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SOC 105-102

5 March 2020

A Class We See But Ignore

The American population refuses to acknowledge socio-economic class in hopes to ignore social issues that need to be taken care of. In a world where money determines your success, America deals with those who are above and beyond in the financial system, and then many more who struggle to put food on the table. Multiple citizens will argue that a standardized successful life, also known as "The American Dream," can be achieved by anyone who works for it. However, when reading *Class in America* by Gregory Mantsios and *Power in America* by G. William Domhoff, the claim that all American citizens can reach their "American Dream" is heavily questioned on the basis of power, income, and what class one is born into.

Born as a white American female, I have not paid much attention to a defined class. I have been aware that different classes existed, but I've never once referred to my lifestyle, or the lifestyle of another in forms of upper class, middle class, or lower class. For reasons described by people in the beginning of *Class In America*, other upper class citizens refuse to use the "upper class" term as well since using such terms seems wrong and ignorant. We fully acknowledge class, but through observation versus labels. The terms are not often referred to out of respect, but if comparing an upper class lifestyle to a lower classed one the differences and observations are noted and understood. This is not done purposely. Due to the collective consciousness, we automatically ignore the definitive terms of class as described in Mantsios' article. We are taught

mind them.

According to Domhoff, the power in America is in the hands of those who have the money to support it. This is why all leaders and most public figures have some large financial background or accomplishments to show for. Not many people will agree with these facts since they are in denial that their beloved country does host a class system. Mostly because it is stated in important U.S documents like the Constitution that all American citizens are considered equal, and have equal opportunities. But going back to Mantsios, the descriptions of the three lives of Bob Farrell, Harold Browning, and Cheryl Mitchell suggest otherwise. The point of these descriptions is to say that many people who are born into an upper class life, middle class life, or low class life will ultimately stay in those classes throughout life. This relies heavily on resources that are available for those who have the money and high connections for it versus a family who does not. Harold Browning was automatically given a high end life and was easily able to create the same life for him, but Cheryl Mitchell who has struggled all her life could barely afford to finish college due to lack of finances, and ended her life working a low income job just like her parents.

American citizen's will refuse and argue that a class system is present in today's society, but by looking at the different lifestyles provided on the basis of finances, it is hard to ignore that just because one is not openly and verbally discussed, there is not one present. We acknowledge the different lifestyles, yet find it so hard to label them, and that is because we know they are becoming issues and do not want to be responsible for fixing them.

