

Gender roles in the great gatsby

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



The Great Gatsby paints a frivolous and cynical female picture of the "Jazz Age". These women almost lose a good sense of moral responsibility. What is presented to the readers is a feminine spirit that advocates money and selfishness world. Daisy is the heroine of the novel, but the author does not have a positive description of her, so she can only outline her image through fragmented pieces. Daisy is the spokesperson of the upper class. Like other girls in the "Jazz era", she is born in a feminine social dance.

Their traditional values ?? and beliefs are obliterated by the materialistic society. They pin their own ideals of life on material interests. Above, they pursue wealth and enjoy themselves. She is the representative of the parasitic upper-class women. She is a rich lady who enjoys her life as her goal. She is shallow and false, loves vanity, is bored, and has nothing to do. She is self-centered in everything, and it is impossible to sacrifice her vested interests for Gatsby.

Five years ago, she married Tom because of her love for money and betrayed Gatsby. In Tom's material world, she became selfish, hypocritical, and spiritually empty like Tom, and the words of the speech were filled with voices of money. Five years later, Gatsby came forward with hope and pursued the beautiful love that had never changed in his heart. At this time, Gatsby was only an old lover who was obsessed with her nostalgia for Daisy. Daisy is a beautiful, radiant woman. If she does not go deep into the inner world of Daisy, she should be a poetic woman just by her appearance, as if all the sunshine is concentrated on her, her beauty is enough to touch everything. However, she married a wealthy and bored rich man. Although they come from different social classes and accept different cultural literacy,

<https://assignbuster.com/gender-roles-in-the-great-gatsby/>

they all show selfishness, emptiness, and money-oriented character. This is related to the situation of women in the historical era and reflects the attitude of American society towards women at that time.

Daisy has her own rules of life and personality, but she lives in Gatsby's illusion. She is beautiful, stupid, selfish, vulgar, and is a trivial little person in the real world. She turned into a wonderful dream of supremacy, a pure symbol that would make him relive the old feelings. She represents the inner essence of the decaying "American Dream". A false, empty, unrealistic illusion. The author discusses this serious issue through Daisy's attitude and approach in dealing with the relationship between people. At a grand reception at Gatsby, Daisy took her arrogant husband, Tom Buchanan, to Gatsby's home. Gatsby introduced to Daisy and Tom the many celebrities who attended the reception, especially the ones who were particularly outstanding during the period:

"Perhaps you know that lady." Gatsby indicated a gorgeous, scarcely human orchid of a woman who sat in state under a white-plum tree. Tom and Daisy stared, with that peculiarly unreal feeling that accompanies the recognition of a hitherto ghostly celebrity of the movies.

"She's lovely," said Daisy.

"The man bending over her is her director" (Fitzgerald 104-105).

From the surface point of view, this is a very elegant picture, just as fascinating as the world famous painting. But in a deeper sense, this picture has no real meaning. The star and her director will never enter real life

except for the scenes in the rehearsal. After continuing to introduce other scenes of this cocktail party, the author suddenly pulled the reader's attention back to the pair of characters, creating a static or snap-like impression for the reader, as if the reader had come to this. Behind the white plum tree, I saw another scene behind the screen:

The last thing I remember was standing with Daisy and watching the movie-picture director and his Star. They were still under the white-plum tree and their faces were touching except for a pale, thin ray of moonlight between. It occurred to me that he had been very slowly bending towards her all evening to attain this proximity, and even while I watched I saw him stoop one ultimate degree and kiss at her cheek.

"I like her," said Daisy. "I think she's lovely."

But the rest offended her—and it is inarguably, because it wasn't a gesture but an emotion (Fitzgerald 107).

Daisy likes the movie star because she does not have any substantive ideological connotations. She is just a kind of furnishings, a prop, in addition to the image on the screen, she has no practical significance, beauty is just a shape of the body. She has completely escaped from the real environment of human existence and has become a fixed posture. This description is actually the confession of Daisy's belief in life. Here she declares her attitude towards people's feelings and the rules they follow. The emptiness and shallowness of the essence of Daisy will inevitably lead to her emotional indifference and moral degradation. Through the shaping of the character of

Daisy, Philip has profoundly and powerfully condemned and criticized the spiritual emptiness and character decline of those who are hidden under the beautiful appearance.

Another major female role in the novel is the unmarried woman Jordan Becker, who is a good friend of Daisy and has the same personality qualities as the upper class women of Daisy. She is selfish and has no sense of responsibility and has the same monetary values ?? as Tom and Daisy. She loves to lie, dishonesty, and cheat in the golf championship game because “ she wasn’t able to endure being at a disadvantage...”(Fitzgerald 58) She was a liar, she was seen cheating in a golf game, but she managed to escape the scandal by bribery or repression. Nick said, “ she was incurably dishonest” (Fitzgerald 58). Because he saw in Jordan the irresponsible nature of Daisy, only the nature of extraction. In the social environment of the time, Jordan had a certain sense of independence but undoubtedly influenced by the materialism and individualism in that era, showing a strong individualistic tendency to become selfish, indifferent and cynical. It was because of her selfishness and indifference that she did not get the love of Nick.

The third major female character in the novel is Myrtle Wilson. She is portrayed as a lower-level figure who is vain, frivolous, and arty. Her husband, George Wilson, was a lower-level worker who repaired the car in the Valley of the Ashes, and Myrtle looked down on her husband. She is hypocritical and loves the limelight. For example, at a party, she tries to show her “ impressive hauteur”, her laughter, her posture, her speech, every moment becomes more and more artificial, and later, “ she seemed to be

revolving on a noisy, creaking pivot through the smoky air" (Fitzgerald 31). In a short period, she changed three skirts and said that she would buy another one the next day. She envied the money and status of Tom Buchanan and confessed to him. She pretended to be funny and learned the tone of the upper class to reprimand the waiters in the hotel. She is hypocritical, advocating money, and wants to squeeze into the upper class; but when she argues with Tom and mentions the name of Daisy, she is broken by Tom's slap, blood flow, obviously in a pathetic and sad status. The tragic ending that she was finally driven to death by Daisy undoubtedly represented the tragedy of this kind of women in the jazz era at the bottom of society.

The significance of Daisy in the whole story is that she is not the perfect object that Gatsby portrays and desperately pursues in his dream world, but a wonderful representative in the "Jazz Age", a secular society. The avatar of the typical essence. She is also a loser in love and marriage. Her failure is closely related to Gatsby's more painful social failure.

In short, the re-exploration of the above female characters has practical significance for today's society. Modern women must strive for equality with men, and should be self-respecting, self-reliant, and achieve independence in the true sense.