

How far do you  
consider gatsby to be  
the epitome of the  
american dream and  
its fa...



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

Gatsby is shown in 'The Great Gatsby' to be the personification of the American dream because he is the typical self made man, he had come from being a nobody into being the most wealthy man on the neighbourhood and able to buy what he wanted "champagne... Rolls-Royce" which was in a way the aim of all American's and had been achieved by Gatsby. But the real aim of Gatsby was never achieved and that was to be with Daisy. So the failure of his dream was not in the materialistic side of it but in the spiritual side of it.

This is also the case of the American dream which wasn't, in the 1920s, spiritually reached in terms of the "pursuit for happiness" (Thomas Jefferson: declaration of independence). Gatsby showed in his character an unrelenting aim for the satisfaction of his love for Daisy, which makes us feel sympathy for him and by him thinking he will achieve his goal makes him heroic. This is also done by the use of a first-person narrative through Nick because if there was a third person narrator than the reader would be "in possession of all the 'facts of the case'" ('The Great Gatsby': Nick Carraway's story?

Henry Claridge) which would go against Gatsby and the heroicness of him and wouldn't derive as much sympathy from the reader because they would learn more of his dealings with Wolfsheim and other illegal activities. The reader could also take a more offensive stand on the adultery of Daisy and Gatsby if it wasn't delivered in such an unobtrusive way "leaving them their together" which hints at the sexual relations but doesn't linger on it.

This would have annoyed a few people back in the days that Fitzgerald wrote this because society was still quite on the religious side so they would have

been surprised to show adultery so constant throughout his novel. He shows his loneliness at his parties by being remote, which is due to his contradictive character, and also the fantastic atmosphere that surrounds him makes him sometimes unapproachable. This was when people didn't really know him but they didn't go up to him and ask they just made up rumours. Gatsby's reincarnation of himself shows the fairytale of all Americans at that time come true.

This was achieved by Jay Gatz who hadn't really any money to his name but being inspired by his employer Dan Cody and as a young man influenced by the American dream he gained wealth. Although the way he did is an issue and could be the reason for the downfall of the American dream, which is that people would want it so much they would steal for it and others are shown here to turn a blind eye to the obvious criminal activities that were hiding under the guise of the American dream. This is showing the obvious downfall in moral decadence of that time.

This book would of been received perhaps with a good reception because at the time Al Capone was doing the same thing as Gatsby (bootlegging) and was a national hero (during prohibition). Gatsby believed because of the American dream that he could buy his love. This was really an unconscious response to Daisys materialistic values. This is shown by Daisys materialistic lifestyle and persona, her voice was " full of money". The failure of the dream was due to Gatsby's unpregnable belief that he can turn back the clock and "... epeat the past... ".

He thought he could just make the past happen again, which was an ignorant view to have. This view would have taken a blow when Gatsby found out that Daisy had a daughter with Tom. This would have shown that the relationship of Tom and Daisy was real not superficial which is what Gatsby had believed. Also Daisy does love Gatsby but she also loves Tom “ I can’t say I never loved Tom” so this is again showing Gatsby that the clock can’t be turned back, that Daisy has found someone else.

To increase the pain to Gatsby, Tom sums up his dream as a “ presumptuous little flirtation”. The failing of Gatsby’s dream was the world doesn’t just revolve around him but other people still carry on in their lives. Gatsby after the dream had failed had no real reason to live on so it wasn’t really a big deal when he died. This is like the American dream because the American dream does mystify and smother people and make them feel like they are the only ones that matter and they are bound to get greedy because it urged you to get rich and spend.

So Gatsbys ignorance of people around him does typify the American dream. Fitzgerald wrote this book in the ‘ jazz age’, a phrase coined by him to show the roaring twenties, when most people were getting rich and enjoying themselves “ a whole race (was) going hedonistic, deciding on pleasure” (Scott Fitzgerald and the jazz age- Diane Roberts) This exemplified the view on things by Gatsby in terms of him always showing money was not an object he just wanted people to have a good time, which most people were due to the boom in the economy during the 1920s anyway.

Fitzgerald used himself as a template for Gatsby in terms of Gatsby's loss of Daisy and his return to her life is derived from Fitzgerald's own experiences with his wife Zelda. The American dream was the ultimate goal searched for by all Americans and was a story of rags to riches told basically in this book. The dream represented to Americans a new life of freedom, but in the twenties this was abused and the material side was also over emphasised in real life and in this book.

The spiritual side was totally ignored by most and Daisy and Tom who's life's were " filled with material comforts and luxuries,"(commentary sheet) also lost the spiritual side and this is shown to be a bad thing because it had led them into both committing adultery so they were not really in a good relationship if it is based on money.

Gatsby is in terms of hope and than failure the total epitome of the American dream and this is conveyed in the last chapter where Fitzgerald writes about Gatsby's dream coming to an end and reflects on all the hope there was from Gatsby for the dream to succeed and then in the same paragraph talks of the hope of the new world that would of befallen the Dutch sailors. The American dream is meant to be the pursuit of happiness and the receiving of it, which wasn't evident with Gatsby in the end.