Title:  The Political American Dream: Reimagining American Optimism in Political, Not Economic, Terms

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Abstract: This paper seeks to understand the American Dream in more political and less economic terms. The political American Dream presents a more collective understanding of the American Dream that prioritizes the principles of the Declaration of Independence: freedom, equality, and union. Such a political understanding can be found in the writings of Abraham Lincoln, Martin Luther King, Jr., and Barack Obama; they believed that the principles of the Declaration have the power to bring together Americans, particularly American racial minorities and immigrants. This paper contends that a political understanding of the American Dream can better unite Americans and contribute to contemporary debates about immigration policy.

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