Title
Shall Our Gratitude Sleep

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Shall Our Gratitude Sleep
A Documentary Photography Project
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Project Summary
Affordable housing is a scarce commodity in California, where high property values, rising rents and dysfunctional real estate markets prevent many people from buying a home or securing a long-term lease. Former members of the armed services are not immune to this problem, even though many have made significant sacrifices to the country. According to the California Department of Veterans Affairs, there are 29,400 homeless veterans in the state, or 22 percent of the population of homeless veterans living in the U.S. Many of these soldiers fought in the Viet Nam and Persian Gulf Wars, but a growing number are young veterans who served in Iraq and Afghanistan.

*Shall Our Gratitude Sleep* is a series of 42 photographs culled from a body of work created between January of 2010 and April of 2011. These images, selected from hundreds of photographs, explore the difficulties faced by California veterans as they struggle to find their place in a highly competitive housing market, often decades after they completed their tours of duty. The focus of the work is not on veterans living in abject poverty on the street, but rather on soldiers who occupy the ambiguous spaces between homelessness and permanent housing. Locations for the photographs included veterans’ outreach events, a transitional housing facility, and communities where troubled veterans seek shelter in an informal network of single room occupancy hotels, rooming houses and makeshift dwellings.

Presentation
The project was exhibited as a series of 20 prints in May of 2011 at the UC Berkeley School of Journalism, and also compiled into a 63-page book entitled *Shall Our Gratitude Sleep*. Two copies of the book were given to the School of Journalism and are on file in its permanent archives.

Sample Images

Sources
In addition to photography, interviews were conducted with veterans living in the communities of Marysville, CA, Stockton, CA, Dixon, CA and San Francisco, CA. Other sources include Patrick Stasio, the organizer of the Dixon Veterans Stand Down, Yuba County Sheriff Steve Durfor, and Colleen Corliss, a spokesperson for Swords To Plowshares, a veterans’ advocacy organization. Statistical information on homeless veterans can be found at: http://www.cdva.ca.gov

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