

The American Dream: Dead, Alive, or on Hold?

BRANDON KING



WHAT IS THE TRUE STATE of the so-called “American Dream” today? Is it still around, waiting to be achieved by those who work hard enough, or is it effectively dead, killed off by the Great Recession and the economic hardships that many Americans have come to face? Statistics reveal alarming facts, including trillions of dollars lost in the stock market (Paradis, 2009). While these losses, combined with admittedly high unemployment in the past few years, have contributed to seemingly dismal prospects for prosperity in the United States, I believe that the ideals and values of the American Dream are still very much alive. In fact, the original term “American Dream” was coined during the Great Depression by James Truslow Adams, who wrote that the American dream “is that

BRANDON KING is studying political science at the University of Cincinnati and plans to attend law school. He has always enjoyed writing pieces related to his major, particularly on the topics of economic inequality and political structures in the United States. He eventually hopes to enter a career in public service. King wrote this essay in 2011, for this book.