

In summation both books are testimony as to the resurfacing of eugenics under the cover of voluntarism and individual freedom of choice. Both are basically popularizations and do not break new intellectual ground, but they are nevertheless serious, multi-disciplinary works, and they can be recommended for the lay audience.

*John Glad*

### **The American Dream:**

#### **Can It Survive the 21<sup>st</sup> Century?**

*Joseph L. Daleiden*

Prometheus Books, 1999, Amherst, New York 738 pages, Hardcover

Can “The American Dream” survive the 21<sup>st</sup> Century? Based upon the author’s findings, the answer is “no”. And if the U.S. government continues current policies, which are economically myopic, socially dysfunctional, and politically centrifugal, not only “The American Dream” but America, itself, will not survive. These destructive policies, as the author explains, are the result of successful lobbying by two “powers” that emerged in the 1950s and 1960s. They are: (a) special interest groups advancing agendas based on race, ethnicity, religion, language, culture, age, sex, sexual orientation, handicap status, and academic and business “needs”, and (b) the ideological fixations of liberals and conservatives.

These “powers” were able to exert such influence because “The American Dream” lost its original meaning. The dream expressed by Thomas Jefferson in the American Declaration of Independence to “establish a nation on the principle that all men had the ‘right to Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness’ “ has been replaced over the years by a multitude of different, at times, conflicting definitions. If “The American Dream” can denote everything, it means nothing. Absent a common bond, the unraveling of society is all but inevitable. This slow unraveling became a rapid deconstruction after radicals from the 1960s assumed leadership roles in the academic, economic, and political fields. Since then, “The American Dream” has been redefined to mean the superiority of the individual over society, of rights over responsibilities, of materialism over morality, of consumption over savings, and of the present over the future.

Can this self-destruction be reversed? The author – who has worked

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as a statistician, demographer, business economist, urban policy analyst, and strategic planner in the public and private sectors – argues it can be provided the public recognizes the solution is complex, multifaceted, and requires immediate implementation. To highlight this importance, Chapter One is entitled “Two Scenarios for the Year 2050”. Here, depending on whether or not the necessary reforms have been instituted, two radically different Americas are presented in the State of the Union address given in 2050 by the President of the United States to Congress. Without necessary reforms, the United States has politically disintegrated, like the old Soviet Union, with seven Southwestern States seceding and forming an independent “Hispanic” country. The rump United States has declined to the level of a Third World country due to overpopulation – already at 500 million and projected to reach a billion in fifty years – and its corollaries: environmental destruction and rampant crime. The second scenario, after the necessary reforms have been adopted, depicts a United States that has remained united politically and culturally, is economically and academically sound, and is enjoying an improved standard of living that is, most importantly, sustainable into the future.

In the next twelve chapters, the author examines the serious problems confronting the United States – population growth, immigration, environment, deficit, trade, poverty, welfare, education, crime, health care, and taxation. Various solutions are presented balancing those advanced by liberals with those proposed by conservatives. After offering a critique on their respective strengths and weaknesses, the author submits his own recommendations.

The author advocates, first and foremost, a liberation from the mental straitjacket of the political ideologies of liberalism and conservatism as they currently exist. As a matter of faith, liberals believe in egalitarianism and conservatives in meritocracy. To prove the truth of their respective “faiths”, the former seek bigger government and more regulations, while the latter seek less government and fewer regulations. Commitment to these secular “faiths” insures that specific government programs are continued even when empirical evidence shows they do not work.

Therefore, the author calls for solutions based on pragmatism. This pragmatism would promote what he calls “the three harmonies” and a modified theory of Rawlsian justice.

The three harmonies are:

1. "Individuals must, to some extent, have the opportunity to fulfill their basic biological needs to be in harmony with their genetic nature.
2. Fulfillment of the needs of individuals must be reconciled to the needs of others, i.e., to a reasonable extent, individual needs must be brought into harmony with societal needs.
3. The aggregate needs of society must be fulfilled in a manner that is in harmony with the environment, i.e., aggregate consumption cannot exceed the carrying capacity of the environment."

They are complemented by a modified theory of Rawlsian justice that reads: "All social primary goods (liberty and opportunity, income and wealth, and the basis of self-respect) are to be distributed equally unless an unequal distribution of any or all these goods is to the greater (relative) advantage to the least favored."

One of the first important points raised by the author is how the metamorphosis of "The American Dream" into the pursuit of materialism has not, contrary to advertisers' assertions, produced happiness. "A 1995 study showed that most Americans felt poorer than they did thirty years before when real incomes were almost 30 percent lower than the 1995 levels."

Next he addresses the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). While the rising GDP of the United States is frequently cited by the government, economists, and the media as proof of the country's economic well being, the author points out that since the GDP is an average it presents a false image of prosperity.

The author presents data the GDP ignores. For example, from 1966 to 1970, the lowest quintile of American families saw their income increase by 22 percent. However, from 1980 to 1997, that income dropped by one percent. Meanwhile, the top quintile saw their income grow 29 percent from 1966 to 1979 and a further 34 percent from 1979 to 1997. It appears "99 percent of all the economic gain between 1979 and 1994 went to the upper 5 percent of income earners."

In 1980, CEOs made 42 times what factory workers received. By 1994, CEOs made 53 times the average factory worker's pay, and among the largest U.S. companies it was 225 times greater.

This occurred while the hourly earnings adjusted for inflation, which had risen 50 percent from 1950 to 1970, from \$5.34 an hour to \$8.03, dropped by six percent, to \$7.54, from 1970 to 1997.

At the same time, weekly earning, which had increased 48 percent

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from 1950 to 1970, dropped 21 percent by 1997 to 1973 levels.

During the 1950s and 1960s, family income grew on average by 3 to 4 percent. After 1973, it grew by less than 1 percent.

Real per capita disposable income adjusted for inflation actually rose 59 percent from 1950 to 1970 and 62 percent from 1970 to 1997. This was due in large part to more hours worked and the necessity of having a two-income family.

The result has been a growing gap not only between rich and poor, but between the rich and the middle class as well. The emotional impact of such growing economic inequalities are reflected in the Louis Harris poll used to calculate an Alienation Index. This index jumped from 29 in 1969 to 65 in 1993.

Alienation based on the perception among the middle class – the corner stone of a stable and prosperous democratic society – that their economic position is deteriorating, and among native-born poor, especially poor blacks, that they are economically worse off today than they were years ago are recipes for potential political instability.

The author explains how the economic, social, and political problems confronting the United States are the result of overpopulation. And this overpopulation is driven by Third World immigration. The combined number of legal and illegal aliens entering the United States annually is now approximately 1.5 million – the highest level in the history of the United States.

Immigrants and their descendents accounted for two-thirds of the U.S. population growth during the 1990s. They are projected to be responsible for virtually all of the population growth in the United States hereafter. The Census Bureau now projects that the U.S. population will increase from 269 million to 400 million by 2050. However, Census Bureau projections are notorious for underestimating U.S. population growth. If immigration, legal and illegal, is higher than anticipated the U.S. population could reach 500 million by 2050. And by 2080, it could exceed 800 million.

What are some of the consequence of such population growth?

Currently, “one percent increase in the immigrant composition of one’s occupation reduces wages at least 0.7 percent”.

If the U.S. population increases by 40 percent, another 100 million, the per capita income may be reduced by an equal amount.

By 2050, U.S. arable land will be reduced by nearly 40 percent from 470 million acres to 290 million acres due to population-generated development. The United States, historically a food exporter, will

become a net food importer. The standard of living will fall towards a Third World status.

There are more immediate problems according to the authors. By admitting Third World immigrants, the US government is importing poverty, illiteracy, infectious diseases, and crime.

Third World immigration is also responsible for higher unemployment among blacks, lower wages for the poor, and increased costs for welfare, SSI, and public education, and increased environmental degradation.

In support of his thesis that Third World Immigration has had an adverse impact on employment, social services, and crime in the U.S., the author presents the following evidence:

- Immigration cost U.S. workers \$133 billion a year due to depressed wages.
- From 1974 to 1996, minimum wage dropped 34 percent in constant dollars.
- More than 2 million U.S. workers were displaced in 1992 alone.
- Third World immigrants are beneficiaries of affirmative action programs originally meant for black Americans allowing Third World immigrant-owned businesses to discriminate against blacks with impunity.
- Net cost of immigration to U.S. taxpayers since 1970 reached \$65 billion annually by 1996 and is projected to jump to \$866 billion for the period 1997 to 2006.
- Immigrants are a net cost to Social Security of about \$1,000 per person annually.
- Immigrants who arrived before 1988 were 56 percent more likely than native born Americans to be living in poverty and 25 percent more likely to receive public aid and have an average per capita income from public assistance of 14 percent more than native born.
- In 1995, the General Accounting Office, GAO, reported immigrants are now twice as likely to receive public assistance as the general population.
- By 1990, the cost of bilingual education was \$7.5 billion – one thousand times the original 1968 estimate.

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- Incarceration rate of illegal aliens is three times the U.S. average.
- In 1994, 25 percent of inmates in federal prisons were aliens.
- Since 1980, there has been a 600 percent increase in alien inmates.
- In Los Angeles, alone, there are an estimated 600 ethnic gangs with over 100,000 members.

In the last chapter, "Putting It All Together", the author lists specific proposals to save "The American Dream". Many recommendations are highly controversial, constitutionally or morally, but all need to be given a fair hearing. These include the elimination of Political Action Committees (PACs) and limitations on campaign spending, Term limits, and the enactment of a national referendum system.

After identifying the necessary political reforms, he offers proposals for socioeconomic reform, including:

1. Abolish GDP as the principle measurement of social welfare.
2. Reduce population growth by a moratorium on immigration. Eliminate all benefits to *illegal* aliens except for emergency medical treatment. Establish an employment eligibility verification system. Eliminate automatic citizenship for children of illegal aliens. Deny federal and state funding to municipalities that refuse to cooperate with the INS. Strengthen border control using the armed forces if necessary. Sharply delimit who qualifies as a political refugee. Return refugees to home country after end of hostilities. End multiculturalism. Expand family planning services, including subsidizing abortions for unwanted children. Emphasize the moral responsibility of avoiding children one cannot support in sex education.
3. Introduce incentives to promote savings into the tax law.
4. Revise the defense budget (which he regards as inflated).
5. Reduce national debt by significantly raising taxes on gasoline, tobacco, alcohol, and decriminalized drugs, and on mortgages over \$200,000.
6. Slow any further tariff reductions.
7. Establish a national database of available jobs, relocation allowances, and job retraining, and a public works program for those unemployed for reasons other than performance.

Receipt of welfare must be tied to incentives to avoid additional children. Discourage reproduction among the socially irresponsible. In some cases, recourse to abortion and sterilization must be addressed.

8. Return control of the classroom to the teachers and control of the schools to the principals. Expel incorrigible students and terminate ineffective teachers. Require standardized tests. Increase the school year from 180 to 220 days. End affirmative action. Expand vocational training and apprenticeships.
9. Institute a universal health care based on a two-tier system consisting of a basic healthcare insurance supplemented by allowing people to either take out additional coverage or receive treatment on a pay-for-service basis. Permit voluntary euthanasia.
10. To insure accuracy and prevent Social Security surpluses from being used to finance other federal programs, the Social Security Trust Fund should be separate from the rest of the budget.
11. Decriminalize drugs so as to reduce the price to such low levels that drug pushers disappear. At the same time establish an extensive drug education program.
12. Abolish corporate tax and index capital gains for inflation. A value-added or consumption tax should be instituted together with a graduated income tax ranging from 10 percent for families above the poverty line to 75 percent for the nation's wealthiest.

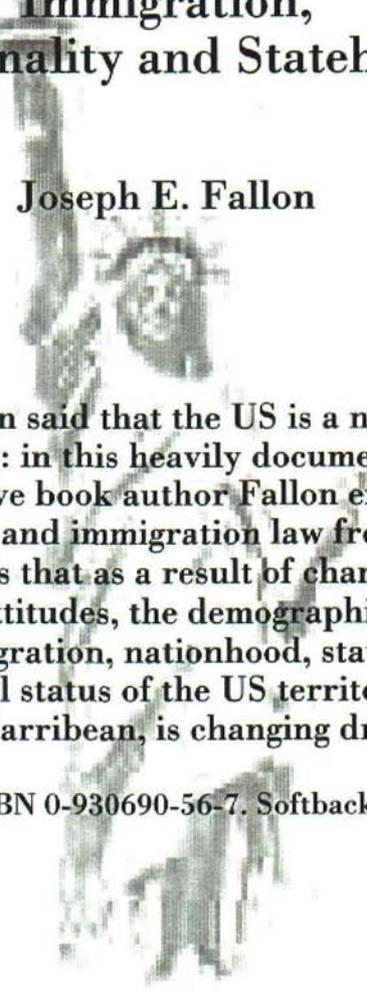
Since many of these various issues are interconnected, the author stresses implementing some, but not all, of his proposals – i.e., ending welfare but continuing immigration – will not achieve the necessary reforms. Partial measures, “compromises” in the vocabulary of politicians, will only result in the proverbial rearranging of the deck chairs on the Titanic.

The author’s proposals are drastic, but they summarize the opinions of many who have advocated fundamental reform in the U.S. and the book makes stimulating, controversial reading.

*Joseph E. Fallon*

# Deconstructing America: Immigration, Nationality and Statehood

Joseph E. Fallon



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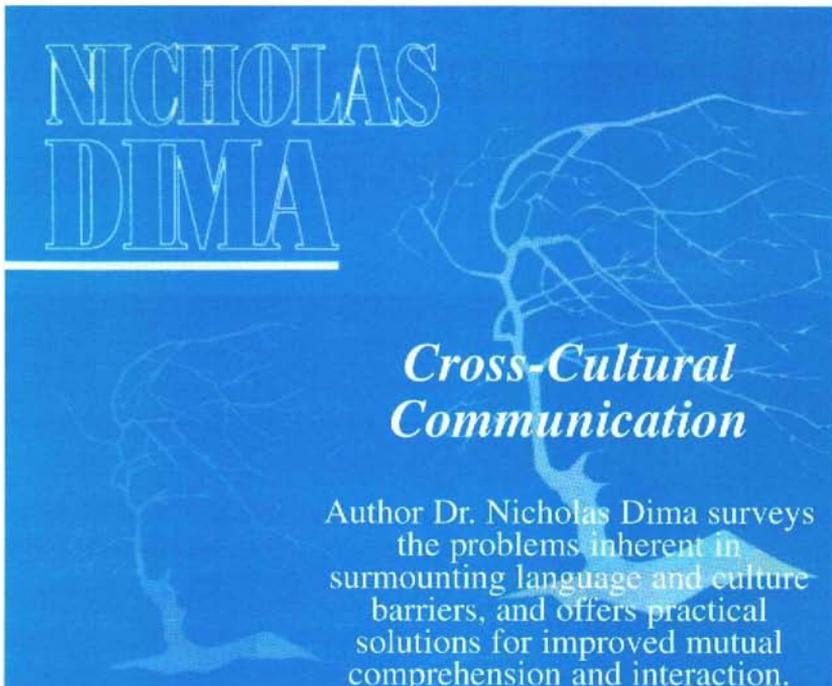
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