

American dream

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The meaning of the American dream has changed over time. In its inception it was a set of ideals, such as freedom, opportunity, and equality traditionally held to be available to every American. These ideas were brought forth to show people that all men and women are created equal. This equality was said to be achieved through hard work and dedication. The American dream is something that has been preached in the United States for decades. People from all over the World come to the United States to prosper and create what they believe will be a better life for themselves and their family.

The biggest question today is, does the American Dream even exist anymore? Many different people have argued that it has been over for some time now. Some believe that it still exists, but is much different than it was when it first was presented. One can see the view points of both sides with the evidence that is presented. The American dream may still exist, despite the failing economy and lack of jobs, the downfall of the public school system, the budget deficits, and the warfare overseas. The dream of a better life in America is the reason why this country has so many immigrants, illegal or legal.

There is hope in this country that does not exist in other countries because of the things that can be accomplished in this country that is somewhat impossible in other areas of the world. America is still a place where people can come and have the opportunity, whether they take it or not, to become anything and anybody they want. The dream is still there, it may have been altered since the time of its inception, but people still have the hope of a better life here more so than anywhere else.

The American dream may need to be altered, but it's not evidence to support that it is over entirely. It comes down to who do we as a people put our faith into, the government or ourselves. Employment is down and it may take decades to get it back to the thriving position that it once was. Jobs are becoming more difficult to find and keeps because of the failing economy.

Bob Herbert stated in the year following the official end of the Great Recession in June 2009, foreign-born workers in the United States gained 656, 000 jobs while native-born workers lost 1. 2 million (568). These numbers show the original American dream has does exist for some, but may be nonexistent for American citizens. People come to American to escape the dictatorship, oppression, and lack of opportunity that they had in their own countries. The fact that the hiring of immigrants picked up when the economy was in bad shape shows that people can still come to America and at least still obtain some form of employment, even if it's not a substantial amount of money. American citizens may see the decrease in employment as a dream killer.

Herbert blames the government and their failed promises to make society better for the reasons that the American dream is not what it used to be. Cal Thomas, on the other hand, believes that the government plays their part, but cannot be blamed entirely for the lack of an American dream. He states that setting aside war, which was imposed on America, the eclipse of liberalism's American dream has been largely caused by expanding, encroaching, over-taxing, over-spending, and over-regulating government (569).

He also states that the creation of a government that is out of control, and thus out of touch robs every citizen, preventing fulfillment of the original American dream. As a people we are completely dependent on the government and look to them to make the right decisions for everyone, but Thomas believes that setting forth our own ideals will keep the dream alive. Herbert wants a resurrection of the American dream. Thomas believes that the American dream is basically over.

Herbert wants America to develop a full employment economy that provides jobs for all who want to work at pay that enables workers to enjoy a decent standard of living. It seems as if Herbert believes putting all faith in the government to make better decisions will make the fulfillment of the American dream possible. He believes that all the government is good at is bulldozing money to the very wealthy. He also believes that raising taxes or stop fighting wars will increase the concept of the dream.

The failed promises of making a better school system and creating better job systems will help this dream come to life. Herbert believes the suffering will only be made worse if the nation embarks on a misguided crash program that will undermine recovery in the long run and will make deficit reduction that much harder to achieve. Thomas says the Herbert's version of the American dream is over. Thomas believes putting all faith in a dysfunctional government is not going to help people achieve their dreams.

Thomas believes that people who put all their faith in a politician or whatever party or persuasion can make their life better than individual initiative is displaying cult like faith. Meaning that believing in such obscurities shows a lack of competence for each individual person, basically one person is

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making all the decisions and everyone else is following no matter how insane they sound. Thomas states that the roles for achieving the American dream may no longer be taught, but that does not mean they do not work. He believes that it is up to the American people to instill the original values of being a successful human being to bring back the American dream.

The American dream was built on the ideas that people should study and stay in school; achieving at least an undergraduate degree; avoiding drugs that harm your body and mind; getting married and raising kids; saving and investing for retirement; living within one's means; demonstrating personal honesty and integrity, which comes from character developed in one's youth, usually with a sense of right and wrong once imposed by parents and affirmed by culture. These are the things that have been repeated over and over for decades.

Thomas believes that these ideas that our country was built on will bring America back to the original American dream. Herbert believes that blaming the government and realizing how much of a deep hole we are in financially and economically will somehow bring forth the original notion of the American dream. He rambles on and on about politicians and their lack of creating solid plans to bring the American people out of this hole they have created for us. He talks about the government going in another direction when it comes to education, stating that it was once very important in educating young people.

School systems around the world are being hammered with cutbacks and teachers are being let go left and right because of budget reasons. Although Herbert and Thomas have two very different points of views on the American

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dreams downfall, they both agree that it is not the same as the original American dream. They both know that what we believed to be the American dream for the last 200 years is not what it is today. It is unknown which one of them is correct, but they both make valid points.

It is up to each individual to figure out who to blame for the downfall of the original American dream and how we can as a people resurrect it or count it out completely. It is sad to say that the original American dream may never be the same, but that does not mean that a new one cannot be created or maybe just altering the old one will suffice. Schooling, having a good job, raising a family, and preparing for your retirement are still very important values to teach a person. The government may or may not play a role in helping people complete these tasks, but it's definitely their job to try as well as the American people. As a country we should want to keep this American dream alive.

It is what this country was built on and has been working for years and years. If we want to drag ourselves out of this whole then it is up to the government and everyone else to take responsibility for themselves and what they can do to keep this dream alive. It is not something that can be accomplished by one entity. Like the saying, "It takes a community to raise a child," it also takes a country to keep the American dream alive. One entity cannot exist without the other. It is up to everyone to work together and complete a common goal. Division and pointing the finger will get us nowhere.