

Great wealth does not ensure great happiness

[History](#), [American History](#)



Great Wealth Does Not Ensure Great Happiness The idea that great wealth can bring great unhappiness is evident in John Steinbeck's novella, *The Pearl*. The author uses a several characters and scenes in *The Pearl* to support this theme. The Doctor causes Kino unhappiness when he visits Kino's hut to treat Coyotito for the scorpion sting. The Doctor does this only after learning of Kino's pearl. Although Coyotito appears to be recovering from the sting, the Doctor gives Coyotito "white powder" (31) which causes Coyotito to become very sick. Kino, "remembering the white powder" was "hard and suspicious" of the what the Doctor did (33). Kino was filled with fear and "uncertainty" and "the music of evil throbbed in his head" (34). The Pearl Buyers also bring unhappiness to Kino because they do not offer him a fair price and lie to Kino about his pearl. Saying that it is like fools gold too large and nobody would want it (49). This "perplexed and worried" Kino (49). Also when Kino realizes that the pearl buyers are trying to take "cheat" him, he is filled with "rage" and leaves the buyer's store with his pearl unsold (52). Once again the interaction Kino had concerning the pearl left him miserable and angry. Kino's neighbors were jealous of Kino and one night someone tried to steal the pearl by attacking Kino. Kino fought back and "felt his knife go home, " killing the man (59). Then Kino, with Juana and Coyotito, fled the village, but trackers were sent to find them and to bring Kino to justice. Thus, the pearl resulted in Kino being a wanted criminal and forced him to flee his home. Eventually, the trackers caught up with Kino and his family and, hearing Coyotito cry, thinking it was a coyote pup, fired a shot into the cave that killed Coyotito. Kino killed each of the trackers and returned to village with Juana and his dead son and the pearl, which was "gray, like a

malignant growth" (89). Kino finally sees the pearl as "distorted and insane" and flings the pearl "with all his might" back into the sea (89-90). John Steinbeck clearly wishes the reader to understand that great wealth can bring great unhappiness and he uses various characters and scenes to communicate his belief. The idea has implication beyond *The Pearl*. Particularly, many of the richest people are reported to be some of the unhappiest people as they strive to maintain their wealth and their social position that their wealth brings.