

Discussion Starters for "The New American Dreamers" by Ruth Sidel

1. Who are the new American Dreamers?
2. How do they and their dreams differ from previous generations?
3. What is Sidel's attitude toward this group?
4. What is *your* attitude toward this group?
5. What is your reaction to the following?

Sidel writes, "A key message the new American Dreamers are both receiving and sending is one of optimism – the sense that they can do whatever they want with their lives." This idea is emphasized by sixteen year old interviewee Angela Dawson who says, "...You must decide what you want in high school, plan your college education, and from there you can basically get what you want. If you work hard enough you will get there. You must be in control of your life, and then somehow it will all work out."

6. What other key points do you agree with? Disagree with? What do you base your opinions on?
7. What points of comparison or contrast do you see between Sidel and Steinbeck's interpretations of the American Dream?