

attitudes is more problematic—some other alternatives should have been discussed (for example, my use of preference). But these concepts are not strong enough to lead to specific topics, so that the remaining chapters (5-10) before the final chapter dealing with the unifying framework seem rather random. For example, why deal with learning and work environments rather than the more primary housing environment and then all the settings in a setting system? The coverage of topics also leaves major gaps. In discussing stress, there is no attention paid to cultural variables—these are generally neglected. There is no discussion of meaning—which is not even mentioned in the index; preference does not appear there either. Cross-cultural studies and environmental quality are very inadequately considered. The full range of models and theory does not appear (for example, there is no reference to symbolic interactionism). Different positions on theory and the history of the field are not reviewed. Thus, the material and the approach are highly selective—more suitable for a monograph than a textbook.

Is there closure? I think not. The unifying framework proposed in Chapter 11 does not seem to build on the previous sections, and the model proposed does not seem to integrate those sections.

Finally, assuming that I were to use a textbook (which is unlikely), would I use this? I find that difficult to answer. I might use it to give reviews or overviews of specific topics, some of which are quite useful as far as they go. But, really to evaluate it, or any textbook, would require that one compare it with others available—it is the relative quality which is important, the alternatives available. This I could not do. It does seem like a useful thing for someone to do—to survey, identify, and compare the range of textbooks available.

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Prisoners of Space? Exploring the Geographical Experience of Older People. By Graham D. Rowles. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1978.

A brief description on a fly page of this book suggests that the author views the older person's environmental experience as far more complex than the prevalent societal image of progressive spatial constriction with advancing years. This work is an in-depth exploration of the geographical experiences, defined as "involvement within the spaces and places of their lives," of five elderly persons who have lived for many years in a working-class inner-city neighborhood. Over a period of two years, the

author developed close relationships with the participants, and in this context discovered many deep meanings in their experiences.

Each person's geographical experiences are described in a vignette that reveals the essential features of his or her lifestyle. Each response is reflected in a unique relationship within the shared environmental context yet each contains common underlying themes such as a vicarious participation in places of the past as well as near and distant locations of the present. The author suggests that constriction in the realm of action is attended by expansion of the role of geographical fantasy together with consistent changes in orientation within space and in the individual's feelings about the places of his or her life.

Graham Rowles has written an important book, a significant contribution to the environment-behavior literature. For this reviewer, the importance is less in terms of what was discovered and more in the method used for the discovery. As someone who has spent a long time in this field, I have witnessed too many studies that seemed to be more interested in the form of science than in the substance. That is, the primary emphasis was placed on "rigor" or quantification, and little attention was given to the importance of what was really learned about the subject. The method the author brings to this work can be called phenomenology, commonly understood as the study of phenomenal consciousness as it is subjectively experienced by the individual—that is to say, it is the study of the individual's personal view of his or her own experience as he or she understands it. This perspective assigns major importance to the interpretations people place on their own experiences as an explanation for behavior. To understand why someone behaves the way he or she does, you must understand how it looked to that person.

This all sounds deceptively simple, but, of course, that is not the case at all. Rowles spent two years with his informants and over that time was able to make measured judgements about crucial aspects of behavior. Contrast this with the 35-minute survey or running 100 freshmen through a contrived experiment. This is not to condemn the survey or experimental approaches; what is being applauded is the leavening such an approach provides for the field.

The generation of experientially grounded descriptive data has links with such investigative approaches as the empathic model and gaming. Here, too, such inquiry facilitates critique, surfaces themes, and poses new questions. Generalizations in the traditional sense cannot be stated, but does that make the information any less relevant, valid, or important?

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