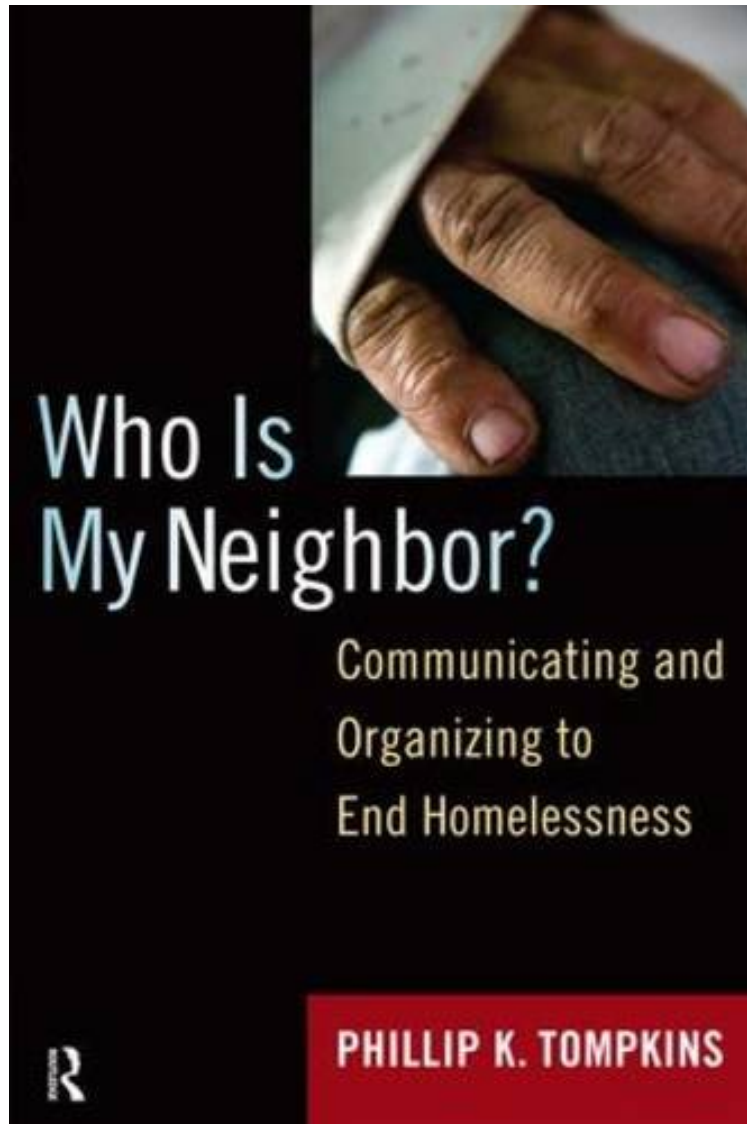


Who is My Neighbor?: Communicating and Organizing to End Homelessness

Phillip K. Tompkins

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Phillip K. Tompkins : Who is My Neighbor?: Communicating and Organizing to End Homelessness before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Who is My Neighbor?: Communicating and Organizing to End Homelessness:

3 of 6 people found the following review helpful. Not the Whole Picture By Diane Nilan Valid and well-written as this new book can be, it seems to contribute to the stereotypes of "the homeless" as adults. The reality is that probably in

excess of 50% of the homeless population includes children and teens, as families and on their own. While I'm happy to see another thoughtful book on homelessness, it would be good to distinguish this as a book about homeless adults, as St. Francis Center, the daytime drop-in center, not shelter, serves men and women, not families or teens. For a glimpse of the rest of the population, based on my 20+ years running a shelter and being involved in advocacy, I humbly suggest my book *Crossing the Line: Taking Steps to End Homelessness*. Or visit our website, [...] for more insights...

Who Is My Neighbor? is a compelling account of the author's ten-year journey as a volunteer at the St. Francis Center, a homeless shelter in Denver, Colorado. A retired Professor of Communication, Phil Tompkins marshals his considerable experience as a participant observer in recording the voices of the guests of the shelter as they teach us about their situation. We learn about their hopes for regaining a home and their fears as they are victimized—in some cases even murdered. Tompkins shows how effective communication and organization can contribute to finding an end to homelessness and establishing a movement toward protective action, especially when a proactive local government gets involved. In addition to giving voice to homeless people, *Who Is My Neighbor?* explores Denver Mayor John Hickenlooper's ambitious Commission to End Homelessness. This remarkable social experiment, now called Denver's Road Home, is two years into implementing an innovative plan for ending homelessness. It provides a model for other cities nationwide where persistent homelessness has defied resolution.

A must read for anyone interested in creating a community-wide response to a complex social problem. Tompkins describes the tools used to create a movement for social change. Roxane White, Former Chair of Denver's Commission to End Homelessness In *Who Is My Neighbor?* Phillip Tompkins asks the right questions about homelessness in America. Tompkins's compassionate meditation does not have all the answers, but rather reflects the author's willingness to put himself on the line by volunteering in the trenches while actively engaging the essential intellectual task of thinking through what the answers will turn out to be. Thomas A. Hirschl, Professor of Sociology, Cornell University Phillip Tompkins blends a sophisticated analysis of the social, political, and economic conditions that have contributed to homelessness in the United States with a thoughtful examination of the communicative features of homelessness. This blend contributes greatly to a growing body of literature on urban communication, helping us understand better the ways in which communication in everyday urban life can transform individuals and communities. Daniel Makagon, College of Communication, DePaul University "This dynamic book is a must-read for communication scholars/activists interested in the social, communicative, and pragmatic aspects of fighting homelessness. While grounded firmly in the social scientific and organizational communication literature on homelessness, Tompkins personalizes and humanizes the statistics and the lives of the people he serves. *Journal of Communication Religion* Tompkins's book takes us on a road trip for the mind as we see through his eyes a decade of experience in volunteer work for a homeless shelter. Overall, the book is a great read and offers marvelous insight into a difficult social problem. Gregory Desilet, author of *Our Faith in Evil: Melodrama and the Effects of Entertainment Violence* "I love this book. It is beautifully written, thoughtful, and thought provoking. Dan Lair, University of Denver About the Author Phillip K. Tompkins is Professor Emeritus of Communication and Comparative Literature at the University of Colorado, Boulder. He is the author of a number of books, including *Apollo, Challenger, Columbia: The Decline of the Space Program*. He has published articles in such journals as *The James Joyce Quarterly*, *Esquire*, *Philosophy and Rhetoric* and *Communication Monographs*. He is the Past President and Fellow of the International Communication Association and won the Peacemaker Award from the Rocky Mountain Conference of the United Methodist Church in 2006. He is President of the Board of Directors of Housing Justice, the mission of which is to give voice to the struggle for decent housing, affordable to all.