

## Simple Arithmetic: Heavy on Butter, Cream, Wine

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### Cover Page Footnote

The author is a retired Unitarian Universalist minister whose first career was teaching mathematics. Her dedicated website is [www.PiZine.org](http://www.PiZine.org).

# Simple Arithmetic: Heavy on Butter, Cream, Wine

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## Synopsis

The language of poetry is one way to offer perspective on ethical issues and social behavior. The language of mathematics is another. The piece herein combines both these ways.

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Not long ago, the government  
of the people for the people  
needed 700 billion dollars to help  
Freddie Mac and the Mae sisters.

Three hundred million people  
lived in the United States then.

If each person put one dollar  
into a central pot, the pot  
would contain one third  
of one billion dollars

not even a pinch of salt  
in the bail-out soup.

To fill the pot, each person needed  
to contribute \$2000, a fantasy  
since few have a spare \$2000, plus  
consider the cost to the 74 million

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then under 18 who presumably needn't think about such obligations, let alone

own them. More than 6.7 billion people lived in the Mac and Mae global world. If each person donated \$100, the global pot might have saved

the floundering Maes and Mac with real rather than virtual money.

but 2.6 billion people lived on less than \$730 per year back then and half the world's adults made less than \$2200, so at least

half the world's adults were poor sources for a rescue pot. Still, there's good news!

The richest 1% own 40% of global assets. High grade butter. Subtracting the world's 2.2 billion children from the world's 6.7 billion people

leaves about 4.5 billion adults in the world, which is a lot.

Collectively, 1%, 45 million, own 40% of the world's coins. Cream. Imagine that this thriving 1% donates 40% of the needed dollars.

If the 9% with 45% of global riches also donates 45% of the 700 billion

the pot would need just another 105 billion, and if the remaining 90% of the world's adults split that \$105 billion evenly, it's only a 2.5 cent

contribution per grown-up. Count me in!  
Heck, I'll throw in a whole dollar

and pay for 39 more of the world's  
citizens who won't, or can't, contribute  
even two cents to a country  
whose wealth and mismanagement

are both so blatant. Fine wine  
down the drain.