With the possible exception of *Huckleberry Finn*, there may not be another novel that has been more discussed or taught in American Literature than *The Great Gatsby*. A staple of high school and college curricula Fitzgerald's most famous novel suffers from the "I already read this" syndrome like very few other novels. But I suspect that many instructors of literature also fall prey to a sense of fatigue with the novel; in the interest of full disclosure, I felt exhaustion and dismay at the prospect of teaching the novel one more time as I planned a recent course on the literature of the 1920s. To alleviate some of my own fatigue, I turned to the volume of the MLA Approaches to Teaching edition on *The Great Gatsby*, edited by Jackson R. Bryer and Nancy P. VanArsdale. As they write in the book's introduction, there is "little commentary" in the "voluminous scholarship and criticism of the novel and its author" that directly considers how to teach it (x). To this end, Bryer and VanArsdale have compiled an engaging volume of essays from scholars that they hope will alleviate the daunting task of teaching Gatsby for novices, but also "intrigue experienced instructors to try alternative approaches" to teach the novel (xii).

In aiding both new and veteran teachers of Fitzgerald's novel, the editors do an excellent job in providing essays that not only detail the historical background of the novel, but also the near-staggering amount of criticism of the novel. For new teachers and scholars of the novel, Jackson R. Bryer's "*The Great Gatsby*: A Survey of Scholarship and Criticism" is an incredibly useful guide. Bryer does yeoman work shifting through nearly ninety years of essays, biographies, scholarly books, and even chapters of books that mention either Gatsby or Fitzgerald in some detail. And while many of the essays in the MLA volume incorporate some element of historical research or context into their discussions of the novel, Kirk Curnutt's "All That Jazz: Defining Modernity and Milieu in *The Great Gatsby*" does a great job of explaining several important historical developments that influenced the production of the novel. Curnutt examines the rise of personality in the early 20th century and notes how the novel presents "characters who revel in the self-conscious …and those who naively assume that their gestures create their real selves" (41). Curnutt also details the rise of mass culture during the 1920s – focusing on how Myrtle and Daisy both frame themselves through magazines and advertising – and the concurrent rise of leisure culture and youth culture during the era. While he admits these contextual topics are only a few lenses by which to analyze the historical context of the novel, Curnutt notes that examining the work through topicality "allows students to view the story as a living link to a past decade whose confluence of changing values and ideals continues to influence our own time" (49).

One of the strengths of the *Gatsby* edition of the MLA Teaching Approaches series is how the editors selected essays that provide strong guidelines for teaching key aspects of the novel. In particular, Cecilia Konchar Farr's essay entitled "Doubting Nick: Reading Nick Reading Gatsby Reading Daisy" serves as an exemplary model for teaching students the often complex and highly abstract notion of the unreliable narrator as she advises us to teach our students to dance with the narrator: believe them when you think it is right, doubt them at other times. Drawing on her experience as a professor at a women's college, Farr
details how her students disliked the women characters in the novel. But by noting to her students that "they buy into Nick and Gatsby's perceptions" of Daisy, she finds their minds are opened to alternative readings of the text (178). By encouraging her students to distrust the narrator, she finds "they engage the text more directly, with less awe" which, in turn, "makes them more comfortable locating themselves and then critically and self-consciously constructing their own readings" (180).

And for those of us who feel a bit tired at the thought of teaching Gatsby again, the edition also includes a number of essays which detail fresh and interesting ways to interact with Fitzgerald's novel. Such an essay is Jonathan N. Barron's piece, "Teaching Regionalism and Class in The Great Gatsby". Building on his experiences teaching in the Upper Midwest and the South, Barron provides some solid recommendations about how to approach the issues of region embedded in the novel. For instance, Barron notes how each of the main characters contemplate their sense of history and class as constructed through their regional identities: Gatsby as a man of the Midwest who is spurned by the Eastern establishment, Daisy as a representative of Southern tradition, and Tom who does not affiliate with the South "or some patrician East" but instead "turns to an even larger affiliation: race" (64). As an instructor from the East Coast who teaches in the Upper Midwest, I not only understood Barron's experiences, but his suggestion to emphasize the regionalism in the novel has opened up several of my own classroom discussions as students ponder the importance of one's region in constructing their ideological framework.

In turn, Robert Beuka describes exploring how to teach the novel through the lens of real estate development in his engaging essay "Love, Loss, and Real Estate: Teaching The Great Gatsby in the Suburban Age". Beuka connects the historical rise of the Gold Coast on the North Shore of Long Island with the conflicted connections "between landscape and a sense of history" (69) within the characters of the novel, such as Nick whose final glance at Gatsby's house suggests "a last effort to maintain an idealized vision of place" that is doomed to failure"(74). Beuka concludes that "for students who have grown up in an age of suburban sprawl, Fitzgerald's depiction in the novel of a landscape in transition might well hold a particular resonance" (74). While students may not be "heartbroken" by the novel's famous last line, Beuka notes that focusing on the importance of place will get students thinking not only about the homogenization of the American landscape, but their own senses of place and their role in history.

Because of the volume's engaging and interesting essays, there is little to criticize about the Gatsby teaching book. Indeed, many of the essays and themes of the book easily can be applied to discussions of Gatsby-related texts that have appeared since the anthology was published; in particular, the plethora of web resources related to the teaching of Gatsby and the 2013 film version of the novel starring Leonardo DiCaprio. As VanArsdale notes in her essay, "The Great Gatsby in the Age of the Internet: Useful Web Sites for Instructors", there are an untold number of web sites of student and teacher produced work that can enliven classroom discussion. But she is quick to note that "savvy teachers should remind their classes to question the credibility and the quality of the information on them" (16). Her advice is not only applicable to the dizzying number of student projects available on resources like YouTube, but also to more professional examinations of The Great Gatsby such as the Crash Course series on the novel featuring the young adult novelist John Green. Similarly, many of the essays point of the rise of industrialism and mass culture in
the context of the novel's writing and setting and it is not difficult to make connections about the impact of technology on society and culture to contemporary students. In addition, an essay like Danuta Fjellestad and Eleanor Wikborg's "Fiction and Film: Teaching Aspects of Narrative in The Great Gatsby", which does a fine job of outlining a plan to teaching the formal differences between the novel and the 1974 version of the novel starring Robert Redford, could be adapted to discussing the most recent mainstream version of the film. Not only would students be more familiar with the Baz Luhrmann directed film, but a discussion of that film could focus on how directorial decisions may or may not contrast with a reader's interpretation of the text.

Overall, Bryer and VanArsdale have compiled a very strong volume that will help instructors find new and engaging approaches with teaching a novel that many of us may have grown tired of discussing. Their edition is one of the strongest in the MLA series.