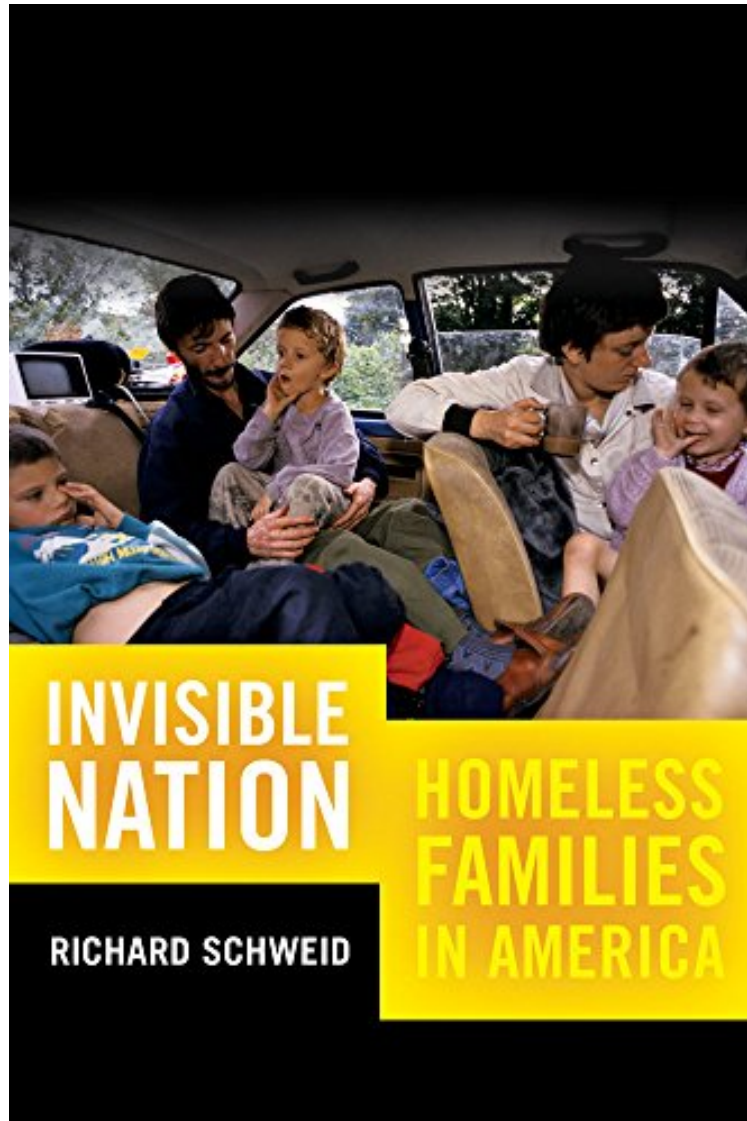


[FREE] Invisible Nation: Homeless Families in America

## Invisible Nation: Homeless Families in America

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**Richard Schweid : Invisible Nation: Homeless Families in America** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Invisible Nation: Homeless Families in America:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Required Reading By Ralph E. Nelson This is a well-researched and engaging book. It should be on the "required reading list" of every legislator, as well as every concerned citizen. It reminds us that homelessness has the face of a hungry child, as well as the shame of a caring parent. And many of us are but one medical crisis from finding ourselves on the street, as well. The working poor often cannot afford housing,

but they also cannot afford homelessness. The book examines best practices in this day and age. It also re-examines our scattered history of dealing with this problem, ever since the days of colonial America. It is rare to find such a readable and engaging scholarly work. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. At first the answer was easy. If a family found itself homeless in the ...By Roger Guettinger What responsibility does a community have to its homeless families? That question, Richard Schweid tells us in his compelling and disturbing new book, has faced Americans ever since the first Puritans settlers landed, in 1620, on the shores of what would become the United States of America. At first the answer was easy. If a family found itself homeless in the Puritans' Plymouth colony, for whatever reason, another family took them in and shared its home until a new home could be built for less fortunate brethren. But as the number of colonists grew, so did the numbers of the poor. More formal arrangements were needed for dealing with the homeless poor. At first, the response was based on the England's 1601 Elizabethan Poor Law. The poor were put to work whenever possible. In some towns poor families were auctioned off to the highest bidder. Homeless children are the focus of Schweid's study. As the American response to their growing numbers evolved, we find almshouses, orphanages, apprenticeships, young children laboring as adults, shelters, children living in rundown motels, new approaches, new laws, a proliferation of agencies, welfare, and so-called welfare reform. Schweid does a masterful job of walking us through the relevant history. It makes for a fascinating story--and an exceedingly sad one. More than 2.5 million children are homeless in the United States every year. For this reader, perhaps the best parts of *Invisible Nation: Homeless Families in America* are the voices of the poor themselves. Schweid decided to write the book after coming by chance across homeless children living in a Dearborn, Michigan motel. He spent several years, off and on, researching the book. He lived for months at a time among homeless families housed in motels in Nashville, Boston, Fairfax, Portland, and Trenton. He talks to everyone he meets and listens to their stories. He ends the book with a chapter called *Turning it Around*. This is an exceptionally sharp, timely book, as well as a book filled with human compassion. Read it and see for yourself. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A gripping, moving description of the impact of homelessness on families By Sue Katz Richard Schweid is one of the most skilled of our contemporary non-fiction writers. He grabs a topic, investigates deeply, and then pours it out in prose that grips the reader. His writing has led me to read his books about topics I didn't know I was interested in: from cockroaches to eels. In this book, however, he is obviously dealing with a topic that he not only has researched meticulously, but cares about deeply. The fabric of homelessness in the USA has changed a great deal and by looking at five major cities, Schweid breaks our hearts with the impact of this homelessness on children and their parents - mostly mothers. I can't recommend this volume more.

"By the second or third day that you're homeless, in the car with all your clothes, your pots and pans, everything, having to wash yourself in a public rest room, you logically start to feel dirty. You prefer to use the drive-through [at fast-food restaurants] where no one will see you. You begin to hide your family." *Invisible Nation* More than 2.5 million children are homeless in the United States every year. In every state, children are living packed in with relatives, or in cars, or motel rooms, or emergency shelters, the only constant being too many people in too little space. In a vividly-written narrative, experienced journalist Richard Schweid takes us on a spirited journey through this "invisible nation," giving us front-row dispatches. Based on in-depth reporting from five major cities, *Invisible Nation* looks backward at the historical context of family homelessness, as well as forward at what needs to be done to alleviate this widespread, although often hidden, poverty. *Invisible Nation* is a riveting must-read for anyone who wants to know what is happening to the millions of families living at the bottom of the economy.

"Schweid creates some vivid portraits of day-to-day struggles . . . . You close the book wondering where those millions of homeless children will sleep tonight."