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John Hedderson\*

# The Population of Texas Counties Along the Mexico Border

## INTRODUCTION

This paper addresses the following questions concerning the population of Texas counties along the Mexico border. What is the size and geographic distribution of the population? What are its general socioeconomic characteristics? And what will be the size and distribution of the population in the year 2000?

From the beginning a few qualifications are in order. When this work was in progress, the only data available at the county level from the 1980 census were the number of persons. Age, ethnicity, income and other information have been gleaned from other sources. This was a handicap in doing the population projection for the year 2000, because to take into account age structure the projections had to be made from a 1970 base.

The figures cited herein are the *recorded residential* population, which underestimates the actual population in two ways. First, every United States census of population has undercounted the residential population. It is not feasible to perfectly enumerate some 226 million people; many are very mobile and some want no contact with government employees of any kind. The Bureau of Census estimates that it missed two percent of the population in its 1970 canvass, and for some groups, particularly young minority males, the figure was much higher. Twenty percent of the black male population aged 25 to 29 were not enumerated.<sup>1</sup> Prior to the 1980 census there were not sufficient data collected about the Hispanic population to allow a precise estimate of the degree to which they were underenumerated. One study of the Bureau of the Census, however, suggested that the coverage of the Hispanic population in 1970 fell between that of white and black populations.<sup>2</sup> According to the 1970 census, 69 percent of the Texas border counties' population was Hispanic; obviously

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1. U.S. BUREAU OF THE CENSUS, CENSUS OF THE POPULATION AND HOUSING; 1970. ESTIMATES OF COVERAGE BY SEX, RACE AND AGE: DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS. (1973).

2. J. Seigel & J. Passel, Coverage of the Hispanic Population of the United States in the 1970 Census: A Methodological Analysis, P-23 CURRENT POPULATION REPORTS, No. 82 (1979).

the extent to which they have been undercounted affects the accuracy of this analysis.

The second way in which the actual population is underestimated is in neglecting the non-residential population. A rural county, for example, may only have 2,000 residents, but at a given time there could be another 2,000 people in the county, working, driving through, eating in restaurants, staying in motels, camping, and in other ways being temporarily involved in the life of the county. Although the individuals change, the number of transients could remain at substantial levels. In addition to the transients, there are the commuters who routinely enter the counties from Mexico or an adjacent county, but are not counted in the resident population. Taking into account transients and commuters, the rural counties along the border may not be quite as bare of human life and activities as the number of residents indicates.

While the data are not perfect, they do provide a rough idea of the size, distribution and composition of the present Texas border population, and they allow rough projections of what this population will be like in the year 2000.

#### SIZE AND DISTRIBUTION OF THE 1980 POPULATION

The total population of the Texas border counties, according to the 1980 census, was 1.2 million residents.<sup>3</sup> A startling illustration of the vast geographic expanse of the Texas border counties is that one of the counties, Brewster, has sufficient area to encompass Connecticut and Rhode Island. I will include as border counties Culberson and Dimmit which do not actually touch the U.S.-Mexico border, but do reach within ten miles of it (see Figure 1). Including Culberson and Dimmit, there are a total of 16 Texas border counties. A graph of the population bears a resemblance, perhaps appropriately, to a pair of longhorns. There is one population peak at El Paso and another population peak at Hidalgo and Cameron Counties with a striking population gap between (see Figure 2). In the gap the only one of thirteen counties with a metropolitan area of over 50,000 people is Webb County. Forty percent of the population in Texas border counties resides in the northwest peak composed of El Paso County, 41 percent resides in the southeast peak which is Hidalgo and Cameron Counties. Those of us from El Paso may tend to underestimate the size of the southeast peak, while those from the southeast peak may tend to think of El Paso as being a small town in New Mexico.

In general the number of residents per square mile is low in Texas border counties, but it would be a misconception to visualize the typical

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3. U.S. BUREAU OF THE CENSUS. 1980 CENSUS OF POPULATION AND HOUSING, PRELIMINARY REPORTS PHC80-P-45 (1981).

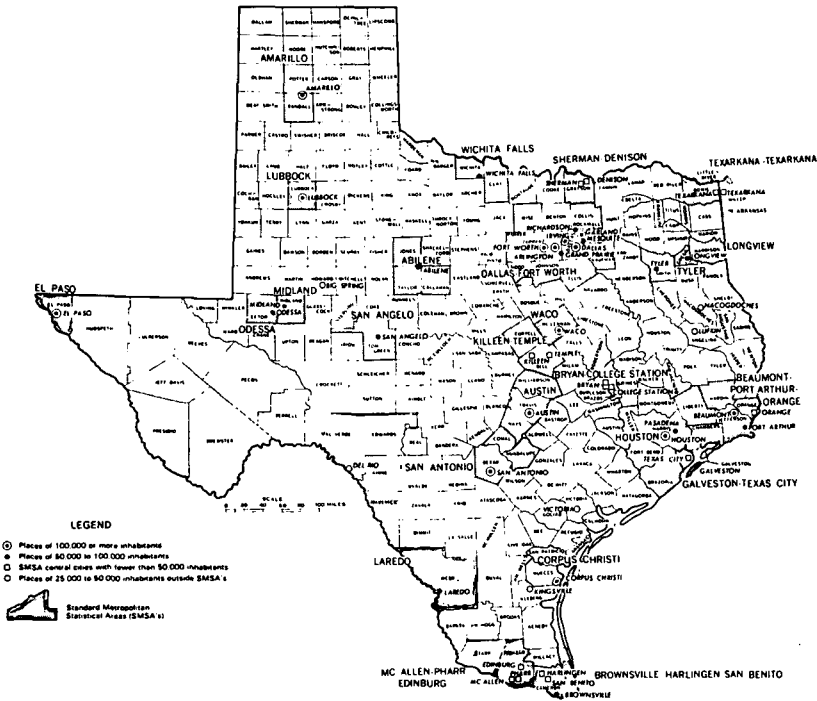


FIGURE 1.

Counties, Metropolitan Areas, and Selected Places in Texas, 1970

resident as dwelling in wide open spaces, herding cattle or tending fields far from neighbors. On the contrary, 89 percent of residents of the Texas border counties live in metropolitan areas of over 50,000 population. This is more metropolitan than the general United States in which only 73 percent of the population lives in such metropolitan areas.

Clearly, the most sparsely settled stretch of the Texas border counties, and one of the most sparsely populated areas in the United States, is in the six counties to the southeast of El Paso which together recorded only 22,000 residents in 1980. The effects on the way of life in this arid region of small towns set far apart should be considered in anticipating the consequences of future development along the border.

*Socioeconomic Characteristics of the Population*

The young, the poor, and the Hispanic are higher proportions of the Texas border population than of the United States population. This is hardly surprising, but the magnitude of the differences is noteworthy. In

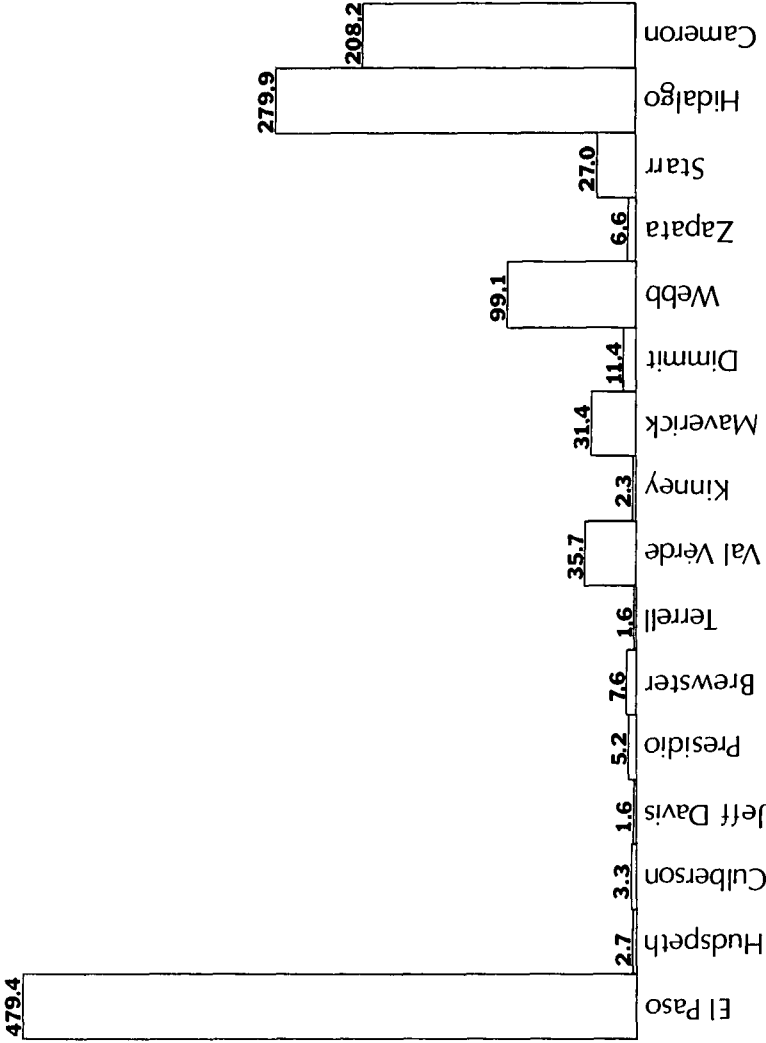


FIGURE 2  
Population (in thousands) of Texas Border Counties, 1980



FIGURE 3  
Population (in thousands) of Texas Border Metropolitan Counties, 1900-2000

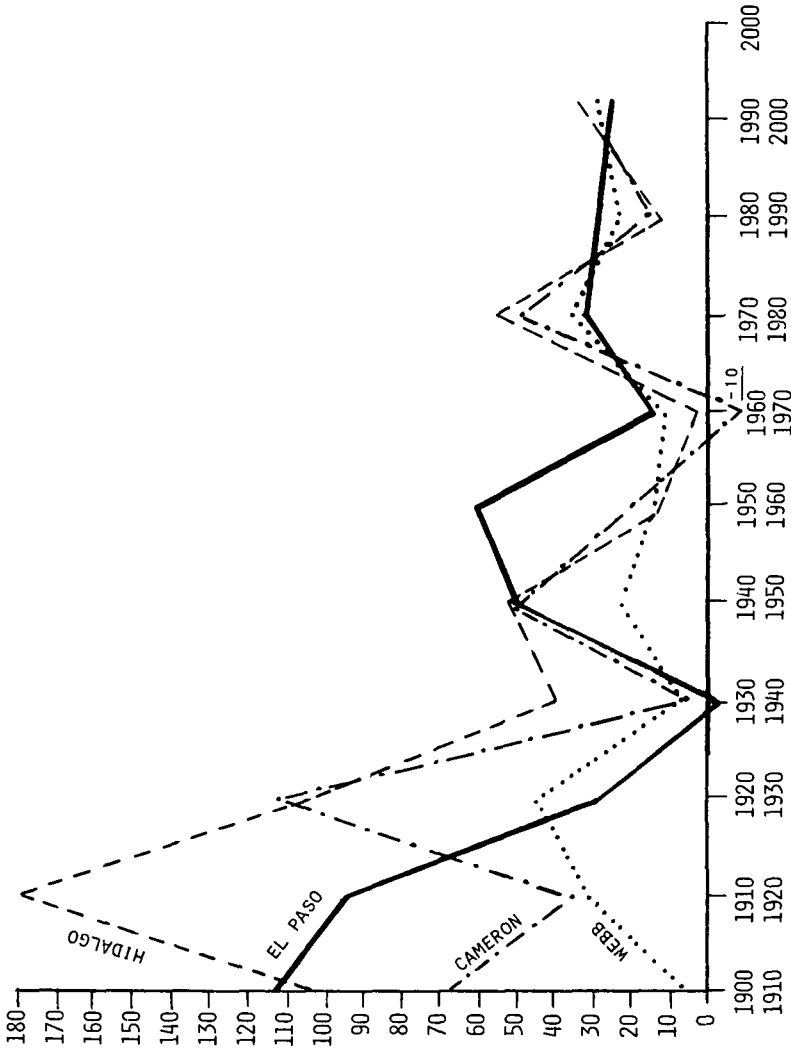


FIGURE 4

Percent Change in Texas Border Metropolitan Counties, 1900-2000 Projection

1970 the median age for the border counties was 22, compared to 28 for the United States.<sup>4</sup> In 1977 estimated per capita annual income of the border counties was \$3,400, compared to \$5,800 for the United States. In 1970 the recorded percent Hispanic of the border counties' population was 69 percent, compared to five percent for the total United States. Within the area there is a very strong negative correlation between percent Hispanic origin and per capita income. The per capita income is deflated by the larger family size of Hispanics, but Stoddard's analysis of family income along the border clearly reveals the much higher percentage of low income families among Hispanics even when one considers total income instead of income per person.<sup>5</sup>

All seven counties with less than 65 percent of the population of Hispanic origin have per capita incomes of \$3,500 or higher, ranging from \$3,500 in Culberson to \$4,500 in Terrell. All nine counties with more than 65 percent of the population of Hispanic origin have less than \$3,500 per capita income, ranging from \$2,200 in Starr to \$3,300 in Presidio. Starr, the county with the lowest income per capita, has the highest percent of Hispanic origin persons, 98 percent. El Paso and Maverick Counties had very similar labor forces in terms of their distribution in various economic sectors; 17 percent in manufacturing; 23–24 percent in wholesale and retail trade, 6–8 percent in services, 10–12 percent in education, 6–7 percent in construction, and 20–23 percent in government. Yet the per capita income was \$1,700 greater in El Paso than in Maverick. This 68 percent difference may be related to Maverick having a 90 percent Hispanic origin population, compared to 57 percent for El Paso.

### *Population Growth 1900–1980*

One does not think of the Texas border counties as being a population boom area throughout the twentieth century. Yet, starting from a base of 106,000 in 1900, the region's population has grown by 1,100 percent since 1900 (see Table 1). In the same time period the total United States population grew by 200 percent. The highest rate of growth for the Texas border counties was from 1910 to 1920, when the population increased by 62 percent; and the lowest growth rate was 1960 to 1970, where it was only 6 percent (see Table 3). This low growth of the 1960s, however, did not continue during the 1970s. From 1970 to 1980 the recorded population increased by 41 percent, compared to 11 percent for the total United States. The only decade in which the population growth of the

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4. U.S. BUREAU OF THE CENSUS, COUNTY & CITY DATA BOOK, 1972, Table 2 (1973); U.S. BUREAU OF THE CENSUS, 1977 *Per Capita Money Income* in P-25, CURRENT POPULATION REPORTS No. 885 (February 1980); and Texas Employment Commission (1980).

5. Stoddard, *Patterns of Poverty Along the U.S.-Mexico Border*, Center for Interamerican Studies, The University of Texas at El Paso (1978).



TABLE 1  
POPULATION (IN THOUSANDS) OF TEXAS BORDER COUNTIES, 1900-2000

	1900	1910	1920	1930	1940	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990 pro- jected	2000 pro- jected
El Paso	24.9	52.6	101.9	131.6	131.1	195.0	314.1	359.3	479.4	618.6	792.4
Hudspeth	—	—	1.0	3.7	3.1	4.3	3.3	2.4	2.7	3.9	5.0
Culberson	—	—	.9	1.2	1.7	1.8	2.8	3.4	3.3	5.6	7.3
Jeff Davis	1.2	1.7	1.4	1.8	2.4	2.1	1.6	1.5	1.6	2.2	2.8
Presidio	3.7	5.2	12.2	10.2	10.9	7.4	5.5	4.8	5.2	7.4	9.4
Brewster	2.4	5.2	4.8	6.6	6.5	7.3	6.4	7.8	7.6	13.9	18.0
Terrell	—	1.4	1.6	2.7	3.0	3.2	2.6	1.9	1.6	2.9	3.5
Val Verde	5.3	8.6	12.7	14.9	15.5	16.6	24.5	27.5	35.7	46.2	59.7
Kinney	2.4	3.4	3.7	4.0	4.5	2.7	2.5	2.0	2.3	2.9	3.6
Maverick	4.1	5.2	7.4	6.1	10.1	12.3	14.5	18.1	31.4	31.9	41.6
Dimmit	1.1	3.5	5.3	8.8	8.5	10.7	10.1	9.0	11.4	15.3	19.8
Webb	21.9	22.5	29.2	42.1	45.9	56.1	64.8	72.9	99.1	124.2	160.8
Zapata	4.8	3.8	2.9	2.9	3.9	4.4	4.4	4.4	6.6	6.5	8.2
Starr	11.5	13.2	11.1	11.4	13.3	13.9	17.1	17.7	27.0	29.9	38.7
Hidalgo	6.8	13.7	38.1	77.0	106.1	160.4	180.9	181.5	279.9	313.5	406.3
Cameron	16.1	27.2	36.7	77.5	83.2	125.2	151.1	140.4	208.2	237.1	306.1
Total	106	167	270	402	449	623	806	855	1,203	1,462	1,883

Source: 1980—U.S. Bureau of Census, 1980 Census of Population and Housing Preliminary Reports, PHC80-P45.

1970—U.S. Bureau of the Census, Census of Population: 1970, General Population Characteristics Final Report PC(1)-B45 Texas, Table 35.

1950-1960—U.S. Bureau of the Census, U.S. Census of Population: 1960, Vol. I, Characteristics of the Population, Part 45, Texas, Table 27

1930-1940—U.S. Bureau of the Census, U.S. Census of Population: 1940, Characteristics of the Population, Texas, Table 22.

1910-1920—U.S. Bureau of the Census, Census of Population 1920, Volume III, Composition and Characteristics of the Population by States, Table 9.

1900—U.S. Bureau of the Census, Census of Population 1900, Vol. I, Part I, Table 4.

TABLE 2  
SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS OF TEXAS BORDER COUNTIES

County	Percent Spanish origin 1970 <sup>1</sup>	Per capita income 1977:	Percent unemployed 1980 <sup>2</sup>	Median Age 1970 <sup>1</sup>	Manufacturing	Wholesale & retail trade	Percentage of Employed in Selected Economic Sectors, <sup>1</sup> 1970				
							Services	Education	Construction	Government	
El Paso	57	4,200	9	22	17	23	8	10	7	23	
Hudspeth	61	3,600	4	21	3	18	9	11	9	23	
Culberson	50	3,500	7	22	3	27	13	9	17	19	
Jeff Davis	64	3,800	3	34	—	11	12	16	10	39	
Presidio	75	3,300	6	29	—	25	13	6	9	21	
Brewster	48	3,800	3	22	2	22	11	23	6	32	
Terrell	42	4,500	4	29	1	18	11	11	4	14	
Val Verde	57	3,800	11	23	9	22	9	10	9	26	
Kinney	72	3,000	5	25	—	15	14	8	6	20	
Maverick	90	2,500	27	19	17	24	6	12	6	20	
Dimmit	82	2,800	10	21	6	23	10	11	7	20	
Webb	86	2,900	12	22	7	29	10	9	7	22	
Zapata	92	3,000	12	28	12	13	3	18	15	28	
Starr	98	2,200	39	22	3	18	6	20	6	27	
Hidalgo	79	2,800	14	21	7	28	8	10	6	16	
Cameron	76	3,000	10	22	11	25	9	10	7	17	
Total Texas	69	3,400	12	22	12	25	8	10	7	21	
Border Counties	18	5,633	5	27	19	22	9	8	8	16	
Total U.S.	5	5,751	7	28	26	20	8	8	6	16	

Source: <sup>1</sup>U.S. Bureau of the Census, *County and City Data Book, 1972*. U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 1973. Table 2.

<sup>2</sup>U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports, Series P-25, No. 885, February 1980, "1977 Per Capita Money Income."*

<sup>3</sup>These are annual averages for 1980 given by the Texas Employment Commission.

TABLE 3

## PERCENT CHANGE IN TEXAS BORDER COUNTIES' POPULATION, 1900 TO 2000 PROJECTION

	1900- 1910	1910- 1920	1920- 1930	1930- 1940	1940- 1950	1950- 1960	1960- 1970	1970- 1980	1980- 1990 pro- jected	1990- 2000 pro- jected
El Paso	111	94	29	-1	49	61	14	33	29	28
Hudspeth	—	—	286	-16	37	-22	-27	12	44	28
Culberson	—	—	35	35	10	53	21	-3	70	30
Jeff Davis	46	-14	25	32	-12	-24	-6	7	38	27
Presidio	42	134	-17	8	-33	-26	-12	8	42	27
Brewster	122	-8	37	2	13	12	21	-3	83	29
Terrell	—	12	67	11	8	-19	-26	-16	81	21
Val Verde	64	48	18	4	8	47	12	30	29	29
Kinney	39	10	6	14	-41	-8	-20	15	26	25
Maverick	27	44	-18	65	22	18	25	73	2	30
Dimmit	213	53	67	-3	25	-52	-10	27	34	29
Webb	3	30	45	9	22	15	12	36	25	29
Zapata	20	-23	-2	37	13	0	0	50	-2	26
Starr	15	-16	3	17	5	23	3	53	11	29
Hidalgo	101	177	102	38	51	13	0	54	12	30
Cameron	69	35	112	7	50	21	-7	48	14	29
Total Texas										
Border Counties	58	62	49	12	39	29	6	41	22	29
Texas	28	20	25	10	20	24	17	27		
United States	21	15	16	7	14	19	13	11		

Source: See Table 1.

TABLE 4  
 NATURAL INCREASE AND NET MIGRATION OF TEXAS BORDER  
 COUNTIES, 1950-1980

County	Percent Net Migration			Percent Natural Increase		
	1950- 1960 <sup>1</sup>	1960- 1970 <sup>2</sup>	1970- 1980 <sup>3</sup>	1950- 1960 <sup>1</sup>	1960- 1970 <sup>2</sup>	1970- 1980 <sup>3</sup>
El Paso	15.7	-9.4	9.1	45.4	23.8	20.9
Hudspeth	-49.3	-45.2	-1.9	27.1	16.8	16.7
Culberson	21.4	-5.0	-9.6	31.7	27.7	20.3
Jeff Davis	-46.5	-12.9	-5.9	22.2	9.4	6.0
Presidio	-45.3	-26.1	-19.0	19.6	14.8	12.8
Brewster	-31.3	4.1	-14.1	19.4	16.8	9.6
Terrell	-34.8	-32.8	-19.9	16.3	7.4	6.4
Val Verde	9.8	-16.3	-3.5	37.3	28.6	24.2
Kinney	-25.4	-31.6	4.4	17.4	13.4	7.8
Maverick	-25.4	-10.4	22.6	43.4	35.1	23.6
Dimmit	-27.7	-28.9	12.2	22.5	18.4	19.1
Webb	-19.5	-15.0	-2.1	34.9	27.5	24.9
Zapata	-24.8	-16.7	22.9	24.6	15.8	13.7
Starr	-11.0	-22.5	5.3	33.8	25.8	26.9
Hidalgo	-23.7	-23.9	10.4	36.5	24.2	27.9
Cameron	-18.6	-29.8	8.6	39.3	22.7	25.3
Total	-9.4	-18.0	7.6	38.8	22.0	23.4
Texas	1.5	2.1	9.8	22.8	14.8	10.7
U.S.	1.8	1.8	2.1	16.7	12.6	6.6

Source: <sup>1</sup>U.S. Bureau of the Census. *County and City Data Book, 1967*. U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 1967, Table 2.

<sup>2</sup>U.S. Bureau of the Census. *County and City Data Book, 1977*. U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 1977, Table 2.

<sup>3</sup>U.S. Bureau of the Census. Current Population Reports, Series P-25, No. 873, June 1980. "Estimates of the Population of Counties and Metropolitan Areas: July 1, 1977 and 1978." Table 8.

Texas border counties was less than that of the total United States was in the 1960s. Perhaps there was an unusually large undercount in the 1970 census. Hidalgo and Cameron Counties, for example, show no growth between 1960 and 1970, but very substantial growth between 1970 and 1980. If the slump in growth during the 1960s is not an undercount artifact, I would attribute it to a regional severe economic recession; and I would welcome the insights of others at this conference as to why the recession occurred, and the likelihood of a reoccurrence. The Texas border counties suffer chronically from economic poverty and unemployment, but the 1960s appear to have been especially hard times.

The steady growth in population masks the fact that often there has been net out-migration from Texas border counties (see Table 4). It has

been primarily high rates of natural growth that have maintained steady population growth since 1950. In the 1950s all but El Paso and Val Verde Counties had negative net migration, and the overall decennial net migration rate was -9 percent. This was more than offset, however, by a robust natural increase during the decade of 39 percent, so that even with the negative net migration the population of the region grew by 29 percent. During the 1960s every county but Brewster had negative net migration, and for the total region there was 18 percent negative net migration. The negative net migration was, again, more than offset by natural increase, which was 22 percent for the decade. The decline in the natural increase rate from 39 percent in the 1950s to 22 percent in the 1960s was due to a decline in the crude birth rate. Part of this decline was due to lower total fertility rates, and part of the decline was due to a decrease in the proportion of childbearing age couples in the population because of out-migration during the fifties and sixties.

Estimates for 1978 by the Bureau of the Census<sup>6</sup> of migration and natural increase rates in the Texas border counties indicated net migration would be positive and about eight percent for the 1970s, while the natural increase would be 23 percent. The actual population increase for the decade was recorded as 41 percent which, presuming that natural increase was being recorded correctly, suggests that net migration was actually closer to 18 percent than the estimated 8 percent. Another explanation, however, is that the 1980 census was more accurate than the 1970 census and that about 10 percent of the difference between 1970 and the 1980 population is due to a more complete count of the actual resident population in 1980. During the 1970s eight of the sixteen counties recorded positive net migration according to the estimates of the Bureau of the Census; and especially significant for growth, all four of the metropolitan areas of over 50,000 people recorded positive net migration. This suggests that the tide of migration has turned positive for the border counties. Four of the ten non-metropolitan counties recorded positive net migration according to the Bureau of the Census estimates for 1978, and probably more will show positive net migration according to the actual 1980 census figures. This is in accord with national trends which shown non-metropolitan counties generally receiving positive net migration during the 1970s for the first time since the 1930s.<sup>7</sup>

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6. U.S. BUREAU OF THE CENSUS, ESTIMATES OF THE POPULATION OF COUNTIES AND METROPOLITAN AREAS, JULY 1, 1977 and 1978, CURRENT POPULATION REPORTS P-25, No. 873, Table 8 (June 1980).

7. Long, *What the Census Will Tell Us About Centrifification*. 2 AM. DEMOGRAPHICS, No. 8, 18-21 (1980).

## SIZE AND DISTRIBUTION OF THE POPULATION IN 2000

One demographer has written of population projections that:

Demographers are called on not only to furnish data about the present size and composition of the population and their past development, but also to estimate their future trend. Such prognosis, however it is made, is likely to be incorrect, but this does not mean that it is useless.<sup>8</sup>

The utility of these often incorrect projections is that they are usually better than blind guesses, and they enable planners to see if reasonably expected changes in the population will require socioeconomic infrastructure adjustments.

The fallibility of demographers is even more evident when we try to make projections for units as small as counties, which can experience great percentage growths or decreases in population because of net migration. It is unlikely that the total population of the United States will double in the next twenty years, or that it will decline in size, but for counties with population of less than 500,000 such shifts in the next twenty years are quite possible.

I did several projections for the Texas border counties, the primary difference being varying assumptions about future fertility and migration. For succinctness and because I intend to redo these projections when age data are available from the 1980 census, in this preliminary report I am presenting only my "middle" projection which predicts a 120 percent increase in the population of the Texas border counties between 1970 and 2000 (see Table 1). The high projection had a decennial growth rate about one-third greater than the middle projection and the low projection had a decennial growth rate about one-third less than the middle projection.

The most standard method of projection is the component method in which estimates of age specific fertility, mortality, and migration rates are projected, starting from a population's base size and age composition. At this time the 1980 age composition of the Texas border counties is not yet available from the 1980 census, so to use the components method entails beginning in 1970. Perhaps the only advantage to this approach was that it illustrated how greatly the recorded population changed between 1970 and 1980, providing evidence that there may have been a substantial undercount in 1970, because the recorded increases far exceeded the Bureau of the Census estimates of natural increase and net migration (note the difference between Tables 3 and 4 for 1970 to 1980). The projected increases for 1990 seem small because the census count

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8. W. PETERSEN, POPULATION (1975).

TABLE 5  
COMPONENTS OF MIDDLE POPULATION PROJECTION FROM 1970-  
2000

<i>Female</i>	<i>Proportion surviving age x to x + 5</i>	<i>Proportion change per 5 year interval due to migration</i>	<i>Age specific fertility per woman during interval</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Proportion surviving age x to x + 5</i>	<i>Proportion change per 5 year interval due to migration</i>
0-4	.980	.050		0-4	.975	.050
5-9	.996	.030		5-9	.995	.030
10-14	.998	.030		10-14	.997	.030
15-19	.998	.060	.350	15-19	.996	.100
20-24	.997	.060	.955	20-24	.993	.100
25-29	.996	.050	.870	25-29	.992	.080
30-34	.995	.040	.520	30-34	.991	.050
35-39	.992	.040	.245	35-39	.989	.040
40-44	.988	.030	.075	40-44	.982	.030
45-49	.982	.015	.005	45-49	.970	.015
50-54	.973	.015		50-54	.950	.015
55-59	.960	.015		55-59	.924	.015
60-64	.939	.018		60-64	.888	.018
65-69	.906	.015		65-69	.836	.015
70-74	.850	.015		70-74	.768	.015
75-79	.763	.015		75-79	.672	.015
80+	.531	.015		80+	.488	.015

1980 population was 10 percent higher than the projected population. Table 1 presents the census count population for 1980 and the projections based on 1970 for 1990 and 2000. In addition to admitting fallibility, a projector is obligated to make explicit what the assumptions are about fertility, mortality, and migration so that people who disagree with these assumptions can adjust their own estimates accordingly.

In 1970 the total fertility rates (a projection of the average number of children that would be born per woman if current age specific fertility rates continued) of El Paso, Webb, Hidalgo, and Cameron were 3.4, 4.7, 4.7, and 4.2 respectively. These rates are quite high compared to contemporary total United States rates, which reached 3.6 during the baby boom, but currently are only 1.8. I assumed that Texas border counties would move down toward, but not reach, U.S. norms, so I used a total fertility rate of 3.0 for my projections (see Table 5). I did not vary the total fertility rate by county or decade in the preliminary middle projection, and 3.0 probably was too low for the 1970s and may be too high for the 1990s. In some of my other preliminary projections in which total fertility was 4.0 in the 1970s, 3.0 in the 1980s, and 2.2 in the 1990s the

overall thirty year effect was not greatly different from a constant 3.0 rate.

Siegel and Passell<sup>9</sup> estimated from Texas Department of Health records that the life expectancies in 1970 of Spanish surname females and males were 73 and 67 years respectively. For survival rates in my middle projection I altered a 1960 New York State Life table that approximated these life expectancies to adjust for probable decreases in infant mortality (see Table 5).

Future migration rates are especially difficult to project accurately, and errors in anticipating migration trends will probably be the most serious source of errors in my middle projection. Based on the 1970–1980 net migration of the four border metropolitan counties, I decided that it would be reasonable to expect decennial net migration to be positive ten percent for border counties from 1970–2000. From differences by age in net migration for El Paso and the total United States during the 1960s, I weighted net migration 10 year increases to allow for the greater migration rates of young people (see Table 5).

One reason to expect continued positive net migration for Texas border counties is the rapid growth of the Mexican communities bordering Texas. In many cases the Mexican cities are larger than the Texas cities they border, and provide both migrants and economic stimulation for further growth (see Figure 5).

The middle population projection yields a demographic profile of the Texas border counties' population in 2000 which is similar in geographic distribution to the 1980 population, but substantially greater in size (see Figure 6). The projected age composition (see Figures 7–10 and Table 6) of the counties in 2000 is generally older, reflecting the projected lower fertility rates; but there were some counties that had relatively old populations in 1970, because of decades of out-migration, which will be younger in 2000 if they experience the projected positive net migration from 1970 to 2000.

I will not venture to project what the precise socioeconomic composition of the Texas border counties will be in 2000. But I think that it will likely remain one of the most poverty-stricken regions in the United States, and in concluding I would like to urge that we address this problem.

### CONCLUSION

One could argue that the human population of a region is both one of its resources and the focal point of its needs. It seems appropriate, therefore, to urge that we keep saliently in mind the human resources and

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9. Siegel & Passel, *supra* note 2.



human suffering of the Texas border counties' population as we discuss the future development of the region. Demographics reveal the traces of the prosperity and hard times of the populations being studied, and relative to the rest of the United States, this appears to be a very hard pressed population.

When we consider transboundary resource needs and issues, perhaps we should raise the question of whose needs are paramount? If the residents of a region should have priority in planning its development, and if goals are assessed in a process in which resident's needs are weighted equally, then we clearly should give special attention here to the resource needs of the young, the poor, and the Hispanic. One could challenge the values of such a Balkanized, democratic philosophy. The Texas border counties are part of a larger, more complex economic, ecological, and political system. For example, fining growers in the area for employing undocumented workers could help young, poor, Hispanic Americans, but also worsen relations between Mexico and the United States, and deprive Mexican agricultural laborers of needed employment. Whose needs are foremost? I hope the answer to this questions is more than an academic point.

#### LA POBLACION DE LAS CIUDADES TEJANAS A LO LARGO DE LA FRONTERA MEXICANA

La población de la región fronteriza de Tejas está concentrada en sólo tres de once condados, principalmente en áreas metropolitanas. Los jóvenes, los pobres y los hispánicos forman la mayor parte de la población. El gran crecimiento de la población ha disfrazado la gran migración desde 1950, pero una encuesta de 1978 muestra que la migración se ha tomado positiva para los condados fronterizos. Se ha predecido un incremento del 120% en la población para el año 2000. Los condados tejanos serán seguramente una de las más pobres regiones de los EUA, y debemos tener eso cuenta cuando se decidan los requerimientos transfronterizos.

##### *Tamaño y Distribución de la Población de 1980*

En 1980, 1.2 millones de residentes habitaban la región fronteriza de Tejas. Aunque trece condados tocan la frontera, el 81% de la población fronteriza vive en sólo tres condados: El Paso, Hidalgo y Cameron. La mayoría de la población vive en áreas metropolitanas de más de 50,000 personas. Al sudeste de El Paso, sin embargo, existen asentamientos pequeños y escasamente poblados, en una región vasta y árida.

##### *Características socioeconómicas de la población*

Los jóvenes, los pobres y los hispanos proporcionalmente conforman más grandes proporciones de la población fronteriza de Tejas que aquellos del resto de la población de USA. Las familias de bajos ingresos son generalmente hispánicas, los condados con población hispánica mayoritaria tienen ingresos per cápita menores de \$3,500.

*Crecimiento de la población 1900-1980*

La población de la región fronteriza de Tejas ha crecido en un 1100% desde 1900, en tanto que la población de los EUA sólo en un 200%.

El crecimiento constante encubre el hecho de que ha habido emigración neta de estos condados. Las tasas del alto crecimiento natural han mantenido la población desde 1950. Durante los años sesenta la migración negativa neta para toda la región fué de 18%, pero ésta fué más que compensada por el crecimiento natural. También han disminuido las tasas naturales de crecimiento, menos parejas en edad de procrear debido a la emigración, y un declinamiento de las tasas de fertilidad.

Una estimación de la Oficina de Censos en 1978, sugiere que la corriente de la migración se volvió positiva para los condados fronterizos. Muestra que la mitad de los condados y las áreas metropolitanas tienen migración neta positiva. Aún los condados no metropolitanos recibieron migración neta positiva por primera vez desde los treinta.

*Tamaño y distribución de la población en el año 2000*

Las proyecciones presentadas permite a los planeadores ver razonablemente cambios esperados. La falibilidad está al proyectar unidades tan pequeñas como condados, que pueden experimentar cambios rápidos en la población debido a la migración neta.

Estoy presentando sólo proyección de población "media," debido a las estadísticas incompletas de 1980. Predigo un incremento del 120% entre 1970 y el año 2000, pero la alta o baja proyección puede ser mayor o menor en una tercera parte.

El método principal de la proyección que he usado comienza desde el tamaño y edad base de la población. Las proyecciones se han basado en las siguientes hipótesis: 1) Las tasas altas de fertilidad disminuirán, 2) Las expectativas de vida de las personas con apellido español eran de 73 años para las mujeres y 67 para los hombres y 3) La migración decenal futura sería positiva en un diez por ciento en el año 2000, debido al rápido crecimiento de las comunidades fronterizas mexicanas.

La proyección media para el año 2000 previene un perfil similar en distribución geográfica a 1980, pero substancialmente mayor en tamaño. Los condados de Tejas se quedaran como una de las más pobres regiones en los EUA, y esto debe ser considerado.

Debemos mantener en mente, en forma destacada, tanto los recursos humanos como el sufrimiento humano en esta población sujeta a presiones. Al decidir necesidades transfronterizas espero que el problema de saber de quien son las necesidades más importantes es más que un punto académico. Si las necesidades de los residentes tienen prioridad en el desarrollo planeado, entonces las necesidades de recursos de los jóvenes, los pobres y los hispanos deben recibir atención especial. De todas maneras, los condados son parte de un mayor, y más complejo sistema económico, ecológico y político, que toma en cuenta las relaciones México-Estados Unidos, productividad agrícola de Norteamérica y el empleo de ciudadanos mexicanos.

TABLE 6  
MIDDLE PROJECTION AGE SEX STRUCTURE BY COUNTY

	1990		2000	
	Female	Male	Female	Male
<i>El Paso</i>				
Total Population	306,300	312,300	388,900	403,400
Percent by Age				
0-4	12	12	11	11
5-9	11	11	10	10
10-14	10	10	10	10
15-19	9	9	10	10
20-24	7	8	9	9
25-29	8	9	8	8
30-34	9	9	6	7
35-39	7	8	7	7
40-44	6	7	7	8
45-49	4	4	6	6
50-54	4	3	5	5
55-59	4	3	3	3
60-64	3	3	3	2
65-69	3	2	2	2
70-74	2	1	2	1
75-79	1	1	1	1
80+	1	1	1	1
0-14	33	33	31	31
15-64	61	62	63	65
65+	6	5	6	5
<i>Hudspeth</i>				
Total Population	1952	1980	2468	2539
Percent by Age				
0-4	12	12	11	11
5-9	12	12	10	10
10-14	10	10	10	10
15-19	8	8	10	10
20-24	7	7	9	9
25-29	9	10	7	7
30-34	9	10	6	6
35-39	8	10	8	8
40-44	4	3	8	8
45-49	3	3	7	8
50-54	4	3	3	3
55-59	3	3	3	2
60-64	4	3	3	2
65-69	3	3	2	2
70-74	1	1	2	2
75-79	2	1	1	1
80+	1	1	1	1
0-14	34	34	32	31
15-64	60	60	62	63
65+	7	6	7	5

TABLE 6 (continued)

	1990		2000	
	Female	Male	Female	Male
<i>Culberson</i>				
Total Population	2908	2724	3742	3596
Percent by Age				
0-4	13	14	11	12
5-9	11	13	11	11
10-14	10	11	10	11
15-19	8	9	10	11
20-24	8	9	8	10
25-29	10	11	7	8
30-34	9	11	7	8
35-39	6	8	8	9
40-44	5	4	7	9
45-49	5	5	5	6
50-54	4	3	4	3
55-59	3	3	3	3
60-64	3	3	3	2
65-69	2	2	2	2
70-64	1	2	1	1
75-79	1	1	1	1
80+	1	1	1	1
0-14	34	37	32	34
15-64	61	58	62	61
65+	6	6	5	5
<i>Jeff Davis</i>				
Total Population	1109	1123	1369	1412
Percent by Age				
0-4	12	12	11	11
5-9	11	11	10	10
10-14	9	10	10	10
15-19	8	8	10	10
20-24	7	7	9	9
25-29	8	8	7	7
30-34	9	10	6	6
35-39	7	10	8	8
40-44	4	4	8	8
45-49	4	4	7	8
50-54	4	3	3	3
55-59	3	3	3	2
60-64	4	3	3	2
65-69	4	3	2	2
70-74	2	2	2	2
75-79	2	1	1	1
80+	2	2	1	1
0-14	32	32	32	31
15-64	58	60	62	63
65+	10	8	*7	5

TABLE 6 (continued)

	1990		2000	
	Female	Male	Female	Male
<i>Presidio</i>				
Total Population	3757	3648	4672	4709
Percent by Age				
0-4	12	12	11	11
5-9	11	12	10	10
10-14	10	10	10	10
15-19	8	9	10	10
20-24	7	8	9	9
25-29	8	9	7	8
30-34	8	10	6	7
35-39	8	8	7	7
40-44	5	4	7	8
45-49	4	3	7	6
50-54	3	3	4	3
55-59	3	2	3	2
60-64	4	3	2	2
65-69	3	2	2	1
70-74	2	2	2	2
75-79	2	1	1	1
80+	2	1	2	1
0-14	32	34	31	32
15-64	59	59	61	64
65+	9	7	7	5
<i>Brewster</i>				
Total Population	6967	6909	8944	9037
Percent by Age				
0-4	10	11	12	12
5-9	11	11	10	10
10-14	12	12	9	9
15-19	12	12	9	10
20-24	5	6	10	11
25-29	6	7	10	11
30-34	6	7	4	5
35-39	9	9	5	6
40-44	13	10	5	5
45-49	4	3	7	7
50-54	3	2	10	7
55-59	2	2	3	2
60-64	2	2	2	1
65-69	2	2	1	1
70-74	1	1	1	1
75-79	1	1	1	1
80+	1	1	1	1
0-14	33	34	30	30
15-64	61	60	66	66
65+	5	5	4	4

TABLE 6 (continued)

	1990		2000	
	Female	Male	Female	Male
<i>Terrell</i>				
Total Population	1417	1447	1738	1806
Percent by Age				
0-4	11	11	11	11
5-9	11	11	10	10
10-14	10	10	10	9
15-19	8	8	10	10
20-24	6	8	9	9
25-29	8	10	7	8
30-34	10	10	5	7
35-39	7	8	7	8
40-44	4	3	8	8
45-49	4	3	6	6
50-54	5	4	3	3
55-59	4	4	3	2
60-64	3	3	4	3
65-69	3	2	2	2
70-74	3	2	2	2
75-79	2	2	2	1
80+	2	2	2	1
0-14	32	32	30	30
15-64	58	61	62	64
65+	10	8	8	6
<i>Val Verde</i>				
Total Population	22975	23181	29344	30313
Percent by Age				
0-4	12	12	11	11
5-9	11	11	10	10
10-14	10	10	10	10
15-19	9	9	9	10
20-24	7	8	9	9
25-29	8	10	8	8
30-34	8	9	6	7
35-39	7	7	7	8
40-44	7	9	7	7
45-49	5	4	5	5
50-54	4	3	5	6
55-59	3	0	3	3
60-64	3	2	3	2
65-69	2	2	2	0
70-74	2	1	2	1
75-79	1	0	1	1
80+	1	0	1	1
0-14	33	33	31	31
15-64	61	62	63	66
65+	6	5	6	3

TABLE 6 (continued)

	1990		2000	
	Female	Male	Female	Male
<i>Kinney</i>				
Total Population	1366	1517	1707	1890
Percent by Age				
0-4	13	12	11	10
5-9	12	11	10	10
10-14	10	9	11	10
15-19	7	7	11	10
20-24	6	7	9	9
25-29	10	10	6	6
30-34	10	12	6	6
35-39	8	10	8	8
40-44	5	4	8	10
45-49	3	3	7	8
50-54	0	2	4	3
55-59	0	3	2	2
60-64	4	3	0	2
65-69	4	3	0	2
70-74	2	2	2	2
75-79	2	2	2	1
80+	2	1	2	1
0-14	35	32	32	30
15-64	55	60	62	65
65+	10	7	6	6
<i>Maverick</i>				
Total Population	16147	15724	20753	20832
Percent by Age				
0-4	13	13	11	12
5-9	12	12	11	11
10-14	10	10	10	10
15-19	8	9	10	10
20-24	8	8	9	9
25-29	9	10	7	8
30-34	9	10	7	7
35-39	8	8	7	8
40-44	5	4	7	8
45-49	4	3	6	6
50-54	3	2	4	3
55-59	3	2	3	2
60-64	3	2	2	2
65-69	2	2	2	1
70-74	1	1	2	1
75-79	1	1	1	1
80+	1	1	1	1
0-14	34	36	32	33
15-64	60	60	62	63
65+	6	5	6	4

TABLE 6 (continued)

	1990		2000	
	Female	Male	Female	Male
<i>Dimmit</i>				
Total Population	7652	7609	9811	9998
Percent by Age				
0-4	13	13	11	11
5-9	12	12	11	11
10-14	10	10	10	10
15-19	8	8	10	10
20-24	8	9	9	9
25-29	9	9	7	8
30-34	9	11	7	7
35-39	8	9	8	7
40-44	5	4	7	9
45-49	3	3	6	7
50-54	3	2	4	3
55-59	3	2	3	2
60-64	3	2	2	2
65-69	3	2	2	1
70-74	1	1	2	1
75-79	1	1	1	1
80+	1	1	1	1
0-14	34	35	32	32
15-64	59	60	62	64
65+	6	5	6	4
<i>Webb</i>				
Total Population	62197	62014	79404	81373
Percent by Age				
0-4	12	12	11	11
5-9	11	12	10	10
10-14	10	10	10	10
15-19	8	9	10	10
20-24	8	9	9	9
25-29	9	10	7	8
30-34	9	10	6	7
35-39	7	7	7	8
40-44	6	6	7	8
45-49	4	3	6	6
50-54	3	3	5	5
55-59	3	3	3	2
60-64	3	2	2	2
65-69	2	2	2	2
70-74	2	1	2	1
75-79	1	1	1	1
80+	1	1	1	1
0-14	33	34	32	32
15-64	60	61	62	64
65+	6	4	6	4

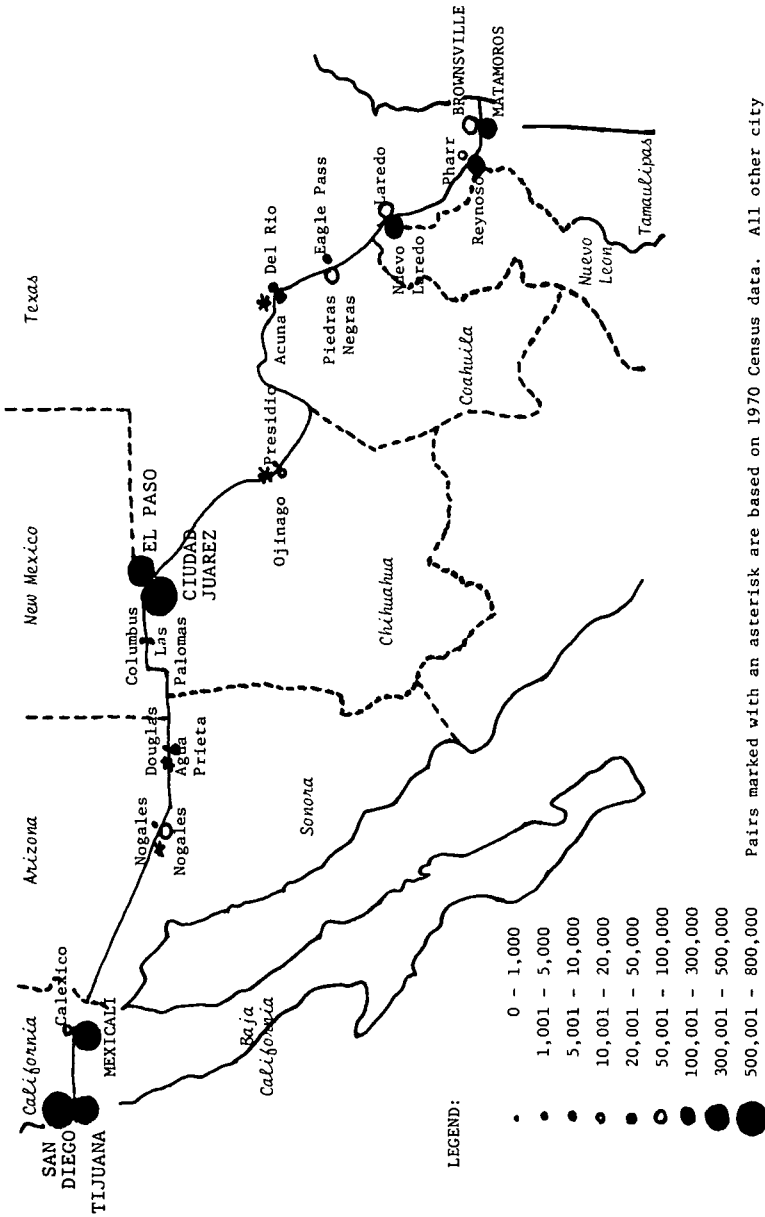


TABLE 6 (continued)

	1990		2000	
	Female	Male	Female	Male
<i>Zapata</i>				
Total Population	3220	3307	4015	4204
Percent by Age				11
0-4	12	12	11	10
5-9	11	11	10	10
10-14	10	10	10	10
15-19	8	8	10	9
20-24	7	9	9	8
25-29	9	10	7	8
30-34	9	10	6	8
35-39	7	9	7	8
40-44	6	4	7	7
45-49	4	4	5	3
50-54	3	3	4	3
55-59	3	2	3	2
60-64	4	2	2	1
65-69	3	2	2	1
70-74	2	2	2	1
75-79	2	2	2	1
80+	2	2		
0-14	33	32	31	31
15-64	59	60	62	65
65+	9	7	7	5
<i>Starr</i>				
Total Population	14998	14939	19133	19554
Percent by Age				
0-4	12	13	11	11
5-9	12	12	11	11
10-14	10	10	10	10
15-19	8	8	10	10
20-24	8	8	9	9
25-29	9	10	7	8
30-34	9	11	7	7
35-39	8	8	8	8
40-44	5	4	8	9
45-49	4	3	6	6
50-54	4	3	4	3
55-59	3	3	3	2
60-64	3	3	3	2
65-69	2	1	2	1
70-74	2	1	2	1
75-79	1	1	1	1
80+	1	1	1	1
0-14	34	35	32	32
15-64	60	60	62	64
65+	6	5	6	4

TABLE 6 (continued)

	1990		2000	
	Female	Male	Female	Male
<i>Hidalgo</i>				
Total Population	157,623	155,853	201,524	204,825
Percent by Age				
0-4	12	13	11	11
5-9	12	12	10	10
10-14	10	11	10	10
15-19	8	9	10	10
20-24	7	8	9	10
25-29	8	10	7	8
30-34	9	10	6	7
35-39	8	9	7	8
40-44	6	5	7	8
45-49	4	3	6	6
50-54	3	3	4	3
55-59	3	2	3	2
60-64	3	2	2	2
65-69	2	2	2	1
70-74	1	1	3	1
75-79	1	1	1	1
80+	1	1	1	1
0-14	34	35	32	32
15-64	60	60	6	64
65+	6	5	6	4
<i>Cameron</i>				
Total Population	119,999	117,083	152,438	153,671
Percent by Age				
0-4	12	13	11	11
5-9	11	12	10	11
10-14	10	10	10	10
15-19	8	9	10	10
20-24	7	8	9	10
25-29	9	10	7	8
30-34	9	10	6	7
35-39	8	8	7	8
40-44	5	4	7	8
45-49	4	3	6	6
50-54	3	3	4	3
55-59	3	2	3	2
60-64	3	3	3	2
65-69	2	2	2	1
70-74	2	1	2	1
75-79	1	1	1	1
80+	1	1	1	1
0-14	34	35	32	32
15-64	60	60	62	64
65+	7	5	6	4



Pairs marked with an asterisk are based on 1970 Census data. All other city sizes based on 1979 estimates.  
 U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development, Office of International Affairs.

**FIGURE 5**  
**U.S.-Mexico Border Population Centers**

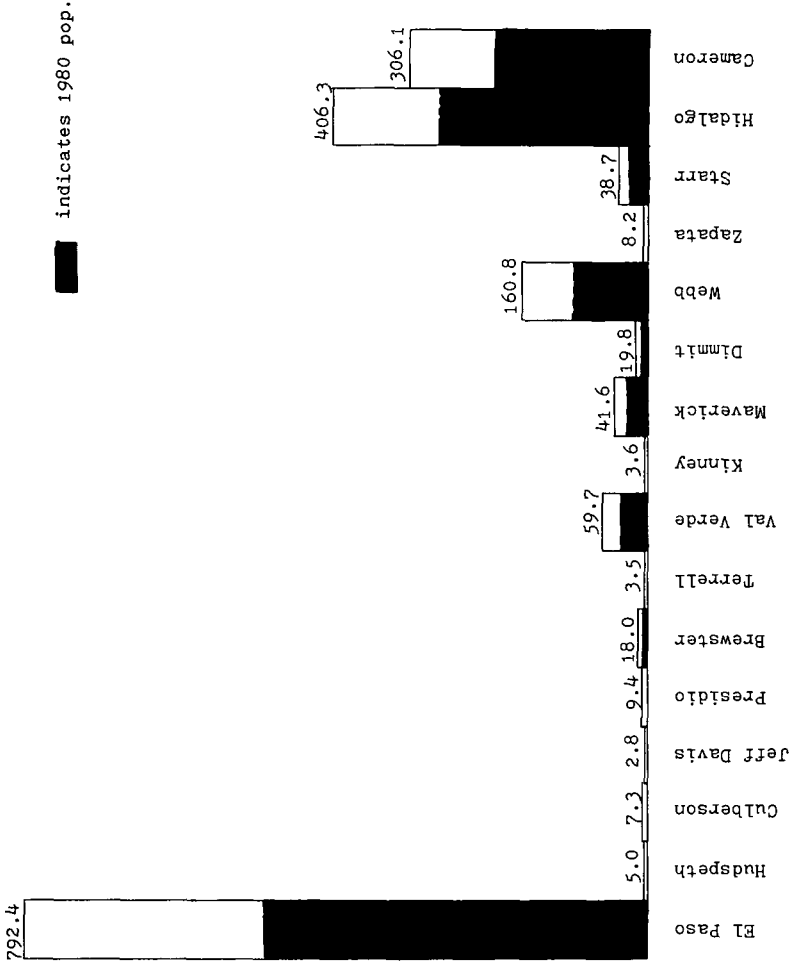


FIGURE 6  
Population (in thousands) of Texas Border Counties, 2000

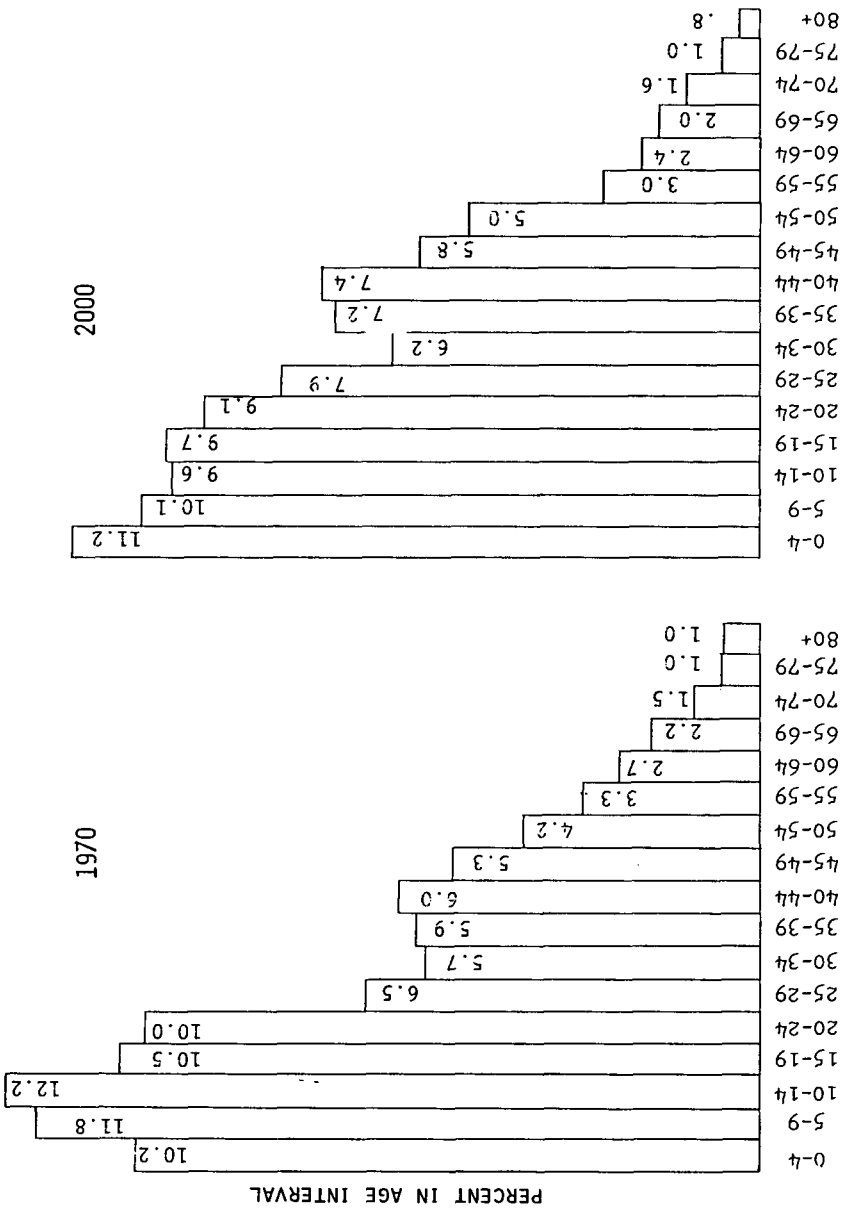


FIGURE 7  
Age Structure of El Paso County, 1970 and 2000

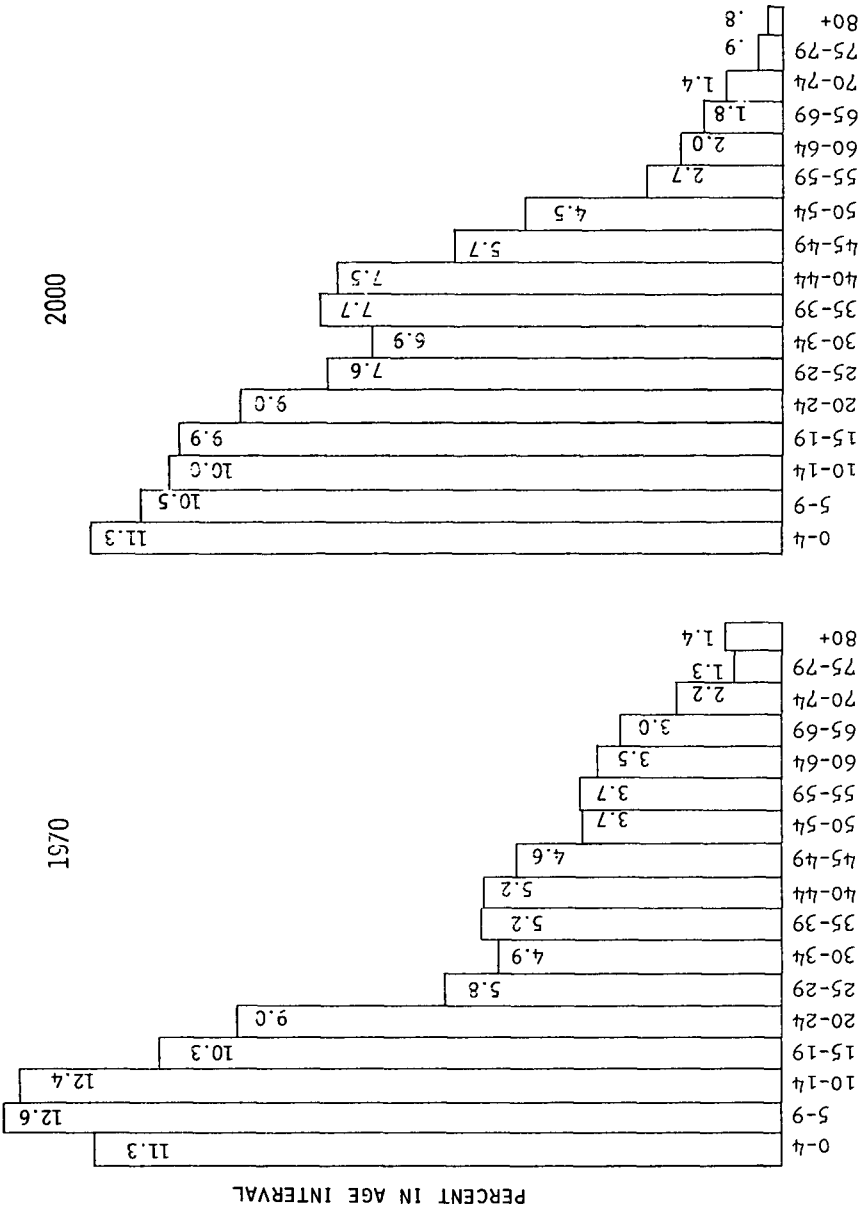


FIGURE 8

Age Structure of Webb County, 1970 and 2000

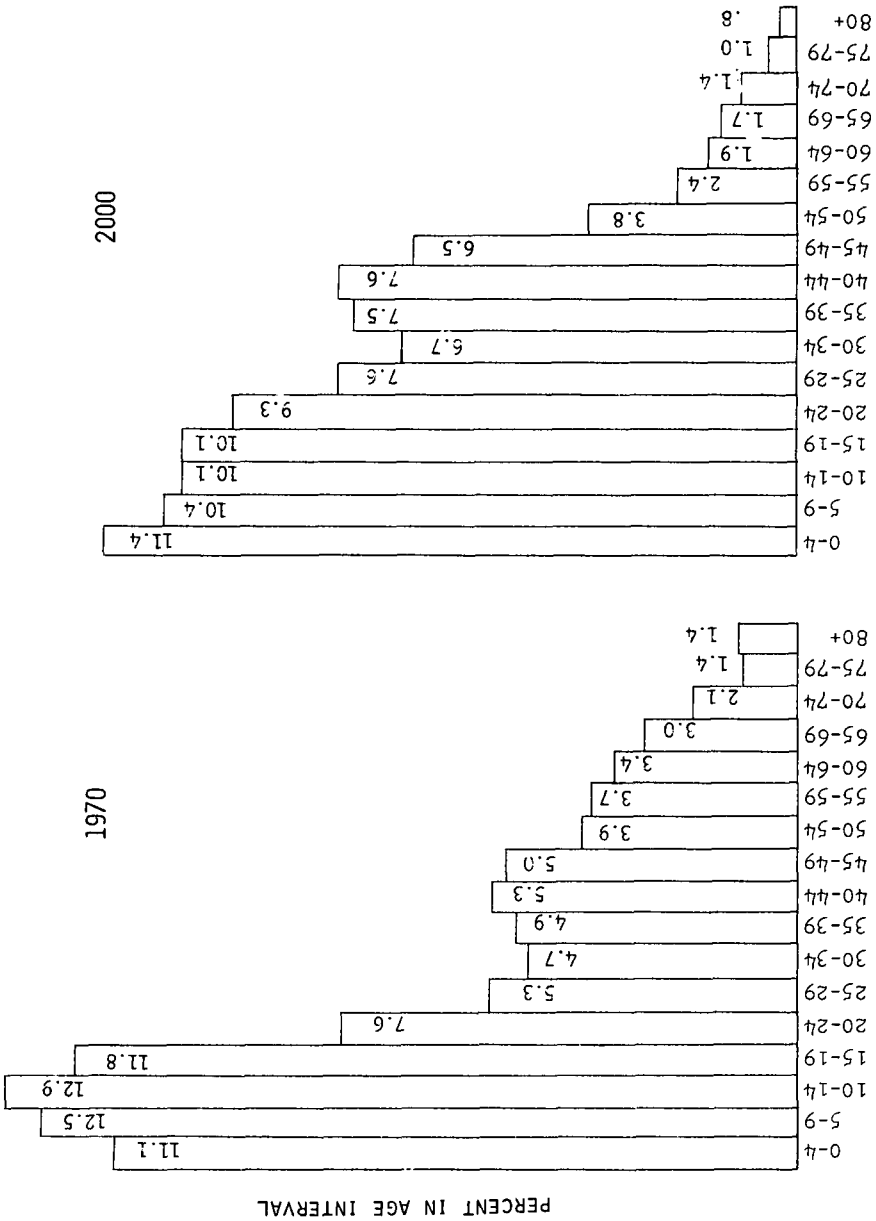


FIGURE 9  
Age Structure of Hidalgo County, 1970 and 2000

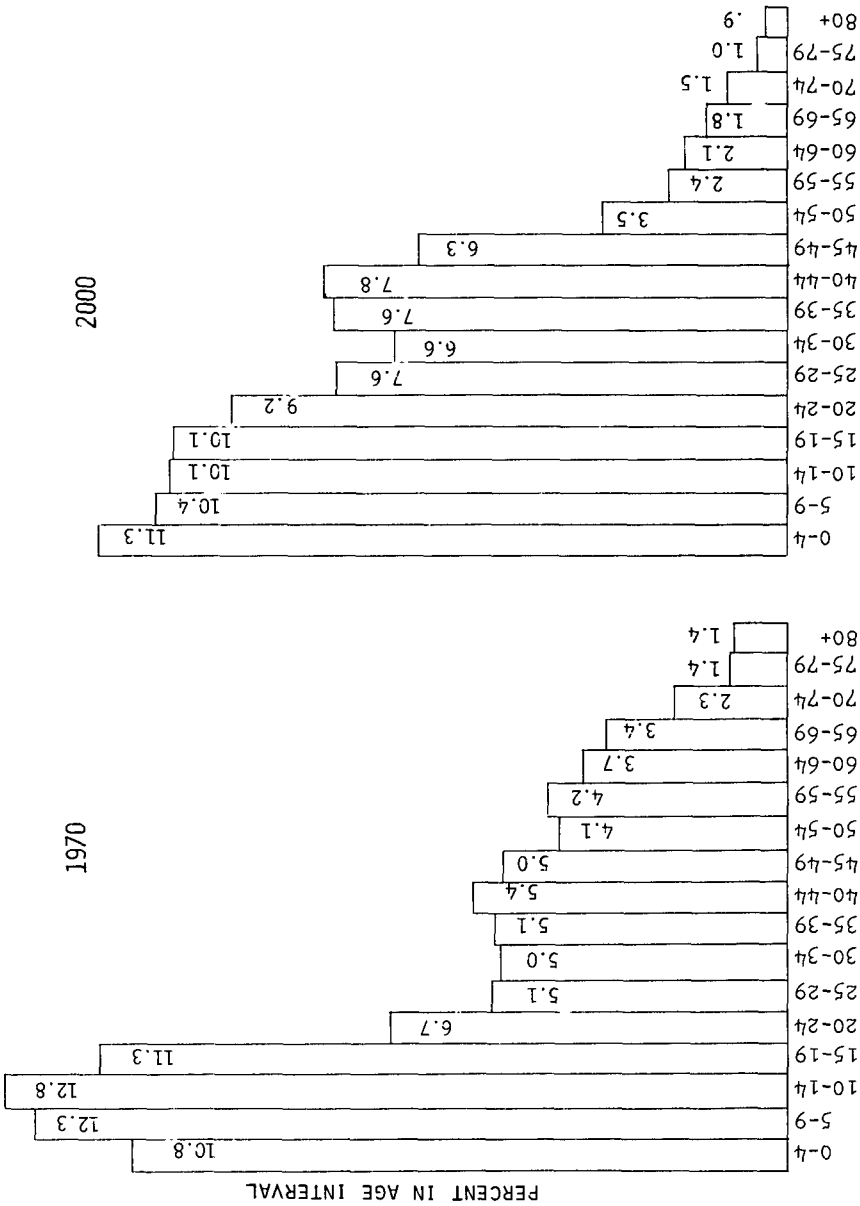


FIGURE 10

Age Structure of Cameron County, 1970 and 2000