

What upwards within  
society, the american  
dream is



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What is the AMERICAN DREAM? I concluded the matter of dreaming about lifes basics wants that are exclusive to North America. The American Dream is the following: Go to college, get a good job, and finally get your own family. If we think about it, the American Dream is indeed a UNIVERSAL DREAM. The concept of the American Dream is created by this value system. The American Dream is intended to be a way of life attainable to all Americans.

Whatever maybe the case, the act of trying to escape reality and the result such an act brings, is evident throughout the three novels Jews without money, by Michael Gold, Street Corner Society by William Whyte, and Passing, by Nella Larsen. All three of these books confront the myth of the American Dream. The American Dream can either be a reality or a nightmare depending upon the cultural prejudices and availability of freedom. Individuals who are united through some common bond, which may be religion social status of color, create a group or class of people. While individuals are subject to racial prejudices, which often makes up upward mobility not possible. Without equal opportunities to move upwards within society, the American Dream is not attainable.

But it is possible in cases where people are willing to sacrifice their heritage culture etc. Nella Larsen, show us through this novel, that if people want, they can achieve the American Dream, but they would have to pay a price for it. This is especially true of Clare Kendry. Her passing is motivated by her desire to improve the conditions of her socioeconomic life.

She is successful in achieving her American Dream, but in the end she does face the consequences of her actions. She manages to rise from being a poor girl to settling down in a well household. Using her white skin color and blond hair as commodities, she escapes the reality of her true character. She gained wealth and respect in the community through marrying an affluent successful white man. But the truth is that she paid the price of passing because she couldn't express who she was and her true identity in the fear of being caught and then left aside abandoned from the whites and the black communities.

In her case, her decision to pass was self-initiated. Clare was afraid to face everyone, especially her husband, with her blackness. When one cannot stand in front of a mirror and except him or herself, that person is bound to be doomed.

In Clare's case it resulted in her death. So it can be said, that in this case Clare achieved the dream of being accepted into society and a well off rich husband, but in the end she did pay the price for that sacrifice she made. *Jews Without Money* is a novel of life of Jewish immigrants in the tenements of New York City's Lower East Side in the early part of this century. It's a day-in-the-life tale of thieves, gangsters and honest folks just trying to get by in a new country.

The novel *Jews without money* by Michael Gold explores the fundamental discrepancy between the American Dream v/s the American Reality due to the warping of poverty. The immigrant Jews step from steerage in search of the American dream and instead find themselves crowded in filthy, roach-

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ridden tenements, at the mercy of factory owners, and gangsters (the American Reality). Social depression arising due to extreme poverty led to the establishments of ghettos a completely new lifestyle. Thus the fundamental discrepancy between the American Dream v/s the American Reality exists due to the existence of poverty. Poverty seems to be the underlying cause of every misfortune in life, and thus even in their make believe world, everything they vainly want is due to poverty and nothing else.

The novel displays different forms of struggles that immigrants go through in order to escape the reality. Michael Gold wishes to be rich, but he is not able to fulfill his dreams and he believes that the American Dream is a lie. His family is unable to lift itself from the bottom of the ladder and prosper.

One of their main struggle, is