

The that they all end
up in

Literature



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The American Dream can be defined as the pursuit of wealth and success through hard work. In F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*, the American Dream is corrupted as the lower class people are unsuccessful in achieving their goals, whereas the wealthy sustain their positions. Jay Gatsby, whom the story is based on, is a quintessential example of the destruction that results in the chase for success, as he dedicates his life in the pursuit of Daisy Buchanan's love, a wealthy woman of the East Egg. Fitzgerald portrays a despondent view of the American Dream through Gatsby's failed attempt at achieving his dream, and the deaths of all the people striving for what they want.

Gatsby's ultimate goal is to win Daisy back. In the beginning, Gatsby is looking out into the water for "the green light at the end of Daisy's dock...

the orgastic future that year by year recedes before us." Gatsby is obviously a dreamer who seeks the American Dream himself, rather than someone who was born into wealth. He realizes that in order to achieve his dream, he must first move up the social ladder for Daisy to want to be with him, just as she had five years prior. As Gatsby reminisces about the past, he realizes "that when he kissed this girl, and forever wed his unutterable visions to her perishable breath, his mind would never romp again like the mind of God." Gatsby is really only in love with the idea of Daisy, however Daisy is only human and cannot live up to his expectations. Therefore, Gatsby's dream was always unattainable; he wanted too much by yearning for the past. Unfortunately for Gatsby, Daisy ends up staying with her husband, Tom: "They weren't happy."

.. and yet they weren't unhappy either... anybody would have said that they were conspiring together." Although their relationship is not a happy one, Daisy wants the security that comes with being married to Tom and does not want to risk losing her status by choosing Gatsby. This marks Gatsby's failure of the American Dream, as the efforts he put into attaining Daisy's love is to no avail.

In the end, Gatsby is left with nothing, whereas Daisy flees with everything she had from the start. The lower class people eventually do not succeed in that they all end up in fatal situations. Gatsby, having come from a poor background, always desired a more successful life than his parents, who were " shiftless and unsuccessful farm people—his imagination had never really accepted them as his parents at all." Contrary to the purpose of the American Dream, Gatsby does not achieve his success through hard work, but rather through dishonesty; his business with millionaire Dan Cody is in vain because Cody's wife inherits all of his money. Because of this, Gatsby becomes involved in illegal activities to acquire wealth, making him seem corrupt. On the other hand, George Wilson, the owner of a car repair shop, is a hard-working man who also wishes to achieve his American Dream; he tells Tom, " My wife and I want to go west...She's been talking about it for ten years.

" George clearly loves his wife, Myrtle, and continues to hold on to this dream for ten years. All he wants is to make her happy and for her to love him despite his social status. In spite of this, Myrtle is after her own dream of gaining an upper class status and insults George by saying, " I thought he knew something about breeding, but he wasn't fit to lick my shoe." It is <https://assignbuster.com/the-that-they-all-end-up-in/>

evident that although George loved and cared for Myrtle so much, she did not feel the same way. Therefore, losing Myrtle sends George on a riot as he takes Gatsby's life as well as his own, illustrating that George embodies the death of the American Dream. Consequently, all the people working to achieve their goals are unsuccessful and those who do not have to work at all maintain their status.

The American Dream implies the continuous struggle to acquire more than what is already provided; it is impossible to remain satisfied forever, therefore those who pursue it are never content. Thus, the American Dream remains just a dream, which is shown in Gatsby's reunion with Daisy as his idea of her does not fit her true characteristic. The desire to relive an idealized moment plays into the dreams of the future, thus Gatsby's dream was destined to fail from the beginning.

Similarly, Myrtle and George Wilson reach tragic endings as they strive for more than what they already have. In the end, only those of the upper class are safe in that they survive