
The second edition of The Encyclopedia of Housing is a timely update for housing research after the recent economic turmoil and mortgage crisis in the United States. Editor Andrew T. Carswell aspired to accurately portray the multidisciplinary field of housing studies today. The result is a two-volume encyclopedia with over 250 diverse entries ranging from housing finance and environmental concerns to development patterns and innovative housing technologies.

Willem van Vliet's previous edition of The Encyclopedia of Housing (SAGE Publications, 1998) was a pioneer volume in housing reference since it featured a broad scope of articles rather than the narrow focus on terminology as in Kamel S. Sayegh's Housing: A Multidisciplinary Dictionary (ABC-Academy Book, 1987) and Jack Rostron and Michael A. Nutt's Dictionary of Housing (Arena, 1997). The two-hundred-plus contributing authors featured in each edition of The Encyclopedia of Housing are experts from academic institutions, government agencies, nonprofit organizations, and private firms. The multidisciplinary nature of housing research includes subjects like urban planning, landscape architecture, sociology, anthropology, political science, and law. Since the encyclopedia covers so many disciplines, it thoroughly introduces topics instead of supplying a complete comprehensive analysis on one subject area.

With research developments and the change in economic conditions over the past fifteen years, the updated and new content is pertinent and thought provoking. New topics such as “Subprime Mortgage Crisis” and the “Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP)” adequately summarize contemporary events and their root causes. The themes of sustainability, development, and planning are prominent throughout entries like “Green Building,” “New Urbanism,” and “Smart Growth.” The encyclopedia also touches on select racial, ethnic, gender, and age group issues in relation to housing.

Geographically, The Encyclopedia of Housing focuses primarily on the United States. Seven entries on “Housing Abroad” offer a general review of various regions including Africa, Asia, Canada, Central and Eastern Europe, Latin America, Middle East, and Western and Northern Europe. However, these sections do not provide much context on individual countries. Carswell argues that these “international entries help set out a framework for evolutionary policy making, which enables U.S. housing policies and practices to be informed by the experiences from other countries” (xxx). Susan J. Smith's The International Encyclopedia of Housing and Home (Elsevier Science, 2012) provides a much more comprehensive analysis of the topic over seven volumes for nearly six times the cost of The Encyclopedia of Housing.

The second edition expands on its predecessor’s work with improved usability. Researchers can easily cross-reference entries with increased visibility on the related subject terms after each entry and the added reader's guide section at the front of each volume, which groups subject areas together. Another great improvement is the addition of descriptions for related organizations and periodicals listed in the appendices. Listing website addresses among the organization descriptions encourages readers to seek out more information on these institutions. As a whole, the contributors' writing styles are very accessible. Readers outside the field of study should understand entries, despite a slight variation between authors from technical and sociological perspectives.

Overall, the contemporary content, multidisciplinary perspectives, and improved usability make The Encyclopedia of Housing a quality reference resource for college and university libraries. Even if your institution owns the first edition, I recommend updating the collection with the second.—Michelle H. Donlin, Government Documents and Microforms Librarian, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, Louisiana


This work joins a growing number of encyclopedic treatments of the subject. Editor Peter Chalk, senior analyst with the RAND Corporation and author of a wide variety of works on national and international security, has assembled a team of sixty contributors. Nearly half of these are graduate students at Georgetown University. Fourteen are academic faculty; seven are independent scholars or consultants, and the remainder are policy analysts, consultants, or fellows affiliated with RAND and other institutes/think tanks.

The introduction describes seven attributes of modern terrorism, which together define the work's scope. The encyclopedia specifically excludes state-sponsored terrorism. Chalk states, “this encyclopedia catalogs the most important groups, individuals, and incidents that have been associated with militant violent extremism over the past six decades. Its aim is to offer a comprehensive and easily accessible reference work to inform practitioners, policymakers, academics, students, and interested members of the public” (ix). All entries were “selected in terms of their enduring legacy, threat potential…or perceived infamy.” (ix). The work contains approximately four hundred signed entries in alphabetical order. The main section runs 775 pages out of the total page count of 871, averaging out to about two pages per article. The length of each article varies from less than a page to around four pages, and each article concludes with a brief further reading list averaging two to six items. “See also” cross-references to related articles are supplied for most articles. Coverage ranges from the best-known subjects (9/11, Bin Laden, John Walker Lindh, Madrid train bombing) to more obscure topics (the Vail Ski Resort arson ecoterrorism, Corsican nationalist terrorism, and the South Moluccan rights movement). Article coverage is relatively uniform: 9/11 receives three pages of text and six further reading entries, and Osama Bin Laden gets four pages and twelve further readings. Black and white
photos are included with some entries.

An alphabetical list of entries appears in both volumes. Volume 2 features a chronology of major events (1946–2011), glossaries, a bibliography, a list of contributors, a categorical list of entries, and a thirty-seven-page index. The category list is of limited utility for subject access as it consists of only four classifications: “Individuals,” “Events,” “Groups and Organizations,” and “Miscellaneous.” That said, the index largely saves the day by providing detailed access to specific people, groups, and events lacking their own entries. Its one major deficiency is spotty and inconsistent geographic access points. A separate geographic index would have enhanced access to the content. The thirty-one-page bibliography contains a wealth of sources, but its arrangement by author or title limits its utility. Some type of subject classification, supplemented with an author/title index, would have rendered it more usable.

The most directly comparable work is probably Combs and Slann’s Encyclopedia of Terrorism (Facts on File, 2007), which, sadly, is already becoming dated. This work also consists of short entries, about 325 in all, and similarly attempts to cover a wide range of topics, including killers like Charles Manson and John Wayne Gacy. Its bibliography is much shorter at six pages, but the chronology, covering 1946–2006, concludes with a useful summary: “U.S. and International Reaction to September 11, 2001, Day by Day” which spans September 11, 2001 to November 26, 2001. Ciment’s World Terrorism: An Encyclopedia of Political Violence from Ancient Times to the Post–9/11 Era (Sharpe Reference, 2011) was reviewed in RUSQ (vol. 52, issue 1, 74–75); as noted there, it places more emphasis on historical context, contrasting with Chalk and Combs/Slann’s focus on modern times. Arrangement of entries within each section by country or region facilitates the geographic access that is missing from the other two titles.

Encyclopedia of Terrorism fulfills its aim of providing a broad, but not deep, compilation of information on modern terrorism in all its manifestations. Of the five audience categories cited in the second paragraph above, however, it is likely to be useful only to students and the public. For these groups, the work provides a helpful summary of each topic with suggested sources for more information. Recommended for public and school libraries that can afford the price; an optional purchase for academic libraries that already have the Combs/Slann or the Ciment titles.—Michael L. Nelson, Research & Instruction Librarian, University of Wyoming Libraries, Laramie, Wyoming

Sources


The Encyclopedia of the U.S. Census (2nd ed.) updates and revises its predecessor to reflect the significant changes that have taken place in US census data collection and analysis over the past twelve years. The most notable addition to the encyclopedia is a twenty-two-page section on the American Community Survey (ACS) that covers historical and methodological aspects of this survey, which has replaced the long-form census questionnaire. The ACS section also includes a guide to understanding and using ACS data products, a particularly helpful addition because these products differ substantially from the data products of the modern decennial census.

The remainder of the encyclopedia has been updated to reflect changes in policy and practice since the first edition. Historical articles remain virtually unchanged, although the editors have added some discussion in reference to the ACS. Articles on current topics have been substantially or entirely revised. Some topics briefly mentioned in the first edition are expanded to full articles in the second, while a few tangential articles are contracted to provide more general information. The bibliographies for each entry have been updated with URLs to online resources, and the appendix includes reproductions of the collection forms for the 2010 census and the 2010 ACS. The index has also been improved with the addition of boldface type to indicate full articles. Additionally, this edition has improved its collection of historical photographs and images relating to the census while clarifying the sometimes confusing captioning of the first edition.

Other works about the census and the ACS may provide more directed guidance but are simultaneously focused on a smaller audience. This encyclopedia avoids any significant mention of the mechanics of accessing data through the Census Bureau’s Web interface, an advantage given that the newest data interface, American FactFinder 2, debuted in 2011 and continues to undergo adjustments as new data products are added and browser compatibility improves.

The second edition of the Encyclopedia of the U.S. Census is also notable for its thoughtful treatment of topics including race and ethnicity, undercounted populations, and immigration. A particularly interesting new article entitled “Human Rights and Population Censuses” frankly addresses the role of population censuses in both advancing and hindering human rights within the United States and in the international community.

This work remains indispensable for researchers using data collected and disseminated by the US Bureau of the Census. Students who are using historical census data will find this encyclopedia helpful in providing an understanding of how the data was collected. Genealogists may appreciate the discussion of historical census collection as a basic framework for detailed research into the creation and publication of census schedules, although they will be disappointed in its lack of coverage of the mechanics of accessing and using census schedules. What the Encyclopedia of the U.S. Census does provide is crucial information for librarians providing guidance and instruction in using census and ACS data, along with a fascinating window into the history of the massive undertaking to count and describe the population of the United States.—Shari Laster, Government Documents/Reference Librarian, University Libraries, The University of Akron, Ohio