

The great gatsby: expectations of women character, hard fate and an interesting d...

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



Inequality of gender is a repeated problem in society that expects women to overcome when placed in that situation. A woman who respects and cares for her husband, has beautiful features, and who does not question but only obey, is the ideal woman in the 1920's, in society. In Scott Fitzgerald's book, *The Great Gatsby*, the author explores the male expectation of perpetuating unfair gender equality, which leads women to feel degraded. Therefore, due to the degradation, women ached in pain physically and mentally.

To start, in the 1920's, a married women is not allowed to show any dominance; only obey her husband and not have a mattered opinion. This shame is shown when Daisy Buchanan in *The Great Gatsby*, is thankful that her baby is a girl and says, " I hope she'll become a fool because that is the best thing she can be, a little beautiful fool". This quotation shows Daisy's perception of a woman's subordination towards men. Daisy knows that males " do not value women's intelligence" and so she hopes that her daughter is a ' beautiful little fool' as she grows. It also expresses Daisy's compliance towards women's standards in society; women have less experience of work and school compared to men and therefore Daisy hopes her daughter is a fool. Women are not allowed to have a voice and they are considered property owned by their husbands after marriage. This is shown as Nick Caraway, the narrator, goes to Daisy's and Tom's house for dinner. Later on after the dinner, Nick describes the situation as having " dinner with the Tom Buchanan". This is evident to the male prejudice perpetuating the idea of gender inequality as once Daisy is married to Tom, her individual identity gets lost. When Nick visits Daisy, as they are related by being cousins, he calls her by not her name but by her husband's. Gender

inequality is strongly present here as women are no longer called by their birth name once they get married.

Another significant problem women have to face in 1920, is unhealthy relationships. In relationships, men are considered the dominate one; leaving the women physically and mentally scarred. In the novel, Tom Buchanan starts a fight with Myrtle Wilson, his mistress, she then yells, “ I will say it whenever I want to! Daisy! Daisy! Daisy!” causing Tom to punch Myrtle’s nose, breaking her nose. Tom punches Myrtle, applying the rule that a man’s responsibility is to control his wife and be the dominant in the relationship. Society, in the 1920’s, promotes the idea that husbands should turn to consequences for ‘ bad’ behavior because women are not allowed to “ ask him questions about his actions nor question his judgment and integrity”. Men are able to aggressively control their wives without any consequences. In the book, Myrtle ends up emotionally scarred and significantly hurt after Tom decides to fight her to gain control. Furthermore with this point, men are also able to treat their partners like an object and take over them and their lives right after marriage. Applying to Myrtle again as once George Wilson, her husband, learns about her affair with Tom, Myrtle goes missing. Michaelis, George Wilson’s friend, investigates about where Myrtle is and George answers calmly, “ I’ve got my wife locked in up there... she’s going to stay there till the day after tomorrow, and then we’re going to move away”. During the interrogation, George feels expresses no guilt for locking Myrtle upstairs. In the 1920’s, it is so common for women to get treated like property by their husbands, to where it is considered part of the norm.

George locking Myrtle away for his turn to idea, demonstrates how difficult and scary it is to be a married woman in the 1920's. George locking Myrtle away, leaving her scarred, proves that men's prejudice of their wives, and her duties as a partner, results in women degrading themselves and other women.

Continuing from this idea, in the 1920's society expects and teaches women to obey and listen to what their husband says. Once married, the wife has no say in the relationship and has to agree and support her husband's actions and what he said. The change from unmarried to married is difficult due to a significant change; having less freedom and having to just look pretty and say nothing. Daisy Buchanan's life is noted as an "Artificial world was redolent of orchids and pleasant, cheerful snobbery and orchestras which set the rhythm of the year, summing up the sadness and suggestiveness of life in new tunes". Daisy manages to hide her sadness by using an 'artificial world' while being married to Tom by replacing the hole in their marriage with her beautiful surroundings. Daisy creates this 'artificial world' because she knows that she is powerless against Tom and therefore finds a way to just cope with it. There are so many expectations women have to follow once they are married because men have placed what they want an ideal wife to be like. For example, after Daisy finds out about her husband's affair with Myrtle, Tom's "hand [falls] upon and hers. Once a while she looked up at him and nodded in agreement". As described, Daisy's experience is her obeying Tom without question. She knows about the affair with Myrtle, however she can only agree with him because he is use his dominance to

make her and to make her feel powerless. Furthermore, Daisy would not be able to get a divorce because Tom would not agree and go through with it and also because Daisy would be “ frowned upon within the community” for the rest of her life, also since she wants best for her daughter. Daisy takes on a lot of emotional abuse in her relationship with Tom and is not able to escape because she is caught up in the idea of how society sees women and how she should act and think.

In conclusion, living in the years around 1920 is difficult for women. Men are the dominate ones in the relationships; given the ability to physically and mentally abuse their wives and have affairs. The male prejudice sustains gender roles for women; must be abiding, loving, considerate, caring, and a kind wife. In many cases, this problem places women in difficult and complicated situations, in which gives them physical and mental problems.