

Describing American Dreams in Terms of Myths and Politics

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Abstract

Who wouldn't want to pursue the American Dream? I, you, everyone, and anybody would want it. "The American ideal has turned into a nightmare." This research paper examines the notion of the "American dream" in terms of myth and politics, success and failure, illusion and disillusionment, using examples from numerous works from the twentieth century. The American dream is described as an equal chance for all people to do anything that would improve and enrich their lives. It's a common occurrence in American literature. The American dream appears to fail in one's life, as in *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald, the helpless and feeble Willy Loman from Arthur Miller's *The Death of a Salesman*, on the basis of 'psychomachia,' on the other hand, the determination and enthusiasm of the old man from Ernest Hemingway's *The Old Man and The Sea*.

Keywords: *Myth; politics; psychomachia; American;*

I. INTRODUCTION

The culture of today is varied. The American dream is stated more than commonly as a result of the United States' progress and the rising number of students studying in the United States. Some individuals used to believe that if they worked hard enough, they might make a better life for themselves. To prove their value, several people even left their countries to come to the United States. The American ideal, on the other hand, progressively showed its flaws as society evolved and changed. The primary problem is that the American dream depicts the polar opposite of real life and societal regulations. The American ideal, for example, is that if one works hard enough, one will prosper. In reality, because society is varied, and success is influenced by a variety of circumstances, this theory is unrealistic. The pursuit of happiness is used as an example in this thesis because it is one of the films that best reflects the American ideal. Furthermore, this article can help others comprehend the core of the American dream and its impact on individuals. As a result, the research focuses on the growth of the American dream, the reasons for its rise, a comprehension of a movie's narrative and characters, a complete picture of the American dream, and so on. The study's relevance lies in a dialectical view of the American dream as well as a deeper comprehension of it.

In today's culture, the limited interpretation of the American dream is that if you work hard and don't give up, you will realise your own worth and achieve prosperity. The basic idea behind this notion is for people to rely on their own power to overcome obstacles rather than relying on the help of others or a specific social class. The American dream, in its most basic form, is the concept of a democratic, equitable, and free society. We perceive it as something we want to do and feel we can do. It's like an image of a bourgeois and nuclear family living happily in the countryside, like *Leave it to Beaver*. This family may represent the American ideal for many people. Not only that, but we may also view certain films that are unmistakably pro-American. This film is about perseverance and effort in the search of happiness. The implication is that hardworking people's ambitions would ultimately come true if they persevere in their efforts and live a happy life.

II. REASONS FOR THE RISE OF THE AMERICAN DREAM

Many people in the United States believe in the American dream. It is the cultural norm in the United States. During the Great Depression of the 1930s in the United States. In his epic work *America*, James Adams originally proposed

the American dream. He wanted to improve the lives of all Americans so that they could achieve the American dream, and that was his greatest contribution to world thought. Since then, the American dream has spread throughout the country, and it has become a universal belief for all Americans. The rise of the American dream, on the other hand, occurred after the two world wars. Unlike the European dream, the United States has become the most profitable country on the planet. At that time, the American dream was on the rise, and by the end of the Marshall Plan, it had reached its pinnacle. The United States guided the future of globalisation as the largest economy in the era of globalisation.

The American dream has progressed through three stages of maturation throughout history. The traditional American dream, also known as the "Primitive gold rush dream," is the first stage. The majority of those who immigrated to America in the eighteenth century were puritans from England and poor or even bankrupt small farmers from Germany who were socially and economically depressed. However, when they arrived in America, there was no colony at the time. They considered equality politics to be extremely important. Democracy has also become a pressing issue for them to address. As a result, it was established at that point that equal rights are an important part of the American dream. Because the United States was not wealthy at the time and relied heavily on traditional agriculture, As a result, land symbolised wealth, and the more land they had, the happier they were. Some people began looking for gold in the United States at the end of the 18th century and the beginning of the 19th century. The American dream took on a strong golden hue when some lucky people became wealthy overnight by panning for gold.

After the civil war, the second stage, known as the dream of personal success, began to industrialize. New York, Chicago, and other emerging industrial cities were seeing an influx of European immigrants. Edison, for example, founded General Electric as a result of his own invention. Ford, who invented the assembly line, and Rockefeller, who made his fortune from oil extraction. Many of them were born into poverty and rose to prominence through their own efforts. Steve Jobs of Apple, Bill Gates of Microsoft, and others became the new wave of the American dream in the information age of the twenty-first century. Their success demonstrated to people at the time that no matter how old you are, you can succeed if you are willing to work hard and use your own wisdom. However, the individual's power appears to be much diminished at this point. Everyone agrees on the importance of putting their own destiny in the hands of the organisation in order to achieve success, perhaps for reasons related to success stories.

The third stage is called the migration dream. People then saw investing in America as another way to achieve the American dream. What people learned at that time was that someone who wanted to immigrate into the United States only needed \$500,000. This was the least demanding way to achieve the American dream. The Marriott Hotel project in San Francisco was a good example. This project caused a lot of repercussions in the community. Moreover, in this stage, the American dream was the new value of transcendentalism, emphasising individual personality and paying less attention to wealth and social status. However, generally speaking, the American dream is too idealised and unrealistic, so the extreme prosperity of the American dream and its decline is an inevitable social phenomenon.

III. MYTH AND LACK OF OPTIMISM

Fitzgerald goes on to convince the audience that the American ideal is impossible. "Moral growth, Gatsby's life of illusion, the withering of the American Dream, and the parallels between the 1920s and the 1980s" are among the book's ethical themes. Fitzgerald's fiction is then linked to the 1990s through current social science and philosophical evidence that addresses Fitzgerald's concerns from the 1920s." Jay Gatsby, the protagonist, epitomises the 'American dream,' as a self-structured man who succeeds in lifting himself out of a slum, only to meet his demise in a hell of miseries. However, when reading the story, one thing that isn't mentioned is the fact that Gatsby earned his wealth by any means necessary, and that it was easy and correct for him to consider illegal means in order to achieve the American dream. People are more than likely to take the easy route to easy fortune. The novel casts doubt on the notion of the American dream. "Fitzgerald's singular expression of the American dream lacks the optimism" that he assures in his work "The Great Gatsby." What is the significance of Chapter 5 in The Great Gatsby? Nick sets up their meeting. Daisy and Gatsby reunite, and they explore and experience themselves; in the end, Gatsby is disappointed because he had planned few ideas to impress her, but she was already impressed and satisfied by Gatsby's wealth, material, house, and wealth. As a result, he may no longer have anything to impress.

In the novel, Fitzgerald depicts irony. Daisy appears to have found love in her reunion with Gatsby, according to the readers; this reveals that the case is simply leading to a different scenario. Daisy's tears were not tears of joy, but tears of pure satisfaction for all of his material possessions. Those fortunes and fortunes were amassed by Gatsby at great risk in order to lift him out of poverty and reclaim his love, which Daisy had betrayed him. Daisy had recently become aware of Gatsby's genuine sentiments. She is a materialistic young lady who is unaware of Gatsby's struggles to become wealthy, despite the fact that it was through illegal means. All he did was for love. Fitzgerald has tragicized the irony of Gatsby's death; none of his friends, including those who regularly partied with him only to benefit themselves, attend his funeral.

In terms of symbolism, Pearson says Fitzgerald is similar to Hemingway. To begin charting the symbolisms in Gatsby, this paper will start with Gatsby, who exudes endless passion and vigour. Green represents Gatsby's hope, and the wealth he acquires aids him in reuniting with Daisy. The clock can be interpreted as the time Gatsby spent with Daisy, and now Gatsby is making up for lost time in order to seize the opportunity. Daisy is a symbolic character who has been included. Gatsby, like few other novels, does not have a happy ending; Gatsby includes his love in his American dream, but is betrayed and killed in the end. He may have achieved his dream of wealth and riches, but there was no permanence, and he had not found his lady love. After reading Gatsby, you will understand why Fitzgerald and the American dream are not synonymous. "In the sea, harpoon is the power of fishermen. Simply put, the loss of the harpoon represents Santiago's loss of power and strength in the face of the sea. He smashed it with his blood-stained hands, wielding a powerful harpoon. "He took my harpoon and all the rope, too," he reasoned, "and now my fish bleeds again, and there will be others." Santiago uses his harpoon to fight sharks. Santiago's physical condition deteriorated as he grew older, but his eyes remained the same colour. Those eyes represent Santiago's "unwavering determination."

IV. PSYCHOMACHIA

"The Death of a Salesman" can be "interpreted as 'psychomachia'... a jumbled mixture of expressionism and realism," according to the playwright. Willy's mentality could not be stabilised, and he could see his own doom; Willy has such a low human conscience that he murders himself in order to pay off his obligations and pursue the American dream. "Why must everyone conquer the world?" Willy hears Linda's (wife) voice. You're popular, and the boys adore you." Despite the fact that his son Biff recognises his father as a con artist with large debts, he supports him anyway. Willy, at the age of 63, is a shambles. "Willy Loman's adultery, which has destroyed the strongest value in Willy's life by alienating his son, Biff." He's on the verge of being fired. Linda is an ever-supportive and loving wife; Biff is taken aback by his father's affair; he loses trust and faith in him and begins to suspect him throughout. "Fitzgerald embodied the fluid polarities of American experience in his tissues and nervous system: success and failure, illusion and disillusion, dream and nightmare." Fitzgerald can be orthodox and even formulistic at times. The spiritual life of Gatsby is compared to T.S. Eliot's Wasteland.

The Old Man and the Sea by Ernest Hemingway reminds us of the distinction between "how something appears" and "who someone is." After a half-hour or so of fighting with the massive Marlin on the second day's sunset, the old man Santiago, a Cuban fisherman, takes a break, leaning against the edge of the boat, staring up at the sky, tired and exhausted physically but mentally strong. "Everything about him was old except his eyes, which were the colour of the sea and were bright and unflappable." Santiago is brave and surreal, self-conscious and irrational, and he gives everything he has to each work he is given. He isn't concerned about the passage of time. He returns from the sea with Marlin after eighty-four days, but fails to bring fish or meat. The tired old guy makes arrangements to return to the water in the morning.

V. CONCLUSION

When comparing and contrasting these two personalities, Santiago and Willy Loman, it is clear that they both lead in opposite directions. These characters investigate diverse human psychologies, as well as how one may manipulate events and outcomes based on one's own willpower. This represents Santiago's never-ending efforts to capture the huge Marlin, the sole fish he had set his sights on. His tenacity in pursuing the fish ensures that he catches it and, thankfully, survives. Age does not determine strength; rather, it is an individual's willpower that defines them.

When man approaches the shore and understands his previous struggle, suffering, effort, and all of life's challenges, the only thing left to do is dive into the sea and be rewarded with a prize as big as the ocean. When the past appears to be empty, with no fight, agony, or sorrow, but live with ease, unlawful deeds, and sedentary living, which leads to final failure, as in the case of Gatsby. Taking a hard decision with a lack of commitment and willpower is doomed to fail, and bad human awareness, damaging delusions like Willy, would prompt the quick conclusion of life, leaving the entire life to be recalled as a coward. There is no such thing as a dream without suffering. The definition of the American dream differs depending on one's life circumstances. It might be a legend or a historical fact.

VI. REFERENCES: -

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