

**An Annotated Bibliography for Instructors of English at
El Camino College: English A and English 84**

Poverty and its Effects

Brown, Kay E. "Temporary Assistance For Needy Families: Implications Of Changes

In Participation Rates." *GAO Reports* (2010): 1. *MasterFile Premier*. Web.

17 Nov. 2011.

Kay Brown discusses the phenomenon concerning the decline in numbers of those impoverished individuals receiving cash benefits, via the federal government. In 1995, eighty-four per cent of eligible families received benefits (the criteria for assistance are calculated by the individual states) as opposed to a forty per cent rate in 2005. Brown attributes this decline to two factors: The increase during this period of the minimum wage and Earned Income Tax Credit increased family incomes; thus, families that were erstwhile eligible for participation in the program no longer were. 420,000 fewer families received funds in 2005 than they did in 1995. For interested instructors, Brown provides some useful charts and graphs to demonstrate the overall decline in participation.

Jackson, Sr., Jesse L., Rev. "Wage War on Poverty, Not Immigrants." *Los Angeles*

Sentinel 30 Mar. 2006. *Ethnic News Watch (ENW)*. ProQuest. Web.

22 Nov. 2011.

The Reverend Jesse Jackson excoriates Representative Tom Tancredo, R. Colorado, and those Americans for whom he speaks, regarding the matter of illegal immigrants. Tancredo supports the deportation of eleven million undocumented workers from the United States and urges the building of a wall on the border with Mexico. However, Jackson also points out that many of the very pro-Tancredo supporters in turn exploit this very population—thereby injuring potential American wage earners—by both employing and underpaying these same illegals. Jackson suggests a reasonable solution to this issue would be to provide a means for illegal aliens to become American citizens.

Jackson, Phillip. "Much of Black America Is Slipping Fast into Third-World Status."

The Tennessee Tribune 30 Nov. 2006. *Ethnic News Watch (ENW)*. ProQuest.

Web. 22 Nov. 2011.

According to the Heartland Alliance, more Blacks are living in "deep poverty" today than in any period of American History since the days of slavery. For instance, thirty per cent of Blacks in Illinois are living in poverty compared to eight per cent of their white

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counterparts. Added to this staggering statistic, the Children's Defense Fund maintains that some one-million black children nation wide live in extreme poverty. Jackson offers the statistic that the Pew Hispanic Trust discovered that between the years 1996 and 2002 Black net worth declined to 5,998 dollars per household, while Whites' net worth rose to 88,651 dollars per household. Jackson opines that, even worse than these sobering statistics, the traditional means of rising in class via the route of education is now an even more remote possibility for Blacks than it ever was. He finishes the article with a Catalog of Ten Key Solutions for Black Economic Well Being.

Katz, Michael B. "The War On Welfare: Family, Poverty, And Politics In Modern America." *Journal Of Social History.* " 44.4 (2011) 1233. *MasterFile Premier*. Ebsco. Web. 18 Nov. 2011.

Katz considers the current social/political climate in America that has "poverty out of favor," an attitude dramatized by the shocking trend of an overall increase in poverty coupled with a large-scale attack on recipients of aid and on their families. Katz cites the Luxembourg Income Study, which arrives at the figure of 21.5 per cent of our children living in poverty. Even more shocking is the figure he cites regarding the off spring of single mothers and their impoverished existence—a full 59.5 per cent of these children live below the poverty line. This disturbing trend bodes ill for our country's future, inasmuch as many of these children become school drop outs, become involved in illegal activities, and are chronically unemployed or underemployed.

Klapper, Bradley S. "Government Failing To Fight Poverty." *Sacramento Observer* 28 Sep. 2006. *Ethnic News Watch (ENW)*. ProQuest. Web. 22 Nov. 2011.

Aron Sengupta, an Indian professor and an expert on poverty, asserted in a report to delegates of forty-seven nations regarding the study of world wide poverty that the United States has failed to eradicate the most abject forms of poverty in this country—particularly as this extreme poverty besets the Black and Hispanic populations. Sengupta argued that the United States allows this dismal poverty rate to victimize a full twelve to fourteen per cent of the overall population. However, Steven Hill, the United States delegate to the conference, counters the claim of a general indifference toward the impoverished by maintaining that over eighty federal government programs currently exist to help those in dire need.

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Lewis, Al. "How to Get Poor Quick." *Wall Street Journal (Online)* 18 Sep. 2011.

ProQuest National Newspapers Core. ProQuest. Web. 18 Nov. 2011.

Lewis cites a stunning statistic that claims the poor population grew to 46.2 million people in 2010 from 43.6 million in 2009. In spite of this figure, he lambastes the conservative Heritage Foundation for sugar coating these grim figures by claiming that 99.9 % of the American population own refrigerators and that 98.7% own television sets. The suggestion therein is that poverty does not exist. Lewis counters with the "toilet paper" analogy—at one time only well-to-do folks could afford this luxury. His conclusion is that poverty is not a single set of criteria and that America has always had a different definition of that term, in that the standard of living here is higher than elsewhere.

"Looking at Inequality in America: [Letter]" *The New York Times* 7 Nov. 2011,

Late Edition (East Coast): *ProQuest National Newspapers Core*. ProQuest.

Web. 18 Nov. 2011.

Several writers offered their opinions regarding the Wall Street Occupiers and their quest to bring to the public eye the gross inequalities that exist in this country between the very few wealthy individuals and the rest of the total population. Concerning the matter of this non-existent shared wealth in the United States, one writer claimed a cause and effect relationship between financial interests and Federal government with its lenient policies toward special interests and corporations. Another writer opined that a worker in the lower twenty per cent of the wage earners in 1975 could own a home: By 1995 this fact was a remote memory as well as a virtual impossibility.

Malveaux, Julianne. *Chicago Defender* 3 Nov. 2010. *Ethnic News Watch (ENW)*.

ProQuest. Web. 22 Nov. 2011.

In a virtual broadside on critics of President Obama, involving his policies to aid the growing poor population in the United States, Malveaux offers a number of stunning claims concerning the over-all black population and its current dire economic straits. She maintains that 25.8% of the entire black population lives in poverty compared, with 9.4% for Whites, 12.5% for Asians, and 25.3% for Hispanics. To support her assertion, she cites the figures involving the median income for each racial group: The median income per household in 2009 was thirty-two thousand dollars for Blacks, fifty-four thousand for Whites, sixty-five thousand for Asians, and thirty-eight thousand for Hispanics. The unemployment figure for Blacks was the highest of any group at 16.1%. Given the veracity of these figures, Malveaux urges government to act hastily in finding a solution for African Americans' growing poverty rate.

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Marsiglia, Flavio F., Stephen Kulis, Hilda Garcia Perez, and Monica Bermudez-Parsai.

“Hopelessness, Family Stress, and Depression among Mexican-Heritage

Mothers in the Southwest.” *Health & Social Work* 36.1 (2011): 7-18.

Academic Search Premier. Web. 17 Nov. 2011.

This article, highly academic in nature, is the result of a study of one-hundred and thirty-six Mexican-heritage mothers residing in a large Southwestern metropolitan area. In attempting to measure or to objectify the nature of stress on these women, the researchers focused on several “stressors”—among these considered for the study were a pervasive anti-immigrant sentiment, economic instability, and the threat of deportation. To make matters worse, disparity in accessing mental-health services between the wide scale population and this group was also deemed a prime factor. Feelings of “helplessness” may very well, though not as a matter of course, lead to “hopelessness” or depression.

Mathis, Greg. “America getting poorer.” *Michigan Chronicle* 21 Sep. 2011. *Ethnic News*

Watch (ENW). ProQuest. Web. 22 Nov. 2011.

Greg Mathis, concerning poverty in our country, asserts that “The most recent report on Americans and on their income, released by the Census Bureau reveals that the number of people living in poverty has reached its highest level in fifty-one years.” According to the writer, one in six Americans of the total population currently lives below the poverty line. Moreover, over twenty per cent of the nation’s children are poor. He contrasts this dismal situation by comparing the astronomical sums and the immense tax refunds enjoyed by the nation’s top CEOs and their corporations. For example, *Verizon* paid its top executive Ivan Scidenberg 18.1 million dollars. And *Intel* received a seven hundred and five million tax refund. The upshot of this disparity between the elite and the impoverished is that the former reinvest the funds into their companies, rather than using these resources to create jobs for Americans. The federal government bailouts, Mathis opines, did little to help pull the American families out of poverty.

Morello, Carol and Ted Mellnik. “Biggest group of poor kids is Latino.” *The Washington*

Post 29 Sep. 2011. *ProQuest National Newspapers Core*. ProQuest. Web.

18 Nov. 2011.

The reporters cite a Pew Hispanic Center study which concludes that 6.1 million Hispanic children are impoverished as opposed to five million non-Hispanic white children and 4.4 million black children. Furthermore, Morello and Mellnik claim that 50.5 million

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Hispanics have been hit harder by the “bleak economy” than has any other racial group. The figure that the federal government arrives at to determine a status of “poverty” is 22, 113 dollars per annum for a family of four. Because of this wide scale poverty among Latinos, according to a speaker representing the *Casa of Maryland*, a charitable organization heretofore devoted to helping unemployed Hispanics find jobs, the organization has had to change its emphasis from employment to providing food through their newly instituted food pantry.

Patriquin, Larry. “More Democracy, Less Poverty.” *New Politics* 13.3 (2011): 79.

MasterFile Premier. Web. 17 Nov. 2011.

In a highly political and philosophic exploration of poverty in the United States, Larry Patriquin undertakes an extensive comparison & contrast between welfare states in Europe—particularly those in Scandinavia—and the welfare state in our country. He argues that the United States is “minimalist” and “punitive” in its handling of poverty and the impoverished—one reason being the “hyper-individualistic value system and its impact on the overall culture. And he further opines that our democracy is weak on social policy because we are weak on democracy. Reforms to social-welfare, for instance, usually involve “cuts” to existing benefits. Shocking as well is the poverty rate among Blacks and Hispanics, a rate which Patriquin puts at about 30% for these groups and about 40% for all single mothers.

Pelayo, Libertito. “On My Own: Filipinos least educated & poorest Asians in U.S.?”

Filipino Reporter 13 Feb. 2003. *Ethnic News Watch (ENW)*. ProQuest.

Web. 22 Nov. 2011.

Pelayo bristles at the contention in a *New York Times* article that Filipinos are among the poorest and the least educated of all Asian groups in this country. Quite the contrary, she asserts; according to graduation notices and the names being read at commencement exercises, Filipinos are, in fact, both highly represented and quite successful in their academic endeavors.

Porter, Eduardo. “Wall Street Protestors Hit the Bull’s-Eye” [Editorial] *The New York*

Times 30 Oct. 2011. *ProQuest National Newspapers Core*. ProQuest. Web.

18 Nov. 2011.

According to Eduardo Porter, 1.4 million families made an average of one million dollars in 2009. And the top one per cent of the economic pyramid shared precisely seventeen per

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cent of the nation's total adjusted income in 2009. As for income, bankers and financiers made seventy per cent more than did workers in the rest of the private sector. Clearly, he exclaims, financial inequality is the rule in contemporary America: The very few "profit" outlandishly at the expense of the many.

"Poverty In The United States." *Congressional Digest* 89.10 (2010): 298-300.

Academic Search Premier. Web. 17 Nov. 2011.

An interesting example of a government report for students unfamiliar with these publications—this report is largely statistical in nature, although the figures are put into a minimum or a skeletal context for the consumer. The United States Census Bureau arrived at the following figures, the culmination of an exhaustive study, considering such demographic markers as age, residence, region and race. For instance, the unemployment figure for all Americans in 2009 was 14.3%, the second annual increase since 2004. A total of 43.6 million Americans were unemployed in 2009, an increase from 39.8 million the previous year. Between the years 2007 and 2009, the poverty rate for children grew by 2.7%, or by 2.1 million children.

Samuelson, Robert. "Hopeless in America." *The Washington Post* 19 Sep. 2011.

ProQuest National Newspapers Core. ProQuest. Web. 18 Nov. 2011.

According to Samuelson, the difference in the current economic recession in America from previous ones is that many more Americans, who may have been unaffected in the past, are now in the throes of financial chaos. In the past year alone, Samuelson asserts that the median household income decreased by a margin of 6.4%, or from 52,823 dollars last year to 49,445 dollars this one—a total net loss of over three thousand dollars in a single year. Moreover, in past recessions, the peak unemployment figure stood at 8%, not the double-digit figure which now besets the population.

Schiller, Bradley. "Families Don't Depend on the Minimum Wage." *The Wall Street*

Journal (Eastern Edition) 13 Oct 2011. *ProQuest National Newspapers Core*.

ProQuest. Web. 18 Nov. 2011.

Schiller argues that a mere increase in the minimum wage is not as helpful for the poor as is a vibrant, job-producing economy. In fact, he claims that of the adults earning the minimum wage in the years 1998 to 2006 more than 70% of these earners moved beyond this status after two years of earning the minimum. And in 75% of these homes, the minimum wage accounts for only 20% of the total household earnings. Consequently, a job-producing economy is ultimately of greater benefit to the poor than is a simple, small "cure-all" wage increase.

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Samuels, Alana. "The Economy: Jobless rate hits 12.1% in California; State employers cut payrolls in August as they see signs of a faltering recovery." *Los Angeles Times* 17 Sep. 2011. *ProQuest*. Web. 18 Nov. 2011.

Alana Samuels points out that, since last month, state employers cut payrolls by some 8,400 positions, a reduction that she attributes to the disagreement in government concerning the solutions to the current economic woes. Adding to the grim situation is the sliding economy in Europe and its inevitable impact on other countries in the world. Samuels cites the statistic regarding the unemployment rate in California, a rate which she fixes at 12.1% and notes that only Nevada, at 13.4%, is higher among the fifty states. As a result of this grim figure, she concludes that 2.2 million Californians live below the federal poverty line.

"Welfare reforms are drastic for children." *Tri-State Defender* 4 Sep. 1996. *Ethnic News Watch (ENW)*. *ProQuest*. Web. 22 Nov. 2011.

According to this source, 50% of the population falls under the federal poverty line after adjusting for taxes and transfers. 59.5% of children living in "solo mother families" exist below the poverty line. To complicate the crisis, of all of the industrial nations, the United States has the highest birth rate per year in the fifteen-nineteen year old age group, with 64% of girls in this age range having children yearly. Yet another sobering statistic was published by the Luxembourg Income Study, which arrived at the percentage of 21.5% of American children currently existing in poverty.