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# Homeless

*Howard Schatz*

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**Howard Schatz : Homeless** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Homeless:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. A GemBy Robtimus PrimeThis book is so profound and beautifully done.It honestly makes me sad that photo books are becoming less and less prominent. I feel lucky to have this book.2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Homeless -- a must readBy Jeff FoleyI recently picked "Homeless: Portraits of Americans in hard times" on ebay and it has knocked my socks off.The portraits in the book are stark, shot against a black backdrop, with minimal posing. They are beautiful photographs --- ironically, since so many of us try to avoid eye contact when we encounter homeless people on the street, they make you want to look at homeless people -- and they are often accompanied, on the opposite page, by words from the subjects.Mr. Schatz took the time to talk to the homeless people in the book, to listen to their stories, and to photograph them as they are -- not as he, the photographer, wanted them to be seen. In my eyes, this helps them go from being a group of homeless to people to individuals. They all have stories and dreams and struggles, just like you and I.3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. A compassionate look at a human problemBy michael b. atheyThe images in this collection are stunning. The text equally so. (Schatz has provided the photo images and the subjects dictate their own text). The result is a very compassionate look at a real human dilemma - this work will both challenge your stereotypes of homelessness and confirm them. For writers, preachers, speakers and those engaged in the fight for human justice, you will be afforded a broad and insightful glimpse into the world of homeless persons - one that will either enflame your

heart or cause you to bolt.

Book by Schatz, Howard

From Publishers Weekly Printed in rich duotone, Schatz's ( Seeing Red ) new book of photographs of San Francisco's homeless is fairly dripping with nobility. But the mood is brave, heartening, beneficent. Trying to capture the people, not the plight, Schatz photographed his subjects in front of a black backdrop. Meticulously lit, Avedon-like, the mostly torso-up portraits bring out an etched beauty in faces most of us would ignore. Small interview transcriptions capturing the subjects' internalized stories--how they got to where they are--range from realistic ("The '58 Eisenhower recession hit so everything folded-up and I went back to Chicago. I worked for the newspaper, and after they automated, that was it") to delusional ("I do open court casework for the U.S. supreme being out here"). The book's intelligent design (done pro bono by Milton Glaser) positions words and pictures on facing pages so they don't interfere with each other. One could feel queasy about Schatz's glamorous portrait style in this particular project, but it's hard to think of a better way to make humanizing pictures of homeless men and women; one copy of the book is being sent to every member of Congress. Copyright 1993 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Library Journal Unlike the compelling photographs that depict economic hardships during the Great Depression, this book consists of very disturbing portraits of people made homeless through abuse of drugs and alcohol and other terrible personal problems. Ranging from the offbeat to the tragic (mostly the latter), the portraits show people whose lives, often starting with painful childhoods, have spiraled downward into a nightmarish existence on the street. The exquisitely made photographs are set against black backgrounds, which symbolize the void in which the subjects find themselves. Their eyes are riveted on the camera, and all the pain and hopelessness shines through. These technically superb photographs, which are beautifully reproduced, make this an excellent if deeply upsetting book. Given the quality of the printing, the book's price is very reasonable, even for a paperback, and all author royalties and publisher profits are to be donated to national healthcare for the homeless. Highly recommended for public and academic libraries as well as major photography collections.- Raymond Bial, Parkland Coll. Lib., Champaign, Ill. Copyright 1993 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Booklist Portraits, critic Owen Edwards points out in a foreword, are quite different from documentary photography: "As a human being, [Schatz] is concerned with the plight of the people who sleep in boxes and doorways. But as a photographer . . . He is interested in not only who they are but how they wish to be seen." During 1992, Schatz and his helpers set up a dark cloth and photographic equipment on city streets (in San Francisco, for the most part) and photographed over 1,000 homeless people, interviewing most of them. Schatz' book and a traveling exhibition that opened in Berkeley in late September focus on 75 of Schatz' subjects, aged 3 to 94. Some people allow their portraits to speak for them, displaying possessions or lack of possessions, human connections or isolation, tattoos, nose rings, wrinkles, facial hair, and firm or flabby bodies. Others add words--about families and jobs, how they lost the homes they once had, and the fantasies and realities that help them survive "outside" or frustrate their best efforts to leave the streets behind. Schatz' dark backdrops remove his subjects from the visual distractions of street or alley, shelter or soup kitchen, forcing readers to meet the subjects' eyes and confront their individualities. A powerful, evocative portrait collection, Homeless benefited from pro bono work by designer Milton Glaser and printer Gardner Lithograph; Schatz' royalties and the publisher's profits will be donated to National Health Care for the Homeless through "Comic Relief." Mary Carroll