

Gatsby is a character undone by his own foolish dreams essay sample

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



Gatsby can definitely be seen as a character whose demise was caused by his own dreams. Firstly, Gatsby was always a highly ambitious young man; this is evident in young Gatsby's self improvement schedule. Even as a teenager Gatsby strived to better himself by practising " elocution, poise and how to attain it" he also worked, studied electricity and mechanics as well as sports, he also had many resolves which he believed would make him a better, more successful person. This obsession with self improvement may have stemmed from his childhood, it is suggested that Gatsby was ashamed of his humble farming background and his " imagination had never really accepted" his parents and as a result always wanted to be rich and to make something of himself. Because of Gatsby's dream to get away from " shiftless...farm people" he reinvented himself from James Gatz to Jay Gatsby, Nick tells the reader that " to this conception he was faithful to the end" and this was the beginning of Gatsby's undoing.

Secondly, though some people may argue that Gatsby's dreams weren't foolish but merely romantic, he is still ultimately undone because of his love for Daisy. When Gatsby met Daisy " his heart was in a constant turbulent riot" and from there his need for wealth and success intensified, this combined with the growing materialism and prohibition of alcohol in America, it was inevitable that Gatsby would soon make his fortune and the only thing left would be to win Daisy. As Gatsby was deeply in love with the " exhilarating" Daisy and desperately wanted to impress her. However due to Daisy's extremely shallow nature, she married wealthy, aristocratic Tom and as Gatsby returned, his dream of acquiring Daisy to match his new found wealth though foolish, was intense. Gatsby's tunnel-vision for Daisy evolves

through the book, at the first the reader is led to believe it was true love between the two however as the novel progresses, it seems like Daisy is just the last piece to the puzzle of his extravagant lifestyle, due to this overly ambitious dream of the good life, Gatsby is well on his way to being 'undone' by it.

Gatsby's dream may be foolish but the reader cannot deny admiring Gatsby for his unfailing confidence and determination. Gatsby's dissatisfaction with his beginnings in life further pushed him to pursue the dream of marrying Daisy and vast wealth, these foolish dreams drive Gatsby so much that when they are crushed, Gatsby cannot accept it. Gatsby's ultimate sign of defiance is just before his death when he wants to use his swimming pool as he hasn't all summer. To Gatsby, the summer represented Daisy and everything that he dreamt about, when the summer ends and autumn begins Gatsby refuses to acknowledge it, just as he refuses to let Daisy go and stop looking at the "green light" at the end of her dock. Gatsby is killed in his pool right at the end of summer and dawn of autumn, this symbolises not only the end of Gatsby's life but the end of Gatsby's dreams as a result. "A dreamer cannot exist without his dreams" and this is certainly true of Gatsby, without Daisy he feels like life is worthless and so it seems fitting that these foolish dreams were in fact the undoing of him. Though some may argue that it was the arrogance of Tom, the jealousy and vengeance of George or the selfishness of Daisy which caused Gatsby's downfall, it cannot be denied that ultimately Gatsby's undoing was due to his own unreachable dreams.