

“Daddy Dearest”: The Development of Child Stars in the Studio System of the 1930s through the ‘50s

Written by Brittany N. Dalton
Special Thanks: Julia A. Malia, Ph. D., C.F.L.E.

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Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to analyze the effects growing up in the studio system had on child stars from the 1930s through 1950s. I chose to focus my research and analysis on three child stars in particular: Judy Garland, Elizabeth Taylor, and Shirley Temple. These three actresses each had different experiences in their careers and relationships to the studio; however, they were all well-known and influential child stars. Each of their careers had an impact on the film industry as a whole. My research focused on multiple biographies of each actress as well as numerous writings and studies on both parent-child relationships and the effects of child stardom on parent-child relationships. My goal in this paper is to show that, upon entering the studio system, the actress' emotional development was dependent on the role her biological parents played in her life. If her parents allowed the studio to act as a parental figure (as was the case for Judy Garland and Elizabeth Taylor), the emotional development of the actress was greatly affected, usually in a negative way. However, if the actress' parents did not relinquish parental control to the studio, as Shirley Temple's mother did not, the actress was able to develop mentally and emotionally in a positive way.

The Development of the Star System in Hollywood

The film industry began in the 1920s, and from the beginning, the industry's executives realized that it was the movies' stars who were the draw for the audience. Starting with the first silent film stars, such as Rudolph Valentino and Charlie Chaplin, audiences related deeply to the characters they portrayed. It was these characters who drew audiences to the movie theaters to share their lives with them as movie patrons lived alternative lives vicariously through the performers. Films became a form of escapism people could use to forget about the trials of their everyday lives.

Adolph Zukor, founder of Paramount Pictures, was the first to implement the studio system. Borrowing the star system from Vaudeville, Zukor took this system and classic storytelling and made films in a factory-like process (Gomery, 2005, p. 7). Upon release of one of his first films, Zukor realized the "the characters were recognized and called by name. I was sure that personalities plus a good story were all that we needed in pictures" (Gomery, 2005, p. 15). Rather than simply rely on bidding the Vaudeville stars away from the stage, Zukor further realized that he needed to secure and nurture his own talent who would be legally bound to him through contracts.

Studios then began to understand how important a troupe of stars was to their profits and business future. These are what drew people to the movies. Studios discovered that they were able to make inexpensive films with very popular stars that would reap enormous profits

(e.g., the Andy Hardy movies produced by MGM with Mickey Rooney). After its early success with *Ben Hur* in 1925, MGM came to rely on the star system as Paramount had. Another example of the power of the star system can be found at Warner Bros. When the studio released *The Singing Fool* in 1928 as their first talkie film, they relied heavily on the star power of Al Jolson. In order to draw audiences into the theater, the entire film was formulated around the trials and tribulations of Jolson's character.

Without top talent, many studios, such as Universal Pictures, would struggle. During the 1920s, many of Universal's biggest stars were lured away from the studio by offers from other studios, making Universal one of the bottom-tier studios. While the exit of stars could kill a studio, stars could also save a studio in the short run. From 1934 through 1936, RKO thrived only because of the popularity of Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers. Four of their films (*Top Hat*, *Swing Time*, *Roberta*, and *Follow the Fleet*) were among the top 10 high-earning films in this 2-year period (Gomery, 2005).

Once the studios had their star system in place, they were able to create motion pictures at alarming rates. At the height of the movie industry's power, between 1930 and 1950, MGM could complete a full-length motion picture every 9 days (Basinger, 2007, p. 14). Performers were on call all waking hours in order to keep up their productivity. This led Hollywood to become known as a factory system, since, like the textile manufacturers of the time, they were able to keep up productivity to turn out as much product as possible. The old studios were really just huge repertory companies shuffling their employees around in order to keep them working.

Due to the proliferation of this profit-making mindset, many stars felt undervalued by the studios. Cary Grant once said, "I think most of us become actors because we want affection, love, and applause" (Basinger, 2007, p. 129). However, the studios were mainly interested in keeping their business running through the focus on financial gain. They didn't have time to cater to every star's need for love. This conflict between the emotional needs of actors and the business-attuned mindset of the studios led to many actors becoming emotionally unstable and feeling abandoned. Even the most popular stars of the time were let go once they became unprofitable, often with very little ceremony. Clark Gable was one of MGM's most popular and profitable stars. However, on his last day at the studio, as the studio system was slowly falling apart, there was no party, no goodbyes; Clark walked himself to the gate and left by himself (Davis, 1993, p. 376). This example shows how unappreciative the studios could be to even their most beloved employees.

With the birth of sound, movie studios were drawn to Broadway where performers could not only act but had clear, vibrant voices that would record well (Davis, 1993, p. 100). The well-

known film *Singin' in the Rain* portrays some of the challenges of this transition period. In the film, the silent screen star, Lina Lamont, is forced to use a voice double for her first “talkie” picture, as her voice is too shrill sounding (Donen, S., Director, 1952, *Singin' in the Rain* [Film], Los Angeles: MGM). Many silent film stars were not able to make the transition to talkies due to problems such as this.

To keep productivity high, it was important for the studios to constantly discover new talent to use. Talent scouts would scour the nation for the top singers, dancers, and actors in the country. The studio scouts were very astute when looking for new stars. They wanted young people who had talent but were also pliant, flexible, and, above all, obedient. With the amount of money it took to create a star, studios wanted to be sure the performer would follow through for them (Basinger, 2007, p. 14). Young talent was found for the studios by the heads of the talent department at each studio: Solly Baiano at Warner Bros., Lucille Ryman and Al Trescony at Metro, Milton Lewis at Paramount, and Ivan Kahn at 20th Century Fox. These scouts would attend Broadway shows, local theater acts, pageants, and night club acts to find new talent (Davis, 1993, p. 80). According to Ronald Davis' 1993 book *The Glamour Factory*, with the astounding success of Mary Pickford, the first child star, mothers around the nation wanted their tots in pictures. Scouts at all the studios were besieged by mothers requesting opportunities for their children or offering photographs of potential child stars.

Once talent was discovered, they were brought to California to take part in many tests. There was the screen test, where it was determined whether they would photograph well. According to Basinger (2005), all new potential “stars” were submitted to a screen test, primarily to see how they would photograph *before* the studio made any touchups. There was also a personality test, where the performer would be asked a series of questions so the studio executives could gauge what sort of personality the individual had and whether it would translate through the camera. This may have included being asked to “stand up,” “sit down,” or “smoke a cigarette” (Basinger, 2005, p. 39). Usually with very inexperienced actors and actresses, there would first be a reading with an acting coach and the casting department. This would be followed by a silent test (mainly a photographic test), and after that there would be a sound test, with the young hopeful reading a short scene from a play or an earlier picture. Studios were searching for beauty, acting ability, and a unique personality that the audience would connect with. Personality was valued first, as this is what would make the star, and then beauty was the second most important attribute (Davis, 1993). Thus, talent wasn't necessarily the selling point for the studios.

Once it was decided that a newcomer had the talent and personality for the job, they were signed to a 7-year contract with the studio. These contracts had 6-month options, where the studio would decide whether or not they still wanted to keep the player. Salaries for these contracts typically started at \$75 - \$250 per week, with large bonuses if the performer became a very lucrative star (Davis, 1993). Though these contracts were flexible for the studio, they were very rigid for the stars themselves. The 7-year contracts essentially bound the individual to the studio. They required the signer to accept any role the studio wanted him or her to play. The studio had the right to terminate the contract for any reason. Also, the star was not allowed to quit the studio but could be fired for any reason (Basinger, 2007). Contracts were for 40 weeks a year so actors went 12 weeks without pay each year. During these 12 weeks, performers weren't allowed to work elsewhere without special permission from the studio. MGM also had a clause in their contracts that mandated that one day at the end of each picture must be devoted to portraits and fashion stills (Davis, 1993). Players had little to no choice over which roles they played, and if they refused a picture, they were suspended, banned from working anywhere else, and the time they were suspended was added to the term of their contract (Davis, 1993, p. 105). For those stars proclaimed as "trouble makers," finding jobs could become difficult, as the studios often would band together against the actor. If there were rumors that a star caused problems, he or she could be blacklisted from any movie studio, as Ingrid Bergman was after she became pregnant with a man who was not her husband (Davis, 1993, p. 111).

Contracts not only dictated a performer's roles and working conditions, but many studios also controlled the star's social lives as well. No star was allowed to marry without studio permission. According to *The Glamour Factory*, "Louis B. Mayer encourage June Allyson to date studio heartthrobs Van Johnson and Peter Lawford then later tried to prevent her from marrying Dick Powell, who Mayer claimed was a 'has-been'" (Davis, 1993, p. 109). "The studios controlled our lives completely," said teen star Jimmy Lydon. "They told us who to go out with and where to. . . . They owned us like a piece of furniture" (Basinger, 2007, p. 131).

The studio not only controlled the actor's social life, but also his or her appearance. Hollywood was the first to pioneer plastic surgery and cosmetic procedures (Basinger, 2007, p. 41). No star was left untouched, and many saw their self-esteem and self-regard fall because of the constant scrutiny.

One of the most interesting examples of this manufacturing of beauty is the story of dancer Eleanor Powell, who came to MGM with already beautiful features. Her one flaw was the large amount of freckles she had on her face. To remove them, MGM had her go through a series of violet-ray treatments. These treatments caused her skin to completely peel off, but her freckles

were gone. To make her body “star worthy,” the wardrobe department made her foundation garments that would mold her hips, flatten her already flat stomach, and lift her too-small breasts. To capitalize on their own genius, one of MGM’s first publicity pieces for Eleanor was titled, “The Glorifying of Eleanor Powell (How in 12 months She’s Been Transformed from an Ugly Duckling into a Vivid, Radiant Film Beauty)” (Basinger, 2007). Newcomer’s screen tests were scrutinized closely to figure out what changes to their appearance would be needed. “What’ll we do with her nose?” makeup might ask. “Well, her hair’s got to be fixed,” a stylist might state. “We’ve got to pad her bosom” was often the consensus (Davis, 1993, p. 82). Even the most popular stars had adjustments that needed to take place. Claudette Colbert hated her nose and would have the makeup department apply green paste along it to reduce its apparent size. Clark Gable’s ears had to be altered, and Rita Hayworth’s hairline was raised. The actor must be groomed to meet the camera, and in these days, perfection became the goal. Even serious actresses were concerned with their appearance--keeping trim, having caps put on their teeth, adding false bosoms and eyelashes (Davis, 1993, p. 103).

After their physical changes were acquired, stars underwent a rigorous training period—especially the child stars. The studio gave potential stars the training they needed to take their place in the studio hierarchy: manners, diction, acting, riding, walking, dancing, singing, fencing, and lessons on how to meet fans and dignitaries (Basinger, 2007, p. 132). Young contract players with less experience were put into an extensive apprenticeship program, including elaborate grooming and culture lessons. Lillian Burns, MGM’s talent coach, said, “They had to learn about antiques, about music, about culture. That was part of their training. By developing the person, you were developing their talent” (Davis, 1993, p. 85). As part of their training, studios also offered singing and dancing lessons. Elizabeth Taylor, Janet Leigh, and Margaret O’Brien were all required to take dance lessons on regular schedules at Metro (Davis, 1993, p. 88). Helen Rose helped young people at Metro pick out their clothes while Della Owens Rice at 20th Century Fox advised starlets on how to dress. Performers learned about taking care of their body, taking care of their clothes, how to come across in interviews, and how to appear in public. “The studio owned you and they wanted their property in great shape,” MGM contract player Jean Porter said (Davis, 1993, p. 88).

One of the most important aspects of building a star was creating his or her publicity and audience appeal. MGM could put their stars in any night club or grocery store to generate publicity for the star in question. Newcomers especially needed publicity to get their names out there. For young stars, the most important thing for the studio to do was build his or her type, basically an overall personality the audience could relate to. For stars who became lost in their

type, it could become very confusing for them to identify their true personality. Most stars were ambitious and realized the advantages of skillful publicity. Prudent performers made themselves available whenever something newsworthy occurred. Young stars especially needed publicity and were constantly in the publicity office, eager to put their names in print. Young stars were involved in anything that would attract the press's attention, even opening a supermarket (Davis, 1993). The creation of a biography for the star was a crucial part of the movie star process. Though mostly factual, many of these bios contained falsehoods designed to build a persona around the performer. Names were changed, ages were changed, and if a star's father was a banker, his profession might be changed to a plumber to relate to the "everyman" (Basinger, 2007).

Because films are such an *intimate* medium, studios realized stars needed a certain persona that the audience could easily relate to and wanted to watch over and over. "'Persona' means the creation of a second self that is believed to be the original self" (Basinger, 2007, p. 74). The problem began when both the studios and the star her- or himself could not distinguish between the original self and the persona. To a ludicrous extreme, studios began to believe in their own creations and even get confused about them. When Greer Garson married the actor who played her son in *Mrs. Miniver*, Louis B. Mayer became very upset, saying, "What will people think?" he bellowed, "You've married your own son!" (Basinger, 2007, p. 99). Gregory Peck felt actors tended to lose sight of reality during the making of a film. "The make believe becomes reality," Peck explained, "and the real world recedes into the distance" (Davis, 1993, p. 257). The persona could also conflict with the maturity of the actual performer. Jane Powell often played youthful, girl-next-door types. She said, "I wanted to grow up and not be the girl next door" (Davis, 1993, p. 110).

When a star finally "made it" in Hollywood, their names appeared above the title and their bonuses got bigger. However, accompanying the new fame was a loss of privacy and the pressure to be on your game at all times, with the studios having very little pity for those who couldn't handle it.

The final step of audience approval was the one that put the name above the title and could even lead to legendary status. Every top-of-the-line movie star had to find a type that he or she could play over and over. The final test for a true "star" was out of the hands of the performer and studio. The audience had to see something it wanted and could grow to love (Basinger, 2007). A picture's success or failure often rested on the star's shoulders. The star, more than the director, was held accountable for a picture's draw at the box office. Although stars were treated like royalty, it was a precarious position, dependent on popular appeal. Because the

success of their films relied so much on the talent themselves, stars felt a heavy burden that sometimes led them to be temperamental and demanding. The difficulties stemmed from the insecurities stars felt from knowing they had a reputation to maintain and that if they were to slip, their career would be finished (Davis, 1993). Probably the largest downside to the acclaim and fame was the loss of anonymity. Suddenly everyone knew who you were and wanted to know the intimate details of your life. For an insecure performer, this could cause extreme unhappiness. Contract player Lizabeth Scott said, "There comes a time when living in the limelight, the impersonalization of your personality becomes so offensive that you finally say, 'I've had it'" (Davis, 1993, p. 119).

For all contract players, the studio became the center of the star's world. It was where they worked 6 days out of the week for 8-plus hours a day. While the studio could be extremely benevolent at times, it often also showed lack of empathy and abuse similar to that of an authoritarian parent. The studios were prepared to be helpful parents to the needy little children who were going to grow up to be big, big stars, as long as they obeyed orders (Basinger, 2007, p. 129). Although studios insisted on allegiance from their contract players, they took care of everything for them, both personally and professionally. Studio security would get stars out of trouble if they needed it, without a word about it leaked to the press. The studio also would give home loans and do the star's laundry for them (Davis, 1993). However, studios had very little pity for those stars who were unhappy with the studio control. When Mickey Rooney wanted to marry Ava Gardner, Louis B. Mayer shouted, "How dare you destroy the studio's best investment! It's not your life, not as long as you're working for me. MGM has made your life" (Basinger, 2007, p. 140). Studios also had little concern for their star's welfares. They could be demanding and exploitative. It was not uncommon for a performer to finish a full day of filming, only to be told he or she had to go to an event that night (Davis, 1993, p. 90).

Although the studios were difficult to deal with, there was a familial atmosphere among all of the players and executives. Those who stayed at a studio long enough came to feel part of a family. There was bickering and internal dissension, but intimate relationships and shared experiences grew and were nurtured. Louis B. Mayer was such a paternal figure on the MGM lot that his young actresses were called "Mayer's Girls" (Davis, 1993). This back and forth between the studio at once acting paternal and protective but also demanding and unfeeling caused confusion for many contract players. Many felt betrayed when their "family" turned out to only be interested in the monetary value of the performer.

Judy Garland: The Quintessential Cautionary Tale of a Child Star

The life and death of Judy Garland represents the typical story of a child star gone amuck. With her well-known drug use and abuse and her emotional, overdose suicide, Judy's tale is one every child star should keep in mind. It also shows how the institutionalization of the studio system can greatly affect the self-esteem and emotional stability of a movie star.

Judy's life began like any other child's. She was born on June 10, 1922, to Frances and Ethel Gumm in Grand Rapids, Minnesota. Frank and Ethel were both in Vaudeville, where they met and courted each other. Frank ran a local movie theater, while Ethel played the piano during the films, providing sound. Before Judy was born, Ethel and Frank already had two children: Virginia, later known as Jimmy, and Mary Jane, who would later change her name to Suzanne. Early in their life, the two girls became a part of their mother's and father's Vaudeville act. During the intermission at the movie theater or in between Vaudeville shows, the girls would tramp out and do their own act, with Ethel accompanying them on the piano (Clarke, 2000; Diorio, 1973; Frank, 1975).

Because they already had two children, Ethel and Frank were not particularly excited when they learned they were pregnant with Judy. They tried to get rid of the baby by having Ethel drink large amounts of castor oil, taking Ethel on rough wagon rides, and even considering abortion (Frank, 1975, p. 11). When they finally agreed to keep the baby, they hoped and prayed for it to be a boy, since they already had two girls. The feeling of being unwanted would haunt Judy most of her life. She would even say at one point that she had kicked and screamed to stay in the womb, since she didn't want them as much as they didn't want her. It was not long, however, before Judy became a part of her sisters' act, and she quickly proved to be the star of the show. One night, while her sisters were performing, Judy came out onstage to sing "Jingle Bells" while ringing a small bell. She was so delighted by the audience reaction and applause that she ended up singing the song four times, before having to be dragged off the stage by Frank Gumm (Frank, 1973). It became clear after sometime that Baby, as she was called (later shortened to Babe), was the star of the act. When they visited their relatives, Ethel would whip out her portable stage and tell Baby to jump up and do a tap dance for them (Clarke, 2000, p. 21).

According to biographer Gerold Frank (1973), the Gumm family dynamic was one of contrasts. At home, Frank was an affectionate father. He would play jacks with the girls on the floor of their home, and he shamelessly indulged them, especially little Babe, who was often ill with ear aches and thus gained most of the attention from their father. Ethel Gumm, on the other hand, was clearly the disciplinarian. She coached the girls with their singing and made both their everyday costumes and their stage costumes.

Due to Frank's increasing health problems, the Gumms decided to move to California to escape the chilling winters of Minnesota and because a doctor friend, named Marc Rosenberg, had recommended it to them. The move to Lancaster, California, was difficult for all of them, as Frank had to build a new business running a new movie theater, Ethel had to make new friends, and the children were taken from their childhood home (Clarke, 2000). The difficulties the family faced began manifesting themselves in Ethel's and Frank's marriage, which was slowly falling apart. As the two began drifting apart, Ethel began spending more time on the girls' careers. Some of this concentration stemmed from her unhappiness, some from her dissatisfaction with Lancaster, and some from her need to fulfill herself through her daughters (Frank, 1975, p. 31). Ethel's shrewd dark eyes searched restlessly for an opening through which she could propel her daughters into show business. Never too proud or too shy, she pushed every door, hoping to find one unlocked (Clarke, 2000, p. 28). During the time they lived in Lancaster and before the girls were old enough to attend school, Ethel shuttled them all around the California and West Coast area to sing in nightclubs, theaters, and fairs. Ethel was not a typical manager and, thus, could not distinguish between the big and small acts and what was important to further her daughters' careers, so she signed them up for anything and everything. This led to some of the shows being less than ideal; in one locale the girls were pelted with tomatoes and sandwiches (Clarke, 2000).

After the Gumm family moved to California, Judy began to experience what she would later come to resent: the idea that she was only a voice. She described it as "winding me up to sing and then putting me back in the closet when they were finished with me" (Frank, 1975, p. 24). According to Gerold Frank's biography, *Judy*, Peg, a friend of Ethel's, would often watch Judy while Ethel and Frank were working. She would take Judy to her bridge club meetings and have her sing for the ladies. More and more it was being made clear to her that this was her value, her importance, her role: her voice was everything. This idea would also be ingrained in her during her time at MGM.

Judy's relationship with Ethel did not help her to feel wanted or accepted. Ethel was a harsh mother and showed very little maternal feeling towards any of her children. Many people noted that Ethel seemed to look at Babe with chilling detachment, more like a manager studying a promising talent than a mother looking at her own child. Ethel rarely, if ever, showed any tenderness towards Judy (Clarke, 2000, p. 35). Ethel also played mind games with Judy to get her to behave in the way she wanted her to. In an article that Judy wrote for *McCall's Magazine* after she left the studio, she stated, "When I was naughty or bad, [Ethel and I] were inevitably in a strange town—like Vancouver or something. And instead of giving me a wallop on the behind,

which I would have welcomed, she wouldn't tell me what I'd done wrong. She'd just slowly pack her own suitcases—in silence—to add to the agony. Then I'd sit there all alone, terrified. Just sitting there waiting, hoping she'd come back. It has a lot to do with my loneliness today" (Diorio, 1973, p. 26). Ethel's frequent abandonment would scar Judy for the rest of her life and cause her to constantly question whether she was truly loved or not. Ethel also tried to use the girls as pawns when she and Frank got into heated arguments. She would get the girls and say, "We're leaving Daddy." When Babe objected, Ethel would simply reply, "Then you don't love me," which would leave Babe feeling both guilty and helpless (Clarke, 2000, p. 38). Judy once said of her parents' marriage, "For years there was no marriage" (Frank, 1975, p. 42). She also recalled a long separation, during this period, when she and her mother lived in the Gates Hotel in Los Angeles, while her father remained in Lancaster with her sisters. Babe always knew that even "in the middle of great kindness or loud laughter [Ethel] was capable of saying something or doing something that would scare me to death" (Clarke, 2000, p. 39). Love for her mother was always mixed with fear, much like the love she felt while at MGM was accompanied by fear of criticism and reproof.

Ethel's lack of warmth towards her daughter caused Judy to have a very low self-esteem, which pervaded her entire life and was the main source of her drug use and subsequent emotional breakdown.

The experience a person has of being parented has a strong influence on the emotional and physical health and well-being of the person as an adult as well as a child. There is a growing body of evidence that the quality of care that babies and toddlers receive depends on the sensitivity, insight, attitudes, and resilience of their parents (Dowling, 2010, p. 188). Many studies have demonstrated also that parental warmth and encouragement of autonomy are positively related to adult adjustment (Rapport & Meleen, 1998, p. 3). Because Ethel showed such little warmth and nurturing, Judy had difficulty adjusting to adult life, and this was especially hampered by her lack of self-esteem. As would be predicted by major theories of child development, the quality of the parent-child relationship moderated the effects of celebrity on adult adjustment. According to Rapport and Meleen (1998), one manner for parents to reduce the risk of adverse consequences associated with child celebrity is to provide their children with warmth and encourage the development of their independence. In Judy's case, Ethel performed neither of these traits. She did not provide Judy with warmth or encouragement, and, in fact, the older Judy got, the more control Ethel and the studio tried to exert over her.

According to Drs. John Mack and Steven Ablon (1983), the empirical literature on child development supports the position that healthy self-esteem regulation depends upon a competent child developing within a supportive, praising world of loving adults. Self-esteem first develops as a response to the mother-child relationship in infancy. If the mother is attentive and understands the child's wants and needs, then the child feels worthwhile, competent, and loved. If this development is not achieved, then a sense of worthlessness, failure, and shame ensues (Kestenbaum, 1998, p. 23). Ethel was never in tune with Judy's needs and consistently expressed discontent with Judy, including when she told an agent Judy "wasn't pretty enough" for movies (Frank, 1975, p. 60). Because the mother-child connection was poorly formed, Judy entered the studio system already feeling worthless and with a damaged self-image. One might consider the precursor of positive self-esteem to be the good body feeling and the effects of pleasurable excitement and lively interest associated with the mutually loving exchanges, the touching and looking that normally occur between parent and infant (Mack, 1983, p. 13). There was very little affection shown between Judy and Ethel, which hampered Judy's ability to develop a strong sense of self-esteem early in her life. Although Judy's father displayed affection and caring for his daughters, Ethel's lack of affection was a more powerful force in Judy's life due to the vast amounts of time spent apart from her father.

When emotional pain and conflict in the family setting become unendurable in childhood, avoidance defenses may develop that lead the child to distance her- or himself from others in the family unit. Self-esteem then may suffer in adult life as a result of continuing unexplained feelings of social isolation accompanied by a sense of "not belonging" (Mack, 1983, p. 18). Judy was devastated when her mother again married, this time to a harsh, disciplined man named William Gilmore. Judy hated Mr. Gilmore (Judy would always refer to him formally as Mr. Gilmore) because, when Judy and Ethel got in arguments, he took Ethel's side and the two would bear down on Judy so she had no hope of getting her point across (Frank, 1975, p. 120). This unhappiness at home caused Judy to distance herself from her mother and Gilmore. As child development theory shows, this distance could have also contributed to Judy's low sense of self-esteem, as she did not even feel welcome among her own family.

Once word got around about the "Gumm Sisters" act (later changed to the "Garland Sisters" at the request of a theater owner), the girls were in demand all around California and especially in Los Angeles. To further the girls' careers, especially Babe's, Ethel felt that moving to Los Angeles was the best solution. Once they moved to Los Angeles, Judy was enrolled in the Lawlor School for Professional Children. The school held classes only until noon, so the children would have the afternoon to go on auditions or work. The school even helped the

children attain their all-important labor permit (Frank, 1975, p. 45). While in LA, Ethel also signed the girls up with the Meglin Kiddies, a booking agency run by Ethel Meglin, a former ballroom dancer. The Kiddies toured as a group and gave shows throughout the Los Angeles area. Ethel Meglin's past experience along with rigorous training and promotion made her "Kiddies" much sought after by both the movie studios and Vaudeville houses. Twice a year Meglin produced a widely publicized "Meglin Kiddies Show" in downtown LA where the children were seen by talent scouts from the studios and radio stations (Clarke, 2000; Diorio, 1973; Frank, 1975). The weekend lessons with Miss Meglin in LA were the start of a confusing period for Judy. She enjoyed it on one hand, but she also disliked it on the other. It was the beginning of the dichotomy suffered by every child performer, who regrets a lost childhood, yet would not have foregone the magical world of Showbiz (Frank, 1975, p. 33).

While at Meglin's Kiddies, Ethel showed just how tenacious she could be to get Judy into show business. Under California labor laws, no child under the age of 6 could appear onstage. Ethel learned that a representative of the Gerry Society, which enforced these rules, would attend Miss Meglin's rehearsal, where 5-year-old Judy was supposed to perform. When it came time for Judy to rehearse, Ethel sent Jimmy onstage instead. Jimmy was old enough to appear, and Ethel had her birth certificate to prove it. Thus, Ethel was able to skirt the law to get Judy onstage where talent scouts might see her. Ethel also tried to shop Judy around to different agents in the Hollywood area and at the Chicago World's Fair, which the girls were supposed to perform at. After Judy sang for agent Harry Cohn, he asked, "Why isn't she in pictures?" Ethel replied, in Judy's line of hearing, "I think it's because she just isn't pretty enough" (Frank, 1975, p. 60). The idea of Judy "not being pretty enough" is one that tormented her throughout her life and would lead to many of the emotional problems she faced while at MGM.



A "not pretty enough" Frances Gumm before she became famous (Johnson, Jim. *Judy Garland Database*. Retrieved 27 April 2011 at <http://www.judygarland.com/>)

According to another Judy biographer, Al Diorio, Jr., one of Judy's first big breaks came in 1934 at a lodge the girls performed at in Lake Tahoe. Judy was asked to sing for some friends of the owners who happened to be the casting director for Columbia Pictures, a songwriter, and a Hollywood talent agent by the name of Al Rosen. Rosen would later become Judy's first agent. Rosen is the person who started taking Judy around to the movie studios, but initially to no avail. Judy had auditioned at nearly every movie studio when she was finally asked

to perform at MGM. This was actually her second time performing there. Frank had to take Judy to her MGM audition because Ethel was working at the time. When Louis B. Mayer and the other executives in the room showed little to no interest in Judy, Judy and Frank left the studio “thinking it was a big nothing,” in Judy’s words (Diorio, 1973, p. 30). Though the studio executives had seemed disinterested, after the audition, Louis B. Mayer decided on the spot to offer her a 7-year contract with the studio. This was the first time someone had been offered a contract without taking part in a screen or sound test (Diorio, 1973).

Judy’s contract with Metro was full of little requirements aimed at stifling Judy and putting her under Metro’s full control. Ethel even worked out an arrangement with the studio where she would be paid a stipend out of Judy’s salary in return for acting as Judy’s secretary and chaperone, making sure Judy fulfilled all of her obligations to the studio (Frank, 1975, p. 109). This clause provided a huge conflict of interest to Judy, as her mother, who is supposed to be her supporter and caregiver, became an employee of Metro whose sole job was to ensure Judy did whatever Louis B. Mayer told her to. Other clauses in her contract stated that if Judy’s physical appearance changed or her voice became impaired so that she could not perform, she could be suspended from the studio without pay. If the damage was permanent, her contract could be terminated. Judy also was not allowed to sing in public, be photographed, her voice recorded, or her name used without the studio’s written permission. The studio owned her: her voice, her face, her name—all were Metro’s (Frank, 1975).

Rumor has it that Judy was Mayer’s favorite of all the child performers on the lot, although it afforded her very few advantages (Diorio, 1973, p. 31). If anything, the fact that Mayer adored her was a disadvantage for Judy. Her mother’s domination over her was second only to that of the studio and Louis B. Mayer. They told her who to date, how to dress, what to say, and practically when to breathe (Diorio,

1973, p. 47).

As was the custom for a newcomer in Hollywood, Judy was put through the ringer when they decided what parts of her physical appearance needed to be changed. The studio would have to bind her breasts to keep her looking no more than 14, the declared age on her contract, for the next few



years. Later, to give her a shapely waist, they would squeeze her into a rigid corset. Judy was also given caps for her teeth to fix her bite and rubber disks to fix her nose. She was instructed to carry these items around with her for whenever she needed them (Frank, 1975). Going through The Gallery,

where stars were fitted and had their portraits taken, was one of Judy's unhappiest experiences. She was told she was too short, too plump, and had no neck. Louis B. Mayer even called her his "little hunchback" (Frank, 1975, p. 72). As Gerold Frank (1975) reported, for Judy this emphasis on what she lacked in beauty was a source of constant humiliation. From it grew, in her teenage years, no less than an obsession—the conviction that she was not physically attractive or sexually desirable to men.

Upon arriving at the studio, Judy went through the normal apprentice program of all new incoming performers. She was given dancing lessons, diction lessons, drama lessons, French lessons, lessons on making up for the screen and street, lessons in deportment, how to walk, how to carry herself, and how to respond in interviews. She also was given additional singing lessons, working with songwriter Roger Edens, who was to become a life-long supporter and defender of Judy (Frank, 1975). As Judy entered adolescence, the importance of peer thoughts became more important than motherly affection, and her lack of self-love became even more apparent. Shifts in middle childhood and adolescence are partial transformations in the gradual movement toward co-regulation in parent-child relationships (Collins, 1984). Adolescents and adult children still have a relationship with their parents, but it is different than their relationship in childhood, though it still has a set of rules and expectations with it. The adolescent no longer needs the parent to be a caregiver, but rather the parent is responsible for providing advice and guidance for the adolescent as she enters adulthood (Collins, 1984, p. 172). The esteem of others creates the positive emotional milieu in which self-love can develop and provides specific information about what is worthwhile and lovable about the person. The opinions, attitudes, and feelings of others become a part of the intrapsychic structure of the self (Cotton, 1983, p. 124). The studio's negative impressions of Judy's physical appearance eroded what little self-esteem she had when she entered the studio. According to Cotton, the influence of others on self-esteem changes considerably in adolescence. The esteem of others plays a significant role in self-esteem regulation.

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increasing
on peers and

The transformation of Judy Garland from awkward teenager to a glamour queen. Judy was never comfortable with her glamorous looks, in evidence in the second picture. (Johnson, Jim. *Judy Garland Database*. Retrieved 27 April 2011 at <http://www.jgdb.com/>)

an
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figures. Louis B. Mayer would become an extrafamilial figure to Judy, and his constant derision of her appearance made her feel extremely insecure. The effects of low self-esteem can be incredibly damaging to adolescents and the adults they become. In the case of lowered self-esteem, an adolescent might feel pain, anxiety, anguish, helplessness, shame, or humiliation (Ablon, 1983, p. 79). It is safe to say Judy felt most of these effects. In his piece on the psychotherapy of adolescent depression, Knobel (1998) observed that, “in adolescence, although the core manifestations of depression are self-deprecation, hopelessness and despair, depression may take distinct forms. It may be expressed as temper outbursts, sadistic, masochistic and explosive sexual behavior, delinquency and drug abuse” (p. 99). This belief explains Judy’s dependency on pills and also foreshadows her increased desire for sexual relationships with men, which would become a fixture of her adult life.

Tragedy struck Judy’s life only 3 months after signing her contract with MGM, when her father passed away suddenly of spinal meningitis. To add to the tragedy, Judy was unable to be with him that night because she was performing on the Al Jonson radio show. However, the nurses at the hospital put the radio to her father’s ear while she sang, “Zing! Went the Strings of my Heart” (Clarke, 2000). The suddenness and unfairness of her father’s death remained a wound to Judy her all life (Frank, 1975, p. 76). Because Judy never felt a strong emotional attachment to her mother and



sisters, she looked for love from her father. After he was gone, she continually sought out sources of love from others, mainly the men she fell in love with (Diorio, 1973, p. 32).

In 1936, before Judy truly became a star, Metro put her in a very small role in the film *Pigskin Parade*. In this film, she played the younger sister of the main actor. Her character was supposed to be unattractive and talking in a heavy Southern accent. After this film, both MGM and Judy decided that she came across on the screen looking like a “fat little pig with pigtails” (Diorio, 1973, p. 33). And so, with Judy’s first film, she was started on her never-ending diet routine. Judy’s big break came when she was asked to perform a song at Clark Gable’s on-set birthday party. The song, “Dear Mr. Gable,” written by Roger Eden, was such a hit it made Gable himself cry and was subsequently written into the film *Broadway Melody of 1938* for Judy to sing. This would be Judy’s first feature role. Though Judy received positive reviews and audience reaction from *Broadway Melody of 1938*, the studio still

Judy before her excessive dieting started. She was deemed too chubby for pictures. (Johnson, Jim. *Judy Garland Database*. Retrieved 27 April 2011 at <http://www.jgdb.com/>).

felt Judy looked too plump for pictures. Louis B. Mayer sent orders to the studio commissary saying that, no matter what she ordered, Judy was to be given nothing but chicken soup to eat (Diorio, 1973). However, Judy often rebelled against this studio mandate and would sneak out to have malted milks and other treats she was denied. A sample of Metro's correspondence during this time reads, "Judy sneaked out between takes seven and eight this afternoon and had a malted milk. Garland gained ten pounds. Costumes refitted. J. G. brought three chocolate bars to rehearsal this AM. Reported this to Mayer" (Diorio, 1973, p. 34).

The weight issue became so bad that one of Metro's executives called Judy to his office and told her frankly she was so fat she looked like a monster. Judy was forced to stand in front of a mirror and told to compare herself with a dummy of an overweight woman next to her. "Now look at yourself," she was told. "Do you want to look like that dummy, or do you want to be a star?" By undermining her confidence, Metro only made her more eager to find comfort in sweet, fattening treats (Clarke, 2000).

Judy once commented on Metro's supervision of her weight by saying, "From the time I was 13, there was a constant struggle between MGM and me—whether or not to eat, how much to eat, what to eat. I remember this more vividly than anything else in my childhood" (Clarke, 2000, p. 82). In desperation, Metro resorted to their last option: diet pills, mixed with Benzedrine and Phenobarbital. Benzedrine had been introduced to the film colony only a year before Judy was signed and quickly became a common drug. They were known for taking away appetite, enabling a person to stay up for hours without sleep and giving one a wonderful sense of well-being free from exhaustion. Ethel was consulted when Judy first began the tablets, and she consented to please the studio. However, when the tablets kept Judy from sleeping, Ethel was forced to give her a sleeping tablet, which then caused Judy to act very drugged. She would then take another Benzedrine to pep herself up, and thus began a vicious cycle that would persist her entire life (Frank, 1975).

Adolescence is a time when body image is very important, as is the estimation of one's peers and "fitting in" with the crowd. With external standards of beauty so rigid and unattainable, girls become increasingly ashamed and distressed about their bodies. Psychologist Albert Bandura's research (cited in Kestenbaum, 1998, p. 27) found that when people fail to meet cultural ideals, intrusive thoughts may undermine cognitive functioning. Intrusive and obsessive self-disparaging thoughts will easily compromise a growing girl's sense of self, as it did with Judy. She became so upset about her body image that she often joined in with others who were making fun of her. The adolescent judges herself according to how she believes she is perceived by others. They see themselves in their peers and develop a concept of themselves

through the eyes of others (Kestenbaum, 1998). Thus, because the studio had such a negative image of Judy's appearance, Judy herself began believing in this image and felt even more out of place in the glamour factory of Hollywood.

The control that Judy's mother and the studio exerted over her eating habits was also damaging to Judy's development because it gave her a skewed perception of her relationship with food. Rather than leading her to healthier options, the harsh restrictions placed upon her only drove her to fattening, unhealthy foods with even more gusto. Among children, excessive parental control over when, what, and how much children eat may teach children to ignore their feelings of hunger or fullness and may lead to increased levels of intake. Researchers have identified a positive association between parents' control of children's food intake (specifically their restricting, access to food) and children's percentage of energy intake as fat (Davison & Birch, 2001, p. 163). Such restriction may well be why Judy never developed a healthy relationship with food and was often overweight in her adult life. Davison and Birch further pointed out that control in the feeding domain may also promote children's preferences for particular foods. Research findings show that restricting children's access to particular foods increases children's preference for and consumption of such foods when the restriction is removed. Davison and Birch also noted that social influences (e.g., media, peers, family) regarding dieting and other weight-control practices are particularly important during adolescence. Sociocultural pressures to be thin via media messages and images are strong, and peer dieting attitudes and behaviors also have been shown to be very important to adolescents. Judy once confessed to Joan Crawford that she felt out of place at Metro. "Until MGM I had enjoyed being myself. I had been judged by my talent, but in the movies beauty was the standard of judgment—and definitely I didn't have it. And so I began to dislike the me I saw



Judy was allowed a milkshake for this publicity still with father-figure Louis B. Mayer and pal Mickey Rooney. (Johnson, Jim. *Judy Garland Database*. Retrieved 27 April 2011 at

reflected in my mirror, especially when I compared myself with the real beauties on the lot, like Lana Turner" (Clarke, 2000, p. 134). A rivalry with Lana Turner would stay with Judy throughout her career at Metro. It reached its height after Turner eloped with band leader Artie Shaw, who was Judy's first real love (Clarke, 2000).

After Judy's success in *Broadway Melody of 1938*,

the studio began placing her in the wildly successful Andy Hardy films, starring Mickey Rooney. These films often were used as a vehicle for new female

performers, and Judy was no exception. Judy was cast in her first Andy Hardy film, *Andy Hardy*

Finds Love, as Betsy Booth, Mickey's plain best friend who never gets the guy. If any message was coming to Judy through her casting, it was always the same and only confirmed the conviction she constantly felt and believed: that men looked elsewhere than at her (Frank, 1975, p. 118). With these Andy Hardy films, MGM had established the persona that remained with Judy almost to the end of her career. She is the wholesome girl next door, the sensitive soul mate boys like but don't lust after (Clarke, 2000, p. 80).

Judy's star-making role came when Metro bought the rights for the story book, *The Wizard of Oz*. At first, Metro wanted Shirley Temple for the role, but when Fox would not loan her out, the role went to Judy. It was a huge film, with a large budget, an all-star cast, and it was one of the first films to use Technicolor technology. Metro's first and only problem with Judy in the making of *Wizard of Oz* was her appearance. Dorothy, the lead character, was supposed to be a young girl in the film. Judy, however, was fully developed, and it showed clearly. In order to make her look younger, Judy was forced to be bound and corseted throughout the making of the film. The pressure on Judy in making *The Wizard of Oz* was huge. She was surrounded by a talented cast and songwriters composing specifically for her, and she felt the weight of having to carry a \$3 million picture (Frank, 1975). Judy had a habit of bursting into laughter during takes. When this occurred on the set of *The Wizard of Oz*, Victor Fleming, a serious and intimidating director, came up to Judy and slapped her across the face. He then told her to go to her dressing room. Upon her return, Judy did the scene in one take and without laughing (Clarke, 2000, p. 98). This example shows that not even children were treated carefully on the set. They were treated just like any adult.

On August 19, 1939, *The Wizard of Oz* premiered at The Capitol Theatre in New York. All during the week leading up to the premiere, Judy and Mickey Rooney performed a Vaudeville act at The Capitol Theatre. They did five shows a day, which ultimately led Judy to collapse offstage from exhaustion. Nevertheless, she was revived and pepped up (with her Benzedrine) for the next show. *The Wizard of Oz* was so successful that it would go on to become one of the most beloved movies of all time and established Judy as one of the top stars on the lot. Judy Garland was officially a movie star, and her life would never be the same. Ray Bolger, who played the scarecrow in *The Wizard of Oz*, had this to say after Judy's death: "She never had a minute to herself. I suppose MGM executives loved her and they adored her but she was still a commodity to them. She went from child to marked woman in one shocking overnight experience" (Diorio, 1993, p. 219).

After the great success of *The Wizard of Oz*, Judy was kept in constant work by the studio, which was eager to capitalize on her newfound audience appeal. Judy continued making films with Mickey Rooney, one of which was *Strike Up the Band*. Judy became so exhausted on the set of this film, directed by Busby Berkeley, who was extremely demanding and harsh, that she collapsed on set. After this incident, Ethel Gumm became so alarmed by Judy's physical and emotional exhaustion that she told MGM that Judy was not to work more than 8 hours a day. Louis B. Mayer's response was to ban Ethel from the lot (Clark, 2000, p. 143). Because Ethel rarely exerted any say in Judy's career, she had lost all control to Metro, of whom she was also an employee. Thus, even when Ethel tried to protect her daughter, she was unable to because she had ceded control years before.

To keep Judy going, the studio and she relied more and more on pep pills and sleeping pills. In an article Judy wrote for *McCall Magazine*, she said, "When we were in production they had us working days and nights on end. They'd give us pep pills to keep us on our feet long after we were exhausted. Then they'd take us to the studio hospital and knock us cold with sleeping pills. Then, after four hours, they'd wake us up and give us the pep pills again so we could work another 72 hours in a row" (Diorio, 1973, p. 45). According to Gerold Frank's 1975 biography, *Judy*, although everyone else in Hollywood took pep pills, it was the way Judy took them that had people concerned. Judy took them mainly for the euphoria they gave her. She was able to escape the things that were truly bothering her, which were mainly her insecurities and sense of inferiority. If others took the pills to feel better than normal, Judy took the pills to feel normal. A cycle developed that would continue for the rest of Judy's life where she would go off the pills and then get right back on. When she attempted to avoid them, the result was a physical pain and sense of suffocation that became so intense she had to take the pills again.

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Judy's birthday party with her *Babes in Arms* cast. The occasion was used as publicity for the film. (Johnson, Jim. *Judy Garland Database*. Retrieved 27 April 2011 at <http://www.jgdb.com/>)

cycle caused her to build drugs (Frank, 1975, p.

Meleen's 1998 study stars and their parents found that young higher lifetime prevalence substance abuse (40% for other substances) that that of the general

population (14% and 2% respectively). Long hours of work on a regular basis can harm children's social and educational development as well. U.S. adolescents who work more than 20 hours per week have reported more problem behaviors (aggression, misconduct, substance abuse) and sleep deprivation (*Health Issues: The Child Labor Public Education Project*, retrieved 18 March 2011 at

http://www.continuetolearn.uiowa.edu/laborctr/child_labor/about/health_issues.html). Judy had incredibly long work hours, and this is the main reason she relied so much on both sleeping pills and pep pills to help regulate her energy. Addiction is caused by many reasons. Lack of willpower, predisposing antisocial personalities, peer group pressures, environmental deprivation, low self-esteem, poor social functioning, and a high level of anxiety are a sample of the list of causal explanations for the addictions (Ottomanelli, 1995, p. 10). Judy certainly was dealing with a high level of stress as she tried to handle the pressure of being a worldwide celebrity, and she also had low self-esteem, brought about first by Ethel's lack of affection and then later increased by the studio's condescension towards her body weight. Individuals with an addiction may present an assortment of facades: flamboyance, insouciance, diffidence, depression—the exterior faces vary, but the interior feelings are common. They are frequently tormented by guilt, remorse, and self-hatred at what they have become and the emotional damage inflicted on family, loved ones, friends, and, especially, the damage caused to themselves. Addiction also results from habitual exercise that almost takes on a life of its own after repeated exposure until it becomes incorporated into the learned habit hierarchy of the individual. Many habits become so well learned that the behavior occurs without conscious awareness. The price an individual pays for addiction is the loss of a productive life. Any aspirations or genuine interests are shoved to the side to give priority to the addiction. Family, relationships, vocational and avocational interests, and society fall by the wayside in deference to the addiction. (Ottomanelli, 1995)

Another issue during this time period was Judy's constant struggle to grow up in the studio and be accepted as an adult. The studio never truly allowed Judy to grow up. When she wanted to wear a gown by the designer Adrian to the premiere of *Babes In Arms*, Mr. Mayer refused to allow it, saying, "You're too young for anything like that!" even though Judy was actually 18 (Frank, 1975, p. 145).

According to biographer Gerold Clarke (2000), Judy was loved throughout the studio for her childlike quality and impish sense of humor. Yet those same qualities proved to be her most serious liabilities at MGM. She was taken seriously as a performer but not as a person; she was treated like a minor, an attitude of condescension that followed her into adulthood and ensured

that she could never truly grow up. By the time Judy was 15, the studio still had her playing 12 and 13 year olds, which became a constant trend in her career. When she was 22 (in 1944), she was playing a 17 year old in *Meet Me in St. Louis*. Judy often said this was one factor that led to her arguments with the studio and her eventual nervous breakdowns (Diorio, 1973, p. 35). However, Judy was finally given her first glamorous, adult role in *Ziegfeld Girl*, where she costarred with Hedy Lamar and Lana Turner. Though she was thrilled to be one of the glamour girls of MGM, being onset with these two other actresses only increased Judy's feeling of inadequacy. To make matters worse, when posing for publicity shots, the makeup department had to put a stovepipe headdress on top of Judy's already high hairdo so she would be close to the heights of Lamar and Turner. When the film ended up being Lana Turner's break out role, Judy was even more devastated and depressed (Frank, 1975, p. 154).

As Judy got older, she became interested in dating and men. She had an avid dating life, though she was always insecure of her beauty and charm. Her relationships with men were to be fraught with peril because of her doubt of her desirability and her need to test them, to be wanted by them with a devotion very few men were capable of. Judy's first real relationship and love affair was with composer David Rose, whom she met at a nightclub. David Rose was much older than Judy, which was to prove to be a constant trend in her choice of men, and he also was married at the time. These two facts, plus her overprotective nature, led Ethel Gumm to loathe the relationship that was developing. Since Ethel disapproved of much that Judy wanted to do, Judy had to do it surreptitiously. Anything Judy wanted, she felt she had to steal (and she would do this often when dating men). Ethel rarely let Judy out of her sight, so Judy would sneak out of the house to see Rose and use other friends and her sister Jimmy for cover. Eventually, however, Judy's exploits were discovered, which led to a rift between mother and daughter. Judy proclaimed to Ethel that she and David Rose were to be married very shortly, as soon as he got a divorce. Ethel was so unhappy about Judy's future marriage that she threatened to stop it by going straight to Louis B. Mayer himself. She knew that Mayer would not like Judy marrying a man so much older than herself, especially while her career was just blossoming. Not only was Ethel unhappy about this chain of events, the studio was as well. They did not want Judy to grow up and be married, as this would be incongruous with the roles she played. Judy's career blossomed due to her playing a young teenager so well, and they did not want to lose a proven money-maker. David Rose was not actually very enthused about the marriage either. It was really Judy who pushed for the marriage, out of love for David, of course, but also out of a desire to get out from under her mother's control. Judy saw marriage as the

only way to claim a life for herself, and she felt a husband would protect her from her mother's controlling nature (Frank, 1975).

Despite all protests, however, Judy and David Rose were married in Vegas, with Ethel in attendance. Judy said of her and Rose's marriage, "Our marriage gave me a chance to get away from my mother and the domination of the studio. But the studio just muscled in and tried to humiliate [David] and even kept him out of work. We had a wonderful marriage until my professional life tore me one way and David another" (Diorio, 1973, p. 48). Indeed, Judy's marriage to Rose did not last very long at all, due in part to their huge age difference and her growing career.

Judy's next love affair was again with an older, married man, Joe Mankiewicz, the prolific Hollywood producer. He was convinced Judy could climb higher than anyone else at Metro. "To MGM Judy was just a piece of equipment," he said, "a money-making device. I found myself fascinated by her, by the possibilities of a girl who obviously could act, but who was very rarely called upon to do so" (Clarke, 2000, p. 182). Joe would end up changing Judy's ideas about nearly everything: her career, her life, her dependence on pills, and her emotional stability. While dating Joe, Judy began to see a therapist he recommended. This would be the first—but certainly not the last—time Judy would try to heal herself through therapy. At first, Judy was serious about the sessions, but later on, she began performing like she would for an audience: making up stories of her treatment as a child, though her doctor remained unimpressed (Frank, 1975, p. 185).

Ethel noticed a change in Judy after she began seeing a therapist. No longer was Judy simply disobedient, but she was self-assertive as well. She would stand up for herself against Ethel and refuse to follow directions. Alarmed, Ethel once again turned to L. B. Mayer for assistance. Disliking independence in his employees and distrustful of psychoanalysis, Mayer agreed with Ethel on every point and called for Judy to stop attending the sessions (Clarke, 2000, p. 185). Judy actually ended up seeing multiple analysts during the run of her career. The view they came away with of her was that she was intellectually a woman and emotionally a child, infantile in her reactions, because all her life she had gotten what she wanted and, like an infant, demanded immediate satisfaction (Frank, 1975, p. 259).

Joe Mankiewicz recognized the fragile nature of Judy's psyche. He realized that to Judy a man meant more than love and companionship. He was her guardian and protector against a world she felt was eager to exploit her gifts (Clarke, 2000, p. 229). Many of her relationships failed because the men were unable to live up to this high expectation.

Judy's second great film came in the form of *Meet Me in St. Louis* and was one she actually resented taking part in. Judy was tired of playing younger roles and very tired of playing the girl-next-door, which the lead role of Esther was. Also, she felt the film had no story, as it merely followed a family living in St. Louis who almost move to New York and then decide against it. Vincente Minnelli was hired as the director of the film. This was only his second project, and though he would later become Judy's second husband, they had a tempestuous relationship on set. Judy was used to finishing her scenes in one take and being told how wonderful they were. Perfectionist that he was, Minnelli required multiple takes and was critical of Judy's performance (Frank, 1975, p. 198). Her unhappiness with doing the film led her to become increasingly unreliable. She repeatedly showed up late on the set or had to leave early due to not feeling well. Though these issues were due in part to conflicts with Minnelli, they also were largely caused by Judy's increasing dependence on pills (Clarke, 2000, p. 198).

Meet Me in St. Louis would go on to become one of Judy's best-loved films and is considered nearly close to perfection. Judy was so happy with the result that she made sure Vincente was hired to direct her next picture, *The Clock*, which was her first non-musical project. It was on the set of this picture that Vincent and Judy fell in love. Judy was attracted to Vincente because he didn't treat her as a talented child; he made her feel like a woman. He convinced her that she was extremely attractive, something she herself had never felt. He treated her as an exquisite female, not a talented property (Frank, 1975). In him, Judy saw someone who appreciated her for herself and who would protect her from the studio domination.

According to Gerold Clarke (2000), Louis B. Mayer had been against all of Judy's previous lovers, complaining that they were married, divorced, or too old. Vincente Minnelli, who was the oldest of them all, was by contrast embraced as if he were the son-in-law Mayer had always hoped for. Metro felt that by marrying Vincente, Judy was more likely to sign a new contract with them, as hers was about to expire. Judy's marriage to Vincente was a full-blown Hollywood affair. Mayer gave the bride away, and Metro's finest dress designers made Judy's wedding dress and hat. The studio was quick to smile on the union as both bride and groom were two of Metro's prized possessions. As Mayer hoped, the marriage to Vincente convinced Judy to sign a new contract with Metro (Frank, 1975, p. 213). Immediately upon signing her new contract, Judy regretted it. Though Judy had grown up on the lot, she felt it was a prison. She hated the early morning calls, the intense pressure and condescending attitudes of the executives. She once described her emotions at this time by saying, "The tension that had been building up in me against the studio seemed to have hit the boiling point" (Clarke, 2000, p. 225).

After marrying Vincente, Judy was determined to be the best wife possible. She cooked and baked for him, and it soon became his job to pass out at least ten compliments for every dish she put in front of him. "Her desire for constant approval was pathological," Vincente once said (Clarke, 2000, p. 222). Judy was so in love with Vincente that she even promised him she would stay off the pills. One night on their honeymoon in New York City, Judy made a grand gesture by throwing a bottle of her pills into the East River. She told Vincente, "I'll never take them again" (Frank, 1975, p. 216). However, it was not long before she broke that promise. Judy was constantly unsure of herself and relied on Vincente to convince her that she could act, that she could sing, and that she was a desirable woman. For years, the executives at Metro had convinced her that she didn't have any talent or beauty, and this notion stayed with her throughout her life (Diorio, 1973, p. 76).

Judy's first major set conflicts began on the set of *The Pirate*, which was directed by Minnelli and costarred Gene Kelly, one of Judy's close friends. Judy was back on the pills and would either show up on the set in a drugged daze or with a raging case of paranoia, which was a side effect of the pills. Other days, Judy just would not show up at all. She missed 99 days out of the 135 in the rehearsal and shooting schedule. Though Judy had wanted Vincente to direct the film, as he was now the only director she trusted to make her look good, her problems and paranoia caused her to view him in a different light. No longer was he a husband in whom she could confide, but the man from Metro, a studio surrogate who shared her house and bed (Clarke, 2000). Judy was also suffering at this time from post-partum depression, following the birth of Liza Minnelli. Judy would be sent into depressions where she would begin to cry hysterically on the set and would have to retire to her dressing room until she could compose herself again. Gossip magazines began reporting that Judy was "difficult" to work with (Diorio, 1973, p. 76). Her years of pill-popping and emotional insecurities were piling up on her, and increasing pressure from the studio and conflict with Vincente sent Judy over the edge. On June 20, 1950, after having an argument with Vincente and her agent, Carleton Alsop, Judy ran into the bathroom, broke a water glass, and attempted to slash her wrists. This would be the first of two suicide attempts. Fortunately, she managed to only scratch herself and escaped permanent damage (Diorio, 1973).

After her first suicide attempt, Judy decided to go to a hospital for treatment. Here she was finally placed on a suitable diet, forced to eat three hearty meals a day, and regimented into a normal sleep pattern. It did not take long for Judy to recover, and the studio was eager to have her back for *Easter Parade*. While recuperating, Judy had managed to gain some weight; however, on return to the studio to film *Easter Parade*, she was put back on her strict diet. Soon

her health was failing again because of the diet, and she had returned back to the pills (Diorio, 1973). Though Vincente was supposed to direct *Easter Parade*, the studio psychiatrist, Dr. Kupper, recommended that he not direct the picture. Husband and wife should not be working together under circumstances where Vincente, in Judy's mind, became less her husband and more the alter ego of MGM (Frank, 1975, p. 234). After the filming of *Easter Parade*, Judy truly needed another break. She had not had adequate time to heal after *The Pirate*, and the production of *Easter Parade* exhausted her. So, she decided to ask Mayer to take a small vacation after the filming of *Easter Parade* (Diorio, 1973, p. 81).

Before Judy was to take that small vacation, Mayer brought her the *Annie Get Your Gun* project. Judy was excited to start the project but asked if she could take a long break before starting production. Mayer agreed, gave her a large bonus, and asked if she could just record one song in advance so they could begin pre-production. One song led to another, and 1 or 2 days led to 2 or 3 weeks. After 6 weeks of recording, the score was completed, and Judy was led into rehearsals and the filming of the song sequences. Hence, Judy never got the break she requested and needed. This example clearly shows the complete indifference the studio had towards Judy's health and well-being. While they presented themselves as a loving "family," the studio executives were really just interested in getting films made, and Judy was their biggest star. Because she never got a break between films, Judy began her old set antics very early on in *Annie Get Your Gun*. She began to show up late on the set, and sometimes she would not show up at all. When she did show up, Judy was so drugged from her pills that she was not even coherent most of the time. She often left the set early as well because she did not feel well. Her inconsistency was delaying production, so MGM made the decision to dismiss Judy from the film. Though she was not making any salary, Judy checked into the Peter Brent Brigham Hospital in Boston and began undergoing care for nervous and emotional

exhaustion. Judy later would recall after her experience on *Annie Get Your Gun*, "Here I was, in the middle of a million dollar wardrobe and a million eyes on me and I was in a complete daze. I knew it and everyone around me knew it.

But I tried desperately to go on. I knew that if I didn't finish this one it was the finish of me" (Diorio, 1973, p. 82).



Picture from the doomed *Annie Get Your Gun*. Judy was exhausted at the time and on pills. (Johnson, Jim. *Judy Garland Database*. Retrieved 27 April 2011 at <http://www.jgdb.com/>)

Although Judy was relieved to be released from Metro, there was also a sense of despair that went along with that. She once told her secretary, "I used to get sick every time I went through the east gates at Metro. I'd give anything if I could go through it again now" (Frank, 1975, p. 320). The break with MGM was always to mean a loss to her, no matter how she rationalized it. Part of this regret was attributed to a sense of failure, but most of it was a loss of family. Judy had grown up on the studio lots. It had become her home, and all of a sudden she lost that family and was left to fend for herself. When Judy asked Mayer for money to pay her hospital bills, he was more than willing to do it. However, when he called Nick Schenck (the head of MGM who was based in New York), Schenck replied, "We are not in the money lending business. Tell her to go to a charity hospital" (Frank, 1975, p. 254). Mayer was so ashamed he decided to personally pay Judy's bills. The assertion that MGM was not a money lending business was a lie because studio executives were more than willing to help stars with their house payments and other finances, if they behaved. Because Judy now had become a liability to the studio, all of the assistance and special privileges befitting a star were denied her.

After leaving the hospital once again, Judy was anxious to return to the studio. However, it was to be for the last time. Like before *Easter Parade*, Judy had managed to gain weight while she was recovering and needed to lose it for *Summer Stock*. Because Judy had never been on a healthy, regular diet, she never knew any other option other than a strict diet that would often render her exhausted and weak. Judy once again began showing up late to the set of *Summer Stock* and would sometimes just not come to the set at all. MGM allowed her to finish the film, but it was to be her last as a contract player. They tore up her contract and let her out of it (Diorio, 1973). Though Judy would make more films later in her life, her relationship and development within the studio system was over. She had devoted her entire adolescence and most of her adult life to this institution and had become one of the most successful actresses of the time. The cost to her personally was enormous, however.

There is no doubt that the studio had a profound effect on Judy's life and emotional stability. She did not enter the studio a well-rounded person, and Metro destroyed any emotional stability she had through the brutal combination of condescension and inconsideration for her health. When Judy first came to the studio at age 13, she really did feel like part of a family. And while she was Louis B. Mayer's favorite, she soon learned that favorites really meant nothing in Hollywood. After the sudden death of her father, Judy looked to Mayer to be her father figure. "When Dad died," she later said, "MGM took over as my father. In our house the word of Louis B. Mayer became the law. When Mother wanted to discipline me, all she had to say was, 'I'll tell Mr. Mayer'" (Clarke, 2000, p. 70). The deference of Ethel to Mayer was ultimately unhealthy for

Judy, as she never really had a caring parent in her life. There was no one there to fight for her welfare or defend her in times of need. In a small memoir she wrote, Judy remembered the studio as a cruel and domineering parent, saying, "Metro thought they were raising me. They were just dreadful. They had a theory that they were all powerful and they ruled by fear. What better way to make a young person behave than by scaring the hell out of her" (Diorio, 1973, p. 34)

Mayer was not a good example of a father in any way, as he was a person of many contradictions: the kind father and the ruthless tyrant; the generous boss and the small-minded bully (Clarke, 2000, p. 70). Because of Ethel's deference to the studio in disciplining Judy, the studio took on the role of her parent in a nonverbal contract of *in locus parentis*. This is defined as those persons with day-to-day responsibilities to care for and financially support a child, or, in the case of an employee, the persons who had such responsibility for the employee when the employee was a child. (*Family Medical Leave Dictionary: Indiana State Personnel Department*, retrieved 18 March 2011 at <http://www.in.gov/spd/2401.htm>).

The style of parenting by the studio was clearly authoritarian. Authoritarian parents are demanding of their child but are also rejecting or unresponsive to the child's needs; they exhibit insensitivity to the child's level of ability, interest, or needs that may impair the child's self-esteem or motivation (Wolfe, 1999, p. 21). This clearly defines the relationship the studio had with Judy. Like Ethel, they were controlling of her every move but showed an extreme lack of caring towards her emotional and physical needs. They were also very insensitive to her fragile self-esteem and only furthered her descent into depression. The studio also fits the definition of an abusive parent. Methods of abusive and neglectful parenting include insulting the child, expressing conditional love and ambivalent feelings, using cruel and harsh control methods, showing no sensitivity to the child's needs, and being sexually or physically coercive and intrusive (Wolfe, 1999, p. 24). Rapport and Meleen's 1998 study of child stars suggested that poor parenting may be reflected in inconsistent behavior toward the needs of the child, which is internalized as a general belief that the world is an arbitrary place. This inconsistent parenting behavior is what led Judy to develop trust issues in her relationships with men. Because she was shown such conditional love by both the studio and her mother, she always felt that love could be taken from her easily. Abused children in particular are believed to have a much greater than average risk of developing emotional and or behavioral problems as a more long-standing consequence of parental maltreatment (Wolfe, 1999, p. 30).

Metro made Judy a star, but it also destroyed, or at least helped to destroy, her self-confidence. She believed what she had been taught to believe: that she was, in truth, a poor

little ugly duckling surrounded by beautiful swans (Clarke, 2000, p. 134). This constant degrading of her self-worth is ultimately what led Judy to seek solace in her pills, which would prove to be her undoing. The studio never thought of what Judy had given them—the millions of dollars she had made for them and the way she and Mickey Rooney had practically kept the studio alive during the early Forties. (Diorio, 1973, p. 86). They were very selfish in their management of Judy; and, in her story, the true brutality of Hollywood is shown.

Overall, the large effect of the studio was to stunt Judy's emotional development. In her first 13 years of life, Judy had been programmed to respond not so much to her own needs as to Ethel's needs, to what pleased everyone else rather than what pleased her. Then, during her adolescence at MGM, she grew up in a kind of convent with constant supervision, constant protection, subservience to authority, rules to be followed, and a rigid morality code. It was also at Metro that the usual, normal difficulties of growing up and the learned experiences that flow from them were smoothed over and disguised. Adolescence is a preparation for life, a learning to cope; this preparation and this training to cope were denied Judy. Because the studio could handle everything, it made Judy depend always on something outside herself—either upon people to take care of her (her many love affairs) or inanimate objects (pills and liquor)—to get away from what was plaguing her (Frank, 1975, p. 224).

Though she led a difficult life and her trials often were exposed in the media, Judy was able to inspire joy and life in her fans. While her fans provided her a source of comfort in the midst of her pain, they were also one of the reasons why Judy was unable to truly discover herself. Once Judy began performing at The Palace Theater in New York in her later years, she inspired an almost god-like adulation among what were later to be known as "Garland Freaks," a legion of persons who led their lives vicariously through Judy. This becomes even more bizarre when one realized that Judy was living not her own life as Frances Gumm but a created fantasy life as Judy Garland—a person who really did not exist (Frank, 1975, p. 336). Judy once said, "I love my career. I want to say this because I'm always being painted a more tragic figure than I am, and I get awfully bored with myself as a tragic figure. I wouldn't have been anything but an entertainer. With all the troubles, with the stumbling and falling on the way, the rewards are still so great" (Diorio, 1973, p. 154).

Elizabeth Taylor: A Lesson in Early Sexualization and Rebellion

Like Judy Garland, Elizabeth Taylor grew up in and was a product of the studio system. However, unlike Judy, Elizabeth always had a rebellious streak that ultimately saved her from falling into the drugs and manipulation Judy experienced. Also unlike Judy, Elizabeth was born into a life of wealth and privilege and often had what she wanted handed to her. Elizabeth

Taylor was born in England on February 27, 1932, to her American parents, Francis and Sara Taylor. Sara Taylor had a history in the performing arts and had made a smashing debut on Broadway before she became engaged to and married Francis Taylor, who worked as a high-end art dealer. The family left England when WWII broke out; since they were Americans, they felt particularly vulnerable. Upon relocating to America, they decided to go to California due to the thriving art culture there, which would help Francis's art business. The marriage was one of incongruence from the start. Sara Taylor was a domineering woman compared to Francis Taylor's meek, quiet nature. It has been said that, throughout their entire marriage, Francis never won an argument. "She's the boss," he would say. "What she says goes and that's fine with me" (Taraborrelli, 2006, p. 10). This domineering attitude would prove a powerful force in getting Elizabeth's career off the ground.

After Elizabeth was born, she became the center of her mother's world. Sara had Elizabeth enrolled in singing and dancing lessons by the time she was 2 years old. Though she had not become famous in her own career, Sara was determined her daughter would have a place in the entertainment industry. By the age of 3, Elizabeth had learned from her mother how to curtsy, shake hands, and speak eloquently to adults. These refinements made Elizabeth seem much older than she actually was, and many felt Sara was rushing her daughter into adulthood. Throughout her life, Sara's dominance often would force Elizabeth into more mature situations than she was actually ready for (Taraborrelli, 2006).



Elizabeth was stunningly beautiful even as a child. (Weller, Robert. *AllVoices*. Retrieved 28 April 2011 at <http://www.allvoices.com/contributed-news/8560946-screen-legend-and-humanitarian-elizabeth-taylor-dies-of-congestive-heart-failure>)

Upon arriving in California, Sara was enthralled with the movie business and was determined to get Elizabeth into the industry. According to Taylor biographer, J. Randy Taraborrelli (2006), after meeting the wife of J. Cheever Cowdon, an executive at Universal, at Francis's art gallery, Sara invited the Cowdons over for tea so they could meet Elizabeth. Upon that meeting, J. Cheever decided to sign Liz to a contract with Universal, and Sara was elated. Elizabeth's contract with Universal was for \$100/week for 5 months, with this money to go into Sara's care. Ten percent of this salary would go directly to Sara as payment for being Elizabeth's "manager" and "to assist in the performance of such services as shall be required by the studio" (Taraborrelli, 2006, p. 38). After making a short film (*There's One Born Every Minute*) for Universal, Elizabeth was dropped from the studio. The executives did not think she had any remarkable talent, and "her eyes are too old.

She doesn't have the face of a kid" (Taraborrelli, 2006, p. 41). This judgment was made by Dan Kelly, Universal's casting director. Elizabeth's "old face" would end up becoming one of her greatest assets when she went to work with MGM. They quickly took advantage of it by making her a sex symbol while she was still a teenager.

After the failure of the Universal deal, Sara was not deterred from putting Elizabeth in movies. She became close to one of Hollywood's most famous gossip columnists of the day, Hedda Hopper, who was known to make or break careers. When Elizabeth finally "auditioned" for Hopper, the gossip columnist recalls, "[Elizabeth] was clearly terrified, but I felt the mother was never going to rest until this child was famous and I wasn't having any of it. She wanted to have a glamorous life through her child. I had seen too much misery in child stars. Let a child be a child, that was my motto" (Taraborrelli, 2006, p. 36). It was not just Hedda who was shocked by Sara's insistence; many producers in Hollywood recall Mrs. Taylor's eagerness to get her daughter in front of the cameras (Morley, 1988, p. 11). Sara's insistence on Elizabeth's career would shape it completely. Because Elizabeth lacked any intrinsic motivation, she often felt indifferent towards which roles and pictures she took.

Ironically, it was actually Francis Taylor who got Elizabeth her big break at MGM, though he staunchly opposed the film industry. Working part time as an air raid warden, Francis met Sam Marx, who happened to be a producer at MGM. Francis talked up Elizabeth, and later, when Marx was forced to drop the lead actress in *Lassie Come Home* because she had grown too tall, he called on Francis Taylor to request Elizabeth. Elizabeth won the role without so much as a screen test (Taraborrelli, 2006, p. 44).

MGM executives were impressed with Elizabeth's beauty and professional nature on the set of *Lassie Come Home*. The film established Elizabeth as a useful, hard-working little girl worth the year's contract Metro was now prepared to offer her while they decided what other pictures they could use her for (Morley, 1988, p. 15). Elizabeth was lucky in the fact that there were very few child stars who could fit the mold she fit. During this time period, MGM had its resident "British troupe" who were British actors used in period pieces and epics. Because of her English upbringing, Elizabeth fit neatly in with this mold and was the only female child star who could play against the actual Brits. Thus, the opportunities for her in the beginning were great. After *Lassie Come Home* proved to be a success, MGM signed Elizabeth to a 7-year contract, starting at \$300 per week. She then was immediately loaned to 20th Century Fox for the film version of *Jane Eyre*. Though she only had a small part, her beauty stood out so much that this film helped reinforce the fact that she had star potential (Taraborrelli, 2006).

Though Elizabeth was naturally extremely beautiful, Louis B. Mayer felt there was always room for improvement. So, like every young actress who came through Metro's doors, Elizabeth too was forced to go through a beautification process. The beauty patrol plucked her hairline to neaten it and also reshaped her eyebrows into what later became known as the famous "Taylor Arch." They also had Elizabeth undergo rhinoplasty to take out thickness at the bottom of her nose (Taraborrelli, 2006).

Though she acquiesced to the beauty improvements, Elizabeth was never like the other actresses at MGM because she rarely subjugated herself to the studio boss, L. B. Mayer. In fact, Elizabeth was not fond of Mr. Mayer in the slightest because she thought he was a hypocrite. She hated the control the studio tried to exert over her as well. She once said, "I didn't like having a gun to my head. I didn't then and I don't think I ever will. I have tried to behave in my life, . . . but it's not working" (Taraborrelli, 2006, p. 57). One of Elizabeth's defining characteristics her whole life was her independent streak. It is one of the traits that kept her from becoming manipulated by the studio, as Judy Garland was. One of the major reasons Elizabeth felt so detached from the studio was because she did not have to work for her contract. Elizabeth was discovered purely out of luck and did not have the experience of auditioning at multiple film studios as other stars had had to do. Her relationship with MGM was not one of gratitude or respect for the old moguls. MGM was just the factory where they made her films (Morley, 1988).

Elizabeth's highly regimented studio days left her feeling anxious and fretful, as they had Judy Garland. "I would get up early [and] go out on the polo field," she said, "to get some steam off. . . . I would take forty jumps before I would go into work." Many times over the years, she would lament never having had a real childhood—"no football games to go to, no proms to attend, no growing-up things" (Mann, 2009, p. 94). Elizabeth's social life also was greatly restricted and structured by the studio. The actresses hired by MGM were called "Metro Girls" and, as such, were not allowed to smoke, drink, swear, or have sex before marriage (Taraborrelli, 2006, p. 45). There was absolutely no bending the rules. Though Elizabeth was unimpressed with the studio executives, Sara was simply enamored with them, particularly Louis B. Mayer. Ava Gardner always believed that Sara and Mayer had had an affair, and even Francis Taylor's brother was convinced that, if the studio chief had wanted it, Sara would have left her husband for him. Elizabeth found the forced adulation of Mayer unnerving and never warmed to him (Mann, 2009, p. 75).

Shortly after Elizabeth arrived at Metro, it became known to Sara Taylor that Warner Bros. was making a film of the popular novel *National Velvet*. The script called for a young girl

who was able to realistically ride horses and could act British. Elizabeth fit the part perfectly, as she had been riding horses since the age of 3, and Sara was determined it would be hers. Through her years spent trying to get Elizabeth signed to a studio, Sara had developed numerous contacts at each of them. Taking advantage of these contacts, Sara visited Warner Bros. one day with Elizabeth and tracked down the producer of *National Velvet*. She extolled Elizabeth as the perfect Velvet Brown and even had Elizabeth proclaim how much she wanted the role. The producer's only response was that Elizabeth was too short for the role and would need to grow three inches. It was Sara's industrious nature and insistence that convinced the 11-year-old Elizabeth that *National Velvet* and stardom were her destiny. After eating large breakfasts every morning for 3 months, Elizabeth had grown the three inches necessary for her to play Velvet Brown. Many people believe it was actually Sara who had simply willed Elizabeth to grow (Morley, 1988). It did not take the producers long to realize that no other child actress except Elizabeth could both convincingly ride horses and portray a young British girl. Thus, she was quickly offered the part and was loaned out to Warner Bros. It is interesting to note that *National Velvet* was directed by Clarence Brown who not only grew up in Knoxville, TN, but attended the University of Tennessee for his bachelor's degree and donated the money to build the present-day Clarence Brown Theater at the University of Tennessee. Displayed in this theater is one of Elizabeth Taylor's costumes from the film.

The road to playing Velvet was not an easy one. To accommodate the orthodontic braces Velvet wears, the studio pulled out two of Elizabeth's baby teeth and installed temporary ones. One publicist thought the mole on her cheek should be removed, and another person wanted to lighten and cut her hair. Elizabeth was continually fretted over and treated as a commodity. Also on the set of this film, Elizabeth contracted a spinal injury that would plague her with back problems for the rest of her life. In one scene of the film, the horse was supposed to buck her off of him. They decided not to use a stunt double, and when the horse bucked, Elizabeth fell off onto her back on the hard ground (Mann, 2009).

Through all of the effort she put into playing Velvet Brown, *National Velvet* was a huge success and established Elizabeth as a movie star. She was offered an extremely lucrative new contract from MGM that made her their top child star on the lot, next to Margaret O'Brien. Elizabeth later said that, if she had known what the MGM contract entailed, she would not have wanted *National Velvet* so badly. "I had no idea what I was getting myself into," she later said. "Slavery!" (Taraborrelli, 2006, p. 52).

After the success of *National Velvet*, Sara and Elizabeth felt confident that they should be able to pick Elizabeth's roles. They approached Mayer one afternoon about giving Elizabeth

the lead role in *Sally*, a film that would allow the young star to sing and dance. Louis B. Mayer was furious at their brashness and began screaming at Sara, saying she was so goddamned stupid she could not spot the day of the week. Elizabeth became so enraged at this treatment of her mother that she shouted right back at Mayer never to dare speak to her mother like that again (Morley, 1988, p. 22). It was the last time Elizabeth was ever in Mayer's office and marked a complete break in their relationship. From that day on, Elizabeth would never associate herself with Mayer again.

Like most child stars, Elizabeth would become totally controlled by the adults at MGM. Luckily, her mother was strong-willed and protective and would not allow Metro to have its way with her daughter. Unlike Judy Garland, who never had protection from the studio, Elizabeth was protected by Sara from complete exploitation, though in Elizabeth's later life, Sara would have a strong hand in the sexualization of Elizabeth. Francis Taylor also stood up for Elizabeth at the studio. Elizabeth recalled, "When they wanted to change my name to Virginia—don't ask me why—my father said 'No, she was christened Elizabeth and that's what she'll be called.' They said my hair was too dark, that it would photograph blue-black. My father said, 'You're not dyeing my child's hair.' They wanted to pluck my eyebrows and again he said no. L. B. Mayer, none of them, could have fought with my Dad and won" (Taraborrelli, 2006, p. 56). Though Francis did not agree with the lifestyle Elizabeth had been thrust into, he wanted to protect her from the exploitation so many other child stars had had to go through. And Sara was an ever-present figure on the set of Elizabeth's films, though her presence was not always a positive force. If Elizabeth made a mistake, Sara would visibly stiffen. Upon seeing Sara upset, Elizabeth would drop her gaze and become flustered and anxious. A grim expression on Sara's face would signify to everyone that she was displeased. However, later in Elizabeth's career, Sara stopped coming to set and was no longer considered Elizabeth's "manager" (Taraborrelli, 2006, p. 54).

Because Elizabeth had never decided upon this life for herself, there were times when she greatly resented being a movie star. She once complained to her parents that she was sick and tired of making movies and just wanted to be a normal kid. Sara responded, "But you're not a regular child and thank God for that. You have a responsibility, Elizabeth. Not just to this family, but to the country now, the whole world" (Taraborrelli, 2006, p. 66). This responsibility was not wanted by Elizabeth, and later in her life, after she had married and had children, Elizabeth would resent the pressure Sara had thrust upon her. From time to time, Elizabeth would also feel resentment toward her mother for having made her the breadwinner of the family. Although there may have been some resentment, Sara's and Elizabeth's mutual

understanding and love for one another allowed for a positive work environment between them while Elizabeth was still young (Taraborrelli, 2006, p. 63). They had the mother-child love and devotion that Judy and Ethel Gumm never had. The fact that Elizabeth was a large provider for her family affected the way she viewed her mother in later life. Because many children performers become the principal wage earner for their families, money becomes central to the child's self-evaluation. The child may perceive love as conditional on professional success and interpret the management of their earnings, as Sara did, as reflecting parental care (Rapport & Meleen, 1998, p. 5). According to Rapport and Meleen's study of child stars, aside from the obvious dangers of coercing children to work, there is a commonly held belief that children who proactively choose to be performers perceive the environment as challenging or invigorating, whereas children placed in the environment perceive the same experiences as stressful. Because Elizabeth never chose to become a performer but was largely pushed by Sara, she did not take enjoyment out of her career. It was merely something she was forced to do, and later she appreciated it because of the lifestyle it allowed her to live, but in her teens, she found the controlled environment stressful and experienced very little happiness in what she was doing.

The fact that Sara was Elizabeth's manager may have led to the rift they would develop later in Elizabeth's life. Rapport and Meleen's 1998 study of child stars and their parents found that, as adults, former young performers whose parents served as their professional managers viewed their mothers as less caring and more overcontrolling than did performers whose parents were not their managers (p. 1). The researchers suggested that one of the reasons parent managers were perceived in a less optimal light than non-manager parents may be because the inherent duties of the manager role introduce conflict to the parent-child relationship. The manager is responsible for making the star do what the studio requests and managing their future projects. Elizabeth saw this "managing" by her mother as merely being "overcontrolling" and not allowing her to do what she wanted. Participants in Rapport and Meleen's study with non-manager parents were less likely to report that their involvement in acting was determined by people other than themselves (p. 12). Because their parents were not controlling their career, they felt more inclined to enjoy what they were doing.

Because she was surrounded by adults both on and off the set, Elizabeth quickly matured and took on adult behaviors, though emotionally she was still a child. Cameramen swore blue streaks around her; wardrobe ladies gossiped about affairs as they fitted her costumes. By her early teens, Elizabeth was already cursing like a sailor (something she would continue to do for the rest of her life) and haggling with her mother over the terms of her allowance (Mann, 2009, p. 67).

Metro understood that the most important part of a transformation from child star to adult film actor had to occur in public. And so, Elizabeth's crucial next assignment was to go out on the town with a full entourage of publicists, press agents, photographers and reporters in tow. It was time for the public to see Elizabeth dating (Mann, 2009, p. 89). Unlike other child stars, whom the studio tried to keep young, they were anxious to make Elizabeth older than she actually was. Though she was only a teenager, Elizabeth already was physically fully developed and had embraced the sex appeal she would carry with her the rest of her life. Elizabeth once said, "I learned how to look sultry and pose provocatively. I developed sex appeal, even though I knew that, somewhere inside, the child had still not completely grown up" (Mann, 2009, p. 88). Rather than hide this more mature image, MGM



The famous bathing suit shot in *Suddenly Last Summer*. She was 27 at the time. (Chatel, Amanda. *The Gloss*. Retrieved 28 April 2011 at <http://thegloss.com/fashion/ensemble-chronicles-remembering-elizabeth-taylors-suddenly-last-summer-swimsuit/>)

decided to capitalize on it and pushed Elizabeth into the dating world before she really understood what dating was. This early sexualization would change Elizabeth completely, as she began to realize that it was only her beauty that kept her career going. From here on out, Elizabeth Taylor was only famous if she was on the arm of a man. The early sexuality thrust on Elizabeth from the beginning of her teens became her trademark. When the first reviews for her film *Suddenly Last Summer* came in negative, the studio decided to plaster Elizabeth on the publicity poster in a low cut white bathing suit. Jim Mankiewicz's son said, "Elizabeth was a sex symbol, the most desirable woman in the world. So they used that to their advantage" (Mann, 2009, p. 273).

Ironically, it was actually Sara Taylor who was eager for Elizabeth to enter the dating role and be seen as a desirable woman. The new, more mature Elizabeth was presented to the public by her own mother in *Photoplay* magazine. Sara wrote, "No longer do [Elizabeth's] worries center around her pets. Now . . . there are other things that interest her like clothes and cars and boys" (Mann, 2009, p. 87).

When Elizabeth reached the age of 16, Sara became preoccupied with Elizabeth's social life. On one hand, she wanted to protect Elizabeth and have her remain a little girl, but she also wanted the public to think Elizabeth was popular and desirable. This meant she needed to be seen on the arm of a man. It was at Sara's urging that MGM set up 16-year-old Elizabeth on her first date with an All-American football player, Glenn Davis. Sara said, "When I saw that frank,

wonderful face, I thought, 'This relief. My worries were over'

The early sexualization effects on her life, including how relationships with men. cited in Maine, 2009, p. 70) objectification (of which has a lasting impact because it external view of themselves and come to see themselves as judged based on their aware of the effects she she would use this sex



A very sexualized Elizabeth in *A Place in the Sun*. She was only 19 at the time. (Wildsound. Retrieved 28 April 2011 at http://www.wildsound.ca/elizabeth_taylor_and_montgomery_clift.html)

is the boy.' I felt such a sense of (Taraborrelli, 2006, p. 70).

of Elizabeth had many long-term she regarded herself and her Frederickson and Roberts (as explain that chronic sexual Elizabeth was definitely a victim) pressures girls to accept an of their value as people. Girls objects to be looked at and appearance. Elizabeth was very had on men, and later in her life, appeal to get what she wanted.

The internal effects of female sexualization on the woman in question include body dissatisfaction, emotional distress, negative self-image, and health problems. The American Psychological Association speculates that sexualization reflects underlying sexism, certainly prevalent in the '50s and '60s (Maine, 2009, p. 68). Though Elizabeth certainly did not suffer from a low self-image, her many health problems later in life could be attributed to the fact that she faced the stress and pressure at a young age of being objectified as a sex object. According to a 2007 report by the American Psychological Association task force on the sexualization of girls (Olfman, 2009, p. 1), girls who are sexualized at a young age are more prone to eating disorders, depression, low self-esteem, impaired concentration, risky sexual behaviors, and unsatisfying sexual relations when they are older. Elizabeth was rarely satisfied by her sexual partners later in her life, particularly her first two husbands and Eddie Fisher. She was voracious in her appetite for sex, and this is partly due to the fact that, during her whole life, she had been portrayed as a sex kitten. It became inherent in her nature. Also according to Olfman, in a sexualized culture, girls are vulnerable to sexual harassment and abuse because they are depicted by society as objects for male pleasure. Because she was known simply for being beautiful and sexy, Elizabeth was deemed weak by her first husband Nicky Hilton. Thus, when he became enraged with her, he often took to beating and abusing her. Elizabeth's early sexualization did not just bring negative effects in her life, however. Due to her sex symbol status, Elizabeth Taylor was able to become a credible AIDS activist when information about the disease was first becoming available in the 1980s. Her close friendships with numerous homosexuals, including Rock Hudson (who passed away due to AIDS) and Montgomery Clift

also gave her the experience and knowledge to speak on this topic. Later in her life Elizabeth Taylor would become more well-known for her activism rather than her acting.

Through her first two relationships, Elizabeth realized that love was only worthwhile if it would benefit her career in some way. Elizabeth's alliances with men were always chosen, consciously and unconsciously, for what they could offer her. This was a pattern she would follow throughout her life and partly explains why she had so many husbands. Elizabeth's first two relationships ended abruptly, and she found she had no problem quickly moving on. Already there seemed to be many consequences of her being influenced to play so loosely with people's emotions, not the least of which was that, after just two boyfriends, she became less sentimental and a little more detached from genuine emotion. With her mother or some press agent always at her side, Elizabeth had no concept of how to meet boys, talk to them, or pick one out for herself. It felt quite natural when the publicity head called her in and told her they had found her the perfect date. All she knew was to accept and go along with it (Mann, 2009).

Elizabeth's next relationship was one purely orchestrated to benefit the studio. Elizabeth had begun seeing Nicky Hilton, heir to the Hilton Hotel fortune, while she was filming *Father of the Bride* with Spencer Tracy, where Elizabeth played the bride. The studio felt it would be a perfect opportunity to create buzz around the film by coordinating Elizabeth's own wedding with the release of the film. They just needed to convince Nicky to marry Elizabeth and vice versa. This did not prove difficult. Nicky Hilton understood from the start that this would be a studio deal. Much would be made of Nicky's asking Francis Taylor for Elizabeth's hand in marriage, but no doubt another important meeting took place between Nicky Hilton and the heads of MGM (Mann, 2009). Elizabeth was eager to marry mainly because she was frantic to get some distance from Sara, although she did love Nicky.

Elizabeth wrote in 1987 that, at this time, she was "desperate to live a life independent of my parents" (Taraborrelli, 2006, p. 81). Elizabeth felt the quickest

way to gain this independence was to marry and create her own family, much as Judy Garland had when she married David Rose. As written in the 2006 Taraborrelli biography, *Elizabeth*, Nicky Hilton seemed strong and powerful to her. There was something about her dynamic with him that made her think he was the boss in the relationship. It was different than what she'd seen in her mother's relationship, and she wanted it for herself.

A mass of reporters after Elizabeth's wedding to Nicky Hilton. (*AllPosters*. Retrieved 28 April 2011 at http://www.allposters.com/-sp/Actress-Elizabeth-Taylor-Wearing-Beautiful-Long-Satin-Wedding-Gown-with-Husband-Nicky-Hilton-Posters_i3778365_.htm)

No one seemed to worry about the wisdom of marrying off an inexperienced teenage girl who had never been out of her mother's sight. The glamour of the wedding, the tie-in with the movie, and the fervor of fans carried them all through on what Elizabeth would later call "a pink cloud"—a phrase she often would use to describe the unreality of public life in Hollywood (Mann, 2009, p. 120). That many of Elizabeth's wedding plans were publicity-driven did not mean that Elizabeth, ever the romantic, did not love playing the happy bride in both the film and her daily life. For her, it was just one more instance where fame and public image spilled over into real life, blurring the line between them (Mann, 2009, p. 115). This constant blurring of the line between reality and films is something that would forever be a part of Elizabeth's life. She was unable to tell what was real and what was not, so she lived her life in a hyper-surreal, celebrity-driven state. Studio florists arranged the flowers; studio photographers patrolled the aisles; a studio contract singer performed "Ave Maria." Elizabeth's attendants, billed as her "friends," were, in fact, fellow contract players like Jane Powell and other girls with studio affiliations (Mann, 2009, p. 117). In return for the publicity they would get for *Father of the Bride*, MGM agreed to finance the entire wedding (Morley, 1988, p. 37). MGM's lucrative positioning of Elizabeth as a bride-to-be in 1950 ensured that romance and marriage forever would be essential components of her fame, superceding her talent as an actress. With the tie-in of the actual wedding, *Father of the Bride* became a huge success for MGM and even spurred the creation of a sequel, *Father's Little Dividend* (Mann, 2009).



Though Elizabeth's professional career was going well, it was not long into the honeymoon before she realized what kind of man Nicky Hilton truly was. She endured successive physical and verbal abuse from him before she finally decided to divorce him only a year later. Though Nicky ultimately proved to be a brutal husband, Elizabeth felt it was important to hide the frustration and pain she was feeling. Perfection had always been very important to Sara, and Elizabeth certainly did not want to disappoint her. She was also afraid of being embarrassed and harshly judged (Taraborrelli, 2006). Elizabeth said of this time: "If I could not be the perfect wife in reality, I could continue to create illusions on the screen. *Father's Little Dividend* followed *Father of the Bride* and in the sequel my celluloid counterpart became a

mother. I was doing exactly what I wanted to do, only it was in 35 millimeter rather than life” (Taraborrelli, 2006, p. 88). Elizabeth would always partly blame herself for the treatment she received from Nicky. She felt his abuse meant that she was not a good wife and somehow did not meet expectations. Studies have shown that the focus of control among victims of abuse is on the events leading up to the negative event, not on the negative event itself. For instance, rape victims cope better if they feel they caused the event leading to the rape and that it was not just chance or fate. This also gives them a basis on which to correct their behavior to avoid future rape (Heath, 1986, p. 282). Thus, it was easier for Elizabeth to cope with the abuse if she took responsibility for it and blamed her own actions for causing the abuse. She did not have to admit to everyone that she had simply married a brute. After her marriage to Nicky collapsed, Elizabeth was angry with everyone: herself, Nicky, and her parents. As a result, she began lashing out anyway she could. She was in full-fledged rebellion mode and did anything she could to horrify Sara and assert independence. This included excessive drinking, smoking, and swearing. This was the first of many instances of Elizabeth acting out when she was unhappy (Taraborrelli, 2006, p. 90).

This was also the first instance of Elizabeth’s life-long illnesses. During the shooting of *Love is Better Than Ever*, Taylor went to the hospital for 2 days with an incipient ulcer. This was the first of many times when an unhappy private and professional life would lead her to seek refuge at a hospital (Morley, 1988, p. 40). It would also become one of her trademark behaviors. The numerous illnesses and accidents Elizabeth encountered were not so much fabricated as they were exploited by her. They served Elizabeth well as a form of rebellion against the structure of her life. When Elizabeth felt her life was out of control, she was able to gain control by becoming ill. Director Richard Brooks, who worked with Elizabeth several times, once said, “If she opens a beer can, she cuts herself. If there’s a chair in the middle of the set, she falls over it” (Mann, 2009, p. 145). One of Elizabeth’s close friends said this of her illnesses: “You must understand that when Elizabeth got sick, she was in control. It was her show, nobody else’s. She always felt pain, no question, but if she could drag it out a day or two longer, or insist she couldn’t walk, she could live her days the way she wanted to, without any director or husband or publicist telling her where to sit, when to stand, when to smile, when to pose pretty for a picture” (Mann, 2009, p. 146).

Elizabeth met her next husband while she was filming in England. Michael Wilding was an older actor who worked mainly in British films as the dashing hero. Elizabeth was drawn to him because he provided protection and was sweet and refined. It was not long before she wanted to marry him. When Michael Wilding first resisted marrying Elizabeth, she became

extremely frustrated. She was a world-famous movie star and, as such, was a woman who had grown accustomed to entitlement. Also, she had always had someone watching over her, be it Sara or the movie studio. She had no comprehension as to how to be an independent woman. It is true that, throughout her life, Elizabeth would feel most comfortable when she was in a relationship. After marrying Wilding, Elizabeth declared that she would not renew her contract with MGM unless Wilding was also offered a contract. Because the studio did not want to lose one of their most famous stars, Wilding as well as Elizabeth signed a 7-year contract with MGM, and the two moved to Los Angeles (Taraborrelli, 2006). In order to buy a house when they moved, Elizabeth used all of the money she had made as a child star, and whatever that money would not cover, they borrowed from the studio, which immediately put Elizabeth under the studio's total control. Wilding's and Taylor's financial troubles played a large hand in leading to the end of their marriage, as Elizabeth did not want to be indebted to anyone and Wilding proved unmotivated to make it in Hollywood (Morley, 1988, p. 44).

It was not long after her marriage to Michael before Elizabeth became pregnant with her first child. MGM promptly took her off salary completely until the baby was born and she was able to get her figure back (Morley, 1988, p. 46). This only added to the money issues the couple faced. Although MGM had left her unemployed after Michael Howard Wilding, Jr., was born, the studio arranged for her to begin giving interviews as soon as she came home from the hospital. They were eager to capitalize on the publicity of motherhood for one of their biggest stars (Taraborrelli, 2006, p. 106). Elizabeth's and Wilding's marriage quickly fell apart, after about 2 years and two kids together. They could not get over their financial issues, and Elizabeth felt Wilding was too meek for her. Dick Clayton, one of Elizabeth's friends, said, "When Taylor needed a new image, her publicists would look around for something new on the romantic front" (Mann, 2009, p. 159). In Hollywood, marriages lasted only as long as they were useful, and Elizabeth had no use for Michael Wilding any longer. She was anxious to develop a new image for herself. During fights with Wilding, Elizabeth would often goad him to hit her, saying, "Go on, hit me, why don't you? If only you would. That would prove you are flesh and blood instead of a stuffed dummy!" (Mann, 2009, p. 156). Since she had been so abused by Hilton, it's interesting to note that Elizabeth sought dominance from her second husband. She began to mirror her parents' relationship and endeavored to rule her husbands the way Sara ruled Francis (Taraborrelli, 2006, p. 128). This would become a trademark of all of her future relationships. If Elizabeth felt the man she was with was weaker than her, she was instantly turned off, yet she sought to control him at the same time.

Although she loved being a mother, in many ways, Elizabeth was not emotionally or mentally capable of being one to her two sons. The boys had nannies to feed them, change them, and teach them to walk. Only at dinnertime would Elizabeth receive them. “She doted on the boys,” said one close friend. “She loved them with all the passion she had. But she was emotionally still a kid herself” (Mann, 2009, p. 140). Though Elizabeth grew up physically very quickly, she was not emotionally mature. She was only 20 years old at the time and was still coddled and protected like a child by her mother and the studio. Elizabeth had never had a childhood, and now she was a mother and wife and was expected to show maturity and good sense. It is no wonder that when she went away on a film set, such as for her next big film, *Giant*, she acted out with regular drinking parties and burping contests with costar Rock Hudson (Mann, 2009, p. 144). For 12 years (up to the filming of *Giant*), everything in Elizabeth’s life had been determined by the needs of her career. That included her marriage to the much older Wilding. If Elizabeth had hoped to gain independence by freeing herself from her mother, she found she was still duty-bound to the studio, to her public, and to her fame. She might be one of the most popular stars in the world, but she increasingly felt that the only way to preserve some part of herself was to act out (e.g., misbehaving on set; drinking excessively) (Mann, 2009, p. 131). Elizabeth had control issues her whole life, and when she felt out of control, she would act out to gain attention and a sense of self.

Elizabeth had another traumatic illness 2 days after the death of her costar of *Giant*, James Dean, who died in a car accident while they were still shooting the film. Elizabeth was admitted to the hospital for symptoms of possible appendicitis or an ovarian cyst. Both of these were found to be wrong, and the doctor concluded that Elizabeth was suffering from “extreme nervous tension” brought about by Dean’s death and the mental duress she encountered during the difficult shoot. (Mann, 2009, p. 148)

After Elizabeth’s failed marriage to Michael Wilding, it was again not long before she encountered her next conquest: Michael Todd. Todd was a very successful producer at the time who had just come off the success of *Around the World in 80 Days*, which had just won the Best Picture Oscar. Todd was very wealthy, powerful, and domineering—all of the traits Elizabeth loved so much. Elizabeth had a very strong predilection for a certain way of life, which she had come to expect as her due after becoming a star. Making movies may never have been a passion for her, but living like a movie star certainly was. Elizabeth loved being showered with gifts, especially jewels. She even became accustomed to receiving gifts from her directors at the end of each shoot (Mann, 2009). Mike Todd was the perfect person to give Elizabeth the lifestyle she had always wanted. He was rich, and he loved spoiling her. He was also drawn to

her celebrity and beauty, as most men were. Mr. and Mrs. Todd's lavish ways of living, with their giant mansion and personal aircraft, was a child's-eye view of the world, and that, perhaps, was the greatest bond between the husband and wife. They were two excitable children grabbing what the world had to offer, with very few repercussions (Mann, 2009, p. 196).

Columnist and friend Liz Smith once said, "She was quite different after meeting Mike Todd. He would say, 'Audacity makes the star' and she began to live that motto." (Taraborrelli, 2006, p. 129). She began living a luxurious lifestyle, one that she would come to expect for the rest of her life.

According to Taylor biographer W. J. Mann (2009), Mike Todd also relished the new celebrity he attained by being associated with Elizabeth. He felt it would greatly help his career, and he even planned on developing his own production company in which Elizabeth would be the star. Unlike her previous husbands, Todd was aggressive and was always up for a fight. Their tumultuous relationship was one of the things that kept them together. Elizabeth relished the fact that Todd would dominate her, while she as well. She always loved Elizabeth once said of when he would lose his I would start to purr (Mann, 2009, p. 181). same aggressive nature life: Richard Burton. When the romance of the



stand up to her and would try to gain control the drama of a good fight. Mike Todd, "I loved it temper and dominate me. because he had won" Elizabeth would find this in the other love of her Elizabeth was younger, movies had influenced

her views of love and marriage. But now she found flying around the world with Mike Todd, bopping and brawling, fighting and frolicking, to be a heck of a lot more fun than those simple, homespun, sugar-coated MGM love stories. Elizabeth was growing up and finally getting out of the manufactured world MGM had created for her. After she married Mike Todd, he began taking control of her career. It was not longer Metro who told Elizabeth what to do; it was now Mike Todd who bossed the studio around—and Elizabeth loved it (Mann, 2009). Elizabeth had always resented the control the studio exerted over her personal and professional life, and now she finally had a champion in Mike Todd. He was the husband who could truly claim independence for her. Mike taught Elizabeth much about being an independent movie star. He was the first person to put the idea in her head that she no longer needed to be contracted to a major studio. She could become her own boss and work for whatever studio she wanted. She

would also be able to choose her own pictures. However, this independence was not to be for Elizabeth at this point in her life. It would be a number of years before Elizabeth would strike out on her own, leaving the studio system in her dust.

Elizabeth had only been married to Mike Todd for a year when tragedy struck the couple and ripped them apart forever. Mike was taking a trip aboard their private airplane, *Liz*, when it crashed during a blizzard in New Mexico. Everyone on board was killed instantly. Elizabeth was supposed to be on the plane as well, but she had not been feeling well that morning and so had decided not to join them. The only item that could be salvaged was Todd's wedding ring, which Elizabeth would wear long after his death. After Mike Todd's tragic death, Elizabeth turned to the open arms of Todd's best friend, Eddie Fisher, who happened to be married to Debbie Reynolds at the time. The two were considered "America's Sweethearts," and the media lashed out against Elizabeth. Elizabeth turned to Eddie because Eddie had wanted to be just like Mike Todd. He had emulated Mike, and so, in a way, it was like Elizabeth could hold onto a little of Mike even though he was gone. Elizabeth felt very little remorse for breaking up the Fisher-Reynolds marriage. She knew, as did most of Hollywood, that the marriage had merely been a studio arrangement and that neither of the parties was happy. However, this did not stop Debbie from capitalizing on her "scorned woman" role. The media showed shots of Debbie Reynolds and her children in her driveway, her face stained with tears as she drove away. Nothing was going to stop Elizabeth from marrying Eddie Fisher, though. Ever since she was 18, Elizabeth had done whatever she pleased, and the public had always followed along. This time, however, it was not to be. Even one of Taylor's closest allies, Hedda Hopper, lashed out at Elizabeth through her column. She said that Elizabeth had lost all of her values and had no consideration for the memory of Mike

Todd (Mann, 2009).

Eddie Fisher
by saying, "We felt we
anything. After all, we

Elizabeth and "America's Sweethearts," Eddie Fisher and Debbie Reynolds (*Nola.com* Retrieved 28 April 2011 at http://www.nola.com/music/index.ssf/2010/09/50s_pop_singer_eddie_fisher_

rationalized their affair
could get away with
had climbed to the top

of our professions and achieved more than we ever dreamed possible, so we felt invincible. We did whatever the hell we wanted to do and then waited for the consequences" (Taraborrelli, 2006, p. 142). For Elizabeth, though, there were very few consequences.

Though there were many protests against her films, with many fans and media writers calling for a complete boycott of her work, Elizabeth's work proved to be as popular as ever. Shortly after the Eddie Fisher scandal, *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* (which costarred Paul Newman) premiered to crowds lining up around the block to see it. It quickly became a smash hit and earned Elizabeth a second Oscar nomination. This success only emboldened her to believe that



With her Oscar for *Butterfield 8*. The scar from her tracheotomy is still visible. (Sofeminine.co.uk. Retrieved 28 April 2011 at <http://www.sofeminine.co.uk/entertainment/album757396/elizabeth-taylor-looking-back-at-elizabeth-taylor-s-life-17926985.html>)

she could do no wrong, even when she was doing wrong (Taraborrelli, 2006, p. 144). As can be seen, Elizabeth had never gotten over her rebellious, independent streak. If anything, her predilection for rebellion got stronger as she got older. She felt she was so famous that she could get away with anything. She even converted to Judaism shortly after marrying Eddie Fisher, not because her new husband was Jewish but as a form of rebellion against the Anti-Semitic feeling dominating the nation (Mann, 2009, p. 264).

Cleopatra was Elizabeth's next large project. The film was forecast to be a huge success, so it had a massive budget to go along with it. However, the course of making *Cleopatra* would never run smoothly. While in London to begin filming, Elizabeth contracted a severe case of pneumonia and was rushed to the hospital. She had stopped breathing, her face turned blue, and she was forced to have a tracheotomy.

Rumors quickly spread that Elizabeth was dying, and fans thronged to the hospital to pay their condolences. Flowers and cards came from all over the world, and several times the media reported that Elizabeth had actually died. Production for *Cleopatra* was delayed indefinitely, and the actors playing Julius Caser and Marc Antony were forced to take on new projects as they could not go so long without work. As she always did, Elizabeth made a miraculous recovery and was better in no time. She was even well enough to attend the Academy Awards that year, where she finally won the Best Actress Oscar for her work in *Butterfield 8*. In 1965, while she was writing her first memoir, Elizabeth wrote of her near-death illness, "When I became sick with pneumonia, I think it was my subconscious which let me become so seriously ill. I had been hoping to be happy, pretending to be happy. But there was something deeply desperate inside me and I was consumed by self-pity. My despair became so black that I just couldn't face waking up anymore" (Taraborrelli, 2006, p. 158). What she was referring to was that she had quickly realized after marrying Eddie Fisher that he was, in fact, not Mike Todd and never would be. She had gone through so much misery with the poor publicity over the affair that she felt trapped in a marriage she was not happy with.

The filming of *Cleopatra* would continue, though, this time in Rome, with a new Julius Caser (Rex Harrison) and Marc Antony (Richard Burton). The total filming would take close to 2 years and would prove a defining moment in Elizabeth's life, as she discovered the great love of

her life in Richard Burton. Richard and Elizabeth did not start off loving each other. In fact, Burton thought Elizabeth was too fat and was not a “true” actress (Burton himself had gotten his start on the stage, which was always considered the purest form of acting). Elizabeth thought Richard a cad and knew his flirtations were only to get her into bed. Over time, however, Richard and Elizabeth grew to be friends and then, ultimately, lovers. Elizabeth loved Richard’s passion and domineering nature, as well as his love for alcohol, which she shared. Richard was drawn to Elizabeth due to her pure magnetism and down-to-earth nature. Though Elizabeth was a world-wide movie star who adored fine jewels, she could also beat any man in a burping or drinking contest.



“Liz” and “Dick” on the set of *Cleopatra*. They weren’t shy about their affection. (*The Burtons*. Retrieved 28 April 2011 at <http://elizabethandrichardburton.tumblr.com/post/1567498723/photo-elizabeth-taylor-and-richard-burton-on-the>)

During the filming of *Cleopatra*, Eddie Fisher was paid \$1500 per week to keep Elizabeth away from alcohol and get her home and into bed at a reasonable hour, then back to the set the next day. As far as Elizabeth was concerned, he was just another insolent employee (Mann, 2009; Taraborrelli, 2006). This was another factor that drove Elizabeth from Eddie into the open arms of Richard. Richard loved teasing Elizabeth and getting her to behave badly. Richard represented the fun, dangerous man, while Eddie had become almost like Elizabeth’s mother used to be. For a woman who would always desire independence, she naturally gravitated to the man who would give it to her. Like Mike Todd, what Richard Burton provided Elizabeth was a sense of liberation—from the daily grind of moviemaking, from studio control, from the strictures that had dictated how she must behave in the public eye. Like the media barrage that happened during the Eddie Fisher affair, the media was insatiable in their appetite for news about Burton and Taylor, or as they would come to be known, “Liz and Dick.” Though both Elizabeth and Richard were married to other people, they were not shy about parading their love around Rome or when they would go on vacation together (Mann, 2009; Taraborrelli, 2006).

Joe Mankiewicz directed the film *Cleopatra*, and his son Chris often worked as a production assistant on the set. Chris said this about Elizabeth during production: “She was the most powerful woman in movies, the first actor—male or female—to get a million dollars. She had the studios kneeling in front of her and could do virtually anything she wanted. She was impervious to any kind of discipline and completely enjoying it” (Taraborrelli, 2006, p. 167). Elizabeth was also always impervious to consequences for her actions. Richard and Elizabeth continued their relationship throughout the filming of *Cleopatra*, much to the dismay of Eddie

Fisher and of Richard's wife Sybil. It was not to be a year after the filming of *Cleopatra* that both would divorce their significant others and finally be together, unattached to someone else.

Cleopatra was remarkable for two other reasons in Elizabeth's life: It was the first time any actor had received a million dollars for a picture, and it was the first film she made independently of the studio. Elizabeth was one of the first movie stars to work without being signed to a major studio. She worked with her agent and producers to get signed to projects at whatever rate she requested. She was also one of the first actors to receive a percentage of the film's profits as her payment. Elizabeth was so famous at the time that multiple studios and directors wanted to work with her, as she guaranteed box office success. She is greatly credited with bringing about the end of the studio system and the beginning of agent-dominated work contracts (Mann, 2009). Sadly, Elizabeth Taylor passed away during the writing of this paper at the age 79. She will long be remembered for her advocacy, her vivacious spirit, and as being one of the last living legends of the Hollywood studio era.

Elizabeth Taylor's life cannot be understood without understanding the celebrity that surrounded her. By age 30, she had lived a life of entitlement for more than 20 years. She had made 33 movies and was a major star who always got exactly what she wanted, a star who inspired awe everywhere she went and in whatever she did. While it may have been thrilling to live this way, it was also very corruptive to her sense of consequences (Taraborrelli, 2006, p. 194). Elizabeth was never truly able to distinguish what was right from what was wrong because she had always gotten whatever she wanted.

Like most actors in the studio system, though, Elizabeth's childhood was marked by the intense control and pressure exerted on her by MGM. Unlike other child stars who would cede to this control and allow it to overwhelm them, Elizabeth took the opposite approach and only became more determined to cultivate an independence and a life of her own. Shirley MacLaine, a long-time friend of Elizabeth's, said, "The old moguls were essentially hard-fisted authoritarians who had created a system of linked dictatorships to control the creative people. We were supposed to be the children; mad, tempestuous, brilliant, talented, not terribly smart children. We were to be led, guided, manipulated, bought, sold, packaged, coddled and tolerated. But we were not allowed to be masters of our own destinies" (Mann, 2009, p. 267).

What makes Elizabeth so different though from Judy Garland? Both actresses entered the studio while they were in their teens, and both became world-renowned actresses. Elizabeth, however, was able to escape the drugs and emotional pitfalls Judy faced and that ultimately destroyed her career and ended her life. Joe Mankiewicz, a close friend of both actresses, felt that the difference between the two "was one of temperament." Elizabeth came

into the business “already strong,” while “Judy was emotional, needing affirmation. Elizabeth survived the demands of the studio because she was confident that she could get what she wanted on her own” (Mann, 2009, p. 94). Mike Nichols, the acclaimed director, said of Elizabeth, “She never had a life of her own. Every movement had always been public. But where most people would have developed a shell, for some reason she didn’t” (Mann, 2009, p. 318). Part of the reason Elizabeth was able to retain a sense of self, unlike Judy Garland, is because she was able to separate the celebrity of “Elizabeth Taylor” from the person she was. “I began to see myself as two separate people. Elizabeth Taylor the person and Elizabeth Taylor the commodity. I saw the difference between my image and my real self,” she said. “Before I reached my teens I resolved to separate my feelings of self-worth from the public image of Elizabeth Taylor” (Mann, 2009, p. 94). This understanding allowed her to sell the commodity to the public without getting lost in the illusion.

As much as Elizabeth accepted the compromises and realities that came with her ambition, she remained a bit wistful about it all. A part of her really did want the “happily ever after” of her films. While her outward appearance was telling the world she was an adult, she was still, in fact, “an emotional child inside a woman’s body” (Mann, 2009, p. 99). Part of that child would never go away, and Elizabeth was always searching for something or someone who would make her truly happy.

One of the reasons Elizabeth was able to break free from the studio is because she never felt at home there. Unlike Judy Garland, who felt a strong attachment to MGM even after she left it, Elizabeth never felt any attachment to the studio. She was always like a rebellious teenager, eager to run away from home; and, ultimately, she did.

Shirley Temple: The Most Successful Child Star Both On- and Off-Camera

There are many differences between Judy Garland’s and Elizabeth Taylor’s child star experiences and that of Shirley Temple. For one thing, Shirley entered the studio system at a much younger age than the other two actresses, who entered in adolescence. Also, Shirley received her contract from Fox Pictures, a much more benevolent studio than MGM. The most important difference, however, was the discipline and guidance provided to Shirley by her mother Gertrude. As you will see, Gertrude had a profound effect not only on the shape of Shirley’s career, but on her emotional development as well.

Shirley Temple was born on April 23, 1928, in Santa Monica, California, to Gertrude and George Temple. Like Sara Taylor, Gertrude Temple previously had performing aspirations of her own. She was a very accomplished dancer but had never been able to break through the

ranks to be a great success. Her career was also hindered by her marriage to George and her subsequent pregnancies. Before Shirley was born, Gertrude already had two children, both boys. A substantial amount of time passed between the birth of Shirley and her brothers so that by the time Shirley was born, her brothers were already teenagers. From her birth, Shirley became the permanent center of the household (since she was the youngest and was also the only girl). Gertrude Temple shifted all of her energies to her daughter—doing things with her and for her. Shirley became the clear center of Gertrude's world (Hammontree, 1998). Mrs. Temple was enraptured with Shirley, seeing her in almost mystical terms. For instance, Mrs. Temple noted that, when Shirley was learning to walk, she did not walk like other children. Gertrude would later say that “Shirley skimmed along the ground, looking like a ‘fairy-child’” (Hammontree, 1998, p. 21).

Gertrude Temple recognized very quickly that Shirley was destined for great things, and she was determined to help Shirley achieve this greatness. Shirley spent her first year of life in a crib right next to the record player, and, to lull her to sleep, Gertrude would put on some of her favorite songs. At 8 months, Shirley was able to stand in her crib and sway to the rhythm of the music. Gertrude was determined to make Shirley a star, either through dancing or in film. When Shirley reached the age of 3, Gertrude decided that her daughter should take dance lessons, claiming she planned to give Shirley the fun she herself had missed. What she really planned on doing was living her own dreams of stardom through Shirley, much like Sara Taylor had through Elizabeth (Edwards, 1988). According to Temple biographer Patsy Hammontree (1998), Gertrude enrolled Shirley at Meglin's Dance School, the same school attended by Judy Garland. Here Shirley took singing and dancing—and a small amount of acting training. Meglin's was typically thought of as the gateway to the movie studios.

Hollywood was experiencing a “baby boom” at this time due to the great success of the child star Mary Pickford. This was also the time period of the Depression, and families were desperate to do anything to put food on the table, even if this meant forcing their children to work in the movies. Promoters saw gold in this situation and “beautiful baby” contests abounded. All parents hoped a published photograph of their child would catch the eye of a Hollywood casting director. Dancing schools provided another place where a child could be seen (Edwards, 1988, p. 28). Several articles about Mrs. Meglin and her dance school's great popularity with casting directors appeared in Los Angeles area newspapers during the spring of 1931, which is how Gertrude discovered the school. It became clear to Shirley at a young age how important her dancing success was to her mother; thus, Shirley was determined to keep her mother happy and rarely complained about her dancing schedule. This is a trait Shirley

would continue to keep throughout her film-making career. Shirley was very much under the control of Gertrude and would do whatever her mother wanted, as long as it made her mother happy (Edwards, 1988). It is a well-established fact that to break into the movie business, potential child actors must have an adult serving as a guiding force behind them. One day, when talent scouts came to interview potential child stars at Mrs. Meglin's, Gertrude took her chance and allowed Shirley to be interviewed. Gertrude would later play off the fact that she never had any role in helping Shirley get her start in show business, but there is ample evidence to the contrary. In reality,



Shirley in *Baby Burlesks*. (The Official Shirley Temple Website. Retrieved 28 April 2011 at

without Gertrude's persistence, it is safe to say Shirley probably would not have gotten into the film industry. Because of Shirley's young age, it is doubtful that her charm alone got her in the business. Rather, her achievements came through her mother's careful planning and dedication to her daughter's professional advancement. This dedication would be present throughout Shirley's career. Gertrude had the final say concerning everything Shirley did (Hammontree, 1998).

Three days after the interview at the dance studio, Shirley was asked to be brought in for a screen test at a film studio, though it was at one of the smaller, low-budget studios called Educational Films, Inc. The executives at Educational Films were impressed by Shirley's natural charm that came through the camera and her dedication and obedience. She was cast in their *Baby Burlesks* series and would work 4 days a week for \$10 a day. Mrs. Temple would receive \$5 a day for making sure Shirley met all of her obligations. While this is not a substantial amount, especially considering what Shirley was paid by Fox at the end of her career, it was a start that allowed Shirley to learn the ropes of the acting world (Hammontree, 1998). At first reluctant to put Shirley in films at such a young age, George Temple was so ecstatic at her being cast in the *Baby Burlesks* that he personally signed the contract for Shirley as her guardian. This was the first and only time George Temple had any involvement in Shirley's acting career, other than acting as her financial manager throughout her career at Fox (Edwards, 1988, p. 34). *Baby Burlesks* was also responsible for exposing Shirley to the less glamorous side of the movie business. While they were filming, the children were no longer treated like children but, rather, as adults. They were not coddled or catered to, and if they dared to cross the line or be disobedient, there were consequences. During production of the

Baby Burlesk films, the children often were exposed to dangerous situations. Shirley recalled making *Kid N' Africa*, saying, "I was being chased by little black boys who were playing the African natives. . . . [The director] wanted all the children to fall at one time. [I] got through on the path and then they put wire up and tripped all the little black boys at once and, of course, they all fell in a heap and some of their legs were cut" (Edwards, 1988, p. 39). Shirley also talked about the forms of punishment the children faced if they chose to disobey directions. One of the rules laid down by Hays (who was the producer of the series) was to restrict mothers from being on the set. This way they could exact punishment without the mothers present to object. The most severe punishment was the "black box," where an unruly or uncooperative child was fastened in a box. A large block of ice was then placed in the box so the child had to sit on the ice, lie on the floor in the puddle of water, or stand up. Shirley said that it certainly taught her to do as directed and do it quickly, but she laughed off any long-term effects (Hammontree, 1998, p. 32).

Shirley ended up making eight one-reel comedies for Educational Films. During this time, her mother acted as her costumer, sewing her costumes for the films, as well as her drama coach. Mrs. Temple helped Shirley memorize lines she could not read and understand what was happening in the scene. Shirley's mannerisms, which would later become her trademark, came from her mother's coaching. Thus, Gertrude Temple already was having a profound effect on shaping Shirley's career by creating the "Shirley Temple" style of acting. Once the children had outgrown the *Baby Burlesks* series, Hays began to make shorts for older children called *The Frolics of Youth*. While many of the other children were dropped at this time, Shirley was kept on as the only child performer and was now paid \$15 a week. These shorts allowed Shirley to come into contact with older actors and helped her learn how to be a part of an ensemble (Hammontree, 1998). According to Hammontree, during breaks in shooting these short films, Shirley often was loaned out to do walk-on parts in feature films at some of the major studios. Disappointed with the quality of the Educational Films' shorts, Gertrude was determined to get better parts for Shirley. She even began going on her own to the large studios to see what parts they had. However, she was able to secure walk-on roles for only one or two pictures. Gertrude's life now was dominated by her pursuit of Shirley's career, and she was determined that her daughter would make the leap from these small comedy shorts to feature films. As was true when Shirley was in dancing school, Gertrude was distant from the other mothers and kept Shirley apart from their children whenever possible. This was to become a trait of Gertrude throughout Shirley's career. She allowed her own competitive nature to keep Shirley from developing friendships with other children on set. Although competitiveness was

partially responsible for Gertrude's aloofness from other movie mothers, a certain amount of snobbishness was also involved. Gertrude felt many of the mothers were exploiting their children to support the family. Gertrude, however, never felt she was exploiting Shirley and, thus, felt isolated from the other mothers. In a way, Gertrude's creation of a controlled environment would prove beneficial to Shirley, as it kept her out of competition with the other young children and also away from any diva-like behavior the children may have exhibited (Edwards, 1988).

Shirley's big break came when she was loaned out to Fox Pictures for a small scene in *Stand Up and Cheer*. Although she only had one scene, it was a large dance number. Shirley proved so effervescent on screen that her powerful screen presence convinced Fox executives that they needed her in their studio. Winfield Sheehan, Fox's studio head, was so impressed with Shirley's performance and professionalism that he offered her a long-term contract. Sheehan offered to pay her \$150 a week for a 7-year contract with incremental raises based on her progress (Edwards, 1988, p. 54). Also as part of her contract, the studio executives decided to claim her age as 1 year younger than she actually was. This way, they could increase her juvenile years and get more productivity out of her. Mrs. Temple agreed to this in order to stay on good terms with the studio, since she had worked carefully to get Shirley signed at a major studio (Hammontree, 1998, p. 13).

Fox executives were slow to take advantage of the public reaction to Shirley from *Stand Up and Cheer*. Shirley's next few roles were minor parts; however, the executives were not doing this out of negligence or lack of talent on Shirley's part. It was a structured plan for Shirley to guarantee longevity. To reduce the risk of overexposure, Sheehan believed it would be best for Shirley to have small parts in major films until she was truly established. Having gained some experience in the way to get things done in the film community, Mrs. Temple had begun to build up her own contacts among staff members in the different studios. Unhappy with the bit parts Shirley was receiving, Gertrude used her contacts to help get Shirley the starring roles Fox was not giving her, such as the title role in *Little Miss Marker* at Paramount, which would become Shirley's next career breakthrough. *Little Miss Marker* changed Shirley from a bit-player in walk-on roles to a major movie star. As the audience became more excited about the young star, her name was moved from the bottom of the marquee to the top (Hammontree, 1998). Audience reaction to *Little Miss Marker* was largely favorable and was the major reason the film made Shirley a star.

After the strong success of *Little Miss Marker*, Paramount executives offered to buy out Shirley's contract from Fox for \$1000 a week. When Gertrude approached Sheehan with this offer, however, he agreed to bump Shirley up to \$1250 a week from \$150 a week, with rising yearly increments of \$1000 a week for 7 years. Gertrude, as Shirley's "coach," would receive \$150 a week. Gertrude accepted these terms (Edwards, 1988, p. 62). When Shirley arrived back at Fox, she was admired by writers, directors, and actors alike. When she ate in the Fox cafeteria with the rest of Fox's stars, she and her mother attracted a steady stream of attention. Fox executives took notice and brought Mrs. Temple into the office to discuss how they could preserve Shirley's innocence and keep her from becoming spoiled (Hammontree, 1998, p. 42). Shirley said of Mr. Sheehan, "[He] took a personal interest in me and protected me with special orders in the studio. He would not let me eat in the Fox commissary for fear the other actors would spoil me." There was also another reason they banned Shirley from the commissary though. Shirley was quite a chubby child, and Sheehan and Gertrude were monitoring her meals and did not want her to be tempted by seeing others eating French fries or ice cream (Edwards, 1988, p. 54). Winfield Sheehan was anxious to keep Shirley from becoming too spoiled or admired because, if she started admiring herself, it would be sure to come out on the screen. He felt it would show through Shirley's eyes; thus, no one was allowed to ask Shirley to recite or dance, and no one was supposed to congratulate her on her work except the director (Edwards, 1988, p. 68). While this may seem like an extremely controlled atmosphere, it actually benefitted Shirley in the long-run. By not allowing Shirley to become aware of her own celebrity, Sheehan and Gertrude were able to keep her down-to-earth and humble, which is a large reason why an emotionally stable Shirley grew up to be an adult. According to Temple biographer, Anne Edwards (1988), one of Sheehan's last gestures before he resigned was to build a special bungalow for Shirley on the lot. The bungalow also had a garden, a picket fence, a rabbit pen. On one wall was painted a mural of Shirley in a princess costume. Her miniaturized white



Constructing Shirley's bungalow at Fox. (*The Official Shirley Temple Website*. Retrieved 28 April 2011 at <http://www.shirleytemple.com/shirleyPhotos.html>)

Gertrude were able to and humble, which is a Shirley grew up to be adult. According to Anne Edwards (1988), gestures before he special bungalow for four-room house had a tree with a swing, and wall was painted a princess costume. Her miniaturized white

baby grand piano. The bungalow also served as her classroom while she was filming. Though there was a community school on the Fox lot, Shirley was tutored privately to keep her away

from crowds and not damage her innocence. By the time she was in 5th grade, she was not only doing schoolwork, but also taking French, piano, and dancing lessons (Hammontree, 1998, p. 43).

Given the fact that Shirley had a special dressing room, a special teacher, a special makeup artist, and a special wardrobe assistant, her ability to keep herself in perspective and to treat others with regard is quite note-worthy. Much of this quality comes from the way Mrs. Temple raised Shirley. Gertrude once said, "I tell Shirley always that she must be very humble. She is taught that it is the hard work she puts into her pictures that makes people admire and like her" (Hammontree, 1998, p. 98). It was this teaching that kept Shirley genuine even when she was exposed to the artificial nature of Hollywood in general.

By early 1935, in her peak of film-making success, Shirley had settled into a schedule to which she adhered for the next 5 years. In addition to her 6-days-a-week studio schedule, she now had product endorsements, including the Shirley Temple doll and "Shirley" dresses. Mrs. Temple would approve no dress design that Shirley would not wear herself. They would spend hours and hours as Shirley tried on each dress to decide which dresses would actually be sold. Other products Shirley endorsed were posters, paper dolls, playing cards, trading cards, costume jewelry, hair bows, hair barrettes, handkerchiefs, and blue drinking glasses with her



An older Shirley with her "Shirley Temple Dolls" (*The Official Shirley Temple Website*. Retrieved 28 April 2011 at <http://www.shirleytemple.com/shirleyPhotos.html>)

photograph etched in white. It is often a natural extension of a child star's success to develop endorsement deals.

Gertrude Temple was very controlling over Shirley's appearance. Extra precautions were always taken by Mrs. Temple to protect Shirley's golden ringlets since they were her most prized possession and a large part of her audience appeal. Whenever Shirley was not on set, she had to wear a head covering, ranging anywhere

from a giant sun bonnet to a bandanna. Gertrude also defined a strict schedule for Shirley that accounted for nearly every hour of the day. Mrs. Temple understood that,

without structure and defined boundaries, Shirley could not balance all the parts of her life. Although some of these boundaries seem severe now, the proof of her policies lies in the emotionally stable adult Shirley became. Very few children have ever been supervised as much as was Shirley Temple. Gertrude had so much impressed upon Shirley that it was her duty to fulfill responsibilities that she accepted her mother's regimentation. She went through her days and nights following the schedule set down by her mother; however, because Shirley had never

known anything different in her life, it never crossed her mind that her life was overly controlled. This was the way she thought all children's lives were lived (Hammontree, 1998).

While Shirley was a disciplined, dutiful young girl on the set, when she had free time, she could be a rebellious, rambunctious child. When her family stopped at Hyde Park to see Eleanor Roosevelt on their way to New York City, Shirley decided to pelt Mrs. Roosevelt's backside with a pebble thrown from a slingshot. Though she received a stern reproach from her mother, Roosevelt forgave her (Edwards, 1988). As Shirley began to star in more and more films, she grew comfortable with the process and the crew and started acting out on set. During the filming of *The Little Colonel* in 1934, she would walk up to Lionel Barrymore, who was her costar at the time, and yell "Boo!" in his face while he was taking a nap. Barrymore was not a fan of Shirley for this reason, and the director spent most of the shoot placating him (Hammontree, 1998, p. 59). Part of Shirley's excess energy came from being restrained by her mother in so many situations. One of her favorite activities was to play baseball with the neighborhood children. While the other children played barefooted and bare-headed, Shirley had to wear a covering on her head and shoes on her feet. She was never allowed to be a truly rambunctious child because that would interfere with her strict schedule (Hammontree, 1998, p.78).

Halfway through 1935, Shirley topped the box office charts as the most popular star in the world. Her pictures solved Fox Pictures' financial troubles and made the studio competitive with MGM and Warner Bros. Gertrude had fulfilled part of her dream. Shirley was as big a star as Mary Pickford had been. Now the only thing left to do was maintain her position (Edwards, 1988). *Time Magazine* reported at this time that, when the grosses of Shirley's first three films were totaled, "it was undeniably apparent that Shirley Temple was potentially the most valuable human property in Hollywood" (Hammontree, 1998, p. 57). One of the reasons Shirley's films became as successful as they did was that they appealed to a broad audience. They were not "kiddie" movies. They had love stories to entertain women and hyper-masculine male costars to appeal to the male audience. Thus, her films were for all ages and genders, which is why they made so much money at the box office (Edwards, 1988).

Gertrude's first frisson of fear for Shirley's impending development came in 1935 when Shirley began to lose her baby teeth. While mother and daughter fretted over how this would affect her filming schedule, it proved to be no problem as the studio personnel simply constructed replacement teeth for her (Hammontree, 1998). Gertrude was keenly aware that a child star's days were numbered, and she also knew that, as long as Shirley was number one at the box office, she did not have to worry about competition. Gertrude, therefore, put up no

objection to the hours Shirley worked at the peak of her success: 6 days a week, 5 hours a day on Monday through Friday and 8 hours on Saturday. When taking care of Shirley's professional interests, Mrs. Temple could easily turn aggressive. She was particularly defensive regarding Shirley's costars and was determined that no other child would be in competition with Shirley. Mrs. Temple was also not above getting in tiffs with Shirley's adult costars, most notably with Jack Haley in *Poor Little Rich Girl*. In the film, there was a very intricate, difficult dance sequence called "The Military Man." Haley attracted Mrs. Temple's ire when he showed skepticism towards Shirley's abilities to execute the long precision tap routine. He was scorned by Mrs. Temple, who expected Shirley to do whatever was necessary. She knew Shirley could do it because Shirley *had* to do it.

Gertrude was careful to keep Shirley from intermingling with her child costars. Whether this was due to Gertrude's own competitive behavior or the fact that she didn't want Shirley to be competitive is unknown. Marilyn Granas, Shirley's stand-in for *Bright Eyes* and other films, mentioned that she and their costar Jane Withers were not allowed to play with Shirley during filming breaks (Hammontree, 1998). Jane Withers was a particularly good child actress, and, while she was not as popular as Shirley, she was more talented. Sensing this, Gertrude was especially competitive towards Jane. Withers once said, "I was not permitted to talk to Shirley at all. I even was told to go and wash my hands before I went into a scene with her" (Edwards, 1988, p. 68). Later, when Gertrude looked at the edits, it was clear that Jane Withers was stealing the movie right out from under Shirley. Gertrude wanted to make sure Shirley would remain the star of the film, so when the film was finally shown at the premiere, almost all of Jane's scenes had been cut out.

Another one of Shirley's costars felt the wrath of Gertrude's competitive nature when she also had her most powerful scene cut from *The Blue Bird*. The actress was Sybil Jason. She later said, "Mrs. Temple had the right to say who was in the movie, how it was cast, and to choose the director and the cameraman. But regardless of who was responsible for this decision, as an adult, I can almost understand the studio's thinking in cutting the scene. Shirley had been the biggest money-maker at Fox for many years and they were protecting their interest" (Edwards, 1988, p. 127).

Shirley spent almost her entire childhood around the company of adults. In an interview on December 10, 1992, Marilyn Granas, who had been Shirley's first stand-in, said, "I don't think she had a great many children to play with. There were certainly never any children that we played with on the set" (Hammontree, 1998, p. 97). Shirley's constant companion was her mother, and while she was at the studio, the people who occupied her world were the adult

crew. One of the effects of this arrangement was the fact that Shirley matured mentally very early on, though emotionally she was still very much a child, as she would learn once she left the studio. Another consequence of the nature of Shirley's social life was the intense bond she developed with her mother. Shirley was too young to feel resentment towards Gertrude and, instead, saw her as her mother, acting coach, and companion. They developed a bond that would continue throughout Shirley's life. Shirley was deferred to by some and treated like an adult by others. Rarely did she have the kind of competitive relationships most children experience. She once remarked that she did not remember ever having any conflict with any of the other children on the set. This was most likely due to the fact that Shirley was kept away from the other children, so she was oblivious to any competitive sentiment or anger towards the other children. They were simply her co-workers (Hammontree, 1998, p. 98).

Shirley's life at this time could not be measured by any normal comparison. She no longer went anywhere without a bodyguard. She faced multiple kidnapping threats, and even with her bodyguard present, there was danger of her clothes being torn by fans reaching out just to get a small piece of her. Shirley said of this hectic time period that "I don't have many memories of other children or their parents because I didn't socialize with my peer group at the studio. . . . I had a lot of concentrating to do. I just didn't have that experience. . . . I was going back to the studio, back to the set, back and forth to lunch, to home" (Edwards, 1988, p. 126).

Though Shirley was making money for Fox, the studio was still in a perilous position financially, which led them to be bought by 20th Century Studios. Thus, the studio became what we now know it as today: 20th Century Fox. Winfield Sheehan, Shirley's staunch supporter and protector, was removed and replaced by the hard-line Darryl Zanuck. When Zanuck took over Fox, he told the writers that their top priority was to develop projects for Shirley that followed the "Little Miss Fix-It" storylines her previous films had. Shirley was Fox's cash cow, and Zanuck was ready to milk it for all she was worth. She was such an important asset to the studio that Zanuck had a special team of writers and directors just for her films (Edwards, 1988). The only major change Shirley experienced when Zanuck arrived was the hiring of her bodyguard, which was previously mentioned. The studio had received numerous kidnapping threats, and Zanuck wanted to take no chances with the most valuable talent on the lot (Hammontree, 1998, p. 63).

As Shirley grew up, she was the star of the lot, so her birthdays were a big, if extremely contrived, affair. Invited were children who performed walk-on roles or acted as extras for the studio, and many of these children did not even know Shirley. Gifts were expected, and some children brought elaborate gifts, just to be noticed by the studio heads, who were always in attendance. These gifts were later placed in cartons and sent to a local orphanage (Hammontree, 1998, p. 100).



One of Shirley's elaborate birthday parties. She was not personally friends with any of the attendees. (*The Official Shirley Temple Website*. Retrieved 28 April 2011 at <http://www.shirleytemple.com/shirley/photos.html>)

In April of 1938, Shirley turned 10 years old and began the dreaded maturation process every child star faces. She was growing rapidly and gaining weight, though her mother prevented her from eating candies and other snack foods. Shirley, however, was always a naturally chubby girl, and her added girth did not please the studio (Hammontree, 1998). As she turned 10, her films continued to be successful; however, Shirley was facing the dreaded curse of predictability. Her films consistently ran the same formula and audiences were becoming used to it. As she grew older, though, her audience expected her films to become more authentic and artistic. Zanuck, however, felt that sticking with the standard Shirley Temple formula (classics with music and dimpled charm) was the key to box office success (Edwards, 1988, pp. 114-115).

To resuscitate her box office returns, which, though still good, were starting to lag, Zanuck cast Shirley in *The Little Princess*, based on the popular book of the time. The script was full of drama and would have provided Shirley a real acting challenge, but the director Walter Lang allowed the film to fall back into the typical Shirley Temple song-and-dance film. The film went on to be a success, but not in the same league as Shirley's earlier films (Hammontree, 1998). The major problem was that Shirley needed to find an audience who would accept her new young adult image, and she needed to convince the studio to accept this image. *The Little Princess* was enough of a success, however, that it convinced Zanuck that Shirley would easily make the transition from child star to adolescent performer (Edwards, 1988, p. 123). This assumption sadly would be proven incorrect. Though Shirley's fans continued showing her support at the box office, film executives and her own mother realized that her films were becoming derivative and her power in films was slipping (Hammontree, 1998).

On April 28, 1940, Shirley turned 12 and entered the most awkward years for making movies. According to Hammontree, though she was still an attractive child, she was too old to continue playing little girl roles believably. However, adolescent characters did not suit the Shirley Temple persona, which was based on cuteness and sweetness. Box-office attendance for her films began declining with *Heidi*, but the decrease was minimal at first, not enough to throw her from number one at the box office. Because of her continued success, the diminishing box office of her next film, *Just Around the Corner*, was a shock and precluded the downward spiral that was to come. Aware of Shirley's box office decline, Gertrude was insistent that Shirley start taking older roles and better scripts. However, Darryl Zanuck was intent on keeping Shirley young, as this was where the profits had always been. Supposedly, he even issued a rule that Shirley's skirts were to be kept as short as possible to make her look more childlike (Hammontree, 1998). And when Shirley's first *artistic* and *adult* film, *The Blue Bird*, failed at the box office, Darryl Zanuck was convinced that Shirley's contribution to 20th Century Fox had ended. He essentially stopped caring about her career from that point forward.

As a response to MGM's success with *The Wizard of Oz*, 20th Century Fox decided to produce *The Blue Bird*, with Shirley Temple as the star. The film turned out to be too cerebral and symbolic for the audiences to follow. Mrs. Temple was against the film from the start and even hired attorneys to contest Shirley's participation. Tired of Gertrude's complaints, Zanuck turned a deaf ear, and the film was a complete failure at the box office. After she became unprofitable, Zanuck made no effort to conceal his increasing indifference towards the Temples. Unlike Sheehan, he held no sentimental attachment to Shirley, nor did he feel any obligation to the once-lucrative performer. To him, she was just a business property that had stopped producing profits and, thus, needed to go. During the filming of *Young People*, Gertrude began to sense this was the beginning of the end and threatened to buy out Shirley's contract from Fox. Darryl Zanuck, however, was indifferent, and when *Young People* failed to perform at the box office, 20th Century Fox paid Shirley her last check for \$300,000, which covered the remainder of her contract (Hammontree, 1998). When Shirley left the studio in 1940, she had made 22 films, saved Fox from bankruptcy, and earned them over 30 million dollars. Within a week of her departure, Shirley's bungalow had been completely renovated, all traces of her tenure removed, and the premises reassigned as a small office complex (Edwards, 1988, p. 128).



School girl Shirley. She loved Westlake much more than making films. (*The Official Shirley Temple Website*. Retrieved 28 April 2011 at <http://www.shirleytemple.com/shirleyPhotos.html>)

After her contract was dropped by Fox, Gertrude enrolled Shirley in an all-girls private school called Westlake Academy. It was Shirley's first experience in a real school, and for the first time, she encountered competition among the other children. Because of Shirley's fame, many of her classmates assumed she would be arrogant and pretentious. They felt the best way to get an edge on her was to keep her in isolation. However, it was not long before Shirley

began to fit into the school social system, and she soon became very popular. Shirley became especially close to her next door neighbor, who also attended the school. Shirley attended all of the social functions held by the school, including the school dances (Edwards, 1988). Westlake had high academic standards and

also served as a finishing school for young ladies. The school helped Shirley develop a gracious manner and her own personal sense of style. Shirley's Westlake years allowed her to make an effective transition from being an adorable little girl to a sophisticated young woman (Hammontree, 1998).

Shirley continued to maintain her ties to the entertainment world, however, through her numerous endorsement deals that were still continuing. She endorsed good grooming for *Parents Magazine* and the practice of etiquette for *American Home*. Shirley became a model of good behavior for adolescents around the country (Hammontree, 1998, p. 114). Shirley's time at Westlake helped her realize what she had missed by becoming a child celebrity. Her perspective of her future was dramatically altered. She realized she did not want to have a career in films. She would later say, "My heart was at Westlake, not in the movies" (Edwards, 1988, p. 138). According to Edwards' biography, *Shirley Temple: American Princess* (1988), Shirley's retirement from films was short-lived thanks to Gertrude. Before her first year at Westlake was over, Gertrude had negotiated with Louis B. Mayer at MGM for Shirley to appear in *Kathleen* for \$2500 a week and \$1000 a week for Gertrude. There was possibility of a long-term contract if the film was successful.

While at MGM, Shirley encountered a very different environment than the one she had grown up with at Fox. MGM was a powerful studio that valued its performers as workers rather than artists. The work schedules in place for their young performers were very stringent, regardless of the effect it had on the star's health (Hammontree, 1998, p. 115). Unfortunately for Shirley, the special charisma she had as a child did not survive into adulthood. Still somewhat

chubby, she had a budding bosom and features that retained their cherubic innocence, which seemed to be a dichotomy. After *Kathleen* failed to perform at the box office, Mayer decided not to pick up Shirley's option, and she had to return to Westlake. Shirley was not concerned in the least, as she would much rather have been at school than making films (Edwards, 1988). Shirley's second year at Westlake also was interrupted when Gertrude signed Shirley to Edward Small Productions, a deal that guaranteed her \$65,000 for her first film with them. Shirley was staunchly against leaving Westlake again. However, when Edward Small Productions threatened to sue her for breach of contract, she was forced to show up and make *Little Annie Rooney*. Like *Kathleen*, *Little Annie Rooney* underperformed at the box office, and Shirley's option once again was not picked up. Again, Shirley was unconcerned with these results, and when no other offers for her services came, she settled into living her life as a real teenager, rather than playing ones in the movies (Edwards, 1988).

Just as Shirley felt she was achieving independence from her mother and the freedom to be a normal child, Gertrude brought her a 7-year contract with David O. Selznick, the prolific producer of *Gone With the Wind*. Shirley was sent to work immediately on *Since You Went Away*. Though the Temples, predominately Gertrude, thought this was the start of Shirley's career rebirth, they forgot that Selznick International was a much smaller studio than Fox. Selznick could not constantly have Shirley in one of his films, so she was often loaned out to another studio to do work. These studio projects were usually of a much lower quality than Selznick's films. Gertrude made no secret of her hope that Shirley was on her way to adult stardom. She felt very optimistic when Selznick's contract was almost equal to what Shirley made at Fox and Gertrude was still paid \$1000 a week. Selznick expressed his desire to groom Shirley into becoming a female romantic lead; however, he would do it by placing her in small roles in ensemble pieces where she could develop her talent and learn from other actors (Edwards, 1988). Selznick wanted audiences to know that Shirley's first two films were not the typical Shirley Temple vehicles she usually starred in. Shirley no longer had the star status she had had as a child, so this reputation had to be rebuilt (Hammontree, 1998, p. 116).

During the filming of *Kiss and Tell*, Shirley's second film with Selznick, she was under enormous pressures to juggle both her school work and a 6-day-a-week shooting schedule. For the first time, Shirley developed a growing resentment towards Gertrude because she was no longer allowed to attend school functions. Gertrude's devotion to Shirley's career became even more intense during this time. She was determined for Shirley to enter film-making full time once she graduated from Westlake. For Shirley, who would gravitate between love and resentment of her mother, Gertrude represented both extreme loyalty and devotion on one hand, while on the

other hand holding guilt high she would never truly be free child stars before her, Shirley from Gertrude's control, age 17, Shirley was ready to Agar. Shirley had met John Westlake and was smitten attractive, smart, and had during this time of extreme



Shirley and John leaving their home, which was situated in her parent's backyard. (Fanpix.net. Retrieved 28 April 2011 at <http://www.fanpix.net/1746245/014306733/john-agar-and-shirley-temple-picture.html>)

John and Shirley dated for married. Although Shirley provide an escape from her back into her mother's

over Shirley's head, ensuring (Edwards, 1988). Like many saw marriage as an escape which is one reason why, at marry a young army man, John through some of her friends at from the start. He was served in the military, which patriotism was a major asset.

a short while before getting had thought marriage would mother, she quickly returned arms when she and John set

up a living situation in Shirley's private playhouse in the Temple's backyard. Because they only lived a few steps away from Gertrude and Shirley's father, Gertrude was able to monitor all of their comings and goings. The independence Shirley felt was short-lived, and she was soon caught between two forces: Gertrude and Agar (Edwards, 1988).

Impressed by Agar's good looks and photogenic face, Selznick decided to sign John to a contract for \$600 a week and would provide him with coaching in diction, acting, and voice. Selznick felt he could cultivate a duo team by having both John and Shirley on the payroll. No one in the Temple family was especially excited about John's acting career—especially Shirley, who had once declared she would never marry anyone in films. Just when she wanted to break away from films the most, her entire family became involved in the business, and she could not escape it. John's involvement with films ultimately led to Shirley's unhappiness with their marriage. She had led a very protected existence and was used to being the center of attention. Though her sophistication made her appear mature, John soon found he was wed to a teenager with overly romantic notions of marriage. As the two drifted apart, John began drinking excessively and staying out until all hours of the night, further driving Shirley away (Edwards, 1988). Upon the release of *She Wore a Yellow Ribbon*, which he filmed with John Wayne, Agar became a star. He had his own fan club and was recognized and asked for autographs wherever he went. While John's career was on the rise, Shirley's was in a downward spiral as more and more of her films failed at the box office. The sudden power shift between the couple created difficulties for both of them (Edwards, 1988).

Shirley's actions often reflected a child's guilelessness meshed with the maturity of a glamorous young movie star. Many years later Shirley would say, "I don't think very many people recognize the danger a child actress must face in having to appear mature too early—because she is exposed to professional working conditions and adult colleagues—when in many respects, because of her sheltered life, she actually is not so mature as the average girl of her age" (Hammontree, 1998, p. 117). Shirley's marriage conflicts were causing her to act out on set as well. Her costar in *The Bachelor and the Bobby Soxer*, Myrna Loy, was concerned how her public image would be damaged by playing the mean character to Shirley's innocent. She said, "Playing [Shirley's] older sister wasn't easy because I had to treat her rather severely on the screen. You had to be careful in pictures about being too hard on dogs, children, and Shirley Temple; otherwise you could really alienate audiences" (Edwards, 1988, p. 181). Shirley's tricks on the set of this film were largely directed at Myrna Loy, out of a sense of competition. One trick Shirley was particularly fond of was to place discarded flashbulbs in the camera lenses during Loy's takes, thus ruining the shot. Myrna concluded that Shirley's behavior sprang from her unhappiness in her marriage (Edwards, 1988).

The beginning of Shirley's "second career" marked a first for her: Gertrude was no longer around to be her acting coach on set. In fact, when Shirley went to RKO to film *Honeymoon*, it was the first film she had made without Gertrude on set. As she began to film more movies, Shirley had lost all passion for film making. To her, films were now a job she needed to put food on the table for her and John. They both desperately needed the money. Because Gertrude had played such a major role in Shirley's films (coaching her, interpreting scenes, helping her memorize lines), when Shirley became older, she was unable to interpret a role on her own. Her characterizations were lifeless because there was no Gertrude there to tell her what the character should do or how she was feeling. Shirley simply could not act without her mother's direction. Children in show business understand perhaps not on an intellectual level, but rather on an instinctive one that their parents need something from them, and they work diligently to satisfy their parents' expectations. Typically the parent is viewed either as a guide and protector or a despot as they rule their children's lives with total structure. Without Gertrude's guidance and motivation, Shirley simply had no will to continue acting (Edwards, 1988). John Agar once said of the mother-daughter relationship between Shirley and Gertrude, "Her mother was not only her mom, but I think she was also her agent and a lot of other things combined. Her father was not, I don't think, that much involved with Shirley in so far as films were concerned" (Hammontree, 1998, p. 18).

When Shirley first began making films again, producers felt that her name would add to both the budget of the films and the box office returns. However, by the spring of 1949, Shirley's films were continually failing at the box office, and she received consistently poor reviews from the trade magazines. Though Shirley's career was floundering, Selznick did not want to back out from his commitment to and investment in her. He suggested Shirley take some time off to travel to Europe and study the repertory players there to become a better actress. He also felt time in Europe would mature her and give her a more sophisticated persona. Shirley, however, had no desire to improve her acting abilities, as film making was merely a job to her, and she refused to go.

During this time as well, Shirley discovered what had happened to the money she had made as a young child. Her father had been in charge of her finances her entire life, and though he had the best intentions, he was not skilled in handling and investing large sums of money. When she was 22 years old, she asked to be told how much money was in her account. When pressed, her father told her that, out of the \$3,400,000 or so that she had made, only \$44,000 was left. Though Shirley always trusted her father and did not hold this against him, it was difficult to swallow. All of her hard work throughout the years had been squandered (Hammontree, 1998).

Shirley's and John's marriage ultimately led to a divorce. As John became increasingly famous, he also became increasingly addicted to alcohol. His resentment towards Gertrude's meddling in their lives led him to resent Shirley, and he would often hang around other women during this time. However, it was not long before Shirley met the love of her life, Charles Black, while the family was on vacation in Hawaii, where Charles worked. He represented everything Shirley had been looking for in a man: He was older, strong, and protective and had no interest in the movie business or in her involvement with it. Upon marrying Black, Shirley announced to the press that her contract with Selznick had expired and she was going to quit the movie business at the age of 22, after 19 years in the industry. Shirley would never make another film again, but she would star in a successful television film series called *Shirley Temple's Story Hour*, in which she read fairy tales. The rest of Shirley's life would be dedicated to philanthropy and politics (Edwards, 1988).

Shirley Temple was a unique child star since she started a professional career at the age of 3. Shirley once said of her childhood, "I was allowed to be a baby for about 2 years. So I had a couple of years as a lazy baby. I thought every child worked, because I was born into it" (Edwards, 1988, p. 28). It probably was for the best that Shirley assumed every child lived the life she did; it meant she did not feel privileged or "special" because of her career. She

understood that it was merely something she did as a job and did not define who she was. Gertrude's role in Shirley's career and development as a person cannot be underestimated. She was Shirley's friend, disciplinarian, and mentor.

Gertrude consistently displayed that Shirley only had one disciplinarian and that was her. Knowing how easily a child star could become spoiled by attention, Mrs. Temple took precautions to prevent that. When a photographer tried to defend Shirley's momentary misbehavior, Gertrude told him, "Tend to your photography, Mr. Hurrell, and I'll attend to my daughter" (Hammontree, 1998, p. 213). One of the most confusing things for a young child must be to have contact with a number of adults who expect different things



Mother and daughter: Gertrude had a huge impact on Shirley's life and development. (*The Official Shirley Temple Website*. Retrieved 28 April 2011 at <http://www.shirleytemple.com/shirleyPhotos.html>)

or who require one thing of her on one occasion and something different on another (Dowling, 2010, p. 131). Thus, it was important for Gertrude to maintain control over Shirley to buffer or eliminate this confusion. Even if other adults were telling Shirley to do one thing and then another, Shirley knew that her mother provided the ultimate guidance.

Mrs. Temple emphasized a work ethic, and she discouraged frivolousness associated with being a movie star. Time has proven that she was correct to believe discipline and obedience were of major importance to her daughter. This self-discipline and sense of responsibility carried through to Shirley's adult life and is a large reason why she became an emotionally stable adult. Shirley's work ethic also contributed to her political success, as she ran for Congress (though unsuccessfully) in 1967 and was named a UN representative in 1969. Shirley was drawn to the political environment due to her strong sense of responsibility towards others around her. David Butler, who directed Shirley in *Bright Eyes*, said, "Gertrude had a firm hold on [Shirley] all the time" (Hammontree, 1998, p. 164), and Allan Dwan, who also directed Shirley in several films, commented that "Shirley was the product of her mother. Shirley was the instrument on which her mother played. I don't know why the mother was like that—but I'd seen it before with Mary Pickford and her domineering mother" (Edwards, 1988, p. 65).

There are those who merely believe Gertrude was using Shirley to live out her own dreams, and, in a sense, they would be correct. However, the difference between Gertrude Temple and mothers like Sara Taylor and Ethel Gumm is the extreme affection and protection Gertrude employed with Shirley. Gertrude did not allow Shirley to become a pawn in the studio's

hands, as these other mothers did. She took control of Shirley's career and made sure every decision was in the best interest of Shirley. She also ensured that Shirley would not become enveloped in her own mystique. She maintained the sense that Shirley was a normal child, not a world-wide celebrity. This kept Shirley down-to-earth and led to the normalcy she experienced in later life. Gertrude Temple created the opportunity for Shirley to become a movie star, but more importantly, she helped Shirley develop the strength of character to have a balanced existence once films were no longer a part of her life (Hammontree, 1998, p. 215). Gertrude made both personal and professional decisions for Shirley. Her standards and expectations became ingrained in Shirley's psyche. Thus, Shirley guided her life by her mother's values, which explain why Shirley grew into a stable adult. Unlike authoritarian parents, who are often brutal in their demands on their children, Gertrude represents an authoritative parent, who, though providing discipline and structure, understands and cares for the needs, both physical and emotional, of her child. Parents who are both demanding and child-centered in their responsiveness (i.e., sensitive to their child's abilities and needs) are referred to as being *authoritative* (Wolfe, 1999, p. 20). Gertrude demanded much from her daughter, but she also understood that Shirley needed boundaries and a schedule in order to cope with these demands. Authoritative parents are considered effective in enhancing their child's development and reducing parent-child conflict. This explains why Gertrude and Shirley had such a close relationship, even when Shirley became an adult. While Sara Taylor and Ethel Gumm ultimately lost their parenting power to the studios, Gertrude was able to hold on to her control over Shirley by protecting her from the manipulation and exploitation the studios could wield over their players.

Though Gertrude was there in the studios to protect Shirley's interest, she could not stop the most brutal of career changers: time. Surviving being a child star is a difficult matter. In their initial glory, child stars seem invulnerable, but they have no protection from the passage of time. With the onset of adolescence, most of the children eventually faded from the screen. This was Shirley's ending as well. Her persona could not survive through her awkward adolescence, and audiences could not see her as anything but an adorable little girl. Thus, her career ultimately was doomed to failure; however, luckily, Shirley was emotionally detached from her career by the time audiences were finally finished with her.

Conclusion

There is no doubt that growing up in the studio system affected the development of these three movie stars, but in very different ways. Judy Garland was sucked into being manipulated and exploited because she allowed herself to believe the studios cared about her

and that they were a family. However, the reason she allowed this to happen was because her mother, Ethel Gumm, had never instilled in Judy a strong sense of self-esteem. Judy was already emotionally damaged by her mother before she came into the studio system, and this damage allowed the studio to create even more emotional trauma for her.

Elizabeth Taylor refused to be used by the studio as Judy Garland had been. However, her mother, Sara Taylor, was greatly enthralled by studio. This meant that, in order to ensure her freedom, Elizabeth had to become rebellious to assert her own power, since her mother would not do it for her. The early sexualization created by the studios and her mother would forever affect Elizabeth's relationships with men because she only understood relationships based on what they provided. Once she had no further use for them, the relationships ended. Elizabeth's life became a series of detached romances in a life of excess and celebrity.

Shirley Temple provides an example of a very different kind of studio experience. She was protected and controlled by her mother, which is what saved her from the emotional trauma and scarring experienced by the other two actresses. Shirley's mother was a guiding force in her life and protected her from the manipulation of the studio, fighting for Shirley in every respect. This affection and nurturing allowed Shirley to become an emotionally stable adult. While the studios certainly were not a healthy place to grow up, ultimately, it was the mother's responsibility to protect her child from the pressures and confusion associated with early celebrity. Children, even adolescents, were not able to do it themselves, and if their mother gave parental authority over to the studio, the star was bound for emotional development issues. However, if the mother, such as Gertrude Temple, assumed full parental control and did not allow the studio to assert parental authority over the child, the child could grow up in a stable and supportive environment, thus helping to assure emotional stability in her adulthood.

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