

التحليل النفسي للخوف والقلق وآليات الدفاع في رواية ف. سكوت فينزجيرالد غاتسبي العظيم

جامعة البعث - كلية الآداب والعلوم الإنسانية - قسم اللغة الانكليزية

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ملخص

يهدف المقال إلى تقديم تحليل نفسي شامل لحالة الخوف والقلق المرتبطة بشخصيات رواية غاتسبي العظيم. كما يناقش المقال الأنواع الثلاثة للقلق: الواقعي والعصبي والأخلاقي. ويركز على كيفية تأثير هذه المخاوف على السلوك البشري من خلال ربطها برواية غاتسبي العظيم ثم يتطرق المقال إلى مخاوف وقلق الشخصية الرئيسية جاي غاتسبي، لا سيما خوفه من مواجهة الواقع، والذي من أبرزه خوفه من الرفض وسعيه الوهمي وراء حبه الوحيد ديزي. يتطرق المقال أيضاً إلى موضوعات الخوف من العلاقة الحميمة والهجران من خلال علاقات غاتسبي وتوم وشخصيات أخرى. ويناقش كذلك الأمر كيف أن تدني احترام غاتسبي لذاته هو ما يوجه أفعاله في الرواية. ونلاحظ أيضاً كيف تظهر آليات الدفاع لدى الشخصيات وكيف تؤثر على سلوكهم.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الخوف، القلق، الخوف من العلاقة الحميمة، الخوف من الهجر، تدني احترام الذات، الشعور بعدم الأمان بالذات، الإنكار، الإسقاط، التبرير، النزوح، التجنب

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**طالبة ماجستير في قسم اللغة الانكليزية في جامعة البعث في حمص- سوريا- اختصاص الدراسات الأدبية

Psychoanalysis of Fear, Anxiety and Defense Mechanisms in F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*

Abstract

The article aims at giving a comprehensive psychoanalysis of fear and anxiety in connection with the characters of *The Great Gatsby*. It discusses the three types of anxiety: reality, neurotic and moral. It focuses on how these anxieties affect human behavior by connecting this to *The Great Gatsby* novel. Then, the article delves into the protagonist Jay Gatsby's fears and anxieties, especially his fear of confronting reality which is highlighted by his fear of rejection and his illusionary pursuit of Daisy. The article touches on themes of fear of intimacy and abandonment within the relationships of Gatsby, Tom and other characters. It further discusses how Gatsby's low self-esteem prompts his actions in the novel. We also notice how defense mechanisms exhibited by the characters and how they impact their behavior.

Keywords: fear, anxiety, fear of intimacy, fear of abandonment, low self-esteem, insecure sense of self, denial, projection, rationalization, displacement, avoidance

Through our daily life observations, and through how we shed light on literary works, as literary characters are mostly taken from life characters, we can notice that different types of fear cause anxiety. The two basic fears are internal and external. An external fear is defined as fear or anxiety that is caused by outside sources. External fear is usually caused by specific events in the past. External fears are usually caused by something outside of you. Internal fears are related to internal emotions and related to low levels of self-worth. People who basically experience anxiety from internal fears have low levels of self-esteem like when someone doubting his or her capability to accomplish something. This is what makes internal fears difficult to recognize anxiety and manage it.

In his book *A Primer of Freudian Psychology*, Hall defines the notion of anxiety as follows:

Anxiety is a painful emotional experience which is produced by excitations in the internal organ of the body. These excitations result from internal or external stimulation and governed by the autonomic nervous system. For example, when a person encounter a dangerous situation his heart beats faster, he breathes more rapidly, his mouth becomes dry, and the palms of his hands sweat. [7](Hall, 61)

Therefore, anxiety can be described as an uncomfortable feeling of fear because of someone's emotional experience and this condition is marked by particular indicators or symptoms. Similarly, Feist states that anxiety is "a felt, affective, unpleasant state that is accompanied by a physical sensation that warns the person against impending danger^[1]" (33). In fact, the term anxiety is almost the same with the emotions of fear. Freud prefers the term anxiety to that of fear because fear is usually thought of in the sense of being afraid of something in the external world ^[7](Hall, 62). Thus, Freud considers that anxiety is a conscious state which can be distinguished subjectively by a person from experiences of pain, depression, and tension resulted from hunger, sex, and other bodily needs ^[7](Hall, 61).

According to Feist, "only the ego can produce or feel anxiety, but the id, superego and external world are involved in one of three kinds of anxiety" ^[1](Feist, 33). He explains further that anxiety can be categorized into three types. The types are reality anxiety, neurotic anxiety and moral anxiety.

The first kind is reality anxiety. Reality anxiety happens when somebody considers that there is a danger around him and so the source of the danger of his anxiety is said to be in the external world of him instead of his internal world. Reality anxiety is closely

related to fear. However, “reality anxiety is different from fear in that it does not involve a specific fearful object” [1](Feist, 34).

In any event, “fears are more easily acquired during childhood because within this period, children are not able enough to cope with external dangers. It happens as their ego has not developed to face excessive amount of stimulation” [7](Hall, 64). Therefore, when they experience something that results in anxiety, they come to the stage of helplessness which is called trauma.

The second one is neurotic anxiety. Neurotic anxiety is aroused by a perception of danger from the instincts. Neurotic anxiety can be displayed in three different forms, that is, free-floating type, phobia, panic or near-panic reaction. The first form of neurotic anxiety is free floating of apprehensiveness. According to Hall “free floating of apprehensiveness is usually characterized by a nervous person who always expects something dreadful to happen” [7](65). The second form of neurotic anxiety is an intense irrational fear or what is called “phobia”. Freud states that “the intensity of the fear here is out of all proportion to the actual danger of the object which the person is afraid” [7](65). The fear is irrational because the majority of the anxiety is found in the Id rather than in the external world. What the person fears in the case of phobia represents something that is related to, or

symbolized by, the feared object. It happens because people are often in such distress, sometimes even in panic that they cannot think clearly. Then, the third form is panic or near-panic reaction, which happens when someone goes mad at people around him whom he does not know and who even have not done anything to him. Therefore, "he cannot explain why he did such a thing, all he knows is that he felt so upset and so tense that he had to do something before he exploded" [7](66). This kind of anxiety is due to the id demands despite ego and superego prohibition.

The last one is moral anxiety. Moral anxiety stems from a conflict between the ego and superego. In other words, when people are feeling anxious, they are afraid of being punished by their superego. Hall also states that moral anxiety is the fear of the conscience [7](81). It means that someone whose superego is well-developed will feel guilty if he does something that contradicts the norms taught by his parents.

The function of anxiety is to warn a person about any danger in the external world. If the ego cannot reduce the anxiety, it will result in a traumatic condition. If the anxiety exists, it could motivate the person to do something that can reduce the anxiety.

However, some of these kinds of fear are related to what Freud called core issues. Tyson defines it as deep-rooted psychological issues that "define our being in fundamental ways" and that they "stay with us throughout life, they determine our behavior in destructive ways of which we are usually unaware" [10](17). Common examples of core issues are fear of intimacy, fear of abandonment, fear of betrayal, low self-esteem, unstable sense of self, and there are many others.

Moreover, in psychoanalysis, a defense mechanism is "any variety of unconscious personality reaction, of which the ego uses to protect the conscious mind from threatening feelings and perceptions" [10](Tyson, 12). Freud states that the defense mechanisms include functions carried out by the ego, they are strategic efforts by the ego to cope with the socially unacceptable impulses of the id. In this case, defense mechanisms are ways of thinking about a situation developed by the ego to reduce excessive amount of anxiety or fear. Thus, defense mechanisms emerge as tactics that help to overcome his or her anxiety through. People usually use defense mechanisms to overcome anxiety and trauma. They choose their defense to deal with their trauma. It is basically unconscious reaction that protects a person from unpleasant emotions such as anxiety and guilt. Defense

mechanisms occur when the ego is that of dealing with the threats and dangers that have happened to the person and arouse anxiety [7](Hall, 85). There are several major types of defense mechanisms identified by Freud such as repression, regression, projection, reaction formation, denial, displacement, intellectualization, sublimation, and rationalization.

Starting with the analysis of fear and anxiety in *The Great Gatsby* and by shedding light on the character of Jay Gatsby and what he fears, we mainly notice that he is the source of different types of fear in the novel.

First, reality anxiety is clear in the novel. Reality anxiety is a painful emotional experience resulting from a perception of danger in the external world. A danger is any condition of the environment which threatens to harm the person. The perception of danger and the arousal of anxiety may be innate in the sense that one inherits a tendency to become afraid in the presence of certain objects or environmental conditions or it may be acquired during the person's lifetime [7](Hall, 63). Gatsby fears being rejected by the upper class mainly because he is poor and being rejected once by Daisy. It is obvious that Gatsby always rejected being born to a poor family, and believes he is different. He throws parties and shows off his wealth to people he doesn't know in an attempt to

win approval of Daisy and to be a part of her social circle. Gatsby's fear of not fitting into this world drives much of his behavior. Moreover, Gatsby seems to be trapped by his past. He fears his past, and that is why he creates a new identity, changing from James Gatz, a poor farm boy, to Jay Gatsby. His fear of being judged or rejected because of his humble background drives him to reinvent himself and seek wealth to reach his goals.

He introduces himself as the son of wealthy parents from the Midwest, but as the story unfolds, it becomes clear that this person is fabricated. However, he believes that his impoverished upbringing would hinder his social ascent and his choices with Daisy. Gatsby is living in a world full of illusions. Nick suggests: "He talked a lot about the past, and I gathered that he wanted to recover something, some idea of himself perhaps, that had gone into loving Daisy. His life had been confused and disordered since then, but if he could once return to a certain starting place and go over it all slowly, he could find out what that thing was"^[3] (Fitzgerald, 87)

The quote highlights the desire of Gatsby to recapture the good times of the past, but also fears re-approach the bad moment when he lost Daisy. However, throughout the novel, Gatsby avoids confronting the truth at all costs. He avoids acknowledging that

Daisy is not willing to leave Tom, and he continues to host parties in the hope that she will attend because he “did it all for Daisy”^[3] (Fitzgerald, 156), to show her his wealth. Gatsby’s fear of accepting the reality that his dream may never come true drives him to live in a fantasy world. He is unable to face the harsh truths of his life. He cannot accept the truth of his past. He clings to the illusion that he can recreate the past and that Daisy will leave her husband for him “Can't repeat the past?” he cried incredulously. ‘Why, of course you can!’ ^[3](Fitzgerald, 86). He cannot believe and accept the reality that Daisy will never go back to him and he cannot accept the reality of her marriage. Gatsby’s fear of reality ultimately leads to tragic consequences. His relentless pursuit of an illusion ends in his demise. This is closely tied to his idealization of a specific time in his life when he was briefly with Daisy before he went off to fight in the war. He sees this period as a golden era and is determined to recreate it.

Gatsby also has a deep fear of losing Daisy again to Tom. Daisy is the cause of Gatsby’s fear. He is not certain of his future with her because he loses her once in the past, he is lost between the past and the future. He is afraid to confront the present. It is fear of the unknown, it is represented in the novel by the green light. Gatsby is fixated on the green light, which symbolizes his

hopes and dreams for the future with Daisy. These dreams are unrealistic. The green light is physically unattainable, just like his dream. Daisy can be seen as a personification of this elite class, and therefore the analysis of Gatsby's feelings about her, in a sense, can address his feelings about the elite. Schneiderman writes, "[Gatsby's] craving for Daisy's approval symbolizes his yearning for acceptance by her prestigious social set"^[9] (224).

Not only does Gatsby have anxiety of the reality, but also Tom and Daisy. They exhibit a fear of confronting the consequences of their actions. They try to protect their own social status and reputation by avoiding the truth "I suppose the latest thing is to sit back and let Mr. Nobody from Nowhere make love to your wife" ^[3] (Fitzgerald, 130). Tom fears losing control and he fears losing his social status that leads him to deny uncomfortable truths about himself and his relationships.

Moreover, we notice that through the progress of the events in the novel we will start recognizing "core issues". First, there is fear of intimacy which is "the chronic and overpowering feeling that emotional closeness will seriously hurt or destroy us and that we can remain emotionally safe only by remaining at an emotional distance from others at all times" ^[10](Tyson,16). Daisy, the rich girl, falls in love with Gatsby, who goes to the military service. He

is poor and on the other hand, she has Tom, who proposed to marry her and she said yes to him because they are both rich. However, Tom experiences fear of intimacy. He is involved in romantic relationships with other women. He is seen, after he returns from their honeymoon, with a girl. He seems like he doesn't want to get emotionally involved with any women even Daisy. For him, Daisy represents social superiority and his mistress, Myrtle, reinforces his sense of his masculine power.

However, Daisy doesn't love Tom, she marries him to run from her relationship with Gatsby. She regrets her decision before her wedding evening when she receives a letter from Gatsby. She holds the letter and "she only let Jordan leave it in the soap dish when she saw that it was coming to pieces like snow" [3] (Fitzgerald, 81). However, we feel she married Tom to stay away from Gatsby, who loves her and truly cares about her. Tyson suggests: "In psychoanalytic terms, a woman who falls in love with a man suffering from severe fear of intimacy probably fears intimacy herself" [10](41). She fears intimacy, but she falls in love with Tom, because this kind of relationship will make her feel safe. However, the fear of intimacy in Gatsby's case is not clear or direct because here we cannot experience the case of love but we experience the case of trying, unconsciously, to achieve a goal for

Gatsby. He sees her as an ideal, she is "gleaming like silver, safe and proud above the hot struggles of the poor" [3](Fitzgerald, 157).

However, Daisy is far away to fulfill her unconscious desires, also to avoid the psychological pain caused by his experience of being a part of a poor family. Moreover, Gatsby and Daisy "feel for each other is always a means of avoiding feeling the effects of something else, something profoundly disturbing that they want to keep repressed, for example, Gatsby's unhappy youth, Daisy's dysfunctional marriage, and both characters fear of intimacy" [10](Tyson, 8). In general, all the characters have a fear of intimacy in different levels as Myrtle chooses her relation according to economic status. Nick and Jordan break up also because they feel they get too close to each other.

Moreover, fear of abandonment takes place when one believes, even without reason to, that one's friends, family, or acquaintances will abandon them. The abandonic (those who suffer from fear of abandonment [6] (Guex 2) feels terrorised by the threat of "conflict, rupture, separation, isolation, solitude, lack of love", and is "haunted by the fear of losing love"[6] (Guex 29, 33). This is initially suggested by Gatsby's lack of friends, as illustrated by the emptiness of his funeral, which only Carraway

and one other person, the unnamed man with owl-eyed glasses, attended. Another indication is that Gatsby's relationship with his family is distant. He left home early, with only one family member, his father, coming into the text, and only at the end of the novel, after Gatsby's death, when it is revealed that Gatsby saw him "two years ago and bought [him] the house" [3](115). He had no other immediate family that the reader is made aware of.

Another indication of the fear of abandonment is Gatsby's rather frantic and rather relentless pursuit of Daisy. Such behaviour is characteristic of those who suffer from fear of abandonment: they "most often [have] very high emotional potential and a wealth of feelings" [6] (Guex, 16). However, Guex writes "these emotions and feelings are never manifested in beneficial ways, because the forces behind them are emotional imbalance, anxiety, and affective insecurity, which recur from an infancy where emotional needs were not met"[6] (16). As regards Jay Gatsby, an example of a high degree of emotional potential and wealth of feelings is in that Gatsby avidly seeks to claim Daisy for himself, going as far as to request that she tell her husband that she "never loved him" [3](Fitzgerald, 88).

Nevertheless, fear of intimacy and fear of abandonment can give us a feeling that we avoid others because we don't deserve

their attention, this may lead us to another core issue which is low self-esteem. Low self-esteem is "the belief that we are less worthy than other people and, therefore, don't deserve attention, love, or any other of life's rewards. Indeed, we often believe that we deserve to be punished by life in some way" [10](Tyson, 16).

The desire of Gatsby's to appear attractive to others reflects low self-esteem because he fears of anything that may risk abandonment or solitude. He is sensitive to failure and extremely vulnerable to misunderstandings that can appear to mean lack of love. Gatsby's gifting of the expensive evening gown may also be a manifestation of his low self-esteem leading him to fear losing an affective connection as a result of an issue. Through the following passage, it is suggested that Gatsby knew about the rumors: "I don't want you to get a wrong idea of me from all these stories you hear" [3](Fitzgerald, 42). Even so, the character does not attempt to distance himself from or disprove said rumors. This attitude corresponds with the low self-esteem characteristic of underestimating oneself while overestimating others [6] (Guex, 29). Specifically, it can be argued that, due to low self-esteem, Gatsby finds himself unworthy of refuting the dark rumors, or even worthy of them; and, simultaneously, overestimates those who produce the rumors, as though it were their right to do so. Those

with low self-esteem overvalue others in the moral, social, and intellectual domains while unfairly undervaluing oneself [6] (Guex, 31).

In Gatsby's case, this can be verified (a) morally, socially, and intellectually, when he recounts to Carraway the time when he met and fell in love with Daisy [6] (99). (A) morally, he felt drawn to the fact that Daisy had been with other men before, as seen in the passage "It excited him, too, that many men had already loved Daisy—it increased her value in his eyes" [3](Fitzgerald, 99). This is a view that places high value on the (a) moral aspects of being with Daisy. Socially, Gatsby places a high value on Daisy's wealth and social status when he says "She was the first "nice" girl he had known" [3](Fitzgerald, 99), which can be read as wealthy and socially privileged; "It amazed him—he had never been in such a beautiful house before"[3](Fitzgerald, 99), indicating that she was in a higher class than him and his acquaintances. Intellectually, it can be deduced that Daisy, due to her higher socioeconomic class, had access to greater opportunities than Gatsby did. This can be perceived in the passage "and at any moment the invisible cloak of [Gatsby's] uniform might slip from his shoulders" [3](Fitzgerald, 99). This passage implies that Gatsby's officer-hood was the only intellectual property, or credential, that he

possessed, and, were it to fall, he would have nothing else (that he considered being) of value to show underneath.

For Tom, this is shown through his close relationships, especially his relationship with Myrtle. She is from a lower class, which means that he is working hard to impress others using his money and power. However, their relationship lacks intimacy. He has no desire for Myrtle. He is only with her to avoid being close to his wife, Daisy. For Daisy, this appears in her relation with Tom mainly, because she feels she doesn't deserve better; also, she is like Tom, trying to impress others through her affectation. Nick suggests when she told him she is a member of a "secret society": "The instant her voice broke off, ceasing to compel my attention, my belief, I felt the basic insincerity of what she had said." [3](Fitzgerald, 22).

However, these kinds of behavior she always does when she is in a group. Another example, is when Gatsby visits the Buchanans with Nick and Jordan, and she goes over to Gatsby and "pulled down his face kissed him on the mouth ...'I don't care' cried Daisy and began to clog on the brick fireplace" [3] (Fitzgerald, 122–23). Thus, this kind of affectation is related to insecurity which is the inability. This is also a kind of core issue, insecure sense of self, defined by Lois Tyson as "the inability to sustain a feeling of

personal identity, to sustain a sense of knowing ourselves" [10](16). All these matters lead to what Nick once said that Tom and Daisy" drifted here and there unrestfully" [3](Fitzgerald, 10) because they don't want to become close to anyone. The feeling of inferiority that is connected to insecure sense of self "oscillates between excessive self-doubt and ambition", because those who experience it are "unable to grasp the concept of moderation" [6] (Guex, 29). In other words, every aspect of their lives is exaggerated, either leaning towards excess or abstinence. Guex writes that this false reality, in which everything is exaggerated, generates fantasies that clash with the real world and crumble because the fantasies cannot exist outside of what one wishes were true [6] (29). This generates frustration that escalates to a sense of despair [6] (Guex, 29).

Gatsby's insecure sense of self relates to the issue's characteristic of oscillating "between excessive self-doubt and ambition" and the inability to "grasp the concept of moderation" [6] (Guex, 29). The text itself touches on this matter in the following passage "[Gatsby] paid a high price for living too long with a single dream" [3](Fitzgerald, 108). As previously explained, those with insecure sense of self exaggerate every aspect of their life, which leads to a false reality. In Jay Gatsby's case, he has excessive

ambition, and this ambition fuels the creation of a false reality surrounding his past and his future with Daisy. As previously illustrated, he exaggerates the events of his past with Daisy, as well as the present, and the future. Ultimately, the fantasies clash with the real world and crumble, because they cannot exist outside of what Gatsby wishes were true. This generates frustration that escalates to the sense of despair illustrated in the climactic confrontation with Tom Buchanan.

Moreover, another kind of core issue found in the novel is fear of betrayal which is defined as “the nagging feeling that our friends and loved ones can’t be trusted, for example, can’t be trusted not to lie to us, not to laugh at us behind our backs, or in the case of romantic partners, not to cheat on us by dating others” [10](Tyson, 16). Gatsby is afraid that Daisy might betray him and reveal their past to Tom. While Tom fears that Daisy might betray him with Gatsby. This creates a kind of tension in the novel. Despite Gatsby's extreme love for Daisy and his repealed attempts to be with her, she seems not to be with him when she learns he is not from "the right side of the tracks"; also, Daisy feels safe when she is with Gatsby again, because she "remains psychologically involved with Tom, she need not fear that she will develop the

kind of attachment she had to Gatsby before her marriage"[\[10\]](#)(Tyson, 46).

Furthermore, Freud finds that to protect ourselves from the harshness of reality and to safeguard the mind against feelings and thoughts that are too difficult for the conscious mind, the mind ego uses defense mechanisms; and talking about fear of intimacy can lead us to our first defense mechanisms found in the novel which is avoidance. Avoidance is staying away from people or situations that are liable to make us anxious by stirring up some unconscious—i.e., repressed—experience or emotion [\[10\]](#)(Tyson, 15). In *The Great Gatsby*, we have Nick, who is the master of avoidance. In all of his previous relations with women, also his relationship with Jordan, he tries to avoid involving in serious relationships.

For Gatsby, a form of denial of his past has been found in the novel. He rejects his past, he longs to return to his relationship with Daisy “He talked a lot about the past, and I gathered that he wanted to recover something, some idea of himself perhaps, that had gone into loving Daisy” [\[3\]](#)(Fitzgerald, 89). Denial is refusing to accept reality because it can be threatening. Denial is defined as denying reality to create a more acceptable new reality and it is “believing that the problem doesn’t exist or the unpleasant incident

never happened' [10](Tyson, 15). This method explains when someone hides bad situations and replaces them with good ones. Freud refers denial to as a refusal to accept consciously the existence of a threatening situation. For Gatsby, the threatening situation is his life without Daisy. His denial is shown by saying "I'm going to fix everything just the way it was before" [3](Fitzgerald, 117). Moreover, Gatsby invents a new past, especially by what is related to his parents. He feels ashamed of them so he invented a new past, they are poor and he doesn't want to belong to them. That is evident when he changes his name from Jimmy Gatz to Jay Gatsby. He invents that his family "all died and [he] came into a good deal of money" [3](Fitzgerald, 70). Daisy frequently denies the reality of her situation and avoids facing the consequences of her actions. She refuses to acknowledge the depth of her feelings for Gatsby and instead retreats into a state of emotional detachment to protect herself from the pain of confronting her true desires.

Moreover, Gatsby is unable to control his emotions and acts immaturely; he is trapped in a frustrating situation. In the hotel room, he was terrified and compared him to Tom Buchanan. He cried and acted impatiently, and he was yelled at by everyone, proving Daisy's love for him. That statement is made clearer by

Gatsby's saying "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 anyone except me!" [3] (Fitzgerald, 104). Gatsby's behavior in this passage portrayed him as a child who used regression as a defense mechanism. Regression is a defense mechanism used by people who have long-term ego issues and are unable to deal with unacceptable impulses in an adult manner. Regression, according to Firestone, is characterized by personal deterioration in psychotherapy as a result of failure experience and prolonged suffering. Nick exhibits regression as a defense mechanism by retreating into a state of nostalgia and idealizing the past. He romanticizes his memories of Gatsby and Daisy's relationship, clinging to a vision of the past where everything seemed perfect and hopeful, despite the harsh realities of the present. "Regression can involve a return either to a painful or a pleasant experience" [10](Tyson, 15).

Rationalization is an attempt to logically justify immoral, deviant, or generally unacceptable behavior. In Freud's classic psychoanalytic theory, rationalization is a defense mechanism, an unconscious attempt to avoid addressing the underlying reasons for a behavior. Freud suggests that rationalization is a way of explaining away one's behavior as being motivated by logical and

acceptable reasons, when in fact the true reasons are unconscious and unacceptable. Jay Gatsby rationalizes his pursuit of wealth and social status as a means to win Daisy's love. He convinces himself that material success will make him worthy of her affection, even though Daisy's love cannot be bought or earned through material possessions.

Projection, ascribing our fear, problem, or guilty desire to someone else and then condemning him or her for it, in order to deny that we have it ourselves [10](Tyson, 15). In the novel, Tom Buchanan often projects his own flaws and insecurities onto others. For example, he accuses Gatsby of being a fraud and having ulterior motives for pursuing Daisy, when in reality, Tom himself is guilty of infidelity and dishonesty.

Displacement, as Tyson defines it, "taking it out" on someone or something less threatening than the person who caused our fear, hurt, frustration, or anger" [10](15). Myrtle displaces her unfulfilled desires onto others, particularly Tom. She seeks validation and escapes from her marriage by engaging in an affair with Tom, believing that he can *engage* her with the social status and luxury she wants.

Thus, this paper is delving into Gatsby's anxiety of reality which leads him to have many other types of fears which in turn leads to his tragic consequences. Moreover, his pursuit to achieve his desires and his inability to accept the reality, his inner self tries to use defense mechanisms to protect him from the harshness of the reality.

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