not satisfied with what she has and where she lives. Actually, she lives in a garage with her husband in the valley of ashes. It is on the way to New York. According to Nongpangar Limsuwan and Supawadee Manutpiyalert's studies, the mistresses in their studies decided to be a mistress because of poverty. They knew that becoming the mistresses could possibly solve their financial problem, so they can have a better quality of lives. These studies could apply to Myrtle. She wants to leave her poor husband and the dirty garage. Then she had a chance to meet a wealthy man on the way while she was going to visit her sister in New

York. The man whom she met is Tom Buchanan from the East Egg. She has fallen in love with him instantly. She confesses to Nick:

'On that day, he had on a dress suit and patent leather shoes, and couldn't keep my eyes off him' (42).

From her confession, it could be judged that she is interested in him because of his wealth. She is attracted to Tom's outfits more than to care about who is in those outfits. She has an affair with him after their meeting in a train car.

When she is with Tom, she usually acts as a rich person. She enjoys showing off her way of getting easy money among her friends. For example:

'I'm going to make a list of all things that I've got to get. A massage and a wave, and a collar for the dog, and one of those cute little ash-trays where you touch a spring, and a wreath with black silk bow for mother's grave that'll last all summer. I got to write down a list so I won't forget all the things I go to do.' (42-43)

From the excerpt, it is clear that she decides to be Tom's mistress because she thinks that he can support her financial status. She knows that it is impossible for her own husband to

provide her with those things. Wealth is her major reason to commit adultery, and Tom is her target.

Time can change his mind and Myrtle can change hers too. It seems that at first Myrtle only cares about Tom's wealth, but later she really loves him. She thinks that Tom also loves her also. Throughout the novel, she never shows that she loves or cares about her husband. Instead, she looks down on him. To her, he is not good enough even to be her pet dog. She declares among a group of her friends:

'I married him because I thought he was a gentleman. I thought he knew something about breeding, but he wasn't fit to lick my shoe.' (41)

Her sister, Catherine, also ensures about Myrtle's feeling that there is no room for

George in her sister's heart:

'She really ought to get away from him. They have been living over that garage for eleven years. And Tom is the first sweetie she has ever had.' (41)

According to Diane Neumann's idea, love is a stereotypical reason that leads a married woman to have an affair. She seeks meaningful glances and soft kisses. An affair, to a married woman, can be the spark of love which can happen with any man except her husband. This

idea can be applied well to Myrtle because she is very lively when she is with Tom. She believes that Tom loves her because he has told her so. However, he said he could not divorce Daisy to marry her because Daisy is a Catholic and the Catholics do not believe in divorce.

Another example which could be expressed well about Myrtle's love is, when she rushes out to stop Tom's car. This incident takes place when Tom, Nick, Jordan, Daisy and Jay are on their way to New York and they stop to refill petrol at George's garage. Myrtle used to see that Tom drives a yellow car, so when she saw the yellow car driven back from New York, she thought it must be Tom. She wants to stop him and asks him to take her away from her husband. She knows that her husband wants to stop the relation between her and Tom by moving to the West. Unfortunately, it is not Tom who drives this car. Then she is killed by Daisy who is the driver.

It can be concluded that Myrtle is greedy about money. Her accumulated unsatisfactory feeling and suffering from her poor surroundings drives her to seek such refuge. She committed adultery because she wants wealth and physical comfort and social status. At the end, her immoral behavior ruins her marriage and destroys her life.

#### PART IV: ADULTERY BEHAVIOR OF TOM BUCHANAN

Tom Buchanan is Daisy's husband. He is a millionaire from Chicago. His family has been very well-off for many generations. He was outstanding when he was in the university.

Nick has mentioned about Tom as follows.

'...among various physical accomplishment, had been one of the most powerful ends that ever played football at New Haven. A national figure in a way, one of those men who reach such an acute limited excellence at twenty-one the everything afterward savours of anti-climax. His family was enormously wealthy – even in college his freedom with money was a matter for reproach...' (12)

From the excerpt above, it clearly shows that Tom's wealth together with his strong physical appearance made him more outstanding than other people in his generation. He thinks that poor people are inferior to him and he is quite snobbish. Besides being born in an enormously wealthy family, he also has good knowledge. He is obsessed with books as the following.

'I've gotten to be a terrible pessimist about things. Have you ever read the 'The Rise of the Colored Empires'? It's a fine book and everyone ought to read it. It's scientific stuff, it's all been proven.' (19)

From his expression, it obviously shows that Tom is an intelligent man. He is interested in this certain kind of book because he wants to keep himself upgraded and updated.

Due to his background, there is no point for him to commit adultery because he has everything concerning physical comfort and social status. Excitement and sex are the possible temptations which lead him to do so. According to Diane Neumann's idea, having an affair is exciting. Boredom is likely caused by a number of things. For example, work is tedious; the daily routine is tiresome, and the spouse and life, are predictable. Rather than working to improve these, the affair brings excitement. Tom gets an excitement from having an affair with Myrtle. Going to meet Myrtle at the garage of George Wilson, her husband, challenges him very much as Nick describes:

'While he has a chat with George his eyes are focused at Myrtle's face. When George gives them his back, they arrange to meet each other 'I want to see you,' said Tom

intently. 'Get on the next train.' I'll meet you by the news-stand on the lower level. They move away when George is back.'(32)

From the description, it is clearly shown that George does not know anything about the relation between his wife and Tom. Tom feels so happy that he can make someone to be a fool. Meanwhile, he is proud that he can show Nick that he is brave to arrange their meeting in front of Myrtle' place.

Having an affair for Tom, it concerns 'sex' mainly. He provides the apartment in New York because he wants to have sexual relationship with Myrtle sometimes. This behavior of Tom match Diane Neumann's idea that a married man has an affair is for sex. A man wants more sex than his wife does, or he wants more variety. Nick has mentioned that when he came back from buying some cigarettes, he found that Tom and Myrtle disappeared from the living room. Nick obviously knows where they are.

## CHAPTER 4

### CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDIES

#### Conclusion

The result of this study leads to the conclusion that people who commit adultery have many reasons to do so. People in the society judge one who has a love affair with prejudice. They think wealth or money is the main factor that leads one to commit adultery. Each character in F. Scott Fitzgerald has shown different reasons for committing adultery.

For Tom Buchanan, he has a mistress because he wants to show off the wealth and power he has. He wants to show that he is prominent and powerful, so he makes himself superior. For Myrtle, she did it because she wants to step to another class of the society. She wants to be supported by Tom. But she also falls in love with Tom at last because he is better than her husband in every way. For Daisy, if she is strong enough, she did not have to commit adultery. She is already rich and Tom will not leave her. It is anger that leads her to do so because she just wants to revenge Tom.

Due to the studies of adultery behavior by both western writers and Thai writers, it can be concluded that the reasons for having a love affair are universal. Love, sex and wealth or money can be the major reasons for those who commit adultery.

## ADULTERY AND THE THAI SOCIEY

Adultery as describe by F. Scott Fitzgerald in *The Great Gatsby* can be compared with adultery in the Thai society. In the past, Thai men were permitted to have more that one wife. Adultery was not a problem then. After Thailand had the constitutional laws, with the increase of western influence, Thai people's attitudes towards marriage changed. It is illegal for men to have more than one wife. Literature and tales can be seen as a reflection of the society, and this attitude. For example, the theme in *Khun Charnng Khun Pan*, *Chantakorop* and *Nang Kakee*, concerns having more than one wife or one husband of the characters. *Khun Pan in Khun Charnng Khun Pan* has many wives. *Kakee* and in *Nang Kakee* and *Nang Morah* in *Chantakorop*, concern a love affair.

Quite often, themes of Thai literature reflect characters getting involved in adultery. Thai people in their real lives, sometimes get involved in a love affair as well. Approximately ten year ago, there was hot head line news of a love triangle which occurred in a palace called 'Wang Assawin.' The owner of the palace was a royal blood named Mom Chao Thitipan Yukon, he married a young wife called Mom Lukpla. Their marriage life was not smooth because of the age difference. Mom Lukpla liked to hang around with her friends who were the same age as her. She always escaped from her old husband to stay outside the palace. Then she got to know Mr. Uted Chuppawa. Mom Lukpla and Uted fell in love with each other. When Mom Chao Thitipan knew about this, he tried to stop it. He did not allow his wife to go out, but his wife did not listen to him. She tried to go out by all means. On August 21<sup>st</sup>, 1995, Mom Chao Thitipan got very sick. The physician agreed that he got sick because of poison. Mom Lukpla was a suspect for this. Finally, she confessed that she did so because she just wanted to go out to meet Mr. Uted, her lover. She did not want to kill Mom Chao Thitipan. She only wanted him to fall asleep in order that she could go out easily. This example shows that adultery behavior still appears in Thai society.

Another aspect reveals how adultery is viewed for men and women. Thai law states that if the wife has committed adultery, she can be imprisoned for more than one year. However for men, in section 1516 of the grounds for divorce law states "If there has been a three year period of separation, one spouse has deserted the other for over one year, or the husband has taken another woman as his wife...he can be imprisoned for over one year." This is merely a difference in terms but asserts societies views on woman being the adulterer as opposed to men. *The Great Gatsby* has the same element. Adultery for Myrtle and Daisy looks a lot worse than Tom because society views it differently. For example, when it is obvious to Tom that Daisy and Gatsby have been having an affair, he is shocked. He disregards the fact that he has been having an affair with Myrtle and puts blame on the misconduct of Daisy having an affair with Gatsby. Tom says:

" Self control...I suppose the latest thing is to sit back and let Mr. Nobody from nowhere makes love to your wife. Well, if that is the idea you can count me out... Nowadays people begin by sneering at family life and family institutions next they'll throw everything overboard and have intermarriage between black and white." (136)

The concept of adultery has been evolving. Nowadays in Thai society, there is a new term called "gig." To be gig or to have gig is very popular. It is not considered as seriously as adultery. The rules of gig are: 1.) a relationship with a gig is not serious but can become so; 2.) to have sex or not is up to the parties involved; 3.) to be gig is a secret; 4.) the gig is never the cause of a break up; 5.) the gig is less important than one's own couple. From the concept of gig, it can be concluded that gig is a dilute version of adultery that makes it acceptable for society to deal with.

## **SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDIES**

1. There should be studies on other novels and short stories of F. Scott Fitzgerald which relate to love and relationship.
2. The research on adultery behavior should be studied in depth to find other factors that cause one to commit adultery.

3. Other literary works of different writers in the twentieth century should be studied to explore how they addressed the social changes which affect change in people's behavior.

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