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English 1010/ 11:30 class

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Synthesis/Exploration

Final

12/6/2012

Is the American Dream Achievable Today?

Is the American dream achievable today? This is a question many of us Americans have asked ourselves. But what is the American dream? Well the American dream is just ideas and values that many people have practice in order to achieve financial prosperity and these ideas and values can mean something different for everyone. So the basic idea of the American dream is to work hard and achieve financial prosperity and lead a happy life. But because of recent economic hardships this country has faced, the idea of the American Dream for some is an idea that does not work anymore and for others is an idea that can still be used today. So is the American dream achievable today? Or is it an idea that only worked for Americans in the past and does not work now. This question is an important one today because we all want to be successful and live happy and be financially secured. Also these ideas and values have been great ones to follow. So in the following there are two perspectives one is that the American dream is achievable which a positive perspective and the other the American Dream is not achievable this is the negative perspective.

The first source that has a positive perspective is an article by Jon Meacham “keeping the Dream Alive”. Jon Meacham discusses the ideas of the American dream and its historical background and its significance. He discusses how the ideas of the American dream being faced by great challenges today with the economic hardships this country has endured and still will endure. He then writes about the ideas of the American dream and where they come from. For example he says the term American Dream was coin by James Truslow Adams who was an historian. Meacham then goes into great detail of the ideas of the American dream through historical analysis. He discusses how the ideas and values of the American dream have played a big role in the shaping of American before its common use. For example he talks about how these ideas influenced many Europeans in the colonization of America especially the founding of Jamestown. As well he discusses these ideas changing through the 1930’s, 1960’s and all the way to the present. In the end of the article he concludes that the American dream being kept alive is up to the people.

Another source that had a positive perspective on the American dream is a report by David Azerrad and Rea S. Hederman Jr. “Defending the Dream: Why Income Inequality Doesn’t Threaten Opportunity”. These writers discuss and analyze what is the American dream in their ideas and values which were succeeding financially and creating a better future for their children etc. Also they discuss the American dream and its relation to the government as well they discuss how these ideas work in our economy. They go into great detail on how these ideas work and their significance to our economic system. They outline their main points into different sections which gives this source very detailed information. They discuss also about how the rich being rich does not mean that opportunity for the poor has become less. They state that because of liberalism and an ideology of poor workmanship and indulgence has cause the

people to have things handed to them instead of working hard for them. So in the end of their report the solution they express was that the American dream will not be fixed fast but if the people encourage good work ethic and respond to bad government ideas on the economy the American dream can be preserved.

In his essay “The American Dream: Dread, Alive, or on Hold?” Brandon King discusses the state of the American dream and whether it is alive or dead today. Brandon King discusses the harsh realities of the economy this country faces. Brandon King then gives his position on the subject “I believe that the ideals and values of the American Dream are still very much alive.” (Brandon King pg. 572) King then discusses the government’s role in the American dream issue, being that it has both caused its setbacks but as well helping in keeping it going. Brandon King then concludes that good policies from the government and hard work from the people will keep this dream going.

Another essay that agrees that the American Dream can be achieved is by Cal Thomas “Is the American Dream Over?” Thomas discusses and responds to Bob Herbert’s “Hiding from Reality” essay. He goes on to counter Herbert’s claims on the subject also he talks about how bad government policies have hurt the American dream. Thomas then claims how the American dream can be achieved by following its basic ideas and values. Which even if not taught today these values and ideas can still be useful. Cal Thomas then concludes that “Unrestrained Liberalism” (Brandon King pg. 570) is what caused the problems for the American dream and the solution to them is ultimately up to us.

In his article “The American Dream’s Empty Promise” by Robert J. Samuelson. This article has an opposing perspective on the subject. Samuelson discusses how the ideas of the

American dream do more harm than good. He says this because the ideas and values of the American dream do not fit in our reality. He says this because the problem with the American dream is that the United States has made it hard for that dream to be fulfilled because of its bad policies in the past. He discusses how education today might not be enough to support the ideas of the American dream than it did in the past. Samuelson then concludes that the American dream does not change or help solve real issues in this country that would need greater concern.

In conclusion these different perspectives on the American dream have weighed heavily on me. Especially the ones that had a pro American dream feel. Like in the essays by Brandon King, Cal Thomas, and the article by Jon Meacham as well the report by David Azerrad and Rea S. Hederman jr. This is so because from them I agree that bad government policies have hurt the American dream also that poor work culture has made people wanting the government to fix the American dream problems and not be more involved in how we can fix these problems. But also the negative perspectives have made me agree with their points like in Robert J. Samuelson's article have made me realize that the American dream may do more harm than good but I disagree that we should get over them. So in the end is the American dream achievable today and my answer would be yes because the term American dream has been a part of our history and the American experience I feel that the American dream is just transforming into what challenges it faces.