
The book review editor placed three demands on me. First, review this encyclopedia. I kept asking myself exactly how to do this. Second, make the review interesting. In the case of any encyclopedia or dictionary, this is a Herculean task. Third, ignore the fact that I contributed 24 of the 500 entries in the encyclopedia. Now, that is just plain impossible! Nonetheless, with these three challenges in mind, here is my best effort.

This handsome book is a comprehensive collection of over 500 authoritative entries prepared by 250 scholars and capturing the multidisciplinary nature of housing research. The Encyclopedia entries are illustrated with 27 tables of data and 33 figures and photographs. The book deals mainly with American perspectives, but does include material on other parts of the world. The book is especially strong in areas of housing research typically associated with the editor (Willem Van Vliet): that is, the interaction of social, psychological, and design aspects of housing environments. It is particularly suited to the needs of undergraduate and graduate students in the area of housing, especially those in disciplines such as Sociology, Geography, Planning, Social Work, Anthropology, Human Ecology, Social Psychology, and Housing Studies, and to a less extent to students in Economics, Regional Science, Finance, Law, Architecture, or Building Science. Van Vliet’s introduction to the volume compares it initially to other published dictionaries of housing, development building, and architecture: Sayegh, Rostron, Dumouchel, Moskowitz and Lindbloom, Carlson, Blankenship, Tosh, Packard and Korab, Heyer, Placzek, Emanuel, Oliver, Whittick, Listokin and Walker, and De Chiara. From what I have read of these others – and I must admit that I don’t often have cause to read dictionaries and encyclopedias generally – this volume is the best of the class.

I do not study such distinctions formally, but I sense that encyclopedias and dictionaries are fundamentally about either (i) terms and terminology, or (ii) concepts and methodology. In the former, the editor starts from a checklist of
terms presently used in the literature and drafts entries to describe these. In the latter, the editor starts from a set of ideas that define a field of study and characterize its modes of analysis, and then drafts entries to explore how and why those ideas work. Both can be useful, although I find the second type more interesting to read. My impression is that the Encyclopedia of Housing is of the first type. Perhaps its greatest strength is that it is a comprehensive snapshot of current and recent jargon in the field. For those new to the study of housing, the array of terminology can be intimidating. The Encyclopedia includes brief and valuable descriptions of terms as diverse as accessory dwelling units, assisted living, board-and-care homes, cohousing, colonias, community-based housing, congregate housing, earth-sheltered housing, ECHO housing, fair share housing, farmworker housing, flexible housing, halfway house, Hogan, home matching, hospice care, housing trust funds, limited equity cooperatives, lodging accommodation, loft housing, mutual housing, new urbanism, nonprofit housing, panelized housing, public/private housing partnership, self-help housing, shared group housing, sweat equity, and transitional housing. The Encyclopedia also includes related terms from the field of planning such as brownfields, common interest development, community land trust, displacement, incumbent upgrading, levittowns, linkage, planned unit development, and urban homesteading. Unless you have read extensively in housing studies and the related planning literature, many of these terms are likely to be new to you, and the encyclopedia will therefore be a valuable reference.

Aside from this kind of general interest, how might a reader with interests specific to this journal feel about the Encyclopedia? Some well-known economists, regional scientists, demographers, and analytical geographers have contributed to this volume. These include Baer on obsolescence, Baer and Myers on filtering, Dolbeare on tax expenditures, Galster on discrimination, Gober on migration, Grigsby on residential location, Long on residential mobility, Malpezzi on rent control, Megbolugbe and Can on housing markets, Nesslein on housing investment, Peiser on equity, Roseman on second homes, Quigley on taxation of owner-occupied housing, Struyk and Kosareva on privatization in Eastern Europe, and Yinger on housing audits. As well, Jaffe has contributed fine technical entries on the plethora of mortgage instruments available in todays market (e.g., fixed-rate, adjustable-rate, balloon, graduated-payment, price-level-adjusted, reverse-equity, rollover, and shared-appreciation mortgages) and aspects of mortgage securitization (collateral mortgage obligation, Freddie Mac, mortgage-backed securities, and mortgage-stripped securities). Other entries that are particularly clear and concise include the following: alternative mortgage instruments, amortization, depreciation allowance, downpayment, eviction, foreclosure, joint tenancy, lease, negative amortization, principal, and second mortgage. I also enjoyed reading several of the other entries: most notably Lillydahl on growth management, Molotch on growth machines, Hoch on homelessness, and Harris on home ownership.

However handsome the book, the first thing that struck me in looking at it was
how valuable it would be as a searchable, hyperlinked CD-ROM or website. The editor intends to create such a website (http://www.colorado.edu/plan/housing-info/menu0.html), but it is not yet operational. The problem is that major topics of necessity are covered under more than one entry. To help the reader find material on any one topic, each entry does include a list of cross-references. The editor also appends a 32-page index of subjects. Four appendices provide additional ways of listing key information, and the book includes three indexes to make searching easier. The editor has designated 20 of the entries as “nodal” meaning that they are gateways to thematically-organized clusters of entries. The remaining entries are designated “satellite”. The nodal entries are abandonment, affordability, behavioral aspects, community-based housing, cross-national housing research, discrimination, elderly, Fair Housing Amendments Act of 1988, federal government, health, homelessness, industrialization in housing construction, mortgage finance, private rental sector, public housing, subsidy approaches and programs, tenure sectors, third world housing, and urban redevelopment.

Let me briefly describe the part of the process in which I was involved. Willem Van Vliet wrote to several scholars – including me – asking if we were willing to write entries. I wrote back positively, and suggested several topics. He then sent me a list of topics with a brief description of what he wanted and a target length for each entry. I was left free to treat each topic as I saw fit. Willem and the editorial board subsequently suggested some corrections, changes, and additions, but (in my case) these were technical and complementary rather than fundamental changes in the focus or scope of the entry. I don’t know if other authors were treated similarly, but have no reason to think otherwise. Aside from advice that Willem sought on a couple of other entries, and the fragments of adjacent entries that appeared on the page proofs for my own, I did not see the entries written by others until the present book review copy arrived in the mail.

This description of my involvement brings me to a more serious concern. What is the intellectual focus within this book? The editor argues at the outset of the Encyclopedia that the focus broadly is on ideas: not history, biography, or legislation. However, the entries do in fact include much material on legislation and on past efforts in the field of housing policy. While it is true that there are no biographical entries, there are too many entries on housing institutions, associations, and journals for my taste. If indeed the focus is on ideas, how are these organized within the Encyclopedia. Here, I find it hard to discern a pattern. Particularly frustrating to me is the way that entries about important and complex concepts are cheek to jowl with uninteresting entries that seem to serve no purpose. What, for example, can one hope to do with entries like “deed” and “downpayment”? My favorite kind of encyclopedia or dictionary is one where the editor tries to recast the world in terms of some new or innovative perspective. This is not what the editor has done. Let me contrast the Encyclopedia with, for example, the New Palgrave Dictionary of Economics which I used in structuring my own entries. Initially, I was quite impressed with the calibre of the New Palgrave entries; they do indeed try to recast the world in terms of economic
theory. However, even the *New Palgrave* shortchanges the reader when it characterizes a market tersely and simply as a “locus of buyers and sellers". To a regional scientist or urban economist, some of the entries in the *Encyclopedia* are similarly unsatisfactory. I am thinking here particularly of the treatment of housing economics. The entries for abandonment, affordability, affordability indicators, affordable housing indices, contract rent, housing allowances, housing costs, imputed rental income, property tax, and speculation, for example, are workmanlike and do not represent state-of-the-art in my opinion. The absence of important authors from the fields of housing economics and finance is also problematic. I am thinking here (in alphabetic order) of Richard Arnott, Axel Boersch-Supan, Jan Brueckner, Bill Clark, Joseph DeSalvo, John Ermisch, James Follain, Allen Goodman, Don Haurin, Patric Hendershott, Peter Linneman, Duncan MacLennan, and John Pitkin. A couple of years ago, I had occasion to review the book by Rothenberg et al. entitled *The Maze of Urban Housing Markets*. That book is not an encyclopedia, but in many ways it is a better source for students who want to learn about state-of-the-art in economic thinking about housing markets.

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This book is about two policy instruments for relieving traffic congestion: the provision to drivers of information about travel conditions, and road pricing. Both are very active areas of research, as evidenced by journal space (e.g. *Transportation Research*, Part C) and recent edited volumes (e.g. Button and Verhoef (eds.) (1998), Emmerink and Nijkamp (eds.) (1999)). Before reviewing the book, I will describe the technologies and objectives of information and road pricing systems.

1. Information

The development of Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) began in the 1970s in Japan, and large research programs are currently under way in Europe.