



You Owe Yourself a Drunk: An Ethnography of Urban Nomads

By James P. Spradley

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An account of the experiences of men who are repeatedly arrested for public drunkenness. This book challenges the idea that these men are simply rejects from society, who cannot organize their behavior by cultural traditions. Using the recently discovered methods of formal ethnographic analysis, the author presents this urban sub-culture as it relates to law enforcement agencies. Life in one jail is described in detail, showing how it changes the men's personal identities, teaching them the skills of this sub-culture and motivating them to adopt a nomadic way of life where drinking is a great social value. **Originally published by Little, Brown and Company in 1970.**

Also by James Spradley and available from Waveland Press: *The Cocktail Waitress: Woman's Work in a Man's World* (with Brenda J. Mann) (ISBN 9781577665748) and *The Cultural Experience: Ethnography in Complex Society*, Second Edition (with David McCurdy and Dianna Shandy) (ISBN 9781577663645). Also of interest: Glasser, *Anthropology of Addictions and Recovery* (ISBN 9781577665588) and Singer, *The Face of Social Suffering: The Life History of a Street Drug Addict* (ISBN 9781577664321).

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Editorial Review

Review

"Spradley's *You Owe Yourself a Drunk* stands the test of time, combining as it does careful scholarship, a concern for social policy, and a palpable compassion for the human beings whose lives are depicted in such rich ethnographic detail." --Michael V. Angrosino, University of South Florida

"Spradley's respect for the complex cognitive worlds and textured social relations of urban nomads, his outrage at the criminal justice system that oppresses them, and his respectfully rendered ethnography always inspire many students." --Brett Williams, American University

"While some of the data may have changed since the research was conducted thirty years ago, Spradley's superb combination of ethnographic method, analytical skill, and personal empathy continues to shine through this pioneering study of life on one of the margins of urban America. *You Owe Yourself a Drunk* reminds us of the sense and understanding that anthropology can bring to the study of contemporary issues." --Lawrence B. Breitborde, Knox College

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