StreetCities: Rehousing the Homeless is Rae Bridgman's study of 'StreetCity' and 'Strachan House', a Canadian government supported alternative communal housing experiment for chronically homeless men and women in downtown Toronto in the 1990s. In looking at everyday life in the two converted warehouses that made up this program, Bridgman makes an impassioned plea for an approach to housing the homeless that involves autonomy, self-organisation, and emotional healing through the creation of community. Posing her arguments in the intentionally modest form of interlocking questions like 'why not recognize homeless people cooperating together as part of a collective?' and 'how can homeless people themselves challenge their own homelessness and the homelessness of others?' (p.101), Bridgman defines two key themes that echo throughout this book: 'an appreciation of utopian impulses in work for social change and an interest in different forms of ethnographic writing' (p.26).

The first goal—to communicate an appreciation of utopian impulses in work for social change—is admirable, but given the dearth of explicit discussion of utopianism and theories of social change, Bridgman's book rests heavily on neo-Touquevillian platitudes about the healing benefits of community that could be drawn from social capital or social work 'how-to manuals', or an NGO website describing...