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Headline: **All men are [not] created equal: F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*: Claire Stocks illustrates how the narrator's bias towards this novel's hero is central to the critique of belief in the 'American Dream'**

Author: Claire Stocks

Source: *The English Review*, 17.3 (Feb. 2007): p9. From Literature Resource Center.

Document Type: Critical essay

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Anyone who has read *The Great Gatsby* is forced to question the title of the book. The eponymous hero of the novel, we soon discover, is a liar and a criminal. He is arguably neither "great" nor, indeed, "Gatsby" but is, in reality, James Gatz, the son of "stiltless and unsuccessful farm people" from North Dakota (p. 105). Although he is initially presented as a rather enigmatic character, whose entrance in Chapter 3 is preceded by various contrasting snippets of gossip about his past, the narrator Nick Carraway eventually learns the truth of James Gatz's history and reveals it to the reader in Chapter 9. But even before we are told that *Gatsby* is not all he seems to be, there are enough hints and clues to make the reader suspicious. For example, the stories that surround *Gatsby* are rather sinister—he killed a man, he was a German spy—and *Gatsby*'s association with Meyer Wolfsheimer causes Nick concern, especially when it is revealed that Wolfsheimer is a gambler who "traded the World's Series" (p. 78). The big revelation that *Gatsby* is not who he seems comes as no real surprise; what is more confusing is why Nick still sees *Gatsby* as "great" and chooses to name the book after him. What, we are impelled to ask, makes *Gatsby* so great?

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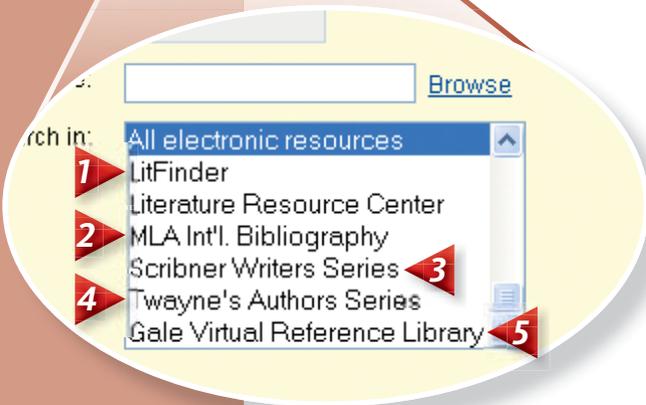
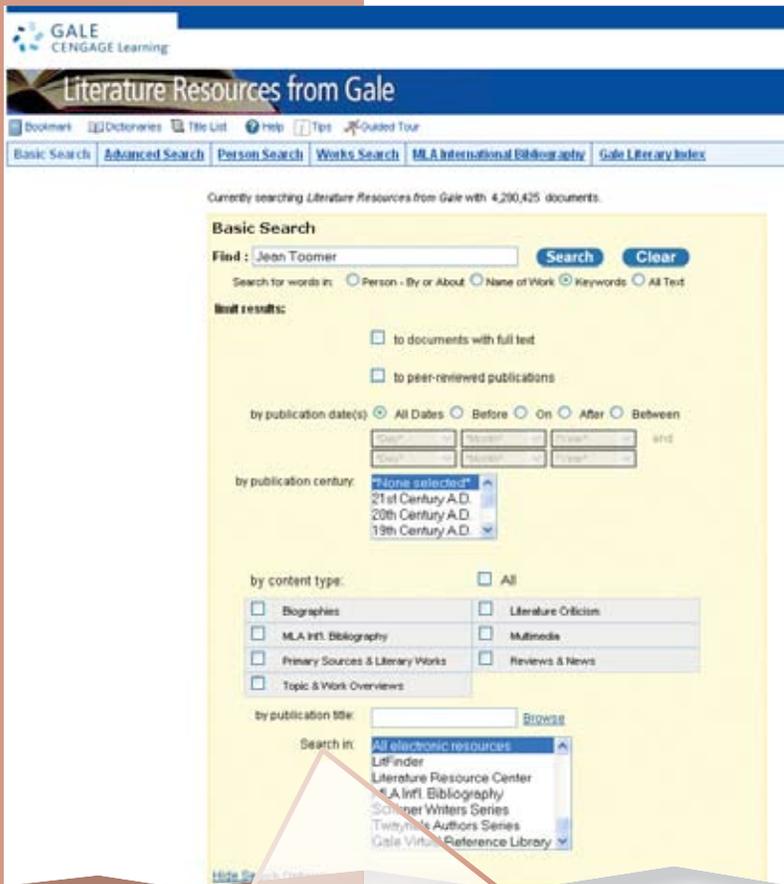
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