

Great Gatsby "In Class" Essay

The women in Fitzgerald's novel *Great Gatsby* are clearly characterized, and have extremely detailed descriptions. All of the characters in the novel are created with extremely strong characters, who all have extremely clear descriptions. However Fitzgerald creates these characters with a contrasting strength. The characters that are men appear to be much stronger than the women that are presented in the novel. This could be a result of the time which the novel is based on or it could be from Fitzgerald's personal opinions. However, whichever the cause for this difference between the strengths of the characters, it is important to note that this large discrepancy is apparent in the novel that is created by Fitzgerald. Throughout the novel the women are treated less as equals, and more as items.

One example that is a major point throughout the story, is the affairs that the different couples have. This begins with Tom having an affair with Myrtle. This in today's society is a horrible thing, and he would be disgraced, but in the novel, it seems almost everybody knows about their affair. And it appears that it is widely accepted in the society in the novel, as none makes any complaints about it, and they all seem to just accept that Tom has two women in his life. This is because he is bored, and wants to have another woman that will entertain him, and he will use for his own self gain. He never shows Myrtle any extra affection, and clearly does not indicate further advancements on her. He has no plan to ever leave Daisy and marry Myrtle, and it is extremely clear that he has no plans to marry her. But she still has hope that they will eventually move out together. This is clear during their party, in fact Tom even hits Myrtle because she is arguing with him. "Making a short deft movement, Tom Buchanan broke her nose

with his open hand” (37). At this moment Tom hits Myrtle, due to her disagreement, and disgracement of his wife. This is very odd, as it appears that Tom is pretending to be lovers with her, but is still refusing to talk about his wife around her. This shows that there is a difference in the power of these characters, because Tom has the strength in the relationship, and is clearly using Myrtle for his own gain, and doesn't actually care for her.

Later in the novel, the group of main characters is sitting around in the hot weather, and considering the idea to going to town to cool down. However, it is presented that Daisy who initially suggests the idea, must ask permission of Tom and the other men in their group for the right to go to the city. This is then later given by Tom, that he agrees with the idea, and because he is the man in the relationship, means that he gets the final decision. “I’m perfectly willing to go to town. Come on-we’re all going to town” (119). This shows, that although no one else has commented on the idea of going to town, Tom has the final choice as to how they spend their day. Instead of moving on the idea when it is first suggested, the group waits until Tom tells them all that they are going into town, before they begin to move on the idea.

Throughout the book, the women are characterized as weaker than the men, as they must always ask for the permission of the men to do things, and then they must do what is ordered of them. It is shown that the men in the world are much more powerful than the women in the world, and they are the ones in charge of all the events present in their groups.