

Utopia/Dystopia: The American Dream

Guiding Questions:

- What is the American Dream?
- How has the vision of the American Dream been made manifest in literature, music and art?
- How has the American Dream changed over time?
- In what ways is the American Dream both utopic and dystopic?

We Begin Our Exploration of the American Dream with this definition:

- James Truslow Adams first used the term "American Dream" in his 1931 book, *The Epic of America*. He states: "The American Dream is that dream of a land in which life should be better and richer and fuller for everyone, with opportunity for each according to ability or achievement. It is a difficult dream for the European upper classes to interpret adequately, and too many of us ourselves have grown weary and mistrustful of it. It is not a dream of motor cars and high wages merely, but a dream of social order in which each man and each woman shall be able to attain to the fullest stature of which they are innately capable, and be recognized by others for what they are, regardless of the fortuitous circumstances of birth or position" (214-215).

The Assignment:

- Complete the following lessons about the American Dream
- Learn how the American Dream is seen over time and history
- Complete the Journals.
- Learn how the American Dream affects you.
- Choose a literary role and complete your version of the American Dream

The Journals:

#1: The American Dream: Defined (500 Words)

DEFINITION. When our society talks about "The American Dream," what do we mean? What are the key aspects of the American Dream today and where did they come from? How is this definition reflected in the various texts we have read and discussed in class? Use at least three texts to support your ideas of which at least one must be a poem/ song.

#2: The American Dream: The Obstacles (500 Words)

OBSTACLES. As we have seen in our various texts, not everyone achieves the American Dream, making it more a dream than a reality. What are some of today's obstacles to achieving the American Dream? Which groups of people have or have had trouble attaining "The American Dream"? Why? Use at least three texts to support your ideas of which at least one must be a poem/song.

Research:

Research Artifact #1: John Winthrop's American Dream

John Winthrop, an ancestor of both George Bush and John Kerry, was the four-time governor of the Massachusetts Bay Colony. He changed the goal of the colony from a commercial venture to a Puritan society. In a sermon titled “A Model of Christian Charity.” Winthrop set forth the idea that America was special (an idea that morphed into what is called “American Exceptionalism”) because of its unique relationship to God and other nations.

This sermon was given while still on board the ship Arbella right before it landed in what is now Massachusetts. Winthrop, alluding to the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5, said:

...for we must Consider that we shall be as a City upon a Hill, the eyes of all people are upon us; so that if we shall deal falsely with our God in this work we have undertaken and so cause him to withdraw his present help from us, we shall be made a story and a byword through the world, we shall open the mouths of enemies to speak evil of the ways of God and all professors for God's sake; wee shall shame the faces of many of God's worthy servants, and cause their prayers to be turned into Curses upon us till we be consumed out of the good land whither we are going...

Think About It?

Based on what you've read, how would you explain John Winthrop's idea of the American Dream?

[illegible]

Research Artifact #2: The American Dream in Song

Listen and read the following lyrics. Look for the idea of the American Dream in each song.

SANTA FE NEWSIES (DISNEY PRODUCTIONS)

*So that's what they call a family
Mudder, fadder, daughter, son
Guess everything you heard about is true.
So you ain't got any family
Well, who said you needed one?
Ain'tcha glad nobody's waiting up for you?
When I dream on my own
I'm alone, but I ain't lonely
For a dreamer, night's the only time of day
When the city's finally sleeping
When my thoughts begin to stray
And I'm on the train that bound for
Santa Fe
And I'm free
Like the wind
Like I'm gonna live forever.
It's a feeling time can never take away
All I need a few more dollars
And I'm outta here to stay
Dreams come true
Yes they doIn Santa Fe
Where does it say you've gotta live and die here?
Where does it say a guy can't catch a break?
Why should you only take what you're given?
Why should you spend your whole life livin'
Trapped where there ain't no future
Even at seventeen
Breaking your back for someone else's sake
If the life don't seem to suit ya
How bout a change of scene?
Far from the lousy headlines
And the deadlines in between
Santa Fe....Are you there?
Do you swear you won't forget me?
If I found you would you let me come and stay?
I ain't getting any younger
And before my dying day
I want space
Not just air
Let 'em laugh in my face, I don't care
Save a place
I'll be there
So that's what they call a family?
Ain'tcha glad you ain't that way?
Ain'tcha glad you got a dream called
Santa Fe?*

MACK THE KNIFE
BY: BOBBY DARIN

*Oh, the shark, babe, has such teeth, dear
And it shows them pearly white
Just a jackknife has old MacHeath, babe
And he keeps it ... ah ... out of sight.
Ya know when that shark bites, with his teeth, babe
Scarlet billows start to spread
Fancy gloves, though, wears old MacHeath, babe
So there's nevah, nevah a trace of red.
Now on the sidewalk ... uuh, huh ... whoo ... sunny mornin' ... uuh, huh
Lies a body just oozin' life ... eek!
And someone's sneakin' 'round the corner
Could that someone be Mack the Knife?
A-there's a tugboat ... huh, huh, huh ... down by the river don'tcha know
Where a cement bag's just a'droopin' on down
Oh, that cement is just, it's there for the weight, dear
Five'll get ya ten old Macky's back in town.
Now, d'ja hear 'bout Louie Miller? He disappeared, babe
After drawin' out all his hard-earned cash
And now MacHeath spends just like a sailor
Could it be our boy's done somethin' rash?
Now ... Jenny Diver ... ho, ho ... yeah ... Sukey Tawdry
Ooh ... Miss Lotte Lenya and old Lucy Brown
Oh, the line forms on the right, babe
Now that Macky's back in town.
Aah ... I said Jenny Diver ... whoa ... Sukey Tawdry
Look out to Miss Lotte Lenya and old Lucy Brown
Yes, that line forms on the right, babe
Now that Macky's back in town ...
Look out ... old Macky is back!!*

COURTESY OF THE RED, WHITE AND BLUE
(THE ANGRY AMERICAN)
BY: TOBY KEITH

*American girls and American guys will always stand up and salute;
Will always recognize
When we see ol' glory flying,
There's a lot of men dead,
So we can sleep in peace at night when we lay down our head.*

*My daddy served in the army,
Where he lost his right eye.
But he flew a flag out in our yard 'til the day that he died.
He wanted my mother, my brother, my sister and me
To grow up and live happy in the land of the free.*

Now this nation that I love has fallen under attack.

*A mighty sucker punch came flying in from somewhere in the back.
Soon as we could see clearly through our big black eye,
Man we lit up your world like the Fourth of July.*

*Hey Uncle Sam put your name at the top of his list,
And the Statue of Liberty started shaking her fist.
And the eagle will fly,
And there's gonna be Hell,
When you hear Mother Freedom start ringing her bell!
It's gonna feel like the whole wide world is raining down on you...
Brought to you courtesy of the Red, White and Blue!*

*Oh, Justice will be served and the battle will rage.
This big dog will fight when you rattle his cage
You'll be sorry that you messed with the US of A
'Cuz we'll put a boot in your ass
It's the American way.*

*Hey Uncle Sam put your name at the top of his list,
And the Statue of Liberty started shaking her fist.
And the eagle will fly,
And there's gonna be Hell,
When you hear Mother Freedom start ringing her bell!
And it'll feel like the whole wide world is raining down on you...
Brought to you courtesy of the Red, White and Blue!*

*Of the Red, White and Blue..
Of my Red, White and Blue...*

AMERICA

BY: NEIL DIAMOND

*Far
We've been traveling far
Without a home
But not without a star*

*Free
Only want to be free
We huddle close
Hang on to a dream*

*On the boats and on the planes
They're coming to America
Never looking back again
They're coming to America*

*Home, don't it seem so far away
Oh, we're traveling light today
In the eye of the storm
In the eye of the storm*

*Home, to a new and a shiny place
Make our bed, and we'll say our grace*

*Freedom's light burning warm
Freedom's light burning warm
Everywhere around the world
They're coming to America
Every time that flag's unfurled
They're coming to America
Got a dream to take them there
They're coming to America
Got a dream they've come to share
They're coming to America
They're coming to America
They're coming to America
They're coming to America
Today, today, today, today, today
My country 'tis of thee
Today
Sweet land of liberty
Today
Of thee I sing
Today
Of thee I sing
Today*

AMERICA WEST SIDE STORY SOUNDTRACK

ANITA

Puerto Rico
My heart's devotion
Let it sink back in the ocean
Always the hurricanes blowing
Always the population growing
And the money owing
And the sunlight streaming
And the natives steaming
I like the island Manhattan
Smoke on your pipe
And put that in!

GIRLS

I like to be in America
Okay by me in America
Everything free in America

BERNARDO
For a small fee in America
ANITA
Buying on credit is so nice
BERNARDO
One look at us and they charge twice
ROSALIA
I'll have my own washing machine
INDIO
What will you have though to keep clean?
ANITA
Skyscrapers bloom in America
ROSALIA
Cadillacs zoom in America
TERESITA
Industry boom in America
BOYS
Twelve in a room in America
ANITA
Lots of new housing with more space
BERNARDO
Lots of doors slamming in our face
ANITA
I'll get a terrace apartment
BERNARDO
Better get rid of your accent
ANITA
Life can be bright in America
BOYS
If you can fight in America
GIRLS
Life is all right in America
BOYS
If you're all white in America
GIRLS
Here you are free and you have pride
BOYS
Long as you stay on your own side
GIRLS
Free to be anything you choose
BOYS
Free to wait tables and shine shoes
BERNARDO
Everywhere grime in America
Organized crime in America
Terrible time in America

ANITA
You forget I'm in America
BERNARDO
I think I'll go back to San Juan
ANITA
I know what boat you can get on
BERNARDO
Everyone there will give big cheers
ANITA
Everyone there will have moved here

Think About It?

List the ideas of the American Dream that are portrayed throughout the course of these songs. Make sure you cite the song next to the example.

Give examples of common threads between all the songs.

[illegible][illegible]

Research Artifact #3: JFK's American Dream

View the pictures below and read JFK's speech.



Address of President-Elect John F. Kennedy Delivered to a Joint Convention of the General Court of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts

The State House, Boston

January 9, 1961

I have welcomed this opportunity to address this historic body, and, through you, the people of Massachusetts to whom I am so deeply indebted for a lifetime of friendship and trust.

For fourteen years I have placed my confidence in the citizens of Massachusetts — and they have generously responded by placing their confidence in me.

Now, on the Friday after next, I am to assume new and broader responsibilities. But I am not here to bid farewell to Massachusetts.

For forty-three years — whether I was in London, Washington, the South Pacific, or elsewhere — this has been my home; and, God willing, wherever I serve this shall remain my home.

It was here my grandparents were born — it is here I hope my grandchildren will be born.

I speak neither from false provincial pride nor artful political flattery. For no man about to enter high office in this country can ever be unmindful of the contribution this state has made to our national greatness.

Its leaders have shaped our destiny long before the great republic was born. Its principles have guided our footsteps in times of crisis as well as in times of calm. Its democratic institutions — including this historic body — have served as beacon lights for other nations as well as our sister states.

For what Pericles said to the Athenians has long been true of this commonwealth: "We do not imitate — for we are a model to others."

And so it is that I carry with me from this state to that high and lonely office to which I now succeed more than fond memories of

firm friendships. The enduring qualities of Massachusetts — the common threads woven by the Pilgrim and the Puritan, the fisherman and the farmer, the Yankee and the immigrant — will not be and could not be forgotten in this nation's executive mansion.

They are an indelible part of my life, my convictions, my view of the past, and my hopes for the future.

Allow me to illustrate: During the last sixty days, I have been at the task of constructing an administration. It has been a long and deliberate process. Some have counseled greater speed. Others have counseled more expedient tests.

But I have been guided by the standard John Winthrop set before his shipmates on the flagship *Arbella* three hundred and thirty-one years ago, as they, too, faced the task of building a new government on a perilous frontier.

"We must always consider," he said, "that we shall be as a city upon a hill — the eyes of all people are upon us."

Today the eyes of all people are truly upon us — and our governments, in every branch, at every level, national, state and local, must be as a city upon a hill — constructed and inhabited by men aware of their great trust and their great responsibilities.

For we are setting out upon a voyage in 1961 no less hazardous than that undertaken by the *Arbella* in 1630. We are committing ourselves to tasks of statecraft no less awesome than that of governing the Massachusetts Bay Colony, beset as it was then by terror without and disorder within.

History will not judge our endeavors — and a government cannot be selected — merely on the basis of color or creed or even

party affiliation. Neither will competence and loyalty and stature, while essential to the utmost, suffice in times such as these.

For of those to whom much is given, much is required. And when at some future date the high court of history sits in judgment on each one of us — recording whether in our brief span of service we fulfilled our responsibilities to the state — our success or failure, in whatever office we may hold, will be measured by the answers to four questions:

First, were we truly men of courage — with the courage to stand up to one's enemies — and the courage to stand up, when necessary, to one's associates — the courage to resist public pressure, as well as private greed?

Secondly, were we truly men of judgment — with perceptive judgment of the future as well as the past — of our own mistakes as well as the mistakes of others — with enough wisdom to know that we did not know, and enough candor to admit it?

Third, were we truly men of integrity — men who never ran out on either the principles in which they believed or the

people who believed in them — men who believed in us — men whom neither financial gain nor political ambition could ever divert from the fulfillment of our sacred trust?

Finally, were we truly men of dedication — with an honor mortgaged to no single individual or group, and compromised by no private obligation or aim, but devoted solely to serving the public good and the national interest.

Courage — judgment — integrity — dedication — these are the historic qualities of the Bay Colony and the Bay State — the qualities which this state has consistently sent to this chamber on Beacon Hill here in Boston and to Capitol Hill back in Washington.

And these are the qualities which, with God's help, this son of Massachusetts hopes will characterize our government's conduct in the four stormy years that lie ahead.

Humbly I ask His help in that undertaking — but aware that on earth His will is worked by men. I ask for your help and your prayers, as I embark on this new and solemn journey.

Think About It?

What principles of Winthrop's speech did Kennedy adopt for his own administration?

How do you think Kennedy would define the American Dream?

How has the Kennedy dream turned into a nightmare?

Research Artifact #4: Ronald Reagan's American Dream

Kennedy wasn't the only politician to allude to Winthrop's sermon and ideal of the "City on a Hill". Read Ronald Reagan's farewell speech to the nation.



My fellow Americans:

This is the 34th time I'll speak to you from the Oval Office and the last. We've been together 8 years now, and soon it'll be time for me to go. But before I do, I wanted to share some thoughts, some of which I've been saving for a long time.

It's been the honor of my life to be your President. So many of you have written the past few weeks to say thanks, but I could say as much to you. Nancy and I are grateful for the opportunity you gave us to serve.

One of the things about the Presidency is that you're always somewhat apart. You spent a lot of time going by too fast in a car someone else is driving, and seeing the people through tinted glass -- the parents holding up a child, and the wave you saw too late and couldn't return. And so many times I wanted to stop and reach out from behind the glass, and connect. Well, maybe I can do a little of that tonight.

People ask how I feel about leaving. And the fact is, "parting is such sweet sorrow." The sweet part is California and the ranch and freedom. The sorrow -- the goodbyes, of course, and leaving this beautiful place.

You know, down the hall and up the stairs from this office is the part of the White House where the President and his family live. There are a few favorite windows I have up there that I like to stand and look

out of early in the morning. The view is over the grounds here to the Washington Monument, and then the Mall and the Jefferson Memorial. But on mornings when the humidity is low, you can see past the Jefferson to the river, the Potomac, and the Virginia shore. Someone said that's the view Lincoln had when he saw the smoke rising from the Battle of Bull Run. Well I see more prosaic things: the grass on the banks, the morning traffic as people make their way to work, now and then a sailboat on the river.

I've been thinking a bit at that window. I've been reflecting on what the past 8 years have meant and mean. And the image that comes to mind like a refrain is a nautical one -- a small story about a big ship, and a refugee, and a sailor. It was back in the early eighties, at the height of the boat people. And the sailor was hard at work on the carrier Midway, which was patrolling the South China Sea. The sailor, like most American servicemen, was young, smart, and fiercely observant. The crew spied on the horizon a leaky little boat. And crammed inside were refugees from Indochina hoping to get to America. The Midway sent a small launch to bring them to the ship and safety. As the refugees made their way through the choppy seas, one spied the sailor on deck, and stood up, and called out to him. He yelled, "Hello, American sailor. Hello, freedom man."

A small moment with a big meaning, a moment the sailor, who wrote it in a letter, couldn't get out of his mind. And, when I saw it, neither could I. Because that's what it has to -- it was to be an American in the 1980's. We stood, again, for freedom. I know we always have, but in the past few years the world again -- and in a way, we ourselves -- rediscovered it. It's been quite a journey this decade, and we held together through some stormy seas. And at the end, together, we're reaching our destination.

The fact is, from Grenada to the Washington and Moscow summits, from the recession of '81 to '82, to the expansion that began in late '82 and continues to this day, we've made a difference. The way I see it, there were two great triumphs, two things that I'm proudest of. One is the economic recovery, in which the people of America created -- and filled -- 19 million new jobs. The other is the recovery of our morale. America is respected again in the world and looked to for leadership.

Something that happened to me a few years ago reflects some of this. It was back in 1981, and I was attending my first big economic summit, which was held that year in Canada. The meeting place rotates among the member countries. The opening meeting was a formal dinner for the heads of government of the seven industrialized nations. Well I sat there like the new kid in school and listened, and it was all Francois this and Helmut that. They dropped titles and spoke to one another on a first-name basis. Well, at one point I sort of leaned in and said, "My name's Ron." Well, in that same year, we began the actions we felt would ignite an economic comeback -- cut taxes and regulation, started to cut spending. And soon the recovery began.

Two years later, another economic summit with pretty much the same cast. At the big opening meeting we all got together, and all of a sudden, just for a moment, I saw that everyone was just sitting there looking at me. And then one of them broke the silence. "Tell us about the American miracle," he said.

Well, back in 1980, when I was running for President, it was all so different. Some pundits said our programs would result in catastrophe. Our views on foreign affairs would cause war. Our plans for the economy would cause inflation to soar and bring about economic collapse. I even remember one highly respected economist saying, back in 1982, that "The engines of economic growth have shut down here, and they're likely to stay that way for years to come." Well, he and the other opinion leaders were wrong. The fact is what they called "radical" was really "right." What they called "dangerous" was just "desperately needed."

And in all of that time I won a nickname, "The Great Communicator." But I never thought it was my style or the words I used that made a difference: it was the content. I wasn't a great communicator, but I communicated great things, and they didn't spring full bloom from my brow, they came from the heart of a great nation -- from our experience, our wisdom, and our belief in the principles that have guided us for

two centuries. They called it the "Reagan Revolution." Well, I'll accept that, but for me it always seemed more like the great rediscovery, a rediscovery of our values and our common sense.

Common sense told us that when you put a big tax on something, the people will produce less of it. So, we cut the people's tax rates, and the people produced more than ever before. The economy bloomed like a plant that had been cut back and could now grow quicker and stronger. Our economic program brought about the longest peacetime expansion in our history: real family income up, the poverty rate down, entrepreneurship booming, and an explosion in research and new technology. We're exporting more than ever because American industry became more competitive. And at the same time, we summoned the national will to knock down protectionist walls abroad instead of erecting them at home.

Common sense also told us that to preserve the peace, we'd have to become strong again after years of weakness and confusion. So, we rebuilt our defenses, and this New Year we toasted the new peacefulness around the globe. Not only have the superpowers actually begun to reduce their stockpiles of nuclear weapons -- and hope for even more progress is bright -- but the regional conflicts that rack the globe are also beginning to cease. The Persian Gulf is no longer a war zone. The Soviets are leaving Afghanistan. The Vietnamese are preparing to pull out of Cambodia, and an American-mediated accord will soon send 50,000 Cuban troops home from Angola.

The lesson of all this was, of course, that because we're a great nation, our challenges seem complex. It will always be this way. But as long as we remember our first principles and believe in ourselves, the future will always be ours. And something else we learned: Once you begin a great movement, there's no telling where it'll end. We meant to change a nation, and instead, we changed a world.

Countries across the globe are turning to free markets and free speech and turning away from the ideologies of the past. For them, the great rediscovery of the 1980's has been that, lo and behold, the moral way of government is the practical way of government: Democracy, the profoundly good, is also the profoundly productive.

When you've got to the point when you can celebrate the anniversaries of your 39th birthday, you can sit back sometimes, review your life, and see it flowing before you. For me there was a fork in the river, and it was right in the middle of my life. I never meant to go into politics. It wasn't my intention when I was young. But I was raised to believe you had to pay your way for the blessings bestowed on you. I was happy with my career in the entertainment world, but I ultimately went into politics because I wanted to protect something precious.

Ours was the first revolution in the history of mankind that truly reversed the course of government, and with three little words: "We the People." "We the People" tell the government what to do; it doesn't tell us. "We the People" are the driver; the government is the car, and we decide where it should go, and by what route, and how fast. Almost all the world's constitutions are documents in which governments tell the people what their privileges are. Our Constitution is a document in which "We the People" tell the government what it is allowed to do. "We the People" are free. This belief has been the underlying basis for everything I've tried to do these past 8 years.

But back in the 1960's, when I began, it seemed to me that we'd begun reversing the order of things -- that through more and more rules and regulations and confiscatory taxes, the government was taking more of our money, more of our options, and more of our freedom. I went into politics in part to put up my hand and say, "Stop." I was a citizen politician, and it seemed the right thing for a citizen to do.

I think we have stopped a lot of what needed stopping. And I hope we have once again reminded people that man is not free unless government is limited. There's a clear cause and effect here that is as neat and predictable as a law of physics: "As government expands, liberty contracts."

Nothing is less free than pure communism -- and yet we have, the past few years, forged a satisfying new closeness with the Soviet Union. I've been asked if this isn't a gamble, and my answer is no because we're basing our actions not on words but deeds. The detente of this 1970's was based not on actions but promises. They'd promise to treat their own people and the people of the world better. But the gulag was still the gulag, and the state was still expansionist, and they still waged proxy wars in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Well, this time, so far, it's different. President Gorbachev has brought about some internal democratic reforms and begun the withdrawal from Afghanistan. He has also freed prisoners whose names I've given him every time we've met.

But life has a way of reminding you of big things through small incidents. Once, during the heady days of the Moscow summit, Nancy and I decided to break off from the entourage one afternoon to visit the shops on Arbat Street -- that's a little street just off Moscow's main shopping area. Even though our visit was a surprise, every Russian there immediately recognized us and called out our names and reached for our hands. We were just about swept away by the warmth. You could almost feel the possibilities in all that joy. But within seconds, a KGB detail pushed their way toward us and began pushing and shoving the people in the crowd. It was an interesting moment. It reminded me that while the man on the street in the Soviet Union yearns for peace, the government is Communist. And those who run it are Communists, and that means we and they view such issues as freedom and human rights very differently.

We must keep up our guard, but we must also continue to work together to lessen and eliminate tension and mistrust. My view is that President Gorbachev is different from previous Soviet leaders. I think he knows some of the things wrong with his society and is trying to fix them. We wish him well. And we'll continue to work to make sure that the Soviet Union that eventually emerges from this process is a less threatening one. What it all boils down to is this: I want the new closeness to continue. And it will, as long as we make it clear that we will continue to act in a certain way as long as they continue to act in a helpful manner. If and when they don't, at first pull your punches. If they persist, pull the plug. It's still trust but verify. It's still play, but cut the cards. It's still watch closely. And don't be afraid to see what you see.

I've been asked if I have any regrets. Well, I do. The deficit is one. I've been talking a great deal about that lately, but tonight isn't for arguments, and I'm going to hold my tongue. But an observation: I've had my share of victories in the Congress, but what few people noticed is that I never won anything you didn't win for me. They never saw my troops; they never saw Reagan's regiments, the American people. You won every battle with every call you made and letter you wrote demanding action. Well, action is still needed. If we're to finish the job, Reagan's regiments will have to become the Bush brigades. Soon he'll be the Chief, and he'll need you every bit as much as I did.

Finally, there is a great tradition of warnings in Presidential farewells, and I've got one that's been on my mind for some time. But oddly enough it starts with one of the things I'm proudest of in the past 8 years: the resurgence of national pride that I called, "The New Patriotism." This national feeling is good, but it won't count for much, and it won't last unless it's grounded in thoughtfulness and knowledge.

An informed patriotism is what we want. And are we doing a good enough job teaching our children what America is and what she represents in the long history of the world? Those of us who are over 35 or so years of age grew up in a different America. We were taught, very directly, what it means to be an American. And we absorbed, almost in the air, a love of country and an appreciation of its institutions. If you didn't get these things from your family you got them from the neighborhood, from the father down the street who fought in Korea or the family who lost someone at Anzio. Or you could get a sense of patriotism from school. And if all else failed you could get a sense of patriotism from the popular culture. The movies celebrated democratic values and implicitly reinforced the idea that America was special. TV was like that, too, through the mid-sixties.

But now, we're about to enter the nineties, and some things have changed. Younger parents aren't sure that an unambivalent appreciation of America is the right thing to teach modern children. And as for those who create the popular culture, well-grounded patriotism is no longer the style. Our spirit is back, but we

haven't reinstitutionalized it. We've got to do a better job of getting across that America is freedom -- freedom of speech, freedom of religion, freedom of enterprise. And freedom is special and rare. It's fragile; it needs protection [protection].

So, we've got to teach history based not on what's in fashion but what's important -- [why the Pilgrims came here](#), who [Jimmy Doolittle](#) was, and what those 30 seconds over Tokyo meant. You know, 4 years ago on the 40th anniversary of D-day, I read a letter from a young woman writing to her late father, who had fought on Omaha Beach. Her name was Lisa Zanatta Henn, and she said, "we will always remember, we will never forget what the boys of Normandy did." Well, let's help her keep her word. If we forget what we did, we won't know who we are. I'm warning of an eradication of that -- of the American memory that could result, ultimately, in an erosion of the American spirit. Let's start with some basics: more attention to American history and a greater emphasis on civic ritual.

And let me offer lesson number one about America: All great change in America begins at the dinner table. So, tomorrow night in the kitchen I hope the talking begins. And children, if your parents haven't been teaching you what it means to be an American, let 'em know and nail 'em on it. That would be a very American thing to do.

And that's about all I have to say tonight, except for one thing. The past few days when I've been at that window upstairs, I've thought a bit of the 'shining city upon a hill.' The phrase comes from John Winthrop, who wrote it to describe the America he imagined. What he imagined was important because he was an early Pilgrim, an early freedom man. He journeyed here on what today we'd call a little wooden boat; and like the other Pilgrims, he was looking for a home that would be free. I've spoken of the shining city all my political life, but I don't know if I ever quite communicated what I saw when I said it. But in my mind it was a tall, proud city built on rocks stronger than oceans, windswept, God-blessed, and teeming with people of all kinds living in harmony and peace; a city with free ports that hummed with commerce and creativity. And if there had to be city walls, the walls had doors and the doors were open to anyone with the will and the heart to get here. That's how I saw it, and see it still.

And how stands the city on this winter night? More prosperous, more secure, and happier than it was 8 years ago. But more than that: After 200 years, two centuries, she still stands strong and true on the granite ridge, and her glow has held steady no matter what storm. And she's still a beacon, still a magnet for all who must have freedom, for all the pilgrims from all the lost places who are hurtling through the darkness, toward home.

We've done our part. And as I walk off into the city streets, a final word to the men and women of the Reagan Revolution, the men and women across America who for 8 years did the work that brought America back. My friends: We did it. We weren't just marking time. We made a difference. We made the city stronger; we made the city freer; and we left her in good hands. All in all, not bad -- not bad at all.

And so, goodbye, God bless you, and God bless the United States of America.

Think About It?

What is the idea of the American Dream in this speech?

How does this idea of the American Dream compare with Winthrop's?

Was it an appropriate farewell speech?

Rudy Guiliani used the "City on a Hill" allusion when he nominated John McCain for president at the 2008 Republican National Convention. If you were a speechwriter, what would you see as the value of using this particular phrase?

Research Artifact #5: Utopia

Think about the word “Utopia”. It comes from the title of a book written in 1516 by Sir Thomas More. Can you define it? If you’re not clear on it, look it up in the dictionary and see how your idea matches with the definition.

For further research look at this picture of a 1950’s housewife:



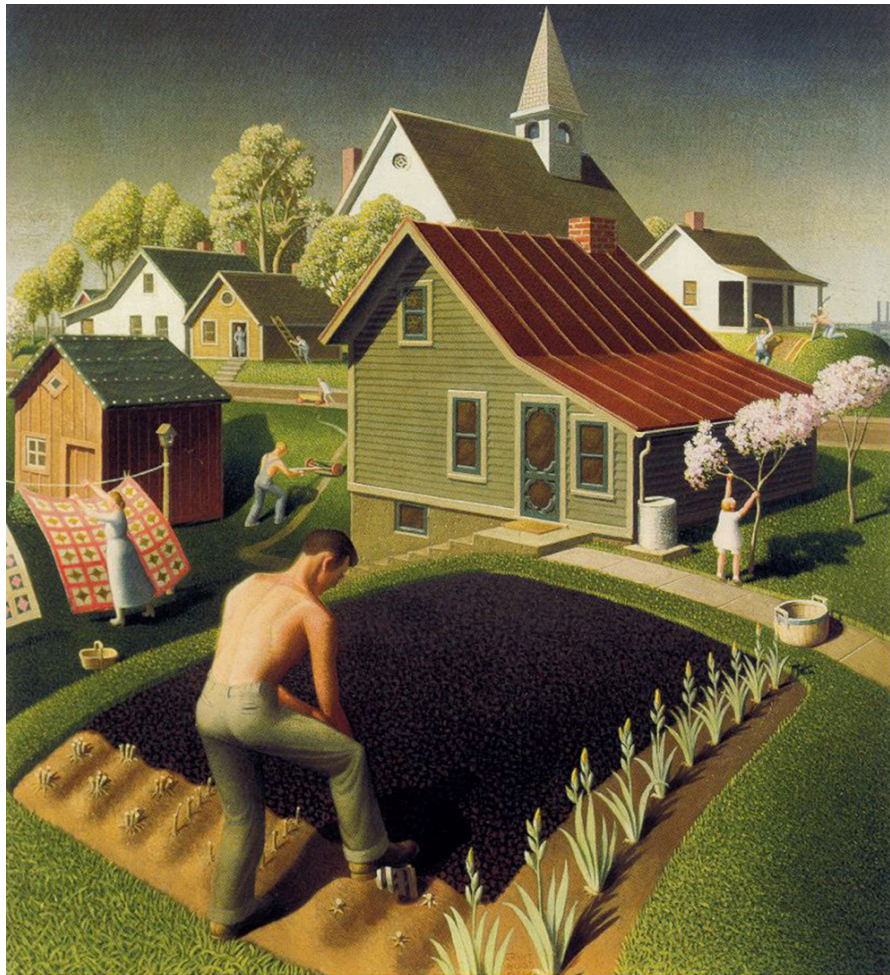
Think About It?

What is the idea of the American Dream present in this picture? In what way is it utopic?

How is this version of the American Dream different than today's version?

How is it the same?

Now, look at this painting by Grant Wood called *Spring in Townby*:



Think About It?

What is the idea of the American Dream present in this picture? In what way is it utopic?

Notice the church in the center of town. How does that connect to other versions of the American Dream that you have read or listened to?

What else do you notice?

Research Artifact #6: Dystopia

The prefix “dys” means apart, away, negative, bad. We use it in words like dysfunctional or disappear. When paired with utopia to give us “dystopia”, we have an image of a place that is the opposite or ideal, or ideal gone bad.

Read Langston Hughes’s poem *A Dream Deferred*. As you read, think of how this presents a dystopic view of the American Dream.

A DREAM DEFERRED

BY: LANGSTON HUGHES

What happens to a dream deferred?

Does it dry up
like a raisin in the sun?
Or fester like a sore--
And then run?
Does it stink like rotten meat?
Or crust and sugar over--
like a syrupy sweet?

Maybe it just sags
like a heavy load.

Or does it explode?

Think About It?

This poem was published in 1951. What happened after that that seems a fulfillment of Hughes’ idea?

In what way is the American Dream portrayed as dystopic?

Do you agree that a dream “deferred” can be a disaster? What does timing have to with dreams?

The painter Thomas Cole did a series of works called *The Course of the Empire*. It was based on a few lines from a poem by the poet Byron about the rise and fall of humanity. Byron wrote:

*There is a moral of all human tales;
This but the same rehearsal of the past*

*First Freedom, and then Glorry; when then fails
Wealth, vice, corruption*

Look through the paintings in the series, noticing how the sun rises and moves through the sky like a day beginning with the sun rise and ending with the sunset. The mountain in the background is a constant, but the foreground changes drastically. As you look through the paintings, think about the parallels between them and the rise and fall of civilizations.

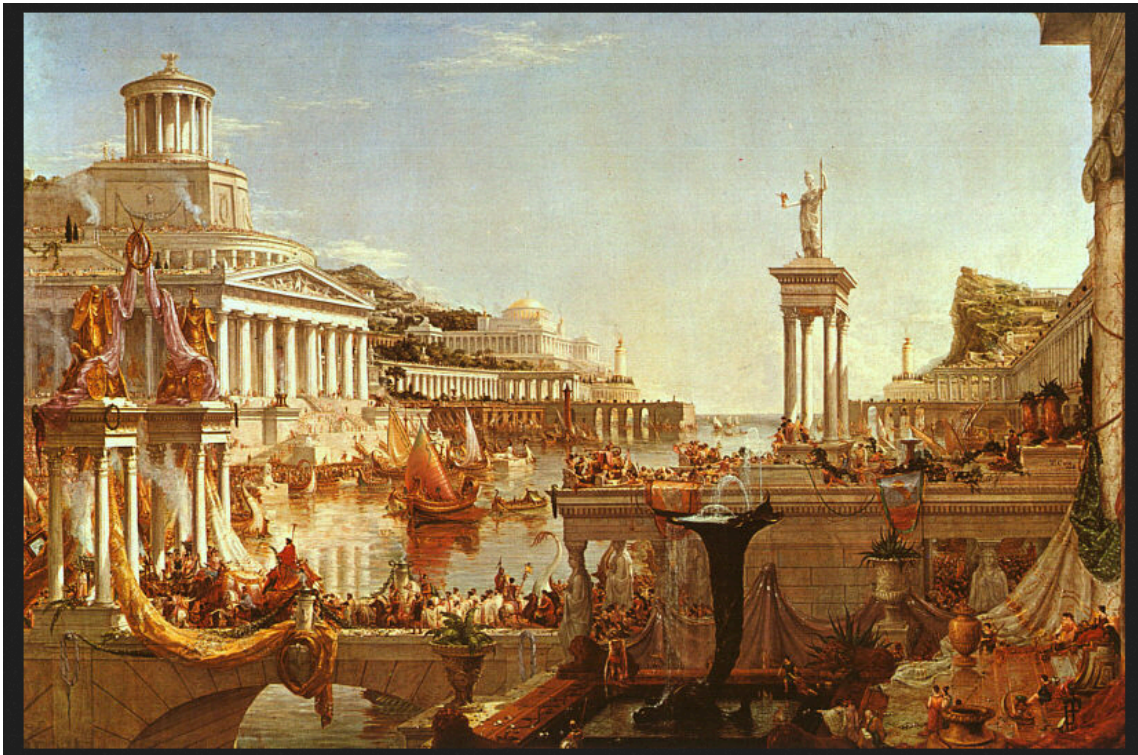
Painting One: The Course of Empire-- Savage State



Painting Two: The Course of Empire-- Pastoral State



Painting Three: The Course of Empire-- Consummation of the Empire



Painting Four: The Course of Empire-- Destruction



Painting Five: The Course of Empire-- Desolation



Think About It?

Do you think that they are an appropriate metaphor for the rise and fall of America? If so, what stage to you think America is in? If not, what are they are metaphor of?

Are the paintings utopic or dystopic? Can the same place be both?

For the future of the American Dream... THE AMERICAN DREAM PROJECT

The Journals:

#1: The American Dream: Defined (500 Words)

DEFINITION. When our society talks about "The American Dream," what do we mean? What are the key aspects of the American Dream today and where did they come from? How is this definition reflected in the various texts we have read and discussed in class? Use at least three texts to support your ideas of which at least one must be a poem.

#2: The American Dream: The Obstacles (500 Words)

OBSTACLES. As we have seen in our various texts, not everyone achieves the American Dream, making it more a dream than a reality. What are some of today's obstacles to achieving the American Dream? Which groups of people have or have had trouble attaining "The American Dream"? Why? Use at least three texts to support your ideas of which at least one must be a poem.

Your American Dream.

Now, it is up to you, chose the role you would like to portray and complete your version of the American Dream.

Photographer

With your artful eye, you capture the images of the American Dream.

Design a photo essay that shows the American Dream. Show how the Dream has been affected by time, cultural influences, and significant historical events. The photo essay must contain at least 15 original photos and 15 historical photos. The photos can be placed in a photo album, slideshow or poster board. The photo essay must convey your American Dream with no words... make every photo worth "a thousand words".

Lawyer

Your passion for controversy and debate guide your vision of the American Dream.

Prepare a legal brief about the status of the American Dream. (Legal brief includes: title, who vs. whom, statement of facts, argument, conclusion, references.) Legal Brief must be 500 words per side of the argument- 1000 words total)

Poet

Using your poetic grasp of language, seek out the heart and soul of the American Dream.

Create a poet's notebook that shows the American Dream. Your notebook includes samples of your original poetry that shows how the "Dream" has been affected by time, cultural influences, and significant historical events. Poet's notebook must contain at least 6 original poems and 2 historical poems that convey your version of the American Dream.

Politician

With a finger on the pulse of the American people, you trace significant political events that shape the American Dream.

Write and deliver a speech that traces the political events that shape the American Dream. Your speech shows how the "Dream" has been affected by political response to cultural influences and significant historical events. Speeches must be video taped and turned in electronically and speech needs to be 3-5 minutes.

Producer

Lights, camera, action! You show the story of the American Dream through stories, films, and a script for a movie.

Make a storyboard for your movie. Sequence the scenes to produce a movie of the American Dream. Videos must be at least 3-5 minutes in length

Musician

With your ear for melody, you play the music of the American Dream.

Write the sheet music and record music with lyrics that characterizes the American Dream based upon your research. Song must be turned in electronically.

Completing the Assignment:

Have a conferences with Miss Loock and be prepared to discuss and validate where you are in your work, problems that you cannot seem to get your mind around, etc. Conferences will be held regardless of absences. During the conference you will discuss your journals and literary role choices. The following rubric is how you will be graded. **American Dream Projects are Due: February 19th**

	Beginning 1	Developing 2	Accomplished 3	Exemplary 4	Score
Action Plan Fulfillment	Plan abandoned or inadequate strategy applied.	Not complete. Fulfillment required substantial teacher involvement.	Applied several strategies and chose an appropriate selection.	Many strategies generated. Prioritized selection of several is evident.	
Guiding Questions	Not all are included or addressed within the exhibit.	Questions are included. There are some questions as to their connection to the exhibit.	The exhibit works to address the questions through content and design.	Questions drive the exhibit in content and design.	
Originality	A minimal collection of other people's ideas. No evidence of new thought.	An extensive "re-hash" of other people's ideas. No evidence of new thought.	Shows evidence of originality and invention. Extends beyond the collection to offer new insight.	Ideas are fresh, original, and based upon logical conclusions and sound research.	
Information Structure	Pages are missing or have no useful information. Presentation distracts from content.	Pages show some overall structure and/or some useful information. Presentation considers content.	Pages are well structured and clear. Presentation complements content.	Pages develop using effective structure. Presentation aids understanding conveys meaning.	
Information Content	Not fully cited. Information unreliable.	Seems reliable but offers no means of validation.	Fully cited, accurate information.	Cited, accurate information that communicates meaning efficiently.	
Graphic Design	Exaggerated emphasis on graphics and special effects weakens the message and interferes with communication of ideas.	Graphics accompany text but there is little sign of connection between the two. Little restraint is applied.	Graphics and text work together to effectively communicate intended meaning.	Graphics and text work together to convey a unified, enhanced meaning that surpasses what would have been had one element not been present.	
Required Elements	Not all elements are included.	Not applicable.	Not applicable.	All required elements are included.	
Role	Failed to complete all role-specific tasks. Did not contribute positively to the team.	Consistently on-task. Most of role-specific work is completed well. Contributed to team success.	Role-specific work is thoroughly completed. Consistently contributed to team success.	Facilitates group while also completing task specific work of the highest quality.	
Reflections and Self-Assessments	Not all included and/or complete.	Inconsistent quality of work. All are included.	Insights are clear. All pieces are included and of a high quality.	Growth and development is clear in the progression of entries and assessments.	
Mechanics	Four or more spelling/grammatical errors.	Three or more spelling/grammatical errors.	Two or more spelling/grammatical errors.	No spelling/grammatical errors.	