and earthen houses, to pre- and post-railroad buildings, to the single- and double-wide forms of manufactured housing. The accompanying photographs, illustrations, and discussion points include dates, materials, and regional variations and illustrate the changing technology, form, and size of each dwelling over time.

The rest of the book follows this same organizational structure, with styled houses that followed national trends. The chapter "Colonial Houses 1600-1820" shows the desire to incorporate the prevailing styles of an immigrant groups' native country as exemplified by the 1683 Parson Capen House in Topsfield, Massachusetts and its English antecedents; the French-influenced 1806 Font-Jucadella Building in New Orleans, Louisiana; and the 1851 Treviito House in San Ygnacio, Texas, with its fortified Spanish-style elements. The author points out that even after the end of colonial rule, historicist styles lingered sometimes longer than expected.

"Romantic Houses (1820-1880)," "Victorian Houses (1860-1900)," and "Eclectic Houses (1880-1940)," include all the well-known and popular national styles beginning with the Greek Revival that dominated our newly independent country for the first half of the nineteenth century. The advent of the railroad, the publication of architectural pattern books, and the availability of standard-size lumber ushered in the era of mass production and a particular set of styles and regional variations and illustrate the changing technology, form, and size of each dwelling over time.

The chapter "Modern Houses 1900-present)" begins with Frank Lloyd Wright and his turn-of-the-last-century creation of the Prairie style, one of the few indigenous American styles. This style and the following Craftsman, Art Deco, and Art Moderne house are categorized as Early Modern and were prevalent from 1900 to World War II. Postwar houses are grouped into a new category called Bankers Modern and typically include houses in large-scale developments with Minimal Traditional, Ranch, and Split-Level styles.

This chapter also includes an in-depth discussion of the policies of the Federal Housing Authority (FHA) and the housing shortage following World War II. The final modern house section, "Mainstream Modern," includes the International, Contemporary, and Shed styles, as well as vocabulary now used to describe houses of the 1950s and 1960s, such as New Formalism and Brutalism, and those of the subsequent decades of Postmodernism and Deconstructivism. When a stylistic category is no longer possible, as for houses built within the last ten or twenty years, the entries are grouped by similarities in their character-defining elements, such as segmental vaulted roofs or the combination of different exterior textures and materials the author calls décomposé. The last catch-all chapter dives deeper into the variations of style as seen with the rediscovery and rereading of previous styles in the 1970s. These include Tudor, Neoclassical, French, and Spanish Colonial variations of the Ranch house, as well as the Millennium Mansion, a less judgmental and diplomatic name for the McMansion.

The professional and advocate community will welcome McAlester's new edition and rely on her categorization of historic American domestic architectural styles, historical context, and the beginnings of our understanding of the new millennium. Similar to fashion, our American culture reinvents and reinterprets historic precedents, and the appearance of American domestic architecture continues to evolve and re-evolve. As the author mentions in the preface, "Knowledge of earlier architectural styles -- both traditional and modern -- is now a necessity for understanding new houses, not just historic ones." This book remains the definitive national standard and go-to guide for identifying and understanding American domestic architecture and its subsurface historical context.

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about arris

Arris is a peer-reviewed journal published annually by the Southeast Chapter of the Society of Architectural Historians. Since 1989, the journal has welcomed original scholarship on all aspects of the history of architecture and landscape.

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