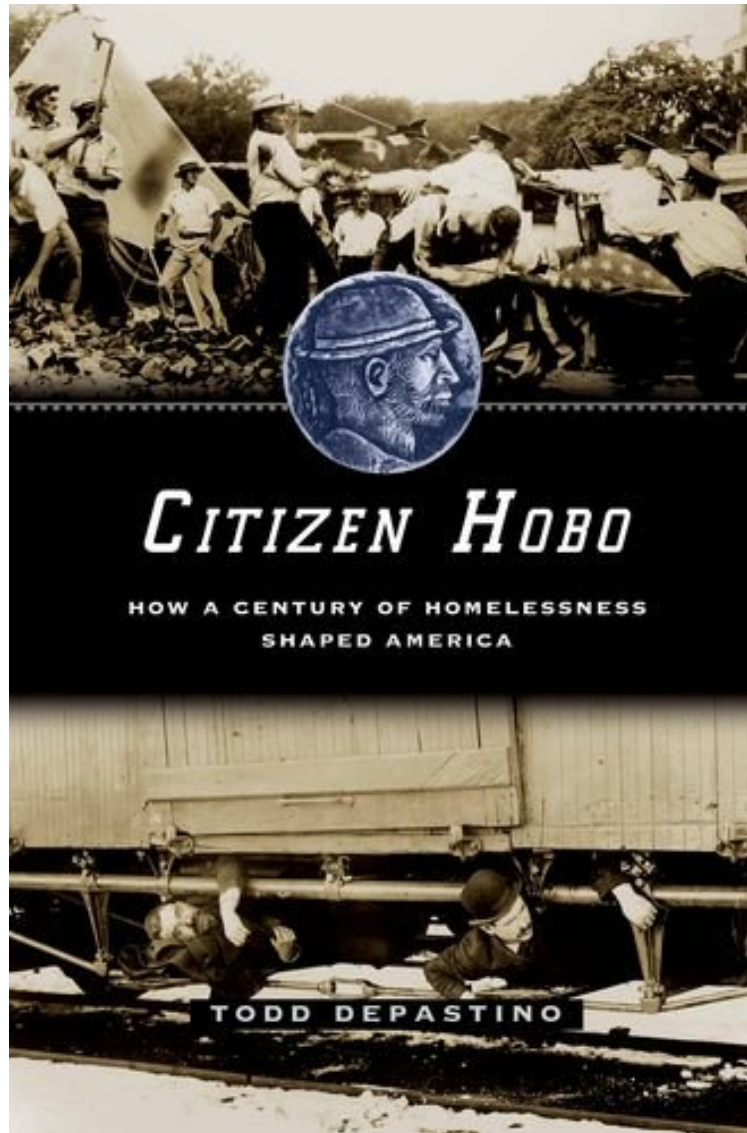


[Read free ebook] Citizen Hobo: How a Century of Homelessness Shaped America

Citizen Hobo: How a Century of Homelessness Shaped America

Todd DePastino

*ePub | *DOC | audiobook | ebooks | Download PDF*



[Download](#)

[Read Online](#)

#1944893 in Books 2003-09-30Ingredients: Example IngredientsOriginal language:EnglishPDF # 1 9.00 x 1.00 x 6.00l, 1.32 #File Name: 0226143783350 pages | File size: 58.Mb

Todd DePastino : Citizen Hobo: How a Century of Homelessness Shaped America before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Citizen Hobo: How a Century of Homelessness Shaped America:

1 of 2 people found the following review helpful. A fantastic voyageBy Jason RahnDepastino does a fantastic job bringing together the many varied historical/sociological events that helped shape transient life throughout the 20th century. A must read for anyone doing research on the Great depression.0 of 1 people found the following review

helpful. Four StarsBy AldrichInteresting17 of 19 people found the following review helpful. Giving Voice to the American Experience of HomelessnessBy John YoungWhen I finished *Mystery Train* and *Ranters Crowd Pleasers* by Greil Marcus, I found myself dazzled by the breadth of the author's knowledge and his ability to connect ideas. I also wanted to run to my shelves of CDs and albums to re-examine Marcus's primary sources, to hear the music I already knew in dynamic new contexts. I was no less creatively and intellectually energized by Todd DePastino's *Citizen Hobo*. DePastino's subject is American homelessness, not the cultural gravity of pop music à la Marcus. *Citizen Hobo*, though, is quick to view the issue not only through traditional scholarship, but also through literature, dime store novels, letters, the underground press and songs, material that brings DePastino's stories to life. By the time I finished *Citizen Hobo* I wanted to re-read *On the Road* and *The 42nd Parallel*, dive into some Whitman and Frost and burn my own CD compilation of songs about hoboes and home, spinning off from Springsteen, Dylan and Guthrie. I offer that as high praise. As for the primary theme of DePastino's work, it's not easily summarized. Make no mistake that this is a rich, academic text that assumes a strong understanding of post-Civil War American history and political ideologies. Still, the narrative is crisp, engaging and eminently readable. *Citizen Hobo* traces the metamorphosis of hoboes from white men who followed the roads to work in the late 1800s to the modern men and women of various backgrounds who have become both homeless and "houseless." In doing so, DePastino delves into American racism and sexism, the failures and successes of capitalism in providing genuine opportunities for all, public perceptions versus the realities of homelessness, and the politicizing and artistic celebrations of "hobohemia." If there's one overarching idea it's that American notions about the homeless have too often been oversimplified, ideologically charged or based on erroneous information. *Citizen Hobo* gives individuals back their various unique and compelling voices by presenting the subject of homelessness in all its complexity. I'd go on, but I'm distracted by thinking about which of Lou Reed's New York songs better represents DePastino's depiction of 1980s homelessness - "Dirty Boulevard" or "Xmas in February." Read *Citizen Hobo* and prepare to be inspired to rethink your own perceptions of the homeless and re-explore your own touchstones of the American experience.

In the years following the Civil War, a veritable army of homeless men swept across America's "wageworkers' frontier" and forged a beguiling and bedeviling counterculture known as "hobohemia." Celebrating unfettered masculinity and jealously guarding the American road as the preserve of white manhood, hoboes took command of downtown districts and swaggered onto center stage of the new urban culture. Less obviously, perhaps, they also staked their own claims on the American polity, claims that would in fact transform the very entitlements of American citizenship. In this eye-opening work of American history, Todd DePastino tells the epic story of hobohemia's rise and fall, and crafts a stunning new interpretation of the "American century" in the process. Drawing on sources ranging from diaries, letters, and police reports to movies and memoirs, *Citizen Hobo* breathes life into the largely forgotten world of the road, but it also, crucially, shows how the hobo army so haunted the American body politic that it prompted the creation of an entirely new social order and political economy. DePastino shows how hoboes with their reputation as dangers to civilization, sexual savages, and professional idlers became a cultural and political force, influencing the creation of welfare state measures, the promotion of mass consumption, and the suburbanization of America. *Citizen Hobo*'s sweeping retelling of American nationhood in light of enduring struggles over "home" does more than chart the change from "homelessness" to "houselessness." In its breadth and scope, the book offers nothing less than an essential new context for thinking about Americans' struggles against inequality and alienation.

"This vivid narrative succeeds in provoking new questions about the role of homelessness in shaping American history."