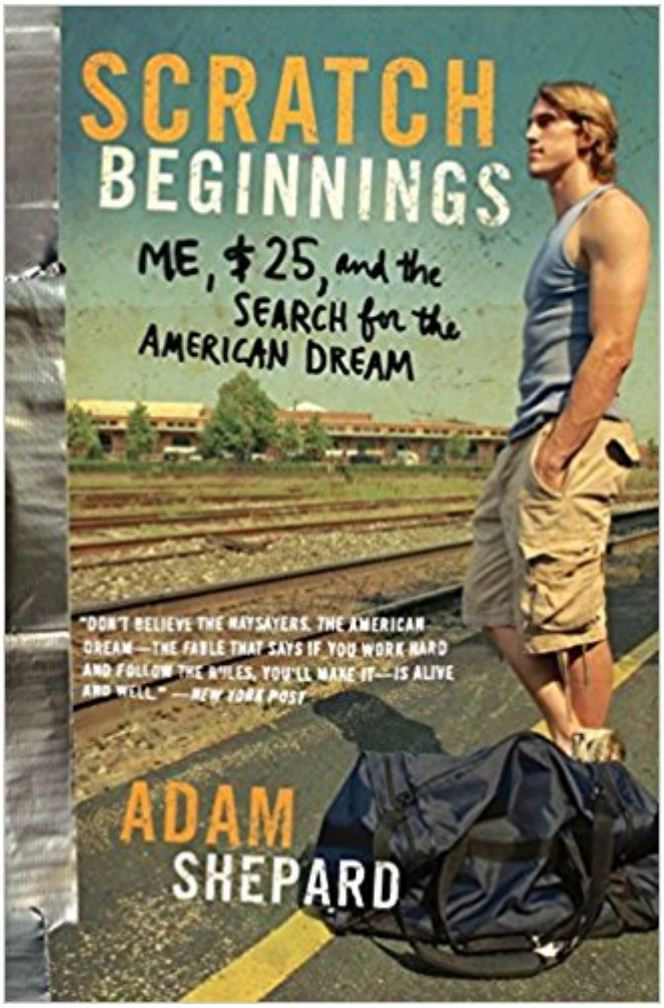
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Scratch Beginnings: Me, $25, And The Search For The American Dream



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Synopsis

Ã¢â ¬Å“DONÃ¢â ¬â„¢T believe the naysayers. The American DreamÃ¢â ¬â •the fable that says if you work hard and follow the rules, youÃ¢â ¬â„¢ll make itÃ¢â ¬â •is alive and well.Ã¢â ¬Â•Ã¢â ¬â •New York PostÃ Â Adam W. ShepardÃ¢â ¬â„¢s Scratch Beginnings is the fascinating and eye-opening account of the grand social experiment the author undertook in response to Barbara EhrenreichÃ¢â ¬â„¢s Nickel and Dimed. Subtitled Ã¢â ¬Å“Me, $25, and the Search for the American Dream,Ã¢â ¬Â• Scratch Beginnings chronicles ShepardÃ¢â ¬â„¢s successful efforts to raise himself up from self-imposed rock bottom in one yearÃ¢â ¬â„¢s timeÃ¢â ¬â •a personal odyssey that is sure to inspire anyone who reads about it, instilling new faith in the solid principles on which our democracy was built.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"Don't believe the naysayers. The American dream---the fable that says if you work hard and follow the rules, you'll make it---is alive and well." ---New York Post --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

What can you get with $25 and a dream?Adam Shepard graduated from college feeling disillusioned by the apathy around him and was then incensed after reading Barbara Ehrenreich's famous work Nickel and DimedÃ¢â ¬â •a book that gave him a feeling of hopelessness about the working class in America. He set out to disprove Ehrenreich's theoryÃ¢â ¬â •the notion that those who start at the bottom stay at the bottomÃ¢â ¬â •by making something out of nothing to achieve

the American Dream.Shepard's plan was simple. With a sleeping bag, the clothes on his back, and $25 in cash, and restricted from using his contacts or college education, he headed out for Charleston, South Carolina, a randomly selected city with one objective: to work his way out of homelessness and into a life that would give him the opportunity for success. His goal was to have, after one year, $2,500, a working automobile, and a furnished apartment. Scratch Beginnings is the earnest and passionate account of Shepard's struggle to overcome the pressures placed on the homeless. His story will not only inspire readers but will also remind them that success can come to anyone who is willing to work hardÃ¢â ¬â •and that America is still one of the most hopeful countries in the world.

I'm a slow reader. It took me a year to finish reading this book, but that's notwithstanding. I bought this book when I was homeless for the 3rd time in my life and it was 1 of the things that gave me the tenacity to make it through that repeat difficult and scary time again. This book is inspiring honest, daring, ballsy and enlightening and I am grateful to have the pleasure of still having it. It's still in great condition even though I bought it used. I would recommend this book to anybody and I have recommended it to a lot of people. Adam Shepard, thank you for your bravery your openness and your honesty. Keep up the good work brother.

Great read. Immensely relevant message. Life can and will suk at times but ultimately what counts is what you choose to do when the crap hits the fan. IÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢ve read reviews that downplay this book because the author is white. After reading it however, I canÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢t really say such critiques are really justified. We can speculate that his experience would be different if his background, race, age or sex or chosen location were different, but again in reading itÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â¦itÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s unnecessary nit picking. The meat and potatoes of the message would apply regardless of any of these factors and itÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s a sound constructive message many could stand to hear. IÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢m a black guy, grew up in the streets of NY and can relate to a lot of the ordeals, mindsets, traps and hard way of learning covered in this book. I can also attest to the vindicating benefits a good ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“Ish happens, get over it, and keep it movingÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• mindset can bring.Trying not to be too wordy, but the book is entertaining and flows really well. A few scenarios had me literally cracking up laughing. Kudos to this Raleigh author.

I listened to the audio book of this after Dave Ramsey recommended it on his site. I found it really

insightful, inspiring and humbling. It really gives you incredible clarity into an almost unknown world by outsiders as well as shows you that anything is possible with a plan, education and a desire to be more and not be stuck where you find yourself by life. It made me incredibly grateful and adjusted my perspective in a lot of ways. I would highly recommend it!

This is an entertaining read. The moral to the story is that hard works still pays off. The American Dream is alive and well for those who are still willing to work for it. Just roll up your sleeves and go to work!

Mr. Shepard took a radical step - to find out for himself if he could make it 'from scratch' - and then also wrote about it. Mr. Shepard is very aware of how he can only start from scratch as he is; a young, educated man from a supportive family. But his descriptions of others where he lands show that homeless men of various ages and ethnicities did at least as well as he did when they focused on improving themselves. Indeed, he seemed to learn a lot from these other men. A book all young men should read.

A great example of showing how far persistence and initiative will take someone. I especially liked how well Adam got to know everyone and explain their stories. I definitely haven't sacrificed enough at this point in my life.

The author doesn't acknowledge his immense social capital until the very end (as other reviewers have pointed out). He comes across as a slave-driver with a thick skin and little sense of dignity: a typical working-class Southerner, in other words. And he pulls a typical Southern stunt towards the end: he gloats about how America is the greatest country on Earth, and then he says that, for example, he's glad he didn't have to do this in Guatemala. If the US is really the best country in the world, he should be saying that he's glad he didn't try to rise from homelessness in callous Sweden, or among the dirt-poor farmers of Switzerland, or in primitive Germany or sweatshop-like France. He would've had an easier time in the core of Europe than he had here, and I suspect he knows it.

I thought this was a great book which provided a thought provoking journey. While reading this I was thinking of how many kids sit around and make excuses when they get out of college but Shepard really showed the ingenuity of the American spirit. He really did a great job on this and made things work. I forced my high school aged son to read this and he really enjoyed it and passed it on to

some of his friends. A great book with a normal guy surviving under harsh circumstances in a rough environment.

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