



Unlocking the layers: Analyzing the most multifaceted characters in classic literature

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Abstract

As readers, we are often drawn to the characters in classic novels who possess complex and intricate personalities. These characters have a depth and richness that make them feel like real people, with all the joys and sorrows that come with being human. From the tortured souls of Heathcliff and Anna Karenina to the scheming and manipulative Scarlett O'Hara, the most complex characters in classic literature are the ones that stay with us long after we finish reading. In this article, I will explore some of the most fascinating and multifaceted characters in classic novels, examining what makes them so compelling and how they continue to resonate with readers today. These characters are not only fascinating to read about, but they also offer insights into the human psyche, providing a window into the human condition. I have briefly looked into the complex traits of famous novel characters like Hamlet, Scarlet O'Hara, Jay Gatsby. Then I will get into more details regarding other characters. From the brooding Heathcliff in Emily Bronte's *Wuthering Heights* to the enigmatic Jay Gatsby in F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*, I will delve into the inner workings of these intricate characters, examining their motivations, desires, and struggles.

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Introduction

Classic literature is widely known for its multifaceted characters, individuals whose complexity and depth have captivated readers for generations. Classic novels are timeless works of art that have captivated readers for centuries. These masterpieces are filled with intricately crafted characters that have a depth and complexity rarely found in modern literature.

These characters are often layered and nuanced, possessing qualities that make them fascinating and complicated. Analyzing the complexities of such characters is essential to understanding classic literature and appreciating the works of great writers such as Shakespeare, Austen, Dickens, and more.

The goal of analyzing these complex characters is to unlock the many layers of their personalities, motivations, and flaws. By doing so, we gain a deeper understanding of their place in the story and their significance in literature as a whole. In this article, we will explore some of the most multifaceted characters in classic literature

and discuss what makes them so complex. We explore the rich tapestry of characters that populate some of the greatest novels in literary history.

Hamlet: The Prince of Denmark

William Shakespeare's play Hamlet features one of the most multifaceted protagonists in all of literature: Prince Hamlet. Hamlet is a complex character whose motivations are sometimes hard to discern. He is a man who is torn between his duty to his family and his desire for revenge against his uncle for murdering his father. What makes Hamlet so intriguing is his indecisiveness. He spends much of the play grappling with philosophical questions about morality and death while trying to decide whether or not to kill his uncle. His mental state deteriorates throughout the play, which makes him unpredictable. The audience never quite knows what he will do next.

Scarlett O'Hara: The Southern Belle

Margaret Mitchell's *Gone with the Wind* features Scarlett O'Hara, a character widely regarded as one of the most complex female characters in literature. Scarlett is a Southern belle who goes through a significant transformation during the Civil War - from privileged daughter to resourceful businesswoman. Scarlett's complexity comes from her unlikable qualities, such as her selfishness and manipulation. Yet at her core, she possesses an indomitable spirit that allows her to survive even in the toughest of times. She is a survivor, who is determined to succeed no matter what the cost.

Jay Gatsby: The Great Gatsby

F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* features Jay Gatsby, a man who embodies the American Dream. Gatsby is ambitious, charming, and romantic, but he also has a dark past and an intense desire to regain his lost love. What makes Gatsby so complex is his dual nature. On one hand, he is a socially sophisticated host who knows how to entertain his guests with extravagant parties. However, on the other hand, he is still haunted by his past and his unrequited love for Daisy Buchanan. His obsession with her ultimately leads to tragedy.

The Psychology Behind the Depths of Heathcliff and Anna Karenina's Tortured Souls

False beliefs about oneself or the world can cause a great deal of pain and suffering. This psychology review explores the tortured souls of Heathcliff and Anna Karenina, two iconic literary characters who struggled with their own false beliefs and personal demons. In Emily Bronte's classic novel, *Wuthering Heights*, Heathcliff's deep-rooted obsession with Cathy leads him down a dark path. His intense love for Cathy is paired with an overwhelming hatred for those who stand in his way, which ultimately leads to his downfall. Similarly, in Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina*, the title character's internal struggles with societal norms and her forbidden love for Vronsky drive her to a tragic end. As we delve deeper into the psychology of these characters, we see how their false beliefs about themselves and those around them ultimately led to their demise. The Pain of False Beliefs False beliefs about oneself or the world can be incredibly damaging to a person's mental health and well-being. Often, these beliefs are rooted in childhood experiences, cultural norms, or societal expectations. They can manifest as negative self-talk, self-doubt, anxiety, or depression.

In literature, we often see characters grappling with their own false beliefs and personal demons. In *Wuthering Heights* and *Anna Karenina*, two iconic literary works, we see how these false beliefs can lead to suffering and tragic outcomes.

Heathcliff's Obsession

Heathcliff is a complex character in *Wuthering Heights*. His intense love for Cathy is paired with an overwhelming hatred for those who stand in his way. This obsession ultimately leads him down a dark path that results in his downfall.

Heathcliff's false belief is that Cathy is the only person who can bring him happiness and fulfillment. He becomes so fixated on her that he is unable to see any other possibilities for his life. As a result, he becomes consumed by bitterness and revenge when Cathy chooses to marry someone else.

Throughout the novel, we see Heathcliff's obsession drive him to behave in cruel and destructive ways. He takes pleasure in others' pain and seems to relish inflicting suffering upon those around him. In the end, his false belief proves to be his undoing.

Anna Karenina's Struggle

Similarly, in Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina*, we see the title character struggle with her own false beliefs about love and societal norms. Anna falls deeply in love with Vronsky but faces societal pressure to remain faithful to her husband.

Anna's false belief is that true happiness only comes from following one's heart, even if it means breaking societal norms or hurting others in the process. Her internal struggle between following her heart and adhering to societal expectations ultimately drives her to a tragic end.

As we explore Anna's psychology, we can see how her false belief about love and happiness leads her to make choices that are ultimately self-destructive. Her inability to reconcile her own desires with societal expectations leads to a sense of hopelessness and despair.

The Importance of Self-Reflection

These characters' stories illustrate the importance of self-reflection and awareness. It is essential to recognize and challenge our own false beliefs in order to avoid the kind of pain and suffering experienced by Heathcliff and Anna.

Self-reflection can help us identify negative patterns in our thinking and behavior. By examining our beliefs and values, we can gain a deeper understanding of ourselves and the world around us. This awareness can lead to greater emotional stability, more fulfilling relationships, and a sense of purpose in life.

The Elusive Charisma of Jay Gatsby: An Exploration of Fitzgerald's Masterfully Crafted Anti-Hero

False portrayals of the enigmatic Jay Gatsby in F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* are pervasive. While many see him as merely a wealthy socialite throwing extravagant parties, the reality is much more complex. Gatsby's mysterious past and his unrelenting pursuit of the married Daisy Buchanan suggest a man deeply driven by his desires. His seemingly excessive behavior and devotion to the façade of the American Dream are attempts to reconcile his past and fulfill his romantic ideals. Despite being fictional, the character of Gatsby remains a symbol of the complexities and contradictions of the American Dream, which continues to fascinate readers today. *Unpacking the Complex Character of Jay Gatsby*

The character of Jay Gatsby in F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* is a captivating and complex figure that has captured the imagination of readers for generations. However, despite his enigmatic persona, Gatsby is frequently reduced to little more than a wealthy socialite who throws lavish parties. While it is true that Gatsby is wealthy and throws extravagant parties, his character runs much deeper than mere surface indulgences.

Driven by Desire

One of the most significant aspects of Gatsby's character is his unrelenting pursuit of Daisy Buchanan, a woman who he fell in love with years earlier. Despite her being married, Gatsby remains doggedly committed to winning her over once again. His obsession with Daisy is rooted in his deep desire for personal fulfillment and romantic satisfaction. This desire stems from Gatsby's mysterious past and the inner turmoil he experiences as he seeks to reconcile it with the present.

Gatsby's Mysterious Past

Throughout the novel, readers are given glimpses into Gatsby's past and why he became so fixated on creating a life of luxury and extravagance. Born into poverty, Gatsby reinvents himself as a wealthy and influential figure after acquiring wealth through dubious means. This transformation allows him to create an entirely new identity for himself, one that enables him to move among the elite circles of society that were previously off-limits.

Fulfilling Romantic Ideals

Gatsby's pursuit of Daisy Buchanan embodies his romantic ideals and the vision he holds for his future existence. In many ways, his devotion to Daisy is an attempt to recapture what was lost in his past and forge ahead towards a brighter future. However, as his attempts become increasingly desperate and futile, it becomes clear that fulfilling these ideals may be ultimately unattainable.

Symbolic Significance

Despite being a fictional character, Jay Gatsby remains an emblematic figure that encapsulates the complexities and contradictions of the American Dream. His determination to succeed at all costs, his pursuit of wealth and status, and his devotion to romantic ideals are all hallmarks of the American Dream. However, Gatsby's story also highlights the pitfalls and limitations of this dream, exposing its darker side and underscoring the dangers of unchecked aspiration.

Conclusion

Analyzing multifaceted characters in classic literature helps readers appreciate the complexity and depth of these characters. They are not one-dimensional, but rather nuanced personalities with layers of motivations and flaws that make them interesting and relatable. By understanding these characters on a deeper level, readers can better appreciate the works of literature they inhabit and gain insight into human nature itself. False beliefs can be incredibly damaging to our mental health and well-being. The stories of Heathcliff and Anna Karenina illustrate how these beliefs can lead to tragic outcomes. By practicing self-reflection and challenging our own false beliefs, we can avoid the kind of pain and suffering experienced by these iconic literary characters.

The character of Jay Gatsby is far more than a one-dimensional wealthy socialite throwing extravagant parties. He represents a complex web of desires, motivations, and ideals that reflect both the promise and peril of the American Dream. As such, Gatsby's story remains resonant with readers today and serves as a potent reminder of the need to balance ambition with perspective.

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