

sent—a transition and new beginning, or the “end” of ecological studies? Except for a few members of the early generations of Barker’s students (e.g., Allan Wicker, Paul Gump, Phil Schoggen, Robert Bechtel, and people like Gerhard Kaminski in West Germany), there do not appear to be many others in younger generations who are conducting research or practicing behavior setting theory with the same dedication, continuity, and commitment as the earlier workers. If I am correct, then it is possible that the ecological psychology perspective may fade from the scene. Furthermore, I had a somewhat nagging feeling that the Schoggen volume too often looked “backward,” emphasizing historical aspects of ecological psychology, and giving less attention in depth to contemporary work and directions for the future. On the other hand, it is possible that behavior setting concepts have become ingrained in our thinking, like Freudian concepts, and will be assimilated into our work in an indirect way.

Finally, over the years a number of researchers, myself included, have had great respect and appreciation for the ecological psychology approach. At the same time, most of us have not put its concepts into practice in our own research. For myself and others, it seemed hard to do. Somehow, it appeared to require a major and long-term commitment to a particular setting or study, was difficult to link with other research and theory in our parent disciplines, and its details and procedures sometimes seemed arcane and not readily available to those not trained and steeped in the tradition. Because Schoggen has made the concepts and methods more accessible, and linked behavior setting theory to ideas in several fields, we may well see broader adoption of the ecological psychology approach than has occurred in the past. Time will tell about all of these conjectures.

In summary, *Behavior Settings* is a must for the libraries of contemporary environment and behavior researchers, students and practitioners. Whether or not the volume signals the “end” of ecological psychology or eco-behavioral science, or stimulates a groundswell of new applications in research and practice, is a matter of speculation. What is certain, however, is that Phil Schoggen has afforded us a genuine opportunity to capitalize on and exploit an important perspective for understanding people-environment relationships.

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Behavior Settings: A Revision and Extension of Roger G. Barker's Ecological Psychology by Phil Schoggen (with a chapter by Karl A. Fox)

On a hot August day in 1972, I drove into Oskaloosa, Kansas to meet with Roger Barker and his colleagues at their field station. I found myself with the

eerie feeling that I was driving into a book I had just read—Roger Barker's *Ecological Psychology*, first published in 1968. As I drove into town, I recognized a number of the behavior settings so painstakingly described in Barker's landmark book. In its original version, the book consisted of a series of theoretical essays and detailed research reports on the behavior settings that Barker and his colleagues had been observing and studying for some years in Oskaloosa. I was welcomed cordially into this company of ecological scientists and even allowed to use their extensive data on behavior settings to explore some research ideas of my own. Just as Oskaloosa was out of the geographical mainstream, so was this group of scientists, energized by Barker's vision; they labored out of the psychological main-stream to construct an ecological psychology far different from anything that psychology had known before.

Now, two decades after the original publication of *Ecological Psychology*, Phil Schoggen has undertaken to revise and extend the original work. Schoggen observes that his "primary goal has been to provide a current and comprehensive description of behavior setting theory and method in sufficient detail and with illustrations adequate to serve as a guide for new research applications" (ix). Overall, Schoggen has achieved his goal admirably, managing to maintain the most important chapters and essays in the original work and to incorporate some of the later work published in *Qualities of Community Life*. Schoggen has managed to substantially fill in the history of research by others who were inspired by the original theory of behavior settings. The revised book presents some of the most seminal ideas of the original work while integrating and incorporating many new developments. In addition, Schoggen has allowed some room for new applications. For example, a chapter written by economist Karl Fox includes an attempt to use behavior settings as a basic unit in social systems accounting. Schoggen has also written an extremely useful chapter showing some of the relationships between behavior setting ideas and other social-psychological concepts as a way of integrating behavior setting theory with other intellectual traditions. This last effort is badly needed and represents another form of theoretical integration that counts as a real contribution.

Scholars concerned with the environment and behavior are already familiar with Barker's creative effort to conceive of the ecological environment both in terms of its physical aspects and in terms of standing patterns of behavior. In Schoggen's revision, the original idea of behavior settings is laid out in three chapters, one focusing on the defining of properties of behavior setting (Chapter 3), another concerned with identifying behavior settings and measuring their properties (Chapter 4) and, finally, an elegant statement of a theory of behavior settings presented very much as it was in the original volume (Chapter 8).

While Barker and his colleagues labored over a theory that allowed commensurate roles for behavior and physical environment, perhaps the most influential aspects of their work had to do with what they originally called

"undermanned settings" which are now described (quite rightly) as "underpopulated settings." This work, much of it originally done with Paul Gump and published in their 1964 book *Big School, Small School*, excited the imagination of a number of researchers concerned with the social environment. Underpopulated settings appeared to produce a range of largely desirable behavioral outcomes for setting inhabitants. Inhabitants of underpopulated settings were less evaluative of individual differences, felt greater functional importance within the setting, took more responsibility, but at the same time felt somewhat higher levels of insecurity.

These original findings on underpopulated settings have been most systematically and creatively explored and expanded in subsequent research by Allan Wicker. Research on underpopulated settings has stimulated considerable interest and Schoggen has included a review of the literature and theory inspired by the original work. Schoggen has also reviewed other related research and has offered an integrating passage on the relevance of underpopulated settings to other theories of the effects of community and organization size.

It is interesting to speculate on why the ideas offered in *Ecological Psychology* have had such a limited impact on the thinking of psychologists. I suspect there are several reasons, not the least of which is the fact that ecological psychology has little to say about motives, personality, or emotion, and these, after all, are major arenas for theory and research in psychology. Thus, for many psychologists, the idea of behavior settings populated by standing patterns of behavior provided a formulation which seems highly abstract. It is also interesting to ask what was happening in the field of psychology when *Ecological Psychology* was first published in 1968. In general, psychology was leaving the era of behaviorism and entering the era of cognition, where it remains today. Perhaps theoretical ideas that focus primarily on physical and behavioral environments were out of step with the increasingly cognitive nature of the field of psychology.

This book is not merely an updating and extension of Barker's original work, but a kind of *Festschrift* celebrating Barker's contributions. Consequently, Schoggen has wisely included an essay titled "Settings of a Professional Lifetime," in which Barker describes the behavior settings that provide an autobiographical statement of his intellectual development throughout his career. This is a truly touching document. It begins with Barker's characteristic disarming modesty. Barker describes himself, as he was in 1928, in the following way, "He was unsound physically, his intellectual powers were unknown, his financial resources were meager, and his motivation was strong, but unfocused" (page 325). Roger Barker's early career was spent in intense contact with many of the intellectual giants of the field, in Terman's seminar at Stanford, with Lewin at Iowa, then later still with Henry Murray at Harvard. Barker describes other Harvard psychologists Skinner, Boring, and S.S. Stevens as "blue-collar, hard-hat workers, not gentleman scholars." Barker was finally drawn to the University of Kansas as chairman to build a depart-

ment, but he soon realized his scientific work required a setting in the field out of the press of daily departmental affairs, so he established his field station in Oskaloosa, Kansas.

Roger Barker makes a much too modest assessment of his own contributions. He says, "the stream of my professional life has skirted the areas of psychology that are currently richly cultivated and harvested, and in fact, it has finally landed me outside of the turf of the psychology tribe." It is certainly true that Barker's insistence on being a stubborn innovator has placed him out of the mainstream. His contributions are all the more valuable for having chosen that more independent and difficult course.

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