

1ère phrase : The USA is seen by most Americans as ... = 😊

1ère phrase : ~~*Since few years, americans think that ...~~ = 😞

~~*Like shows the doc3~~ 😞

~~*It was published on August~~ 😞

Document 1: The American Dream Is Dead for Us Working Class Americans | Opinion Newsweek, Aug 17, 2023

One of the strangest things of being a working-class American is hearing politicians talk about the American Dream, when everyone I know knows the truth: **The American Dream is dead, at least it is for us.**

Of course, everyone defines the American Dream in their own way. For some people, it's probably a big house and a fancy car, a country club membership and a closet full of designer clothes. But most of us want something much more simple.

For me, the American Dream would be to have my own home so I don't have to worry about being evicted by my landlord, enough money to pay for electricity, water, and internet for my homeschooled child, a car so I can get to work, and a bit of savings in case the car breaks down.

So far, this has eluded me, though not for lack of trying. I work three jobs and pick up any extra work when asked. But I still make just under what my bills come out to each month. I've thought a lot about why that is, and the conclusion I've come to is that it's because I don't have access to real opportunity.

That's what I've learned as a lower income American: **You can't have the American Dream without opportunity.**

Who would disagree with the idea that every American should have the same opportunity as the next? And yet, to those of us at the bottom, this is **not just a dream—it's a fantasy.** Equal opportunity means everyone has an equal chance to reach the height of their ability. But this hasn't been the case for many years now, if it ever was.

If you grew up lower income in the 1980s like I did, you didn't get to go to college and get a degree. 40 years later, that means you're stuck working a job that doesn't have the benefits that diploma-requiring jobs do. Meanwhile, the cost of living went up—but wages stayed the same. Many like me are stuck in a dead end job with low wages and no way out. **The American Dream has become an American nightmare.**

People say it's **never too late to go back to school, but for many of us, it is.** Imagine you're working full time. Imagine you're working more than full time like I am—two or three jobs, because that's what it takes to make ends meet in America in 2023. But let's say you find a way to invest all this time (and money!) into furthering your education. There's always the fear of not getting a job with the degree you have spent so much time and money on and then having no way to pay back a student loan. Now you're worse off than before.

It's just not true that all Americans are given the opportunity to pursue the American Dream. Good jobs often require a college degree, even if they don't require any skills you would learn at college. **But we in the working class get locked out of those opportunities over a formality, a piece of paper.**

(...) The American Dream is harder than ever to accomplish, especially with **the rising cost of living in 2023.** **People living in poverty or who are low income are even further down the pole now.** The divide is only getting bigger. And it's hard to see how we will ever have a shot at the American Dream.

Ruby Nicole Day is a 41-year-old married mother. She homeschools her son and drives for DoorDash. She lives in South Lebanon, Ohio. The views expressed in this article are the writer's own.

Document 2: The American Dream Isn't Dead, It's Just Misunderstood

*americancompass.org**, 19 August 2021, by Jeffery Mc Neil (The Edgerton Essays*, Perspectives from the Working Class)

Some people believe the American Dream is dead and the game is rigged against them.

That isn't my mindset or attitude. In order to **fulfill your dreams**, you must aspire to be what you desire. That is the American Dream, to me. And I think some people don't understand what fulfilling that American Dream can take.

I live in Washington, D.C., and am surrounded by **ambitious people aspiring to be politicians, writers, and journalists**. Many of them are immigrants that came from repressive places where the government decides what your fate will be. In America, you're not forced to work, **you can choose to hold a cup panhandling or you can take risks and start a business**. Trust me, I know people who have done both.

Part of the problem is that too many equate the American Dream with doing well—making money, the big house, the nice cars. Too many Americans suffer from a sense of entitlement, wanting instant gratification, rather than paying their dues. They envy someone running a business, who has two cars and a trophy wife. You don't see the behind-the-scenes work it took to get there. You don't know how someone may have started his business, working in his garage, may have spent days in the soup line and was mocked for thinking outside of the box.

Ten years ago I came to Washington, D.C., with \$10 dollars, broke and homeless. I was unemployed and unemployable. I hadn't bathed in weeks and the only prospect I had was to beg or sell a newspaper written and sold by the homeless, Street Sense. If anyone had a reason to give up, it was me. Many had and they have passed away. Being proud and competitive, I refused to be a beggar and charity case and saw that selling papers was better than panhandling.

Make sure your dreams are your own, not others' expectations. Dreams start with plans and come down to choices. If you let others set your expectations for you, you're letting them make your plans for you. Do I **become a comfortable slave or do I take risks** by becoming someone who is independent?

Sometimes that means marching to the beat of your own drum. It also means having a positive mindset. If you go into something with the mindset that your task is impossible, you'll find yourself just wasting another day in bed dreaming. **America will give you an opportunity, but you have to be the one to take action.**

When it comes to solutions for those facing poverty, there is **no one-size-fits-all solution**. There isn't one factor or stereotype. I was lucky to find organizations such as Street Sense, S.O.M.E. (So Others May Eat), Miriam's Kitchen, and Bread for the City. Being addicted, I never went to rehabilitation, but found a sponsor at AA meetings and haven't taken a drink in 12 years. Instead of complaining about my first job, which wasn't great, I used it as a resume-builder. I focused on staying away from negative people and looking at the big picture. (...)

**American Compass is a self-proclaimed conservative think tank which considers itself part of the "conservative labor movement".*

**Edgerton Essays feature the perspectives of working-class Americans on the challenges facing their communities and families and the debates central to the nation's politics.*

Document 3: The 'American Dream' of upward mobility is broken. Look at the numbers.

Mark R Rank and Lawrence M Eppard, *The Guardian*, 13 March 2021

The US has long prided itself as being an **exceptionally fluid society** with respect to social class and economic mobility. The American Dream holds that anyone who works hard can achieve economic success – perhaps even **rise from rags to riches**.

Underlying this belief is the assumption of abundant opportunity and meritocracy. Arriving immigrants often **believe they have come to a land of opportunity**, with a level playing field allowing for advancement and success. Those who fail to do so tend to blame themselves.

Yet according to recent research, the United States has far less mobility and equality of opportunity today than the European Union or other OECD countries.

First, the amount of **economic advantage passed down from one generation to the next** is much higher in the US. Approximately 50% of a father's income position is inherited by his son. In contrast, the amount in Norway or Canada is less than 20%.

What about rising from rags to riches? In the US, 8% of children raised in the bottom 20% of the income distribution are able to climb to the top 20% as adults, while the figure in Denmark is nearly double at 15%.

Equality of opportunity is also much less viable in the US than in other OECD countries. American **life expectancy varies by up to 20 years depending on the zip code of residence**. Quality of education also differs widely depending on the wealth of the neighborhood that families reside in. And the **chances of being victimized by a crime, exposed to environmental toxins or having unmet healthcare needs is far greater for America's poor than those impoverished in all other OECD countries**.

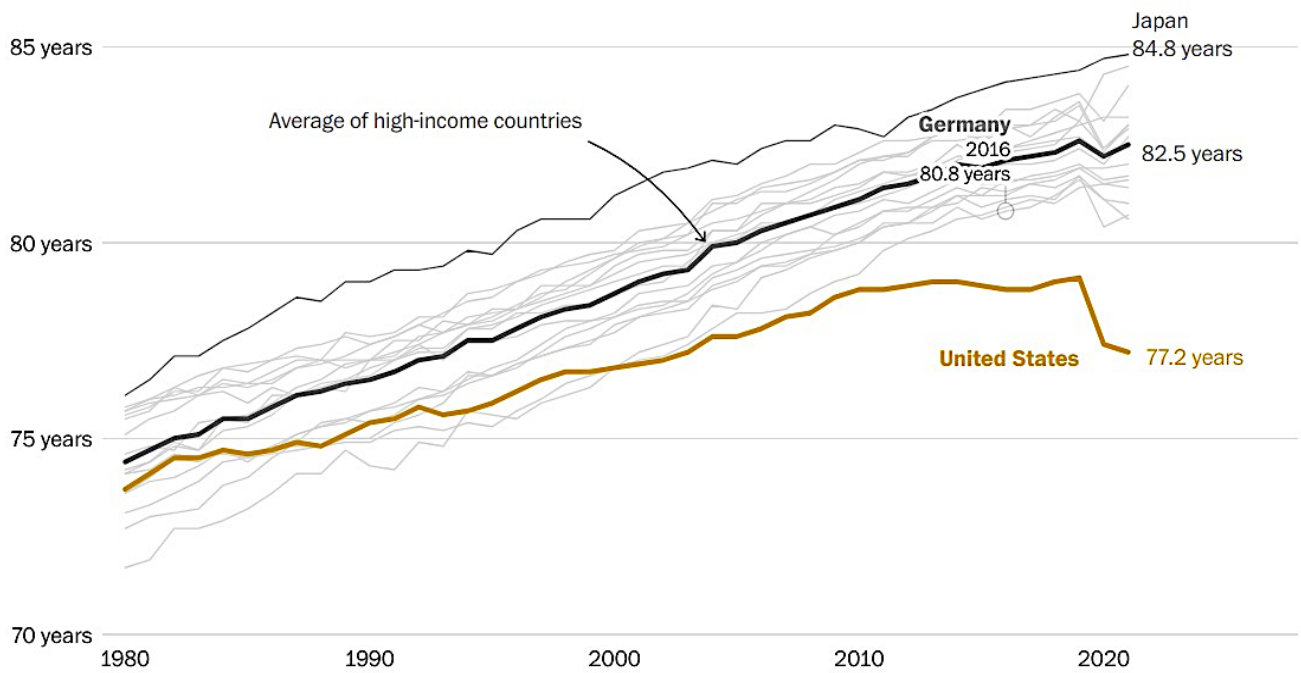
One of the reasons for lower US mobility is that the ladder of opportunity has become much harder to climb – **because the rungs of the ladder have grown further apart**. This is evidenced by the rising levels of income and wealth inequality. Currently, those in the top 20% of the income distribution earn nearly nine times more than those in the bottom 20%. This difference is far greater than in the European Union or the United Kingdom. **Wealth inequality is even more skewed**. In the United States, the top 5% of the population own three-quarters of the entire financial wealth of the country, while the bottom 60% possess less than 1%.

We discuss one explanation for these trends in our book, *Poorly Understood: What America Gets Wrong about Poverty*. The United States has traditionally viewed economic success and failure as the result of individual effort. Rugged individualism and self-reliance have been defining qualities of the American character. On the other hand, our European neighbors are much more likely to attribute poverty to structural factors such as social class or the lack of jobs. As a result, other OECD countries are much more willing to invest in a robust social welfare state designed to help ameliorate some of these structural inequities.

In addition, the United States has frequently viewed poverty and inequities through the lens of race and ethnicity. Poverty is often seen as a "black problem" rather than as an "American problem". Race has been used to divide poor blacks and whites from seeing their common economic interests.
(...)

Document 4:

Life expectancy in wealthy countries



Source: United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division.

DOC1	DOC2	DOC3	DOC4
<p>thesis → the US dream is dead for middle-class Americans</p> <p>Everyone has their own definition of the US Dream</p> <p>Columnist → just wants basic things = enough to have a home and protect yourself and your family But even with 3 jobs, it is still hard to make ends meet.</p> <p>Key problem : lack of opportunity → no equality of opportunity</p> <p>If underprivileged when growing up in the 80s → no college education → no upward mobility 40 years later</p> <p>US Dream = nightmare</p> <p>Difficult to go back to school (expensive) and not be sure to get a better job.</p> <p>Degree is needed to get a good job → middle-class don't have the same opportunities</p> <p>Things are getting even worse with inflation and higher cost of living</p>	<p>opinion / conservative think tank</p> <p>US Dream isn't dead → you can achieve your dream if you do what it takes.</p> <p>Washington DC → people who took the bull by the horns / took their destiny into their own hands</p> <p>Choose to be a beggar or a businessperson</p> <p>Definition of US Dream</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Money / big cars / big house, which you can get instantly → flawed - People forget all the efforts that successful people had to make to make it. <p>To achieve your dream :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Go with your guts - Don't let people tell you what to do / follow your dream, not sb else's - Don't expect America to help you, take action / persevere 	<p>Thesis → The American Dream is broken</p> <p>Def of the US dream → fluid society → you can climb the social ladder easily</p> <p>Go from rags to riches</p> <p>But Europe and other OECD countries are doing better</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More inherited money and privileges in the US - Fewer success stories / people actually climbing the social ladder - More inequalities / discrimination <p>Dues to increasing income / wealth inequalities → widening gap between rich and poor</p> <p>Explanation : America focuses on individual success Other countries focus more on the welfare on the community</p> <p>+ race & ethnicity → divisions between poor whites and poor blacks → no unity in the fight against poverty</p>	<p>Chart by the United Nations</p> <p>Life expectancy =</p> <p>Increasing in most developed countries</p> <p>America has always been below average</p> <p>Sharp drop around 2019</p> <p>Sharper drop than in any other country</p>

PROBLEMATIQUE / KEY-QUESTION

Does the American Dream exist ?

→ does it **still** exist?

→ does it still exist **for everyone**?

→ To what extent does it still exist for everyone? / Can it be said that it still exists for everyone?

Can it be said that the US is still a land of opportunity for all?

TITLE :

The American Dream: reality or illusion?

Where is the American Dream?

Today's _____ American Dream

The USA : A dying land of opportunity?

PLANS

- 1- The American Dream exists
- 2- But hard work and determination are not enough
- 3- How can it be reached? / At what cost?

- 1- There is no American Dream for some
- 2- Yet it can be reached
- 3- But it is much harder than in the past / in other countries

- 1- What is the US Dream / different definitions
- 2- Therefore → no consensus on whether it still exists or not
- 3- But it seems to be more of an ideal than a reality

1) Is the American Dream dead? Not everybody agrees.

Has the US Dream ever existed? → Doc 4 : life expectancy in the US has always been below the average of high-income countries.

Death of the American Dream for working class citizens: it has become a fantasy for many years → has turned into an American nightmare (Doc.1) VS. opposition to the supposed death of the American Dream (conservative point of view): it is still achievable but there is a price to pay = making efforts, taking risks (Doc.2)

A 'broken dream': the belief in a land of opportunity does not match reality today (Doc.3)

2) This is due to contrasting definitions of the American Dream.

Traditional vision/definition: working hard enables anyone to become economically successful (from poverty to wealth) (Doc.3)

Contrast with today's vision of a working-class woman: for well-off people, the American Dream = having access to luxury products, while the working poor, juggling several jobs, would just like to be able to make ends meet + own a house + have some savings = a currently unattainable dream (see Doc 4 : US ≠ better than other countries)

But this vision is rejected in doc.2: wrong approach = sense of entitlement → the right to be doing well (money, house, cars) = flawed expectation to be able to get it instantly VS. personal story: getting out of destitution through his own perseverance and hard work, initiative, risk-taking + your own dreams, not someone else's...

3) However, signals point to the fact it has become more an ideal than a reality.

Solutions do exist, e.g., organizations that helped J. Mc Neill out of poverty while working hard (Doc.2)

However, the USA offers less mobility and equality of opportunity today than the European Union or other OECD countries (inherited privileges, fewer success stories, worsening inequality): indeed, other countries' approach (= fighting poverty as a structural problem, not an individual or racial one) → more efficient // decreasing life expectancy in the USA, lower than Japan and Germany, where it is increasing! (Doc.4)

Blatant lack of opportunity + exclusion of the working class (absence of college degrees, further education = too risky) → increasing social divide (Doc.1)

- **INTERDIT de commencer une phrase par ~~*ALSO~~** 
- **INDEED / IN FACT = OK une fois, pas cinq...**

The American Dream may still be real, but for _____?

_____ decades, America has _____ seen as a country where anyone can succe____. But today, _____mericans are divided over whether the so-called “American Dream” still exists. These four documents - an opinion piece published _____ *Newsweek* _____ 2023 (Doc1) describing the reality of this dream for a working-class woman, two articles _____ 2021 one published on *americancompass.org* (Doc2) defending a conservative vision of the American Dream, the other from *The Guardian* (Doc3) comparing equality of opportunity in _____USA and OECD countries, and a graph from the United Nations (Doc4) describing the decline in life expectancy in America - _____ the question of _____America is still a land of opportunity for all.

Although the USA has its flaws – it is a highly individualistic society (Doc 3), and life expectancy there has long been way below the average of rich countries (Doc 4) - it is widely regarded as a dreamland (Doc 3) where those who work hard and have ambition can _____their dreams (Doc 2). There is, _____, no consensus as to¹ what the American Dream is: while some expect success to fall into their lap², others are prepared to make all the necessary sacrifices to get to the top (Doc2). For others, still, it is simply about being able to pay the bills and take care of their family (Doc1). But even this is not within everyone’s _____.

¹ As to

² To fall into sb’s lap

Hard work and determination are not enough, and the American Dream is no longer a reality for the working class. Doc 1 shows that those who did not have the opportunity to go to college lack the required _____ to apply for well-paid jobs. That is why it is increasingly difficult for the people from the bottom of the ladder to make it to the top (Doc3). And today's rising cost of _____ makes matters worse, even for those with multiple jobs (Doc1). Therefore, they are trapped in poverty and even seem resigned to this predicament³ (Doc1).

Some would argue that nothing is impossible if you persevere and follow your dream and nobody _____(Doc2), but the conditions for achieving the American dream seem limited. While European countries are taking structural measures to combat inequality, America seems to be lagging further and further behind⁴: inequality is more marked than elsewhere (Doc3), and America is the only high-income nation _____life expectancy has been persistently plummeting (Doc 4). Unless someone is lucky enough to benefit from opportunities, _____ may never be able to rise. In short, although the American Dream is still accessible, it is slowly disappearing due to blatantly⁵ growing inequalities.

³ Predicament

⁴ To lag behind

⁵ Blatantly

Translate the following sentences into English

Comme c'est que doc 3 il dit, Etats-Unis est un pays riche.

Cet article a été publié dans The Economist en août 2021.

Les Etats-Unis ne sont pas aussi puissants qu'avant.

Tout le monde n'a pas la possibilité de réaliser son rêve.

Les pauvres n'ont pas les mêmes chances que les riches

Même s'ils travaillent dur, ils restent pauvres.