

# Re: Rent and Basic Income

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*Source:* <http://sci.tech-archive.net/Archive/sci.econ/2005-06/msg00307.html>

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- *From:* "Jim Blair" <jeb@xxxxxxx>
  - *Date:* Tue, 14 Jun 2005 10:22:53 -0500
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"Jerome Bigge" <jerbigge@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx> wrote in message  
[news:l2mfal1ted2g4gqvpsnjsnkfmm13cuq80s@xxxxxxxxxxx](mailto:news:l2mfal1ted2g4gqvpsnjsnkfmm13cuq80s@xxxxxxxxxxx)

> On Wed, 08 Jun 2005 08:31:28 GMT, royls@xxxxxxxx wrote:

>

> (much snipped)

>

> >>> Not minimum wage workers.

> >>

> >>I agree that if someone worked for minimum wage for the last 50 years,  
their

> >>income would have fallen in real dollars. But that means they fell from

> >>being WAY overpaid to being slightly overpaid. I mean if someone hasn't

> >>learned enough to get a better job in 50 years of experience, they  
probably

> >>don't contribute much to whoever they work for.

>

> Problem is that they might be in an occupation class where

> pay does not increase regardless of how long they've been

> working for the same employer. The security industry is a

> good example. Major reason is that after a person goes

> through a period of "learning the ropes", that is about all

> there is for them to learn. They might earn a bit more after

> time due to being "promoted" in "rank", but this will be more

> a matter of "nickel and dime", not really "serious" money.

> Reason for this is that the employer can easily replace

> anyone with a new hire who will "learn the job" in a week

> or so. (speaking from experience both as an employee

> and later on as an employer of security guards)

I hear the pay is very high for security guards in Iraq.

Maybe some "industries" don't have a lot of room for advancement. So change  
to another.

But the main point here is that the same individual is not likely to work  
for minimum wage their entire life.

>

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- > Self employment is an "option" only to those who are
- > able to raise the necessary "capital" and have enough
- > savings to tide them over until they can establish their
- > business. Or can start a "family" business where they
- > can work long hours (well beyond the regular "40") to
- > make up for the relatively low "per hour income"...
- > You see this last frequently with certain ethnic groups,
- > where the entire family will be running the business and
- > perhaps putting in 12 hours a day 7 days a week. Of
- > course they can't afford to hire "help" because they'd
- > have to pay wages, government mandated "benefits",
- > along with overtime after 40 hours and so forth here.
- >
- > There can be no doubt that it is more difficult today
- > than it was fifty years ago when there were many
- > more union manufacturing jobs still available.

??? I doubt that. The US job growth has been mostly in small business since the 1970's. So somebody is starting them up.

At any rate "manufacturing jobs" will continue to decline both in the US and world wide. For the same reason that agricultural jobs declined during the last 200 years: automation.

- > >>>..See Barbara Ehrenreich's "Nickel and Dimed"
- > >>> and Katherine Newman's "No Shame in My Game."
- > >>
- > >>I see a lot about people who can't get by on their US wages. It makes me
- > >>wonder how it is that so many people move to the US from Mexico or points
- > >>south, work for those low wages, and then send 1/3 or more of their income
- > >>home to relatives.
- > >
- > >I doubt that many do.

There have been stories on TV about entire villages in Mexico that are supported largely by the money sent to them by relatives who work in the US at low paying jobs.

- >...And anyway, we've seen that the main way they
- > >do it is by saving on land rent, by sleeping several dozen of them in
- > >one house, in contravention of local land-use laws.

That too. They conserve their money many different ways.

- > >
- > >>And when there is a TV newscast about those "working poor", they all seem to

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- >>>be overweight and smoking cigarettes.
- >
- > Don't know about the smoking of cigarettes, given today's
- > prices, but the cheapest foods tend to be the most fattening.
- > (I'm on the Atkin's Diet and it is fairly expensive relative to
- > what I could be eating if I ate like the poor people do...)

Anyone can lose weight by simply eating less of whatever it is they eat now, especially if they also exercise more.

But sure some foods are better than others. I don't know where you live, but my observation has been that the cheaper foods are also the better for you. Price potatos per pound and potato chips. Brown rice and Rice'oRoni. In general, basic staples are both more nutritious and cheaper than prepared or processed foods.

Here there are farmers markets in Madison and also in just about all of the surrounding towns. Fresh veggies, cheese, honey and various other things directly from the farmer and at reasonable prices.

I say most people in the USA could lose weight and eat better and also spend less on their food.

- >>>I agree that making ends meet at any income level is difficult, and
- >>>especially for those who make poor choices about how to spend their income.
- >>

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jim blair (jebclair@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx) Madison Wisconsin  
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- **References:**
  - ◆ **Re: Rent and Basic Income**  
◇ From: Jerome Bigge
- Prev by Date: **Gdp indexed bonds**
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