



The graphic features the words "GENDER", "stat", and "POVERTY" in a large, bold, sans-serif font. The word "stat" is positioned above "POVERTY". To the right of "stat" is a vertical bar chart with four bars of increasing height, each containing one letter of the word "stat" (s, t, a, t). The y-axis of the chart is labeled with numbers from 0 to 8.

GENDER stat POVERTY

Published:

July 10, 2014

Author:

Gail Cooper, *Vice President for Programs*
Sudha Rao, *Programs Intern*

Contents:

1. [Overview](#)
2. [Income and Employment](#)
3. [Households and Poverty](#)
4. [How Poverty is Defined and Categorized](#)
5. [References](#)

Overview

“Gender Stat: Poverty” is a statistical snapshot of poverty and gender based on information from the websites of a variety of organizations that focus on these issues. It is meant to be a portal through which readers may connect with organizations conducting original research and deeper analysis of the conditions, structures and barriers that confront those most affected by poverty. Please keep in mind that, for ease of reading, all percentages in the narrative portion of the snapshot have been rounded.

The statistics that follow are organized into four general categories: national poverty numbers; income and employment; household poverty; and international comparisons. The last section looks at policy priorities as articulated by people living in poverty, through polls, survey, interviews, etc. In addition, the glossary to the right describes poverty measurements currently in use in the U.S., and defines a few categories of poverty.

A note about sources: Hyperlinks throughout this document will send readers directly to websites related to the information being discussed. Additionally, we have included a complete list of citations here.

National Poverty Numbers

The U.S. Census reports that between 2007–2011, on average, 43 million U.S. residents lived in poverty. In 2012, 20 million people in the U.S., equivalent to 7 percent of the population, lived in deep poverty, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. Of those, 15 million were women and children. In fact, almost 10 percent of children under age eight lived in deep poverty in 2012.

Gender Stat: Poverty

By sheer numbers, despite common misperceptions, the U.S. Census average from 2007–2011 shows that more than half of the poor residents in the U.S.—26 million—are white. Latino residents represent the next largest number of people living in poverty—11 million—followed by black residents at 9 million. It is important, however, to look at these numbers in relation to the total population of each group. For example, though almost three times fewer black residents live in poverty than white residents, their numbers represents more than a quarter (26 percent) of *all* black residents. For Latino/a residents, the poverty rate is similar at 23 percent of all Latino/a residents in the U.S., while the rate of poverty among all white residents is 12 percent.

U.S. Poverty Rates by Race, Selected Detailed Race, and Hispanic Origin Groups: 2007–2011

Race and Hispanic or Latino origin	Population	Number below poverty
Total	298,787,989	42,739,924
White alone	222,007,105	25,659,922
White alone, non-Hispanic	192,160,374	18,959,814
Black or African American alone	36,699,584	9,472,583
American Indian and Alaska Native alone or in combination	4,738,750	1,130,661
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	2,414,908	651,226
Asian alone or in combination	16,389,524	1,899,448
Asian alone	14,223,507	1,663,303
Asian Indian	2,743,999	224,343
Chinese	3,162,573	424,322
Filipino	2,517,885	146,113
Japanese	782,469	64,553
Korean	1,378,830	206,241
Vietnamese	1,554,143	228,381
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone or in combination	992,614	156,717
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	485,892	85,346
Native Hawaiian	151,905	21,937
Samoan	99,860	17,606
Tongan	39,893	7,221
Guamanian or Chamorro	70,669	8,197
Fijians	27,158	1,738
Other Pacific Islander ^a	96,407	28,647
Some Other Race alone	15,393,344	3,792,156
Two or More Races	7,563,658	1,415,388
Hispanic origin	48,190,992	11,197,648
Mexican	31,157,323	7,744,050
Guatemalan	1,054,350	262,575
Salvadoran	1,708,491	323,317
Cuban	1,727,550	279,011
Dominican	1,387,724	364,523
Puerto Rican	4,466,054	1,142,216

In 1966, the U.S. government adopted its **current method** of measuring poverty (see sidebar for more details on this measurement). While not without its critics, the standard at the least shows a lasting disparity: women and children in the U.S. have experienced poverty at a higher rate than men for each of the last 46 years. The chart below excerpts U.S. Census data comparing poverty rates in 1966 and 2012. Girls and women lead across all age groups, with the largest gender gap among those 65 years and older. (For Information on each year between 1966–2012, visit: <http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/data/historical/people.html>.)

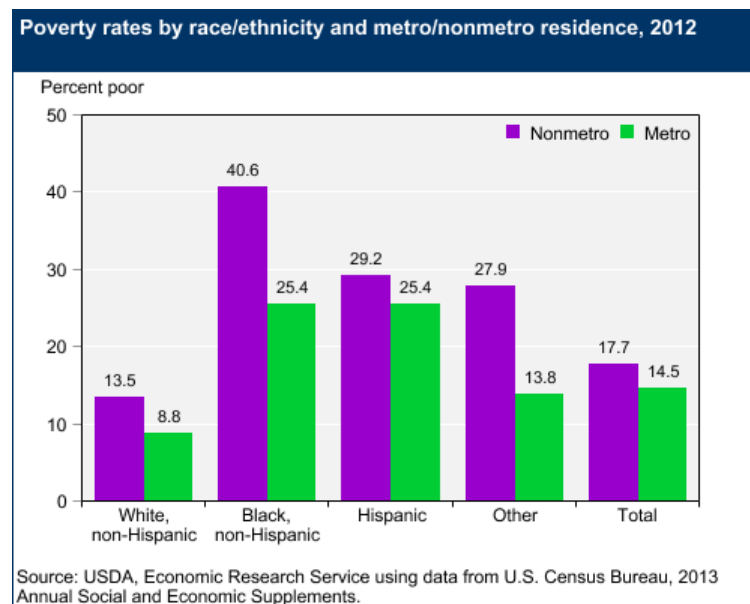
Poverty Rate by Gender in 1966 and 2012 (Census Historical Poverty Tables: Table 7)				
Year	Gender	Under 18	18–64	65 and Over
1966	Female	18.8%	12.1%	32.0%
	Male	16.6%	8.4%	23.5%
2012	Female	22.3%	15.4%	11%

Gender Stat: Poverty

	Male	21.3%	11.9%	6.6%
--	------	-------	-------	------

As shown in detailed [reports](#) from the United States Department of Agriculture's Economic Research Service, poverty in the U.S. has historically been higher in rural communities than in urban communities. From the perspective of gender, however, the same is true, urban or rural: women experience a higher level of poverty than men and black women and Latinas have higher rates of poverty than white women.

Because the rates are so high for many people of color, their communities are more vulnerable overall. According to the National Women's Law Center's report "Insecure and Unequal: Poverty and Income among Women and Families 2000-2012," poverty rates among Native American women, African American and Latina women over the age of 18 were 34 percent, 25 percent and 25 percent, respectively, in 2012. For those living outside of urban areas in 2012, black residents experienced the highest rate of poverty at 41 percent. Latino residents had the next highest rate at 29 percent, while white residents maintained the lowest poverty rate at 14 percent.

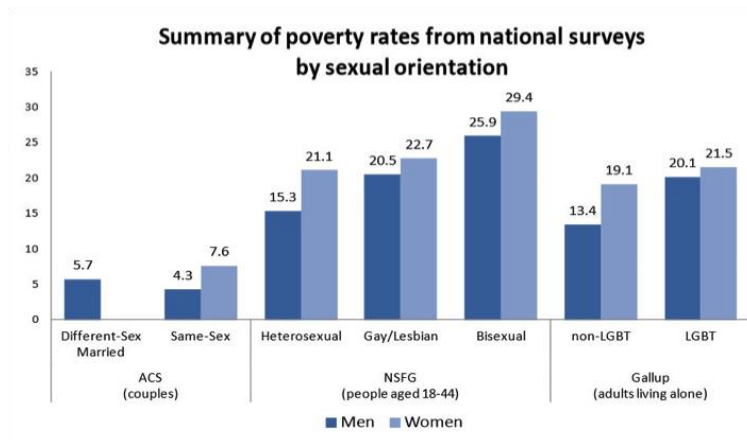


In the same year, the report notes, 3 million elderly women lived on approximately \$5,500/year, including 700,000 who lived in extreme poverty (an 18 percent increase from 2011).

Extensive reports on poverty and LGBT residents by the Williams Institute at the University of California have helped to challenge common stereotypes of affluence attributed to LGBT communities. In its 2013 [report](#) "New Patterns of Poverty in the Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Community," the institute analyzed the results of three surveys, two national and one specific to California. Its analysis shows that 23 percent of lesbians between the ages of 18 and 44 lived in poverty in 2010, which is just slightly higher than that of heterosexual women (21 percent) in the same age range. The rate for bisexual women—29 percent—was the highest. (See the report's appendices for more detailed information on the data, methodology, sample sizes, etc.)

Women in same-sex couples experience higher poverty rates than heterosexual married couples' rates, including those living outside of large metropolitan areas. Likewise, one in five LGBT people living alone indicated an income at or below poverty level.

Gender Stat: Poverty



From: **The Williams Institute's "New Patterns of Poverty in the Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Community"**

That same report shows that among LGBT communities, poverty rates can differ radically. For example, African American women with female partners are likely to be poor at three times the rate of white women in same-sex couples. Likewise, the National Center for Transgender Equality (NCTE) and the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (NGLTF) reported the results of a national survey: extreme poverty, or living on a household income of less than \$10,000/year, was an important factor in the viability of transgender communities. Latino/a immigrants who are not U.S. citizens had the highest rate of extreme poverty at 43 percent, followed by black (34 percent) and Latino/a (28 percent) citizens. Put in context, 4 percent of the general U.S. population lives in extreme poverty.

	Household Income of Less Than \$10,000/Year
Overall Respondents	15%
American Indian	23%
Asian	18%
Black	34%
Latino/a	28% 43% for non-citizens
White	(No analysis offered)
Multiracial	23%
General U.S. Population	4%

Income and Employment

As this **chart** from the American Association of University Women (AAUW) makes clear, in 2012, women were paid less than men of the same race across the board. White men were paid more than all women, regardless of race.

Women's Earnings Compared to Men's by Race/Ethnicity, 2012

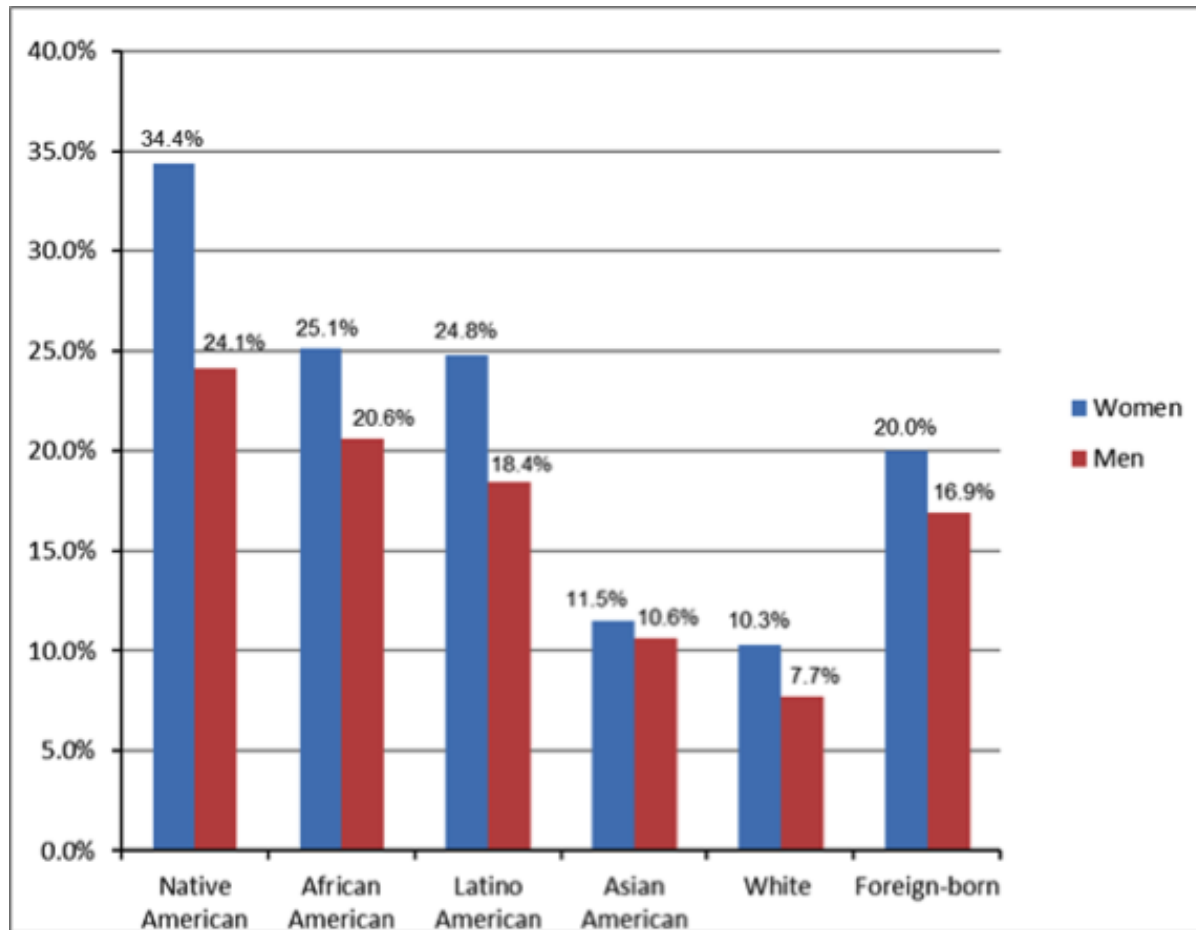
	Women's earnings as a percentage of men's earnings within race/ethnicity	Women's earnings as a percentage of white men's earnings
Hispanic or Latina	89%	53%
American Indian and Alaska Native	87%	60%
African American	89%	64%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	89%	66%
White (non-Hispanic)	78%	78%
Asian American	79%	87%

Note: Based on median annual earnings of full-time, year-round workers, ages 16 and older

The Economic Policy Institute found that women are more likely than men to work in low-wage industries and to **earn poverty-level wages**. Bureau of Labor Statistics data shows that in 2012, the overall working poor rate for women was 8 percent, whereas for men it was 6 percent. For certain jobs that predominantly employ women (and immigrants and people of color), full-time work did not lift employees above poverty. For example, in 2012, **917,470** maids and housekeepers had income levels that on average fell below the poverty level when working full-time.

In 2012, the BLS reported **unemployment rates** that were higher among immigrant women (9 percent) than among native-born women (8 percent), and a smaller proportion of immigrant women were in the labor force (55 percent) as compared to native-born women (58 percent). The chart below shows that across race, women's unemployment numbers were higher than men's.

Poverty Rates for Adults by Gender and Race/Ethnicity in 2012



The earning potential of single mothers is limited. When they are employed, Legal Momentum's report "Worst Off – Single-Parent Families in the United States: A Cross-National Comparison of Single Parenthood in the U.S. and Sixteen Other High-Income Countries" shows a significant portion of single mothers earn low salaries. For example, in 2009, 39 percent of employed single mothers were low-wage workers (defined as employees earning less than two-thirds of state median hourly wage). And as shown on the chart below, the median annual earnings of single mothers is below that of single fathers.

Median Earnings Per Year of Full-Time Employees, 2011

(Casey & Maldonado, 2012)

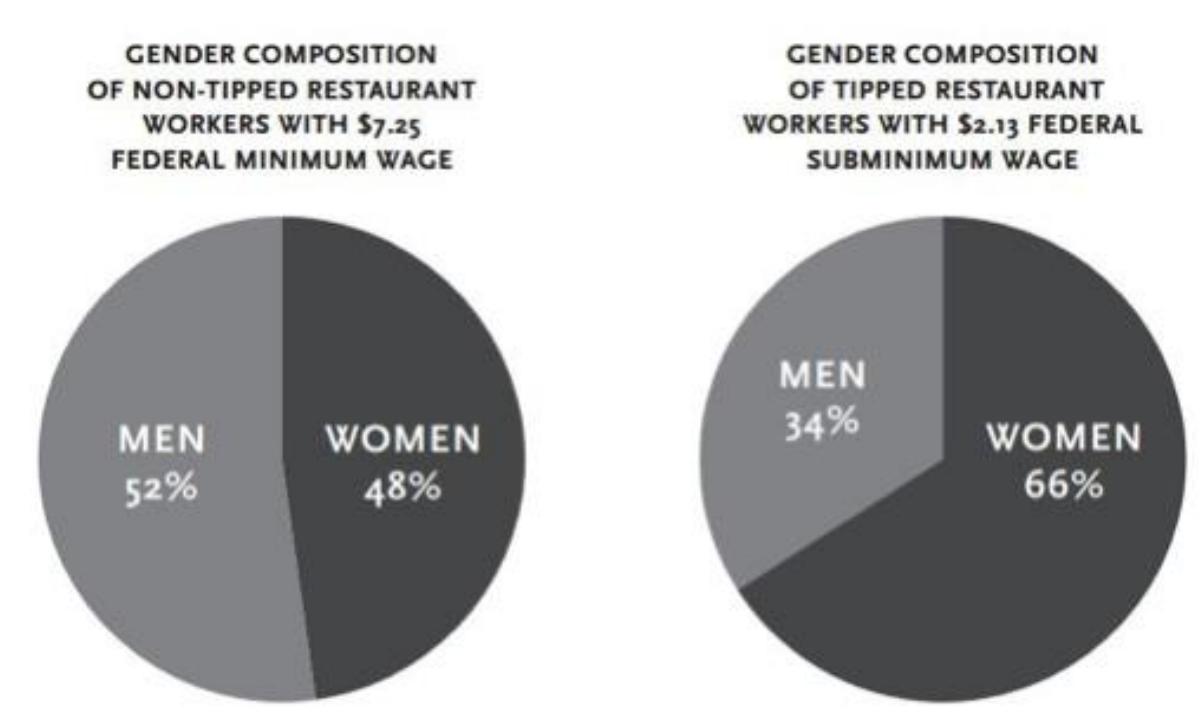
	Single mothers	Single fathers	Married men living with spouse
Without high school diploma	\$20,000	\$26,000	\$30,000
With high school diploma	\$25,000	\$38,000	\$42,000

Gender Stat: Poverty

With bachelor's degree or higher	\$53,000	\$62,000	\$80,000
----------------------------------	----------	----------	----------

The Legal Momentum report also points out that single fathers are employed more than single mothers: in 2010, the average monthly employment rate was 76 percent among single fathers and 67 percent among single mothers. At the same time, nearly one-third of U.S. single mothers (as compared to one-quarter of single fathers) declared no earned income, which disqualified them for participation in poverty-relief programs such as Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and Additional Child Tax Credit (ACTC).

Women currently make up two-thirds of low-wage workers overall, and they represent two-thirds of tipped workers, as represent by this chart from Restaurant Opportunities Centers United's report "Tipped Over the Edge: Gender Inequity in the Restaurant Industry." (Notably, the report also shows that 37 percent of sexual harassment charges women brought before the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission from January through November 2011 came from restaurant industry workplaces.)

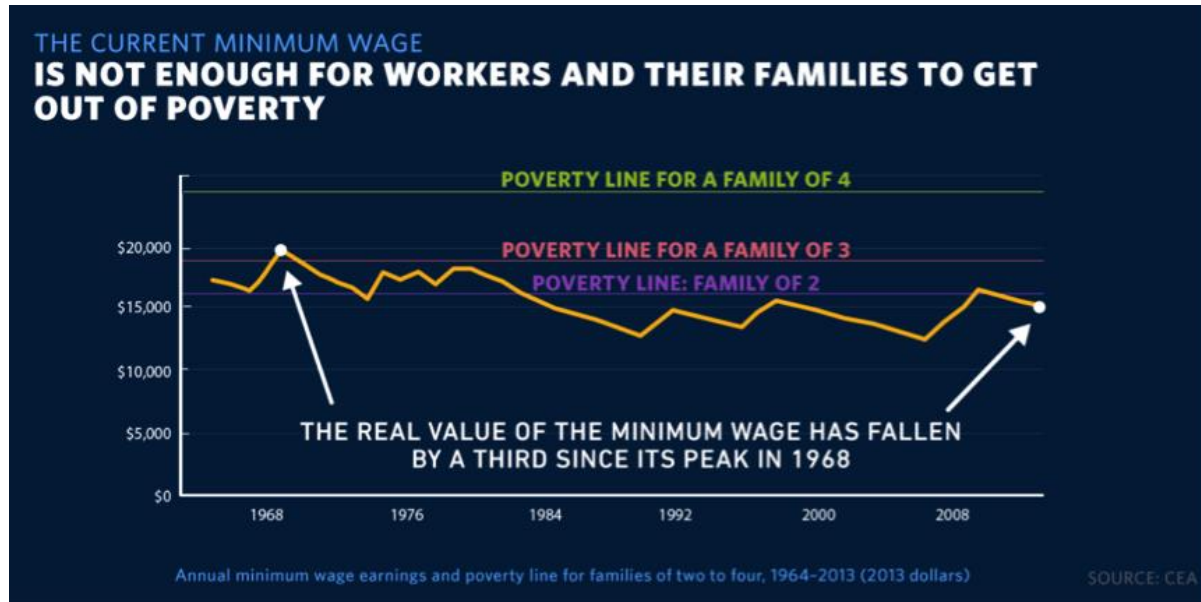


In tipped work, employers pay workers a minimum of \$2.13/hour with the expectation that the worker will earn at least an additional \$5.12/hour in tips, to combine for a total wage that meets the overall Federal minimum wage of \$7.25/hour. As the White House has discussed widely, employers do not always cover the differential as required by law and workers are left to scrape by on extremely tight wages.

The question of whether to raise the Federal minimum wage from to \$9 or \$10.10/hour is hotly contested. Whether institutions such as the Congressional Budget Office's analyses of the **pros and cons** are accepted, there is less disagreement about the decreased *real value* of today's minimum wage. The White House, **Pew Research Center** and others have shared research on the issue, including looking at how the *real value* of the minimum wage,

Gender Stat: Poverty

when adjusted for inflation, has declined since the 1960s. This [chart](#) from the a White House report on the issue shows how a single full-time annual minimum wage salary could lift a family of three above the poverty threshold in 1968, whereas today, it can only lift a family of one above the threshold.



Immigrant women face similarly daunting circumstances, according to the [U.S. Census](#). In 2011, 48 percent of households headed by immigrant single mothers (not including citizens) lived below the poverty line; by contrast, 30 percent of native-born single mother households and 25 percent of naturalized citizen single mother households lived below the poverty line. The households described were also more likely to experience poverty than those headed by single fathers or married couples.

Poverty Status of Families by Family Type, Nativity, and U.S. Citizenship Status of the Householder: 2011

Family type and poverty status ¹	Total		Nativity and U.S. citizenship status					
			Native		Naturalized U.S. citizen		Not a U.S. citizen	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total families	80,529	100	67,301	100	6,735	100	6,493	100
.Below poverty level	9,497	11.8	7,041	10.5	772	11.5	1,683	25.9
.At or above poverty level	71,033	88.2	60,260	89.5	5,963	88.5	4,810	74.1
Married couples	58,963	100	49,198	100	5,194	100	4,571	100
.Below poverty level	3,652	6.2	2,268	4.6	448	8.6	936	20.5
.At or above poverty level	55,311	93.8	46,930	95.4	4,746	91.4	3,635	79.5
Male householder, no spouse present	5,888	100	4,849	100	401	100	638	100
.Below poverty level	950	16.1	783	16.2	36	8.9	131	20.6
.At or above poverty level	4,938	83.9	4,066	83.8	365	91.1	507	79.4
Female householder, no spouse present	15,678	100	13,254	100	1,141	100	1,283	100
.Below poverty level	4,894	31.2	3,990	30.1	288	25.3	616	48
.At or above poverty level	10,783	68.8	9,264	69.9	853	74.7	667	52

Note: Numbers in thousands. Universe is the civilian noninstitutionalized population of the United States, plus Armed Forces members who live in housing units - off post or on post - with at least one other civilian adult.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, Annual Social and Economic Supplement, 2012. Internet release date: June 2014

Gender Stat: Poverty

In the NCTE/NGLTF national survey mentioned above, the unemployment rate among all LGBT respondents was twice that of the general population (14 percent vs. 7 percent). Rates among black transgender individuals was 26 percent, and among Latino/a respondents, 20 percent. Job and gender discrimination played a role, as 47 percent of respondents said that they were fired, not hired or denied a promotion due to their gender identity, and 26 percent reported that they lost a job due to being transgender or gender-nonconforming. Non-citizen Latino/a (42 percent), American Indian (37 percent), multiracial (36 percent) and black (32 percent) transgender individuals experienced higher rates of job loss due to bias.

(Adapted from *Injustice at Every Turn*, 2011)

	Household Income of Less than \$10,000/year	Loss of Job due to Bias	Unemployment Rate
Overall Respondents	15%	26%	14%
American Indian	23%	37%	18%
Asian	18%	21%	12%
Black	34%	32%	26%
Latino/a	28% 43% for non-citizens	26% 42% for non-citizens	20%
White	(No analysis offered)	24%	12%
Multiracial	23%	36%	18%
General U.S. Population	4%	N/A	7%

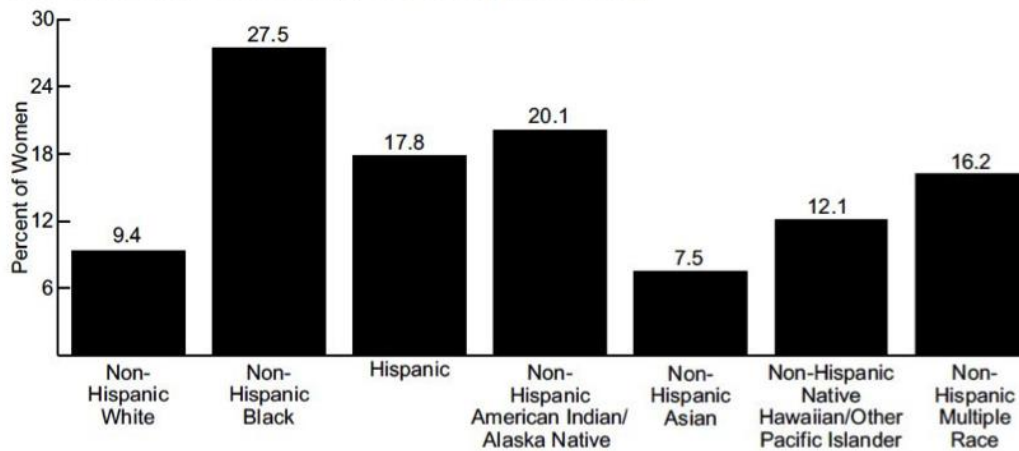
Households and Poverty

Census reports have noted that a family's composition is a strong determinant of whether its members live in poverty. Families with two adults (especially if both work) tend to have a higher income and are less likely to be poor. For households headed by a single adult, particularly a woman, the opposite is true. Pew Research Center has **reported** that, in 2012, women headed the households of just over half of poor families.

Poverty rates for households headed by single mothers declined steadily between 1996 and 2000 (from 42 percent to 33 percent), but from 2000 to 2010, single mother household poverty rates increased each year, rising to 41 percent, where it has remained constant for three years, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. The NWLC found that more than 40 percent of female-headed households with children lived in poverty in 2012. The rate was 23 percent for male-headed households and 9 percent for households headed by heterosexual married couples. The Forum on Child and Family Statistics reports that in 2011, close to 40 percent of children in female-headed households experienced food insecurity, with 2 percent experiencing "very low" food security. The chart below, from Women's Health USA 2012, highlights that in 2011, black women were most likely to be the sole heads of households with children or other family members present, at 28 percent. Asian and white women were least likely, at 8 and 9 percent, respectively.

Women Aged 18 and Older Who Are Heads of Households with Family Members,* by Race/Ethnicity, 2011

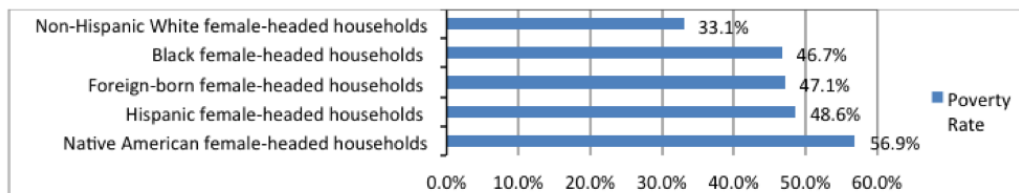
Source I.4: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey



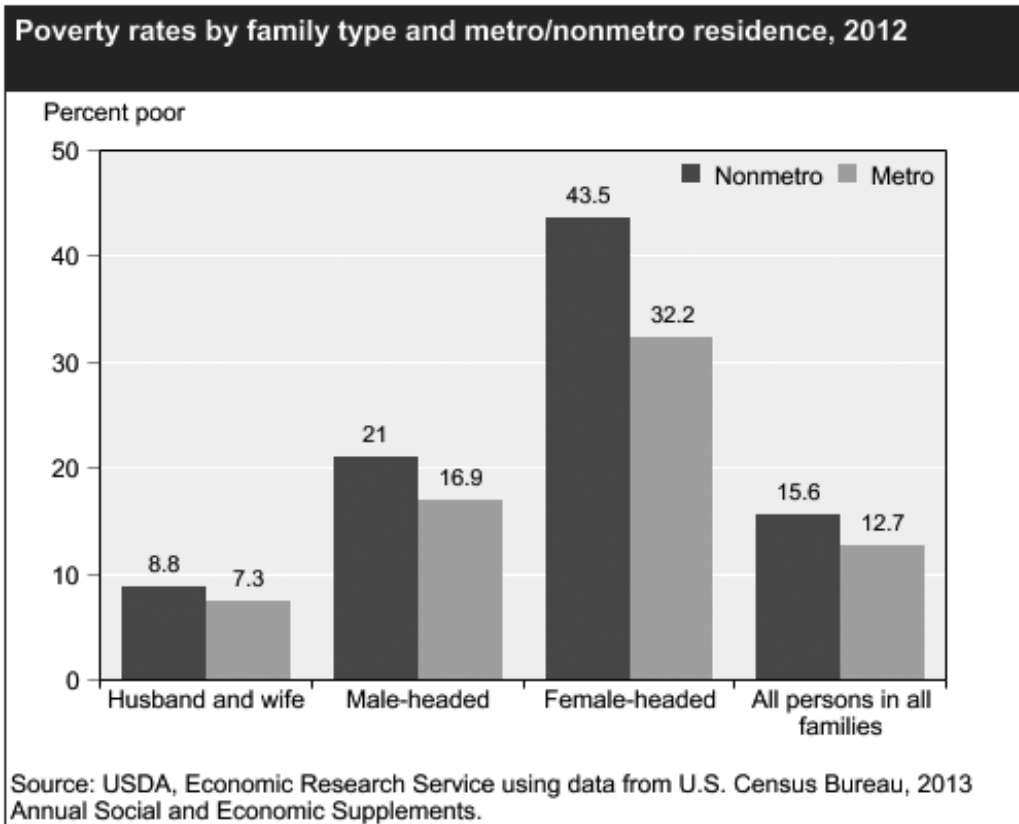
*Includes the civilian, non-institutionalized population; includes those who are heads of households and have children or other family members, but no spouse, living in a house that they own or rent.

NWLC's analysis of poverty among female-headed households by race shows that Native Americans experienced the highest at 57 percent and whites the lowest at 33 percent.

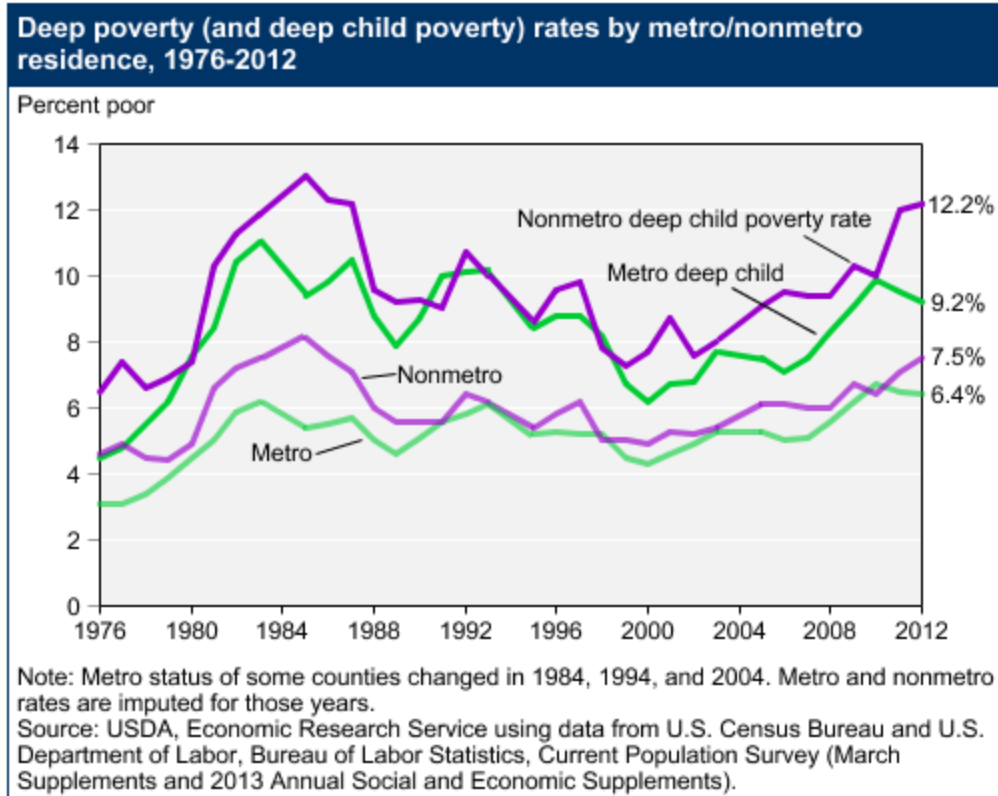
Poverty Rates Among Female-Headed Households with Children by Race in 2012 (National Women's Law Center)



The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Economic Research Services **reported** that in 2012, 44 percent of those living in single-female-headed households outside of metropolitan areas were poor, as compared to 21 percent of those living in single-male-headed households. The rate was far lower for rural households headed by two adults: 9 percent.



"Deep poverty" rates for children exceed those for the population at large. At the same time, the deep poverty rate for children over the last decade has increased, particularly in rural parts of the country. The deep poverty rates for rural and urban children reached their highest point in the 1980s. In the same time frame, the gap between deep poverty levels for urban and rural children widened to its farthest point on record, before narrowing again by the early 1990s. In the aftermath of the 2008 recession, child poverty has increased in rural areas and declined in urban areas, leading the gap to widen again since 2010 as the following chart shows.



As the Williams Institute report noted, children of LGBT parents experience a **higher vulnerability to poverty**, particularly African American children in gay households, whose poverty rate is the highest by far at 52 percent. Children living with lesbian couples have a poverty rate of 38 percent. LGBT people, single or in couples, are more likely to receive cash assistance and SNAP benefits than heterosexual individuals or couples.

International Comparisons

A 2012 report from UNICEF compares data on relative child poverty among the world's wealthiest nations. The U.S. ranked 34th out of 35 nations, with 23 percent of its children living in households that earn less than 50 percent of the national median. Only Romania had a higher percentage at 26 percent. By contrast, the top ranked country, Iceland, had a rate of 5 percent.

Researchers have long known that women experience higher poverty rates than men cross-nationally. One study, "Gender Differences in Poverty: A Cross-National Study," uses the Luxembourg Income Study (LIS) data, which defines poverty as an income less than 50 percent of national median household income data. The study found that in the mid-2000s the gender difference in poverty was the largest in the U.S. among the 23 industrialized nations studied. Researchers found that single adult women experience almost 14 percent higher rates of poverty (36 percent vs. 22 percent), and countries such as Poland, Belgium and Denmark had almost no gender differences in poverty rate. An **analysis** by Legal Momentum, also using the LIS data, found that poverty rate for U.S. single mothers, at 51 percent, was nearly two times higher than the average rate of 15 other high-income countries (27 percent).

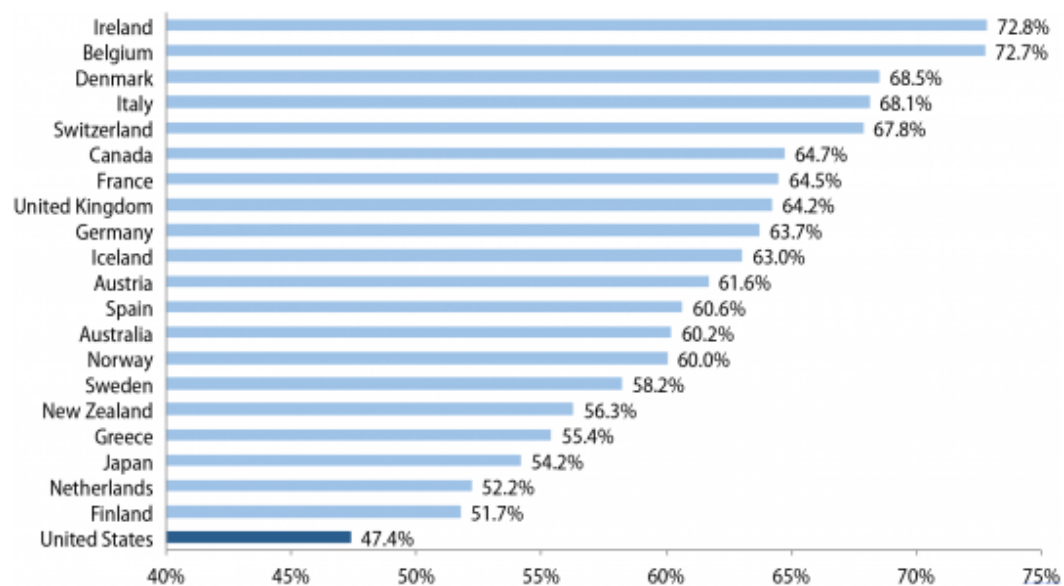
A **report** from the Economic Policy Institute (EPI) indicates that while the average child poverty rate among 26 member states of the Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD) was 10 percent, the U.S. ranked highest at 23 percent and Iceland was the lowest at 5 percent. When focused on relative poverty, the report notes that in the late 2000s, the average relative poverty rate among 34 member states of the OECD was 7 percent;

Gender Stat: Poverty

the rate in the U.S. in the same time frame was almost double, at **17 percent**. Denmark (6 percent), Iceland (6 percent), Slovakia, Netherlands and France (all 7 percent) ranked lowest, while Spain (14 percent), Australia (14 percent) and Japan (16 percent) ranked closest to the U.S.

As the following **chart** from the EPI shows, when looking at how workers at the low end of the earnings chart fare in relation to the workers making median earnings, the U.S. comes in dead last compared to its peers at 47 percent, while Ireland leads all nations at 73 percent.

Earnings at the 10th percentile as a share of median worker earnings in selected OECD countries, late 2000s



In **2009**, 19.2 percent of the U.S. GDP went to social expenditures, placing it 24th out of 34 OECD countries; the OECD average was 22.1 percent.

In the late 2000s, Roosevelt House **reports**, social programs in the United States reduced poverty in the nation by 9.7 percent, whereas other countries' programs did so by as much as 17.4 percent.

According to an analysis of 2010 data published by the **OECD** in 2013, the Gini coefficient for disposable income in the U.S. in 2010 was 0.38; among 34 OECD countries, the U.S. ranked 4th highest in inequality.

Policy Priorities

Several organizations have conducted surveys, polls and interviews with those directly affected by poverty, earning poverty-level wages and living with hard choices about spreading meager resources among competing needs. The results yield useful information both about the more intangible challenges of being poor in the U.S. as well as what policies and provisions those affected deem most important.

Wage Theft Poll: Hart Research Associates compiled results from 1,088 interviews it conducted in February and March 2014 with fast food workers in the ten top metro areas of the U.S. In the report, 89 percent of fast food workers confirmed that they had experienced wage theft, and 25 percent of women working in the fast food industry report that they have been treated unfairly in their job because of their gender. Some examples including being required to

Gender Stat: Poverty

perform work before and after they had clocked in or out, employers refusing to pay overtime wages, employers failing to reimburse employees for out-of-pocket expenses such as gas for deliveries, etc.

Hard Work, Hard Lives, a 2013 report from Oxfam America, shows that 65 percent of low-wage workers believe that Congress passes laws to predominantly benefit the wealthy. Only 9 percent thought that laws passed by Congress mainly benefit the poor.

In "America's Lower-Wage Workforce," a 2013 report from Associated Press/NORC and Center for Public Affairs Research, 83 percent of employers stated that additional job training is extremely or very important for lower-wage workers' upward career mobility. In addition, 49 percent of low-wage workers felt that additional training could help them get ahead.

"The People's Agenda," a 2014 national survey by AP/NORC Center for Public Affairs Research, explored what individuals earning \$50,000/year or less thought government policy should prioritize. Ideas included: preserve Social Security (75 percent), lower unemployment rates (73 percent), reduce the gap between rich and poor (53 percent), and reduce gender-based workplace disparities (33 percent).

How Poverty is Defined and Categorized

Official Poverty Line

The method for establishing who is poor in the U.S.—the parameter of the so-called Poverty Threshold—is anachronistic. Not only is this measure **over 50 years old**, it is based on a 1955 Department of Agriculture report that estimated the average family used approximately one-third of its income on food. In 1963–1964, **Mollie Orshansky**, an economist with the Social Security Administration, helped establish the federal **official poverty threshold** by creating a minimum food consumption basket, the cost of which is multiplied by three. The resulting amount is understood to be the least amount of income a household needs to purchase basic goods. A household is officially considered poor if its income before taxes falls below this threshold, which is updated annually to reflect inflation and family size.

The reality is that in 2013, families spent about one-seventh of their budgets on food, with larger allocations going to transportation, health care, child care, etc. Advocates believe this calculation **underestimates poverty** by not accurately reflecting expenses today's households must meet. The measure also does not account for geographic variations.

In 2012, the official poverty rate for the population was **15 percent**. If a family of four with two children under 18 made less than **\$23,283/year** (or \$11,720/year for a single-person family), that household was counted as poor.

Supplemental Poverty Measure

The supplemental poverty measure (SPM) was launched in 2011 in response to the limits of the official poverty measurement. To better reflect the current economy and household expenses, the SPM includes adjustments to a family's income and expenses before making its final calculation. Thus, when households receive tax, housing and other government subsidies (e.g., through the Earned Income Tax Credit or Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program), these supplements are added to their overall household income. At the same time, households' expenses—such as child care, work-related transportation and medical care—are added to their estimated costs of living. SPM thresholds are also sensitive to the difference in housing costs based on location. In 2012, the SPM poverty rate for the entire population was **16 percent**. Because SPM includes subsidies that largely benefit families with children, poverty rates for children tend to be lower when using the SPM instead of the official poverty line; conversely, the rates for the elderly tend to be higher.

Relative Poverty

Although not used as commonly in the U.S. as the first two measures, relative poverty is a measure used internationally to reflect how people are faring relative to others living in their country. A commonly used relative poverty threshold is set at 50 percent of the national average income. In the late 2000s, the U.S. relative poverty rate was **17 percent** (the OECD average was 9.6 percent); that is, approximately 17 percent of the population had income at less than half of the national median level.

Categories of Poverty

Extreme Poverty

A term predominantly used in international development literature. The **World Bank** defines extreme poverty as surviving on less than \$1.25/day per person (2005 US dollars). A group of **U.S. researchers** at the National Poverty Center modified the definition to surviving on less than \$2/day per person and identified the incidence of U.S. families living at or below this level. Between 1996 and 2011, they found that the number of families living on \$2 or less per person per day (i.e., \$60 or less/month per person) increased from 636,000 to 1.65 million. The study also found that single women headed 51 percent of households living in extreme poverty in 2011, compared to 37 percent headed by married couples.

Deep Poverty

Deep poverty is defined as income below half of the official poverty line. In 2010, the deep poverty threshold for a family of four was **\$11,057**. In **2012**, 20.4 million individuals (7 percent of the population) were in deep poverty, including **15 million women and children**. Close to 10 percent of children under age eight lived in deep poverty that year. According to another **estimate**, approximately 44 percent of the poor population was living in deep poverty.

Near Poverty

There is no true consensus among organizations and researchers about how to define this term. One commonly used definition is to calculate income level up to 1.5 times the official poverty line. One estimate using this method put the near poverty rate at **9.8 percent** in 2011. Not considered officially poor by federal standards, the near poor are highly vulnerable economically and have difficulties paying for basic expenses such as housing, food, and health care, but often do not qualify for government subsidies.

Twice-Poverty

Twice-poverty is defined as the income level at double the official poverty line. In 2010, the twice-poverty threshold for a family of four was **\$44,628**. According to one estimate, the twice-poverty rate was **34 percent** in 2011.

Generational Poverty

Generational poverty is used to describe families that have been living in poverty for at least two generations. Generational poverty is often juxtaposed to situational poverty, which is usually characterized as sudden and temporary in nature.

Working poor

The working poor are defined as individuals who are part of the labor force (working full- or part-time or looking for work) for at least 27 weeks in a year, but whose incomes fall below the official poverty line. In 2011, **7 percent** of the labor force was considered working poor.

References

- Adamson, Peter. "Measuring Child Poverty: Report Card 10." UNICEF, May 2012. Accessed June 26, 2014. http://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/pdf/rc10_eng.pdf
- Badgett, M.V. Lee, Laura E. Durso, and Alyssa Schneebaum. "New Patterns of Poverty in the Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Community." The Williams Institute, June 2013. Accessed June 26, 2014. <http://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/LGB-Poverty-Update-Jun-2013.pdf>
- Badgett, M.V. Lee, Laura E. Durso, and Alyssa Schneebaum. "New Patterns of Poverty in the Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Community: Key Findings." The Williams Institute, June 2013. Accessed June 26, 2014. <http://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/research/census-lgbt-demographics-studies/lgbt-poverty-update-june-2013/>
- Benz, Jennifer, Trevor Thompson, and Jennifer Agiesta. "The People's Agenda: America's Priorities and Outlook for 2014." Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research, January 2014. Accessed June 20, 2014. http://www.apnorc.org/PDFs/Peoples%20Agenda/AP-NORC-The%20Public%20Agenda_FINAL.pdf
- Casey, Timothy and Laurie Maldonado. "Worst-Off: Single-Parent Families in the United States." Legal Momentum, December 2012. Accessed June 26, 2014. <http://www.legalmomentum.org/sites/default/files/reports/worst-off-single-parent.pdf>
- Cauthen, Nancy K. and Sarah Fass. "Measuring Poverty in the United States." National Center for Children in Poverty, June 2008. Accessed June 26, 2014. http://www.nccp.org/publications/pub_825.html
- Christopher, Karen, Paula England, Sara McLanahan, Katherin Ross, and Tim Smeeding. "Gender Inequality in Poverty in Affluent Nations: the Role of Single Motherhood and the State." 2000. Accessed June 26, 2014. <http://apps.olin.wustl.edu/macarthur/working%20papers/wp-genderinequality.pdf>
- Community Service Society. "The Unheard Third." 2013. Accessed June 20, 2014. <http://www.cssny.org/vote2013>
- Congressional Budget Office. "The Effects of a Minimum-Wage Increase on Employment and Family Income." February 18, 2014. Accessed June 26, 2014. <http://www.cbo.gov/publication/44995>
- DeNavas-Walt, Carmen, Bernadette D. Proctor, and Jessica C. Smith. "Income, Poverty, and Health Insurance Coverage in the United States: 2012." U. S. Census Bureau, September 2013. Accessed June 26, 2014. <http://www.census.gov/prod/2013pubs/p60-245.pdf>
- Desilver, Drew. "Minimum Wage Hasn't Been Enough to Lift Most Out of Poverty for Decades." Pew Research Center, February 18, 2014. Accessed June 26, 2014. <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2014/02/18/minimum-wage-hasnt-been-enough-to-lift-most-out-of-poverty-for-decades/>
- Desilver, Drew. "Who's Poor in America? 50 Years into the 'War on Poverty,' a Data Portrait." Pew Research Center, January 13, 2014. Accessed June 26, 2014. <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2014/01/13/whos-poor-in-america-50-years-into-the-war-on-poverty-a-data-portrait/>
- Economic Hardship Reporting Project. "Nearly Half in Poverty in the U.S. Live in Deep Poverty." September 20, 2013. Accessed June 26, 2014. <http://economichardship.org/nearly-half-poverty-u-s-live-deep-poverty/>
- Economic Policy Institute. "The State of Working America: Chapter 7, Poverty." November 2012. Accessed June 26, 2014. <http://www.stateofworkingamerica.org/files/book/Chapter7-Poverty.pdf>

Gender Stat: Poverty

Economic Policy Institute. "The State of Working America: Poverty." Accessed June 26, 2014. <http://stateofworkingamerica.org/fact-sheets/poverty/>

Economic Policy Institute. "The State of Working America: Poverty and Twice-Poverty Rates, 1959-2011." September 13, 2012. Accessed June 26, 2014. <http://stateofworkingamerica.org/chart/swa-poverty-figure-7a-poverty-poverty-rates/>

Economic Policy Institute. "The State of Working America: Wages." Accessed June 26, 2014. <http://stateofworkingamerica.org/subjects/wages/?reader>

Fisher, Gordon M. "The Development of the Orshansky Poverty Thresholds and Their Subsequent History as the Official U. S. Poverty Measure." U. S. Census Bureau, September 1997. Accessed June 26, 2014. <http://www.census.gov/hhes/povmeas/publications/orshansky.html>

Gould, Elise and Hilary Wething. "U.S. Poverty Rates Higher, Safety Net Weaker Than in Peer Countries." Economic Policy Institute, July 24, 2012. Accessed June 26, 2014. <http://www.epi.org/publication/ib339-us-poverty-higher-safety-net-weaker/>

Grant, Jaime M., Lisa A. Mottet, and Justin Tanis. "Injustice at Every Turn: A Report of the National Transgender Discrimination Survey." National Center for Transgender Equality and National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, 2011. Accessed June 26, 2014. http://www.thetaskforce.org/downloads/reports/reports/ntds_full.pdf

Green, Matthew. "Poverty Line Problems: The History of an Outdated Measurement (Infographic)." October 25, 2013. Accessed June 26, 2014. http://blogs.kqed.org/lowdown/poverty_line

Hart Research Associates. "Key Findings for Survey of Fast Food Workers." April 1, 2014. Accessed June 20, 2014. <https://www.dropbox.com/s/5jz463hm23xm92a/National%20Wage%20Theft%20Poll%20Memo.pdf>

Heggeness, Misty L. and Charles Hokayem. "Life on the Edge: Living Near Poverty in the United States, 1966-2011." SEHSD Working Paper 2013-02, February 2013. Accessed June 26, 2014. <https://www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/publications/WP2013-02.pdf>

Hill, Catherine. "How Does Race Affect the Gender Wage Gap?" American Association of University Women, April 3, 2014. Accessed June 26, 2014. <http://www.aauw.org/2014/04/03/race-and-the-gender-wage-gap/>

Institute for Research on Poverty. "How is Poverty Measured in the United States?" Accessed June 26, 2014. <http://www.irp.wisc.edu/faqs/faq2.htm>

Jensen, Eric. "Teaching with Poverty in Mind: Chapter 1: Understanding the Nature of Poverty." November 2009. Accessed June 26, 2014. <http://www.ascd.org/publications/books/109074/chapters/Understanding-the-Nature-of-Poverty.aspx>

Macartney, Suzanne, Alemayehu Bishaw, and Kayla Fontenot. "Poverty Rates for Selected Detailed Race and Hispanic Groups by State and Place: 2007-2011." U.S. Census Bureau, February 2013. Accessed June 26, 2014. <http://www.census.gov/prod/2013pubs/acsbr11-17.pdf>

National Center for Transgender Equality and National Gay and Lesbian Task Force. "Injustice at Every Turn: A Look at American Indian and Alaskan Native respondents in the National Transgender Discrimination Survey." Accessed June 26, 2014. http://www.thetaskforce.org/downloads/reports/reports/ntds_native_american_3.pdf

National Center for Transgender Equality and National Gay and Lesbian Task Force. "Injustice at Every Turn: A Look at Asian American, South Asian, Southeast Asian, and Pacific Islander Respondents in the National Transgender

Discrimination Survey.” Accessed June 26, 2014.

http://www.thetaskforce.org/downloads/reports/reports/ntds_asianamerican_api_english.pdf

National Center for Transgender Equality and National Gay and Lesbian Task Force. “Injustice at Every Turn: A Look at Black Respondents in the National Transgender Discrimination Survey.” Accessed June 26, 2014.

http://transequality.org/PDFs/BlackTransFactsheetFINAL_090811.pdf

National Center for Transgender Equality and National Gay and Lesbian Task Force. “Injustice at Every Turn: A Look at Latino/a Respondents in the National Transgender Discrimination Survey.” Accessed June 26, 2014.

http://transequality.org/Resources/Injustice_Latino_englishversion.pdf

National Center for Transgender Equality and National Gay and Lesbian Task Force. “Injustice at Every Turn: A Look at Multiracial Respondents in the National Transgender Discrimination Survey.” Accessed June 26, 2014.

http://www.thetaskforce.org/downloads/reports/reports/ntds_multiracial_respondent_s.pdf

National Economic Council, Council of Economic Advisers, Domestic Policy Council, and Department of Labor. “The Impact of Raising the Minimum Wage on Women.” March 2014. Accessed June 26, 2014.

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/docs/20140325minimumwageandwomenreportfinal.pdf>

National Low Income Housing Coalition. “Extreme Poverty on the Rise in the United States.” May 17, 2013. Accessed June 26, 2014. <http://nlihc.org/article/extreme-poverty-rise-united-states>

National Women’s Law Center. “Insecure and Unequal: Poverty and Income Among Women and Families 2000-2012.” September 26, 2013. Accessed June 26, 2014.

http://www.nwlc.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/final_2013_nwlc_povertyreport.pdf

Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development. “OECD Data Lab.” Accessed June 26, 2014.

<http://www.oecd.org/statistics/>

Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development. “Statistics: Income Distribution and Poverty.” Accessed June 30, 2014. <http://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?DataSetCode=IDD>

Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development. “Statistics: Social Expenditure – Aggregate data.” Accessed June 26, 2014. <http://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?QueryId=4549>

Oxfam America. “Hard Work, Hard Lives.” Accessed June 20, 2014.

<http://www.oxfamamerica.org/static/media/files/low-wage-worker-report-oxfam-america.pdf>

Restaurant Opportunities Centers United. “Tipped Over the Edge: Gender Inequity in the Restaurant Industry.” February 13, 2012. Accessed June 26, 2014. http://rocunited.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/02/ROC_GenderInequity_F1-1.pdf

Roosevelt House. “Income Inequality Today: US and Global Aspects, a Conversation with Branko Milanovic and Janet Gornick, Moderated by William P. Kelly.” November 13 2013. Accessed June 26, 2014.

<http://www.roosevelthouse.hunter.cuny.edu/events/income-inequality-today-us-global-aspects/>

Short, Kathleen. “The Research Supplemental Poverty Measure: 2012.” U. S. Census Bureau, November 2013. Accessed June 26, 2014. <http://www.census.gov/prod/2013pubs/p60-247.pdf>

Tompson, Trevor, Jennifer Benz, Jennifer Agiesta, and Dennis Junius. “America’s Lower-Wage Workforce: Employer and Worker Perspective.” Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research, March 2013. Accessed June 20, 2014. http://www.apnorc.org/PDFs/Wages/AP_NORC_Low%20Wage%20Earners_Final.pdf

U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. "Household Data Not Seasonally Adjusted: A-15. Employment Status of the Civilian Noninstitutional Population by Race, Hispanic or Latino ethnicity, sex, and age." Accessed June 26, 2014. <http://www.bls.gov/web/empsit/cpseea15.pdf>

U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. "Occupational Employment and Wages, May 2013: Maids and Housekeeping Cleaners." May 2013. Accessed June 26, 2014. <http://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes372012.htm#nat>

U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. "A Profile of the Working Poor, 2011." April 2013. Accessed June 26, 2014. <http://www.bls.gov/cps/cpswp2011.pdf>

U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. "A Profile of the Working Poor, 2012." March 2014. Accessed June 26, 2014. <http://www.bls.gov/cps/cpswp2012.pdf>

U. S. Census Bureau. "Current Population Survey 2012 -- Poverty Status of Families by Family Type, Nativity, and U.S. Citizenship Status (2011)." June 2014. Accessed June 26, 2014. <http://www.census.gov/population/foreign/data/cps2012.html>

U. S. Census Bureau. "How the Census Bureau Measures Poverty." Accessed June 26, 2014. <http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/about/overview/measure.html>

U. S. Census Bureau. "People with Income Below Specified Ratios of Their Poverty Thresholds by Selected Characteristics: 2012." Accessed June 26, 2014. <http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/data/incpovhlth/2012/table5.pdf>

U. S. Census Bureau. "Poverty Rate by Gender in 1966 and 2012." Accessed June 26, 2014. <http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/data/historical/people.html>

U. S. Census Bureau. "Poverty Thresholds: Poverty Thresholds by Size of Family and Number of Children." Accessed June 26, 2014. <http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/data/threshld/index.html>

U. S. Department of Agriculture. "Poverty by Race/Ethnicity." September 30, 2013. Accessed June 26, 2014. <http://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/rural-economy-population/rural-poverty-well-being/poverty-demographics.aspx#.U62Z5PlDV1Y>

U. S. Department of Health and Human Services. "Mollie Orshansky: Her Career, Achievements, and Publications." May 17, 2010. Accessed June 26, 2014. <http://www.aspe.hhs.gov/poverty/orshansky/index.shtml>

U. S. Department of Health and Human Services. "Women's Health USA 2012: Household Composition." Accessed June 26, 2014. <http://www.mchb.hrsa.gov/whusa12/pc/downloads/pdf/hc.pdf>

The White House. "Raise the Wage." Accessed June 26, 2014. <http://www.whitehouse.gov/raise-the-wage>

Wiepking, Pamala and Ineke Maas. "Gender Differences in Poverty: A Cross-National Study." *European Sociological Review*. July 2005. Accessed June 26, 2014. <http://www.wiepking.com/papers/WiepkingMaas2005.pdf>

The World Bank. "Choosing and Estimating a Poverty Line." Accessed June 26, 2014. http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS/EXTPOVERTY/EXTPA/0,,contentMDK:20242879~menuPK:435055~pagePK:148956~piPK:216618~theSitePK:430367,0_0.html

The World Bank. "PovcalNet: an online poverty analysis tool." Accessed June 26, 2014. <http://iresearch.worldbank.org/PovcalNet/index.htm?0,6>