

# The Socioeconomic and Cultural Impact of the Homeless on the Denton, Texas Community

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## RESEARCH TOPIC

My research will be conducted on the social and economic impact of the homeless population in the Denton community, and what those homeless contribute to the community.

## RESEARCH QUESTION

### Research Question

How do the homeless, many of whom have no jobs, impact the economic position of and contribute to the culture of the Denton area?



## BIBLIOGRAPHY

### Articles and Books:

Cronley, C. (2010, March). Unraveling the social construction of homelessness. *Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment*, 20(2), 319-333. doi:10.1080/10911350903269955

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Hatchett, B. F. (2004). Homelessness among older adults in a Texas border town. *Journal of Aging & Social Policy*, 16(3), 35-56. Retrieved October 18, 2011, from Academic Search Complete.

### Images:

Unknown. (Photographer). (2010). *Spotlight on the homeless population*.

[Image of photograph]. Private collection. Retrieved November 29, 2011, from <http://nursing322sp10.wordpress.com/spotlight-on-the-homeless-population/>

## LITERATURE REVIEW

- Several studies suggest that the main causes of homelessness among adults are unemployment, criminal activity, foreclosure, and personal choice (Cronley, 2010; Hatchett, 2004).
- Society generally has one of two responses: Ignore it or pass legislation to try to get rid of it.
- Most of the legislation, however, addresses only emergency situations such as medical care (Hatchett, 2010).
- One study covered the cause-and-effect cycle of homeless youth, addressing in-depth concerns about prostitution, the drug trade, and other criminal activity (Flowers, 2010).
- For many street youth, crime begins as a means of survival.
- Many are abducted or seduced into the sex trade, with both very young girls and boys targeted.
- Many individuals believe that “people become homeless... not because of a dysfunctional system but because of a dysfunctional self” (Cronley, 2010).
- The McKinney Act assigned responsibility for the homeless to the federal government, but the system to care for the homeless today is still a mix of federal and privatized care.

## ABSTRACT

The government has painted a sordid picture of the condition of homelessness in the United States, and for the past fifty years the responsibility for taking care of the homeless has shifted back and forth from the citizens to the federal government. Nobody, it seems, wants to deal with such a vague, messy problem. Some groups advocate the building of many new homeless shelters and transitional housing for the people who live on the streets. Up until now, however, very few studies have been done where homeless individuals were asked for their stories and opinions. This study explores the viewpoint of homeless individuals and what they have to offer to the culture of the Denton, Texas, community as well as the socioeconomic impact they have. A meta-analysis will review data from previous research, and interviews will offer first-hand insight into the plight of the homeless.

## METHODS

- I will do a meta-analysis in order to obtain a broad, varied, and unbiased base of literature to review. In my search, I will include both homelessness itself and governmental measures that affect it. Much of the literature I cover should also be past interviews of homeless people in order to accurately gauge the impact of homelessness on the community.
- I will also conduct my research through in-person interviews. Interviews will offer current and more centralized data for my research. Statistical research within the context of the meta-analysis and interviews will be beneficial as well. By studying the statistics of homelessness and the socio-economic standing of the city, I will be able to accurately report the socio-economic impact of the homeless on that city.



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