I. Middle and Working Class

1. Work

1. under and unemployment ▲

1. + hours ▲

3. paid vacation and paid sick days ▼

4. dual working families ▲

5. moonlighting ▲

6. leisure time: ▼

7. benefits ▼

B. Financial Situation

1. Disposable income ▼

2. Consumer debt: ▲ (1700% since 1980)

<http://www.truthdig.com/report/item/laws_offer_debtors_little_protection_allow_collectors_seize_wages_20140916>

1. Mortgage debt ▲

4. health care costs ▲

5. education costs and student debt ▲

[http://www.truthdig.com/eartotheground/item/student\_debt\_catches\_eve](http://www.truthdig.com/eartotheground/item/student_debt_catches_eve_the_elderly_20140915)

[\_the\_elderly\_20140915](http://www.truthdig.com/eartotheground/item/student_debt_catches_eve_the_elderly_20140915)

6. Increasing tax burden?

C. Communities

1. Deteriorating infrastructure

2. Deteriorating schools

3. Self-interest and mean spiritedness

<http://www.fair.org/blog/2013/05/29/good-news-everyone-except-you-wage-earners/>

II. Poor Get Poorer

A. Poverty

1. Def: standard of living below what is necessary for

maintenance of adequate diet, health, and shelter

a. Poverty line or threshold

b. Mary Orshanky 1963

c. 3x the $ minimal subsistence diet (Thrifty Food Plan adjusted for inflation)

d. SSA and the poverty line 2014

i. single

ii. family of 3

iii. family of 4

iv. before tax

e. underestimates poverty

i. 1/5 on food

ii. before tax

iii. adequacy of Thrifty Food Plan

iv. negative events

f. main cause

2. Extent

a. 2004 36 million /12%, 2008 40 million/13%, 2012 50 million/16%

b. age

i. under 18, 2004 19%/12.8 million, 2011 16.4 million/22% (25% in CA)^

ii. over 65 under 10%^

B. Comparison and trend

1. comparison to other industrial countries

a. highest poverty rate

b. highest rate of childhood poverty

2. Trend

a. +14 million since 2004

a. near poor: within 125% of poverty line ^

b. working poor: 30%^

c. severely poor^

i. 20 million at one-half or under the

ii. \_\_\_ million are children

d. AA children 50% (up from 34%)

C. The poor in US really well off?

1. Welfare In America is too good?

2. AFDC 1996

a. cash:1/3 of poor

b. avg payment: $500 per family

c. non-cash benefits: 40%

d. all benefits; 3/4 poverty line

e. children 1.9

3. Welfare reform TANF (Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Conciliation Act)

a. less than ½ of poor families receive TANF benefits/

b. avg $372

c. children 1.8

i. poverty rate +

ii. assistance -

4. Three studies: Wisconsin, NYTimes, and Nation

a. 70% below poverty

b. 36% no medical care

c. 50% can't afford enough food

5. Homelessness

III. Who benefits from poverty?

A. surplus of desperate workers that depress wages.

B. someone to do the dirty and dangerous work in

society

C. creates jobs to maintain the social order ( power arrangements): police, social workers, prison guards

D. profit: “poverty surcharge” on food: +8%-18%

E. profit: rip off loans

F. scapegoats for wealthy, someone to blame

<http://fortune.com/2014/09/12/fortune-500-worker-pay/>