

Reconciling self: gay men and lesbians using domestic materiality for identity management

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ABSTRACT

This paper contributes to research on gay/lesbian experiences, meanings and uses of domestic environments by considering the role of domestic materiality in gay/lesbian identity management. Prior work shows that accumulating and arranging meaningful possessions in domestic space underwrites identity work. Drawing on in-depth interviews with gay/lesbian Australians, I apply this contention to gay/lesbian homemaking practices. In particular, conceptualising identity as fractured, I argue that maintaining domestic materiality reconciles diverse dimensions of multi-faceted selves. Different possessions embody different facets of self – sexuality, familial connections, cultural heritage, spiritual beliefs, *inter alia*. Juxtaposing these objects at home brings together the diverse fragments of self, materially embedding a holistic sense of self within domestic space. Domestic materiality thus (re)unites various dimensions of fractured selves, reconciling sexual identities with familial, ethnic and spiritual identities, *inter alia*. This reconciliatory function of material homemaking is a key way in which sexual identities are affirmed in the everyday lives of the gay/lesbian Australians.

HOME AND IDENTITY

While home is certainly not always a haven for its occupants, it remains a key site ‘for the construction and reconstruction of one’s self’ in the contemporary western world.ⁱ Indeed, there is a growing body of literature across the social sciences and humanities on the links between home and identity-construction, including geography,ⁱⁱ sociology,ⁱⁱⁱ anthropology,^{iv} cultural studies,^v gender studies^{vi} and architectural history and theory.^{vii} In this paper, I aim to advance nuanced understandings of this connection, teasing out further threads which weave individuals into their homes and vice-versa. I argue that material homemaking practices are a key means of reconciling fractured or fragmented identities in the contemporary western world: various meaningful possessions embody different facets of self, and

their juxtaposition at home not only (re)unites these diverse identity-fragments, but materially embeds a ‘whole’ self within domestic space. I argue that this is particularly so for those whose sense of self includes subjectivities which are marginalised, and thus not readily affirmed or easily performed in the public sphere. Specifically, in this paper I consider the importance of homemaking for gay men and lesbians as a means to reconcile their sexual identities with other identity-fragments, and thus sustain a holistic sense of self.

This argument, then, extends an established tradition of research into material culture, which seeks to understand how processes of identity-construction are related to everyday material encounters, the intimacies of subject-object relations, and when, where and how material culture matters to people.^{viii} I begin by

providing a conceptual scaffold for understanding the links between identity-construction, homemaking and domestic materiality. I then outline my data, which are drawn from in-depth interviews with gay/lesbian Australians. Finally, I present two in-depth case studies of individuals reconciling their identities through material homemaking practices.

MAKING HOME, MAKING SELF: A MATERIALIST APPROACH

While the idea of home is connected with a range of scales from the body to the nation to the globe,^x here I focus on home at the site of the house or dwelling, which is also the most commonly evoked scale of home in contemporary western societies. As suggested above, in popular thought there is a close association between house-as-home and identity-construction. While feminist work has shown that homes can be sites of domestic violence and unrewarding labour – and hence fear and alienation^x – home is also understood and appropriated as a place of belonging, intimacy and freedom for and by many. Likewise, while ideals of home are often influenced by wider discourses, and while some dwellings are subject to external surveillance and regulation, home is also an intensely personal space in which people try to secure their privacy.^{xi} For many, home is perhaps the main site in which a sense of autonomy and control can be enacted, where we are not subject to the norms, discipline and demands of employment and public engagement.^{xii} As such, home is understood as a key site for both consciously and unconsciously constructing and affirming a sense of self.

In the 1970s, humanistic geographers^{xiii} and social psychologists^{xiv} – concerned as they were with how people make sense of their ‘selves’ and their sense of ‘being-in-the-world’ – began to foreground this intimate link between home and identity. Home was understood as the very source of an authentic self, a place ‘to which one withdraws and from which one ventures forth’, where an unchanging identity was rooted and protected from the wider turmoils of a rapidly-changing world.^{xv} Our ideas about both home and identity have moved on since then, acknowledging greater complexity. In particular, we have moved away from essentialised views of both home and identity. Identities are seen to be fluid, composite and fractured, both composed of multiple axes of difference and ongoingly changing. Likewise, while home continues to be understood as a site of self-construction, it is no longer seen as a fixed, unchanging space which ‘stores’ traditional values under threat from the modern(ising) world. Rather, home is in a constant state of becoming, remade over and over again through processes called homemaking.

Homemaking is, simultaneously, identity work, through which our identities are ongoingly (re)constructed in and through the home.^{xvi} As Blunt and Dowling assert, a particularly important feature of homemaking is its material dimension – those decisions and actions which mould the design of domestic materiality. The ‘new structures formed, objects used and placed’ by the occupants palpably ‘embody the values and meanings that made, selected, arranged, and preserved them’.^{xvii} Their contention echoes a strong chorus of critical voices. Sanders, for instance, suggests that ‘buildings work like the clothing that covers our bodies; both are coded to enable us to articulate the various identities that we assume everyday’,^{xviii} while Young argues

that ‘home carries a core positive meaning as the material anchor for a sense of agency and a shifting and fluid identity’.^{xix} In this paper, I focus on the accumulation and arrangement of meaningful material possessions at home as a key form of identity work for gay/lesbian Australians.

Recently, scholars across various disciplines have brought attention to the identity work embedded in maintaining material objects. Taylor, for instance, urges us to conceptualise ‘interiors as projection of self’, where ‘we see the facets of our character mirrored in the objects with which we have surrounded ourselves’.^{xx} Indeed, for Marcoux, objects lie at the heart of the home – it is the objects that people take when they relocate, and so these possessions symbolise self more than the actual dwelling.^{xxi} Hecht similarly suggests that cherished possessions arrayed at home constitute a material autobiography which ‘bind[s] our past with our present and possible futures, thereby framing and reflecting our sense of self’.^{xxii} For Rose, meanwhile, meaningful objects – in her case, family photos – transform a house into a home by materialising and reflecting our memories of significant relationships and events.^{xxiii} Tolia-Kelly similarly demonstrates how pictures, paintings, sculptures and shrines in British-Asian homes prismatically refract landscapes of origin, articulating a particular British-Asian identity,^{xxiv} while Reimer and Leslie examine how couples narrate and generate shared identities through negotiating the consumption of home furnishings.^{xxv} Likewise, Chavelier argues that familial and coupled identities are materialised *in* furniture and decorative objects collected over time.^{xxvi}

Other scholars have contributed to this work, but this ‘thick description’ is sufficient to demonstrate the diverse ways in which domestic objects can underpin and shape identity-construction. Against this wide-ranging background, I find Noble’s argument about ‘accumulating being’ particularly helpful for unpacking and understanding how the relationship between objectified domestic materiality and ongoing identity work actually *works in practice*.^{xxvii} Focusing on the meaningful domestic objects in a sample of working- and lower-middle-class nuclear family households in Sydney, he extends anthropological and philosophical understandings of the material dimension of identity-construction. He begins by affirming Miller’s contention that objects underwrite identity because they physically externalise facets of a conscious self, and allow us to comprehend self-identifications in concrete form rather than abstract terms.^{xxviii} That is, objects reflect self back to self in *material* form. He adds to this by arguing ‘that the accumulation of objects is not just the opportunity to have a series of discrete experiences of self-actualisation which objectify our social worlds, but has an ongoing cumulative effect’.^{xxix} In this way, the progressive accumulation of a *range* of objects reflects and sediments the ‘totality of our being, not simply discrete elements of it’: ‘it is not a series of relations with discrete objects that matters, but a totalising system that materialises the permanence of intimate life in the face of flux’.^{xxx}

It is this cumulative effect of subject-object relations that is Noble’s important contribution to our understanding of these processes, and it is this element I wish to apply and develop in this paper. Noble’s focus is on the accumulation of *interpersonal relations* over time: networks of family and close friends sustain our sense of self, and these connections are materialised in domestic possessions. I re-affirm this important dimension, but I want to extend its focus here. Rather than inter-

subjective relationships *per se*, I suggest that people also accumulate *identity-fragments* through domestic material culture. By 'identity-fragments' I mean different axes of subjectivity – how identities are fractured along lines of class, gender, ethnicity and cultural heritage, sexuality, politics, *etc.* Sometimes interpersonal relations, rather than sustaining subjectivity, render some of these fragments antithetical. For instance, familial relationships or ethnic-cultural communities may be unable to accommodate non-normative sexualities or political positions. Yet, these diverse elements often need to be reconciled for reasons of individual self-esteem and personal well-being.^{xxxix} Drawing on Noble, I suggest one important way fragmented axes of self-identity are reconciled is through material homemaking, which can simultaneously 'presence' antithetical self-identifications through the accumulation of meaningful possessions at home. Our various objects embody different facets of self – including their sustaining inter-subjective relationships – such as sexuality, familial connections, cultural heritage, spiritual beliefs, class, politics, *etc.* Their juxtaposition at home thus brings together these diverse identity-fragments, materially embedding a holistic sense of self within domestic space. The maintenance of domestic materiality can therefore (re)unite various dimensions of fractured selves, reconciling sexual identities with familial, ethnic and spiritual identities, *inter alia*.

I further argue that this is particularly so for those whose self-identifications include certain subjectivities which are marginalised in wider society, and thus not affirmed or readily enacted in the public sphere. Several scholars have argued this case with regard to 'race' or ethnic-cultural identities. Famously, hooks, in an essay entitled 'Homeplace: a site of resistance', reclaimed the material space of the home as a site in which African-American subjectivities could be affirmed in the face of wider discrimination and dehumanisation in the US.^{xxxix} Subject to 'racist oppression' and 'sexist domination' in the public sphere, the home became the one place where these marginalised identities and sustaining relationships could be nurtured. More recently, Tolia-Kelly has drawn attention to similar experiences of British-Asians in the UK.^{xxxix} Having already experienced the loss of one home, and subject to racism and exclusionary politics in wider British society, these migrants make a considerable investment in their domestic environments as sites of enfranchisement and belonging, where their ethnic-cultural identities are nourished. Importantly, Tolia-Kelly points out that a key part of this work is material: domestic objects recall and 'presence' cultural landscapes of origin.

Building on these arguments, I suggest a similar framework applies to gay men and lesbians. A range of research across various western contexts has shown that everyday public spaces are heterosexed, where performances of sexuality are expected to conform to heterosexual norms – for example, displays of intimacy are only acceptable between opposite-sex couples. Conversely, performances of gay/lesbian sexuality are typically unwelcome, and often met with verbal and physical threats.^{xxxix} For instance, in Australia, recent research by the NSW Police and the Gay and Lesbian Rights Lobby found that gay men are four times more likely to be assaulted in public than heterosexual men, and lesbians six times more likely than heterosexual women.^{xxxix} In this context, while we must acknowledge that the home is also an everyday space disciplined by heterosexual norms,^{xxxix} it is also one of the few spaces where there is a possibility of temporarily escaping hetero-regulation.^{xxxix} For many gay men and lesbians, then, the home takes on a heightened importance as a space where they can enact non-

heterosexual identities and relationships with some degree of freedom. Moreover, home is perhaps the one place where sexual identities can be reconciled with other facets of self, like familial and ethnic-cultural connections. I argue that material homemaking practices are an important part of this reconciliatory process, and are thus a key means by which sexual identities are affirmed in the everyday lives of gay/lesbian Australians.

METHODOLOGY

The data for this study are drawn from in-depth interviews with 20 gay men and 17 lesbians, recruited through advertisements circulated in gay/lesbian community periodicals, emailing lists and websites. The resulting sample is socially and geographically specific, comprised largely of educated, middle-class, working-age Australians of European heritage resident in urban areas. The interviews, completed between September 2004 and May 2005, were semi-structured, highly conversational, and largely conducted in participants' homes. They were subsequently analysed using a combination of content and discourse analyses. The central aim of this research was to investigate gay/lesbian homemaking practices, and to understand how these homes are used to constitute and consolidate non-heterosexual identities and relationships. As the interviews progressed, I found that not only was home an important site of gay/lesbian identity work, but that home was also used by respondents to reconcile their sexualities with other aspects of self. While sometimes this was achieved through particular domestic activities – like support groups and familial affirmation – I found that domestic materiality was an important component of this process. Respondents evocatively discussed the meanings embedded in their possessions, and how they symbolised different and multiple facets of self. Many ruminated on how they had both consciously and unconsciously arranged their meaningful possessions to bring together different 'parts' of their lives, concretely (re)uniting multi-faceted identities.

However, I don't wish to use or represent the entire sample in this paper. Rather, I have chosen to present two exemplary case studies of identity management through domestic materiality.^{xxxix} This is partly because homemaking projects are unique to individual identities, and so I want to remain sensitive to these differences. But moreover, *because* each set of homemaking practices and objects reflects a *particular* identity, focused case studies – rather than drawing snippets across the sample – allows for deeper and more precise detail of how these material processes work. Simultaneously, they exemplify the use of domestic materiality as a tool for managing fractured identities: while these narratives can't be generalised, I argue that the principles they demonstrate help us to better understand the relationship between home(making), identity and materiality more broadly. In the following, then, I discuss the domestic materiality of Maria and Anthony. I have selected these two because they exhibit some similarities – in particular, they both have an investment in their (non-Anglo-Celtic) ethnic-cultural heritage. Reconciling these identities is common to both. But there are also differences which will emerge across their narratives. Notably, Maria is in a cohabiting relationship while Anthony is single. This marks a difference in how their material homemaking practices reconcile and affirm sexual difference.

MARIA

Maria is a 30-something lesbian. Her parents migrated from Greece to Australia, and she was born and raised in Melbourne. She has recently moved to London with her girlfriend. I opened every interview with a broad question about what home 'means' to the respondent. Maria's response shows that her idea(l)s of home are bound up with domestic objects:

To me home is a number of things. Paramount is that it is a space of your own, filled with the things that you love and the people within it and that there is a sense of permanency. Photos of your loved ones and books you have read and loved. Things you have bought in your travels to remind you of the places you have been. For example, in Turkey, I bought carpets; in India, silks; in Prague, crystal candleholders and a beautiful art deco vase.

Material possessions, which are closely bound to their owner, are thus central to Maria's homemaking practices.

These possessions are important to Maria because they embody her sense of self, her interpersonal connections and key life events. As she re-iterated later: 'My books and photos mean a lot to me, as they are part of my life and a part of me'. One reason why Maria's domestic objects are so central to her sense of self is that she was previously married; she divorced when she came out as a lesbian at 30. She spoke at length about how she wasn't able to be herself in her marital home:

None of the places I lived truly reflected who I was or truly felt like home. I felt I was living my life in a mask which I could not yet uncover, so I carried on doing what was acceptable and not dealing with the dissonance within. I lived in numerous flats until we bought our own flat and then eventually our house. At all times I was trying to build something which was contrary to who I really was. I did not feel that the material things in the home reflected me as it was like I was putting in place a theatre stage – I was doing what was accepted rather than letting my true self show. I had the picket fence, the garden, the pool and four-bedroom house, but it was a charade because it was built on something that was contrary to myself, even though at the time I could not understand why.

Evocatively, Maria cites a dissonance between the materiality of the home and its ability to embody her identity. Consequently, she stresses that it is now essential for her home to materially reflect her 'whole' self: 'The things within [my home] reflect who I am as a whole – it is evident in the material things'.

Maria's 'whole' self comprises a range of connections with her sexuality, cultural heritage, travels, partner and family, and all of these are captured in an array of meaningful possessions. Books, photos and sentimental things from her childhood represent her ties to family and her ethnic-cultural identity as Greek-Australian; objects from her travels to Asia and Europe remind her of what she has experienced and learnt about the world; a Pride flag symbolises her sexuality; photos of her girlfriend, along with household items they have jointly purchased, materialise her same-sex partnership. She said this combination of objects shows her 'unique personality'. As such, I suggest that the conscious juxtaposition of these possessions is a key means

by which Maria reconciles the different parts of her sense of self. Elsewhere in the interview she emphasised the importance of both her Greek ethnic-cultural identity and ongoing positive connections with her mother. However, she also said she had not come out to her parents, and she is not sure if she will. She is unsure of her the mother's reaction and fears possible rejection because 'she is very religious and also the Greek community is very unaccepting of homosexuality'. Instead, her home and the cherished possessions within it are a way to reconcile these antithetical identities and relationships. For instance, she emphasised that she had 'photos of family as well as of us [her and her partner] displayed'.

This process of material reconciliation thus affirms her sexual identity. She emphasises that her sexuality is never concealed in her home as it is outside:

I do not hide my sexuality in my own home. It is one bedroom and clearly two women live in it as there is one double bed and we also have the gay pride flag as well as photos of each other.

Indeed, Maria's relationship with her partner is fundamental to how her sexuality is materially affirmed at home: she emphasised the role of domestic materiality in sustaining their identity as a same-sex couple:

To me the material things need to reflect your personality and that you have built these material things together with your partner. The reason for this is that buying material things has an emotional attachment that reminds you of the things you like, as well as the fact that you have shared this with your partner. Every physical aspect of home from the sheets on the bed to the toaster is a decision based on these emotional attachments and would be purely functional without. So to me the physical and material things that make up a home, or what I would call a home, is a place that has been built with these emotional attachments. Therefore, to me being able to share myself with the person I love, and they with me, reflected in the material things surrounding us, represents home.

For Maria, domestic objects most clearly represent her relationship because they embody the emotional work invested in joint homemaking decisions. They remind Maria of her emotional attachment to her partner: coming together as a couple is materialised in these objects. In this way, these 'shared' material possessions help to affirm Maria's sexual identity, reconciling it with her other identity-fragments.

ANTHONY

Anthony is a 50-something gay man living alone in a suburban home in Sydney's eastern suburbs, which he inherited from a close aunt. He is second-generation Italian-Australian. When I visited, I was struck by the variety of objects displayed. Not long into the interview, it became clear that these were very dear to him. Anthony cherished living alone, not just because he valued privacy and quietness, but because of the control this facilitated over the arrangement of his possessions:

My aunt was a minimalist. ... I've obliterated that kind of minimalism with all my lovely things. They

represent a lot to me and now I have the space to put them out. ... There's something wonderful about that – the freedom to design how I fill everything up. ... Home is a place to put things out – it's an expression of me. I don't know if it's completely conscious, but it is in some respects.

Anthony's home, then, is a place in which to arrange and display meaningful material possessions which consciously and unconsciously express his sense of self.

I asked Anthony why he displayed these possessions and what they represented. His response elicits the importance of domestic objects for everyday identity management, revealing how different possessions represented different parts of his sense of self – sexuality, cultural heritage, family connections, spiritual beliefs, *etc.* Moreover, he suggested that juxtaposing these objects at home materially reconciled the multiple dimensions of his identity, expressing and reflecting a holistic self in domestic space. Thus, Anthony pointed to diverse items with connections to family, friends, personal history, ancestry, spirituality, and sexuality (Figure 1):

Some are family history things – photographs of the ancestors and things like that. Some are intriguing, like this large oil painting done in 1898 of a woman whom my friends say is me in drag. ... Other things are to do with Sicily; on behalf of the family I've been trying to reclaim our ancestral rights over the two houses my grandfather had left us two-thirds share of on the island of Celina, north of Sicily. ... Religious art from all traditions – Buddhist, Hindu, Christian. ... Things that friends have given me. Things that remind me of seminary days [he trained as a priest]. A few souvenirs that Aunty had. Bits and pieces I've bought from travels. ... I suppose consciously I try for symmetry but maybe to someone else it would be a totally disordered mess.



Source: (Andrew Gorman-Murray, 2007)

Figure 1. Some of the cherished possessions in Anthony's living room.

He continued, providing rich detail about other 'precious things', and what connections and fragments of self they embodied: the old seat from the sanctuary at St. Augustine's Church, his 'spiritual home'; broken bits of furniture and tiles from the ancestral home on Celina; pictures of Aunty; vibrant, colourful paintings of Christ and the Sacred Heart; camp paint-

ings by gay artists; and what he called 'big gay posters'. The inclusion in this inventory of objects representing sexuality is significant: they reconcile Anthony's sexuality with other dimensions of self, affirming sexual difference through the maintenance of domestic materiality. Indeed, Anthony made this reconciliatory, affirmative function of material possessions quite clear through two interconnected examples. For a while his cousin lived with him, her presence inhibiting the material expression of sexuality:

When Carmen was here there were certain things she wouldn't like me to hang up. Gay things. When I say gay things they weren't pictures of 'Mr Butt Naked'; that's not my style. But there were things she couldn't live with that were wonderful statements. ... When you're living with someone, they're constantly censoring what you'd hang on the walls. ... But now [Carmen's gone] this is the one place where I feel like I don't have to cover anything up. [I even] put the gay flag up on the flagpole outside [in the front-yard]. ... It's about not being a hidden gay person. People know the rainbow flag, and I like the pink triangle, so I got a rainbow flag and stitched a pink triangle over it and put that up. It's an obvious statement that this is a gay household. ... I'm telling you who I am. This is my community too; even though I'm a gay person I don't have to be hidden. ... [The neighbour's] little girl said, 'I like the flags Anthony puts up.' I thought, 'That's good. Our community should be able to embrace diversity of every kind – religious, political, sexual, etc.'

These examples demonstrate the role of domestic materiality in reconciling sexuality with other fragments of self. Anthony suggested he felt inhibited and incomplete when Carmen censored the display of 'gay things'. But now he is free to express his sexuality materially, just as he does with his familial, cultural and spiritual identities, enabling the materialisation of a holistic identity at home. In the process, his sexual difference is affirmed, legitimised as equally important to his identity as family connections, cultural heritage and religious beliefs. This assertion of legitimacy through domestic materiality is powerfully extended through Anthony's discussion of the flagpole in the front-yard (Figure 2). This is a deliberate material statement of his sexual difference, intended to call attention to the presence of a 'gay household' in Australian suburbia, and assert Anthony's right to belong to the wider community *as a 'gay person'*. In a sense, he extends the principle of his own home as an expression of his multi-layered self to the wider suburban neighbourhood: just as his home materialises, affirms and reconciles the diverse fragments of his identity, he contends that 'our community should be able to embrace diversity of every kind'. Consequently, I argue that Anthony's flagpole is a direct challenge to the discursive social structures which normalise suburban Australian homes and residential communities as sites in and through which heterosexual family lifestyles are idealised. Instead, Anthony's material homemaking practices assert the legitimate presence of sexual difference, queering the ideal sexuality of the Australian home, and reclaiming domestic spaces as sites which also affirm and nourish gay/lesbian identities.



Source: (Andrew Gorman-Murray, 2007)

Figure 2. The rainbow flag with pink triangle in the frontyard of Anthony's suburban home.

CONCLUSION

Through these two case studies I have attempted to demonstrate the veracity of the conceptual arguments I outlined earlier in the paper about the role of domestic materiality as a tool for identity management in the contemporary western societies. I argued that material homemaking practices are a key means of reconciling fragmented identities, where the accumulation and arrangement of meaningful material possessions in domestic space can (re)unite different parts of self. Various meaningful possessions embody different facets of self, and their juxtaposition at home brings together these diverse identity-fragments, and materially embeds a 'whole' self within domestic space. I have illustrated this principle by showing how two gay/lesbian Australians reconcile their sexual identities with other identity-fragments – notably familial connections, ethnic-cultural heritage and spiritual beliefs – through the maintenance of domestic objects. Both emphasise the importance of 'material things' at home, explain how these possessions represent self and connections with significant others, and show how their sexual identities are reconciled and affirmed through domestic materiality. As such, they suggest that material homemaking practices contribute to the everyday well-being of gay/lesbian Australians, legitimising and positively reinforcing sexual difference.

ⁱ Iris Marion Young, 'House and home: feminist variations on a theme,' in *On Female Body Experience: 'Throwing Like a Girl' and Other Essays*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2005, p. 153.

ⁱⁱ Alison Blunt and Robyn Dowling, *Home*, London: Routledge, 2006; Suzanne Reimer and Deborah Leslie, 'Identity, consumption, and the home,' *Home Cultures* 1 (2004): 187-208; Alison Blunt, 'Home and identity: life stories in text and in person,' in Alison Blunt, Pyrs Gruf-

fudd, John May, Miles Ogborn, and David Pinder (eds) *Cultural Geography in Practice*, London: Arnold, 2003, pp. 71-87.

ⁱⁱⁱ Ann Dupuis and David Thorns, 'Home, home ownership and the search for ontological security,' *The Sociological Review* 46 (1998): 24-47; Peter Somerville, 'Homelessness and the meaning of home: rooflessness or rootlessness?' *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 16 (1992): 529-539.

^{iv} Sophie Chavelier, 'The French two-home project: materialization of family identity,' in Irene Cieraad (ed) *At Home: An Anthropology of Domestic Space*, Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1999, pp. 83-94.; Sophie Chavelier, 'The cultural construction of domestic space in France and Great Britain,' *Signs* 27 (2002): 847-856; Jean-Sébastien Marcoux, 'The refurbishment of memory,' in Daniel Miller (ed) *Home Possessions: Material Culture Behind Closed Doors*, Oxford: Berg, 2001 pp. 69-86.

^v Greg Noble, 'Accumulating being,' *International Journal of Cultural Studies* 7 (2004): 233-256; J. Macgregor Wise, 'Home: territory and identity,' *Cultural Studies* 14 (2000): 295-310.

^{vi} bell hooks, *Yearning: Race, Gender, and Cultural Politics*. Boston: South End Press, 1991; Young, 'House and home'.

^{vii} Mark Taylor, "'Furniture is a kind of dress": interiors as projection of self,' in Terrance McMinn, John Stephens and Steve Basson (eds), *Contested Terrains: SAHANZ Conference Proceedings*, SAHANZ, 2006, pp.531-535; Joel Sanders (ed), *Stud: Architectures of Masculinities*, New York: Princeton University Press, 1996.

^{viii} Ben Anderson and Divya Tolia-Kelly, 'Matter(s) in social and cultural geography,' *Geoforum* 25 (2004): 669-674.

^{ix} Blunt and Dowling, *Home*.

^x Linda McDowell, *Gender, Identity and Place: Understanding Feminist Geographies*, Cambridge: Polity Press, 1999.

^{xi} Young, 'House and home'.

^{xii} Dupuis and Thorns, 'Home, home ownership and the search for ontological security'; Noble, 'Accumulating being'.

^{xiii} David Porteous, 'Home: the territorial core', *Geographical Review* 66(1976): 383-390; Edward Relph, *Place and Placelessness*, London: Pion, 1976; Yi-Fu Tuan, *Space and Place: the Perspective of Experience*, London: Edward Arnold, 1977.

^{xiv} Clare Cooper, 'The house as a symbol of the self,' in Harold Proshansky, William Ittelson and Leanne Rivlin (eds) *Environmental Psychology: People and their Physical Settings*, New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1976; Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi and E. Rochberg-Halton, *The Meaning of Things: Domestic Symbols and the Self*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981.

^{xv} Yi-Fu Tuan, 'Geography, phenomenology and the study of human nature', *Canadian Geographer* 15 (1971): 181-192.

^{xvi} Blunt and Dowling, *Home*.

^{xvii} Denis Wood and Robert Beck, 1994, p. xvi, cited in Blunt and Dowling, *Home*, p. 23

^{xviii} Joel Sanders, 'Curtain wars: architects, decorators and the 20th-century domestic interior,' *Harvard Review of Design Magazine* 16 (2002): 1-9, at p. 9.

^{xix} Young, 'House and home', p. 149.

^{xx} Dorothy Todd and Raymond Mortimer, 1929, p. 1, cited by Taylor, 'Furniture as a kind of dress', p. 531.

^{xxi} Marcoux, 'The refurbishment of memory'.

^{xxii} Anat Hecht, 'Home sweet home: tangible memories of an uprooted childhood,' in Daniel Miller (ed) *Home Possessions: Material Culture Behind Closed Doors*, Oxford: Berg, 2001, p. 123.

^{xxiii} Gillian Rose, 'Family photographs and domestic spacings: a case study,' *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* NS, 28 (2003): 5-18; Gillian Rose, "'Everyone's cuddled up and it just looks really nice": an emotional geography of some mums and their family photos,' *Social and Cultural Geography*, 5 (2004): 549-564.

^{xxiv} Divya Tolia-Kelly, 'Locating processes of identification: studying the precipitates of re-memory through artefacts in the British Asian home,' *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* NS, 29 (2004): 314-329; Divya Tolia-Kelly, 'Materializing post-colonial geographies: examining the textural landscapes of migration in the South Asian home', *Geoforum* 25 (2004): 675-688.

^{xxv} Reimer and Leslie, 'Identity, consumption, and the home'.

^{xxvi} Chavelier, 'The French two-home project' and 'The cultural construction of domestic space'.

^{xxvii} Noble, 'Accumulating being'.

^{xxviii} Daniel Miller, *Material Culture and Mass Consumption*, Oxford: Blackwell, 1987; Daniel Miller, *A Theory of Shopping*, Cambridge: Polity Press, 1998.

^{xxix} Noble, 'Accumulating being', p. 236.

^{xxx} Noble, 'Accumulating being', p. 236, p. 251.

^{xxxi} Yoel Elizur and Michael Ziv, 'Family support and acceptance, gay male identity formation, and psychological adjustment: a path model,' *Family Process* 40 (2001): 125-144; Caitlin Ryan, 'Counselling lesbian, gay and bisexual youths,' in Anthony D'Augelli and Charlotte Patterson (eds) *Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Identities and Youth*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2001, pp. 224-250; Charlotte Patterson and Anthony D'Augelli (eds), *Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Identities in Families*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998; Andrew Gorman-Murray, 'Queering the family home: narratives from gay, lesbian and bisexual youth coming out in supportive family homes in Australia,' *Gender, Place and Culture* 14 (2007), in press.

^{xxxii} hooks, *Yearning*.

^{xxxiii} Tolia-Kelly, 'Materializing post-colonial geographies'.

^{xxxiv} Gill Valentine, '(Hetero)sexing space: lesbian perceptions and experiences of everyday spaces,' *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 11, 4 (1993): 395-413; Gill Valentine, '(Re)negotiating the "heterosexual street": lesbian productions of space,' in Nancy Duncan (ed) *Bodyspace: Destabilizing Geographies of Gender and Sexuality*, London: Routledge, 1996, pp. 146-155.; Stewart Kirby and Iain Hay,

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^{xxxv} Gay and Lesbian Rights Lobby, 'Lesbians and gays are not equal,' electronic publication, September 2004, at www.girl.org.au

^{xxxvi} Lynda Johnston and Gill Valentine, 'Wherever I lay my girlfriend, that's my home: the performance and surveillance of lesbian identities in domestic environments,' in David Bell and Gill Valentine (eds), *Mapping Desire: Geographies of Sexualities*, London: Routledge, 1995, pp. 99-113; Louise Johnson, *Placebound: Australian Feminist Geographies*, South Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 2000.

^{xxxvii} Andrew Gorman-Murray, 'Gay and lesbian couples at home: identity work in domestic space,' *Home Cultures*, 3, 2 (2006): 145-168; Andrew Gorman-Murray, 'Reconfiguring domestic values: meanings of home for gay men and lesbians,' *Housing, Theory and Society* 24 (2007), in press; Andrew Gorman-Murray, 'Queering the family home'.

^{xxxviii} For studies similarly using an in-depth case study approach to writing about homemaking practices, see: Katie Walsh, 'British expatriate belongings: mobile homes and transnational homing,' *Home Cultures* 3 (2006): 123-144; Katie Walsh, "'Dad says I'm tied to a shooting star!" Grounding (research on) British expatriate belonging,' *Area* 38 (2006): 268-278; Pamela Moss, 'Negotiating space in home environments: older women living with arthritis,' *Social Science and Medicine*, 45, 1 (1997): 23-33.