“The Great Gatsby”

**THESIS/INTRODUCTION**– The book *The Great Gatsby* written by Scott Fitzgerald in 1925 is a classic novel in which money is the center of many characters' lives. However, that money could not buy happiness. Jay Gatsby lived in a dream world and died hoping he could have Daisy Buchanan, but in reality, Daisy would never have belonged to Gatsby, in spite of him being a wealthy man. It is filled with many characters that live hopeless, lonely lives, even though they have all the money one could want.

On the other hand, the movie *The Great Gatsby* produced and directed by Baz Luhrmann in 2013, is an adaptation that shows a society gone crazy on alcohol, the emptiness of wealth, and hollow relationships. Luhrmann’s frenetic scenes of the parties contrast with Fitzgerald’s slower, statelier episodes of the book’s doomed love. Generally, the life of the characters in the movie is not as lonely as depicted in the book.

**Thesis Statement:** *The Great Gatsby* in novel and movie both tell the same story, but the overall character development and plot is much briefer and less detailed in the movie than in the book.

1. **BODY** – **Comparing and contrasting *The Great Gatsby'* development ofbook characters and movie characters.** 
   1. In the book, there is steady character development- Fitzgerald creates his characters in the beginning of the novel and masterly develops them in such a way that they fit to deliver the themes he intends to deliver. The personality of each character is developed slowly such that there is more to them than what one reads in their first few chapters.
   2. In the movie, there is very littler character development. Luhrmann introduces each character’s identity very quickly and their personalities are very transparent.
   3. For example, in the book, Daisy is portrayed as a shallow character and the audience is not supposed to show sympathy towards her. In the shirt scene, Daisy cries out about missing out on Gatsby's wealth. On the contrary in the movie, Daisy’s character is portrayed as less shallow. More romance is shown between her and Gatsby. In the shirt scene in the movie, Daisy cries. Nick narrates that the reason why she was crying is due to the missed times with Gatsby but Daisy fails to express her feelings to Gatsby and instead says that the reason she is sad is because she has never seen such beautiful shirts before.  
      P. 92 "It makes me sad, because I've never seen such beautiful shirts before."
2. **BODY** – **Comparing and contrasting the use of music in *The Great Gatsby* the book and “*The Great Gatsby*” the movie.**
3. Fitzgerald uses African American street music (jazz) in the book to show relevance in that time. The music helps create a sense of pomp and circumstance which also borders on being appropriate as typically the wealthy are the most dignified and this was not a genre of music which elicited the sense of being dignified.
4. The Luhrmann film adaptation of 2013 uses hip-hop in the movie soundtrack. This genre was an interesting choice as this movie first brings relevance to modern times. It is also a type of music that is more often associated with lower classes and less educated people (despite that that is just a stereotype). Nevertheless, hip-hop is a music genre, which has crossed over into mainstream but is not always well accepted by the more conservative, and sometimes more affluent. Like the original story using jazz, in the movie using hip-hop examines how the characters are defying social norms of their time.
5. **BODY** – **Comparing and contrasting plot development in *The Great Gatsby* the book and “*The Great Gatsby*” the movie.**
6. The plot development of the film is almost similar to that of the novel, but Lurhmann and his co-screenwriter Craig Pearce 2013 version do cut out one of the side stories: the relationship between Nick and Jordan Baker, the friend of Daisy’s from Louisville who is a well-known golfer. Their affair in the movie is more of normal friendship unlike in the novel where it is a deep romantic relationship. Unlike the book, the film version is impersonalized and highly choreographed. Lurhmann fails to show this love relationship in the movie in order to focus on Gatsby storyline.
7. The plot in the movie does not show the sexist themes found in the book. The novel depicts themes of female submission and sexism, as female characters are portrayed as dainty women who are valued for their beauty, poise, and charm. Although the female actors in the movie are beautiful, poised, and charming, they do not act submissive or as if they are merely followers of the men. The director may have put into considerations that modern day does not entertain these themes that were evident at the time when Fitzgerald wrote this book (Goldsmith, 2003).
8. The plot in the movie does not show the racist themes found in the book. Whereas in the novel, there are examples of racism through class and educational inequities, the movie does not highlight this. This can be observed as the musicians, servants, and wait staff in the movie are culturally diversified whereas in the book they are mostly black.
9. The movie’s plot and purpose seems to be less substantial than that of the novel. Whereas the novel was a commentary on American Culture, the movie seems to be purely for entertainment purposes.

IV. **CONCLUSION**

a. Despite the vast number of differences between the book and the movie, both stories makes the reader and viewer realize that money or wealth does not necessarily get rid of misery. b. The message that wealth may bring more misery than would be experienced without wealth is better delivered in the novel. The novel’s focus is to examine American culture and values. The movie’s over the top music, dancing scenes, and generally glamorous set design all depict opulence, but the undertones and messages of what this opulence can do to a society is not well developed. Moviegoers do not receive the same messages that the original book communicated. c. Thus if one is looking for pure entertainment they should watch the movie, whereas if they are looking for a deeper meaning and commentary on culture, they should read the book.

**Annotated Bibliography**

Goldsmith, Meredith. "White Skin, White Mask: Passing, Posing, and Performing in the Great Gatsby." *MFS Modern Fiction Studies* 49.3 (2003): 443-468.

This essay argues that The Great Gatsby may be fruitfully read against African American models of identity formation of the late teens and Twenties. Like Gatsby, passing and Americanization fiction render racial and national identity theatrical. Gatsby's parties, given minimal attention in Fitzgerald scholarship, miniaturize the process of identity formation that characterizes the novel as a whole. Theatrical modes of identity formation are not limited to the novel's parvenus, however: showing how even the novel's elite are fully implicated in the culture of imitation, Fitzgerald refutes the possibility of any identity as "the real thing."

Boyle, Thomas E. "Unreliable Narration in" The Great Gatsby"." *The Bulletin of the Rocky Mountain Modern Language Association* 23.1 (1969): 21-26. The author argument is that they understand of a novel is most significantly realized through analysis, sounds, rhymes as well as the ideas that the novel is a composition of. The meaning and analysis results to rhetoric of fiction, a phrase implies that brilliant concept of distance between the perception of the narrator and the norms of the novel or simply put; the distance between the perception if the narrator and the readers perception. If this distance exists then it means the outcome is unreliable narration.

Lena, Alberto. "Deceitful Traces of Power: An Analysis of the Decadence of Tom Buchanan in the Great Gatsby." *Canadian Review of American Studies* 28.1 (1998): 19-42.

When Ernest Hemingway first published The Snows of Kilimanjaro in Esquire (1936), the story contained an explicit reference to F. Scott Fitzgerald's relationship with the rich: The rich were dull and they drank too much. They were dull and they were repetitious. He remembered poor [Scott Fitzgerald] and his romantic awe of them and how he had started a story once that began, 'The rich are different from you and me.1 and how someone had said to [Scott], Yes, they have more money. But that was not humorous to [Scott]. He thought they were a special glamorous race and when he found they weren't it wrecked him just as much as any other thing that wrecked him. ([1939] 1967, 72)