

# Potty Politics

Income Inequality

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2013



Change Elections Change America

“The disposition to admire, and almost to worship, the rich and the powerful, and to despise, or, at least, to neglect persons of poor and mean condition is the great and most universal cause of the corruption of our moral sentiments.” – Adam Smith

## Growing Inequality

- 50 million Americans currently live in poverty
- The United States has the highest income inequality of the developed world. Behind countries like Russia and Iran.
- Since 1990, CEO pay is up 300%, Corporate profits have doubled, and average worker pay has increased only 4%
- 21.9% of children in the US live in poverty
- The top 1% of Americans hold 40% of the nation's wealth, the top 10% own 80%
- Since the Great Recession in 2007, 95% of income gains have gone to the top 1%

*Democracy Matters is a non-profit, non-partisan organization committed to getting money out of politics and giving our political system back to the average citizen. For more information contact:*

*DemocracyMattersPitt@gmail.com*

## **DEMOCRACY MATTERS MEETINGS**

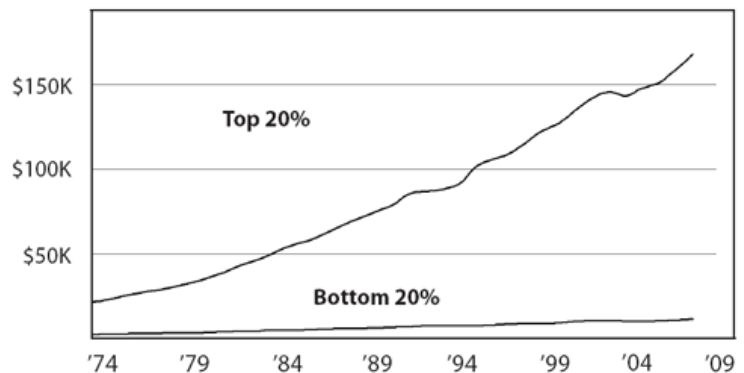
**Wednesdays 8:30-9 PM**

**At the tables outside Einsteins in  
Posvar**

***New members are always welcome!***

## Income Inequality

Mean household income: top 20% and bottom 20%



As the holiday season approaches, it is important to think of those less fortunate than us. With more than 50 million Americans living below the poverty line and more joining that number every day, things aren't looking so great for America. We're approaching poverty levels that we haven't seen in nearly 30 years. While things are so bleak for a large amount of our population, a very small proportion of people in America are enjoying prosperity at record levels. Currently the wealthiest 400 households in the United States hold more wealth than half of all Americans combined. This massive concentration of wealth is not only hurting our economy, it is hurting our country as a whole.

The redistribution of wealth up to the wealthiest Americans has had catastrophic effects on our political system. Today, more money means you have more of a voice in American politics. Politicians spend nearly a fifth of their day trying to solicit campaign donations from wealthy individuals. In return for these donations, laws are being passed that favor the top income earners while hurting the average American. Education and welfare are being slashed while more and more tax breaks are being given to major corporations.

Income inequality will continue to get worse until we change how politics in America functions. Campaign Finance Reform would be a massive step in solving the problems our country faces. By getting money out of politics we can get politicians in office who actually care about the average citizen and pass laws that create meaningful change.