

## THESES AND DISSERTATION ABSTRACTS 1998

### STRAW BALE HOUSING: CONSUMER ACCEPTANCE IN ATHENS, GEORGIA

Dina Ehrenzweig

*Building houses using straw-bales is a cost-effective, environmentally friendly, and efficient construction technique, yet it is rarely used due to the low level of consumers' acceptance. This study was conducted to identify the socioeconomic characteristics related to the acceptance of straw-bale housing. The sample was selected using a systematic random sample. Slightly more than half of the respondents were female. The mean age of the respondents was 42.8 years old, with ages ranging from 21 to 78 years old. The mean number of family members was 2.52, and the mean number of children was .58. The majority of the respondents were married and were white. The mean income was \$63,228 and the median income was \$52,500.*

*This study analyzed responses from 332 participants and examined how level of education, household income, amount of previous information a person has about straw-bale houses, and level of innovativeness affected acceptance of straw-bale housing. It was found that level of innovativeness and household income are both related significantly to acceptance of straw-bale housing. In addition, this study analyzed the responses from participants who were the most accepting and least accepting of straw-bale housing. It was found that for these respondents, the odds of being accepting of straw-bale housing were about 25% as large as for respondents who earned higher scores on level of innovativeness.*

Master of Science  
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## **ESTIMATING THE DETERMINANTS OF HOUSING QUALITY USING STANDARDIZED CORE WELFARE INDICATORS: THE CASE OF GHANA**

Emmanuel Doe Fiadzo

*Inadequate data on housing characteristics and lack of consensus regarding appropriate measures of housing quality characteristics retard developments to meet housing needs of people in less developed countries. A constructed housing quality index is developed and Cronbach's alpha and factor analysis are employed to evaluate its measurement properties. The constructed housing quality index and an overcrowding measure are used to identify key socioeconomic and demographic factors related to housing quality in Ghana with data from the Core Welfare Indicators Questionnaire survey (1997).*

*Access to quality of life amenities contributed significant additional information to traditional physical attributes in modeling a housing quality index. Consistent with results of housing studies in other developing countries, income, location, marital status and tenure appear to be the principal determinants associating who occupies physically deficient or overcrowded housing in Ghana. However, female-headed households and renters in Ghana have housing quality index scores higher than their counterparts.*

Doctor of Philosophy  
Jack Houston  
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## **DOES PERSONALIZATION IN RESIDENCE HALLS CONTRIBUTE TO RESIDENT RETENTION?**

Sheila Gassner

This study focused on discovering the importance of personalization to students living in residence halls and determining whether personalization contributes to resident retention. A qualitative methodology, focus group interviews, was chosen to collect data directly from students at two selected universities. Contrary to some research that indicated a direct correlation between personalization and retention, this study suggests personalization is a critical component of place attachment, yet it does not override other intervening issues, such as policies and regulations, privacy and space needs, expense,

and maturity, which affect overall retention. Furthermore, personalization is an expression of choice and it helps people develop a sense of identity essential with any type of dwelling. This study is helpful to all those interested in providing housing for a student population. While personalization is not a determinant of student retention, this study confirms the role of personalization as it relates to personal development integral in the activity of dwelling.

Master of Science  
Ruth Brent  
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## **AN ANALYSIS OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF STATE LEAD STATUTE BY MINNEAPOLIS AND ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA AND THE IMPACT ON AFFORDABLE RENTAL HOUSING**

Sandra C. Hartje

*This study analyzed the implementation of the Minnesota lead statute by the cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul from 1991-1995. In-person interviews were conducted with city and state lead officials during 1996. Differences were significant in the implementation of the state statute by the two cities including reporting of blood lead levels, type of education available to families, type of lead orders issued, inspection procedures, types of and methods for sample collection, penalties for noncompliance, use of condemnation, availability of an appeals process, and clearance proceedings. Additional differences were found in the organizational structures of the agencies.*

*The impact on affordable housing was real, unintended and negative. Affordable housing units were removed from the current housing stock through increased vacancy periods, abandonment by the property owner, and condemnation by the city. In addition, both homelessness and discrimination against families with children were reported as increasing.*

Doctor of Philosophy  
Evelyn M Franklin  
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## **AFFORDABLE FAMILY TOWNHOUSE DEVELOPMENTS FOR FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN: PARENTS' SATISFACTION AND ASSESSMENT**

Norido Sakurai

*This study explored factors that influence parents' satisfaction with their housing as a good place to raise children. The sample consisted of 76 parents with at least one child less than 18 years of age and in 13 newer affordable low-density townhouse developments. Background characteristics of parents, housing deficits, safety and adequacy of children's play areas and sense of community were examined. Three theoretical models were tested to predict factors related to parents' residential satisfaction and assessment of housing as a good place to raise children.*

*Most parents were satisfied with their overall residential environments, especially with the affordable rent, appearance and size of the development, and most of the dwelling features. Lack of storage space, lack of private and shared outdoor space, difficulty in supervising children, and inadequate upkeep and landscaping were sources of dissatisfaction. The results from the analyses indicated that the significant factors in predicting parents' overall satisfaction with and assessment of housing as a good place to raise children were satisfaction with management, children's play areas, and the social environment.*

Master of Science  
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## ARCHETYPAL PLACE CONCEPT FOR ASSISTED LIVING PRIVATE DWELLINGS

Lauren Beth Talliferro

*The purpose of this study was to determine which archetypal settings independent living residents of facilities that provide assisted living need and expect in the private living spaces of assisted living residences. The researcher developed an Archetypal Place Concept for Assisted Living Private Dwellings, based on work by Spivak (1984), which included eight archetypal categories with four sub-categories each. This concept was then used as a tool to evaluate scale models of assisted living dwellings constructed by independent living residents of retirement communities that offer assisted living. Seventeen residents in four retirement communities in Southwest Virginia participated in the research.*

*The findings revealed that sample members believed all eight archetypal categories should be included in assisted living private dwellings. However, the degree to which the archetypal categories should be developed in a dwelling varied depending on whether the sample members were familiar with large or small assisted living dwellings.*

*The most popular combination of sub-categories for sample members familiar with large assisted living dwellings was: multiple rooms not shared by unrelated adults, with separate sleep and living areas; separate sleep areas out of the living room with a door; bathrooms with a toilet, sink, shower, vanity closet, and linen closet; food storage with cooking appliances; two built-in closets; windows facing one direction, some with an outdoor area; separate seating for living and dining out of the sleep area; and kitchenettes with a refrigerator, sink, and cooking appliances.*

*The most popular combination of sub-categories for sample members familiar with small assisted living dwellings was: one room not shared; a sleep area not shared, with no separate living room; a bathroom with a toilet, sink and shower, tied with toilet, sink, shower, vanity storage, and linen closet; food storage with no cooking appliances; two built-in closets; windows facing one direction; designated seating arrangement within sleep area; and no kitchen, possible food storage. It was concluded that assisted living facilities should include a variety of dwelling types to meet different people's needs. However, any assisted living dwelling should include all eight archetypal categories to allow residents to function more comfortably.*

Master of Science  
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## HOUSING MARKET CHOICE PATTERNS OF SINGLE WOMEN HOMEOWNERS

Rebecca S. Wood, Jr.

*Housing researchers are aware of the lower homeownership rates and other housing problems of single women but there is very little research focusing on single women homeowners or the characteristics of the housing they buy. Also, since a wide body of research can be found that examines determinants of homeownership for various population groups, the importance of this study was in its focus on single women homeowners and the characteristics of their housing rather than the determinants of ownership for this group.*

*Using data from the 1993 American Housing Survey (AHS), the study sample consisted of 639 women homeowners who were either widowed, divorced, separated, or never-married, and who did not own their previous residence. The study's purpose was to construct a profile of single women homeowners that included a description of their demographic and housing characteristics, the means by which they acquired their homes, and the changes made in the housing when they became homeowners. Additionally, this study examined which demographic and previous housing characteristics of this group were related to the housing characteristics of their present homes.*

*Descriptive results from this study suggest that single women homeowners are primarily middle aged without young children at home, earn moderate incomes, and that the largest proportion of them live in the South and metropolitan areas. When compared to homeowners in general, single women homeowners' homes cost less and represented a higher proportion of attached and mobile home units. The results also showed that single women used low down payment financing instruments to a lesser degree than did all homeowners.*

*Results from statistical analyses suggested that significant relationships exist between single women homeowners' housing characteristics, and a) their demographic characteristics, b) their previous housing characteristics, and c) their reasons for moving and selecting their current homes and neighborhoods. Another key finding was that single women homeowners of varying marital status differed in their present and previous housing characteristics and their reasons for selecting the current home.*

*The results of this study support the suggestion made by other researchers that examining differences not only by gender but also the variations in marital status will help to clarify and add to the knowledge of housing and its relevance to populations of varying social composition.*

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