

Our nation of homelessness amanda turley essay sample

[Sociology](#), [Poverty](#)



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Homelessness is something that is happening to many people all around the world. Now when it comes to the United States, homelessness is not a phenomenon, and contrary to popular belief, the problem did not arise in the past few decades with the closing of mental hospitals, the influx of Vietnam veterans, or even the deep cuts into federal housing assistance.

Homelessness in America is as old as the country itself, and the responses to the problem have not varied much since the beginning until here recently.

There are many different reasons why someone may become homeless.

There are Nemours national, states and local reports repeatedly indicate that there is not one single cause to homelessness (Causes of Homelessness. (2011, January 1). With that being said I do disagree because however if a person does not have the financial ability to pay rent for a place than they are not going to have a roof over their head. I live in Hillsborough County, Florida and there was a survey done during the 2011 homeless count, the homeless people were given a list of many different options on why the reason they were homeless. The number one reason was due to employment and/or financial reason; that was 49.38 percent (Causes of Homelessness. (2011, January 1).

When a person becomes homeless they also become criminalized against.

There are many different cities here in the United States that has laws and prohibition when it comes to the homeless people and their acts. The homeless people here in America have been criminalized against for many many decades. While reading an article named "Out of sight- Out of mind", they had a group of people complete a survey on 50 of the largest cities in

the United States. The information that they found was that out of 50 cities 83 percent of them had some type of laws and prohibition against begging, and as well 73 percent prohibited or restricted sleeping and or camping (Outlawing/Criminalizing Homelessness). It has also been proven that the homeless contributes to the risk for incarceration, and also incarceration contributes to a higher risk of homelessness (CriminalJustice2011).

When it comes to the high cost of living and along with the combination of low wage jobs, and high unemployment rates only exacerbates these problems and then forces Americans to choose between shelter, food, and other expenses that may be a necessity. According to the Hunger and Homeless, in the United States more than 3.5 million people experience homelessness each year; 35 percent of the homeless population are families that have children; 23 percent are the military veterans; 25 percent of the population are people under the age of 18; 30 percent have experienced some type of domestic abuse and have nowhere to turn but the streets; and then 20 -25 percent are people who have a type of mental disorder (Homelessness In America).

Being homeless is very hard. Not only does it wear a person down physically but also mentally. When individuals are homeless they do not go to the doctor as often as they should. As well they lack access to health care treatment. People that are without a home have higher rates of hospitalizations for physical illness and substance abuse than others. In a study that was done 47 percent of homeless woman meet the criteria for a diagnosis of major depressive disorder (Buckner, Beardslee, & Bassuk,

2004). The President's New Freedom Commission on Mental Health (2003) made clear the need to address the public mental health system's delivery of service to people without homes and with mental illness.

This population is more likely to use hospitals than regular outpatient care (North & Smith, 1993), which is not only more expensive but results in fragmented service and less attention, paid to ongoing mental health needs. As well it has been argued by a man named Cohen and Thompson that there is a considerable psychosocial stress associated with homelessness, and it is often very hard to separate issues experienced by mentally ill homeless people from those of the homeless population at large.

One other major effect on the homeless is due to affordable housing. A lack of affordable housing and the limited scale of housing assistance programs have contributed to the current housing crisis and to the homelessness. Since the year 2000, the incomes of low income households have declined as rents continue to rise. In the year of 2009, a worker would need to make 14.97 per hour to be able to afford a one bedroom apartment and they would need to make 17.84 dollars an hour to be able to afford a two bedroom apartment (Washington Post).

We can trace contemporary mass homelessness to the Ronald administration to the social safety net and affordable housing funding. These cuts happened at the same time that the cumulative effects of deindustrialization, global outsourcing of jobs, decreasing real wages, urban renewal and gentrification were driving down income and driving up house cost. During the 1980's

under Regan's neoliberal policies, homelessness reemerges throughout the United States. The lack of affordable housing has led to high rent burdens, overcrowding, and standard housing. Not only has it forced people to become homeless but is also putting many people at risk to become homeless.

When you think back on criminalization, the retributive justice depends on the proper purpose of methods of punishments (Dreisbach. 2013). When someone is homeless and has no money or way to do anything they hold a sign and ask for help which is known as begging. A Massachusetts state law prohibits "wandering abroad and begging" or "going about in public or private ways for the purpose of begging or to receive alms". That was invalidated as a violation of a person's right to freedom of speech. The Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court stated that peaceful begging involves communication protected by the First Amendment and rejected the state's argument that the statute supports the compelling government interest in preventing crime and maintaining safe streets (Outlawing/Criminalizing Homelessness).

When it comes to criminalization against the homeless, I feel that it is going to get us nowhere. What good does it do to fine a person when you already know that they cannot even afford or know where they are going to get their next meal at? I also feel that it does place an unnecessary burden on the criminal justice system, because I feel as if it would be a waste of tax dollars and also policing. We as a nation need to pursue alternative approaches to dealing with the crisis of our homeless. For an example one county that is

taking a stand in helping our homeless citizens is Broward County, in Florida. They have come up with a program that they call " Homeless 101". This program main propose is to developed a long-term plan and manage a year-round planning effort that will address the needs of homeless individuals and households (Homeless Services).

So yes there are many different factors that need to be worked on as a nation when it comes to being there for our people in need. In the Declaration of Human Rights article number 25 states: Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age for lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control (UN News Center). ` There seems to be doing many different approaches to reducing our number of people who are homeless. We as a nation have come out with many different social service organizations, charities, and even government agencies have helped out a lot too.

There are also housing vouchers. Housing vouchers are what is known to be section 8. Section 8 is a program ' that provides assistance to very low income families so they will be able to afford decent, safe, and sanitary housing (Benefits. gov - Housing Choice Voucher Program (Section 8)). These housing vouchers are given out by the government and you must reach certain requirements to receive a voucher. Now once you do get approved you are than put onto a waiting list (Benefits. gov - Housing Choice Voucher

Program (Section 8)). There are more options than just the vouchers, there are also emergency shelters, housing first programs, street team interventions, governmental ten year plans, and even outreaches programs.

Our nation has made a lot of progress over the past few years on reducing homelessness. There have been communities across the United States that have organized partnerships between local and state agencies and with the private and nonprofit sectors to implement plans to be able to prevent, reduce and even end homelessness. These communities in partnership with the federal government have used a targeted pipeline of resources to be able to combine housing and the supportive services to deliver permanent supportive housing for people who have been homeless the longest. The results have been significant.

Now that we have Obama in office we have an Affordable Care Act, which is a landmark initiative if the Obama administration, will further the plans goals by helping numerous families and individuals experiencing homelessness to get the health care they need. With this plan it calls upon the federal government to work in partnership with state and local governments, the federal governments partners at the local level have already made tremendous strides, with communities across the nation including over 1,000 mayors across the country having developing plans that will bring an end to homelessness. I honestly feel that homelessness will always be among us. Everyone struggles it's just some people can get out of it and some people need help.

References:

Benefits. gov - Housing Choice Voucher Program (Section 8) (Benefits. gov - Housing Choice Voucher Program (Section 8)) <http://www.benefits.gov/benefits/benefit-details/710>

Causes of Homelessness. (2011, January 1). . Retrieved January 1, 2011, from <http://www.homelessofhc.org/~homeless/index.php/get-educated-information-homelessness/causes-of-homelessness>

Homeless Services (Homeless Services)

<http://www.broward.org/HumanServices/CommunityPartnerships/HomelessInitiativePartnership/Pages/Default.aspx>

<http://www.broward.org/HumanServices/CommunityPartnerships/HomelessInitiativePartnership/Pages/Default.aspx>

Outlawing Homelessness (Outlawing/Criminalizing Homelessness)

<http://www.nhi.org/online/issues/106/brown.html>

http://www.nhchc.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/CriminalJustice2011_final.pdf

Overview of Homelessness In America (Homelessness In America) <http://www.studentsagainsthunger.org/page/hhp/overview-homelessness-america>

. (n. d.). Responding to the needs of the homeless mentally ill. S H Frazier. Retrieved , from <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1425074/>

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, UDHR, Declaration of Human Rights, Human Rights Declaration, Human Rights Charter, The Un and Human Rights (UN News Center) <http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/>

<https://assignbuster.com/our-nation-of-homelessness-amanda-turley-essay-sample/>

What you'd need to make in every county in America to afford a decent one-bedroom (Washington Post) By: Badger, Emily, and Christopher Ingraham.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/wonkblog/wp/2014/04/22/what-youd-need-to-make-in-every-county-in-america-to-afford-a-decent-one-bedroom/>

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1425074/> Responding to the needs of the homeless mentally ill. Responding to the needs of the homeless mentally ill.

Responding to the needs of the homeless mentally ill.