

A Distraction from the Truth

The social ideal that each American is given the same opportunity to achieve financial stability is a reality for some, but this dream will forever remain in the hopeful minds of the average person as nothing more than a fantasy. The American dream is simply a distraction implanted in the brain of the worker to keep him focused on the greater good of the country.

Whether or not you achieve the perfect American life isn't even up to you. You can work your whole life to achieve your dreams but fall short to the person who either worked a little harder or was given a hand out.

Richard Oden was interviewed by *PARADE* Magazine about his recent termination from his company after his development of pneumonia. Oden is quoted with saying he was "unable to return to work by a given date" (Oden Parade Magazine). His company then fired him at the age of 54 even after Oden had no previous problems with his work.

Richard Oden was merely a pawn, a dupe to the belief that hard work and determination is all you need to get anywhere in life.

The dream will always be out of reach to the outsider. An outsider being a citizen who doesn't live in the upper class and doesn't have all the advantages required to living a perfect life. The dream slips away from the outsider much like how the advantages of America drift away from African-American, Claude McKay. McKay writes in his poem entitled "America" that opportunity slips away "like priceless treasure sinking in the sand" (Par. 3 McKay). McKay says this to symbolize all that America has to offer her inhabitants, yet Americans don't have the tools necessary to harvest her treasures.

But through all this disbelief, the dream lives on in the mind of the worker as a blanket to cover up the fact that all of their work is meaningless.

Americans may choose to believe this ideal may come true or they can accept their reality and live their life with eyes wide open. An American is free to believe in anything makes them happy. A person living in the United States is technically an American, but there's far more to it.

Americans have the right to the pursuit of happiness, as outlined in the U.S. Constitution. Americans can do anything they need or want to do to be happy.

Langston Hughes writes about how he “eats well and grow(s) strong” (Hughes). He is describing his struggle and how he works towards happiness throughout the severe racism he is facing. He does not need people to accept him for his color because he is happy with who he is.

Americans still can pursue their happiness or the American dream, but unless you have a large sum of money or a good amount of luck, they may never truly achieve their goals.

The dream is still possible, but it is not nearly as easy to achieve as people say it used to be or how easy they say it is now.

The ideal used to be that with enough work, Americans could live any life they wanted. Today's more realistic world can realize that is no longer the case.

Another interview from *PARADE* Magazine shows us the harsh reality that is modern day America. Shelly Comer raises 3 kids and one more girl, a friend of her oldest child. Comer says she is “going into debt” as a response to sending her children to college. She says she has a retirement plan but “nothing saved for her”, meaning she only has enough to live but not live happily(Shelly Comer Parade Magazine). Shelly Comer worked her whole life for her kid’s happiness.

In a way, Comer is still living the sociological ideal of the American dream solely being based on happiness because she is happy that her kids are able to live a happy life with education.

The dream remains alive but the end goal may manifest itself to you in a form that you did not expect.