The Great Gatsby: Love Or Willing To Reach An American Dream?

F. Scott Fitzgerald wrote The Great Gatsby, a novel that depicts a world filled with corruption. He uses Nick Carraway as a narrator, though a questionable one as he is so different than the rest of the characters. Fitzgerald attempts to guide the readers through the novel to show corruption and failure of the American Dream by using Carraway as a moral guide and to be able to guide the readers, Fitzgerald had to carefully establish Nick as a trustworthy narrator.

The American Dream is often seen as a sensitive topic, in which Fitzgerald understood that frustration and that it must be dealt with gently and therefore he acknowledged the need for a kind narrator within the materialistic time period. Enter Nick Carraway, who on the first page lets readers know “In consequence, I’m inclined to reserve all judgments.”. Fitzgerald already concludes from the start that Nick is a trusted man. Fitzgerald included a short section regarding Nick’s family and background. The Carraway’s claim themselves to be loyal Americans. However, when Nick’s great uncle was called to fight in the Civil War, a substitute was sent in his place. This portrays Nick’s honesty. If he is able to see the hypocrisy within his own family, there is no doubt that he is an honest man. Nick graduated from “New Haven”, proving that he is also competent. Throughout the first few pages of the novel, readers catch just a glimpse into Nick’s life, but that glimpse is enough to trust him fully. His narrating is very open as he brilliantly sets up the story. But Nick is still seen as a trustworthy narrator that is continuously reinforced throughout the story, as a way of reassuring readers that Nick remains decent while the rest of the characters continue on their collapse.

The meeting with Jordan Baker causes Nick to once again mention the topic of honesty. When he learned of her cheating in a golf tournament, Nick declared, “She was incurably dishonest.” This manifests a contrast between Jordan and Nick when a few lines later he says of himself “I am one of the few honest people that I have ever known.” Nick let his honesty shine through when he admitted to himself that Jordan was a very selfish, greedy, and cynical person, but he loved her nonetheless. He did not feel the need to lie to himself and the readers in order to make Jordan sound amicable. Such an act shows that Nick remains unchanged even in the presence of a charming and rich lady. Nick also remained unchanged and declined the opportunity to earn ‘easy money’ offered to him by Gatsby through Meyer Wolfsheim. “I’ve got my hands full” Nick answered when he realized that the money “was obviously and tactlessly for a service to be rendered.” The chaste Nick is shown in sharp contrast to the depraved and criminal Wolfsheim, fortifying Nick’s image as a narrator to be trusted. But Nick believes that everyone, no matter what crimes they may have committed, deserves a good end. “Everyone has some vague right at the end.” Nick is the novel’s only honest and unbiased character. He remained incorrupt and his morality was not lost in the search for the American Dream. Fitzgerald has cleverly set up a truthful narrator who can bring the corruptness of Gatsby’s dream, and of the American Dream, to light. Jay Gatsby is never the narrator of his own story. Instead, Nick articulates and filters Gatsby’s dream, avoiding sentimentality as he does so. Nick has the ability to take Gatsby’s dream, which very possibly sounded abhorrent coming from Gatsby’s mouth, and refine it into something admirable. He can also expose the failure of the American Dream through the use of themes that appear in the novel, and relate them to Gatsby’s dream.

Gatsby’s dream is to become wealthy and thusly win over Daisy’s heart. “His heart beat faster as Daisy’s white face came up to his own.” Gatsby sees Daisy Buchanan as an angel, a girl with the kind of lifestyle he aspires to have. He has a vision of perfection of Daisy that is unreal. But Nick is able to see the honesty and purity of Gatsby’s corrupt dream, much like he is able to see through the unattainable American Dream.

The American Dream is the dream that one can come from nothing, and through hard work, determination, and money, anything is possible. Gatsby truly believes in this dream, including the idea of going back in time. “You can’t repeat the past,” Nick tells Gatsby. Through articulating Gatsby’s dream, Nick shows readers a slightly judgmental side of himself. Although he doesn’t demolish the idea of the American Dream, it is obvious that he doesn’t believe in its existence either. His feelings toward it are ambivalent. Although he doesn’t approve of the dream, he is awed by Gatsby’s ability to hope. Since Nick has been carefully established as a trustworthy narrator, readers will accept the suggestion that the American Dream is corrupt. This was an important gain for Fitzgerald in his quest to illustrate its failure.

The American Dream is essentially a hopeful deception. It represents that for which one reaches out for that, in the end, turns out to be a fraud. Fitzgerald uses Jay Gatsby as a vehicle to explore the idea of the American Dream, which was a key element in shaping American society and its citizens. Gatsby, like many average Americans, has a dream of becoming successful and noble. In The Great Gatsby, Jay Gatsby decides to pursue The American Dream as a young adult. Gatsby came from a poor social class, which forced him to work hard even though he would receive no high status in life. Gatsby knew this, but always remained very ambitious and refused to settle for a life of “janitor’s work”. It wasn’t until Gatsby was 17 years old when he found his real inspiration to become successful. This inspiration was Daisy Buchanan. Gatsby even moved across the lake from Daisy in order to see a little green light at the end of her dock.

The green light symbolizes Gatsby’s dream to be with Daisy. “He stretched out his arms toward the dark water.” The first sighting Nick had of his neighbor was Gatsby stretching his arms toward the green light. Already the idea of the American Dream surrounded Gatsby from the first moment he was spotted. But Gatsby’s idea of the green light changed as the story progressed and as he secured Daisy’s affection. It was no longer as important to him, seeing as how he had achieved his dream. “The colossal significance of that light had now vanished forever.” But like everything in life, nothing is guaranteed, and soon Gatsby faces losing Daisy to Tom for eternity.

'Your wife doesn’t love you,' said Gatsby. 'She’s never loved you. She loves me… She only married you because I was poor and she was tired of waiting for me. It was a terrible mistake, but in her heart, she never loved any one except me.' Gatsby was so desperate for Daisy that he began making wild accusations. After the car accident that killed Myrtle, Gatsby waited in front of Daisy’s house and had a butler sitting by the telephone all night in hopes of hearing from his beloved. He was snatching at some last hope to recapture the past. But to his disappointment, Daisy was out of his life as swiftly as she had re-entered it. Thus, Gatsby’s dream is an illusion, paralleling the illusion of the American Dream.

Without Nick as a narrator, such clear links between Gatsby’s dream and the American Dream would not have been possible. F. Scott Fitzgerald’s masterpiece, “The Great Gatsby”, tells the story of a world corrupted by money, greed, and pursuit of the American Dream. Even though

the novel is titled after Gatsby, Nick analyzes the actions of others and presents the story so that the reader can comprehend the central theme: Despite the fact that human beings will inevitably fail, we still encompass a brilliant capacity to hope. This is the heart of the American Dream and Nick acknowledged and explained it. Without him, the story would not have been possible. Nick was like the box of a puzzle; the puzzle is impossible to put together without it.