

Journal 4/15 (4/16 B Day)

80% of Americans say that they are in the middle class

Why would people believe they are in the middle class when they are not? Explain

Why do people want to be labeled as middle class?
Explain

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The American Class System

Unit 6: Social Inequalities

Determining Social Class

Sociologists rely on 3 techniques to rank individuals according to social class

- **Reputational Method** – individuals rank other members in their community
- **Subjective Method** – individuals are asked to determine their own social rank
- **Objective Method** – sociologists define social class by income, occupation, and education

Social Classes in the United States

% OF U.S. POPULATION

■ % of Pop.



Upper Class

- The Upper Class can be divided into two groups

Old Money

- Refers to the fact that these families have been wealthy for generations
- Much of their wealth comes from inheritance
- Members are born into an atmosphere of wealth and power
- Family name and past accomplishments are as important as the family fortune
- Are able to attend the most prestigious schools



Upper Class

- The Upper Class can be divided into two groups

New Money

- Refers to the newly rich
- Generally have acquired wealth through their own efforts
- New money is less prestigious than old money



Upper Class

- Members of the upper class often carry great power and influence
- Members often fill top positions in government and private businesses



WEALTH
INEQUALITY
IN
AMERICA

ACTUAL
Distribution of
Wealth in the U.S.

"THE WEALTHY"

15.1%

POVERTY LINE

7%

"THE RICH"

"THE POOR"

IDEAL

THINK

"THE MIDDLE CLASS"

"THE
1%"

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%



Upper Class

Congressional wealth

Net worth of lowans in Congress compared to the top 10 most wealthy.

Rank	Name	Average Net Worth
1	Darrell Issa (R-Calif)	\$436,500,015
2	Jared Polis (D-Colo)	\$387,864,231
3	Mark Warner (D-Va)	\$242,889,630
4	John K Delaney (D-Md)	\$214,902,588
5	Michael McCaul (R-Texas)	\$160,340,931
6	Dave Trott (R-Mich)	\$113,844,576
7	Vernon Buchanan (R-Fla)	\$106,912,071
8	Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif)	\$101,273,023
9	Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif)	\$94,202,571
10	Richard Blumenthal (D-Conn)	\$81,745,158
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52	Rod Blum (R-Iowa)	\$15,401,529
137	Chuck Grassley (R-Iowa)	\$3,762,538
343	Joni Ernst (R-Iowa)	\$578,515
349	David Loebsack (D-Iowa)	\$534,509
387	David Young (R-Iowa)	\$375,000
439	Steven A King (R-Iowa)	\$218,508

Source: Center For Responsive Politics

COURIER GRAPHIC / DAVID HEMENWAY



\$3.7B

Donald Trump,
president

SOURCE OF WEALTH:
REAL ESTATE



\$2.9B

Wilbur Ross
Jr., secretary of
commerce

INVESTMENTS, BANKING



\$1.4B

Linda McMahon,
small-business
administrator

PRO WRESTLING



\$1.25B

Betsy DeVos,
secretary of education

AMWAY, FAMILY
FORTUNE



\$621M

Steven Mnuchin,
secretary of the
treasury

GOLDMAN SACHS



\$385M

Rex Tillerson,
secretary of state

EXXON MOBIL



\$110M

Andy Puzder,
secretary of labor

FAST FOOD



\$29M

Ben Carson,
secretary of housing
and urban development

BRAIN SURGERY, BOOKS



\$25.6M

Elaine Chao,
secretary of
transportation

INVESTMENTS



\$18.7M

Tom Price,
secretary of health
and human services

INVESTMENTS

The Upper Middle Class

- Primarily high-income business people and professionals such as doctors and lawyers
- Most have a college degree or advanced degree
- Class membership is generally based on income rather than assets
- Career motivated
- Politically and socially active but their power and influence are limited to the community level



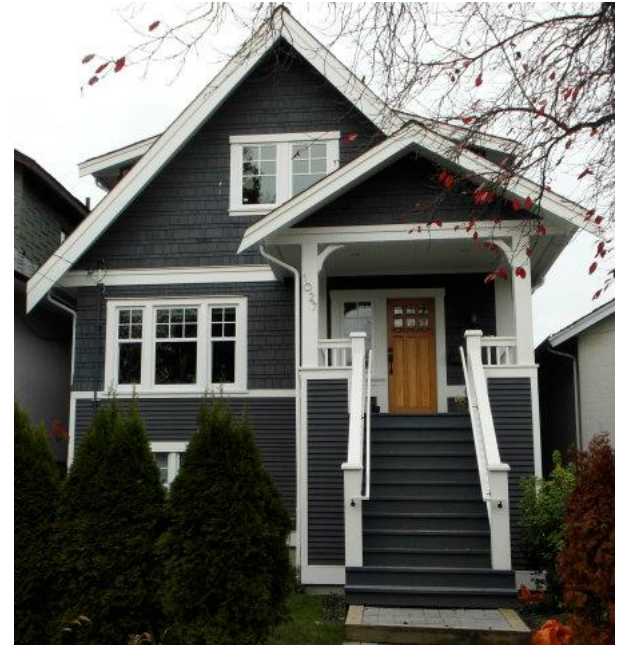
The Lower Middle Class

- Most members hold white-collar jobs which do not involve manual labor
 - Nursing, middle management, and sales
- Live a comfortable life but must work hard to keep what they have achieved



The Working Class

- Many members hold jobs that require manual labor (Blue-Collar)
 - Factory workers, tradespeople, service workers
- Some jobs pay as much as lower middle class jobs, but are less prestigious
- Members have few financial reserves
- Unexpected crises can push them into the lower classes



The Working Poor

- Members work at the lowest paying jobs that are often temporary or seasonal
 - Fast food, retail, housecleaning, migrant farmwork, and day laboring
- Even though they work hard, they rarely make a living wage
- Many depend on government support programs
- Most are high school dropouts
- Most are not involved politically because they believe their situation will remain the same regardless of who is in power



The Under Class

- Some members do work, but usually at the most undesirable jobs
- Main source of income is public assistance
- Life is a day-to-day struggle



- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t2XFh_tD2RA
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QPnxOOeY1Kg>
- https://archive.nytimes.com/www.nytimes.com/packages/html/national/20050515_CLASS_GRAPHIC/index_01.html