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Cato's David Boaz Does Not Like D.C.'s 'One Percenters'

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WASHINGTON -- "One percenters" in the nation's capital are wealthier than are rich people elsewhere in the country, and the Cato Institute's [David Boaz](#) does not like it.

The Washington Post ran a piece over the weekend about [how much more money -- about \\$150,000 -- it takes to be rich in the D.C. area than it does elsewhere in the country:](#)

To be considered part of the 1 percent in this area, it takes a household income far above the national average of \$387,000. The gateway for the region is \$527,000. In the District, the top 1 percent of households bring in at least \$617,000; in Montgomery County, more than \$606,000; and in Fairfax County, \$532,000, according to an analysis of census statistics by *The Washington Post* and Sentier Research, a firm that specializes in income data.

Some statistics in the story give pause -- the one relating that 80 percent of the "one percenters" are white, for example. And it was a little surprising to read that a one percenter who "had just returned from a business retreat on billionaire Richard Branson's private island" describe his million-dollar home in Potomac as "typical, stereotypical . . . very normal, upper-middle-class neighborhood."

But there are no surprises in where D.C.'s rich people get their money, according to the *Post*:

Most of those people making the big bucks are exactly who you would expect: doctors, lawyers, chief executives, managers and management analysts.

[Boaz responded to the piece](#) with a libertarian bent in Cato's "@ Liberty" blog:

The one percent in Washington are lawyers, lobbyists, government contractors, and the doctors and entrepreneurs who serve them. But unlike regions where actual wealth is created — software, automobiles, financial services, capital allocation, movies and television, medicine — Washington's economy is based on the confiscation and transfer

of wealth produced elsewhere. As such, Washington's wealth is a net loss for economic growth in the country.

Some *Post* commenters agreed with Boaz -- others accused the *Post* of stirring up class warfare.

One advised all readers to believe in the American dream:

Look, if Kim Kardashian can make it in this country, nobody has any excuses.