

Dissecting the great gatsby: a deeper analysis of jordan baker

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Although Baz Luhrmann's stellar adaptation of F. Scott Fitzgerald's New York Times bestselling novel *The Great Gatsby* possesses a great many well-transitioned similarities with its paperback predecessor; one of the most intriguing diversions from page to screen was the finalized execution of the characters. Particularly that of Jordan Baker, a famous American pro-golfer of disputed reputation and the de-facto girlfriend of the novel's narrator, Nick Carraway. From the first, Fitzgerald's portrayal of the well-off, New York high-rise, luxury-born miss—and thus the reader's initial takeaway—is that of a snobbish, affluent, flighty woman.

Clearly she is used to achieving her desires hand-to-mouth, and has never truly had to strive for anything a day in her life. She serves primarily throughout the duration of the novel (when she appears at all), as the go-between of the Daisy-Gatsby affiance and the sometimes-girlfriend of bonds man Nick Carraway. Jordan's transition onto the big-screen, however, is a world apart. She is written with empathy, compassion, refreshingly cynical wit, and a serious to-the-point manner she was not seen to possess throughout the novel. Yet somehow still remaining the over-indulging, careless scuttlebutt Fitzgerald's reader's quickly grew to loathe.

Yet let's not forget she was the catalyst that started the ball rolling. That through her willing manipulation by Gatsby, and in turn her manipulation of Nick, she was the deciding force that—perhaps inadvertently, perhaps purposefully, we'll simply never know—led to all the destruction that followed: Daisy and Jay's sort-lived affair, Tom's impassioned outbursts, Myrtle's death, and ultimately Gatsby's death at the hands of George. Her transition from book to screen is nothing less than perfection, and takes the <https://assignbuster.com/dissecting-the-great-gatsby-a-deeper-analysis-of-jordan-baker/>

flat, two-dimensional woman Fitzgerald wrote her to be, and molds her into a real person with real, human flaws. By the end of the movie she is, if not quiet beloved, at least begrudgingly respected. In the book, she is seldom seen or thought of, and thus not largely missed—which was the entire point.

Through her—as through all his well-off characters, Nick Carraway included—Fitzgerald made his readers hate money and power and thus any extension of wealth as much as he himself came to loathe the stuff—the imminent, meaningless stuff! Jordan was, as all woman Fitzgerald wrote were, his device to express everything he hated about his lifestyle, his wife, and the hapless 1920s Bohemian New York he had chosen to call home. Jordan Baker remains one of the most elusive characters of Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*. She is a woman seldom seen and it is this fact—or perhaps because of this fact—that she becomes the flat, two-dimensional, deceptive woman whom his readers quickly grow to loath. This is perhaps why it's all the more reason her three-dimensional transition to screen is such a masterwork.