

# Presentation of the Trustees Report A Journalism Roundtable

Social Security 2019 Technical Panel

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March 29, 2019



Hutchins Center  
on Fiscal & Monetary Policy  
at BROOKINGS

# Highlight What You Want to Highlight

If you want the public and press to focus on something other than date at which trust fund runs dry, tell them that

...on one page

...with three bullets

...a chart (or two)

[2015 blog post](#)

**Trust Fund Reserve Gains One Year for Projected Depletion Date**

Posted on [July 23, 2015](#) by [Stephen C. Goss, Chief Actuary](#)

[2018 press release](#)

**Social Security Combined Trust Fund Reserves Depletion Year Remains 2034 Says Board of Trustees**

[Disability Fund Improves by Four Years](#)

# Highlight What You Want to Highlight

Press release from Boston Fed on President Rosengren's (16-page, 17-footnote) speech in Hong Kong:

- Rosengren disagreed with the view that the market turbulence at the end of 2018 was caused by the Fed's ongoing balance sheet reduction.
- He also said "it is unrealistic to expect the Fed's balance sheet to return to the size it was before the financial crisis," as some have suggested, because factors not related to monetary policy impact the balance sheet's growth.
- Rosengren also emphasized that central banks may need to turn to balance sheet tools to stimulate the economy during the next recession, given a low-rate environment with limited room to reduce rates before they reach zero.
- He described the Fed's post-crisis approach to monetary policy implementation as requiring a larger balance sheet.

<https://www.bostonfed.org/news-and-events/press-releases/2019/rosengren-explains-the-feds-balance-sheet.aspx>

# Don't Put the Print Version Online

Design a version of the summary for online users – with [hyperlinks](#).

# Graphic design can help

Boring...or interesting?

Complicated...or comprehensible?

Old fashioned...or modern?

TERRORISTS DESTROY WORLD TRADE CENTER, HIT PENTAGON IN RAID WITH HIJACKED JETS

Nation Stands In Disbelief And Horror

Streets of Manhattan Resemble War Zone Amid Clouds of Ash

As the towers fell, a massive cloud of ash and dust billowed from the World Trade Center...

The towers fell in a matter of seconds, and the impact was felt throughout the city...

At the World Trade Center, the towers fell in a matter of seconds, and the impact was felt throughout the city...

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What's News—

Business and Finance

ALABAMA FINANCIAL... The state's financial industry is facing a new wave of challenges...

World Wide

NEW PREMIER... The new premier of the United Kingdom has taken office...

U.S. Airport Security Screening

Long Seen as Dangerously Lax... Airport security has long been criticized for being too lenient...

Attacks Raise Fears of a Recession

Analysts warn that the economic impact of the attacks could be severe...

Eye of the Storm

One Journey Through Desperation and Grief... A personal account of the impact of the attacks on a family...

Midnight in the South

A Night of Fear in the South... A report on the impact of the attacks in the southern states...

At the World Trade Center

What Happened on 9/11... A detailed account of the events at the World Trade Center...

At the Pentagon

The Impact of the Attacks on the Pentagon... A report on the damage and aftermath at the Pentagon...

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Death Toll, Source of Devastating Attacks Remain Unclear; U.S. Vows Retaliation as Attention Focuses on bin Laden

At least 2,600 people were killed in the attacks, and the source of the attacks remains unclear...

The U.S. has vowed retaliation against those responsible for the attacks...

Attention is now focused on Osama bin Laden, the suspected mastermind...

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Map showing the locations of the World Trade Center and the Pentagon in New York City.

Hour of Horror

Forever Alters American Lives

The attacks have forever changed the lives of millions of Americans...

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The Wall Street Journal September 12, 2011

## What's News

Business & Finance

It's not an offer of aid, which is essential, but it will serve to ease the financial burden of their efforts for air-freight companies.

But the company's stock price is still in the red.

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## Israel and Hamas Trade Blows as Tensions Escalate



Militant Israeli soldiers set off a chain of explosions in the Gaza Strip, above, and the militant group launched a rocket salvo into Israeli territory, causing the threat of another conflict, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said after a U.S. visit.

## Lyft Leads Wave of Startups Debuting With Giant Losses

Lyft's losses were more than \$1 billion last year, according to a report by the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission. The company's losses were more than \$1 billion last year, according to a report by the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission. The company's losses were more than \$1 billion last year, according to a report by the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission.

## Avenatti Accused Of Fraud, Extortion

Attorney Michael Avenatti, who secured the settlement for the 19-year-old boy, was accused of fraud and extortion. The attorney's actions were described as "outrageous" and "unethical" by the court.

## Hints About Space/Male Science Less Tenuous/So Hope Scientists

Scientists are looking for signs of life on Mars. The Mars rover Perseverance is currently on the surface, and the next rover, Mars 2020, is scheduled to launch in late 2020. Scientists are looking for signs of life on Mars.

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## Report Sets Off Political Tussle

Trump camp says a warning 2020 message as Democrats press for Mueller's full findings.

President Trump's camp says a warning 2020 message as Democrats press for Mueller's full findings.

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## 'The Magic Elixir': How the College-Entry Scam Spread

Rick Singer won over parents on financial-services speaking circuit.

Rick Singer won over parents on financial-services speaking circuit. He is a former college admissions officer who now runs a company that helps parents navigate the college admissions process.

## FHA Zeros In On Risky Loans

Higher underwriting standards by the agency could mean lower loan loss ratios.



Higher underwriting standards by the agency could mean lower loan loss ratios. The chart shows a significant increase in the percentage of loans that are 30 days past due or more.

The Wall Street Journal  
 March 26, 2019

Running circles around everyone else.

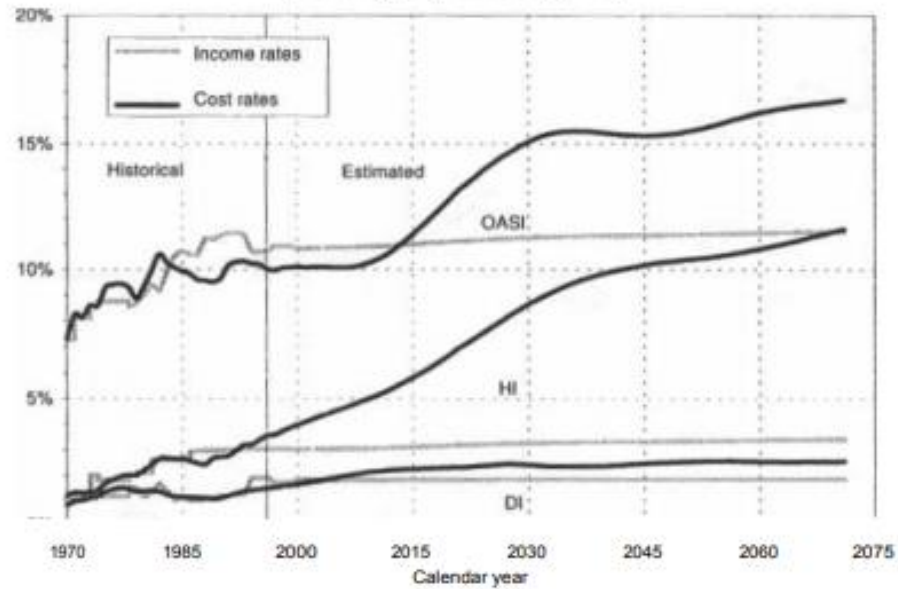
Dell Technologies is #1 in External Storage Storage, Capital Expenditure and Security, according to the Gartner Magic Quadrant. See gartner.com/storage.

#1 31.7%

See Gartner Magic Quadrant for more details.

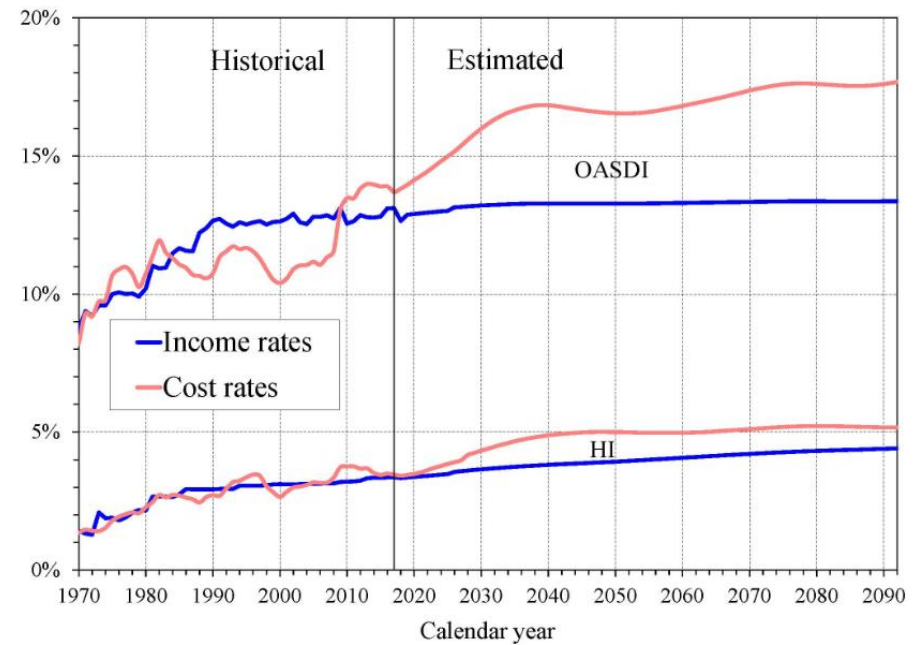
# Social Security Trustees Report: 1998 vs 2018

**Chart C—Income and Cost Rates**  
*[percentage of taxable payroll]*



1998

**Chart B—OASDI and HI Income and Cost as Percentages of Their Respective Taxable Payroll**

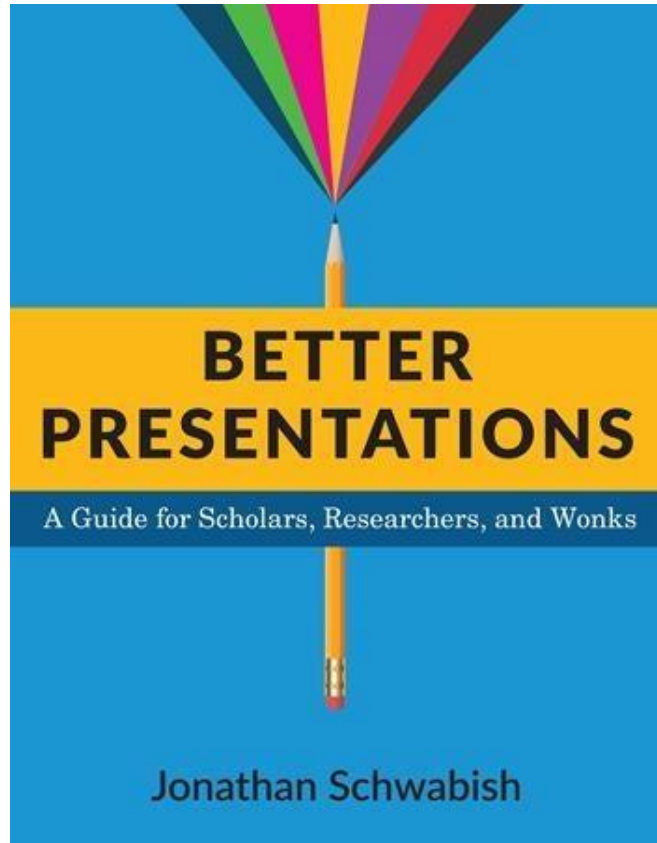


2018



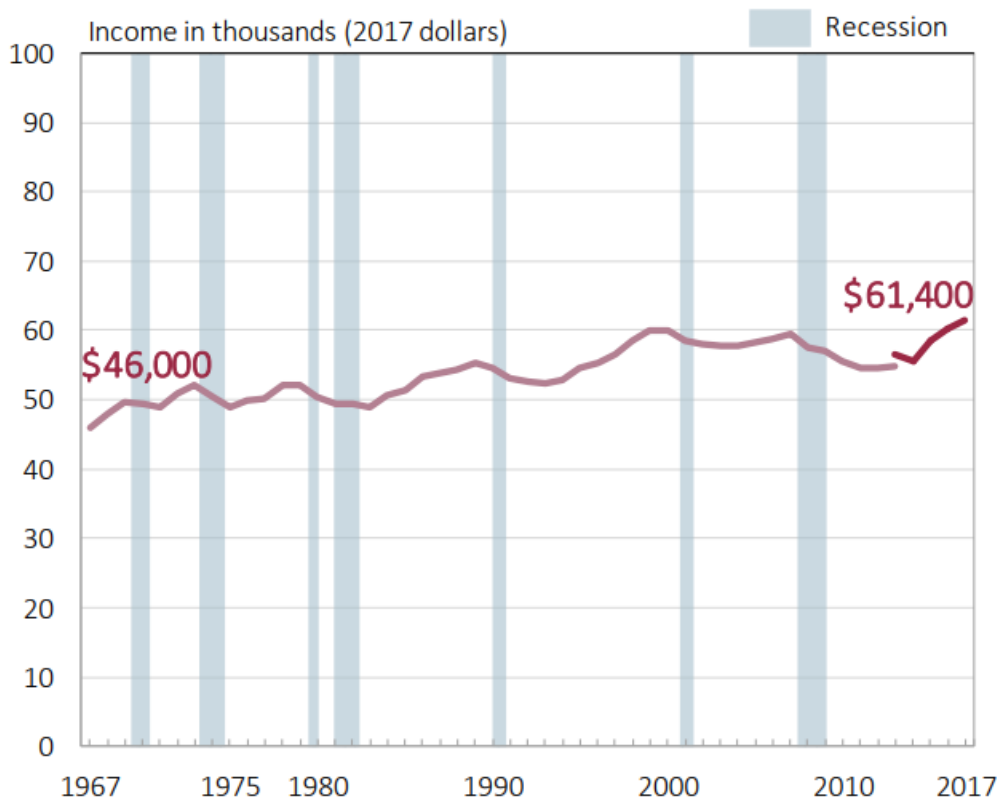
# Listen to Jonathan Schwabish on charts

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# Make charts that are easy to share

## Real Median Household Income: 1967 to 2017



Median household income was \$61,400 in 2017, an increase in real terms of 1.8 percent from the 2016 median of \$60,300. This is the third consecutive annual increase in median household income.



U.S. Department of Commerce  
Economics and Statistics Administration  
U.S. CENSUS BUREAU  
[census.gov](https://www.census.gov)

Note: The data for 2013 and beyond reflect the implementation of the redesigned income questions. Income rounded to nearest \$100.  
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, 1968 to 2018 Annual Social and Economic Supplements.

# FAQs

## **What about them?**

Do them.

## **Why?**

Makes it easier to understand the basics.

## **How?**

Short questions. Short answers.

See <https://www.brookings.edu/series/the-hutchins-center-explains/>

## **What?**

Perhaps separate basics of Social Security finance from what's new.

# Blog posts or explainers

- Fertility
- Immigration
- Productivity

# Social media

Some good experiments:

Facebook Live with Steve Goss

<https://www.facebook.com/socialsecurity/videos/10156690568145288/>

Reddit with Steve Goss

<https://www.facebook.com/socialsecurity/videos/10156690568145288/>

Do more. Twitter? Short videos? Graphics to share on social media?

# Learn from others

Bank of England: Making monetary policy understandable

<https://www.bankofengland.co.uk/inflation-report/2019/february-2019/visual-summary>

Census Bureau press kit: Income, Poverty, Health Insurance

<https://www.census.gov/newsroom/press-kits/2018/income-poverty.html>

Elmendorf era at Congressional Budget Office

- Health care spending blog <https://www.cbo.gov/publication/45175>
- Immigration blog <https://www.cbo.gov/publication/45176>
- A dozen (very short) videos: <https://www.brookings.edu/research/doug-elmendorf-unleashed/>

Raj Chetty

[https://opportunityinsights.org/national\\_trends/](https://opportunityinsights.org/national_trends/)

National Academy of Social Insurance video

<https://www.nasi.org/learn/social-security/just-the-facts>