

It is to say, however, that such correction of deficiencies can best be accomplished by those with a knowledge of how the private industry functions, knowing not only where it falls short but also why it works as it does and why it falls short, not in ideological terms but in specifics of the construction industry functioning in the economy.

It was to be hoped, that is, that a book called *The Story of Housing* would give the whole story, not simply the parts of the story which warranted public — that is, governmental — attention. Further carping criticism could be made of some misprints, some tables which are incomplete. Despite these comments, however, it seems to me that what the book apparently set out to do, it has done well, giving both an overview of the development of policy and programs and the details of legislation which will be of great use to all students in the field. Its editor, Gerturde S. Fish, and the authors of the chapters are to be thanked for filling a gap in the current educational material.

*Grace Milgram*

*Note: The views in this paper are solely those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of the Congressional Research Service or of the Library of Congress.*

McKown, Cora F. and Walter L. Calbert, *Residential Energy Alternatives*, Center for Energy Research, Texas Tech University, Lubbock, Texas, 79409. 90 pages. Free.

This book, written for consumers and other housing decision makers including builders, bankers and architects, is one of the best overviews of energy and housing that I have seen. It is clearly written in non-technical language so that even a novice in the energy area can soon feel like an expert and have a good understanding of the hows and whys of many means of energy conservation. It is abundantly illustrated with large, clear line drawings. Topics include passive forms of energy conservation (site location, plantings, window locations), inexpensive collector systems, various types of active solar heating and cooling systems, and earth sheltered housing. Also included are special sections on non-conventional housing such as

manufactured housing, zomes, domes, and foam houses. Attention is given to interiors of energy conserving housing, highlighting types of floor, wall, and window coverings as well as furnishings and colors that can increase the function and livability of the homes.

Of special note is the section on home finance. Although people may not think of finance as related to design, the book aptly points out that if you can't get someone to finance it, you probably won't get the home. Thus, convincing the consumer is not sufficient. Those who control the money, establish the building and zoning codes and develop federal housing programs must also be convinced.

Most of the measures presented are currently used primarily in new construction. Although the principles presented would apply to retrofitting, the economic and technical problems of retrofitting are not discussed directly. Other topics not covered in great detail include insulation and evaluating the economics of energy saving alternatives. Given the scope and purpose of this book, I do not consider that these are serious omissions.

The main strength of this book is that it makes unfamiliar energy saving alternatives seem not very mysterious at all, and very possible for the average consumer. The clarity of the book is due in large part to the understanding and research on the part of the authors and students who prepared it. The references and notes include many sources to which the more advanced reader would want to turn.

I recommend this book as a source of information to those unfamiliar with energy alternatives, and as a general reference for those who may already have substantial knowledge in the field. The book is short enough to be read in an evening, and should serve a broad range of readers. My copy has already been on loan to a high school teacher developing a unit on energy, to a grad student just becoming interested in the area, and to a newspaper reporter doing a story on earth sheltered housing. It should be of interest to those who are staunch supporters of energy conserving measures as well as to those who do not yet think they are.

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