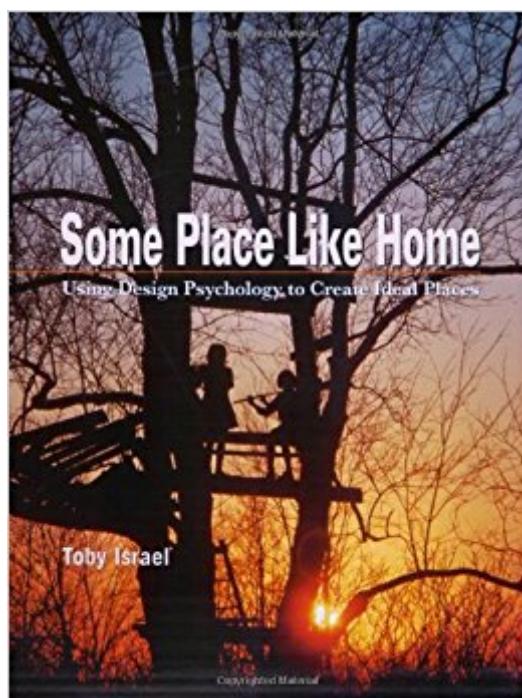


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# Some Place Like Home: Using Design Psychology To Create Ideal Places



## **Synopsis**

Both an accessible and fascinating title, this book reveals how our past experiences and psychological developments inform the choices we make today when selecting a place that we truly feel is our "home" It considers our "environmental autobiographies" and our psychological development in respect to urban experiences, focusing on the personal stories of Charles Jencks, Michael Graves and Andres Duany, three of the most prominent figures of our time from the world of design Both theoretical and practical exercises involve the reader in understanding and improving the quality of their own environment. An entirely new approach to architectural design which combines aesthetics and psychology

## **Book Information**

Paperback: 252 pages

Publisher: Academy Press; 1 edition (December 19, 2003)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0470849509

ISBN-13: 978-0470849507

Product Dimensions: 6.8 x 0.6 x 8.8 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.2 pounds

Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars 6 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #369,193 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #237 in Books > Medical Books > Psychology > Reference #387 in Books > Arts & Photography > Architecture > Buildings > Residential #998 in Books > Textbooks > Humanities > Architecture

## **Customer Reviews**

"Some Place Like Home....considered the bible of the field." (LA Times, March 15, 2007)

"explores a new field of work features exercises so readers can analyse their own past" (Design Week, December 2003) "an extraordinary book, intellectually written includes thought-provoking exercises will make you a believer" (Design Management Review, Spring 2004)

Defined as "the practice of architecture, planning and interior design in which psychology is the principal design tool", the purpose of Design Psychology is to create environments that reflect the individual or group as well as encourage positive change. Some Place Like Home introduces the new field of Design Psychology, using in-depth interviews with design superstars Michael Graves,

Andres Duany and Charles Jencks to examine how places from the past contain the seeds of future choices – for home locations, dwellings and interior design. The Design Psychology Exercises used to delve into the “environmental autobiographies” of Graves, Jencks and Duany can in turn be used by readers, themselves, to explore their own environmental treasure chests. The last portion of the book focuses on the practical application of Design Psychology by showing examples of residential, corporate and institutional projects created via the Design Psychology process. A Design Psychology Toolbox, provided at the end of the book, gives readers hands-on programming exercises they can use to explore and design from their most fulfilling inner experiences. This is a groundbreaking, “must read” book for anyone seeking to create an ideal environment that feels “Some Place Like Home”.

Great book!

Using interviews with well known architects, Toby Israel demonstrates how early memories of architectural spaces are reflected in later work. Personally I always thought the spaces I lived in determined my architectural preferences, and this book shows in a systematic way just that. I highly recommend this book for anyone who is curious about architecture and psychology and memory.

I'm rarely uncertain about my reviews but I am with this one. I've gone through Toby's recommended process of discovery and I think it is partially valid but either incomplete or on the wrong track. Her questionnaires and analysis of past experiences with "home" are the basis of her theory and book. From Martin Seligman's Authentic Happiness "It is difficult to find even small effects of childhood events on adult personality, and there is no evidence at all of large effects." (I happen to be reading this article with this quote, I haven't read the book yet: [...]) I just don't see a childhood environment influence in my design preferences. I suspect that we are influenced much more by what we are exposed to than we remember. If a child sees a dome in a house and happens to remember 30 years later that a dome can be used in a house design then that designer is more likely to use a dome. My understanding of Toby's theory is that the designer would use a dome feature if they had a happy environment with a dome in the home in their previous experience. I see this as more coincidental than part of the psychological make-up of the designer. I grew up in an old California mining town and my parent's house had bats in the attic. The bats were amusing but I don't recall the urge to design my homes with accommodations for bats. An review is no place to get into a full academic discussion but I believe I've seen enough decent research that works against

her theory and that my personal experience combined with her approach does not work at all. It would take a book to refute her theory properly but at least don't accept it without question. What value has this book, theory, and process to architectural and interior design? I found that the insight into the thinking and histories of the three superb architects she interviews was worth my time and money. Also, her process should work at least some of the time, and possibly more often than not. It can't hurt to know the client better and her technique is not burdensome. I recommend reading the book if you are doing design and want another theoretical reference point. - jim

This book is wonderfully written and easily understood by those directly and indirectly involved with interior design and architecture. The author, Toby Israel, leads you through her pioneering ideas behind design psychology with an interesting format that includes narration, interviews and exercises. You'll discover how your own past history of place - where you grew up, the type of home you lived in and even where you went to school - can affect choices you make regarding dwellings and workplaces now and in your future. The exercises throughout the book help readers uncover influences from their past and can help them create successful environments for themselves or for clients. This book is a must have for anyone seeking to create satisfying designs with tools we inherently possess but too often ignore.

"Some Place Like Home" is a groundbreaking book for the field of Design Psychology. As an Interior Design student I realize that my study is constantly subordinate to the field of Environmental Psychology and the two are interrelated. Dr. Israel is a pioneer of this field and I would recommend her work to anyone wanting to further their understanding of this discipline. She is dead on when she states, "The idea of environmental autobiography has been around for a long time, so has environmental psychology. Unfortunately these ideas have not been effectively communicated to the public at large, or to architects. Perhaps this book will help convince people that there is a powerful connection between past, present and future sense of home and place and that this connection can be explored through...Design Psychology."

A great book, very easy reading but also very inspirational in the sense that you are handed very usable tools for communication with (potential) clients. A logical thought-process which needed to be put to paper: how to create a design which is not only great, but also gives the person who has to live there a sense of home!

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