

Compare and contrast gatsby's and myrtles parties



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

At the end of Chapter 2 and at the beginning of Chapter 3, we find Nick describing two different parties, the first one Myrtle's, the second Gatsby's. The parties are very different themselves; they contain two completely contrasting settings, at opposite ends of the spectrum. Myrtle's party is at the lower end of the spectrum, and seems to be the 'wannabe party', where most of the people there are the people who wish to become the people who attend Gatsby's party, who are the rich and famous.

This contrast of attendees to the parties is very interesting, and in my view, portrays how society in 1920's America was. People wanted to be rich, and followed how the people who were rich to as close as they possibly could. Myrtle's party is a very interesting scenario, in all of its forms. Myrtle's apartment even shows how she is determined to live the upper class lifestyle. The description of the apartment (" a small living room, a small dining room, a small bedroom, and a bath. ") Shows how poor it really is, and may also show how poor Myrtle is.

The apartment also shows Myrtle's undying desperation and need to be seen as rich, mostly shown in the items inside the apartment. " tapistried furniture entirely too large for it (the apartment) " The furniture is symbolic of Myrtle in many ways, it can be seen that she is desperate to be seen as rich, and so she buys items that are too large for her own restrictions on life. It could also be seen that the 'furniture entirely too large for it' shows that Myrtle's desires for life are too large for what she can manage, and so they seem to become cumbersome, and become intrusive in everything that she does. ladies swinging in the gardens of Versailles" is showing the type of lifestyle Myrtle wants to have, and it is the lifestyle that Daisy and Jordan have

achieved. This continues to show the desperation of Myrtle, as she is trying to gain the 'touch of class' wherever she can, and this desperation is amplified when we see how much of a following she has on celebrities lives ("several old copies of Town Tattle") it seems she is hoping that if she reads and learns how celebrities live, she will pick up that lifestyle and become one also.

The people who go to the party help show what the party is trying to portray. Catherine, Myrtle's sister, is exactly the same as Myrtle in many ways. She is portrayed by Nick as very fake, and possibly a 'Gold digger', but the reality is that she is just trying to gain security, and the best way to do that in the 1920's was to find a rich husband. Mr. McKee is a photographer, and we can tell by the way he asks enthusiastically to Tom about possibly photographing his family, that he also desperate and trying to 'make it big'.

This is further reinforced at the end of the chapter, where McKee is drunk, half naked and still showing his portfolio to people, in this case, Nick. This shows the perseverance people at this time had to become rich, and how much they needed to force their particular medium on people to get a chance to become rich, but also to preserve their dreams. Tom, at this time, is at the party to escape his life with Daisy, and it is interesting how differently he treats Myrtle and Daisy, but also the similarities. Tom seems to be more willing to spend on Myrtle, for example, the apartment itself and the dog.

It is obvious that Tom only wishes to use Myrtle, and thus the apartment, for sex, which is why he has spent so little on it, as it only contains what he

requires. However, there are similarities in how he treats Daisy and Myrtle. For example, he will not allow either of them to have their own say if they are not the same as his, and how brutally he treats them if they do not. We see this in plain view when he breaks Myrtle's nose. This shows how he believes in a patriarchal society, and shows how he can bring her back down to reality with one deft blow.

Gatsby's party is so much different from Myrtle's it is unrecognizable.

Gatsby's party is extremely extravagant, and everything Myrtle wants hers to be. His vastness of wealth is shown in many ways, such as "'his Rolls Royce became an omnibus', 'five crates of oranges and lemons', 'enough coloured lights to make a Christmas tree', 'pitful of oboes and trombones'" All of these show off how much wealth Gatsby has, and it is even more amplified with the knowledge that these parties are common occurrences. The descriptions given also seem to be very biblical, such as " pyramid of pulpless halves".

This imagery may show the fact that the pyramid is made of 'pulpless halves' shows the people who go to these parties are the kind of people that are in the magazines that Myrtle reads, which are known to be very superficial. The fact that Gatsby is still mainly called " my neighbour" shows that he is still very mysterious, even though he continuously throws these large parties. This is an interesting contrast, we expect people who throw such parties to be the type of people who show off, or who are celebrities.

In other words, the type of people Myrtle aspires to be like. However, Gatsby is not like this, we know he throws parties with such exuberance and

enthusiasm, and yet we have only seen a glimpse of the character himself, and we have not as of yet heard a piece of dialogue from him. This is probably why Nick is so interested in him, as he does not fit into the mould that people expect him to. There is no specific people mentioned who go to Gatsby's party, apart from Catherine in the previous chapter.

The other people are only described as "enthusiastic meetings between women who never knew each other's names" This description shows who the type of people go to Gatsby's parties, they seem to be very superficial, and the stereotypical 'rich person' we can compare this with Myrtle's party, where almost everyone there, excluding Tom, wants to become rich, but they do not think about the consequences of such a thing and will possibly fall into this stereotype, or see it as the right way to be.

We can see contrasts between the two parties in many areas, such as the fact Myrtle's party feels very cramped, whereas Gatsby's is very open. This shows the value of life and wealth these two people have, as well as their ambitions. Myrtle's overwhelming ambition to be rich and famous controls as to what she does, which is to do anything she can and nothing else to get her dream. Gatsby's position in life means that he can do what with his life, making his party personify his freedoms. Overall, we are shown two different sides of 1920's America.

We see the Hollywood-style America, with Gatsby's party, where everyone is having a fantastic time, even if it is all very hollow. But we are also seen the underbelly of America, with all the opportunists in one place trying to use the wealthiest person there to boost themselves upwards. This, could be said, to

be the reality of the American Dream. To make it big, you need to use every chance you can get and make all of the risks you can chance to make it, and if you don't, you fall down the ladder and have to start again.