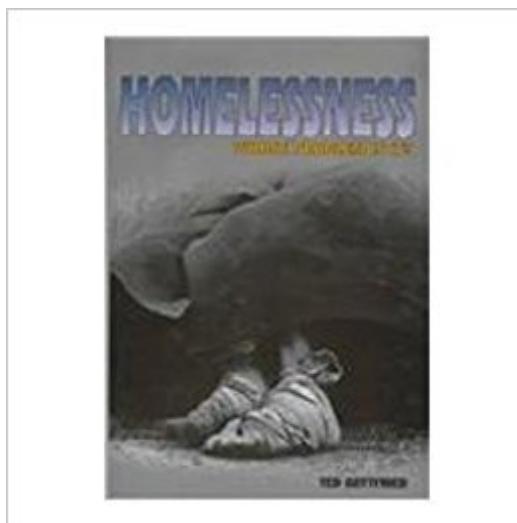


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# Homelessness: Whose Problem Is It? (Issue And Debate)



## **Synopsis**

Discusses the issue of homelessness, examining who the homeless are, how they become that way, and differing views on how to deal with the problem.

## **Book Information**

Library Binding: 128 pages

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Average Customer Review: 4.0 out of 5 stars 1 customer review

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Age Range: 12 and up

Grade Level: 7 and up

## **Customer Reviews**

Grade 7 Up-Gottfried offers a statistical picture of homeless America as well as a comprehensive history of this persistent societal problem. Although he acknowledges his activist stand on behalf of the homeless, he conveys a broad range of opinions. He also does an excellent job of presenting associated problems such as poverty, violence, mental illness, substance abuse, immigration, limited schooling, lack of skills, and single motherhood. The author probes the effects of major public-policy decisions that have affected the homeless: deinstitutionalization, rent control, and the 1996 Welfare Reform Act. However, the problem is occasionally framed in terms of simplistic, admittedly "extreme" positions, whereby the homeless are regarded as either victims of society who require massive Federal support or as dependent slackers who are candidates for "tough love" treatment. The author questions liberal positions in a general way. Conservative opinion is personified with references to Ronald Reagan, Rush Limbaugh, and the staff of the Heritage Foundation. The issue of homelessness is touched upon in Arlene Erlbach's *Everything You Need to Know if Your Family Is on Welfare* (Rosen, 1998) and Gail Stewart's *Mothers on Welfare* (Lucent,

1997). Laurie Rozakis's *Homelessness* (21st Century, 1995) deals with the topic in a sympathetic manner. Tamara Roleff's *The Homeless* (Greenhaven, 1996) is also a good supplement. Libby K. White, Jewish Vocational Services, Baltimore, MD Copyright 1999 Reed Business Information, Inc.

Gr. 6^12. Is homelessness the fault of the individual or society? Is the individual responsible for coping with it, or is government? What efforts have been made to counter it, and how successful have they been? In a methodically evenhanded consideration of these and related issues, Gottfried looks at the history of homelessness in this country, from the landing of the Pilgrims to the Welfare Reform Act of 1996. Drawing from cited secondary sources, he presents opposing points of view with a mix of brief quotes, paraphrased arguments, specific cases, and the occasional muddy, black-and-white photo. This utilitarian collection builder does what it sets out to do, giving readers a framework for developing either (or, ideally, both) written assignments or personal opinions; although it has no URL list, it does back up a brief bibliography with a list of addresses. John Peters

I found this book to be very informative. Various views regarding the problem of homelessness were presented in such a way the reader could come to their own conclusions. It is a very straightforward book and contains current information.

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