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Love the title.

great question

The True Colors of a 1920's Woman: A Literary Analysis of *The Great Gatsby*

Was the role of a woman during the 1920's just about being glamorous, haughty, and carefree? Throughout the novel *The Great Gatsby*, F. Scott Fitzgerald shows his female character's true colors by describing them as avaricious and egotistical. Despite the fact that the women in F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* seem to live lives filled with kindness and happiness towards others, the women throughout the novel are selfish, greedy, and materialistic fools.

successful thesis

Daisy is being sarcastic when she says, "All right," I said, "I'm glad it's a girl. And I hope she'll be a fool--that's the best thing a girl can be in this world, a beautiful little fool'" (Fitzgerald 17). During this time, women did not have the rights they have today. Daisy, who has realized that women have no purpose, weeps when she discovers that she has had a

daughter because women do not have any rights. Daisy believes that because she has given birth to a girl, the best thing that she can be is a fool. She is upset that her daughter will have to live in the society that she lives in because the women in the 1920's had no role other than getting married and having children. Women did not have careers and were unable to become successful because her purpose was to be a house wife and nothing more. Men believed that they are

Strong analysis

superior to women based on physical attributes, but women have proven themselves since the 1920's and have shown that she can do anything a man could.

Shift in
Pronoun
Number

Daisy is a fool for marrying Tom because he cheats on her. During this time, it was important for women to marry men with money because they had no way to provide for ~~herself~~ ^{themselves.} ~~without doing~~ so. If women were born into the upper class, then ~~she~~ ^{they} married the same class she ~~was~~ ^{they} born into. A woman's goal during the 1920's was to be high on the social ladder, whether she was born or married into it. Also, she is a fool for marrying Tom because her real love, Jay Gatsby, was away fighting in the war, and she decided she could not wait any longer. Daisy married for wealth, not for love, because in this aristocratical society there was no other way. Tom is also physically abusive, and Daisy is a fool for staying with him if he will continue to hurt her.

Myrtle Wilson was a middle class woman who longed to be upper class: "At the newsstand, she bought a copy of *Town Tattle* and a moving picture magazine, and in the station drug-store some cold cream and a small flask of perfume" (Fitzgerald 27). Myrtle desires to be something that she is not and these four items symbolize that. She wants to be a normal upperclass woman who knows of the latest gossip and looks the best, but she will never be anything more. She let "...four taxicabs drive away before she selected one, lavender-colored with gray upholstery, and in this we slid out from the mass of the station into the glowing sunshine" (Fitzgerald 27). Myrtle did not want to ride in a yellow taxicab that anyone on the street would ride in. She wanted to ride in the fanciest one because she wants to be someone of upperclass. Myrtle is an extra in a movie, and no matter what she does to impress the directors

she will never be the lead. While in the lavender taxicab, Myrtle sees a man selling puppies and asks for a police dog: “‘No, it’s not exactly a *police* dog,’ said the man with disappointment in his voice. ‘It’s more of an Airedale’” (Fitzgerald 27). No matter how hard Myrtle tries, she will always be a mutt instead of the pure-bred that she strives to be. She will never be anything more than the mutt she is. Also, Myrtle wants to be upperclass because she knows that Tom will not leave Daisy if she is not: “‘Daisy! Daisy! Daisy!’ shouted Mrs. Wilson. ‘I’ll say it whenever I want to! Daisy! Dai---’ Making a short deft movement, Tom Buchanan broke her nose with his open hand” (Fitzgerald 37). Tom broke her nose because she was not wealthy enough to speak Daisy’s name. Through this, Tom is saying that Daisy was much more important than she was. Myrtle would never be rich enough to say Daisy’s name because Daisy was ^{too} good for her.

Wonderful analysis and quotes to support your ideas!

Jordan Baker is a woman who loves excitement, and while she is at Gatsby’s party, she was “...looking with contemptuous interest down into the garden” (Fitzgerald 42). Jordan feels as if the party, and Nick, are not good enough for her. When Nick goes over to say hello, she holds out her finger to him and begins talking to two fans. She feels that the people at these parties are not as wealthy as he or she should be. After a half hour at the party, Jordan wants to leave because the “‘...party is much to polite for me’” (Fitzgerald 44). Jordan likes to have fun, and was not thrilled with what was going on at the party. Most people at the parties are strangers, who know someone who knows Gatsby, so Jordan is not familiar with most of them. Later, while Jordan and Nick are discussing Gatsby, she disregards her thoughts about Gatsby because of her opinion of his parties: “‘Anyhow, he gives large parties,’ said Jordan, changing the subject with an urban distaste for the concrete. ‘And I like large parties. They’re so intimate. At small parties

there isn't any privacy'" (Fitzgerald 49). Jordan is talking out of both sides of her mouth. She begins by saying that the party is not good enough for her, but then she says that she liked the party. ~ great point —

Jordan Baker is a woman who does other peoples dirty work for them: "'He wants to know,' continued Jordan, 'if you'll invite Daisy to your house some afternoon and then let him come over'" (Fitzgerald 78). Instead of working up the courage to ask Nick himself, Gatsby asked Jordan to ask Nick to invite Daisy to tea so the two could "accidentally" meet. Jordan is used, and she doesn't seem to mind. Jordan enjoys knowing the gossip and meddling in other people's lives.

good use of semicolon

Daisy cannot force herself to pretend that she can be like Gatsby; she has and always will be old money. In F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*, Daisy cannot overlook the fact that Gatsby mingles with new money:

But the rest offended her--and inarguably, because it wasn't a gesture but an emotion. She was appalled by West Egg, this unprecedented 'place' that Broadway had begotten upon a Long Island fishing village--appalled by its raw vigor that chafed under the old euphemisms and by the too obtrusive fate that herded its inhabitants along in a short-cut from nothing to nothing. She saw something awful in the very simplicity she failed to understand. (107)

Daisy may have loved Gatsby, but when one loves someone, he or she can overlook his or her flaws. As long as Gatsby mingles with new money, she will remain appalled by the new money because she cannot overlook any of their flaws. Although Daisy has been to many parties, this

The margin is off in the long quote; + needs to be indented ten spaces from left margin —

one is very different. There are no celebrities there, just upperclass men who wanted to enjoy themselves.

To continue, Daisy may say she would leave Tom for Gatsby, but she never would: "Tom was evidently perturbed at Daisy's running around alone, for on the following Saturday night he came to Gatsby's party. Perhaps his presences gave the evening its peculiar quality of oppressiveness..." (Fitzgerald 104). Daisy and Tom are both materialistic, and as long as both are alive, the two will never leave each other. Tom uses Daisy, and she is just his property. As property, she has no rights and is not equal. Tom feels it is okay to cheat on her because she does not mean anything to him other than being his 'wife'. Until the day she dies, she will never be equal to him: On the television hit series NCIS, Dr. Mallard declares "women will never be equal to men, until they are equal in death" (Kill Ari Part 1). Women throughout this decade were not thought of as anything but fools. Women could not do anything during this time but marry well and into the right social class

Wonderful use of another secondary source to support your ideas

I love this! Throughout the story, Fitzgerald describes his women characters as property: "Daisy and Jordan lay upon an enormous couch, like silver idols weighing down their own white dresses against the singing breeze of the fans" (Fitzgerald 115). Daisy and Jordan are covers set on the couch to protect both's dresses; women are nothing more than that. Throughout the 1920's, men did not look at women equally. Women were paperweights sitting there for show and for nothing more. Tom may have loved Daisy for a little while, but he married Daisy and then moved on to Myrtle. It was okay for Tom to cheat on Daisy because she did not mean anything to him, but when Daisy cheated on Tom with Gatsby, it was not alright. There were different standards set

So True!

for people based on his or her gender, which is not right. Women can do whatever men do:
 women can be as rich, smart, or athletic as any man is. *you go girl!!*

Daisy is not as careful about her relationship with Gatsby: “‘Make us a cold drink,’ cried Daisy. As he left the room again she got up and went over to Gatsby and pulled his face down, kissing him on the mouth. ‘You know I love you,’ she murmured” (Fitzgerald 116). Daisy does not care if Tom finds out about her affair. She may be having the affair to get back at Tom, and it will be even better when he finds out. Tom will finally realize what pain he has put Daisy through while he has had his affairs. Daisy loves Tom, and she has finally understood that he may not love her anymore. She needs to win him back, and she thinks the only way to do that is to make him jealous.

Daisy is trying very hard to show Gatsby how everything is the same as it was, but Gatsby now knows that it is not the same: “‘Her voice is full of money,’ he said suddenly” (Fitzgerald 120). While Gatsby was away, Daisy spent her time becoming a selfish and greedy wife who throws her money around left and right, and Gatsby doesn't like it. The old Daisy didn't act like this, and although he wants her to change back, she never will. Once one adapts to a life like Tom's, he or she can never go back. In this case, the richer Tom and Daisy are, the more snobbish both become. No matter what happens, Tom and Daisy's views on society will stay the same based on the society they were born and raised in.

When Gatsby confronts Daisy and asks her if she ever loved Tom, she can not say she does not: “‘Oh, you want to much!’ she cried to Gatsby. ‘I love you now--isn't that enough? I can't help what's past.’ She began to sob helplessly. ‘I did love him once--but I loved you

do not use contractions

The second my hand reached the wheel I felt the shock--it must have killed her instantly.' (144)

Daisy not only selfishly allowed Gatsby to take the blame for Myrtle's murder, but she also just hit the gas and drove away. Daisy committed a hit-and-run murder and let a man who loved her take the blame for it. There is no person who could ever kill someone, even if it was an accident, and let someone take the fall for his or her crime. No ~~one~~ ^{his or her} in their right mind could do that, (which, in this case, Daisy is not in her right mind.)

Gatsby tells Nick that Daisy was the "...first 'nice' girl he had ever known" (Fitzgerald 148). Daisy is a 'nice' girl because she has money. She may have been somewhat nice to Gatsby, but it may have just been her money talking. Gatsby fell in love not only with the nice girl he met, but he also so true fell in love with her wealth. Gatsby used to have the same American dream as Myrtle did: to be wealthy. Daisy had certain standards, and in order for Gatsby to meet her standards he had to become rich enough.

When Mr. Wilson finds the dog collar, he is unsure of the true reason why Myrtle bought it, for he had been given multiple explanations: "Michaelis didn't see anything odd in that and he gave Wilson a dozen reasons why his wife might have bought the dog leash. But conceivably Wilson had heard some of these same explanations before, from Myrtle, because he began saying 'Oh, my God!' again in a whisper—his comforter left several explanations in the air" (Fitzgerald 159). Mr. Wilson does not realize that Myrtle's true reason for having this small expensive dog leash made of leather and silver was that she wanted so very badly to have pure-bred dog. This pure-bred dog symbolizes everything Myrtle longed to be: she longed to be rich and worthy of

Tom's love. Myrtle wants to be worthy enough to say Daisy's name and not be beaten for it.

Myrtle's dying wish was to have her American dream, which is to be a wealthy member of the upper class like Daisy and Tom.

The night after Daisy killed Myrtle, egotistical Jordan gets mad at Nick for not letting her be the center of his attention: "'You weren't so nice to me last night.' 'How could it have mattered then?'" (Fitzgerald 155). While everyone is dealing with the guilt of Myrtle's death, Jordan is thinking about how "rude" Nick was being to her. Nick's mind was not on Jordan at the time, for he was thinking about how his cousin, Daisy Buchanan, killed someone and let his neighbor Jay Gatsby take the blame. Jordan does not care about anyone but herself, and she does not realize how selfish she is being. Unlike Myrtle, Jordan and Daisy grew up in a society where everyone cared only about ~~themselves~~ ^{himself or herself}. These women did not know any better because they grew up in a decade of wealth and selfishness.


Daisy turned out her bedroom light, signaling to Gatsby to leave: "'Nothing happened,' he said wanly. 'I waited, and about four o'clock she came to the window and stood there for a minute and then turned out the light'" (Fitzgerald 147). Daisy is telling Gatsby that she is done with him. Daisy is turning out Gatsby's green light; she can no longer love him no matter what he tries. Even though Gatsby takes the blame for Daisy's crime, Daisy decides to shut him out of her life. Daisy does not want to be reminded of what she did to Myrtle, and she associates Gatsby with her crime. On account of this, Daisy decides that she can not spend anymore time with Gatsby because he is a constant reminder of her crime. Daisy and Gatsby's relationship has

ended because of Daisy's guilt, which shows that she is egotistical; she ends a relationship with a man who loves her because she needs to forget something she did in his company.

In conclusion, F. Scott Fitzgerald has shown that the women throughout the novel *The Great Gatsby* are egotistical, avaricious, and materialistic. The priorities of a women during this time period were wealth and fame, much like many women's today. Although the women characters in *The Great Gatsby* look as if they lead lives of consideration, compassion, and sympathy, the women throughout the novel are selfish, greedy, and materialistic fools.

Wow!

Honestly, I believe this to be a college level paper. The analysis and support with specific quotes was outstanding. You do need to work on pronoun/agreement, long quote margins, and no contractions. Otherwise, a grand slam!

I will
Miss you  Tears

Works Cited

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Perfect