

Why is fitzgerald's the great gatsby a satire? essay

[Literature](#), [American Literature](#)



Authored by Scott Fitzgerald, *The Great Gatsby* is a must-read chef-d'oeuvre. It satirizes the events as they unfolded in the 1920s soon after World War I. Fitzgerald seeks to reveal the worthlessness and the futility of the remark 'great' as it stood in the Jazz Age, a period dominated by moments of sadness and destruction. As the paper unveils, Jay Gatsby's contentment, prosperity, and collective recognition are no more than images that mask his sinful life.

Satire begins right from the title of the novel. *The Great Gatsby* implies something 'great,' be it a person or a society. Therefore, the reader expects greatness from the book. However, Gatsby, the protagonist of the story, is not as great as the reader expects. He is a mere thief and an extravagant person who gathers people for bashes every Saturday, not to say something 'great,' but to win the heart of only one person in the crowd: Daisy.

Besides, the title might suggest a society that is upright from all perspectives, morally, socially, spiritually as well as politically. However, it is ironic that the title is a social satire addressing the ethical dissipation of American society with everything in pathetic conditions. Behind the title are issues concerning the unfulfilled American dream, its heightened corruption, spiritual decadence, and hopelessness, none of which denotes greatness and hence the satire.

Fitzgerald's masterwork further reveals satire in another way that arouses laughter to the reader. The irony stands out through the way Fitzgerald points out the truth concerning Gatsby's family background. Gatsby tries to induce some contentment through the way he describes his family. For instance, in his conversation with Nick, he points out that he comes from a

well-able family located in a prominent place: Middle west and, in particular, San Francisco.

However, based on 1920s family situations, families underwent significant destruction, thereby leaving people in pathetic conditions subjugated by moments of sorrow rather than joy. The real terms of Gatsby's family stand out when he reveals it in chapter six. The reader then realizes that Gatsby's words are no more than a cover of the truth concerning the situations of families, not only of Gatsby but also of others as well and hence the satire.

Another aspect of satire in Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* is the wealth associated with Gatsby, as the reader observes in chapter two. Here, the reader wonders about the great party organized by Gatsby. He invites many people, some of whom cannot explain where the money comes from.

Mr. McKee associates the wealth with the fact that Gatsby is a son to a prominent person Kaiser Wilhelm, a German Emperor. However, the truth of the matter stands out in chapter 6, which reveals the money as an inheritance from Cody. He is not rich as the reader might insinuate but rather a professional criminal involved with every sort of illegal activity only to get money to impress Daisy in the name of entertaining the other people like McKee.

The author further satirizes the education of the American people. The reader might mistake Gatsby for an educated person, as he points out in chapter four, where he tells Nick about his Oxford University education. Later in chapter seven, the truth manifests itself when Gatsby tells Tom that he

cannot pass for an Oxford man. Through this satire, the reader realizes the truth concerning the American people who boast of being educated while in the real sense, they are not.

Lastly, in chapter four, Jordan Baker brings to light a house that Gatsby erected, thinking that it will help in bringing Daisy closer to him. However, in chapter five, where Gatsby shows Daisy his home ground, he instead realizes the vast distance between them.

It is ironic that the house that the reader expects to strengthen the love between Gatsby and Daisy ends up separating them instead. There is no love at all between the two but an illusion. The novel ends with Tom and Daisy reconciling but not Gatsby as the reader expected.