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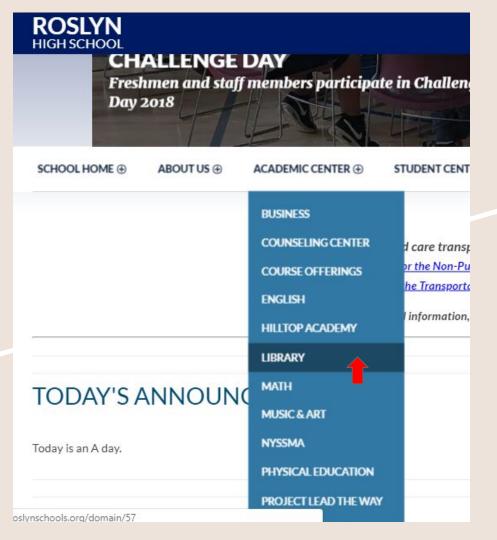
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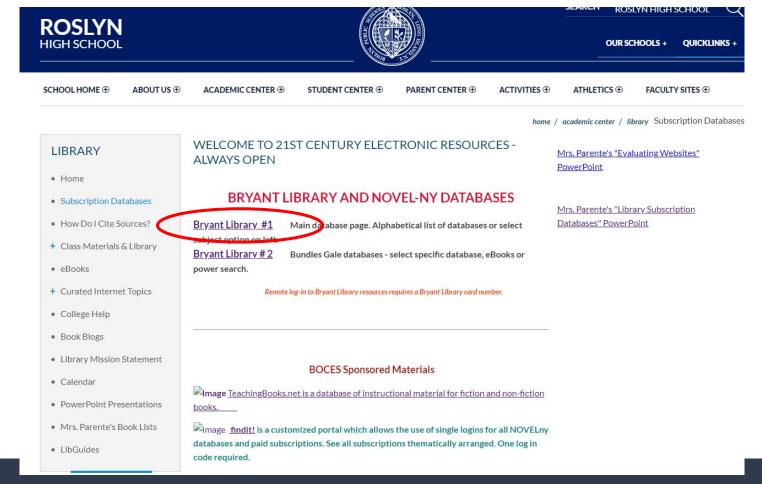
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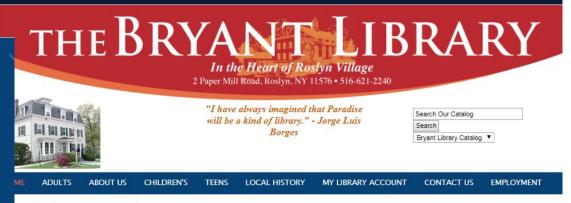


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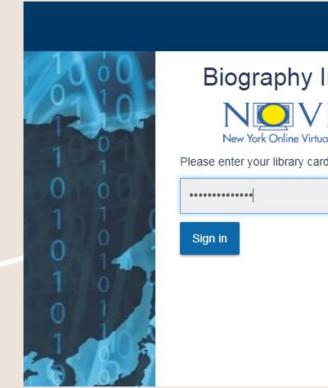
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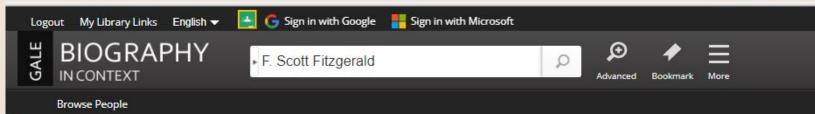
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F. Scott Fitzgerald



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Born

September 24, 1896 Died

December 21, 1940

Perhaps because so much of his writing is autobiographical, F. Scott Fitzgerald is as famous for his personal life as he is for his writing. In his career as a writer, Fitzgerald proved to be gifted in a number of forms--he excelled as a novelist, a short story writer, and an essayist. But because his personal and professional histories paralleled the times in which he lived and wrote, Fitzgerald will be forever identified with the Jazz Age of the 1920s and the ensuing Great Depression of the 1930s.

F. Scott Fitzgerald was born Francis Scott Key Fitzgerald on September 24, 1896, the namesake and distant cousin of the author of the National Anthem. His father, Edward, who viewed himself as...



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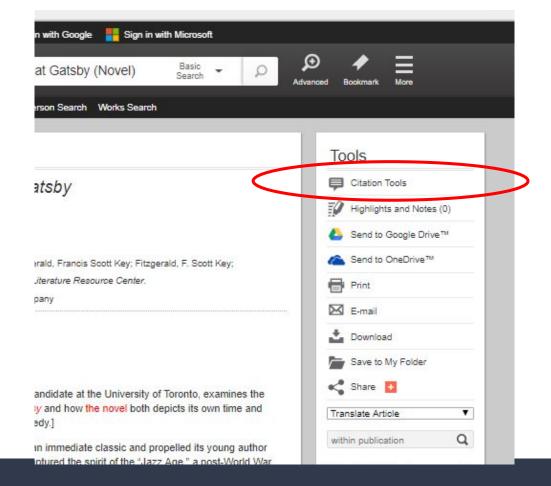
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[In the following essay, Hermanson, a doctoral candidate at the University of Toronto, examines the roles of the major characters in *The Great Gatsby* and how the novel both depicts its own time and deals with timeless issues of ambiguity and tragedy.]

Published in 1925, *The Great Gatsby* became an immediate classic and propelled its young author to a fame he never again equalled. The novel captured the spirit of the "Jazz Age," a post-World War I era in upper-class America that Fitzgerald himself gave this name to, and the flamboyance of the author and his wife Zelda as they moved about Europe with other American expatriate writers (such as Ernest Hemingway). However, *Gatsby* expresses more than the exuberance of the times. It depicts the restlessness of what Gertrude Stein (another expatriate modernist writer) called a "lost generation." Recalling T. S. Eliot's landmark poem "The Wasteland" (1922), then, *Gatsby* also has its own "valley of ashes" or wasteland where men move about obscurely in the dust, and this imagery of decay, death, and corruption pervades the novel and "infects" the story and its hero too. Because the novel is not just about one man, James Gatz or Jay Gatsby, but about aspects of the

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