

Household income in the United States

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For information on the income of individuals please see [Personal income in the United States](#)

The **Household income in the United States** is a measure of current private income commonly used by the United States



This graphic shows the distribution of gross annual household income. The building's thirty exposed floors are easily divided into quintiles, each income quintile represented by six floors. Each floor represents the tenth of a third (3.33%) of households in the US, and each section of 10 floors represent roughly one third of American society. The floors above the top black line represent those households with incomes of or exceeding \$100,000. The floors below the bottom black line, however, represent those households who fell below the poverty threshold. In order to live on the top floor of the American income strata, a household's annual gross income needs to exceed \$200,000.

government and private institutions. To measure the income of a household, the pre-tax money receipts of all residents over the age of 15 are combined. Most of these receipts are in the form of wages and salaries (before withholding and other taxes), but many other forms of income, such as unemployment insurance, disability, child support, etc., are included as well. The residents of the household do not have to be related to the householder for their earnings to be considered part of the household's income.^[1] While the use of household income remains among the most widely accepted as households tend to share a common economic fate, the size

of a household which is commonly not considered may off-set gains in household income.^[2]

In 2005, the median annual household income according to the US Census Bureau was determined to be \$46,326,^[3] similar to that of Canada which was roughly \$41,510 (USD) in the year 2000.^[4] The median income per household member (including all working and non-working members above the age of 14) in the year 2003 was \$23,535.^[5]

In the year 2005, there were approximately 113,146,000 households in the United States. 17.23% of all households had annual incomes exceeding \$100,000,^[6] while another 12.7% fell below the federal poverty threshold^[7] while the bottom 20% earned less than \$19,178.^[8] While the aggregate income distribution tends to tilt towards the top with the top 6.37% earning roughly one third of all income, those with upper-middle incomes also controlled a large, though declining, share of the total earned income.^{[9][2]} Households in the top quintile, 77% of which had two income earners, had incomes exceeding \$91,705. Households in the mid quintile, with a mean of one income earner per household had incomes between \$36,000 and 57,657.^[8]

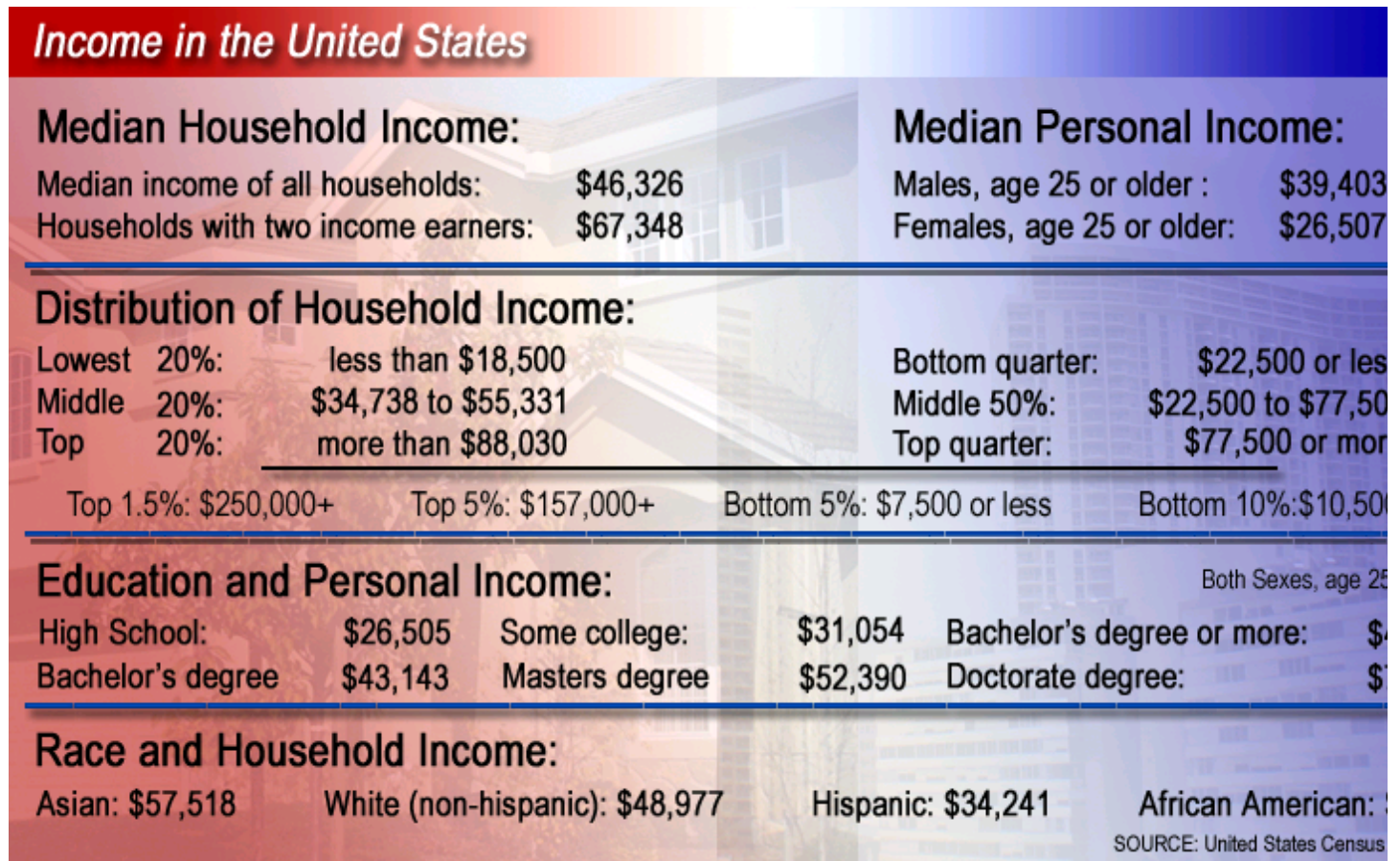
The 2005 economic survey also found that households in the top two income quintiles, those with an annual household income exceeding \$55,331, had a median of two income earners while those in the lower quintiles (2nd and middle quintile) had median of only one income earner per household. Due to high unemployment among those in the lowest quintile the median number of income earners for this particular group was determined to be zero.^[6] Overall the United States followed the trend of other developed nations with a relatively large population of relatively affluent households outnumbering the poor. Among those in-between the relative extremes of the income strata a large and quite powerful section of households with moderately high middle class incomes^[9] and an even larger number of households with moderately low incomes.^[6]

While the median household income has increased 44% since 1990 it has decreased very slightly when considering inflation. In 1990, the median household income was determined to be \$30,056; \$44,603 in 2003 dollars. While personal income has remained relatively stagnant since over the past few decades, household income has risen due to the rising percentage of households with two or more income earners. Between 1999 and 2004 household income stagnated showing a slight increase since 2004.^{[10][11]}

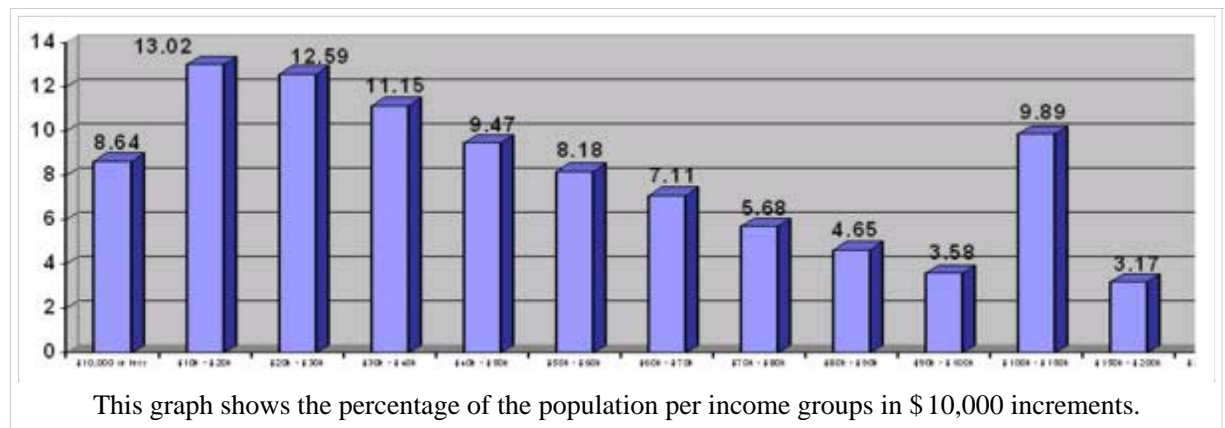
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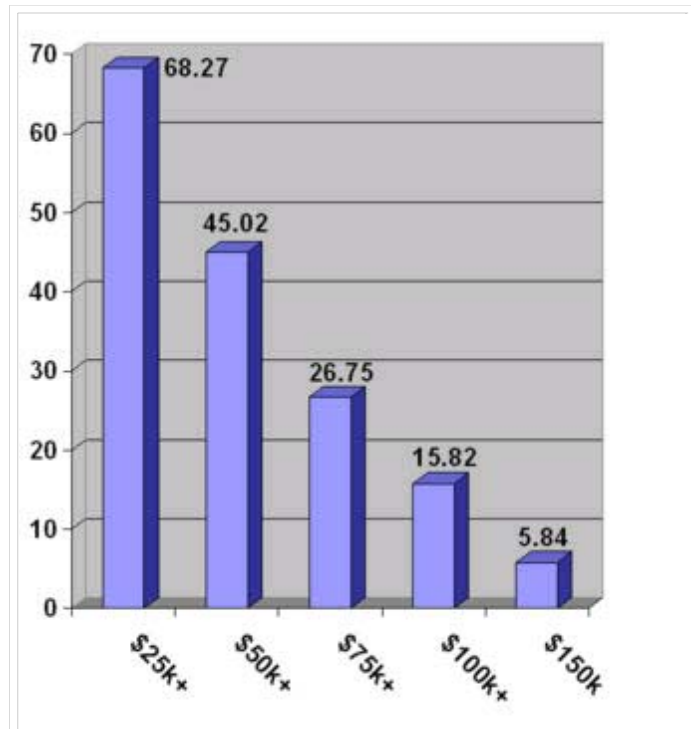
Income at a glance



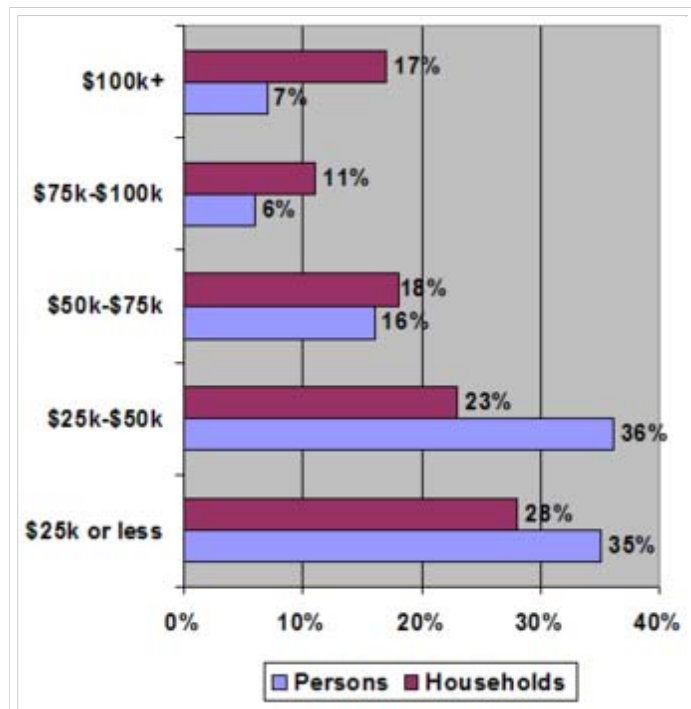
Income distribution



Income range	Households (thousands)	Percent
\$0 to \$25,000 (28.22%)		
Under \$2,500	2,566	2.26%
\$2,500 to \$4,999	1,389	1.22%
\$5,000 to \$7,499	2,490	2.20%
\$7,500 to \$9,999	3,360	2.96%
\$10,000 to \$12,499	4,013	3.54%
\$12,500 to \$14,999	3,543	3.13%
\$15,000 to \$17,499	3,760	3.32%
\$17,500 to \$19,999	3,438	3.03%
\$20,000 to \$22,499	4,061	3.58%
\$22,500 to \$24,999	3,375	2.98%
\$25,000 to \$50,000 (26.65%)		
\$25,000 to \$27,499	3,938	3.48%
\$27,500 to \$29,999	2,889	2.55%
\$30,000 to \$32,499	3,921	3.46%
\$32,500 to \$34,999	2,727	2.41%
\$35,000 to \$37,499	3,360	2.96%
\$37,500 to \$39,999	2,633	2.32%
\$40,000 to \$42,499	3,378	2.98%
\$42,500 to \$44,999	2,294	2.02%
\$45,000 to \$47,499	2,700	2.38%
\$47,500 to \$49,999	2,371	2.09%
\$50,000 to \$75,000 (18.27%)		
\$50,000 to \$52,499	3,071	2.71%
\$52,500 to \$54,999	2,006	1.77%
\$55,000 to \$57,499	2,420	2.13%
\$57,500 to \$59,999	1,786	1.57%
\$60,000 to \$62,499	2,566	2.26%
\$62,500 to \$64,999	1,774	1.56%
\$65,000 to \$67,499	2,101	1.85%
\$67,500 to \$69,999	1,637	1.44%
\$70,000 to \$72,499	1,978	1.74%
\$72,500 to \$74,999	1,413	1.24%
\$75,000 to \$100,000 (10.93%)		
\$75,000 to \$77,499	1,802	1.59%



The above graph shows the percentage earning the amount shown on the graph or more.^[6]



This graph shows the percentage of persons and households in each of the income groups shown.^[6]

\$77,500 to \$79,999	1,264	1.11%
\$80,000 to \$82,499	1,673	1.47%
\$82,500 to \$84,999	1,219	1.07%
\$85,000 to \$87,499	1,418	1.25%
\$87,500 to \$89,999	984	0.86%
\$90,000 to \$92,499	1,282	1.13%
\$92,500 to \$94,999	917	0.81%
\$95,000 to \$97,499	1,023	0.90%
\$97,500 to \$99,999	846	0.74%
\$100,000 or more (15.73%)		
\$100,000 to \$149,999	11,194	9.89%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	3,595	3.17%
\$200,000 to \$249,999	1,325	1.17%
\$250,000 and above	1,699	1.50%

SOURCE: US Census Bureau, 2005^[6]

Quintiles

Households are often divided into quintiles according to their gross income. Each quintile represents 20%, or one fifth, of the population.

Household type is strongly correlated with household income. Married couples are disproportionately represented in the upper two quintiles, compared to the general population of households. Cross-referencing shows that this is likely due to the presence of multiple income earners in these families. Non-family households (individuals) are disproportionately represented in the lower two quintiles. Households headed by single males are disproportionately found in the middle three quintiles; single females head households concentrated in the bottom three quintiles.

The highest income households are almost ten times as likely to own their homes rather than rent, but in the lowest quintile, the ratio of owners to renters is nearly one to one.

The New York Times has used the quintiles to define class. It has assigned the quintiles from lowest to highest as lower class, lower middle class, middle class, upper middle class, and upper class.^[12]

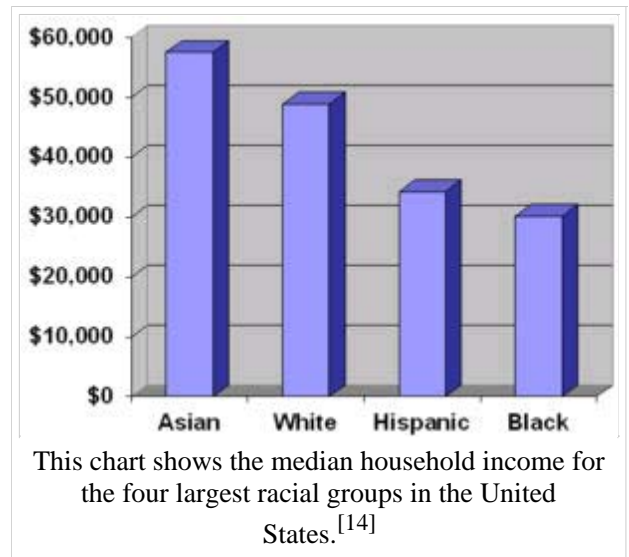
Data	All households	Lowest fifth	Second fifth	Middle fifth	Fourth fifth	Highest fifth	Top 5%
Households (in 1000s)	113,146	22,629	22,629	22,629	22,629	22,629	5,695
Lower limit	\$0	\$0	\$18,500	\$34,738	\$55,331	\$88,030	\$157,176

Median number of income earners	1	0	1	1	2	2	2
Tenure							
Owner occupied	62.4%	49.0%	58.8%	68.9%	80.5%	90.0%	92.8%
Renter occupied	29.2%	48.3%	39.7%	29.9%	18.7%	9.6%	6.9%
Type of household							
Family households	68.06%	41.06%	59.97%	70.04%	80.87%	88.35%	90.61%
Married couple families	51.35%	19.03%	38.89%	51.00%	67.05%	80.08%	85.59%
Single-male family	4.32%	3.08%	4.64%	5.69%	4.89%	3.30%	2.47%
Single-female family	12.38%	18.94%	16.43%	13.35%	8.93%	4.24%	2.54%
Non-family households	31.93%	58.92%	40.02%	29.96%	19.12%	11.64%	9.36%

SOURCE: US Census Bureau, 2004^[13]

Race

Despite great advances made to lift minorities out of poverty and many African Americans and Latino Americans joining the middle class, there is still an uneven racial distribution among the income quintiles. While White American who were not of Hispanic descent made up roughly 75.1% of all persons in 2000,^[15] 87.93% of all households in the top 5%



were headed by a person who identified as being White alone. Only 4.75% of all household in the top 5% were headed by someone who identified him or herself as being Hispanic or Latino of any race,^[16] versus 12.5% of persons identifying themselves as Hispanic or Latino in the general population.^[15] Overall 86.01% of all households

in the top two quintiles with upper-middle range incomes of over \$55,331 were headed by a head of household who identified him or herself as White alone, while only 7.21% were being headed by someone who identified as being Hispanic and 7.37% by someone who identified as being African American or Black.^[16] Overall households headed by Hispanics and African Americans or Blacks were underrepresented in the top two quintiles and overrepresented in the bottom two quintiles. Households headed by persons who identified as being Asian alone, on the other hand, were overrepresented among the top two quintiles. In the top five percent the percentage of Asians was nearly twice as high as the percentage of Asians among the general population. European-Americans

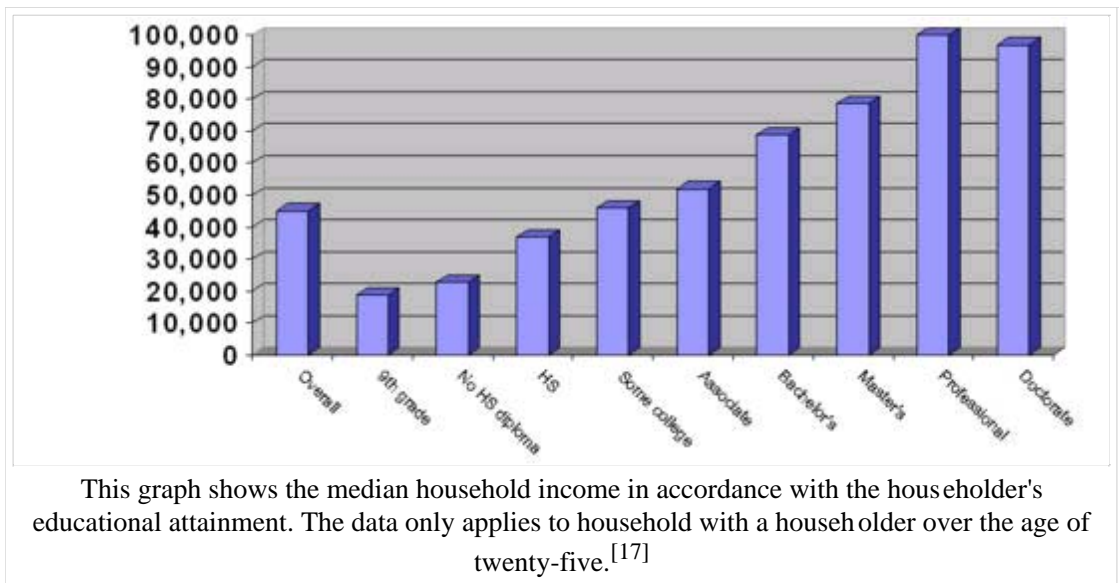
were relatively even distributed throughout the quintiles only being underrepresented in the lowest quintile and slightly overrepresented in the top quintile and the top five percent.^[16]

Race		All households	Lowest fifth	Second fifth	Middle fifth	Fourth fifth	Highest fifth	Top 5%
White alone	Number in 1000s	92,702	16,940	18,424	18,978	19,215	19,721	5,695
	Percentage	81.93%	74.87%	81.42%	83.87%	84.92%	87.16%	87.93%
Asian alone	Number in 1000s	4,140	624	593	786	871	1,265	366
	Percentage	3.65%	2.76%	2.26%	3.47%	3.84%	5.59%	6.46%
African American or Black	Number in 1000s	13,792	4,474	3,339	2,637	2,053	1,287	236
	Percentage	12.19%	19.77%	14.75%	11.65%	9.07%	5.69%	1.04%
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	Number in 1000s	12,838	3,023	3,130	2,863	1,931	1,204	269
	Percentage	11.33%	13.56%	13.83%	12.20%	8.53%	5.89%	1.19%

SOURCE: US Census Bureau, 2004^[16]

Education and Gender

Household income as well as per capita income in the United States rise significantly as the educational attainment increases.^[18] In 2005 graduates with a Master's in Business Administration (MBA) who accepted job offers are expected to earn a base salary of \$88,626. They are also expected to



receive "...[a]n average signing bonus of \$17,428."^[19] According to the US Census Bureau persons with doctorates

in the United States had an average income of roughly \$81,400. The average for an advanced degree was \$72,824 with men averaging \$90,761 and women averaging \$50,756 annually. Year-round full-time workers with a Professional degree had an average income of \$109,600 while those with a Master's degree had an average income of \$62,300. Overall "...[a]verage earnings ranged from \$18,900 for high school dropouts to \$25,900 for high school graduates, \$45,400 for college graduates and \$99,300 for workers with professional

degrees (M.D., D.O., J.D., D.D.S., or D.V.M.).^[20]

Considering how education significantly enhances the earnings potential of individuals, it should come as no surprise that individuals with graduate degrees have an average per capita income exceeding the median household income of married couple families among the general population (\$63,813).^{[20][21]} Higher educational attainment

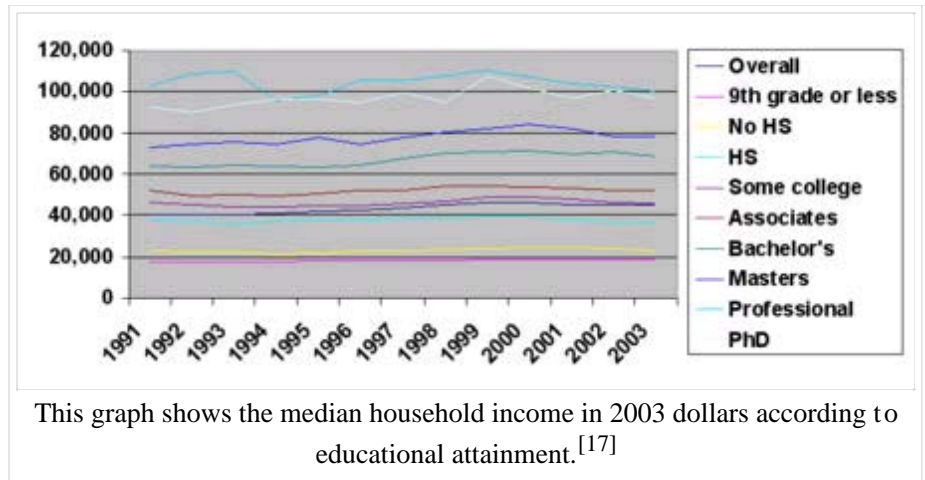
did not, however, help close the income gap between the genders as the life-time earnings for a male with a professional's degree were roughly forty percent (39.59%) higher than those of a female with a professional's degree. The life-time earnings gap between males and females was the smallest for those individuals holding an Associate degrees with male life-time earnings being 27.77% higher than those of females. While educational attainment did not help reduce the income inequality between men and women, it did increase the earnings potential of individuals of both sexes, greatly enabling many households with (a) graduate degree householder(s) to enter the top household income quintile.^[20]

Household income also increased significantly with the educational attainment of the householder. The US Census Bureau publishes educational attainment and income data for all households with a householder who was aged twenty-five or older. The biggest income difference was between those with some college education and those who had a Bachelor's degree, with the latter making \$23,874 more. Income also increased substantially with increased post-secondary education. While the median household income for a household with a household holding an Associates degree was \$51,970, the median household income for those with a Bachelor's degree or higher was \$73,446. Those with doctorates had the second highest median household with a median of \$96,830; \$18,289 more higher than that for those at the Master's degree level, but \$3,170 lower than the median for households with a professional's degree holding householder.^[17]

Criteria		Overall	Less than 9th grade	High school drop-out	High school graduate	Some college	Associates degree	Bachelor's degree	Bachelor's degree or more	Mast deg
Median individual income	Male, age 25+	\$33,517	\$15,461	\$18,990	\$28,763	\$35,073	\$39,015	\$50,916	\$55,751	\$61
	Female, age 25+	\$19,679	\$9,296	\$10,786	\$15,962	\$21,007	\$24,808	\$31,309	\$35,125	\$41
	Both sexes, age 25+	\$32,140	\$17,422	\$20,321	\$26,505	\$31,054	\$35,009	\$43,143	\$49,303	\$52
Median household income		\$45,016	\$18,787	\$22,718	\$36,835	\$45,854	\$51,970	\$68,728	\$73,446	\$78

SOURCE: US Census Bureau, 2003^{[17][22]}

The change in median personal and household since 1991 also varied greatly with educational attainment. While, both the overall median personal and household income increased since 1991, this increase did not take place on all levels of educational attainment. The overall income increased over the course of the 1990s, reaching its high in 1999, but decreasing has been ever since. In 1991 the median household income in the US was \$40,873 in 2003 dollars, while the median household income in 2003 was



\$45,016. In 1999, however, the median household income was \$46,236, 2.7% higher than today. While this trend held true for all levels of educational attainment the extent of chronological fluctuations in income were greatly influenced by educational attainment. Overall the median household and personal income decreased for those with more than a 9th grade education but less than a four-year college degree since 1991. In other words, the median household income decreased for households and individuals at the high school drop-outs and graduate, some-college, and an Associates degree level. Income did, however, increase for those with a Bachelor's degree

or more. The following table shows the median household income according to the educational attainment of the householder. All data is in 2003 dollars and only applies to householders whose householder is aged twenty-five or older. The highest and lowest points of the median household income are presented in bold face.^{[17][22]}

Year	Overall Median	Less than 9th grade	High school drop-out	High school graduate	Some college	Associates degree	Bachelor's degree	Bachelor's degree or more	Master's degree	Professional
1991	\$40,873	\$17,414	\$23,096	\$37,520	\$46,296	\$52,289	\$64,150	\$68,845	\$72,669	\$1
1993	\$40,324	\$17,450	\$22,523	\$35,979	\$44,153	\$49,622	\$64,537	\$70,349	\$75,645	\$1
1995	\$42,235	\$18,031	\$21,933	\$37,609	\$44,537	\$50,485	\$63,357	\$69,584	\$77,865	\$1
1997	\$43,648	\$17,762	\$22,688	\$38,607	\$45,734	\$51,726	\$67,487	\$72,338	\$77,850	\$1
1999	\$46,236	\$19,008	\$23,977	\$39,322	\$48,588	\$54,282	\$70,925	\$76,958	\$82,097	\$1
2001	\$45,300	\$18,830	\$24,162	\$37,468	\$47,605	\$53,166	\$69,796	\$75,116	\$81,993	\$1
2003	\$45,016	\$18,787	\$22,718	\$36,835	\$45,854	\$51,970	\$68,728	\$73,446	\$78,541	\$1
Average	\$43,376	\$18,183	\$23,013	\$37,620	\$46,109	\$51,934	\$66,997	\$72,376	\$78,094	\$1

SOURCE: US Census Bureau, 2003^[17]

Age of householder

Household income in the United States varies substantially with the age of the person who heads the household. Overall the median household income increased with the age of householder until retirement age when household income started to decline.^[23] The

highest median household income was found among households headed by working baby-boomers.^[23] Households headed by persons between the ages of 45 and 54 had a median household income of \$61,111 and a mean household income of \$77,634. The median income per member of household for this particular group was \$27,924. The highest median income per member of household was among those between the ages of 54 and 64 with \$30,544. The group with the second highest median household income, were households headed by persons between the ages 35 and 44 with a median income of \$56,785, followed by those in the age group between 55 and 64 with \$50,400. Not surprisingly the lowest income group was comprised of those household headed by individuals younger than 24, followed by those headed by persons over the age of 75. Overall households headed by persons above the age of seventy-five had a median household income of \$20,467 with the median household income per member of household being \$18,645. These figures support the general assumption that median household income as well as the median income per member of household peaked among those households headed by middle aged persons, increasing with the age of the householder and the size of the household until the householder reaches the age of 64. With retirement income replacing salaries and the size of the household declining, the median household income decreases as well.^[23]

Aggregate income distribution

The aggregate income measures the combined income earned by all persons in a particular income group. Overall all households in the United States earned roughly \$4,286,391 million in 2005 (4.3 trillion). Roughly one third, 32.5%, of all income in the US was earned by those households with an income over \$150,000, approximately the top five percent. Approximately one fifth, 20.58%, of all income was earned by the top 2.67%, those households earning more than \$200,000 a year. Overall the aggregate income distributing tilts toward the top, despite the fact that households with middle-range annual incomes ranging from \$50,000 to \$75,000 earned roughly one fourth, 25.11% of all income. As the percentage of middle-range income households is roughly one-fourth of the population, this particular income group's share of income is roughly equal to their representation in the general population. The bottom 6.37%, however only earned 0.27% of all income.^[6]

Aggregate income distribution, 2005^[41]

Percentage of the total income earned by each income group

	10%	20%	30%	40%
less than \$25,000	6.76%			
\$25,000 to \$50,000		18.12%		
\$50,000 to \$75,000		22.54%		
\$75,000 to \$100,000		20.00%		
\$100,000 or more				32.58%

SOURCE: US Census Bureau, 2005^[6]

Household income over time

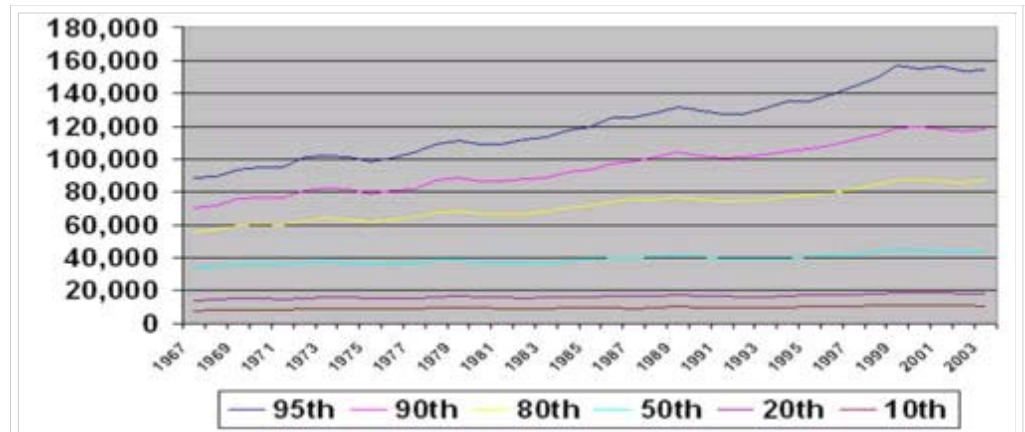
Please note that all figures are presented in 2003 dollars.

Since 1967, the median household income in the United States has risen modestly, fluctuating several times. Even though personal income has risen substantially and 42% of all households now have two income earners, the median household income has increased only slightly.

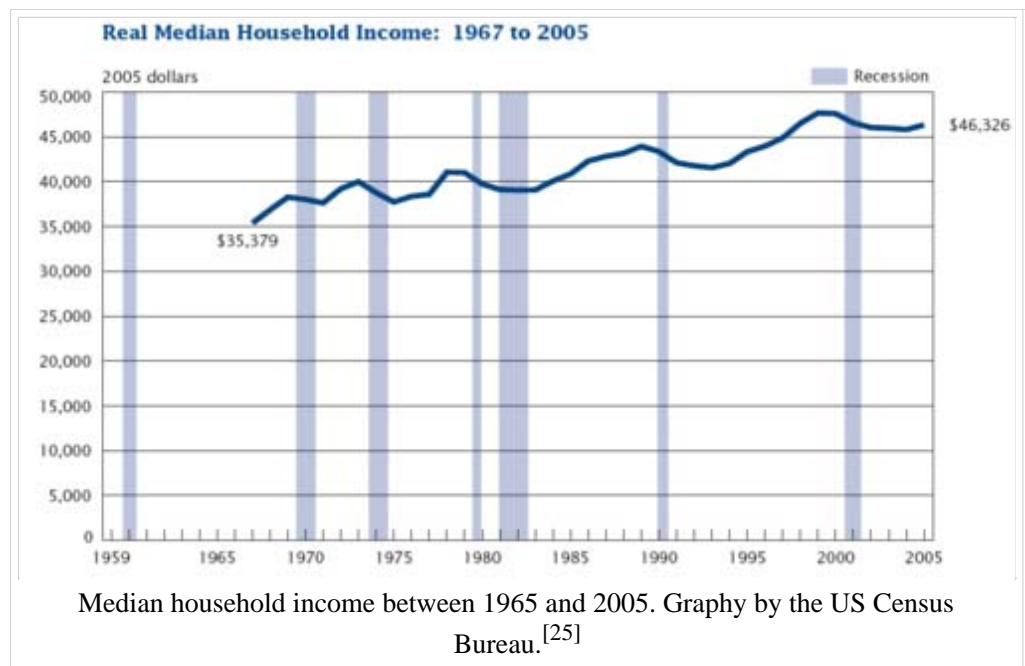
According to the US Census Bureau, this paradoxical set of trends is due to the changing structure of American households. For example, while the proportion of wives working year-round in married couple households with children has increased from 17% in 1967 to 39% in 1996, the proportion of such households among the general population has decreased. Thus, while married couple households with children are the most economically prosperous type of household in the United States, their share of the population has been dwindling in the United States. In 1969, more than 40% of all households consisted of a married couple

with children. By 1996 only a rough quarter of US households consisted of married couples with children. As a result of these changing household demographics, median household income rose only slightly despite an ever increasing female labor force and a considerable increase in the percentage of college graduates.^[26]

“ From 1969 to 1996, median household income rose a very modest 6.3 percent in constant dollars... The 1969 to 1996 stagnation in median household income may, in fact, be largely a reflection of changes in the size and composition of households rather than a reflection of a stagnating economy.”- John McNeil, US Census Bureau



This graph shows the income of the given percentiles from 1967 to 2003, in 2003 dollars.^[24]



Median household income between 1965 and 2005. Graph by the US Census Bureau.^[25]

Overall, the median household income rose from \$33,338 in 1967 to an all-time high of \$44,922 in 1999, and has since decreased slightly to \$43,318. Decreases in household income are visible during each recession, while increases are visible during economic upturns. These fluctuations were felt across the income strata as the incomes of both, the 95th and 20th percentile were affected by fluctuations in the economy. Yet, it is important to note that income in the period between 1967 and 1999 grew faster among wealthier households than it did among poorer households. For example the household income for the 80th percentile, the lower threshold for the

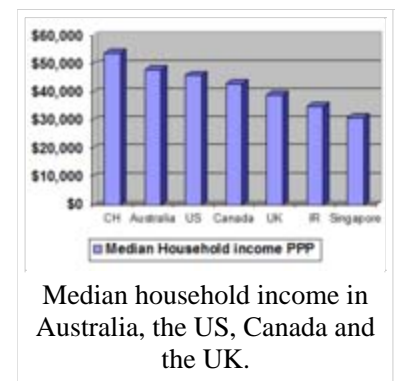
top quintile, rose from \$55,265 in 1967 to \$86,867 in 2003, a 57.2% increase. The median household income rose by 30% while the income for the 20th percentile (the lower threshold for the second lowest quintile) rose by only 28% from \$14,002 to \$17,984. One should note that the majority of households in the top quintile had two income earners, versus zero for the lowest quintile and that the widening gap between the top and lowest quintile may largely be the reflection of changing household demographics including the addition of women to the workforce.^{[24][26]}

While per-capita, disposable income has increased 469% since 1972, it has only increased moderately when inflation is considered. In 1972, disposable personal income was determined to be \$4,129; \$19,385 in 2005 dollars. In 2005, disposable personal income was, however, \$27,640, showing a moderate 43% increase.^{[27][28]} Since 1990, household income has fallen slightly, but this does not take into account the decrease in average household size.^[29]

Data	2003	2000	1997	1994	1991	1988	1985	1982	1979
20th percentile	\$17,984	\$19,142	\$17,601	\$16,484	\$16,580	\$17,006	\$16,306	\$15,548	\$14,002
Median (50th)	\$43,318	\$44,853	\$42,294	\$39,613	\$39,679	\$40,678	\$38,510	\$36,811	\$38,100
80th percentile	\$86,867	\$87,341	\$81,719	\$77,154	\$74,759	\$75,593	\$71,433	\$66,920	\$68,000
95th percentile	\$154,120	\$155,121	\$144,636	\$134,835	\$126,969	\$127,958	\$119,459	\$111,516	\$111,000

SOURCE: US Census Bureau, 2004^[24] (*Page 44/45*)

International comparison



Median household income for other countries is shown in the table below. The data for each country has been converted to US dollars using Purchasing Power Parity (obtained from the OECD).^[30]

Country	Median household income national currency units	Year	PPP rate (OECD)	Median household income (PPP)
Switzerland ^[42]	CHF 95,772	2003	1.76	\$54,000

United States	US\$46,000	2006	1.00	\$46,000
Canada ^[43]	estimated CAN\$53,528		1.25	estimated \$43,000
New Zealand ^[44]	NZ\$58,708		1.47	\$40,000
United Kingdom ^[45]	GBR£24,700	2004/05	0.631	\$39,000
Scotland ^[46]	GBR£24,128	2004/05	0.631	\$38,000
Ireland	€35,410		1.00	\$35,000
Australia ^[47]	AUS\$46,326	2006	1.36	\$35,000
Hong Kong ^[48]	HK\$186,000	2005	5.96	\$31,000
Israel ^[49]	99,168 ILS	2004	3.23	\$31,000
Singapore ^[50]	\$45,960	2005	1.55	\$30,000

Income by state



An average California home in Salinas, CA. In 2004, California was the most expensive state in the nation^[31] and had a median household income of \$49,894 (rank 13).^[32]



This map shows the bottom fifteen states according to median household income.



This map shows those states whose median household income is below the national median.

The median household income by state ranged from \$32,589 or 26.7% below national median, in West Virginia to \$57,352 or 29% above national median, in New Hampshire. Connecticut, which is often referred to as the nation's wealthiest state,^[33] came in at number four with a median household income of \$55,970. California which had the highest median home price in the nation.^[31] where home prices have far outpaced incomes^[34] only ranked number thirteen with a median household income of \$49,894.^[32] While California's median income was not near enough to afford the average California home or even a starter home, West Virginia, which had the nation's lowest median household income also had the nation's lowest median home price.^{[31][32]} The northeastern states, more specifically those located in New England, as well as the western states had the highest

median household income. Of the top fifteen states, all were located in the Northeast and West, with the sole exception of Minnesota which ranked fifth. The southern states had the by far lowest median household income with nine out of the country's fifteen poorest states being located in the South. It should be noted, however, that New York, Pennsylvania and the District of Columbia also fell below the national median. Overall, median household income tended to be the highest in nation's most urbanized northeastern, north mid-western and western states, while rural and mostly southern states had the lowest median household income.^[32]

State	Rank	Median household income	+/- national average	Change 1999-2005 (inflation adjusted)
New Hampshire	1	57,352	+12,879	-2%
New Jersey	2	56,772	+12,299	-4.5%
Maryland	3	56,763	+12,290	-0.5%
Connecticut	4	55,970	+11,497	-3.5%
Minnesota	5	55,914	+11,441	-5.7%
Alaska	6	54,627	+10,154	-6.9%
Virginia	7	53,275	+8,802	-0.8%
Hawaii	8	53,123	+8,650	-0.4%
Massachusetts	9	52,354	+7,881	-3.3%
Colorado	10	51,022	+6,549	-8.4%
Utah	11	50,614	+5,691	-10.5%
Delaware	12	50,152	+5,679	-5.4%
California	13	49,894	+5,421	-3.6%
Washington	14	48,688	+4,215	-8.1%
Wisconsin	15	47,220	+2,747	-8.2%
Nevada	16	46,984	+2,511	-5.8%
Rhode Island	17	46,199	+1,726	+4.4%
Illinois	18	45,787	+1,314	-7.9%
Vermont	19	45,692	+1,219	-4.5%
Nebraska	20	44,623	+150	-4.6%
Michigan	21	44,476	+3	-12%
United States national average (\$44,473) -6%				
Pennsylvania	22	44,286	-187	-5.2%
New York	23	44,228	-245	-2.7%
Ohio	24	44,160	-313	-9.3%
Missouri	25	43,988	-485	-5.5%
Kansas	26	43,725	-748	-9.8%
Wyoming	27	43,641	-832	+4.1%
Georgia	28	43,217	-1,256	-8.3%
Iowa	29	43,042	-1,431	-5.7%

District of Columbia	30	43,003	-1,470	+0.5%
Indiana	30	43,003	-1,470	-9.7%
Oregon	31	42,617	-1,856	-10.4%
Arizona	32	42,590	-1,883	-6.8%
Idaho	33	42,519	-1,954	-5.8%
Texas	34	41,275	-3,198	-9.9%
South Dakota	35	40,518	-3,955	-2.5%
Florida	36	40,171	-4,302	-6.7%
North Dakota	37	39,594	-4,879	+1.2%
Maine	38	39,395	-5,078	-1.9%
South Carolina	39	39,326	-5,147	-9.5%
North Carolina	40	39,000	-5,473	-11.3%
Tennessee	41	38,550	-5,923	-8.7%
Oklahoma	42	38,281	-6,192	-5.3%
Alabama	43	38,111	-6,362	-7.8%
New Mexico	44	37,587	-6,886	-6.2%
Kentucky	45	37,396	-7,077	-5.3%
Louisiana	46	35,523	-8,950	-3.7%
Montana	47	35,201	-9,272	+1.6%
Arkansas	48	33,948	-10,525	-7.2%
Mississippi	49	33,659	-10,814	-10.3%
West Virginia	50	32,589	-11,884	-3.8%

SOURCE: US Census Bureau, 2004/05^[32]

Median income

The median

income divides households in the US evenly in the middle with half of all household earning more than the median income and half of all households earning less than the median household income. In 2004 the median household income in the United States was \$43,389.^[21] According to the US Census Bureau, the median is "considerably lower than the average, and provides a more accurate representation."^[35] Considering other racial and geographical inequities in regards to household income, it should come as no surprise that the median household income varies with race, size of household and geography. The state with the highest median household income in the United States was New Hampshire with \$57,352, followed by New Jersey, Maryland and Connecticut, making the Northeastern United States the wealthiest area by income in the entire country.^[36] In terms of region the median household income was as follows: "Northeast (\$47,994), West (\$47,680) and South (\$40,773)." Median household income in the Mid-West declined by 2.8% to \$44,657.^[37] The exception was the Midwest, where income declined 2.8 percent, to \$44,657. While median household income has tendency to increase up to four persons per household, it declines thereon after. This indicated that while four person

households have larger incomes than those with one, two or three members, household with seem to earn progressively less as their size increases beyond four persons. According to the US Census Bureau 2004 Community Survey, two-person households had a median income of \$39,755, with \$48,957 for three-person households, \$54,338 for four-person households, \$50,905 for five-person households, \$45,435 for six-person households, with seven-or-more-person households having the second lowest median income of only \$42,471.^[38] In terms of race, Asian-Americans households had the highest median household income of \$57,518, European-American households ranked second with \$48,977, Hispanic or Latino households ranked third with \$34,241. African American or Black households had the lowest median household income of all races with \$30,134.^[37]

Mean income

Another common measurement of personal income is the mean household income. Unlike the median household income which divides all households in two halves, the mean income is the average income earned by American households. In the case of mean income, the income of all households is divided by the number of all households.^[39]

The mean income is usually more affected by the relatively unequal distribution of income which tilts towards the top.^[35]

As a result the mean tends to be higher as the median income with the top earning households boosting it. Overall the mean household income in the United States according to the US Census Bureau 2004 Economic Survey was \$60,528, or \$17,210 (39.73%) higher than the median household income.^[40]

“ “Median income is the amount which divides the income distribution into two equal groups, half having income above that amount, and half having income below that amount. Mean income (average) is the amount obtained by dividing the total aggregate income of a group by the number of units in that group. The means and medians for households and families are based on all households and families. Means and medians for people are based on people 15 years old and over with income.”^[39]

-US Census Bureau, Frequently Asked Question, published by First Gov.

The mean household income for households headed by persons identifying as White alone was \$65,317, \$40,685 for those headed by persons identifying as African American or Black, \$45,871 for those headed by persons identifying as Hispanic or Latino, and \$76,747 for those households headed by persons identifying as Asian alone. Approximately one third, or 36.5%, of all households earned more than the mean income, while 63.5% earned less than the mean.^[40]

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Income in the United States

Household income in the United States

Personal income in the United States
Affluence in the United States

Income by:

State (localities by state)
County (highest | lowest)
Metropolitan area
Place
Urban Areas
ZCTAs (Zip Codes)

Economy	Affluence Banking Companies Standard of living U.S. Dollar Wall Street Household income Homeownership Personal income Poverty Federal Reserve
Society	Demographics U.S. Census Bureau Languages Religion Social structure Standard of living Media Education Holidays Folklore Middle class Educational attainment Professional and working class conflict Crime Adolescent sexuality
Arts	Music (Classical Folk Popular) Film & TV (Hollywood) Literature (Poetry Transcendentalism Harlem Renaissance Beat Generation) Visual arts (Abstract expressionism) Cuisine Dance Architecture
Other	United States territory Communications Transportation (Highways and Interstates Railroads) Uncle Sam Flag American Dream Media Education Tourism Social issues (Immigration Affirmative action Racial profiling Human rights War on Drugs Pornography Same-sex marriage Prisons Capital punishment) Anti-Americanism American exceptionalism American Folklore American English United States Mexico barrier Passenger vehicle transport

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Social stratification: Social class				
Bourgeoisie	Upper class	Ruling class	Nobility	White-collar
Petite bourgeoisie	Upper middle class	Creative class	Gentry	Blue-collar
Proletariat	Middle class	Working class	Nouveau riche	Pink-collar
Lumpenproletariat	Lower middle class	Lower class	Old Money	Gold-collar
	Slave class	Underclass		Classlessness
Social class in the United States				
Middle classes	Upper classes	Social structure	Income	Educational attainment

External links

- Income, Poverty, and Health Insurance Coverage in the United States: 2003 (<http://www.census.gov/prod/2004pubs/p60-226.pdf>)
- US Census Bureau's web-site for income statistics (<http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/income/income.html>)
- NPR.org statistics and background (<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=7180618>) on income inequality in the United States

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