

The Great Gatsby

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The Great Gatsby is a 1925 novel written by American author F. Scott Fitzgerald that follows a cast of characters living in the fictional town of West Egg on prosperous Long Island in the summer of 1922. The story primarily concerns the young and mysterious millionaire Jay Gatsby and his quixotic passion for the beautiful Daisy Buchanan. Considered to be Fitzgerald's magnum opus, *The Great Gatsby* explores themes of decadence, idealism, resistance to change, social upheaval, and excess, creating a portrait of the Jazz Age or the Roaring Twenties that has been described as a cautionary tale regarding the American Dream.^{[1][2]}

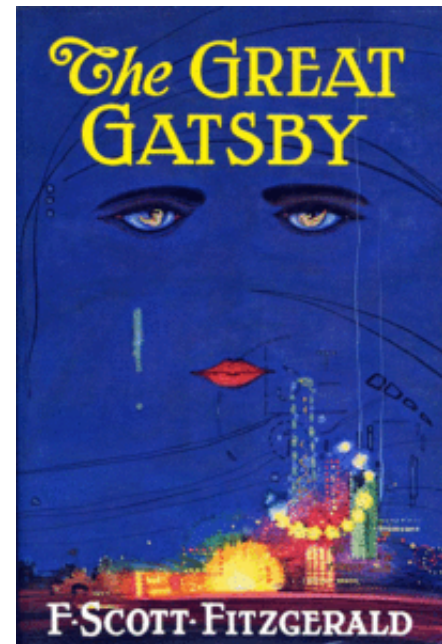
Fitzgerald, inspired by the parties he had attended while visiting Long Island's north shore, began planning the novel in 1923 desiring to produce, in his words, "something *new*—something extraordinary and beautiful and simple and intricately patterned."^[3] Progress was slow with Fitzgerald completing his first draft following a move to the French Riviera in 1924. His editor, Maxwell Perkins, felt the book was too vague and convinced the author to revise over the next winter. Fitzgerald was ambivalent about the book's title, at various times wishing to re-title the novel *Trimalchio in West Egg*.

First published by Scribner's in April 1925, *The Great Gatsby* received mixed reviews and sold poorly; in its first year, the book sold only 20,000 copies. Fitzgerald died in 1940, believing himself to be a failure and his work forgotten. However, the novel experienced a revival during World War II, and became a part of American high school curricula and numerous stage and film adaptations in the following decades. Today, *The Great Gatsby* is widely considered to be a literary classic and a contender for the title "Great American Novel". The book is consistently ranked among the greatest works of American literature. In 1998 the Modern Library editorial board voted it the best American novel and the second best novel in the English language.^[*citation needed*]

Contents

- 1 Historical context
- 2 Plot summary

The Great Gatsby



Cover of the first edition (1925)

Author	F. Scott Fitzgerald
Cover artist	Francis Cugat
Country	United States
Language	English
Genre	Novel
Published	10 April 1925 (Charles Scribner's Sons)
Media type	Print (hardback & paperback)
Pages	218 pages
ISBN	NA & reissue ISBN 0-7432-7356-7 (2004 paperback edition)

- 2.1 Major characters
- 3 Writing and production
- 4 Cover art
- 5 Title
- 6 Themes
- 7 Reception
- 8 Legacy and modern analysis
- 9 Adaptations
- 10 See also
- 11 Notes
- 12 References
 - 12.1 Bibliography
- 13 External links

Historical context

Set in the prosperous Long Island of 1922, *The Great Gatsby* provides a critical social history of America during the Roaring Twenties within its narrative. That era, known for unprecedented economic prosperity, the evolution of jazz music, flapper culture, and bootlegging and other criminal activity, is plausibly depicted in Fitzgerald's novel. Fitzgerald utilizes these societal developments of the 1920s to build Gatsby's stories from simple details like automobiles to broader themes like Fitzgerald's discreet allusions to the organized crime culture which was the source of Gatsby's fortune.^[4] Fitzgerald educates his readers about the garish society of the Roaring Twenties by placing a timeless, relatable plotline within the historical context of the era.^[5]

Fitzgerald's visits to Long Island's north shore and his experience attending parties at mansions inspired *The Great Gatsby*'s setting. Today there are a number of theories as to which mansion was the inspiration for the book. One possibility is Land's End, a notable Gold Coast Mansion where Fitzgerald may have attended a party.^[6] Many of the events in Fitzgerald's early life are reflected throughout *The Great Gatsby*. Fitzgerald was a young man from Minnesota, and like Nick, he was educated at an Ivy League school (in Nick's case Yale.) Fitzgerald is also similar to Jay Gatsby, as he fell in love while stationed in the military and fell into a life of decadence trying to prove himself to the girl he loves. Fitzgerald became a second lieutenant, and was stationed at Camp Sheridan, in Montgomery, Alabama. There he met and fell in love with a wild seventeen-year-old beauty named Zelda Sayre. Zelda finally agreed to marry him, but her overpowering desire for wealth, fun, and leisure led her to delay their wedding until he could prove a success.^[7] Like Nick in *The Great Gatsby*, Fitzgerald found this new lifestyle seductive and exciting, and, like Gatsby, he had always idolized the very rich.^[7] In many ways, *The Great Gatsby* represents Fitzgerald's attempt to confront his conflicting feelings about the Jazz Age. Like Gatsby, Fitzgerald was driven by his love for a woman who symbolized everything he wanted, even as she led him toward everything he despised.^[7]

Plot summary

The main events of the novel take place in the summer of 1922. Nick Carraway, a Yale graduate and World War I veteran from the Midwest – who serves as the novel's narrator – takes a job in New York as a bond salesman. He rents a small house on Long Island, in the (fictional) village of West Egg, next door to the lavish mansion of Jay Gatsby, a mysterious millionaire who holds extravagant parties but does not participate in them. Nick drives around the bay to East Egg for dinner at the home of his cousin, Daisy Fay Buchanan, and

her husband, Tom, a college acquaintance of Nick's. They introduce Nick to Jordan Baker, an attractive, cynical young golfer with whom Nick begins a romantic relationship. She reveals to Nick that Tom has a mistress, Myrtle Wilson, who lives in the "valley of ashes": an industrial dumping ground between West Egg and New York City. Not long after this revelation, Nick travels to New York City with Tom and Myrtle to an apartment they keep for their affair. At the apartment, a vulgar and bizarre party takes place. It ends with Tom breaking Myrtle's nose after she annoys him by saying Daisy's name several times.

As the summer progresses, Nick eventually receives an invitation to one of Gatsby's parties. Nick encounters Jordan Baker at the party, and they meet Gatsby himself, an aloof and surprisingly young man who recognizes Nick from their same division in the war. Through Jordan, Nick later learns that Gatsby knew Daisy from a romantic encounter in 1917 and is deeply in love with her. He spends many nights staring at the green light at the end of her dock, across the bay from his mansion, hoping to one day rekindle their lost romance.

Gatsby's extravagant lifestyle and wild parties are an attempt to impress Daisy in the hopes that she will one day appear again at Gatsby's doorstep. Gatsby now wants Nick to arrange a reunion between himself and Daisy. Nick invites Daisy to have tea at his house, without telling her that Gatsby will also be there. After an initially awkward reunion, Gatsby and Daisy reestablish their connection. They begin an affair and, after a short time, Tom grows increasingly suspicious of his wife's relationship with Gatsby. At a luncheon at the Buchanans' house, Daisy speaks to Gatsby with such undisguised intimacy that Tom realizes she is in love with Gatsby. Though Tom is himself involved in an extramarital affair, he is outraged by his wife's infidelity. He forces the group to drive into New York City and confronts Gatsby in a suite at the Plaza Hotel, asserting that he and Daisy have a history that Gatsby could never understand. In addition to that, he announces to his wife that Gatsby is a criminal whose fortune comes from bootlegging alcohol and other illegal activities. Daisy realizes that her allegiance is to Tom, and Tom contemptuously sends her back to East Egg with Gatsby, attempting to prove that Gatsby cannot hurt him.



The Plaza Hotel in the early 1920s

When Nick, Jordan, and Tom drive through the valley of ashes on their way home, they discover that Gatsby's car has struck and killed Tom's mistress, Myrtle. Nick later learns from Gatsby that Daisy, not Gatsby himself, was driving the car at the time of the accident but Gatsby intends to take the blame anyway. Myrtle's husband, George, falsely concludes that the driver of the yellow car is the secret lover he recently began suspecting she has, and sets out on foot to locate its owner. After finding out the yellow car is Gatsby's, he arrives at Gatsby's mansion where he fatally shoots both Gatsby and then himself. Nick stages an unsettlingly small funeral for Gatsby, ends his relationship with Jordan, and moves back to the Midwest disillusioned with the Eastern lifestyle.

Major characters

- **Nick Carraway** – a Yale graduate originating from the Midwest, a World War I veteran, and, at the start of the plot, a newly arrived resident of West Egg, who is aged 29 (later 30). He also serves as the first-person narrator of the novel. He is Gatsby's next-door neighbor and a bond salesman. He is easy-going, occasionally sarcastic, and somewhat optimistic, although this latter quality fades as the novel progresses.
- **Jay Gatsby** (originally **James "Jimmy" Gatz**) – a young, mysterious millionaire with shady business connections (later revealed to be a bootlegger), originally from North Dakota. He is obsessed with Daisy Buchanan, whom he had met when he was a young officer stationed in the South during World

War I. The character is based on the bootlegger and former World War I officer Max Gerlach, according to *Some Sort of Epic Grandeur*, Matthew J. Bruccoli's biography of F. Scott Fitzgerald. Gatsby is said to have briefly studied at Trinity College, Oxford in England after the end of World War I.^[8]

- **Daisy Fay Buchanan** – an attractive and effervescent, if shallow and self-absorbed, young woman, identified as a flapper.^[9] She is Nick's second cousin, once removed; and the wife of Tom Buchanan. Daisy is believed to have been inspired by Fitzgerald's own youthful romances with Ginevra King. Daisy once had a romantic relationship with Gatsby, before she married Tom. Her choice between Gatsby and Tom is one of the central conflicts in the novel.
- **Thomas "Tom" Buchanan** – a millionaire who lives on East Egg, and Daisy's husband. Tom is an imposing man of muscular build with a "husky tenor" voice and arrogant demeanor, a former football star at Yale. Buchanan has parallels with William Mitchell, the Chicagoan who married Ginevra King. Buchanan and Mitchell were both Chicagoans with an interest in polo. Like Ginevra's father, whom Fitzgerald resented, Buchanan attended Yale and is a white supremacist.^[10]
- **Jordan Baker** – Daisy Buchanan's long-time friend with "autumn-leaf yellow" hair, a firm athletic body, and an aloof attitude. She is Nick Carraway's girlfriend for most of the novel and an amateur golfer with a slightly shady reputation and a penchant for untruthfulness. Fitzgerald told Maxwell Perkins that Jordan was based on the golfer Edith Cummings, a friend of Ginevra King.^[10] Her name is a play on the two then-popular automobile brands, the Jordan Motor Car Company and the Baker Motor Vehicle, alluding to Jordan's "fast" reputation and the freedom now presented to Americans, especially women, in the 1920s.^{[11][12][13]}
- **George B. Wilson** – a mechanic and owner of a garage. He is disliked by both his wife, Myrtle Wilson, and Tom Buchanan, who describes him as "so dumb he doesn't know he's alive." When he learns of the death of his wife, he shoots and kills Gatsby, wrongly believing he had been driving the car that killed Myrtle, and then kills himself.
- **Myrtle Wilson** – George's wife, and Tom Buchanan's mistress. Myrtle, who possesses a fierce vitality, is desperate to find refuge from her complacent marriage, but unfortunately this leads to her tragic ending. She is accidentally killed after being hit by Gatsby's car (driven by Daisy, though Gatsby insists he would take the blame for the accident).
- **Meyer Wolfshiem**^[note 1] – a Jewish friend and mentor of Gatsby's, described as a gambler who fixed the World Series. Wolfshiem appears only twice in the novel, the second time refusing to attend Gatsby's funeral. He is a clear allusion to Arnold Rothstein, a New York crime kingpin who was notoriously blamed for the Black Sox Scandal which tainted the 1919 World Series.^[16]

Writing and production

Fitzgerald began planning his third novel in June 1922,^[4] but it was interrupted by production of his play, *The Vegetable*, in the summer and fall.^[17] The play failed miserably, and Fitzgerald worked that winter on magazine stories struggling to pay his debt caused by the production.^{[18][19]} The stories were, in his words, "all trash and it nearly broke my heart,"^[19] although included among those stories was "Winter Dreams", which Fitzgerald later described as "a sort of first draft of the Gatsby idea".^[20]

After the birth of their child, the Fitzgeralds moved to Great Neck, New York, on Long Island, in October 1922; the town was used as the scene for *The Great Gatsby*.^[21] Fitzgerald's neighbors in Great Neck included such prominent and newly wealthy New Yorkers as writer Ring Lardner, actor Lew Fields, and comedian Ed Wynn.^[4] These figures were all considered to be "new money", unlike those who came from Manhasset Neck or Cow Neck Peninsula, places which were home to many of New York's wealthiest established families, and

which sat across a bay from Great Neck. This real-life juxtaposition gave Fitzgerald his idea for "West Egg" and "East Egg". In this novel, Great Neck (King's Point) became the new-money peninsula of "West Egg" and Port Washington (Sands Point) the old-money "East Egg".^[22] Several mansions in the area served as inspiration for Gatsby's home, such as Oheka Castle^[23] and the now-demolished Beacon Towers.^[24]

By mid-1923, Fitzgerald had written 18,000 words for his novel^[25] but discarded most of his new story as a false start, some of which resurfaced in the 1924 short story "Absolution".^{[4][26]}

Work on *The Great Gatsby* began in earnest in April 1924; Fitzgerald wrote in his ledger, "Out of woods at last and starting novel."^[19] He decided to make a departure from the writing process of his previous novels and told Perkins that the novel was to be a "consciously artistic achievement"^[27] and a "purely creative work — not trashy imaginings as in my stories but the sustained imagination of a sincere and yet radiant world."^[28] He added later, during editing, that he felt "an enormous power in me now, more than I've ever had."^[29] Soon after this burst of inspiration, work slowed while the Fitzgeralds made a move to the French

Riviera where a serious crisis in their personal relationship soon developed.^[19] By August, however, Fitzgerald was hard at work and completed what he believed to be his final manuscript in October, sending the book to his editor, Maxwell Perkins, and agent, Harold Ober, on October 30.^[19] The Fitzgeralds then moved to Rome for the winter.^[30] Fitzgerald made revisions through the winter after Perkins informed him in a November letter that the character of Gatsby was "somewhat vague" and Gatsby's wealth and business, respectively, needed "the suggestion of an explanation" and should be "adumbrated".^[31]

Content after a few rounds of revision, Fitzgerald returned the final batch of revised galleys in the middle of February 1925.^[32] Fitzgerald's revisions included an extensive rewriting of Chapter VI and VIII.^[19] Despite this, he refused an offer of \$10,000 for the serial rights in order not to delay the book's publication.^[19] He had received a \$3939 advance in 1923^[33] and \$1981.25 upon publication.^[34]

Cover art

The cover of the first printing of *The Great Gatsby* is among the most celebrated pieces of art in American literature.^[35] It depicts disembodied eyes and a mouth over a blue skyline, with images of naked women reflected in the irises. A little-known artist named Francis Cugat was commissioned to illustrate the book while Fitzgerald was in the midst of writing it.^[35] The cover was completed before the novel; Fitzgerald was so enamored with it that he told his publisher he had "written it into" the novel.^[35] Fitzgerald's remarks about incorporating the painting into the novel led to the interpretation that the eyes are reminiscent of those of fictional optometrist Dr. T. J. Eckleburg^[36] (depicted on a faded commercial billboard near George Wilson's



The now-demolished Beacon Towers served as an inspiration for Gatsby's home



Oheka Castle was another North Shore inspiration for the novel's setting

auto repair shop) which Fitzgerald described as "blue and gigantic – their retinas^[note 2] are one yard high. They look out of no face, but instead, from a pair of enormous yellow spectacles which pass over a non-existent nose." Although this passage has some resemblance to the painting, a closer explanation can be found in the description of Daisy Buchanan as the "girl whose disembodied face floated along the dark cornices and blinding signs."^[35] Ernest Hemingway wrote in *A Moveable Feast* that when Fitzgerald lent him a copy of *The Great Gatsby* to read, he immediately disliked the cover, but "Scott told me not to be put off by it, that it had to do with a billboard along a highway in Long Island that was important in the story. He said he had liked the jacket and now he didn't like it."^[37]

Title

Fitzgerald had difficulty choosing a title for his novel and entertained many choices before reluctantly choosing *The Great Gatsby*,^[38] a title inspired by Alain-Fournier's *Le Grand Meaulnes*.^[39] Prior, Fitzgerald shifted between *Gatsby*; *Among Ash-Heaps and Millionaires*; *Trimalchio*;^[38] *Trimalchio in West Egg*;^[40] *On the Road to West Egg*;^[40] *Under the Red, White, and Blue*;^[38] *Gold-Hatted Gatsby*;^{[38][40]} and *The High-Bouncing Lover*.^{[38][40]} He initially preferred titles referencing *Trimalchio*, the crude parvenu in Petronius's *Satyricon*, and even refers to *Gatsby* as *Trimalchio* once in the novel: "It was when curiosity about *Gatsby* was at its highest that the lights in his house failed to go on one Saturday night—and, as obscurely as it had begun, his career as *Trimalchio* was over."^[41] Unlike *Gatsby*'s spectacular parties, *Trimalchio* participated in the audacious and libidinous orgies he hosted but, according to Tony Tanner's introduction to the Penguin edition, there are subtle similarities between the two.^[42]

In November 1924, Fitzgerald wrote to Perkins that "I have now decided to stick to the title I put on the book ... *Trimalchio in West Egg*"^[43] but was eventually persuaded that the reference was too obscure and that people would not be able to pronounce it.^[44] His wife, Zelda, and Perkins both expressed their preference for *The Great Gatsby* and the next month Fitzgerald agreed.^[45] A month before publication, after a final review of the proofs, he asked if it would be possible to re-title it *Trimalchio* or *Gold-Hatted Gatsby* but Perkins advised against it. On March 19, 1925,^[46] Fitzgerald asked if the book could be renamed *Under the Red, White and Blue* but it was at that stage too late to change.^{[47][48]} *The Great Gatsby* was published on April 10, 1925.^[49] Fitzgerald remarked that "the title is only fair, rather bad than good."^[50]

Early drafts of the novel entitled *Trimalchio: An Early Version of The Great Gatsby* have been published.^{[51][52]} A notable difference between the *Trimalchio* draft and *The Great Gatsby* is a less complete failure of *Gatsby*'s dream in *Trimalchio*. Another difference is that the argument between Tom Buchanan and Jay Gatsby is more even,^[53] although Daisy still returns to Tom.

Themes

Sarah Churchwell sees *The Great Gatsby* as a "cautionary tale of the decadent downside of the American dream." The story deals with human aspiration to start over again, social politics and its brutality and also betrayal, of one's own ideals and of people. Using elements of irony and tragic ending, it also delves into themes of excesses of the rich, and recklessness of youth.^{[54][55]}

Others, like journalist Nick Gillespie, see *The Great Gatsby* as a story "about the breakdown of class differences in the face of a modern economy based not on status and inherited position but on innovation and an ability to meet ever-changing consumer needs."^[56] This interpretation asserts that *The Great Gatsby* captures the American experience because it is a story about change and those who resist it; whether the change comes in the form of a new wave of immigrants (Southern Europeans in the early 20th century, Latin Americans today), the nouveau riche, or successful minorities, Americans from the 1920s to modern day have plenty of experience with changing economic and social circumstances. As Gillespie states, "While the specific terms of the equation are always changing, it's easy to see echoes of *Gatsby*'s basic conflict between established sources of economic and cultural power and upstarts in virtually all aspects of American society."^[56] Because this concept is particularly American and can be seen throughout American history, readers are able to relate to *The Great Gatsby* (which has lent the novel an enduring popularity).^[56]

Reception

The Great Gatsby was published by Charles Scribner's Sons on April 10, 1925. Fitzgerald called Perkins on the day of publication to monitor reviews: "Any news?"^[19] "Sales situation doubtful," read a wire from Perkins on April 20, "[but] excellent reviews." Fitzgerald responded on April 24, saying the cable "depressed" him, closing the letter with "Yours in great depression."^[57] Fitzgerald had hoped the novel would be a great commercial success, perhaps selling as many as 75,000 copies.^[57] By October, when the original sale had run its course, the book had sold fewer than 20,000 copies.^{[19][55][57]} Despite this, Scribner's continually kept the book in print; they carried the original edition on their trade list until 1946, by which time *Gatsby* was in print in three other forms and the original edition was no longer needed.^[19] Fitzgerald received letters of praise from contemporaries T. S. Eliot, Edith Wharton, and Willa Cather regarding the novel; however, this was private opinion, and Fitzgerald feverishly demanded the public recognition of reviewers and readers.^[19]

The Great Gatsby received mixed reviews from literary critics of the day. Generally the most effusive of the positive reviews was Edwin Clark of *The New York Times*, who felt the novel was "A curious book, a mystical, glamorous story of today."^[58] Similarly, Lillian C. Ford of the *Los Angeles Times* wrote, "[the novel] leaves the reader in a mood of chastened wonder," calling the book "a revelation of life" and "a work of art."^[59] *The New York Post* called the book "fascinating ... His style fairly scintillates, and with a genuine brilliance; he writes surely and soundly."^[60] The *New York Herald Tribune* was unimpressed, but referred to *The Great Gatsby* as "purely ephemeral phenomenon, but it contains some of the nicest little touches of contemporary observation you could imagine-so light, so delicate, so sharp a literary lemon meringue."^[61] In *The Chicago Daily Tribune*, H.L. Mencken called the book "in form no more than a glorified anecdote, and not too probable at that," while praising the book's "careful and brilliant finish."^[62]

Several writers felt that the novel left much to be desired following Fitzgerald's previous works and promptly criticized him. Harvey Eagleton of *The Dallas Morning News* believed the novel signaled the end of Fitzgerald's success: "One finishes *Great Gatsby* with a feeling of regret, not for the fate of the people in the book, but for Mr. Fitzgerald."^[63] John McClure of *The Times-Picayune* opined that the book was unconvincing, writing, "Even in conception and construction, *The Great Gatsby* seems a little raw."^[64] Ralph Coghlan of the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* felt the book lacked what made Fitzgerald's earlier novels endearing and called the book "a minor performance ... At the moment, its author seems a bit bored and tired and cynical."^[65] Ruth Snyder of *New York Evening World* called the book's style "painfully forced", noting that

the editors of the paper were "quite convinced after reading *The Great Gatsby* that Mr. Fitzgerald is not one of the great American writers of to-day."^[66] The reviews struck Fitzgerald as completely missing the point: "All the reviews, even the most enthusiastic, not one had the slightest idea what the book was about."^[19]

Fitzgerald's goal was to produce a literary work which would truly prove himself as a writer,^[67] and *Gatsby* did not have the commercial success of his two previous novels, *This Side of Paradise* and *The Beautiful and Damned*. Although the novel went through two initial printings, some of these copies remained unsold years later.^[68] Fitzgerald himself blamed poor sales on the fact that women tended to be the main audience for novels during this time, and *Gatsby* did not contain an admirable female character.^[68] According to his own ledger, now made available online by University of South Carolina's Thomas Cooper library, he earned only \$2,000 from the book.^[69] Although 1926 brought Owen Davis's stage adaption and the Paramount-issued silent film version, both of which brought in money for the author, Fitzgerald still felt the novel fell short of the recognition he hoped for and, most importantly, would not propel him to becoming a serious novelist in the public eye.^[19] For several years afterward, the general public believed *The Great Gatsby* to be nothing more than a nostalgic period piece.^[19]

Legacy and modern analysis

In 1940, Fitzgerald suffered a third and final heart attack, and died believing his work forgotten. In the last year of his life, he wrote his daughter, "I wish now I'd never relaxed or looked back—but said at the end of *The Great Gatsby*: I've found my line—from now on this comes first. This is my immediate duty—without this I am nothing."^[19] By his own admission, Fitzgerald viewed himself as a failure, and only 25,000 copies were sold at the time of his death.^[70] His obituary in *The New York Times* mentioned *Gatsby* as evidence of great potential that was never reached.^[71] However, a strong appreciation for the book had developed in underground circles; future writers Edward Newhouse and Budd Schulberg were deeply affected by it and John O'Hara showed the book's influence.^[72] The republication of *Gatsby* in Edmund Wilson's edition of *The Last Tycoon* in 1941 produced an outburst of comment, with the general consensus expressing the sentiment that the book was an enduring work of fiction.^[19]

In 1942, a group of publishing executives created the Council on Books in Wartime. The purpose of the Council was to distribute paperback books to soldiers fighting in the Second World War. *The Great Gatsby* was one of these books. The books proved to be "as popular as pin-up girls" among the soldiers, according to the *Saturday Evening Post*'s contemporary report.^[73] 155,000 copies of *Gatsby* were distributed to soldiers overseas,^[74] and it is believed that this publicity ultimately boosted the novel's popularity and sales.^[75]

By 1944, full-length articles on Fitzgerald's works were being published, and the following year, "the opinion that *Gatsby* was merely a period piece had almost entirely disappeared."^[19] During a revival of Fitzgerald's works in 1945, *Gatsby* gained readers when Armed Services Editions gave away 150,000 copies of it to military personnel in World War II.^[76] During the 1950s, the book gradually became part of standard high school curriculum required reading in the United States.^[55] This revival was paved by interest shown by literary critic Edmund Wilson, who was Fitzgerald's friend.^[77] In 1951, Arthur Mizener published *The Far Side of Paradise*, a biography of Fitzgerald.^[76] He emphasized the book's positive reception by literary critics, which may have influenced public opinion, and renewed interest in it.^[78]

By 1960, the book was steadily selling 50,000 copies per year, and renewed interest led *New York Times* editorialist Arthur Mizener to proclaim the novel "a classic of twentieth-century American fiction."^[19] *The Great Gatsby* has sold over 25 million copies worldwide.^[70] The book annually sells 500,000 copies and is Scribner's most popular title; in 2013, the e-book alone sold 185,000 copies.^[70]

Adaptations

Film

The Great Gatsby has resulted in a number of film adaptations:

- *The Great Gatsby*, in 1926, by Herbert Brenon – a silent movie of a stage adaptation, starring Warner Baxter, Lois Wilson, and William Powell. It is a famous example of a lost film. Reviews suggest that it may have been the most faithful adaptation of the novel, but a trailer of the film at the National Archives is all that is known to exist.^[79]
- *The Great Gatsby*, in 1949, by Elliott Nugent – starring Alan Ladd, Betty Field, and Shelley Winters; for copyright reasons, this film is not readily available.^[79]
- *The Great Gatsby*, in 1974, by Jack Clayton – starring Sam Waterston, Mia Farrow, and Robert Redford, with a script by Francis Ford Coppola.^[79]
- *The Great Gatsby*, in 2000, by Robert Markowitz – a made-for-TV movie starring Toby Stephens, Paul Rudd, and Mira Sorvino.
- *G*, in 2002, by Christopher Scott Cherot – a loose hip-hop adaptation set in the Hamptons.
- *The Great Gatsby*, in 2013, by Baz Luhrmann – starring Leonardo DiCaprio, Tobey Maguire, Carey Mulligan, and Joel Edgerton.

Opera

An operatic treatment of the novel was commissioned from John Harbison by the New York Metropolitan Opera to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the debut of James Levine. The work, which is also called *The Great Gatsby*, premiered on December 20, 1999.^[80]

Books

- *The Great Gatsby*, a graphic novel adaptation by Australian cartoonist Nicki Greenberg.
- *The Double Bind* by Chris Bohjalian imagines the later years of Daisy and Tom Buchanan's marriage as a social worker in 2007 investigates the possibility that a deceased elderly homeless person is Daisy's son.^[81]
- *Daisy Buchanan's Daughter* (2011) by Tom Carson is the purported autobiography of Tom and Daisy Buchanan's daughter.
- *The Graphic Canon Volume 3*, a comic adaptation of many works of literature, edited by Russ Kick, which includes an adaptation of *The Great Gatsby* by American cartoonist Tara Seibel.

Radio

- In October 2008, the BBC World Service commissioned and broadcast an abridged 10-part reading of the story, read from the view of Nick Carraway by Trevor White.^[82]
- In May 2012 BBC Radio 4 broadcast *The Great Gatsby*, a Classic Serial dramatisation by Robert Forrest.^[83]

Theater

- *The Great Gatsby Musical* opened at the Kings Head Theatre, London, on August 7, 2012. A Ruby In The Dust production, it is adapted by Joe Evans and Linnie Reedman with music and lyrics by Joe Evans, directed by Linnie Reedman, with Matilda Sturridge as Daisy Buchanan. The show transferred to the Riverside Studios in 2013 with the music orchestrated by Chris Walker and musical staging by choreographer Lee Proud.
- Simon Levy's stage adaptation,^[84] the only one authorized and granted exclusive rights by the Fitzgerald Estate, had its world premiere at The Guthrie Theater to commemorate the opening of its new theatre in July 2006, directed by David Esbjornson. It was subsequently produced by Seattle Repertory Theatre. In 2012 a revised/reworked version was produced at Arizona Theatre Company^[85] and Grand Theatre in London, Ontario, Canada.^[84]

Ballet

- Northern Ballet premiered a version of *The Great Gatsby* at Leeds Grand Theatre in the UK in 2013 with choreography and direction by David Nixon, musical score by Richard Rodney Bennett and set designs by Jerome Kaplan. Nixon also created the scenario and costumes designs.

Computer games

- In 2010 a casual hidden object game called *Classic Adventures: The Great Gatsby* was released by Oberon Media.^{[86][87]} The game was released for iPad in 2012.^[88]
- As a tribute to old NES games, developer Charlie Hoey and editor Pete Smith created an 8-bit-style online game of *The Great Gatsby*.^[89] Ian Crouch of *The New Yorker* compared it to *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (1989) for the NES.^[90]

See also

- *Le Monde's* 100 Books of the Century

Notes

1. ^ The spelling "Wolfshiem" appears throughout Fitzgerald's original manuscript, while "Wolfsheim" was introduced by an editor (Edmund Wilson) in the second edition^[14] and appears in later Scribner's editions.^[15]
2. ^ The original edition used the anatomically incorrect word "retinas", while some later editions have used the word "irises".

References

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