



Everyday family spaces: Systemic symbolic violence

Vicky Carrington
Faculty of Education
University of Tasmania
Australia

INTRODUCTION

Within the popular and institutional discourses of modern Western nationstates the nuclear family has been awarded neutral and iconic status (Carrington 1998). This discursive and ideological position has been extended to include the domestic space in which this family lives. Yet, this rendering of home and house is patently problematic: feminist scholarship (e.g. Bell & Newby 1976; Connell 1987; Osmond & Thorne 1993; Yeatman 1986) and Critical Theory (Marcuse 1956; Fromm 1955; The Frankfurt Institute 1972) have been active in foregrounding the highly politicized nature of relationships within the home. More recently, poststructuralism and postmodernism (Agrest, Conway & Weisman 1996; Davis 1990; Sibley 1995; Soja 1996; Westwood & Williams 1997) have heightened awareness of the highly political nature of social relationships, drawing our attention particularly to the social impact of space. Given this revival of interest in the implications of social spaces, I suggest it is timely to reassess the complicit role of domestic space in the systemic symbolic violence that characterizes and underwrites contemporary Western society.

Drawing upon the sociological framework developed by Bourdieu (1984, 1990, 1992) this paper implicates domestic architecture as one of the processes of symbolic violence within which habitus formations are constructed. I begin by discussing the connection between the narrative of the nuclear family and the single family dwelling and the role of architecture as a cultural semaphore. Here, I argue that the connection between nuclear narratives of family and home cannot be fully understood without an appreciation of the role of the mass media in the construction of desire and the shaping of family as a normative narrative. I conclude by suggesting that regardless of contemporary design updates the single family dwelling remains, at the close of the twentieth century, a mechanism of social

control—an instance of systemic symbolic violence. I turn initially to the nature of architecture itself in our society.

ARCHITECTURE AS SEMAPHORE

More than a physical enclosure, architecture forms one of the central symbolic systems of human society (Madanipour 1996): values, political currents, aspirations and ideologies are enshrined in architectural form, constituting a coded communication, a semaphore. Making matters all the more complex is the dual role of architecture--not only is it a communication about the society in which it stands but it also impacts upon the members of that society. There is an intricate relationship of coercion, complicity and resistance at work here as physically and symbolically architecture contributes to the inculcation of sociocultural systems. As Bourdieu argues, symbolic systems constitute the "instruments by which we construct reality" (Bourdieu 1977, p. 112). As a symbolic system, the architecture we erect and the ways in which we are coerced into thinking about and dwelling within it actively constructs a sociocultural reality.

Thus, architecture is a politically charged cultural discourse that acts in concert with other social phenomena to construct particular subjectivities and habitus schemata. Bourdieu tells us that "symbolic power is that invisible power which can be exercised only with the complicity of those who do not want to know that they are subject to it or even that they themselves exercise it" (1992, p. 164). It is this symbolic power that is reflected in architecture--in design, construction and utilization. Eco (1997) outlines an argument for approaching architecture, and this would include domestic dwellings, as a form of mass communication. Throughout, his semiotic approach hints at the inherent symbolic violence. Referring to 'architectural discourse' he notes that it is "psychologically persuasive"...and..."experienced inattentively" (1997, p. 196). While Eco notes that architecture is part of 'everyday' life, he recognizes that its interpretation and use in ways that deviate from the encoded communication can only be undertaken consciously. He is, in fact, acknowledging the insidiousness of the 'everyday' in constructions of subjectivity.

SYMBOLIC VIOLENCE

Symbolic violence is a useful conceptual tool in the analysis of this relationship. Used most potently by Bourdieu (1984, 1990, 1992), the notion of symbolic violence refers to the imposition of cultural systems without connecting these practices to "the power relations which are at their source" (Bourdieu and Passeron 1990, p. 41). This concept is particularly powerful because Bourdieu has linked it quite specifically to the development of bodily hexis as one aspect of habitus. Throughout Bourdieu's sociological

framework, the relationship between social life and the physical body remains prime. It is this link that makes symbolic violence particularly useful when interrogating the impact of physical spaces and design on the development of physical practices. The physical practices that emerge in response to a 'reading' of the symbolic messages built into architecture become inscribed into habitus, impacting upon subjectivity and future action. Bourdieu has quite explicitly outlined symbolic violence and its relation to the status quo:

Symbolic violence, to put it as tersely and simply as possible, is the violence which is exercised upon a social agent with his or her complicity.....Of all forms of "hidden persuasion", the most implacable is the one exerted, quite simply, by the order of things (Bourdieu & Wacquant 1992, p. 172).

I take this spatially articulated violence to be symbolic in that it is never explicitly identified, rather, it seems to enter us via the very air we breathe, becoming the text through which we 'read' our society. And, in terms of the everyday, nothing appears more self-evident and enduring than the physical and architectural spaces we inhabit and consequently the messages they semaphore.

In Western post-war societies such as the United States, Britain and Australia, nothing has been more 'everyday' than the linkage of the modern nuclear family with a single family dwelling. This coupling has been facilitated by the Images of nuclear family constructed and circulated in Western mass media. The nuclear narrative has, I suggest, become a normative machine within Western societies. As part of this process, mass media have created and validated Images of nuclear family, in effect, constructing desire. This construction of desire and the legitimation of the nuclear narrative, including its connection with a nuclear family space, are of significance to my argument here. I turn, therefore, to an examination of the role of the popular press and television in the construction and dissemination of the nuclear narrative.

MASS MEDIA -- THE CONSTRUCTION OF NUCLEAR DESIRE

Individuals living in post-war Western nations have been immersed in processes of symbolic violence which reach a focal point in the narrative and the reality of the nuclear family home (Carrington 1998). The narrative, in fact, stands as a pivotal example of the power of symbolic violence to shape habitus. Implicit within the pages of literature, within mass-circulation women's magazines and on television are Images in relation to which our subjectivities, desires, identities are constructed and reconstructed. The desire, the yearning, to live this nuclear life, and the

prerequisite recognition of it as desirable and legitimate are symptomatic of the symbolic violence in which we are immersed.

As I noted earlier, we are all enmeshed within a complex overlay of symbolic forces. Thus, the symbolic violence of our domestic spaces is entwined with, and reinforced by, other visions of the nuclear family. Prime amongst these have been visions supplied by popular mass culture. Since the 1950s, television and print media have held up living examples of the monocultural nuclear family for public consumption and reference. Generations of women have learnt what the perfect wife and mother was and how to be one from the plethora of women's magazines, versions of which exist in every Western nation. These blueprints for womanhood and family continue to dominate the magazine shelves of supermarkets and newsagents, reflecting prescriptive recipes for family life and, at the same time, constructing the desire for this 'legitimized' life. Reinforcing these print messages, television has delivered moving tableaux of appropriate family forms, racial configurations and individual roles for consumption.

For those of us living in Australia and Great Britain, these television families were overwhelmingly American and reflected the strong ideological commitment to the nuclear family that underwrote American politics at the time. Examples spring readily to mind. *Father Knows Best* reflected the narrative of the wise, patriarchal father/husband figure and modelled the problem-solving, decision-making male role. This model of nuclear manhood was extended to include family man-of-action in *Lost in Space*. Married women--depicted in shows such as *The Dick van Dyke Show*, *Bewitched* and *Lassie*---were always at home, draped around living room or kitchen scenery. *The Patty Duke Show* and *Gidget* demonstrated appropriate female adolescent roles and activities, while *Doby Gillis* and *My Three Sons* modelled the concerns and practices of 'normal' adolescent males. Key here is the recognition that all these shows pivoted around the centrality of the nuclear family and the family home. Fathers and children came 'home'; they played basketball in the private yard of their single family nuclear 'home'; mothers created dinners in the kitchens of these 'homes' which were then routinely shared around the dinner table by the entire family'. These mythic families modelled 'nuclear family'. In so doing, they colluded in the construction of desire for this family form and for the lifestyle and social legitimacy it proffered. The inherent messages in these shows demonstrated quite clearly that being a man, woman or adolescent required that you be positioned relative to the nuclear family and to the home. Clearly, prime time television in the 1950s and 1960s was focussed on the family, and these families were white and lived perfect nuclear lives in single family dwellings situated in homogeneous, localized communities: A very strong message about happiness, gender and normalcy was broadcast every day and night into millions of homes across the Western world.

Simultaneously, mass education pivoted around the middle class, white nuclear family, reflecting its gender roles, activities and spaces from the pages of every textbook. The 1950s and 1960s are memorable, in particular, for the advent of the generic, vocabulary-controlled instructional reading text -- the basal reader. Looking out from the pages of these mass produced and widely disseminated reading materials were a host of white, middle class nuclear families living in single family dwellings. Nowhere in these pages are 'normal', everyday families depicted as anything other than white and comfortably middle class. Nowhere do mothers have jobs outside the home, nowhere are fathers unemployed, nowhere are these families other than nuclear. I suggest that these depictions of appropriate ways-of-being constitute an interlocking grid of symbolic violence that centres round the fundamentality of the nuclear family to Western life. In print and on television the nuclear family, living in a nuclear home, was constructed and used as the template for the postwar Fordist-Keynesian social world. Entwined with this nuclear narrative were highly specific roles and spaces for men, women and children and the importance fo the family home.

THE NUCLEAR FAMILY AND THE SINGLE FAMILY DWELLING

To this point I have argued that domestic architecture has come to signify nuclear family in the Western imaginary. Yet, in the same way that our idea of 'family' has become, as Foucault suggests, 'sanctified', so the physical space which encloses, regulates this grouping has also become sanctified and thus ideologically removed from the hustle and bustle of real life. This is particularly interesting given that the mass production of housing for the nuclear family , along with building and marketing defensive capabilities, has fuelled Western economies since the end of the Second World War. There is, I have suggested, a complex connection between twentieth century economic trends, the emergence of the mass media and its ideologically-driven portrayal of the nuclear narrative and the spread of mass produced single family dwellings. Beyond this, there are direct linkages between the nuclear narrative, the single family nuclear dwelling and the modern, technologically-based and culturally homogeneous nationstate (Allon 1994; Carrington 1998). I am in no way suggesting that the single family dwelling or house is the only space that can be connected with the nuclear family. However, I *am* suggesting that the narrative which has been constructed around the nuclear family, and which extends to the allocation of ways of life and social trajectories, makes assumptions about the spaces and practices of individuals and family groups. That is, unproblematic links are made. These links focus around the notion that firstly, this family formation is normal and moral and secondly, that living this shape entails a nuclear family home which both reinforces and is reinforced by other symbolic systems operant in our society. Indeed, popular understandings of the modern family are premised upon the overlay of these mutually reinforcing

components: father-mother-child/ren hierarchical relationship (the nuclear family), the ascription of specified roles for males and females, and the single family domestic dwelling.

Architecture is a cultural message writ large. When we turn then to the architecture of domestic dwellings, we are presented with a message about our social narratives which is mirrored and magnified in the images presented on television and in popular print media. I am suggesting that domestic architecture in Western nations is linked particularly to the construction and maintenance of a homogeneous nuclear narrative and beyond this to framings of the modern nationstate and the operation of advanced capitalism. Space sets the limits of what can be done and imagined. Thus, domestic architecture represents the implicit beliefs and values of the society as a whole, although refracted through the lens of mass media and mass production and profit margin for developers. Prescriptive understandings of what a family will look like, what sort of relationships will be contained within it, what sort of activities this family will pursue and where are all built into the various room designs, spatial allowances and layout of homes. These inbuilt presumptions and societal requirements are instances of symbolic violence in action. They contribute to the development of particular symbolic systems and consequent realities, that is, to ways of being. To illustrate the intransigence of the nuclear narrative I turn now to an examination of domestic housing design in the immediate post-war British restoration and in 1980-1990s Australia.

THE POST-WAR RECONSTRUCTION

Generic Western domestic architecture of the late 1960s and early 1970s was characterized by a single hallway with bedrooms leading off, a small informal meals area attached to the kitchen, a formal living/dining area, a single exit (generally via the laundry) to a fenced backyard (Dovey 1994). The family narrative which accompanied this physical layout centred on the division of roles based upon gender--married women stayed at home and lived increasingly technologized lives while men went out into the public sphere of paid employment. The post-war reconstruction of public housing in Britain provides an interesting example of this. Destruction of housing in the Second World War meant that Britain was forced to undertake substantial housing construction in the immediate post-war years. Implicit within the design of flats and detached housing constructed to fill the chronic accommodation shortage were assumptions about male and female social roles. These unproblematic assumptions, in turn, were reinforced via normative media representations of the nuclear family. Home plans and design of urban spaces were premised on the notion that married women would be at home--in the private sphere--caring for children and undertaking other domestic duties while men would be in the public spaces

of employment (Roberts 1991). In terms of specific design choices, this gendered division of labour was made material via the layout and dimensions of kitchens, utility and dining rooms advocated by governmental committees such as the Dudley Committee, created to establish housing standards for the post-war reconstruction. According to Roberts (1991, p. 81), the terms of reference of this body extended from "reviewing the plans in the existing manuals for council house architects to reviewing virtually every aspect of standards for houses throughout the country". Post-war reconstruction, then, was guided by an ideological commitment to the nuclear narrative.

This reconstruction was accompanied by the increasing availability of domestic appliances and the technologizing of the home and as a corollary, the emergence of the 'housewife', whose role was one of service to husband and children (Roberts 1991). This was seen as a lesser role than that played by males in paid employment, yet regardless of differential value, it acted to impose strict moral and behavioural codes on mothers and wives. Relatedly, Arnold and Burr (1985) note that the availability of household appliances led to increasing expectations of hygiene, tidiness and standards of housework. As well, women in particular were constructed as consumers of home products and fashion and shopping became increasingly a marker of taste and style, in effect, a performative art. Thus, not only were women reconstructed as mothers and homemakers, but also as commodity consumers. Paralleling the division between public and private, men were portrayed as producers while women became consumers. As well, accompanying this portrayal, popular discourses and advertising of the time made much of the lessening workload for women in the home as a direct result of new domestic technologies. The effect of these concurrent currents of symbolic violence was the emergence of a disciplinary regime directed at women in the home as they were, as a stereotypical group, reconstructed and monitored via mass media representations of family, wife-mother and consumer.

THE 1980S AND BEYOND

The 1980s heralded a number of subtle shifts in the design pattern of generic domestic housing (Dovey 1994). Turning to Australia as a particular example, it is evident that overall dimensions have increased since the 1970s, but what is particularly striking is the increasing specialization of these spaces. Key amongst these changes has been the emergence of the informal living area as the focus of the family home. The formal eating area, where it remains, has become isolated from the other household zones. Although they have maintained the same size since the 1970s, formal dining and living areas have become, according to Dovey (1994, p. 135), "more symbolic and less functional". Increasingly, they are a display for those who

enter the house. As I noted earlier, these displays semaphore particular social position and belief systems. As Dovey notes, we are seeing, across this twenty-year period, an increasing division between formal and informal zones of the house, and this differentiation has acted to increase, rather than lessen, the specialized usage of each section.

The kitchen is now a fundamental part of this extended informal zone, extending a panoptic view of the other living areas. Consequently, women as a category, whilst still narratologically situated in the kitchen, are brought into clear view in the centre of the 'living' space of the home. The kitchen, in turn, affords views overlooking this space. The kitchen is increasingly a display area however, at the same time, it affords panoptic views of other household zones. Thus, kitchen and informal living area, although increased in size and importance within the overall layout of the house and expectations of usage, remain highly specialized and the panoptic view afforded within this zone allows each family member to monitor the behaviour of others and, as Foucault pointed out, self. This is an interesting shift. In a period when women, and for that matter all family members, are absent from the domestic space for increasing segments of the day the kitchen is becoming larger and more central. The backyard, also, has been incorporated into the informal living zone, landscaped and separated from the inside by large glass doors. The once pre-eminent functional aspects of this outer space--drying clothes, attaching hoses and storing garden equipment--are increasingly positioned away from the living area. The laundry door, once the only exit onto the backyard is positioned in relation to this separated functional space, away from public entertainment areas.

These are the public spaces of the house: the spaces where the casual visitor is allowed ready access; where the life of the family is on display and signals particular practices and values. There are however, other divisions of household space. These focus around sleeping quarters, laundry, family bathrooms and toilets, storage space-. These are the household zones not immediately accessible to casual visitors, and the positioning of these zones throughout the house asserts particular physical practices and rhythms on the occupants. Here, the size and location of bedrooms is informative. Adults (the presumption of heterosexual, biological parentage is strong) are designated greater private space in the form of a shared, double bedroom with all the inherent assumptions that attach, and from the 1980s, this space has been enlarged and increasingly detached from the other parts of the house. As part of this differentiation and enlargement, a private bathroom has been added to generic renderings of 'family home'. The remainder of the bedrooms in these houses are 'single', generally of small dimensions and sharing a bathroom. Effectively, the number of persons who can make use of them and the types of activities that can go on within them are controlled. Reflecting the power of the nuclear narrative to influence cultural messages

into the late 1990s, these subordinate spaces are intended for use by the smaller, less socially powerful offspring of the heterosexual adult couple.

This increasing separation of parental and child sleeping quarters and the differential room dimensions signal particular expectations of the relationship between adults and children and the needs of each. In this way, the inbuilt assumptions of who will sleep where and why reflect particular mainstream cultural narratives--heterosexuality, patriarchal social forms, the requirement of autonomous, private space for healthy child and adolescent development, and the 'generation gap', to name but a few. These and other cultural messages are coded into the architectural design of these homes, and the physical behaviours they inculcate constitute the action of symbolic violence as particular bodily practices and cultural knowledges are inculcated into habitus. Simply by living in and using the existing space, the inbuilt cultural presumptions are transmitted into habitus. Thus, the 'everyday' spaces of the home act to construct particular activities, relationships and subjectivities--systematic processes of symbolic violence.

It is clear that there has been a gradual change in the design imperative of the generic house: an increasing division of formal and informal; the separation of parental space; the incorporation of garden design into the growing informal living zones; and the relegation of unruly spaces (games and television rooms, childrens' bedrooms and playrooms, family bathrooms) away from the central living area. In turn, these layouts reflect normative notions of public and private space drawn from the nuclear narrative. The inculcation of particular gender roles, sexual relationships, and particular understandings of the division between private and public are unrecognized companions in the design of the modern, nuclear house and reflect the labor and power divisions of the narratological nuclear family.

These housing designs were, and remain, powerful, *everyday* influences on our lives. They constitute processes of symbolic violence that act to construct particular habitus. Bourdieu (1992, p. 51) further emphasises the everyday nature of the action of symbolic violence:

...the modalities of practices, the ways of looking, sitting, standing, keeping silent, or even of speaking...are full of injunctions that are powerful and hard to resist precisely because they are silent and insidious, insistent and insinuating....The power of suggestion which is exerted through things and persons and which, instead of telling the child what he must do, tells him what he is, and thus leads him to become durably what he has to be, is the condition for the effectiveness of all kinds of symbolic power that will

subsequently be able to operate on a habitus predisposed to respond to them.

This is significant. It is the everyday things that tell each of us what we are, that define, for us, our societal roles and trajectories. In my reading, Bourdieu's point is that this reality is always a construction that reflects existing distributions of social power and further, that the reproduction of particular realities serves specific political purposes. Architecture, then, along with its representation in mass media, is part of the process that imposes particular symbolic and physical realities. In this, it constitutes one of the key symbolic violences in post-industrial everyday life. If this reading is correct, the domestic house, then, constitutes a significant site of the systemic and intersecting symbolic violences active in the construction of various and changing models of citizen in Western societies. An analysis of the impact of the space and shape of these sites at the close of this century provides us, then, with a useful window into these processes.

DISCIPLINE AND CONTROL

The construction of the nuclear family narrative is firmly embedded within the sociopolitical currents of the mid-twentieth century. However, since the fundamental political and economic shifts of the 1970s heralded the emergence of fast capitalism and what Hall (1992) has termed 'new times', a differently configured social and economic landscape is emerging. The emergence of serial debt and serial gratification is illustrative here. In contemporary America, only around thirty per cent of credit card users pay back their debt in full each month (Ritzer 1998). This means that around seventy per cent of all American credit card users practice serial, never-ending debt. I suggest that these patterns of credit card usage are an example of the shift from discrete debt events to serial debt—from overt discipline to ongoing, seductive control. Accompanying this shift has been the emergence of what I would term 'serial gratification'. Both debt and gratification, in this sense, are linked to a shift in the consumption cycle that has taken place in the movement from a disciplinary to controlling society, that is, from Fordist-Keynesianism to fast capitalism and 'new times'. There is an interesting link to be made here between changes in the construction of desire in changing economic and social times and notions of discipline and control. The view of debt as a measure of individual and/or societal dysfunction or mismanagement which characterized economic debates for any number of years is a marker of what Deleuze (1997, p. 310) terms "disciplinary societies". Deleuze notes that in disciplinary societies, "one was always starting again (from school to the barracks, from the barracks to the factory) while in societies of control one is never finished with anything" (p. 310). Disciplinary social formations are premised upon the experience of serial "apparent acquittal" while societies which are premised upon control

are characterized by "limitless postponements" (p. 310), or in other words, debt.

The outcome of this shift can be readily observed. Consider for example, special events. There has been a drift from emphasis on discrete, *very* special events (e.g. birthdays, Christmas) for which we were encouraged to save and wait, to aggressive marketing of a virtually overlapping series of newly-emphasised or created special events (birthday, anniversary, Mother's Day, Father's Day, Easter, Christmas, End of Financial Year Sale, New Year Sale, Back to School Sale). These events represent a shift from the *discipline* of delayed gratification to the ongoing *control* of serial gratification. This serial, ongoing gratification is particularly seductive, constituting control invoked via debt and the gratification of serial desire: "Man (sic) is no longer man enclosed, but man in debt" (Deleuze 1997, p. 312).

As part of this shift, the single family dwelling, and along with it implicit assumptions of the nuclear family, has become a commodity to be desired and acquired via ongoing debt--an object of serial gratification. As early as the 1920s, home-buyers were seduced by the mass media promise of a better life attached to ownership of a particular house. As well, men and women were immersed in eddies of symbolic violence as particular gendered social roles and identities, linked quite specifically with the narrative of nuclear family and family home were created and legitimized around them. As Archer (1996, p. 155) notes in relation to the emergence of mass-produced bungalow-styled housing in Australia:

articles on the bungalow began to evoke emotive Images of a whole new stress-free lifestyle which would magically suffuse its occupants with a feeling of well-being.

In this seductive cycle of symbolic violence, architecture plays a role which, in combination with the impact of mass media and the control of desire, should not be overlooked. This shift may begin to account for the increasing specialization of domestic zones to which I have referred in this essay. Rather than becoming multi-use spaces, the spaces inbuilt into the contemporary Western home are increasingly specialized and thus increasingly restrictive. As a code, the pervasiveness of the nuclear family home is a marker of the unspoken rules of Western life.

CHANGING TIMES

Contemporary reality, however, is increasingly complex, and Western nations are increasingly composed of culturally and racially heterogeneous families (Castells 1997, 1998; Pieterse 1995). In the shift to globalizing

capitalism, the narrative of the Western nuclear family is increasingly contested. My point here is that while the cultural and racial mix of the clientele is undeniably changing, architecture is slow to follow (Poulton cited in Hart 1998; Watson & McGillivray 1994). While floor plans and overall size have altered over a twenty-year period, the inbuilt cultural message transmitted by the very spaces in which we live out our lives, still revolve about normative nuclear narratives. This is an interesting contradiction--while the cultural and racial mix of contemporary nations are undoubtedly swinging away from the homogeneously white society enshrined in narratives of nuclear life (Castells 1997, 1998; Hall 1996; Luke & Luke 1998), this is not, I suggest, the message communicated via domestic architectural form. Just as architecture signals the self-vision and expectations of a particular society, it also charts the progress of sociocultural change. Lefebvre notes that without an accompanying appropriation of space there is no possibility of changing society or life-style (1979). Following Lefebvre, I would argue that unless we encounter physical appropriations of space, a performative discourse as it were, that counters or supplements the existing cultural landscape, then we cannot convincingly argue for the emergence of new culturally diverse communities and nations.

The Australian experience is again illustrative. A history of ongoing migration, most recently from Asian nations, is not reflected in architectural design. Observers of the Australian architectural landscape have noted that:

The design of Australian houses still remains constrained by a 'normative' concept of an Australian house which specified a limited array of designs, sizes, material and layouts. Houses that deviate from these specifications are uncommon in spite of the variety of architectural forms that would be possible, the prior experience that many migrant Australians have with contrasting styles of living, and the ethic of cultural diversity (Watson & McGillivray 1994 cited in Thomas 1997, pp 105-6).

Implicitly, what are constructed as appropriate practices are encouraged via the physical design and inherent symbolic violence of homes. The fact that the design of homes is not changing to reflect the differing family lives and material practices of non-nuclear families, moving instead towards increasingly specialized spatial design (Dovey 1992), suggests that the domestic dwelling assumes the role of a silent control mechanism in our society, reinforcing more overt processes. In effect, then, the symbolic violence coded into domestic housing limits the outer boundaries of any counter-narrative that may emerge. The increasing specialization and overcoding of domestic space I have identified here and the specific

structuring of subjectivity and habitus formations which may follow can be seen as a marker of this social trend.

CONCLUSION

If architecture forms a fundamental symbolic system which both constructs and is constructed by a society, then domestic architecture is a particularly significant contributor to this process. The domestic space is where individuals live, where the everyday takes place, where primary habitus formation occurs. Waterson (1991) writes that "inhabited spaces are never neutral; they are all cultural constructions of one kind or another. Any building, in any culture, must inevitably carry some symbolic load" (p. vxi). For Waterson, houses in particular are encoded with that society's idealized narratives. That is, domestic architecture forms a cultural text.

Contemporary Western domestic architecture, then, forms part of a process which acts to lock in the meaning and interpretation of a particular cultural message, to minimize opportunities for wilful reappropriation in a time of increasing diversity. That is, the increasing specialization of the various zones of dwellings renders it increasingly difficult to appropriate and use them for purposes other than those for which they are designed and constructed. These 'purposes' reflect normative and selective interpretations of the nuclear narrative by architects, builders, town planners, financial institutions, advertisers and local councils. The fact that the design of housing is not changing to reflect the differing family lives and material practices of increasingly diverse family forms and identities, moving instead towards increasingly specialized spatial design, suggests that the domestic dwelling is ever more a silent control mechanism in our society. The move away from outright discipline in our society I have identified has the effect that it is neither longer possible nor desirable to overtly sanction families and relationships that have moved outside the nuclear narrative. However as discipline has faded, control has increased. It is here that a reassessment of the role of domestic space becomes important. This reassessment tells us that the symbolic violence coded into the nuclear family home and from there into our very physicality is a control device, ensuring that individuals and families do not easily move beyond the outermost parameters of the nuclear narrative.

REFERENCES

Agrest, D., Conway, P. & Weisman, L. (1996). (Eds.). *The Sex of Architecture*. New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc.

Allon, F. (1994). The Nuclear Dream: Lucas Heights and Everyday Life in the Atomic Age. In S. Ferber, C. Healy, C. McAuliffe (Eds.) *Beasts of*

Suburbia: Reinterpreting Cultures in Australian Suburbs. (pp. 35-52). Melbourne: Melbourne University Press.

Archer, J. (1996). *The Great Australian Dream: The history of the Australian house.* Sydney: Harper Collins Publishers.

Bell, C. & Newby, H. (1976). Husbands and Wives: The dynamics of the deferential dialectic. In D. Barker & S. Allen (Eds.). *Dependence and Exploitation in Work and Marriage and the Family* (pp. 152-168). New York: Lonman.

Bourdieu, P. (1984). *Distinction: A social critique of the judgement of taste.* (R. Nice, Trans.). New York: Routledge.

Bourdieu, P. (1977). *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, trans R. Nice, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bourdieu, P. (1990). *The Logic of Practice.* (trans. R. Nice). Cambridge: Polity Press.

Bourdieu, P. & Passeron, J. 1990 *Reproduction in Education, Society and Culture*, (trans. R. Nice) (2nd edn.). London: Sage Publications.

Bourdieu, P. (1992). *Language and Symbolic Power*, (trans G. Raymond & M. Adamson). J.B. Thompson (Ed.). Cambridge: Polity Press.

Bourdieu, P. & Wacquant, L. (1992). *An Invitation to Reflexive Sociology*, The University of Chicago Press: Chicago.

Carrington, V. 1998. *Landscaping the Family in New Times.* Unpublished doctoral thesis. University of Queensland, Australia.

Carrington, V. & Luke, A. (1997). Literacy and Bourdieu's Sociology Theory: A Reframing. *Language and Education*, 11 (2): 76-112.

Castells, M. (1997). *The Power of Identity.* Oxford: Blackwell.

Castells, M. (1998). *The End of Millennium.* Malden, MA: Blackwell.

Connell, R.W. (1987). *Gender and Power: Society, the person and sexual politics.* Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Davis, M. (1990). *City of Quartz.* New York: Vintage.

Deleuze, G. & Guattari, F. (1983). *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and schizophrenia.* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

- Deleuze, G. & Guattari, F. (1987).** *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and schizophrenia*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Dovey, K. (1994).** Dreams on Display: Suburban Ideology in the Model Home. In S. Ferber, C. Healy, C. McAuliffe (Eds.) *Beasts of Suburbia: Reinterpreting Cultures in Australian Suburbs* (pp/ 127-147)..Melbourne: Melbourne University Press.
- Eco, U. (1997).** Function and Sign. In N. Leach (E.d.). *Rethinking Architecture: A reader in cultural theory* (pp. 182-201). London: Routledge.
- Foucault, M. (1997).** Of Other Spaces: Utopias and heterotopias. In N. Leach (Ed.). *Rethinking Architecture: A reader in cultural theory* (pp. 350-355). London: Routledge.
- Freidman, A. (1996).** Not a Muse: The Client's Roles at the Rietveld Schroder House. In D. Agrest, P. Conway, L. Weisman (Eds.) *The Sex of Architecture* (pp. 217-232). New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc.
- Fromm, E. (1955).** *The Sane Society*. New York: Rinehart.
- Genocchio, G. (1995)** Discourse, Discontinuity, Difference: The Question of 'Other' Spaces. *Postmodern Cities and Spaces* (pp. 35-46). S. Watson & K. Gibson (Eds.) Oxford: Blackwell.
- Habermas, J. (1973).** *Legitimation Crisis* (T. McCarthy, Trans.). London: Heinemann.
- Hall, S. (1992).** Questions of Cultural Identity. In S. Hall, D. Hold and t. McGrew (Eds.). *Modernity and its Futures* (pp. 274-316). Cambridge: Polity.
- Hart, M. (1998, February 28).** The Queenslander pulls up stumps. *The Courier Mail.*, p. 15.
- Kahn, J. (1995).** *Culture, Multiculture, Postculture*. London: Sage.
- Lefebvre, H. (1979).** Space: Social Product and Use Value. J.W. Freiberg, (Ed.). *Critical Sociology: European Perspectives*. (pp. 285-295). New York: Halsted Press.
- Madanipour, A. (1996).** *Design of Urban Space: An inquiry into a socio-spatial process*. Chicester: John Wiley & Sons.
- Marcuse, H. (1956).** *Eros and Civilization: A philosophical inquiry into Freud*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

- Osmond, M. & Thorne, B. (1993). Feminist Theories: The social construction of gender in families and societies. In P. Boss, W. Doherty, R. LaRossa, W. Schumm & S. Steinmetz (Eds.). *Sourcebook of Family Theories and Methods: A contextual approach* (pp. 591-622). New York: Plenum Press.
- Pieterse, J. (1995). Globalization as Hybridization. In M. Featherstone, S. Lash & R. Robertson (Eds.). *Global Modernities* (pp. 45-68). London: Sage.
- Price, C. (1993). Ethnic intermixture in Australia. *People and Place*, 1 (1), 6-8.
- Rapoport, A. (1969). *House Form and Culture*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Reed, C. (1996). Introduction. *Not at Home: The Suppression of Domesticity in Modern Art with Architecture*. London: Thames and Hudson.
- Reiger, K. (1985). *The Disenchantment of the Home: Modernizing the Australian Family 1880-1940*. Melbourne: Oxford University Press.
- Ritzer, G. (1998). *The McDonaldization Thesis*. London: Sage Publications.
- Robbins, M. (1991). *Living in a Mad-made World: Gender assumptions in modern housing design*. London: Routledge.
- Sibley, D. (1995). *Geographies of Exclusion*. London: Routledge.
- Soja, E. (1996). *Thirdspace: Journeys to Los Angeles and other real-and-imagined places*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Spigel, L. (1992). The Suburban Home Companion: Television and the Neighbourhood Ideal in Postwar America. In B. Colomina (Ed.). *Sexuality and Space* (pp. 185-218). New York: Princeton Architectural Press.
- The Frankfurt Institute for Social Research. (1972). The Family. In *Aspects of Sociology* (pp. 129-147). Boston: Beacon Press.
- Thomas, M. (1997). Discordant Dwellings: Australian Houses and the Vietnamese Diaspora. In I. Ang & M. Symonds (Eds.). *Home, Displacement, Belonging* (pp. 95-113). Research Centre in Intercommunal Studies, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences: University of Western Sydney, Nepean.

Vidler, A. (1996). Homes for Cyborgs. In C. Reed, (Ed.) *Not at Home: The Suppression of Domesticity in Modern Art with Architecture* (pp. 161-178). London: Thames and Hudson.

Ward, P. (1998). Something rotten in the streets of suburbia. *The Weekend Australian*. January 31- February 1, 1998, p. 10.

Waterson, R. (1991). *The Living House: An anthropology of architecture in South-East Asia*. Singapore: Oxford University Press.

Westwood, S. & Williams, J. (1997). *Imagining Cities: Scripts, signs, memory*. London: Routledge.

Wigley, M. (1993). *The Architecture of Deconstruction: Derrida's Haunt*. Cambridge MA: The MIT Press.

Yeatman, A. (1986). Women, domestic life and sociology. In C. Patemen & E. Grosz (Eds.) *Feminist challenges: Social and political theory* (pp. 157-172). Boston, Northern University Press.