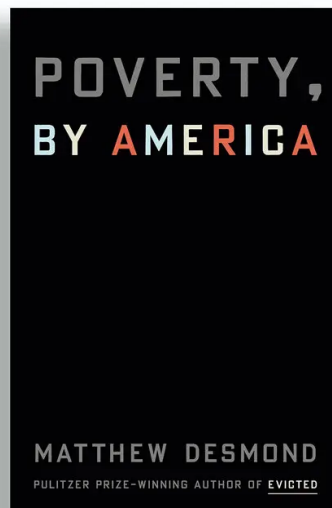




# IGSS Summer Reading 2023

*"Why all this American poverty? To understand the causes of poverty, we must look beyond the poor. Those of us living lives of privilege and plenty must examine ourselves. Are we--we the secure, the insured, the housed, the college educated, the protected, the lucky--connected to all this needless suffering? This book is my attempt to answer that question, addressed to that 'we.' Which makes this a book about poverty that is not just about the poor. Instead, it's a book about how the other half lives, about how some lives are made small so that others may grow" (8).*



IGSS is a self-directed community driven by a sense of inquiry and exploration, guided by compassion, seeking transformation in ourselves and the world. With that in mind, we ask that you read the book **Poverty, By America by Matthew Desmond** over the summer. Please type up your responses to the prompts below, prepare to share them with others, and submit them to the IGSS Summer reading assignment on Canvas by the first day of IGSS. We are looking for thorough, thoughtful responses that demonstrate your ability to think critically.

*Heads up: Sexual abuse is referenced on pages 11 and 15*

1. In 1961, James Baldwin [remarked](#) how "extremely expensive it is to be poor." What might that mean in 2023? Do you agree with this claim? In your response, please include at least two quotes from the book. Please also do some outside research and incorporate that into your response.
2. "As people accumulate more money," Desmond writes, "they become less dependent on public goods and, in turn, less interested in supporting them." What does Desmond mean by

“public goods”? Pick one example of a public good. Do some research to evaluate the funding of this public good. Does your research support or refute Desmond's claim? Explain.

3. Desmond found that “every year, the richest American families receive almost 40 percent more in government subsidies than the poorest American families.” Did this fact surprise you? Can you think of ways that you or your family benefit from government assistance that you've never thought of as “welfare”? Do you think differently about it now? Explain, using a variety of textual and personal evidence to support your response.

4. Regarding public housing, Desmond writes: “Two things are true. First, most Americans want the country to build more public housing for low-income families. Second, most Americans do not want that public housing (or any sort of multi-family housing) in their neighborhood.” The North Shore has a long history in opposing the construction of [affordable housing](#). How can we reconcile these contradictory desires? Use the text and at least one additional source to determine a path forward. How and why would this solve the problem? What pushback might there be?

5. Desmond concludes his book with a variety of solutions. Choose one solution that he proposes and evaluate. You will definitely need to use outside sources for your response; please consult a minimum of two and integrate them in your response.

**Please include a works cited, using MLA format, for all of the outside sources you used.**

*You will submit your work to Canvas on the first day of class.*



Please sign up for the IGSS 2023-2024 Remind. We regularly use Remind to communicate and we don't want you to miss out on any announcements! Click on the [link](#) or text @b89ha6 to 81010. All students, including returning students, should sign up.