

# California dream



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In the late 19th century, the discovery of gold in California drew thousands of people in from across the United States and all around the world in a feverish rush to strike rich. Many left everything behind to dare venture into the final frontier of the wilderness that was California. Word quickly spread about a land showered by sunshine and ripe with gold ready for the picking. As a result, the California dream developed and quickly romanticized imaginations all across the world with its promise of easy money and lure of adventure.

Today, the California dream stands high like the palm trees that adorn Hollywood boulevard; captivating the hearts of people who wish to live big like movie stars. However, due to overcrowding, unemployment and high living costs, the California dream seems to be nothing more than fool's gold. California currently finds itself in an economic state of crises that simply makes the California dream unaffordable. It is virtually impossible for the average person to achieve their California dream. Overcrowding has become a serious issue in California.

The more people that immigrate to California, the greater the strain becomes on its already scarce resources. As a result, there is less opportunity for people to fulfill their dreams. It's not hard to miss the signs. From jam-packed freeways to overcrowded classrooms, this problem is very much real and is a cause of huge inconvenience for its residents. This burden weighs down all Californians who aspire for a greater quality of life. For example, students are forced to compete not only for seats in classrooms, but for instruction from overwhelmed teachers as well.

When people can't get the right education and skills needed for higher paying jobs they dream of, they're left with no other choice but to compete with one another once again for low paying jobs. The unemployment rate in California is amongst the highest in the country. There are simply too many people all competing for the same jobs. According to Rawls, "promise and paradox are at the center of the California dream"(29) and that's because the more people who subscribe to the same dream, the less likely it is for them to realize it.

The infamy of the California dream can be attributed to the overproduction of Hollywood blockbusters. Its misrepresentation lures people into California with hopes of achieving the unrealistic goals they believe the California dream is about. As a result, the value of the California dream has become inflated and rendered its job markets oversaturated with under-qualified and ill-prepared candidates. Many Californian cities were ranked as some of the most expensive places to live in The United States.

The high cost of living can be attributed to California's beautiful natural landscapes and popular urban locations such as hip San Francisco, the famous Hollywood and Los Angeles. As a result of this popularity, real estate cost have skyrocketed way beyond what the average worker can afford. A minimum wage job in the city would not be enough to support a decent quality of life. Many of those who come to California to pursue this dream are met with the harsh reality of high rent cost, and low paying jobs.

Many end up returning to where they originally came from, and those who remain here have little choice but to shack up with others to help ease the

burden of the high cost or face serious risk of homelessness. This is the result of too many people interested in the same location to fulfill the same dream of the same job. As ling-ling would put it “ California needs a time-out to solve many problems that are heightened by exploding population”(96). Many of the issues that California faces such as overcrowding, unemployment and high living cost are linked to one another.

This chain of problems has entangled itself around the California dream; weighing down anybody who holds on to its promise of a better life. Rawls so romantically states “ The California dream-whatever its present form-draws its power from universal needs. Founded on expectation and hope, the California dream promises to fulfill our deepest longings for opportunity and success...”(23). However, in its present state, California cannot support the very dream it was founded on back during the gold rush.