

### **IDEA 36 A culture of poverty: Reality or myth?**

Educator Paul Gorski says *there is no such thing as a culture of poverty*. Differences in values and behaviors among poor people are just as great as those between poor and wealthy people. He challenges these myths in order to reach a deeper understanding of class and poverty.

*Myth:* Poor people are unmotivated and have weak work ethics.

*Reality:* The poor do not have weaker work ethics/lower levels of motivation than the wealthy.

*Myth:* Poor parents are uninvolved in their children's learning; they do not value education.

*Reality:* Low-income parents hold the same attitudes about education that wealthy parents do.

*Myth:* Poor people are linguistically deficient.

*Reality:* All people, regardless of the languages/language varieties they speak, use a full continuum of language registers. [www.genconnection.com/English/ap/LanguageRegisters.htm](http://www.genconnection.com/English/ap/LanguageRegisters.htm)

*Myth:* Poor people tend to abuse drugs and alcohol.

*Reality:* Poor people are no more likely than their wealthier counterparts to abuse alcohol or drugs. Although drug sales are more visible in poor neighborhoods, drug use is equally distributed across poor, middle class, and wealthy communities.

*Myth:* America's poor are "the envy of the world." They're still pretty well off by international standards

*Reality:* For America's poor, life expectancy statistics resembles those in developing countries

<http://vorcreatex.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/For-Americas-poor-life-expenctancy-data-resembles-those-in-the-developing-world-Another-conservative-argument-about-poverty-appears-to-be-wrong.pdf>

<http://vorcreatex.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/The-Myth-of-the-Culture-of-Poverty.pdf>