

The women of the great gatsby

[Sociology](#), [Women](#)



Sympathy is defined as having feelings of sorrow for someone else's misfortune. In a novel, sympathizing in a character allows the reader to relate to them. In Fitzgerald's "The Great Gatsby", there is no female character with whom we can sympathize. However, at various points within the novel we do offer our brief condolences to each character.

Throughout the novel Daisy Buchanan appears enigmatic to the reader: why is she in a loveless relationship? Why did she leave Gatsby hanging on a thread? Many conclude that the ultimate chapters prove to us in many ways that she is incapable of loving. Shown by her choice to stay with Tom for his wealth and security; rather than choosing Gatsby, for she was "appalled by its raw vigour that chafed". She looks down on the vulgar nature of people that try and buy their way into the upper class as he has done. However, it is feasible to suggest that she chose Tom; after all he didn't build his empire selling illegal alcohol like Gatsby. In addition, it is possible to argue that being in an unhappy marriage – shown by her reaction to Tom speaking to his mistress over dinner – is a liable reason to which we can feel empathy for her.

Despite all of this, however, it is apparent throughout the novel that she is materialistic, promiscuous and immoral. As soon as Tom leaves she "kiss[es] him on the mouth" she is not only betraying Tom, but she acts "careless[ly]" with Gatsby's emotions. He is a character in which the reader can sympathize – meaning she is hated. Ultimately, she chooses to run away with Tom, this is her last act that convinces we, as the reader, to deplore her.

Jordan is an equally difficult character to whom we can sympathize; however, for different reasons. There is only really one instance in the novel that contrasts this view, and that's when Jordan had "met another bad driver" in Nick. This does make her emotionally accessible to us; we can feel pity for her. However, this is overshadowed by her compulsive ability to lie.

Apparently, she does not "give a damn" about the end of her and Nick's relationship; an obvious lie, yet it implies that she will move on soon enough. We will never know if she actually met someone else during her and Nick's meeting, yet it is unlikely, as she is a neurotic fabricator.

Adding to this, we notice that Jordan is a highly destructive and careless character, rather like Daisy. She casually mentions to Nick that she "left a borrowed car out in the rain, and then lied about it" She is being careless with other people's property, lying about it to ensure she is not affected by any repercussions". It is apparent that Jordan does not, as a whole, evoke sympathy with us.

Myrtle does not draw any sympathy from the reader at a first glance. She is the lower-class mistress to Tom. She is a poor representation of the 1920's woman as she carries "her surplus flesh sensuously", meaning she is rather provocative, it is also the only compliment she receives in the book, inferring Tom's only use for her is sex; not a particularly good role model for women. She is somewhat comparable to Daisy in that her only care is money and materialism, she wants to escape the upper class, and Tom is her refuge. Her "tremendous vitality" should aid her in this.

However, we can sympathize with “ Myrtle Wilson” when she fulfils her “ tragic achievement”. This refers to her death, all she ever wanted to do was to escape her class and accomplish her American dream, but Nick morbidly realizes that the only way she ever would is through death. Much like Gatsby, her dream is forever doomed.

Myrtle, in my opinion is a character with we can sympathize the most; her tragic story is rather like Gatsby’s. In that she had an unachievable, completely unattainable dream in her sight, but it was never to be - a doomed dream.

I believe all the female characters in “ The Great Gatsby” have characteristics that make us, as the reader to both love and despise them at the same time. Fitzgerald has portrayed them as merely humans with certain traits and bad decisions that moulds them into who they are. All three of these women are accessible to the reader, whilst at the same time completely detached and despised. I believe that the view in question is different for every reader, as they can make their informed opinion on each of these women. As for me, I do feel sympathy for them, but only to a certain extent.