

## If We Equally Divided the World's Wealth By Roger Copple

If we essentially divided the world's wealth equally and ubiquitously created true democracy that would basically solve the world's problems. Someone recently said to me, "The United States is not responsible for all the problems of the world." But I would say, if we caused the problems, then we are responsible. And it seems like we have caused most of the major problems of the world. See William Blum's [website](#) and John Tirman's book, with a Foreword by Howard Zinn: "*100 Ways America Is Screwing Up the World.*"

Would the world be better without the United States? We can ask the world that question. We can ask every single country that question. We can ask them to answer honestly and not out of fear of the United States. Which country causes the most fear? Maybe that's a good question too. Which country shows the most cooperation, compassion, fairness, egalitarianism, ecological wisdom, and voluntary simplicity? It is certainly not the United States.

Countries have characteristics just like individuals do. We the citizens of the United States need to show more compassion for the world by somehow changing the United States government. It's killing everything, including us. What country kills the most--people, animals, and plants? I am afraid to hear the answers from every single country. Will we care about their answers?

It should be simple and easy to solve world problems. Just think of the world as a family, and each family member has a different personality. We may not always agree with family members, but we still love them.

Which country has the most nuclear weapons to kill people? Is that anything to be proud of? Which country every year spends the most outrageous amount of money on the military? We should feel ashamed. Which country has the most billionaires who are making the world worse, not better? Is this the best we can do as a nation?

In my retirement lately, I have been studying a college textbook. It has over 800 pages, a soft-cover book that seemingly weighs about 4 pounds. It is called *The West in the World: A History of Western Civilization*, Fourth Edition, by Dennis Sherman and Joyce Salisbury, published in 2011. I got the book at a used book store. I didn't even have to pay 2 or 3 dollars for the book. It was free in a box of books in front of the store. Apparently it was considered an unsellable item.

I want to learn more about history, and sometimes I spend 30 minutes on a page. There are so many important details that are hard to remember because we don't

think everyday about the events from our past, but maybe we should. As I now read about history, and study the pictures too, as an adult learner reading for intrinsic reasons--it seems every page makes me feel angry toward the aristocracy and the Catholic and Protestant churches (which have usually sided with the aristocracy); and every page makes me feel sad for the misery and unhappiness of the poor and downtrodden that have suffered for thousands of years. It is a sad, sad tale--a tragedy. Sometimes it makes me feel like weeping, but I force myself to keep reading. This time, I started at the middle of the book with the 13th and 14th centuries. I read the entire book a few years ago. Of course, we all know that 2 major world wars (the biggest tragedies of all) occurred roughly in just the last 100 years. Things are not getting better, but we should feel assured knowing that there is a cause for every effect. We have to find the reasons the world is so screwed up.

Using [Ecosia](#) as my search engine (it's supposedly planting trees with each search), I found the following information when I did a search of "If we divided the world's wealth equally." Here is what I found at [reddit.com](#):

"If wealth was equally distributed in America, every family would own \$ 528,420 in assets. Most of us living in the richest nation in the world don't feel like that at

all. I am a firm believer in meritocratic capitalism. If a guy is doing great work, it's ok for him to earn 10 times more, or 20 times more than others -- *but not thousands of times more*. There are vanishingly few uber-geniuses whose work is both handsomely paid *and* utterly good for society. An enormous number of high earners do us NO good; in fact, in 2008 their greed and short-sightedness crashed the world's economy. They are not beneficial.

Fact: in 2013, the median wealth of an American family was \$ 81,400.00. But if all wealth in the country was divided equally (which I do not advocate, for it is against meritocracy) every family would own \$ 528,420.00 in assets. There must be a gap to *reward merit*, but this is too wide. I believe the [median](#) should be much closer to the [mean](#). We need to quantify these things in the debate; America can understand this. We must use words like median and mean, and then explain why it's crucial to understand them in order to correct the distortion. For non-math people this is easy! For example, if 10 people earn these amounts per task: \$2, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 7, 11, 13, and \$23,735, the mean or average makes them look like a wealthy group: \$2,379 on average! But the median tells us it's not true: a median of \$6.50.

In other words, the fact that Bill Gates and I have a combined wealth of 79 billion does not make *us* two the wealthiest guys in the world. Therefore, living in America with so many billionaires does not make *Americans* the wealthiest people, just the wealthiest *country* on Earth. Source for data:

<http://www.federalreserve.gov/econresdata/scf/scfindex.htm>

**47 Comments** " (End of 3-Paragraph Quote)

The writer above says that every family could earn \$528,420 a year, which seems like a very high amount. The writer states that he or she believes in meritocracy by saying it's okay for people to get 10 or 20 times more than others, but not thousands of times more. Most people would essentially agree with that, but I think the ratio between the highest and lowest annual incomes for the whole world should be 10:1, and ultimately we could strive for 3:1. The earth has an ecological carrying capacity. The earth desperately needs the wealthiest people to choose lifestyles of voluntary simplicity. If it would take 4 earths for everyone in the world to have the lifestyle of [the average American](#), then it shows that it is not just the American government but the lifestyles of the American people--that are primarily responsible for preventing world peace and destroying the planet.

The [World Bank](#) says almost half of the world is living on less than \$5.50 a day; that is \$2,007.50 a year (365 x 5.50). We could guarantee that every world citizen over the age of 18 has an annual income of \$12,000. The lowest hourly wage for meaningful work could be \$15 per hour, which is [about \\$30,000 a year](#). Any annual income above \$120,000 throughout the world could be taxed at 100 percent. To reduce the world's ecological footprint and show international fairness, some [Left Greens](#) might say that these worldly wage rates need to be reduced even more, as we encourage more of the wealthiest people throughout the world to choose voluntary simplicity--to protect, restore, and heal our fragile earth. Reducing our military budget by 90 percent--as we close down our 700-1000 military bases around the world and dismantle all nuclear weapons--will allow us to use our tax revenues in more humanistic ways. As other nations reciprocate, we could reduce our military spending even more. If a [Democratic World Federal Government](#) built from the bottom up supports plans like this, I think most world citizens would want a democratic world government. The United States is an Empire, but the countries of the world do not want or need an empire controlling them. We, the citizens of the world, do not want an empire controlling us.

Currently the world is endangered because the wealthiest one percent keeps getting more powerful. We are moving toward a New World Order, controlled from the top-down by fascist oligarchs. We still have time to change this. As I see it, democracy--authentic and participatory democracy--is what can save us and the world, and also egalitarianism--radical egalitarianism. Moreover, the world's wealthiest individuals need to choose [voluntary simplicity](#). Essentially we need a ["New Culture. New Constitution. New Everything."](#) Here is ["The Most Democratic](#)

[Way to Have a Constitutional Convention"](#) and here are ["15 Proposals that Could Make Our Nation and the World a Better Place."](#) You can also read these articles at my website [www.NowSaveTheWorld.com](http://www.NowSaveTheWorld.com)

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