



# Poor America: A Comparative-Historical Study of Poverty in the U.S. and Western Europe

*Samuel J. Eldersveld*

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Poor America describes the sharp contrast in the extent of poverty between the United States and six Western European countries. While 36 million Americans live below the poverty line, a much smaller percent of Western Europeans struggle with the same problem. Samuel J. Eldersveld seeks to discover why this variance exists by exploring various theories. To explain the larger percentage of American poor, he tackles the history of poverty in each of the featured countries along with examining the 'system theory' approach, the role of values, the political elite character in the United States compared to Europe, and the differential robes of the business elites in these countries. Poor America follows the issue of poverty through the present day, discussing proposals and prospects for reform in poverty relief in the United States.

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