



# Trimalchio: An Early Version of The Great Gatsby

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This is the first edition ever published of Trimalchio, an early and complete version of F. Scott Fitzgerald's classic novel The Great Gatsby. Fitzgerald wrote the novel as Trimalchio and submitted it to Maxwell Perkins, his editor at Scribner's, who had the novel set in type and sent the galleys to Fitzgerald in France. Fitzgerald then virtually rewrote the novel in galleys, producing the book we know as The Great Gatsby. This first version, Trimalchio, has never been published and has only been read by a handful of people. It is markedly different from The Great Gatsby: two chapters were completely rewritten for the published novel, and the rest of the book was heavily revised. Characterization is different, the narrative voice of Nick Carraway is altered and, most importantly, the revelation of Jay Gatsby's past is handled in a wholly different way. James L.W. West III directs the Penn State Center for the History of the Book and is General Editor of the Cambridge Edition of the works of F. Scott Fitzgerald. He is the author of William Styron: A Descriptive Biography (Random House, 1998).

## Trimalchio: An Early Version of The Great Gatsby Details

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# From Reader Review Trimalchio: An Early Version of The Great Gatsby for online ebook

## Michelle Prendergast says

Considering that this sat amongst Fitzgerald's enormous collection (if there's one thing I've learned from all of the biographical info I've read about him it's that the man saved everything) for years, it's fortunate that this has been made available to the public after all these years. I've taught Gatsby for the last 7 years, and reading this earlier version provided a different insight into Gatsby and Daisy in particular. Chapters 6 and 7 were quite different from what's published in Gatsby, and will answer some questions about the nature of Daisy's and Gatsby's relationship. Also, the introductory notes explaining the literary reference behind the Trimalchio title is instructive. Overall, it's worth the read for Gatsby fans.

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## Karyn says

I wanted to read this, after reading that Baz Luhrmann used parts of it to make the movie. I found some of the "inconsistencies" with the version of the Great Gatsby that I'm familiar with that Luhrmann built into the movie. I didn't find it so terribly different-- we get more of Gatsby's back story, and it seems that Fitzgerald did intend Nick Carraway to be gay based on his deeper description of the relationship between Jordan and Nick.

All in all it was an interesting read-- I appreciated some of the Appendixes which explained many of the now obscure references (would have been nice to have all of those at my fingertips when I first started teaching the novel.)

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## John Vanderslice says

I read this less for personal than academic reasons. I'm teaching novel revision in the fall and wanted to expose my students to an early draft of a novel they all know. (Or might all know.) Trimalchio, though advertised as an "early version" of the Great Gatsby didn't seem that early to me. There was one chapter that simply does not exist in Gatsby and never could exist. Another chapter reads a bit differently, but not in ways that are crucial and fundamental. Many of the remaining seven chapters struck me as essentially the same as in Gatsby. I'm sure a line by line analysis of the two novels would show more dissimilarities than I'm suggesting, but on a casual read through, coming on the heels of a read through of Gatsby, I found the novels to be in most ways, and all the important ways, the same. The introduction to Trimalchio tries to argue for more dissimilarity, and set me up to find substantial amounts of such, but again the novels just didn't feel that different to me. I don't know whether to call that a good or bad thing, but it is a little weird when you're expecting and looking for difference.

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## **James Maskell says**

If you've only read *The Great Gatsby* once or twice, or haven't read it in several years, *Trimalchio* doesn't have much to offer you. However, if you really know the ins and outs of *The Great Gatsby*, this book will be entertaining to you. Most of the edits that resulted in the final publication make sense, and it's fun to see how little revisions like when Gatsby decides to reveal that he didn't graduate from Oxford, and to whom he reveals this actually alter the readers' perception of the character. A few other similar edits show up as well, which I don't really need to go into. There are a lot fewer "old sport"s in this book as well, something I wish Fitzgerald had carried into *The Great Gatsby*.

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## **Darren Tang says**

Can you repeat the past? Who knows. But for as much as he wanted, and for as close as he was, ultimately Gatsby could not.

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## **Karen says**

With all the excitement about the new Gatsby movie coming out, I stumbled across this title last week and I have to admit I like it better than the original. It is much more messy than the original and a little less vague with the supporting characters. Plus, I love seeing the corrections and the letters from Fitzgerald's publisher. I would love to use it in a classroom.

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## **piperitapitta says**

Lettura contemporanea a quella de *Il Grande Gatsby* (terza o quarta rilettura, ormai, chi può dirlo?), questa volta nella traduzione di Nicola Manuppelli.

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## **Yvonne says**

Consider this a behind-the-scenes look at "The Great Gatsby." The novels differ significantly, though the central plot is the same. "Trimalchio" gives a deeper back story of each character, which helps me understand everyone's behavior in "Gatsby." If you love "Gatsby," you have to read "Trimalchio." I've read "Gatsby" repeatedly, but I've always still had questions, and "Trimalchio" answers some of them.

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## Dante Rassler says

5/5

[Next review contains spoiler about both *Trimalchio* and *The Great Gatsby*]

I'd say I'm started as a dreamer, just as *Gatsby* did. I did believe in most of the charming ornaments at both side of the path that we both were walking through. But right in this moment, I'm just disgusted as *Nick*.

Reading *Trimalchio* just revived all the magic that I felt in the original *Gatsby*. And, as I don't think I reviewed *Gatsby* yet, I'll just tell what I did love of him. I first watched the movie, and all the magic and gathering of all the broken things that just sharpened the spirit of what I saw that was *Gatsby*. All the loneliness that bleed the movie just made me fell in love.

Reading *The Great Gatsby* for first time was watching that all the fake sadness that I had was just a unreal and tainted vision of what *Baz Luhrmann* believed in his *Gatsby*. But the one from *Scott Fitzgerald* just was crashed with all the weight of the cruelty of the reality of his time. I didn't feel betrayed, because those two vision of *Gatsby* just showed us the reality of being a dreamer in a world where the dreams just can stayed broken.

Watching the way of the world of *Gatsby* was really conceived, in the mind of *F. Scott Fitzgerald* was simply beautiful. Walking in the same path of loneliness, love, despair and, disillusion was gorgeous.

If you loved *Gatsby*, you need to read this, to watch the birth of *Gatsby* and his raise and fall.

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## Steven Rhodes says

Worth the price admission for chapters VI and VII alone. Nick is less likable in *Trimalchio*, and his affair with Jordan is drawn out a bit more fully (not that I really cared). Nick and Jordan, to quote the introduction "are more clearly complicit in Daisy's affair with Gatsby, and in the wreckage that follows."

*Gatsby's* admissions to Nick in Chapter VIII were waaaaay to explicit for my liking; Fitzgerald wisely chose which criticisms of his editor to follow and which to ignore.

All in all, a worthwhile read for any *Gatsby* fan, and, more broadly, to those interested in the creative/publishing process.

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## **Mel Belstein says**

No lo encuentre tan distinto a El Gran Gatsby...

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## **Ilenia Zodiaco says**

Come sempre, inarrivabile.

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## **The Blabbing Bibliophile says**

I just heard of this title a week or so ago. With Gatsby being my favorite since I first read it at the age of fifteen (too long ago), and having seen the movie three times so far, I had to give this a go. I'm baffled that as an English major that I haven't heard of this version sooner, but I'm really glad I did. No one writes such whimsical worlds as Fitzgerald and this early version gave me even more insight to the world I wish I could live in. Some of the characters are down-right despicable, but even with his dark mystery, Gatsby balances them out by being the eternal romantic, gentleman, and hopeful dreamer. Now I understand Leonardo DiCaprio's version of him so much better having read this version. Like the commercials say, the summer belongs to Gatsby. If you are a Fitzgerald diehard like I am, you'll thoroughly enjoy this early edition.

PS- read the very end of the book to discover the meaning of why Fitzgerald named this Trimalchio. It's just brilliant and so enchanting. Doesn't quite hold a place in your heart the way "Gatsby" does, but it's extremely powerful with such great meaning. Ok, I'm done gushing about everything Gatsby now. Enjoy!

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## **Andrew says**

This early version of The Great Gatsby provides an enlightening window onto FSF's practice of writing. While it is essentially the same book as Gatsby (the characters are drawn a little differently and the unfolding of the crisis scene between Gatsby and Tom et al in chapters six and seven occurs differently) the most remarkable feature of Trimalchio is the impression one gets that FSF wrote one of the most beautiful, truthful and sad books ever written in any language essentially in a single draft. As Keats' mss do for him, this text conveys the astonishing artistic genius of a man who wrote one of the few true masterpieces of our national literature. He far surpasses Petronius and one can only hope that in the ruins of our civilization enough copies of this book, in either form, remain for future scholars to use, as we use the Satyricon, in their understanding of our morals, our habits, our ethos and our vernacular. The only drawback is that, as of yet, Trimalchio is only available in a rare, and expensive, scholarly edition. I was forced to use interlibrary loan to obtain a copy. It retails for somewhere near 60 dollars. Dover, it is high time for a paperback...

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## **Cheryl Yang says**

First off, let me say that *The Great Gatsby* is one of my favorite books. Maybe it's the fact that it's a literary treasure, or maybe it's that I read it four times within the span of three weeks last year while writing my final essay for high school and developed the book version of Stockholm syndrome for it. Who knows. Anyways, it took about 5 minutes after finding out that this book existed for me to order it on Amazon.

It was very fun and exciting to be able to re-read *Gatsby* but also have it ever so slightly different. It felt almost like a game, trying to pick up on little things that had changed and making new discoveries about the characters and the themes. This book felt a bit more raw than the final *Gatsby*. It seemed like the themes and symbolism were more obvious and some bits felt unpolished. Still, it was beautiful and amazing and made my little heart pitter patter.

I loved the experience of reading this and I'd recommend it to anyone who enjoyed reading *Gatsby*.

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