The American Dream; Chastened
Students in Learning Community 04, English 101 and Political Science 101, and First Year Seminar 01, Political Science 101
Professors Victoria Bond and Andreas Karras

Q1: Interview Subjects under 25

What does the American Dream mean to you?

“I believe that the American Dream means the ability to own a home, live comfortably and have economic stability without the worry of unemployment or the fear of going hungry looming.”

“The American Dream is not simply owning a house with a white picket fence anymore. The American Dream is to know that my many years of education will secure me a future where I won’t worry about how to put food on the table or a roof over my head.”

“To me the American Dream is living in a world full of opportunities. After two years of being in college, I’m still not sure what I want to do. My American Dream would be to be in a Corvette with a nice chick and there are no worries. But then again, I’m only making like $250 a week.”

“First off, it means the right of a higher education and to become successful individuals of the future. It means, for me, to be able to get a decent job after graduating college. Secondly, my American Dream consists of living comfortably and seeing that all my hard work has actually paid off.”

“To me, the American Dream is an ideal life in which one lives satisfactorily with their own house and property with no significant difficulties.”

“The American Dream means to me a better life, stability.”

“To me the American Dream is a dream which many young people believe is easily accomplished until they matured a bit and realized that it is far from the truth.”

“The American Dream means, to me, feeling secure, owning a home, having a good job, getting an education, living comfortably, and having the freedom to pursue desires.”

Q1: Interview Subjects over 25

What does the American Dream mean to you?

“The American Dream for me is to have a well-paying job, having an education, being able to support my family, and being able to live a long and healthy life.”

“To me, it means having a good job, raising a family, being able to pay bills and being happy.”

“Living on the beach and fixing bikes. Relaxed, debt free and Obama free.”

“To me it means having a good job, raising a family, being able to pay bills and being happy.”

“For me the American Dream is the hope of owning a big home and being free of all problems / stress.”

“The American Dream means nothing to me. It’s almost a fantasy in this world.”

“It’s mostly a silly dream that most lower class or foreigners imagine. But you can say it’s a way to express yourself in any ways you want like live the life you want. For example get freedom of religion. Or have a voice in government; the freedom you need.”

“My American Dream was achieved a long time ago when I came to America, bought my own house with my husband and was able to provide all I could for my daughters. Now all I hope is to watch my daughters achieve their American Dream.”

Q2: Interview Subjects over 25

Are you optimistic, or pessimistic, that things will be better in the future?

“I am rather pessimistic about it. We’re trying so hard just to stay afloat and not have the country fall apart and, as the saying goes, it’ll only get worse before it gets better.”

“Well the United States has always been able to come back from a time of unsettling chaos. During the Great Depression and the Civil Rights movement, people thought the United States was doomed but we still stand. I’m sure we can do the same now.”

“I’m optimistic about things in the future because the economy is improving and the laws that caused the problems of the recent recession have been revised. Policies in place will lead to a happier outcome.”

“I’m optimistic only because I feel as though the standard of living has decreased significantly for a lot of people and because of this people will realize and more action will be taken to change this in the future.”

“Both, reason being historically with recessions and depressions we are able to recover. The economy goes back up, for example the steel industry in Pittsburgh. I’m optimistic but not everyone’s above the poverty line.”

“If having hope means being optimistic then yes I am. I hope thing will be better in the future because I don’t want my kids, grand kids and great-grand kids having to pay for Americas’ mistakes now.”

Q2: Interview Subjects under 25

Are you optimistic, or pessimistic, that things will be better in the future?

“I’m optimistic that things will be better in the future. I mean things have been so bad, I just do not want to think they can get any worse. I can only hope.”

“I’m rather pessimistic about it. We’re trying so hard just to stay afloat and not have the country fall apart and, as the saying goes, it’ll only get worse before it gets better.”

“I’m optimistic that things will be better in the future. I feel things will be better in the future because I don’t want my kids, grand kids and great-grand kids having to pay for Americas’ mistakes now.”

“I want to be optimistic. Sometimes all we can do is hope for the best. I think we can get better as a nation. The depression was bad, but this country and its people got through it. I’m hoping that President Obama focuses on what people really need help on and helps change it. That’s the only way we will get better.”

“Optimistic. I feel we go through cycles and everything will level itself out. I have faith and it’s going to take time.”

“I’m optimistic that things will be better in the future. I want to be optimistic. Sometimes all we can do is hope for the best. I think we can get better as a nation. The depression was bad, but this country and its people got through it. I’m hoping that President Obama focuses on what people really need help on and helps change it. That’s the only way we will get better.”

“Well, I think in order to answer that you need to have the ‘cup half full’ mentality. If you are always negative then of course you will see the bad in things. Let us not be naive to the fact that things could be better. However, let us also know that it could be worse.”

“We’ll, I think in order to answer that you need to have the ‘cup half full’ mentality. If you are always negative then of course you will see the bad in things. Let us not be naïve to the fact that things could be better. However, let us also know that it could be worse.”

“I’m rather pessimistic about it. We’re trying so hard just to stay afloat and not have the country fall apart and, as the saying goes, it’ll only get worse before it gets better.”

“I feel optimistic about the future. I hope it gets better for the well-being of the people. It’s not just in this country but all over the world like Greece and Germany that are also facing struggles right now.”