

Let us now praise our paper of record: The New York Times confronts America's unpleasant facts

By now the effects of what those numbers don't reveal are felt in the bones and marrow of those suffering from the effects. And in four articles between April 21 and May 10, all on page 1, the Times painted vivid portraits of hardship and hopelessness now rampant from the dirt poor in West Virginia to the once comfortable middle class in California. The first piece, "50 Years Later, Hardship Hits Back. Poorest Counties Are Still Losing in War on Want," (April 21) describes life in McDowell County, West Virginia, the poorest county in the state, "emblematic of entrenched American poverty for more than half a century." After President John F. Kennedy visited this county, he established the federal food stamp program with his first executive order. And it was the squalor in this county and in others in Appalachia that President Lyndon B. Johnson had in mind for the battleground of his "war on poverty."