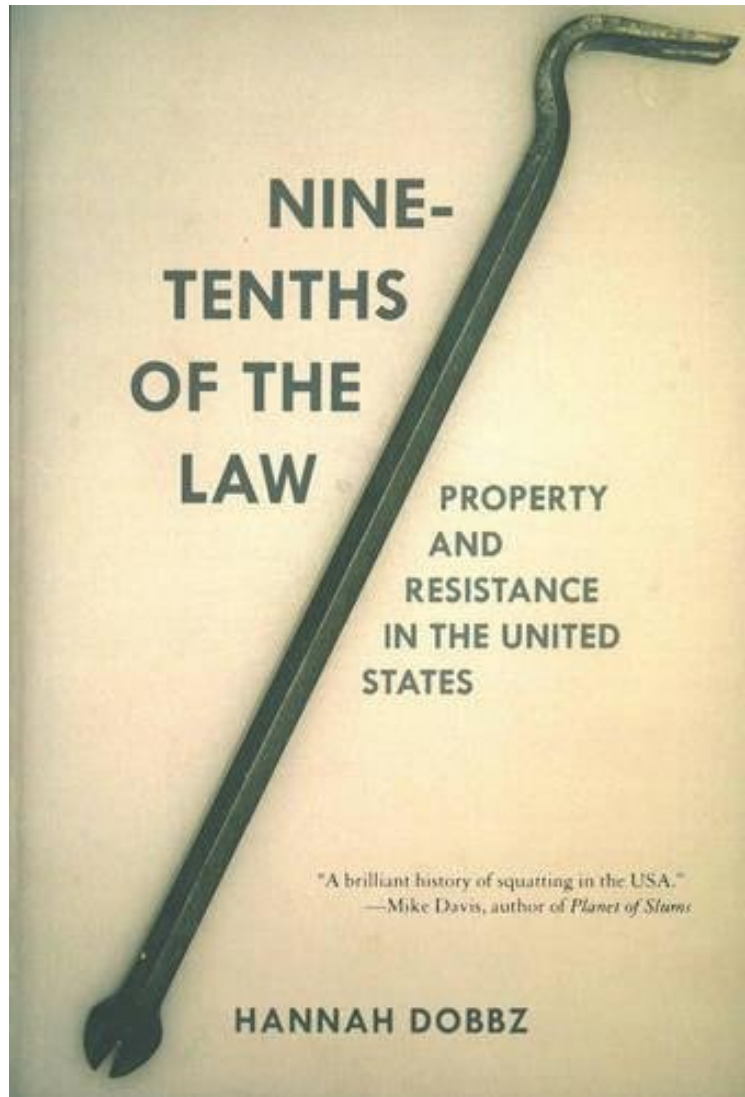


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# Nine-tenths of the Law: Property and Resistance in the United States

Hannah Dobbz

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**Hannah Dobbz : Nine-tenths of the Law: Property and Resistance in the United States** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Nine-tenths of the Law: Property and Resistance in the United States:

0 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Squatters rule the earth!By Stan HenryReading this book gives me hope that the transmogrification of land to property can revert once again to the land that care for us as we care for it.4 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Housing Is A Basic Human Right!By wildflowerboyIn "Nine-Tenths

of The Law", Hannah Dobbz writes about housing justice from an anarchist perspective. Whether you're interested in squatting and living off-the-grid or you want to organize a land trust or a cooperative household, this book is a tool that you will want in your activist toolbox. While most books on squatting focus mainly on the European experience, particularly on Amsterdam, this book focuses instead on the United States, from San Francisco to the Lower East Side in New York City. Besides giving a ton of practical advice on the topic, Dobbz also provides a lot of fascinating history as well. For example, I really enjoyed reading about the occupation of Alcatraz by American Indian activists and the Tompkins Square riots. For Occupy activists responding to the foreclosure crisis and working with houseless populations, this is a book you need to read as soon as possible. I highly recommend it. 7 of 11 people found the following review helpful. flawed but decent  
By Alexander Tarnas  
A fine attempt at US squatter history. Chapters 5 and 6, about 30 pages, are great. The book is at its best when relating lengthy anecdotes about individuals. Otherwise, a scattered compression of too much history, long slogs through semi-meaningless statistical and bureaucratic minutia, and too much philosophizing filler. Recurring theme that modern squatters may shun or be barred from ownership but are "stewards", and yet ample proof is given that squatters almost universally lack the motivation and technical ability to do even basic roofing, carpentry, electrical, plumbing, or other renovation work -- the essence of stewardship in the realm of vacant buildings. Book lacks any close treatment of the relevant case law or legislation. Lacks information on the available legal, free market pathways to cheap housing or land in modern America, other than a cursory treatment of co-op housing. Narrow focus on urban and suburban centers. No consideration of cooperative home construction/renovation, living on a boat, "small town" and rural building stock or wilderness lands, work trade on farms, historical home renovation ownership programs, low income housing charities (like Habitat for Humanity), or any comparison to housing cost and ownership situations in the developing world, in modern slums, former Soviet wastelands, the "empty cities" of China, war zones, refugee camps, etc. No consideration of methods for making an income from land and buildings excluding schemes that leverage market or rental value. I grew up outside of Detroit, lived in Oakland (like the author), and currently live (in a house I bought for \$4k) in the author's chosen city of Pittsburgh -- here in the Rust Belt, where I can help you find a house for under \$10k any day of the week. Why squat when you can own? The reasons would include ineptitude, desperation, and lack of imagination -- not hallmarks of able "stewards". Substantial appendices, though not entirely accurate or helpful, with extensive bibliographic notes and index.

"Millions of foreclosed homes and abandoned buildings on one hand; millions of Americans desperate for decent shelter on the other. Hannah Dobbz makes the necessary addition of resources and needs in a book that is both a brilliant history of squatting in the USA and a template for the next stage of the Occupy movement.--Mike Davis, author of Planet of Slums and Buda's Wagon  
How does "property" fit into designs for an equitable society? Nine-tenths of the Law examines the history of squatting and property struggles in the United States, from colonialism to twentieth century urban squatting and the foreclosure crisis of the late 2000s, and how such resistance movements shape the law. Stories from our most hard-hit American cities show that property is truly in crisis: One in five homes in Buffalo, NY, are abandoned. Our national housing vacancy rate is 14 percent. If we gave a house to every homeless person in the United States two-thirds of that stock would remain empty. In May of 2011, one in every 103 homes in Nevada was in foreclosure. Nine-tenths of the Law expands our understanding of property law and highlights recent tactics like creative squatting ventures and the use of adverse possession to claim title to vacant homes. Hannah Dobbz unveils the tangled relationship Americans have always had in creating and sustaining healthy communities. Hannah Dobbz is a writer, editor, filmmaker, and former squatter. In 2007 she produced a film about squatters in the Bay Area called Shelter. The film has screened widely at universities, bookstores, and community spaces, including the 2009 Three Rivers Film Festival in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

"From the Native American Seizure of Alcatraz Island, to New York Squatters and Homesteaders of the 1980s, to the housing actions led by Occupy Wall Street today [Dobbz] asks important philosophical questions about these tendencies. [Her] book is a welcome addition."--Seth Tobocman, co-author, Understanding the Crash