The wealth gap has widened by more than 50% during the past 40 years. In 1960, the top 1% had 125 times the median wealth of United States. Today, that number is 190 times more. Wealth is begetting more wealth. The wealthy are investing more, amassing more property, and having an easier time paying of debt. While the rich are prospering, the poor are getting poorer. Or are they?

While the wages may be increasing, one has to take into account inflation and the expenses a family today has compared to the expenses a family had 40 years ago. But, is this wealth gap inequality necessarily a bad thing? Taking into account Claude Fischer’s argument, inequality only retards economic growth. Workers on the lower level of the societal ladder are more prone to sickness, injuries, and generally bad health which prevents them from fully utilizing their energy to do their work. Less active work force, less output, less income. Income motivates all rungs of the ladder, and nobody wants to have less income. Shouldn’t the need for more profit inspire the wealthy to invest more into their workers? Sadly, they’re not investing and the huge wealth gap continues.

In the 1970’s and 1980’s we saw the beginnings of the wealth gap. The yuppies were finishing college at faster rates and entering the labor market with great entry level jobs. Those who couldn’t afford college, were left to toil away in car repair shops, retail business or factory work. Those that had better access to higher education naturally did better. They invested more in stocks, real estate, and generated more assets for themselves. The high school graduates could barely start a savings account, much less invest into stocks or buy a home.

While the rich may finance scholarship programs to help the poorer kids, very few actually jump at the opportunity. Many think that they have no business in college because their parents did not go, or they are simply worried about financing a college education. It’s proven that a college education drastically increases the salary one can receive, but many are stonewalled by the amount of money it takes to finish a college education.

This apprehension at taking out a loan and finishing college creates a new generation of laborers who live in poverty. If since 1960, the United States is at 50% wealth gap, what can our generation see in another 50 years? The gap maybe so drastic that new taxes may be imposed on the wealthy to finance relief programs for the poor. The United States is one of the most wealthiest western nations, yet such a great inequality of income exists. A possible explanation for the wealth gap, is the lack of jobs. The 1990’s saw the close of many factory doors and its unskilled workers flooded the job market. In the meantime, many jobs had become specialized, and had no room for the unskilled men and women.

In our generation alone, computer technology has played a crucial role. If we continue at this level of computer innovation, could our generation in 20 years be flooding the labor market in search of new jobs as well? It's very possible. All of these scenarios relate to the figures of the wealth gap we have now.

The poor are indeed getting poorer. Without equal access to better health care, education and jobs, the market suffers. While the poor are trying to catch up to the higher-ups, the ones sitting on the top perch are enjoying their position. They have the means,
the poor, however are scrambling in every direction to get at those means.