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Honors English III

15 September, 2015

The Great Gatsby

In *The Great Gatsby*, using a psychoanalytical analysis, we see that Gatsby has been working the last five years solely to win back Daisy, and yet Tom, who isn't even faithful to her, manages to keep her over Gatsby. That is just one example of the many in this book of a juxtaposition of caring solely about one thing, and caring about all equally, showing that all things should be kept in moderation in order to achieve success.

Gatsby spent his entire life trying to win back Daisy, yet he doesn't get her back. He is blatantly solely focused on her the entire book. As stated in Chapter 1, "[Gatsby] stretched out his arms toward ... a single green light, minute and far away, that might have been the end of a dock." (p. 25) That green light was at the end of Daisy's dock — right in the beginning of the book, the first time we see him, he's already determined to win her back. Then Jordan tells us, "Gatsby bought that house so that Daisy would be just across the bay," (p. 83) and "[Gatsby]'s read a Chicago paper for years just on the chance of catching a glimpse of Daisy's name." (p. 84) Wow, now that's dedication. There is not a single thing that he does in this book that cannot be somehow traced back to Daisy. So why does he fail to win her back?

Tom was not even faithful to Daisy, and yet he won her over Gatsby. Jordan tells us, "Tom's got some woman in New York." (p.19) This "some woman" is Myrtle, Tom's mistress.

Evidently, he has not been faithful to his wife in recent years. Not only is he not faithful, however, but he isn't even careful about it — everybody knows! Jordan even says, "I thought everybody knew." (p. 19) Not only is he not careful about people finding out, but he insisted ("his determination ... bordered on violence," p. 28) on introducing Nick to his mistress, and forcibly keeps him there for a party. Later, we find out that he was with a chambermaid on their honeymoon! If he's this reckless about his marriage, why does Daisy choose him over Gatsby?

Everything should be kept in moderation, that's why. Gatsby has been working solely on winning back Daisy for the last five years, as discussed in Paragraph 1. He is an exaggeration of (and therefore symbolic for) taking things to the **extreme**. He cares about Daisy, and nothing else. Tom, however, seems to care about everything equally — despite being so reckless about his marriage (as discussed in paragraph 2), he is very defensive of Daisy when Gatsby tries to take her away. Though he appears to care more about Myrtle than Daisy, he breaks her nose when she mentions Daisy's name. He is an exaggeration of (and therefore symbolic for) keeping things in **moderation**. He cares about everything equally. So now, Fitzgerald is comparing the extreme to the moderate, and when directly competing, Tom won over daisy, showing that moderation is more effective than being extreme, thus producing the common phrase, "Everything in moderation."

Gatsby who cares only about winning Daisy back, is symbolic for taking things too far into the extreme. Tom, who cares about everything almost equally, is symbolic for keeping everything in moderation. Fitzgerald is telling us that moderation will always be superior to the extremes, as with the common phrase "everything in moderation." The sacrifices made in the extreme scenario will always be a downfall that destroys the main objective — Gatsby wanted to

impress Daisy with riches, so he gained lots of money through illegitimate means, which Tom used against him to win over Daisy. So next time you want to quit smoking or go on a diet, remember *The Great Gatsby*, and don't quit cold-turkey, or eat only vegetables for a year — keeping everything in moderation is the only way to succeed, just as it was for Tom Buchanan.