

# The ethicality of an action jay gatsby report (assessment)

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



Ethics is a field of study that defines human actions and behaviors. Scholars have presented different ethical theories to explain when an action should be accepted or condoned. In our modern society, actions are ethical or unethical, depending on their implications. While that is the case, very little research has been done to explore the ethicality of actions performed by characters in works of fiction such as films, novels, and television shows. In the book "The Great Gatsby," Jay Gatsby decides to take Daisy Buchanan's blame.

This happens after Daisy kills Myrtle Wilson, her husband's mistress. This was one of Jay's efforts to win Daisy's love. Jay and Daisy were lovers before he became wealthy. This paper describes Jay Gatsby's action and applies the utilitarian theory to establish whether Jay's action was ethical or not.

As presented in the novel, Jay Gatsby was trying to win Daisy back because he firmly believed she was the love of his life. It was five years after Jay had lost the love of his life. At the same time, Daisy was jealous because her husband was engaged in an extramarital affair.

As a result, Daisy decided to kill Tom's mistress in an accident. The accident took place in the presence of Jay Gatsby. Because of love and desire to reunite with his lover, Jay found himself in a dilemma. It was because of the difficulty that he decided to do anything to retain his lover.

As described in the novel, it is evident that Daisy would be in trouble after Tom realized that she had killed Myrtle. As well, it appeared that Gatsby was not sure of the possible outcome after the accident. With such kind of

uncertainty and dilemma, Jay decided to take the blame on behalf of her lover.

In response to the dilemma, Jay Gatsby was the prime suspect, something that led to his death. Myrtle's husband killed Jay and eventually shot himself.

Although the author of the novel did not clearly explain why Jay Gatsby acted in this manner, it would be agreeable that the character was trying to save his lover. He was on the path towards achieving his dreams.

At that moment, Jay Gatsby was sure of a reunion with his lover, and nothing was going to take her away from him. His financial position and wealth gave Jay the courage to take the blame. He was optimistic that he would deal with the issue later. However, Jay's attempt to reunite with Daisy is what led to his death.

John Stuart Mill is one of the ethical theorists who presented the theory of utilitarianism. According to Mill, utilitarianism is what governs human behaviors, actions, and ideas. Utilitarianism supports "actions that will result in happiness."

As well, an action is "wrong" if it results in the opposite of happiness to the people. Mill's utilitarian theory can be used to assess the ethicality of Jay Gatsby's action, as presented in the discussion above. This theory is applicable here because it helps ascertain whether the action undertaken by Gatsby is ethical or not.

There are various steps involved in applying the theory to a situation or action. As described by Mill, the basic idea behind the theory is the “happiness principle.” That being the case, an action is “right,” only if it results in happiness. Alternatively, actions are wrong if they do not promote human happiness.

The theory defines “happiness as the absence of suffering or pain”. On the other hand, the theory defines unhappiness as “the presence of suffering.” With such considerations, it can be easier to establish whether an action is permissible or not. The use of the above steps helps individuals differentiate between a good and a bad action. An action is “good” if it results in happiness.

It can be easier to use Mill’s utilitarian theory to assess Jay Gatsby’s action and conclude whether it is unethical or ethical. From the book by Scott Fitzgerald, it is notable that Jay Gatsby decided to take Daisy as his own despite the fact that she was already in marriage. According to utilitarianism, Jay’s action does not result in happiness. Daisy’s husband and other people in society become bitter after the event.

As well, Gatsby decides to take the blame for Myrtle’s death. According to the utility theory, an action is good only if it promotes happiness. However, Gatsby’s decision to do so does not produce any happiness at the very end. Instead, George Wilson kills Gatsby after guessing that he was the one having an extramarital affair with his wife. After killing Gatsby, George shoots himself, thus “causing pain.”

From this novel, it is evident that such deaths would not have occurred if Gatsby did not try to reunite with Daisy or take the blame for Myrtle's death. From the above discussion and application of Mill's utilitarian theory, it is agreeable that Jay Gatsby's action, as presented in the novel, is unethical.