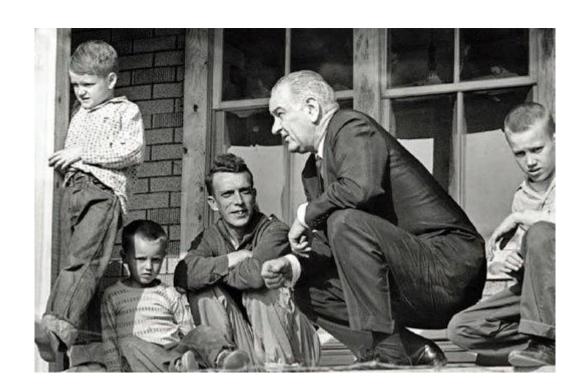
The War on Poverty and the Office of Economic Opportunity

Part 2: Community Profiles Texas



Primary Source Media



The War on Poverty and the Office of Economic Opportunity Part 2: Community Profiles Texas

Guide Compiled by Alissa De Rosa

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Cover Photo: LBJ speaking with the poverty-stricken.

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SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The most ambitious and controversial part of the Great Society was its initiative to end poverty. The centerpiece of the War on Poverty was Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) to oversee a variety of community-based antipoverty programs. Central to OEO's mission was the idea of "community action," the participation of the poor in framing and administering the programs designed to help them.

In an effort to assess the scale of poverty in America, the OEO developed the Community Profile Project. The Community Profile Project was designed to increase the scope, accessibility, accuracy, and utility of information supporting the planning and evaluation of programs for community improvement.

The Project compiled data for 3,135 U.S. counties and county equivalents that subdivided each state into independently-administered localities. Each profile, composed as a narrative with statistical indices, contained information showing general poverty indicators, size and composition of the poor population, and selected aspects of geography, demography, economy, and social resources.

Each profile is subdivided into six sections with a number of sub-sections: Poverty Indicators, Profile of the Poor, Geographic Profile, Demographic Profile, Economic Profile, and Social Profile.

Poverty Indicators

The Poverty Indicators highlight social and economic characteristics which vary with the nature and level of poverty. These include:

Magnitude of poverty	Severity of poverty	Economic compensation
Economic activity	Family resources	Employment conditions
Educational achievement	Functional illiteracy	Adequacy of health care
Health status	Sufficiency of housing	Agricultural prosperity

Profile of the Poor

This includes:

Definition of Poor Level of poverty Changes in poverty level Severity of poverty Magnitude of poverty Race & residence of the poor

Geographic Profile

Poverty is a regional phenomenon in the U.S. Not only is it concentrated more heavily in specific sections of the country, it also varies in kind, extent, and intensity; along with characteristics of population and land uses which are unique by virtue of regional locations. Sub-sections in this profile include:

Regional characteristics (urban/rural population; retail sales; disposable income; and per capita income)

Regional climate and terrain Regional trading areas/urban centers of economic activity

Boundaries Administration & county government

Congressional representation State government

Demographic Profile

The characteristics of individuals in poverty are reflected in the characteristics of their communities. Contrasts and similarities in the distribution, trends and levels of population characteristics, are essential information in identifying and combating individual and community problems. Sub-sections include:

Distribution of population Population Change Racial components of population

Economic Profile

This section consists of two sub-sections: Characteristics of the labor force and Government finance, revenues, and expenditures.

Among characteristics of the labor force which are also related to poverty is the population of workers holding jobs in skilled and high-paid positions. In communities where the educational and economic opportunities are limited, these jobs are limited, implying under-employment of skills and the existence of under-developed human resources.

Government finance – revenues and expenditures – is based on a variety of taxes, including property, utilities, sales, income, and investment earnings. These revenues affect support of education, law enforcement, fire protection, highways, sewerage and other sanitation, public assistance, libraries, hospitals, healthcare, parks and recreation, urban renewal, corrections, and public buildings, among others.

Social Profile

This section consists of three sub-sections: Community health facilities and manpower, Housing, and Education.

Poverty-stricken areas generate far less government revenue. The statistics and narrative in this subsection assess the extent of Community Health Facilities and Manpower.

Conditions and characteristics of Housing are associated with the incidence and degree of poverty in a community. A basic indicator of housing adequacy is the percentage of dwelling units not dilapidated. Also, the number of persons per room in a dwelling unit is another indicator of housing inadequacy—the number of persons is also an indicator of crowded housing conditions. The status of housing is assessed by a number indicators of household prosperity compared with national averages. These indicators include the number of: washing machines, freezers, air conditioners, televisions, telephones, and automobiles. Information on renter-occupied dwellings and gross rent statistics are also used to assess housing adequacy.

The level of educational achievement and facilities in a community is an indicator of its socio-economic status. The extent of functional illiteracy, measured by local government expenditures on education, is also detailed in these Community Profile section.

These Community Profiles provide an in-depth analysis of poverty in America by providing an extensive inventory of current and historical data of the U.S. at a local level.

Part 1: Western States, includes Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington and Wyoming

Part 2: Midwestern States, includes Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, Wisconsin

Part 3: Southern States, includes Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, West Virginia

Part 4: Northeastern States, includes Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont

Part 5: Texas

SOURCE AND EDITORIAL NOTE

The documents comprising this microform publication are from the Presidential Papers of Lyndon Baines Johnson, White House Office Files, Office Files of Fred Panzer: Office of Economic Opportunity Information Center, "Community Profiles," in the custody of the Lyndon Baines Johnson Library in Austin, Texas. The documents comprising this microform publication have been filmed in their entirety and as they are arranged at the Lyndon Baines Johnson Library.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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REEL INDEX

The following is a listing of the folders comprising the microfilm publication entitled *Part 2: Community Profiles Texas*. The Reel Index lists the series and subseries, the folder title, as well as a listing of the major subjects and principal correspondents for each folder.

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[7]	Atascosa County, Texas.
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[9]	Bailey County, Texas.
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