

Great gatsby: overview

[Literature](#), [Books](#)



Seven Deadly Sins and Seven Cardinal Virtues: The Great Gatsby
In the book of Proverbs, it is written that there are “ six things the Lord hates, and the seventh His soul detests. ” Those seven deadly sins are: lust, gluttony, greed, laziness, anger, envy, and pride. In contrast to the seven deadly sins, there are seven heavenly virtues. These virtues are: purity, self-control, charity, diligence, forgiveness, kindness, and humility. In *The Great Gatsby*, author F. Scott Fitzgerald designs the characters to reflect each deadly sin but also each heavenly virtue. F.

Scott Fitzgerald, in reflecting the era of the 1920s, satirizes the lavish lifestyle of the rich and represents the seven deadly sins through the characters that he develops. The first deadly sin is lust. In the novel, Tom Buchanan lusted after Myrtle just as Gatsby lusted after Daisy. The gluttony is apparent in the luxurious parties that Gatsby hosts at his West Egg mansion. Fitzgerald describes these parties as elaborate and grand as many entertainers, social icons, and even common people attend. Gatsby’s mansion itself, located in the new money area of West Egg, reflects the gluttony of the times.

Its blue gardens and elegant design attracted an abundance of people. Gatsby’s other possessions such as his plane, his cars, and his boats also portray his wealth and Fitzgerald uses them to represent gluttony. Greed is ever-present in the novel as well. Gatsby wanted everything to impress Daisy. He hosted the lavish parties hoping to impress her and lure her into him. Tom Buchanan was also greedy as he wanted a relationship with both his wife and his mistress Myrtle, and could not give either of them up.

The greed that is present in the novel corrupts Gatsby's idealization of the "American Dream." He does not do things the right way and he has collected his sum of money through improper practices. He is greedy in his perspective of Daisy, as he begins to view her as an object to be obtained. Fitzgerald does a great job depicting the laziness of the 1920s. The lifestyle of Tom and Daisy is a prime example. They obtain their money without having to work, so they live lazily, coasting aimlessly from one event to the next.

Tom Buchanan is the ideal depiction of anger in the novel. A prime example of Tom revealing his anger is when his mistress, Myrtle, would not stop chanting Daisy's name and Tom reacted by punching her square in the nose. Furthermore, when he discovered the affair between Gatsby and his wife, he caused his hit-and-run accident, killing Myrtle, thus leading to the death of Gatsby. The next deadly sin is envy. Gatsby was definitely envious of Tom, especially because of Tom's stronghold on Daisy.

Upon discovering Daisy's affair with Gatsby, Tom instantly becomes envious of Gatsby, which, through a chain of events, led to Gatsby's murder by George Wilson. Lastly, pride is exposed through many characters. Nick Carraway's portrayal of Tom early in the novel reflects Tom's pride. Upon visiting Tom, Nick reveals a conversation with Tom. Tom boasts of his confidence in himself and the lavishness of his East Egg home. East Egg as a whole represents entitlement, thus pride, as the inhabitants of East Egg obtained their wealth from rich ancestors.

Tom's pride led him to have an affair with Myrtle and similarly, Gatsby's pride led him to scandalously pursue Daisy. The seven deadly sins are clearly

apparent in the novel as Fitzgerald uses them to ridicule the culture of the rich in the 1920s. Dissimilar to the seven deadly sins, the seven heavenly virtues are revealed as Fitzgerald uses them to provide a sharp contrast. In a sense, Gatsby was pure only in the fact that he saved himself for Daisy. Gatsby also displayed temperance and self-control in his relationship with Daisy as he did not let it overtake him entirely.