

The situation with the wealth in america

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“ Abundance of valuable material possessions or resources.”

Low class, middle class, and high class. These are the barriers that have been placed upon society by social constructs. Class is how we determine one's stature, allowing benefits and privileges to those who are deemed so. Yet, the balance between these three classes are, unarguably, out of proportion. While society has made endless efforts to end racism and segregation, the fight for poverty has been everything but successful.

“ The wealthiest 1 percent of American households own 40 percent of the country's wealth” (Washington Post). This quote alone, shows just how distorted the wealth in America stands. There's a concern that the high class and middle class are becoming wealthier, while the poor are becoming more poor. In fact, a study by the Urban Institute shows that, “ between 1979 and 2014 every class of American became wealthier. The upper middle class (households earning between \$100, 000 and \$350, 000) increased from 12. 9% to 29. 4%. The poor (households earning under \$30, 000) contracted from 24. 3% to 19. 8%” (IRIS). Not only has the wealth of classes increased, but like the chapter title states in Class Matters by The New York Times, “ Life at the Top in America Isn't Just Better, It's Longer” (Scott 2005).

Class defines status; it allows privileges and respect. It is the difference between driving a Tesla Model X and a Chevy Luv. However, the benefits of class are not only materialistic; privilege, food, health, representation, and education supplement the benefit of money. In Class Matters, Janny Scott gives a scenario of three people in different classes, but with one common threat: heart attack. It goes without question that the treatment between an

architect, utility worker, and a maid for a heart attack will differ with care by a great margin.

“ Class is a potent force in health and longevity in the united states. The more

education and income people have, the less likely they are to have and die of

heart disease, strokes, diabetes, and many types of cancer. Upper-middle-class

Americans live longer and in better health than middle-class Americans, who live

longer and better than those at the bottom” (Scott, 2005, p. 29).

What we have at our disposal depends on what we are able to afford. What we are able to afford has a direct correlation to the quality as well. It only makes sense that the richer live longer; they have access to things that the poor do not.

Walter Benn Michaels supplements this argument

What is even more disturbing, is the diversity throughout the top one percent. “ In total, there are just about 120 million American households. So when we talk about the top one percent, we are looking at the top 1. 2 million households. Breaking the 120 million homes down by race, according to the U. S. Census, there are nearly 83 million white households, and there are just about 14 million black households” (Huffington Post).

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