

Theme Statement: Obsession is a shadow of love, though love can be illusory.

In F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*, Gatsby mistakes his past infatuation with Daisy for love. In the time they spend apart, Gatsby's longing for Daisy has warped into obsession. This consumes his life and leads him to dedicate his life around rekindling her love for him.

Gatsby's American Dream filled with extreme materialism motivates him to acquire wealth and status in obsession for Daisy. (Consumes his life)

- Gatsby comes from a very poor family, and Daisy doesn't grow their relationship because he doesn't have the money or status to support her.
- He realizes that his lack of wealth is the barrier to his relationship with Daisy, and chases after this ideal, acquiring wealth through whatever means necessary, legal or illegal.
- Once he finally achieves this money and status, he seeks the one remaining "object" (his extreme materialistic pursuit leads him to value his life from his possessions) that eluded his grasp: Daisy.
- He has achieved everything he ever dreamed of; he has achieved his American Dream

Gatsby's character has been corrupted and tries to increase his status in an attempt to gain Daisy's affection

- "Young Parke's in trouble,' he said rapidly. 'They picked him up when he handed the bonds over the counter. They got a circular from New York giving 'em the numbers just five minutes before.'" (166)
 - He is involved in illegal markets, specifically selling bonds that are counterfeit or stolen
- Owns gaudy mansion, to throw extravagant parties in hopes that Daisy will come
- Shows that he is of higher status by not pursuing any other women or even attempting to maintain relationships with someone unrelated to Daisy
 - Secrecy in his life
 - At his parties, he doesn't let women lean on him and attempts to show that he is of even higher of a class than the elite present, and that he has reserved his heart for somebody not at the party
 - Motive for befriending Nick

Gatsby is more interested in the pursuit of Daisy rather than Daisy herself

- "*Possibly it had occurred to him that the colossal significance of that light had now vanished forever.*" (93)
- Pursuing a bastardized image of an American dream in which he is gripped by extreme materialism
 - Gatsby treats Daisy as a token, and by winning this token, which presents a unique value from his other possessions, he has achieved everything he aspired for, and, more generally, his version of the American Dream