

<<英美文学经典小说解读>>

图书基本信息

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内容概要

《英美文学经典小说解读》作者撷取了二十位著名英美作家经典文学作品。通过对各时期主要文学流派作品的简介，向读者展示了英美文学的大致框架，引发读者去思考、欣赏，去正确认识英美社会及社会众生相。全书以题材广泛、风格各异、集知识与学术于一体为特色，既有利于教师系统讲解，同时也方便学生自学，适合广大高校开设英美文学课程的授课教师、英语专业学生以及有一定英语基础且对英美文学感兴趣的读者。

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书籍目录

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章节摘录

If Gatsby represents one part of Fitzgerald's personality, the flashy celebrity who pursued and glorified wealth in order to impress the woman he loved, then Nick represents another part: the quiet, reflective Midwesterner adrift in the lurid East. A young man (he turns thirty during the course of the novel) from Minnesota, Nick travels to New York in 1922 to learn the bond business. He lives in the West Egg district of Long Island, next door to Gatsby. Nick is also Daisy's cousin, which enables him to observe and assist the resurgent love affair between Daisy and Gatsby. As a result of his relationship to these two characters, Nick is the perfect choice to narrate the novel, which functions as a personal memoir of his experiences with Gatsby in the summer of 1922.

Nick is also well suited to narrating *The Great Gatsby* because of his temperament. As he tells the reader in Chapter 1, he is tolerant, open-minded, quiet, and a good listener, and, as a result, others tend to talk to him and tell him their secrets. Gatsby, in particular, comes to trust him and treat him as a confidant. Nick generally assumes a secondary role throughout the novel, preferring to describe and comment on events rather than dominate the action. Often, however, he functions as Fitzgerald's voice, as in his extended meditation on time and the American dream at the end of Chapter 9. Insofar as Nick plays a role inside the narrative, he evidences a strongly mixed reaction to life on the East Coast, - one that creates a powerful internal conflict that he does not resolve until the end of the book. On the one hand, Nick is attracted to the fast-paced, fun-driven lifestyle of New York. On the other hand, he finds that lifestyle grotesque and damaging. This inner conflict is symbolized throughout the book by Nick's romantic affair with Jordan Baker. He is attracted to her vivacity and her sophistication just as he is repelled by her dishonesty and her lack of consideration for other people. Nick states that there is a "quality of distortion" to life in New York, and this lifestyle makes him lose his equilibrium, especially early in the novel, as when he gets drunk at Gatsby's party in Chapter 2. After witnessing the unraveling of Gatsby's dream and presiding over the appalling spectacle of Gatsby's funeral, Nick realizes that the fast life of revelry on the East Coast is a cover for the terrifying moral emptiness that the valley of ashes symbolizes. Having gained the maturity that this insight demonstrates, he returns to Minnesota in search of a quieter life structured by more traditional moral values.

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