

University of Washington Tacoma

## UW Tacoma Digital Commons

---

Sociology Student Work Collection

School of Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences

---

Spring 6-10-2023

### Poverty-The Single Problem Destroys Millions

Alexander Jiang  
alexj66@uw.edu

Follow this and additional works at: [https://digitalcommons.tacoma.uw.edu/gender\\_studies](https://digitalcommons.tacoma.uw.edu/gender_studies)



Part of the [Social Justice Commons](#), and the [Social Work Commons](#)

---

#### Recommended Citation

Jiang, Alexander, "Poverty-The Single Problem Destroys Millions" (2023). *Sociology Student Work Collection*. 92.

[https://digitalcommons.tacoma.uw.edu/gender\\_studies/92](https://digitalcommons.tacoma.uw.edu/gender_studies/92)

This Undergraduate Project is brought to you for free and open access by the School of Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences at UW Tacoma Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Sociology Student Work Collection by an authorized administrator of UW Tacoma Digital Commons. For more information, please contact [taclibdc@uw.edu](mailto:taclibdc@uw.edu).

A person wearing a grey hoodie, blue pants, and white sneakers is sitting on the ground. They are holding a large cardboard sign in front of them with both hands. The sign has the text "48 million" written on it in black marker. The background is a dark, textured wall.

# Poverty

---

The Single Problem Destroys Millions

<https://money.cnn.com/2014/10/16/news/economy/48-million-americans-poverty-census-bureau/index.html>



# Rich vs. Poor

<https://fineartamerica.com/featured/the-gap-between-poor-and-rich-lus-joosten.html>

# Why Rich?

- The top 5% of all Americans controls 60% of the nation's wealth, and the same 5% controls the lives of other 95% through the means of running corporations and infiltrate everything in society.
- Self-made millionaires and the wealthy generally possess at least one of these traits. Out of the 233 interviewed, 13% are salesmen/saleswomen, 28% have professional experiences at other firms, 63% took personal financial risks in search of wealth, 68% have college degrees, 25% have postgraduate degrees. Apart from all these traits, they have an almost unanimous trait that 86% of them work more than 50 hours a week.
- Half of the rich are saver-investors, they become rich by saving 20% or more of their earnings, and invest those savings consistently in assets. 18% of them are top-level executives which require a significant amount of skillset and experiences to continue that path. 7% of the group are absolutely geniuses in their fields, groundbreaking inventions that made them extremely rich. Last but not least, half of the group are entrepreneurs, which are high risk high reward.
- They are all presented or earned opportunities to walk on the path to financial freedom, but why are people out there starving? Is it because of their incompetencies or lack of opportunities? Why aren't they given such opportunities?



[https://www.wga.hu/html\\_m/g/goya/4/](https://www.wga.hu/html_m/g/goya/4/)

# Why Poor?

- Approximately 8% of the entire population lives in absurd conditions. 600 million people lives on less than \$2 a day makes me feel sad and unjust, but at the same time it should make us wonder, why are poverty still so severe in this day and age?
- Here are the 11 reasons why poverty is still prominent in modern society:
- **INEQUALITY AND MARGINALIZATION**
  - No access to resources needed to live a life that meets basic standards due to inequality embedded in the matrix.
- **CONFLICT**
  - Wars, large-scale violence in the society destroy people's lives and make it impossible to climb out of poverty.
- **HUNGER, MALNUTRITION, AND STUNTING**
  - A vicious cycle is created when people are starving and aren't able to get enough food to fill their stomachs. They lack the strength and energy needed to be productive and make a living of themselves.
- **POOR HEALTHCARE SYSTEMS**
  - Countries that lack good health care systems are devastating to its citizens especially for mothers and young children. Pregnant women and young children are more vulnerable to different illnesses like malaria, diarrhea, and respiratory infections. Though they are easily cured, a bad healthcare system could transform those illnesses to life-threatening. Certainly, getting treated will drain the resources from those families and they are very unlikely to get out of poverty.
- **LITTLE OR NO ACCESS TO CLEAN WATER, SANITATION, AND HYGIENE**
  - More illness..., typically within countries with poor health care systems as well. Extremely difficult for citizens even beginning to think of getting out of poverty when their lives are in danger every single day.
- **CLIMATE CHANGE**
  - Climate change causes natural disasters. Drought or flooding destroys agriculture and homes, causes more poverty.
- **LACK OF EDUCATION**
  - Education = more opportunities, No Education = little to no opportunities
- **POOR PUBLIC WORKS AND INFRASTRUCTURE**
  - When the government is shy on the pocket, the people can't expect much good opportunities to get out of poverty.
- **LACK OF GOVERNMENT SUPPORT**
  - Government is the heart of a nation and the support of its citizens, without the help of the government people are more likely to live miserably.
- **LACK OF JOBS OR LIVELIHOODS**
  - Little to no opportunities were presented as a path to get out of poverty.
- **LACK OF RESERVES**
  - One national incident or natural disaster could destroy a nation without emergency reserves.



<http://crapshed.blogspot.com/2010/05/homeless.html>





## Richer & More Poverty

---

- The wealthy were getting wealthier while the middle-class and below were getting devastated during the pandemic.
- CEOs such as Jeff Bezos' net worth grew by \$13 billion while 51 million people were filing for unemployment.
- Total appreciation of Jeff Bezos, Bill Gates, Mark Zuckerberg, Warren Buffett and Larry Ellison reached a whopping \$101.7 billion.
- “Downton Abbey economy” where the 1% rich are getting richer, poor are getting extremely poor, and the middle-class are struggling with high prices and stagflation, forcing them to live check to check and even borrow debts in order to achieve standards of living.

<https://www.usatoday.com/in-depth/news/world/2021/04/29/covid-19-crisis-india-display-these-shocking-photos/4886613001/>

# End Poverty

- So, the billion-dollar question is, what can the society and the system as a whole pursue in order to contribute and eliminate poverty and ensure a standard of living for the people?
1. There are 12 solutions potentially feasible to solve the problem.
  2. Enhance safety net programs to provide assistance to anyone facing financial hardship or in need of support. Create good-paying jobs that meet family needs.
  3. Increase the minimum wage to guarantee financial stability for everyone.
  4. Implement long-term paid family and medical leave along with paid sick days as permanent provisions.
  5. Empower workers to restore balance in the job market.
  6. Make long-lasting boosts to the child tax credit and earned income tax credit.
  7. Promote equal pay to establish a level playing field in the job market.
  8. Allocate resources towards affordable and quality childcare and early childhood education.
  9. Increase the availability of healthcare for all.
  10. Revamp the criminal justice system and implement policies that aid in successful reintegration into society.
  11. Allocate resources to ensure affordable and easily accessible housing for all.
  12. Update and modernize the Supplemental Security Insurance program to meet current needs.



<https://untweetablethoughts.blogspot.com/2014/02/this-is-accessed-from-preventdisease.html>



# Annotated Bibliography

- Kelly, J. (2020, July 22). *The rich are getting richer during the pandemic*. Forbes. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/jackkelly/2020/07/22/the-rich-are-getting-richer-during-the-pandemic/?sh=55e8cf4a5c7e>
- Billionaires were getting incredibly richer during the pandemic while 51 million Americans filed for unemployment benefits. People weren't able to afford energy and phone bills while Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos' net worth increased \$13 bn in one single day. "Households in the poorest fifth—as measured by their pre-crisis income—have been hit hardest in terms of earnings, with a fall in their median household earnings of around 15%" (Kelly 2020).
- *11 top causes of global poverty - world*. ReliefWeb. (2020, March 4). <https://reliefweb.int/report/world/11-top-causes-global-poverty>
- Why does poverty persist around the globe? Here are the 11 main reasons that cause poverty worldwide. Inequality, conflict, hunger, poor healthcare systems, no access to clean water and sanitation, climate change, lack of education, poor infrastructure, pandemics, lack of social support and lack of personal safety nets.





# Annotated Bibliography

- Corley, T. C. (2019, September 3). I spent 5 years analyzing how rich people get rich - and found there are generally 4 paths to wealth. Business Insider. <https://www.businessinsider.com/personal-finance/how-people-get-rich-paths-to-wealth>
- How did the rich become rich? Research showed that wealthy individuals that started from the ground up usually possess these traits: 13% of those group of people are salesmen/saleswomen, 28% have professional experiences at other firms, 63% took personal financial risks in search of wealth, 68% have college degrees, 25% have postgraduate degrees. And last but not least, 86% of them work more than 50 hours a week. The rich are pursuing wealth in at least one of four ways: being investors, being senior executives at firms, being top experts in their industries, or being an entrepreneur (most risky).
- CBC/Radio Canada. (2014, March 22). *Why the rich get richer and the poor get poorer* / CBC news. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/business/why-the-rich-get-richer-and-the-poor-get-poorer-1.2580263>
- “Downton Abbey economy”, 1% controls significant amounts of wealth in the world, the poor is continuously getting poorer, and the middle-class people are squeezed with high prices and stagnant wages. During the 2008 financial crisis, while other people were getting devastated and losing their jobs and homes, the wealthy that had dry powder on hand were able to seize the opportunity and became richer.

# Annotated Bibliography

---

- Pathak, A. A., & Ross, K. (2023, March 22). The top 12 solutions to cut poverty in the United States. Center for American Progress. <https://www.americanprogress.org/article/top-12-solutions-cut-poverty-united-states/>
- Top 12 solutions to end poverty in the U.S.:
  1. Expand safety net programs to benefit all in need.
  2. Create good-paying jobs that meet family needs.
  3. Raise the minimum wage to ensure economic stability for all.
  4. Provide permanent paid family and medical leave and paid sick days.
  5. Increase worker power to rebalance the labor market.
  6. Make permanent increases to the child tax credit and earned income tax credit.
  7. Support pay equity to create a fair labor market.
  8. Invest in affordable, high-quality childcare and early childhood education.
  9. Expand access to health care.
  10. Reform the criminal justice system and enact policies that support successful re-entry.
  11. Invest in affordable, accessible housing.
  12. Modernize the Supplemental Security Insurance program.



# Annotated Bibliography

- Elliott, C. (2023, April 18). *Why is it so hard to get out of poverty in America*. Listen Money Matters. <https://www.listenmoneymatters.com/how-to-escape-poverty-in-america/>
- This article examines the reasons why it is so hard to get out of poverty in the U.S., by providing data and concrete evidence to support the author's claim. It also discusses about different types of poverties exist in the U.S., and well as the impact and causes of poverty. Lastly, the article provides feasible solutions in order to get out of poverty.

