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**The Ambiguity of the American Dream and the Shift to
Hollywood Dream**

This Extended Essay is submitted to the Department of English, as a Partial Fulfillment for the Requirements of the "MASTER'S DEGREE" in Literature and Civilization

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For all the teachers of the English department.

DEDICATIONS

To all...

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgement.....	I
Dedications.....	II
Table of contents.....	III
Abstract.....	IV
General Introduction.....	1
<u>Chapter one: The American Dream: Past and Present</u>	
1.1. Introduction.....	5
1.2. Definition of the American Dream.....	6
1.3. Historical Understanding of the American Dream.....	7
1.4. The Constitution of the American Dream.....	10
1.5. A Real Case of the American Dream	11
1.6. The American Dream Today.....	15
1.7. American Dream in a Broad Sense.....	16
1.8. The Measure of the Dream.....	17
1.9. kanye West, a Sample of the American Dream.....	18
1.10. Conclusion.....	21
<u>Chapter two: The Hollywood Dream</u>	
2.1. Introduction.....	26
2.2. History of Fame.....	27
2.3. Today's Fame Seekers.....	28
2.4. The Psychology Behind Celebrity Obsession.....	30
2.4.1. Imaginary Idols.....	31
2.5. Why Is Celebrity Imitation Growing?.....	33
2.5.1. A Doubling American Dream.....	33
2.5.2. American Reality.....	34
2.5.3. Advances in Technology.....	35
2.5.4. Radio, Film and Television.....	36
2.5.5. Internet.....	37
2.5.6. Social Media.....	38
2.6. Where Did the Shift From American Dream to Hollywood Dream Begin?..	39
2.7. Timeline of the Generations Adopted From.....	41
2.8. What Future Might Hold to the American?.....	42
2.9. Professional Communication Tools for the Hollywood Dream Audience....	43
2.10. Conclusion.....	44
General Conclusion.....	46
Bibliography	49

ABSTRACT

Celebrities now dominate the American culture. From television shows to household products, Hollywood has burrowed itself into nearly every aspect of people's lives. Many people not only want to imitate celebrities, but more and more want to actually become celebrities, too. This growing trend has impacted the attitudes and aspirations of different nations' youth, shifting from the once-revered hard-working American Dream to the ego-driven Hollywood Dream. This change did not happen overnight; it has been hundreds of years in the making, but has accelerated with a series of events in the last two decades. History shows that societal and cultural attitudes tend to shift over time. While humans all share the same basic biology needs, major occurrences like wars, economic conditions and technological advancements shape each generation's view of the world.

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

The American Dream For some people, it may be a comfortable house with a white picket fence, a couple kids, a pet dog, and a barbecue with friends in the back yard on a warm summer evening. For others, fulfilment of the dream could mean creating a successful business and making a million dollars.

for many people, especially those who have had the experience of living under a drastically different form of government, the American Dream is simply the ability to live in a country where we are free to talk about whatever we wish without being afraid that government thugs are going to burst through the door at any moment and haul us away to a concentration camp or threaten our family.

In its highest expression, the American Dream is an ideal of the Human Spirit. It is an ideal in which each and every individual human being is offered the opportunity to reach his or her greatest potential. To reach the aim of the study the researcher raised the following questions:

- Is the American Dream something definite?
- Is the American Dream a static or dynamic concept?

Consequently, we postulate two hypotheses that complete each other and lead the researcher to fulfil the investigation at stake:

- The notion of American Dream changes through time with the advance of technology.
- The American Dream concept is not static and became the Hollywood Dream.

To check the veracity of the above mentioned hypotheses the researcher opt the qualitative method of research based on myriad scanning and skimming readings in relation to the raised issue.

This extended essay is divided into two main chapters. The first chapter is almost concerned with the classical American Dream. It displays the different views that tried and still doing to explain and give a clear cut definition of the concept. Differently said, the American Dream is: the rags-to-riches tale, the get-rich-quick scheme, the middle class lifestyle, becoming a celebrity, another melting-pot metaphor, a true democracy, a classless society, universal education, Westward expansionism, capitalism over communism, security from fear, and the illusions peddled by the entertainment industry.

However, the second chapter treats the question of the shift that mainly characterises the American Dream. From the reverend Jerry Falwell and former lawyer General Alberto Gonzales to Kanye West .Symbols of the AD include everyone from Benjamin Franklin to Henry Ford, Abraham Lincoln to Walt Disney, Ross Perot to Clarence Thomas, Barack Obama to Oprah Winfrey. Besides to an uncountable number of movies and television shows including Bend it Like Beckham are also said to portray stories about the American Dream.

CHAPTER ONE :

The American Dream: Past & Present.

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The American Dream: Past and Present

1.1. Introduction.

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1.4. The Constitution of the American Dream.

1.5. A Real Case of the American Dream.

1.6. The American Dream Today.

1.7. American Dream in a Broad Sense.

1.8. The Measure of the Dream.

1.9. Kanye West, a Sample of the American Dream.

1.10. Conclusion.

1.1. Introduction

This chapter is devoted to diachronic and, from time to time, synchronic description of the American way of life depending on the importance of the historical event. On one hand, it is necessary to provide a full definition of the term "AD" as a concept. It is a thought or idea which suggests that all Americans can succeed through hard work, and that they are all capable to have happy and successful lives. Otherwise many people believe that the structure of American society (class, race, and ethnic origin) makes the AD not coming true. If we go back in time we will recognize that the idea of an AD is older than the United States, dating back to the 1600s, when people began to come up with all kinds of hopes and aspirations for the New World that time. Many of these dreams were based on owning land and establishing prosperous businesses which would automatically produce happiness.

On the other hand, it is of paramount importance to endow the reader with some pros and cons interpretations of the term. Accordingly, Critics of the American Dream also indicate that many versions of the dream associate prosperity with happiness, and that happiness may not always be reachable, these critics imply that the American Dream may always remain definitely out of reach for some Americans, making it more like a nasty joke than a real dream. Someone who manages to achieve his or her own version of the American Dream may be thought to be "living the dream," and everyone has a unique reading of what the American Dream might be. Essentially, the American Dream is about hope and the potential for change, and one could quarrel that people who make change in some way, even a small way, are living the dream. It is noteworthy to mention that the concept of the American Dream is frequently used throughout this extended essay and henceforth (AD).

1.2. Definition of the AD

The term "AD" first was used by the American historian James Truslow Adams in his book "The Epic of America" published in 1931. At that time the United States was suffering under the Great Depression. Adams used the term to describe the complex beliefs, religious promises and political and social expectations. "The AD" has become a widespread term to describe the American Way of Life in general, but it is by far not that easy." The AD" always has something individual. That is, why till today no one succeeded in giving a universally acceptable definition of the term. Another reason is the permanent change of the "AD", which always made it a highly discussed topic within the American Society.

Hollywood used and still uses it in a lot of movies, for example in "Pretty Woman". A lot of American historians say "The AD" even has its beginnings in the Declaration of Independence and the first European Settlers because the basic idea is that every man and every woman shall, regardless of their birth, achieve what there are able to do. Everybody shall be treated and seen equally and be recognized by others for what they are and have reached, referring to their position. To make "The AD" come true all Americans have to work together. "The AD" is supposed to be for each American, despite all social groups. Accordingly, too many Americans have built mistrust towards "The AD" because they did not reach what they had hoped for and also had expected. For a lot of people "The AD" is connected to becoming wealthy and the ability to achieve everything if one only works hard enough for it (From rags to riches). For others it is much more and is beyond materialism. For them it is the dream of living a simple, happy and fulfilling life and the most important features being faith

and equality. "The AD" also is about liberty and America being the country of unlimited opportunities.

The AD" has a lot to do with America being a country of immigration, and these immigrants all hoped to live a better life in the new world. That is where from our point of view lies the paradox because all Americans are descendants of immigrants. This is one reason why nowadays a lot of people say "The AD" has become a nightmare. Frankly speaking one could say "the AD" is the belief of the US-American Society that each individual can, through hard working and strength of mind, achieve everything.

1.3. Historical Understanding of the AD

The term first emerged in the early 20th century. Classifying various public goals and desires under the heading of the "AD" is an academic exercise, which reveals a great openness in association. We contend that the AD is a perspective where fantasy is a real possibility, and the context of modern American consumer culture.

We will discuss in more detail the term of 'AD' in the following chapters. What perspective does the AD offer? What is translated, and how does the AD provide a new viewpoint? The AD meaning creates a perspective that sees fantasy as a real possibility. This is due to the contrasting relationship of the two elements of the term: American and dream. In here, the dream represents a fantasy or an idealized vision. Such visions circulate in all forms of public media, from the campaign speech to the advertisement, the sermon to the cinema. In all these historical uses, the "AD" represents a desirable fantasy.

If the dream represents fantasy, then the *American* element stands for a real possibility. What makes the dream uniquely *American* is the idea that America is the land of possibility. As the chronicler of the American frontier Frederick Jackson Turner liked to say, “America has been another name for opportunity.”

The AD used to be about owning a modest home, having a happy family, and supporting yourself with honest, hard work. No one vies for things like that anymore.

Now we want huge buildings, plastic surgery, designer children, and teeth made of gold. Life doesn't seem worth living unless we can get invites to all the best parties or fly around the world in a private jet. Minimally, we'd like to star in at least one reality TV show!

The average American spends half of their time chasing this new unattainable version of the AD and the other half of their time watching those who are living it.

But, here's the kicker: No seems troubled by the fact that so many celebrities seem absolutely miserable. In fact, it's almost as if their unhappiness and heartache thrills us. Sure, we may feign polite interest at a heartwarming story featuring Oprah at a school opening, but what we really want to hear is the *dirt*. Show us the scars from the bad boob jobs! Let us listen to the audio of them screaming at their children! Make public their drug addictions and struggles with body image! Give us the gory details on their imploding marriages or broken friendships!

Tell us that they're unhappy, so we can look down on them and say to ourselves that if we were in their position, we wouldn't be such fuck ups!

Isn't it weird that when shit hits the fan we assume the problem lies with the celebrity and not with the lifestyle? We condemn celebrities for being stupid and

spoiled because it makes us feel better about our failure to attain what they have. We look down our noses at a princess with coke on her nose because it's the only time in our lives when society tells us it's OK to feel superior.

It's a trick, people. It's a clever sleight of the hand. We are shown enough of the lives of celebrities to make us secretly (Or not so secretly) want to emulate them, but should we ever get discouraged with the chase, we are shown the spoiled, rich brats fucking it all up.

The message is clear: Happiness is 14 room mansions with crews of people to clean up after you. Happiness is pedigree dogs and elevators made for your fleet of cars. Happiness is personal chefs and dishing with Kathy Griffin on which neighbor is the biggest bitch. Right now, Mary Kate Olson has access to happiness. But that ungrateful bitch is spending all of her time clutching a toilet and pissing it all away. You are the ones who really deserve it, so keep chasing!

And what is happening while we're all spending our time chasing this crazy, fucked up version of the AD? Why, the handful of people who are *actually in power* are laughing at us while they simultaneously rape resources, steal more wealth, and send children off to die so they can buy another set of cuff links. Oh, and on their down time, they dream up more unrealistic goals for us to adopt so we don't give them any shit about it, either. On the off chance we *do* get a little upset, they can just funnel a few million more bottles of Prozac down to the little people until we're all pleasantly oblivious to the world around us. After all, it's far easier to rule over stupid cows than it is to deal with angry adults.

I know I sound like a conspiracy theorist. But it amazes me that so few people have not realized that problem is not with the *individual celebrity*, but the *lifestyle*

they're living. I suspect that *any* person living in a cold, sterile, prepackaged, soulless environment might have a few problems remaining on an even keel.

1.4. The Constitution of the AD

Here, the researcher outlines the central question of this dissertation, how did the constitution of the AD take place? As we have seen, the AD do not have a singular meaning but one with many versions, meanings, and associations. This dissertation focuses on one particular version associated with Hollywood and articulating a “magical theory of social change” that all one needs is a dream to make them come true. Previous rhetorical theorists offer many competing explanations for constitution which can be readily applied to the Disney version of the AD. Some see the origin as stemming from a controlling exigence, such as the problems of 20th century consumer culture. Others locate the origin in various speakers, such as the corporate hucksters who benefit from the ideology of a magical theory of social change. Still other scholars locate the origin in texts such as those biographies and popular media accounts which portray Disney as an example of the AD. Finally, some contend that audiences actively construct texts from the fragments of cultural discourse, making the receivers the proper origin of constitution. We contend that locating the origin of the Disney version in the exigencies, speaker, audiences, or texts remains inadequate. Each approach assumes a meaning-centric, instrumental model of communication that neglects the role of media technology and mediation. Instead, these explanations for constitution rely upon an implicit conceptualization of situation based on oral discourse and of communication based on the written word. Consideration of electronic and other media technologies denies this notion of situation and communication alike. Most rhetorical situations today are far from the present,

embodied, and pragmatic situations of oral cultures, and most communication is not simply the instrumental transmission of meaning or information. In place of these theories of origin, a revised theory of situation based in the work of Jacques Derrida and other media theorists demands a reconceptualization of constitution as the result of the process of mediation whose origin cannot be found in the substances of speakers, audiences, texts, technologies, or situations but in an economy of forces a mode whose various, often contradictory and competing translations, shape the very perceptions of speakers, audiences, and situations. In short, the Disney version of the AD is constituted through the translation of modes into a model rhetorical situation.

1.5. A real case of the American Dream

Francis Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* was published in New York in 1925. Those years in America, the 1920s, are often considered as the Roaring Twenties: a decade of great social change, a decade of jazz, an age of success and American Dream, an age of everything. The novel is indeed a story about the American Dream and its decay. The American Dream is often described as the aspiration of young Americans to live better than their parents: without war, poverty and misfortune but with love, wealth and happiness

The Great Gatsby is a novel thematically based on the concept of the American Dream in general, and the degenerated 1920's version of it in particular. This novel treated deterioration of the American Dream in the 1920s focusing on the Jazz Age and how the Dream of Success was perceived and practiced by the people of the time. The goal is to make a clear distinction between what the American Dream originally is, and how it might change in each age based on different readings of the same idea.

The focus will be on the original definition and assumptions of the American Dream articulated by the founding fathers, and the ways it has been misinterpreted. The suggestion would be that hard work, good ethics and equality for all, which are the basic factors constituting the American Dream, are definitely forgotten and twisted in the Jazz Age, and that this collapse is what leads the protagonist to his tragedy not the dream itself. In contrast to the original definition, the ideals of freedom, equal opportunity and happiness are replaced by infatuation with material possessions, immorality and bigotry.

Jay Gatsby is a young and charming millionaire. His past and the origin of his fortune are quite uncertain, which makes him a mysterious character. We only know he fought during the First World War. He lives in a luxurious villa in West Egg where he incessantly throws parties. In this way, Gatsby creates his own image: a man who reach fortune, success, and mystery, always surrounded by a group of people who strive to be a part of his inner circle. Gatsby is only interested in one person among the others: Daisy, a married woman living in East Egg.

Jay Gatsby in particular can be seen as a representative of the corruption of the American Dream. As a young man he believed in the commonly held views that character was essential for success. We can see this clearly in the notebook that he kept as a young man, filled with self-improvement plans, most of which focus on building good character.

Gatsby represents the American dream because he is born in a poor humble family, yet he left his parents chasing his dream at an early age rises to a position of wealth and power. We are aware of his humble beginnings when we learn about his

early meeting of Daisy while still a young soldier on a military base. Daisy initially loves him, but their romance is stymied by her parents and his departure for The Great War.

After the war, Gatsby knows that the only way he could ever be a suitable husband for Daisy is if he were to build up tremendous wealth. To that end, Gatsby begs, borrows and steals his way into the bootlegging industry. The wealth he accumulates from bootlegging buys him the tremendous house and parties Gatsby needs to once again catch Daisy's attention.

Finally, it doesn't matter how Gatsby made his money, just that he had a dream and achieved it (almost) through hard work and determination.

Back to the novel most of the people appearing in *The Great Gatsby* are full of hope especially Gatsby who is hoping to win Daisy back he has an extraordinary gift of hope and he sacrifices himself to fulfill his dream. He struggles to get into the upper class. In the end his dream fails completely, and his life finds an unexpected end.

Nick Carraway is a pragmatic man, who comes from the Middle-West, and does not share the American dream. But still he is striving for something; he wants to be himself, as he sees himself, tolerant, objective and reliable. The money of the upper class is just a tiny bit of his dream together with his admiration for the rich East Eggers. Mainly, his dream consists of mental values, of a pursuit of honesty.

Daisy lives her American Dream with Tom as her husband, who has a lot of money. She does not have any long term aims in her life. Having that kind luxury around her, she lives for the moment, and does not think about the next one.

Tom was born into his American Dream. He never had to work in his life, and got all his money from his parents. Since everything is perfect for his narrow-minded eyes, he does not want any changes. Losing Daisy would be a major change in his dream because he sees her as one of his possessions.

Wilson's dream is to earn enough money to move away with his wife and to start a new life some place beautiful. But his dream can just become true with the help of Tom. Although, Wilson does not realize that Tom does not want to help him at all. His dream fails, when his wife is killed, which is the point where life becomes senseless to him.

His wife, Myrtle, has also a dream; she wants to become a girl of the upper class. Having an affair with Tom, she acts as if she already belonged among those rich people. Tom is her key to the upper class and she would do everything for him. She hates Daisy, because Daisy is standing in her way, for her marriage with Tom

1.6. The AD Today

So far the question of the AD is still under discussion. So, is the United States of America an "ideal" country? Has the "AD" been fulfilled? The answer is obvious: People are imperfect and the ideals that America claims as its foundation are far from being completely fulfilled. The American society has serious problems. And many of the freedoms that we would like to take for granted are too often overrun.

By their nature, ideals exist independent of physical reality. And ideals are important even if they are not completely fulfilled. In fact, they are especially important when they seem to be far above the norm of society. They give us something

to reach for, to aspire toward. They can serve as a model of what we should become even if we are in the midst of struggles on an entirely different level.

But ideals can be fulfilled. In the long run, with the right effort, they can be fulfilled in society at large, even though the road toward them may seem long and hard and slow. And above all, the thing that is most important for each of us to realize is that each of us individually, through our own efforts, can become a fulfilment of the ideals of freedom, courage, love, and personal achievement in our own lives.

1.7. AD in a Broad Sense

Critics see the AD as a clever political and economic marketing strategy. They want people to get away from selfish individualism and materialism, and to return to community spirit and social responsibility. The huge gap between the rich and the poor in America is obvious, but at the same time the role of state welfare and political intervention in helping weaker members of society remains controversial. “Affirmative action”, however, is a widely practised policy of supporting blacks and single parents, especially in education and work schemes.

In social terms, the concept of a classless society has never really become reality because of the existence of an underclass of people who refuse to join the “rat race” of a competitive, success-oriented society. This lower class sees mainstream America as an uncaring dog-eat-dog society and themselves as losers in the race for success. In a society marked by a huge diversity in income and lifestyles, the middle class often works long hours, taking on several jobs with hardly any holidays in order to be able to live the American way. The rich enjoy the benefits of material success.

In ethnic terms, the various minority groups cope differently with the pressure on the individual in a society which is marked by the ambition to succeed. The Native

American population (two per cent of the population) has, to a large extent, never fully adapted to the white lifestyle and system of values. A rapidly growing Hispanic community (13 per cent) largely consists of Mexican Americans who have illegally immigrated and are often exploited as cheap workers on farms and in private households.

The vision of America as a “melting pot of nations” which still today appears on all American coins, in which the foreign immigrants give up their national identity, way of life, culture and language and form a new nation, has never become reality. In the 1960s, the growing self-confidence of the minorities, their fight against discrimination, and the influx of new ethnic groups who refused to be culturally absorbed by American society, has made America look for a new image for this concept. The concept of the “salad bowl” was suggested as more accurate, accepting America as diverse, multi-cultural and pluralistic.

1.8. The Measure of the Dream

America was founded on the principle that we all have an equal right to chase the same opportunities without unjust exclusion, interference, discrimination, or impediment--in harmony with the principle of freedom, and its expression in human creativity, ingenuity, and scheme. Our nation's primary greatness was the direct result of the fact that this ideal existed in broad strokes across our young nation, notwithstanding inevitable contradictions and inequities, including the fact that the AD was suspended from a whole class of Americans who were black. Even that anomaly in our history was eventually forced to give up to the compelling principles found in our declaration with which it was plainly out of harmony.

America became great in all fields of invention, science, letters, industry, arts, religion, and culture precisely because the AD made all such progress possible. Today, however, America is in serious decline in these very areas because the Dream no longer exists on a universal scale in American society. Some impression of it still exists, of course, and US people today still can reach many wonderful opportunities, but the Dream itself has declined to the point of near decay, and where it appears to exist, that existence is largely a fantasy, because the dream is not equally available to all. The reason of our legal republic The theory of government on which the nation was founded is the notion that society as a whole is required, in principle, to yield to the divine rights of every person in that society.

As a result, the Constitution was done to protect the rights of the individual (or the minority) from tyranny by the collective or the majority. It follows that the purpose of the Constitution is to guarantee to each individual the right to follow the AD. Unfortunately, as the American Constitution has been increasingly devastated by revisionist judicial activism in our courts and by the self-serving agendas of special interests over the past century and a half, so has the Dream that the Constitution was meant to protect it from the decline. The Fifth Amendment clearly states that whenever government "takes" private properties for public use--such as for public roads or for public health and safety (by way of modern zoning") the government must pay "just compensation" to the owner. Yet, for roughly a century, a tradition has developed in the courts that have allowed local agencies and commissions to regulate virtually out of existence many citizens' right to use their property.

1.9. Kanye West a sample of the AD

Kanye West was raised in a middle-class family in Chicago, Illinois, and began rapping in the third grade, becoming later a famous celebrity. He endeavours to provide his audience with the “AD” meaning according to his own experience, so he says the following: “I know people want to talk about the AD, but my dream is a world dream. It's a world in which everyone's main goal would be to help each other. The first thing I told my team on New Year's Day was, "You know, people say bad news travels fast, but this year let's make good news travel faster." You get back what you put out, and the more positive energy you put out, the more positive energy you'll get back. We had to do a lot of fighting in the past couple of years to get people to understand what we want to do, what we will do and what we're capable of doing. Not just me or my design team, or my music team, but an entire generation that has the information highway and the ability to access information. Information is not only power; it's simply everything. It can be a scary thing for people to think universally, to think in terms of the world. It's not traditional. There's a lot of people who want to make sure things don't become a hybrid, but the Internet has opened up every conversation, literally and metaphorically. It starts as homogenizing, but this hybridizing, this interbreeding of ideas, is necessary for us as a race to evolve. (Thank God for Steve Jobs.) For example, there was an embroiderer at a fashion house who was in her 90s and she refused to give anyone her technique. She said, "When I die, this technique will die also." I think the opposite of that. I think it's so important for me, as an artist, to give Drake as much information as I can, A\$AP, Kendrick, Taylor Swift, any of these younger artists as much information as I can to make better music in the future. We should all be trying to make something that's better. It's funny that I

worked at the Gap in high school, because in my past 15 years it seems like that's the place I stood in my creative path to be the gap, the bridge. It's beautiful when you can connect a purpose to things that you've spent a lot of time on. I feel very positive about the future. People are starting to recognize and just give me a chance to be looked at, respected and a part of the conversation. I really appreciate that my collection at New York Fashion Week was accepted positively. The moment that I saw AlberElbaz, he patted me on the back and said, "Keep going." It's important to believe and it's equally important to pay your dues. I was speaking at a fashion award ceremony...It's funny to be so famous and noted for one thing, and to have so many people try to box you out of another form of art, even if you've proven you're an artist of one form. My goal isn't to "break through the fashion world;" my goal is to make usable sculpture. My goal is to paint. My goal is to be as close to a five-year-old, or a four-year-old, or a three-year-old, as possible. If a three-year-old says, "I like the color orange," he's not giving an explanation to an entire world that can give him a thumbs-up or a thumbs-down on whether or not he should like the color orange. I don't care about the thumbs-up or the thumbs-down. Fashion is something that's in my heart to do -- in my spirit. There's no world that can stop me from what I love. Not the rap world, not the fashion world, not the *real* world. But it hurt me as a human being to see that article written, with the amount of work that's there and the potential and what I *know* I will eventually do. But behind bravery and courage is the ability to brace for pain, not the idea of never having pain or trying to avoid pain. Bravery and courage is walking into pain and knowing that something better is on the other side. I heard this quote from Steve Jobs: someone came up to him when he was working on something and said, "Hey, just do it. It will be easy." And he said, "Wait a second. Anything halfway good is *at least* medium hard." There's no easy way out. Just choose what you want to focus on. Right now,

over 70 percent of my focus is on apparel. I haven't even given my College Dropout of clothing yet.

I also love people being inspired to follow their dreams, because I think people are oppressed by smoke and mirrors, by perception. There isn't an example of a living celebrity that has more words formed against him, but just a little self-belief can go a long way. I think the scariest thing about me is the fact that I just believe. I believe awesome is possible and I believe that beauty is important. When I say "beauty," what's your current definition of beauty? When I think beauty, I think of an untouched forest, only created by God's hand. I think of a gray sky that separates the architecture from the background and creates these amazing photographs because you don't have to block the sun above you when you're taking the photograph. I think beauty is important and it's undermined by our current corporate culture. When you think about the corporate office, you don't see the importance of beauty. I think all colors are beautiful and in a corporate world only one color is. But another thing is that I believe money is important. I think that artists have been brainwashed to look at money as a bad thing, and it's not. I think they're equally important in our current civilization.”

1.10. Conclusion

To sum up, the AD is a dream because it is a fantastical vision; it is a vision of possibility, and the AD because it portrays a vision of possibility in a consumer culture. The AD represents the possibilities of a world of consumerism. Versions include the dream of mass consumption, the dream of an automobile powered society, Hollywood dreams of a celebrity or fantasy life, and the dream of home ownership. Such dreams are not simply pleasurable dissipations or debilitating illusions; in the

American frame, the dream holds the potential to become reality. People can and do achieve the AD. The AD has many aspects, and it can be fact or fiction depending on the efforts of the American people. Perseverance is a shield which protects the dream of the people. But it is also the American people who protect the dream. Only through their perseverance can the dream be achieved. The double-edged sword of the AD is protected and fulfilled by the shield of perseverance.

The AD has always been there, but its attainment depends of having the perspective to see what opportunities are in front of you. Next we will examine in details how the AD gradually shifted to the Hollywood Dream, a term that may substitute the traditional concept which is known as AD.

CHAPTER TWO:

The Hollywood Dream.

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The Hollywood Dream

2.1. Introduction.

2.2. History of Fame.

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2.5.1. A Doubling American Dream.

2.5.2. American Reality.

2.5.3. Advances in Technology.

2.5.4. Radio, Film and Television.

2.5.5. Internet.

2.5.6. Social Media.

2.6. Where Did the Shift From American Dream to Hollywood Dream Begin?

2.7. Timeline of the Generations Adopted From.

2.8. What Future Might Hold to the American?

2.9. Professional Communication Tools for the Hollywood Dream Audience.

2.10. Conclusion.

2.1. Introduction

The second chapter displays mainly the nowadays AD which became the Hollywood dream because many people now want to behave like celebrities. Not only do many Americans, Arabs which is the concern of the researcher, want to imitate celebrity lifestyles, but they also often follow the nuances of celebrities' private lives. With the media and the social networks like Facebook and Twitter, The Internet has allowed the world to identify where celebrities are going; what they are doing (e.g. Cheb Khaled announced his naturalisation to Moroccan citizenship on facebook); what they are thinking and feeling. In fact, the most followed person on Twitter is a celebrity: Lady Gaga.

All the focus, according to the investigation perspectives is on the effects of this obsession that are becoming increasingly apparent in every aspect of various societies among them European and Arab nations. Research, through this chapter, shows that the use of kind of entertainments which is growing; along with market budgets allotted for this type of promotion.

We come to the end of the chapter with the pertinent results on the issue at stake. According to some studies, years from 2000 to 2011 publications of entertainment magazine witnessed a great growth. Fame-oriented reality shows like American Idol, X factor, The voice have more viewers than news programmes combined and celebrity news blogs, are some of the most visited and highest ranked sites on the web. In fact, celebrity photos are hardly considered tabloid content anymore; they represent an important rubric in the media.

2.2. History of Fame

Celebrity fascination is growing and penetrating cultures at a rapid rate, yet historically such fanaticism is not a new attribute of the human race. For centuries, cultures have idolized famous figures from an early age to Madonna. For centuries people celebrated heroes with temples and cults, but it was the rise of Athens and El Hejaz as the centre of Greek and Arab cultures respectively where oral epics like the Iliad, the Odyssey and Mou3alakat were cast into written form and created a unified cultural meaning of heroism.

Some people often model their behaviour and lifestyles after celebrities, who consider themselves better and superior than the rest of the society. However, unlike Greek gods who were really untouchable therefore had a healthy space, today's celebrities are all too accessible to fans for worship – even though some might not deserve to be worshiped.

The difference between today's celebrities and the classical ones is that their fame was based on discernment of power, talent and grace. According to Amy Henderson, historian at Smithsonian Institute, fame has changed from “traditional larger-than-life” heroes, to cultural icons – to, celebrity personalities,” as Daniel Boorstin defined them, celebrated not for achievement but simply for ,well-knownness.

According to Leo Braudy cultural studies expert this shift from social pariah to social elite happened as a result of competition between the reigning monarchs and artists over who best understood and used “the new world of media. In the matter of “new media,” Gutenberg's printing press one of the first communication tools that linked people and reached the masses, launching modern-day intuitions like newspaper and book publishers. Not long ago it was the printing press, but today's new media is

radio, film, television, computers and mobile phones, which have a series of associated institutions (e.g. radio, film and television resulted in studios and broadcast companies). Entertainers have focused on new media to become elite. But in recent years, the Internet broke down the walls and all the barriers facilitating the information distribution channels that celebrities once had access to becoming available to the everyday man.

Today's celebrities cover a long way from Greek mythological heroes and members of the royal court. Celebrity has emerged from those who have helped advance the modern world, like Amelia Earhart who is seen famous indeed unlike who are famous for being famous, like Paris Hilton and Kim Kardashian.

According to Fred Inglis in his book 2010 *A Short History of Celebrity*, the mechanisms of celebrity take on their modern form from the leisure, window-shopping, haute couture, wealth and gossip columns in London, Paris and New York. He adds that after the First World War, the invention of Hollywood paved the way to the star, and new media, film and radio, restored immediacy and confidence to the human narrative.

2.3. Today's Fame Seekers

Many people run after fame and wealth, but this greediness seems to have grown. Whether it is people exploiting their children, risking jail time or spending money they do not have, many Americans believe they have what it takes to be a star and some are willing to do anything to get it.

A major example of this is the Balloon Boy hoax of 2009, when parents Richard and Mayumi Heene of Fort Collins, Colo., alerted authorities and the media that their son Falcon accidentally floated away in a homemade helium-filled balloon.

The whole world watched and feared for the child's safety as the National Guard helicopters and local police pursued the runaway balloon. Once the balloon had fallen and authorities discovered Falcon was not inside but instead hiding in his house the whole time, suspicion surrounded the Heenes and many wondered if the event was a prank. The Heenes later admitted to staging the event in a try to land a television show, after seeing programming like John & Kate Plus, and went to jail.

“Everyone believes that being famous is a must because of the shows and TV programmes of some celebrities like Paris Hilton and Lindsay Lohan, and they think it's cool,” said Robert Attermann, vice president of the Abrams Artists Agency. “Shows like Entourage and all of the reality shows send that message that anyone can be famous. They make it look like it's an easy thing to do.” However, he added, it is definitely not easy. Easy or not, many people believe so strongly that they or their children have what it takes to be a star that they sometimes make impractical decisions, like spending thousands of dollars on a talent convention. According to former owner of the International Modelling and Talent Association (IMTA) Helen Rogers, from 1991-2000, enrolment at the conventions roughly increased and huge income more than tripled thanks to the thousands of children who seek fame, but somewhere alongside the way, the conditions of fame itself have shifted, this shift of fame towards one's lesser self can be accredited in part to the rise of reality television, which has brought about extremes in human behaviours and traits this sort of behaviour is everywhere in modern-day media and becoming somewhat “normal” conduct in the eyes of many Americans.

2.4. The Psychology behind Celebrity Obsession

Knowing that fanaticism is a common human trait displayed throughout history and that some people will do just about anything to get it, it is important to identify the psychological drivers behind this behaviour. According to Stuart Fischhoff, Ph.D., spokesman for the American Psychological Association and professor emeritus of media psychology at the California State University at Los Angeles, celebrity fascination is in human genetic makeup. "What's in our DNA, as a social animal, is the interest in looking at alpha males and females; the ones who are important in the pack," says Fischhoff. "We are sociologically pre-programmed to follow the leader". If mental health is a factor behind celebrity followership, it may help explain why the Hollywood Dream is enticing many of youth.

In a 2010 New York Times article titled "Mental Health Needs Seen Growing at Colleges," the number of students visiting counselling centres for serious mental illness has more than doubled compared to the rate a decade ago. Furthermore, a survey by the American College Counselling Association found that forty-four percent of students in counselling have severe psychological disorders, compared to just sixteen percent in 2000. Additionally, the article notes that the most common disorders today include depression, anxiety, suicidal thoughts, attention disorders, self-injury and eating disorders.

In the same vein of thought, for Algerian, the targeted population of the researcher, there are many factors contributing to rising mental health issues among adolescents. One of the biggest contributors is stress. Many young Algerian people face unprecedented pressures to succeed and, as pressure has increased, so has anxiety. One reason may be that Algerian teens are confused by conflicting messages that they receive from friends and society. Teens today see more of what the world has to offer

good and bad through the media, at school and on the Internet, which can lead to unrealistic expectations and result in a strong sense of rejection and disappointment which systematically lead to Depression.

2.4.1. Imaginary Idols

David Elkind claims that adolescents exist in a sort of egocentric shock, like they are on a stage in front of an audience obsessed with their lives. Many children today have an extended adolescence and therefore remain in front of their “imaginary audience” for a longer period of time. This can result in unhealthy relationships and delusions of fame. “The danger is that if these adolescents don’t control all this daydreaming with a healthy dose of reality, they could end up in relationships that are manipulative or exploitive,” explained Daniel Lapsley, “Basically, after spending so much time in front of an imaginary audience, they might ultimately only be interested in forming relationships that serve their need to be admired, instead of forming ones that authentically engage other people.”

Additionally, when teenagers feel neglected by their parents, research shows that the imaginary-audience phenomenon increases considerably. As a result, adolescents who feel they do not receive enough attention at home are more likely to fantasize about getting it elsewhere Halpern (2007:38). Furthermore, a study by Jean M. Twenge discovered that emerging adults had higher levels of narcissism, which was linked to a heightened desire for fame. “Many kids today grow up thinking that they will eventually be movie stars, sports figures, or at least rich...a lot of young people also assume that success will come quickly”

In the 1956 Psychiatry paper entitled “Mass Communication and Para-social Interaction: Observations on Intimacy at a Distance” by Donald Horton and R. Richard

Wohl, the authors explained this concept as “the illusion of intimacy,” meaning we have intimate relationships with celebrities but it is all an illusion. Later, in the 1970s, researcher J.L. Caughey coined the term “artificial social relations.” The term proposes that the number of people we know in the “artificial world” of celebrities is much larger than the amount of people we actually know in the real world. This makes people want to get closer and closer to celebrities.

According to Horton and Wohl, people have seemingly intimate relationship with celebrities and become familiar with them because they are continually in the media. In fact, most people probably see celebrity faces as often as they see some of their friends and know an extraordinary amount of personal information about those celebrities.

These illusionary relationships may explain society’s difficulty with real relationships and why many people are replacing one for the other, as Maltby noted. Many people have a tendency to turn to celebrities as a means of satisfying needs that are not being met in conventional ways.

According to the book, when people see stars get away with inappropriate behaviours it reinforces the sense that they are “special,” which makes their status even more desirable. Through envy, this provokes humans’ own narcissistic urges and drives people to act like the celebrities they admire.

Therefore, the Mirror Effect might be a contributing factor to the emerging adult’s aspirations for a celebrity lifestyle. This would explain why so many are willing to splurge on luxury items, like designer sunglasses and handbags, with price tags that might horrify their older counterparts. Like the celebrities they see in the magazine, many emerging adults feel that they, too, deserve special things.

2.5. Why Is Celebrity Imitation Growing?

Nowadays, many people are obsessed with celebrity; it dictates their thoughts, attitudes, dreams and behaviours. Although it is already an integral part of many people's daily lives, celebrity worship continues to permeate deeper into culture. But, celebrity was not always so prevalent. This obsession with Hollywood came to the surface as a result of a few major events that have dramatically changed American life.

2.5.1. A Doubting AD

James Truslow Adams popularized the phrase "AD" in 1931 and said, "Life should be better and richer and fuller for everyone, with opportunity for each according to ability or achievement." i.e. American democracy gave citizens the opportunity to achieve success and wealth through saving and hard work, regardless of religion, race or social class.

The modern AD, for the researcher point of view, was this general prosperity and well-being for the average person. European civilization had produced the great cathedrals of the world. America had the two-car garage. And this middle-class contentment created a country of optimists. 63% of Americans did not think they could maintain their current standard of living Zakaria Fareed (2006:41). This is not entirely surprising, seeing that Americans have experienced the most severe economic downturn since the Great Depression and unemployment hovers around 9.1 percent, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

2.5.2. American Reality

The U.S. has changed drastically in the last several decades. The middle class, which was the heart of the AD, is dwindling, and the disparity of wealth among social

classes continues to grow Timothy Noah (2010). Manufacturing jobs are moving offshore, leaving millions jobless and ultimately eroding middle class America. Higher Incomes, incomes are higher than a generation ago, but after inflation adjustment it is actually on average \$800 less than what our parents earned in the 1970s. As a result, many women entered the workforce to boost household income. Now to be middle class, most families need two incomes.

Savings and Debt, despite having two earners, most Americans are spending and not saving. in 2004, the average savings rate was zero percent and debt grew to twelve percent.

Overconsumption, according to sociologist Robert Frank, many Americans are suffering from “luxury fever,” which is driving the middle class to finance their increasing consumption and worsen their debt. However, the majority of these people are not financing healthcare, food or basic necessities; they are splurging on designer clothes and expensive gadgets. According to economist Robert Frank, America’s new “luxury fever” forces middle-class families “to finance their consumption increases largely by reduced savings and increased debt.

With so many elements threatening the AD, it is not surprising that the concept and everything it encompasses is disappearing. The decay of the AD is fueling stress and depression rates throughout the U.S. It is this root of unhappiness that is ultimately driving escapism and pushing Americans toward the Hollywood Dream.

2.5.3. Advances in Technology

Another element playing a role in the collapse of the AD is technology. In theory, technology exists to minimize work and make life easier. However, while developments such as computers, the Internet and smartphones have connected and

empowered humans like never before, they have a negative aspect as well. Though many people argue that the aforementioned technologies improve their productivity and multitasking abilities, research actually indicates otherwise. Scientists say that heavy multitaskers have more difficulty focusing, blocking out irrelevant information and ultimately experience greater stress Richtel (2010). Technology has brought about great benefits, such as the spread of historical records and scientific knowledge. Instead, technology has simply made it easier for humans to act on innate impulses, namely the desire to admire and be admired Halpern (2007).

2.5.4. Radio, Film and Television

A small number of the technologies that have allowed people to act on such impulses are radio, film and television. According to Inglis (2010) the invention of such tools increased the way that people communicate and receive news, bringing immediacy and intimacy to the masses. It was this technology joined with culture that introduced immediate mass publicity and produced celebrity.

Film and television, in particular, brought faraway places and people into people's living rooms, birthing the celebrities of today and amplifying fame; the start of the Hollywood Dream. Thanks to television musicians, politicians and famous figures are now accessible to people so they are able now to see what they put on and the way they behave.

According to the 1992 book *Make Room for TV*, by professor of Screen Cultures at the School of Communication at Northwestern University Lynn Spigel, "the arrival of television did more than turn the living room into a private theatre; it offered a national stage on which to play out and resolve conflicts about the way Americans should live."

While it may have influenced American life, it also helped generate the illusion of intimacy and artificial social relations. This was the catalyst to celebrity worship because many people began to get fulfillment and satisfaction out of the relationships they found with celebrities and characters on television.

It is easy to blame the media for this confusion, but the real cause is the human brain, which tricks people into believing that celebrities are their social intimates. While television and film played a role in creating this confusion, the popularity of reality television has worsened the situation. "Reality TV further confuses the picture by transforming ordinary folk into bold-faced names without warning," explained Carlin Flora, author of the 2004 *Psychology Today* article titled "Seeing by Starlight: Celebrity Obsession."

While reality television allows many people to fantasize about becoming celebrities by simply being on television, fans of such programmes show a strong desire for status as a means to get attention. Fans of reality television shows are more likely than other people to agree with statements like "Prestige is important to me" and "I am impressed with designer clothes." Therefore, many of these people are attracted to reality television because it sends the message that ordinary people can become famous and, perhaps next time, the new celebrities will be them Reiss and Wiltz (2001:66).

2.5.5. Internet

In addition to radio, film and television changing the way that people communicate, one technology in particular gave people the ability to have around-the-clock, instant access to celebrity news: The Internet. The Internet provides a constant

stream of information about the lives of celebrities, captured by the paparazzi or fans with cell phones, all available online Pinsky and Young.(2009)

People also have the ability to self-publish content the same like Internet brought about real-time news coverage, but Prior to the Internet; people lived in a world controlled by intermediaries: the media, record labels, movie studios, book publishers, etc. The Internet makes people able to break down these barriers and publish their own unregulated content that is accessible to anyone in the world, without the middleman.

Furthermore, with the internet access the average person now has the ability to become a cyber-celebrity as a result of the content they post online. In the past five years, in particular, the combination of widespread Internet accessibility and reality television have redesigned the landscape of fame and significantly influenced the public's relationship with celebrity.

2.5.6. Social Media

Moreover to Internet's power as a medium for admiring celebrities and striving for fame is social media. Social networks like Facebook and Twitter are allow people to connect with others around the world, with minute-to-minute updates. almost everyone from politicians to celebrities and the daily person are using these forums to share out their thoughts and actions to the masses.

Twitter and Facebook are not only digital platform for the users to talk about their single lives; it also presents opportunity for the user to be exposed. Now a lot of people are uploading images and videos, of themselves and their children to social media platforms to grab the attention of the masses and recreate their own success story.

Most conversations and interactions between people today occur on electronic devices (e.g. Twitter, Facebook, email, text messaging, etc.) and as a result humans are losing face-to-face interactions and becoming more and more disconnected.

"This ability to reach out and get our friends to help us, it comes at a price of being much more discovered, and people being much more visible and under stress because we can't always control the message about ourselves," said Harvard Business School professor Mikolaj Jan Piskorski, who has studied online social networks while such resources are great tools for information, they can also be harmful to the mental health of our youth, further driving celebrity worship.

In general, new media and the collapse of the AD are fueling stress and mental health issues among many Americans. This growing state of unhappiness and the depressing opportunity for middle class prosperity are driving many people towards the Hollywood Dream because it is apparently in better reach.

2.6. Where Did The Shift From AD To Hollywood Dream Begin?

The AD is extremely fixed within American culture, but somewhere along the way the nation shifted its aspirations to the Hollywood Dream. This alter was years in the making; however, the nation's obsession with celebrity was not fully obvious until the arrival of the generation born between 1980 and 1987.

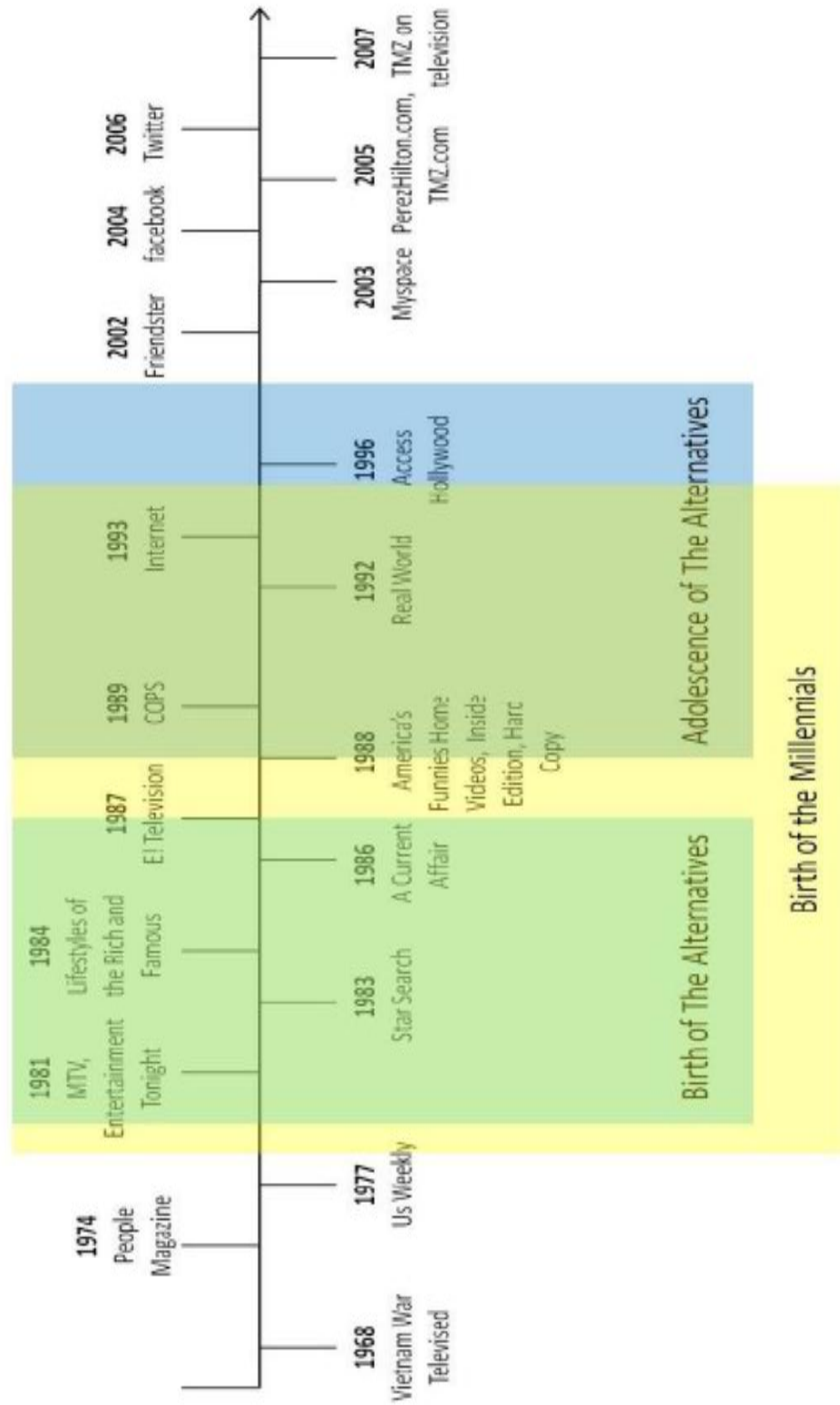
Many Millennials have a high gaze at celebrities, it is also important to identify exactly which members, or sub generation, of this group connects with the Hollywood Dream the most. Therefore, such a group was known and coined "the Alternatives" during research for this thesis due to their favorable attitudes towards and influence by celebrities, as well as their trend to seek an alternative lifestyle from the conventional - alternative music, alternative medicine, alternative food, alternative energy and an

alternative AD (Gill). Additionally, a few major cultural and media changes took place during the majority of the Alternatives' childhood and adolescent developments that shaped their attitudes towards fame and celebrities, as well as their concept of success.

Unlike generations of the past, the Alternatives were shaped by Hollywood. Most fall within the emerging adults category and many never knew life without MTV, Entertainment Tonight, People Magazine or Us Weekly.

2.7. Figure 1: Timeline of The generations adopted from

Entertainment Media Timeline



For these generations, initially, the Internet was the wild west of the modern world and the Alternatives were at the perfect age to pioneer this new media. They were many born surrounded by celebrities, entertainment news and reality television.

One of the most famous examples of this is Mark Zuckerberg, an Alternative who created one of the most powerful social media platforms on the Internet: Facebook. This social media outlet has become such an integral part of so many people's lives that twenty-seven-year-old Zuckerberg has become a celebrity Internet entrepreneur worth \$13.5 billion and had an Academy Award winning film made after his success story.

2.8. What future might hold to the Americans?

The Hollywood Dream is, therefore, flourishing. As America continues to change from a manufacturing to a service-oriented country, many people will continue to look to Hollywood for escapism and distraction, just as they have before.

In addition, the possibilities for the Internet are still endless, so this platform and its uses will continue to expand, bringing fame closer and closer to the normal person. Furthermore, new social media platforms and technology will arise and continue to evolve the way that people interact.

While economic conditions and technology may be nourishing America's celebrity worship, many people's need to follow celebrities and become celebrities themselves will sooner or later come to an end. As with most things in life, the alarm will dangle backwards on the Hollywood Dream. Like the continuous flappers of the 1920s who birthed and raised the conservative mothers of the 1950s, ideals change with passing generations.

Once the new generation recognizes that fame is not as reachable as it seems and that anything in life that is worth having requires work, the tendency of celebrity worship will be wrecked. Rising and maturing into maturity will remodel the aforementioned generation's aspirations and pave the way to a whole new generation of Americans. While the Hollywood Dream is seemingly the aim of many American's desire at the moment, who knows what the next decades have in store and what event or technology will change America's dream

2.9. Professional Communication Tools for the Hollywood Dream Audience

As American culture has become more and more consumed with celebrity, this tendency has really impacted professional communicators, specifically public relations practitioners. The audience of the Hollywood has vastly different psychological drivers than it was before, with adolescents modeling their decision making. This presents a new challenge for communicators to reach such a spectators and line up suitable messages with their attitudes and aspirations. Not only have key messages changed, but the channels used to share out such messages have changed as well.

The way that people receive news has totally shifted with the mass popularity of the Internet. According to a 2007 U.S Census, three out of five households have home Internet access, which growing daily. For the Hollywood Dream audience, internet has a major role empowering them and it is the tool that should be used by public relations professionals to direct their communications.

In a latest study conducted in America, 122 people were asked what news source they preferred. The Internet won hands-down. In fact, 74.5 percent of the new generation ranked the Internet as their most preferred source for news.

Although social media did not rank high among respondents, it should not be overlooked as a communication tool. When respondents were asked which online platforms they accessed more than once a week (they were able to select more than one), the targeted said that they used the following platforms:

-Facebook – 94.1 percent

-Blogs – 54.9 percent

-YouTube – 41.1 percent

-Twitter – 23.5 percent

This shows the growth potential for the relatively new social media tool and the up-and-coming generations.

2.10. Conclusion

To summarize America became an extremely prosperous nation during the Baby Boomer era and the country is resting on this success. Despite the fact that jobs are moving abroad, debt is growing and savings are decreasing, many Americans are not keen to balance back their consumer-driven lifestyles. Instead, some people sacrifice some of the important things in life, like their children's development, so they can work more and consumer more. Many of people are overextended in every sense of the word and this is causing major mental health issues, like depression and anxiety. Additionally, many American families have adapted to the constraints of two working parents and are coming up short, particularly the middle class, and this is significantly impacted the mental health and development of many American children. Regardless

if celebrity worship is positive or negative, it is deeply rooted in American culture and has a strong influence on many young Americans. Those who understand the attitudes and motivational drivers behind this group and factors influencing their behaviors stand to benefit the most. Therefore, to be effective with communication tools and messages aimed at the Hollywood Dream audience, public relations professionals must utilize some of the characteristics that define this group, like individualism, recognition and glamour.

General Conclusion

The idea of the AD has absolutely altered over time. Today's version of the "AD" was created during the time around the Great Depression of the 1930s. This was the time when people believed they could succeed from rags to riches but this idea has faded now.

Today's reality is not the AD. The truth is that the dream is so far to reach since lot of Americans cannot work hard and make it come true simply because they are jobless. In fact, only few people realize The AD while the rest continue to fight to avoid poverty and living from hand to mouth for the most of them. But the surprise about The AD is not that only a few make that dream come true. Rather, it is the fact that even those who do succeed are not any happier.

The majority of Americans do not dream of becoming the next Bill Gates because they are realistic. People are conscious of the hardships America is facing; therefore they dream of what they know is a suitable approach to the AD. It is sad that the Dream is not as optimistic as it was in history, but time changes everything.

Many Americans see fame as the barometer for personal achievement. This obsession was described as, "You are nobody unless your face is painted in LCD on a building in Times Square". America's steady diet of supersized rubbish celebrities and million watt success icons has deprived the American society and particularly the youth. In last two decades, celebrity coverage has increasingly replaced hard news. Hard news is defined as local and national coverage that affects the community at large. Accordingly, hard news has dropped from 65% to 50% of all media coverage. Furthermore, he explains that these percentages break down to Americans receiving two minutes of celebrity news, six minutes on local and national criminal reporting

and twenty-five seconds on scientific innovations. This drastic change in journalism illustrates that fame has corrupted people's perceptions. Americans have the false construct that notoriety is interesting. This myth about fame has caused many people to seek fame as a means of attaining personal fulfillment. The sad/horrifying part of this is that it's everyone's fault. People don't just *get* famous on their own. Fame requires a kind of agreement between the celebrity and the public and we all seem happy to enter into that contract.

So what do we do? How can we stop this? The truth is, we can't. It's a global pandemic and there is no cure. As long as people remain fascinated by publicity hounds that will do anything to get on TV, the networks will keep spewing out more and more false celebrities.

We think that if people keep up with celebrities as a hobby (much like scientists keep up with technology trends), it's fine and there's nothing wrong with it. But when people look at celebrities as actual role models, or people whom they would like to model their lives after, that's when we think it's taking things a little bit too far.

This suggests that people with the most extreme celebrity worship engage in an attributional style that believes the cause of most events in the person's life are external, that is, they are outside the control of the person experiencing the event. People who have stable, global attributions share such an attribution style with people who are depressed. So people who have the most extreme celebrity worship look to the outside world for explanations, and believe celebrities might hold a piece of that cure. We think these findings are not surprising when taken into context. Teens seek positive role models that they can emulate. Also, when our own lives start to go downhill, we gain some value (and perhaps a little boost to our mood and self-esteem)

when we can read about the most famous and popular people in our culture who suffer from not different misery from our own. They breakup, they makeup, they wear bad clothes; they have hangovers, just like us. And maybe that's the real key... That we're seeking a sign of humanity that we can relate to and that feels familiar to us, despite how far away, unreal, and unattainable such lives really are.

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