

Introduction
greatness dinesh
d'souza explains why
immigrants



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Introduction

D'Souza strives to explain why people are attracted to America through some physical observations and opinions stated by the immigrants. On the other hand, Schlesinger uses a doctrinal approach to discuss the concept of America's greatness.

Dinesh D'Souza on America's greatness

Dinesh D'Souza explains why immigrants are drawn to America in such great numbers. He explains that this is one country in which even the poor live a relatively comfortable life.

People from poor or developing countries around the world are eager to make it into the US because everyone seems to be living contentedly. He cites an example of an anti-Reagan administration's depiction of the poor during an economic recession. When the Soviets viewed this documentary, they did not sympathize with the poor in Reagan's administration; they envied them. Most were surprised that the so called poor Americans had cars, microwave ovens and other material possessions. This was a far cry from what the poor in the Soviet Union could afford. Even the writer's friend described the US as a country in which "poor people are fat".

D' Souza believes that America is different from other nations in the world because of the lack of aristocracy. This is one place where the poor will not be at the beck and call of the rich. In fact, life for the rich is much better in other countries than it is in the US.

He contrasts this with situations in India where a rich person is spoiled for choice when selecting people who will cater to his needs. D' Souza (95) affirms that it is the egalitarian beliefs of the American people that make equality a reality. Almost everyone is treated with respect in the US even if they perform seemingly minor services such as waiting in restaurants. In fact, the American state has extended the advantages of affluence to almost everyone in society. In other words, most people in the US have access to medical healthcare even without insurance. They are educated and have a great chance at tertiary education.

The poor are well dressed and do not have to expose their nakedness because of lack. Some of them can even go for holidays around the world or purchase high class products. D' Souza further explains that immigrants are not just drawn to the US for material pursuits; most respect America owing to its rich democratic culture. This is a country which allows every man an opportunity to create his destiny regardless of one's background. Such values are captured in the concept of the American dream and will keep drawing more people to this great land.

Immigrants often contrast the lives of the poor in their own countries with lives of the poor in the US and realize that they will be better off in America. They are drawn to the fact that equal opportunity is presented to all in the US irrespective of one's birth. D'Souza contrasts this to his place of birth i. e. India.

This is a land where one's access to opportunity is determined by one's caste. He was lucky to come from a higher caste because that meant that he

could live and work in relatively better positions than someone from a lower caste or tribe. In the US, it is possible for people of the same family to live completely different lifestyles because they have the liberty to do so. The US is also appealing in terms of its social values; it is a place that gives everyone freedom of choice. People can decide on their social life because they choose who they will marry or what opinions they will hold. The same cannot be said about other countries of the world. In India, one's spouse is selected even before one reaches puberty.

Indeed, the US is a country where one can exercise free will without being bogged down by traditional or cultural obligations.

How Schlesinger expounds on this

Arthur Schlesinger wrote a book called “ Liberalism in America: a note for Europeans” and he basically wanted to do the same thing that D' Souza did; explain why America is so unique. In attempting to do so, Schlesinger believes that the US is unique because of its concept of liberalism. He asserts that Americans were born into freedom. They did not have to fight for their ideals through a social revolution because it was there by default. In other words, the American is a gradualist who looks to solve problem by reason rather than revolutions. America does not have the baggage of other European countries which had long histories of injustice and corruption.

Americans had the liberty to curve out their ideals without having to radically alter social and economic conditions. Schlesinger therefore puts a name to the assertions made by D ' Souza or he gives a firm insight into the observations made by this author. D'Souza (115) explained that people were

attracted to the US because of the equal opportunity that it offers all its citizens. However, D'Souza did not explain why this was the case.

Schlesinger therefore expounds on the former mentioned author's ideas by explaining how this came about or the reasons behind the American dream and the freedoms in the country.

Schlesinger (4) further says that America lacked one distinct feature that made it so difficult to get ahead in some of those other wealthy countries and that is feudalism. Many European nations were confined by feudalism because it defined who could access wealth and could not. The rich were born into wealth and continued to be wealthy because they had the ability to control political and social conditions. Feudalism therefore took away the ability of European governments to restore equality amongst their citizens.

D'Souza made this same observation in his article when he said that America is characterized by the absence of aristocracy which is quite rampant in other parts of the world. However, he did not explain how this ties in with American values.

Schlesinger forms a bridge between the social order prevalent in the US and its relation to American values. In the book " Liberalism in America"

Schlesinger, explains that liberals in America have this firm belief in the concept of change. They suppose that society must continually strive to improve; an issue that can be done by applying reason to solve economic and social challenges. In order to understand this better, one can contrast liberals to conservatives. Conservatives tend to oppose change as much as is reasonably possible. They hold that change will threaten power or wealth distribution especially because things are already going so well. Therefore,
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the American liberal is always someone who strives to improve society. This is someone who believes that it is worthwhile to pursue such improvements even if the results will be marginal.

The author further explains that in America, liberalism is more committed to the end goal rather than the doctrine. Its objective is to accord equal opportunity to all. Sometimes this can occur in the form of a *laizzes faire* approach as was the case during Jefferson's era but in other circumstances it can occur in the form of continued government regulation as was the case during the industrial era. In this regard, Schlesinger is illustrating that there is a firm correlation between American social – economic values and their propensity towards equal opportunity.

He has therefore given a good background explanation of why Americans appear more respectful of one another irrespective of social status or why one can rise up the ranks of any business or corporation irrespective of the family or birthplace.

Conclusion

D'Souza talks about the reasons behind immigrants' positive perception of the United States. He mentions equal opportunity and freedoms but does not clarify where these freedoms come from and why they exist. Schlesinger bridges that gap by giving these values a name i.

e. American liberalism and by explaining where they were derived from and what causes them to exist.

Works cited

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