



The Great Gatsby by F. Scott Fitzgerald
Reviewed by Shreyas



Stand Alone, Historical Fiction/Melodrama

Give a summary without spoilers!

The now legendary American novel is centered around events that take place in and around New York City during the 1920s, a time in which America had just gotten out of the Great War and was full of young rich people who would spend all their time partying and having fun with friends. The story follows Nick Carraway and his observations of the mysterious but extremely wealthy Jay Gatsby who spends his time throwing lavish parties which are attended by the hundreds. Gatsby is an enigma to almost all characters he encounters in the novel. His background as an Oxford man is doubted by many and how he happened to get his wealth is a mystery. One of the biggest questions raised was why does Gatsby throw these massive parties? He is barely present at them so what is the point? That question is answered once Nick learns about Daisy Buchanan's past with Jay Gatsby. Daisy is an old cousin of Nick and she too is incredibly rich. She is also married to Tom Buchanan, the male heir of one the richest families in America. However when Gatsby moves to within just a few miles of Daisy and Tom, the past starts to rear its ugly head in their affairs.

What drew you to this book?

Although reading this book was a school assignment, the reading itself felt nothing like an assignment. I was absolutely captivated by the way Fitzgerald told his story. The narrator Nick Carraway is incredibly observant and manages to provide an in depth and relatable view of the elite class of society. The story line was also full of nuance and symbolism relating to concepts like the class divisions of America and the "American Dream", and human morality in the eyes of a greater being. Picking up on each little bit of symbolism and looking at the characters and story in a new light with each new chapter is very captivating as well as thought provoking. The story forces the reader to think about the society they live in and what it means to accomplish their dreams.

Did it remind you of something that you've previously read?

I drew many comparisons between *The Great Gatsby* and the novella *Of Mice and Men* by John Steinbeck. Both novels center around characters who constantly chase their

"American Dream" while the society around them seems to be actively fighting against the protagonists goals. The main characters tirelessly work as hard as they can and no matter the hardships they face, keep their dream as a beam of hope in their lives. Another connection I was able to draw from the Great Gatsby was Romeo and Juliet. The story of each both follow the pursuit of love between two characters who are hopelessly separated from each other as well as the efforts made by these characters to fight against society and achieve their dreams.

To whom would you recommend this book?

I would recommend The Great Gatsby to someone who really wants to delve into a book and understand the meaning behind each and every word. I don't think the reader needs to be incredibly advanced as much of Fitzgerald's language can be easily understood but someone reading The Great Gatsby should be willing to re-read passages and even entire chapters to understand new perspectives and deeper meanings within the text. The surface level story of Gatsby is also very interesting with many captivating and entertaining characters but I feel as though the true value of Gatsby comes from analyzing the motives and outcomes of each character's action.

Overall, did you like it and would you recommend it to others?

I would certainly recommend the Great Gatsby to others. Although the story centers around the lives of the ultra wealthy of American society in a time that was one hundred years ago, the motives and message the story tells is incredibly applicable to today. I feel as though America is in a time in which everybody is working incredibly hard to be the best they can whether it be getting into a prestigious college, being given a high-paying job, or reinventing themselves to a greater person. The Great Gatsby attempts to paint the reality of what happens when people set their minds on one specific dream and how the concept of an "American Dream" can delude people into hopelessly chasing after a dream. Overall the Great Gatsby despite being written so long ago has an incredibly timeless and modern feel to it that allows for any reader to gain great insight and have great appreciation for the story.

Anything else that you would like to add to this review? What made you choose it? Did you like the cover? Was it recommended to you? Did you find it at the library?

One more thing I would like to add to this review is just more appreciation for the narrator Nick Carraway. In a story full of exorbitantly rich folk who do things in life which are inconceivable to the average person, Nick Carraway acts as the perfect lens into these actions and lives. Nick is more of a middle-class man who expresses great amounts of virtue in all aspects of life. He makes sure to stay on good terms with almost all the people he encounters and reserves his judgement of them. Nick is also a

hardworking man who makes sure to stay honest and humble in his day to day life. As an incredibly observant man, Nick is able to pick up on nuances and details of characters that no other could pick up on, allowing him to express sympathy or understand the rationale of a person's actions. Nick Carraway is the perfect narrator to put events into perspective in a novel as grand as *The Great Gatsby*.