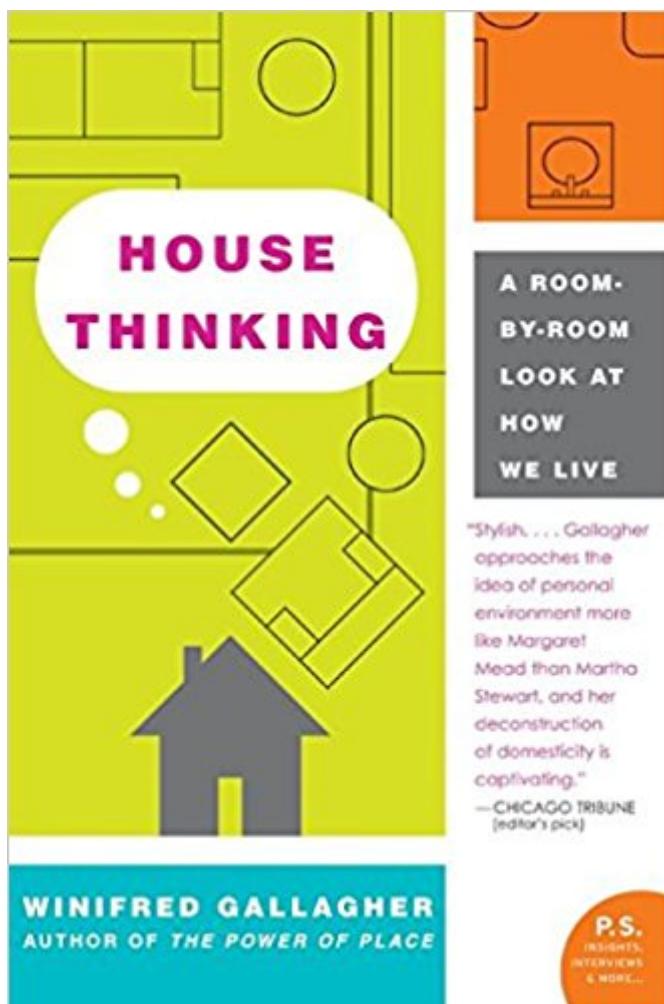


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# House Thinking: A Room-by-Room Look At How We Live (P.S.)



## **Synopsis**

Ethan Allen and HGTV may have plenty to say about making a home look right, but what makes a home feel right? In *House Thinking*, journalist and cultural critic Winifred Gallagher takes the reader on a psychological tour of the American home. By drawing on the latest research in behavioral science, an overview of cultural history, and interviews with leading architects and designers, she shows us not only how our homes reflect who we are but also how they influence our thoughts, feelings, and actions. How does your entryway prime you for experiencing your home? What makes a bedroom a sensual oasis? How can your bathroom exacerbate your worst fears? *House Thinking* addresses provocative questions like these, enabling us to understand the homes we've made for ourselves in a unique and powerful new way. It is an eye-opening look at how we live . . . and how we could live.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

Tapping into the American consumer's burgeoning interest in home design, cultural critic Gallagher (*Pride of Place*) takes on the single-family home in her latest cultural inquiry. Chapters are themed by room, beginning with the entry and living room and moving through to the basement, garage and garden; each ends with anecdotes describing how Gallagher's own family has changed its home with her new-found knowledge. Equal parts architecture, history, sociology and psychology, Gallagher's book easily makes academic discussions relevant to the general reader. The text is

liberally peppered with pop culture references, though at times these appear humorously off-mark, as when she cites MTV Cribs (a hip-hop version of *Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous*) as a "popular children's show." Gallagher is not an unbiased observer — she makes a clear argument for her own preference for traditional notions of comfort and craft. Avant-garde architects and designers are often derided for their emphasis on novelty and art over homeliness and practicality. Because of this, Gallagher's text often feels like an etiquette book evoking a romantic nostalgia for propriety. She is at her most engaging when discussing notions of prestige and social hierarchy — issues particularly relevant in an age of proliferating McMansions and Martha Stewart — inspired interest in the hallmarks of good taste. (Feb. 7) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

**\*Starred Review\*** Gallagher writes fresh and nuanced interpretations of the subtler aspects of life. In her latest work of creative synthesis and interpretation, she conducts a tour like no other of the American house, excavating its fascinating history and covert psychological influences. Humans are happiest in dwellings that allow us to both nest and perch, Gallagher explains, citing Frank Lloyd Wright. To assess whether a house succeeds in providing these qualities, she performs what she calls house thinking, analyzing the ambience of each room in houses old and new, urban and suburban. To set the gold standard, she describes various architectural marvels, including Edith Wharton's Mount (Gallagher has a particular interest in writer's abodes), whereas on the practical side, she recounts her own home-improvement efforts. As she assesses every aspect of every room, she offers compelling observations regarding women's lives past and present, changing family configurations, our mania for possessions, and the dominating role televisions and computers now play on the domestic scene. As Gallagher casts our houses and private lives in a revealing new light, she reinforces our perception of home as a place that merits our keenest attention. **Donna Seaman** Copyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

I first heard Ms. Gallagher interviewed on NPR and found her to be interesting and articulate. The book is just as wonderful! Informative, interesting and beautifully written. I urge anyone who is thinking of buying a house to read this book FIRST - then start looking at the real thing. Ms. G. provides us with a mini architectural degree and a phd. (small case) in the phsychological aspects of our most important space - our homes. Thank you for a great book. I have bought several copies for

friends and family about to embark on this important mission and they have all been delighted to be exposed to Ms. Gallagher's knowledge and insight.

I have decorating books replete with full-color illustrations of ideas, and I have New Age-y decorating books that explain Feng Shui and how to use essential oils, but this book is a really nice bridge between the visualizing your space and analyzing the psychology behind how you use it. It's strategic vs. tactical, but since there are so few books for laymen that tackle the former, it's a welcome addition and brings interesting insights as to how to think about our homes and make them more liveable.

I don't actually hate this book, which is what giving a book 1 star means, however, I do think it is awful because it is so poorly written. Did this book have an editor assigned to it? In the first 15 pages, which is as long as I stayed with this book, there is an abundance of incomplete sentences, syntax errors, and random, seemingly unrelated ideas jumbled together. Several times I picked the book up and tried to read it only to put it down because a lot of it was nearly incomprehensible to me. In the Praise section in the front of the book I was surprised to see this book was recommended by the Chicago Tribune, New York Times Book Review and Sarah Susanka, author of The Not So Big House, which is a highly readable, well written book and one that I highly recommend. Did these people really read House Thinking? I'm going to ask for my money back.

I chose this rating because of the quality of the books, the price, and the speed at which it arrived. I purchased multiple books for my clients and staff and felt good about handing them out. Great quality

a thoughtful look at rooms!

I always thought that we are all psychologically affected by the space we live in, and this book expands on that theme. This is a great book for anyone who seriously thinks about their homes beyond mere decorating. I wish I had written it.

Fascinating look at how architecture and interior design influence our mood and behavior. You gain general principles and insights into what makes a space inviting or unappealing. This is a great book for an architect or interior designer with an interest in environmental psychology. This is NOT a

"how to" book for consumers who want remodeling ideas.

House Thinking focuses on each room and its function, historically and personally. One example is how a "Great Room" came about and how people in the past used such a space and how your own family activities and needs might fit with one. Gives a different and useful perspective on home space, room by room.

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