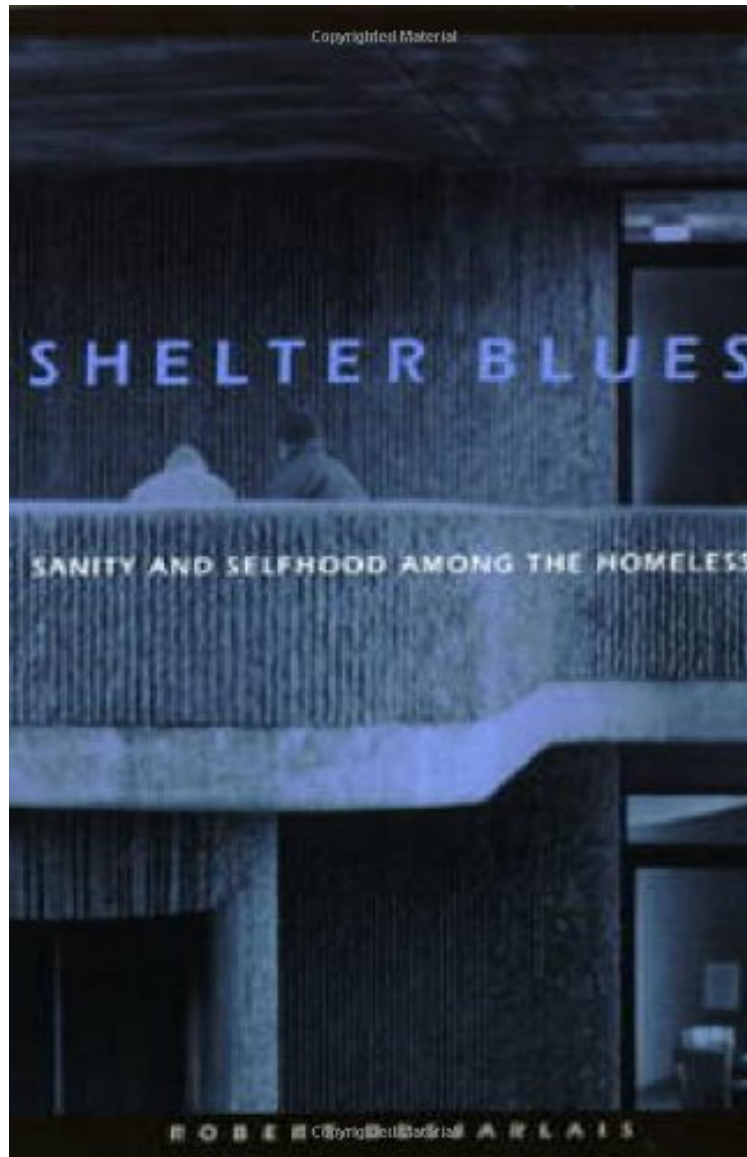


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Shelter Blues: Sanity and Selfhood Among the Homeless (Contemporary Ethnography)

Robert R. Desjarlais

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Robert R. Desjarlais : Shelter Blues: Sanity and Selfhood Among the Homeless (Contemporary Ethnography) before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Shelter Blues: Sanity and Selfhood Among the Homeless (Contemporary Ethnography):

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Very good source! Book was in excellent condition By Lauren

Haley Bought this for a class. Very good source! Book was in excellent condition. 2 of 17 people found the following review helpful. Inaccurate description By Rachael R. Kenney I'm very interested in homelessness and I enjoy social theory, but this book is far more academic than the description made it seem. I couldn't get more than 20 pages into it without my head spinning. If you are looking for something light this book is not the right choice! 8 of 13 people found the following review helpful. Shelter Blues Rave Review: By Ellen Lesperance This is an intriguing book that is organized around the lives of homeless shelter residents in a particularly unique facility in Boston. The shelter is located in a post-modern architecture anomaly, a masterpiece which was never completed, allowing the author to contemplate the idea of beautiful ruins, the sublime, and compare these ideas to the lives of the homeless residents. The book is incredible in that it meshes a wide range of theoretical approaches to studying sociology and attempts to discuss notions of experience, fear, and survival which are really difficult to take on. The book is not so much a case study, more a study of life and its effects.

Desjarlais shows us not anonymous faces of the homeless but real people. While it is estimated that 25 percent or more of America's homeless are mentally ill, their lives are largely unknown to us. What must life be like for those who, in addition to living on the street, hear voices, suffer paranoid delusions, or have trouble thinking clearly or talking to others. Shelter Blues is an innovative portrait of people residing in Boston's Station Street Shelter. It examines the everyday lives of more than 40 homeless men and women, both white and African-American, ranging in age from early 20s to mid-60s. Based on a sixteen-month study, it draws readers into the personal worlds of these individuals and, by addressing the intimacies of homelessness, illness, and abjection, picks up where most scholarship and journalism stops. Robert Desjarlais works against the grain of media representations of homelessness by showing us not anonymous stereotypes but individuals. He draws on conversations as well as observations, talking with and listening to shelter residents to understand how they relate to their environment, to one another, and to those entrusted with their care. His book considers their lives in terms of a complex range of forces and helps us comprehend the linkages between culture, illness, personhood, and political agency on the margins of contemporary American society. Shelter Blues is unlike anything else ever written about homelessness. It challenges social scientists and mental health professionals to rethink their approaches to human subjectivity and helps us all to better understand one of the most pressing problems of our time.

"Beautifully crafted, powerfully illustrated with conversation, theoretically important, and almost unique as an ethnography." Arthur Kleinman, Harvard University About the Author Robert Desjarlais teaches anthropology at Sarah Lawrence College and is the author of *Body and Emotion: The Aesthetics of Illness and Healing in the Nepal Himalayas*, also published by Penn.