

## Local Politics Matter

# The Math Is Really Simple

## No Degree Required



In looking at the United States of America from a historical perspective I have always been intrigued by the notion that America represents the highest ideals of a Democracy. The ideals of a true Democracy are the right to life, liberty, and property which no Government can take away. Implicit in this statement is that each and every individual should have an opportunity to live a life of comfort. This means that there should be real and sustainable educational opportunities that subsequently lead to real and sustainable employment opportunities. With that in mind how does one explain the vast and growing economic equality gap in the United States of America? As important

as this subject is and as vital as it is to a real Democracy there is literally no coverage of this issue by the media and there is very little broaching of the topic by our elected officials. Let's examine the numbers from Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia:

**Wealth inequality in the United States** (also known as the **wealth gap**<sup>[2]</sup>) is the unequal distribution of [assets](#) among residents of the [United States](#). Wealth includes the values of homes, automobiles, personal valuables, businesses, [savings](#), and [investments](#).<sup>[3]</sup> The net worth of U.S. households and non-profit organizations was \$94.7 trillion in the first quarter of 2017, a record level both in nominal terms and purchasing power

parity.<sup>[4]</sup> Divided equally among 124 million U.S. households, this would be \$760,000 per family. However, the bottom 50% of families, representing 62 million households, average \$11,000 net worth.<sup>[5]</sup> From an international perspective, [the difference in US median and mean wealth per adult](#) is over 600%.<sup>[6]</sup>

How can this be the case in a true Democracy? How can the top 20% of Americans hold 86% of the wealth while the bottom 80% own 14% of the wealth? Are we really living in a Democratic society? The [Census Bureau](#) estimated that there were 245.5 million Americans ages 18 and older in November 2016, about 157.6 million of whom reported being registered to vote. If we take the total eligible voters and multiply the number by 20% (wealth holders) you get 49.1 million votes. If you multiply the same number by 80% (non-wealth holders) you get 196.4 million votes. This simple test of math tells me that a significant percentage of Americans fall into one of the following

categories:

- Don't bother to vote
- Vote against their own interests

How does this happen in a true democracy? How do so many people accept poverty, substandard education, and substandard political representation as a norm? In a Country where we often talk about American Exceptionalism what does that really mean? What is exceptional about a Country where a significant percentage of its citizens live in abject poverty? What is exceptional about a Country where most citizens have no voice in the political process? What is exceptional about a Country that discourages its citizens from participating in the electoral process? The answer is simple. There is nothing exceptional about that Country. The good news is that the fix is just as simple. It is all in the **MATH**.

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