

THE DREAM, THE REALITY, THE ACTIONS: A STUDY OF CHANGING AMERICAN VALUES AND ATTITUDES IN THE 21ST CENTURY

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Many of us have observed that in the last 10 years the "American situation" or in other words American power and position in the world has changed significantly. In that same time-frame the domestic situation has also changed for most Americans due to recent economic disruptions and stagnation making it more difficult for people to maintain or raise their economic standing. This study creates a theoretical framework based off of the Marxist theory of false consciousness and functionalist theory of anomie to explore if American society is about to or is in the beginning of a fundamental change in its values and institutions. This initial analysis will use the fundamental American value of the "American Dream" to determine this. Once the possibility for change is established it will be the job of this study to explore exactly how American society is changing. It will concentrate on whether Americans are becoming more egalitarian or individualistic in their relations to other Americans and attitudes towards those abroad. This study plans to use voting data, opinion polls, and in the future face to face interviews and surveys to determine what is America's mindset and how it is changing. This study and the determination of this change will show sociologists, policy makers and social activists two radically different paths that America may take in the 21st Century.