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Bringing Work to Life

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Contact Us

Elsdon Organizational
Renewal (EOR)

www.elsdon.com

renewal@elsdon.com

Tel. 925 586 9039

Welcome

Welcome to the final issue of Bringing Work to Life.

Our four books explore bringing work to life for those close to us, for ourselves, for our organizations, and for our communities:

How to Build a Nontraditional Career Path: Embracing Economic Disruption, (Praeger, 2014), describes why, when, and how to create an inspiring and practical nontraditional, entrepreneurial career path from more than one source of income:

<http://www.abc-clio.com/product.aspx?isbn=9781440831584>

Business Behaving Well: Social Responsibility, from Learning to Doing, (Potomac Books, Inc., 2013), provides a rationale and roadmap for organizations to incorporate socially responsible practices, building on principles of social justice:

<http://www.nebraskapress.unl.edu/product/Business-Behaving-Well,676586.aspx>

Building Workforce Strength: Creating Value through Workforce and Career Development (Praeger, 2010), describes the application of workforce and career development principles and practices to strengthen organizations:

<http://www.abc-clio.com/ABC-CLIOCorporate/product.aspx?pc=C3236C>

Affiliation in the Workplace: Value Creation in the New Organization (Praeger, 2003), describes leadership approaches to integrate individual needs with organizational needs for the benefit of both:

<http://www.abc-clio.com/product.aspx?isbn=9781567204360>

This newsletter contains two articles: *Renewal*, and *Community and Social Trends*.

Renewal

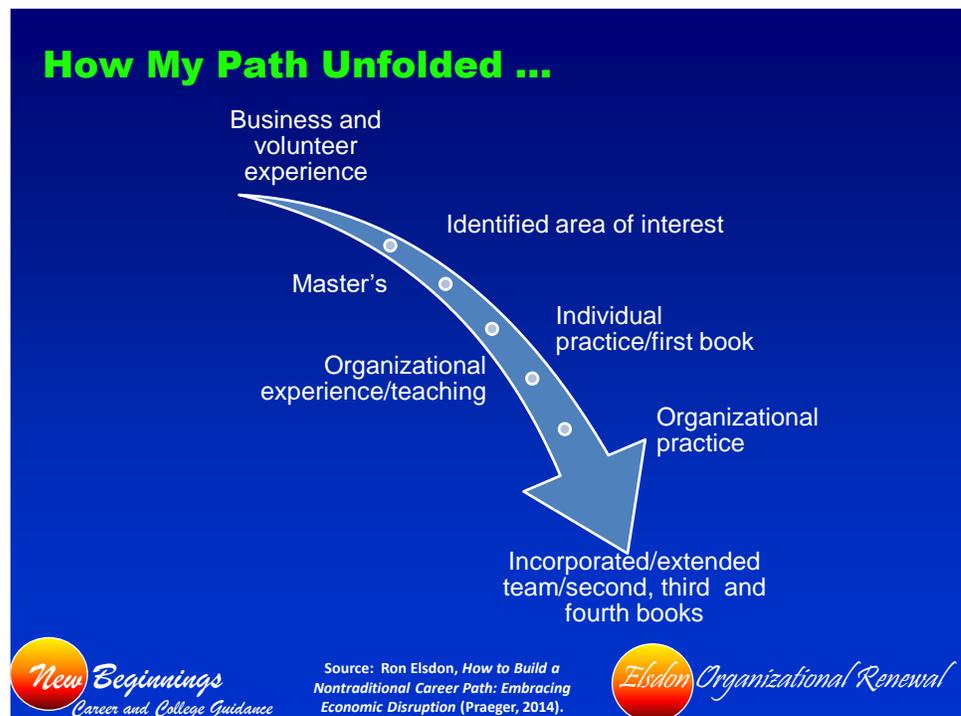


Ron Elsdon, Ph.D., is founder of *Elsdon Organizational Renewal*, which focuses on supporting organizations enhance effectiveness through revitalized workforce relationships and leadership practices. Prior to establishing his practice, Ron held senior leadership positions at diverse organizations. Ron is also co-founder of New Beginnings Career and College Guidance, which provides caring and personalized support to individuals in career guidance and coaching.

Ron is author of *How to Build a Nontraditional Career Path: Embracing Economic Disruption*, which describes why, when and how to create an inspiring and practical nontraditional, entrepreneurial career path from more than one source of income; editor of *Business Behaving Well: Social Responsibility, from Learning to Doing*, which provides a rationale and roadmap for organizations

Those hardy Cypress trees, bending in the wind like an elderly couple crossing a windswept plaza, protect isolated nearby farm buildings at the far reaches of remote and beautiful Point Reyes preserve in California. The trees were planted a century ago for the benefit of future generations. Reaching the end of their lives, they are being replaced by new trees, to renew protection for future generations. This reminds me of members of an English university, finding trees planted by their predecessors more than one hundred years earlier. Those predecessors anticipated the need for massive wooden replacement beams as part of roof renewal (*Affiliation in the Workplace*, referencing Max DePree). “We do not inherit the land from our forefathers, we borrow it from our children,” is how Antoine de Saint-Exupery expressed it (*Affiliation in the Workplace* from Gary Hamel). In the examples of the Cypress trees and the wooden replacement beams, we see physical renewal benefitting our lives and communities. In this article, we explore renewal in other ways: for ourselves, for our organizations, and for our communities, from times past to times to come.

Let us look first at personal renewal, acknowledging that this involves change and transition, which is both rewarding and challenging. Here is a figure from *How to Build a Nontraditional Career Path* that shows how renewal has looked in my nontraditional career path:



This path began in the world of technology and business in conventional organizations, and evolved to the world of career and workforce development in private practice. Volunteering is important throughout; the latest aspect being delivering volunteer career services in a prison (https://www.ncda.org/aws/NCDA/pt/sd/news_article/117365/_self/layout_details/false). Building self-awareness along this path helped with this transformation (as in coaching (Dotlich and Cairo)). I could not, at the beginning, anticipate how the path would unfold. It has been rewarding and fulfilling, made possible by the support and kindness of many people along the way, for which I am most grateful. Here is some

to incorporate socially responsible practices, building on real-world examples from contributing authors, and principles of social justice; editor of *Building Workforce Strength: Creating Value through Workforce and Career Development*, a book that describes the application of workforce and career development principles and practices to strengthen organizations; and author of *Affiliation in the Workplace: Value Creation in the New Organization*, a book describing leadership approaches to integrate the needs of the individual with the needs of the organization for the benefit of both. Ron holds a Ph.D. from Cambridge University in chemical engineering, an M.A. from John F. Kennedy University in career development and a first class honors degree from Leeds University in chemical engineering. With his co-author, he was awarded the Walker Prize by the Human Resource Planning Society for the paper that best advances state-of-the-art thinking or practices in human resources.

learning about personal renewal that emerges:

- Self-awareness is a key foundation for moving forward
- Honor serendipity for it is at least as important as planning
- Transitions accompanying changes involve a roller-coaster of emotions during endings, neutral zones, and new beginnings (Bill Bridges)
- Expect unexpected supporters and barriers
- Give back to others navigating their paths
- Outcomes range from slight adjustments to major transformation, at different life stages

Now let us look at organizational renewal. The football (round ball) team, Newcastle United, from my home town in England, like other football teams in England, is in a constant state of flux. New players are added, others leave as their short careers peak. Managers and owners change, the stadium is renovated. New young supporters emerge as others are no longer there. Only a few things stay the same, the club name, the tradition and legacy (going back more than a century), the location, and the support of the local community. Renewal is integral to the continued success and survival of the football club, and that is true for most organizations.

Indeed, success is predicated on moving from one cycle of initiation/growth/maturity/transition to another, to avoid decline (*Affiliation in the Workplace*). This requires clarity of vision, integrity of values, and effective leadership to build a capable and flexible workforce (*Building Workforce Strength*). It requires skill in the process of guiding organizational change from creating a climate for change, through engaging and enabling the organization, to implementing and sustaining (as outlined in *Building Workforce Strength* citing Dan Cohen). Organizational renewal today takes place in the context of a long arc moving from a relationship of worker servility that existed in the early years of the twentieth century, to patriarchy that was more typical of the mid-twentieth century, to interdependence today and in the future. Hopefully, we are moving from liberated companies to liberated people, not just for those in high demand skill areas, but for all.

Which brings us to community and what kind of society we are striving to create. In the 1930s and 1940s, led initially by Franklin Delano Roosevelt, the United States endured and then emerged from a debilitating depression, a cataclysmic world war, with a clarity of vision for a fair and just society as exemplified by a second bill of rights (*Business Behaving Well*). Much progress was made on societal renewal in the first eighty years of the twentieth century, building on Roosevelt's legacy. It is one of our great national tragedies that this second bill of rights was not fully realized and it is an even greater tragedy that these values have been under assault for much of the time since the early 1980s.

Today the concepts of truth, justice and fairness are missing from a Washington administration that is focused on grabbing more for the wealthy, while short changing many in our society. This is not sustainable. We are faced with an urgent need to equitably balance individual and community needs for all in our society. To create that same sense of renewal that was clear with Roosevelt, that saw needed

further expression through the Civil Rights and Voting Rights acts of the 1960s, and that propelled the United States to a position of leadership. Today growing economic inequities in our society have led to reduced circumstances and constrained life choices for many. It is incumbent on all of us to embrace principles of social justice with courage and conviction. In so doing, we will experience personal, organizational, and community renewal, so that we can then say, “Compassionate at last, we are compassionate at last.” Personal, organizational, and community renewal, then become interwoven in a beautiful tapestry of life.

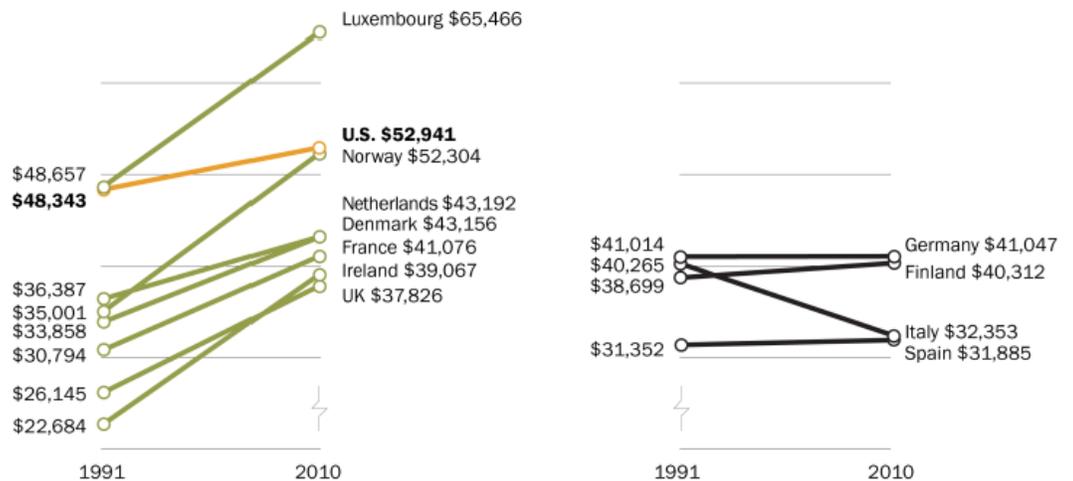
Parts of this article are extracted from, or based on concepts from: *How to Build a Nontraditional Career Path* (Praeger, 2014), *Business Behaving Well* (Potomac Books, Inc., 2013), *Building Workforce Strength* (Praeger, 2010), and *Affiliation in the Workplace* (Praeger, 2003).

Community and Social Trends

As inequality has increased in the United States we have seen household income grow more slowly than in the more equal European countries as shown in the next figure:

Household incomes in most countries in Western Europe rose faster than in the U.S. from 1991 to 2010

National median disposable household income scaled to reflect a three-person household, in 2011 prices and purchasing power parity dollars



Note: The survey dates for some countries differ slightly from the dates shown as follows: Denmark - 1992, France - 1989, Germany - 1989, Ireland - 1987, Netherlands - 1993, and Spain - 1990. Incomes for these countries are projected to 1991. See Methodology for details.

Source: Pew Research Center analysis of data from the Cross-National Data Center in Luxembourg (LIS).

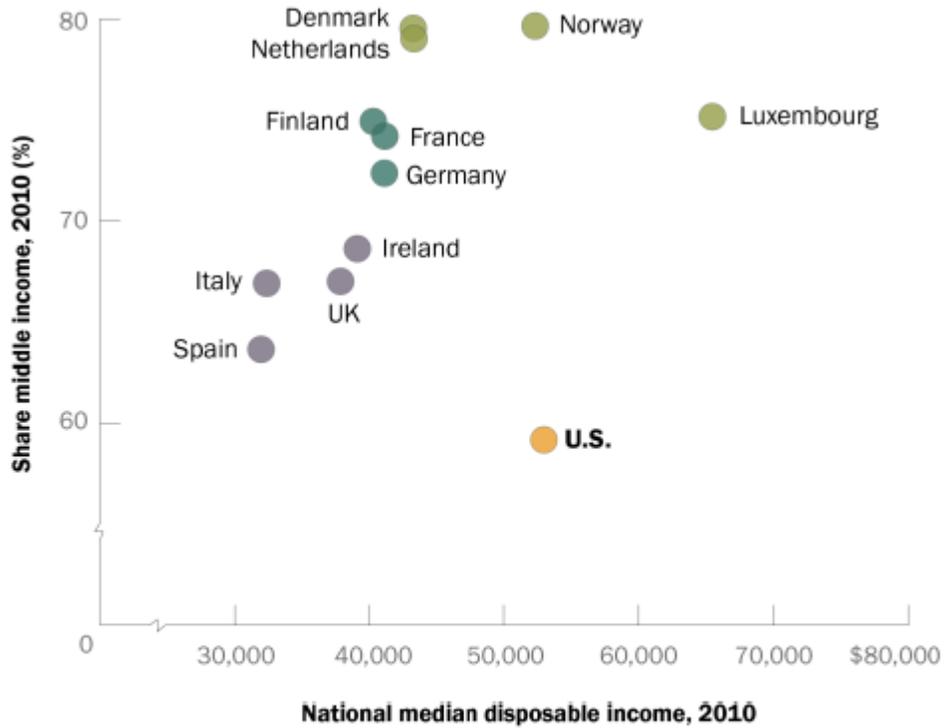
Middle Class Fortunes in Western Europe

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Source: Rakesh Kochhar, Pew Research Center, Middle Class Fortunes in Western Europe, April, 2017.

Meanwhile our share of middle income adults is disproportionately low:

Share of middle-income adults rises with national household income; U.S. appears an exception



Note: Middle-income households have disposable incomes that are two-thirds to double the national median disposable income, after incomes have been adjusted for household size.

Disposable incomes are expressed in 2011 prices and purchasing power parity dollars.

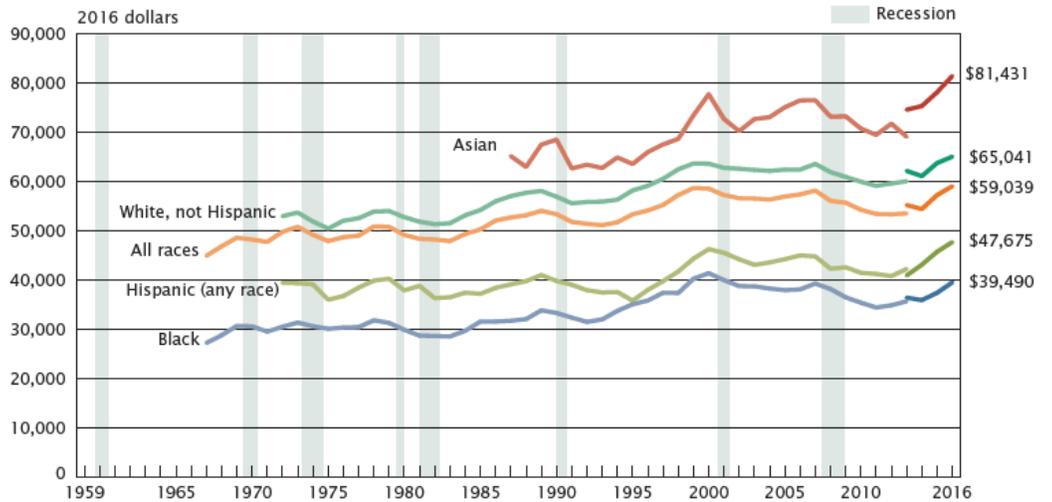
Source: Pew Research Center analysis of data from the Cross-National Data Center in Luxembourg (LIS).
 "Middle Class Fortunes in Western Europe"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Source: Rakesh Kochhar, Pew Research Center, Middle Class Fortunes in Western Europe, April, 2017.

In spite of household income gains in 2015 and 2016 in the United States, real median household income is little changed from the late 1990s as shown in the next figure:

Figure 1.
Real Median Household Income by Race and Hispanic Origin: 1967 to 2016



Note: The data for 2013 and beyond reflect the implementation of the redesigned income questions. The data points are placed at the midpoints of the respective years. Median household income data are not available prior to 1967. For more information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see <www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/cps/techdocs/cpsmar17.pdf>.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, 1968 to 2017 Annual Social and Economic Supplements.

Source: Jessica L. Semega et al, Income and Poverty in the United States: 2016, United States Census Bureau, September 2017.

As shown in the next figure, from the late 1940s through the late 1970s income growth was relatively strong and uniform for all income groups. However, since the late 1970s, the slower income growth that prevailed was concentrated in the top 20 percent of the income distribution, mostly in the top 5 percent. Furthermore, since 2007, there has been little significant income growth for most people (the lowest 95 percent):

Average annual family income growth, by income group, 1947–2016

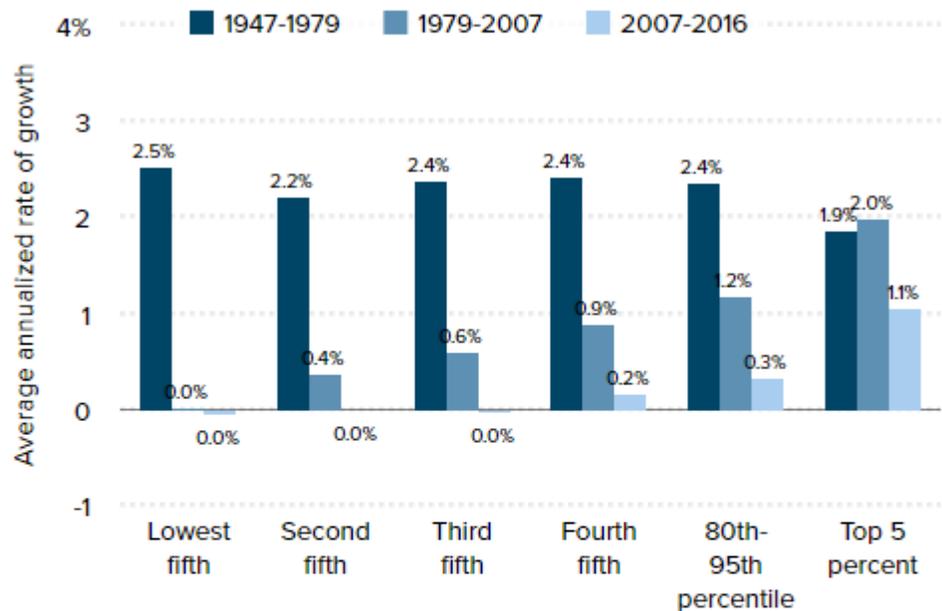


Chart Data

Note: Data are for money income. Because of a redesign in the CPS ASEC income questions in 2013, we imputed the historical series using the ratio of the old and new method in 2013.

Source: EPI analysis of Current Population Survey Annual Social and Economic Supplement *Historical Income Tables* (Table F-3)

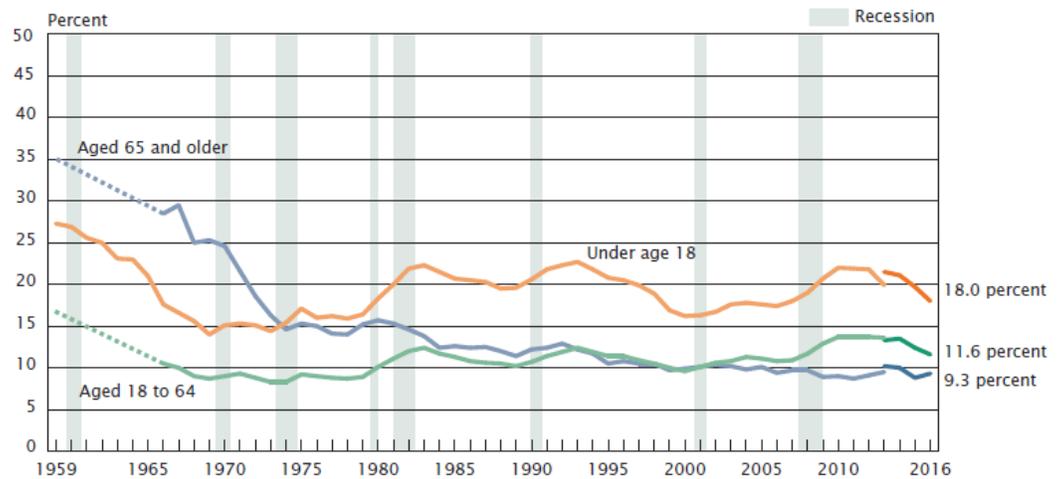
Updated from: Figure 2C In *The State of Working America, 12th Edition* (Mishel et al. 2012), an Economic Policy Institute book published by Cornell University Press in 2012

Economic Policy Institute

Source: Elise Gould and Zane Mokhiber, Economic Policy Institute, Working Economics Blog, Most families are nearly back to 2007 income levels, but inequality continues to grow in 2016, September 15, 2017.

Poverty rates in the United States are similar to those in the late 1970s as shown in the next figure:

Figure 5.
Poverty Rates by Age: 1959 to 2016



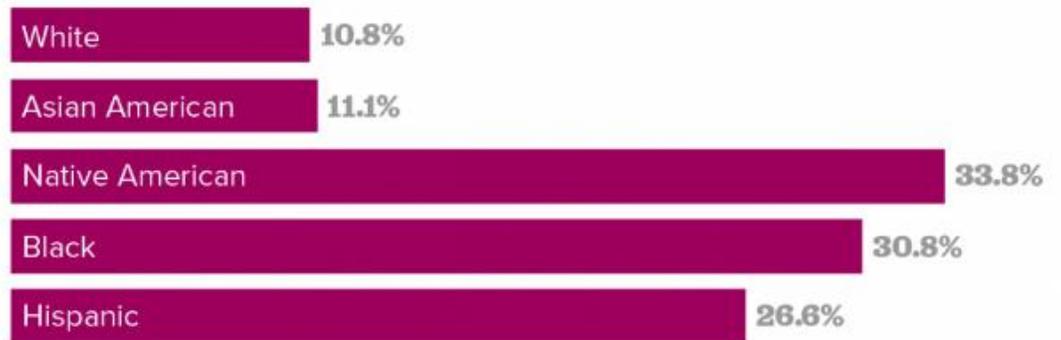
Note: The data for 2013 and beyond reflect the implementation of the redesigned income questions. The data points are placed at the midpoints of the respective years. Data for people aged 18 to 64 and aged 65 and older are not available from 1960 to 1965. For information on recessions, see Appendix A. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see <www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/cps/techdocs/cpsmar17.pdf>. Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, 1960 to 2017 Annual Social and Economic Supplements.

Source: Jessica L. Semega et al, Income and Poverty in the United States: 2016, United States Census Bureau, September 2017.

Since the 1960s, social security and Medicare successfully reduced poverty for those aged 65 and older, but there has been little movement in the poverty rates for those who are younger. It is a national disgrace that almost one in five of our children are in poverty, while the current administration seeks to remove even some of the meager supports that exist. It is also a disgrace that poverty rates for Native American, African American, and Hispanic children continue to hover around 30 percent as shown in the next figure:

Child poverty declined for most racial and ethnic groups in 2016. But major disparities still exist.

Share of children in poverty by race/ethnicity, 2016



Source: American Community Survey 2015-2016.

Economic Policy Institute

Source: Janelle Jones, Economic Policy Institute, Economic Snapshot, One-third of Native American and African American children are (still) in poverty, September 20, 2017.

Healthcare in the United States ranks the lowest of eleven developed countries, as shown in the next figure:

Exhibit 2. Health Care System Performance Rankings

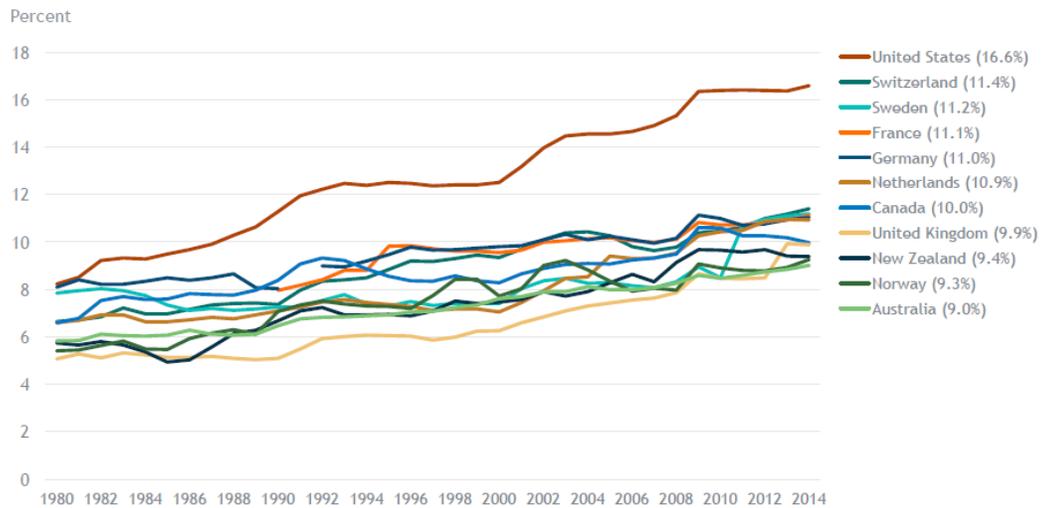
	AUS	CAN	FRA	GER	NETH	NZ	NOR	SWE	SWIZ	UK	US
OVERALL RANKING	2	9	10	8	3	4	4	6	6	1	11
Care Process	2	6	9	8	4	3	10	11	7	1	5
Access	4	10	9	2	1	7	5	6	8	3	11
Administrative Efficiency	1	6	11	6	9	2	4	5	8	3	10
Equity	7	9	10	6	2	8	5	3	4	1	11
Health Care Outcomes	1	9	5	8	6	7	3	2	4	10	11

Source: Commonwealth Fund analysis.

Source: Eric C. Schneider et al, The Commonwealth Fund, Mirror, Mirror 2017: International Comparison Reflects Flaws and Opportunities for Better U.S. Health Care, July, 2017.

While costs are much higher, reflecting an ineffective, private bureaucracy:

Exhibit 1. Health Care Spending as a Percentage of GDP, 1980–2014



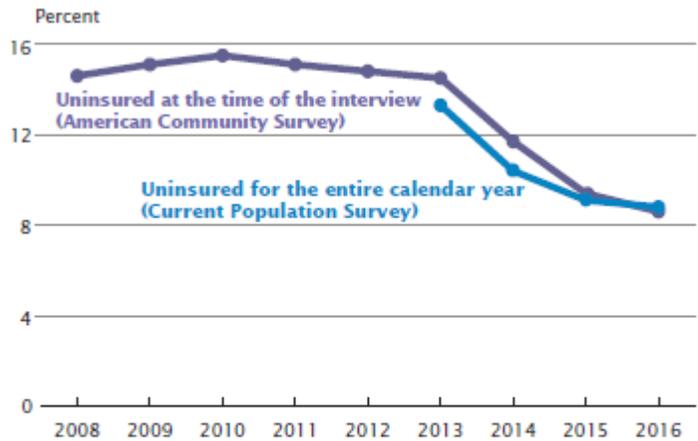
Notes: GDP refers to gross domestic product. Data in legend are for 2014.

Source: OECD Health Data 2016. Data are for current spending only, and exclude spending on capital formation of health care providers.

Source: Eric C. Schneider et al, The Commonwealth Fund, Mirror, Mirror 2017: International Comparison Reflects Flaws and Opportunities for Better U.S. Health Care, July, 2017.

Much progress has been made due to the Affordable Care Act, with a 40 percent reduction in the uninsured rate between 2013 and 2016 (almost 18 million additional people secured coverage between 2013 and 2016) as shown in the next figure:

Figure 2.
Uninsured Rate: 2008 to 2016



Note: Estimates are for the civilian noninstitutionalized population. For the Current Population Survey, estimates reflect the population as of March of the following year. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions in the Current Population Survey, see <www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/cps/techdocs/cpsmar17.pdf>. For the American Community Survey, estimates reflect the population as of July of the calendar year. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions in the American Community Survey, see <www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/tech_docs/accuracy/ACS_Accuracy_of_Data_2016.pdf>.

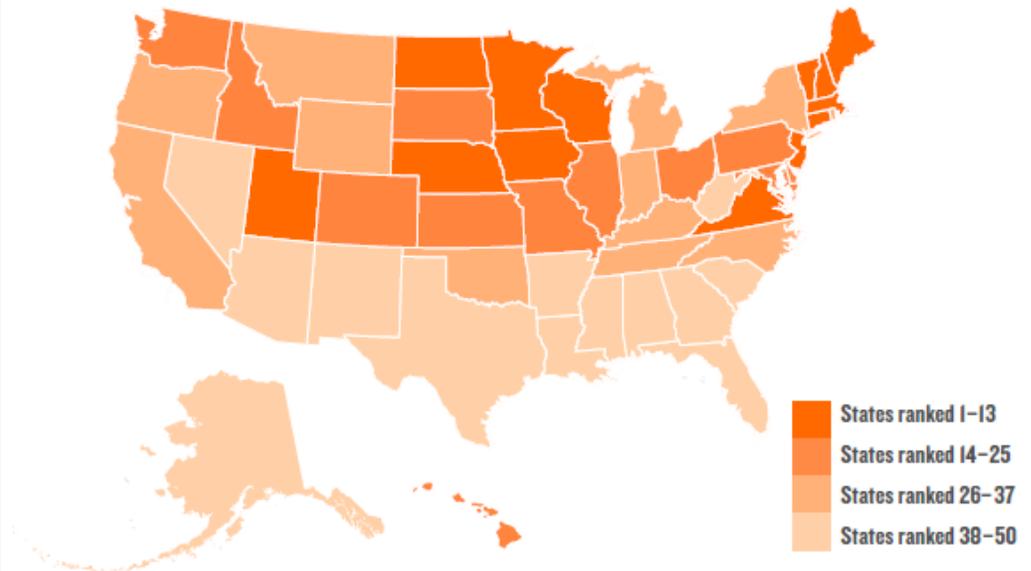
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, 2014 to 2017 Annual Social and Economic Supplements and 2008 to 2016 1-Year American Community Surveys.

Source: Jessica C. Barnett and Edward R. Berchick, Health Insurance Coverage in the United States: 2016, United States Census Bureau, September 2017.

However, much progress is still needed to contain costs and to broaden coverage as there were twenty-eight million people lacking health insurance coverage for all of 2016. A single payer, Medicare-for-all system, is critically needed.

The challenges we face in supporting our children are highlighted in the next figure, where children in many southern states suffer disproportionately:

A STATE-TO-STATE COMPARISON OF OVERALL CHILD WELL-BEING*: 2017



2017 OVERALL RANK

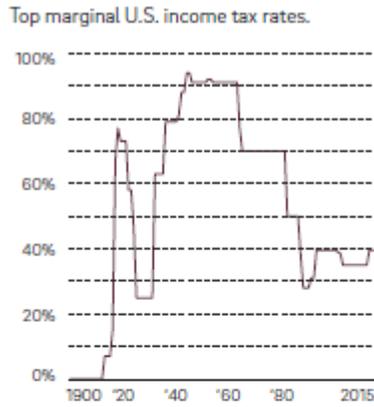
1. New Hampshire	11. Nebraska	21. South Dakota	31. Oregon	41. Texas
2. Massachusetts	12. Wisconsin	22. Colorado	32. Michigan	42. Georgia
3. Vermont	13. Maine	23. Delaware	33. North Carolina	43. West Virginia
4. Minnesota	14. Washington	24. Ohio	34. Kentucky	44. Alabama
5. Iowa	15. Kansas	25. Missouri	35. Tennessee	45. Arkansas
6. Connecticut	16. Maryland	26. Montana	36. Oklahoma	46. Arizona
7. Utah	17. Hawaii	27. Wyoming	37. California	47. Nevada
8. New Jersey	18. Pennsylvania	28. Indiana	38. Alaska	48. Louisiana
9. North Dakota	19. Illinois	29. Rhode Island	39. South Carolina	49. New Mexico
10. Virginia	20. Idaho	30. New York	40. Florida	50. Mississippi

*Due to changes in the on-time graduation indicator, Overall rankings cannot be compared with previous years.

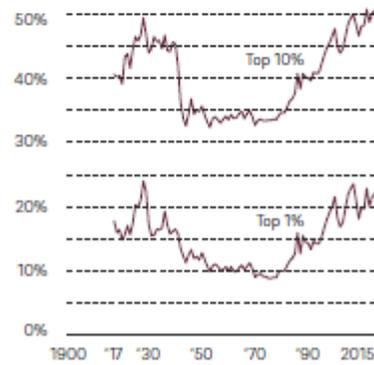
Source: The Annie E. Casey Foundation 2017 Kids Count Data Book: State Trends in Child Well-Being.

One major factor accounting for economic and healthcare inequality is inadequate taxation, particularly of wealthy individuals. The decline in top marginal tax rates since the 1950s is shown in the next figure. The figure also shows how the wealthy are now capturing an obscene level of total income in the United States.

FIGURE 5
Lower Taxes Coincide with Higher Share of Income



Source: Tax Foundation.
 Proportion of total income earned by highest-earning 1 percent and 10 percent of U.S. households, 1917–2015.

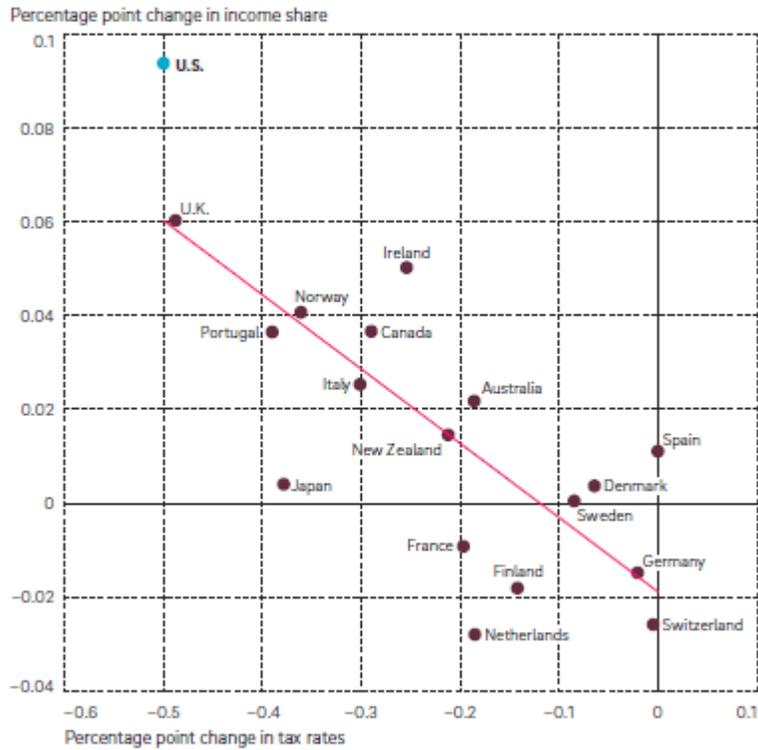


Source: Piketty and Saez (2003) and updates since.

Source: Makato Nakajima, Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia Research Department, Taxing the 1 Percent, Second Quarter, 2017.

The next figure shows that as top marginal income tax rates decrease then the percentage of income going to the top 1 percent increases (in this figure the scales are shown as fractions of 100 percent, so, for example, 0.1 means 10 percent)

FIGURE 6
Similar Inverse Relationships Globally
 Change in top marginal income tax rate and income share for households in top 1 percent of income distribution in 18 industrialized countries, 1960–1964 average to 2005–2009 average.



Source: Replicated from cross-country evidence by Alvaredo, Atkinson, Piketty, and Saez, <https://www.aeaweb.org/articles?id=10.1257/jep.27.3.3>.

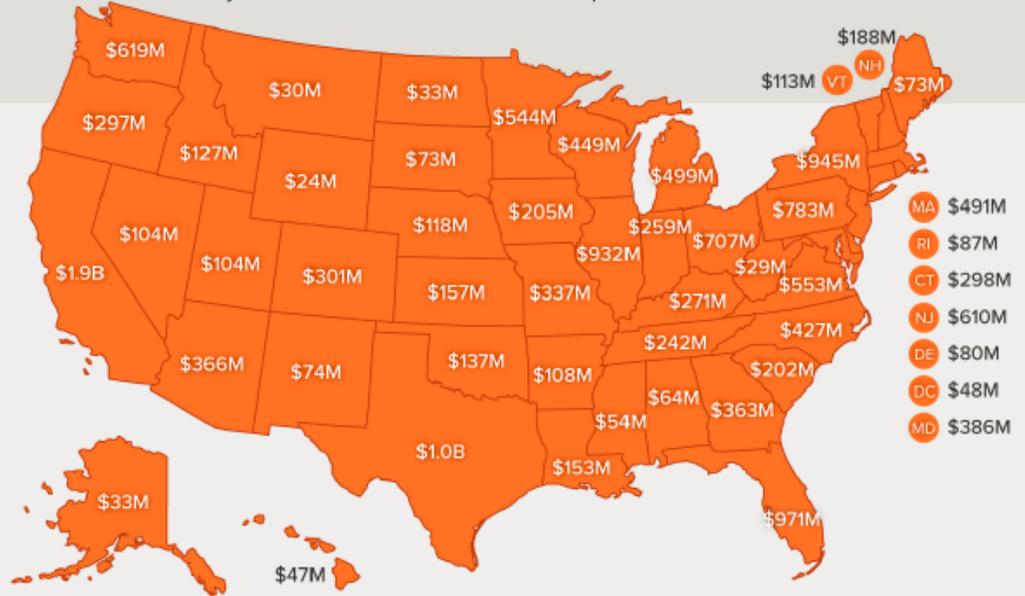
Note: For countries where data are not available for the same five-year ranges, data for the closest five years are used. For example, for Portugal, the top income tax rate and top 1 percent's income share are available only for 1976–2005. Therefore, the averages of 1976–1980 and 2001–2005 are substituted.

Source: Makato Nakajima, Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia Research Department, Taxing the 1 Percent, Second Quarter, 2017.

Meanwhile the current administration attempts to restrict legislation that would require financial advisors act in their clients best interests. The cost to retirement savers of failing to pass such legislation is summarized in the next figure:

Financial advisers with conflicts of interest cost retirement savers this much in every state every year

The conflict of interest or “**fiduciary**” rule will require financial advisers to act in their clients’ best interest—just like doctors and lawyers. **But the Trump administration and Republicans in Congress are trying to weaken or kill the rule**, and a lot is at stake. People saving for retirement lose billions of dollars every year due to conflicted advice from unscrupulous financial advisers.



Source: EPI analysis of Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP) data; *The Effects of Conflicted Investment Advice on Retirement Savings* (White House Council of Economic Advisers, February 2015)

More at go.epi.org/conflictofinterest

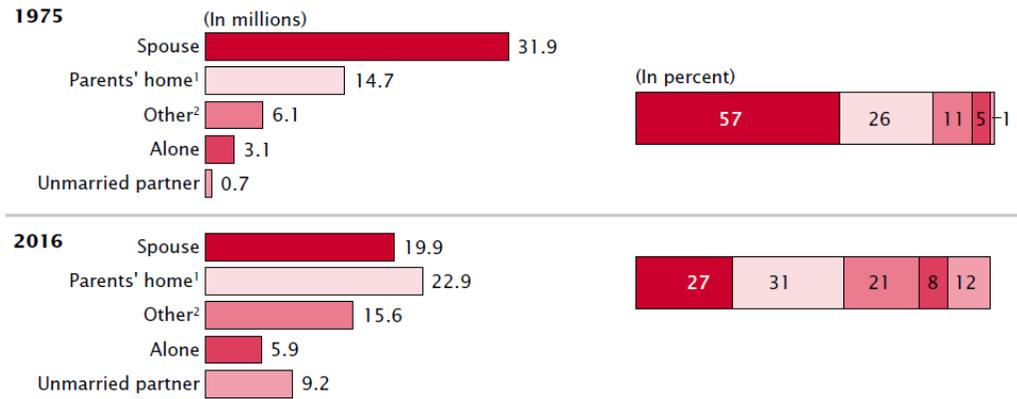
Economic Policy Institute

Note: The map shows the annual costs to retirement savers of the underperformance of IRA assets that are invested in products for which savers received “conflicted” advice (advice provided by financial advisers whose earnings depend on the actions taken by the client). If it were fully implemented, the conflict of interest (“fiduciary”) rule would require that financial advisers act in the best interests of clients saving for retirement. Underperformance of investment returns in which savers received conflicted advice can be due to a wide range of factors, including high fees, high trading costs, poor market timing, and increased risk exposure without increased returns.

Source: Heidi Shierholz and Ben Zipperer, Economic Policy Institute, Here’s what’s at stake with the conflict of interest (“fiduciary”) rule. May 30, 2017.

And young adults are struggling to gain economic independence as shown in the next figure:

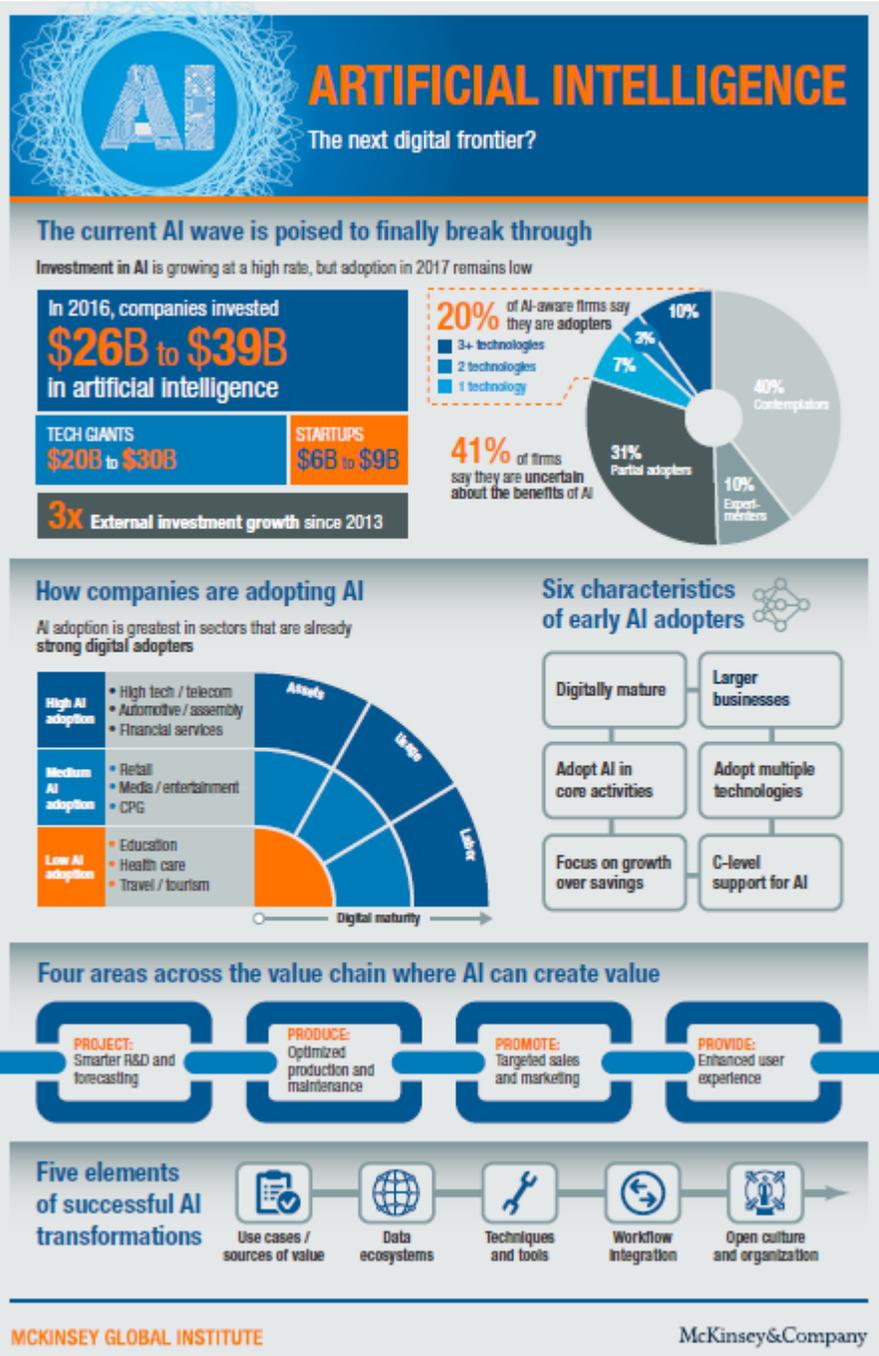
Figure 3.
More Young Adults Lived With Parents Than a Spouse in 2016
 Living arrangements among adults aged 18 to 34: 1975 and 2016



¹ College students who are living in dormitories are counted as living in the parents' home.
² "Other" includes people who are living with relatives besides a spouse, such as siblings or grandparents, and nonrelatives such as roommates.
 Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1975 and 2016 Current Population Survey Annual Social and Economic Supplement.

Source: Jonathan Vespa, United States Census Bureau Current Population Reports, The Changing Economics and Demographics of Young Adulthood: 1975-2016, April, 2017.

Meanwhile significant shifts in technology, such as the emergence of artificial intelligence, presage fundamental social changes in our future:



Source: Jacques Bughin et al, McKinsey Global Institute, Artificial Intelligence: The Next Digital Frontier?, June, 2017.

Our opportunity and challenge is to create a society that values and represents all. As a start this means electing a new administration, an administration with insight and integrity.

Quote

“Civilization started only some 10,000 years ago. The mind staggers ... at what will be accomplished in the future But more urgent than finding out how to control (our physical world) ... is the need for our social development to catch up with our

achievements in the physical sciences.”

William Beveridge, The Art of Scientific Investigation, 1957.