

Example of essay on american dream

[Art & Culture](#), [American Dream](#)



The concept of the American dream can be seen in the “ Snows of Kilimanjaro” by Ernest Hemingway and “ The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock” by T. S. Eliot. The concept of the American dream is the belief that with the needed work and dedication, a person can rise from rags to riches. It is possible to reach to top of the society and earn a lot of money. All that one needs to do is work hard. However, in the before mentioned pieces of writing, this concept undergoes criticism. The writers show that in order to reach this dream one often needs to sacrifice something else, something that is too valuable to sacrifice. Without this sacrificed object, the person cannot truly be happy. This idea is proven through the characters of the protagonists of the stories.

In the “ Snows of Kilimanjaro” the main character has reached the top. Though working hard he is now able to live with as much wealth as wanted and a lot more than needed. However, the work that he has done is not one that he enjoys. “ After he no longer meant what he said, his lies were more successful with women than when he had told them the truth”. (Hemingway) His wife is richer than all the rest of the women that came before. She is his triumph. His work was making women fall in love with him. Even though it was never his main goal, the urge to reach to peak kept pushing him toward the money and away from his real dream. He had always wanted to write. But now it is too late. “ Now he would never write the things that he had saved to write”. (Hemingway) With the approach of death, the protagonist realizes just how much he had paid to reach this wealth. He should have done it differently. But now it is too late. “ If he lived by a lie he should try to die by it.” (Hemingway) The American dream that he was trying to reach,

ended up pulling him in the direction of unhappiness and the inability to be himself with others.

“ The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock” also aims to show a character, that after reaching the top, loses the meaning of his life. He had lived all his life with the aim of reaching this higher society. But now that he has finally entered this high-class society, he does not want it. He has become familiar with all of it. “ And I have known the arms already, known them all” (Eliot) He sees it all as unneeded now and thinks of the life he could have been living. “ And would it have been worth it, after all”. (Eliot) Rather than gaining something from this case, he has only lost. “ How his hair is growing thin!” (Eliot) He has measured out his life in coffee spoons and only now, when it is too late, understands that this American dream is not for him. It is simply to worth what he has given up.

Both Hemingway and Eliot criticize the American dream concept. They emphasize that with the race to reach the riches, people often kill themselves morally and forget to follow their real dreams. Because, after all, it is more important to do what you love and what makes you human, rather than do all that is needed and give up all that you can just to be rich.

Sources

1. Ernest Hemingway “ The Snows of Kilimanjaro”
2. T. S. Eliot “ The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock”