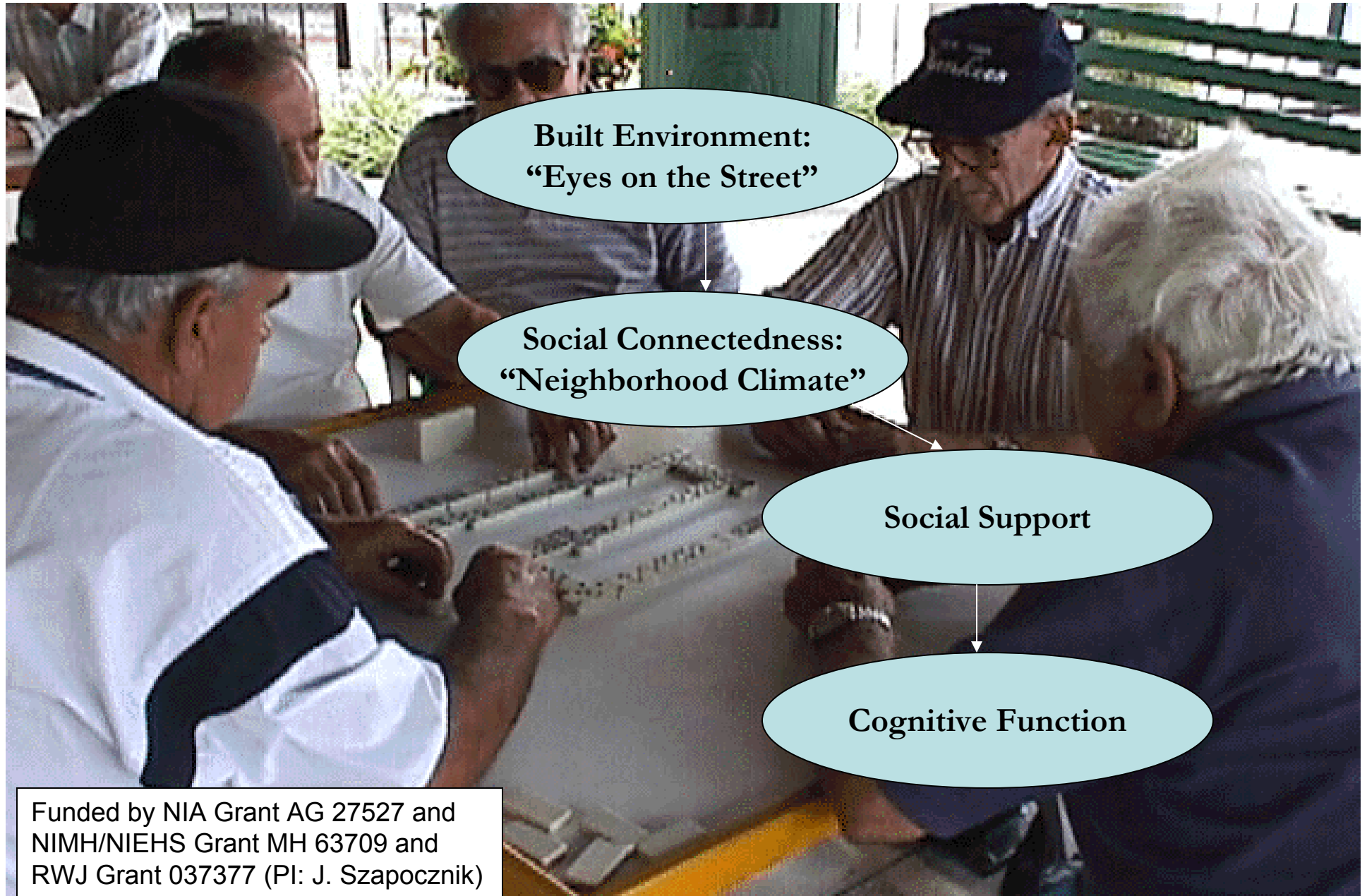


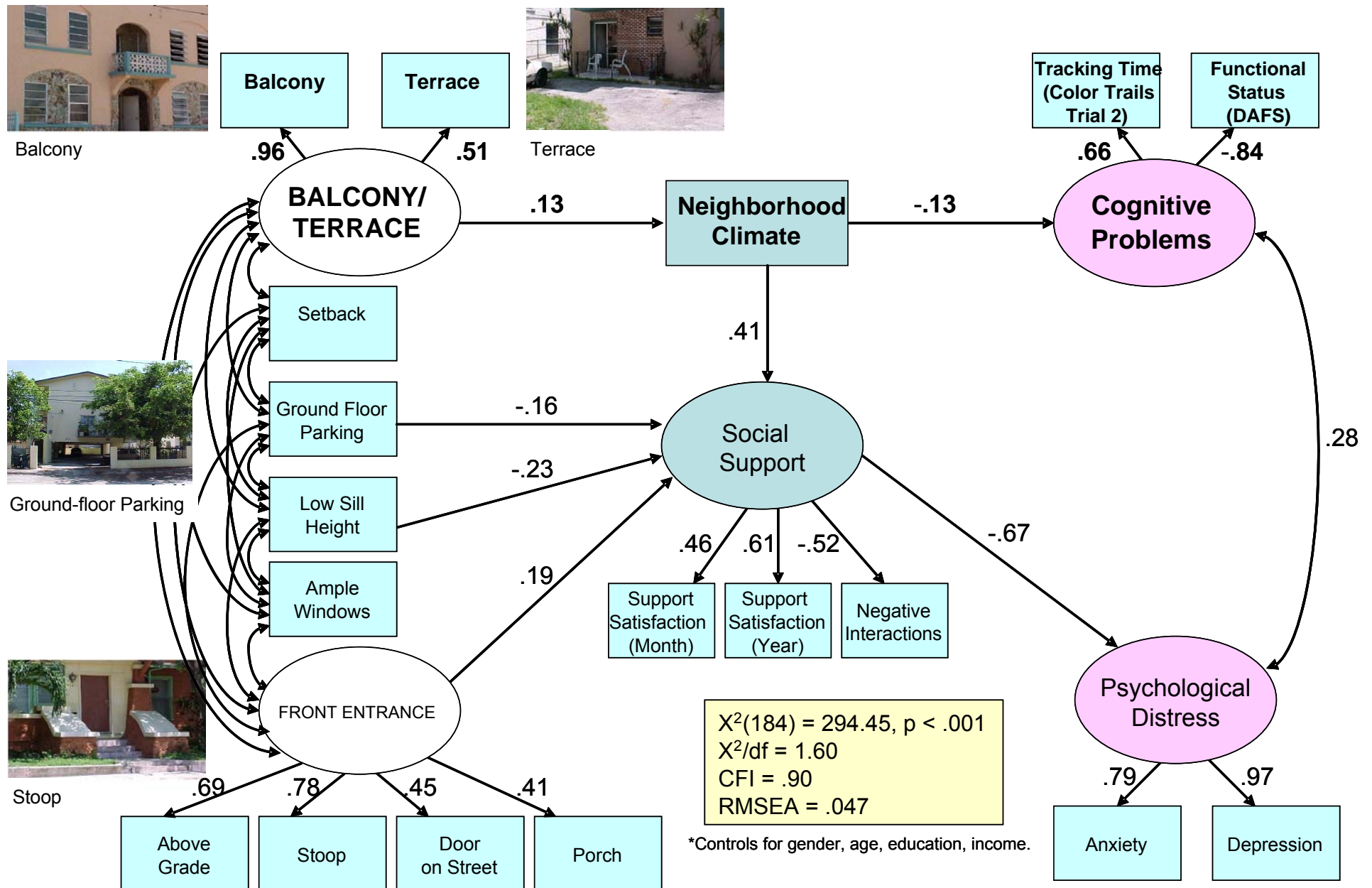
Built & Social Environments & Cognitive Aging

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Impact of Built Environment on Cognitive Problems*



Refs.: ¹A. R. Spokane et al., in press, *Archit. Sci. Rev.*; ²J. Szapocznik et al., 2007, under review.

- All 3857 lots in 403 blocks of East Little Havana, FL, were coded for built environment indicators
- Population based sample: 16,000 households enumerated for Hispanic elders \geq age 70
- 273 elder-blocks – 1 elder per block
- Elders' cognition and social environment assessed





What We Learned!



Interdisciplinary Research:

- Interdisciplinary teams can assess built and social environments' effects on elders' cognitive function (e.g., architects; behavioral scientists).

Environmental Variables Predict Cognition:

- Built environment features that promote direct observation (e.g., balconies) predicted neighborhood social climate, which in turn predicted reduced cognitive problems.

Public Health Implications:

- Even relatively small effects of environment on cognition can have enormous public health impacts due to its pervasiveness. Millions may be affected (e.g., like fluoride in drinking water).