# Poverty History

## Introduction

It has been proclaimed several times that the American Society has been founded on the ideals upon equality between people and justice so the class distinctions do not matter as they are in other societies around the world. Today, one of the main distinctions between different sections of the population is the class to which the person belongs to the society. There are many distinctions, which categorizes the class of any person such as occupation, wealth, education and income. These are the factors that determine the class of any person within the society (New York Times).

## Defining Class in American society

Most often, class is broadly defined as the status to any person in the society and the way he or she is perceived by the society. The class of any person is a combination of his wealth, his or her occupation, education and income.  Over past 20 years, the topography of the class has shifted greatly and has blurred the boundary lines between the lower, middle and upper classes (New York Times). In the novel Samaritan a wealthy screenwriter returned to a poor neighbourhood he once lived in, and helped the impoverished neighbours (Price). The story highlights the humane side in every person, which is not influenced by class or status.

## Identification of Members of Any Class by Public and Its Accuracy

It is said that it is fairly easy to identify the members of different class with many signs such as residential area, clothing, behaviour, occupation and manners. Take an example, most of the time, the upper class can be identified by their designer clothing, opulent vehicles and serious occupation as owners of big companies and their lifestyles in general.  They are also very well-groomed and have distinct air of being patronized towards other classes within the society (New York Times). It’s also been observed that social class plays a dominant role in the social structure of USA, and the shadowy class lines still divide the upper classes from the middle classes in the US (New York Times).

However, sometimes these lines can be blurred as some companies expect their employees to well-dressed and have refined air to project an image for their customers. It may be also a fact that a member of upper class may prefer to live in middle class neighbourhood due to any reason. So, some of the time, it is possible that the accuracy of the identification can be disputed however, most of the time these impressions are completely accurate.

## Effect of Homelessness on Families and Children

It is a fact that having a roof over the head is one of the essential requirements of the human being regardless of the class distinction. One ofmthe bets studies carried out on the homeless of America is by author Jonathan Kozol. He observes how the American state have repeatedly encouraged improvisation of the poor, by offering private companies thousands of dollars to house the poor in deplorable conditions, rather than give a few hundred dollars to the poor people directly, so that they could pay their rent and regain their self-respect (Kozol). The effects of homelessness upon families and children have a profound effect that can linger during the whole lifetime. Depending upon their attitude towards this calamity and resilience in family relationship, they can sink into hopeless situation or either drives their attitude so the situation cannot occur again in their lives (Poverty History).  Most of the teenagers learn to hide their homelessness condition as it is a stigma that can prevent them from leading a normal life with friends and special friends. The children may run wild on street and take on a life of anti-social crimes to earn their living in any way that is possible. This may lead to danger in society in future years (Poverty History).

## Effects of Jobs on Respect of Others and Self-Respect

The main idea behind joining any job is to earn a decent living that is possible, with existing educational qualification as well as experience. However, with class distinction in modern society, it also serves as the main reason of categorization in different classes. Some jobs, by their profile and designations are respected such as doctors, nurse and others. Some jobs are dismissed and do not garner any respect or awe among the people.

Most of the people are programmed to respect themselves and get respect than other people simply, with designation of the job. It is being proclaimed repeatedly that hones labor, in any field or any scale should be the reason of self-respect and gaining the other person’s respect, but it is not true in real life.

## Effect of Housing Segregation by Class

Today, the housing facilities have been segregated due to many criteria’s, such as wealth, atmosphere of the neighbourhood, income, tastes, class and status of that particular person. The upper classes of the society prefer independent mansions with a lot of land around it or modern condos in affluent areas (Taylor).  The middle class prefers to live independent houses that are affordable to them with nice and safe neighbourhood.   The lower class within the society is forced to live in ghettos or bad neighbourhood where the safety of life and property is always at stake. This can profoundly affect the sense and concepts to the community in every class. (Taylor).

## Effect of Wanting Stuff and Sense of Self

The main foundation of American society is based upon the American Dream that is good income, a wonderful house and wealth. With the continuous exposure of consumerist culture through all mediums of communication such as TV, Movies and others, most of the lower and middle- class Americans dream about latest gadgets and beautiful clothes. Yes, most of the people are overburdened by wanting more and more stuff, and they are ready to do anything to possess these things in life. The sense of self is taking lot of beating mainly due to this reason.  This is because they are disregarding their upbringing and values instilled during their childhood in a race to possess the latest stuff available at the market.

## Evaluation of the Situation in the Society

In the US, almost 25% of workers don’t even make $10 per hour. Shulman describes vividly the plight of the working poor in America, also points out the faulty economic policies of the US government (Shulman). I think the situation is getting worse as the competition is becoming tough in all aspects of the life. There are more people who are competing to acquire the finest jobs, best life partner, latest gadgets and other things with which they can impress other people of their class and status within the society.  There are very few people who are happy about their lives and hold concrete values as their priority in life.

## How to Improve the Situation

Although, most of the people are going for their American dream, but there are still some people who hold upon their values in life.  One thing we can do is to teach our future generation that money does not ensure instant happiness. The values and standard that ensure the self-respect is much more important and crucial for ensuring happiness in life.

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