

Fourth Grade / Novel

Instructor. Fanan A.Al Kader

The great Gatsby (F. Scott Fitzgerald)

Lecture 7 /Ch .8

Discussions and explanations of the most important issues in the novel

"They are a rotten crowd ,I shouted across the lawn ."You are worth the whole damn bunch put together"

Nick shouts these words across the lawn to Gatsby as the novel nears its end .This is his final statement to Gatsby before Gatsby is killed .Nick goes on to say that he is glad he said that as it was the only compliment he ever gave Gatsby .Nick believes and conveys to Gatsby that his virtues would weigh as much as all the virtues combined of the entire rotten lot he is with .The whole damn bunch refers to Daisy ,Tom and Jordan ,and more widely to high society.

"Let us learn to show our friendship for a man when he is alive and not after he is dead."

Wolfshiem speaks these words to Nick Caraway when he talks about Gatsby after his death. He reminds Nick of memories of Gatsby but when he asks him to attend Gatsby's funeral, he simply refuses with these remarkable words. It is a great quote to teach a lesson that one should give value to his friends in their lives instead of winning praises at their funerals.

"That's my Middle West The street lamps and sleigh bells in the frosty dark."

"I see now that this has been a story of the West, after all – Tom and Gatsby, Daisy and Jordan and I, were all Westerners, and perhaps we possessed some deficiency in common which made us subtly unadoptable to Eastern life."

The lines from Ch.9, when Nick compares the east and the West. Though he is dazzled by the East, he confesses that after Gatsby's death, the East starts to hunt him. Now he finds solace, satisfaction and sense of belonging in his own

middle –west. Nick concludes the motif of geography in the Great Gatsby in these lines .Nick explains that all characters share some common traits. They all have the idea of the American dream ,but they can never forget that their roots are grounded in the East. Nick thinks of America not just as a nation but as a geographical entity, land with distinct regions embodying contrasting sets of values. The Midwest, he thinks, seems dreary and pedestrian compared to the excitement of the East, but the East is merely a glittering surface—it lacks the moral center of the Midwest. This fundamental moral depravity dooms the characters of *The Great Gatsby*—all Westerners, as Nick observes—to failure. The “quality of distortion” that lures them to the East disgusts Nick and contributes to his decision to move back to Minnesota.

There is another significance to the fact that all of the major characters are Westerners, however.

Throughout American history, the West has been seen as a land of promise and possibility—the very emblem of American ideals. Tom and Daisy, like other members of the upper class, have betrayed America’s democratic ideals by perpetuating a rigid class structure that excludes newcomers from its upper reaches, much like the feudal aristocracy that America had left behind. Gatsby, alone among Nick’s acquaintances, has the audacity and nobility of spirit to dream of creating a radically different future for himself, but his dream ends in failure for several reasons: his methods are criminal, he can never gain acceptance into the

American aristocracy (which he would have to do to win Daisy), and his new identity is largely an act. It is not at all clear what Gatsby's failure says about the dreams and aspirations of Americans generally, but Fitzgerald's novel certainly questions the idea of an America in which all things are possible if one simply tries hard enough.