

**University of Massachusetts Amherst**

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**From the Selected Works of Charles Kay Smith**

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## American Inequality, A Prose/Poem 3/2/2014

Charles Kay Smith



Available at: <https://works.bepress.com/charleskaysmith/149/>

*American Inequality*

Technology's gift of expanding wealth  
is distributed among the super rich.  
Seems Congress, Court and policy's beholden  
to an affluent few whose greed depends

on low-wage pain for half the nation  
struggling from paycheck to no paycheck.  
And their children, shorn of the promise  
Of a brighter day: under-educated

and lacking opportunity to raise the wage.  
If you imagine the poor living lives of ease,  
explain their shorter life expectancy, please.  
Their prevalence of anxiety and mental illness.

Such measurable miseries oppose your fancy.  
Who betrayed American democracy into oligarchy?  
Thieves who usurp the science bonus  
in greed without guilt for the hopeless.

"The poor deserve their pain," they say.  
Pope Francis knows that's wrong.  
But who will set it right?