

## THE AMERICAN MYTH: A REALITY OR MYTH

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**Dr. Sanjeev Kumar**

Asst. Prof. (English)

D.A.V. P.G. College

Bulandshahar

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### **Abstract:**

The American Dream has been a very important term in American literature always forming the background and the themes of several literary pieces. The aim of the present paper is to explain the term; its origin from the settlers specially the protestants ever migrated to America, their beliefs regarding it; to explain whether it is a reality or myth, illusion or disapproval for example, writers like Arthur Miller in the Death of A salesman disapproves it as a reality in American society. The paper also tries to neglects its root philosophy that "it people work hard, will be successful and god is happy."But the paper here disapproves the American myth as a reality partially for there are Americans who worked hard and succeeded, but at the same time there are some people also who work hard, but remained failed to achieve success in life.

**Keywords:** reality, myth, Americans etc

To understand the term we have to focus certain things as what does it means. Where does it come from? What were the American Values to which it is connected to and different concepts about it, myth vs reality and then look at criticism on it or what is it today and also the representation in literature.

What is the American Dream.?

The main meaning of the American Dream means it does not matter where you are from what school you went to or, how much money your parents have. What matter is if you work hard, you will achieve success? You can become anything a rich business person, a politician or some other leader the only thing you need is hard work and when you will achieve your goal none will ask your back ground it's up to you if you live a successful life, it's your fault if you don't. We can look at certain sentences as for us. You can make it from rags to riches from dishwasher to millionaire, but where all these thought came from and to know it goes back to the earliest immigrants or settlers to this land the most important group was the prostantants and it was their philosophy "if people work hard will be successful and god is happy". According to

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their ethics every person is responsible for his own life. We should not rely on others to our work for us. The reality is that there are so many great people that if they would come to America they could get a better life. Let us discuss a little more about the basic of the American values closely connected to the American dream. The American Values that shaped the American lives, have their origin in the secular past namely - the freedom of the individual which in history mainly refers to their religious freedom. Today, it stands for freedom of speech, freedom to live life without any type of discrimination, self-reliance, self discipline and self-efficiency. It is very similar that every body should take care for himself rather than relying on anybody else and all these four values together with hard work go back to the American dream. If you work hard and follow this, you will succeed in your job in life. Everything that is discussed until now is the basic understanding about American dream. That the whole world is a dream tells quietly what it is a dream only.

The American dream is both a myth or reality. That is the question that if everybody could get achieve success by hard work, he or she is absolutely great, but and success in many cases is money and this is not the things are. Surely to some people the American dream came to true, for example - Arnold Schwarzenegger he was born in Europe and immigrated to U.S. and he was good at fitness and body building and after some time he became an actor is a famous celebrity latter on he become a politician. There are more stories like this. These were celebrities who born in poor families but become famous in many ways for these people the American dream in its real material meaning come true, but apart from these lucky ones, there are millions of people who have not been successful in the world of work and success. There are Americans who are not living in American dream and ever if they work hard.

This leads us to the criticism of the American dream and its situation today. Many people criticized American dream theory because it is untrue and makes people believe in things which we not likely and it gives unrealistic hopes of life. In the U.S. A. many people are poor especially minorities – African - Americans people belonging to African – Americans groups. Many people get bad education and bad job opportunities. Great historical stories among these Martin Luther King, Mal Colm X spoke about the fact that American dream is not set fairly among all people and some groups discriminated in succeeding in anything and this is not only the minorities group that suffered alone, but there are several people out of jobs due to ongoing economic crises. Several people are in huge debts and nobody knows when they will be paid off. Even some people have jobs even then they cannot afford health insurance which is currently one of the political problems that need to be taken critically.

Now, the question is whether American dream is reality or not is certainly one of the major themes in literature and music. About these themes there is *The great Gatsby* written by Francis Scott Fitzgerald sets about the America of 1920s and discusses a rise and fall of a millionaire and the second book is *Angela's Ashes* the novel was written by Frank Mc. Court and tells about poverty of immigrants and in music the theme of American dream is hurt in some of the madona's songs.

In a national survey of more than 1'300 adults only 6 percent of Americans ranked 'Wealth' as their first or the second definition of American dream, 5 percent named "a good life for my family", while thirty four percent put in financial security',

The American dream was also explained in declaration of Thomas Jefferson. There it is meant that life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness are self-evident rights of the individual.

"We hold truths to be self-evident, that all are created equal, that are endowed by their creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness".

The American dream is represented by three characters in the play *The Death of a Salesman*. Willy Loman is an energetic man gripped by American dream. He is a travelling sales man. He has to travel around and sell things for himself in New York film. He is forced to earn money by selling things and without his business he can't afford his living. He commits suicide in the hope of earning twenty thousand dollars in life insurance money for his wife and two grown sons. In the beginning wily seems to be indicated loser thought that is also implies in his name too. Low man that implies that a person who stands at the bottom of the social hierarchy. He is not only "loser, but also a dispirited person lost in the myth of success. In All his life he has dreamt the dream of big success – the American dream. His key to success seems to be very easy; "Be liked and you will never want" (Page 34, Line 9 F.).Thus, the play disapproves the American dream as a reality and tries to prove it as a mere myth.

### References:

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