3D Printed Homes

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The homeless—the poor victims and symptoms of humanity's inability to support its population—may have a brighter future now than a year ago. As 3D printed technology becomes more prevalent, it brings with it the chance to end their suffering: 3D printed homes, described here. Despite the controversial nature of technological development, it is impossible to deny the benefits inherent in these cheap, $10,000 homes. Furthermore, production is expected to be cut from 24 hours to just 6 hours and $4,000. If this expectation becomes reality, non-profit organizations will be able to provide far more *proper* housing to those in need in far less time for far less money.

Not only does 3D printed housing benefit the world's homeless and impoverished, but it also revolutionizes the temporary housing industry. For example, disaster victims have many worries on their mind, the first of which is finding shelter. 3D printing shelter is cheap and efficient, meaning that families endangered by a storm will have a cheap house within days of the disaster, giving them a safe place to piece their life together. What's more, scientific expeditions to extreme environments would find their work much easier with 3D printers. In Antarctica, scientists and their exploration guides could travel to their research destination and have sturdy, safe, and sound housing within hours. With simpler housing, the scientists would have more time to experiment and fewer safety worries.

Another possible benefit of this technology is in space exploration. Astronauts could travel to the moon, or to Mars, and print a shelter from raw materials in just hours. This shelter would be cheaper than one built on Earth and dragged across space; this shelter would also reduce the volume of materials brought to make a shelter. It's even possible that the raw materials could be synthesized directly from the planet or moon on which the shelter is constructed. Space applications are the most farfetched, though, as space's extreme environment would place high demands on any structure and material used.

With all of these possible benefits, my reaction to this development is a net positive. I am pleased that we may finally be able to help those too impoverished for proper shelter. My main worry about 3D printing homes is the loss of diversity and choice in housing. All houses would be printed the same and customization would be limited to furniture, decoration, and color. However, people can do a lot with the 800 square feet provided by the printer; moreover, I have faith in those who can afford expensive housing to choose multifarious designs over unanimity. As a step up from homelessness, 3D printing is clearly a great solution.