



Hysterical Fantasy in F. Scott Fitzgerald's *Tender is the Night*

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Abstract

Through many years, F. Scott Fitzgerald's *Tender is the Night* has remained a novel worthy of reading and analyzing for various reasons. It can be clearly seen that Fitzgerald found a way to give it a symmetry that is not usually found in long psychological novels. Having conceived a new, modernist structure and adopted a third person limited omniscient point of view, Fitzgerald shows us the process of collapse until Diver has nothing left in his life; his marriage and his friendships are all destroyed. With the aim of bringing out a new way of reading *Tender is the Night*, this paper investigates the reasons for Dick Diver's downfall, dealing with both professional career and personal life using the framework of Freudian theory and in particular the concept of hysterical fantasy. It is then further suggested that Diver's fantasy derives from the trauma in his childhood with the loss of his father. According to Freud's dynamic view, hysterical fantasy in men relates to either hidden sexual desire or ambitions in life. Considering Freud's concepts in regard to the protagonist's case, the present paper argues that Dick Diver's failure resulted from both his hidden sexual desires and his excessive ambition in his professional career.

Key words: Freud; Fantasy; Downfall; Trauma; Loss

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INTRODUCTION

Tender is the Night can be seen as F. Scott Fitzgerald's most complicated novel, with "a new plot set in Europe about an American psychiatrist who is ruined by his marriage to a wealthy mental patient" (Brucoli, 2002, p.330). Fitzgerald's notes for the novel also exhibit his intention to make it "a novel of our time showing the break up of a fine personality. Unlike *The Beautiful and Damned* the break-up will be caused not by flabbiness but really tragic forces such as the inner conflicts of the idealist and the compromises forced upon him by circumstances" (Brucoli and Baughman, 1996, p.10). Right after the novel was published in 1934, literary critics assessed the novel as presenting "breakdowns: breakdowns in marriage, friendships, and individuals" (Lucas, 1963, p.89) or "the feminization of American culture" (Fetterley, 1984, p.208) which destroyed the protagonist, Dick Diver. In addition, Burton (1971), using the Freudian theory of counter-transference, tried to argue that due to a reversal of therapeutic treatment, Doctor Diver is the best illustration of American dream-neurosis. Nevertheless, as Burton (1971) shows, Diver's collapses appear ambiguously and his situation is far more complex than one might think. It becomes necessary to look into the gaps as well as the structures of the novel to make Diver's tragic fall clear.

Some literary critics have adopted Freudian theory and trauma theory to interpret Diver's breakdown as pathological love, such as Pamela A. Boker (1992) and Susann Cokal (2005). Like Burton (1971), Boker (1992) endeavors to argue the case for love transference while Cokal (2005) focuses on the idea of "a classic Freudian framework of cause, effect, and blame centered on the incest issue" (p.76) in analyzing the stories of Dick Diver and Nicole Warren. Another approach is to focus on Diver's failure as his "misguided faith in the

profession's promise to control life's contingencies" (Blazek, 2007, p.67), a strategy undertaken by William Blazek. He examines the role of psychiatry and Freudian psychotherapy in the novel and their influence on society. Accordingly, this novel has a special value for understanding both the historical context and the changes in medical treatment at that time. Also, Blazek (2007) claims that "the workings of cause and effect, of stress and disorder in the marriage of Dick and Nicole Diver went beyond therapeutic exegesis and training exemplar" (p.68). Blazek supposes that the disorder and trauma that Dick suffers in his life may be different from what other authors and even Fitzgerald himself describe in previous novels, because the central character is a doctor treating mental illness, so the collapse, if he has one, goes beyond what he learns from his professional career and beyond expectations.

What we should emphasize here is that not only psychiatrists or psychoanalysts but also readers in general and literary critics in particular can find in the novel deep and rich resources for examining a broken marriage's effects on one's life, and that is one reason why the novel has attracted a great deal of attention. This essay, therefore, draws on a new perspective, reading trauma and identity loss as keys to understanding the ambitious psychiatrist, Dick Diver, and his collapse in *Tender is the Night*. Drawing on specific aspects of Freudian theory (1908), we can say that Diver's downfall is due to hysterical fantasy that has resulted from his unsatisfied wishes in life. According to the Freudian concept, "the motive forces of fantasies are unsatisfied wishes and every single fantasy is the fulfillment of a wish, a correction of unsatisfying reality" (Freud, 1908, p.146). By using the word fantasy "Freud understands it as the intimate creation of representations, not the faculty of imagining in the philosophical sense of the word" (Kristeva, 2002, p.63). Freud (1909) further points out that "a common source and normal prototype of all these creations of fantasy is to be found in what are called the day-dreams of youth" (Freud, 1909, p.159). Drawing on Freudian theory, we can conclude that daydreams occur in both sexes and "in men they may be either erotic or ambitious" (Freud, 1909, p.159). In Diver's case, sexual desire and ambition in professional development are causes that lead him to be a day-dreamer.

Concerning the notion of hysterical fantasy, Freud writes that "psychical structures [which] are regularly present in all the psychoneuroses, particularly in hysteria, and that these latter – which are known as hysterical fantasies – can be seen to have important connections with the causation of the neurotic symptom" (Freud, 1909, p.159). So, we can say that hysterical fantasy is a kind of unconscious fantasy since "unconscious fantasies are the immediate psychical precursors of a whole number of hysterical symptoms [and] hysterical symptoms are

nothing other than unconscious fantasies brought into view through 'conversion'" (Freud, 1909, pp.161-162). Freud, then, further claims, "unconscious fantasies have either been unconscious all along and have been formed in the unconscious; or – as is more often the case – they were once conscious fantasies, day-dreams, and have since been purposely forgotten and have become unconscious through 'repression'" (Freud, 1909, p.161). Drawing on Freudian concept of hysterical fantasy, then, we can say that the novel clearly shows that Dick's failure and ruin, which have resulted from hysterical fantasy connected both to his traumatization in married life and his ambition in his professional career, show him to be a day-dreamer throughout his life.

1. DIVER'S HYSTERICAL FANTASIES RELATED TO SEXUAL DESIRES

According to the narrator, the young American Dr. Diver is a dynamic, educated traveling man at "a fine age" (Fitzgerald, 1934, p.129). He drifts from Oxford and Johns Hopkins to Vienna and Zurich. Furthermore, the novel says "of all the men who have recently taken their degrees in neuro-pathology in Zurich, Diver "has been regarded as the most brilliant" (Fitzgerald, 1934, p.261). He settles down at Dohmer's clinic, where he wants "to be a good psychologist – maybe to be the greatest one that ever lived" (Fitzgerald, 1934, p.147). Diver's desire shows his ambitious plans in his professional career. In addition, Diver also publishes his own book about psychiatry, *A Psychology for Psychiatrists*. His ambitious and even obsessive plans illustrate the values of his profession, aimed at finding ways to cure mental illness, the duty and responsibility of a psychiatrist in the modern world. However, the clinic in the novel is depicted as "a gold mine" (Fitzgerald, 1934, p.193) and also "a refuge for the broken, the incomplete, the menacing of this world" (Fitzgerald, 1934, p.135). As a brilliant psychiatrist, Diver consciously knows his position and the values associated with his career, but ironically, he is eventually rejected by the people he loves.

It is an undeniable fact that Diver's desire can be seen as insecure and irresponsible in choosing both professional career and his love. Diver once confesses that he "got to be a psychiatrist because there was a girl at St. Hilda's in Oxford that went to the same lectures" (Fitzgerald, 1934, p.153). We do not have further clues about what occurred in Diver's relationship with that girl, but he seems to have made a big decision based on a simple irrelevant desire. Moreover, another decision in later life shows the repetition of such action based on emotional desire: Diver becomes attached to other love-objects, Nicole Warren, his wife, and Rosemary, a beautiful actress. Diver believes that he can play various roles in his romance with, as a father, a husband and

a psychiatrist, as and a father and a lover in his affair with Rosemary. However, he loses control over his relationships with both of them, particularly with Nicole. Diver rationally concludes, however, he was “the wrong person for Nicole” (Fitzgerald, 1934, p.235). It can be assumed that Diver’s professional goals and sexual desire are connected to insecure and unstable desires, hence making Diver’s character ambivalent and contradictory.

Ronald Berman’s “American Dreams and ‘Winter Dreams’: Fitzgerald and Freudian Psychology in the 1920s” (2005) has used numerous textual analyses to prove that Freudian language and ideas had a tremendous impact on Fitzgerald’s early short stories, and especially on his fourth novel, *Tender is the Night*. Berman (2005) argues persuasively that “Fitzgerald was from the beginning of his career interested in psychological phenomena and their explanation” (p.49), and his professional career as a writer began “within the orbit of Freudianism” (p.53). Similarly, James L.W. West III (2011) writes, “Fitzgerald had a good layman’s knowledge of the current state of psychiatric treatment, both in Europe and in the United States” (p.63). Thus, it can be supposed that Fitzgerald implicitly adopts Freudian theories at a very early stage of his writing career and *Tender is the Night* provides the best example of his utilizing Freudian theory in an apt and thorough way.

However, “psychological research on F. Scott Fitzgerald tends naturally to center on his work after 1930, when Zelda began a long course of therapy in Europe and in the United States. Fitzgerald became knowledgeable enough to follow her treatment, discuss it with her doctors – and even draw some of his own psychiatric conclusions. A certain amount of what he learned appears in *Tender is the Night* (1934)” (Berman, 2005, p.49). What is more, Berman (2005) argues, “Fitzgerald used a mechanism of dream and daydream, and suggested layers of complexity beneath the human face” (p.50) to make the psychological life of his main characters in the stories and novels compelling. Consequently, the author’s wide knowledge of psychiatry enhances the fruitful depiction of the working life of Diver, and by making his hero a psychiatrist, as Burton (1971) reminds us, Diver “could best illustrate the nature of neurosis in his society and the tragedies it inevitably produces” (p.143) and “how cleverly Dick, like all neurotics, conceals his neurosis from himself” (p.146). Moreover, Freud (1908) suggested in “Creative Writers and Day-Dreaming” that “the psychological novel in general no doubt owes its special nature to the inclination of the modern writer to split up his ego, by self-observation, into many part-egos, and, in consequence, to personify the conflicting currents of his own mental life in several heroes” (p.150). For these reasons, experiencing pleasure and happiness as well as pain and loss in his own marriage and life helps Fitzgerald better understand his characters and then make them

richer and more believable. Therefore, Diver’s trauma is a good illustration of such a mental collapse in the special circumstance of a psychiatrist in Western society.

Diver’s frustration is expressed in various aspects in the novel, and the speculations of Freud can be used to a surprising degree in analyzing it. In accordance with Freud’s ideas in “Those Wrecked by Success” (1916), Diver is not satisfied with his life while he shows “a conflict between [his] libidinal wishes and the part of his personality we call his ego, which is the expression of his instinct of self-preservation and which also includes his ideals of his personality” (Freud, 1916, p.316). Diver lives in a luxurious place with a beautiful and rich wife and two children. So, as would be expected, these conditions make Dick happy, but unbelievably and sardonically, he also suffers from it, and shows his feelings are in fact contradictory and complicated. Dick Diver’s contradiction comes from what we might simply call the frustrations of life in that he cannot find any enjoyment, and he begins bringing people both happiness and hurt. There is a conflict and struggle in his ego to attend people in his leading role and to assert his identity in this narrow world.

In the same essay, Freud (1916) also points out that “people occasionally fall ill precisely when a deeply-rooted and long-cherished wish has come to fulfillment. It seems then as though they were not able to tolerate their happiness; for there can be no question that there is a casual connection between their success and their falling ill” (p.316). In Dick’s case, his so-called success and fall seem to be very close and it is not always easy for him to realize the gap between them. He seems to be successful in life and in particular in his professional career but he is collapsing unconsciously. Ironically, Dick cannot recognize his coming downfall but Nicole can. The doctor-patient’s role seems to be undergoing a reversal, and according to the narrator, Nicole can see when “one of his most characteristic moods was upon him, the excitement that swept everyone up into it and was inevitable followed by his own form of melancholy” (Fitzgerald, 1934, p.36). Although Dick is unconscious of the situation in which he is trapped, his emotional state is observed by Nicole, who is both his wife and his mental patient.

As expected, Dick very quickly is enveloped in disillusionment, when he transfers his emotion to a girl, Rosemary, who loves and idealizes Dick in every way. Rosemary is a symbol of the modern girl in modern American culture. She has been educated by her stage mother, who is also her best friend, in values quite different from Victorian morals: Rosemary is instructed to consider herself an equal to a man. As a beautiful and famous actress, Rosemary also idealizes her romance as a reflection of the fantasy world she creates in films. Rosemary wants Dick to be her lover in both films and life. She persuades Dick to try a “screen test” so he will become “her leading man in a picture” (Fitzgerald, 1934,

p.81). Moreover, from the beginning, Rosemary “lived in the bright blue worlds of Dick’s eyes eagerly and confidently” (Fitzgerald, 1934, p.20). However, Dick mistakes his own feelings, because Rosemary tells him frankly “I know you don’t love me – I don’t expect that” (Fitzgerald, 1934, p.75). Once again, Dick is captured in the world of a dynamic girl, who has been educated to be strong and active. Rosemary’s mother, Mrs. Speers, taught her that “You were brought up to work – not especially to marry. Now you’ve found your first nut to crack and it’s a good nut [...] Whatever happens it can’t spoil you because economically you are a boy, not a girl” (Fitzgerald, 1934, p.50). Rosemary has made her own decisions in her life; especially in choosing to love Dick. “She [Rosemary], chose him, and Nicole, lifting her head, saw her choose him, heard the little sigh of the fact that he was already possessed” (Fitzgerald, 1934, p.28). In this case, Dick is “possessed” and totally controlled by the two women he loves, and Nicole’s gaze shows that she knows it all but she ignores it all.

Dick faces troubles as he continues in both his marriage and his affair. He once tells Rosemary that his “relations with Nicole are complicated” (Fitzgerald, 1934, p.87) and “Nicole and I [Dick] have got to go on together. In a way that’s more important than just wanting to go on” (Fitzgerald, 1934, p.86). He cannot clarify why he married Nicole, but it seems they have to continue together because they live depending on each other. Obviously, Dick does not marry Nicole just for her money, but it overwhelms him and distracts him from his work. Therefore, Dick wants to devote his life to Nicole Warren even though he is only “half in love with her” (Fitzgerald, 1934, p.156).

Furthermore, she has become a mental patient as the result of the effects of an incestuous intercourse. She has belonged to another man, her father, before she falls in love with Dick. Here it is interesting to cite Freud (1918) suggesting that “the husband is almost always so to speak only the substitute, never the right man; it is another man – in typical cases the father – who has first claim to a woman’s love, the husband at most takes second place” (p.203). Even his colleague Franz advises him that it would be “better never see her again!” (Fitzgerald, 1934, p.156). Therefore, Dick is consciously aware of Nicole’s circumstance but “the question of marrying her has passed through my [his] mind” (Fitzgerald, 1934, p.156). Dick’s decision, therefore, makes him tumble on Nicole’s world without becoming a “fine man” and “good psychiatrist” as he expected. In short, his choice makes his “beautiful lovely safe world [blow] itself up here with a great gust of high explosive love” (Fitzgerald, 1934, p.68). Paradoxically, “Dick Diver turns out to be Jay Gatsby all over again” who is “betrayed by his own ability to make the right distinction” (Troy, 1934, p.21). Dick cannot find his true identity and is trapped in Nicole’s world because

in reality Nicole cannot recover from her illness again.

In addition, Dick’s sexual desire towards Rosemary Hoyt has grown, leading to Nicole’s growing dissatisfaction with her marriage. Dick consciously knows that Rosemary idealizes him with her oddly modern and yet naïve love. At first, he rejects her completely. However, ironically, before he shows his so-called love to her he wants to know about her virginity:

“Tell me the truth about you,” he demanded.

“I always have.”

[...]

“Are you actually a virgin?”

“No-o-o!” she sang. “I’ve slept with six hundred and forty men – if that’s the answer you want.” (Fitzgerald, 1934, p.230)

We all know Rosemary is just pulling his leg, but the dialogue reveals the fact that Dick loves Rosemary because – he wants to love a girl surrounded by other men. He desires to have her, hold her and make her his love-object. This situation is parallel to the case of Gatsby, who sees so many men around Daisy that his desire to have Daisy is stimulated day by day. In another situation, when Dick is told about Rosemary’s affair with Hillis, “Dick felt a change taking place within him. Only the image of a third person, even a vanished one, entering into his relation with Rosemary was needed to throw him off his balance and send through him waves of pain, misery, desire, desperation” (Fitzgerald, 1934, p.100). Drawing on Freudian theory (1918), we can form a picture of how Dick’s feelings when he wants to know about Rosemary’s virginity. As the Victorian Freud (1918) points out, virginity is “the state in a woman of being untouched” (p.193) and “whoever is the first to satisfy a virgin’s desire for love, long and laboriously held in check, and who in doing so overcomes the resistances which have been built up in her through the influences of her milieu and education, that is the man she will take into a lasting relationship, the possibility of which will never again to open to any other man. This experience creates a state of bondage in the woman which guarantees that possession of her shall continue undisturbed and makes her able to resist new impressions and enticements from outside” (p.193). Obviously, Dick is not Rosemary’s first man so he feels insecurity in this relationship. Dick can never possess Rosemary through sexual intercourse and so his feelings are full “of pain, misery, desire, desperation”.

Dick seems to fall into a form of melancholia in which he highly appreciates “somatic rather than psychogenic affections” (Freud, 1917, p.243). Drawing on Freudian theory, we can say that Dick is attracted by sexual obsessions rather than sharing what he expects in his life. As a consequence, Dick and Rosemary are “full of brave illusions about each other, tremendous illusions; so that the communion of self with self seemed to be on a plane” (Fitzgerald, 1934, p.86). Near the end of the novel, after returning from his father’s funeral in America, Dick sees

Rosemary in Rome. He realizes that “Rome was the end of his dream of her” (Fitzgerald, 1934, p.240). Rome is seen a romantic and idealist place for a romance, but ironically Rome sees the decline and deterioration of the promising psychiatrist as he wants to hide himself from reality. In addition to the break-up with Rosemary, Dick gets drunk, fights with a taxi driver and then is beaten by Rome police. After that “he [Dick] was in love with every pretty woman he saw now, their forms at a distance, their shadow on the world” (Fitzgerald, 1934, p.220). Dick now may not be conscious at all of his illusions. When Dick moves to New York after his broken marriage, he even becomes “entangled with a girl who worked in a grocery store” (Fitzgerald, 1934, p.338). It can be seen as characteristic of “a pathological disposition” in melancholia to want to throw away the normal life that one has taken such a long time to build.

2. DICK'S HYSTERICAL FANTASY RELATED TO PROFESSIONAL CAREER

As he starts his career, Dick depicts his ambitious plans to become a famous psychiatrist. He wants to make his American dream come true so he idealizes and re-creates his world, his women, and his life. Dick wants to fulfill his wish to become a successful psychiatrist, in particular. He seems to ignore Franz's warning: “You are not a romantic philosopher – you're a scientist. Memory, force, character – especially good sense. That's going to be your trouble – judgment about yourself” (Fitzgerald, 1934, p.131). Franz's words implicitly notify Dick that he should not make life decisions just based on passion; otherwise, he will lose his true identity. Moreover, Dick was shocked when Abe observed, “Something tells me I'll have a new score on Broadway long before you've finished your scientific treatise” (Fitzgerald, 1934, p.72); “Rosemary had never before seen Dick's face utterly expressionless; and she felt that this announcement was something momentous” (Fitzgerald, 1934, p.72). For a doctor, to live such a life and depend on his wife's money seems to be degrading and undermine his commitment to work. However, Dick denies as much to Rosemary: “I didn't disgrace myself at the height of my career, and hide away on the Riviera. I'm just not practicing. You can't tell, I'll probably practise again someday” (Fitzgerald, 1934, p.73). But even Dick himself cannot find his own answer to the question, when will “someday” come?

Freud (1908) clarifies that “the motive forces of fantasies are unsatisfied wishes, and every fantasy is the fulfillment of a wish, a correction of unsatisfying reality” (p.146). What is more, “if fantasies become over-luxuriant and over-powerful, the conditions are laid for an onset of neurosis or psychosis” (p.148). In Dick's case, he wishes to be both a good psychiatrist and a husband. He loves Nicole but he also uses Nicole's money to satisfy his

wishes. However, Dick's wishes do not become realized and he sinks deeper and deeper into his own fantasies. He cannot be independent in his own life, and is “ruined” (Fitzgerald, 1934, p.294) by Nicole. Gradually, he gets drunk more and more often and he is “no longer a serious man” (Fitzgerald, 1934, p.261).

Freud (1908) further points out that “in a fantasy, the dreamer has regained what he possessed in his happy childhood – the protecting house, the loving parents, and the first objects of his affectionate feelings” (1925). Thus, it is important that Dick is also traumatized by the fact that his father passed away because

Dick loved his father – again and again he referred judgments to what his father would probably have thought or done. Dick was born several months after the death of two young sisters and his father, guessing what would be the effect on Dick's mother, had saved him from a spoiling by becoming his moral guide. (Fitzgerald, 1934, p.222)

Clearly, Dick was born after some miserable experiences had happened in his family. It is not surprising that Dick was his father's pride and hope, and Dick's father becomes the “earliest and strongest of protections”. When Dick's father is gone, he has no “moral guide” in his life. “Lucky Dick can't be one of these clever men; he must be less intact, even faintly destroyed. If life won't do it for him it's not a substitute to get a disease, or a broken heart, or an inferiority complex, though it'd be nice to build out some broken side till it was better than the original structure” (Fitzgerald, 1934, p.131). Dick will hardly find any substitute figure to replace his father, who can be seen as the most powerful figure in his life.

Freud (1917), in his essay “Mourning and Melancholia” (pp.243-258), explains that “the distinguishing mental features of melancholia are a profoundly painful dejection, cessation of interest in the outside world, and loss of the capacity of love” (Freud, 1917, p.244). In Book I and II, one can say that Dick's life is embedded in “painful dejection”; for instance, “he [Dick] was hopeless” (Fitzgerald, 1934, p.54) when he was in jail, and “what had happened to him was so awful that nothing could make any difference unless he could choke it to death” (Fitzgerald, 1934, p.254). Dick also wants “to go away alone” (Fitzgerald, 1934, p.213) “for a month or so, for as long as can” (Fitzgerald, 1934, p.212), definitely suggesting that Dick wants to escape from his world and his wife. While he is away, he goes out drinking and is beaten badly by the Rome police: “he [Dick] felt his nose break like a shingle and his eyes jerk as if they had snapped back on a rubber band in his head [...] Momentarily, he lost consciousness” (Fitzgerald, 1934, p.246). Symbolically, Dick has suffered a trauma brought about by rejection.

In another of Freud's essays, “The Loss of Reality in Neurosis and Psychosis” (1924, p.183-187), we see that “neurosis does not disavow reality, it only ignores it;

psychosis disavows it and tries to replace it" (p.185), so "both neurosis and psychosis are thus the expression of rebellion on the part of the id against the external world, of its unwillingness – or if one prefers, its incapacity – to adapt itself to the exigencies of reality" (p.185). Here, Dick develops his own melancholia after his marriage to Nicole and then he suffers a broken relationship with a friend. As a result, he wants to avoid external reality. Psychoanalytic observation of the transference neuroses leads to the conclusion that "the keeping away from consciousness was a main characteristic of hysterical repression" (Freud, 1926, p.163). Dick clearly wants to run away from his real life with his hysterical fantasy.

From Dick's point of view in Book II, both Nicole and he are "ruined" and Nicole is no longer the focus of his desire. Melancholia, according to Freud (1917), may be "regularly the reaction to the loss of a loved object [...]. The object has not perhaps actually died, but has been lost as an object of love" (Freud, 1917, p.245). Evidently, Dick loses both Nicole and Rosemary and surely he never wins them again. What is more, the person who suffers from melancholia "extends his self-criticism back over the past; he declares that he was never any better" (Freud, 1917, p.246). In Book II, Dick becomes the "Black Death" and he cannot "bring people happiness now" (Fitzgerald, 1934, p.239). In contrast, in Book I, Dick is described as a man of "moral comment" (Fitzgerald, 1934, p.97) who can always "give people excellent advice" (Fitzgerald, 1934, p.254). But what we see in Book II is that "whatever Dick's previous record was, they [Warren's family] possessed a moral superiority over him for as long as he proved of any use" (Fitzgerald, 1934, p.256). Dick becomes another self in his world: "he would be a different person henceforward, and in his raw state he had bizarre feelings of what the new self would be" (Fitzgerald, 1934, p.254).

Freud (1917) also claims that "the melancholic displays something else besides which is lacking in mourning – an extraordinary diminution in his [the patient's] self-regard, an impoverishment of his ego on a grand scale. In mourning it is the world which has become poor and empty; in melancholia it is the ego itself. The patient represents his ego to us as worthless, incapable of any achievement and morally despicable [...] He abases himself before everyone and commiserates with his own relatives for being connected with anyone so unworthy. He is not of the opinion that a change has taken place in him, but extends his self-criticism back over the past; he declares that he was never any better" (p.246). It is very true in Dick's situation that he cannot become a good husband and a psychiatrist. Furthermore, he lacks independence and is betrayed by the people he loves.

Another essential point concerning melancholia which well illustrates Dick's case is Freud's claim that "he [the mental patient] is giving a correct description of his

psychological situation. He has lost his self-respect and he must have good reason for this" (Freud, 1917, p.247). Thus, we can better see why Dick got drunk and invites a terrible beating and arrest. Dick even falsely confesses when being drunk to raping and killing a five-year-old child (Fitzgerald, 1934, p.255). Dick totally loses his identity; Dick "had lost himself – he could not tell the hour when, or the day or the week, the month or the year" (Fitzgerald, 1934, p.220). There is no doubt about Dick's collapse and losses, and his life eventually becomes so dark and dim that he becomes incapable of finding his true personality.

CONCLUSION

By making use of Freudian theory with several of Freud's little known but highly thought-provoking essays, this study has attempted to bring a new depth of understanding Diver's collapse. Dick Diver is no longer the "fine man" he once was. Interestingly, Freud argues that melancholia "borrows some of its features from mourning, and the others from the process of regression from narcissistic object-choice to narcissism" (Freud, 1917, p.250). He goes on to say "in melancholia, the occasions which give rise to the illness extend for the most part beyond the clear case of a loss by death, and include all those situations of being slighted, neglected or disappointed, which can import opposed feelings of love and hate into the relationship or reinforce an already existing ambivalence" (Freud, 1917, p.251). Dick desires to be loved and to be good, but he is betrayed by all the women he comes to love. Dick Diver is not the only one who suffers from the melancholia and hysterical fantasies in Fitzgerald's novels, but he is one of the most representative and yet ambiguous characters coping with trauma and loss in Western decadent society. The decline from being an ambitious and successful man to a "nobody" in the end shows the steady collapse and ultimate failure which we see depicted in many of Fitzgerald's heroes.

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