

Character of gatsby in "the great gatsby"

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Every man wants to be considered great in the eyes of his peers, but it is important to remember what greatness truly means. There are thousands of ways to define the word " great," but I have my own definition of the word. A great man is selfless, honest, and trustworthy. He is sincere, has strong values, and he does things for the benefit of others. Jay Gatsby, F. Scott Fitzgerald's main character in the novel *The Great Gatsby*, is a charismatic man who throws elaborate parties for the wealthy people of Long Island.

To those around him, Gatsby appears to be a great man, however, the reader can see through this facade and understands that he is not as great as he appears. Because he is stubbornly narrow-minded, selfishly uses people for his benefit, and seeks to destroy a family, Jay Gatsby is not a great man by any means. Jay Gatsby is stubbornly narrow-minded, and refuses to accept the reality that he cannot be with Daisy Buchanan. Jay Gatsby is unable to let go of the few moments he shared with Daisy years ago, before he was shipped off to Europe to fight in the Great War.

While he is away, Daisy marries Tom Buchanan, yet Gatsby still tries to win her hand. Instead of moving away from Daisy and starting a new life, Gatsby moves across the bay from her and insists he will meet her again. At one of Gatsby's parties, Nick urges Gatsby not to ask too much from Daisy. Nick realizes that Daisy has moved on with her life and reminds Gatsby that he cannot repeat the past. Gatsby replies in shock saying " Can't repeat the past? ...Why of course you can" (110)!

Gatsby, who has everything luxury imaginable, refuses to believe that he cannot relive his past with Daisy. A great man would get around such an

obstacle in life, and would find another way to fulfill his heart's desire.

Because Gatsby put all of his "eggs in one basket," he was left with nothing when his only love refused to be with him. Nick Carraway knew that Gatsby was narrow-minded and said that he "paid a high price for living too long with a single dream" (161). Unfortunately for Gatsby, that high price was his life.

Jay Gatsby cannot be considered a great man because he selfishly uses people for his own benefit. Gatsby does not have any friends until Nick moves in next door; however this friendship is not genuine. Gatsby is simply using Nick in order to meet Daisy. Gatsby also uses Jordan to get closer to Daisy. Once he finds out that Jordan knows Daisy, he begins to make his clandestine arrangements. Acting as Gatsby's pawn, Jordan relays a message to Nick saying, "He wants to know...if you'll invite Daisy to your house some afternoon and then let him come over" (78).

Gatsby is quick to ask for favors from Nick, even though he barely knows him. Gatsby pretends to be Nick's friend; however, friendship works both ways and Gatsby never delivers on his end. Gatsby's selfish use of people who care about him prevents him from being great. A great man does things for the benefit of others, expecting nothing in return. If Gatsby were a great man, he would not use innocent people as part of his plan to destroy a family. Gatsby actively tries to break up a marriage and family by trying to take Daisy away from her husband and daughter.

Gatsby is not content with his current relationship because Daisy is still married to Tom, and he does not have her to himself. Gatsby takes drastic

measures in an attempt to win back Daisy, which includes confronting her husband, Tom Buchanan. Gatsby becomes so bold as to tell Tom that Daisy never loved him. When arguing with Tom, Gatsby says, " Daisy, that's all over now...it doesn't matter any more. Just tell him the truth- that you never loved him- and it's all wiped out forever" (132).

Gatsby is only concerned with himself and does not consider how he would tear apart a family if Daisy were to run away with him. Marriage is a sacred union, in which individuals commit themselves to one another for the remainder of their lives. Gatsby gives no consideration to Daisy's young daughter who would have to live the rest of her life without her mother. Gatsby's inconsiderate actions make it clear that he is not great. A great man would never do anything to harm a family because a great man has values. If Gatsby was a great man, he would accept that Daisy married Tom, and look for love elsewhere.

Jay Gatsby is not a great man because he uses people for his own benefit, very stubborn, and attempts to break up a marriage. Great men look to help better the lives of others around them. Everything that Gatsby does is selfish and nobody else besides him benefits from his actions. Gatsby uses his wealth to make it appear to others that he is a great man, however the reader knows that even the parties that Gatsby throws are for his own benefit. Gatsby cannot be considered a great man because of his selfishness and indifference to the feelings of others.