



6,000 Years of Housing (Revised and Expanded Edition)

By Norbert Schoenauer

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6,000 Years of Housing (Revised and Expanded Edition) By Norbert Schoenauer

The fascinating evolution of house forms from the Stone Age to the present.

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Part architecture, part history, and part anthropology, this encyclopedic book limns the story of housing around the world from the pre-urban dwellings of nomadic, semi-nomadic, and sedentary agricultural societies to the present. Ancient urban dwellings were inward-looking, ranged around a courtyard. Until fairly recently, these dwelling types survived in indigenous urban house forms in the Islamic world, India, China, and the Iberian peninsula and Latin America. After the collapse of the Roman Empire, however, outward-looking house forms replaced the ancient form in most of Europe and the New World.

In the Middle Ages houses served both as homes and as places of work, but gradually the domestic and business lives of the inhabitants became separate. In the wake of the Industrial Revolution, profound changes in the residential development of the western world occurred: housing became segregated along socioeconomic lines and dwelling types polarized, with low-density, single-family houses at one extreme, and tall, high-density, multifamily tenements and apartments at the other. Side effects of America's automobile-intensive suburban dream housing include inefficient land use, pollution, and urban decay. *6,000 Years of Housing* chronicles how this came about, and suggests solutions based on a rich variety of historical precedents.

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Review

“Accessible not only to the architectural community . . . but to anyone with a passion for housing . . . issues are expressed clearly, and details serve a larger context.” (Elizabeth MacKenzie, MAIBC - APT Bulletin: The Journal of Preservation Technology)

About the Author

Norbert Schoenauer is Macdonald Emeritus Professor of Architecture at McGill University. He lives in Montreal.

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