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**The Great Gatsby**

The Great Gatsby by F. Scott Fitzgerald, had a prevalent theme of moral decay throughout the book. Moral decay is when there is a situation where you can make a right and wrong decision and you make the wrong decision knowing that its wrong. The character’s in The Great Gatsby showed this theme throughout the book through both Tom and Daisy Buchanan having secret relations, the death of Myrtle Wilson and the funeral of Gatsby.

In the book, both Tom and Daisy Buchanan are cheating on each other to feel the love that they once had. Of course at some point of their lives they did truly love each other, but it has trickled down to no love at all. They continue to engage in the wrong behavior even though they know what’s right. Tom was dating Myrtle Wilson while Daisy was having relations with Gatsby. In the book there is a quote that describes the life of Daisy and Tom, “They were careless people, Tom and Daisy- they smashes up things and creatures and then retreated back into their money or their vast carelessness, or whatever it was that kept them together, and let other people clean up the mess they made.” (Fitzgerald 179.) The Buchanan’s not only made a mess in their own lives, but they ruined the lives of their friends. They ruined friendships with the group of friends they had because fights broke out. With the fight that broke out, it caused the death of Myrtle Wilson, the woman Tom had a relationship with. When Myrtle got hit with the car Daisy was driving and instead of Daisy stopping to see who she hit and to see if they were okay, she kept going. She knew on the inside that the right thing to do was to stop and check to make sure that the person was okay but she was too scared and kept going. Moral decay was a prevalent theme throughout this book because the characters know the difference between what’s right and what’s wrong, yet they continue to pursue with the wrong actions.

Myrtle Wilson or, Tom Buchanan’s secret affair, was killed because of the actions of moral decay throughout the characters. The death of Myrtle happened within the blink of an eye. Daisy was coming back from New York in Gatsby’s yellow car where she was so upset with what happened with Tom she didn’t see Myrtle in the road and hit her. Daisy didn’t stop, she kept going. When everyone found out what happened and found out that the yellow car was involved, Gatsby told her he would take the blame which would lead for him to have the rest of his life in shreds. In the book it states “Was Daisy driving?.... ‘yes’ he said after a moment, ‘but of course I’ll say I was.” (143.) Gatsby took the blame for the death of Myrtle because he didn’t want to see anything happen to Daisy. Tom Buchanan heard about the yellow car and told Myrtle’s husband that Gatsby was driving. Wilson went to Gatsby’s house and shot Gatsby and then committed suicide because of the death of Myrtle. Gatsby knew he did the wrong thing taking the blame for killing Myrtle but he did it for Daisy. He loved Daisy so much that he didn’t care about his future as long as she didn’t get in trouble. Because Gatsby took the blame for the death of Myrtle, it caused him to get killed and the Buchanan’s to vanish and retreat back to their money.

The death of Gatsby caused for his father, Mr. Gatz to arrive. Only a few attended the funeral of Gatsby, considering the Buchanan’s vanished and no one knows where they went, Wolfsheim couldn’t build up the courage to go and Jordan Baker didn’t show up. The people who showed up were Nick Caraway, Mr.Gatz and the guy from the library who Nick met a few weeks ago at the first party he attended at Gatsby’s. Daisy and Tom vanished with no sign as to where they went, and didn’t even have the decency to send flowers. Neither did Meyer Wolfsheim, he didn’t show up either. Meyer was talking about how he raised him to be who he was today, and how he made him become successful but that was in his past and he didn’t want to go back. The guy in the library showed up and stated “The poor son-of-a-bitch.” (175.) With everything Gatsby has done not only to his friends, but the people around him, he deserved to have a funeral with everyone who attended his parties, and everyone who qualified themselves as his friends. As for Tom, Daisy, and Jordan, they knew it was the right thing to attend the funeral for their friend, but instead they didn’t show up or made a mess out of everyone’s lives and vanished. Not only were Gatsby’s “friends” not genuine friends, it showed that they had no respect for him and did the wrong thing by not attending his funeral.

Moral Decay is when the society declines to a lower level of mortality or more known as when you know the difference between wrong and right in the situation yet you always picked the wrong one. Therefore, moral decay was the most prevalent in The Great Gatsby because every character at some point in the book picked the wrong choice instead of the right knowing that it was wrong. Moral decay was shown throughout the book through the Buchanan’s having secret relations, the death of Myrtle Wilson and the funeral of Gatsby.