Simbolism In The Great Gatsby Essay, Research Paper

CRITICAL ANALYSIS on the SYMBOLISM

In the GREAT GATSBY

The novel THE GREAT GATSBY is rich with symbolism. Two of the most apparent of these are the green light and the names of the people who attended Mr. Gatsby’s parties. These are just some the symbolism that occur in the book, but they are the ones that I will be talking about in this critical analysis. When F. Scott Fitzgerald wrote this novel he was able to make about every thing in this novel into some sort of symbol for something. Fitzgerald made this novel with the intent of having much symbolism with some more easily to find than others. This novel contains every type of symbolism imaginable and it was to choose from the types of symbolism that occur in the novel. The two that I have chosen here are the ones that I felt that some of the most affect in the novel.

The first symbolism that I will be talking about is the green light that appears at the end of Daisy’s dock. This symbolizes the dream that Gatsby has. He does this because the green light represents Daisy and he is trying to retrieve her. When Nick says that “he stretched out his arms toward the dark water in a curious way, and far as I was from him I could have sworn he was trembling.” Gatsby here is trembling because he is so close to fulfilling his dream that he could fell it. Also by Gatsby doing this he is showing that he will do anything to have his dream come to life. When Nick sees Gatsby trembling he shows Nick that he is vulnerable to his dream, since Gatsby wishes that his dream would come true.

This scene also shows how Gatsby worships his dream by stretching out his arms in a way like he was praising the light. Here Gatsby shows that he is worshiping his dream as if it was a god. This is another example of the lengths that Gatsby will do, to have his dream come true. Like any other religion Gatsby will do anything for his religion. A fine example of this is when he states “but of course I’ll say I was.” By saying this Gatsby is reassuring that he would do anything for his dream even take the blame for a murder. This is especially true because this happened when his dream had died, but he refused to believe that. Even when Gatsby died he still believe in the green light, his dream, by staying at the pool awaiting the phone call from Daisy that never came. The green light also becomes just a green bulb at the end of Daisy’s dock symbolizing the end of his dream.

Also the green light is a symbol for a promise that will become. Because green is the color of promise and hope. The green light also is parallel to the “green breast of the new world.” Since his vision is corrupted with the idea that the only way to attain it is through material possessions. This is also true with the idea of the American dream by thinking it can only be given with the acquisition of material possessions.

The second symbolism that I will be talking about is the names of the guest Nick wrote, in a timetable, of who attended Gatsby’s parties. These names symbolize the corruption that is happening during that age. They also show the vulgarity of some of the names and what they did in the party. Some of these are “the Leeches, Blackbuck, Ismays, Fishguards, and the Hammerheads.” These names also concise of a man dead “Doctor Webster Civer who was drowned last summer up in Maine.” These names were just some of many symbolism in the book that pertained to corruption of the society that Fitzgerald’s time, and it gives us a look of how the people acted during this time.

Also the date of the timetable is important sine it was taken July 5, the day after the declaration of American independence. Because they represented how corrupt America has become. With people like “Francis Bull, James B. (”Rot-gut”) Ferret and the Dancies” Fitzgerald is using the characters name as a way of describing the characters of the characters and what they did in Gatsby’s parties. He is showing here with the character names describing the way the people acted at Gatsby’s parties. Reading the names of the characters you could see how recklessly they acted at Gatsby’s parties. The names that Fitzgerald writes in this chapter are a great example of his writing style. Since he described how each character was with just writing his name in the book.

These symbolisms’s each have its own theme but they both share an equal theme. That basic theme from both these symbolism is that the time when this book was created it was a very corrupt time. This is reflected by the use of names of the guests at Gatsby’s parties and the way the green light reflects the American dream. When Fitzgerald talks about these things he leaves it up to you to distinguish what it means by leaving subtle hints about its true meaning. These symbolism also give us insist on some of the topics that gave Fitzgerald inspiration to write about for his novel. It also fortifies the theme of the novel by showing how material things can corrupt other things about you. It also shows how your mindset can become clouded by trying to achieve your dream without looking at the consequences. Fitzgerald incorporates many things when he wrote about these two symbolisms.