Perhaps Daniel's most valuable contribution to historical scholarship is the information he provides on the early difficulties and subsequent growth of Ohio University, one of the town's oldest institutions and largest employers. The growth of the university is one of the few stories that distinguishes what might otherwise be an unremarkable nineteenth-century history. Daniel is also at his best when he weaves together disparate accounts from newspapers, diaries, and other sources to offer an engaging picture of Athens' wartime experience, both through the eyes of Athens-born soldiers and the community back home.

The book's sweeping scope (which formally spans the period from 1800 to 1920, but which actually begins with the earliest documented human occupation of the area) is not, however, without problems. Daniel makes this extended chronology digestible by slicing it into specific segments. But his method also tends to sever the narrative in places to make it fit the sequence of chapters. For example, in chapter five (which focuses on the 1850s) the reader learns that a new railroad is being planned from Columbus to Athens to provide access to the coal fields in the nearby Hocking Valley. However, it is not until chapter eight — more than ninety pages and twenty years later — that the reader discovers this line was completed and put into operation.

The progressive physical, cultural, intellectual, political and economic growth of Athens through the nineteenth century suggests that the town was consistently working to break down its isolation. But, according to Daniel, regardless of increases in its population, Athens did not truly become a city until the twentieth century. One might wonder why, then, if Daniel is so intent upon documenting Athens' "Village Years" (as indicated by the book's subtitle), nearly one-third of the book describes life in Athens between 1900 and 1920, a period during which Daniel claims Athens finally became a city — and an "urbane" one at that. But this is a minor point. The book's only real flaw has to do with how Daniel has chosen to organize the massive amount information he has compiled. Overall, this is a highly readable account of the nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century history of a midwestern university town. ■

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The Home: Words, Interpretations, Meanings and Environments. David N. Benjamin, ed., assisted by David Stea. Avebury Publishing House, Aldershot, 1995. 310 pp.

The first scholarly article on the topic of the home was published in 1678; but, even now, at the end of the twentieth century, use of the term is still ambiguous. So claims David Benjamin, editor of *The Home: Words, Interpretations, Meanings and Environments.* The fifteen chapters in this collection do nothing if not confirm Benjamin's claim.

With the exception of one, all the contributions to this book were drawn from a three-day symposium entitled "The Ancient Home and the Modern Industrialized Home," convened in 1992 at the University of Trondheim, Norway. The organizers of this symposium endeavored to see the topic covered according to as many disciplinary traditions, conceptual approaches, and methods as possible; and conference presenters included archeologists, sociologists, architects, psychologists, linguists, anthropologists, geographers and urbanists. The contributions chosen for this book display a similar variety in terms of their approach. They are arranged by sub-sections treating the subject by definition, as a tool for cultural interpretation, as a reflection of social change, and as a model for the future.

The book opens with an attempt at linguistic definition — or perhaps demonstration of the futility of such an attempt. Stephen Brink's "Home: The Term and the Concept from a Linguistic and Settlement-Historical Viewpoint" was specially commissioned for this purpose. Brink traces the word home and its variants — *ham, heima, hem,* and *heimr* — as they appeared in Germanic languages as long as 2,000 years ago. Though it is impossible to pin the meaning of these ancient terms down exactly, they all relate to ideas about place: among them farm, hearth, village, settlement and dwelling. Though not stated explicitly, the problem of definition obviously has much to do with the subjective use of the word by both individuals and groups.

Of the chapters that follow, that by Amos Rapoport is particularly pivotal, because it problematizes the spill-over of the term home into the realm of popular culture. Rapoport claims that the understanding of the term by researchers has been conditioned by its popular usage. Phrases such as "there's no place like home" or "you can't go home again" imply a

mental state. Others such as "home is where, when you go there, they have to let you in" suggest ownership and control. The term can also carry intimations of physical and emotional comfort, family and relationships, security and possession. Rapoport then radically suggests the term is not needed in scholarly research at all. He argues that the concept of "dwelling," defined as a system of settings, is less laden, and consequently much more useful as point of departure for the study of relationships of culture, life-style, and social structure.

Another noteworthy contribution to the book is that by Ruth Tringham. She takes readers back through the prehistory of Southeastern European settlements in search of the micro-history of home. Archeologists, Tringham claims, have not written much about homes or home, although they have written considerably about architecture, spatial patterns, buildings, dwellings, shelter and houses. Her aim is to expand the archeological record both quantitatively and qualitatively by asking different questions. By viewing material culture as an active component of social action, she argues that questions can be asked and narratives constructed about individual actors and their everyday lives. Such efforts at constructing micro-histories of home hold great promise in terms of documenting the role of women and other actors long excluded from the prehistorical picture.

In the final section, Tomas Wilkstrom's chapter, "The Home and Housing Modernization," looks at ways in which the concept and reality of home have been constructed by users of dwellings. In the late 1980s Wilkstrom interviewed the inhabitants of several apartment buildings scheduled for renewal or "modernization" in Sweden. Drawing on the theoretical framework provided by German phenomenologist Otto Friedrich Bollnow in his *Mensch und Raum* (*Man and Space*), Wilkstrom provides vivid oral histories that document the ways people create spaces for living; stated otherwise, how they create homes out of housing.

Conspicuously absent from this collection is more material specifically investigating issues of home and gender. This topic has been at the center of ongoing debates in a number of disciplines over the past three decades, and its omission weakens what would otherwise be a comprehensive survey. Several of the contributions to this volume, among them Rapoport's and Tringham's, are outstanding in their invigorating scholarly approaches to a concept and subject already well covered but by no means exhausted. Yet, despite such contributions, the extent to which this volume accomplishes more than substantiating the complexity of the subject and introducing a variety of approaches is unclear. This volume will be of most value for those embarking on the study of home from within a particular disciplinary or methodological framework. The chapters themselves indicate that scholars and professionals already engaged with the subject have little doubt as to its complexity. ■

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