
Population and Environmental Psychology Bulletin

Vol. 29, No.3, Autumn, 2003



AUTUMN 2003

IN THIS ISSUE

Feature Articles

2003 Presidential Address.....	<i>Severy</i>	1
Academic's Review of Env Psych Handbook.....	<i>Saegert</i>	3
Practitioner's Review of Env Psych Handbook ..	<i>Wise</i>	7
<u>Division 34 Business</u>	<i>Clayton</i>	11
<u>Announcements</u>		11

FEATURE ARTICLES

2003 PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

Critical Issues for Psychologists in Reproductive Health Programming and Research

by

Lawrence J. Severy

University of Florida & Family Health International

NEWSLETTER NEWS

PEPB is an unrefereed forum for sharing news, ideas and opinions in population and environmental psychology. Opinions are those of the authors and do not reflect the official policy of Division 34 unless explicitly stated.

Call for Submissions

Winter 2004 Issue

Deadline: February 15, 2004

As promised, in this issue of PEPB we have two reviews of the 2002 *Handbook of Environmental Psychology*, one from an academic's perspective (Saegert), and one from a practitioner's perspective (Wise). An invitation to the Division 34 electronic discussion list to publish further opinions about the Handbook (independent of these reviews) elicited zero responses. Undaunted, I am extending the invitation to Div. 34 newsletter readers (a largely overlapping cohort) in the hope that the divergent opinions voiced in these reviews will rouse some members of the silent majority to take up pen and paper (or keyboard and electron, as the case may be) and respond.

Please send opinions about the Handbook as well as any other contributions for the newsletter (commentaries, short research reports, abstracts, announcements, teaching tips, laboratory assignments, syllabi, etc.) to Russ Parsons at: rjp@highstream.net.

The goal of this paper is to identify and discuss a number of critical issues challenging psychologists, particularly psychologists interested in reproductive health and population. The fact of the matter is that reproductive health per se, especially concerns for family planning and contraceptive decision-making have been pushed to the back burner by the omnipresent pandemic of HIV/AIDS. Little attention has been given to the vast majority of the world's women of reproductive age who are not at risk of HIV. In a related fashion, nor has research attention been given to the plethora of family planning and reproductive health issues that become critically important to couples (concordant or discordant) when they discover that they have HIV/AIDS. The goal here is to suggest critical (also potentially incorrect) assumptions driving current behavioral research on HIV/AIDS, present a number of substantive areas for research, identify those federal organizations still funding behavioral research on population and reproductive health, and discuss the crucial cross-cutting themes demanding further psychological theory and empirical evidence.

First, let us discuss the assumptions, perhaps inappropriate, driving current HIV/AIDS research. These assumptions have been identified by Judy Auerbach, formerly of NIH, and more recently Vice President for Public Policy, American Foundation for AIDS Research. She discusses at least six assumptions of importance to this paper. In her words, "what are the assumptions that we have acquired since the beginning of the epidemic that may cloud our way of thinking and impede innovation in HIV prevention and programming?" Borrowing extensively from Auerbach's ideas, the assumptions are:

- 1) We know how many people are getting HIV infections. The typical report suggests that the number of new infections per year has remained constant since 1990 and is about 40,000. However, data collection methods are probably producing artifactual results. The truth is that the number of new HIV diagnoses since 1994 demonstrates five years of decreases followed by unfortunate upswings. Further, prevalence and incidence rates do not track each other. In other words, assessment problems are masking the facts.
- 2) We can accurately characterize the exposure category for each individual who acquires HIV infection or has AIDS. Again there are measurement problems. Approximately one-third of new cases of AIDS in 2001, according to the CDC, are due to "other" reasons than those identified. This makes "other" one of the two most "reported" reasons. Further, assessment categories often force one and only one response, not multiple causations. Behaviorists are sufficiently wise enough to recognize this procedure is a mistake.
- 3) Certain features of a person's identity or social location are the ones that matter most for HIV prevention or transmission; and we know which ones those are. Most research focuses upon ethnicity and gender. However, personality and cultural factors are typically not taken into account, and identity means more than the two utilized demographic markers.
- 4) Sex can be treated like other health related behaviors. It has been tempting to depend upon existing theory on health prevention behavior when developing program innovation and new research. However, curtailing smoking and adherence to dieting regimen do not carry the same challenges as altering sexual behaviors, nor do they carry the same probability of finality.
- 5) We can stem an epidemic by focusing on individual behavioral change. The fact of the matter is that the two most dramatic modifications of behavior have come from national level efforts – in Thailand with its condom promotion campaign in the early 1990's and more recently in Uganda with its ABC model (abstain, be faithful, and/or use condoms). In fact, although sex is an intense interpersonal behavior, many factors enter into the matrix leading to prevention. See Figure 1, also adapted from Judy Auerbach.
- 6) The biomedical and clinical science paradigm – especially the randomized controlled trial design – is the only valid approach for ascertaining truth; and is appropriate for addressing HIV/AIDS related behavioral and social science questions. The fact of the matter is that the paradigm for clinical trials and therapeutic research is very different from that for prevention. In fact, they differ on at least six different dimensions including: reasons for entering the trials, expectations of morbidity, time frame for expected impact, sample sizes, base of research and probable industry support.

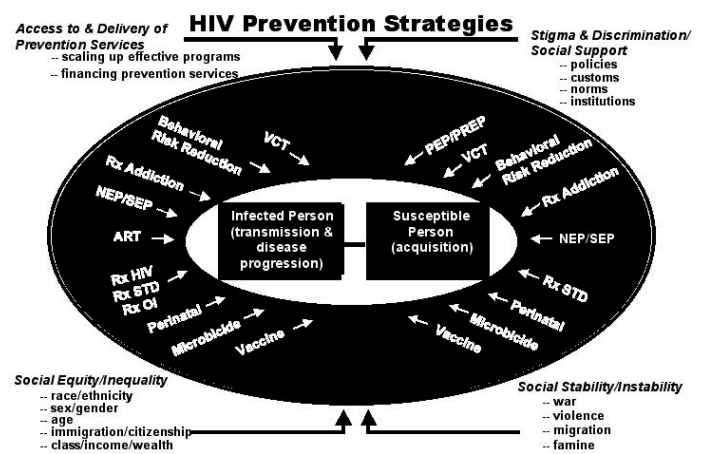


Figure 1 - HIV Prevention Strategies

With these problems in mind, what research needs immediate attention? Again borrowing extensively from Auerbach, at least seven different issues derive from the above description of the problematic assumptions. These are the need for:

- The continued improvement of assessment tools for HIV/AIDS surveillance, monitoring and modeling.
- A better understanding of the linkages among HIV transmission, acquisition, and prevention processes.
- A more comprehensive model of these linkages as regards the social, cultural and physical context in which the processes occur.
- A greater focus on the interactions between individuals and the above contexts – regarding both susceptibility as well as protection.
- Development and integration of a broader array of theoretical frameworks to inform a broader array of intervention strategies.
- Similarly, methodological approaches to address more complex questions need further development and integration.
- The implementation and scale-up of effective science-based interventions.

Given this state of affairs, who funds the research that demands attention? There are three federal agencies, and a host of private foundations providing opportunities. The Gates Foundation and recent Presidential and Congressional initiatives have infused great sums of money into the war on HIV and AIDS. The fact is that most of these dollars are for care, and not for research. Further, consider a developing problem at many funding organizations. Unfortunately, the total number of proposals submitted to these groups by psychologists in the last 5/10 years has diminished to the point that very few psychologists are now asked to serve on the relevant study sections. The only way to increase the flavor and influence of psychology on these review boards is for psychologists to generate more proposals. It is a vicious cycle. In order to identify more specifically the types of projects of interest to these agencies, one should access their web sites as they contain

complete descriptions of typically funded topics. The agencies are:

- The Center for Population Research; Demographic and Behavioral Sciences Branch, NICHD. This unit is perhaps the longest lasting federal organization funding basic behavioral research on fertility and reproductive health.
- The Office of Family Planning; and the Office of Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Programs, HHS. These two programs fund research and demonstration programs often related to family planning clinics.
- The National Center for HIV, STD and TB Surveillance and Epidemiology, CDC; the CDC has experienced the greatest growth of research dollars for the funding of research in these areas, often in collaboration with CDC investigators.

Viewing all of the above, what do I believe are the compelling themes cross-cutting the issues, challenges and topics identified? What are the overarching issues that might provide psychologists with “fertile ground” for research?

Acceptability and Sustained Behavior

Acceptability is a complex concept involving not only the individual, but also their partner and those others within the gender and cultural context within which the individual finds him or herself. Along with Susan Newcomer at NICHD, I have tried to define acceptability as the voluntary sustained use of a method of prevention within the context of alternatives. Little theory addresses long-term behavioral adherence in this arena. The one theory in the area specifically created in response to the HIV/AIDS problem, known as ARRM (AIDS Risk Reduction Model), only added the concept of maintenance in later versions, and even less research addresses this stage. As mentioned above, people cannot afford to adhere to their new regimens with the same disdain as they do with dieting!

Provider/Client Perspectives

The provision and use of prevention methods often depends upon an important provider. The quality of this relationship is an understudied phenomenon. Building upon this point is the clear assumption for psychologists that the two probably have very different perspectives and “truths” about what types of methods, services, advice and assistance are needed in any situation. Successful interventions are going to depend upon those perspectives being resolved in some fashion, at least for long term behavior.

HIV and Family Planning Integration

How does one provide family planning information, methods, and services in the age of AIDS? How does one do research on family planning when those around you are trying to stop an epidemic? How does one research family planning without consideration of HIV/AIDS issues? One response is simply to “stay the course.” As mentioned earlier, there are more women and couples in the world at risk of an unwanted pregnancy than there are women and couples at risk of HIV. A more complex response is that the research agendas need to be

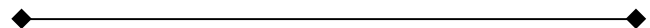
coupled. For example, one of the most cost efficient and effective methods of preventing mother to child transmission of HIV is simply to prevent the conception. Further, what are the potential drug interactions of contraceptives on antiretroviral (ART) drugs? Conversely, what are the potential impacts of ARTs on contraceptives? In other words, instead of family planning issues becoming left at the research door, the issues have become even more meaningful and cannot be forgotten!

Microbicides and Vaccines

This has been an area of great interest to me personally for the last several years. What will the final impact be of new innovations wherein either a vaccine or topical microbicide product is approved for HIV prevention? Can a substance be created that will either have, or not have, contraceptive efficacy in the same product? What will be the individual, couple, and cultural processes that tolerate or support the acquisition and use of such products? And, what if these products are less than 99% effective? Consider vaccines. The first generation products are more likely to be like the flu vaccines (around 50%) than vaccines for mumps or measles (99%). What will happen to peoples’ behavior when they assume that they are now protected? Will this actually lead to more risky behavior, which will lead to more of a public health problem than before the vaccine becomes available? How do we convey what “partial effectiveness” means?

My hope was that I could bring to the table a plethora of intriguing questions – questions that demand research. And, even though acquiring research funding is not an easy task, there is money available to pursue these questions. All that we need now is a cadre of psychologists ready, willing and able to seek that money, or begin the quest for new knowledge to solve these really important problems. What I am most worried about, and what I perceive to be the biggest challenge that we fight, is.....*Where are the psychologists that might fill the void? And, where are they being trained?*

Any answers?



Book Reviews

Review of the *Handbook of Environmental Psychology* (2002) (Eds) Robert B. Bechtel and Arza Churchman. New York: John Wiley. 772 pages.

Reviewed by Susan Saegert, Ph.D., Director, Center for Human Environments, Department of Psychology, City University of New York

The new *Handbook of Environmental Psychology* sets out ambitious goals in the editors’ preface. Since the 1987 two-volume handbook, the editors note that globalization and new technologies have changed the nature of the environment and people’s relationships to it and this Handbook must therefore reflect these changed relationships. The editors see their handbook as more interdisciplinary, pluralistic, and

international than the previous volume. The editors state that all authors share certain perspectives in that they reject physical determinism, adopt a contextual position, and eschew speaking of “universal” phenomena. The editors claim that the book is representative of the field as it exists. On this last point, the Handbook often falls short. However, it contains many interesting and worthwhile chapters.

The Handbook includes 42 chapters organized into five sections: I. Sharpening Theories; II. Sharpening Links to Other Disciplines; III. Sharpening Methods; IV. Sharpening Application; and V. The Future. After reading all the chapters, my impression is that an academic reader might benefit from a different structure. Before reading the whole Handbook, I tried to use it in my writing, research, and teaching, without much success. The problems I encountered were in part because the organization did not help me find substantive areas. In addition, the index is not always thorough and consistent. But, the most serious problems arose because some topics that seem to me central to environment-behavior studies receive scant attention. For these reasons, I was skeptical about whether this version serves the functions of a Handbook for an academic field. Several colleagues reported similar difficulties in finding what they were looking for in the handbook.

After reading the entire Handbook, I would conclude that there are parts of a successful academic Handbook here. In addition, there are some valuable but more topically narrow papers; some rather idiosyncratic, but nonetheless engaging reflections on the author’s own thinking, research, and practice; and some good chapters for a handbook aimed at a non-academic audience.

Criteria for an Academic Handbook

Reading through the Handbook of Environmental Psychology (2002) and comparing it to handbooks I regularly use clarified for me what I want from an academic handbook. Each chapter should provide a clear theoretical perspective that is used to integrate the bulk of empirical findings in the area. The references should include a fair sampling of work that goes beyond that of the author and close collaborators. The reference section should in itself be a resource for a researcher/teacher. Ideally, either the chapter itself or a multi-chapter topical section should give the reader a comprehensive view of important theoretical positions, empirical findings, and significant applications, as well a methodological and conceptual critique of existing work.

This book review will attempt to assist the academic reader by identifying the chapters that meet these goals best. I will also give some idea of the content of each chapter and note the areas that have not been fully represented in this handbook.

Environmental Degradation and Sustainable Development

The Handbook provides a uniquely valuable resource on the topic of environmental degradation and sustainable development. Nine chapters of almost uniformly high quality address these large and significant issues. They include three chapters from the theory section, one from the links to other disciplines section, and five from the application section:

Theory:

- Environmental Psychology: From Spatial-Physical Environment to Sustainable Development (Bonnes and Bonaiuto);
- Environmental Management: A Perspective from Environmental Psychology (Pol)
- The New Environmental Psychology: The Human Interdependence Paradigm (Gärling, Biel & Gustafsson).

Other Disciplines:

- Environmental Sociology (Dunlap)

Applications:

- The History and Future of Disaster Research (Peek and Mileti)
- The Challenge of Increasing Proenvironment Behavior (Geller)
- Emerging Theoretical and Methodological Perspectives on Conservation Behavior (Vining & Ebreo)
- Contamination: The Invisible Built Environment (Edelstein)
- Environmental Conflict and Its Resolution (d’Estrée, Dukes, & Navarrete-Romero)

These chapters could more effectively have been combined into a topical section, since most all provide admirable examples of the integration of theory, research, and application. The three consecutive chapters in the theoretical section were each very good and added up to more than the sum of their parts. Pol’s broad gauge and extremely useful chapter on environmental management, along with Bonnes and Bonaiuto’s informative and well-conceptualized chapter set the stage for these papers very well. Gärling, Biel and Gustafsson, with its focus on game theory, provides a narrower and more tightly defined paradigm, and does so very clearly. All of these chapters provide substantial reviews of empirical research along with informed, clear theoretical perspectives. Taken together they constitute a (mostly) thorough, multifaceted analysis of how human behavior, social groups, and institutions contribute to and deal with environmental degradation and sustainability. I particularly liked Edelstein’s chapter which develops a complex and empirically grounded theory of psychosocial processes of dealing with environmental contamination. The eight pages of references are also informative, and not over weighted to his own work and that of close colleagues. It is followed by d’Estrée, Dukes, and Navarrete-Romero’s excellent chapter on environmental conflict. Both chapters are theoretically innovative while being empirically comprehensive. Together they really deepened my understanding of the dialectic of psychological, interpersonal, social, and institutional processes involved in dealing with environmental problems. Peek and Mileti concentrates more heavily on natural than manmade disasters, and ignores much psychological literature relevant to disasters. However, it presents a thorough and coherent analysis that is prominent in the field of disaster management.

Research and Practice Methods

All of the methodological chapters are valuable contributions to an academic handbook, although the section as

a whole has some important omissions. The topics included transactional research, Meta analysis, experience sampling, GIS, structural equation modeling, space syntax analysis, behaviorally-based architectural programming, and post occupancy evaluation. Authors differ in how much they focused on how to use the approach, why it is useful, or how it has been used, but each makes important points. For example, Werner, Brown, and Altman's chapter on transactional research is written in a clear, conversational way that would make it easy to use in a classroom. It first appeared rather simple and commonsensical. However, as I progressed through the Handbook, I thought that research in many areas would benefit greatly from application of the approaches proposed.

Three other useful chapters can be seen as contributions of the Handbook to our understanding of research processes. Horelli's chapter on participatory planning, and Wiesenfeld and Sanchez's chapter on community-based research and action might be better located in the methodological section. Rivlin's reflections on the ethical dilemmas of conducting environment-behavior research also could fit in this section better than the theory section.

The topics included leave out some important methodological advances relevant to the field, as well as reflections on some widely used methods. The absence of a chapter on multi-level models seems hard to understand since these statistical techniques, developed since the last handbook, address one of the core problems of environmental psychology: how to deal statistically with nested levels of analysis. A chapter (or two) on qualitative methods would be welcome, especially a comparison of different approaches such as, for example, discourse analysis, grounded theory, and ethnography. Another quibble is that while Golledge's chapter on GIS is scholarly and significant, it concentrates on the cognitive aspects of GIS representations without giving attention to other equally important contributions of the use of GIS to environment-behavior research.

Nonetheless, the entire section is well worth reading. Clearly the emphasis on the use of multiple methods is a strength of environment-behavior studies. The field as a whole would benefit from taking seriously the theoretical, technical, and practical issues raised by these authors, and taking them to a next level.

Other Substantive Areas

The 19 chapters in the section entitled "Sharpening Applications" review a variety of research areas and vary greatly in scope, tone, and attention to empirical research. The first two chapters by Gifford and Kuo give examples of and practical advice on how to do research that has an impact in the real world. The remaining chapters address specific areas of research and practice.

In addition to the chapters on environmental degradation and sustainability reviewed above, several chapters are particularly noteworthy. Karen Franck's chapter on women and environments stands out as particularly theoretically acute, comprehensive, and well written. She covers major contributions on the topic from the 1970s through the end of the century and includes a very useful bibliography of these works. She also includes a brief but well chosen bibliography of

theoretically important books on the intertwining of sex and gender. She makes good use of theoretical, empirical, and critical sources from a wide range of disciplines including architecture, urban planning, psychology, literature, geography, sociology, philosophy, and social theory. Bronzaft's chapter on noise and McCoy's chapter on work environments also provide useful analyses and scholarly resources on core topics in environment-behavior studies. In contrast, Korpela's chapter on children's environments is narrower than its name implies, focusing exclusively on children's environmental preferences. Important research and theorizing about the role of the physical and social environment in development gets short shrift because of this focus.

Horelli's chapter on participatory planning and Wiesenfeld and Sánchez's chapter on community based approaches to addressing environmental planning make unique and significant contributions and work well as a pair. These authors root their work in strong Meta theoretical perspectives (Alinsky, Habermas, and Lewin for Horelli; Friere and liberation theology and psychology for Wiesenfeld and Sánchez). The conceptual models each provide, accompanied by diagrams and charts add conceptual clarity to complex, multilayered topics. Horelli's appendix of a typology of existing tools, with examples, is very useful as well. These chapters bring significant theoretical and practical contributions developed in Europe and Latin America to an English speaking audience. They also suggest that participation tends to be local, and it would be useful to represent the theoretical and practical work of participatory researchers from other parts of the world. There are significant contributions and innovations arising also in Australia, New Zealand, Asia, Africa, the United States, and Canada. Each locale surfaces themes related to its specific historical situation, populations, and governmental and economic arrangements. From a North American perspective, problems related to race, ethnicity, and immigration need more attention. Also, I would welcome a more detailed look at the psycho-social and cultural dynamics of the difficult task of creating productive democratic participation in contexts of inequality. I have in mind for example a paper by Xavier de Sousa Briggs (1998) entitled 'Doing Democracy Up-Close: Culture, Power, and Communication in Community Planning.' Given their diversity and prominence in the environment and behavior field, participatory planning, research, and action probably deserve a whole section. Nonetheless, these two chapters on their own will, I expect, be widely read, used, and cited.

There are two chapters on crime and the environment that add up to both more and less than the topic implies. Taylor's chapter is entitled "Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED): Yes, No, Maybe, Unknowable, and All of the Above". By framing the chapter as a response to environmental determinism, he is not able to be as articulate as he has been in much of his other work about the complex social and psychological dynamics relating crime to the social and physical environment, and both to people's everyday lives. In the process of fitting research into the format of this question, important broadly conceptualized studies by other environmental and community psychologists are also excluded. Rotton and Cohn title their chapter "Climate,

Weather, and Crime”, yet they often go further and discuss climate, behavior and psycho-social processes more generally. The additional material piqued my interest and made me want a fuller treatment of the larger topic. Both chapters are well-grounded theoretically and empirically, and provide valuable methodological critiques.

Problems of Scope and Audience

The three remaining papers in the section, while competent within their own definitions, illustrate some of lack of clarity about the audience for and scope of the Handbook.

Two chapters, each very useful in themselves, highlight the omissions in this handbook while illuminating their particular topics. Design and Dementia by Day and Calkins provide a good conceptualization and review. But I couldn't help wondering why it was the only chapter on health care environments. The chapter's appropriately narrow theoretical focus also highlights the absence of a broader conceptualization and review of theory and research on health and disease, as well as stress and restoration. Environmental psychologists have contributed so much important work in these areas that their omission gives a distorted view of the field. Seeing Kristen Day as one of the authors also made me wish that the handbook had more on her ground-breaking work on the ethic of care and the experience of public environments. Public space is an area of productive and innovative research in environment and behavior studies that is neglected. Bitgood's chapter on environmental psychology in museums, zoos, and other exhibition centers provides a useful review of this developing area of research. At the same time, the discussion of these places as learning environments made me wonder about the absence of a chapter on schools.

Rather than being too narrow, Rod Lawrence's chapter on Healthy Residential Environments takes on too many topics, each with a large literature and important recent theoretical developments. A handbook that accurately represented the contributions of environment-behavior studies and environmental psychology would need more than one chapter on the topics compressed in this chapter, which include housing, neighborhoods, urban and rural settlements, natural and built environments, "sick buildings", and health-environment relationships more broadly. Faced with the more material than one chapter can handle, Lawrence provides a definitional and conceptual guide that lacks much theoretical or empirical specificity. These omissions are almost surely not because he is unaware of the scholarly literature. He is one of the editors of the 2003 special issue of the *Journal of Social Issues* on the residential context of health. Yet the wealth of theoretical and empirical literature contained in the special issue makes no appearance in his chapter. Nor is the explosion of research and literature reviews on health and the built environment in public health represented in his paper, despite having a section on epidemiological research. Also research, literature reviews, and theoretical conceptualizations of the relationships between neighborhoods and health within sociology, urban planning, developmental psychology, and urban policy are not reflected in the chapter. Perhaps the editors' intention to address issues at a global scale deflected him from these more concrete and specific contributions. His paper does a good job of explaining

the perspective taken by the World Health Organization and other multinational organizations on the issue of health and residential environments. But he can only scratch the surface of the many relevant bodies of literature.

Carpman and Grant's chapter on wayfinding suggests ambiguity about the handbook's audience, as well as its scope. The paper is an excellent overview of the topic, perhaps just right for practitioners interested in making wayfinding work better in buildings and larger areas. The principles put forward strike me as true and probably empirically verified or verifiable. But the empirical base of the chapter is very unclear. From an academic perspective, the chapter needs more discussion of theory and research. It also suggests the need for a broader treatment of environmental cognition.

Theoretical Perspectives

The chapters in the section called "Sharpening Theory" that have not already been mentioned include a chapter by Wapner and Demick that extends the Organismic-Developmental Theory introduced by Wapner and his colleagues early in the history of Environmental Psychology. Carl Graumann contributes a solid, engaging, and philosophically well-grounded chapter on phenomenology. Wicker updates the reader on contributions of ecological psychology. While the new empirical material included in Wicker's chapter adds to our understanding of behavior setting theory, his 1987 chapter remains a classic that should be read in addition to the new chapter. These chapters each make a significant contribution but alone do not represent the major theoretical positions relevant to environment behavior studies.

The section does not address several important theoretical and meta theoretical positions developed by environmental psychologists, and neglects important broader theoretical roots and current developments relevant to the environment behavior field. Within environmental psychology, Kaplan, Ulrich, Harting and others have contributed to the valuable and widely employed theory of restorative environments. The on going importance of the stress concept suggests that it also deserves theoretical treatment. In addition, a discussion of Harry Heft's (2001) exciting reframing of Gibson's work in the context of William James' theory of direct experience would have been a welcome inclusion. Heft's work makes explicit links with both phenomenology and behavior setting theory. In addition, his discussions of environments as cultural artifacts pushes his work beyond the limits of Gibson's thinking. The pragmatist tradition underlying transactional approaches, especially as exemplified in the work of Dewey and Bentley, is largely missing. Current theories of the nature of space as a social product and lived experience are also not included. For example, Bourdieu's, Lefebvre's, and de Certeau's contributions to our understanding of everyday life deal directly with the experience of space and are increasingly prominent in discussions of environment-behavior relations.

What are Other Disciplines in an Interdisciplinary Field?

The concept of this section is difficult to grasp, once the editors define the field as interdisciplinary. Nonetheless, the chapters are all well worth reading. Anthony and Watkins introduce recent developments in the small but intriguing areas

of convergence between clinical and environmental psychology. Both the authors and the other major figure in the area, Clare Cooper Marcus, work strongly in the tradition of environment and behavior studies. Arza Churchman's chapter on environmental psychology and planning points out some differences in disciplinary conceptions that can suggest better interdisciplinary practice. But it does not fully reflect the amount of engagement among environmental psychologists and urban planners that already exists. Parsons and Tassinary provide a useful and substantial conceptualization and review of research in environmental psychophysiology, which they note has been a component of environment behavior research since its inception. In their case, the expertise required more than the topics connects it more firmly to other disciplines. While the chapters on environmental anthropology and sociology are rooted in distinct disciplinary traditions, concepts and research from both disciplines have been routinely included in much environment-behavior research, as reflected for example in the two edited series in the field. Separating these fields out while including architectural topics in the other sections also is puzzling.

The Future

The Handbook concludes with a chapter by Robert Sommer on "Personal Space in a Digital Age", a chapter by Dan Stokols and Maria Montero, "Towards an Environmental Psychology of the Internet", and "On to Mars!" by Bob Bechtel. All suggest interesting research problems that are emerging with the advent of new technologies. The first two address issues that are also very salient in most people's day to day life. Sommer's chapter admirably meets all criteria for a scholarly handbook chapter and will be useful to anyone with a serious interest in personal space. He also thoughtfully speculates about the many ways in which cell phones and the internet redefine our personal spaces. Stokols and Montero's chapter also offers a good start in thinking about the significant reconfiguration of life brought about by electronic technology, especially the internet. The conceptual framework and research agenda they put forward have the hallmarks of both authors' strengths. The careful categorical analysis we have grown to look forward to from Dan Stokols comes to the fore in the two by two table that insightfully frames influences of the internet into four modes of human-environment transactions. Montero's broad knowledge of social theory and concern about social justice make this chapter come the closest of any in the book to grappling not only with technology but also with the implications of globalization. While it would have made for a less upbeat ending, the section on the future might also have considered the implications for environment-behavior research of international terrorism, immigration and forced relocation, and the conflicts over and rapid revisions of the geopolitical map of the world.

Conclusion

The *Handbook of Environmental Psychology* (2002) suggests to me that the two volume length of the 1987 Handbook is still closer to the length required to convey a representative view of the field. By giving the reader a very brief idea of what is contained in each chapter, I hope to help

researchers and other academics to find the information they are seeking in the Handbook when it is there. Perhaps a second volume of the Handbook is warranted before the ten-year life span postulated by the editors expires.

References

- Briggs, X.deS. (1998) Doing Democracy Up-Close: Culture, Power, and Communication in Community Planning. *Journal of Planning Education and Research* 18:1-13
- Heft, H. (2001) *Ecological Psychology in Context*. Mahwah, N.J.: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

From Dawn to Decadence: Fifty Years of (mostly American) Environmental Psychology. A practitioner's review of the Handbook of Environmental Psychology (2002 edition)

Bechtel, Robert B. & Churchman, Azra (2002) *Handbook of Environmental Psychology*. John Wiley & Sons, NY.

Reviewed by:

James A. Wise, Ph.D.

CEO, Eco•Integrations, Inc.

Adjunct Professor, Dept. of Psychology, and Environmental Sciences & Regional Planning Program, Washington State University, Tri-Cities.

Research Associate, Center for Sustainable Buildings Research, University of Minnesota.

"Design research is whatever I can reach from my drafting board." --A Seattle practicing architect, circa 1980.

My colleague's quote of 20 years ago is still relevant, even though his drafting board has been supplanted by a CAD system, and his arm's length reach by direct, broadband connections to the Internet. Handbooks still have their place in a design practitioner's world, and they are meant to provide the practitioner user with both concise factual results of the 'state-of-the-art' of a science, as well as a working knowledge and conceptual orientation around its foundational theories and operational schema. In other words, a practitioner's Handbook of Environmental Psychology would provide useful information, but more importantly show how to efficiently and effectively think through social/behavioral issues of design and ask the right contextual questions that not only lead to a satisfactory design solution, but to creative ways of engaging users of designed settings.

Does the new *Handbook of Environmental Psychology* do so? Regrettably, no. Does it represent an advance of 15 years of research since the publication of the first handbook (edited by Dan Stokols and Irwin Altman) in 1987? Hopefully, no. Does it honestly portray the 'state-of-the-art' of Environmental Psychology today? Well, that's the Big Question, because it may represent an understandably narrowed perspective of its mostly academic editors and contributors. But if it represents the field at large, it appears to show that

Environmental Psychology (or at least its American counterpart, which is mostly responsible for the Handbook) has reached a state of Decadence, which Jacques Barzun (2000) reminds us means a “falling off”, with a discipline’s founding premises exhausted, development stalled, repetition and frustration prevalent, and no ‘clear lines of advance’.

This is a strong indictment, but one this reviewer believes is warranted, and is made here in the constructive sense that something can still be done to represent Environmental Psychology as a professionally useful domain, because I believe it is. I profitably use it every day in my work with architects, facility managers, building engineers and planners, who recognize its value. Just not in the form and substance as presented in this edition of the *Handbook of Environmental Psychology*.

Let’s start with its basic physics. The first edition of the *Handbook* was a two- volume tome of 6lbs and 1654 pages. The latest is one volume, 3lbs and 722 pages. Now, terseness is a virtue in most sciences, so the contraction might be seen as the shuffling off of unneeded baggage. But this is not borne out in the number of contributors (66 vs. 61) or in the number of chapters (43 vs. 42) between the two editions. It is, however, borne out in comparing the subject matter indices, where such continuing staples of professional practice as “affordance”, “interiors/interior design”, or even “Human Factors” have disappeared altogether from index of the new *Handbook*. All the more curious because the Handbook has a handsome cover design conveying interior “space planning”, which is also missing from the index.

These noticeable omissions [and others detailing recent advances in human-centered design around “Kan-Sei”, “PCT/ACT” (Perceptual Control & Affect Control Theory), “Enactive Cognition” and “Fractal” design and analysis techniques] begin to illuminate the crux of the problem. Over the past fifteen years, Environmental Psychologists (or at least most of those writing here) have apparently stopped talking with their colleagues in allied disciplines, and narrowed their audience to each other. Where the first edition *Handbook* was a catholic enterprise that embraced the full multidiscipline range and richness of the emerging field, the second one has matured into an array of its own defensible academic ecological niches, and as a result seems mostly concerned with communicating among its own familiar members.

This general impression is borne out in the organization of the new *Handbook*, which puts *seven* chapters of abstruse “Theories” upfront, then another five of misnamed “Links” to other disciplines, and then another eight of (mostly) research “Methods” in place before the reader gets to “Applications”. This creates the impression to a practitioner that they must take the time and effort to wade through all of the former before they are even deemed ready to put Environmental Psychology to work for them. And then the “Applications”, chapters hardly ever make use of any of the former theories, methods, links or analyses. This is hardly the organization an applications-oriented Handbook should take. See, for example, the revised Human Factors Design Handbook (Woodson, Tillman & Tillman, 1992) arranged specifically for practitioner usage.

The same insular impression is strengthened by reading through the elaborate theories and waiting for the first explanatory or summative conceptual graphics and/or images to appear in the text. These finally do, at pages 176 and 181 respectively. Such graphics and pictures and even tables (except for Carpmann & Grant’s refreshing and eminently readable chapter on Wayfinding) are generally in very short supply in the *Handbook*, making it not a resource for any predominantly visual thinker (as designers tend to be), or anyone looking for a succinct, readily apperceived answer. Are Environmental Psychologists really such wordy people, or was the *Handbook* victim of an irresponsibly skimpy publishing budget?

But beyond such usability concerns for style and layout of the *Handbook* as a whole lay the abstruseness and self-referential nature of the content material in many of the chapters themselves. It is as if these were written not to be put to use, but to demonstrate the authors’ mastery of a few journal’s contents, and their sagacity around distinctions that could only be of concern to other environmental psychologists, and not to outside appliers of that discipline.

For example, the chapters on Architectural Programming and Postoccupancy Evaluation (POE) provide an indication but do not convey the widespread enduring impacts on design from these two activities that originated in the short-lived (mid ‘60s-‘70s) socio-behavioral revolution in Architecture. The entire current range of green-building tools, assessment techniques and commissioning processes (the hottest field in design and construction) owe their existence to the evolution of Programming and POE methods, yet these links go unmentioned, as does the entire related literature in the Human Factors field.

Even a timely chapter on Environmental Psychophysiology (re the new AIA Initiative on Architecture and Neuroscience) takes six densely written pages to describe a taxonomy of relationships between psychological and physiological constructs. But the taxonomy does not orient a designer in how to address a setting to elicit or constrain certain emotional behaviors or cognitive performance by its occupants. And yet architecture and successful commercial design is commonly tasked with this kind of requirement. In addition, the taxonomy uses as title for one of its major classes the term “Invariants” which has another very different foundational meaning shared by the mathematical and physical sciences, as well as design methods. I’m sure the organization the taxonomy presents is useful for a group of EP researchers, but environmental design practitioners would find it simply mysterious.

The apparent reluctance by Handbook authors to get their heads dirty in much beyond what has been published in the two or three academic journals that environmental psychologists regard as sources of relevant work is part of the problem. Another is the reluctance to get beyond what authors themselves publish. The well-intended chapter on “Bridging the Gap” about how scientists can make a difference outside academia has some reasonable suggestions in it. Then these are blunted by a final section on ‘Examples of High Impact Research’, which are restricted to examples from the author’s own laboratory. How much better it would have been to have actually gone out to

professional practice journals, assessed what is being presented there, and then traced these topics back to their academic origins, wherever they might lie.

The tendency to write a chapter centered on an author's own research interests is endemic to the entire volume, and resurfaces in subtle ways throughout the text. Unfortunately, these research interests may have little or nothing to do with the kinds of problems that environmental designers face in everyday practice. The chapter on Women and Environment, for example, explores feminist psychology and gendered meaning of place, while missing completely the commonplace errors in design that beset women in contemporary environments (see Wise, Baumgartner & Forghan, 1984). Most of these derive from ignored physiological and anthropometric differences between men and women, and do not require exotic psychological explanations. The concluding few paragraphs appear to recognize this in some insightful recognition of work on birthing room design. Those should have started the chapter, not ended it.

The Chapter on Crime Prevention through Environmental Design spends most of its pages setting up conceptual distinctions of interest to academics, not practitioners, and ignores most of the CPTED work originating in other countries or in applied studies. No wonder it can only slog inconclusively around the question of whether CPTED works. Note to academic researchers: The applied question is not whether something works, *but how it can be best made to work in the context to which it is applied*. For an example of how to apply environmental psychology to the design of banks so as to deter bank robberies, see Wise & Wise, (1985). This Progressive Architecture and Industrial Design award-winning applied research was funded by and performed for the banking industry, but apparently, like many other applied CPTED studies in the business or design literatures, never picked up by academic environmental psychology. Yet successful studies are published in the professional literatures because that is where the professionals (who commission them and pay the bills) expect them to reside.

Similarly, the chapter on Work Environments, while written and organized more from an applications viewpoint, is somewhat hobbled by not including more sampling from a significant literature originating in the Human Factors field and in work-environment reports from government agencies and major office furniture manufacturers and companies. Yes, these can be difficult to find, are not often referenced in academic journals and are not usually archived in major university libraries. But such studies, done in an applied context, usually offer key manipulations and insights that complement and extend the findings of more narrowly focused academic research. Such 'soundness and roundness' for a broad category of work is exactly what a Handbook needs to provide for the practitioner, who is unlikely to ever be able to read much beyond their own professional specialization. A similar problem besets the chapter on "Climate, Weather, and Crime". Where in that one are the converging lessons from the significant Human Factors and ASHRAE literature around temperature effects on humans?

A chapter dealing with a relatively newer applications arena, like the one on "Museums, Zoos, and other Exhibition

Centers" tends to fall victim to yet another kind of academic shortsightedness. This entails the assumption that research occurring before the area arose has little relevance, and that current relevant research all occurs within the settings chosen for investigation. So the major lessons derived for exhibition design around "minimizing effort" and maximizing motivation and attention in the user all fail to cite or build on G.K. Zipf's (1949) famous 'Law of Least Effort' from Experimental Psychology, as well as numerous marketing, anthropology, and consumer psychology studies centered around design of commercial displays. Such links to central tenets of Psychology as well as broader applications examples would all tend to help coalesce principles of environmental psychology into a few fundamental 'laws' with parameters that make them applicable to a wide variety of settings. That's what Environmental Psychology needs to be successfully applied. We do not need or want a plural of Environmental Psychologies for homes, offices, health clubs, metro stations, zoos, etc. We want one Environmental Psychology, grounded in a psychology of the organism as a whole, and parameterized to fit its different applications contexts. It's not that hard. Physics and General Systems Theory have already shown us the way.

Sometimes a chapter of the *Handbook* seems to foretell a wide applicability, and disappoints all the more because it is so ideologically constrained. Such is the case with the Chapter on "Increasing Proenvironmental Behavior". I actually turned to this one first upon receiving the text for review, because I was involved at the time in some applied work on advising businesses in how to increase environmental awareness among staff and in how to progress towards being a recognized 'sustainable business'. As mentioned earlier, the turn towards Sustainability (for real or for show) is one of the hottest developing areas of the business and design worlds these days.

So what did the chapter have to offer? Not much, really, because it had all been conceived and written within an unnecessarily conservative "experimental analysis of behavior" perspective (i.e. 1950's style behaviorism), which is simply inappropriate for 21st century businesses. Fortunately, there is by now quite a useful business literature around the same subject of increasing companies' proenvironmental behavior, attitudes and practices that I could rely on. But it is a sad missed opportunity that in the *Handbook* this important and timely topic could not have been presented in a way that solidified and built on the same focused literature from other disciplines, instead of casting it in a version of psychology that has little to offer the contemporary practitioner, and has long been relegated to the historical archives where it belongs.

The succeeding chapter on "Perspectives on Conservation Behavior" offered yet another test of usefulness, because I had been peripherally involved in efforts to improve recycling behavior at the Australian Summer and Utah Winter Olympic sites. One question that kept resurfacing at both events was the number and design of recycling receptacles. There were adamant proponents on either side of whether visitors could be reliably directed to deposit used items into two or three differently marked recycling containers. Again, so much of the research in this otherwise well-written chapter simply missed the point of practitioner's needs. We don't care about personality differences, nor attitudes, lifestyles, reasoned

action, planned behaviors etc. We just want to know how to design recycling bins and related information so as to instate and maintain a high degree of differentiated recycling behavior on site. That's all. The variables that are the lifeblood to academic environmental psychology seem to be noise to the practitioners. Still, because of its more inclusive theoretical stance, this chapter did stimulate some useful ideas, and showed that applications insights can be gleaned from academic research that is not overly ideologically straitjacketed.

The final section of the *Handbook* on "The Future" contains three chapters by luminaries of the field (R. Sommer, D. Stokols, & B. Bechtel) that aim to transition Environmental Psychology to the Digital Age, the Internet, and Mars Habitats, respectively. Two of these are instructive efforts at bringing the EP Establishment into the Information Age, while the third epitomizes the problems of the text as a whole.

"Personal Space in the Digital Age" and "Environmental Psychology of the Internet" are both readable scholarly reviews of how the enduring concepts of Environmental Psychology fare encountering the Information Age. But they leave the reader with a feeling of bemused quaintness, much like the halberd-like flourishes of the first firearms, or the buggy-like contrivances of the first automobiles. It is like a concept designer of one Age meeting the Concepts of the succeeding one. For a jolt of how the real Future Technospace is thought of by the generation creating it, read the article by Weiss (2003) describing the contextual meaning and interior design of a new store in Manhattan, which sells artifacts of Digital Age Design. There is no more "Personal Space", only "Immersive Space" intersected to varying degrees by its occupants. This new way of thinking is in tune with the way that the information generation thinks of space and home. The tried and true concepts of the Environmental Psychologists seem to no longer apply in the way that established authors of that field project them.

What is missing in the "Digital Age" and less so in the "Internet" chapter with its 'outside in' perspective is the recognition and inculcation of explanatory concepts from the New Media literature that are being generated to communicate and examine the different kinds of emergent informational environments. It seems that Chapters aimed to bridge the gap between conceptual frameworks for established environments and new ones ought to at least conceptually engage the new ones on their own terms. I personally think that many useful concepts of Environmental Psychology can make the transition, because Cyberspace inevitably carries with it the ecological space imperatives of our enduring biological heritage. But one would not guess this from the contents of these chapters, which seem more intent on impressing the old upon the new than constructively engaging emergent conceptual frames. That has been better done in the seminal and influential works of architects who have also explored the meaning of design in the Information Age, like Prof. Michael Benedikt, (U Texas, Austin) whom many credit with inventing the term "Cyberspace".

"On to Mars", the final chapter, would seem to be a rousing finale to the *Handbook*. It is enthusiastic in the same sense that a letter home from Space Camp is, but it mostly resides on the same substantive level. If Environmental

Psychologists are going to promote their usefulness to designers and engineers of space habitats, it behooves them to show that they have done their homework and are acquainted with the Space Human Factors and Space Architecture literature that have painstakingly laid the research foundations around isolated and confined environments (ICE) design.

There is no indication in this chapter of NASA-JSC's massive 20-year effort to develop its Man-System Integration Standards, which is available online and incorporates much HF and environmental psychology material into its design guidelines. Nor is there acknowledgement of JSC's own Astronaut Psychological Support Group, which also relies on accumulated years of spacecraft and simulator living experiences. Then there are similar omissions of the closely allied societies of the HPEE (Human Performance in Extreme Environments) and SpaceArchitects.org and even the well-established International Space University in Strasbourg, which continues to offer coursework around the HF and socio-behavioral bases of space habitat design.

This is just a beginning of a list that shows there is a well developed multidiscipline field (including the behavioral sciences) that has coalesced around ICE design for the past 20 years or so. A really useful chapter for practitioners in the *Handbook* would have sketched its outlines and resources; shown what special insights EP brings to the mix, and extracted some of the more interesting questions currently under scrutiny. The current chapter may be suitable to give intro psych students a sense of what environmental psychology in space might entail, but one expects a higher level of inclusiveness and expertise in any chapter like this that would be aimed at the professional practitioner.

What the new Handbook of Environmental Psychology illustrates most competently are the reasons why Division 24 of the APA is fading, and Environmental Psychology programs along with it. It is a discipline that appears to have forgotten why it started in the first place, and that has learned not to pursue practical problems through whatever fields of knowledge are useful to their solution. Instead, it has retreated into increasingly esoteric and incomprehensible theory and accompanying research 'methods' that serve mainly as a bulwark against the demands of design for the real world. It ignores the very real advances supporting human – centered environmental design that have occurred in numerous specialty fields of architecture, engineering, life and behavioral sciences, as if these would somehow dilute its theses, and in so doing has fashioned blinders for its own protagonists. They simply don't know how to ask the right questions anymore.

Years ago, Environmental Psychology was a freshly blooming field that attracted a young Experimental Psychologist like myself because it boldly confronted the problems of design for the real world and offered innovative means to make them better. Its credo matched my own: That armed with a toolbox of techniques from Psychology as a Science, a researcher could work alongside practitioners to create innovative solutions that would *make a difference* in an increasingly synthetic, constructed world. It seemed to say: "Seek wherever the problems lead you." and stood in stark contrast to the lecture I had received from my Area Chair at a great Mid-Western University, who reminded me that Experimental Psychology

only entailed "Learning, Psychophysics and Memory", and why the hell had I ever allowed design students into my stat classes anyway?

After almost 30 years of successfully working with architects, interior and industrial designers, planners, facility managers, spacecraft, building and software engineers of all kinds I have learned and demonstrated that the promise of that fledgling field was not an idle one. Psychology applied in the service of design, environmental or otherwise, works, and both the researcher and the designer come away richer for the exchange.

But it is not the stilted, mostly self-referential, unnecessarily arcane Environmental Psychology that predominates in this 2nd edition of the *Handbook*. The real *Handbook of Environmental Psychology*, usable and valuable for Architects, Facility, Interior and Urban Designers unfortunately remains to be written.

References:

Barzun, J. (2000). *From Dawn to Decadence: 500 years of Western Cultural Life*. NY: HarperCollins.

Weiss, D. (2003). TKNY: 'Idea Lab'. *Archi-Tech Residential*, Summer, 20-25.

Wise, J.A., Baumgartner, D. & Forghan, K. On Being the Right Sex: Discrimination by Design in the Built and the Product Environment. *Proceedings of the 28th Annual Meeting of the Human Factors Society*. San Antonio, Texas: 1984, 576-580.

Wise, J.A. & Wise, B.K. *Bank Interiors and Bank Robberies: A Design Approach to Environmental Security*. Rolling Meadows, Illinois: Bank Administration Institute, 1985.

Zipf, G.K. *Human Behavior and the Principle of Least Effort*. Cambridge, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1949

Division 34 Executive Committee and Business Meeting Minutes August 2003

Susan Clayton, Ph.D., Secretary

Treasurer's Report

We appear to be in a healthy position, financially. We have an increase in assets from 2002 to 2003, based on income primarily from dues. However, there may be some outstanding expenses of which we are not currently aware. Dues for 2004 are expected to remain at the 2003 level of \$11.

APA 2004 Convention

Joe Juhasz will coordinate programming for environmental issues. Leanne Rivlin will coordinate programming for population issues.

There was a proposal to offer a prize for the best paper submitted by a graduate student, based on work within the past 3 years. The prize winner will be expected to present their paper at the 2004 APA conference. The prize will be free membership in division 34, and free travel to APA. The paper must be submitted by March 15th. Susan Clayton, Larry Severy and a graduate student to be named will review the submissions and select the winner.

This proposal was unanimously endorsed by those present.

Name Change

There has been some discussion over the past year about changing the name of division 34. Larry Severy, Leanne Rivlin and Bruce Walsh will continue to review the possibility of a name change.

Officers

Larry Severy has now become Past President. Leanne Rivlin is the new President. Greg Wilmoth is President-Elect. Greg also remains Treasurer. Susan Clayton is the Secretary and Courtney Leidecker is the division representative to APA. Gary Gottfredson is the Member-at-Large.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

PsycEXTRA Will Launch January, 2004

APA is launching a new database, *PsycEXTRA*, to bring together important professional content that often does not get widespread attention. *PsycEXTRA* will include materials such as the following:

- * Newsletters
- * White Papers
- * Policy Papers or Standards
- * Consumer Brochures or Pamphlets
- * Newspapers and Magazines
- * Fact Sheets
- * Reports, such as Annual, Progress, Research, or Technical

Librarians call these and other similar publications "gray" or "fugitive" literature because they are often very hard to find. They generally are not indexed in products such as APA, as well known scholarly database PsycINFO, so they do not come to the attention of scholars and researchers who would find them very useful.

For more information on *PsycEXTRA* please go to <http://psycextra.apa.org/>.

