

Growing economic disparity article review

[Sociology](#), [Poverty](#)



George E. Curry reported in *The Scanner* on November 12, 2012, in his article entitled “ No Surprise - Income Inequality Growing” about the divide between the have and the have-nots in the United States, and how the rift is just getting larger. Curry analyzed a government report which was issued by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities and the Economic Policy Institute, entitled, “ Pulling Apart: A State-by-State Analysis of Income Trends,” studied the incomes of all levels of households in the United States.

The report divided the income levels into three categories: high-income, middle-income, and lower-income households. Much of what people have thought to be true in recent year was proven to be so. There is an increasing divide between the wealthiest and the poorest people in this country. There is also a growing division between the income levels of the rich in America and the middle-class families. This disparity does not only exist in the state of Washington, but occurs at the national level as well. The study was based on the three business cycles prior to 2007. It was during this time that the analysts were able to demonstrate that the nation’s highest income households had significant increases whereas the lower-class and middle-class households demonstrated only small increases in their levels of income.

The breakdown of the groups demonstrates this point in a clearer manner. The top 20 percent of households in the United States had incomes averaging \$164, 490. In contrast, the bottom 20 percent of households in the United States had incomes of only \$20, 510, which is only 1/8th as much as the wealthiest 20 percent. To create an even greater disparity between the two groups, the wealthiest 20 percent saw an income increase of 8. 6

percent during the period of the late 1990s to the mid-2000s. During the same time period, the middle fifth of households lost 6 percent in their income levels. New Hampshire was the only state where there was a decrease in the level of disparity between the classes. In 36 states, the levels of disparity between the wealthiest and middle classes were reported to have significant increases (Curry, 2012).

The report was using factual information in government reports to prove a theory that society has held in recent years that the rich have been getting richer and the poor have been getting poorer. The United States is supposed to be the land of opportunity where most people belong to the middle class. In recent years, especially with the onset of the recession, many people have come to question what really does constitute a middle class. Many people wonder if the middle class is literally disappearing.

The article uses statistical information to prove its point. One of these sources was studying the three business cycles prior to 2007. By studying a relatively long period of time, the information is more likely to be accurate rather than just studying one quarter or one year. There is also information from the two Washington think tanks, the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities and the Economic Policy Institute which are third party agencies and not affiliated with a particular group, therefore, should pose no bias in their reports.

Some of the evidences that help to expose the growing disparities were the percentages in changes that were demonstrated by the poorest and wealthiest 20 percent. If the poorest 20 percent only saw a decrease of 6 percent, the wealthiest should not have had an increase, let alone an

increase of even more than what the poorest saw as a decrease. If the poor lost 6 percent, the wealthiest 20 percent should not have had an increase of 8.6 percent in their earnings.

This issue affects every household in the United States, no matter what income bracket they are in. Not only are the discrepancies between the rich and poor growing, but people seem powerless and unable to do anything to change the situation.

Reference

Curry, G. E. (2012, Nov 21). No surprise - income inequality growing. The Skanner. Retrieved