



Teaching Leaflet

Understanding Poverty

“Suggested Resources For Further Study”

Books

Nickel and Dimed: On (Not) Getting By in America by Barbara Ehrenreich (published by Holt Paperbacks)

Barbara Ehrenreich leaves behind everything she knows as a successful writer and heads out to live the lives of the working poor in America. She finds work as a cleaner or waitress trying to live off meager wages and tips. What she finds is that not only can one not survive in these jobs, one begins to disappear; one becomes invisible. This is a great narrative on one person's journey into the invisible class in America: the working poor.

The Working Poor: Invisible in America by David K. Shipler (published by Vintage)

David Shipler provides the reader with glimpses into the lives of people who work hard every day at one, two, or even three jobs yet still live below, at, or barely above the federal poverty line. For the people you meet in this book the American Dream is just that, a dream, even though they work hard for it every day. This book illustrates what it is like to end up trapped in a cycle of dead-end jobs with no benefits forcing people to learn how to work the system of government assistance to merely survive.

The Other America: Poverty in the United States by Michael Harrington (published by Scribner)

This book utilizes the research of sociologists and economists to help the reader understand the depth of poverty. In this book he brings to light the plight of the “invisible” citizens of America: the elderly, children, and minorities.

What's Class Got to Do With It?: American Society in the Twenty-First Century by Michael Zweig (published by Cornell University Press)

There is a common misconception that America is a classless society, that anyone who works hard enough can make it out of any situation to better his or her life. Michael Zweig has brought together essays on the hidden issue of class. For too long class has remained hidden behind the issues of race or gender. This book examines the role of socioeconomic class in our society today.

Poverty in America: A Handbook by John Iceland (published by University of California Press)

This handbook is a readable reference for anyone wishing to study poverty in America in today's society. This book provides theoretical issues, history, and public policy discussions. Iceland shows how poverty is measured and understood and how these have changed or stayed the same over time.



Ending Poverty in America: How to Restore the American Dream edited by John Edwards, Marion Crane, and Arne L. Kalleberg (published by New Press)

This book is a collection of several essays from several of the leaders in the War on Poverty. The writings tackle the issues of why the rich are getting richer, the middle class are getting poorer, and why working families cannot survive. It examines programs that develop assets and policies that can be put in place to help lift people out of poverty.

Movies/Media

The Poverty Tour - www.usccb.org/cchd/povertyusa/tour.htm

This tour is an interactive way to do (or supplement) the budget exercise found in Teaching Leaflet D.

Waging A Living - www.pbs.org/pov/wagingaliving

Waging a Living is a documentary that examines the day-to-day life of people labeled “the working poor.” It was filmed over three years in the northeast and California.

Poverty, Inc. - www.pbs.org/wnet/expose/2008/08/poverty-inc.html

Poverty, Inc. is a documentary on the business of poverty. This documentary looks at how businesses are making a profit off of the working poor.

People Like Us: Social Class in America - www.pbs.org/peoplelikeus

People Like Us is a documentary that examines social class in America. This website is a tool to accompany the documentary that provides stories from the film, more information on the people you meet in the film, games, resources, and information on airings of the film or ways to order a copy.

Websites

From Poverty to Prosperity: A National Strategy to Cut Poverty in Half

www.americanprogress.org/issues/2007/04/poverty_report.html

This resource is produced by the Center for American Progress, Task Force on Poverty. It reports on the recommendations made by national experts and leaders convened in 2007 by the task force. This website provides a copy of the full report, an executive summary, facts about poverty in America, and principles and key steps for cutting poverty in half in ten years.

U.S. Census Bureau, Poverty

www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/poverty.html, www.census2010.gov/hhes/www/poverty/poverty.html

The U.S. Census Bureau website provides an overview about poverty, how it is measured, news, publications, definitions, and data sources. This website is the place to go if you are looking for specific and detailed information about poverty in your area.