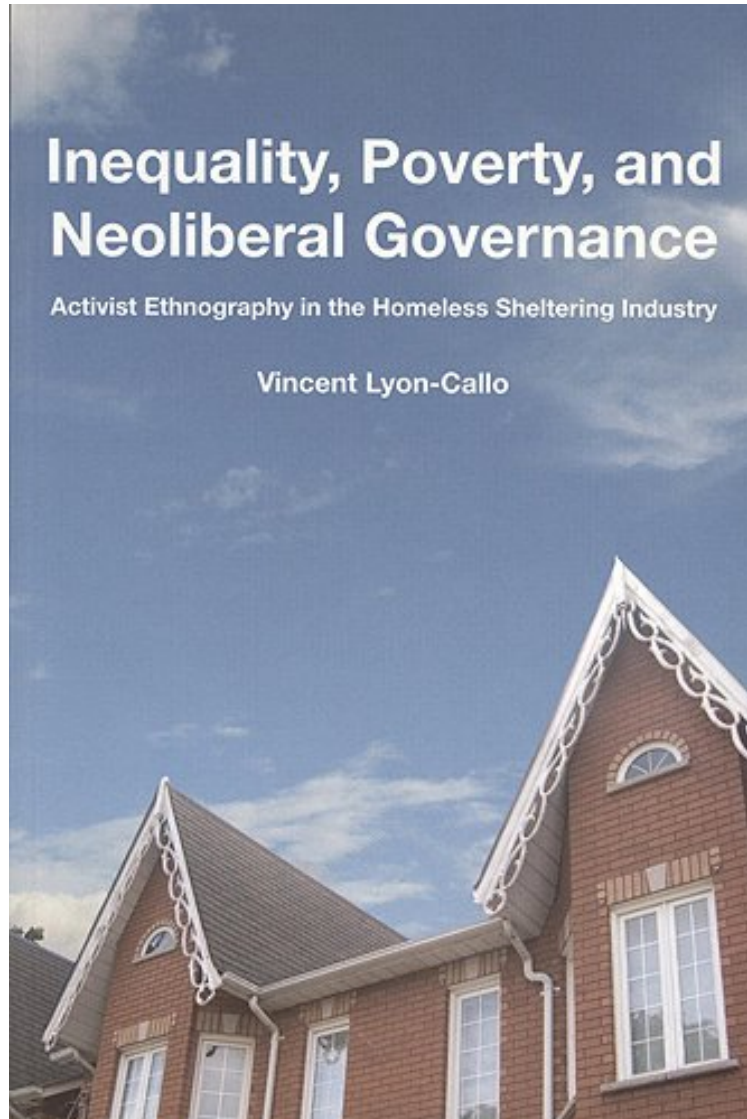


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# **Inequality, Poverty, and Neoliberal Governance: Activist Ethnography in the Homeless Sheltering Industry (Teaching Culture: UTP Ethnographies for the Classroom)**

*Vincent Lyon-Callo*

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**Vincent Lyon-Callo : Inequality, Poverty, and Neoliberal Governance: Activist Ethnography in the Homeless Sheltering Industry (Teaching Culture: UTP Ethnographies for the Classroom)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Inequality, Poverty, and Neoliberal Governance: Activist Ethnography in the Homeless Sheltering Industry (Teaching Culture: UTP Ethnographies for the Classroom):

1 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Fantastic BookBy Woman7This book is a must read for anybody working in the homeless industry or indeed any one interested in finding out the truth about homelessness. One of my favourite books of all time!6 of 8 people found the following review helpful. An absolute must-read for sociology studentsBy Midwest Book ReviewWritten by an anthropologist who has worked in homeless shelters in Connecticut and Massachusetts, *Inequality, Poverty, and Neoliberal Governance: Activist Ethnography In The Homeless Sheltering Industry* is a candid, scholarly inquiry into the question: why has the rate of homelessness remained at significant levels despite a strong American economy and hundreds of millions of dollars poured into the homeless sheltering industry? *Inequality, Poverty, and Neoliberal Governance* systemically examines political economic studies, an ethnographic study, as well as individual case studies to reveal plainly a side of the homeless sheltering industry that is little talked about. From the flaws inherent in a system where a woman who wants to work cannot find a place to live unless she is falsely declared disabled, to questioning the overuse of medicalization to treat the homeless, to the special concerns involved in successfully helping homeless youth and more, *Inequality, Poverty, and Neoliberal Governance* offers unique insights into real-world problems and endemic industry flaws that leave the programs designed to help people at the mercy of the temperments of a few in charge. An absolute must-read for sociology students and field workers grappling with the difficult problems of combatting homelessness today.

Why did the rate of homelessness remain at significant levels while the US economy was supposedly booming and hundreds of millions of dollars were spent in the homeless sheltering industry? Drawing upon five years of ethnographic fieldwork in a homeless shelter in Northampton, Massachusetts, Lyon-Callo argues that homelessness must be understood within the context of increasing neoliberal policies, practices, and discourses. As advocates, activists, policy makers, and homeless people focused attention on market-based and individualized practices of reform and governance, collective efforts that challenged an economy dependent on low wage jobs, declining housing affordability, and the dismantling of the social safety net were marginalized and ignored. Homelessness continued, despite, and partly due to, the limitations of the neoliberal approach. Combining the rich detail of an ethnographic study with the systemic examination of political economic studies, this book offers a view of homelessness and inequality that is rarely explored elsewhere. Chapters include discussion of the medicalization of homelessness, the difficulty of finding paid employment given broader political economic conditions, how shelter staff are trained to manage homeless people, how statistics are used to produce ideas of homeless people as deviants, and how funding concerns affect possibilities for resistance. Key to the study is an activist approach that raises the possibilities and problems associated with a publicly engaged anthropology.

"In short, this is a terrific book....Lyon-Callo's descriptions shatter stereotypes about homeless people and focus instead on the dysfunction of the system that allegedly serves them." In short, this is a terrific book. Lyon-Callo's descriptions shatter stereotypes about homeless people and focus instead on the dysfunction of the system that allegedly serves them. His arguments are clear and convincing; he made me think in different ways about issues I thought I already understood. (Susan Greenbaum, Professor of Anthropology, University of South Florida)With a masterful blend of theory, sophisticated ethnographic analysis and personal commitment, Lyon-Callo achieves his ambitious goal. Moving way beyond the usual focus on the homeless, he conveys a clear, convincing, and grounded understanding of the complex processes which produce policies, professional expertise, and popular 'common sense,' and [which] ultimately constrain the subjectivities of guests and staff in a homeless shelter. (Judith Goode, Professor of Anthropology and Urban Studies, Temple University)About the AuthorVincent Lyon-Callo is an Associate Professor of Anthropology at Western Michigan University. He also worked in homeless shelters in Connecticut and Massachusetts throughout most of the 1990s. His work on poverty, neoliberal policies, and the possibilities of an activist ethnography has been published in a wide range of academic journals and volumes.