Archi-texture

Meditations on the Mediations of Dwelling

By Wendy Seaná Blake, BA (Hons. 1st)

This thesis is presented for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy of Murdoch University, 2004.
Declaration

I declare that this thesis is my own account of my research and contains, as its main content, work which has not previously been submitted for a degree at any tertiary education institution.

……………………………………

Wendy S Blake
Abstract

This thesis is an inter-disciplinary and inter-cultural exploration of home as understood as the place in which we usually live. Empirical research in an Australian suburb and an Indian town provide the fabric from which cultural studies engages with phenomenology to produce a design used to cut and style this exploration. Motivated by an interest in what threads contribute to the weave of contemporary household dwelling, this thesis revisits the two questions used by Heidegger to frame his essay ‘Building Dwelling Thinking’: “What is it to dwell?” and “How does building belong to dwelling?” It is an inquiry committed to its respondents as bearers and representatives of ‘structures of feeling’ circulating within the socio-cultural milieu or *habitus* in which they live and engage with the idea of ‘home.’ This inquiry offers an exploration of the chief constituent mediums of home which I call its ‘archi-texture’. As such, it looks at location, physical and material attributes, domestic technology and household membership as framed by the presence or absence of a family. This thesis is almost certainly the only example of an empirically grounded examination of Heidegger’s ontological exposition of dwelling. Hence I position it as a meditation on the mediations of dwelling rather than a judgmental critique, although in no sense do I believe it to be either a dispassionate position nor an impartial digest of the research material.
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For Michael,

You’re my cabin, you’re my castle, you’re my instant pleasure dome.
I need you in my house ‘cause you’re my home.

(‘You’re my Home’ by Billy Joel)
Introduction

I was moved to research and write on this topic by my love for, and my fascination with, the phenomenal qualities of my current mode of dwelling. I have a house and a household that I call home. Let me explain the origins of my motivation. As a child I grew up in unexceptional middle-class circumstances, living with my parents and siblings in a large, architect designed house on the outskirts of Melbourne. I called this house ‘home.’ There was nowhere else at that time to which I applied this label. Yet, as soon as I grew old enough to be considered an independent adult, I left this home and struck out on my own. While this home was familiar and secure, it was also rather rule bound and restrictive and I was in a hurry to gain more freedom. Yet I was not seeking to shed physical and psychological security only to gain independence of choice and decision. As it happened however, there was a reasonably direct trade off, and for quite a while my adult life was framed by the attempt to regain lost ground and reintroduce security alongside my new found autonomy. My journey in this life is now perhaps only half over, but I’m delighted to report I made it, and for this I give thanks to the mysterious intersection of providence and circumstance. The dialectical exchange between security and autonomy has settled into a comfortable balance, and no longer demands much attention. But, as progress into this steady-state was achieved, a related opposition came to dominate my life in a constant dialectical play that produced tension as one position or the other held sway.

The dialectically active opposition I perceive is not mine alone, but belongs to life as it is lived in the so-called ‘first’ world. It is an opposition that inheres in the experience of dwelling as lived at the address we call ‘home,’ as well as in our technologically assisted appetite and capacity for travel. It is the opposition between the centripetal and the centrifugal, the hestial and the hermetic, that is, movement at, or around a centre, and the movement out from or away from this centre. The attention required to negotiate and deal with this tension is demanding, rewarding, exhilarating and fatiguing. Yet to disengage is not really an option, and would require, anyway, an exceptional amount of effort. It is for me one, if not the principal, dialectic involved in what the academy succinctly encapsulates in the phrase ‘the post-modern condition’. The countervailing pressures of this dynamic dialectic give birth to the creative tension between tradition and change, and the placement and displacement of identities, qualities, and sensibilities now so familiar. In my experience, the identities, qualities, and sensibilities of this post-modern condition derive from, are involved in, and revolve around, the daily integument and tension between being at home with being away from home. Post-modernity is the daily interfusion of
the centripetal/hestial with the centrifugal/hermetic. Everyday instances of this dialectical play generate, develop, and arrange the circumstances which constitute these post-modern times.

Like millions of other people, my life and mode of dwelling is a complex web of stability and movement, permanence and transience. To have a home is to have, and experience, a centre in which there is movement both around and away from. Let me be specific and relate it to just one daily pattern in my experience. As long as I am living in suburban Perth, Western Australia, radio, television, computers and cars are as much a part of my daily life as my partner and children and the house we share. It’s often necessary to use the automatic timer on the radio to wake up in time to go to work in the morning and I continue to listen to, react to and digest the import of radio broadcast news and current affairs as I go about my early morning business. Thus, usually my first interactions after waking in the morning are with the radio rather than partner or children. My day regularly begins with me tuning in to the tumult of events in the world beyond my house and home. Listening to the radio is a hermetic, centrifugal activity. The same goes for television and computers, where the movement out is virtual, and planes, trains, automobiles etc, in which it is actual. Of course, other things stay fairly stable, and though change occurs, it does so quite slowly, so that perception tends to register these as stabilities and constancies. For instance, the kind and position of furniture in rooms, daily routines, and relationships with family members all have a hestial, centripetal nature, albeit to a greater or lesser extent. Home involves, in other words, some things and people that remain relatively in place and constant, and others that move and change. Furthermore, while there is indeed a sense in which stability and permanence have material, and psychologically anchored, coordinates, there is also a sense in which, paradoxically, stability emerges out of movement. For me, the tension between stability and autonomy evolved into a chronic awareness of the tension in dwelling between the centripetal/hestial and centrifugal/hermetic or, as I later describe it, between ‘dwelling as staying’ and ‘dwelling as wandering.’ Because I found this interfusion fascinating at the personal and experiential level, I was moved to research and ponder other peoples experience.

In this thesis I am interested in what ‘home’ in these post-modern times may mean, and how meaning varies as cultural and technological conditions vary. This thesis is a meditation on the mediations of dwelling as experienced at home. Hence, it is a thesis about the place, be it house, apartment or simply room, in which we usually stay, into which aspects of the world are regularly imported, and from which we also travel out, in both virtual and actual fashion. Such are the
prompting and underlying motivations that lay behind my decision to situate my study within several theoretical and empirical territories. In many ways this is a study situated at an unusual set of cross roads which have not, to my knowledge, been explored before. Literature on the idea of ‘home’ is large and includes a wide range of treatments from historical mappings that trace its development (Rybcznski1986, Harevan 1991, Rykwert 1991, Thompson 1998, Troy 2000) or recommend an historical awareness (Lawrence 1995, the poetic phenomenology of home in literature (Bachelard 1962); proposals to facilitate comprehension of the phenomenon which advocate description and critique using the philosophy of phenomenology (Dovey 1985, Korsec-Serfaty 1985, Pallsmaa 1995, Westman 1995, Stea 1995); as well as more straight-forward sociologically inspired research agendas (Saunders and Williams 1988). When it comes to the even larger corpus of studies of home the bulk of a fairly conservative archive and an increasing number of more critical studies derive from sociological, anthropological or cultural studies perspectives (Rapoport 1976 and 1981, Altman and Gauvain 1981, Duncan 1985, Saile 1985, Richards 1990, Thompson 1993, Kent 1995, Carsten and Hugh-Jones 1995, Efremova 1999, Dandekar 1999, Birdwell-Pheasant and Zuniga 1999, Chapman and Hockey, 1999 ) or occasionally mix psychology and phenomenology (Cooper-Marcus 1995, Sixsmith 1995). Diverse, interesting and informative as most of these engagements are, there has not been, so far as I am aware, a meeting of phenomenology with an empirically and inter-culturally grounded representations of home. This thesis lies at the intersection of these particular paths, which is marked by a multi-directional signpost that represents the confluence of a number of participating disciplines. All point to home as their desired destination. This is, in other words, an inter-disciplinary study where the eclectic discipline of cultural studies provides the nominal departure point, but whose already porous boundaries are opened still further to accommodate an extended interrogation of two fields by phenomenological philosophy in a Heideggerian mode. Such a position apprehends being, and interpretations of the meaning of being, as possible only in relation to the world in which being finds itself. In this case, the world is that of home as granted by residence in a specific location. Wherever appropriate, the phenomenological approach is complemented or supplemented by insights drawn from psychoanalysis and qualitative and quantitative anthropology and sociology. Together, the application of such knowledge and perspective fashion an interpretive frame that induces the empirical material to speak forcefully and meaningfully in ways that it cannot suggest on its own. This thesis is a detailed investigation, via the self-representation of subjects, of two very different communities for the platial, social, familial, technological values that gather while dwelling at home. As such, this thesis makes a contribution to cultural studies that is as distinctive as it is descriptive. Being inter-disciplinary
has advantages, though there can be disadvantages. The advantages are the virtues of fertilisation and amalgamation. Disadvantages may lie with the limitations these may have for the exercise of disciplinary scope. The former give rise to knowledge fashioned by bold cross-references and interconnections, the latter tend to result from the sacrifice of depth these productions can entail. It is my hope to contribute to inter-disciplinarity without relinquishing any of the disciplinary detail required to do it justice.

As already indicated this research has two fields, the suburb of Coolbellup in Perth Western Australia, where I lived from 1990 to 2003, and Diu a small town in western India where, before I decided on this topic, I had lived for 3 months in 1994/5. The juxtaposition is unusual, but it was chosen not out of a perverse desire for difficulty, but because I felt it was much less interesting to restrict my exploration to a single field. I wanted to elicit and compare meaning as it emerged in a relatively poor suburb in a rich country, and a relatively rich town in a poor country. The research began in Coolbellup at the beginning of 1996, and moved to Diu at the beginning of 1997. Necessarily, these two experiences were in many respects incommensurate with one another. Between Coolbellup and Diu differences abound, though the questioning intention that I brought to these fields was the same. The extended comparison I undertake here is intended to increase our understanding of dwelling at home both intra and inter-culturally. To do this it has been necessary to sift and separate ideas, and create a taxonomy from what are essentially inter-related and inter-dependent aspects of dwelling at home.

Chapter One discusses the intent of the quest as it examines the idea of home. This excursion spirals out from the significance and particularity of place, in order to close in on the particular nature of dwelling in the building called ‘home.’ The motivation for the excursion is phenomenological, and its inspirations are the questions Heidegger poses in his essay ‘Building Dwelling Thinking’: “What is it to dwell?” and “How does building belong to dwelling?” To further clarify the distinctions that are involved in an exploration of the specific dwelling undertaken at home in houses, it is necessary to note the relatively sedentary nature of this mode of dwelling, and outline the differences in cultural disposition, or habitus, that living behind walls tends to produce and sustain. Sedentary dwelling is dwelling that has undergone domestication. By introducing permanence with the erection of walls, settlement also introduces possibilities for privacy. At the same time, the permanence of the buildings we construct to house us becomes existentially significant as particularity develops and deepens. Hence home becomes a web woven of differentiation, connection, and associations and it is in the threads of particularity that
dwelling experience per se is woven. I propose that it is in the particularities which gather in the enduring architecture of houses, that we can discern archi-texture. The final, phenomenologically motivated, move in this chapter discusses the implications for the domesticated dwelling of the technological revolution, that has allowed us to realise the twofold nature of dwelling, as both the desire to stay and the desire to escape the accident of our physical location. A review of the literature that has contributed to or informed this thesis concludes the chapter.

Chapter Two discusses the theoretical and empirical grounds with which, and upon which, I conducted my research. Since I cannot describe myself as an anthropologist, although I have been involved in the production of ethnography, I engage here with the critiques of itself that anthropology has, unflinchingly, insisted upon, as well as those anthropology has made of cultural studies. The problems of representation, and of how to represent my method and fields, meant being self-consciously critical. Candid about cognisant of the limitations and partialities of perspective and method, I am still confident of the worth and legitimacy of my representations. My representations of the geography, topography, history, and social demographics of the very different fields of Coolbellup and Diu, and the variations in my interview method, constitute the rest of the chapter.

Chapter Three inaugurates the first layer of the taxonomy of inward spiralling circularity I imposed. It begins with a discussion of the notion of home itself in a cultural studies take on its phenomenology. Here I describe, and engage with, the ways in which home can be understood as a ‘structure of feeling’, an ‘interpellation’, and a ‘field of care’ in the processual dialectic between persons and places. Being at home in one’s house necessarily entails a relationship to the world beyond the house, into the neighbouring area of Coolbellup and Diu respectively. Employing a dialectical framework devised by Kim Dovey, the rest of the chapter looks at the representations made of Diu and Coolbellup by my respondents, as they disclose modes of platial, temporal and socio-cultural order, as degrees of appropriation, connection and identification. The structures of feeling which emerge offer comment on the extent to which a sense of home or homelessness coalesce out of perceptions of social and topographical attributes as they are felt to be present, or as they are felt to be changing. Structures of feeling in Diu show a great deal more positive and consistent agreement than those of Coolbellup. In Coolbellup, attitudes of divided and negative perception had to be set alongside those that praised or appreciated. Next to one another, the explorations of Diu and Coolbellup suggest that a sense of
home or homelessness, at the local level, involves a sense of subscription to, or absence of, a sense of community.

Chapter Four talks to the relationship between the terms ‘house’ and ‘home’ and illustrates the extent to which these are used distinctively or interchangeably. Recognising the importance of the platial forms and order of domestic architecture in mediating and shaping perceptions of home, I discuss these material attributes and consider matters of style, size, suitability, and desirability. Housing produces relative levels of platial polyvalency and privacy that, to a large extent, are functions of the ratio of rooms to people, and these, in turn, are produced and sustained by a habitus of culturally conditioned expectations and desires. A desire for privacy is, in other words, a desire that is learned. In a culture that does not place much value on intra-household privacy, individual variance from this convention tends to follow what is learnt in departures from it. Overall, the substantial differences in the domestic architecture of Coolbellup and Diu resulted in significantly different perceptions of what constitutes acceptable or desirable platial forms and order. While comfort and convenience were central considerations in both places, there were obvious differences in the aspects represented and in the placement of emphasis. This was especially clear with respect to the relative presence and absence of private places and the value attributed to privacy.

Chapter Five moves deeper into the material aspects of home by considering dwelling with technology. Compared to Diu, the constitution of the domestic technological landscape of Coolbellup is rich and diverse, reflecting Australia’s greater level of wealth and technological development. Much more than just reified objectifications of the desire to facilitate the completion of tasks or save labour, our relations with technology mediate our relations with the world, influencing the nature of perception itself. Employing Don Ihde’s phenomenology of technics allows an appraisal of Coolbellup and Diu for technological relations as they are possessed and/or privileged. Especially notable were convergences and divergences in the enumeration and evaluation of various household technologies, including the house itself. Differences in the relative technological texture of households became apparent in the themes that emerged. Possessing more domestic technology and more complex technology, Coolbellup respondents displayed both more awareness of, and more ambivalence towards, technology per se. In Diu however, there were more reified examples, more desire for more domestic technology, and less critique of technology per se.
Given the frequent equation of, and importance of, family-life in constituting, perceptions of home, the final chapter begins by introducing some of the differences in the way in which it is located and discussed in social inquiry in India and Australia. The family is an issue of enormous perennial consequence in both countries, yet it is evident that the family in India is regarded as the pivotal institution for habitus reproduction and cultural transmission. This provides the background against which the family figures in the phenomenology of perceptions of home in Diu and Coolbellup. India is a country with a high level of religious sensibility and commitment, and religious prescription and proscription are extremely influential in promoting the family, and thus conditioning perceptions of its importance to the individual and society. This is strongly reflected in the juxtaposition of Diu and Coolbellup. Compared to Coolbellup, the house-held family in Diu is privileged in conceptions of home and made the recipient of a high level of emotional investment. The widespread attrition of religious mores and dominance of secular sensibility in Australia is reflected in the relative casualness with which the family was inserted into perceptions of home. To emphasise the import of these findings, I employ Mary Douglas’s idea of home as a ‘virtual community,’ a device that also serves to suggest links with the ideas of chapter three and move the work towards its conclusion.

As is the nature of conclusions, mine revisits the interest I have in the twofold nature of dwelling. Then, recalling the principal tendencies expressed as structures of feeling that emerged in each chapter, aggregates and permutates them to address the Heideggarian questions that frame this thesis. In the nature of introductions, it would be like stitching the garment before I’ve cut the cloth to present those concluding remarks here. I hope you enjoy engaging with these meditations on the mediations of dwelling.
1.1 “Home involves so much”

In his story *At The Auction of the Ruby Slippers* Salman Rushdie uses the exhibition and auction of the ruby slippers worn by Dorothy in *The Wizard of Oz* as a device to talk generally about the commodification of value and the anxiety that surrounds the costs of wish fulfilment. Though they are only one of innumerable extremely desirable items to pass through the auction room for sale to the highest bidder, the ruby slippers attract crowds of all kinds of people because of their alleged power to bestow the wish for which they became famous. After many adventures in the strange and dangerous land of Oz, Dorothy regains the magic ruby slippers and, clicking her heels together, wishes to go home. The ruby slippers instantly oblige. The main role of these slippers in both Baum’s and Rushdie’s stories is to symbolise the desire for home. To ‘go home’, to ‘be at home’, to ‘have a home’ are all packed into the metaphor of the magical ruby slippers. In Rushdie’s story, the anonymous narrator describes scenes of undisguised desire emerging from the large motley throng in attendance at the auction. He is not surprised by the degree of interest shown since it seems that, in the relativistic and nihilistic period in which we live, here at the turnover of the millenium, the ruby slippers have powers that offer an “affirmation of a lost state of normalcy in which we have almost ceased to believe and to which the slippers promise us we can return.”

Despite the fervid reverence of the instant cult that formed around them, Rushdie’s narrator expresses grave and melancholy doubts over the capacity of the slippers to deliver what everyone present at the auction expects them to. Like the notion of home they are honour bound to deliver, Rushdie regards the ruby slippers as fantastical and somewhat ambiguous entities. In a time of change, upheaval, and concomitant existential uncertainty, the doubt is of the slippers reputed ability to fulfil wishes at all, much less deliver the one that will realise a return home. The lament is twofold: the difficulty of detailing what we mean by home, that home is problematic, and that there is no more than a possibility that it can be achieved.

Home has become such a scattered, damaged, various concept in our present travails. There is so much to yearn for. There are so few rainbows any more. How hard can we expect even a pair of magic shoes to work? They promised to take us *home*, but are metaphors of homeliness comprehensible to them, are abstractions possible? Are they literalists, or will they permit us to redefine the blessed word? Are we asking, hoping for, too much? As our numberless needs emerge from their redoubts and press in upon the electrified glass will the shoes, like the Grimms’ ancient flatfish, lose patience with our ever growing demands and return us to the hovels of our discontents?
Rushdie works a contemporary canvas as his narrator expresses anxieties about how the meanings of home exist in deteriorating disarray, and lies them alongside some crucial ideas about what home ought to mean. Rushdie seems to be saying that, nowadays, home is a profound existential promise which everyone wants and seeks, an idea whose profundity is imbued with almost magical elements and processes, and that promises to produce such necessary things as security, solace, and delight. He seems to say that home is a wish that lies over rainbows but, because of a contemporary paucity of rainbows, it is not easy to either find or traverse them, much less make them stay put or definitively define them, except as a kind of aura. This aura seems to inhere within the concept of home in the same way that colours inhere in rainbows that is, at first vividly, but with a poignant transience which communicates the knowledge of the disturbing evanescence of materialisation.

During the last decade ‘home’ has claimed sentimental and critical attention in proportion to perceived threats to it from phenomena and events felt to be antithetical to, or just incompatible with, its existence. At the introduction to an article with the revealing title ‘Home: The Promise and Predicament of Private Life at the End of the Twentieth Century’, Krishan Kumar provides a glancing overview of the contemporary provenance of the concept of home and the rise of critical attention it has as a result received.

Home, Heimat in one form or another is enjoying a somewhat unexpected renaissance. The discovery or rediscovery of the home is new or striking not so much for the fact of it, as for its revaluation of the home. Home is now positive. Home is good - precisely, homely like wholesome (and preferably home-baked) bread. This is no news to the bulk of the population. Home has always been celebrated by them. There is indeed, it has generally been held, no place like home. But a shift seems to have occurred at the level of high culture, or ideology. There the home had been regarded with a certain lofty disfavour; now it has been endowed, by many intellectuals, with the warm glow of approbation.3

“Home” suggests Rushdie’s narrator, “involves so much,” it is almost too much to wish for. Yet as Kumar says of the existence and universal appeal of home there can be no doubt. Indeed, invested as it is with desire, ambition and real and imagined nostalgia, home has become such a privileged and precious notion it has been enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.4 Still, Rushdie's narrator's doubts about the plausibility of the notion of home are well founded, for what is it that we invoke when we deploy the concept? Presuming that they can indeed transport us, and imagining the ruby slippers as able to intuit our subjective, momentary
and contextually specific wish to go home, how will the place they take us to differ from the place they take any other person? How will the slippers distinguish between one version of home and another when there are an infinite number for them to choose between? If, as Rushdie’s narrator laments, the concept of home has become dispersed by use and raddled by circumstance, then the ruby slippers must distinguish between a host of metaphors, abstractions, and literal materialisations.

The problem of home is the problem of a wealth of generalities and specificities. Abstractions of home are not easy or useful, for qualities of home (homeliness) are specific for those who invoke them. Thus, one of the lessons to be drawn from Rushdie’s appropriation of the motif of the ruby slippers is of the prudence that ought to accompany the definition of wishes. The story implies that when wishing for home, it’s wise to attempt to define with some rigour the parameters of what one wants, so as to instil direction to the peculiar combination of forces which coalesce to produce the noun home, the adjective homely, and their antitheses homelessness and the unhomely.

When it comes to the nuanced notions of the term home, materialism and idealism can be converse pitfalls of one another - attributing too much to the former will detract from the latter, and vice versa. Over-emphasis on the substantive issues impoverishes the imaginative register, while a list towards romantic ideals can undermine substantive concerns. If, on the one hand, a too materialist conception of home is engaged all one ends up with is a quantity of bricks and mortar, or some arbitrary destination such as the nation one is a citizen of. But if, as Rushdie’s narrator implies, home is the source and repository of potent combinations of imagination, memory and emotion that are “yearned for”, then home acquires an idealist hue that implies a pure and idyllic rapture. Yet, if placed in the imaginary register of wish-fulfilment, home becomes a Platonic cachet of ideal notions which can never all become incarnate at once. In idealism, existing approximations are doomed because they will inevitably never measure up. There is also the tendency for home to coalesce around idealisations defined by contrast with their antithesis or nemesis. Not to have a home, or to be without some place to call home, is regarded as a tragic and an unacceptable condition for human beings to occupy. Yet, at the same time, drifts in the direction of idealism do not prevent susceptibility of the notion of home to endless reinterpretation as the idea is infused with idiosyncrasies refracted through culturally syncratic codes, customs and belief. A balance needs to be observed and distinction, definition and direction are required for particularity to prevail over generalisation and produce nuanced
analysis and interpretation. The whole material and ideal matrix must be acknowledged, so that every interpretation draws on the efforts of such awareness to reflect its position in and portion of the matrix.

Home is a small word that shelters many notions, co-notions and connotations and like love, sex, and family, presents a slippery semantic surface for an innumerable number of intangible ideas as well as tangible places. Home is crammed with potential and diverse meanings, all of which depend, as John Hollander suggests, on principles of context and subordination: “Many of the questions of what you mean by ‘home’ depend upon specification of locus and extent in what might be likened to a set of Emersonian conceptual concentric circles.”

Home may signify territory in the mind or on the ground; territory that may be broad and generalised, or narrow and specific or may, alternately, entail one then the other as referential contexts change. It signifies and embodies the concrete and the immaterial, the general and the microcosm of the excruciatingly particular. The throng of possibilities may vary subjectively, geographically and temporally from one moment to the next or historically from one era to another. I have for instance been in the situation while abroad where I have talked about ‘going home’, and what I meant was not only a return to my native land, but a return to the familiar environment, surroundings, and neighbourhood of my house. I have also thought about Scotland, the country I was born in, as a place I wish to live. On the other hand, ‘going home’ after a party has a very limited reference as simply the place where one intends to spend the rest of the night and can refer to a tent on the beach or the house of a temporary lover, as readily as one’s own house. In the realm of ideas, religion and poetry frequently resort to depictions of God or heaven as humanity’s true, eternal and spiritual home. For example the line after ‘Swing Low, Sweet Chariot’ is “coming for to carry me home.” Or Wordsworth, whose famous lines in the ‘Intimations of Immortality’, “…trailing clouds of glory, do we come from God who is our home” echo the same idea. India feels to me like a home at this metaphysical and philosophical level. Keats on the other hand used home in ‘Fancy’ to metaphorically illustrate the idea that the restless and relentless quest of whim will never yield permanent pleasure in observing: “ever let the fancy roam, pleasure never is at home.” Still located in the realm of ideas, but more mundanely, are expressions of the passionate relationships which can exist between people and activities or objects. Native English speakers for instance would recognise how common is the use and reception of statements to the effect that someone or other is very much ‘at home on stage’, ‘on the streets’, ‘with another person’ or with a particular set of ideas or images.
The problem of what we mean by home has several important subtending or participatory considerations. What we mean by home frequently depends not only on the context of articulation, but upon three crucial underlying ideas. The first of these surrounds the notion of dwelling: what constitutes dwelling? Secondly, how does dwelling contribute, or fail to contribute, to the notion and experience of home? And, lastly, how are building and dwelling related? From the latter set flow issues that concern the built environment and involve the common assumption that, whatever else home may connote, it is predominantly understood as resting on material foundations of shelter found in every sedentary and domestic society. In the following four sections I move through the layers which contribute to the prevalence of association of home with building and dwelling, while the last section comprises a review of the literature.

1.2 The Significance of Place
From infancy, knowledge based on familiarity with one’s immediate environment is crucial to a subject’s integration and development. Similarly, the importance of knowledge based on familiarity with space and place to the formation of culture cannot be over-estimated. One of the first and most influential philosophical engagements with place was by Martin Heidegger as he addressed the question of being as a matter of inhabitation of, access to, and interconnection with the world. The world is a place as well as the mother of countless other places. This seems self-evident, yet the place-fullness of the world, and the significance of place in our lives are often minimised or forgotten. Human beings are the kind of beings we are because our being is inextricably involved with the world. We live in a world, and our relations with ourselves and with others come into existence and develop only because of shared access to this world. We find ourselves in the world with all of its objects and events, and it is thus that we and the world we inhabit cannot be known independently of one another. Our ontic, or world orientated behaviour, is a direct reflection of our ontological status. We are being-in-the-world and we live in intimate and reflexive reciprocity with the world. In order to draw closer to the nature of place and make clear the qualitative differences from the abstraction of space of undifferentiated extension, I employ the neologism platial. Platial means ‘of place’ just as spatial means ‘of space’. To conceptualise the platial is to think through the ways that places are apprehended and thus show ourselves as beings in place. Phenomenological philosopher Jeff Malpas argues for the necessity of examining experience and place in terms of each other. “The crucial point about the connection between place and experience is not ... that place is properly something encountered
only ‘in’ experience, but rather that place is integral to the very structure and possibility of experience.”

In *A Taste of Madeline* Malpas uses the famous image of the madeline cake from Proust’s *A la recherche du temps perdu* in order to understand why place is important to us, what kind of relations we have with place, and how to conceptualise them. Proust’s narrator Marcel discovers himself and others, and the time which has been his and theirs, via association with particular places and objects. Proust’s novel reveals no mere identification of people and events with place, but the more profound idea of human being-ness as itself a constitution in terms of place, so that, “any exploration of self will also be an exploration of place.” The self is a place that evolves out of existential collaborations with place. Places have natures and features that are as salient in their affect on us as significant others. The incorporation of places into our lives, imagination and memories, argues Malpas, is an inescapable process that could only be limited by situations of extreme platial deprivation. The idea of persons as constituted through place is, he suggests,

.... a way of seeing human beings that treats them, not as individual creatures who exist in a way independent of their surroundings, independent of the landscape, but as beings who are indeed constituted as the beings they are only within their surroundings, within a landscape, within a place.

We apprehend platial when we realise that when we look at a place we are already looking from the place that is our body. As Maurice Merleau-Ponty held, to be is to have a bodily positioning in space and is synonymous with being situated. And to be situated, as Edward Casey argues, is at a foundational level, to constitute and thus belong to place. The importance of the place that is the body was given psychoanalytic scrutiny by the post-Freudian object relations theorists pioneered by Melanie Klein and developed by Donald Winnicott. They gave accounts of infant and individual psychology that place the corporeal experience of self and the world at the centre of the generation of meaning and interpretation. In early infancy, self-embodiment is experienced as coterminous with the world, which extends in every direction from the self. The sense of self and others that subsequently evolves is possible because the world provides the ground upon which the self apprehends itself as a distinct subject. At some point early in our lives, the quintessential distinction of mutual encounter as well as separation from others promotes knowledge of mutual but individual embodiment. The corporeal place has unavoidable and indispensable relations with other places which, as embodied experience, constitute and reconstitute the particles and strata of subjectivity. In its constant and ubiquitous relations with
the world the body is the ground and the destination of culture. Julia Kristeva argues that signifying practices are sourced in material bodily processes. The logic of language operates out of bodily drives, which as a semiotic *chora* make their way into language through the discharge of signification.\(^{16}\) For Kristeva, signification is never only representation, but the release of corporeal motivations. Thus as Horst Ruthrof avers, meaning is grounded in our embodiment and is both hetero-semiotic and inter-semiotic, which is to say that,

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\text{...meaning has ultimately to do with the body and that linguistic expressions mean anything or nothing at all unless they are activated by haptic, visual, tactile, gustatory, olfactory, and other non-verbal signs.}^{17}
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In having or taking a place, the body literally ‘takes place’. The lived and moving body is what Merleau-Ponty called the “natural subject of perception.” The lived body, by virtue of its constitution as the primary agent of perception, possesses “corporeal intentionality”. And it is due entirely to the relations or “threads of intentionality” together with our mobility, that constant integumentation occurs between lived bodies and the world. However temporary the body’s position and situation, some forms of bodily orientation will be present - the body is standing up, lying down, leaning left, tending right, inside a house, outside on the beach, and so forth. By virtue of their capacity for orientation bodies, as they move from one location to another, belong to their environment.

Embodiment is particular and, using Proust, Malpas explains that the concern with place is also a concern with particularity for, like people, places are characterised by their individuality.\(^{18}\) The idea is persuasive, as every place has some essence which could only be described as essentialist, with the proviso that it also be considered unique. Existence is constituted in terms of particular essence. However “this essence is not essence expressed in the universal or abstract, it is an essence residing in particularity itself.”\(^{19}\) Regarding particularity as essence gives us purchase on why we talk about the ‘spirit’ and ‘sense’ of place. It is necessary to focus on the particular and recognise that our being is always a particular being in the middle of a particular place. A focus on particularity risks getting lost in obscurity, but this doesn’t need to happen as long as we accept the difference that is inherent in particularity. The essence of places and persons can be realised through recognition of their composition in difference. Particularity may be discovered through the “multiplication and proliferation of aspects and view.”\(^{20}\) What is real, and what comes to described as reality, is constituted and emerges out of the layering of particularity upon particularity as connections and association of person, place and time occur across difference.
...the real is only to be found in the obscurity of the particular, and in the richness of differentiation that comes with the particular. ... A particular place can indeed be understood to consist in a dense complex of association and differentiation, and in-so-far as density of interconnectedness and of differentiation might be said to be the hallmark of the real, so the experience of the real is precisely the experience of place. ... The attempt to grasp the real is an attempt to penetrate into the dense complexity and particularity of place.²¹

What is real is the unity of texture whereby place is apprehended, through time, as thick and elaborate manifold sets of inter-relation and juxtaposition. Reality occurs in place because place unites difference across space and time. As Casey says, places and realities are more events than things known only according to categories.²² Time provides an open horizontal structure that shows us our existence as the mingling and layering of the places we have dwelt. The materials that comprise the innumerable particularities of places and people are appropriated and unified by time. A place is the unification of spatial and temporal aspects, dispositions and views. The constitution of places per se, and of dwelling places in particular, assumes an embodied spatio-temporal experience as Casey explains:

> Of one thing, we can be certain: both the continuing accessibility and the familiarity of a dwelling place presuppose the presence and activity of the inhabitants lived body. This body has everything to do with the transformation of a mere site into a dwelling place. Indeed bodies build places. Such building is not just a matter of literal fabrication but occurs through inhabiting and even by travelling between already built places.²³

But what is dwelling? How does dwelling figure in our existential encounter with the world? And what can we apprehend of its essence?

1.3 “What is it to Dwell?” and “How Does Building Belong to Dwelling?”

Heidegger dedicated a lecture to the nature of dwelling. Building Dwelling Thinking was given at a colloquium in 1951 whose governing theme was ‘Man and Space.’ In 1951, Germany was still suffering from an acute housing shortage in the wake of terrible devastation during World War II and a huge displacement of people. At the end of this meditative paper, Heidegger leaves his readers to ponder suggestions, whose significance is as axiomatic now as then, despite the huge advances made in providing adequate housing for the populations of rich and technologically developed societies. Heidegger’s concern at his essay’s end is for humans to question and ever pursue the nature of their dwelling.
However hard and bitter, however hampering and threatening the lack of houses remains, the real plight of dwelling is indeed older than the world wars with their destruction, older also than the increase of the earth’s population and the condition of industrial workers. The real plight of dwelling indeed lies in this that mortals ever search anew for the nature of dwelling that they must ever learn to dwell. What if man’s homelessness consisted in this, that man still does not even think of the real plight of dwelling as the plight? Yet, as soon as man gives thought to his homelessness, it is a misery no longer. Rightly considered and kept well in mind, it is the sole summons that calls mortals into their dwelling. But how else can mortals answer this summons than by trying on their part, on their own, to bring dwelling to the fullness of its nature? This they accomplish when they build out of dwelling, and think for the sake of dwelling.

At the outset of this essay Heidegger’s concern is to address two theoretical questions “What is it to dwell?” and “How does building belong to dwelling?” Heidegger maintains as only “correct” the idea that building and dwelling are related as means and ends in the proposition that: “We attain to dwelling so it seems only by means of building” in which, “The latter building has the former dwelling as its goal.” For Heidegger, the merely correct is an insufficient ground on which to examine dwelling since it cannot see what is essential, and stands for only a few facets of the whole. What is merely correct is too limited as a description. It deals in epistemology and does not touch ontology, and can thus only be a derivative of what is essential about being and its relations with the world. As Heidegger says, “for building is not merely a means and a way toward dwelling - to build is in itself already to dwell.” How do we know this? The answer, says Heidegger, lies with our language. Old English and High German both show that the current German word bauen, or building, means to stay in place, to dwell and is the source of the verb ‘to be.’ Yet, because of the habitual nature of dwelling our awareness of the connection “falls into oblivion” and the ways in which dwelling is accomplished with building in activities of cultivation and construction tending to dominate the fore-ground. To dwell is etymologically, epistemologically and thus existentially and ontologically equivalent to being.

To be a human being means to be on the earth as a mortal. It means to dwell. ...Building as dwelling, that is, as being on the earth remains for man’s everyday experience that which is from the outset “habitual” - we inhabit it.

Had Heidegger looked further back into the etymology of the term dwelling he would have uncovered, as Edward Casey has, the seemingly opposite semantic connotations borne by these related words. Dwelling not only echoes the verb ‘to be’ but as Casey notes, the origins of dwelling recall being in place as well as being on the move which is, in itself, also the movement in and through place.
For dwelling-as-residing is not necessarily sedentary; not in the literal absence of motion but finding a comparatively stable place in the world is what matters in such dwelling. Such a finding is possible even when in motion. ... If human beings may peregrinate in place, so they may also dwell stably even as they move from place to place. The two aboriginal senses of dwelling [ie “to stay” and “to go astray”] are not, then, simply diametric opposites; they form a complemental series in which coexistence counts for more than exclusion and in which dialectical interplay allows for many unanticipated combinations.”

Casey calls the two primary modes or extremes of the term dwelling the ‘hestial’ and the ‘hermetic’. Hestial, is so named after the Olympian goddess Hestia whose province is the domestic life symbolised by the hearth. Hestia represents the centred and contained movements, secluded and intimate activity of which takes place around the hearth. Her opposite is Hermes god of thieves who is the messenger of the Gods. Herme’s business is change and the outward directed movement and the quick purposeful traversal of open space. The hestial and hermetic refer to two modes of embodiment, the stationary and the mobile, and two interconnected ontological categories – earth and world. These modes of being and doing evoke two ways to build and two ways to conceive and actualise dwelling. The hestial connotes dwelling and building that is concerned with the particularities of place, while the hermetic is concerned with the space of abstract characteristics. While one belongs to the actions of staying in place, the other belongs to actions connected with departures and journeys. The relationship of the two forms is compelling for, as with all dichotomies, each requires the other to delimit its meaning. In order to remain or linger in a place it is necessary to understand the consequences of leaving it to travel and wander and perhaps even go astray. The state of wandering or getting lost or in error hence depends upon a contrast of certainty and familiarity. Being led astray is associated with both adventure, caprice and foolishness, while wisdom is connected with steadiness, steadfastness, a ‘knowing of one’s place’ as well as ‘knowing where you stand.’ Thus, the domain of the term dwelling can account for every mode of being as belonging without conditions of form and content. It does not matter whether the belonging is to a domestic space, to passage on a transoceanic ship, to an idea, or to a nation-state. Dwelling is the process enacted between human being-ness and the world and does not have to be restricted to an experience of home where home is conceived of as a specific place that acts as an anchor of experience among a family or familiar group. Likewise, dwelling is not limited to a large territorial entity anchoring the experience of a large, diverse number of people such as happens with patriotic invocations of ‘Motherland’ or ‘Fatherland.’ In both cases dwelling is a state of mind that relies on the bodily
bearings in relation to spatial entities. Being and dwelling arrive as the always contingently determined outcome of an everyday existential dialectic enacted in the time horizon, that exists between birth and death. Between the onset and denial of human agency we belong and know belonging because of the primacy of our experience and the world which grounds this experience.

Given the undeniable mortality of human beings and their presence on earth, Heidegger situates human existence as occurring at the intersection of two axes, ‘earth and sky’, ‘divinities and mortals’. These produce a “primal oneness” a “fourfold unity” which allows us to see dwelling as always a “staying with things.” Using an etymological route to examine the meanings which underlie the modern form of dwelling, Heidegger uncovers meanings of freeing, caring and preserving to suggest that, “the fundamental character of dwelling is this sparing and preserving” which, “pervades dwelling in its whole range.”

In saving the earth, in receiving the sky, in awaiting the divinities, in initiating mortals, dwelling occurs as the fourfold preservation of the fourfold. To spare and preserve means: to take under our care, to look after the fourfold in its presencing… Staying with things, however, is not merely something attached to this fourfold preserving as a fifth something. On the contrary: staying with things is the only way in which the fourfold stay within the fourfold is accomplished at any time in simple unity. Dwelling preserves the fourfold by bringing the fourfold into things. But things themselves secure the fourfold only when they themselves as things are let be in their presencing. How is this done? In this way, that mortals nurse and nurture the things that grow and specially construct things that do not grow. Cultivating and construction are building in the narrower sense. Dwelling, in so far as it keeps or secures the fourfold in things, is, as this keeping, a building.

Heidegger’s essay delves into the nature and relationship which obtains between space, location and the building which both gathers and defines the mode in which these presence to arrive at the essence of dwelling as the “basic character of being.” Heidegger realised that in sedentary societies (a subject to which we will soon return) dwelling as building receives most of the credit for manifesting the nature and modes or existentiale of existential being. The proposal is that as mortals, “our stay among things and locations” characterises our dwelling and leads to the assertion that, “only if we are capable of dwelling, only then can we build.” Dwelling is the existential self-organising poiēsis in which the essence of being participates. When we build our stay amongst things is palpably obvious, yet even when we wander, whether in body, mind, or spirit, we nevertheless still enact a stay amongst things. Heidegger exemplifies this when he asks his (German) readers to think of the old Heidelberg bridge and then consider what happens in such reflections upon internal images:
..even when we relate ourselves to those things that are not in our immediate reach, we are staying with the things themselves. … it belongs to the nature of our thinking of that bridge that in itself thinking gets through, persists through, the distance to that location.$^{36}$

Space and being are coeval since,

..spaces open up by the fact that they are let into the dwelling of man. To say that mortals are is to say that in dwelling they persist through spaces by virtue of their stay among things and locations.$^{37}$

Acts of recollection in other words, illustrate how critical (unknown numbers of), cognitive apprehensions of bodily location are in establishing locations as significant for the body and providing consciousness an opportunity to rehabit or dwell in these locations when brought to mind. Heidegger’s focus on the built environment, especially the house in the Black Forest, has meant his work can be misunderstood as claiming the presence of the built environment as necessary to the experience of dwelling.$^{38}$ Dwelling however articulates being as a presence-in-the-world and, as such, is no less evident in the relative mobility of nomadic peoples than among the relatively sedentary.

1.4 Domesticity: The Dominance of Sedentary Dwelling

Heidegger suggests that the loss of epistemological recognition of the ontological connection between building and dwelling is why dwelling, as being-in-the-world, is usually so unthinkingly habitual and, moreover, why dwelling is taken to be simply a consequence of instrumental construction. Our habitual assumptions and forgetfulness about the nature of dwelling are due to the way the presence of dwelling contains its own negation, absence or difference. For many centuries now, the term dwelling has been employed without the contrary connotations of its initial bipolar meanings. Dwelling has come to represent only stays in place, rather than departures from and transience between places. It is perhaps not surprising that these meanings have fallen into oblivion for, with the rise of agricultural practice and more permanent or sedentary societies, meanings which conveyed experiences of wandering became less and less relevant. Absences and negations shadow, even as they help define, presences, and those who wander come to be seen as incomprehensible, and understood as benighted. The nomadic tend to arouse the suspicion of those who remain in place and build in order to dwell. The forgetfulness that attends the repression of transient dwelling must be borne in mind when we reflect on the suspicion, and often hostility, with which the sedentary and domesticated have viewed nomadic
societies.\textsuperscript{39} In \textit{At Home in the World} Michael Jackson researched the dwelling experience of the Walpiri people of the Tanami desert in north central Australia. As he discusses the identification of Walpiri people with their country, Jackson employs Pierre Bourdieu’s resonant notion of \textit{habitus} to outline the collection of features which bias the attitudes of sedentary peoples towards the nomadic.\textsuperscript{40}

In discussions around the notions of dwelling and home, the term habitus is especially apropos because it recalls the habitual aspects of dwelling and home irrespective of how these notions are inserted in the semiotic landscape. The concept habitus offers to explain the link between the social subject and its social environment. Bourdieu first articulated the notion in his book \textit{An Outline of a Theory of Practice}, in which the following explanation, though rather tortuous, amply covers the ground. Habitus involves

\ldots durable, transposable dispositions, predisposed to function as structuring structures, principles of the generation and structuring of practices and representations which can be objectively ‘regulated’ and ‘regular’ without in any way being the product of obedience to rules, objectively adapted to their goals without presupposing a conscious aiming at ends or an express mastery of the operations necessary to attain them and all this being collectively orchestrated without being the product of the orchestrating action of a conductor.\textsuperscript{41}

As a theory of practice then, habitus is incorporated in the body in the form of a system of durable dispositions that are the product of all biographical experience. As an immanent and embodied series of permanent dispositions, habitus “refers to something historical, linked to individual history.”\textsuperscript{42} However, while a society will contain classes and groupings of shared dispositions, no two individual habitus are identical. Though it precedes his use of it, Bourdieu revived the notion of habitus because of its suggestion of things associated with the idea of habit, as practices one has acquired and mobilises on an everyday basis, and habitat, one’s usual environment. Unlike habit however, habitus is not a matter of simple automation or repetition, and is not as fixed in form as habitat tends to connote. Habitus is also however generative and transformative, facilitating, in accordance with relevant circumstances, its own reproduction but without exactitude, “a product of conditionings which tends to reproduce the logic of those conditionings while transforming it.” Risking a mechanical analogy, but without intending to imply exactitude of the process, Bourdieu calls habitus “a kind of transforming machine that leads us to ‘reproduce’ the social conditions of our own production yet in a relatively unpredictable way.”\textsuperscript{43} Thus in any situation habitus will tend towards reproducing the “objective
logic of its conditionings” although it is always possible that this logic and its structuring structures will, *en route* or over time, undergo some degree of transformation as social and subjective change occurs.\(^{44}\)

Habitus is an evocative term when applied to inquiries of dwelling and home, as these notions evoke ideas of the daily attitudinal and behavioural dispositions, that although habitually employed, still adjust to suit the contingency of circumstance and cultural delimitation.\(^{45}\) Although the habitus among sedentary and domesticated folk varies quite dramatically from one society to another, it is inscribed within dispositions which are likely to have more in common with each other than with the habitus of non-domesticated and nomadic peoples. While the range of cultural variety among the domesticated communities is enormous it could be argued that, despite all the differences of culture and geography, domesticated people conform to a common existential condition brought about by sedentary dwelling conditions and ideological formations of sedentarianism.\(^{46}\)

Given the prevalence and near unanimity of sedentary dwelling experience nowadays, it is worthwhile engaging with some of the main assumptions of sedentarianism. Underlying the knowledge and assumptions of the sedentary is the same principle, however unconscious, that, “being-in-the-world” requires emplacement and a perceptually mediated engagement with the world.\(^{47}\) Historically, the large scale shift of people into settled societies has meant that dwelling has come to be understood as equivalent to the structural, social and architectural stabilities of sedentary and domesticated society. Across the world, there are so many domains where dwelling means in a building, the building is known as housing, and the housing is called home. The bodies of all sedentary and domesticated people are conditioned by the knowledge of enclosed, restricted and protected environments. Conduct is informed and regulated accordingly, and usually is appropriate to the physical, factual features of household living.\(^{48}\) Sedentary peoples tend to assume that the ‘natural world’ cannot provide adequate shelter or places for domestic activity. Dwelling among the sedentary is usually synonymous with building, and must be planned, constructed, maintained and modified according to a presumption that the buildings will have considerable permanence. Although construction of a built environment is no guarantee of permanence and the demolition of buildings has become a feature of contemporary construction, such destruction operates alongside the tacit presence of the need for, and desirability of, ethics of construction. These include the acquisition, securing, dividing and framing of environments and offer architectural durability and continuity.
A sedentary form of dwelling is a mode of experience that literally divides experience with walls, and produces private places and an experience of privacy. A sedentary consciousness has little awareness of the consciousness that attends mobile or hermetic dwelling experiences, and therefore lacks the architectural permanencies and privacies of sedentary existence. The general prejudice suffered by nomads from sedentary peoples devolves from the particular kinds of experience, knowledge and values that derive from and inform sedentary life. The expansion of technological power and sophisticated exchange economies based on the ownership of land and the accumulation of harvests of sedentary peoples have, at least in the West, historically fuelled fear and persecution of nomadic modes of life. In *The Domestication of the Human Species*, Peter Wilson makes a fascinating and detailed comparative inquiry of the material determinations and social consequences of sedentary and non-sedentary culture. Foucault, in his discussions on discipline and surveillance, could have used Wilson’s insights regarding the social and cultural issuances that have followed settling down to dwell in one place and the development of domesticated culture.\(^{49}\)

The development of domestication “meant,” among other things, the construction of a technology that simultaneously enhanced the opportunities for concentration by erecting physical barriers against intrusion and interruption; reduced the chances of distraction; and hindered the free-flow capacity of people to pay attention to one another as an undifferentiated feature of the routine of everyday life.\(^{50}\)

The emergence of privacy had unexpected advantages with the expansion and development of creativity, skill, performance and productivity. Undeniably, there were also negative consequences. Complication and complexity entered communication relations. Walls and closed doors divide both people and knowledge. Secret knowledge and secrecy are provided with easy breeding grounds and stimulate greater levels of surveillance and voyeurism. As Wilson points out, the psychology and behaviour of domesticated people generates, conditions and develops those social and cultural customs, rules and taboos which do so much to mark one culture from another. Building as such, but particularly building which provides the infrastructure for domesticated society, ought to be considered a foundational technology, since the presence of walls founds so much subjective and cultural disposition. I am with Wilson when he claims that the identification that comes with established domestication is a deep, if not the sole, source for powerful notions of ownership and legitimacy that ground relations of person and property in domesticated societies. This should not be taken to mean that non-domesticated societies do not identify with the land and people in which they are embedded and by which they are surrounded.
On the contrary, they tend to have very strong identifications with the land that are powerful precepts of cultural identity.

Non-domesticated people are however much rarer these days, and where they do exist their connections with the land are likely to be challenged by the myriad changes and pressures of cultural and economic globalisation. However, as Wilson’s work shows, non-domesticated societies glean, cultivate and distribute identifications over much larger territories. Furthermore, the cultural responsibilities and personal relations of non-domesticated peoples tend to be characterised by more contingency in circumstance and environment. A focus on particular locations or features in the country or territory periodically traversed and temporarily inhabited, tend to determine the inter-personal relations of nomadic people. In domesticated society by contrast, the sense of belonging to a single place is often pivotal in determining a great range of cultural meaning, including ownership, legitimacy, rights, responsibilities and relations with others. Domestication entails identifications of place and persons that differ fundamentally from the way attention is directed and placed between nomadic people. Privacy has huge social and economic consequences and, as Wilson argues, “the merger of person and place and their reciprocal identity is the essence of property, of ownership and the right to exclude others.”

For Casey the existential and definitional inter-relation of self and other, subject and platial environment are the *sine qua non* of dwelling as building, and his work elaborates the many particularities which inform the platial instantiation and development of building. Freud once said that “the dwelling house was a substitute for the mother’s womb” and this revolutionary way of understanding houses as more or less conscious psychological projections prompted Casey to call the whole built environment “extensions of our bodies.” Places built for residing are not merely containers but more fundamentally, “an enlargement of our already existing embodiment into an entire life-world of dwelling.” Eventually, contends Casey, the longer we live in places the more intimacy we have with them. Not only do we feel more ‘at home’ in them but they become more body-like and can even become “places created in our own bodily image.” Casey is in no doubt that “our very identity is at stake” in the perduring process of association, connection and differentiation with the particularities of the places we reside in. Going even further, he proposes that our bodies’ characteristic particularities engage with and reflect particularities of our homes, thus perpetrating and enlarging our sense of identification with them.
Since a significant part of our personal identity depends on our exact bodily configuration, it is only to be expected that dwelling places, themselves physical in structure, will resemble our own material bodies in certain quite basic respects. The resemblance moreover, is two-way. A dwelling where we reside comes to exist in our image, but we, the residents, also take on certain of its properties. How we are, our bodily being reflects how we reside in built places. Such traits as “reclusive” or ‘expansive’, ‘sinuous’ or ‘straight’ can characterize our somatic selves as well as the houses we inhabit.\(^5\)

As places which receive and respond to our presence, our houses gather and found places of existential identity. If our existential being emerges out of our constant and intimate encounters and involvement with places, and their particularity helps to form our own unique particularity, then our houses can be understood as places with a depth and breadth of association and connection that is only possible with significant duration or degree of permanence. Building and domestication are technologies of social and collective experience which in turn promote many other social and collective experience, as Casey observes. In creating built places we

...transform not only the local landscape, but ourselves as subjects: body subjects become fabricating agents. These same subjects are social subjects and no longer individual pathfinders... *homo faber* is engaged in a characteristically collective enterprise that entails social *a priori* structures. ...Such building ultimately means constructing places in which we are able to dwell, and dwelling places offer not just bare shelter but the possibility of sojourns of upbringing, of education, of contemplation, of conviviality, lingerings of many kinds and durations.\(^5\)

Identification can emerge from simple dwellings without walls just as easily as from the complex experience of sophisticated architecture. What matters, in other words, are the threads of particularity which weave our domestic experience and provide the principles of our dwelling, our *archi-texture*.

### 1.5 Archi-texture: Threads in the Fabric of the Homespun

In the chapter ‘Spatial Stories’ of his book *The Practice of Everyday Life* Michel de Certeau acknowledges the distinctions drawn by Merleau-Ponty between ‘geometrical spatiality’ which is homogeneous and isotropic, and anthropological spatiality, which depends upon human perception, and the subsequent translation perception receives into behaviours and languages.\(^5\)

Throughout the book, de Certeau’s project is to explain the operational elements which put culture into motion and produce its effects. To analyse the practices of everyday life he redivides anthropological space into the mutually constituting and defining notions of space and place and,
in this way, makes apparent the operational phenomenology of humanised space. Dwelling, in de Certeau’s terms, is platial and spatial, that is both a stable location and a practised notion. Places, says de Certeau, are stable, ordered “proper spaces.” Places, in other words, are ordered spaces and so exhibit the rule of coexistence in which two things cannot occupy the same location. Places are appropriated spaces and receive labels. In this taxonomy spaces by contrast, are characterised by their composition as, “the intersection of mobile elements” with variables such as velocity, direction and time. Spaces are actualised by operations that produce effects of situation, orientation, and temporal position which means that “space is practised place.”

De Certeau calls narrative structures metaphorai, as they are means of transportation selecting and linking together places using everyday tactics which not only describe and explain our orientations in space but constitute and actualise spatial relations. Stories are vehicles that carry out the operations that “traverse and organise places” and so spatialise our discourse. Stories organise the play of the changing relationships between places and spaces, carrying out the labour that “transforms places into spaces or spaces into places.” To make theory from practice one must get inside practice and obtain views from the inside which, though they will never wholly or faithfully reproduce the view of an insider, can nonetheless illuminate “how every story is a travel story – a spatial practice.” De Certeau discusses how the space or practised place of a dwelling is linguistically mapped and marked, and thus organises notions of the platial and spatial in discourse. Both the platial and the spatial, however, always depend upon and subtend the social. However girt with dirt, inert, or alive with the presence of other species, place and space receive their meaning from the scope and depth of social semiotics. The platial and spatial have their own pre-social topological and geographical substance and reality, but this is always and indubitably interpreted according to the quotidian tropes and evanescent whims of the human cultural milieu. As encountered and mediated by the body, architecture and the built environment constitute perhaps the most obvious expressions of the ways in which the platial and spatial are apprehended and understood. Taking the notion with which this thesis most concerns itself, it may be said that ‘home’ has both stable proper aspects as well as qualities derived from the varieties of mobility it allows and receives. In this way ‘home’ is at once a source, location and destination as well as a discursive and narrational resource. As such a resource, ‘home’ bears discursive and narrational imprints that de Certeau calls ‘spatial stories’. ‘Home’ is a particularly prominent spatial and platial story, because it is realised by several sorts of expression in verbal, visual, kinaesthetic and tactile forms of enunciation.
I do not agree with de Certeau’s decision to invert the understanding of space and place drawn by Merleau-Ponty and other subsequent philosophers of place. With my prior allegiance to place as a ground of specificity and particularity, I mean to illustrate this thesis by reversing de Certeau’s ideational resource and talk about platial stories rather than spatial stories. The punned title of this thesis ‘Archi-texture’ aims to draw attention to some of the many threads that comprise the fabric of the richly seamed subject of dwelling. From Anglo Saxon *arce* borrowed from Latin *archi* and this from Greek are chief or pivotal principles. Texture derives from the Latin *texture* meaning ‘web’ and *texere* ‘to weave’. Hence, drawing on its resemblance to architecture, I want archi-texture to evoke the principles by which the dwelling which takes place in building materialises. Archi-texture is about the physical, emotional and social web of dwelling, the weaving of the actual, imaginary and metaphoric threads that combine to make a fabric of the dwelling that takes place in houses and homes. To understand archi-texture is to tease out the threads of meaning of domestic architecture and domesticated dwelling.

Let us return for a while to the dual epistemological heritage of the term dwelling, as both a staying and a wandering. With explicit reference to this ontologically sourced epistemology, the philosopher and architect Karsten Harries argues for architecture which understands and does justice to this “twofold nature of our belonging which is never without tension.” Harries depicts the contradictory nature of the character of dwelling as at least as old as the Biblical story of Adam and Eve’s fall from God’s grace, when they are expelled from the Garden of Eden. For Harries, this story suggests that ever since walls and closed doors have existed they have “always been experienced as invitations to trespass.” The Biblical tale of banishment may also be read, submits Harries, as a tale not only about exile, but about liberation, for it is a story about “human beings refusing to keep their assigned place.” Attempts to reduce the power of the determination of distance on human affairs have been with us since long before the invention of the wheel, and have perhaps always existed as a desire awaiting, if not striving for, wish fulfilment. It is however the advent of technological power, as Harries argues, that gradually over centuries enabled humans to escape from the “accident of location” so that “no longer is place destiny.” In the twentieth century our technological power developed to such extent that travel options have multiplied and great distances been overcome by both vehicular and electronic means. Acting on our desire to stay and to wander, we can physically cover great distances in steadily decreasing amounts of time, and/or bring the world closer by virtual means. We sought displacement and we found it, and, as Harries observes, we who are blessed with sufficient affluence welcome it, as it makes us feel somewhat dislocated and rootless.
Place circumscribed the freedom of Heidegger’s Black Forest farmer in a way that we would find intolerable. Television, radio, and telephone, satellites, cables, and computers let us experience whatever place we are in as a place we just happen to occupy and may want to exchange for another, should economic opportunities, love, or perhaps the promise of spiritual growth prompt us. If we are no longer rooted in one place, as farmers were for countless generations, this comparative lack of rootedness is just the other side of a vast increase in freedom.

Familiar residence and restless travelling enable those sophisticated engagements with our world which produce and change societies and cultures, and thus both form and fragment the phenomenal structure of our being. As we have seen, the fertile substance of this ambivalence is exemplified by Harries in the contrast between Heidegger’s constrained environment in the Black Forest house and the sophisticated, technologically embellished experience of dwellers in today’s technologically advanced countries. The gathering of the fourfold in the Black Forest House in ‘Building Dwelling Thinking,’ in other words, has to be set beside the general sense of dispersal, fragmentation, and consequently diminished apprehension, of the gathering oneness of the fourfold which occurs in the commitment to objectivity that inaugurated and shaped the realities of modernity. Heidegger called the view and governance of the world from the demanding stance of objectivity, the rule of the Ge-stell (the En-framing), a mode of revealing that constantly orders, challenges and exploits nature and converts it into a perpetual supply of resources. In the mode of En-framing, says Heidegger, “everywhere everything is ordered to stand by, to be immediately at hand indeed to stand there just so that it may be on call for further ordering.”

Born in the West, the Ge-stell now dominates our relationship to nature as the mode of revealing which emerges and rules in modern technology.

The commitment to objectivity in the rule of the Ge-stell forms a technological mode of being which privileges the constant advance (aka Progress) of technological mediation: the rise of modernity has been coextensive with the adamant advance of the production and consumption of technology. Yet, at the same time, it has been technologies of information, communication and transportation that have done most to create the freedom from accidents of location as well as their shadow sides. That a certain queasiness has accompanied the rate and scope of our success in dislocating ourselves is perhaps inevitable. Although the “desire to defeat the tyranny of place” is quite possibly as old as humanity, it is also essential to remember that it does so only against the other meaning of dwelling, of loyalty to place. As one lingers, tarries, stays and resides in a place, so one comes at least to know, if not to love, its natural, cultural and social topography.
The coexistence of these two mutually defining impulses in every experience of dwelling can produce a tension that manifests as an uneasy and persistent ambivalence.

Harries reasons that, if what we experience in the successive technologisation of the world are continual “attacks on distance” which threaten dislocation by bringing what would otherwise be remote into the local provenance of our dwelling, then it is crucial that we try and understand the resulting tension and ambivalence, so as to be better prepared for life amongst the contradictions which permeate our experience of dwelling. Harries finds the ambivalence associated with dwelling both deeply problematic and inspirational, thus articulating the dilemma and pointing, as many others also have, at a mark of modernity, or for those who don’t mind the old expression, the current Zeitgeist. The shadow sides of liberation from place are the senses of superficial connection, dislocation, displacement, rootlessness or alienation, all of which are varieties of homelessness that disturb the sense of emplacement in a global society where capital concentration, capital mobility, technological instantaneity, mass production and mass consumption encourage, and frequently assure, an easy exchange and substitutability of places.

Instead of genuine proximity we are increasingly offered only its perverted analogue: the equidistance and thus the homogeneity, the indifference of place. … This attack on distance brings with it a loss of place of which the mobile home is but an expression - there is a sense in which most of us today live in mobile homes. It is not surprising then that such houses are easily left, exchanged for another. The ease with which we relocate ourselves and replace buildings is witness to a more profound displacement that may be welcomed as humanity’s coming of age, or deplored as a loss of genuine dwelling. When all places count the same, we can no longer place ourselves and become displaced persons.

The commitment to objectivity has transformed our sense of space with the installation into the everyday of technological mediations for the conquest of distance. These facilitate in use, and perpetrate in experience, a sense of homogenous, undifferentiated space that frames and informs human - world relations. It is no longer considered necessary, or even desirable, that things remain assigned to earthed or ‘proper’ places. I agree with Harries when he says that we moderns can feel “lost in space” as space conquers place and leads to “a characteristically modern sense of homelessness.” Harries asks his readers - so, given that we humans are complex creatures prone to creating ambivalence in wanting to both linger and wander as evidenced by the push to technologically reduce or eliminate distance, how can we live contentedly with ambivalence and its consequences? This question returns us to the Rushdie quote at the beginning of the chapter and the existential dilemma it poses regarding the commonplace insecurity and impaired
meanings which as he suggests no longer reliably support the kind of dwelling which gives us an experience of home. Comments and laments such as Rushdie’s and my own sense of distaste and disquiet provoke this thesis.

I have long felt the contrary agonism of an oppositional pull in a desire to stay put and a desire to leave and go wandering. This tension, between the wish to remain in place and know the particularities or *genius loci* of my particular patch, coexists with and helps cultivate an equal, but largely unrequited, wish to roam, explore and feed my desire to confront new frontiers of experience and knowledge in other realms. At the same time though, I am also offended and afflicted by the haste and hubris with which we advance technology to bring the world ever closer. Yet in my part of the world (the over-developed world), the progressive ‘rise in the standard of living’, though it raises the quantity and standard of communication, does not necessarily also raise its quality, or advance the means and causes of empathy and reciprocity. That increased communication can or will result in more mutuality is however an oft advertised promise. Indeed, technological advances and fixes have much in common with the magic power of the ruby slippers, as sparkling instruments full of uncertain promise. The principle aim of my research, and this thesis, is to seek and present something of the attitudes and experience of others regarding the dwelling places they call home. At base my questions all seek to engage with the quote from Heidegger cited above viz: “that mortals ever search anew for the nature of dwelling…they must ever learn to dwell anew.” The intention of each chapter is to draw closer to this proposition by examining different aspects of dwelling. Every layer of disclosed experience about the nature of dwelling at home is ultimately prompted by the question: Is a search for the nature of dwelling in train here? If dwelling is motivated by the quest for an understanding of dwelling the question that follows is: Has the learning that inevitably accompanies such searching resulted in modes of dwelling that yield existential security and satisfaction, or has the quest ceded on the contrary existential disquiet? Though these are the core questions motivating this work these are very large issues, and thus constitute a kind of ideal horizon towards which this work moves to provide a sense of what is involved. Inevitably answers have to be in terms of tendencies. Positive tendencies will suppose that fulfilling modes of dwelling have been found or are in the process of formation. Negative tendencies will suppose that there have been damaging compromises or even failures in the quest. These core questions lie at the foundation of a small host of other questions, whose various realms of inquiry attempt to evoke the significance of shelter and reveal something of what it means to be a domesticated dweller.
Many other scholars have posed questions and responded with research and theory that in one way or another have variously contributed to, sensed, played to, or avoided the problem of dwelling. Thus, before I begin this journey it’s important to present the work that directly and indirectly has contributed to, or has informed, the foreground or background of my concerns. Given that home is a quintessential sort of place it is to be expected that I began with research into the philosophy of place.

1.6 On Space, Place, House and Home: A Review of the Literature

While genetic and biochemical-physiological components of subjectivity remain elusive, despite the interest and money invested in the pursuit of their elementary particles and molecular combinations, the competition at the other end of campus, in the humanistic disciplines, really has more to offer. That human subjectivity is a matter of unavoidable relations with the platial and social environments of the life-world has more demonstrable efficacy than explanations from any branch of physical or chemical biology. In order to work with the issues of human subjectivity, the approaches of the humanities and social sciences tend to bestow insights that are both more satisfying and more serviceable than those from the natural and experimental sciences. Nevertheless, the subject centred research agendas of the social and natural sciences share a common developmental period for their concerns are both equally new to the twentieth century.

The periodisation of the development of notions of home, dwelling, place and space is possible, so long as no rigid demarcations are erected. A chronological approach plots the unfolding process and shows how, like layers in an eternal onion, new questions and insights depend as much upon the recognition of layers as upon an ability to peel them. Prior to this most modern of the eras of modernity, the thematic concerns of philosophy typically reflected developments in the ‘natural’ experimental sciences. Thus the tardy development of notions that help us think through our experiential connections to our life-world was due, Casey suggests, to philosophy’s historical privileging of space, and its concomitant neglect of place. In the West this bias has produced a dominant world view which, he argues, has regarded place for an entire epoch “as an impoverished second cousin of Time and Space, two colossal cosmic partners which tower over modernity”. Consequently, until recently there had been little academic interest in place which was viewed in both the natural and social sciences as a derivative and trivial form of spatiality.
It is only recently that philosophy has come around to place. As discussed above, the resuscitation and reworking of notions of place are at the centre of the contributions of Edward Casey and Jeff Malpas. While the contributions of Plato and Aristotle continue to feed philosophy on space and place, in the modern era it was through Heidegger’s intervention in hermeneutic and phenomenological inquiry which aimed to uncover the ontological structure of being, that space and place came to be seen as definitive elements of existential equations. Heidegger’s challenge to metaphysical thought, and the development of an existential analytic, properly began with *Being and Time*, but was considerably extended later in the collections of essays *Poetry Language Thought* and *The Question Concerning Technology*. Phenomenological ontology, however was initially proposed and developed by Heidegger’s intellectual mentor, Edmund Husserl. Heidegger inaugurated a radical turn in philosophy whose pivot lay in the cardinal principle that human beings can only be understood as relational, as being-in-the-world, and assumes that existentiality is always already environmentally mediated. The Heideggerian field proved exceedingly fertile, so that despite their differences, scholars working in the humanities and social sciences now regard all meaning as derived from subjects ‘geared’ and ‘destined’ to the world (to borrow the phrasing of Merleau-Ponty).

As inquiry into cross-cultural and inter-subjective experience developed, disciplinary boundaries relaxed and a cross fertilisation of views, methods, issues and objectives took place. Comparative anthropology and sociology, for example, examined the spatial implications of social belief and behaviour. Edward Hall’s *The Hidden Dimension* is dedicated to discussion of culturally determined interpretations of, and responses to, houses. Pierre Bourdieu’s classic formal structural analysis of ‘the Kabyle house’ describes the substantive mapping of gender roles and other cultural values in the layout and social organisation of the house. Amos Rapoport’s *House Form and Culture*, as the title suggests, sought the social and material reasons that helped to condition the forms of shelter of diverse groups of people. Using extant ethnographies, Rapoport focused on cross-cultural comparisons of houses, from their material structure and social mores, to the environmental conditions in which they were embedded. Subsequently, the incorporation of materials from psychology, sociology and anthropology inspired the development of ‘humanistic geography’, featuring the ‘perspective of experience’ to explain and describe the endless variety of human relations with their environment. Place and space were by now conceptually distinct, and recognition was accorded to the importance of place as the medium of personal, social and cultural perception. “Space” said Yi Fu Tuan “is transformed into place as it acquires definition and meaning.” Space on the other hand has non-discriminating
and all embracing connotations in the West, and carries positive and negative evaluations: on the one hand argues Tuan, “space lies open…suggests the future and invites action” while, on the other, “to be open and free is to be exposed and vulnerable.” With an epistemological rubric both unbounded and undefinable, it can be seen how inadequate a notion space was when applied to human beings and doings. Edward Relph concurred, and observed that place connotes specificity with discrete temporal and perceptual boundaries, that indeed, the existential significance of places is due to the way they act as the “focus of meanings or intention, either culturally or individually defined.”

By the mid eighties the conceptual distinctiveness of space and place, though it had not altogether disappeared, had suffered a steep decline of visibility as the elaborate and elusive politics of the period I call ‘the Post’ broke over social and cultural inquiry and washed the boards of notions suspected of harbouring any sort of essentialism. The almost missionary fervour of the Post period leapt on old and established orders of things and savaged rationalist representations of truth and imperial delusions of grandeur. In this period of tumult, theoretical innovations occurred that addressed the reduction of space in critical theory to merely a contingent category. Space as Michel Foucault realised, had been “treated as the dead, the fixed, the undialectical, the immobile” while “time on the other hand was richness, fecundity life and dialectic.” Edward Soja’s Postmodern Geographies worked to reassert the importance of space and make geography a critical intervention. David Harvey’s exemplary The Condition of Post Modernity explained post modernity as an economy of ‘time and space compression’ fuelled by the technological developments and economic imperatives of late capitalism. Refreshing though the anti-establishment roar of the ‘Post period’ was in so many respects, it is nonetheless regrettable how many academic endeavours stayed clear of empirically gathered, small-scale or local manifestations of platial perception and sensibility even as they studied the large-scale conditions that affected them. The neglect of place at this time may be attributed to the sudden preoccupation with space by critical theory that had absorbed the sceptical lessons of post-structuralism and deconstruction.

Much of the credit for the swell of recognition which space accrued in social and cultural inquiry at this time was due to Henri Lefebvre’s The Production of Space. Lefebvre’s work began from the premise that we both produce spaces and are made by them. He attributed equal prominence to the dialectical production of space as ‘practiced’, ‘conceived’ and ‘lived.’ The dialectics of ‘lived experience’ intersecting with spatial practices and conceptualised discourse
made it possible to account for the production and definition of place under conditions of
globalised production, thus making a claim for its importance. However despite Lefebvre’s
inspiration when it came to the deconstruction of ‘big ideas’, like rationalism, colonialism,
sexism, racism and nationalism, it was space rather than place that tended to be the approved
currency. Still it is only due to its progressive osmosis of an eclectic range of ideas that cultural
studies thrives. Cultural studies first adopted philosophies of space and place to interrogate
geography and, as interest in cultural topographies of all kinds has grown, positions have been
reviewed with the result that stimulating paths lead once again into inquiries that probe the
production and importance of place.

Feminist scholarship of the Post was especially instrumental in redefining and redistributing the
relationship between space and place. Feminist work saw in place a notion that can more
effectively articulate particularity and speak to specificities of power and identity. The concept
of place has had an erratic evolution in the interstices between philosophy, geography and social
or cultural inquiry. However, as the numbers of interdisciplinary accounts surely attest, place is
now a firmly ensconced concept in its own right, confidently drawn on to discuss the
intersections between subjects and their environment in both everyday and extraordinary
moments. Place makes an explicit and particular heuristic device which helps us understand
the multi-determined and dimensional complex of relations that constitute us and our habitats,
even though they will still tend to elude complete elucidation. Place is where we are, where find
each other and every other being, whether in fact or fiction.

Drawing in towards the particularity of place there are no accounts, as far as I can tell, which
explore the nature of dwelling as it pertains to the experience of the house-held home as I will do
in this thesis. Academic interest in the subject of the dwelling places of nomadic and sedentary
peoples arose in anthropology where implicit cultural comparison showed the differences and
continuities in the way different societies conceptualised, built and used their shelters or houses.
The locations chosen for such comparisons were almost always rural and focussed on non-white,
non-European peoples. Studies of house and home in cultural studies, history, anthropology and
sociology have been neither very numerous nor very scarce. A considerable body of work has
only recently emerged that has the domestic orientation of dwelling places at its centre. Before
the late sixties there were isolated studies that looked explicitly at the relation between people
and their housing, but the origins of the small tradition in the study of house and home arguably
begins properly with Amos Rapoport’s *House Form and Culture* and Paul Oliver’s *Shelter and*
Canvassing and then documenting the cross-cultural meanings of house and home has shown perhaps how little there was on our own ‘Western’ experience. This dearth however was addressed when attention turned to the themes of house and home and the urban and suburban ‘ordinary landscapes’ in which they were situated. However, cultural comparisons were largely overlooked and research concentrated on psychological and ideational dimensions of house-held experience.

Gaston Bachelard’s seminal book *The Poetics of Space* provided the distinguished precedent suturing together phenomenology and Jungian psychology to create a practice called *topo-analysis*. Topo-analysis specialised in the practise of *topophilia*, or the reading of images of house and home from European (and especially French) literature which, although usually of a benevolent, felicitous nature, inevitably also touched their antithesis. Psychoanalytic explorations of the built environment are few and seem to have either engaged with ‘big architecture’ in the field of urban civilisation, or house and home as represented in literature and film.

After considerable attention directed at the ‘home-ground’ of Western urban, domestic experience during the seventies, the eighties saw interest swing to cross-cultural studies of housing and homing. One of the first on the scene was the collection of specially commissioned articles *Housing and Identity Cross Cultural Perspectives*. The contributions of this book, and others like it, look at house and home as the articulation of differences and continuities in approaching housing and the phenomena of home as instantiations of personal and socio-cultural identity. Of particular note in this corpus is the interdisciplinary work of Amos Rapoport who, during the course of a long career, has produced perhaps the largest volume of material related to the study of dwelling both within and across cultures. Rapoport uses both cognitive and behavioural psychology and a variety of empirical sources from sociology and anthropology to convey some of the conceptual understandings of the environmental nexus, or ‘system of settings’, which comprise ‘home’ and ‘dwelling’.

Extending notions mooted in his first book *House Form and Culture* in ‘Socio-cultural Aspects of Man Environment Studies’, Rapoport defines the nature of his work as the rubric of man-environment studies. In this paper, an extensive number of categorical investigations of the socio-cultural and environmental determinants of behaviour are proposed to help describe “the mutual interaction of people and their built environments.” Though I did not encounter this work until much later, and though to follow every suggestion would require a team and an immense amount of time, still a number
of Rapoport’s suggestions are reflected in my study. Rapoport’s agenda wants to compare dwelling culture in so-called ‘simple’ and ‘complex’ societies through a focus on the cognitive bases of residential choice, and the specifics of activities in the residential environment. While I don’t subscribe to any easy distinction of simple and complex societies, and don’t believe anyway it is relevant here, my work uses discourse, what people say about their dwelling situation, to analyse and compare dwelling cultures. To get specific about activities, as Rapoport proposes, would certainly illuminate the manifest and latent aspects of cultural choice. However, the investment in such an undertaking, particularly if combined with his first suggestion of broadening samples across time and space, is far too ambitious for a single researcher of limited resources to consider.

Given the importance of house and home in the socialisation of women in the West, it is of course not surprising that they have figured prominently in the work of feminist scholars. Following Betty Friedan’s *The Feminine Mystique*, with its excoriating indictment of the gender binding nexus of women’s expected roles and suburban environments, a substantial body of feminist writing has been directed at the gendered inequalities and constraints of women’s role as housekeepers, home-makers and house-held mothers.110 Such work has endeavoured to show how houses, notions of home, and the (usually) suburban places in which they are located, mingle to produce and reproduce gender divided roles, and how, in turn, these “technologies of gender” govern the processes which constitute the everyday domain of women’s lives.111 Women’s experience, women’s housing, domestic and urban experience was once regarded as a scene of an unequivocal lack of power, worth and visibility.112 Feminists looked at what men had, and what women by contrast did not have, yet tended to overlook women’s sources of power and pleasure in their negotiation of the roles of home-maker, housekeeper and secondary breadwinner. As the seventies turned into the eighties and feminist consciousness, having been raised, became increasingly acute, it was noticed that women’s domestic roles and experience did not always accord with readings that equated women’s generally subordinate position with forms of singular and simple oppression. However, though indubitably marginalised and discriminated against, it has been recognised that women do, of course, have power and agency, especially in the home. Despite inferior social and economic status, women interpret, manipulate, subvert or contest the ideological forces of subordination even as they feel pressure to submit, acquiesce, and comply.113 The political and deconstructive nature of feminist scholarship has (as it did with notions of place) provided the example of, and opened the door on, many other subordinate ways of seeing. Some work however would have you believe it has no political aims or allegiances and
seeks only to present the facts of the matter. This is, of course never the case for, even if denied or unadmitted, interests and investments are always present in writing and authors.

For the most part, the literature in the field of house and home in the last two decades has engaged with its representations, and to a lesser extent its lived realities, and shows itself to consist of politically informed projects with intra and cross cultural awareness. These come from and integrate a range of analytical approaches, the most prominent being anthropology, sociology, phenomenology, and history. If one draws a wider circle to include the suburbs which ‘house’ the houses and which, in this sense, may constitute part of what makes home, home, then the quantity of literature widens a bit further. Living in the suburbs is a topic with a somewhat queasy fascination that has exercised many cultural commentators. This seems to be especially so in Australia, where in the past influential criticism had denounced the quality of architectural design and social life of its suburbs. First articulated by the architect Robin Boyd, these critiques spoke of the suburban conditioning which produced in its citizens attitudes of cultural vacuity and vulgarity, and were alleged to be the breeding ground of crude forms of mass culture. Recently, however, literature on Australian suburbs has confronted this subject with the support of empirical studies. Though there can be no outright denial that suburban living does indeed produce both bland and disturbing features, such studies have done much to animate and rehabilitate the collective image of suburbs by showing them to be complicated entities of diverse constituencies and complexions.

Finally, I must account for the enormous bias that is evident in this literature review as, with the exception of some comparative material in anthropology, it deals exclusively with Western experience and conditions. The anthropological material is however the work of Western anthropologists for anthropology has, for most of its history, been a Western pre-occupation and preserve. Until quite recently, the West has, for the most part, appeared as a ground against which other figures are presented even when there is no actual discussion of comparative differences or congruences. ‘Other’ peoples have turned their non-Western, but generally Western trained, gaze on themselves and the West relatively late. This is especially true when it comes to studies of house and home. Despite searches through book catalogues and the indexes of periodical journals, I found very little which addresses the conditions and experience of domesticity or dwelling in India (or anywhere else for that matter). On the other hand, when I entered ‘architecture’ and ‘Indian’ as search terms in the library catalogue at the University of Western Australia, where anthropology and architecture have school status, one hundred and forty two
entries were revealed; a fact which is in itself revealing. However, when combined, the number of entries on Indian Architecture of the sub-continental variety was still comparatively small. Nonetheless the largest amount of literature on Indian housing were works about architecture. The focus and analysis of these was style and abstracted functions with little or no mention of ordinary houses. The most likely sounding title to emerge, *The Hindu Hearth and Home* turned out, on inspection, to be a close description of the traditions which surround the preparation and presentation of food for everyday and ritual purposes in Indian households. The most relevant and helpful were Irina Efremova’s “Delimiting the Ghar in Socio-Cultural Space’ and Hemalata Dandekar’s ‘A House of Your Own: The Value of Ghar for Village Women in Maharashtra.’ In both Gujarati and Marathi ghar is the term for home, and, as Eframova shows, is much more than a house (makan) and a multi-dimensional phenomenon. Depending on context, the ghar has strong correspondences and identification with the family or caste group and the places or territory significant to them. A. M Shah’s *The Household Dimension of the Family in India* was useful for its intricate discussion of family structure and its relation to house-hold roles and life-cycle issues, particularly marriage and reproduction. Unfortunately it treats the family, but not in relation to their accommodation, and so could not contribute to my understanding of the significance of house and home. There were several interesting titles which offered information on the semiotics of contemporary and traditional domestic space. This concludes the literature review. In the next chapter I introduce my fields and methods and the theoretical and practical issues they raised with regard to the interrogation of sedentary, house-held dwelling in Coolbellup Western Australia and Diu in the Union Territory of Daman and Diu, India.

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**Endnotes**


2. Rushdie *East* 93 –94.


4. Article 25 in *The Universal Declaration of Human Rights* as adopted and proclaimed by General Assembly in resolution 217 A (III) 10 December 1948, “Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.” At http://www.un.org/Overview/rights.html (accessed May 18th 2004)


In the final section of her paper ‘Experience and use of the Dwelling’ Perla Kerosec-Serfaty’s suggestions for future research into the phenomenology of dwelling at home resemble the ones I undertake in this thesis. In order she says, “to grasp the dwelling experience” research needs to probe, “the question of the ontological relationships between being and doing, that is between dwelling in and appropriating the home. …a fundamental direction for research demands an understanding of the interactions between being and doing as well as of their integration of individual dynamics on the one hand and, on the other hand, to the collective history of a given society” In Irwin Altman and Carol Werner (Eds), Home Environments, Vol 8 of Human Behaviour and Environment: Advances in Theory and Research. (New York: Plenum Press, 1985), 82

Edward Casey, The Fate of Place. (Berkeley: University of California Press,1997) and Jeff Malpas, Place and Experience: A Philosophical Topography,(Cambridge: Cambridge University Press,1999) argue that the eclipse of place as a significant concept in philosophical discussion occurred during the Enlightenment, especially in the philosophy of Descartes and the physics of Newton. In their texts, space was regarded as a matter of simple and undifferentiated pure extension, isotropic and homogenous. Place was merely a derivative of space, and an issue of simple geometrical location. Both Casey and Malpas seek to return to ‘place’ as the notion of most existential relevance, but, as Malpas argues, analyses which seek to delineate place cannot simply switch the focus from space to place. Instead, an analogy with the method of topographical survey demonstrates that a number of sightings are required. Intersecting, supplementing and complementing each other a “wide-ranging, criss-crossing of journeys over the landscape at issue” can show us the significance of place Place, (41).

Platial’ is not a neologism of my own construction as I once believed. After coining the word as I thought for the first time, it was not long before I encountered ‘placial’ in Edward Casey’s Getting Back into Place (Bloomington : Indiana University Press, 1993) a work which, as the title suggests, gives genealogical and phenomenological consideration to the notion and practice of place. Casey and I both make extensive use of the adjective platial and its adverbial form platially. Casey however spells his neologisms placial and placially. I however spell them with a ‘t’ to make it typographically congruent with, and bear the same sorts of relationship, as space does to spatial and spatially.

See Malpas, Place and Experience, 33. The opening chapter contains a valuable overview of the poets, novelists and philosophers whose work has emphasised the ineluctable centrality of place to experience. For other phenomenologically guided geographies of the human – world mutuality, see Yi Fu Tuan, Topophilia: A Study of Environmental Perception, Attitudes, and Values (New York: Columbia University Press, 1974); Anne Buttimer, and David Seamon (Eds), The Human Experience of Space and Place (London: Croon Helm: 1980) and David Seamon, and Robert Mugerauer (Eds), Dwelling, Place, and Environment: Towards a Phenomenology of Person and World. (Dordrecht, Netherlands: Martinus. Nijhoff. 1985).

Jeff Malpas, ‘A Taste Of Madeline: Notes Towards a Philosophy of Place’ International Philosophical Quarterly Vol XXXIV 4,136 (December 1994), 438 This is a lovely paper though earlier and less intensive than Place and Experience. The evocation of the importance of place as integral to self-constitution is pellucid.


Casey, Getting Back, especially chapter one ‘Implacement’ 13-16.


See Julia Kristeva, ‘The Semiotic and The Symbolic’ from The Revolution in Poetic Language in The Kristeva Reader. Toril Moi (Ed), (Oxford: Basil Blackwell 1986), 90-123. Of the pre-linguistic source of the signification which she calls the semiotic chora Kristeva says, “Discrete quantities of energy move through the body of the subject who is not yet constituted as such and, in the course of his development, they are arranged according to the
various constraints imposed on this body – always already involved in a semiotic process – by family and social structures. In this way the drives, which are ‘energy’ charges as well as ‘psychical’ marks, articulate what we call a *chora*; a non-expressive totality formed by the drives and their stases in a motility that is as full of movement as it is regulated.” (93). See also Kristeva’s *In the Beginning was Love: Psychoanalysis and Faith*. Trans. Arthur Goldhammer (New York: Columbia University Press, 1987), 4 - 8.


22 Edward Casey, ‘How to get from Space to Place’ in *Senses of Place* Steven Feld and Keith Basso (Eds), (Santa Fe, New Mexico: School of American Research Press 1996), 26


26 Heidegger, *Poetry*, 146.


29 At the outset of ‘Building Dwelling Thinking’ Heidegger briefly touches on the contradictory aspect of the term dwelling as an existential and experiential domain which encompasses both stasis and motion in the figures of: a woman “at home at a spinning wheel”, “the truck driver at home on the highway” and “the chief engineer at home in a power station” (145). These figures are used to illustrate the kinds of belonging that exist in the domain of dwelling as they house us and as we inhabit them, but still do not dwell in them. Thus, though he only briefly acknowledges the diverse potential adumbrated by dwelling as being that is at home because it belongs, this is because Heidegger’s main concern is to inquire into the relationship between building, dwelling and thinking, and to think through dwelling from the commonplace association of sheltering and housing. However, it is in the sense of inhabiting that Heidegger discusses rooms as ‘equipment for residing’ in his ‘Analysis of Environmentality and Worldhood in General: The Being of the Entities Encountered in the Environment’ in *Being and Time* Trans. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (Oxford, U.K. Blackwell 1993), (1962), 98.

30 Casey, *Senses*, 133. *The Barnhart Dictionary of Etymology* Robert K Barnhart (Ed), (The H.W Wilson Company, 1988), 308, has the Old English *dwellen*, Old High German *dwellen* and Old Icelandic *dvelja* with meanings of to wander, hinder, tarry, delay and originally, to ‘make a fool’ of or ‘lead astray’. Around 1200, the English *dwellen* meant to remain, stay and then later meant the act of staying in a place and later a place of residence.

31 The conventional meanings of hermetic as closed, airtight, secret, esoteric as well as the association of the god Hermes with fertility are obvious omissions that challenge the usefulness of Casey’s opposition. Indeed, there is a sense in which these aspects of the hermetic belong to the hestial pole, as the hearth is a place that encourages the keeping of secrets.


33 Heidegger, *Poetry*, 151 (emphasis in original).
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34 Heidegger, Poetry, 160.

35 Heidegger, Poetry, 160.

36 Heidegger, Poetry, 156.

37 Heidegger, Poetry, 157.

38 Heidegger’s examples of the cognate association between ‘to build’ and ‘to be’ in the famous example of the house in the Black Forest has rather overshadowed the way in which he included an account of dwelling in which that which was not immediately present could nonetheless be gathered in consciousness and thus also constitute a mode of dwelling. In the example of the Heidelberg bridge however, Heidegger suggests that two inter-dependent qualities can be apprehended within the basic or primordial character of our being - consciousness and energy. Consciousness of place and time is consciousness of the field of energy. In uniting the fourfold in the stay among things dwelling does not have to depend on corporeal presence. The body may or may not, as it were, be ‘on location.’ Dwelling can still occur in a location removed from our present corporeal position. Some prior embodied experience must however establish familiarity with this bridge, which in subsequent reflection allows us to virtually reinhabit it. Here, we dwell there, in our imagination. While on the one hand, and at the most general level of our being, dwelling does not depend upon bodily presence at a site, it does require embodied knowledge gathered from the experience of our stay in the world amongst things (156-157). It should be recalled too, that immediately after providing the example of the Black Forest house, Heidegger was careful to point out that his use of this example “in no way means that we should or could go back to building such houses; rather, it illustrates by a dwelling that has been how it was able to build.” (160, emphasis in original).

39 For an excellent excursion around dwelling as wandering and the nomadic as a repressed form of dwelling as wandering see Bruce Chatwin’s evocative collage of stories in Songlines (London: Picador in association with Jonathon Cape, 1988).


43 Bourdieu, Sociology, 88.

44 Bourdieu, Sociology, 88.

45 Bourdieu observed how in the semi-literate societies such as the Kabyle, inhabited space, and in particular houses, are a “…principle locus for the objectification of the generative schemes and through the intermediacy of the divisions and hierarchies it sets up between things, persons, and practices, this tangible classifying system continuously inculcates and reinforces the taxonomic principles underlying all the arbitrary provisions of this culture.” Indeed, to understand how spatial and temporal organisation govern practice and representation to create durable dispositions in perception, thought and action, Bourdieu advocates grasping this “dialectic of objectification and embodiment in the privileged locus of the space of the house and the earliest learning processes.” In Outline, 89-90.

47 While it can be easily confirmed that the primary mediating structure of being-in-the-world is the body, it is not so readily seen that the value bearing nature of dwelling experience is an en-cultured body. Thus while individual bodies mediate experience via their own variety of subjectivity in body-centred sensation and mentation, it is also the case that individual subjects never avoid the enveloping medium of cultural values.

48 The Walpiri live semi-nomadic lives and, when using houses, occupy these in partial non-committal ways for the utility of the shelter they provide. As represented in At Home in the World Jackson’s experience of the Walpiri experience of dwelling describes a mythologically and totemically inscribed land that is the source of Walpiri identification and attachment to ‘country’. Jackson’s account of Walpiri life persuasively links the material facts and implicit relations of sedentarianism. As he says, “In the West we have a habit of thinking of home as a house. Walls make us feel secure. Individual rooms give us a sense of privacy. We tend to believe that living in a house is
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synonymous with being civilised. We have an ingrained prejudice against nomads and drifters. ...We live in built up environments. Our habitual patterns of movement in the everyday world are constrained by the parameters of houses, buildings, rooms, and thoroughfares. Ours is a habitus of walls and enclosures, of well-marked exits and entrances, paths and roads. This material habitus determines a particular sensibility, which sees boundaries as a precondition of meaning. The constructed world - nailed, bolted, screwed, and cemented into place - predisposes us to make sense of experience by cutting it up and framing it with concepts and categories. For us, security is a function of the substantiality of the ideas and places we construct. Existentially and discursively we are less at home with indeterminate images and open horizons.” Jackson, *At Home*, 84- 85.


52 Wilson, *The Domestication*, 71.


55 Casey, *Getting Back*, 120.

56 Casey, *Getting Back*, 111.

57 Casey, *Getting Back*, 120.


60 Certeau, *The Practice*, 117.


69 Harries, *The Ethical*, 172.

70 Harries, *The Ethical*, 168.
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72 Technology per se and modern technology in particular are the subject of chapter five.

73 Harries, *The Ethical*, 168.

74 See and compare for example, the continuity of themes of distance transcendence as they play out in the flux, fluidity, transience and instaneity of modernity in Marshall Bauman’s now classic *All That is Solid Melts Into Air: The Experience of Modernity*. (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1982) and Zygmunt Bauman’s destined classic *Liquid Modernity*. (Oxford: Blackwell 2000).

75 Harries, *The Ethical*, 173.


77 Social science began by imitating the methods of natural and experimental science in efforts to describe the structures of life-world experience using theory and methodologies that were either behaviourist or rationalist in approach. Oriented towards the visible forms of behaviour and cognitive representation, positivistic, post-factiori theories modelled and measured reality in surveys, reports, diagrams and statistics. However by the last quarter of the twentieth century the paradigm of natural and experimental science was seen as insufficient, inappropriate, or simply misleading by the social sciences. In geography for example the recognition of the inadequacy of the importation of the concept from the natural sciences that considered space as merely realm of pure extension that should be interrogated using only quantitative and geometrising operations. Such awareness prompted the reinstatement of humanistic values and qualitative approaches which emphasised human responses and orientations to environment in defiantly anti-postivist phenomenologies of the prescientific, pre-given perceptual structures of the life-world. These approaches to space, place and dwelling shared an understanding of being human as a direct consequence of a lived engagement with the world.

78 Casey, *The Fate*, xiv.

79 Casey, *Getting Back, The Fate, and The Sense*. Also Malpas *A Taste and Place and Experience*.

80 Heidegger, *Being and Time, Poetry, and The Question*.

81 Husserl’s most relevant, and arguably, most approachable work in this context is *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology* Trans. David Carr (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1970). For an elegant reading of this text see John Wild ‘Husserl’s Lifeworld and the Lived Body’ in *Phenomenology: Pure and Applied*, Erwin Straus (Ed), (Pittsburgh: Dukuesne University Press 1964),75 -93. Husserl’s reliance on an idealistic reduction of the essence of perception located in subjective transcendental consciousness was unacceptable to Heidegger, and this rejection acted as the spur to his career in reconceptualising the assumptions of Husserl’s phenomenological reduction. However, in the *Phenomenology of Perception*, Maurice Merleau-Ponty considerably qualifies this understanding of Husserl’s position with regard to the ‘problematic of the reduction’ by reference to the unpublished portions of *The Crisis*. Merleau-Ponty suggests that far from being at ease with a phenomenology sourced in the transcendental consciousness of a self-same sufficient ego, Husserl constantly queried the problem and acknowledged that the problem of relations with ‘other’ consciousnesses subverted such reliance. Defending Husserl he says “ The *Cogito* must reveal me in a situation, and it is on this condition alone that transcendental subjectivity can, as Husserl puts it “be an intersubjectivity.” …The True Cogito does not define the subject’s existence in terms of the thought he has of existing and furthermore does not convert the indubitability of the world into the indubitability of thought about the world, nor finally does it replace the world itself by the world as meaning. On the contrary it recognises my thought as an inalienable fact, and does away with any kind of idealism in revealing me as ‘being in-the-world’ (xiii). As Merleau- Ponty goes on to claim, all the misunderstandings of Husserl by his interpreters and with himself have arisen “ from the fact that in order to see the world and grasp it as paradoxical we must break with our familiar acceptance of it and, also, from the fact that from this break we can learn nothing but the unmotivated upsurge of the world. The most important lesson which the reduction teaches us is the impossibility of a completer reduction. This is why Husserl is constantly re-examining the possibility of the reduction. …The philosopher, as the unpublished works declare, is a perpetual beginner ….Far from being, as has been thought, a procedure of idealistic philosophy, phenomenological reduction belongs to exisential philosophy: Heidegger’s
Heidegger’s ontological phenomenology constituted a radical approach because, rather than studying things in isolation from each other as so much prior philosophy had done, his phenomenology saw human–world relational interfaces as irreducible elements of the life-world and he sought to give accounts of these relations as phenomena. In studying the facticities of existence and experience, phenomenology saw the relations and relationships of the life-world as possessing constitutive essences and that these bore consequences for the perception and consciousness of existential being (Dasein) For an excellent series of explanatory essays on Heidegger’s work with particular exposition of the place of Dasein in which “to be is to appear in place” (204), see Joseph Fell, *Heidegger and Sartre: An Essay on Being and Place* (New York: Columbia University, 1979) especially chapter two, ‘Dasein, Ground and Time in Sein und Zeit’, chapter seven, ‘The Nature of Place: Earth and Language’, and chapter eight, ‘Man’s Place in the Fourfold: Beyond Displacement’ See also Malpas, *A Taste and Place*; and Casey *Getting Back* and in Feld and Basso, *Senses*.

Merleau-Ponty, *The Phenomenology*, xi. Like Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty followed Husserl in understanding the body as the ground or agent of all perception with which all orientation to the world takes place. “Everything throws us back to the organic relations between subject and space, to the gearing of the subject onto his world which is the origin of space.” (251).


“The perspective of experience” was coined by Yi Fu Tuan in two early and influential books, *Topophilia* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall 1974) and *Space and Place: The Perspectives of Experience* (Minneapolis University of Minnesota 1977). Tuan looks at the mediating factors of space and place, as presented in the literature of individual and group psychology in a wide selection of material documenting social and cultural practice and belief. Tuan’s field of examples draws on many cultures, environments and theoretical contributions, although there is only a limited foray into the experience and meaning of house and home.

Tuan, *Space and Place*, 36.

Tuan, *Space and Place*, 54.

“Open space has no trodden paths and signposts. It has no fixed pattern of established human meaning; it is like a blank sheet on which meaning can be imposed. Enclosed and humanized space is place. Compared to space, place is a calm centre of established values.” Tuan, *Space and Place*, 54.

For an honourable overview and critique of the ‘Post’ as an historical and discursive development see Michael Dear and Stephen Flusty (Eds), *The Spaces of Postmodernity: Readings in Human Geography* (Malden: MA Blackwell, 2002).

Michel Foucault, *The Foucault Reader* Paul Rabinow (Ed), (Harmondsworth, England: Pantheon, 1984), 70


Let me state that I have no dispute with the sense of openness, freedom and relief generated by the Post era. However, although place was not an altogether neglected notion its marginalisation in ‘the Post’ revolution delayed I believe, its assimilation into critical thought. It seems to me that there was an aversion from the study of place.
because it was tended to be viewed, if not as a collection point for small-scale hackneyed essentialisms, than largely irrelevant to the meta-discourses of gender, race, class etc. which were generally regarded as the notions most responsible for producing culture and subjectivity. For the movers and shakers of the Post period the local events and identities inevitably associated with place discouraged their study as more urgent and compelling were topics which privileged the global reach and effects of capitalism. It is interesting that, at the height of its popularity the Post aimed to ‘open up’ or ‘create’ conceptual space and thus disrupt the homogenising effects of universalising and homogenising strategies preferred by capitalism. But an evolution of sorts has taken place and ironically while previously place was seen as too limited a notion to matter, the Post mandate to map the conditions and determinations of cultural phenomena are now also to be seen in the host of inter-related factors which produce the specificity of place.


97 It is interesting to note how often, despite discussions of the importance of specificity, difference, diversity, plurivocality and partiality of mode or identity, the term space was regularly preferred over place. A great variety of spatial metaphors were employed: ‘centres’, ‘margins’, ‘peripheries’, ‘boundaries’, ‘planes’, ‘corners’, ‘vectors’, ‘angles’, ‘horizons’ and ‘zones’ were used to articulate difference and discuss the exercise and distribution of power. Indeed it could be said, that cultural studies once depended upon assuming the importance of place even when the focus was on the seemingly place-less regimes of language and discourse.


100 The delay and denial of place in critical projects mentioned above coincides, I suggest, with male dominance in the field and is symptomatic of the masculine preference for projects on a larger scale of perceived importance such as nations, cities, races and ideologies and genres.

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102 One is the study ‘An Enquiry into People’s Homes: A Report Prepared by Mass Observation for the Advertising Service Guild. (London: Published for the Advertising Service Guild by J. Murray, 1943). The Mass Observation project was conceived by Charles Madge and Tom Harrison to look at the then current needs and attitudes in order to better inform the post-war provision of housing. Rapoport and Oliver used comparative anthropology to look at the networks of relations that obtained between housing and society in a variety of cultures. As the titles suggest, the focus was on residential structures and the social formations as cultural responses to available materials, environment, climate. In these works Western forms are present as the familiar background against which the foreign forms of other, non-Western societies are portrayed. Amos Rapoport, House Form and Culture (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall 1969); and Paul Oliver, Shelter and Society (New York : Praeger 1969). Eighteen years later Oliver expanded and updated this work to produce Dwellings - The House Across the World (Oxford: Phaidon, 1987). While more informed and sophisticated, the aims of Oliver’s later project remained essentially the same. In this latter work Oliver lamented the lack of development of inter-disciplinary studies in which both the artefact and processes of dwelling are treated together and build “ a collective unified study ”, where the knowledge and skills of anthropology and architecture were shared to create “a common graphic language” (9). While Oliver’s treatise on dwelling at home does not combine anthropological with architectural insights it does participate in the evolution of interdisciplinary by subjecting cultural comparisons in the discourse and practice of dwelling to philosophical questions.


104 Bachelard chose to explore the memories and imagination that construe poetic images of houses and their levels, rooms, niches, corners and cupboards. Though it has shortcomings in the universal context of its claims, this book is a deserved classic for its singular, lucid and lyrical readings, that uncover many of the threads of the complex of desires (and associated fears) interwoven within the dominant tropes of ‘Western’ domestic experience. It is Bachelard’s contention that while the house is the result of historical circumstances, (in the ‘Western’ context) it is a “privileged entity” for the “intimate values of inside space”(2). The point, argues Bachelard, is not to describe or analyse the ostensive raison d’etre of houses, but to attain to their “primary virtues, those that reveal an attachment that is native in some way to the primary function of inhabiting” (4). My own encounter with The Poetics of Space was both a lesson and a caution, for while it often spoke to my desires and fears, and to less conscious aspects of my experience, at the same time I was aware of its urban and Western bias. Subsequent work in similar vein does not, in my opinion, equal Bachelard’s talent for interdisciplinary exposition but instead uses varieties of psychoanalysis and psychology without the supplement and subtlety of the phenomenological gaze. In House as a Mirror of Self: Exploring the Deeper Meaning of Home (Berkeley, Ca: Conari Press, 1995), for example, Clare Cooper Marcus draws extensively on Jungian notions of the collective unconscious to claim that the realities of one’s inner being are represented by external symbols, and that houses, regardless of their kind and context, are symbols of the psychic unity of these realities. See in this connection Carl Jung Memories Dreams and Reflections (London Collins 1969), 253. Marcus’s approach is much less percipient and nuanced than Bachelard’s, since she sees only the single detached house as available to receive the less conscious inner realities of the psyche, and this leads her to claim that for this reason “almost universally, the image of the high-rise building for family living is rejected” (131). According to Marcus, the pluri-vocality of residence in high rise apartments cannot reflect what seems to be “ a universal need for a house form in which the self and family unit can be seen as separate, unique, private and protected” (133) - a statement that is manifestly false from New York to Bombay. A less pedantic, more varied and more critical use of psychological theory occurs in Marc Olivier’s Psychology of the House. Trans. Jessie Wood. (London: Thames and Hudson, 1977). Attractive for those who enjoy phenomenological quantification is Judith Sixsmith’s ‘The Meaning of Home: An Exploratory Study of Environmental Experience’ in Giving Places Meaning: Readings in Environmental Psychology Linda Groat (Ed), (San Diego, California: Academic Press 1995). Here, employing a ‘multiple sorting task’ using ‘participant generated elements’ among a sample of post-graduate students, Sixsmith revealed an interesting cross section of meanings about home from a group who had in many cases just left home. Much more interesting from my point of view, since it underpins its pragmatic theory of object relations with a substantial amount of research in middle-class American homes is Mihaly Csikszentmihaly and Eugene Rochberg-Halton’s The Meaning of Things Domestic Symbols and the Self (Cambridge, London: Uni Press, 1981).
In the following books a variety of psychological, sociological, anthropological perspectives have been mobilised to explain and describe the socially and subjectively experienced identity with which accommodation has been associated, from the common suburban variety of Western metropoli, to the living conditions of nomads. Julienne Hanson, *Decoding Houses and Homes* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980); Irwin Altman and Mary Gauvain, “A Cross Cultural and Diialectic Analysis of Houses” in ‘Spatial Representation and Behaviour Across the Life Span: Theory and Application’ (New York, Academic Press, 1981); Irwin Altman and Carol Werner (Eds), *Home Environments* (New York Plenum Press 1985); Paul Bourdieu, and Nezar Al Syaad (Eds), *Dwellings Settlements and Tradition Cross- Cultural Perspectives* (Lanham, Maryland: University Press of America, 1989) and Roxanna Waterson, *The Living House* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990).


Amos Rapoport, ‘Socio-cultural Aspects of Man Environment Studies’ in *The Mutual Interaction of People and Their Built Environment: A Cross-Cultural Perspective* Amos Rapoport (Ed), (The Hague, Paris: Mouton Publishers 1976), 3. In analysing ‘the mutual interaction of people and the built environment’ Rapoport’s aims are very ambitious being no less than to give answers on dwelling conditions which, however complex, exist in a framework where, “any specific question in the field can be seen as forming part of three broad, basic questions... concerned with the characteristics of people -- as members of a species, as individuals, and as members of various social groups -which affect the way in which built environments are shaped” (1). On similar theme of the determinants of dwelling see too Rapoport’s ‘Identity and Environment: A Cross-Cultural Perspective in *Housing and Identity: Cross-cultural Perspectives* James Duncan (Ed), (London Croon Helm 1981).


This nicely descriptive turn of phrase comes from Theresae de Lauretis’s, *Technologies of Gender: Essays on Theory, Film, and Fiction* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1989).


Acknowledging the power of agency in women has not meant the over-throw of masculine dominance. Yet it does mean that women’s experience cannot be interpreted as simple effects of sexism. Accounts that have drawn attention to the oppressive affects and effects of hegemonic patriarchy on women’s relationship to house and home have made way for more supple scholarship which has documented and analysed the complex determinations which constitute the field of women’s experience vis a vis house and home. Without relinquishing feminist critique, nuanced analyses depict the explicit and implicit ways in which places are gendered, as well as the ways in which such these judgements and assumptions are resisted or manipulated. The flavour of these developments is captured well in a collection of stories edited by Drusilla Modjeska in *Inner Cities: Australian Women’s Memory of Place* (Ringwood,Victoria: Penguin, 1989),where the contributors explore the houses, homes, neighbourhoods, suburbs and cities which have been places of resonating significance in their lives. Following the mood of the Post era in which she is writing Modjeska uses platial metaphors to portray women’s experience of gender. In her introduction she says “Women are practised on the peripheries. Our memories, our stories, like the ways we live, are formed in movement between inner and outer, past and future, centre and margin, between the physical environment and the social world. We shape our cities, and reshape them from the edge, we always have; just as our cities shape us. We live in houses that weren’t built for our dreams, in suburbs connected by transport systems we can’t control. We fit our stories to the worlds we inherit. Or, do we? These are questions and considerations of the women writing here about their

114 Happily the only example from the period of ‘the Post’ that I have seen in the genre of home is Witold Rybcznski’s *Home: A Short History of the Idea* (New York: Viking, 1986).


Chapter One Archi-texture

118 One exception is Janet Carsten and Stephen Hugh-Jones (Eds), About the House: Levi-Strauss and Beyond (Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

119 Cases in point are Percy Brown’s Indian Architecture (Bombay: Taraporevala Sons, 1959) and Robert Maclaurin’s largely photographic work Architecture of the Hindu Dynasties (Newport, R.I: Media for the Arts, 1968). The only titles I could find which dealt with contemporary vernacular form and content were Satish Grover, The Architecture of India (New Delhi, Vikas 1980) and Suzanne Slesin and Stafford Cliff, Indian Style (New York: Clarkson N. Potter, 1990). The former makes some bobs in the direction of vernacular modernity, and has an interesting account of traditional symbolism in the Hindu house. The latter is a ‘coffee table’ production dedicated to lovely photos of stylish houses unlike any I was dealing with in Diu or indeed that I have ever been invited into!


121 Irina Efremova, “Delimiting the Ghar in Socio-Cultural Space”; and Hemalat Dandekar, ‘A House of Your Own: The Value of Ghar for Village Women in Maharashtra, both in Home, Family and Kinship in Maharashtra, Irina Glushkova, and Rajendra Vora (Eds), (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1999). Dandekar’s paper intercepts and has resonances with my own, though it works with quantitative analyses of a formal (mailed out) survey conducted among a large sample of university students and faculty members.


..fieldwork cannot be willed into happening. Inevitably, it proceeds by fits and starts. Anxieties and doubts beset you, no matter how good your language skills, how thorough your background reading, how extensive your ethnographic experience in other cultures. This is because the savoir faire on which your social survival and sense of self-worth depend stems not from any abstract understanding but from direct familiarity with a body of practical knowledge, which informs every aspect of everyday life and can only be acquired gradually through trial and error. At first, you are reduced to a state of childlike naivete, completely at the mercy of people around you, dependent upon them for guidance, information, and above all, acceptance as a human being. Even if you are fortunate enough to enlist the help of a sympathetic and knowledgeable informant, much of your time is spent coming to terms with ambiguous gestures, mystifying silences and unspoken protocols. Through inept questioning and endless guesswork you struggle to get your bearings, seeking an underlying pattern which will render everything comprehensible and clear. But there are no short cuts. Understanding is a product less of your methodology than of your mastery of basic social skills. And this demands time and perseverance.¹

2.1 Writing Culture: Self-Conscious Ethnography and Perspectivism

In contrast to Heidegger’s theoretical exposition of the questions “What is it to dwell?” and “How does building belong to dwelling?”, my intention is to disclose and examine some grounded manifestations of dwelling. Complete answers have to be out of the question. One must humbly accept that whatever disclosures take place, they will always be manufactured revelations. As Heidegger states, “though man acts as though he were the shaper and master of language, in fact language remains the master of man.”² Heidegger’s argument is commonplace in the humanities, though a situation used to exist there not so long ago in which, as Clifford Geertz puts it, “there was a widespread pretence of looking at the world directly, as though through a one way screen, seeing others as they really are when only God is looking.”³ Replacing the idea that ‘facts’ or data equal truth and can be ‘raw’ or ‘pure’, is the idea of interpretations whose truth or legitimacy must be decided in context and circumstances of articulation, and not against a blank mise-en-scène or some preexisting scale of measurement.⁴ Given the fact that natural language does not function like a formal definitional sign system, the governance of our being by language will always mean the governance of our being by interpretation. As humans without interpretations, we are unable to deal with the world. Such an admission can not however raise questions about the authenticity, truth or value of objects and events, for these are inevitable and constitute the main business of human consciousness. The inevitability of interpretation is constant, even if not always self-evidential.

Geertz’s remark occurs in a book dedicated to the problem of fieldwork as framed by questions of how experiences in the field are ‘written up’ and become ethnography. As James Clifford argues, whatever
else ethnography does it “translates experience into text.” In *Works and Lives*, Geertz addresses the tension between ‘being there’ and ‘being here’, which, in self-conscious ethnography, foregrounds the inevitable omissions, reductions, simplifications, contradictions and bewilderments that occur in and beyond the field. The poetics and politics of ethnography, as Clifford and Marcus emphasise, should be viewed literally as “writing culture”, and the knowledge which emerges has political dimensions that are the responsibility of the author. There will always be questions of responsibility in making representations given the way “words attach to the world, texts to experience [and] works to lives.”

Social inquiry aims to convey not only unfamiliar modes of being, but understanding of the modes of being from which the inquiry emerges. Anthropologist Paul Rabinow cites phenomenologist Paul Ricouer, who claimed that the project of the social sciences is the attempt of “the comprehension of the self …by the detour of the comprehension of the other.” Thus textualising the other must be candid in its attempt to show the conditions out of which meaning emerges. Contexts of person, time, place and circumstance are essential, and one must not deny moments of deviation, inconsistency or contradiction. Careful interpretations are needed because experience is constantly refracted and mediated through elusory paradigms of situation and understanding which can be called ‘factions’, since they are representations which do not suppress the imagination nor reason. Social researchers used to fiercely resist the idea that imagination played a role in writing up, suggests Geertz, because of a confusion, endemic to the West since Plato at least, of the imagined with the imaginary, the fictional with the false, making things out with making them up. The strange idea that reality has an idiom in which it prefers to be described, that its very nature demands we talk about it without fuss - a spade is a spade, a rose a rose - on pain of illusion, trumpery and self-bewitchment, leading onto the even stranger idea that, if literalism is lost so is fact.

Alongside the processes of analytical and systematic ratiocination, the terrain of self-conscious research acknowledges the work of the imagination and thus, as Geertz argues, tells stories, makes pictures, concocts symbolisms, and deploys tropes.

If there is any way to counter the conception of ethnography as an iniquitous act or unplayable game, it would seem to involve owning up to the fact that, like quantum mechanics or the Italian opera, it is a work of the imagination, less extravagant than the first, less methodical than the second. The responsibility for ethnography, or the credit, can be placed at no other door than that of the romancers who have dreamt it up.

The route to the self, via the detour of the other, is rarely singular or straightforward, for any one interpretation is potentially interwoven with other interpretations and offers degrees of qualification or
even outright contradiction. Thus, representation and interpretation could be considered a hall of distorting mirrors. Yet, as Graham Watson argues, we engage in what Steve Woolgar has aptly called “ontological gerrymandering” if, as writers, we allow a rhetorical boundary to be established between our textualising activities and the behaviour of those who are the subject of our analysis. An ontological gerrymander emerges when the moral practice of reflexivity is invoked, but reflexivity itself is not made problematical. Watson advocates reconstructing the writer–reader relationship, since readers are now aware that “facts are merely shorthand for temporarily stable reifications” and thus in competition with other interpretations. This no-nonsense stratagem relies on an awareness of the construction procedures that produce texts. The distinction between facts and interpretations is now generally known to be “social rather than epistemological” and facticity is understood as a status rather than a state. Watson proposes neither radically relativizing ontology nor epistemology, but a stance of radical relativism which as a methodological imperative does not involve any judgemental relativism. While I am in agreement with the argument, I cannot agree with the descriptive phrase radical relativism as this implies that no proposition can be made to stick. If “anything goes” as Paul Feyerabend argues with respect to an anarchistic approach to science, then everything stays and obviously nonsensical claims such as there being no force called gravity must at least initially be entertained. However, while such claims can soon be dismissed as useless and untrue, and the problem of absurdity avoided, there remains the problem of truth in representations. As far as representations are concerned a stance of radical relativism means that while descriptive statements can be shown to be erroneous, they cannot be shown to be correct or contain truths. Thus, instead of this extravagant term which misrepresents the use and benefits of relativism, I suggest the term ‘perspectivism’ as embodying the methodological stance Watson advocates.

The stance of perspectivism alleviates the problems of contested interpretation which, argues Watson, are “bouts of epistemological hypochondria” that undermine the claims of legitimacy in social research. Perspectivism frees us from dependence on our subjects who, as experts on their own situation, present unproblematic accounts to the researcher which underline the fact that subjects, as much as researchers, are “in the business of constituting meaning.” Every account is always context dependent or indexical and, since it refers back to itself, is also always reflexive, for there is no account which is not involved in its own construction. Meaning is always contingent on the circumstances of its own production. Any account, insists Watson, is not an interpretation superimposed on a pre-existing reality but is indeed “constitutive of that reality” in so far as there is something to be described. Hence, without exception, all utterances are reflexive and the reflexivity of our discourse is unavoidable, rather than something we can choose for or against. Adopting perspectivism enables the “rewriting of culture” which, framed
“under the auspices of indexicality and reflexivity”, allows writers to write in the knowledge that “what we write is never not indexical and never not reflexive.\textsuperscript{16} Thus, with every interpretative act informed by the nature and climate of opinion in which it is received and evaluated, the relevant questions to be asked of any representation must be (a) Does it seem legitimate? and (b) How does it produce this legitimacy? How, in short, does fieldwork get written up and become ‘ethnography’ if you are from anthropology and simply ‘research of a hybrid nature’ if you are, as I am, from cultural studies?

As a cultural studies researcher I am aware of the ambivalent attitude anthropology holds towards this area.\textsuperscript{17} While anthropology has appreciated the insightful notions and critiques of cultural studies it has also been critical of the way cultural studies has produced them without comprehensive employment of anthropology’s ‘brain-child’ the ethnographic method, which depends on delineating a field and undertaking fieldwork.\textsuperscript{18} Yet, fieldwork and the field have had little coherent theorisation or formal training, even though the accomplishment of successful fieldwork is like a rite of passage in anthropology. Still, however little theorisation and training there has been in anthropology, there has been even less in cultural studies, and it is to this problem and its negotiation that the next section is dedicated as I examine the implications for my work.

2.2 Fields and Fieldwork

In its formative heyday anthropology meant ethnography in far away places, and field experience was institutionalised as anthropology sought to ‘make strange’ the practices of the West out of which ethnographers almost exclusively emanated. Yet, as George Stocking notes, although “fieldwork is virtually a \textit{sine qua non} for full status as an anthropologist …the same cannot be said for fieldwork training.”\textsuperscript{19} For Stocking, a pervasive belief in anthropology holds there to be

something ultimately ineffable about fieldwork; an epistemological ideology of cultural immersion justifies a methodological practice that at some point becomes a matter of sink or swim.\textsuperscript{20}

Fieldwork is usually prepared for by what must be called the ‘no-method method’.\textsuperscript{21} Ethnographic endeavour tends to be colonised by a number of assumptions of what constitutes \textit{pukka} research, that is research as sanctioned and guarded by orthodox styles of anthropology, but ethnographic endeavour now exceeds anthropology’s traditional disciplinary boundaries. As the constitution of fields and fieldwork has changed in practice, so has the nature of the ideas that inform them. In ‘Discipline and Practice: The Field as Site, Method and Location in Anthropology’ Gupta and Ferguson are concerned with the way the ideas of the field and the practice of fieldwork have previously distinguished
In the essay which opens the book, they show how received ideas about the field and the fieldworker define, normalise and patrol the boundary of ‘real ethnography’ and can constrain contemporary fieldwork practice.\textsuperscript{23} The idea of the field, say Gupta and Ferguson, has enabled certain kinds of knowledge “authorizing some objects of study and methods of analysis while excluding others.”\textsuperscript{24} But for the health of ethnography it is important, they argue, to “de-centre and de-fetishize the concept of ‘the field’” while still foregrounding matters of location and the situated knowledges they inspire.\textsuperscript{25} The usual radical separation of ‘the field’ from ‘home’ results in a “spatialization of difference”, and produces two sets of beguiling contrasts which reify and fetishise field realities.\textsuperscript{26}

Firstly, the spatial distinction between the site of data collection from the place of ‘writing up’ yields at least two sequentially distinct kinds of writing, field-notes and ‘the ethnography’. Secondly, the contrast involves tropes of exit and entry from ‘the field’ which, in constructing the difference between a home and field, tend to minimise or make invisible the cultural and capital flows which link these places together.\textsuperscript{27} Moreover, though it will always be true that the ethnography of exotic places matters, such attitudes tend to beget an “uncritical mapping of difference onto exotic sites” and make readers forget that one’s ‘home’ is “also a site of difference.”\textsuperscript{28}

Fields and fieldwork have often been placed in more or less unspoken hierarchies of purity and topic. The dominant notion of what constitutes an appropriate field sees it as one of intense difference from home, in a hierarchy where the less like home the field is the better.\textsuperscript{29} Likewise, some topics are regarded as more equal than others, and fieldworkers are expected to work alone unencumbered by other ties or obligations. Normative and hegemonic notions are also active in constituting proper methodology, policing the borders of ‘real ethnography’, sanctioning certain practices and condemning others in the name of authenticity and ‘insider ethnography’. The authorisation of field experience has typically coalesced around the assumption of an immersed and trained observer, who produces ethnography from the inside. Participant-observation has been idealised in a fieldworker fluent in whatever language is used, who not only listens and observes, but enters as a participant into the everyday society of their field. Yet these ways of being in the field beg questions of what ways are discouraged or prevented, as well as what other ways there might be. For instance, the extended participant observation that belongs to a native of the field has a view that no amount of participant observation from an outsider can deliver.\textsuperscript{30} Gupta and Ferguson conclude that it is unwise to uncritically valorise dominant traditions of method, and that social inquiry must remain open to knowledge produced in unorthodox fields, and by unorthodox methods.\textsuperscript{31}
As readers will rightly surmise, the issues raised by the above discussion are ones which confronted me, a self-trained novice in the Clayton’s discipline of cultural studies. As Gupta and Ferguson contend, the limitations of ethnographic norms need to be reinvisioned with a “heightened sense of location” in methodological and epistemological strategies which foreground the circumstances that contextualise any ethnographic enterprise. Such ‘location work’ self-consciously shows locations and shifts between locations, pointing out both, their links and gaps, similarities and differences. ‘Location work’ acknowledges that any field is really a matter of multiple fields or, as George Marcus suggests, a multi-locale field requiring multi-dimensional fieldwork. The knowledge assembled in ethnographic enterprises emerges through the knower of the field, and thus in a sense extends to social inquiry the advice given by the god Krishna to the warrior and disciple Arjuna “by its one Knower the field is illumined”. Of course, a god’s eye view is impossible as human centred knowledge is always partial knowledge. Both writers and readers have to accept that knowledge is refracted through and constructed by other knowledge, and that the successful gathering of ‘data’ and writing up will always involve some mixture of compromise, lack, betrayal and failure. Along with the partiality and compromised situation of the researcher are those of her respondents, who must necessarily reduce, distill and gloss their experience in order to tell it, and who may have reasons to lie. Whether committed by the researcher or her respondents, simplifications and omissions find their way into all social research and, though one does not expect outright falsifications by the former, it is both hard to identify or correct them in the latter. Finally, the temporal landscape is evanescent, while the physical landscape is relatively concrete and stable, which means that time tends to escape representation or undergo condensation into salient moments. Thus there must be recognition that other kinds of knowledge inevitably coexist with whatever knowledge researchers glean and present. It is as essential for the production of knowledge that ethnography be seen as quintessentially a bricoleur art that works with what is available, as it is to point to its compromises, lacks or failures. There needs to be a celebration of partiality as notions of finality or totality are abandoned in accounts which serve and deliver reality from a perspective of reasoned imagination.

Methodologically speaking, these are matters of awareness, ability and opportunity, perception and inference. Perspectivism produces an informal epistemology that has legitimacy and credibility, without resorting to reified representations that deny the fluidities of context and circumstance. Questions of veracity and value are matters that can only be engaged and resolved in an imperfect fashion, given the incomplete nature of perception and opportunity in one’s fields and one’s fieldwork. Special kinds of interpretations known as theories, used with reason and imagination, attempt to understand a bricolage of empirical material and create in turn a bricolage of knowledge that should
aim to be truthful without claiming to be ‘the truth’. For me, there is relief involved in owning the partiality of my research. But, it is also the case that there is some anxiety involved in owning responsibility for every position vis a vis my material and method, with their inevitable exhibition of biases, gaps and inconsistencies. Thus, I want to suggest that fabrication rather than construction is the term more faithful to the combination of my circumstances and abilities, and the selectivity, gloss, reduction and omission I had to practice, in order to produce this thesis. Fabrication conveys the sense in which planning, chance and discrimination have combined to weave this text. Working with its unique blend of situated knowledge and partialities, this thesis endeavours to cross culture, to show some of the key aspects of what dwelling at home means within a certain place and time for certain people. To get to know, as it were, where I’m coming from, it is necessary to describe first the fields themselves and then the way my research unfolded. The next two sections make representations of Coolbellup and Diu as geographical, topographical and historical locations. A sense of location is crucial as the background against which the discussion of dwelling and home can take place.

2.3 The Dwelling Place, The Dwelling Time: Potted Guides to Diu and Coolbellup

Initial curiosity and speculation about this topic fuelled my commitment to undertake research. Living in Australia and visiting India were the original stimuli. Though there are many things which fascinate me about the way life is lived in these two places, I felt it would be best to work with phenomena I knew experientially with great familiarity, and so my topic became the dwelling that is undertaken in the place one usually lives, the place we call home. The idea was to juxtapose dwelling at home in two fields. The first was to be Coolbellup, a suburb of Perth, capital of Western Australia and a place I lived in for twelve years until very recently. The second was to be the town of Diu, on the island of Diu, in the Union Territory of Daman and Diu, situated less than a kilometre off Gujarat’s Kathiawar peninsula in India. India is a place I have travelled around for nearly four years of my adult life and the topic emerged while in Diu after I learnt I’d been granted a scholarship for doctoral research.

The contrasts were blatant. Diu, and India in general, were unusual while Coolbellup seemed to epitomise all that was usual and familiar in my Australian experience. And though the contrasts became less vivid as my stay in Diu received the imprimatur of the everyday, they continued to provoke questions about the processes of dwelling that produce and sustain a home. Here I represent the fields of Coolbellup and Diu in a series of syntagmatic and paradigmatic prospects. Syntagmatic prospects are simple and linear, and manifest, for example, in the relationship between houses, land, and streetscapes. Paradigmatic prospects however are complex congregations of many different elements from different levels, such as the way statistics combine to produce a quantitative picture or the way a
landscape looks, sounds and smells. Gathered together, syntagmatic prospects form the convoluted rubric of paradigmatic prospects. Here description builds to develop some sense of the nexus of platial and temporal elements that pattern Coolbellup and Diu and show their general particularity.

Coolbellup is a suburb of 3.1 square kilometres, situated about seven kilometres from the Indian Ocean and fifteen kilometres south from Perth’s CBD. Its population, according to the 1996 census was 6,045. Coolbellup is erected on part of an ancient formation of sand dunes, thus the land gently undulates and its soil is poor. Coolbellup was one of several Ministry of Housing (MoH) suburbs established in the early 1960’s when market gardens, pine plantations and remnant bush were scoured and built over to provide low cost rental housing to the economically disadvantaged. When surveyed and developed into a suburb, the land for the most part was divided into rectangular parcels of between 700 to 800 square metres on which sits a detached house designed and built by the MoH. There are also several hundred flats and some duplex accommodation. All forms of residence conform to standard designs, with total uniformity in the flats and very slight architectural variations in the houses that originally had a floor area of about 80 -100 square metres. There is a small, mall style shopping centre, a hotel-motel, three primary schools, a community hall, a library and, compared to newer suburbs, quite a large amount of open space in the form of parks and sporting grounds.

Typically, Coolbellup is described as a lower or working-class suburb. Along with the representations of local interest groups, Coolbellup’s statistical profile provides the raw material on which government housing policy is conceived. Such impressions are in part the creation of statistical quantification informed either by extrapolation or experience. Statistical typifications can be illuminating, though it must be stressed they by no means do justice to or encompass the lived reality. But bearing this caution in mind there are certain things which exude typicality, such as the prevalence of state government commissioned housing, low real estate values, low incomes, and class-linked disadvantage in health, education and occupation. Income, occupational and educational profiles all suggest that the area in 1996 was populated predominantly by those who, whatever their actual cultural and social capital are economically speaking amongst the poorest in the state. As I write, however, Coolbellup is experiencing some significant change as it undergoes a MoH initiated redevelopment with the objective of altering its reputation as typical working class and welfare ghetto.

As shown in the census in 1996, before redevelopment commenced Coolbellup had a large population of people who were renting from the MoH or were in rent subsidised accommodation. Before the redevelopment, Coolbellup had a significant Aboriginal population compared to other areas of Perth.
Prior to 1995 Coolbellup had some of the lowest real estate values in the metropolitan area. This has changed however as Australian real estate prices in general have gone up and real estate prices Coolbellup have seen some of the highest percentage rises of housing value in the Perth metropolitan area.\textsuperscript{40} Due to a MoH initiated program of ‘redevelopment’ the Census of 2001 shows some significant alterations in statistical profile.\textsuperscript{41} The most dramatic alteration is in the total population down to 4,850 (from 6,045).\textsuperscript{42} The number of owned or being purchased properties has increased to 1,210 (from 1,186) while the number of government rentals has decreased dramatically to 299 (from 699). There has also been a steep increase in the number of private rentals from 228 to 427.\textsuperscript{43} A surprise is the increase in the percentage of Indigenous people to 6\% (from 4.9\%).\textsuperscript{44} There is also a significant increase in the numbers of people aged 65 and over from 503 to 605.\textsuperscript{45} Redevelopment plans for MoH suburbs in W.A were hatched in the early 1990’s and initiated in Coolbellup in 1997. Though expected to take five years to complete some aspects were still outstanding in early 2004. Housing stock has been sold to a company which refurbishes it and sells it to private investors at prices which reflect its increased value. The company is also renovating all remaining MoH stock, landscaping Coolbellup’s parks and recreation grounds and of all its access roads. Redevelopment ideals are epitomised in the so-called ‘entry statements’ which, located at Coolbellup’s borders, have a strategic aesthetic that emphasises neatness and prettiness in the trees, shrubs, paving, kerbing and lighting that realise this purpose. Entry statements bestow a look of apparent gentility that is, however, often belied in the interior of the suburb as similar standards are, at best, found in isolated patches. Behind the host of refurbishment objectives lay the guiding objective that aimed to reduce the social problems commonly associated with low income areas by reducing the MoH population.

The prevailing conception within MoH policy sees high levels of Ministry tenants as incompatible with conventional civic norms and expectations, making ‘bad news’ for real estate values in general and the image of suburbs such as Coolbellup in particular. Before ‘redevelopment’ about 30 percent of Coolbellup’s population were MoH clients. The objective is to reduce this figure to around 10 or 12 percent. Those who live in Ministry houses who do not want to buy their house are subject to pressure in the form of inducements to relocate in ‘new’ and ‘better’ housing in areas that are usually further towards the fringe of the metropolitan area and thus further ‘out of the loop’ of well established civic facilities. By relocating tenants and reducing its stock of public housing the MoH addresses the problems of poor suburbs with the application of simple social engineering axioms which treat disadvantage by redistributing it.
My family and I lived in Coolbellup because our income in many ways determined such a choice. Despite middle class educations my husband and I have low incomes which hover around the official poverty line. Nevertheless, we did not feel poor, and there was a shared sense that on our suburban block, we had a small and private kingdom for which we harboured mixed feelings of appreciation and dismay. We enjoyed the quiet privacy, but on the other hand felt unpleasantly alone and anonymous. Our neighbours seemed both physically and socially distant as we saw them rarely, knew only a few and there were many we did not know even by sight. Towards the end of this thesis, I return to integrate this feeling of social seclusion in a discussion of how notions of community structure dwelling in Coolbellup and Diu. But now it’s time to depict and draw contrasts with Diu.

Diu is part of the Union Territory of Daman and Diu on the west coast of India at the end of Gujarat’s Saurasthra peninsula in the gulf of Cambay at about 20 degrees North and 70 degrees East. Daman is nearly 250 kilometres away across the bay of Cambay. The Union Territory of Diu has an area of around 40 square kilometres with five villages and the walled town, built by the Portuguese, that occupies about a square kilometre. According to the Indian Census of 1991, the whole of Diu has a population of around 39,000 people. This had risen to 44,110 in 2001 an increase of 11.71 percent. Most of Diu is a small island, but the village of Ghogla lies on a small portion of the mainland to the north. The two are separated by a very shallow, narrow strait which was bridged in 1990. Diu’s climate is tropical but the land is rocky and the soil poor and thin. Arguably, the most crucial contrasts between Coolbellup and Diu lie in the fact that Diu is a political and cultural entity on a scale that Coobellup doesn’t even register on. One of the differences that so distinguish Diu from Coolbellup is the longevity of its existence. Diu has a both legendary and historical record, while the suburb of Coolbellup has only existed for around forty years. In its introduction to the Union Territories of Daman and Diu, the *Anthropological Survey of India* traces Diu’s place in legend since the composition of the Hindu epic legend the *Mahabharata* around the fifth century BCE. Diu appears in the *Mahabharata* as a place ruled by a great demon king Jalandhar who was killed by the god Vishnu. The place where Vishnu left his weapon, the Sudarhsan chakra (discus) is known as Chakra Tirtha and temple of Jalandhar is still there. The history which led to Diu becoming a Union Territory is long and intricate and has been determined at times as much by its geographical location as by the political complexities of its occupation and governance. For approximately two thousand years beginning in the Mauryan period (322-320 BCE) Diu was ruled by a series of dynastic entities. In 1535 four hundred and fifty years of Portuguese colonisation began. This period ended in 1961 when India liberated Diu in ‘Operation Vijay’ and it was incorporated with Goa and Daman as a Union Territory.
Diu held great strategic importance for the Portuguese, who at first tried to capture it from a Muslim sultan, but then, entered into a treaty arrangement with him in exchange for Portuguese help in repulsing conquest by the Mughal emperor Humayan. The Portuguese required Diu to help them protect their lucrative spice and textile trade with Indian kingdoms along the south west coast. To that end, they built a walled town and a big fort on the eastern end of the island. Prior to and during the Portuguese period, Diu was well known for its port and ship building capacity and the mercantile relations they facilitated. Consequently, Diu’s characteristic architectural appearance is a result of its history as a colony of Portugal. Since union with India, much of the Lusitanian influenced domestic architecture has been allowed to decay, and colonial era buildings are being substantially refashioned or replaced by Indian adaptations of European modernism.

The main centre for shopping, commerce and government business in Diu is located alongside the port area and, though quite adequate, could in no sense be considered to contain the same level of material sophistication and opulence of even a modest Australian shopping centre. In the mornings, a fish market opens in a rough concrete shed and a fruit and vegetable market sets up in the main square. The produce in this market is, on the whole, brought from the mainland, since Diu is an infertile place and supports only a very small agriculture sector. This market also attracts regular vendors selling a variety of goods from spices to cheap plastic Chinese sunglasses and watches. Nearby is the main bazaar which opens in the morning and then once again in the late afternoon. It contains a moderate number of small shops, some small bars and restaurants, Union Government departmental offices, the post office and the branches of two banks. There are no supermarkets, nor any franchised chain stores, but there is a Union government ration dispensary where the entitled poor collect heavily subsidised staple items such as rice and kerosene. Deeper in there are several small to medium clusters of shops, in one of which there is a cinema and another contains the only dealer in electronic items. One of the most surprising sights deep among the winding allies is the sudden appearance of the dazzle of wares in the occasional gold and silver merchant, gold in particular being much in demand for the premier gifts at weddings and engagements and as a form of insurance or investment. In 1997 none of the hotels in Diu belonged to even nation wide corporate concerns, however this situation had changed by 2001 when several large resort style complexes had emerged or were in the process of construction.

Since independence from Portugal, Diu’s demographics have undergone considerable alteration as the influence of Portugal has waned dramatically while Indian influences have waxed vigorously. People moved away from Diu during the economic blockade erected by India between 1954-6, but many more moved in after union with India. The population has greatly expanded, and extra Indian influences in
the form of foreign goods and visitors have been increasing rapidly in recent years. Tourism’s exponential growth dates from just after the completion of the Thad bridge that crosses the narrow strait. Every year sees increases in development for the influx of tourists during the cool season from October to February.\(^{53}\)

Diu is a complex, multi-segmented and multi-layered entity of communal and religious interests. Although the *Anthropological Survey of India* confesses that “ethnographic information on the territory is scanty” and, while information tends to vary according to community size and influence, it does what it can to document Diu’s cultural mosaic of around twenty-five communities.\(^ {54}\) Most of Diu’s population perceive their identity as correspondent with those in Gujarat, and consider themselves migrants, or are considered to be such by those who trace their connection to Portuguese rule.\(^ {55}\) According to the *Anthropological Survey* informal local governance in Diu is administered at the level of caste community or *jati*, and all the communities of Daman and Diu enjoy a monopoly over an occupation that creates unity amidst the division of identity.\(^ {56}\) As one of India’s federally administered Union Territories, Diu is governed directly by the central government which appoints a ‘Collector’ to be its chief administrator and magistrate, while a Municipal Corporation of elected councillors looks after municipal governance matters.\(^ {57}\) One of the main sources of livelihood is provided from the business in or connected with fishing. The production of salt and the quarrying of stone are also substantial industries, but agriculture is minimal because of Diu’s rocky, windswept and salt affected land.

In the 1970’s Diu was declared industrially backward and special development schemes were implemented by the central or Union Government. The steady injections of government funded incentives fed industrial development, especially in fishing and the promotion of small scale industries such as salt and liquor.\(^ {58}\) In the latter half of the 1990’s a considerable amount of Union Government money became available for civic improvement projects in roads, buildings and projects with the aim of beautification to aid the development of tourism. A substantial amount of domestic tourism has been a feature of Diu’s character and economy since Indian independence and has strongly corresponded to its special status as vendor of legally available alcohol. For, in addition to its long history of Portuguese occupation, Diu’s main source of cultural distinction comes from its being ‘wet’, as opposed to the ‘dry’ state of Gujarat to its immediate north.\(^ {59}\) Were another anthropological survey to be conducted now, there can be no doubt that tourism would figure as a major source of Diu’s economic wealth and reputation.\(^ {60}\) Diu’s geographical, cultural and political boundaries both constitute its life-blood and facilitate its circulation. Without them it would be just another small fishing port in an otherwise low
lying and infertile coastal region. The social statistical, geographical and historical boundaries and contrasts I’ve described so far are as evident and pivotal to the construction of Diu’s identity and the identities of its people as they are absent or irrelevant in Coobellup. With lens resolution refined to zoom in on the perceptual and sensual level, distinctive comparisons continue to multiply as the particularities and peculiarities of Coolbellup’s and Diu’s platial identities assume the foreground.

2.4 Environmental Sense and Sensualities: The Garden Suburb versus The Walled Town

Contrasts of the built and cultural environments between Coolbellup and Diu are vivid. Some of the most obvious cultural differences are due to the intersection of climate and technological development. Culture has place and time in common and these act reflexively on one another. It’s sometimes even possible to ascertain the place of something by what time it is and vice versa, though admittedly this is less and less likely in the technologically enhanced climatically controlled twenty-four hour societies of the West than it used to be. Much more than in Coolbellup, life in Diu is given its rhythm and location by the time of day. Diu is in the tropics and quite technologically underdeveloped compared to Coolbellup. The climate in Diu moves through a cycle of hot days and cool nights (October to January), with increasing heat and humidity (February to May) which is relieved by the monsoon (June to September). Coolbellup by contrast has more of a Mediterranean climate with four identifiable seasons. Diu has a sunny but humid climate, and because it is comparatively technology poor but people rich, the days are structured by divisions which place certain kinds of behaviour and activity at certain times. The more intense the humidity and heat, the more likely it is that relief is optimised in the customs that surround life’s core operations of work, food, sleep and leisure. In Diu, rising with the sun, working till midday, resting after lunch and socialising in the evening structure both time and place to a much greater degree than they do in Coolbellup. With its more temperate climate and technologically assisted lifestyles, life’s core operations in Coolbellup are less determined by time and place. In Diu, daily life seemed both more structured and less complicated than it did in Coolbellup. Its tropical location and comparative underdevelopment mean there are fewer options about what to do, and when and where to do it.

Climatic difference aside, perhaps the most salient thing that distinguishes Diu from Coolbellup is the ratio of people to area. Coolbellup with an area of 3.1 square kilometres has population density of around 1,700 per square kilometre while the territory of Diu, with an area of 40 square kilometres, has a population density of 907 per square kilometre. While the Indian Census for 1991 states the urban population of Diu to be 21,000 there is no way of knowing the proportion for the population of the town of Diu, though I would guess it to be at least two thirds or around 14,000 people. Further
comparison of population density and the proportions of built up to open space can only take place via
descriptive comparison. In Coolbellup, the streets are approximately two to three times as broad as the
main thoroughfares of Diu and four to five times the width of its many alleys. The contrast is
exaggerated once foot paths and the bordering institution known as the ‘nature strip’ in Coolbellup are
included, for Diu has neither of these. In Coolbellup, only those streets that attract a certain quotient of
traffic have a footpath, and thus along these the nature strip is especially broad. Nature strips conjure
up images of rich vegetation however, this is not often the case as they are usually bare of any
vegetation save some grass or a single tree.\textsuperscript{61} Relatively few people in Coolbellup have taken up the
offer of a tree for their bit nature strip supplied by the local council, and neither have they undertaken
any gardening on it, though they are entitled to. However, the redevelopment project has meant the
planting of Coolbellup’s major boulevards with trees as well as on the nature strips in front of most
refurbished properties.

Almost every house in Coolbellup has a front and back garden dominated by large areas of lawn with
cultivated borders and beds. Though there are no substantiating figures, it is not hard to see that much
more land is occupied by gardens in Coolbellup than house floor space.\textsuperscript{62} Gardens have few species of
plant that are native to the area, but are planted out with a large variety of exotic species which, in the
sandy porous soil, are generally nourished by the application of fertiliser and mulch. Diu’s soil is also
thin and infertile and, while there are very few gardens, the natural vegetation has adapted ingeniously
to urban conditions. It has the capacity to grow virtually without soil out of rock. It has thus
successfully transferred itself from the natural landscape to the limestone built buildings. This
vegetation springs from cracks and crevices in the built environment and contributes to its erosion as
networks of roots probe fissures and gradually gouge themselves increased tenure. Although clad with
polished sandstone or concrete, a common sight in Diu after the monsoon is the growth of trees and
shrubs out of the facades and roof tops of buildings with deteriorating surfaces. In the abandoned
buildings of absentee land-lords, this growth goes unchecked and so hastens their dilapidation that,
within a few years the building becomes something of a hanging garden. Although vegetation is quite
limited beyond the town walls and very limited within them, there are many forms of animal life to
take advantage of the bits and pieces that do exist.

While Coobellup is perhaps a thousand times greener than Diu, its range of animal life is comparatively
minimal. In Coolbellup, native and introduced birds are by far the most numerous animal populations
and rare are appearances from any other ‘wild’ creatures notwithstanding microfauna, insect life, mice
and rats. Most animal life in Coolbellup is of the domestic variety, with the large population of cats by
far the most numerous. But, since Council by-laws require dogs to be kept in yards or on leashes, their numbers, like those of other caged creatures, are hard to judge. By contrast, in spite of the paucity of vegetation in Diu, that which does exist generally hums with bird and insect life. In the interstices of Diu’s built environment dwells a large compass of animal life: cows, pigs, frogs, toads, shrews, geckos, dogs, cats, goats, donkeys, peacocks, snakes, squirrels, crows, swallows, sparrows, jackals, bats, owls, pigeons, parrots, mynah birds and several birds I can’t identify. Pigs and most dogs and cats are feral. Goats, cows and donkeys are owned, but roam at large competing with the dogs and pigs for vegetable scraps. Many cows have learned to supplement their scavenging by taking up begging attitudes on door-steps, and some of the audacious ones even come inside if they find the door open! Sparrows and pigeons fly easily in and out of buildings as there is rarely any glass in the windows, and the ventilation ducts are simply rectangular holes set into the wall. Along with other wall niches, the latter provide nesting sites for pigeons, swallows and sparrows. Other birds are more wary, though they too can hang around in the hope of obtaining some of their foodstuff. Geckos like to hang out on the cool interior walls. Frogs and toads live around the damp environments by tanks, taps and wells and, like shrews, snakes, jackals, bats and owls tend to emerge only at night and be heard rather than seen.

Each animal in the Diu environment seems to bear a stated or tacit valuation. Cows are sacred to the Hindus, while pigs are reviled by all and are not eaten by anyone, not even the Christians whose Portuguese ancestors were responsible for importing them. This is an entirely opposite attitude from the Christian custom in Goa, where a whole cuisine has been constructed around pork. Like pigs, dogs are regarded as vermin and both populations are regularly culled with poisoned bait. It is rare in Diu to see a dog kept as a pet, though when they are they are pedigrees (pomeranians usually) and rarely seen, since they live sequestered lives inside, to avoid them interbreeding with the feral mongrels. Cats are more likely to be born into ‘petitude’, yet do not receive anything like the degree of concern from their owners as cats in the West. Thus, most cats are feral and have not got high rates of survival. Crows are despised, but are so common and hard to control that they escape especial disparagement. The occasional peacocks are treated with delight, even though they have the reputation in India as bringers of bad luck. In Hindu legend the ‘eyes’ on the feathers are said to see and transmit unwholesome knowledge. Parrots are considered desirable pets, and if captured are kept in tiny cages where they regrettably live out the rest of their lives. Shrews are shy uninvited night foragers who, despite their depredations in larders, are regarded with affection. Snakes are both venerated and feared. I observed the same people trying to kill a cobra in the presence of tourists but later returning alone, to the spot where it disappeared, to offer prayers and incense. Jackals are considered with equivocal emotions. On the one hand, their eerie howling and their dead of night appearances ally them with ghosts and
encounters with them are feared. At the same time, jackals are regarded with pity for the community of disturbed souls they are said to represent. Encounters with animals are a daily affair in Diu and relations with them, just like one’s relations with humans, may be acrimonious, polite, distressing, indifferent or delightful. Diu and Coolbellup hold as little in common with regard to animal life as they do in the nature and extent of their vegetation. The differences between Diu and Coolbellup in terms of platial composition are not exhausted however by statistics, history, geography, topology, botany or zoology but continue in the realm of the senses.

It’s interesting to compare the sense environments of Coolbellup and Diu. The sights, sounds and smells associated with daily life are as frequent in Diu as they are absent in Coolbellup. In Diu, my senses were often in use as quotidian events announced themselves in a variety of modes which were often known to my ears and nose before my eyes. There was by contrast not much ‘action’ in Coolbellup. People sounds in Coolbellup were few and there was little pedestrian traffic. Apart from a small quantity of pedestrian traffic in people going to and from the shops or bus stops, the most evident public activity occurred at the shopping centre, on the sports fields or with an occasional group of children playing on the street. The shopping centre attracted the greatest numbers of people into the environment beyond their houses, but only a small proportion of those who visit the ‘town centre’ arrive on foot or by bus. Almost everyone drives almost everywhere. A fairly reliable way of estimating whether there’s anybody home in Coolbellup is to check the carport or the drive-way. With the exception of the birds and the occasional barking dog, there are few animal sounds in Coolbellup and, leaving aside a music peal of an occasional ice-cream van during the summer, and the occasional Christian evangelist, hawking is unknown. Indeed, most sound in both the fore and the back ground in Coolbellup comes from motorised traffic. Occasionally a domestic sound system, a lawn mower or other working machine tilted the balance of sound in the environment between birds and traffic but generally, Coolbellup reposes quietly among the low hum from the big roads which border it, and the throaty roar of vehicles in its own streets. Confined more to internal environments than external ones, Coolbellup’s odiferous environment is even more restricted than its auditory one. Odours in Coolbellup are generally created in private, and are neither meant for public consumption nor indeed do they have much chance of leaking out into the neighbourhood. Because cooking is done in houses sealed by glass and insulation, the leaking of food odour is minimised. When cooking smells do permeate beyond the house, though they are savoury they are much less pungent than those in Diu where the cuisine incorporates many highly aromatic ingredients which find easy escape though unglassed windows and open doors.
In Coolbellup household rubbish is deposited in two large 240 litre bins and disposal is almost entirely automated being managed by just one person with a truck. One bin is dedicated to materials designated as recyclable and is collected bi-weekly, while the other bin receives everything else and is collected weekly. Rubbish disposal in Diu, by comparison, is multi-faceted and involves a large numbers of agents. Because of the number of foraging, wandering animals almost all food waste is consumed if thrown into the street. All non-edible rubbish in Diu is deposited in ad hoc heaps by the side of the street and removed every few days by the Dalit sweepers, who collect the piles together and truck them to a municipal dump. Alternatively, when the truck is unavailable, they incinerate this rubbish on the spot. Many materials which are considered rubbish (even if recyclable) in Coolbellup have a small monetary value in Diu, making it worthwhile for the poor to collect and sell such materials to merchants who, in turn, sell them in bulk to reprocessing firms. The sweepers do some of this sorting, extracting items such as hard plastic, cardboard and glass. However, there is not usually a lot of these to be found, as householders have generally sorted and sold profitable rubbish to specialised hawkers. Waste which is blown out of range of the street onto patches of wasteland is collected every so often by itinerant Dalits, who lead much more marginal existences than the established rubbish hawkers. Poor, dirty, ragged and malnourished, they travel between towns scouring the landscape for pieces of paper and plastic which, collected by the kilo, yield a barely livable pittance.

Periodically, when large quantities of unusable rubbish are burnt by the sweepers, the smell is nauseating. In the absence of the itinerant Dalits, many plastic bags and other non-recyclable plastics slowly smoulder their way into the atmosphere where the direction of the wind determines who suffers. A wind from the sea blowing across incinerating rubbish, for me and my family, meant moving out for the day. Thankfully such toxic engulfments were an infrequent event. More regular, but just as offensive however, was the stink of the remains of rotten prawn and crab offal, which the dogs, pigs and other scavenging creatures won’t eat because of the high proportion of shell and skeleton involved. When neighbours down-wind of our house had crustacean for dinner, we tended to breathe its stink the next day until the rays of the sun scorched it into oblivion. By way of compensation there were often delightful smells from cooking and religious devotions. A very pleasant, but evanescent, olfactory environment emerged from the preparation of breakfasts, lunches, dinners and burning of incense. The general absence of glass and insulation along with open doors, tropical heat, and whirring fans gave a changing and pungent olfactory dimension to our daily surroundings.

The auditory environment in Diu was also very varied, and changed according to the time of day and the season. There was traffic in the form of pedestrians, bicycles, scooters, auto rickshaws, and the
occasional car or procession for the gods, deaths and marriages. Packs of roaming feral dogs would howl and fight at night and in the morning calls for custom strung the air as the names, price, and virtues of street hawked goods brought people out to inspect and buy. Neighbours would regularly broadcast their favourite prerecorded music and radio programs to the whole neighbourhood, who enjoyed it or were resigned to it - at any event, I never became aware of any complaints. The Hindu calendar governed the broadcast of certain texts, songs, chants and prayers, while five times a day the mosque called Muslims to prayer. Fireworks exploded intermittently, lit for fun by children but resounded in volleys over several days and nights at festivals such as *Holi* and *Diwali* or to mark aspects of marriage and engagement ceremonies. A band would sometimes practise in the evening. Band music accompanies the bride and groom through the streets after marriage, and is now considered an essential feature of most marriage celebrations. Marriages are elaborate affairs, with several publicly performed aspects. The marquees for marriage parties can occupy a portion of a broad street or all of an alley over the course of several days. Overall the visual, auditory and olfactory environment in Diu was a sensory environment of extraordinary richness, and the involuntary sensory consumption linked the neighbourhood in a community of common sensation that made Coolbellup seem impoverished by comparison. Now, having represented Coolbellup and Diu as field locations and placing my readers, the last section of this chapter will layer in my fieldwork. Perspectivism of course informs the whole thesis, but becomes especially evident in my representations of the situations, motivations, methods, achievements and compromises that constituted my fieldwork experience.

### 2.5 The Fields: Issues of Representation and Reflexivity: Motivations, Methods, Achievements, Compromises and Failures.

As a field, Coolbellup’s platial and temporal forms were very familiar. Indeed, Coolbellup felt normal, familiar and typical to the point of monotony. With occasional exceptions in their older and/or affluent areas. Australian suburbs have, to my eyes, mean proportions and few variations of form which combine to deliver an impression of low-lying, self-effacing, homogeneous conventionality. Coolbellup’s buildings are without pleasing proportions of height, breadth and depth, and there is little variety of form. Though constant regularities and repetitions of line and form can be aesthetically pleasing, Coolbellup’s buildings are, almost without exception, inelegant and uninspiring as compared to continental Europe. On the other hand they also lack the interest that is created by the riot of variety in India. Moreover, though I enjoy a lot of vegetation around buildings, and although Coolbellup is quite green, it did not ameliorate for me, the visually boring and socially isolating affect of low-budget, low-line standardised architecture set, equi-distantly from one another and the street, in squat isolation on nearly identical blocks. Furthermore, as there is very little street-life in Australian suburbia, unless
you appreciate motorised traffic, the lack of an animate topography adds to the sense of monotony. As a built and populated environment, Australian suburbia on the whole lies, for me with boring tedium, between the soothing charm of elegance and the intrinsic interest of animate clutter. But, predicability, sameness, and drabness in the suburban landscape are familiar accusations of Australian suburbia in general, and public housing in particular. The configuration of my Diu field was, by contrast, daily inscribed by an ever-changing street population as well as interesting and unfamiliar platial and temporal features. Also, while Diu does not have much in the way of vegetation in its urban areas, there is great variety in the height, size and age of buildings. Finally, as I noted above, time and place are organised rather differently to the way they were in Coolbellup and, because I was not accustomed to them, they were rendered more interesting. Between Coolbellup and Diu knowledge and conditions were incommensurate with each other and these bore consequences for the ways in which I conceived and managed my research.

Fields and fieldwork are fields of choice and challenge. Choices, at least to begin with, are easier: one makes a research commitment choosing a topic and a field (or in my case two) and launches into research expecting to capture the data and impressions and wielding one’s chosen methodology like a net. Challenges are often unpredictable, and tend to be retold in those amusing stories researchers relate whose main message seems to be: be wary of the wily ways and forms of assumptions and expectations. In my case, an increased ability to distinguish between hope and expectation was one of the most important things I learnt from my experiences. The ingredients and constitution of one’s field(s) can influence or determine how fieldwork is done. What can be said, what must remain unsaid, and what is eventually learnt, all depend not only on who one is, but where one is. A field is neither a constant nor a static place, things will change and move in and out of view. There will also inevitably be places within one’s field(s) that the researcher does not, or is not allowed to, visit, and in general more interesting places than one can possibly be aware of. Any field of research will thus involve commissions and omissions, presences and absences, placements and displacements. Before offering you more on the motivations that contributed to the formation of my topic and my choice of fields, it is necessary to understand some particularities of the way my field was constituted, and to do this, I must take a detour via the circumstantial importance of my family, who lived with me in Coolbellup and accompanied me to Diu.

The documented presence of social units larger than that of the researching agent are not as rare as they used to be. It is usual that when researchers go into a field in the company of their families, the inclusion of some of the members responses to the event may go largely undocumented. Perhaps this
is because the family’s presence is considered peripheral to the research proper. But I would argue that ‘proper’ can only be that which respects the context of its production. To me, proper production in research depends on acknowledging, in the representations one makes of one’s situation, not only oneself as an experiencing, mediating, authoring agent, but any other influential meaningful agents or factors. Thus, the presence of families and friends must be fore-grounded, even though they may not otherwise appear, just as any large grant that bought connections, information or influence should be declared. My research was to explore and compare the conditions of my Australian experience with ones in India. Hence, because my family were such an integral part of my life in Coolbellup, and also because I had no desire to live alone in Diu for a year, we went together. My initial intention had been to include material from interviews conducted with my family in Coolbellup and Diu, but this has proved to be impossible due to constraints of space. At the time however it seemed an excellent scheme, from both the emotional and research points of view. Thus decided, it was important to have this adventure together and ignore the idea which has in the past has so sanctimoniously implied that for maximum clarity a single researcher must immerse themselves in their field.

Immersion would no doubt be a valuable research objective with perfect conditions but who has perfect conditions? Fieldwork under actual conditions can turn into a Faustian bargain, if familiar forms of aid and support are exchanged for caches of data in a futile search to produce perfect conditions. Immersion is supposed to deliver more reality because it assumes that, alone and immersed in her field, the researcher draws closer to her research subjects. However, closeness depends on variables over which the researcher has little or no control, such as their own sex, age, ethnicity, temperament, marital status and parental responsibilities. Immersion is an idyllic mythological idea which is unlikely to be achieved for a variety of personal or circumstantial reasons. Anyway, every research situation has certain advantages and disadvantages that will both obtain and exclude certain kinds of knowledge. Besides, insight is not simply or necessarily a consequence of the application of the immersion principle. Insight relies on revealing hitherto concealed notions, and these in turn rely on the deliberate, conscious juxtaposition of discernible contrasts. For me, disclosure and contrast were available in the juxtaposition of our suburban family life with our dwelling in Diu, and thus the otherness we embodied was as distinct in Diu as it was obscure in Coolbellup. We went to live in Diu for a year, and certain key aspects of habitus maintenance were involved as we sought a residence that provided some continuity with what we knew in Australia. The evident resemblance of this desire to the expression of the colonial British: ‘we would not be living in the fashion to which we have become accustomed’ is mistaken. For if the meaning of home is at least partly constituted by senses of continuity and
familiarity, and if difference and otherness are the defining elements of every form of habitus, then they each deserve to be recognised and respected.

Both achieving the right to dwell in Diu and everyday life presented challenges to my assumptions and expectations. I had expected that the problem of where to dwell would be one of choice between several locations, each one with different advantages and disadvantages from the point of view of my intended research. However, for an alarming amount of time, it seemed that instead of investigating how people dwelt, my field work might never advance beyond a preoccupation with the simple questions of where we would live. Exponential increases in tourists and an increase in illicit drug dealing, combined with the willingness of local people to proffer accommodation, and the annoyance of the powerful lobby of hotel proprietors, to persuade the Collector to forbid the renting of privately owned accommodation to foreign visitors. But eventually we obtained permission to reside in the ‘Divecha house’, which was semi-detached and had a kitchen, bathroom, two rooms, an enclosed courtyard and a roof terrace. It had, in other words, a structure, size, facilities and situation that enabled some continuity with our dwelling experience in Coolbellup.

As Jackson observes in the opening epigraph to this chapter, fieldwork is an extended social event in which understanding is a product not so much of methodology as a command of basic social skills. In an unfamiliar location, you struggle to become acquainted with its everyday realities and feel your way into a knowledge of the social scene around you. The learning is constant and entails willingness to adapt and adjust one’s imported ideas of what constitutes accepted forms of behaviour in general, and civility in particular. Learning how to behave was not for me as difficult as the learning curve involved in organising and collecting my material. One of the foremost lessons these struggles showed me was that total consistency in the gathering of data in two such different fields as Coolbellup and Diu was an illusory ambition. The periodic emergence of all kinds of circumstance made necessary several major adjustments to my semi-structured interview agenda and the often, intricate arrangements which surrounded obtaining initial and subsequent interviews themselves.

To begin with, not only did I feel at home in Coolbellup, but it was my first field of research where, despite my reading of cautionary tales, rather idealistic notions governed my approach as I tried to be as methodical as possible. Even before I got to Diu the idealism of my methodology suffered as events came up that demanded compromise or change. But it was as a much needier and more dependent researcher in Diu that it became clear that I must get used to accepting, and adapting to, a host of circumstantial realities, which were often both unexpected and unwanted. Discrepancies in the numbers
of my research subjects was one such unanticipated circumstantial reality. In Coolbellup, I had decided that I required an equal number of adults and children, males and females, and I very nearly managed it. In Diu however, the effort required to obtain and sustain a home and gather data in a language I could speak at only a rudimentary level was much greater. In Diu, feeling alone, strange and dependent on anyone who would help me, I soon decided it was necessary to interview anyone who consented to be a respondent. Thus it was that in Coolbellup there are twelve respondents seven adults (four female, three male) and five children (three male, two female) while in Diu there are nineteen - fifteen adults (seven male, eight female) and four children (three female, one male). In Diu, I not only felt more at the mercy of other people’s good will, but I understood that here there was much more to understand, and having more respondents was thus an advantage.

The construction of the text of my interviews was an evolving one, replete with issues of representation, reflexivity and accountability, as the work itself elicited gaps in my comprehension and I responded with additions, deletions and rearrangements (see Appendix I for the texts of the original interview and subsequent supplementary questions). As the research progressed, questions emerged from implicit and invisible levels to obvious and explicit ones. In Coolbellup the main emergent issues that arose during the period of research concerned the notions and attitudes of my respondents to:-

(i) The more important and less important house-hold technologies;
(ii) communication technologies of radio and television in particular including: favourite channels, time invested in listening/watching, imagining self on radio/tv;
(iii) the more important and less important aspects of architecture of houses;
(iv) favourite places in and around the house;
(v) housework, how was it divided and how much time was invested;
(vi) collections, i.e, objects
(vii) sacred places: at home /the world.  
(viii) anything they wished to ask me.

As my skills and knowledge increased, questions continued to emerge in ideas which were not only a product of shifts of place and person within a single field, but the consequence of migration from Coolbellup to Diu. In Coolbellup, the number of things I became aware that I was not asking or, not asking in sufficient detail, generated nineteen supplementary questions (and probes). But in Diu I came up with two further lists of questions (and probes), yet there are still things that are unanswered which I would have liked to explore and which I now accept I will probably never know. More questions were
generated in Diu because it was only once I arrived there that I realised that my Coolbellup agenda contained a number of assumptions that needed unpacking, or omissions which begged questions. In Diu there were also questions which developed because of the problems of translation. And as in Coolbellup there were new questions, and additions to questions that arose in response to the capacities and limitations of my own research process, as well as others that were connected with the abilities of my research assistants. In Diu while there were a few questions that emerged that were unique to my developing knowledge there were issues which would have become issues in Coolbellup had I had as much time as I liked. Twenty-five principal questions were developed around the following issues:-

(i) numbers of people in household
(ii) number of generations who has lived in house;
(iii) a description of house including: size of house, number of rooms,
(iv) storage places in house; (re: capacity and tidiness)
(v) value of house;
(vi) who would inherit the house;
(vii) privacy including: need of privacy, room of one’s own,
(viii) relations with neighbours;
(ix) number and kinds of visitors;
(x) amount of time spent inside and outside the house;
(xi) the principal activities of the household;
(xii) special pleasures or dislikes about home;
(xiii) modes of transport that serve the home dwelling;
(xiv) proximity of house to amenities shops; school etc.
(xv) presence or absence of pets;
(xvi) knowledge of the Vastushastra( Hindu doctrine for ordering the house and consecration ritual)
(xvii) perceptions of tourists visiting Diu;
(xviii) perceptions of Australia;
(xix) a game designed to assess familiarity of room and objects in which interview took place;
(xx) anything they wished to add

Language of course was a huge issue in Diu for I did not speak Gujarati well enough to conduct my own interviews. Representation and interpretation were subject to translation from English into Gujarati and back again. In Diu the problems of translation depended on relations with my research assistants, and were a product of our combined capacities and limitations. Interviews conducted in English by myself in the first year of research in Coolbellup resulted in longer interviews than those
conducted in my presence in Diu by my research assistants. I had two paid research assistants in Diu: my first was Agnello, a member of the remnant population of Catholics, a husband, a father of two small girls, a lay social worker, trilingual and an English teacher at a local Gujarati medium school. Agnello helped me during the first five months of my stay. When I lost Agnello due to the pressure of his many other commitments, some time elapsed before I acquired the help of Pareshbhai who is Gujarati, bi-lingual, a yogi, a former naval lieutenant, an amateur astrologer, a teacher of hotel management and catering and, at the time, a bachelor. In the period between Agnello and Paresh I tried working with someone who, though he made himself sound plausible by procrastination, was almost worse than no help at all. When Paresh turned up I gave heartfelt thanks, for not only did he and I spend more time together in and beyond the purposes of research than had previously been possible but, as he possessed a curious and intellectual mind, our collaboration produced refinements and evoked nuances in my ideas I could never have achieved with Agnello. Understandably, neither Paresh nor Agnello had the degree of identification with the research which I did. Not only was dwelling in Diu as familiar and unremarkable for them as it was unfamiliar and extraordinary for me, but, as the designer and manager of the project, my investments and responsibilities existed on a scale they recognised but could not share.

In Coolbellup, I was the only mediator and moderator of the interviews and English was the only language. Interviews were consequently less formal in Coolbellup than they were in Diu in Gujarati. Though the interview agenda was technically mine, it was beyond my direct and immediate control in Diu as it was usually delivered by another, and subject to their influence. As translated and delivered by my research assistants, the interviews, as might be expected, tended to be rather formulaic as they lacked the situationally conditioned inflections and nuances of my own, by then, well practised style. The higher level of formality, together with my more obvious otherness, tended to result in both a less open structure and more structured responses. Less formality in Coolbellup had meant more deviation from the order of questions and more ad hoc supplementation. Thus although informed by fewer questions eventually, the greater degree of informalism in Coolbellup made interviews generally more expansive in scope and longer than they were in Diu, with a typical length running between two to three hours. However, as already mentioned, Diu elicited many more questions than Coolbellup and thus required more interviews with lengths varying from between one to two hours. Working against the increased formality of interviews in Gujarati were also the ameliorating factors of friendship. I came to know several of my respondents much better than I did in Coolbellup. Shrieventh Kumar, Marianne and Levita all spoke English, and not only did I do their interviews myself but we socialised in casual haptic ways. Marianne was Agnello’s wife and we became quite close friends. Vijayaben was
my housekeeper and cook. Though verbal communications with her were limited by my elementary Gujarati, we had a very fond and friendly relationship. Ashwinbhai was my next door neighbour with whom there was a similar kind of good natured friendliness. Thus, in the interviews with these people, house and home tended to be discussed at greater length and expand on themes of importance and relevance. This was especially so in the case of Paresh.

When I first met him, Paresh lived in a tiny room in a haveli tenement. In here he could sleep and sit but not much else. Especially frustrating was the lack of room to house his computer system, its paraphernalia, and reference materials. Near the end of my year in Diu, Paresh moved into a government issue, three room apartment (described in English as ‘quarters’). Thoughtful, and influenced by yoga’s focus on practices of introspective meditation, Paresh did not speak hastily or at length though he proved to be the most eloquent of all my respondents. Near the end of my stay, I took his interview and it surpassed in detail anything previously encountered in either Diu or Coolbellup. In this interview, along with general cultural, historical and topographic descriptions of Diu, Paresh gave me a detailed biographical and sociological view of himself in relation to both his environment and each of his previous dwellings. He had obviously reflected extensively on the project as a whole, and on the specific content of the interview agenda. This interview had already been abundantly supplemented by many professional conversations surrounding the topic and its translation as well as many others that were simply part of our friendship. Both the interview and the process which produced it were an excellent example of the range and complexity of the personal, social, and platial mediations involved in the notions and practices of dwelling and home. On their own interviews can be good tools, yet however revealing they cannot, I believe, approach the insight gained in an extended process of friendly association. Paresh showed me dwelling and home not only as causes and effects of experience and understanding but coeval and coterminous with experience and understanding per se. The composition of one’s field varies according to time and opportunity, and is determined by factors in and beyond itself that the researcher may or may not be aware of. For example, the intentions and expectations I brought with me to my interviews did not always unfold as imagined or hoped. As originally conceived with the purer ideals which attend conception of a project, I imagined each interview taking place in the interviewees residence thus facilitating, I thought, not only a more relaxed atmosphere, but one which would allow them to indicate the places they felt to be important or irrelevant. Though the majority of my interviews in both Diu and Coolbellup did take place in my interviewees houses, for a significant minority this was not the case. Contrary to my expectations, the place of the interview with three of the five Coolbellup children was decided by the children, for reasons that remain best known to themselves and about which I can only speculate. For Melissa,
Marissa, and Reuben, the interviews took place in an empty classroom after school. They did not reveal why they preferred the empty classroom, however, being also the parent of two children myself, I strongly suspect they wanted to avoid answering questions in the presence of other household members. For Michael, however, it was evident that school was just the most convenient place to do our interview since his family had relocated to a nearby suburb to which I had no transport. Brandon’s interview by contrast was conducted at his house, and this makes him an exception. Exceptional too was his attitude, for he expected that I would go home with him ‘after school’. Moreover, Brandon was interviewed in the presence of his mother, who, not only listened but contributed to the discourse. And, while Brandon seemed perfectly at ease with this situation, it can never be known how this might have affected what he did or did not say. Brandon differed most in this respect from Melissa, who gave the impression that by talking at school we were removing our conversation from things at home she did not want to expose to a stranger. As the only Indigenous child in my study, Melissa’s reluctance to have me at home was, I thought, a comment on a basic lack of ease of relations between the black and white people in Coolbellup. Her attitude mirrored the friendly but distant relations we had with some Aboriginal neighbours, who came into our home on many occasions, but never reciprocated with an invitation for us to visit them.

A similar set of circumstances attended the conditions in which interviews with the two Dalit (aka the so-called ‘untouchable’) women, Hiraben and Laxmiben, took place. I was given to understand that these women wanted their interviews taken beyond the hearing, and possible interference, of the members of their household. Thus, while my research probably benefited from the greater candour from these women, it may also have suffered as a result of displacement from their familiar surroundings and relocation at my house. Such circumstantial contingencies, which enforce changes in our intentions, provide a valuable reminder that every interview is conducted in the midst of imperceptible influences that affect what is revealed and suppressed. We all have our secrets, and even the most earnest discourse must concede that it is a perspectival condensation of experience, and thus, a gloss on the face of reality. Like any other event, interviews are framed as much by the displacement of intentions as by their fulfilment.

In Coolbellup, as I moved further into the process of data collection and began interviews, it became apparent that my research technique varied from one person and situation to another. Each one of my respondents represented different degrees of ease and difficulty and required different kinds of effort and approach that, in turn, unfolded differences of response and counter-response. I became very aware of the diversity of my interview technique. My questions would vary in their phrasing according to
whom I was talking to, what they said last, and what else they had already said on the topic. In both Diu and Coolbellup there were people who took time to relax or ‘warm up’, though I was pleased to find that most people seemed at ease from the beginning. Although for the most part my questions provoked answers which responded to the topic, there were also answers which seemed unrelated to the question, or did not follow my prompts. Reasonably often, answers were given which, from my point of view, went off at tangents, made obscure associations or peculiar references. Such instances serve to remind us that, quite apart from the research agenda that you have devised, people also have their own agendas, which they pursue more or less consciously. If the pursuit is less conscious, then responses can be a surprise, and reveal attitudes one may not otherwise have gleaned. For example, the elicitation of points of view on architecture were, by association, hitched to comments about television, neighbours, crime, relative wealth, the provision of municipal amenities or the economy and its effects on the cost of living.

Some of the most interesting answers came, not in answer to a question at hand, but to another somewhere else in the interview, where ironically, the answer might have been less relevant. Different aspects of my interviews seemed to stimulate some to ‘talk at length’ to these topics, and the level of their concern was underlined when they again returned to these concerns in relation to other questions. Using as a probe a formulation that imitated the phrasing of an initial response could not only serve to show that I had understood, but also serve as a request for more information. Rephrasing a question could however also evoke new and unexpected meanings out of chains of association peculiar to the respondent, and divert the flow of discourse beyond expected channels. Finally, there were moments when my participants would use identical constructions in their answers as I had used in the question and such suggestibility invited speculation about their comprehension or, alternatively, their lack of interest in the topic. The variety, and sometimes the mystery, of responses in long interviews is part of research reality and impossible to predict or avoid. Yet, for all this, variety and mystery are irreplaceable guides to the interpretation of the values and preoccupations of one’s respondents and, for every shadow cast by enigmatic representations, there are still penumbras and pools of light.

In this chapter, my purpose was to show the theory which informed my fieldwork and then, after guiding you through the historical, geographical, topological, botanical, zoological, sensory environments of Coolbellup and Diu, describe as much of my fieldwork process as seems salient and manageable. The next chapter begins the discussion that motivates this thesis by examining the notion of home itself, and then looking at how much Coolbellup and Diu were understood as homely locations.
Endnotes


4 Zoë Sofia gives an entertaining and personal account of the impossible fiction of objective factuality in doing experimental science in her medical school training in *Whose Second Self? : Gender and (Ir) rationality in Computer Culture* (Geelong, Victoria: Deakin University Publishing Unit, 1993), 36.


8 Geertz, *Works* 140.


11 Contemporary readers, argues Watson, are now comfortable with the idea that knowledge is constituted and can place reality construction procedures in the foreground rather than the background. *Recapturing*, 86–87.

12 Thanks to Horst Rutherof for alerting me to the problems with the phrase ‘radical relativism’.


14 Watson *Recapturing*, 87- 89.


16 Watson *Recapturing*, 86- 87.

17 Appropriating the term from an advertisement selling a non-alcoholic drink which tastes ‘alcoholic’, I think of cultural studies as something of a ‘Clayton’s discipline’, that is a discipline you have when you are not having a discipline. Cultural studies is a symbiotic discipline, one which depends upon all other forms for its existence while also enabling these to understand their formation as cultural identities. For example, one could describe the relationship of cultural studies to the rest of human thought, word and deed, as a mutual feeding. Temperamentally and behaviourally speaking, cultural studies is a libertine field, because its attention is drawn to the culture of knowledge production of anything from meat-eating to medicine, acne treatments to architecture, jeans to genes, anthropology to zoology. As might be expected, some of the objects and subjects upon which cultural studies rests its analytical gaze return an analytical gaze of their own to the culture of knowledge production in cultural studies.

18 Post-structuralism and feminism have fomented the revolution and reform which has stirred anthropology since the late sixties. The grounds of anthropological inquiry have been ‘reinvented’ by the scrutiny of the constitution of knowledge and identity that lies at the hub of cultural studies’ concerns. Yet anthropology is sceptical of cultural studies, because the latter
has in the past often read meanings and reached conclusions without empirical research to produce its evidence. Cultural studies has had analytical habits in which phenomenal analysis has been drawn from the authors’ experience and corroborated or contradicted by material from predecessors or responses from their peers. Due to the critiques levelled by anthropology, cultural studies has had a reputation of being lightweight and self-serving, because of this insufficient grounding in empirical sources beyond the academy. Over the last decade a spirited debate has arisen over the intersections and interfusions of the new polymorphous interdisciplinary discipline of cultural studies with the much older and less mutable disciplinary tradition of anthropology. For a collection of these debates see Stephen Nugent and Cris Shore (Eds), *Anthropology and Cultural Studies*.(Chicago: Pluto Press, 1997) The reader should be aware however that all contributions are, with one exception, by anthropologists. The opening essay ‘Brother Can you Spare a Paradigm’ sets out what is at stake, and I have chosen two essays to illustrate the nature of the divide, the criticisms of cultural studies’ *modus operandi* and the regard held for its analytical and theoretical insights. Jeremy Maclancy’s ‘Researching Culture in Basqueland’ is wholly critical of any ethnography in which the ethnographer is not immersed alone, in her field, for a prolonged period of time and thus both participates in huge quantities of dialogue and generates huge quantities of data. Good dialogue, he argues, can only be the product of extended periods of fieldwork, and he doubts the credibility of any ethnography which not so grounded, or of ethnographers who are less than long-time and regular participants and observers. (Maclancy had the privilege of one year preparing for his research, 21 months in his Basque field, and several returns). Signe Howell’s contribution ‘Cultural Studies and Social Anthropology: Contesting or Complementary Discourses?’ is much less austere, and has both complimentary things, and less complimentary things, to say about cultural studies. She does, however, insist that cultural studies needs ethnography to ground its arguments and, learning from anthropologys mistakes as well as its achievements, undertake its ethnographic endeavours with all due care. Howell lists five complaints against the methods of cultural studies, the two most important being that, “they focus upon cultural representations to the exclusion of presenting contextualized indigenous views and practices” and that they “frequently operate on a highly abstract, jargon ridden, meta-cultural studies, the two most important being that, “they focus upon cultural representations to the exclusion of presenting contextualized indigenous views and practices” and that they “frequently operate on a highly abstract, jargon ridden, meta-structure.”(107) Howell also accuses cultural studies of tending to be parochial, with its gaze fixed fairly firmly on topics and objects out of the West. I would argue that this is changing as I speak, with great diversifications of ethnic background and location among its practitioners. By contrast, Maclancy’s uncompromising attitude sets such a high standard as to almost certainly discourage lesser efforts. For me, cultural studies’ *bona fides* as a discipline are ultimately impugned by a lack of fieldwork and exalted by fieldwork that is both comparative and accessible.

19 George Stocking, *The Ethnographers Magic and other Essays in the History of Anthropology* (Madison, Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press 1992),13 –14 As Stocking suggests, because there has been no thorough exploration or archeology of fieldwork training, there exist only impressionistic generalisations of its nature and history. Although there has been some theorisation of fieldwork methods and processes, training for fieldwork has by and large been informal and unsystematic, and often almost entirely absent. See also the lively discussion by James Clifford in ‘Spatial Practices : Fieldwork, Travel and the Disciplining of Anthropology’ in *Anthropological Locations: Boundaries and Grounds of a Field Science* Akhil Gupta and James Ferguson (Eds), (Berkeley, Los Angeles: University of California Press; 1997),187. As Clifford observes, who could avoid the impression that fieldwork involves “an especially deep, extended and interactive research encounter” (187). Still, in a corrective argument he notes how this is merely an ideal, for in practice the “criteria of depth” in fieldwork (length of stay, mode of interaction, repeated visits, grasp of languages) have varied widely, as have actual research experiences.” (187). Important too is his reminder of the significant ethnographic engagements conducted under the auspices of the institutional mother of cultural studies in the Birmingham School.


22 Gupta and Ferguson, *Anthropological*, 1

23 ‘The field’ is a phrase of strong rural and pastoral connotations, and the image of anthropologist is still haunted by the archetype of “the lone, white, male fieldworker living for a year or more among the native villagers.” Gupta and Ferguson *Anthropological*, 11-12.


25 Gupta and Ferguson, *Anthropological*, 4-5.


As George Marcus argues, even fieldwork and ethnography that purport to visit a single field do nothing of the kind for they are generated and sustained from a variety of positions which, in the form of places institutions or persons, constitute a ‘multi-locale’ brought together by ethnographic praxis. *Ethnography*, 52.


See Kamal Viswaswaren ‘Betrayal: An Analysis in Three Acts’ in *Fictions of Feminist Ethnography*. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press 1994). Viswaswaren draws from, and extends, the opus of feminist reflections on, and analyses of, the ethnographic endeavour. Incorporating and embellishing lessons about the nature of truth and the problem of epistemology in the constitution of notions of identity and position which feminist scholarship has done so much to theorise, Viswaswaren discusses the necessity of recognising that ethnographic authority comprises gaps, lacks, failure and betrayal alongside its positive insights and obvious successes. Following Donna Haraway, Viswaswaren understands “the process of positioning as itself an epistemological act” which has everything to do with acts of knowing and knowledge production (48). Ethnographers, says Viswaswaren, have to admit to less authority, rather than trying to invoke more (41). Moreover, partiality vis a vis one’s own subject position and those of one’s subjects will always involve matters only partially understood. Thus the best accounts are honest attempts to practice reflexivity and accountability which mean that “partial knowledge is not so much choice as necessity” (50).


Personal communication with a local real estate agent suggests five slight variations on MoH housing style.

The 1996 Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), *Basic Community Profile Table For Coolbellup Table B01 Selected Characteristics: All Persons in Coolbellup*, shows that of a total population of 6,045 there were 1,888 persons over the age of 15 who were not in the labour force. Of these 567 were described as unemployed. *Table B.29 Annual Household Income: All Classifiable Households in Coolbellup* shows the largest concentration of income levels 73%, lay between $5001 and $50,000 per annum or $96 pw and $961 pw. respectively. A total of 10.3% of households had incomes between $50,001 and $150,000. Of the latter figure 6% comprise those households with incomes between $50,000 and $70,000. *Table B22 Occupation by Age by Sex : Employed Persons in Coolbellup* shows fairly low percentage of ‘Managers, and Administrators’ 3.3%, ‘Professional’ 4.2% and ‘Para-Professional’ 5.5%. Trades-persons constitute 16%, Clerks 13.5%, ‘Sales and Personal Service Workers’ 13.5 %, ‘Plant and Machine Operators and Drivers’ 11.9% and ‘Labourers and Related Workers’ 23.5%. *Table B07 Age by Living Arrangements by Sex* shows 503 people over the age of 65. In CDATA 96 [with] MapInfo Professional [electronic resource] : Census 1996. Canberra: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Troy, N.Y: Mapinfo Corp., 1997-1998

ABS 1996. *Basic Community Profile Table For Coolbellup Table B04 Aboriginality by Sex: All Persons in Coolbellup*, states the proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People in Coolbellup to be 4.9%.

‘The West Australian Property Report’ an industry sponsored advertising feature in *The West Australian* (Saturday March the 9th 2002) sources *The Real Estate Institute of Western Australia and the Department of Land Administration Titles Division* to present the average annual growth in real estate prices over a period of 30 years. While Coolbellup’s average annual growth in property prices over a 30 year period was nothing extraordinary (around 7-8%), the growth for the single year 2001-2002 stood at 14.1% and was thus amongst the highest in the Perth metropolitan area.
Chapter 2 Method and Field


42 The ABS 2001, Basic Community Profiles tables for Coolbellup are constructed somewhat differently to the 1996 census and thus rather hard to directly compare (see notes 38 and 39). According to the ABS 2001 Basic Community Profile For Coolbellup incomes seem to show some significant decline in the echelon up to $52,000 per annum once a rise of 11.5% in the Consumer Price Index is factored in Table B30 Weekly Family Income by Family Type showed 57% had incomes between $200 pw and $699 pw. which translates to $10, 400 - $36,348 per annum respectively. The proportion of households that had incomes of between $700 and $999 pw or $36,400 and $51,948 per annum was 20%. At the same time there would seem to be a significant rise in the echelon of household income between $1000 and $1,199 pw or $78,000 and $103, 948 per annum, a figure of 21%. A further 2% had incomes over $2000 pw or above $104,000 per annum. Also in decline was the unemployment figure Table B25 Age by Labour Force Status (Fulltime/Part-time) by Sex: Persons aged 15 years and Over shows a decrease in the number of people not in the labour force to 1649 (from 1,888) and a great reduction in the number of unemployed persons to 269 (from 567). Table B27 Occupation by Age by Sex: Employed Persons showed little change with 1996, although these were again organised somewhat differently: ‘Managers and Administrators 3.1%’Professionals 4.6%, ‘Associate Professionals 3.9%, Trades-persons and Related Workers’ 17.3%, Advanced Clerical and Service Workers 2.8 %, ‘Intermediate Clerical, Sales and Service Workers’,18.3%, ‘Intermediate Production and Transport Workers’ 12.8 %, ‘Elementary Clerical, Sales and Service Workers’ 9.8% and ‘Labourers and Related Workers’ 16.2%. http://www.abs.gov.au (accessed May 2nd, 2004).

43 ABS 1996, Basic Community Profile For Coolbellup Table B42 Household Type by Nature of Occupancy by Landlord Type compared with ABS 2001 Basic Community Profile Table B19 Dwelling Structure by Tenure Type and Landlord Type .http://www.abs.gov.au (accessed May 2nd, 2004).


48 Singh et al, The Anthropological, 4

49 Diu was important to the Portuguese because from Diu the Portuguese could mount naval patrols to protect the trade emanating from Goa and the Malabar coast. Situated at the head of the ocean intersection of trade routes from the Malabar coast, East Indies and Persian Gulf, Diu was a crucial military acquisition.

50 Singh et al, The Anthropological, 4-5.

51 For example, only one of Diu towns’ three cathedrals was in use and badly needed restoration for which there was no money in either the public purse or within the tiny remnant Catholic community. When compared to the ex-Portuguese colony of Goa it is interesting how few extant buildings in Diu show an undiluted Lusitanian influence. There was by comparison with Goa obviously much less investment in domestic architectural infrastructure. One speculates, but is unable to confirm, that these differences reflect the fact that, whereas Goa was the centre of the source of a jealously coveted trade in spice, metals and textiles, Diu’s main reason for existence was to serve as a guard post in this lucrative trade. Besides, Diu’s poor, rocky, salt affected soil does not encourage much in the way of non-trade related settlement. There are a few examples of pure Lusitanian Baroque in Diu. The native people who worked for the Portuguese incorporated some architectural influences but on the whole generally built according to their own traditions. Only buildings used for administration, protection or worship show undiluted period architecture and there are no intact examples of domestic architecture from the earliest period of colonisation. Even those built much later in the colonial period are either already in ruins or are gradually falling into decrepitude. In this respect Diu is again unlike Goa. For though Goa has an equally long history of Portuguese colonisation, there are large numbers of Portuguese period buildings in active use and architecture in the colonial mode is being both restored and recreated. Compared to the colonial architectural legacy of Goa, Diu’s heritage is significantly less opulent and ornamental in conception. In Goa sacred, administrative and domestic architecture is richer,
grander and more gracious, and architectural style ranges from a restrained Baroque to the heavily ornamented and curvaceous flourishes of the Rococo and the Neo-Gothic.

52 The total population of Diu, according to the Census of India 1981 was 30,421. “Of the total population Hindu’s then accounted for 93.11 percent, Muslims for 6 percent Christians 0.76 percent, Jains for 0.09 percent, Sikhs for 0.03 percent and 0.01 per cent professed other religions.” cited in Singh et al Anthropological, 11. In the ten years between 1981 and 1991 Diu experienced a huge 28.62% growth in population as the Census for 1991 records Diu’s then population at 39,485. By then the ratio of religions had altered slightly, Hindus increasing to 93.5 % and Muslim’s and Christians both declining to 5.57 % and 0.64% respectively. In 2001, the census records a population of 44,110 and an 11.71% decadal growth rate, which is half or less than half of many places in India and also of India in general. As yet there is no data available on the current religious complexion for Diu. Also, the Census of India Provisional Census Results shows how, unusually for India where males generally outnumber females, Diu has more females (23,269) than males (20,841) in Table 1 Population by Sex and Decadal growth of population during 1981-1991 and 1991-2001 in http://www.censusindia.net/cendata1/index2.html (accessed May 2nd, 2004) As yet there is no released data for religious affiliation ratios in the 2001 Census.

53 The bridge has facilitated the growth of tourism and the provision of its concomittant infrastructure in accommodation and the provision of food and transport. Combined with the installation of ‘new’ technologies of television, fax, and the internet, tourism has created an overall economic boom for a significant proportion of the local economy.


56 According to the Anthropological Survey all communities report “the existence of a very strong traditional panchayat [n.b jati or sub caste constituted councils] which regulate their social life. The punishment awarded by such panchayat for infringement of rules of solidarity is harsh indeed! The data on linkages of communities is impressive. Most of them are linked with one another through their traditional occupations. It seems that the tradition of sharing is much stronger in this area, and that the rigidity of castes and untouchability is relatively low.” Singh et al, The Anthropological, iii.

57 The ‘Collector’ is the abbreviated form of ‘Tax Collector’, a function that is no longer required but one that retains the juridical and administrative authority invested in them during the period of British colonisation, and subsequently transposed to independent India. The Collector heads the departments of Education, Health, Agriculture and Law and Order while the Municipal government controls the distribution of Federal funds for the provision and maintenance of municipal projects.


59 Gujarat enforces a blanket prohibition on the consumption of alcohol in public venues, and has done since its inception. This state of prohibition owes much to the fact that Gujarat is the home state of Mahatma Ghandi - a great human being and, fortunately for Diu, a wowser. Crossing from Gujarat into Diu to drink is thus a practise as old as India’s independence from the British. Domestic tourism, especially in the form of Gujaratis wanting to drink, increased significantly with the installation of the Thad bridge. International tourism soon followed suit. Nowadays, because of the bridge and its volume of traffic the inevitable illegal trade in smuggling has received an immense boost. Also, in contrast to the pre-bridge era when most of the alcohol sold in Diu was made locally it is now imported from other ‘wet’ states across India.

60 I first visited Diu in 1995. Then we were among a large number of Indian weekenders and day-trippers but only a few other foreigners. There was nothing like the number of foreign tourists, nor the burgeoning of varieties of accommodation we found upon our return two years later in 1997. Such is the exponential, multiplication effect in a global market of such literature as the ‘Lonely Planet’ guides. The Lonely Planet series of guide and travel books covering many countries, and often specific cities or areas within countries, now dominate the market in travel literature. The Lonely Planet series is usually reprinted and updated every year. Most travellers, from backpackers to five star resort customers, seem to carry a Lonely Planet guide. Becoming a traveller in tandem with the rise of spectacular marketing success of these books has led me to observe at first hand the multiplicative effects they have on many previously ‘undiscovered’ places. Once Lonely Planet recommends somewhere, this place or route typically becomes ‘discovered’ and opportunistic development rapidly follows. The nature and extent of development may have substantial negative implications, undermining the reasons certain places were identified as desirable to begin with. Developmentally speaking, quantitative change tends to foster qualitative change. As visitor numbers proliferate, they can seriously alter platial characteristics and experience. In the two-year interval between my visits to Diu, such quantitative and qualitative change by development was obvious. By the time we
left in early 1998, several five star resorts had been proposed or were in the early stages of construction, and the tiny airport
was receiving some significant upgrading to cope eventually with daily connections with Bombay and Ahmedabad. Only
large established centres of tourism seem to escape the gravitational pull of The Lonely Planet endorsement. See for
example Hugh Finlay (Ed), *The Lonely Planet, India: A Travel Survival Kit* (Hawthorn, Victoria: Lonely Planet, 1996) and
compare it with the (1992) edition.

61 Indeed, it could be argued that the ‘nature strip’ deserves the appellation of a ubiquitous misnomer since they rarely
support more than single tree per block and border most Australian suburban streets.

62 Deducting the unextended house floor space of around 100 square metres or the extended house floor space of 120
square metres from an average 700 square metre block leaves a large amount of ‘garden’.

63 Vegetation and the weather are, for me, the source of both graceful proportion and welcome irregularity in Australian
suburbia. Trees and clouds lack linear regularity and help to vary the ungenerous proportions with which, in my opinion, the
majority of the suburban environment in Australia is organized. Vegetation lends visual and textural variety as well as the
necessary presence of the plant kingdom that is such a rich and diverse form of life. It is possible that variation in line and
colour are necessary ingredients to the cultivation and facilitation of the phenomenon known as civic pride. My own archi-
textural conjecture is that vegetation mediates pleasure by simultaneously invigorating and softening suburban
environments. Behind, in front of and between the regular, rectangular, inorganic *poesis* of houses, the organic *physis* of
nature springs in irregular ways, making places more diverse, more interesting, and less monotonous. The irregularity of
vegetation, contributes to perceptual complexity or variety because wind induced movement involves continual shifts of
line, colour and sound, all of which can serve as a source of pleasure, interest and imagination.

64 See for example the writings of the architect Robin Boyd, who wrote many disparaging words on the lack of architectural
imagination that he thought characterised the boom of housing construction in Australia in the nineteen fifties and sixties.
And, though it is unfashionable to say so, there are resonances between Boyd’s descriptions and my own responses to
Coolbellup. See for example Boyd’s *The Australian Ugliness* (Harmondsworth, Eng: Penguin Cheshire, 1963); *The Great
Great Australian Dream* (Australia: Pergamon Press, 1972) and *Australia’s Home: Why Australians Built the Way They Did*

65 Its educational to compare as an example the narrated experiences of Diane Bell with those of Claude Levi-Strauss. Bell
went into her central Australian field with her children. She introduces her children at the beginning, and from time to time
you are told various things about their activities with, and their responses to, the Indigenous community among whom they
live. By contrast, Levi-Strauss neglects to mention that he is accompanied by his wife on his Brazilian expeditions until
page 394! See Bell’s *Daughters of the Dreaming* (St Leonards, N.S.W: Allen and Unwin, 1973) and Levi-Strauss’s *Tristes

66 It is still my hope that I will write up this material either in a separate paper or in a book version of this thesis.

67 There are two appendices. The first gives a short description of each of my respondents and the second contains the
evolution of the interview process as reflected in my growing list of questions.

68 Due to a later and late discovered confusion on the part of my translators in Diu this term was translated as ‘scared’. As a
result I decided that the small amount of data I had collected in Coolbellup on the subject although interesting did not justify
inclusion since comparisons with the highly charged religious context that is India were impossible.

69 For descriptions of *haveli* architecture see chapter five.
Chapter Three At Home in the World

3.1 ‘At Home in the World’: An Exposition on the Significance of Home

Having encountered Diu and Coolbellup as historical, geographical, topographical and sensuous entities, it is time to meditate on the notion of dwelling vis a vis home. Home is a matter of connection, identification and appropriation, involving two kinds of intelligence, the affective intelligence of emotion and the cognitive intelligence of thought. Yet, because emotions may be thoughtful and thoughts emotional, we need ways of discussing home which acknowledge the irreducibility of the intersection of feeling and reason. To this end I argue that, as we consider home, we must attempt to elucidate the mundane and elusory nature of experience, which Raymond Williams called a ‘structure of feeling’. It is a difficult idea to put into practice and an even more difficult one to capture, since its aim is to make contact with modes of experiencing as they are actually lived, and thus to undermine the tendency of social analysis to treat experience as categorical subordinations of fixed forms. To seek home as a structure of feeling, is to attempt to represent what Williams describes as “specifically affective elements of consciousness and relationships; not feeling against thought, but thought as felt and feeling as thought.” Williams recognised the equally valid claim for such representations to be called ‘structures of experience’ but decided against it, since this phrase tends to invoke a past tense that works against talking about “practical consciousness of a present kind in a living and inter-relating continuity.” To try and present a ‘structure of feeling’ he argues, means that we are “concerned with meanings and values as they are actively lived and felt”. We thus try and show the seams and edges where experience meets language on the surface of everyday life. Methodologically speaking a ‘structure of feeling’ is the formation of a cultural hypothesis derived from attempts to understand elements and their connections in a generation or period, and ought to, “always to be returned, interactively, to such evidence.” Thus, instead of analysing to reduce, classify, marginalise or eliminate the subjective and elevate the valorised objective category, I want to engage in analysis that privileges thoughtful feelings, expressed as opinions, inclinations, hopes, wills and desires. At the same time however these have to be understood in relation to more formal and systematic beliefs and as partial and contingent aggregates of the continual process of subjectification. Every time home is hailed an interpellation in the dialectical field of context and circumstance occurs. To call home ‘home’ is the principle act of interpellation, a hailing of the experience of dwelling. Interpellation is a constitutive and associative device that links subjects with their social and material surroundings. Acts of interpellation are acts of nomination, and imply location and the recognition of certain kinds of bonding or mergence between persons and
places. Repeated interpellations of relations between person and places tend to be mutually defining. As Kim Dovey puts it: “place takes its identity from the dweller, and the dweller takes his or her identity from the place [and] there is an integrity, a connectedness between the dweller and the dwelling.”

Hailing home takes place in statements such as ‘being home’, ‘going home’ and ‘calling home’. In each instance, the term home is the subject or object of the statement. Home is also hailed in expressions where it qualifies events or objects, such as ‘home-life’, ‘home-body’ and ‘home-made.’ The platial connections and appropriations which, over time, coalesce to constitute identifications, emerge out of our acquiescence to repeated interpellations of home as it is inserted and mobilised in discourse. The route is circular, for discourse has an inherently reflexive quality with understanding.

As home is hailed, so too are the subjective connections, appropriations and identifications for the instance of home in question. Specific meanings for home develop as memories gather to summon and recall past associations and applications. Interpellation brings the charge of experience. The extent of the connection, appropriation and identification depends, however, upon the depth and frequency of experiential charges. The everyday experiential interplay of dwelling between person and place, which Yi Fu Tuan, in a related but more restricted context, called a ‘field of care’

To have a home, or to be at home, is to have and to dwell in a ‘field of care.’ To care is to ‘care for’ and ‘to take care of’. To ‘have a care’, or ‘take care’ is to contribute to and participate in things which matter. Caring is involvement and investment and an act of appropriation. Acts of appropriation (from the Latin appropriare) mean to make something one’s own. Appropriations transform mere association into modes of connection and, if the connections endure and deepen, into modes of identification. Appropriation is the verb that describes the action that transfers meaning across, among, and between the oppositional qualities which form the dialectical rubric wherein notions of home lie. Appropriation describes the dialectical exchanges of dwelling, the process of give and take with the world. We take aspects of the world and make them our own, and as such are appropriated by the world. Appropriation means both caring for and being cared for. Appropriations, or the exchange of care between our being and our world, are what Heidegger called the nature of our dwelling. Dwelling occurs as a gathering or belonging within the ‘fourfold’ the four poles of existence. In Being and Time Heidegger equates Being-in-the-world with care, “Dasein when understood ontologically is care. Because Being-in-the-world belongs essentially to Dasein, its Being towards the world is essentially concern.”
The axes of the realm of existence are earth and sky, divinities and mortals, which together describe the location of Being-in-the world and our consciousness of this world. The fourfold is the realm in which all things are, all places are created and sustained, and all locations come into being. Dwelling, says Heidegger is “always a staying with things.” Dwelling is the actualisation of the gathering within the rubric of existence of the belonging that is being. “To say”, argues Heidegger “that mortals are, is to say that in dwelling they persist through spaces by virtue of their stay among things and locations.” As a staying with things “dwelling preserves the fourfold by bringing the presencing of the fourfold into things.” Staying with things cannot be other than a continual dialectic as consciousness moves between itself and the world, investing the world with the cares of existence and incorporating or admitting the world into consciousness. As Dovey has suggested:

It is through our engagement with the world, our dwelling, embodying both caring and taking, that the world discloses itself. As we open ourselves to the world of things and places we bring them meaning, and at the same time these things and places lend meaning to our sense of identity. ... The dialectic of appropriation embodies the emergence of environmental meaning through interaction. It is the dialectic between personal change and environmental change, the process through which we change our environment and we are in turn changed by environmental experience.

Dwelling is a ‘field of care’, a dynamic field of giving and receiving, of excorporation and incorporation, a process of what Anne Buttimer calls “lived reciprocity”, a processual dialectic between persons and places. Dwelling is appropriation, and dwelling at home is an especially privileged act of appropriation in which the care invested in the world, and very particular aspects of the world, become incorporated in one’s being, and part of consciousness. Calling home ‘home’ in repeated acts of interpellation not only represents deeds of care, but also bestows care in acts of appropriation. An act of appropriation is a dialectic of negotiation, of giving and receiving, to produce subjective and collective forms of identity.

Conceived in the broadest possible outlines, home, and its opposite homelessness, are intricate weaves of experience in a highly privileged series of relationships between people and their environments. The bonds between person and place depend for meaning on their opposite, upon their negation. Thus it is important to understand that which is not home, so as to comprehend what constitutes home. The poet Seamus Heaney has suggested that place is simultaneously both ‘humanized and humanizing’, and there can be no doubt that a home is usually one, if not the most, humanised and humanising environments in our experience. Inverting Heaney’s
definition, the negation of home in homelessness is the subjugation of place to space, and reflects either incomprehension or failures of the care of humanising intention. Conditions of homelessness emerge as the lack, or negation, of identity so that, in this thesis, a condition of homelessness is understood to be not only the lack of a place to live, but the presence of conditions which threaten, erode or disenfranchise the humanised place of home. To help comprehend some of the modes of dwelling associated with home I am using the dialectical framework developed by Kim Dovey, but with a simple qualification. Dovey’s scheme uses the terms space and spatiality whereas, as I argued in chapter one, place and platiality suit much better the profound sense of particularity identity and meaning that coalesce in the notion of ‘home’. Using place and platiality, acknowledges the contextual specificity of conceptions of home as places of indigenous constitution and irreducible *genius loci*. Space and spatiality are terms I usually reserve for abstracted features of the environment, geographical, legal or administrative notions, that eschew subjective or social particularities.

Dovey argues that conceptions of home as social order are “at once extremely flexible and yet conservative.” They are flexible because, while home may be embodied in a building, it is more often about certain patternings of experience and behaviour. This means of course, that because the notion of home is governed by certain sorts of relationships, it can undergo transposition from place to place. In this way, a sense of home may be re-evoked if some of its most significant patterns are renewed or restored. Thus the flexibility of the term home allows a sense of home to emerge over many scales and within many contexts that can induce ambiguity unless scale and context are specified. One cannot but concur with Michael Jackson, who observes how the term home is “shot through with ambiguity” and Roderick Lawrence who reminds us that this ambiguity can never be “taken for granted.” Home may entertain different sorts of circumstance, so that what counts on one occasion becomes no longer relevant once circumstances have changed. Home may be as large and complex as a nation state, or as small and personal as a bedroom. Although in English and Germanic languages, home most commonly uses a geographical location as a reference point, this is not necessary. One can feel at home in the realm of ideas and/or practices that are unconnected with buildings or geography, such as when one talks about being at home with philosophical or religious ideas. Nor is home a term of mutual exclusion, so that, if in one instance it is deployed when overseas to refer to the country of origin, it is also available in the next, in another context, and in another sentence, to describe the temporary lodgings of every hotel one occupies while abroad. The foci of this thesis are those notions of home involved with the particularities of residential dwelling. Attention in
this chapter is dedicated to examining the location of the residence. It seeks to understand if, and to what extent, the notion home is extended beyond the house to the neighbourhood or community.

Dovey identifies three intersecting orders of being which, in one combination or another structure notions of home. To analyse the experiential structure of home depends on looking at home as a platial, temporal and socio-cultural order in dialectics that disclose modes of connection, identification and appropriation. Dovey’s scheme has three sets of platial dialectics. In the first ‘home’ and ‘journey’ form a dialectic which in turn subsumes the dialectics of: ‘rest’ versus ‘movement’ and ‘being at home’ versus ‘the yearning for home’. In the second set ‘order’ is in dialectical relation with ‘chaos’ which subsumes the dialectics of ‘the familiar’ versus ‘the strange’, ‘security’ versus ‘danger’, ‘the sacred’ versus ‘the profane’ and ‘autonomy’ versus ‘heteronomy’. The final set sees ‘inside’ in relation to ‘outside’ and subsumes ‘room’ versus ‘house’ and ‘house’ versus ‘city’. Dovey’s social dialectics comprise ‘the self’ versus ‘the other’ ‘the public’ versus ‘the private’ and ‘community’ versus ‘identity.’ Attribution of social and platial will change according to context, for social and platial are mutable and not absolute positions. Hence the dialectical pairs of ‘outside’ and ‘inside possess strong material orientations, in which the house or residence is like the tool which actualises home. Having said this however, ‘inside’ and ‘outside’ can also be understood as metaphors for knowledge, as in the knowledge of ‘insiders’ as opposed to the knowledge of ‘outsiders’. Similarly, while public and private may refer primarily to social distinctions, they can also be viewed as material delineations and refer respectively to rooms and houses, as opposed to suburbs, cities and countries. All notions are products of social interpretations of social and physical reality, and will tend to acquire greater reality the longer an interpretation remains active and the more often they are deployed. Over time, patterns of experience and behaviour stabilise connections, appropriations and identifications of whatever environmental arrangements and props accompany and evoke such experience. Home is a cybernetic as a well as a dialectical process. Platial and temporal longevity cultivate personal identifications within wider socio-cultural forms of identity. Taking the house for the moment as the locus of a series of living patterns, sleeping, eating, work and relaxation tend to be central to notions of house as home, and are assumed in housing design. Yet there are also diverse culturally specific or eccentric idiosyncratic activities, which are practised at home and realise subjective relations and conceptions of home. Spiritual and sexual practices, television viewing, gardening and cooking each actualise active relationships to a house and help to realise its conception as a home. As Dovey states, the phenomenon of home “comes to be
embodied in this ordered structure that is at once spatial, temporal and socio-cultural.\textsuperscript{26} Ultimately, subject position, disposition and culturally shaped subjectivity, determine epistemology and decide what counts as home.

Constitutionally the notion home is always complex, and this complexity is due to its constitution in substantial and perennial material modes (like towns, rooms and people) together with insubstantial ephemeral modes (like words, thoughts, and smells). Home is at once a tangible and intangible and a static and dynamic phenomenon. The intricacies of its existence mean that home can be seen as a site where many modes of connection, appropriation and identification ‘take place’. To apprehend what home might ‘mean’ to its inhabitants involves more than simply distinguishing and treating criteria singly, but observing how they combine and are woven or layered together. It also means seeing these multiple significations in relations with one another, a move that is crucial if conceptions of home are to be understood as dynamic relations of person and place. There are no necessary departure points when it comes to analysing the modes of constitution which shape home, since each element bears some relationship to every other element in a Möbius strip of continuous interaction and feedback. One must however begin somewhere, and, for reasons of concentric gradation, I begin with a brief excursion around the body and work outwards.

All terrestrial places that are counted as home are the result of bodily activity, knowledge and investment. Home is achieved physically and symbolically, by ensuring control of bodily access and behaviour, to produce platially “demarcated territory” within an environment that may or may not be signified or secured by other means.\textsuperscript{27} Home, as Dovey reminds us, is “the environment we inhabit day after day until it becomes taken-for-granted and is unselfconscious” and, because this sense of familiarity is “rooted in bodily routines”, the home environment is made predictable.\textsuperscript{28} Home thus involves a claim on place which is at once recognised and controlled by psychology and physiology. To be at home. is to be in control of intention and orientation of a very particular place and platial circumstances. Relations of proximity and precedent are thus both important in defining home, though, they may not be equally so in every situation. Much depends on the length and strength of bodily association and investment in place that fosters bodily familiarity. As Dovey argues, a sense of home develops out of the dialectic relation of ‘insideness’ and ‘outsideness’, that is out of relations between subjective and social perspectives, which develop over time and “reflect like a mirror personal modes of identification that are not apparent to outsiders.”\textsuperscript{29} Home environments tend to become taken for granted and
unselfconscious, so that insiders may lack any deep understanding of their own experience, while to outsiders a lack of familiarity makes home imperceptible. Whereas ‘outsider’, or socially derived interpretations of home, tend to view and judge the tangible material of home, and see social identity reflected therein, ‘insider’, or subjective interpretations, add layers of intangible experience derived from a history of dialectical experience of lived reciprocity.

Home is conservative, argues Dovey, to the extent that the socio-cultural order that governs it is taken-for-granted and habitually under-examined. Both the emotional sensibilities with which home is invested, and the conceptions with which it is defined, are emblematic of Pierre Bourdieu’s idea of habitus, which sees every subject or environment as a governing, but mutable, socio-cultural construction. Bourdieu’s development of the notion of habitus occurred as the result of ethnographic fieldwork in Kabylia, Algeria, from which his analysis of the Kabyle house has become a famous example of the objective structuring of sensibility and the governing and organising dispositions of socio-cultural logic, with all that this involves for the division of labour and power especially between the sexes.\(^{30}\) The Kabyle house exemplified how houses can be seen as “the principal locus for embodying the basic categories of the world.”\(^{31}\) Advancing the enormous importance of this idea, I wish to suggest the obvious next step, which is to argue that not only houses, but any instance of ‘home’, is best understood as an articulation of habitus. As we have seen, the notion of home has a ubiquitous domain, where an acquired knowledge of a myriad range of connections and appropriations circulate and gain the status of familiar and taken-for-granted concepts of self and collective identity. Home provides a locus for the reception, generation and circulation of taxonomies of knowledge, practice and objects of all kinds. Home embodies and combines these as forms of practised knowledge, or praxis.\(^{32}\) Home is thus a fertile field for the production, maintenance, and modification of the structuring structures of perception, thought, action, and thus for the application of the notion of habitus. Habitus is coextensive with the dialectics of socio-cultural fields of belief and knowledge, together with the modes of use and practice that operationalise these fields and make their realities. Hence home is a principle site for the generation and transmission of habitus and, in cybernetic fashion, both the notion of home itself, and each instance of home, is served and strengthened by the habitus of socio-cultural mores. These provide both the conditions for home’s expression, and those which each particular instance of home articulates. Home, as Dovey argues, is “a schema of relationships that brings order, integrity, and meaning to experience in place - a series of connections between person and world.”\(^{33}\) Home is an active dynamic relationship that promotes all kinds of connectedness: connectedness with people, with place, and with the past, present and
future. It thus follows, that to experience instances of homelessness means to lose essential forms of connection and appropriation with those people, places or times that promote self-definition and identification. The loss of connections that creates a sense, or actual state, of homelessness may be just as intangible as the sense and experiences of home. Losses of connection are identifiable as those moments where home was, but isn’t any more, or where a home is desired, but cannot be realised. The elements of the dialectics which produce connection and give rise to the habitus, sense and experience of home, are weakened with the development of the sense and experiences of homelessness to the point of disorganisation, if not destruction. Nevertheless, the elements at play in the disconnection of homelessness, for all their corrosive outcomes, are no less dialectical or processual.

Change, of course, is a constant, but losses of connection are the result of changes whose proportions are not accommodated or managed within the existing sense and experience of home. Change may arrive at any time, in any guise, to alter familiar forms of connection, appropriation and identification. Agents of change often lack personal attributes, and wear the anonymous features of state or corporate structures of bureaucratic and technological rationality. These institutionalised entities possess the power to reinvent the world according to rationales which either neglect to acknowledge the non-substantial or intangible aspects of life, or treat them like substantial parts of reality, and so fail to respond adequately to life’s complexity. Hence, intangible aspects of home like memories are forgotten, or reductions and simplifications render that which is intangible more palpable, often by putting a price on it. The interrelated and interactive properties and processes of rationalisation, technologisation, bureaucratisation, and commodification, argues Dovey, have, “eroded the traditional sense of home and paralyse its re-emergence.” These forces break down and dispel the sense and experience of home, and replace it with the sense and experience of homelessness. Perceptions of homelessness are fed by feelings of bewildered helplessness or alienation, due to excesses of commodification, rationalisation and technological power, in which social interaction is dominated by the pressures of time and the conditions of exchange. The legislative and bureaucratically administered decision to resume land to build a new freeway, for instance, will typically compensate the occupants for no more than value of their property. Yet, for those with homes on the receiving end of such decisions, money is only part of the issue. Nonetheless there is no choice, for a relationship with the process of land resumption is an obligation enforced by law.
Besides the impersonal forces that create conditions of anomie and alienation at the expense of a sense of home, it is important to point out that homelessness can also be the result of very personal circumstances, such as poverty and inter-familial conflict. In such conditions, the forces of disconnection that threaten or undermine connection are seen as a phenomenon of increasing disorder and incoherence. For instance, when a gambling or drinking addiction eventually results in the loss of one’s accommodation, family and reputation in the local community. The counterpart of exploring those conditions that can bestow the sense and experience of home is an awareness of the depredations and failures, whether personal or impersonal, which produce actual homelessness or a sense of homelessness.

Time now to take theory to discussions of home as mobilised in Coolbellup and Diu. Apprehended as structures of feeling, Coolbellup and Diu are modes of being-in-the-world. Notions of home, as they relate to particular instances of shelter and residence, are inevitably contextualised by the way their location participates in producing both the sense of home and its negation, homelessness. Representations of home within the situational significance of Diu and Coolbellup show the structure of feeling of the mis-en-scene which mediates the ‘insideness’ of residential dwelling, with the ‘outsideness’ of dwelling in the world as such. In the rest of this chapter, I focus on the discursive rendering of the geographical, topographical, social and historical aspects of Diu and Coolbellup to reflect notions of home or homelessness. I hope to show the ways in which connection, appropriation and identity are perceived as served, suffering, or failed in this small town and suburb, respectively.

3.2 At Home in the World: Surveying the Situational Significance of Diu.

A majority of my Diu respondents (10) were born either in the town on the island or had moved from the small mainland enclave of the Union Territory of Diu known as Ghogla. A large minority of my respondents (7) however had moved into the area from places further away, either as the result of marriage or for the purposes of employment. The differences of initial location, of ‘insiders’ versus ‘outsiders’, were present as differences of response to the town and island environment as they, often favourably, compared their past with their present location. But overall, though there were some criticisms, there were no purely negative portrayals of Diu as an environment and context for residential dwelling. Indeed a large majority of people had exceptionally positive things to say both about the town and the island of Diu, and even those who were critical still espoused their appreciation or pleasure of various aspects. Most critical comments involved perceptions of the detrimental affects of urban development and change,
though a small body of critical opinion issuing from some of the immigrants was directed at the manners of the more established population.

### 3.2.1 “Nice and clean and a bit like paradise”: Aesthetic Perceptions of Diu

Marianne was perhaps Diu’s most rhapsodic exponent. Marianne belongs to the remnant Catholic population of Diu but was born and raised in Goa, another of Portugal’s colonies in India. Goa has an international reputation as a tropical paradise with its verdant rice paddies and majestic coconut groves. Yet, Marianne had no hesitation extending the compliment of “a little paradise” to Diu, though it is much less fertile and has a rather rocky and windswept appearance. Most of Marianne’s adoration was directed towards this windswept beauty and the calm and compact convenience of the Diu town. As Marianne extolled the aesthetic virtues of Diu’s topographical beauty, she associated them with Diu’s relatively clean environment and commended its lack of pollution. Diu was “nice and clean and a bit like paradise.” It’s comparative lack of pollution was a common theme that found resonance with others, as Diu was compared with other Indian towns. My Brahmin neighbour, Ashwinbhai, for instance had been an economic immigrant to Diu from his native place Jamnagar in Gujarat. Taking over the management of an untenanted temple, Ashwin was both very grateful for his turn of fortune and for the beautiful location in which he now dwelt. He compared Diu favourably with Jamnagar, not only because of his improved livelihood which had changed his life “in absolutely every respect”, but because he felt so “whole-heartedly happy” in Diu and was deeply appreciative of the aesthetic gifts of its natural environment, which provided, he said, “as peaceful a place as I have ever seen anywhere.”

Like Ashwin, Hiraben, Laxhmiben and Krishnaben felt that only much better economic prospects would induce them to live somewhere else. Hira articulated the greatest reluctance to the idea of moving, in spite of the fact that her family were so poor that their economic plight sometimes kept her awake at night. Laxhmi’s son, Natwar, had never lived anywhere else, nor he said would he want to, unless the climate was identical. With her two small children, Krishnaben waited in Diu to join her husband in London until he was well established. Krishna had been born in Diu and had spent her entire life there, except for eight years in Rajkot a big city in Gujarat once she had married. As Krishna had never been out of India before, the move to London was going to entail a huge shift of circumstance, and would require an unknown number of adjustments to her assumptions and practices of dwelling. Krishna was about to renegotiate dialectics of home
versus journey and the familiar versus the strange. Current and established connections and identifications were to be relinquished for a completely new place and mode of dwelling.  

Shrivesh Kumar was also in Diu for reasons of employment. A soldier in the Indian army, his duty for fourteen years had been to provide part of the guard detail for Diu’s customs house. Although theoretically he could, at any time, be transferred, Shrivesh was philosophic and pragmatic, and said he felt at home in Diu because this was where his duty lay. Shrivesh found Diu to be “a silent place” and this peacefulness suited his condition as single man. Estranged from his father, and consequentially his natal home, Shrivesh wanted to call home “somewhere in the world” that would be permanent. Though fourteen years in Diu seemed to more or less have decided the question, the possibility of transferral hung like a sword that would sever the familiar, substitute the unfamiliar, and so create disorder in retirement. Still, despite uncertainty over the shape of his destiny, Shrivesh was transmuting a ‘yearning for home’ into the more robust sentiment of ‘being-at-home.’ The transmutation process involved cultivating an attitude of acceptance of, and planning for, a future in Diu as though things were to continue on as they had, and there was to be no eruption of the dialectic of movement and rest.

A single mother, Vijayaben had had many “unhappy days…filled with bitter experiences”, yet, she found solace in Diu’s natural beauty. Though not as effusive as Marianne, or as reverent as Ashwin, Vijaya articulated a secure sense of contentment with the place she had dwelt her entire life. But Vijaya did not have the means to live anywhere else. At the same time however, she realised that finance was not as relevant as sentiment, and proclaimed she did not want to live anywhere but Diu, for she felt “happy in Diu in every respect.” Vijaya had been to Goa and told of how much she had liked it so that, because its similarities to Diu, were she ever so lucky she would like to live there. Vijaya spoke of Goa has having “no difference to Diu”, and in so doing, drew on their similar relationship to the ocean, tropical climate, and Portuguese heritage. With its resemblance to Diu, Vijaya had sensed connections with Goa, and thus the conditions for the development of appropriation and identification, and a possible alternative home. This sense of connection is interesting, for Vijaya has no Portuguese ancestry and her visit to Goa had been both singular and brief. But then, resemblance triggers feeling and sensibility which, composed as they are of the compound deposits of perception and experience laid down in memory, may be neither retrievable, nor wholly explicable. For Vijaya, the charms of Diu had elicited such positive responses that they could cushion even the tragedy of desertion by her husband.
Pramila’s understanding of home was strongly connected to the area in which her family lived together. She said, “if we go to another town, we don’t feel like it could be home.” Ahead of beauty, but equal with the quality of peace for Pramilaben and her husband, were Diu’s healthy environment and civic amenities. They had lived in the U.T of Diu since their marriage twenty-six years ago, twelve on the mainland enclave of Ghogla and thirteen in the town of Diu itself. The move to Diu town was regarded as exceptionally beneficial, for Diu provided “a healthy way of living.” Pramila characterised Diu’s entire environment in scenic and theatrical terms as being “like a good show.” These unique qualities, moreover, also inspired a religious analogy, for Pramila thought Diu was “like one temple” and felt herself to be blessed to live there. The opposition between cleanliness and beauty, vis a vis pollution and ugliness, participates in the dialectic of order vis a vis chaos, and, as is evident here, shows a desire to seek dwelling within the former and transcend the latter.

Vikrambhai’s attitude towards Diu was quietly approving. He had lived there for four years, only for reasons of employment and career development. But his reserved and subdued manner did not, however, mean that he didn’t appreciate his dwelling place. At twenty-three, his job in Diu was Vikram’s first piece of paid employment as a trainee veterinary assistant. As a young man, negotiating the journey out of his natal home and making his way in the world, Vikram negotiated the dialectics of home and journey, order and chaos. Relative to his age, the time in Diu represented one sixth of his life or almost all of his adult experience. Time, and a benign and undemanding environment, had conditioned a feeling of home in Diu. A reserved young man, Vikram wished to concentrate on his job and be friendly with his neighbours, while remaining cautious of becoming too involved in other people’s lives. Vikram’s attitude of quiet appreciation was even more pronounced in his friend, and my research assistant, Pareshbhai who, though he seldom referred to the charms of Diu’s topography, clearly enjoyed walking to, and sitting in, its rocky landscape for rest and replenishment. Paresh was also interested in delineating features which attracted other people. Many of Diu’s positive features of natural and cultural heritage have become linked to its development as a tourist attraction, and involved substantial improvements to civil infrastructure as well as large increases of business and employment opportunities.

3.2.2 “The roads were not broad, the tourists were less and the hotels only four in number”: Perceptions on the Changes Wrought by Development.
Pareshbhai, who had lived in Diu for seven years, was an unusually sensitive barometer of change, and quite clear on the degree of transformation Diu had undergone in the seven years of his residence. Paresh was better educated than the most of Diu’s population and, rather than emmigrating to Canada like his brothers, had decided to dedicate his multi-layered professional qualifications to India. The period of his residence represents something of a historical and psychological frontier, as it spans the time before and after the bridge was built connecting the mainland to the island. The bridge was a watershed development that brought many substantial changes in its wake, especially the substantial increase of domestic and international tourism. In many ways Diu had changed in front of Paresh’s eyes. Before arriving, Paresh had heard many things connected with Diu’s comparative isolation, such as how there were few vehicles plying its roads, and how this lack of traffic had given it a reputation for “sleepiness”. When he first came the bridge was under construction, it was “not open for travelling purposes, the roads were not broad, the tourists were less, and the hotels were only four in number.”

As a migrant to the Diu area, he had both the opportunity and the ability to read, observe and reflect on his chosen location. Consequently he had assembled many pieces of information, which ranged from geological, geographic and climatic profiles, to the approximate population of its diverse caste communities. Diu’s developmental changes drew considerable comment, as it had been declared a tax free zone for fifteen years, and had attracted a lot of business. The change in government policy had seen the allocation of government land along the waterfront in exchange for private investment. But the biggest change had been in the price of land. When Paresh first arrived, land in the centre of Diu had cost about three hundred rupees a square metre, but was now exchanged for around seven thousand. The policies that had encouraged investment, catalysed rapid development and stimulated a steep escalation in the value of land had of course affected the attitude of landowners, who sold land at handsome profits. The selling up of land had sponsored, in a spiral fashion, an exodus of the rich to developed countries, further investment, more emigration, more and larger remittances from money earned abroad and thus escalating standards of living and prices. Compared to his native place of Bhavnagar, Paresh found Diu “very different”, with a totally “opposite kind of attitude.” The changes in Diu meant that, for Paresh, the population had become obsessed with material advancement in which, according to him, most thought of little besides money and how to make more. Paresh’s observations of development and change in Diu, after the installation of the bridge, were a theme among those who had witnessed them, with more people seeing them as positive rather than negative.
Krishnaben noted some of the great social changes that had taken place in Diu, which anticipate the degree of the changes and modifications she would witness and participate in after emigration to Britain. Addressing first the historical transformation over the long period when Diu was ruled by kings, through Portuguese colonialism, to its current incarnation as a tourist destination, Krishna was most interested in the changes in her lifetime. Not only had there been developments to the material texture of the landscape, but the intangible landscape of its consciousness, which she saw as the positive change from conservatism to liberal progressivism, and welcomed the growth of social intercourse and free mindedness. Indeed, the mutations in Diu’s social fabric had been so great that she claimed it had “improved totally.” In dialectical terms, though the forms of group identity continue to be strong, the struggle of self and self identity as opposed to society and community identity is being realised more and more in the favour of the former.

Ashwinbhai made a long list of changes that had occurred with the increased flow of tourists and the infra-structural development that had caused it, and was due to cause still more. The local administrators had made “especial efforts”, and there had been increases to efficiency and management in general, and the tourist flow in particular. Though he gave no particular endorsement to the changes which had taken place in Diu, he offered such a detailed catalogue of them as to make them sound both positive and progressive, and himself as proud of all the progress. Yet, Ashwin’s refectory establishment in the temple was largely unknown by tourists, as he did nothing to capitalise on the yearly influx of, and increase in, this potential source of revenue. Though his refectory stood at the crest of a hill on the road that acted as the principle conduit for tourists passing from the port side of the island to the beaches, Ashwin did not in any way advertise its presence. Nonetheless the few tourists who, by word of mouth, did find their way were greeted and served with obvious pleasure and this irregular patronage provided a welcome fillip to Ashwin’s income.

Having lived in Diu her entire life, Vijayaben had witnessed and evaluated the kinds and degree of change it had undergone, and gave considerable importance to the presence and the activities of tourists. These transient people had added as much interest to her experience of Diu, as the infra-structural developments themselves. Similiarly, in her twenty-five year experience of Diu, Varshaben thought Diu had changed a great deal but implied, by the attractions she cited, that these changes had been undertaken mostly to encourage tourism. Hiraben too thought developmental change had been great since she arrived after marriage fifteen years ago. Then, she said, Diu had been beautiful but hardly developed, now however the social, infra-structural
and architectural situation had “totally changed.” Despite the total nature of change, Diu’s beauty, for Hiraben, had improved and compared very favourably with the place she grew up in Gujarat. To preserve Diu’s beauty and cleanliness, said Hira, “Diu must never join the state of Gujarat” which by comparison she judged to be neither as well resourced or administered as Diu.

Natwar, who had lived all of his thirteen years in Diu, said he had no idea how it used to be before the bridge, but was now very aware of the new possibilities for “wandering” which development had brought. By interesting places to ‘wander’, Natwar meant the creation or improvement of places to cater for visitors as designated ‘sights.’ Though he set no importance on the past, and had few comments on the present, Natwar believed in and enjoyed the developments aimed at increasing tourism. The radical changes brought by development had produced order and enhanced interest, which for tourists and residents promoted greater social and personal autonomy in the increased island accessibility of well planned roads, public works and accommodation.

Witnessing the changes over twenty-five years, Pramila and her husband found only merit in the developments in Diu which were, according to her now “doubly good.” A great deal of land had been developed with housing and where their house had stood alone, a neighbourhood of houses had since collected. Even so, Diu town was, they agreed, much “more spacious” and “less congested ” than their previous residence in Ghogla, where they had lived for the first twelve years of their marriage. Dialetically speaking order was advancing with civil development, and the disorder of the unhumanised natural environment was in retreat.

It was evident among my three most senior respondents, two of whom had lived in Diu their entire lives and the other since he was a young man, that their sense of being at home was linked, at least in part, to the colonial era. Not only did they express an identification for Diu as their ‘native place’, but spoke of fond memories of the colonial period. Jinabhai was about eighty and one of the most senior members of the Dalit community. Long ago, during Portuguese rule, an unspecified generation of Jina’s forefathers had moved the family to Diu. Jina was already middle-aged when India removed Diu away from Portugal. For Jina, Diu was undoubtedly his native place and his days were “passing in happiness.” Diu had become so familiar and beloved that, even if he were to go somewhere as enjoyable as Bombay, he would, he said, feel uncomfortable if he were absent from Diu for more than five or six days. Jina displayed some knowledge of Diu’s long and complex history. He remembered how the Portuguese, in
recognition of the discrimination Dalits suffered, at the bottom of the caste hierarchy, made policies which provided special employment opportunities. The result was increased economic security, and some improvement of their social status. The low status and incomes within the Dalit community also allowed him to compare unfavourably the purchasing power of money of “free Diu” with Portuguese Diu. It had been better, he said, being a citizen of Portugal, for then food was cheap and he stressed the difference by comparing the purchasing power of one rupee then with a thousand rupees now. Such was Jina’s degree of identification with Portuguese governance that he said “now we are Indian only because the food we are getting is Indian.” In other words, the dependence on and consumption of Indian food quite literally made him Indian. For Jina, time past is truly time passed and must be accepted as such. He did however express considerable regret about the passing of Portuguese governance for then “it was a good time.” Jina’s contrasts between the time of the Portuguese and the present represent dwelling in the past as comparatively secure and comfortable when set against the present. The tension between past and present illustrates the negotiation of the dialectic of ‘community and identity’ in an intersection with that of ‘security and danger.’

For some, by contrast, there was little change to be noticed. Marianne did not think that there had been many changes over the course of the five years since the marriage that necessitated her move to Diu. The bridge had been in place for two years when Marianne arrived in Diu and she has since noted only a few changes. Admittedly, Diu was busier. There was “a lot more construction” and “a little more traffic” and it had become “less quiet and cool.” But these were acceptable levels of change, and for Marianne there was overall “not much development.”

Similarly, Vilasbhai was a young man who had lived with his family in both in Ghogla and Diu town for the last thirteen years. They had moved from Gujarat to improve their means of livelihood. Focused as he was on cultivating his business and study interests, Vilas did not believe there had been much change, except to observe that there were now more tourists and consequently more business. Even more exceptional than Vilas, was Laxhmi who, after sixteen years in Diu, said it had not changed at all. She did however remark on its attraction to tourists, and since she could hardly have failed to notice some development, her comments suggest that Diu had not altered the nature of her experience. This atypical situation is an example of what I am calling a steady state social dialectic, in which human relations remain constant, despite the entry of environmental change. From Laxhmi’s point of view, material change had had no
important effects on social relations, and this suggests that economic development is not always seen as the driver of social change.

As the place in which he expects to grow old and eventually die, Shrivesh Kumar looked for peace and quiet in his environment. Hence, his criticisms of detrimental, development-assisted change were set to intensify as long as the current developmental trajectory continued. Peace and quiet were, according to Shrivesh, diminishing as tourist developments expanded in size and scope. The greatest producer of noise pollution and despoiler of peace, for Shrivesh, was the huge increase in the quantity of traffic. When he came to Diu fourteen years ago, there were only three or four cars and twenty-five motor-bikes, but now the numbers were so big as to seem “unlimited.”

Shrivesh was also critical of the tourist driven rise in the cost of living. Rising expenses would not, however, undermine his desire to stay in Diu after his retirement from the army, so long as conditions did not continue to change for the worse and eliminate its peaceful nature.

Thirteen year old Levita’s attitude echoed Shrivesh’s, for Diu’s peaceful environment had also been disturbed as quantitative change brought qualitative change. Levita had lived all of her life in Diu, and felt just as unhappy as Shrivesh with the increases of development, people and pollution. The bridge was built when she was seven, and the continuity with the remote and peaceful past had been broken. Levita compared Diu with other parts of India she had seen or heard of, and felt that because of the “many, many changes” that had taken place, its peace was endangered. If things continued to develop as they had, Levita felt India’s multitude of urban problems would become Diu’s problems. Her fear was that, with too many “others”, the dialectics of strangeness and familiarity would tilt to favour the strange over the familiar. That eventually, the sacred peace would be profaned as it receded in the face of increases in the rationale and power of capital and commodification. Like many others, Levita and Shrivesh stressed the importance of social or environmental peace and security to the experience of being-at-home in the world. Levita and Shrivesh were however the only critics of the tide of development.

3.2.3 “Diu life is peaceful and there is no tension of any kind” : Positive Perceptions of Diu

Mention of the importance of social and environmental peace as a feature of dwelling location were frequently articulated and took several forms, the most prominent of which was of social harmony between neighbours. While neighbourhhoods tended towards dominance by one
community or another, with the exception of the Dalit ghetto few were homogenous, with varying degrees of heterogeneity tending to be the result of the levelling effect of money. Vijaya expressed most clearly, but also perhaps most ambivalently, the unavoidability of the community of neighbours. She said that she could never consider her house as a private place since, “whatever we do in our house the neighbouring people come to know.” Most people were however openly positive on the subject of their neighbours, and openly declared the value they placed on a peaceful neighbourhood, in which the dialectical balance inclined in favour of community, familiarity, heteronomy and the other.

Laxhmiben spoke of her perception that harmonious social relations had remained, even as other things had changed. Laxhmi had an energetic sense of appropriation and connection to Diu, facilitated by a gregarious nature and the close social and communal life of the Dalit ghetto, “Here” she said, “all people and everything is familiar and known to me.” Despite an unhappy marriage, Laxhmi’s neighbour Hiraben felt similarly, and almost echoed these sentiments when she said “I am very known to all and familiar to this place.” There were not any other places Hira could say she felt at home, and she was not interested in trying to make a home elsewhere. Vilasbhai was just as definitive. He felt at home in Diu because he had good neighbours and there was “total peace” inside and outside the home. Vilas attributed his satisfaction with life to Diu’s peaceful nature, which was good for business in general, and crucial to the profitable enterprise of the tea and pan shop business he managed with his father.50

Musakhan, a long established Muslim immigrant, now regarded Diu as his native place, and the only place he felt at home. He spoke of a neighbourhood in which he had never known any communal conflict. His family had never had any kind of harassment for, he said, “all Hindus and Muslims stay here as brothers and sisters.” Not only had harmony been the norm but, said Musa, on the whole his experience of Diu had been so good there were no bad experience worth mentioning.51

Natwar, a Dalit, and Levita a Catholic, shared a similar sense of their multi-communal social environment. It was because people were good and helpful to each other that each felt at home in Diu. Though her identification as Catholic was very strong, Levita greatly appreciated the peaceful coexistence, friendliness and mutual aid of her Hindu-Catholic neighbourhood.52 She was unique in raising the subject of crime as anti-social, in order to dismiss it as of any real concern compared to other places in India. Yet, said Levita, when a crime does occur people rally
to each other with sympathy and support, such that “there is a big knitting together of people in Diu.”

The same marked sense of connection and identification with Diu’s peaceful and amiable social character was also elaborated by Ashwinbhai. He spoke of his happiness at the calm and cooperative concord of his professional and social relations within a mixed neighbourhood of Brahmin and Vaisya sub-castes. Likewise, Ashwin’s neighbour, Krishnaben’s eight year sojourn in Rajkot had given her some idea of the differences of life in a city compared to a small town. Though Krishna had had a large circle of friends and had many outings in Rajkot, she said she would rather live in Diu because, compared to other places, here life was “peaceful and there is no tension of any kind.”

The move to Diu town from Ghoghla was regarded as unequivocally positive by Pramilaben and her husband. In part, this was because of substantial improvement of their socio-cultural milieu and in part because of better educational opportunities for their children. Apparently while they lived in Ghoghla, they had been the subject of malicious gossip from neighbours for the way they chose to conduct their daily routine. The move to Diu, they said, meant leaving behind all such ill-natured talk, and there was no need to fear anyone or any “fear of fights.”

A more recent migrant from Porbander in western Gujarat, Vikrambhai, noted Diu’s diverse cultural ambience, and spoke of how he felt Diu to be “a mixture of cultures.” Vikram recognised how Diu was, in this respect, “totally different” from Porbander. Vikram wanted a lot of peace and quiet, and this was generally available in the government owned housing estate in which he lived. Despite preferring to keep aloof and exercise selection in the company he kept, relations with his neighbours went “very well” since “all were co-operative to all.” Too many neighbours, and too much diversity among them, however, meant trouble, and the worst place to live was, he thought, a crowded one in which too many people had too “many different kinds of thoughts and manners.” Vikram’s desire for peace and quiet linked his experience of the housing estate to his perception of its surrounding environment. His criticisms were directed at any conditions that disturbed the peace of the surrounding environment, such as the commotion or noise caused by neighbours and traffic.

In the context of the desire for environmental peace, it is interesting to note that most of the discussion of the nuisance of neighbours and traffic came from the three bachelors, who lived on
their own. For each it was obvious that a peaceful environment was one of the most desirable aspects of a bachelor existence. Pareshbhai, Vikrambhai and Shrivesh Kumar each described peace as something upon which the successful experience of their solitude depended. Peace was enjoyed when their residential situation lacked intrusive levels of noise, or disruptive interaction with neighbours. Paresh’s life priority, for instance, was the attainment of both inner and outer peace, with the former being much more difficult if the latter was missing. Though the dwelling environment he occupied when we first met was uncongenial, he later came to dwell in a place with generally conducive conditions. During the last month of my stay, Paresh was allocated government lodgings in Ghogla on the mainland. These offered a degree of peace for which he was very thankful since he had of late endured a situation in which, as he put it, the landlord’s son would “come and hammer my head.” He offered his new residential situation a great compliment when he said: “the same peace and the same happiness of meditation I am getting in this house” For Paresh, peace begets peace because, “there is no disturbance if you are not inviting it.” And of course, Paresh felt he did not invite disturbances. The peace and quiet of a bachelor existence, living on his own with a large quotient of self-determined time and privacy, placed Paresh within dialectics that valued autonomy over heteronomy, and the sacred above the profane.

Autonomy was also a central concern for Shrivesh Kumar, who lived alone in a room in the same tenement as his landlord’s large family. Shrivesh valued peacefulness above all else: “When I think of home I think of peacefulness, peacefulness. If I am thinking of home then it must be peaceful.” Valuing peace and quiet meant a minimum of interaction with other people, which was determined by the kind and level of interaction he had with his neighbours. Shrivesh obtained peace when he could avoid “being entangled with householders and entangled with others.” This ardent desire for peacefulness was linked to a desire to be alone and cultivate solitude. By withdrawing as much as possible from the social world beyond his room, Shrivesh meant to remain beyond the interference and gossip of others, and thus protect the potentially peaceful experience of dwelling in Diu.

3.2.4 “I hate the gossip of other people”: Negative Perceptions

Shrivesh Kumar was not however blessed as he would like to be since, he was regularly disturbed by the constant comings and goings of his neighbours in the tenement and by the traffic outside. There was moreover, he felt, too much curiosity about his affairs from his neighbours and he regarded his situation as gravitating towards becoming a public affair, rather than being as it
should, his private one. There was no privacy, he said, because “everybody is looking, everybody is anxious at what I am doing, but they cannot ask me.” As this brief anecdote illustrates Shrivesh was especially exasperated with the nosiness of neighbours, who closely monitored his activity, but then complained if they found fault with his behaviour: “I used to keep my window open, just for ventilation, but my landlord asked me not to. My neighbour, an old lady, must have seen me while I was changing my dress, so she complained.” Peace and the preservation of privacy were paramount concerns for Shrivesh, who resented and resisted the disposition of his community towards making affairs of the self, affairs of the commons.

Like Shrivesh, Marianne’s idea of the worst possible home was associated with unwanted entanglements with neighbours. Marianne had got on extremely well with her mother-in-law but, after her death and a falling out between her husband and his brother, the quality of life in their joint household deteriorated into a state of constant tension. After the issues of the conflict the shared facilities of bathroom, toilet and garden were the main catalysts and sites of conflagration. In Marianne’s experience, the bad feeling that arose between her family-in-law heightened her sensitivity to the potentially painful unease of bad neighbours. Bad neighbours could ruin an otherwise beautiful house and happy household. A location, said Marianne, could only be called a good location by the kinds of neighbours one had, since: “If you lived in a very beautiful posh house and the neighbours are no good, and they make your life a misery, then it makes a hill of difference.” Bad relations with neighbours did not however cease when Marianne’s family withdrew from the shared house of her in-laws, for tension and anxiety emerged again as they rented rooms from a Hindu neighbour while they built their own house. The landlady’s attitude made Marianne feel that she and her family were the wrong kind of neighbours. The two rooms were uncomfortably small, and Marianne was very uneasy because of the actual and potential mischief making of her two small daughters. Living in her own house did not, however, help enamour Marianne to her socio-cultural environment. She encountered a lot of prejudice and conservatism among her Hindu neighbours who were, she felt, “very conservative narrow-minded types” and hence quite dissonant with her own liberal Catholicism. Thankfully however, such people from Marianne’s point of view were essentially “non-interfering” so that, despite their narrow intransigent attitudes, they did not usually bother her. In her own house, she stated, she got annoyed at the number and frequency of visitors to her house, who included people seeking help from her husband, who did voluntary social work, and the still friendly members of her husband’s family. For Marianne, autonomy and privacy for herself and
her immediate family, though they were sought, were not often found, since she lived amongst a situation of constant heteronomy and engagement with others.

Pareshbhai’s interest in the practice and philosophy of yoga meant that he valued quiet solitude, not only for the practice itself, but because he was writing a book on the subject. Paresh described himself as “a peace loving man” because of his profound dislike of gossip. His situation however must be placed in socio-cultural context, for his professed aversion for mainstream society knew some reciprocated antipathy directed at the person and idea of the outsider. Soon after Paresh first arrived in Diu, he was given accommodation and permitted to teach yoga on the roof terrace of the church, by the ecumenically spirited and well loved head of St Paul’s church, Father Mariano. This proved somewhat controversial amongst the more conservative sections of the Catholic community, who objected to the presence of a practising and pedagogic yogi. Paresh understood their censure, for he could not imagine a similar situation being tolerated by a Hindu priest. Conservative Catholics were not however the only source of antipathy. As a high level public service professional, Paresh had made friends among other male professionals who also lived in Diu for career reasons. This group of non-local professionals attracted certain sorts of resentment from some of the established population, and in particular from those whose residence, while not necessarily original, predated independence from Portuguese rule. It seems that while there was no active hostility to outsiders, there was, equally, little love lost upon them. Such attitudes had saddened Paresh but had not persuaded him to leave, as Diu suited his purposes of well paid employment and simple, quiet dwelling conditions. Appreciation of his new accommodation in Ghogla, however surpassed his disappointment with inhospitable neighbours. Despite discouraging experiences, Paresh felt at home in Diu because he found connection and identification among a small community of other educated men. Moreover, his yoga practice helped cultivate a level of detachment and self-reliance with which he could transcend his surroundings. In the generating and circulating of damaging representations, Paresh considered gossip dangerous. Gossip had the capacity to disrupt the cultivation of familiarity and security. Its profanity could, however, be defused by finding identity in a community, and in spiritual knowledge of the ultimately sacred nature of all reality. With such knowledge, human resentment could be reinterpreted as a defensive attitude of the known against the unknown. The sacred was not a relevant domain in Coolbellup, and perceptions of the nature of dwelling there were rather different from perceptions of the nature of dwelling in Diu.
3.3 **At Home in the World: Surveying the Situational Significance Coolbellup**

At home in Coolbellup? Relative to Diu the answer has to be both yes and no. When compared with Diu, the responses in Coolbellup were more divided, expressed more criticism, and held more ambivalence. The large majority of my Coolbellup respondents were not born there, but had moved from other suburbs in the Perth metropolitan region, with one direct emigration from the United Kingdom. However, while these distinctions bore relevance within each individual situation, they did not seem to condition responses to the question of the nature of dwelling in Coolbellup.

3.3.1 **“Couldn’t knock Cooby”: Positive Perceptions of Coolbellup**

Among the adults of my Coolbellup research Pat, Christine, Bernard, Michael, Marissa and Reuben register as subscriptions on the positive side of an imaginary balance sheet. Positive responses in this case are those without much ambivalence or seriously negative counterpoints, and range from the benign, ironical and bemused acceptance of Bernard, through the subdued contentment of Christine, to the hearty allegiance of Pat. But, with the exception of Pat and Reuben, certain aspects of either Coolbellup itself, or of experience in Coolbellup were endorsements heavily conditioned with criticism.

Perhaps the most loquacious of my Coolbellup respondents, Pat, had lived in Coolbellup for nearly twelve years, but although she had never left the state of Western Australia had led a transient life. From a working class background, with itinerant parents, Pat had lived large sections of her adult life in Perth in a variety of suburbs and socio-economic classes. Pat’s social and platial relations had achieved balance after a great deal of movement and insecurity, but she had been happily ensconced for twelve years in a place that exuded familiarity, security, autonomy, and community. The many benefits of living in Coolbellup included the low price of its real estate, its easy laid-back atmosphere, and its location as ‘a hub’ in close proximity to many useful or desirable places. In comparing the range of her residential experience, Pat was sure her ideal dwelling place was Coolbellup. Pat was gregarious and knew a lot of people, and it was her opinion that in Coolbellup “everyone helps each other.” She envisaged growing old and infirm in Coolbellup, and believed its social and familial infrastructure would supply and support her desire to remain where she evidently relished being. Her position was epitomised in her declaration to the MoH that the only way she would leave Coolbellup was “in a box.” Having lived in rich areas, she thought that superior economic circumstances did not tend to coexist with the presence of “real people.” For Pat, real people were to be found in Coolbellup and places...
like it, where the possession of material advantage and social capital did not interfere with the expressions of the common unity of human interests represented by the term ‘community’. Gathered in the dialectic of the ‘real’ (sincere, and unpretentious,) and the ‘less real’ (shallow and pretentious) were Pat’s preferred resolutions of self and other, community and identity and familiarity and the strange. There was no reason for Pat to expect any disruption to the comfortable routine into which she was settled. Predicting little change in her circumstances, she contemplated, with obvious contentment, a dwelling situation which would continue to be “very laid back, very mundane and humdrum.” Though she had many loyalties towards, and eulogies for, Coolbellup these were offset, though not displaced, by awareness of its reputation as a low status suburb, populated by high proportions of unemployed and low-income clients of the MoH.\textsuperscript{65} Still, comparisons with other areas such Perth’s CBD, where Pat disliked its fast pace and had a fear of daylight robbery, emphasised how comfortable and secure she felt Coolbellup to be.\textsuperscript{66} Pat’s fear of the city and comfort in Coolbellup illustrate dialectics of inside and outside interwoven by the familiar and the strange. The local situation was appreciated as an experience of comfortable inside-ness while the city was perceived as outside and unknown.

Coolbellup for Bernard was comfort expressed as ease and convenience. Before emigrating to Australia and Coolbellup twenty-six years ago, Bernard and his young family lived in a village in rural England. Urban Australian life was compared positively with English rural life because it enabled “a release” from class restrictions.\textsuperscript{67} Emigration as ‘ten pound Poms’ had made possible an escape to a mode of dwelling in which people were able to “do what they liked” in the ‘lucky country’. In Coolbellup, Bernard had found a convenient, casual and comfortable existence which he summarised as “relaxed and hassle-free.” Although he claimed he had never given it any reflection, he attributed his ease of attitude and experience to just being among “the ordinary people you meet wandering about.” Bernard took pleasure in the easy going, everyday ordinariness of Coolbellup, but also recognised that others in his neighbourhood did not possess the same relaxed attitude. Enjoyment coexisted with some critique of, and a sardonic distance from, those among his neighbours who according to him “were all taken up by petty differences with their neighbours.”\textsuperscript{68} Despite the length of his stay in Coolbellup, Bernard was not however inclined to call it home, though he admitted he felt at home. Though generally content with his suburban situation, Bernard looked forward to the more intimate society of country life retirement to the bush (ie a rural landscape) which he thought was like “reverting to my roots.” ‘Going bush’ was an attempt to go ‘home’ for the shed on the property had become, as it had in England, more of a social centre than the house.\textsuperscript{69} But, gender relations had shifted since he was
at home in a rural shed. Whereas in England the house had been the woman’s domain, in Australia the shed was, if not gender blind, then at least gender generous. For Bernard a return to rural life meant the absence of constraints which circumscribed rural experience in England, and thus successfully resolved the dialectic of ‘being-at-home’ and ‘yearning for home.’

Like Bernard and Pat, Christine also found Coolbellup conveniently located with everything central to her “needs at the moment.” A denizen of Coolbellup for twenty-one years, Christine was well disposed towards it, and called it “comfortable and friendly.” Yet she qualified ‘friendly’ by saying that by this she meant that, “no one has offended me yet.” Aboriginal, and originally from a town in the West Australian wheat-belt, Christine’s professional work as a childcare coordinator involved her in a complex of relationships with Coolbellup’s Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal populations. Relationships were privileged aspects of Christine’s mode of dwelling, and she talked about them as central to her notion of home. Though Christine found she needed to exercise professional and personal discretion in her relationships, the things that made Coolbellup home were the interest and enjoyment provided by the diverse constellation of its social relations. Laughing, she said, “you sit there and laugh a lot at what you see around the place. It's been fun.”

At twelve Michael had lived in Coolbellup from his birth shortly after his parents had emigrated from Portugal. Michael was due to move to a house built by his father and uncle in a newly developed suburb optimistically titled Success. Our interview took place in the middle of the physical transition to this new situation to which Michael was, as yet, unable to apply the term home. Considerable psychological adjustments were required, as Michael continued to return to Coolbellup for school, shopping and to visit relatives. Coolbellup had provided a context of lifelong connections and identifications, whose hold would only diminish with time and effort. A deep and habitual level of familiarity meant that there were times when, unconsciously, Michael turned in the direction of his old address. Returning was a shock, for it made him realise he no longer lived there. Though initially reluctant to transfer his allegiance, Michael felt challenged by the new reality, and saw the necessity of changing his notion of home. Psychic abrasions were softened somewhat by the comparisons he was able to draw with his initial responses to Coolbellup. Michael’s early apprehensions of inter-communal tensions in Coolbellup had gradually been replaced by increasing familiarity, understanding and had bestowed a trust of the differences between Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Australians.\textsuperscript{70} Demographically, developmentally and architecturally speaking, Success presented quite a contrast to Coolbellup,
and Michael was keenly aware of the predominance of White and the lack of Indigenous people. Coolbellup, he said, was a community “where everyone’s together, everyone is bound together and a lot of people know other people and it becomes like one family, one whole community.” Indeed Michael thought Coolbellup an ideal sort of place, which successfully negotiated oppositions to produce a balance, minimising danger and strangeness and maximising security and familiarity.\textsuperscript{71} Although Success was in the early stages of development there were many infra-structural absences he had enjoyed in Coolbellup. Yet, like the other children, Michael was not especially concerned with the physical and visual appearance of Coolbellup. Having grown up there the children had grown connections and identifications with its people and places and called Coolbellup ‘home’.\textsuperscript{72}

Michael’s cousins Marissa and Reuben were children of very different dispositions and orientations but concurred on feeling and calling Coolbellup home. Marissa spoke of Coolbellup with quiet emotion and a loyal sentiment, whereas Reuben’s invocations were very casual and he did not hold it to be his only home.\textsuperscript{73} For Marissa Coolbellup was “the best place” she knew. It was, she said, “the place where I’m meant to be.” In Coolbellup she “could trust people” and because she was “just too used to Cooby’ there was nowhere else she identified as home. Reuben used the metaphor of his own house to describe Coolbellup’s familiarity and friendliness, and his own easy going, un-problematic relationship with it. Coolbellup was, he said, just as secure and familiar as his house: “Yeah, I feel at home in Cooby. When I walk around the street its as if there’s this, like this big humungous house that I’m in.” For Reuben, Coolbellup was “just great and perfect”, and he listed advantages such as quietness, convenience, trees, fresh air, and, a quantity of “old houses, which don’t vanish.” Reuben also drew comparisons to prove Coolbellup’s superiority by giving details of the inadequacies of a previous neighbourhood in a nearby suburb. Together the children disclosed the quotidian connections that helped to foster immanent and intimate identifications with Coolbellup which differentiated them from most of the adults. The children’s appreciation overwhelmingly prevailed over their critiques, while for adults, it was rather the reverse. Critiques of Coolbellup are the subject of the next section.

\textbf{3.3.2 “Why did you move to this place?”: Frictions and Change}

As I found in Diu, issues of change and development map platial and social changes as they reflect and intersect with one another. In Coolbellup the subject of change and development embeds a number of issues and emotions.
With the retrospective vision of twelve years, Pat said initially that she had not observed substantial change in Coolbellup. However, change in this sense had been construed by Pat as that which affected her personally. Yet, as our conversation evolved it became evident that Pat was quite aware of social changes due to MoH policy. Changes to Coolbellup’s demographics were noted in the move of young married couples and families into the area who were taking their first step in purchasing and settling, but would no doubt also sell up at an opportune time. Pat also saw demographic change as the result of immigration and education policies, which had the affect she said, of making Coolbellup “very cosmopolitan.” Pat saw Asian families and international students moving in “bringing their traditions, their lifestyle and their food” and “slowly mixing into the community.” Pat was in favour of both cosmopolitanism and gentrification as property was privatised, since it meant Coolbellup would lose its stigma as a MoH ghetto. Together privatisation and demographic diversity would encourage integration, cooperation and mutual aid, fostering connection, appropriation, and identification. Demographic changes were marked by most people. The young tended to notice an increase in the number of older people, while adults remarked on demographic shifts of both age and ethnicity.

Joe, Pat’s son had been a denizen of Coolbellup since the age of ten. Now working in a white-collar job as a sales representative, Joe saw himself as having improved and progressed beyond his working class background. Indeed, he was, he said unique in his family in buying his own house and breaking-free from a history of tenancy. Recently married, he and his wife had bought a renovated house in Coolbellup but soon intended to move to what they felt would be a more appropriate middle-class suburb. As far as Joe was concerned, Coolbellup had only changed for the worse. Its physical appearance and the civic amenities had, he claimed, not only deteriorated but seldom saw any expansion or qualitative improvement. Joe was disgusted and disappointed by Coolbellup’s aesthetic impoverishment, and the lack or failure of facilities such as the shopping centre. Peter on the other hand felt that, with the exception of some expansion to and cosmetic redevelopment of the shopping centre, the suburb had not changed in any substantial fashion. The shopping centre indeed was the subject of mixed opinion, and all the adults except for Pat commented on it. Joe saw half-baked and tokenistic efforts of renovation, while Janet saw misguided efforts to ‘keep up appearances’ and forms of social engineering in an attempt to prevent certain kinds of ‘undesirable’ social intercourse among unconventional patrons like Aboriginals. Indeed Janet went so far as to pronounce the changes to the shopping centre a failure, and observed, like Joe and Peter, the level of vacancy in its retail premises.
For Christine, who had lived for twenty years in Coolbellup, its increased “centralisation and busy-ness” were the most noticeable aspects of change and were an effect of expanded demographic diversity. Though she felt that Coolbellup still possessed a rather stigmatised image in Perth’s collective consciousness, this image had diminished. When she first came to live in Coolbellup it was considered a ghetto, a dumping ground for undesirable ‘troublemakers.’ With increased ethnic diversity, acceptance and tolerance had increased and a more inclusive society had evolved. Bernard, on the other hand, was of the opinion that while Coolbellup’s built environment had not changed much in twenty-five years, it had in social and cultural terms. Noting a downward shift in the quality and quantity of interracial and general neighbourhood relations, Bernard attributed this change to two other developments. Firstly, the transience of Aboriginal people, and secondly to the presence of fewer children, as families had grown up and moved out. Not only had the suburb aged, he thought, but children were nowadays much less likely to be out on the streets. There was, as a result, less amity and more friction between black and white people as the deterioration of inter-race relations was attributed to the serious shrinkage of relationships between children. There had been a shift in the nature and operationality of social bonds. As children grew up and families dispersed, the social bonds that had been brought into existence by relations between children dissipated among the adults.

The children Michael and Brandon both coincided and differed on how Coolbellup’s platial attributes had changed, and how this change affected them. Michael thought Coolbellup wasn’t that crowded and compared its sporting amenities favourably with Success, where he had just moved, and where there were not nearly so many ovals, parks and school grounds. Success, however had more remnant bushland close at hand in which Michael and his friends liked to spend quite a bit of time. Yet, he was aware how temporary this bush was, since suburban development would soon ensure its destruction. Significant stands of bushland were obviously important to Michael and Brandon, and their removal, along with other forms of suburb rationalisation, was lamented. According to Brandon, quite substantial changes had taken place and Coolbellup had become increasingly boring as possibilities for adventure had disappeared. Such a perspective evaluated Coolbellup in terms of fun, play and adventure and, on this score, Brandon felt that Coolbellup had lost important sources of interest. Not only had he ‘grown up’ and so grown beyond the pleasures of earlier adventures, but Coolbellup had acquired new topographical constraints which, in one way or another, thwarted play and adventure. At the same time, developments that were specifically directed at children, such as play equipment in the park, were seen as suitable only for ‘little kids.’ Brandon saw the re-development of Coolbellup
as a despoliation of the landscape, both over-rationalised and over-developed. Housing developments immediately next to Coolbellup were clearing the bush which, along with its own redevelopment, entailed more restrictive town planning codes and by-laws regulating what had previously been unregulated. Town planning had regulated the landscape in favour of security and predictability, and against the adventurous, mutable and unpredictable. Thus despite its cosy familiarity and dependability, for Brandon, Coolbellup had become rather too secure as value and significance associated with the less tamed and more changeable environment of earlier times had been lost. While to be designated ‘home’ a place needs to serve experiences of security, the presence of too much security can undermine a vivid sense of the dialectical nature of reality, and constrain perception and imagination.

While Reuben shared Marissa’s sense of Coolbellup as home and did not strongly desire to live anywhere else, his impression of Coolbellup’s platial ambience differed from hers. While Marissa had no comments on platial values, except to observe without any especial interest a few of the obvious changes wrought by development such as upgrades to roads and parks, Reuben denied that there had been any change at all. Michael said his understanding of other ethnicities had changed to such an extent that not only did he no longer fear Aboriginal people, but now had Aboriginals as his friends. Curiously, neither Michael, Brandon nor Reuben referred to crime or communal tension, or echo any of the girls misgivings about Coolbellup’s social character. In the boys accounts, Coolbellup seemed a place without fear or animosity, and thus at odds with Melissa’s and Marissa’s experience. Marissa’s endorsement of Coolbellup as the only place for her, coexisted with an account of unease related to its reputation for anti-social behaviour. The disfunctional problems of poverty stigma, burglary, assault and inter-communal tension are the subject of the next section.

3.3.3 “The image of an area is directly related to self-esteem”: Negative Perceptions

Marissa was disappointed with the lack of compassion in her neighbours whom she approached for money to help extremely poor people in underdeveloped countries. Not only was there a lack of care for others beyond the neighbourhood, but a lack of care within it. Crime had increased. Discussing change, Marissa had noted a few large scale platial changes, but overlooked mention of the installation of security devices in her household that had become necessary to protect their house from burglars. Coolbellup had changed. Crime, and especially
property crime, had increased recently to such an extent and from such a low level, that Marissa could remember a time when it was usual to leave the windows open at night.\textsuperscript{82}

Tempering Pat’s complimentary analyses, were discrepant opinions that commented on the social and familial circumstances which contribute to the formation of crime and social delinquency. While Pat felt uneasy visiting the relative crowd and bustle of Perth, there were no such fears for her property or her personal safety in Coolbellup. She recognised however that other parts of Coolbellup were not so quiet and suffered anti-social antics, like “yobbos speeding around with cars”. There had been just “a few break-ins”, and she had once suffered “a brick through the front window”, but otherwise her area was “really quiet”. Pat believed there was more crime everywhere “not just in Coolbellup.” And, while she “couldn’t really knock Cooby” because it was overall “a great place,” she sternly criticised the apathy of some of its residents, and equated the amount of crime as in direct proportion to the amount of apathy. To exemplify her sense of appall, Pat concluded an anecdote of an assault on her daughter in the shopping centre by saying, “and what really pissed me right off was these twenty or thirty adults standing there, mostly men, looking and laughing.” There were also observations about the crime associated with race and class, but Pat attributed blame across the spectrum, and said parental example and guidance were the determining factors. However, while she acknowledged the injustice of attributing blame according to race, this discernment was qualified by a general accusation of alcoholism and parental neglect in Aboriginal families. While she acknowledged there were as many problems in White families, Pat was frank in her anti-Aboriginal prejudice, for what she perceived as a general refusal to engage with the (White defined) work ethic.\textsuperscript{83} Pat distinguished between “full blood” and “mixed blood” Aboriginals, approving only the former, who live mainly in rural and remote areas of Australia. The latter, who live largely in suburban locations, she condemned as lazy because, despite equal educational opportunities, they “think the world owes them a living” and are “not prepared to help themselves.”\textsuperscript{84} Pat’s concerns are indicative of a level of resentment in mainstream White Australia which cannot comprehend Black Australians who, they charge, have insufficient respect for ‘normal’ values, and are unwilling to make ‘proper’ connections, appropriations and identifications with their social and material environment. For Pat, urban Aboriginal people embody one of her few grievances against her dwelling place. For others, inter-racial tension was just one of a number of social problems that elicited high levels of fear and condemnation.\textsuperscript{85}
Originally from New Zealand, Michelle and her husband bought a house in Coolbellup “as a starting block” in one of the few areas they could comfortably afford. Michelle was willing to call Western Australia her home, but many negative experiences had made an exception of Coolbellup. Michelle wanted to move because she had reached the limit of what she was prepared to suffer; Coolbellup had lost the opportunity to be considered home. Michelle felt under siege from some of her neighbours and her sense of home had been reduced to her house with the door shut. At odds with her location because of its people, who did not care for either themselves or their environment, Michelle lamented, “what the hell am I doing here?”. She felt, she said, that she lived among people who had “no respect” who “didn’t care a shit as regards where they live or what they do.” The close proximity of such care-less attitudes, beyond the controlled confines of her house, both saddened and angered Michelle. The litany of complaint against anti-social behaviour was long. Michelle cited broken glass on streets, pavements and sports fields, alcohol and drug abuse, domestic violence, child neglect; burglary, vandalism and noisy dogs. Her antipathy to the abuse and neglect she saw was expressed in terms of class and race. Anti-social behaviour and disfunction was “a chain thing” as adult “riff raff” raised miscreant children. The trans-generational transmission of attitude and behaviour was further compounded by ghettoisation. Like Pat, Michelle also regarded Aboriginal people as both trouble-makers and bad tenants, and complained of a generally malign intent among them and unwarranted leniency shown them by the MoH.

The problem, as Michelle saw it, was solvable by social engineering in which troublemakers of under and lower class people were distributed more equally across the metropolitan area. To support this view, she quoted a policeman who had attended her most recent burglary who said it was “a proven fact that these sort of people don’t integrate well and it doesn’t work keeping them all together. They’ve got to separate them.” Although the MoH had sold some stock to private enterprise the new tenants were, Michelle felt, essentially the “same calibre of people” albeit, “the cream of those kinds of people,” as they seemed to have “a bit more direction” and be “a little bit more educated.” Overall however, the extent of platial and social disfunction lay, she believed, beyond the powers of the Cockburn City Council, the MoH and the police to correct. Coolbellup was a black hole into which money spent on improvements was cancelled by vandalism and the lack of good social policies. Help was too episodic, uncoordinated and under-resourced to address the extent and depth of problems. Thus, though peace and security had improved somewhat, it was still inadequate. Coolbellup was too insecure and unwholesome for Michelle to make the social and platial connections and appropriations that create
identification. She and her husband planned to move, as soon as practicable, to a suburb that did not have a significant MoH presence. Ideally, the place she would call home afforded the greatest degree of individual liberty and security. This ideal recognised the autonomy of persons, and the inalienable right to property and privacy. Even unconventional and eccentric lifestyles could be accommodated, so long as they did not contravene the rights of others or include anti-social attitudes. In expressing such a desire, Michelle was not alone.

Three other adults - Joe, Peter, and Janet – concurred with Michelle’s dislike and disapproval of Coolbellup. From a working class background, Joe aimed to transcend the working-class ethos of Coolbellup’s denizens who he described as “a prickly lot” with a reputation for making trouble. Joe’s antipathy to Coolbellup was vehement, and his main criticisms were levelled at its platial and social aesthetics which, he said, expressed a collective lack of self-esteem. Coolbellup’s social and platial self-esteem could not be lifted, in Joe’s opinion, until the Council allocated more funds for improvement, and the inhabitants rearranged their attitude and became less careless and apathetic. Unlike Michelle, disfunctional families, anti-social behaviour, child neglect and crime were not ostensibly issues for Joe, though they shadowed his detailed complaints of poor platial and social aesthetics. Joe did not feel comfortable in Coolbellup and, with the exception of the library, did not enjoy being out and about in its public places. Feeling at home occurs, he said, when one “feels settled” and this depended on feeling “comfortable” with one’s social and platial surroundings. Being settled, for Joe, meant “being at peace with where you are.” However with the exception of his own house, his mother’s house and the cricket club, Joe did not feel comfortable, settled or at peace in Coolbellup. The experience of peaceful settlement depended upon the amount of time one invested in a place, until, he said, one came to know it “like the back of your hand.” Joe felt no incentive to invest such time. The friendliness and comfort he aspired too was to be found, he felt, in a richer suburb, where people were more approachable. Joe was impatient to move away from the tension and the constraint he felt cramping his residence to be with, what he called, “a better class of people.” To a place, in other words, where ‘good’ platial aesthetics were valued, practised and mirrored by ‘good’ social aesthetics. Coolbellup could not provide the platial and social connections with which Joe, as an émigré to the middle-class, could identify. As with Michelle, Coolbellup presented Joe with experiences which nurture middle-class discomfort with lower-class disadvantage and difference.

Michelle and Joe’s discontent with Coolbellup was in some respects echoed by Peter, who had been a resident for eight years. Peter bought into Coolbellup because of its inexpensive real
estate, and its proximity to the social and commercial centre of Fremantle. His intention had been to move out when he could profit by a substantial rise in house prices and could afford to buy in Fremantle itself. Two and a half years before our interviews his marriage had broken down, and his wife and children moved out, an event that cast him into depression which Coolbellup’s social and platial ambience only compounded. During this period Peter ‘despised’ Coolbellup, but when it had passed his attitude became one of resignation, in which he said he simply “put up with it.” Realising that the contempt he bore his social environment was not helpful, this shift of philosophy enabled him to regard several burglaries with more equanimity. Still, Peter called Coolbellup “a disgrace” and blamed the Council for its poor facilities and levels of maintenance. Compared with other parts of Cockburn City he thought it was neglected and badly in need of infrastructure and social services. In particular, Coolbellup was, he suggested, “crying out for” funds for groups such as the ‘Men’s Health and Wellbeing Association’ as there were a lot of men with serious problems in poor areas such as Coolbellup. In Coolbellup Peter perceived a degree of misery and dejection that was incomparable with other suburbs in his experience, and he attributed this unhappiness to the depressed economic circumstances of many people. While he felt he understood and tolerated Coolbellup, Peter did not connect or identify with it. With his fear of the streets at night, and the break-up of his family and house-hold, he felt no sense of ownership or belonging. Uneasy and unable to connect with or appropriate his local area, Peter was not at home in Coolbellup. Despite its poverty, unemployment and corruption Peter liked Jamaica, where he had once lived for a short time, and felt it facilitated connection.

As a downwardly mobile emigrant from the United Kingdom, Janet bought a house in Coolbellup because it was what she could afford. Like Peter, Joe and Michelle, Janet would have preferred to live somewhere else, though she appreciated Coolbellup’s undulating landscape, plentiful trees and bits of remnant bushland. For eight years she had lived on her own during which she had known oscillations of familiarity and hostility in her relations with her neighbours. Such oscillations followed both profound changes in the social atmosphere of her street, and in her own attitude. Janet’s dilemma about her ambivalence to her situation in Coolbellup frequently provoked the question of “why do I live here?” Her ambivalence is, almost entirely, related to Coolbellup’s social ambience. The main problem in Janet’s opinion is its serious lack of community. Janet has travelled extensively, especially around India and, though poverty prevents more travelling, she says she feels at home while doing it. Despite all the changes involved in a trip through Europe, Janet felt “a complete sense of peace and oneness, as if I had the best of all possible worlds.” Travelling outside of familiar domains conferred a sense of
community identification with fellow travellers, whereas in Coolbellup she often felt emotionally and intellectually alienated.\textsuperscript{98} Community can be a mercurial notion but, for Janet, the term refers to a context in which connection and the appropriation yield identification.

Although Melissa and Michelle share similar concerns over the extent and nature of disorder and crime, Melissa, as Aboriginal and a MoH tenant, has the social profile Michelle found so problematic. Some of the crime Melissa experienced were assaults on the person and property of acquaintances, but most were instances of domestic violence among relatives. Yet Melissa’s responses to Coolbellup converge with Michelle’s, just as they do with her classmate Marissa’s. Relating her witness of an assault on her friend by two Aboriginal boys and a White boy, Marissa steered a route around any racial indictment but levelled blame at both groups. The insecurity of violence both in Melissa’s house and on the streets had produced fear and prompted caution.\textsuperscript{99} Still, as we saw above, despite acknowledging a sense of threat and fear, Melissa’s relationship to Coolbellup was not compromised to a point of aversion, for with her friends she made everyday use of Coolbellup’s streets and parks. Feeling at home in Coolbellup, for Melissa, was realised in dialectics in which familiarity, security and autonomy overcame strange and dangerous people and places.

Also Aboriginal, Christine’s twenty years in Coolbellup and the nature of her work as a public servant had given her a broad overview of the tenor of relations between black and white Coolbellupians. Christine’s awareness of local hostility towards Aboriginal people was a result of both personal experience and education. Awareness of the cultural marginality of her people as she grew up, had raised a critical consciousness and transformed the naiveté of her youth. For Christine, despite some welcome changes in the greater acceptance of cultural difference, there still smoldered malignant and persistent anti-Aboriginal prejudice in Coolbellup.\textsuperscript{100} Thus, though outright discrimination and bigotry were not as common as they once were, because of the rise of corrective politics, Christine detected a quiet hostility. The absence of high levels of ostensible trouble gave Coolbellup the appearance of a peaceful suburb. Whether trouble is ostensive or not however, there can be no doubt that Coolbellup had a much more ambivalent and ambiguous structure of feeling than Diu.
3.4 At Home in the World: Comparing the Structure of Feeling in Coolbellup and Diu

With differences in emphasis and degree, agreement and appreciation of Diu was extensive. While a large number of Diuites had no desire to live anywhere but Diu unless an unusual opportunity were to arise, only two of my Coolbellup interviewees thought Coolbellup the ideal place to live. Although the relationship of my interlocutors to Diu’s platial and socio-cultural environment seems to be unequivocal endorsement, there were important exceptions and criticisms. Most of my respondents in Diu spoke with unmitigated appreciation for their dwelling environment, but in those who had criticisms to offer, though some were acute, none were bitter. Among those who did find fault, the critiques showed worry, disappointment or sorrow rather than angry and damming censure. Despite big differences in the longevity of their association with Diu, each respondent was committed, after their own fashion, to sustaining and/or cultivating their sense of connection with Diu. Connection was important though, of course points and places of connection differed with some more social and others more platial in orientation. Long personal histories of association and experience, appreciation for neighbours and community, and the pleasures of landscape offered modes of connection and identification. Though there was some evident tension over the direction which Diu’s development was taking, such concern only served to confirm the high level of appreciation for Diu’s social and platial environment.

It was evident that opinion in Diu valued social co-operation and environmental peace, since they were mentioned again and again. A wide swathe of opinion emphasised the desirability and possibility of concord and rapport with one’s dwelling place, and social and platial peace were central in a structure of feeling which understood Diu as a home-in-the-world. People of both sexes and all ages spoke of the importance, and the actuality of good relations with one’s neighbours. With the exception of Marianne, however, the importance of peace as in ‘peace and quiet’ was explicitly articulated only by the three bachelors. The ‘peace’ the bachelors desired was obtained when their residences lacked intrusive levels of noise and the disruptive interaction with neighbours. Such peace and quiet could only be found, by other Diuites, in places beyond the home such as beaches, temples, or tombs. Thus, articulations of the desire for peace and cooperation generally did not refer as much to the lack of noise or commotion, as to the quality of community relations. Whatever the length of their association and particular sources of connection, everyone cared for and felt at home in Diu, and the dialectics of give and take, or “lived reciprocity” provided meaning, order and integrity to their perception and experience.
The structure of feeling of dwelling in Coolbellup, by contrast, shows strands of praise and indictment and seems divided, differentiated, ambiguous, and contentious. Instead of a broad consensus of appreciation, as there was in Diu for its platial characteristics, Coolbellup opinion fractured along major and minor fault lines. Expressions of appreciation for Coolbellup’s platial ambience as topography, urban design, and architecture were either minimal or limited to personal responses to specific features such as the park or library. There were also several serious critiques expressed with disappointment, frustration, or anger. Although the words peace, harmony and cooperation were not actually used, issues of peace and cooperation were acknowledged by omission rather than commission, and present as absences.

In Coolbellup, a sense of homeliness, expressed as satisfaction and enjoyment of the suburb existed for some, but this contentment was often qualified by reservations and grievances about the insufficiency or absence of familiarity and security. The negatively marked themes of crime, anti-social behaviour and the lack of the civil and material infrastructure, point to lacks of care and the break-down, neglect or lack of community. Of my twelve interlocutors, not only did two people not feel at all at home in Coolbellup, but felt so alienated by its social or platial qualities that they looked forward to leaving as soon as circumstances permitted. For the rest, attitudes ranged from mild to serious concern over the nature of their social and platial environment. Especially notable was the way reflections of a positive nature were qualified by expressions of unease or anxiety about the character of the neighbourhood. There was often the awareness that happiness, pleasure, status, or health were, in some respects, threatened or compromised by dwelling in Coolbellup. The desire for more peace and cooperation in Coolbellup was evident, however, when the deficit or limited supply of peace was replaced by concerns about security. A concern for security tends to enter as trust, harmony and cooperation are felt to be weak, or unreliable. In Coolbellup, security involved taking defensive strategies against depredations of person and property, and ‘peace’ tended to refer more to the idea of being left alone (as in 'left in peace’). Alternatively, peace was conjoined with quiet to refer to the absence of unwelcome noise in one’s environment. In Coolbellup, security involves the preservation of privacy, stability, safety and protection of one’s person and property in an insecure environment in which care could not be taken for granted. In Diu, by contrast, a dependable state of stable, caring concord ensured that notions of defense and protection were not ordinarily associated with home.

Despite multitudes of differences, the dialectical oppositions of familiarity and strangeness and security and danger were the most active dichotomies both in Coolbellup and Diu. Endorsements
and criticisms of Coolbellup and Diu were statements on the dialectics of self and other, and community identity and self-identity, and were used to suggest or deny respective eligibility for the appellation ‘home.’ By contrast with Diu, the issue of homeliness in Coolbellup was fraught with ambivalence, as opinion differed on whether it served to produce a sense of home. This ambivalence circulated, in one guise or another, as the presence or absence of a sense of community. A sense of home in Coolbellup and Diu, emerged in an appreciation for, and engagement with, the perennial dialectic of self and other as it was nourished by, or failed to nourish, a sense of the self as part of a meaningful community. Most manifest in any resemblance of Diu and Coolbellup was an understanding of the necessity of co-operative and peaceful community, as the prerequisite for any experience of feeling at home-in-the-world. The terms ‘peace’ and ‘cooperation’ were frequently employed in Diu to invoke notions of the ‘lived reciprocity’ of community as connection, appropriation and identification. In Coolbellup, though the terms peace and cooperation never emerged except in the employment of their opposites, a realisation of the importance of these notions, and the desire for their realisation, can be discerned beneath every uncomplimentary indictment of the absence or inadequacy of social rapport. As I hope I have illustrated, the relative presence or absence of co-operative and peaceful community should be considered a ‘structuring structure’ of everyday habitus. As an essential aspect to be considered in the constitution of quotidian life, the nature of community should also be part of any discussion of those ‘structures of feeling’ realised in dwelling places which centre on, but lie beyond, the house where one is at home-in-the-world.

Endnotes

1 For an intelligent discussion of the integration of emotional and cognitive intelligence, directed albeit to promoting necessary conversations between philosophy and literature, see Martha Nussbaum Love’s Knowledge: Essays on Philosophy and Literature (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990) especially the introduction ‘Form and Content in Philosophy and Literature’ and chapter eleven ‘Love’s Knowledge’


3 Williams, Marxism, 132.

4 Williams, Marxism, 132.

5 Williams, Marxism, 132 –133.
On the concept of ‘interpellation’ see Louis Althusser ‘Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses ‘in Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays’ Trans. Ben Brewster (New York: Monthly Review Press 1971), 127-186. Of course, Althusser used ‘interpellation’ to describe the way ideology captures its subjects as for instance, in this statement: “The individual is interpellated as a (free) subject in order that he shall submit freely to the commandments of the Subject, i.e. in order that he shall (freely) accept his subjection, i.e in order that he shall make the gestures and actions of his subjection ‘all by himself.’” (182, emphasis in original). I hope Althusser would not mind the liberty I have taken of extending the range of this excellent notion to the capture of subjects by everyday ideology by the concept of home.


Heidegger discusses hermeneutic circularity in ‘Being-in as Such’ sections 32-35 of Being and Time Trans. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (Oxford U.K: Blackwell, 1993), 188-214. In section 32 ‘Understanding and Interpretation’ Heidegger underlines the reflexive circuit of understanding when he says, “understanding appropriates understandingly that which is understood by it. In interpretation, understanding does not become something different. It becomes itself. Such interpretation is grounded existentially in understanding; the latter does not arise from the former” (188). In Section 34 ‘Being-There and Discourse’ he advanced the argument into the realm of language which, as discourse, is he insists “existentially equiprimordial with state-of-mind and understanding” This makes a hermeneutic circle, because as coexistent and coeval with state of understanding the “intelligibility of something has always been articulated, even before there is any appropriative interpretation of it.” (203, emphasis in original).

I continue to draw on this very productive three part conception of connection, appropriation and identification which was conceived and elaborated by Kim Dovey in Home Environments, 39 ff.

Yi Fu Tuan. ‘Space and Place : Humanistic Perspective.’ In C. Board, R J Chorely, P Haggett and D R. Stoddart (Eds), Progress in Geography V6, 212-52 (London: Edward Arnold), 236.

In ‘Experience and Use of the Dwelling’, Perla Korosec-Serfaty claims the concept of appropriation as “a process with ontological value in that it coincides with a development and an actualization of the self”, and thus a notion necessary for comprehending the meaning of home. In Irwin Altman and Carol Werner (Eds), Home Environments, Vol 8 of Human Behaviour and Environment: Advances in Theory and Research (New York Plenum Press, 1985), 74-76.


Martin Heidegger, Being and Time, 84. Heidegger fully develops the explication of Being-in-the-World as essentially care in Part ‘Care as the Being of Dasein’, 225-273.

Heidegger, Poetry, 151.


Heidegger, Poetry, 151.

Dovey, Home, 48.

Anne Buttimer, ‘Home Reach and the Sense of Place’ in Anne Buttimer and David Seamon (Eds), The Human Experience of Space and Place (London: Croon Helm 1980), 169.


Dovey, Home, 38.

Dovey, Home, 39.
Chapter 3 At Home in the World in Diu and Coolbellup


23 Sopher draws attention to the diverse geographical and topographical references that may be invoked for the term ‘home’ in English and other Germanic languages, which Romance languages do not do. In the latter, the notion of the house that provides a material base for a home does not extend to a quality of home that involves attachment and identification in other realms. In *The Interpretation*, 130. Very interesting too as it delves deep into ‘homes’ diachronic etymology in a wide range of Indo-European languages is Stefan Brink’s ‘Home: The Term and the Concept from a Linguistic and Settlement – Historical Viewpoint’ in *The Home: Words Interpretations Meanings and Environments* David Benjamin and David Stea (Eds), (Aldershot,: Avebury, 1995).

24 Dovey, *Home*, 45.


26 Dovey, *Home*, 38.

27 Dovey, *Home*, 36.

28 Dovey, *Home*, 37.

29 Dovey, *Home*, 37-38.


31 Dovey, *Home*, 39.

32 Praxis is practised knowledge and is reflexive. Praxis is knowledge that becomes practice as well as practice that becomes knowledge. I have to confess that, as yet, I have not been able to trace an origin for this extremely useful term of term but am sure it predates my employment of it.

33 Dovey, *Home*, 43.

34 Dovey, *Home*, 51.

35 The varied but overall positive experiences reported by the adults were echoed by the children. All of the children had lived the entirety of twelve or thirteen years in Diu, and were unanimous in their endorsements of its attributes. Brief, emphatic and to the point Kajal, summarised the feeling among the children when she said, “I live in Diu because I like Diu. Diu is nice and very peaceful. Our area is very peaceful. I like living here in Diu.” Natwar’s articulation of his sense of connection was more nuanced, extending, as it did, from such favourite places as the seaside with the opportunity it provided to wander and explore, to Diu’s favourable climate and a strong identification with the temple of his Dalit community.

36 “I love it! I prefer living here. It’s quiet, it’s beautiful. Take any road and there’s a lovely spot and you can sit and relax, you can dream. It’s a tiny island but it’s full of beauty.”

37 And Ashwin continued, “it is a beautiful spot with various sea beaches as well as eye-catching historical monuments like the fort and the old churches.”

38 Nirmalaben’s brief but careful responses excluded the desirability of dwelling in other places. A devout and elderly Hindu, Nirmal had never lived anywhere but Diu but felt as strongly attached to the place with absolutely no
desire to live anywhere else, as did Musakhan a Muslim, whose family had migrated to Diu when he was a young man. Only Kajal and her mother Varshaben said that if they could choose they would live somewhere else (for Kajal this was Bombay, for Varshaben, London). They were unique, for everyone else expressed reluctance to the idea of leaving Diu for less familiar, less reliable, less beautiful or less peaceful environs. Pramilaben was very content in Diu town, and made very positive comparisons between it and the mainland village of Ghogla where they had lived for twelve years saying “if we go to another town we don’t feel like it could be home.” She seemed to retreat from such remarks however when at another point she suggested complacently they “should like to live anywhere.” Such sentiment was however, itself strongly contradicted later when she firmly excluded the idea of living in Bombay.

For Hiraben the beauty and cleanliness of the urban and natural environment of Diu seemed to provide consolation in an unhappy marriage. Indeed, Hira’s enthusiasm for Diu’s natural beauty was such that she declared that one gets “a thrilling experience watching the natural surroundings.”

“I like living here since it’s my birth place and I have grown up here. …The part of Diu where I live is situated on the seacoast and I feel very happy as have I passed my childhood playing with sand at the beach. …It has peaceful environment, it looks beautiful in every respect, and goes on still improving day to day.”

Diu was healthy because “the climate is good, the air and light are good, and we can wander anywhere.” Varshaben also emphasised the high level of cleanliness to be found in the town’s environment and, like many others, named points of interest for visitors, as well as her own particular enthusiasms for certain favourite places with a peaceful ambiance that brought her peace of mind and light-hearted enjoyment to her family.

“In Diu in the olden days, no one was going out in the evening …Now the changes are there and everyone is free minded.”

“Diu has changed a lot and appears quite a lot more beautiful than before….We can see everywhere around new roads and buildings as well as hotels and gardens and fountains compared with earlier times when the place looked quite different, dull and inactive and hardly any visitors or tourists were to be seen.”

“In many respects Diu has changed. Previously in Diu there was no museum, fountains, musical fountains and the roads of Diu have been made broader. There are good statues of God to see, and to see those statues, people come from a distance. In the hotels many people come to eat everyday and thus the hotels are famous.” Laxhmiben, however, stressed the power of Diu’s natural beauty as of greater importance in attracting the tourists. “The visitors appreciate the place and admire its beauty. There are very attractive places for visiting all over the island. It is also well decorated everywhere. They watch this town with interest.”

“The people are not like before, there has been quite some change among them. The population has also increased, and the houses, roads etc are well shaped.”

At seventy-three Nirmalaben had also lived an adult life either side of the transition from Portuguese rule. When asked to consider the affects and possibilities of her long experience in Diu, Nirmala, like Jina, spoke only of the past in which she was a subject of Portugal. Though she said there had been changes, she would not comment on them, as she said she “had not studied”, thus implying that she thought she did not have enough education to venture a comparison. In addressing the subject of the past, Nirmala simply said that the “olden times were the good times.” She was indeed generally reticent and only prepared to acknowledge that there had been both good times and bad, and would not comment on Diu’s present condition.

“Previously it was quite a peaceful island and the people which were visiting Diu it was their pleasure, and the pleasure of the natives, that their experience of Diu was as a really peaceful island. But after this bridge, and more encouragement from the Tourism Department and the tourists, there is so much pollution from noise. Previously there were not many vehicles, but nowadays so many vehicles are there. When I came to Diu, I saw only three or four cars and about twenty-five motor-cycles or motor-bikes, but nowadays it is unlimited.”

“Many vehicles have been introduced. …There was only land once, but now houses have been built, and many people from many different places have come to live here. It’s become too much polluted. And restaurants and all have also been built, ….So many people from different places come here to see those beautiful places and it is a peaceful island. So I don’t approve of the changes that have taken place, no. …Because if it was peaceful, it was very good, but now there is too much pollution. Now there are too many tourists.”
“It is good to stay here. I feel at home in Diu, yes I do. We can live peacefully, the neighbours are good and the places are with peace. Diu is a good place. The public is good. Good business is here. There is nowhere else I would rather live, only Diu.” Busy with his tertiary studies and the co-management of a tea shop, Vilas liked to take a break and gain some time alone by going to the beach or public garden where he could “sit quietly and enjoy.”

“Our place is good in that neighbours are there, relatives are there, we are well with all of them, and there are no complaints from or about others.”

“Diu in my eyes is a very peaceful island and the neighbours are friendly. They always help each other in any difficulty…people are very friendly with each other here. Whenever I’m in need of them, I go and ask how could they help me, and whenever we need some things from them so they give us. Also, when they need something from us, so we also help them in many ways.”

“I am on good terms with everybody over here. And, I myself, being a silent person, offer no chance of any kind of dispute or quarrel with anyone. I feel peaceful in every respect over here.”

“Lately I am disturbed with these students, but that is not very serious for me. Here I can meditate, that is my first pleasure. I can worship, that is my second pleasure and third, and most important I am having privacy. I can do my programming work on computer, I can write my thesis as a yoga student and so many things I can do without any disturbance, This is a peaceful place.”

“I completely hate entanglement with the neighbours. I don’t want to disturb anybody in my work. I don’t want to listen or talk any words with my neighbour. I don’t want to be disturbed by anybody, and I don’t want to disturb anybody.”

This curiosity was not restricted to neighbours but to everybody. According to Shrivesh, though other people could not easily inquire into his affairs, they were interested “Not only from neighbours, not only from my landlord, but even my colleagues who are working with me, they are interested. They want to interfere but they cannot.”

“When we’re living in the house of my mother-in-law I could never feel at ease. I was sick of this world of always feeling conscious that they would listen to what we were talking about.”

“I became very tense and tight, everything belonged to them, and baby would go and touch some tree, or go and get herself in big jams and leave peelings all over their path. I was always imagining that this landlady would be after me screaming and howling at me about my kids.”

“I like to live a little far from the society, not coming into contact with many people but only with chosen company. I hate the main mentality of this population - the gossip of other people… I am a bit reserved, not mixing that much with people.”

“He was not just a Father, he allowed me to practice yoga and teach also and to keep my religious things in my room in the church. It was a funny thing for a priest, allowing a Hindu to stay and compared to a Hindu priest it’s not possible.”

“The nature of these people is very dismal. They seem to be a mix of people, but when we come as outsiders, they are not mixing that much. …No one has come down to my house to have tea or coffee to date. I’m going to finish nearly a month in this new house and only my friends, those who are from outside, come here to enjoy. As per my invitation no one of this local Ghogla area, or those who are serving with me in the same institute come. So I think the people of Diu resent outsiders, and think of their own benefits first. So they also don’t invite you to their place and that’s a pity on them. This is not the case of any particular community, but with the old community, those who particularly have this as their native place.”

“Oh yeah, definitely I feel at home in Coolbellup. Like I say, I’m part of the furniture out here now. I could imagine being an old-age pensioner out here. I’m going to be in Cooby when I’m fifty, sixty years old, I’m just going to be here. Just me, getting up in the morning, making an apple pie, cooking a roast, or going shopping. I couldn’t live in the fast lane. I like Cooby and I don’t think I’ll ever leave. My place is Cooby, my space is here. There is nowhere else I’d rather live. If I won Lotto I’d buy this house from Homeswest (aka MoH), bulldoze it and build again. But I’d build right here because I like it, and I don’t want to go anywhere else. I can’t even go and book into a pub and stay the night in the pub, I love this place so much, incredible.”
“Basically it’s so laid-back around here and everyone, or most people are so friendly that you just feel very comfortable here. …You’re really centrally located…You’re close to everything here.”

“I’ve lived in really poor areas and really rich ones. I much prefer Coolbellup. There’s no real money in Cooby but there’s real people. And given a choice of living, I’ll take here any day. People out here are normal, everyday, down-to-earth type of people. There’s no pretence, there’s no ‘I’m better than you and I’ve got more money than you’.”

“There’s a perception that Aboriginals and dole bludgers, pensioners, and oldies inhabit Coolbellup. Not true, there’s a lot of private homes in Coolbellup…There are a lot of people here who chose to buy a house here. …A lot of people in Coolbellup take a great pride in their homes and gardens. There’s only a few that don’t.”

“If I go to Perth, I’m on edge and I clutch my handbag by my side. I’m terrified somebody is going to come along and grab it. …I hate Perth, there’s too many people going too many places, too fast. It’s like your life’s rushing past you, you know, it’s too quick.”

“If I go to Perth, I’m on edge and I clutch my handbag by my side. I’m terrified somebody is going to come along and grab it. …I hate Perth, there’s too many people going too many places, too fast. It’s like your life’s rushing past you, you know, it’s too quick.”

“It was too restricted as for social reasons. I couldn’t probably be taken seriously as a truck driver in England. But here there’s no problem. Everybody could do what they liked and it wasn’t anybody else’s concern, so it was a release. When we first came here it was a release not to have small village social restrictions.”

Apparently, petty differences obsessed many veteran residents, and these struck Bernard as “very odd” attitudes with which he could not identify. The distance and bemusement is illustrated in his retelling of a remark he made to his wife: “Like the other day when I came back Daphne said ‘What are you laughing at?’ and I said, ‘I’ve come to the conclusion that some of the silly old buggers who live in Coolbellup live too long.’ ”

“Funnily enough, we have more social life down there [on the farm], sitting in a shed, than we do here. Lots more people call and, because they’re not in a house and its not formal, they’re much more inclined to chat with us and sit there and tell their stories, and less inclined to do it when they are in a house. I trace it back to the English attitude where you could meet people. We came from a little farming area. You could meet farmers and talk to them inside a shed but you would not be invited to the house because that was the woman’s domain and discussion was limited much more than it was sitting in their farms or their side sheds - quite different, which is odd considering they were quite close.”

“I used to think that I’d get hurt by other people, but now, I’ve become friends with a lot of Aboriginal kids. …I can talk to them, I could play around with them, play basketball, football. Now I think they’re okay.”

“An ideal area would be something like Coolbellup. It would balance together - some people can get really out of hand. Coolbellup because its been settled, everybody knows each other and everything’s together, everything; they work together and they help each other. If something happens there’s usually people round and they can help.”

Relations between Brandon and his local community bore an overall disposition of happy dependability and he declared: “I like living in Coolbellup, I’ve got a lot of friends, some of my school friends live on this street. I’d say it’s a healthy place. Most of the gardens and the houses are really clean so the people, I think, are very healthy. And if they keep it that way then there won’t be much sickness around.” Brandon showed an unmistakable engagement with and enjoyment of Coolbellup especially in relations to friends (and his passion for skateboarding along its streets). With the exception of some instances of bullying from peers and teachers, Coolbellup was, for Brandon, a benign, amiable and affable place, and the security, familiarity and health of its platial and social ambience were of a high order. For Melissa, while Coolbellup could get “a bit boring”, her enthusiasm for the area was evidenced in her enjoyment of its streets and grounds: “I spend most of my time at home and just walking around Coolbellup with all my friends. I like the streets, walking round about up to the school where we play. I don’t like it on my own. I hate it when I’m grounded. So Coolbellup’s a pretty friendly kind of place. In some ways it’s a beautiful place.”

There was with Reuben the reminder that while Coolbellup was home at one level, Portugal was home on another. His Portuguese identity informed a desire to go back and perhaps live there since he said, it “held his spirit.”

“I mean that just really pisses me off, driving through the potholes and everything. Half of the shops are vacant, not a tree round the place. It just doesn’t look good, simple as that. It’s been like this for years. Why hasn’t it changed?”
The shopping centre’s changed, and though it was open and fairly old and down-market, there were huge seats. The Aboriginal population and the old people would sit on these large benches. Dogs would wander in and out. Since they’ve tarted it up its gone down a bit, because few people sit there and they’ve got tiny seats and half the shops are empty.”

“There’s a variety of different people that are coming through. It has changed in a way where people have become more tolerant of each other. When we first moved here it was ‘why did you move in this place?’ This was where all the poor people came, Aboriginal people, all the troublemakers. Now there’s people that have brought private homes and things, more and more Asians and ethnic groups.”

“I don’t see them wandering about the streets together, which you used to.”

“Our children knew nearly all the Aborigine children in the area and with the changes, they no longer know them. There’s not quite so much community feeling with the Aborigines as there was then. In fact the opposite of what people think at present. I think it’s due to the changing Aboriginal population, the fact that they come and go more than most others. I don’t think they were more stable then but because they were children they mixed better.”

“I think they’re trying to build a new Coolbellup and all the great sort of places are like ‘restricted walking areas’ and there’s not enough adventures any more. It’s just that there’s not enough daring things to do now. We don’t seem to see the fun any more.”

“Coolbellup’s changed since I found out more about it and become friendly with more people. It’s become more of a better place to live. In my opinion it’s changed in the way I’ve reacted to other people, indigenous and white people and other cultured people. … I started liking it more and more because I knew more and more about it, and knew more people.”

“I’d like money to give like to people like in World Vision because I’m a member. But I’ve tried my best, but people around don’t really care about World Vision. Probably an ideal place is in a neighbourhood where people care what you care about, like World Vision and all that.”

“The main thing is there’s thieves. Before we used to have no thieves and we used to leave our windows open at night. But at home we almost got robbed at our house about a month ago. … Our next door neighbour has tried to get the burglars six times. That’s why we’re pretty scared of them. We’ve got locks and smoke alarms all that round our house.” It is interesting to notice how, unlike Melissa and Marissa, Brandon Michael and Reuben seemed unaware of the actuality or possibility of crime in Coolbellup.

“Yes I am prejudiced against them because they’re lazy; they will not get off their backsides and do anything for themselves.”

“They’re great so long as they’re full-bloods. Soon as you start with the half-caste, quarter caste whatever, they just think the world owes them a living and they’re not prepared to help themselves, and that annoys me, because my parents were from a low socio-economic group. We’re on the pension, thousands of other people are in the same boat. Actually, Aboriginal people get more. … They’ve got basically the same educational opportunities as everyone else, but they choose not to take advantage of it.”

White discriminations based on the skin colour of Indigenous Australians loosely equate the degree of darkness in skin colour with the degree of cultural (and by extension personal) integrity, strongly suggesting that urban Aboriginals exist in an ill fitting limbo between cultures. In a vicious circle, the lack of Black compliance to White values feeds misunderstanding and prejudice. The unofficial apartheid of marginalisation and abjection experienced by Aboriginal people is sponsored by White ethnocentrism, but is as conventional as it is disturbing. For White bigots, Aboriginality is no excuse for not ‘fitting in’, and miscegenation tends to stand as a symbol of the failure of assimilation to White ways, means and values. Pat’s accusations are indicative of a general unwillingness by Whites to acknowledge the history of White invasion and dispossession of Black Australia, on which subject see Henry Reynolds and Bruce Dennett The Aborigines (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 2002) and Reynolds Dispossession: Black Australians and White Invaders (Sydney: Allen and Unwin, 1989). The general lack of overt acknowledgment tends to fuel White anxieties about Black threats to the values which structure White appropriation, connection and identification with Australia. In White Australia, social relations are ordered by, and subordinated to, spatial ones in the norms of private property. For Whites, familiarity and security exist in the laws and institutionalisation of private property, an institution that ensures that the dialectical relationship of self and other is
always mediated by division and separation. Thus, reconciliation between Black and White Australia would involve something of a paradigmatic shift within the broad intersection of these spatial and social dialectics. It might mean, for example, that land was not considered vacant simply because it had no built structures or very few inhabitants. It might also mean that entitlement to, and control over, land did not depend upon possession of a title deed. In this connection see Robert Hillman, *Aboriginal Australia: Towards Reconciliation* (Port Melbourne, Vic: Echidna Books, 2001); Richard Broome *Aboriginal Australians: Black Responses to White Dominance, 1788-2001* (St Leonards, N.S.W.: Allen and Unwin, 2002). The film *Quest for Country* directed by Michael Riley (Blackfella Films, 1993), provides powerful insights into the Indigenous view of White society. Such attitudes are, as its director says, “one’s which whites don't understand and blacks find hard to explain.” Unfortunately due to the unapologetic stance of a conservative government, Whites these days discuss such things much less than they did just a decade ago. The lack of attention continues to feed Black disaffection and menaces the nature and sense of home for both White and Black Australians.

86 “I feel at home in my home with my door shut. I switch off and forget about outer things. But then I walk the streets and I don’t feel home.”

87 “They have no respect for what they work with, they walk they damage, they do anything, and it saddens me terribly and I get quite depressed.”

88 “I got broken into, three Aboriginals. The police said to me ‘we’re not even going to bother going to look for them, we’re not going to bother taking fingerprints.’ They haven’t got the man-power, they haven’t got the time.”… “There’s not a good intent amongst Aborigines. They’re given too many chances here, basically. They should be banned and they shouldn’t be given a second chance.”

89 “Coolbellup gets the last of everything and I don’t blame the Shire, because over time they’ve probably spent the money and it’s never been appreciated and looked after. They’re hitting their head up against a brick wall, because as soon as they put a bit of money and effort into it, its either, graffiti or smashed. There’s so many limitations that you’re battling with Homeswest [aka MoH]. I mean, they cry they need 7.5 million dollars a year, but they don’t try and deal with them that are creating the problem. They still go and put them into their properties, they leave them in for x amount of time, and then may evict them when the damage is done. And yet they do them up again. They put the same sort of people in them, and they basically wait for the damage to recur again. To me it’s just shocking.”

90 As “average middle-class people, just trying to get ahead in life” Michelle and her husband realise they “can’t go just anywhere”. What they sought was a safe place and an ideal place in many respects where, “you should be able to do whatever you want to as far as living.” Michelle realised her ideal place was “a fantasy in this day and age. I think you should be able to leave your front door open. I think you should be able to do, within reason and consideration to everyone around you, whatever you want to do.” Her ideal recognises queer folk, extravagant modes of dress and inalienable rights of household privacy, but stops at conditions which permit people to deal drugs, consume large amounts of alcohol and have all night parties, the behaviours in other words, from which Michelle wants to escape.

91 “The image of an area is directly related to self-esteem. If you look good, you feel good, no doubt at all. I want to go because I do not feel proud of the people of this area.”

92 “I feel we’re let down here. I can’t just go out and enjoy walking around Coolbellup, I don’t think it gives a comfortable feeling and I don’t feel comfortable doing it. There’s nothing nice to look at really. Some houses are very ordinary, and just the type of people walking down the street.” Also, according to Joe white-collar workers like himself were “totally unpopular” at the local pub.

93 “Its only probably in the last six months that I’ve come to terms with my marriage breakdown so that living here isn’t a drag. Even after being broken-into a couple of times, I never hated the area or any of the people. It happens, there’s nothing I can do about it.”

94 “Basically it’s very unhappy. I think this area is full of unhappy people who economically are not in very strong positions. They look unhappy. I spent a bit of time walking around areas with a higher degree of affluence and you notice the difference in the people.”

95 Peter drew a comparison with New York and its reputation for distrust and assault, and said he felt safer on the streets of New York than in Coolbellup. Though he recognised that New York was a place he probably did not know
well enough to know its “terrors”, he could feel threats to personal safety in Coolbellup’s streets which were of much greater concern to him than property crimes.

96 “The atmosphere has gone from being very friendly and neighbourly and open, to a time when it was quite hostile. We had a couple of hostile families living nearby. And it’s changed, one of the families has moved away and it’s made a huge difference. My spirits have lifted. I had a little party. Sometimes I do feel at home in Cooby. But for quite a while, when I had those awful neighbours. I didn’t even feel at home in my home.”

97 “I feel I endure being here a lot of the time because there’s not enough of a community to give me happiness. I think it takes more than one person really to make a home, or it needs to be in a community to give the feeling of home. I think, I look at how I live now, and I think, how I would like to live and there’s a big gap there. I think living in a community of people is important.”

98 “I felt at home with whoever I was with, because I was always in a community of people who I happened to be with on the train, on the bus. I felt I was with people of my own kind. I don’t feel as if I’m with people of my own kind here. I feel I have to modify what I really feel to communicate with people in this area. Although I like them very much, we don’t really speak the same language.”

99 “There’s a bit more crime than there used to be. I know there’s a lot of places around Coolbellup where you can feel safe. It’s a good place, other than all the drugs and that. I’ve seen a lot of people get hurt. I’m a bit scared sometimes walking around, especially late.”

100 “This is where there’s trouble all the time. Take crime, now, it’s still there, but it’s more subtle trouble because people just can’t come out abuse like they used to be able to.”
Chapter Four  Matters of House and Home

4.1 House and Home: Different Dwellings at the Same Address?

In this chapter I consider how notions of homes, vis a vis houses and other solid structures of dwelling, may be best apprehended and understood. As Mark Wakely notes how “English speakers juggle the words house and home with such abandon that they have become almost indistinguishable.” Conventionally, a ‘house’ is that concrete entity that both shelters and subtends that of the ambiguous entity called ‘home.’ A house is a more or less permanent building that serves to house people, shielding them from the elements and from each other. There are numerous accounts in which ‘house’ is distinguished from ‘home’ by the architectural concerns of structure, aesthetics, and materials, whereas home is used to discuss the affective realm which provides for, and helps constitute, whatever is considered ‘homely.’ In architectural discourse, house and home are the respective recipients of two broad areas of distinction: the former is functional and aesthetic while the latter is about structures of perception and experience.

The commonplace answer to the question, ‘Do the terms house and home refer to different notions of dwelling?’ is, ‘Yes they do.’ House and home are usually found at the same address. Roderick Lawrence, for instance, recognises the usual overlap between house and home. “House and home” he says “may or may not overlap, just as family and household may or may not be synonymous.” Lawrence then takes the usual step of using the term home in his study to refer to the numerous, multi-layered aspects of domestic, residential dwelling. In the literature, this choice is a frequent one, though it results in an enigmatic equation in which home = house + X, where X is whatever is added to house to turn it into home. Just as home often includes a house, so does it include a myriad of other purposes and functions. Wakely articulates the confusion and the abyss between house and home when he reminds us how, despite the fact that

...banks talk of ‘home loans, and developers peddle never lived in ‘project homes’, I like to think that architects and builders make houses; that houses become homes only when we take up residence in them, christen them with love and memories, make them the centre of the world. At the end of the working day we go home, we don’t go house. For a house to be a home, I think you need to feel positive about the place: secure, rooted, comfortable (at home not at house) and able to express yourself within its walls.

Thus, as Wakely suggests, “although it might have one less letter, home is a much bigger word than house ...it’s more evocative, more politically charged and steeped in emotion.”
Inside the term home, some forms of emotional investment are given greater esteem than others. While it is both common and commonly understood, that affection for a building and some of its particular aspects may well nest inside ‘home’, at the same time ‘home’ tends to be seen as a less appropriate term when such materialities are the main, or exclusive, sources and objects of affection. Indeed, leaving aside their utilitarian aspects, the suspicion emerges that the materialities in question are taken in such situations to be symbols or records of emotional investments connected to significant others or the self. Nevertheless, though it is often the case that objects act as signs of, or surrogates for, the self or significant others, they can also be appreciated, and even adored, in their own right for the beauty, pleasure, comfort, or convenience they bring. Yet, as will become evident in the next section, there is little consistency among those who make a distinction between house and home, but rather degrees of interchangeability. Discursive compartments slither, blur, and show themselves to be less stable than much of the literature would have us understand. House and home are relative rather than absolute meanings, whose province lies well beyond the descriptive capacity of even the most exhaustive description. The diverse content and range of interrelations of possible dimensions suggests that the use of the terms ‘house’ and ‘home’ is bound to vary from person to person and context to context. Sharing the dynamics of common culture and contextual particularity, ‘house’ and ‘home’ are interdependent, multi-dimensional phenomena. At once both site and medium for affiliations, roles, duties, claims, rights, and obligations associated with family, community, government, education, employment, religion and recreation, ‘house’ and ‘home’ operate in tandem in the realisation of a welter of individual, social and platial identities. Furthermore, it is clear that, however they are conceptualised, ‘house’ and ‘home’ depend upon and subtend the much larger concept of dwelling. As Susan Saegert observes:

The notion of dwelling highlights the contrast between house and home. First, it does not assume that the physical unit of a house defines the experience of home. It connotes a more active, mobile relationship of individuals to the physical, social and psychological spaces around them.

Notions of house and home are, in this sense, like effects of dwelling. In the literature however, not only is dwelling made an effect of house or home, but house is construed as a product, and treated differently from home. Even though house may exchange or share meanings with home, the latter is construed as both the process and the term which unites product and process. Amos Rapoport, on the contrary, insists that it does not make sense for academics to work with the term ‘home’ as it is too large and vague to be useful. Yet, as I see it, Rapoport shows good but
eventually impractical reasons for abandoning the term ‘home’ in favour of ‘dwelling’ defined as ‘a system of settings’. His claim is that the latter is more precise and can more effectively disclose the meanings and operations that coalesce in sedentary dwelling. For Rapoport, the gathering and aggregation of emotion, cognition and behaviour around the material reality of the house cannot justify the confusion which the use of the term home gives rise to. As he, in a sense justifiably, complains a large body of literature uses ‘home’ as a synonym for ‘house’, and mixes it up with the activities and meanings that live there. First of all, he argues, it is uncertain what exactly is to be included in the plethora of connotations that pertain to the term ‘home.’ The term home should not be used to cover both an object and people’s reactions to it. One cannot, he argues “confound an affective reaction with the object. Doing so leads to confusion between product and process, with home referring to both.” The result too often is that not only is ‘home’ defined as ‘the meaning of home’ but the physical aspects of dwelling get neglected. To deal with this confusion, Rapoport believes the building should act as an anchor and departure point, and advocates ‘dwelling’, defined as ‘a system of settings’, as the most appropriate term with which to refer to the concrete object embedded in a matrix of conditions, motivations, attitudes and activities. Separating product and process allows ‘dwelling’ to describe the material rubric, while everything else is described as various kinds of environment-behaviour relations. Rapoport argues that researchers thus obtain “a more neutral concept” that can, in neutral fashion, discuss “a system of settings related to systems of activities or meanings or values. Since there the object of study is so often the house and the relationships which take place within it, clarifying this difference should be straightforward. The researcher’s job is to examine meaning and behaviour against the system of settings in which they occur.

If the use of abstract theory was all there was involved, I would side with Rapoport when he criticises the confused use of the term home. It is often ambiguous and inconsistent. But it also needs to be said that the term ‘dwelling’ has similar problems. It can act as a noun and a verb and thus beget epistemological confusion at the theoretical level. It cannot simply be defined as a ‘system of settings’ and left at that. Secondly, the term ‘dwelling’ is, for my purposes, awkward to use in practice and does not cover the conceptual ground that suddenly emerges, without warning, in the course of research. I cannot concur with Rapoport’s insistence on conceptual tidiness, because in practice, there’s nothing tidy about it. Vernacular use lies with the notions of ‘house’ and ‘home’, instead of with abstruse connotations connected with the term dwelling. ‘House’ and ‘home’ have their equivalents in Gujarati (‘makan’ and ‘ghar’), and in both English and Gujarati these are the preferred terms. Such vernacular use has to be accommodated. It would
seem forced, as well as potentially confusing, to speak to people about their ‘dwelling,’ or worse, their ‘systems of settings’ and, at the same time conscientiously avoid the obvious terms. If the discourse generated in the interview process is to remain as informal as possible, then any inconsistency or vagueness accompanying use of ‘house’ and ‘home’ needs to be acknowledged, and as far as possible adjusted for. The lack of clarity in definition must be accepted, precisely because these are ‘user-defined’ categories and as such must be allowed to prevail. For ease of mutual interpretation, research should, as far as possible, work with the language with which it is presented. Moreover, there can be no doubt that professional and academic use of house and home reflect vernacular sources. Despite vagaries and inconsistencies, these terms show no sign of decline, nor does it behove research to change the language or the understanding that accompanies it, and which it attempts to represent. Still, for clarity in academic discussion and analysis, it is as necessary to distinguish meanings of house from those of home, and ‘house-like’ from ‘home-like’ attributes, as it is necessary to employ the term ‘dwelling’ to serve the higher-order epistemological function of being-in-the-world. Finally, it should be noted that the neatness and ease of the dichotomous thinking involved in product and process requires caution and discrimination. Product and process derive from the split between mind and body, and may introduce other overly neat dichotomies, like rational and emotional, or masculine and feminine. The divvying up of experience is a matter of categorical miscegenation, just as much as it is a matter of categorical creation. In this chapter, I have separated product/house and process/home where appropriate, but I have also accepted their confounding where it occurs.

In the English vernacular, only a rough semiotic separation between house and home actually occurs. Similarly, in my research, the idea that material elements can by themselves constitute a house, and not contribute to the meaning of home was neither common nor consistently applied. Overall ‘house’ was less used than ‘home.’ Nonetheless, though ‘home’ was not so circumscribed, it was less likely to be employed if material substances and concrete forms were in the foreground. ‘House’ by contrast, tended to be the less favoured term when emotional investments and affective relations were under discussion. In the next section, I show that common parlance tends to use home for subjectively construed conceptions and dynamic relations of place, and house for the objective relations and static conceptions in place. Ultimately however there is no epistemological imperative. As crucial mediators and arbiters of domestic residential experience, ‘house’ and ‘home’ support, complement, and supplement one another.
Chapter 4 Matters of House and Home

4.1.1 House and Home: Different Dwellings at the Same Address in Coolbellup?

There was conflation as well as separation of notions of house and home in Coolbellup and Diu. Conceived as concepts unrelated to the self, clear distinctions emerged between house and home as product and process respectively. When possessive pronouns personalised and possessed house and home however, complex conflations took place, which sometimes contradicted or, alternatively, contributed nuances of meaning that confirmed the presence or dependence of the one upon the other.

Though Michael said his house was identical with his home, his discourse showed that, in practice, they were not so easily conflated. At the time of our interview, Michael was changing his address, leaving a small older house in down-market Coolbellup for a big new one in the up-market suburb of Success. To discuss ‘house’, he compared his old house in Coolbellup with his new house in Success but, to describe what he thought of ‘home’, Michael addressed all of his remarks to the house in Coolbellup. Ostensibly, a house for Michael was a structural thing composed of rooms with different valencies, roles and functions, while home connoted specificity that is more subjective. However the two met and mingled, so that certain structures and functions implied certain affects. The composition of his Coolbellup house was central, and its rooms, enumerated by principle function, were places of key significance. In particular, ‘home’ was his room in the Coolbellup house and its smaller and more familiar order of rooms.

Was house the same as home? Reuben was not sure, but his comments on house and home illustrate an almost complete convergence of these concepts. Still, he distinguished what it meant to feel at home by separating his home from those of his friends, as being the place where one ate and slept. At first Reuben said he had no particular ideas of home, that “nothing came to mind” - but he would let me know. A bit later however, he said his thoughts about home were “the same” as those he had for his house, yet there was special appreciation of the yard for the pleasures of playing it offered. Reuben’s thoughts of home were orientated towards its material satisfactions and comforts, in particular sleeping and eating. At twelve, Reuben had lived half his life in this Coolbellup house, a period long enough for house and home to have merged, as the one mapped onto the other. Homeliness was characterised most prominently by spaciousness, a quality much belied by the outwardly ordinary appearance of his house. On the other hand, identity and connection were hedged by a latent anxiety when he imagined his house collapsing and threatening his home. For Reuben’s sister Marissa, house and home were uncomplicated by difference, being both “a place to live and shelter in and where you stay with your family.”
Similarly, domestic life for Michelle centred in her house as the concrete repository of emotional connection. Michelle said, “the house is my home and heart and life.” Having rented a number of different places before marriage, Michelle felt the intertwined nature of physical and emotional relations was inevitable, and independent of the fact of ownership, as home transcended structure.22

Melissa had a history of temporary residence and was used to transience as both places and people came and went in her dwelling experience. For Melissa house and home converged, in so far as place connected her to her extended family. Yet, house and home also met in a shared sense of possibility and vulnerability, from bureaucratic assault by the MoH on the one hand, and domestic violence on the other. Both product and process were subject to periodic disruption, in which dwelling was platially, physically or psychologically insecure. Melissa’s attitude was complicated since, while she used ‘house’ and ‘home’ interchangeably, the fairly constant change and upheaval made her dwelling situation temporary, and representations of house and home were fluid ones of unsure connection.23

For Christine, an experience of home grew out of what was, to begin with, just a house. A house was merely a house, an undifferentiated product, until one’s own ideas and effort of creation, decoration and renovation made platial changes which, with the process of raising children, converted Christine’s house into a home.24 The most important difference between house and home for Christine, however, was that you got to call a house home when certain powers, rights and freedoms were recognised. At home one was in charge: “the king or queen” of a little kingdom, and there was no other place in which such power and freedom existed in the same measure. The power to choose and to change were crucial determinants for Christine of whether a house was also a home, a process of appropriation in an everyday mode of dwelling.

For Joe both house and home referred and reflected each other, and he used the terms interchangeably, while for his mother Pat, the material comforts of her house were the *sine qua non* of home. For Pat, the words home and house cannot be used interchangeably to describe the same thing, though she was well aware that popular use had made them synonymous. A home was a house with a cosy sensuous environment. A house was only a home if its material environment was held in esteem. It was only a house, however, when there was a lack of appreciation for its material conveniences and sensual pleasures. A home cannot emerge in a house that is either overly or insufficiently ordered by considerations of appearance and status, an
attitude Pat attributed to experiences of transience and deprivation in her childhood, and as a housekeeper for rich people. Home is when a house is much more than a shelter. Still it must offer a level of congenial comfort to the extent that it creates a “cocoon affect.” A home is a house that serves pleasure and comfort. A home can only come into being so long as household features serve the comforts and pleasures of its members. The product is, in other words, no use unless it serves the process.

4.1.2 House and Home: Different Dwellings at the Same Address in Diu?
Vikrambhai rejected the separation between the notions of his house and his home. His home was, he said, in no way different from the platial and material order of his residence. House and home were both defined as platial, architectural and technological entities, whose purpose was to provide shelter and essential facilities. His ideal home confirmed this essentially utilitarian attitude, for it was via properties of structure and infra-structure that the ideal was reached. When they conformed “as per your requirement” you could realise appropriation and connection. The idea of the ‘worst possible home’ was a difficult concept for him to subscribe to, as any house was better than no home at all. While many shared Vikram’s concern with the extent of facilities available in one’s house, his exclusive focus on platial and material order, and his neglect of the social order of home which inhabited it and animated it, was singular.

Musakhan’s attitude was also orientated to platial and material conceptions of house and home. When discussing the concept house, he listed architectural and technological features and, for his own house, the material things “it should not be without.” Musa conflated house with home and used them interchangeably. The most important things about Musa’s house were, he said, the teak supports for the roof. The most important thing about his home was the gas stove without which “nothing is possible.” For Musa, material concerns were paramount, as without them neither house nor home could exist. Similarly, for Ashwinbhai a home is a house where the material environment supports and serves the social and familial one. However, he focused on the physical and architectural qualities of his own house and home, and emphasised the maintenance of platial order as indispensable to making a house a home. For Ashwin, house and home were mutually imbricated. Indeed, so closely identified were they with one another that, asking about his home after asking about his house, made Ashwin claim he that they were effectively identical that, describing the one, described the other.
Chapter 4 Matters of House and Home

When Vijayaben’s husband had left her and “gone away citing no proper reasons” she felt she and her son had had a house but not a home. A house, for Vijaya, was commensurate with the building and the material infrastructure of life, and she distinguished house and home as the difference between the house she had lived in, and the house she wished she lived in. Thus, while she separated notions of house from home, when she moved into subjunctive mode she neglected to make this distinction. What she wished for, and what she had merged. However, the separation re-emerged when, avoiding the idea that home was a matter of house ownership, she discussed her ideal home, in which home was seen as personal and familial, rather than embodied in the materiality of structures and contents. Perhaps the separation Vijaya drew between housing, as a matter of architectural and material infrastructure, and home, as the security of family life, illustrates an understanding that the comfort of the house can never coincide with, or match, the comfort of home.

Drawing a distinction between home and not home, Pramilaben noted the distance between the ‘haven’ provided by their house, and the situation of those who live in hostels or hotels. The most vivid illustration of the difference between inert product and animate process belongs to Marianne, who declared that “houses were made of bricks” while “homes were made of hearts.” At the time of our interview, Marianne was living in a simple household with her husband and two young children and, like Vijaya but in contrast to Vikram, felt home was personal feeling rather than platial location or material construction. Marianne described the struggle to build their house, but neglected to comment on it as a house. Instead, she focused on her experience. Home for Marianne was unequivocally about process rather than product, about the dynamic relations of place rather than static relations in place.

Ultimately, most Diuites and Coolbellupians held there to be differences between ‘house’ and ‘home’ that were at times important to distinguish, but which, at other times, served each other in orientations or inflections of meaning within an inter-relational matrix. Overall, special recognition of the differences between house and home were most evident among those who, for one reason or another, appreciated the product, the process, or both. In the next section, attention turns to the material concerns of structure.

4.2 House Form and Platial Order

It is perhaps at the spatial, physical, visible and tangible level that the most acute differences between Diu and Coolbellup are to be seen and felt. The spatial and physical features of their
urban and architectural landscapes differ in many respects: the size of blocks upon which houses are built, the way that houses are sited on them, the size, shape and composition of houses, the building materials used, the variations of house design, and the way houses relate to streets, other houses and the public commons of their respective urban settings.

Amos Rapoport’s book *House Form and Culture* was a pioneer in a new field of cultural inquiry that began to look in earnest at dwellings and dwelling systems which previously social science had overlooked. At the time, this approach was new, stimulating, and global in scope, emphasising analysis and explanation. *House Form and Culture* explored houses from positions of contrast and comparison, rather than simple juxtaposition and description. Despite subsequent criticism *House Form and Culture* gave, for the first time, comparative access to the large number of factors which enter into house form. As Rapoport saw it, the form of a house was a complicated matter of multiple determinations that needed to be seen together, in order to produce cross-cultural analysis. Geographical location, climate, material, technological capacity, economics and social structure could each be relevant to the way a house was built, used and understood. Recognising that houses gathered and exhibited cultural solutions to climate and environment, as well as accommodating cultural prescriptions, proscriptions, preferences and beliefs, this book was among first attempts to appraise house form as a cultural intersection of material and immaterial vectors. Houses from a variety of periods and geographical locations were examined as spatial, physical and material responses to natural and cultural conditions, and subsequently inspired several similar studies. I see the representations and discussion of the built environments of Diu and Coolbellup as extending in kind the comparisons that Rapoport initiated. In the following two sections, I discuss the ways in which the houses and associated landscape of streets in Diu and Coolbellup share certain aspirations, as well as how different some of the assumptions embedded there are. In the two sections beyond, the discussion turns to ways in which notions of house and home converge or diverge in the discourse of their inhabitants.

### 4.2.1 House Form: Platial Orders of House and Home in Diu

Platial forms are visible and tactile indices of our cultural and social environment. Though platial forms act as repositories for intangible aspects of consciousness like memory, they are most often apprehended via material and measurable means. Imagine a place you know, and its particular identity is first, usually, a matter of what it looks like. This initial image is usually quickly followed by associations, or desires which may also act as triggers to visual memory. Though
form may enclose content, form also contributes to determining it. Picturing Diu and Coolbellup immediately brings to the fore their crucial differences. For instance, while Diu hosts a range of house styles that belong to different times and show a variety of influences, the houses of Coolbellup are more or less chronologically coeval, and show little heterogeneity in architectural form. While every house in Coolbellup is situated on a piece of land with ample room for a back yard and a front garden, few residences in Diu have either such a large amount of land, or a back and a front garden. Indeed, there is frequently no garden at all. Having read the descriptions of the public domains of Coolbellup and Diu, you know something of how certain features of urban development such as streets and the orientation of houses to streets are differently realised. Such contrasts are interesting, not only for the physical and spatial comparisons they enable, but because they provide access to comparisons of the way these two societies make, use and describe their dwelling places. Time now to consider the role of house form and platial orders of sedentary dwelling, as we move in from the streetscapes to consider and contrast the platial ordering of houses in Diu and Coolbellup. At first the look is general, and then particular, with special attention to matters of style, size, suitability and desirability.

Along the narrow streets, lanes and cul de sacs of old Diu, it is rare for houses within the walls of the historical town to be sited on a block that it does not almost entirely occupy. Houses in the walled town are mostly tenements, and usually abut the street directly, with collectively used courtyards either in the middle or at the back. In old Diu there is hardly any cessation in the street frontage, as premises form a meandering and almost continuous front down both sides of the street, broken only by occasional alleyways or side-streets. Courtyards are common, but generally small. They are either behind or between tenements, providing areas in which to socialise, play, hang washing, grind masala, or access a common pump and toilet. Where land has become available due to dereliction and demolition, well-to-do people have built large, lavish, detached houses, that, even if they have a fence, still sit cheek by jowl with their older neighbours. In-town residential dwelling thus, invariably, takes place in close physical proximity to one’s neighbours.

Irrespective of the type or age of the building, locally quarried limestone blocks measuring about thirty by fifteen by ten centimetres are the sole construction material of the walls. Roofs are usually low pitched with terracotta tiles in older structures, and flat and of reinforced concrete in newer ones. To guard against erosion limestone blocks are rendered outside with limestone slurry or cement and painted. Housing beyond the walls of the old town tends to be by those who belong to poorer castes, for there land and tenancies are cheaper. Beyond these fringe
developments small-scale farm holdings exist wherever the fertility of the land permits. The size and complexity of these houses in rural parts generally reflects the size of the allotment and wealth of the inhabitants. In Diu, the size of a residence varies from around twenty-three square metres to between two to three hundred according to wealth and historical period.

In Diu, Portuguese colonial architecture was influenced by the traditional Gujarati architectural form known as the *haveli*. *Havelis*, in essence, are residences grouped as tenements around an internal courtyard. In his paper *Sociology of the North Gujarat Urban House* V. S Pramar talks of the dominance and prevalence throughout Gujarat of this, originally North Gujarati, architectural form. The *haveli* is a housing style whose forms developed in, and accompanied the rise of, Gujarat’s famous mercantile communities. Originally, from rural origins and medieval times, *havelis* were the dominant architectural mode across Gujarat until after Indian independence. Before independence, the lifestyle of the mercantile community became, with the *haveli*, the model for the entire region in a remarkably homogenous and uniform pattern.

The great mansion or *haveli* of the urban financier shows in its design a spatial arrangement which is almost identical with that of the ordinary trader, shop-keeper or artisan. The larger dwellings merely repeat some of the spatial elements of the smaller dwellings,...but this difference is only quantitative not qualitative. A mere repetition of identical units creates no new architecture, because the relationship between spaces remains the same. … The urban house has at its core a set of spaces which, in their sequence and proportions, are… identical with those of the rural dwelling.

As Pramar explains, the defensive, protective and rural origin of a single *haveli* becomes apparent when grouped with others. Originally *haveli* habitation was organised by ties of kinship, and a grouped collection of *havelis*, in a complex of extended families surrounding a common and semi-public courtyard, are known as a *khadki*. Now, however, caste affiliation rather than kinship, tends to define membership of a *khadki* in urban areas, and market forces to an extent contribute to their attrition. In urban areas a collection of *khadki’s*, developed around a common access road or path, is called a *pol*. Like *khadki’s*, *pols* were once oriented around caste group. But, due to the scale involved, such arrangements are more subject than *khadki’s* to the caste-blind influence of market forces, and the equalitarian ethic intoned in the rhetoric of globalising modernity. Nowadays the construction ethic in congested areas of urban Gujarat has ignored the *haveli* form in favour of cost and space efficient apartment blocks.

Inside Diu town, housing from the Portuguese era is mostly comprised of *havelis*, or modified *havelis* collected into *pols*. Where affluence has permitted, these *havelis* have incorporated bas-
relief ornamentations to doors, door frames, window frames, window shutters and around the base, roof and intervening storey lines. The facades also show the influence of Portuguese design in touches of baroque ornamentation to plinths, gateways, architraves, gables and verandah piers. Modification and compromise of the haveli style in Diu occurred as builders inserted some features that belong to Portuguese colonial forms and adjusted others. Modified haveli’s in Diu have often adjusted the position of the wada, or internal courtyard, situating it at the rear and sometimes dispensed with it altogether. These rambling tenements are typically owned by a family, and apartments and rooms are leased to tenants or, occasionally, sold as subdivisions. Separations in the architectural style of early and late periods of Portuguese colonialism are evident in the construction choices. Earlier periods were more utilitarian in orientation and less likely to receive the romantic and imaginative flourishes of a settled and relaxed colonial occupation. The waxing of a more pronounced aesthetic architectural disposition may be linked to the waning of the military one, so that in the later colonial period, with more trade and money, there was also more attention given to aesthetics. For the most part, architectural adaptations and mixtures prevail, and the housing within the walls of Diu town comprises older or newer versions of the haveli. But though the people to land ratio is not as tight in Diu as it is in other areas of Gujarat, no new havelis have been constructed for over sixty years.

Housing designs from the mid to late twentieth century show Indian adaptations of Bauhaus modernism in the censure of ornamental accessories so favoured by the European Baroque and haveli constructions. For want of another term, I call these Indian modern, because of their functional appearance. The U.T Government adopted Indian modern in the apartments it provides to civil servants. An austere, no-fuss functionalism dominates the style and standards of government built apartments, which are identical in the amount of space they encompass, irrespective of the number of people they house. Privately built versions of the Indian modern follow, however, the haveli in purpose, as they have been built to serve expanding families in which married sons and their families take up residence in the parental home. As the weathering erosion of a tropical climate and rock flora crumble old havelis and colonial architecture, these are seldom restored, but are either demolished or are radically renovated into less angular versions of the Indian modern, or what I call the European neo-rustic, whose popularity it has eclipsed. The European neo-rustic styles are built by the wealthy, and tend towards the grandiose, as they fuse functionalist and romantic elements in substantial, detached, double storey houses, reminiscent of houses in rural areas and small towns across Europe. These large and vivid houses dominate their blocks, and have small rear courtyards or gardens, narrow paved
or vegetated perimeters and are enclosed by walls which wear hundreds of shards of broken glass to deter would-be thieves. Most Neo rustic houses occur in singular fashion among haveli and usually, but not always, are of similar height and orientation to the street-scape. Their comparatively bright colouration makes them stand out however. Along the crest of Diu’s only hill, a large scale demolition has taken place and a neo-rustic colony has sprung up. This development’s invocation of the collective architectural harmony of a European village contrasts strongly in scale and colouration with the old weathered forms nearby.

In Diu, with the exception of the very new neo-rustic houses which boast more rooms, there are not many rooms, and little walled differentiation of internal domestic space. Platial differentiation takes place according to time, need or the placement of objects. Only the houses of the middle and upper-middle classes occupy relatively generous amounts of floor space. These usually house a large number of people in a few large, generously proportioned rooms. Several smaller ones are dedicated to the storage of supplies and special items of furniture, like chairs used to honour visitors. Poorer people have less space, meaner proportions, fewer rooms and store items in chests, or simply piles. The lower classes generally have houses or apartments that are just two or three rooms. Overall, there is little emphasis on personal space and, with some important exceptions, available space is divided and redivided according to varying requirements. The notion that one should have a room of one’s own into which one retreats to be private, is uncommon in India. Generally, individual rooms dedicated to privacy and sleeping, are considered either unnecessary or undesirable. With the regular exception of kitchens, bathrooms and toilets, it is unusual to find a house in Diu with discreet, special purpose rooms such as bedrooms, sitting rooms or dining-rooms. In middle-class households, though there may be one or more bedroom, they do not tend to be regarded as the special province of any one member of the household. Though there may be rooms with beds, these are often shared by members of the same sex. With a mat, mattress, pillow and sheet laid out on the floor, several people sleep in each of the few rooms, grouped according to sex and relationship. Bedding is removed and folded away during the day, and the room returned to its several day-time functions. Even simple families of the middle-classes, in which a nuclear family occupies its own residence, the only bed often belongs to two brothers, or a mother and daughter. In the hot season people may sleep on roofs or in courtyards. Newley-weds living in the house of the husband’s parents tend to be premier claimants of a bed in more private space, though the wife may also find herself obliged to sleep alongside her sisters-in-law. With the exception of places dedicated to worship and
religious ritual, cooking, washing and defecation, the principle of polyvalency orders domestic places.  

Rather than rooms belonging to people as they do in the West, rooms are associated with different purposes at different times of the day. It is also the case that certain places in certain rooms are dedicated to certain sorts of activities, such as television viewing or prayer. Unless the household is a poor one, the rooms of a typical Diu house with the exception of kitchen, and bathroom and toilet, are flexible overlaps of place and purpose, which they serve according to time and circumstance. Regardless of family income, or how many children and other relatives the house may sleep, the number of rooms and the privacy they afford does not increase with increases in size of the house. According to the literature, despite differences in architectural form, this polyvalency of purpose is characteristic of most dwelling in India. Pramar, for example, uses the concept of polyvalency in his study of the haveli, and draws attention to the importance of the floor and the praxis that define place and the sparse quantity of furniture. Whether a house in Diu reflects the influence of the haveli structure or not, polyvalency of purpose and praxis defines and orders internal places according to person, activity and time. With the exception of the most Westernised residences (and thus almost by definition, the most affluent), such forms of platial differentiation have remained sociologically constant across India. For example, in his introduction to a coffee table pictorial tour around contemporary and domestic Indian architecture, Ismail Merchant recalls his childhood in a two roomed, lower middle-class Bombay apartment.

The apartment house was five storeys tall, with two apartments to a floor. Our family consisted then of my parents, my three elder sisters and myself. In time three more daughters arrived. Until my older sisters were married, nine of us lived in two rooms, not counting the kitchen and bath. One of these was my parent’s bedroom, but sometimes it overflowed when relatives came to visit. …My father sometimes liked to sleep out on the balcony, and at night the servant lay down on the kitchen floor.

Of course Ismail Merchant is now an international celebrity and no longer an ordinary Indian, nevertheless while he was a child, the polyvalency of place in his parent’s two room apartment was made operational by the ethic of flexible opportunism and mobile items of furniture. The incorporation of Western style furnishings and new technologies have, however, involved shifts of platial definition, as will be discussed further in chapter six. It would seem that, with the exception of the rich, the platial order of domestic life for the vast majority of ordinary Indians has not changed very much in the last fifty years.
4.2.2 House Form: Platial Orders of House and Home in Coolbellup

Most people in Coolbellup own about the same amount of land as each other as was produced when the suburb was surveyed and divided into blocks of land of about seven hundred square metres. The overwhelming majority of houses in Coolbellup are detached, single storey, single brick (veneer) bungalows built by the MoH between the early and late 1960’s. MoH house plans conformed to a single basic theme with five minor variations. Thus initially at least, houses occupied approximately the same floor area at around eighty to a hundred square metres. As chapter three discussed, suburbs such as Coolbellup are typical of state funded housing across Australia, in which houses and apartments had scheduled standards of materials and fittings due to a budget conscious, cost - benefit analysis applied to their construction. A limited set of designs thus incorporates standardised rooms and facilities. When first built, every house had three bedrooms, a kitchen, a combined living and dining area, a bathroom, a toilet, a laundry and a small front porch. Compared to Diu, Coolbellup houses not only have specific rooms for specific purposes, but these are usually heavily furnished with separate bedrooms allocated to adults and children of different sexes wherever possible. With the permission of the MoH, extraordinary additions of rooms and features were at the expense and discretion of the tenant. Rather bluntly and bleakly Fiske, Hodge and Turner describe the standardisation of state-funded housing across Australia when they say,

..the variation on the double fronted bungalow (with porch, without porch, porch on left, porch on right ) is mechanical and meaningless ; each difference is sufficient to distinguish one house from the next but minimal enough not to infer (sic) differences of status.33

The change of MoH policy in the late 1980’s encouraged tenants to buy their houses and, in conjunction with the redevelopment agenda begun in the mid 1990’s, has heightened the scale of home improvement activities in Coolbellup. The cheap real estate of Coolbellup has attracted young middle class, first home buyers, who purchase a house they believe will prove to be an affordable and improving investment. Progressively a substantial number of residents have purchased houses and added one or more rooms as well as all kinds of elaborations and embellishments. Workshops, patios, verandahs, garages, garden sheds, swimming pools, and security screens and systems have appeared. Most blocks of land have received ‘improving’ attention which has transformed them from uncultivated sandpits to respectable gardens, which range in style from the formal, to the informal and a few that are wholly uncared for. Gardens
usually consist of lawns at both the front and back, bordered or divided by flower beds, shrubs and small trees. In their homogenous orientation to the street and ubiquitous presence of a lawn, houses and gardens in Coolbellup exemplify the convention of conformity and predictability of Australian suburbia. Viewed at a distance Coolbellup residences display a homogeneity that is belied by closer examination when it becomes evident that small scale differences proliferate to produce the distinctive comforts which for many people help convert houses into homes.

4.3 A Room of One’s Own: Platial Polyvalency and Privacy

As already broadly insinuated, platial polyvalency is linked with the social ecology and meaning of the private and privacy. The idea of privacy, like the phenomenon of home is, as Dovey reminds us, a dialectical process “of being in contact and being out of contact with others.”

Anthropologist Peter Wilson proposed that notions of privacy developed with the adoption of architecture which, in providing technological control of attention and exclusion, “fertilised or mechanised attention.” Attention and concentration are natural or pre-cultural modes of privacy conditioned by the surrounding cultural environment. In societies in which architectural technology is temporary or minimal, privacy can be obtained either through leaving the company of others, or via the inchoate means of body language which signals to others that one wants to concentrate, or be left alone. However, domesticated dwelling affects the conditions of attention by impeding sensory ability to attend to and monitor others.

Living behind walls affects the various aspects of attention, and people so affected must respond. This occurs in part by specialising attention, by developing modes of surveillance, supervision, and inspection, and by evolving stratagems of evasion and display.

However it is acknowledged or demarcated, the ‘grand dichotomy of public and private’ can be discerned and described as relative levels of ‘visibility’ and ‘collectivity’ which, whether via walls or the protocols of the gaze or spoken word, paradoxically both expose and shelter culture. What is private exists in a condition of low visibility and a lack of attention, while what is public has a high level of visibility that is meant to encourage the giving of attention. Crucial though these ideas are in enacting any platial order, at this point I must confess that in Coolbellup, where I began my fieldwork, the idea of inquiring into comparative notions and evaluations of privacy and private places did not occur to me. This of course is regrettable for a social researcher, yet I should say that it did not occur because, from my position, privacy and the private were such naturalised, conventional, and embedded assumptions, I couldn’t see them. A
large portion of my life has been spent in suburban Australia, and this has obviously so conditioned my perception that I only saw privacy as relevant once I began my fieldwork in Diu. The privacy of the suburban block, along with the dominant functional valency marking rooms, means that the privacy of and in a house in Australia is expected. At the platial level of house and home, every resident has access to privacy in Coolbellup. Though I was aware of domestic arrangements in India as different, I was aware of the obvious comparison in the ratio of the size of houses to the number of inhabitants. This meant that the big differences of cultural juxtaposition tended to obscure the small internal differences I might have disclosed in Coolbellup. Thus, though some of the comparisons which emerge in the following sections cannot be said to derive from any formal empirical research, I beg the reader’s indulgence of the use I am able to make of a lifetime of informal participation and observation. The following sections show how different evaluations of privacy can be, and how these evaluations correspond with platially produced privacy. I turn to examine how specific notions of privacy, polyvalency, and other forms of platial order such as size, shape, material and colour, illustrate the ways in which house and home mingle and coincide, or separate and diverge. Discussion enters the house to take accounts of the meanings that reside in evocations of platial order.

### 4.3.1 Housing Style, Size, Suitability and Desirability in Diu

Ashwinbhai lived in a haveli influenced house-temple built several generations ago by the Gola community, the traditional retainers of the Rajput rulers of the area, though its exact age and ownership were unknown to him. He paid no rent. Unusually, Ashwin and his wife and two daughters lived near her parents rather than his, as his wife’s father used to be the priest of the temple. Ashwin took over as priest and ran the temple as a refectory where he and his family cook for a number of regular customers. Given the dual purpose of the temple, as well as Ashwin’s obvious pride in his profession, it was not surprising that he made special mention of the enclave room dedicated to the gods, which fronts an inner courtyard (wada). The platial order of architectural form was emphasised over the reasons and purposes of the temple and refectory. Mention of the store room that housed the ritual paraphrenalia of the gods, as well as bulk quantities of non-perishable food, serve as a reminder of the place of food in Hindu religious ritual, especially as prepared by priests, who often earn a living by cooking for others alongside their role as mediating agents for the gods.

Ashwin’s ideas about his house emphasised its simplicity of structure and infrastructure. When asked about ‘home’, Ashwin addressed existing aspects of his house, such as the importance of
good ventilation, fresh air and sunlight. His house, he said, “should” offer congenial and attractive shelter, but although he affirmed its pleasing form and aspect, he was not wholly uncritical of the architectural simplicity he had just claimed to appreciate. In some respects the arrangement was too simple, and lacked important properties of privacy and space. Such qualities as fresh air were very important, but there were neither enough rooms nor private places. While the internal courtyard, where worship, ritual and the refectory business took place, was roomy and well ventilated, this feature constituted the greater portion of household space. The unsymmetrical division between public and private areas gave insufficient private places, for it left only one room for the four permanent members of the household to sleep beyond the public domain and any intrusive weather. Ashwin wanted separate rooms for his children, yet it was possible, he said, for him and his wife to obtain some conjugal privacy by placing a temporary bed in the store room. For Ashwin, eating and socialising areas occurred at the expense of adequate areas to serve sleep and other unarticulated needs. Personal, private place was at the expense of publicly designated space.

Musakhan owned his two storey, three-roomed house in which eight to ten people lived. He would bequeath it to his three sons. He thought his house’s most important architectural feature was the teak cross beams that supported the roof. Its least important features were all side details he had planned, which would improve the house’s comfort and appearance. Musakhan drew a direct correspondence between the house’s level of infrastructure and his sense of well-being as registered by the comfort and convenience to their bodies. There was a sense of “well-ness”, said Musa, in having “all facilities.” He valued his home as the repository of all necessary things, and felt a person “should not go out to borrow any thing.” The ideal home embodied the principles of provision and acquisition in the idea that at home “there must be beautiful-ness” created by facilities such as a garden and a swing, which Musa aspired to provide one day. A terrible home lacked facilities, or ones such as broken chairs that were useless, offered no pleasure and gave a sense of inadequacy. For Musa, there was a direct relation between the amount of space a house afforded, and the level of harmonious relations, in the family who shared it. Good facilities facilitated good family relations illustrating again the inter-woven texture of product and process. With the construction of another floor, said Musa, “more children can stay and wives and sons can live peacefully.” Musa did not consider his house a private place for “any one can come, relatives known and unknown.” Indeed, he stated categorically that his life was an open one and he “had no need of privacy.” In a similar fashion, Pramilaben, who lived with her husband and two adult and one half-grown children in a narrow, freestanding, Indian modern two-storey, four-
Hiraben was poor, the poorest of my Diu respondents, and her one room garret accommodated all cooking, eating, sleeping and entertaining for six people. Bathing, laundering, dishes and toileting, were managed by either borrowing the private facilities of her brother in-law or common facilities like the communal pump.\textsuperscript{57} On Hira’s wages there was no money to spend on ‘home improvements’ to address such problems as holes in the roof and a rickety wooden staircase. Her meagre income was the mainstay of the household, and her main concern was how to feed her family. When thinking about her house, Hira did not talk about the size or design of her house, but about ingredients essential to the continuation of life. She listed features and items her house required, but did not possess. The resignation with which she viewed her house was evident in her description of her ideal home, which she aspired to but without much hope. In the ideal home were separate rooms, a variety of decorations, but most importantly, no scarcity of food.\textsuperscript{58} For Hira, the ideal home was replete with a platial order in which design, size and aesthetics were chosen so as to encourage familial contentment.\textsuperscript{59} In a poor, crowded household such as Hira’s, an absence of regular domestic privacy and private space prevailed. Within the house the only form of platial privacy possible, was achievable by sitting under the roof at the edge of the room with one’s back turned. The only other opportunities Hira had for privacy were connected with her work as a sweeper, and the regular occasions when she foraged for firewood. These activities took her outside the house, where she would often work alone. Yet there was little indication that Hira sought or valued privacy, but on the contrary she, like her neighbour Laxhmiben, preferred to socialise, when time and duties permitted. Moreover, though she initially denied having a favourite place round the house, she later said her sitting room and the front stoop were favourite places, as they facilitated chat with her neighbours.

Laxhmi’s comments on how she spent her time ‘alone’, revealed not only her distaste for bodily and psychic solitude, but the idea that these were not normal things to desire since, if one finds oneself alone, one naturally seeks company.\textsuperscript{60} Laxhmiben’s joint family occupied at least three times as much space as Hira’s though it also accommodated three times as many people. In a new Indian modern four roomed house, Laxhmi lived with her husband, four children, her parents-in-law and later, after fundraising efforts by the entire family, enough money had been collected to erect another storey. Into this extra room moved her husband’s brother and his wife. Despite the ratio of people to rooms, Lahxmi counted one of the rooms as her private room, because by
‘private’ she meant a measure of personal presence and control. This was, in other words, the room in which she spent most of her time, rather than a room that facilitated solitude.

Vijayaben, like Hira, accounts for at least part of her dwelling experience in terms of the stressful exiguousness of seemingly permanent economic insecurity. Vijaya’s immediate maternal family of six did not own the two storied, four roomed, late colonial style house in which they lived. Deserted early in her marriage by her husband, Vijaya led a difficult life as a single mother from a low status caste. Her family’s access to the house relied on an uncle’s continued absence abroad, making investments in platial ordering and structuring, hopes upon which the importance of the home did not, and could not, depend. Though Vijaya hoped that somehow, some day, her family would own a house, there was little hope the dream would be realised. With her son and mother, Vijaya slept in the sitting room on mats and mattresses on the floor that were rolled away during the day. Her brothers had one of the bedrooms, and shared a double bed, while her unmarried younger sister had the tiny attic room, which was only just big enough for a narrow bed. Despite the lack of any room of her own, Vijaya managed to obtain some of the privacy she desired by sitting and sleeping on the roof terrace.

Varshaben and her daughter Kajal regarded their tiny apartment on the third floor of a three storied haveli situated in a pol, as private, although its two small rooms housed two adults and three children. The entire building belonged to her father-in-law. On his death, it was to be divided between five sons. Varsha thought the supporting pillar in the middle of the house was the most important feature, as it carried the whole weight of the building. For similar structural reason, the roof beams were almost as important. Most of Varsha’s comments, however, either referred to the facilities in her house, or to the houses of others. Varsha wished her house was bigger, more conveniently located, and had more amenities. Varsha was envious, and held a comparative attitude toward housing, in particular the houses of the Dalit community who, though beneath her in social status, were in many cases able to house themselves better than her family, due to the combined economic pull of their large families. Varsha’s daughter Kajal slept with her brother on the floor in the kitchen, while Varsha, her husband, and toddler used a high and narrow double bed in the only other room that accommodated little else besides (a television, a wall cabinet, a small table and two straight-back chairs). Common bath and toilet facilities were located in the courtyard. Still, Kajal imagined her ideal home as little different. It still comprised
just two rooms and kitchen, but added an internal W.C and bathroom. Both Kajal and her mother said they would appreciate more privacy in some platial separation. Varsha attributed her lack of privacy to the smallness of the rooms and the presence of three children, one of whom, as a toddler, seemed to take up more room than the others. Like Hiraben, Varsha’s proposal to realise some privacy was extremely modest, yet, unlike Hira more likely to eventually materialise.

Government owned accommodation, or quarters, are supposed to be made available to government employees of every description, theoretically. The process of allocation, which happens when one reaches the top of the queue, is, however, manipulated by the injection of influential power and corruption. A lowly sergeant in the Indian army, Shrivesh Kumar, for example, had been stationed in Diu for 14 years and had still not been granted government quarters. Government quarters are in the Indian modern style and identical in size irrespective of the number of people they house, and have standardised features. Thus a bachelor, like my friend, research assistant and government employee Pareshbhai, inhabits the same apartment as a family would. At the time of our interview, Paresh had just been allocated government quarters, with which he was well pleased. From Paresh, I learned a lot from about the dimensions, details and costs associated with this form of accommodation in comprehensive descriptions, which included the measurements and installed facilities of each room. Paresh also spoke of his particular needs and covered issues of space, essential services, location, privacy for meditation and said that with the exception of reliable electricity, these needs were all fulfilled. As an ardent yogi, Paresh hoped to communicate its virtues by writing a book on yoga. To practice yoga, meditation and compose this text, Paresh required a moderately spacious, well-ventilated, quiet and private place. Previously his accommodation had lacked the room and the privacy he desired, so, to obtain more, he had often stayed with his friend Vikrambhai. His new residence, however, provided privacy and the opportunity for integration of his psychological, physical and spiritual existence. Though the unencumbered floor was considered one of the most important architectural features, Paresh imported a substantial amount of furniture and manchester, and took advantage of his single occupancy to dispense with high levels of platial polyvalency

Like his older friend Paresh, Vikrambhai was a bachelor and, as he worked as a veterinary assistant with the Department of Agriculture, had been in allocated a government apartment. These quarters complied, he said, with every standard specification of size, shape and material. Like Paresh, Vikram also practised yoga, but did not refer to it at all when he described his accommodation in wholly materialist terms, with particular emphasis on the importance of
quality in its construction. According to Vikram, size was not as big a problem for inhabitants as cheap or careless construction methods.\textsuperscript{71} This must be placed in context, however, for Vikram’s view represents the opinion of a single man who inhabited a comparatively large amount of space, only a small portion of which he furnished or used. Appropriate size and spatial proportions were not placed by others below concerns over construction quality, and it seems likely that Vikram’s represents a view of platial order derived from somewhere other than his Diu experience. His specific interpretation of privacy as private ownership, meant that Vikram would not call his quarters private, since they were owned and allotted by the government. Yet another definition of privacy was also in tacit operation, since Vikram valued being alone, liked a quiet environment, and wanted to write a book on establishing and maintaining domestic aquariums, drawing on his veterinary knowledge.

Another bachelor, Shrivesh Kumar rented a ground floor apartment in a large, three-storey modified \textit{haveli in a khadki}. The apartment comprised one small room partially partitioned by a half wall from two other very small rooms full of things stored by his land-lord. They were so full that Shrivesh could not use these except to store some shoes and hang clothing. A window in one wall looked out onto a bare muddy stretch of ‘garden’ across which waste water travelled before joining the street gutter. Another looked out onto a common bathroom, foyer and stairwell. Though he said he had no formal knowledge of architecture, Shrivesh articulated quite explicit ideas about what constituted reasonable residential dimensions and circumstances.\textsuperscript{72} His ideal architectural minimum had a volume of just over four thousand cubic feet, yet his actual room, at only eight feet by twelve feet by ten feet, had a volume of only nine hundred and sixty cubic feet, and so provided for less than a quarter his desired ‘living’ room. Though he conceded his room had enough air and light, and was “enough,” by way of contrast he thought it very cramped and inadequate. Srivesh did not reside in the architectural circumstances of his choice, but where he could afford to, and he had been repeatedly overlooked for government quarters.\textsuperscript{73} The surge in the price of rental accommodation and land prices, driven by exponential increases in the numbers of tourists, had affected him seriously.\textsuperscript{74} Shrivesh was the only person in Diu to comment on the elasticity of the notion of privacy, for he noted how the concept could contract and expand, according to how one measured it. For him, it meant that he was allowed to be left undisturbed. Indeed Shrivesh was quite adamant in his desire for privacy and peace in and around his lodgings, and deplored noise and disruption, especially when these involved “entanglements with neighbours.” Though unhappy with his residence, because of its squalid, noisy situation,
meagre dimensions and expensive rent, Shrivesh realised he could do nothing but accept his situation and hope for more privacy.\textsuperscript{75}

Marianne had many things to say about the house she, her husband and two children had commenced living in, a house they were still building and was only two-thirds finished. Situated on a comparatively large block of land, their new house was to be the most recent incarnation of Indian modern, uncluttered by extraneous ornament, and consisting of a sitting room, two bedrooms, a tiny kitchen, a courtyard and a garden. Getting to the stage where they could inhabit it had been a huge emotional and financial effort, and as soon as possible they had moved into one of its rooms. They had use of a bathroom and toilet, but the room was very roughly finished before painting, flooring and, with the exception of an electric bulb, the installation of basic fittings. One of the things Marianne valued in her conception of the ideal house was simplicity, and her current accommodation certainly had it.\textsuperscript{76} Though conditions were rough, she said she was content and not impatient. Indeed, future improvement to the house’s appearance and facilities were to be minimal and unostentatious, partly because of expense, but also because Marianne could not subscribe to the idea and the work involved in ‘keeping up appearances.’ Nevertheless, the influence of attractive features on the day-to-day to life of inhabitants was, she thought, very important. It was more important, for instance, to paint the house in congenial colours, and to have a polished cement floor, rather than worry about fashion statements in one’s choice of tiles. Colours, she believed, affected mood, so it was important to choose carefully, as the wrong choice could detrimentally affect psychology, just like too much fussy housework.\textsuperscript{77} Marianne with her husband and two small daughters had always slept in the same room. This was supposed to change when the house was completed, but three years later though the house was complete and bigger than first envisaged, the family occupied just three rooms and still slept together. The rest was let to two tenants. The voluntary social work Marianne’s husband did for the church entailed visits from clients and, when combined with the visits of neighbouring relatives, made Marianne’s house a much visited place. She was blunt about the absence of privacy and her desire for more. Though she did not have a room of her own, and did not expect one, she wanted to be able at least to move out of range of the daily intrusions of visitors and relax, insofar as responsibility for two small daughters would allow.\textsuperscript{78}

Twelve year old Levita’s circumstances were unique among my Diu respondents, in that in her older style Indian modern house there was a ratio of only five people to seven rooms. She was conscious of its relative spaciousness.\textsuperscript{79} It was a house unusual for the number and size of
specifically designated rooms.\textsuperscript{80} The backyard was large, but barren and undeveloped. Nobody visited it except incidentally or for some fresh air. Levita knew the back yard represented an asset were they to build another house on it and lease it to tenants.\textsuperscript{81} The roof terrace and the front verandah were important places, as the verandah afforded social interaction, while the roof was the more private spot, and looked directly out onto the church where Levita, a proud Catholic and gifted student, enjoyed going to school. Levita commended, with obvious admiration and gratitude, both the convenient location, design and build of her house, and felt it to be a rare and privileged place.\textsuperscript{82} Still she believed there was always room for improvement, and in her ideal conception of home, Levita had a desire to see the house renovated, in a still “more beautiful manner.” Such an extension would, she felt, allow her family to become even happier, and would moreover confirm that God has blessed them.\textsuperscript{83} Despite being a big house, and although privacy would seem not to be difficult for Levita to obtain as she applied herself to her studies, the sitting-hall was the only room equipped with working tube-light and fan. Private space for study disappeared because the sitting hall was a site of constant use, and thus constant interruption and disturbance for the academically motivated Levita.\textsuperscript{84} Despite the presence of a large bedroom, it went largely unused due to its lack of light and air. Instead, the sitting hall also acted as a bedroom in which Levita slept with her mother and sister and, because it was coolest there, the whole household slept there in the summer.

Situated into the side at the top of the only hill in the township, Krishnaben lived in perhaps the most striking and statuesque house in Diu. Painted a light and vivid blue, this extremely narrow house rose three storeys high and had six rooms, two balconies and a roof terrace. Krishna and her two young children lived with her parents-in-law and their two unmarried daughters. Stacked like blocks of descending size, the three floors bedecked the rise with such obvious prestige that it was not surprising that Krishna thought its presence was its most important feature.\textsuperscript{85} Originally owned by her husband’s grandfather but now the house of her father-in-law, her husband, his only son would inherit it. Yet Krishna’s husband was employed in London, and she and the children were to join him as soon as the necessary arrangements had been made. Thus, this expensive house would, on her father-in-law’s death (which was imminent) belong to another of Diu’s absentee land-lords. The front of the house lay down the slope of the hill against a patch of rough waste ground, while the back and entrance to the house was at street level. The ground floor was thus split level, with the front containing a bathroom and toilet, and the area at street level divided into kitchen and sitting room. The only room on the first floor was used exclusively as a store-room, while the top floor was the only designated bedroom. The sitting room provided
sleeping places for her parents-in-law, while the top bedroom was shared by herself, her sisters-in-law and her children. Privacy, in the sense of private space, was neither available nor expected, and the sitting room and the bedroom operated as extensions of each other. Most of the activity occurred in the kitchen and sitting room, with the latter highly valued for its confluent affect in bringing the family together. Krishna had recently left a house in the large Gujarati city of Rajkot, which she had lived in for eight years since her marriage. She was obliged to move again soon and resettle in whatever London accommodation her husband could arrange, though she had no idea what to expect. A change of some magnitude was pending, and the familiar populous and polyvalent platial order of her home in Diu was likely to be replaced by a house or flat in which, it would be expected, just four people would reside.

To conclude this discussion of Diu, let me present Jinabhai and Vilasbhai, who represent many of the features which I have been concerned to highlight. Jinabhai, an elderly grandfather, slept with two of his nephews in an Indian modern house of two floors, seven rooms and a roof terrace. Altogether, a total of nineteen family members were housed here. Although Jina suggested it was possible to have privacy by closing some doors, he said he usually felt no need to. Similarly, Vilas had said he had no special need for privacy in the small, plain and recently constructed Indian modern house, of just two rooms, which he rented along with his three unmarried sisters and parents. The anterior room housed a narrow double bed, but also served as the kitchen. Vilas and his father slept in the front room, while his mother and sisters used the back room. Vilas’s attention centred on the importance of platial order as conceived in the matter of household infrastructure. His house, he stated, had to provide him with “all necessary things for household use.” Vilas also desired more household space, for he noted how the front room lacked spaciousness, while the front porch was hardly more than a big step. Vilas was, however, by no means discontent with his situation. Though change was worthy of mention, change itself would only come should opportunity arise. Without a change in economic fortune, Vilas did not consider either of his desires for his house to be of great importance. But then, Vilas did not imagine an ideal house in material terms, but as a place where there was family concord and harmony (the topic in chapter six). In Coolbellup, by contrast, material factors were the subject of some idealisation, as the next section shows.

4.3.2 Housing Style, Size, Suitability and Desirability in Coolbellup

Joe and his wife lived in an extended and substantially improved four bed-roomed, exMoH house, but were due to move up-market to a bigger, more expensive one in another suburb. Joe’s
attitude towards his house was unsentimental, practical and status conscious. With four bedrooms, an extended lounge room and only two people, they had more rooms than they used. Describing what motivated them to buy this house, Joe mentioned three key elements. The ‘sunken lounge’ at the front with a view onto the street held pride of place, followed by the polished floorboards and the location. Joe was proud of his house and the way in which it differed from the standard MoH houses. He was conscious of the lack of importance he attached to the swimming pool, which he recognised as somewhat anomalous, given its popular reputation as a focus, and said they more or less neglected it. Indeed, Joe placed the importance of the outside well below the inside of the house, which housed the computer, which in turn housed the Internet, and this hierarchy formed part of Joe’s rationale of connection. Joe saw his house primarily as a product and a location that had accumulated value from investments of money, time, and effort, in improvements that had transformed ‘this house’ into ‘his house.’ Matters of home improvement led out of, and back into, what the house offered as an investment. Improvements made to its platial order had helped, in effect, to increase Joe’s sense of appropriation. For Joe, the Coolbellup house would be “special”, because not only was it their first, but the revenue raised in its sale would determine the purchase of the next. This was a ‘first house’, the first step up the ladder towards acquiring a home closer to Joe’s desired ideal, which included more rooms and “a better location.” In his discourse, Joe only implied the presence of other people and spoke of his home, almost entirely, in terms of investment and improvement. Joe focused on the part platial order played in the objective praxis of proprietorship.

By way of contrast, Joe’s mother, Pat talked of her house in terms redolent with subjective orientations to platial order. Pat and her husband and two children had leased a house from the MoH twelve years ago, and were unusual tenants in that they had done a great deal to improve and secure their house and garden. If she had unlimited money to spend, Pat conceived her ideal home as a perfection of what she already had. Her first project, among many others, would be to rebuild the kitchen. Her existent and extensive refurbishment was closely associated with her criticism of the MoH for the poor workmanship, and ill considered design standards, of the original construction. Pat was very critical of MoH work ethics, which had she claimed exemplified “a bandaid mentality.” Women, said Pat, were much more aware than men of the practical and aesthetic aspects of domestic platial order. This could be seen in the huge qualitative differences between the original and recent MoH designs, once women joined the design team. Though they had often been tendentious and contentious, her relations with the MoH had evolved into one of mutual respect and understanding. To get to this point however, Pat had become self-sufficient in running maintenance, and adopted a no-nonsense, forthright manner
Relations with the MoH entered a new phase when Pat secured their written acknowledgment of responsibility for reimbursement of the major improvements she had made, should she end her tenancy.

To Pat’s mind, the MoH house where her itinerant parents had sometimes taken her to stay, had been wholly unsuitable. Deficient in such basic comforts as heat in the winter, coolness in summer, this house had been entirely devoid of more refined ones. The transience of her childhood had given Pat a sincere appreciation of windows and the doors, which were essential in controlling access, and producing a secure and cozy enclosure she called the “cocoon effect.” A cocoon was important for both safety and emotional reasons. Besides valuing her house for its physical and emotional security, Pat was conscious of the way a house’s platial order was a reflection of, or badge of, identity. It seemed to her that comfort and identification with one’s house belonged to those who cared for and liked to spend their time at home, and she strongly disapproved of the attitude in the MoH that permitted people to live in “pigsties.” At the same time, she recognised that decisions on the improvement of facilities and appearance of MoH properties lay with the tenants themselves. Pat said it was easy to tell those house owners and keepers who were care-full citizens, as they spent money and time improving their houses. Meanwhile those who continually wasted money on consumables, were obviously lazy and careless and had no concern for what their houses felt like or looked like.

Michael’s speech exhibited strong affective bonds and nostalgia for the old, small, familiar house his family of five had just left in Coolbellup. In doing so, he made plain the contrasts with his big new house in Success, to which he referred with awe rather than affection. Home improvements figured prominently in the discussion. Michael’s father was responsible, not only for all the home improvements carried out on the Coolbellup house, but for improving their housing situation altogether by building the new house in Success with the help of his brother. The house in Success was bigger in every respect than the unextended house in Coolbellup, though it had been improved by three aviaries, a fish pond, and a double garage. Made of double brick, the new house was much stronger than the old one. Moreover everything was new, and had been chosen by considering the views of each family member. The block of land on which the new house is situated was, at six hundred square metres considerably smaller than the average seven hundred square metre block in Coolbellup. However, this much larger house sat much closer to its...
borders. Thus, with all the big new houses much closer together, the platial order had a powerful effect of crowded closeness.  

Reflecting the change of his residence from down-market Coolbellup to up-market Success, Michael’s verb tenses shifted from the present to the past and back again, as he compared the size and the facilities of the new house with the old one. Subordinated within his conception of house and home were dichotomies of old and new, simplicity and complexity, tradition and modernity. Having no choice but to take up residence in the new house, Michael was trying to give the process of appropriation and connection a chance to succeed, by gaining control over emotions of loss. By eschewing nostalgia, and rationalising the process by aligning himself with objective comparisons drawn by his parents, Michael focused on the arrival of new privileges from the luxuries of modernity. Thus, the huge new, modern house was held to be ideal, and he justified this by claiming the new over the old, the complex above the simple and the modern over the traditional. The worst possible house, meanwhile was small, with rudimentary plumbing and crammed with people, like the ones he had heard of back in Portugal where his parents had grown up. Despite his efforts, there was the discernible ambivalence evident in Michael’s inability to suppress his sense of attachment and approval for his old home in Coolbellup. Appropriation of the new dwelling environment had not yet occurred, as there were still not enough points of connection and identification which, unlike awe, often take time to develop.

Michael’s cousins Reuben and Marissa’s large family of eleven, had bought a MoH which their father extended and improved, while their mother transformed a sandy yard into a garden. Their house had undergone many improvements, including another bedroom, a family room, a ‘party room’ for the large parties their family often hosted, and a new driveway was being laid. Reuben appreciated the size and spaciousness of this house and block, as it gave ample space to play around, and said the garden was getting to be “the best.” He also nominated the kitchen as a special place because there the family and visitors gathered. His sister Marissa however said the most important feature of the house was the living room. This was partly because it was here that the whole family would congregate, but also because it was decorated with a large number of photographs and Catholic iconography, which Reuben acknowledged but did not endorse. Adjoining the living room, said Marissa, was a special room big enough for only two people that was dedicated to prayer and worship. While for Reuben, it seemed that the platial integrity and order of the building figured prominently, for Marissa it was the connection with her family that bestowed her experience of home. The house had four bedrooms, three of which slept three
children each, and one the parents. For Reuben and Marissa, privacy in their rooms was unlikely. While for Reuben this was of no consequence, homework was recognised as a reason for occasionally obtaining the privacy Marissa said she sometimes desired. The house stood in great contrast to the first house they occupied in Australia following their immigration from Portugal. In that house there had been only two bedrooms in which “all the kids, into one room, were squashed.” If money were no object, Reuben’s ideal house would be “like a castle” with great spaciousness, three storeys, a maid, two garages, a mini golf course and intercom activated electric gates. To Reuben’s mind, the worst home bore many similarities to their first one, with its image of a hovel, small, dirty and dark on the outskirts of suburbia in a location, where the close proximity of bushland threatened the house with sudden engulfment by a bush fire. Like her brother, Marissa’s ideal house was a mansion with a big pool, while her idea of the worst possible house was the cardboard boxes in which she knew homeless people slept in certain areas of the city.

Brandon lived with his mother and brother in a two-bedroom duplex they rented from the MoH. Awful to contemplate, for Brandon, was the prospect of material deprivation in which the rooms were cramped, or gave a feeling of trappedness if one was prevented from leaving. Such dreadful conditions could be compounded by a lack of money, which impeded even mental escape via books or television. The ideal house on the other hand was characterised by strength. Brandon stressed the durability and solidity of the ideal house as “something you can’t smash up.” It was also a fantasy object in which he possessed a room of his own, decorated with holographic paint and lockable, so as to keep his brother away from his unorthodox collection of pets. In another idealistic moment, Brandon proposed taking advantage of the ditch, which apparently existed beneath his house, to install a swimming pool! Thus, though he placed importance on structural integrity, this could be overdone when limiting architectural norms, like the adult insistence on walls and floors, were always at the expense of the innovative contributions of children.

Twelve year old Melissa had lived in Coolbellup for six years. The move to Coolbellup represented a period of relative residential permanency, by contrast with the six years in which she, her mother and brother had moved between the houses of relatives. Frequent shifts between households to visit as well as avail themselves of the resources of an extended family is a rare practice among White households, but quite normal in Aboriginal ones. Stability, for Melissa, was enhanced by location, because it meant they lived in close proximity to a large number of their relatives. Among Aboriginal people a relatively stable housing situation entails
responsibility to kin, and it was now her family’s turn to share their house. For Melissa the
creation, maintenance and appropriation of platial order were compromised by their MoH
tenancy. By MoH rules, the size of many Aboriginal households was too large for the available
space. Moreover, given that all MoH accommodation is small by current standards, the expansion
of Indigenous households with visiting relations tends to attract negative attention from non-
Indigenous neighbours. The fluidity is seen as disorderly, disruptive and suspect. Following
complaints by Melissa’s neighbours, for instance, the MoH, without obtaining permission,
removed valued property along with an agreed quantity of rubbish. The quantity and quality of
platial and familial order in her home was a central concern for Melissa who, when she thought
of the concept house, thought of “the state of it.” As the actual house was apparently rather
dilapidated, with cracks in floors and walls that harboured cockroaches and spiders, this was
unremarkable. Order was also to the fore when Melissa considered the notion home in relation
to poverty. The rather precarious nature of their tenancy prompted her to imagine her ideal home
as much bigger, with carpets, modern facilities, a beautiful garden, a pool, a trampoline and,
perhaps most importantly, security in “a place where no one is allowed to go on your property
without permission.”

Also Aboriginal, Christine and her two youngest children lived in the house she had lived in for
twenty years, at first renting, and later purchasing it from the MoH. In one way or another
Christine had been renovating ever since. A busy professional woman, Christine joked that her
ideal home was a place in which the necessity for house and garden work was obviated by some
powerful but unspecified force. Imagining this unrealistic ideal, led Christine to introduce the
actualities of the power and freedom she felt and cherished about her house. Though beauty and
modern facilities were important, they were, she felt, less important than the quality of
spaciousness, a quality that dovetailed with her desire for autonomy. “Home” she said, “has got
to be a house where you can have space and room to move.” The importance of personal
autonomy, for Christine, had in part been formed by a history of social marginality and
discrimination. It had been first realised when, as a young girl, she eventually obtained a room of
her own. Even within her large and rather transient family, Christine had secured her own
bedroom, which she remembers as both a haven and a power centre. A room of your own was a
place of personal power that allowed you to order and control your own place.

Michelle and her husband were not happy with their quality of life in Coolbellup and intended to
sell their substantially improved house as soon as possible, in order to move to somewhere which
did not have a MoH presence. When asked to describe her house, Michelle directed her comments at the improvements they had made to a standard MoH house.\textsuperscript{110} At much greater length, however, was a discourse that contrasted her house with the houses of her MoH neighbours. Michelle was preoccupied with the problems of her housing situation and associated problems with the MoH. Living in Coolbellup had been disappointing and frustrating, as her sense of platial order had been constantly challenged by the attitude of her neighbours and the MoH, who, she felt, did not do enough, or spend enough, to ensure that property was respected.\textsuperscript{111} Nonetheless, despite the low number of owner occupiers in her neighbourhood, Michelle said Coolbellup people had gradually become more “house proud”, since there were many who were spending money and effort on improvements and thus, “converting those places to live, into what you could call a home.”

Bernard had no strong feelings about his Coolbellup house and called it “just an ordinary, little, red, brick box,” which he and his wife did not especially like nor resent. For Bernard, his house rarely presented him with issues of improvement. On the contrary, the house had always been almost entirely a matter of amenity and convenience since his family of six rented, it twenty five years ago, and later purchased it. Bernard was less interested in the size, shape or facilities offered by his house than its location, and its convenience as measured by its distance from places such as the park and shops. This is not to say that he did not express any interest in its form, for certain features were important and, in this case, the most important was the size of the driveway, for it could accommodate a large truck.\textsuperscript{112} Convenience of location and design epitomised his house and the only improvement on the standard MoH design had been the creation of a back verandah which, along with exposed floorboards, ranked as the only things it had lacked. Liking a bit of space around him, Bernard was due to relocate within a few years to his ideal dwelling in ‘the bush’. Just as he sought a sense of space on a small farm in a self-constructed ‘kit house’, Bernard had wanted space in Coolbellup. To make more space, he had installed a back verandah which served as a connection with the space outside, and as the primary social place.\textsuperscript{113} Otherwise the MoH house was unchanged and, despite a preference for polished boards, the floor still wore the original carpeting, for Bernard had no ambition to improve further, and accepted the nature of his house, as he accepted its surroundings.\textsuperscript{114} Bernard would have enjoyed a productive vegetable garden, however without the application of a lot of fertiliser and water, such a project was not easily realised in Coolbellup’s thin sandy soil. Thus, the garden was left empty of anything save some trees, with Bernard merely mowing the rough hardy lawn, relieved that it “did not use too much drinking water.”
Though uncritical of his own house, Bernard was nevertheless quite critical of the growing fashion for very large houses, as being altogether “too elaborate and too expensive.” The mimicking of architectural period design in contemporary housing development, as in the trend of ‘federation style’ houses, he considered in-authentic and tokenistic. Bernard speculated that such house owners, who might have previously been denied such experience, sought to requite this lack by seeking large houses, where the prestige and esteem that attended control of great quantities of space enhanced their self-confidence. A lot of house was, Bernard observed, “something to aim for”, and satisfied psychological needs using spatial and material abundance. Bernard had lived, and did not want to live again, in large or old houses. The feeling was that they were simply too big to be convenient, and not nearly as desirable “as picture postcards might lead you to believe.” The worst place to live was a unit in a retirement village, and Bernard found it hard to understand why retirement villages were so popular, referred to such an attitude as anomalous, and himself, in this respect as “a misfit.”

Janet, and her partner of the time, had required more dwelling space and, meeting the criteria for special purchase terms offered by the MoH, took out a mortgage in Coolbellup. Janet was critical of the standardised design of MoH houses, which she thought ugly in conception and cheap in construction, with no aspect superfluous to basic need. Janet was buying her MoH house and thus serving her first priority, to own a house she could afford, rather than rent another. Still, she expected to find it difficult to realise the house’s full potential due to a lack of money. Distinctions between houses in Coolbellup depend on the extent of any subsequent departures made from MoH’s original principles of design standardisation, yet departures into difference that reflect individuality are usually a matter of finance. There was a lot about her house which Janet strongly disliked, disapproved of, and frequently dreamed of changing. As she said, she was “always thinking about the ideal home.”

Dreams had both practical and romantic elements, as Janet considered subdivision of the block and building another house simple, light, airy and containing a minimum of possessions. A more fanciful dream was an extensive specification of her desire. Janet wanted a home in a rural, hilly, beautiful, commune, with simple facilities like squat toilet and a kitchen without many appliances and a floor level stove. It was healthier to squat. Indeed, Janet’s ideal house incorporated “all the things” she believed to be “good and healthy.” She held an unusual sensitivity to, and awareness of, forms of platial order. The worst possible houses, for Janet, were exemplified in the
large pretentious houses of the rich in places like Perth’s City Beach. Especially repellent were
the gardens, which used excessive amounts of water. In the last analysis, Janet felt that the
quality of at home-ness, for her, did not depend on comfortable or stylish design and decoration,
so much as on an elemental experience of spaciousness. She had such an experience while
living for three months in a tent above a wide bay, which gave, she said, “a wonderful sense of
place and shelter” that “became so much a symbol of home.” Although only temporary, and only
a tent, these simplicities, together with the location, readily gave Janet a “feeling of at home-
ness.”

After eight years together in the same house, Peter’s wife had left with their two children. With
their exodus, Peter felt his need for house-held space withdraw and contract. Alone in his
purchased and extended, but otherwise only slightly improved MoH house, Peter felt he used
very little of the house and could be content with much less. The quantity of space needed was
seen as variable according to circumstance, with comfort being the chief determinant of how
much was required. Nonetheless, a sense of spaciousness was idealised in an ideal home that was
new, and big, and located within wide open spaces where there was no need to lock doors. It was
clear, however, that the desire for such a degree of spaciousness and freedom depended upon the
presence of togetherness and happiness in his family situation. After separation from his wife
Peter had been depressed, preoccupied with marital troubles, and had let things deteriorate. On
his own, Peter focused on his relationship with the world beyond his house and its location.
Environmental awareness and convenience, meant that Peter also preferred to organise and
manage his garden as one of low water and maintenance requirements. As his pain subsided,
his interest in freshening-up the interior increased. Repainting the walls and recovering the floor
with lighter, brighter colours would, he thought, help to deal with depression and encourage
optimism. It was clear that emphases on home alterations were relevant only to the extent they
enhanced the sense and experience of comfort. Though Peter was not what he called, “the real
home handyman”, his father was a carpenter, who apparently “never stopped working on his
house.” Peter’s father had helped build a fence and a pergola, and was willing to help with any
further alterations. Though enjoyable, the level of home improvement encouraged by ‘do-it-
yourself home improvement shows’ was, Peter felt, quite unrealistic due to the expense of tools
and materials involved. Like a move nearer to the sunnier social ambience of Fremantle, that was
not an option, renovation could be psychologically beneficial. For Peter, even if home was
ultimately about care as a matter of love, rather than care for the platial order, the latter has been
the focus of this chapter while the former is to be the issue in chapter six.
4.4   Matters of House and Home

Generalisations can be misleading, and it’s both more honest and effective to note tendencies of conflations and separations of the notions of house and home in Coolbellup and Diu. In both places, most people did not hold there to be any difference between their house and their home, though they recognised connotational differences in the abstracted concepts as differences between product and process. Differences between notions of house and home were significant in those who, for one reason or another, felt particularly appreciative, or aware, of the house as a product, or the home as process. While I do not claim it is always possible to link income with forms of platial order in terms of location, size, design and apparent condition of residences and gardens, generally income does tend to reflect the quality of residential dwelling in Australia and India.129

Compared to Coolbellup, Diu’s domestic architectural heritage situation is longer, denser and layered with complexity. Compared to Coolbellup, the quantity of land and the ratio of floor space to people in Diu households were large, though these tended to vary according to economic and / or marital status. While talking about house and home, many of my Diu respondents showed especial regard and respect for platial order, in terms of preferences for specific sorts of architecture, facilities and furniture, such as the desire for a garden, another or a bigger room, a reliable electricity supply, and appliances like fans, fridges or stoves. In Coolbellup, on the other hand, there was almost no attention paid to facilities or furniture, but a concentrated focus on architectural design, and household location relative to the surrounding neighbourhood. It seems likely that facilities and furniture were literally over-looked, as they were unexceptional, and taken for granted matters, and thus left out of consideration of forms of platial order. Whenever possible, people in Diu wanted, and hoped to translate wealth into, desired platial order in the form of an improved quantity and quality of domestic amenities. Usually such desire could expect to be realised one day, while extensions of space and the addition of more rooms were likely to remain dreams.

It could be argued that, across these two cultures, a tendency exists among those who see a strong conceptual separation between notions of house and home, to lay more emphasis on the non-material composition of home. In other words, those whose comments reveal attitudes of the convergence of house and home, were, on the whole, less inclined to place emphasis on home in terms of the social dimensions of the family, community, or religion. Nevertheless, overall only a
few people neglected to talk of home as a place which involved other people, or invoke emotional and psychological connections and identifications, and thereby use, or infer, abstract qualities such as happiness, harmony or conviviality. These people tended to emphasise the product-like nature of house and home, while, at the opposite end of the spectrum, were a few who placed great emphasis on the centrality of home’s emotional and psychological composition. The latter saw houses as products intimately involved with home as a dynamic and continual process of social interaction. For the most part, however, my respondents mixed product with process, and showed a tendency to stress product and material necessity when using the term house, and process or issues of appropriation, connection and identity, when using the term home. Issues of connection and identity come to the fore when, in chapter six, I look more closely at home’s familial and interpersonal foundations.

Coolbellup exists near the bottom of published lists of Perth’s relative ‘real estate values’, and experiences problems of crime and anti-social behaviour. People with sufficient money and aspirations of class advancement tend to move away, when Coolbellup’s lower-class difference produces lacks of fit and comfort with the platial orders that manifest these differences. Though there were in Coolbellup only moderate discrepancies of wealth and social status, structural alterations to extend available space, in the form of extensions to existing place, were the improvements most frequently valued and aspired to. Indeed, home improvements developed into quite a theme among Coolbellupians, most of whom own or were buying a house which used to belong to the MoH, and only some of whom were tenants. When asked to speak of their house, quite a few people addressed the ways their house had departed from its prior standard design house, and was now distinguished by one feature or another. Most people took home improvement initiatives themselves, but a few sought to move out of the area to achieve more harmony between internal and external forms of platial order. In Coolbellup, ideal homes were often considered to consist of the control of more space, as more house and land. However, in both Diu and Coolbellup, extra wealth, whether available or not, was seen as the ability to translate the desires for increased control over more domestic space, and more convenient, comfortable and comely forms of platial order. In both places, establishing order in the house usually involved the production of comfort, to make a house into a home. Producing and maintaining certain sorts of platial order, though dominated by matters of pragmatic utility and economic motivation was in both places, integral to the process of appropriation, and supportive of the processes of connection.
From all that has taken place above, it is possible to have some understanding of what does and does not constitute privacy, as well as a number of ways in which people understand it. Though privacy and a private place were considered desirable by a number of people in Diu, privacy was usually reckoned as dependent on time and circumstance, and its achievement, via private places, depended more than anything else, on being a single, male immigrant. Though some possessed a desire for privacy, among others there was little evidence that privacy or private places were obtainable, much less expected. In Diu, to be within visual and auditory range of other people in one’s household was regarded as a commonplace condition of life, a form so taken for granted, and so ordinary, as to be a part of an invisible tradition. Those who had the most privacy also required it the most, but private places were uncommon, except among those who lived alone. Among wealthier households, an active desire to obtain a quotient of privacy, or private space, was more common than in poorer households. When a private place was a valued quality of one’s dwelling place, the value lay with the idea that private places should make privacy possible. Privacy was valued as a quality that varied from simple relief from social interaction, to the attention it permitted to be directed to activities such as learning, writing, contemplation, and meditation. Whether practical, abstract or contemplative, the attention to task which privacy facilitates, was seen as necessary for the most satisfying outcomes. In Diu (and more generally in India), it is quite usual to forgo private places and adapt to conditions of dwelling that have a high ratio of people to place.

Within Diu households, personal forms of privacy must often depend on the absence or the inattention of others and, relative to Coolbellup (and Australia generally), the development of certain attitudes and appropriate behaviour are essential, if general contentment is to be optimised and friction minimised. Among the three bachelors, who each lived alone, a concordance of the desire for privacy provided a juxtaposition of this uncommon condition with the common conditions of family life. Theorising this juxtaposition suggests that privacy seems to beget the desire for privacy, as privacy and the accession to private places are, for the most part, matters of individual habit with a subscription to the collective norms of habitus. In India, much more than in Australia, one needs to learn to customise one’s behaviour, because the mutual proximity and potential monitoring, and interaction with other household members, tends to be a given. To minimise conflict and promote household cohesion in a closely shared domestic environment, where the ratio of people to space is small and limited, rooms are polyvalent, and interaction and observation usually unavoidable, private places must be depreciated. Rather than physical
solitude, privacy comes to depend on mutual agreement and knowledge of the signs which signal needs or moods of psychological solitude.

Compared to Coolbellup, both physical and social architecture in Diu militate against individual sequestration, and underscore a tradition in which the notions of privacy are unmarked and sometimes unusual, ideas. Thus, it becomes possible to suggest that, if dwelling with access to private places is underprivileged, or considered unimportant, then home tends to be seen as a place in which the visible and collectively oriented aspects of selves are given more attention than the private, introspective dimensions. In contrast to Coolbellup, where there were comparatively generous ratios of people to place, in Diu given a few exceptions, rather than find privacy in a room or particular place of their own, those who wanted or required privacy in their dwelling had to either signal a need for it (which might or might not be respected), or seek it in opportune moments in the absence of others. Privacy, and the private places that accommodate it, are, regardless of their idiosyncratic or culturally-syncratic dispositions, always produced and conditioned by praxis. Generating and dissolving in cybernetic spirals and eddies of experience, praxis is knowledge that becomes practice, or practice that becomes knowledge. Seen as platial order, and expressed as matters of style, size, suitability, or the desire for increases in any of these qualities, matters of house and home are among the conditions that orchestrate and manage the praxes which structure feeling about house and home, and ultimately about dwelling itself.

Endnotes

1 Mark Wakely, *Dream Home* (Crows Nest N.S.W Allen and Unwin, 2003), 3

2 There are numerous examples. For example, Juhani Pallasmaa in ‘Identity, Intimacy and Domicile - Notes on the Phenomenology of Home’ poses the question “Can a home be an architectural expression?” His answer is that home is not so much a “a notion of architecture, but of psychology, psychoanalysis and sociology.” Home is also “individualized dwelling” and the means of this subtle personalization seems to be outside of our concept of architecture. Dwelling or the house, is the container, the shell for home. The substance of home is secreted, as it were, upon the framework of the dwelling by the dweller. Consequently, the essence of home is closer to life itself than an artefact…..A house as composed by the architect is a system of spatial hierarchies and dynamic, of structure, light, colour, etc., whereas home is structured around a few foci consisting of distinct functions and objects.” in *The Home : Words, Interpretations, Meanings, and Environments* David Benjamin and David Stea (Eds), (Aldershot: Avebury 1995), 132. By way of confirmation see Bror Westman’s assumption of this difference between house and home in ‘The Home and Homes’ also in *The Home*.


4 See Amos Rapoport, ‘A Critical Look at the Concept “Home”’ in *The Home*, 41
5 Wakely, *Dream*, 3. See also Lawrence *The Home*, 54, who notes that “In principle, ...a person can purchase a house but one cannot buy a home!” and goes on to suggest that difference between house and home is that unlike houses homes have “experiential dimensions at one or more geographical scales.”

6 Wakely, *Dream*, 3.


8 Lawrence, *The Home*, 56-57.


10 Editors Donna Birdwell-Pheasant and Denise Zuniga-Lawrence for example, say in their introduction to ‘Houses and Families in Europe “The term ‘house’ is often paired with (or inter-changeable with ‘home.’ These two terms describe distinct cultural constructions. While ‘house’ implies a physical structure or shelter, ‘home’ defines a place of origin and retreat, such as one’s natal village or birthplace, one’s country or other native place. Home is a concept of place rather than space, implying emotional attachment and meaning beyond the constraints of the physicality of any particular dwelling house. ‘Home’ thus, may take on the meaning of a territory, a physical reference point, a symbol of self, or a manifestation of family identity.” in *House Life: Space, Place, and Family in Europe.* (Oxford: Berg, 1999), 6.

11 The term ‘home’ argues Rapoport, is also quite inappropriate for cross-cultural and historical research, since apart from its vagueness and lack of clarity, it is too “affective, emotive, subjective and normative” *The Home*, 43.

12 Rapoport, *The Home*, 33 and 43.


14 Rapoport, *The Home*, 25-40


16 Rapoport, *The Home*, 42.


18 Rapoport, *The Home*, 42.

19 Rapoport, *The Home*, 43


21 Home for Michael was “my room basically.” But also, “a small house with a place to sleep, a place to wash, a place to wash clothes, a place to eat and a place to cook...and a outdoor area, not too big, but big enough to have things like a garage and some pets.”

22 “...your home or your house is what you make it. What is your own personal concept of, what you’re trying to achieve in the four walls, wherever you may be, whether its a tent, whether its a house that you don’t own, or whatever. ...Everyone’s home has got their own touches. It’s your own basically, it’s familiarity and whatever they want to do creates their home.”

23 “We’ve had a lot of people come to our house and we’ve had, at particular times, people get into our house while we’re asleep or not home and lots of family problems and that with people. Mainly to do with auntie’s boyfriends and all that.”
“My house is my kids home, and a home is how you make it, and how you want it to be. You know, what you feel comfortable in. It used to be just a house when I first moved in, the first couple of years, and then we started renovating. And then the kids come along. We’ve been here that long its the kids’ home. It’s their first home and only home, and therefore it’s your home too.”

“I’ve lived in houses, real show places, where a cat’s not allowed to walk inside because it might drop a hair on the dark blue carpet. And you can’t sit in that chair, and you can’t use that cup, and you’re terrified to be inside these places. So it’s not a home, it’s a house. It’s just a box that you sometimes go into, and you sleep in sometimes.”

“First of all for a home good ventilation must be there in the house. It must be located in the city, in such a place where every thing is near to you, and no other difficulties should be there. There should not be any problem of water or such like. That’s all that is needed for home.”

“In one way, no home is a worst possible home, as the persons living inside are getting shelter from the cold, the heat and the rain.”

“When I think of home, I think that in this house we can construct one more floor …It is a good home and well built up.”

“This home is made of hearts. A house is made of bricks and a home is made of hearts. I could say describing my home in experiential and emotional terms that we have really struggled to build this house. It’s been very tough, extremely difficult in the sense that we’ve always had sleepless nights, when we were crying because of financial problems. And ultimately the house is up and we’ve got a roof over our heads,... and I feel very proud and great. I feel something incredible that the house has really come up and we are under our own roof, and there’s nobody’s marquee to defend!”

As the introduction states, Rappoport’s approach was new not because of “the stress he put on the buildings and their creation” but because “the topic of dwellings and settlements while relevant had been either neglected or treated as secondary.” Rapoport Amos, *House Form and Culture* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall 1969), viii.

For critique of *House Form and Culture* see Roderick Lawrence, *Housing, Dwellings and Homes: Design Theory, Research and Practice* (Chichester, UK John Wiley 1987), 28 and 78.


Pramar, *Contributions*, 335.

The Census of India 2001 for example, records that for households with five members 39.2% have one room and 32.2% have two rooms, 14.3% have three rooms, 6.6% have four rooms, 2.3% have five and 2.4% have six or more rooms. For households of six to eight members the figures are 32.6% have one room, 32.7 have two rooms, 16.6% have three rooms, 8.8% have four rooms, 3.3% have five rooms and 3.8% have six or more rooms. in *Table S00-012: Distribution of Households by Size and Number of Dwelling Rooms* http://www.censusindia.net/2001housing/S00-012.html (accessed April 12th 2004).


The term polyvalency was coined by Petherbridge and used by Pramar in *Contributions*.

Pramar uses the notion of polyvalency extensively in his analysis of the *haveli*. It’s worth citing his comments on the polyvalent platial order of the *haveli* to show its almost seamless correspondence with the platial order in
contemporary Diu. “...the various spaces of the Gujarati house are, with the exception of the kitchen and water room, never given over to specific and rigidly defined functions. There are no ‘bedrooms’, ‘dining rooms’ and ‘living rooms’ in the manner of the European house. The spaces which do exist can be used for a multiplicity of functions depending upon circumstances. ...In the European house, it is the permanent placement of pieces of furniture which determines the usage of a particular space; for example sleeping in a bedroom or eating in the dining room. The Gujarati house is conspicuous by the absence of furniture. It is the floor alone which provides the all purpose locus for all activities, hence the lack of functional definition. .... This means that a few simple architectural spaces are adequate to satisfy a great variety of functions. Thus, even though there are a multiplicity of functions, this is not reflected in a multiplicity of spaces. The Brahmin and the Baniya can both manage with an identical set of spaces.” In Contributions, (331).


41 As Merchant recollects: “ For furniture there was a double bed and a big clothes cupboard, called an almira (a Portuguese word) and some small trunks along the walls and under the bed. The other room, the living room ( in Bombay this room is called the ‘hall’) - was where my sisters and I usually slept, on seven thin mattresses laid out on the floor. During the day these were rolled up and stored away. There was a sofa covered in leather, a sort of club sofa. To say it was Art Deco would be too grand. What seemed grand, to our eyes, was my mother’s glass-fronted cabinet of small treasures. There were odds and ends of silver in it, pieces of china and glass, dolls, souvenirs- the kind of collections seen everywhere in the world in middle-class people’s houses. ......In those days there was no refrigerator and no modern stove or other appliances apart from the sink. The cook worked over a spirit stove, or even a bucket of coals. Since nothing could be refrigerated, only what could be consumed in a day was brought home from the markets....sometimes the cooking was done outside on the stair landing. When we ate, a mat was laid out on the kitchen floor spread with the dishes and we all sat on it in a semi-circle. We did not go in much for pictures and things like that.” Slesin and Cliff Indian, x.

42 Merchant continues:” When I think of how today my own walls are jammed with all sorts of pictures I hardly bother to glance at, and my rooms filled with useless furniture, I wonder how this could have happened. When I see Bombay apartments now, and compare them with the one I grew up in - I’m speaking of quite modest ones, nothing fancy - I am struck by the buying mania of middle-class Indians, with their passion for colour television, kitchen gadgets, and glitzy -looking telephones, not to mention big refrigerators, which have been replaced in the hall by the VCR as today’s status symbol. All we had was a radio made in India by a company called Chicago Radio. Our rooms were full of people rather than things.” Indian, x.

43 John Fiske and Bob Hodge and Graeme Turner, Myths of Oz : Reading Australian Popular Culture (Sydney: Allen and Unwin, 1987), 32.


46 Wilson, The Domestication, 182. For reading that discusses the varieties of privacy across time and culture see Barrington Moore, Privacy: Studies in Social and Cultural History Armonk, New York: M.E Sharpe, (1984),


48 In his book India Stanley Wolpert makes some rather sweeping, but nonetheless accurate, juxtapositions of domestic living conditions in India and America in which the orientation of the former is away from privacy, while the latter privileges it. He could just as easily have made similar generalisations of India and Australia. “The typical
Indian family live together under a single roof and eat food prepared in the same kitchen. There is little privacy in an Indian household, nor does it seem to be missed or much desired. Indians as a rule appear to have less-developed privacy needs than do most Americans, and usually miss the bustling human contact if they opt to leave their joint-family home to establish an isolated nuclear family in some modern apartment. Most Indians find life in America much too “lonely”, even as Americans usually find India much too “crowded”, especially if they get close enough to an Indian family to live in their home. ‘Private’ rooms are rarely equipped with doors that fully close, and, if they can indeed be closed, they can hardly ever be locked. Joint families are used to sharing, not just food, but possessions of all sorts as well, including TV sets and VCR movies. Newly-weds rarely find any privacy at home. Nor do they seem to require much. Only eating is viewed as a specially private sort of act by Indians, and then only if one is a very strict Brahman.(sic)” (35).

If considered in the light of the four Aristotlian causes (material cause, efficient cause, formal cause and final cause), it is the formal cause, the shape and qualities of his dwelling place, (causa formalis), of his dwelling place on which Ashwinbhai places most significance rather than, as one might expect, the efficient or final cause. In other words, Ashwin emphasises the shape and size of his house over its functions of temple and refectory. On Aristotle’s four causalties see Heidegger, Martin ‘The Question Concerning Technology’ in The Question Concerning Technology and Other Essays (New York: Harper Torchbooks), 6-9 and is treated in chapter five.

“I believe in simple kind of house and not a showcase for am I a simple man and value simplicity and a simple way of living in every respect.”

“The place being a temple is considered as a public concern and premise, and not a private one.”

“Where I sleep is room of five by six feet and we sleep four persons there, I, my wife and two daughters. ...that room is my bedroom but no other place is available, because other rooms are used for other purposes and are not in good condition and not private totally.”

“On the upper side of the window we want to put shading. We want to put the red roof tiles (naliya) in the month of December. After that we are going to put the small hollow place made nearby entrance of doors and windows to put oil lamps (gokh).”

“First of all we should have a house. Then we should have furniture, TV, radio-tape etc. All these things should be there. All things should be there. One should not go out for any thing [or] ask or borrow. A sofa set should be there, a T.V, a fridge, a Godrej cupboard, a swing (hindola), all these things should be there.”

“On the upper side of the window we want to put shading. We want to put the red roof tiles (naliya) in the month of December. After that we are going to put the small hollow place made nearby entrance of doors and windows to put oil lamps (gokh).”

“It should have garden in the front where the open road is there. In the garden a swing where people can sit and swing should be there. There must be beautiful-ness.”

“The worst possible home is where there is no pleasure of living, where there are no facilities. Like if broken chairs are there and you cannot sit, and the cooking is done in a fireplace (chula).”

“The room is small and we cannot move easily. If we walk straight without bending, our heads touch the roof. There is no garden or courtyard. We can store little things but not big things. In this room we, four people sleep. It is very difficult when we have guests.”

Talking about her house Hira says, “Whatever things are essentially required. I bring them and keep them. We also purchase the whole stuff for the months and store, oil, rice, wheat, bajara, kerosene, salt, sugar, tea-leaves. We buy fish, meat and vegetables. We eat pulses and vegetables every Thursday, while the rest of the days we eat fish and sometimes meat. My house its okay, but a TV, tape recorder, cupboard, etc and such things are required. The house looks good if such things are kept, and I feel I can pass my time.”

“As an ideal home, I feel separate rooms and different types of decorations in the house would make home people more lively. They would spend more of their time at home rather than going outside.”

“When nobody is in the house and I am all alone, I sit in the balcony and chat with my neighbours and pass my time.”

“We’ve strived much and put in all efforts to set up a housing facility, but to date we haven’t achieved this triumph. …Yet we haven’t exhausted all hope, for the time in future may enable us to fulfil our dream, to have our own, small decent house. May God bless us for such.”
“My house should have two bedrooms, one sitting room along with kitchen, store room, toilet and bath room. I prefer my house well furnished with materials like refrigerator, television set, sofa set, tables, chairs, stools, fans, and colourful curtains hanging over the windows and doors. I like a clean and tidy house with a peaceful environment inside.” Yet though it was very clean and tidy, with a kitchen, an outside bathroom and toilet, and had a few sun bleached curtains, none of the listed things were present in Vijaya’s house.

“I sleep in the sitting room, my son and my mother sleep with me. I do not have a room of my own. There is no room where I can live privately. Yes, I have a need of privacy, it must be, but it is not there. I’d like one room…it should be of three by three metres. Just one thing only is important in architectural terms, and that is the terrace of the house. I either sit or sleep sometime on top there and feel peaceful, especially at night. I feel that is the most important for me.”

The numbering of floors is like the American system with the floor at ground level known as the first floor.

“When I think of our house, now it is on the third floor, it should be on the first floor in a quiet place. In my house all the facilities should be there, it should have all facilities. All arrangements should be there. And like other’s houses, all must be well with nothing lacking so that all can live well like that.”

“When I think of others’ house I think of whether my house is of this type? In the Dalit area there are good buildings and our house should be a good place like that, I think.”

To obtain more privacy, Varsha merely wished for “one room bigger than this room.” Kajal had she said “a need of privacy. I would like that much as will allow me to play, talk and read with my friend in a separate place where no one comes to disturb us.”

“Here is the description of my government quarters where I’m living now... There are three rooms and one kitchen. The rooms are twelve by fourteen feet each, the kitchen is twelve by ten feet and the WC and the shower bath is six by three feet. One room is equipped with a fan, and lighting tubes are supplied, by which I mean that they were given to me by the government. Electricity and the water connection bills I am paying, and the rent is seven hundred rupees per month, which is deducted from my salary. The electricity bill is fifty-five rupees per month minimum and water connection charges eleven-fifty rupees per month, minimum. Other than that, I would like to say that this house was built up about four years before. It is made out of limestone and the cement and the lime paste. It was built up by a government contractor, and on the construction side it is okay, there is no problem with that.”

“Basically when I’m thinking of a house, I think that the space for living should be there, properly, with air and water, that is the basic requirement. And you should be able to approach the things of basic requirement like food grain, vegetables and the fish market or meat market easily. The second thing is the supply of electricity should be there, not like in Diu with so many disturbances. In some of the Indian villages there is a big problem of electricity. The second concept of house is that there should be a place of meditation, an area where you can live with your inner self.”

“I can meditate, that is my first pleasure, I can worship, that is my second pleasure, and third and most important, …I can write my thesis as a yoga student. …Both the meditation and the peace that I was getting in the meditation room with my guru, the same peace and happiness of meditation I’m getting in this house.”

“For a house if it is small is no problem, but the construction must be comfortable to us. If the construction is not good enough it is a problem. In view of the construction, it depends, but three to four rooms should be there.”

“If a man wants to live in a correct fashion he must have a minimum room for his living, for a kitchen, for sitting and for his guests. One room must be sixteen feet long, wide and in height, and it must have a ventilator, and minimum of two windows on each wall”

“Whatever I have got, I am enjoying or I am fooling myself, because there is no other way.”

“I had a very cheap rent of one hundred and fifty rupees. Here I am paying five hundred rupees though this room is small. I have seen those landlords…they are not kind to others….they want more and more benefit for themselves, and nowadays the property owners, they are converting their property into hotels because they want to earn the money from tourism.”
Chapter 4 Matters of House and Home

75 “But I have to accept because it has been very difficult to get a good residence or good house where there is a privacy and there is no disturbance. Whatever is available, I have to accept. If I can get more privacy, I will be happy.”

76 “This house is a very simple model. The rooms are quite big and spacious, it’s very well ventilated and there are no fancy designs, And it’s very simple, terribly simple.”

77 “They say because they’re light pleasant colours, then you feel good and happy and if you’ve dark colours then it affects the mind. It does seem to be an important factor…. And I feel when there are tiles you’ve got to be very you know particular. You can’t come in with messy feet, you’ve got to clean and swab. It’s a very hectic life you don’t feel free. But if we have a nice cementing then it’s more comfortable I do mind, because, basically I’m quite lazy. Call it lethargic. And if it comes to the cleaning and the swabbing and keeping the house spic and span then it costs me quite a bitter effort. But you know how people around are now? They see the house and see the way she’s maintaining it and it makes a lot of difference, no?”

78 “A private place is a place in the sense that there’s nobody coming in, like keeping a distance from people, so no, in that respect because there are quite a few visitors, yah quite few. In fact it’s only one room that we live in and there’s no privacy.” In their first house though there had still been many visitors, privacy could be obtained in a room on the second floor where, Marianne said, “you could relax, you could do something for yourself.”

79 “My house has been built in a very big place, and there are many rooms and the architecture is a very good architecture. They have built the house in very good way so many rooms and such big, big rooms and all. And very peaceful atmosphere also.”

80 “In my house there are seven rooms, there is a dining hall, then a sitting hall, bedroom, bathroom, and a kitchen,. and on top there is a terrace. But there is no garden because the house is situated on the main road.”

81 Echoing an opinion held by her elders, Levita discussed how the land at the back of her house could one day be built on, and thus accommodate tenants “You could say the backyard is very important because we can construct one more house there. So I like the front as we can get cool breeze from there. But the back yard, for me it is not too much important. But it is important for my family members as, if there is some need of money, we can construct and we can find a paying guest.”

82 “It is in the main road in front of this church. It is very good for us to go to church and very near for me to go to school also and has been placed and built in a very good way.”

83 “And this house should in the future be constructed in a more beautiful manner. More beautiful than this generation, so we can be more happy, and know that God has blessed us.”

84 “I have a need of privacy because when I want to study all the people come. They start meeting each other and they talk, and always I’ll be disturbed while they are talking. So I need this room. I would like one room for privacy.”

85 “This house is like a hill station. The balconies are something new and people think how many facilities will be there in the house. It looks from outside, that is important. It looks something special to others.”

86 “The sitting room is my favourite place where all sit together, because the total family sits together.”

87 “We are moving soon to London and because I am going for the first time I do not have any idea about what home over there will be like. My husband is in service there, so his employers will provide our accommodation and should give us a house.”

88 “We bought this house on the lounge as the catalyst. This room, our main room probably influenced us no end to buying the place, just this lounge room. This is a sunken lounge, we like the idea of a different level in the house And, the other thing that sort of struck us was the polished floorboards. Whenever you catch in Coolbellup some wooden floors, they don’t always look like that. I think they’re great. And apart from that it is fairly different from a standard Homewest [aka MoH] house as well, and would get back to my earlier argument of location and where we are.”
“You know it’s funny, because we’ve got a below ground pool out the back. But I don’t see that as an integral part of our living which is interesting, because you’d think that would be the main focus of the house.”

“Just improving the house, more than anything to make it feel more home-like. When you buy a house and somebody else has cut the design, it takes time to change that around to yours. Like the garden, I’ve basically changed the whole lot. It was quite a nice garden but it just wasn’t mine, so I felt I had to change it.”

“We’ve gone through and put security screens on all the windows. We’ve insulated the house, we’ve painted it, we put floor coverings, we’ve done all the gardens, we’ve done a heap of work here and we’ve spent a lot of money.”

“I’d have a humungous kitchen, with heaps and heaps of cupboards and more drawers, and a big block in the centre for making pastry. I would change the kitchen, but I don’t think much else. I’d have a gazebo out the back with a fish pond and two bathrooms definitely. Whether you’ve got two people or ten people in our house, everyone will have to use the toilet at the same time. I’d have piped music through all the rooms, that’d be nice. But you know, just a bigger kitchen, a better kitchen. This one annoys me, its only got one drawer. And I really find it hard to cope with that.”

“They will patch things up and patch things up, over and over again, and then, at the end of the day they have to replace the bloody thing anyway.”

“Things I can’t really do myself I’ll ring them up. I usually don’t have to wait an extended amount of time and they do know they’re not allowed to send any cowboys out here. Because I had a little chat to the management, and told them, any work I do will be top quality work with good products, and I expect them to do the same and to send trades people, not cowboys.”

“You can shut everyone out. I think its just safety, it’s a cocoon effect I think. If you’ve grown up without it, I think you appreciate it more when you’re older. As a kid most of my life was spent in a sleeping bag either on top of a load of dynamite, which my father used to cart, or underneath a truck on the roadside. Besides sleeping on roadsides from here to Wyndham and back again, and living in tents and really roughing it, I think the worst house I ever lived in was my parent’s house. That was an asbestos house and, Jesus it was like an oven in summer and an icebox in winter. When we came back, we’re here for a couple of weeks before we went away again. It was never settled, you were never in one place for too long. And being here, I like the fact that there’s continuity - you’re here, and you’re safe. If you just want to come home, lock all the doors, pull down the blinds, you can. But if you want to open them all up, you can as well. So you’re either going back into your cocoon for safety or emotional reasons, or you open everything out so that everyone says ‘Oh you’re home’, ‘Yeah, come on in and have a cup of coffee’."

“This new house is sort of like just blowing me away, because its so big and open. Our old house used to be everything. We used to have a door to shut up everything. In the new house you’ve got the family room, the meals area, the kitchen and the games room all built into one. It’s a pretty good structure, because one side is built as bedrooms and bathrooms and the other side is where most people are, in the main living quarters.”

Among three of the four children, the standardised nature of the original MoH structure was implicit, whereas embellishments, invariably carried out by fathers, drew special comment.

“Well, there’s four bedrooms, two bathrooms, a dining room, a lounge room, a meals area, family room, kitchen, games room, and the laundry and the toilet. And the outside is not huge, but there’s also a double garage and he’s putting a workshop with a shower and a toilet and a sink outside.”

“This new house is double brick so it’s stronger. Its not like if you hit the wall and its going to crack or anything, like it did in the other house a couple of times. It’s new, every things new. Every thing is different to what we used to have. Like, we could choose what we wanted instead of having it there. You could change things and that’s why it took so long to get the house. At the building stage, because we changed so many things, we’d shop around for the things even the colour of a floor tile or something. We’d all go out and we’d all have look at the colour of them and we’d all sort of put our opinion in and then Dad would count it towards the end product.”

“The houses are more modern in Success. And in Coolbellup you have more spaced out areas like with your bit of front yard. But in Success there’s less front yard and everybody’s like crammed up.”
Chapter 4 Matters of House and Home

101 “Well our old house used to be not modern but like a house of Portugal, just the basic structure of what you need really. An ideal sort of house would be a modern house. A house which is open and like our new house, open and a lot of area, and a lot of everything that you need for the extra luxury for the modern family of today.”

102 “The kitchen, because all the family’s there. And when we’ve got people over there you can talk to them and things.”

103 “I’m like studying and I’ve got a room and my sister she’s four but she goes through my room, goes through my pencils and all that. And I’ve just got to have room by myself, where I can think and all that. Yeah, I have got a room, but it never stays empty, everyone goes in it and I usually lock the door when I’m studying.”

104 “[Worst are] cramped rooms, with three big floors above, and having to eat gruel all the time. I hate that stuff. And having nothing to do, like didn’t have enough money to buy books, or didn’t have a T.V or weren’t allowed out of the house, and feeling trapped inside your own house, apart from having to go to school.”

105 “An ideal home would be something that you can’t smash up. Holographic paint or something that’d go over bedroom and I’d be happy with a room to myself, so I could be all alone, without my brothers telling you what to do. I lock myself in it whenever I’m angry, and somewhere where you can keep your pets without everyone coming in and throwing them out.”

106 The frame is important, otherwise the house would collapse and the roof but I wouldn’t mind if the wall would be gone, that’d be okay. And we’ve got a big ditch under our house, and could put a swimming pool in there.”

107 Bigoted Whites label Aboriginal transience as ‘walkabout’ which, while it accuses Blacks of irresponsibility and unreliability, ignores their systematic disenfranchisement, exploitation, disadvantage, and encourages fear, discrimination and a lack of everyday civil respect. Transience of abode used to be a perpetual feature of the nomadic hunting and gathering life of Indigenous experience prior to colonisation. But although hunting and gathering practices for urban Aborigines are seldom, if ever, a usual means of provision, the pattern of movement between sites and groups remains an important, albeit substantially modified, practice. In shifting between the more or less stable residences of their kin, Aboriginal people test and practise ties of affinity and obligation, while also coping with the consequences of common poverty and inadequate resources. Unlike non-Indigenes, who generally change abode for reasons associated with employment or to improve their standard of living and residence, Aboriginal people practise platial relocation for reasons of family solidarity, using traditional obligations to meet contemporary insecurity by pooling resources and sharing responsibilities. See Eleanor Bourke and Colin Bourke ‘Aboriginal Families in Australia’ in Families and Cultural Diversity Robin Hartley (Ed), (St Leonards, N.S.W: Allen and Unwin, 1995). Nevertheless, the high level of transience among urban Aboriginal people has usually as least as much to do with endemic inter-generational poverty as it does with customary patterns of visiting. The problem of Aboriginal housing is a systemic feature of MoH departments across Australia. Indeed the issue of appropriate housing for Aboriginal Australians is a persistent weeping wound, among many other wounds, for, as a class, Aboriginal people are among the poorest people in Australia and have the worst health and housing statistics. On Aboriginal disadvantage in the Perth metropolitan context see Sharon Delmage The Fringe-dweller's Struggle: Cultural Politics and the Force of History (Ph.D Diss. Murdoch University Library, 2000) and Justin Healey (Ed), Aboriginal disadvantage (Rozelle, N.S.W.: Spinney Press, 2002). It also bears pointing out, that people who identified as Aboriginal constituted 4.9% of the Coolbellup population, the time while the turnover rate for a change of address in residential accommodation over a period of five years among all Coolbellupians was 11.4% in1996. Such a contrast challenges the idea that Aboriginal people are more likely to move house than other people. In Australian Bureau of Statistics Census, Basic Community Profile Table, Table B03 State and Statistical Local Area of Usual Residence 5 Years Ago by Sex, 1996.

108 For Melissa the ‘state of the house’ summarised concerns for platial order in concerns like, “whether it would be a good place to live in… Is it a good safe place to live for people. ….Do you have a big block around your house? Whether you can fix it up and do the garden up nicely and things.” Melissa’s family had tried to create more order. She said “We’ve tried to make it nice and put a garden in it but it didn’t survive for long. We’ve tried over the past few years to get the house set up, and we have since we first moved in.”

109 “I used to just have my own bedroom, so that was my home as long as the door was shut. It was where you could go in and just to relax, and do what you wanted to do, and think how you wanted to think.”
“In the time we’ve been here we would have spent twenty thousand dollars on our property. As a choice - we had an asbestos roof- and we removed that. We put a carport on, we tidied the patio roof up properly and put a new roof on. We had the whole house painted. We’ve put touches on our garden and stuff like that.”

“We talk to our neighbours and its ‘why should we do that, we don’t own the property?’ In Michelle’s experience the MoH were ‘not going to spend a great deal of money on any of the homes that are let out. So, they’re [i.e,MoH] not going to value our house to their houses, but we’re going to add value to theirs. So we’re actually wasting our money by putting our money into the place.”

“Well originally, we bought this house, partly because it was cheap, but also for the odd reason because it had a double driveway and, at that stage, we had a fairly large truck. Coolbellup is the sort of place where you could put a truck on your driveway and the neighbours wouldn’t object.”

“We did have a verandah put on the back immediately we moved here, because we liked to sit outside and we couldn’t without being in the sun or rain and the verandah’s always been the social meeting place. …It was a sort of halfway outside.”

“I’ve lived in so many different ones that really the layout and structure of it doesn’t make much difference.”

“I don’t think that what you could call ‘Federation style’, is achieved by sticking a small piece of painted green wood in front of a house, when the house is still basically exactly same as it was before that. So I find fashions in housing rather strange.”

“Looking through windows straight at somebody else’s windows, with people of my own age, would be about as bad as I can imagine.”

“The unit seemed too cramped up. It wasn’t big enough for two people, we had to share a bedroom, share a study, and then there was the lounge - dining room. But, though I loved it, I think it would be ideal for one person, it wasn’t really big enough for two people. It was fine if only one of us was there, but if we were there all the time, we didn’t have enough space, although we had a nice garden. So we moved to Coolbellup because we could get a good price for the house, get a cheaper house, have money to spare and plenty of room.”

“Oh I think there’s a lot of things I hate. The first hate’s quite a strong one, that there is a lot of work needs doing, and I’ve got a list of things and I’m knocking them off one by one. All the outside needs painting. It’s looking in a disgusting state, but I feel in some ways that’s a good thing, because it’s less likely to be burgled. The worst, the very worst, thing is that back fence just outside in the patio where the sand comes through, because we’re on a hill and a retaining wall has never been built. I really detest that, it’s ugly and I no longer feel any shame. It’s a shambles, and I will leave it as a shambles, because all my efforts to beautify it have to come to nothing, the sand comes through and things don’t grow, and it’s disheartening. So I no longer disguise the fact.”

“I’d like to leave everything here and start afresh – lovely, and perhaps have everything in the Japanese style… If I could live in the hills somewhere, with a beautiful view. I’d have a house with a long passage way, perhaps having rooms going across just on one side of the passage, and a beautiful verandah I could sit on. So, an indoor and an outdoor house, away from traffic, that would be fabulous. A rammed earth or mud brick house. I often think about it. I design houses in my mind. I often think about that because I think about and look at how I live now, and think how I would like to live, and there’s a big gap there. And, how I would like to live would be in a beautiful house, but it would also be a community based house. I often think about if I had the money to build an ideal place, it would be, perhaps half a dozen people or more. I wouldn’t build just one little place for me. I think living in a community of people is really important.”

“I hate these houses and I’m sure I’d hate all the people in them. I can’t imagine, living in such ghastly place. City Beach epitomises all that I think is the very worst. If someone gave me one of those houses I wouldn’t use it, I’d pull it down and let it go back to nature.”

Ultimately the most important and desirable thing was “just to have a space to be in, a space that I can go and be alone in and just have shelter, just ordinary everyday necessities, not more than that.”

“And for three months I lived in a tent in one place that became so much a symbol of home. You know being at home, not wanting to be anywhere else, and those magnificent views, you can imagine over a bay. And having that feeling of ‘at home-ness’, what was present in that tent. If I haven’t got that in place where I live, I feel I’m really missing something. So really in a way, the physical-ness of it is not all that much important. I just think of it as an
Chapter 4 Matters of House and Home

extension of that tent, because that’s where I had that feeling of a wonderful sense place and shelter which I didn’t have before.”

123 “I [think the amount of space I need] varies. It doesn’t have to be a big space it just has to feel comfortable for your situation, or for my situation. I live in a three bed-roomed house by myself, but I could probably only use more or less a third of the house. So I could live in a lot smaller place and still be very comfortable and content with it.”

124 “The ideal home? Something with wide open spaces, big, brand new and no doors that need to be locked and kids playing. ...The kids playing. Somewhere where you can go when you finished work, put your feet up, feel that you’re happy and contented...life's wonderful.”

125 “Actually I despised the place so much that for many months I just did nothing. It just got completely overgrown and deteriorating, and I had no interest in the place at all.”

126 “The good things that I see are related directly to where my house is. There’s a park over the road, there’s a bus stop over the road, a shopping centre within five minutes. So yeah, the positive things are directly related to where my house is. Its mostly location, its proximity to Fremantle, to the city, to the freeway.”

127 “I’m not a real gardening fanatic and hate mowing the lawns, and that’s why I’ve put all native plants in the front yard to try and make it look like natural bush. I like the Australian bush, and not these manicured gardens. I mean it’s ridiculous, it’s a waste of water.”

128 “I was just starting to get interested again in this place. I’m going to take it off the market, because there’s just no point in selling it at the moment. I want to get what I want. So I may as well make it more comfortable for what I want, and do it up the way I want. This dark colour is going to go. It’s going to become a lot lighter. It’s depressing these colours, I want to liven it up a bit. I mean my main objective is to brighten it up. As an interest, you know, just to give me something to do as well, so I’m not sitting around watching TV.”

129 This is again a tendency, for people with comfortable incomes sometimes have other priorities. They can lack concern for residential conditions and appearances, and prefer to put available wealth into consumable passions. Others, however, will struggle to pay bills and are not deterred from finding the money to invest in the creation of more space, more comfort or more privacy, by extending and improving a house to convert it into their home.

130 Where one avenue is unnavigable, other channels tend to open. It is also possible to obtain privacy by invoking some of the privileged practices of religion. Religious traditions have provided channels of prescribed privacy such as prayer, introspection, contemplation, or meditation, and private places such as cells, caves, and forest camps as housing options for those who engage in these practices. Hinduism, for example, provides several sanctioned forms of privacy in the tradition of the sannyassin, sadhu, yogis and the ashrams. These counter, balance and coexist with, the populated polyvalency of domestic space, but raise questions that lie well beyond the scope of this thesis. Hindu tradition advises that the wisdom of one’s individual destiny and providence, or dharma, lies in acknowledging that human life occurs, ideally, in stages. First there is the life of the celibate student or brahmacharin, this is followed, upon marriage, by the life of the householder, grahastha. Then, when one’s duties to family are fulfilled, comes the stage of withdrawal from worldly concerns to live a simple life of contemplation and meditation as a hermit in the forest as a vanaprastha. And finally a stage of total renunciation in sanyass as one prepares for the death of the physical body and the continued existence of the soul, achieved ideally in complete union with the Godhead or, as is more often the case, the transmigration of the soul to another body. While sannyassis tend to be self appointed wandering renunciates, sadhus are those who may wander off at any stage of life. Both typically seek self and God realisation as a practitioner of one or more of the many forms of yoga. The sutras of Patanjali, whose wisdom underpins the practice of all yoga, recommends attention to the nature of the mind, “stilling the fluctuations of the mind stuff.” in order to gain control over awareness, and ultimately realise the nature of existence and the self. To support the contemplative life of the many aspects of Hindu religious life, are secluded hermitages and collective communities known as ashrams whose social and platial order privilege materially modest, inner focused forms of dwelling. See Srisa Chandra Vidyarnava, A Catechism of Hindu Dharma (New York: AMS Press, 1974) also Arthur Basham The Origins and Development of Classical Hinduism (Boston: Beacon, 1989).
Chapter Five  Dwelling with Technology

5.1 Technology as a Lens and a Frame for Dwelling Experience

Chimps with sticks and bower birds with beads aside, technology does not, for the most part, come into existence apart from human beings. While there were almost certainly eras in the pre-history of our planet which could properly be labelled innocent of technology and pre-technological, such a situation can only be imaginatively constructed from within an historical frame, in which every technological development and trajectory is part of the texture and processes of history. While this may seem all too obvious, it is important to recall, if only because technology and a technologically mediated life-world are so often taken for granted. Technology and the technological tend to become part of the background against which human affairs take place, rather than the very stuff, of which, said the Buddha with regard to thought itself, “we make our world.”

Without thought we are mute, it literally articulates our existential being, and technology, at its most fundamental level, is a form of thought, of material intentions, of thought and intention rendered material. By introducing technology as a topic into the arcane circles of philosophical meditation: epistemology, metaphysics, ethics, politics, law, etc. we can loosen the spells cast by their, often necessary, nomological and theoretical separation. In the vast ecology of the current episteme, a philosophy of technology has the potential of the philosopher’s stone, legendary for its hermeneutic value in facilitating understanding, and crucial as a tool for actualising (materialising) desire. At its purposeful, instrumental level however, technology, seen as objects, equipment or gadgets designed to satisfy some human need or desire is not, insists Heidegger, equivalent to “the essence of technology”. For, at a foundational or essential level, the entire scope of technology, the essence of technology claims Heidegger, is “by no means anything technological.” It is impossible to grasp the essence of technology by “merely staring at the technological.” Technology, in other words, can not be counted as merely a matter of tools, machines and networks of hardware. Alongside its obviously instrumental existence, technology is also a mode of knowledge, the techno logos, forms of knowing which inform those acts of creation we would label cultural, rather than natural, and practical, rather than theoretical. Those forms of creation in other words, which have given, and continue to give rise to all technology, from the simplest hand held stone and bone tools, to the complex electronic and optic fibre circuitry of the present, or the ‘replicator’ in Star Trek’s futuristic imagination. Our technologically mediated environment depends on us for its being and, in-so-far as we are
constituted by the nature of our relations with others (both other people, and other entities, such as technology), so necessarily are technologically mediated environments the outcomes of our relationships with them. Not all knowledge can be said to be coextensive with language. Knowledge, articulated as technology, cuts, divides and categorises the world, revealing some aspects and concealing others. In Heideggerian terms, technology, both item by item and as a whole, always involves certain sorts of knowledge. Certain kinds of knowing will inevitably involve certain sorts of revealment and concealment, which are embodied in each technological instance, from the single utensil to the entire technological arrays of cultures and civilisations.

In western modes of inquiry prior to Heidegger, the dominant claim regarding the being of human beings was founded on metaphysics, which declared an essential separation of subject and object, in which ‘to be’ was equivalent ‘to being produced’. The production of actual objects out of ideal forms was the first separation of so called ‘productionist’ metaphysics, and Heidegger declared his aim to be the deconstruction of the productionist ontology of being. In the Heideggarian inquiry into technology, all technology belongs to the bringing forth into unconcealment of being, and revives the ancient Greek notion of poiēsis. Poiēsis entails all emergent or arising phenomena, and subsumes within its rubric two further modes of being, technē and physis. Where physis articulates all of those moments of the life-world which grow in, or are spontaneous creations of, nature, technē owes its being to human intervention, mediation and involvement. As a mode, the being and processual development of technē uses and complements the being and processual mode physis. The essential difference between technē and physis is the difference between presencing or bringing forth itself (physis), as contrasted with presencing or bringing forth not in itself, but in another (technē). Technē is not however equivalent to technology. In a categorical hierarchy, technē precedes technology, though they share the common denominator of human interventions of making and shaping. The essential character of technology can be understood in what comes to presence, or is brought forth, in technology.

For Heidegger, what was essential about technology is understood by the “modes of occasioning” or that which “brings hither out of concealment and forth into unconcealment.” According to Aristotle there are four modes of occasioning, associated with every instance of technē. In each objective production there is a material, formal, efficient and final cause. In modern technology however, matter lost its agency and its particularity when the logos of efficiency presumed to equivalence with, and came to dominate, the other causes which presence
In essence, the difference between tekhne and technology is the difference involved in the fundamental shift from tekhne as the manipulation of natural matter, to an emptying of initial and natural content and its re-materialisation according to a specific logic – a reduction in other words to a techno logos. In comparing ancient and modern making activities, Carl Mitcham observes that the fundamental difference between Greek tekhne and modern technology is that

*Teckhne* involves logos, but only in grasping form, not in directing the actual process of production, the activity qua activity. There is no logos of this activity. But is this not precisely what modern technology proposes to furnish – a logos for the activity, a rationalisation of the process of production, independent of, if not actually divorced from, any particular conception of eidos or form? Is this not precisely why it can so vigorously claim to be neutral, to be dependent in use on whatever human beings want to do with it, on purely extrinsic ends?

Modern technology is thus a mode of revealing, but a revealing of a different mode from that which is brought forth in poiēsis. Rather than the bursting-forth in physis, or the infolding of bringing forth in poiēsis, modern technology is a challenging-forth (*herausfordern*). The challenge is to nature. The revealing which rules in modern technology, argues Heidegger, “puts to nature the unreasonable demand that it supply energy that can be extracted and stored as such.” The mode of revealing that rules in modern technology has the character of a “setting upon” where the logos is the ordering of nature into a supply of ready material, a standing reserve (*Bestand*), which ensures a rule of efficiency and convenience, and supports every rationalisation that furthers these ends. As standing reserve, objects lose their particular character as objects, their unique object-hood, and gain substitutability. It is the logic of mass production which produces a plethora of undistinguishable, interchangeable commodities. Apart from the distinctions of brand, price and quality, one microwave oven is the same as another, and occurs in a series of hundreds of thousands. Though much more could be said on Heidegger’s deconstruction of mass production, the salience of recalling the relationship between tekhne and technology and the character of modern technology, will become evident as I consider the ways in which our dwelling with technology intersects with, and helps constitute and define, our being-in-the-world. Suffice it to say for now, that dwelling with technology for most, if not yet all, human beings involves dwelling *primarily* with modern technology of all kinds. I stress the word ‘primarily’, because although there are other kinds of technology in our lives, which have not been mass-produced, these are relatively rare and few in number.
My intention in this chapter is to disclose and interpret our technologically mediated life-world, and pose two questions: What relations, and what qualities of relations, seem to prevail between people and their technologically mediated life-world? And secondly: when conceived as configurations of human - technology relations, in what ways has dwelling experience been realised in Coolbellup and Diu? Two further questions spawn in their wake, and extend the discussion of chapter four on the divergences and convergences of the concepts of house and home. The first is: Are houses, for example, to be regarded as technologies in their own right, or do they tend to be seen as mere containers for a range of other technological objects and systems? Second, in human – house relations, which relations are at the fore and which to the rear?

The introduction of technology into philosophical theory makes it important to distinguish, not only intentions brought to human – technology relations, but the meanings that technology can have. However, as with many other umbrella concepts such as ‘love’ or ‘work’, the term technology embodies a tendency towards reification in meaning, though as the Fontana Dictionary of Modern Thought acknowledges, the nature of reification is unavoidably part of interpretation. Reification, according to this dictionary, occurs when “an analysis of any relationship in a complex world involves a process of simplification through a set of abstractions, in which certain aspects of a given phenomenon are selected and stressed for heuristic purposes.” In the case of technology, the fallacy of reification is also seriously assisted by the vast extent and concrete materiality of technology. The term technology reifies when it is used as an umbrella term for the object-hood of the enormous and diverse quantity of tools, machines and artefacts, and neglects the intentions they embody, and the relevance of the specific contexts in which they are used.

The widespread assignation of the insignia ‘technological’ to only certain classes of objects, shows how frequently technology is thought of as having, or employing, electronic or mechanical qualities. Some domestic objects are more likely than others to bear the label technology, and such metonymic reification is supported by the great quantity of complex technology available, and the lack of comprehension the lay person has of its composition and/or capacities. Persistent reifications of technology occur in ‘common sense’ when it notices only that equipment that has sophisticated ‘state of the art’ qualities which, bracketed together, are called ‘high tech’, ‘automatic’ and ‘electronic’. Electronic and automatic technologies are so taken for granted that there is a tendency for them to be emblematic, and represent all technology. Such abstractions, which substitute the part for the whole, reduce the possibilities for the representation
and interpretation of all technology. Further reductions occur with notions of technological newness and novelty, which encourage the idea of capital p ‘Progress’ and sustain a ‘frontier’ mentality. The idea of ‘Progress’ abets forgetfulness, precludes other sorts of association, and results in a conceptual narrowness that is a problem, because of the number of things that don’t or can’t be said. In the everyday, this tends to mean that the discussion of things, objects and artefacts does not move into discussions of the nature of technology and, on the contrary, actually perpetuates a lack of recognition of the ways in which human culture structures, and is structured by, technology.

Perhaps less evident than notions of progress and newness, but lending support to such ideas, is the notion of technology as neutral. Although critical thought, as Cynthia Cockburn argues, no longer needs to disclaim technological determinism, much popular understanding continues to subscribe to it, or its opposite a pure social determinism. The ‘truth’ about technology however, is that intentionality and relativity rule, and that ambiguities, ambivalence, and inconsistencies are certain. There are no simple, single or final determinations or explanations, for every technology is a *gestalt* phenomenon, a sum greater than the simple combination of its parts. In every technology, determinations and effects proliferate, complexifying and defying any simple glibness of explanation or interpretation. The prevalence of notions of technological progress, novelty and neutrality are important, not only in the examination of our dwelling with technology, but in contemplating past, and possible future, trajectories of our human condition.

### 5.2 Domestic Technology as a Lens and Frame for Dwelling Experience

Overwhelmingly, the descriptive and interpretative material on technologies has tended to be associated with the politics and lifestyle statements of mainstream or sub-cultural movements, rather than the immediacy of the locus of what Husserl called the ‘core- sphere’ (*Nähsphäre*). With the exception of our clothes and personal accessories, housing and domestic technologies are nearer to us than almost any other things or objects. The circle of theory and analysis has drawn much closer around consumption and the consumption of banal, everyday objects. Interesting and valuable though this work is, most of it must be consigned to extended footnotes. The past decade has seen a small explosion of work dedicated to exploring and theorising the myriad ways domestic quotidiana contribute to the constitution and maintenance of our life-worlds. A great deal of this work has been from a feminist perspective, for the obvious reason that the household, and many of its familiar technologies, lie in a feminised sphere of value and activity.
Though by no means the first to do so, Tim Dant conveys the crucial importance of our houses, when he claims that there, “we confront ourselves and our culture through the material form of things” that, as we live with them “using them, working with them, altering and adding to them, the work of building is continuous – and so is the process of mutual shaping.” Shaping is cultivation, and cultivation is reciprocal. The work we do and the energy we invest in objects is one kind of shaping. As well as the shaping of our actions in use, an object’s reflection of its uses, and our affective investments, entail the cultivation of memory and imagination. Employing insights from C.S. Pierce, Csikszentmihalyi and Rochberg-Halton emphasise how difficult it is to separate a thing’s use – related functions from its symbolic meanings, when they claim that “even purely functional things serve to socialise a person to a certain habit or way of life and are representative of that life.” Objects have an iconic presence, and can be viewed as signs with ‘objective’ characters, since they possess a concreteness and permanence relative to other signs, such as emotions or ideas.

Csikszentmihalyi and Rochberg-Halton’s inquiry considers domestic objects as symbols with reference to the self, and their aim is to try and disclose the meanings that derive from the investment of attention domestic objects attract. Domestic objects are seen as useful symbols, inscribed with intentions and meanings that derive from the investment of attention they have attracted. The authors call this analytic framework ‘cultivation’, as it involves trying to understand the psychic energy invested in domestic objects which, they say, is only possible “because humans are able to focus their attention selectively in the pursuit of goals.” ‘Cultivation’ in their use of the term, derives from the original Indo-European, and subsequent Latin, derivation of the term culture and means ‘to tend’, ‘to take care of’, ‘to watch over’, ‘to grow’ and ‘to nourish’. Cultivation entails the meanings of ‘to attend’ and ‘to intend’ both of which involve action towards objects. Thus it is that “the meaning of the object…becomes realised in the activity of interaction and in the direction or purpose that this activity indicated: physical and psychological.” In his essay ‘Building Dwelling Thinking’, Heidegger argued for the same kind of relationship when he spoke of the nature of dwelling as a “staying with things”, and a “sparing and preserving.” Dwelling is a taking care of the things which presence with us, and with which we have relations of intention and attention. Dwelling occurs when things are given up to their nature as things, “things themselves secure the fourfold only when they themselves as things are let be in their presencing.” Heidegger asks the question: “How is this done?” and responds, “in this way, that mortals nurse and nurture the things that grow and
specially construct things that do not grow.”33 Cultivating is thus the giving of attention and intention, not only for purposes of objectification and construction, but, as Heidegger avers, cultivating, in its widest possible sense, is a staying and a keeping. Cultivation is a dwelling, staying with intention, and a keeping of attention. And dwelling, insofar as it keeps or secures the fourfold in things, involves objects and buildings - technology in other words, that offers a measure of phenomenal stability.

In ‘A Phenomenology of the Quotidian Artifact’, Larry Hickman works through adaptations and extensions of Hannah Arendt’s notion that an essential function or quality of quotidian artefacts is to stabilize human life, within the flux of human and natural events.34 Supplementing Arendt’s depiction of the small-scale, friendly technology of quotidian, Hickman proposes that human nature has developed a second “technological nature” that, among other things, allows us to take-for-granted the familiar but unsettling aspects of ‘big technology.’ Technological quotidian stabilise our existence, and are divided by Hickman into five modes, which represent our relations with things: personation, authentication, distraction, as a focus of desire, and as implements of magic. Stabilisation occurs when technological quotidian grant, or satisfy, certain forms of intention and attention. When subject to objectification, things tend to lose meaning, and outcomes in terms of stabilisation become uncertain, because intention and attention to thing-hood undergo displacement and reduction. Stabilisation, in other words, is a product of cultivation, and Hickman’s five modes provide a way of understanding the satisfactions derived from relations with things, as well as the dissatisfactions of relations with things that suffer objectification.

As discussed in chapter four, we can draw a conceptual distinction between house and home. ‘House’ tends to be the material shelter, while ‘home’ means the individual and social productions sheltered by it. In actuality however, neither term is pure, as each has intercourse with the other, and their technological aspects contribute to this cross fertilisation, though they tend to lie in the background of our awareness. The privilege of knowing some things tends to obscure other things. The bodily based, extra-linguistic knowledge of technology is inclined to be forgotten, because its nature exceeds the disciplinary boundaries of language. Technology exceeds conceptual rubrics because it is a mode of knowledge sourced in embodied intentionality. As I’ve discussed, the ‘essence of technology’ is not simple, and cannot be reduced to its purposive rational instrumentality and ostensible raisons d’etre.35 Dwelling with technology is a mutually shaping, but largely ignored, series of relationships. Indeed, our
dwellings with technology involves a kind of incest in the level of intimate familiarity it involves, which is often beneath awareness. The carnality suggested is deliberate, for one of the precepts that guides this chapter is that dwelling with technology involves the body. House and home are technologies which both accommodate other technologies, and are, in their own right, repositories and expressions of bodily values. Yet, although bodily values inform the character and experience of technologies, they tend to be understood as merely utilitarian entities designed to alleviate labour, or provide pleasure and, as such, form the background against which the events of the life-world are set.

Psychoanalytic theory regards the unconscious as the not yet conscious, and Freud’s most important discovery was to suggest that the unconscious has a permanent agenda of self disclosure. Freudian theory states that extra or pre-linguistic dimensions of knowledge are of the body (ie libidinal drives or intentions) and, because of their eruptive and disruptive nature, are made inadmissible and repressed from conscious awareness. However, through one medium or another, the unconscious seeks to attain consciousness for its contents. Dreams, jokes and slips of the tongue are the most famous attempts by the unconscious to achieve the conscious expression of bodily desire. Yet, it is possible for any act or behaviour, tactile or intangible, to be a potential semiotic medium of unconscious contents. As Freud suggested in *Civilisation and its Discontents*, the “return of the repressed” occurs in the sublimated projects and products of civilisation, its arts, sciences, architectures and technologies. Technologies are sublimated extensions of the body’s energy. Technologies perfect and remove the limits of function inherent in human organs. Houses, for example, can be seen as a “substitute for the mother’s womb, the first lodging.” Thus, it is profitable to see technology as a projection or receptacle of unconscious bodily values and intentions.

While a full psychoanalytically informed discussion of these issues is beyond the scope of this thesis, it is important to understand several psychoanalytical precepts regarding the logos of technology expressed in our artifactual / technological world. The first of these, as mentioned above, is that, as a mode of revealing, technology also conceals, exceeding the ostensible (civilised or sublimated) reasons which brought it into existence. In other words, along with their ostensible causes (material, formal, efficient and final) technological processes, objects and systems are likely to bear unintentional dimensions, whose ‘reasons’ are located in the unconscious domains of the psyche. Following this, a second precept holds that technology is as much about meanings as it is about ostensive purposes. Technologies are indeed full of meaning,
Chapter 5 Dwellin\[5pt\]g with Techn\[5pt\]o\[5pt\]l\[5pt\]o\[5pt\]g\[5pt\]y or Technolo\[5pt\]g\[5pt\]i\[5pt\]cally Med\[5pt\]i\[5pt\]a\[5pt\]t\[5pt\]ed Dwelling.

whether these are conscious and acknowledged or not. Finally, it is necessary to recall how mutually constitutive are the conscious and unconscious aspects of the psyche, and thus how essential it is to try and understand both ostensive and latent reasons in the projection of the material we call the technological. So it is that, in attending to the mode of revealing and concomitant concealment which is technology, we attend to its details and contexts, to its particular instantiation of both latent and ostensive aspects.

The mode of being which is technology is inextricably related to what it means to be human, and it is up to us to try and understand the emergence and presentation of our technologies as forms of knowledge, which exist between the place of the self and the place of the world. Thus, for the remainder of this section, I adopt what could be loosely classed as a Heideggerian charter in a non-productivist, hermeneutic account of human–technology relations that hopes to promote awareness of domestic technology’s less obvious meanings. As such, this account exists alongside accounts which view technology as instrumental, and concerned with rational purposes and operational effects. Instrumental understanding is the dominant and popular form of knowledge. But merely instrumental understandings are naïve, and require extension by accounts which accept technology as forms of knowledge that reveal and conceal our life-world. This chapter deals with everyday domestic technology, and our technologically mediated dwelling experience. Dwelling with technology involves examining the relational equations that are disclosed by the context and discourse that mediate perceptions of the house-bound life-world, the pre- eminent form of home. To do this I employ Ihde’s phenomenology of technics.39

5.3 Domestic Technics

5.3.1 House-held Technologies: Sonatas

Our experience with technologies mediates our life-world. The nature of technological intercession transforms human perceptual experience as it is embedded in, and contributes to, the constitution of our cultural praxis. Technology mediates human actions and expressions because it enters in between us and the world. If we employ Levi- Strauss’s famous dialectical image, which distinguishes food as ‘the raw’ and ‘the cooked’, we have by analogy ‘raw’ moments of perception and engagement with the world, in which nothing exists or enters between us and our sensory experience, and ‘cooked’ moments, where experience is mediated via some presence or object, whether it be a pair of shoes on our feet, a fork in our mouth, or a television program before our eyes. The materiality and perceptual capacities of the human body interact with the materiality and technical capacities of technologies, which in one way or another alter the nature
of our perceptions. A phenomenology of technics is a kind of philosophical ecology, in which we are the organisms studied. Don Ihde’s *Technology and the Life-world* offers a phenomenology of technics in a fivefold division of relations mediating people and the life-world.

The key to Ihde’s phenomenology of technics is the notion of *intentionality*. Intentionality comprises the specific artifactual attributes that comprise technology which we have built into them, and which we access in using them. The intentions that inhabit technological design are relations of perceptual contexts. Reproduced below is Ihde’s diagrammatic sketch of three of the five mediational structures. These ‘sonatas of relations’ issue from the initial phenomenological proposal of an unmediated or non-technological relation with the world, characterised in the equation, Human -World.

Embodiment Relations : (Human -Technology ) - World
Hermeneutic Relations : Human - (Technology -World)
Alterity Relations : Human - Technology - (World).\(^{40}\)

The position of the parentheses is crucial to making sense of these telegraphic representations, because they show the phenomenological distinctions created by the mediating role of technology in the context of the unmediated relation that obtains between us and the world. In each relational equation, fundamentally qualitative differences in perception result. It is important to stress, however, that the precise nature of the perceptual transformations, along with any discontinuities and similarities with the unmediated situation of any particular technology, awaits its particular analysis. The parentheses surrounding human and technology, that represent relations of embodiment, indicate that between unmediated perception and the mediated variety is the use of an embodiment technology. The technology, in other words, extends in some way one or more of the body’s sensory capacities, and thus has a basically prosthetic structure. Embodiment technologies instrumentally extend, and therefore inevitably transform, the body’s experiential reality. The experiential transformations offered by embodiment relations produced by the physical characteristics of embodiment technologies, offer an extension of the body’s faculties. Perceptions of the world that occur through a technology that extends the perceptual apparatus of the body, facilitate perceptual transparency. As extensions to the body, they become embodied. Spectacles, microscopes, telescopes extend the eyes, hearing aids and telephones extend the ears, and allow extensions into the world these senses could not otherwise attain.\(^{41}\) But the disclosure of perceptual context often incurs a cost, as some perceptions recede or even vanish when others
are revealed and dominate. The coexistence of such perceptual revelation and concealment is a matter of amplification and magnitude. Concealed absences are often hard to apprehend, and the costs involved may be hard to evaluate. Telescopes, for example, allow great extensions of sight but at the expense of dimensionality, of depth. Telephones increase vocal distance and extend the range of the ear, but at the same time negate, to the point of abolishment, the senses of sight and touch.

Hermeneutic relations are characterised by the reading and interpretation of the world. They lie within an intentional structure of technologies that facilitate interpretation and, possibly, manipulation of the world. The parentheses here indicate the way in which a text comes to represent the world by signs or indices of various kinds. Switches, gauges, graphs, keyboards, film, or any kind of representational display are hermeneutic devices in which the appearance of aspects of the world comes via textualised attributes. In such technologies, the world is literally read in relations that require hermeneusis. Reading and interpreting the signs in the technological text enables what has been encoded, in systematised abstractions, to be decoded and rendered a ‘reality’. Any technology that employs coding to relay information about the world offers a potential hermeneutic relation with it. All devices that recruit and apply the conventions of a theory of representation offer or impose hermeneutic relations with the world, with alphabets and literature being the most obvious examples. In reading this text, for instance, one uses the interpretative conventions of written English. Unlike the degrees of transparency yielded by embodiment relations, hermeneutic technologies report on aspects of the world that cannot otherwise be apprehended. Thus, relations with them inevitably include a degree of opacity. Unlike the relations of embodiment, hermeneutically conducted relations do not have perceptually isomorphic mediatory positions, but ones which enhance differences with the unmediated situation. Clock faces, for instance, interpret the world by measuring the passage of time, by employing abstract signs for measuring duration. But digital clocks eliminate the duration or spatial element of temporal measurement found in clock faces in a further abstraction, which uses only numerals, and a code representing the ante and post-meridian positions.  

The parentheses around world, in the diagram of alterity relations, are placed to emphasise the eclipse, in some respects, of the world by qualities which enable the technology to become a quasi-other. The parentheses indicate that, while in use, such technologies are placed in the foreground of human awareness. Alterity relations can incorporate and exceed embodiment and hermeneutic relations, by offering a mediation in which the world withdraws, and the technology
embodying and/ or representing the world is central. Technologies in which alterity relations are present are focal termini, that typically exhibit quasi-otherness by mirroring or possessing life-like characteristics. Technologies which mediate alterity relations invite representations of the world in images, whether ‘real’ or contrived in fictional representations. Film and television are reflecting surfaces, ‘mirrors on the world’, where aspects of the world are represented in images and sound which, whether ‘real’ or fictional, are always animated. Television is perhaps the quintessential and ubiquitous alterity technology. However, the alterity of television is also complemented and supported by embodiment and hermeneutic relations. Television offers alterity relations, while simultaneously extending the body’s visual and auditory range, and providing hermeneutical references of the world beyond the frame or place of viewing. In television, these prosthetic and referential relationships with the world are rather eclipsed by quasi-other relations which, in extrapolating the world of human experience, extend our awareness of one another, and our imaginative inhabitations of otherness.

Altery technologies may possess capacities which employ kinds of perceptual sense and sentience. Conspicuous examples are the computers that come embedded in microwave ovens and video recorders, for in these, the intention is not simply to imitate human ability and action, but to exceed it. Yet their difference from human action and ability is crucial to the challenge and fascination of the relations they facilitate. Using computers entails having dealings with highly organised hierarchies of phenomenological relations of various kinds, which together possess a kind of otherness. Word-processing and email programs, for instance, engage with and represent the world using textual codes, and convey meaning via hermeneutic relations. Embodiment relations are available with computerised conferencing, when optical and auditory channels extend our vision and audition. Alterity relations may be said to be at their purest, however, when they present a world within a world in relations with a meaningful ‘other’, such as in interactive computer games that offer relations with another and a world with within the world. Perceptions of alterity are facilitated in projections of self that require qualities of recognition, interchange (interactivity), challenge, wit, skill and imagination. In the last analysis, however, a definitive incommensurability between humans and alterity technologies makes any acknowledgment of autonomous otherness in them impossible. As Jean Baudrillard has said “artificial intelligence is without intelligence because it is without artifice.”43

At the same time that the blurring of distinction between actual and virtual in relations with quasi others is crucial, it is perhaps just as important to acknowledge the way in which alterity
technologies alter the customary phenomenological effects of architectural technology by penetrating their long established capacity for opacity. It is necessary to include in any account of technological alterity in what Paul Virilio calls the “morphological irruption” of this cadre into the phenomenology of everyday life. As I shall soon point out, not all alterity technologies are electronic ones, but the electronic and tele-communicative are the ones responsible for the displacement of traditional architecture of occluding walls. The “improbable architecture” of tele-distribution is one that abolishes distance, delivers instantaneity and provides transparency to what was previously solid and opaque. Alterity technologies of the tele-communicating kind are not then simply mirrors on the world, but delivery systems which bring the world right before us. “In effect” says Virilio,

..we are witnessing a paradoxical moment in which the opacity of building materials is I reduced to zero. …On the other hand, with the screen interface of computers, television and teleconferences, the surface of inscription, hitherto devoid of depth, becomes a kind of ‘distance,’ a depth of field of a new kind of representation, a visibility without face to face encounter….The ancient private public occultation and the distinction between housing and traffic are replaced by an overexposure to which the difference between ‘near’ and ‘far’ simply ceases to exist…”

While ready examples of alterity relations in contemporary media are obvious, Ihde has been careful not to create the impression that ‘high-technology’ has a monopoly on the ability to confer alterity relations. Religion, for example, provides a situation where the noumenal ineffable is represented by very concrete icons, which represent a pre-eminent other. The alterity of relations available in icons bears similarity with those available in houses, inasmuch as they are both technologies which receive the intense physical, psychological and spiritual investments of human praxis. I want to now adapt Ihde’s phenomenology of technics to talk about the technological complexity of texture found in houses.

Ihde suggests that the taken for granted, unobtrusive, commonplaceness of shelter technologies can mean that they are often regarded as background technologies. Unlike the relations of embodiment, hermeneusis and alterity, Ihde does not represent background relations diagrammatically. This omission may be because background relations, by literally providing the ground rather than figuring in the foreground, offer something of an invisible field position against which other technological relations stand out. However, using the same schemata, there doesn’t seem to be any reason not to characterise background relations within parentheses, and thus make the equation: (Human - (Technology) -World). Here the parentheses signify the immersion of each of the components in the field, where technology is the ground against which
the already foreground relational figure of Human - World takes place. Automatic technologies like central heating, and semi- automatic technologies like washing machines, dish washing machines and refrigerators, facilitate background relations, because their operations ‘hum’ away in the background, and we are largely oblivious of their presence. The audible contribution of background technologies to any environment is often described as ‘white noise.’ They have, in this sense, an ultimate kind of transparency in that they are usually invisible, because they do not involve much of our attention. Background technology also includes such systematic technologies as the water, gas and electrical supplies. In technologically rich cultures, such as Australia, background technologies leap into the foreground however when such primary examples, like the electricity supply, are withdrawn or go down.

There are biases in Ihde’s characterisation of background technologies which favour single and sophisticated /electronic technologies. Sheets blankets and beds, for example, are sleep facilitating technologies ,which are usually considered an essential pre-requisite for the rests which occupy approximately one third of our lives. But such technologies, if they are recalled at all, rarely attain the status of technologies, and remain simply manchester, furniture and utensils. All are commonplace and used on a daily basis, but are generally taken so much for granted as to be completely overlooked in both casual and academic discussions about technology. But their mediational importance can be gauged by imagining their absence. Were they to suddenly disappear, most people would notice immediately and regard their absence as extremely problematic – how does one prepare dinner without a knife, or use a table without a chair? It is surely the case that the more technologies you have, the more you stand to lose with their withdrawal. But even among the familiarity of domestic technologies per se, some technologies are more familiar, and thus more invisible, than others. The habitual availability of the background relations are, in a sense, the technological mainstays of a house-hold, and help to constitute it. Finally, although background relations are often so assimilated or withdrawn as to be a barely detectable presence, with houses perceptual apprehension of another kind exists.

Houses are arguably the quintessential background technology, since we take them for granted. On the other hand, they are so large and encompassing they cannot help but occupy the foreground. Next to losing loved ones, the loss of a house is experienced and represented as a disaster, and has the effect of redefining people as refugees. As I have argued, discussions about the technology in one’s domestic environment are directed, not at technological backgrounds, but
at foreground, ‘leading object’ technologies and the relations they facilitate. Houses however are both.

In our relations with the world, houses must be seen as technological ensembles, as they act as focal entities to exhibit what Ihde calls ‘multi-stability’. Phenomenologically speaking, instances of multi-stability are perceptual gestalts. Gestalts involve diverse perceptual understandings of phenomena that exist simultaneously, but are not necessarily perceived simultaneously. A gestalt is thus a concatenation of phenomenal events - a whole which has qualities different from, and greater than, the nature and sum of its component qualities. Gestalt switches involve the exchange of one mode of perception for another, (for as perception changes so does meaning) and uncover multi-stability. It is highly unlikely therefore that a gestalt will present a constant body of phenomenal knowledge. The passage or pressure of time and other events tends to ensure that there will be insufficient attention for all. Sensory and cognitive perceptions which are missed may, however, still be retrieved with time and attention. Ihde calls these experientially unrecoverable differences horizontal relations, because they either tend to blur the horizons of nature and artificiality, or their mediational effects situate as horizons what is explicitly present. Horizontal relations effect total, or near total, technological transparency that comprises the furthest edges or horizons of perception.

Because I am looking at residential dwelling, I want to stress the micro-perceptual level of Human-Technology-World gestalt multi-stability, over the macro-perceptual level that Ihde focuses on in his program of cultural hermeneutics. Hence, in a tangential view, I want to suggest that the notion of horizontal relations can be useful when we look at houses as technological ensembles. An array of horizontal relations unobtrusively texture household environments. In houses, the principal horizontal effect is the creation of ‘vibes’ or ‘atmospheres’. A variety of perceptions combine to form a ‘feeling’, which is usually first apprehended just below conscious levels of awareness, and is later given corroborating substance by conscious perceptions. The particular atmospheres which houses exude tend to be associated indications of the customs, predilections and manners of the people who inhabit them, and thus may not be produced via technology. Some technologically produced ambiences do, however, contribute to the creation of the atmosphere of a house, such as happens, for example, with sounds from music systems or smells from the kitchen. Not only are houses sometimes central perceptual foci, they are also simultaneously, if less consciously, vessels and vehicles of culture at the micro-level. In multifarious ways houses are background technologies within which a complex array of
Chapter 5 Dwelling with Technology or Technologically Mediated Dwelling.

embodiment, hermeneutic, alterity and horizontal relations take place, and so traverse and transcend every phenomenological exposition. A house ‘holds’ primary and second level perceptual gestalts. There are, perhaps, as many different perceptual positions or cultures within a household as there are members and technologies. Dwelling with technology involves a constellation of relations to produce a multi-stable, and always evolving, material and social domestic environment.

5.3.2 Domestic Gestalts: House-held Concertos

As perceptual gestalts, houses incorporate, combine and exceed embodied, hermeneutic and alterity relations. As multi-stable phenomena, it is possible for houses to exhibit many features characteristic of, or common to, embodiment, hermeneutic, alterity and background relations. Because they accommodate almost every relation, houses operate at a metaphoric meta-level of interpretation, in which they are read as signs of the self, and the houses of others as signs of their otherness. Houses, at this interpretative meta-level, are disclosed as a constellation of symbolic relations. Expressed as a symbolic relation, a well cared for house can represent the well cared for self who lives in it. Interpreting the interrelations of material culture and subjectivity makes it appropriate to take an excursion around the meta-levels of mediation signified by houses, before embarking on some of the specific issues of dwelling with technology embedded in my research.

Houses can be technological domains that are metaphoric in structure – let us count, at least some of, the ways.

At several levels houses can be understood as prosthetic extensions of the body, offering embodiment relations to the ‘sense-able’ self. Houses, like clothing technologies, extend in a sense the protective function of the skin by sheltering, containing and enclosing the body. Perceptual transparency, and the opposite characteristic of perceptual opacity, are both features of the embodiment relations facilitated by houses. Degrees of perceptual transparency are achieved through the obvious embodiment technology of the windows, which extend the eyes. Telephones facilitate transparency by extending auditory perception, though the degree will vary according to use. Perceptual transparency can vary from moment to moment, depending on circumstance. For example, standing before the window while making a telephone call, delivers a transparency that offers some compensation for the opacity of the walls and the physical distance of the person to whom one is talking. Walls usually constitute much more of the surface area of a house than its windows, and because of their capacity to produce opacity, are one of the most widely used technological devices for creating private places and privacy.
In their institution of embodiment relations that extend the body’s sensory array, houses are reflexive technologies, and have certain consequences for bodies. In the protective enclosure of the places they facilitate, houses contribute to the condition of bodily homeostasis, the management of constant body temperature. In the screening of sun, wind and rain and the retention of warmth or coolness, houses provide the environmental conditions necessary to extend physiological homeostasis, and thus survival and potentially life enhancement. As a combined instance of embodiment and background relations, the opaque and private house extends the body’s spatial environment, and in so doing, extends the body’s knowledge of itself as embodied. Private places, like the technology of clothing, help to produce subjectivity, the intentional agent, the figure in the foreground of all relations with the world. Self-knowledge and identity, moreover, are provided with specific sorts of contextualisation, if houses are considered as contexts for, and backgrounds to, the self. The background in turn shelters the intangible horizontal and atmospheric relations of social relations of a house. Without a house, and the enclosing and disclosing function of architecture, there are fewer possibilities for relations which project and extend the protective role of the skin. Nor, furthermore, is there as much scope for the experience which uses the house as the stage for social relations with others. Without a house, much less a room of one’s own, the potential for embodiment, background and horizontal relations is greatly reduced. Which is not to say, it must be emphasised, that privacy, except by inter-subjective agreement, cannot occur in house-less situations. As chapter five illustrated, privacy is a culturally and subjectively relative state, a matter not only of what one gets used to, but the adjustments and adaptations one makes inside one’s cultural position.

Houses, in their capacity as focal entities and as the termini of perception, often constitute what Gaston Bachelard called “our corner of the universe, our first world.”49 Beyond their place as primary realities in the perceptual experience of infants, houses, as Bachelard illustrated, continue to act as cybernetic devices, simultaneously mediating sources of external reality, as well as a source of reality in their own right. Yet houses also receive projections that emerge from the internal reality of the body, which is, in turn, informed by the platial environments and sub-environments of a house, its rooms, corners, niches, furniture and tools. Houses, in other words, present themselves to the self according to investments which the psyche has made, and become a palpable prosthesis of the impalpable psyche. Houses become emblems or mirrors of the self to the extent that they receive projections of conscious and unconscious desire. Houses can be said to, both literally and figuratively, ‘hold’ selves. At the same time, from a different perspective,
houses can also be seen anthropomorphically as quasi-others, facilitating alterity relations written by the scripts of memory and association. Houses, in several ways, extend the domain of the psyche as it gathers and exudes desire.

Desire and the self are coextensive, but it is the desiring self in relation to the world that is essential and interesting. As Jeff Malpas has observed “desire and the self are constituted only within and through place” and as this thesis has already claimed, the “topology of being” is the fibre of matter and consciousness that weave identity and reality. Houses are particularly potent concatenations of conscious and unconscious experience, and essentially particular places. When the quality and quantity of technological mediations are also considered, it can be seen how the complex textures of dwelling with technology contribute further kinds of particularity, as the following two sections describe.

5.4 The Complex Textures of Dwelling with Technology in Coolbellup

In rich countries like Australia houses are, without doubt, remarkable technologies, being the containers of, and the context for, hosts of technologies and thus an abundance of technologically mediated relations. Taking into account differences of wealth, which determine levels of possession and consumption, it is nevertheless the case that most Australian houses (like the rest of the overdeveloped world,) whether rural or (sub)urban, gather in one place, ‘under one roof’, an array of technologies denser and more complex than any previously known in the history of housing. Despite the relativities of wealth, most Australian houses command more technological and material power than has ever before been available to ordinary people. The residences of the ‘technologically rich’ command household empires with vast inventories of necessary and accessory technologies. In Australia you are ‘technology rich’ if you have access to and control of, a house with hot and cold running water running from a number of taps in bathrooms, kitchen, and laundry. You would also own at least one telephone, television, radio, video player, computer, car, music system, refrigerator, washing machine and stove, as well as tables, beds, cupboards, chests-of-drawers and several sources for the control of temperature, such as air-conditioning units, fans and space heaters. Australian houses are technologically maximal domains of iconic equipmentality. Houses are thus sites for the range of intentions and attentions directed towards cultivating relations with the world via an extensive ensemble of technology. It is to the technological relations which constitute cultivation in Coolbellup that we now turn.
5.4.1 Houses and Other Domestic Technologies as Relations of Embodiment

Embodiment relations in houses were highly valued and much sought after in Coolbellup. Houses were seen to serve subjective and social senses, by accommodating and extending the sense of self and as a sense of reference for others. They were also understood as important mediums of self-stabilisation, by nourishing intention and cultivating attention. Projections of embodiment sought realisation in the world via domestic technologies. Embodiment, in other words, was sought in relations of embodiment. Successful embodiment varied with the psychic and physical bodies that houses sheltered and nourished, and thus how these related to the world. Embodiment relations with technology of the house were words expressed in catalogues of experience, as these were aligned and juxtaposed with the broadly defined aims of temperament and personality.

Intention and attention inhered in the cultivation and realisation of interest in a house to produce a home for the self, and a place out of which to relate to, and into which to retreat from, others. Generally speaking, if houses cannot serve as successful mediums for the self, then change is sought. If a change of house, however, was desired but unobtainable, then there was no choice but for it to remain the object for, and recipient of, unrequited desire for self-extended embodiment.

Janet had travelled and lived extensively in India, and drew comparisons between India and Coolbellup in a series of critical juxtapositions. Houses in Coolbellup were characterised by her as basic, unimaginative and impractical. In design and materials they lacked comfort, and their age meant they needed regular maintenance. Janet noted, however, some redeeming features about her house. Nonetheless a greater litany of inadequacies gave the impression that there was, overall, a lack of fit between herself and her house. Her house lacked the ability to extend and embody her existence. Windows, floor coverings and fences, which would otherwise usually belong inconspicuously in the architectural and technological background, intruded into the foreground, disturbing both her comfort and her aesthetic sense. To provide her with a satisfactory fit, and help realise her own personal potential, her house would, Janet claimed, require drastic renovation. At the same time that Janet sometimes enjoyed communion with her house, as produced in sunlit moments and a good television or radio program, she desired human, rather than technological, forms of alterity. Houses and technologies provided essential relations of embodiment, but these required essential supplementation in the forms of the alterity provided by other people.
Cultivation of her house, and the technological realisation of her house as a home, was an absorbing topic for Michelle. Yet she revealed how, despite the help of appropriate technology and the best intentions and attention to detail, her house was a medium dependent on its context as much as on its own specific properties. Though Michelle and her husband put in the money and work to produce a house which would mediate their selves to their environment, still such improvements could not counter the nuisance of their neighbourhood. Thus, although Michelle to some extent experienced her house as a shield and retreat, it was nonetheless a medium which eventually failed to resist depredations from the world outside. Were the situation in Michelle’s neighbourhood less invasive, then her attitude to the protective medium of her house may have resembled that held by Pat.

After the kitchen table, the most important technological features of Pat’s house were its doors and windows she said, “so you can shut everyone out” and produce a degree of opacity which she called “the cocoon effect.” Pat’s gregarious nature and friendly neighbourhood did not mean she always welcomed company, and she was quite clear that there were times when she wanted to be alone. Pat would signal such times by closing down the signs of her otherwise ‘open door’ house, and explained her sincere appreciation for the capacity to do this, and the control she could exercise. Her appreciation of this freedom of choice and control was, she felt, a result of her history as a truckie’s daughter, where there was no choice but to live out in the open in make-shift camps beside the road. The cocooning effect of her house was, for Pat, a matter of psychological and physical security.

Convenience, functionality, comfort, and pleasure were predominant among the motives, reasons and qualities which the people of Coolbellup drew on to discuss their relation to domestic technologies of the house and inside the house. In Coolbellup, satisfying embodiment relations were often marked as issues of comfort, pleasure and convenience, though, of course, what constitutes pleasure and comfort and convenience are matters of subjective disposition and circumstance. Convenience tended to be an issue of assured function and satisfying use. These qualities were placed in the foreground by several people. Bernard characterised his twenty-five year sojourn in his Coolbellup house as one of ‘convenience.’ Initially it was the convenience of the double drive-way, that could accommodate a semi-trailer, which had decided the purchase of this particular house. But the house proved to be convenient in other ways, as it met in general the material, physiological, social and psychological expectations of Bernard and his family. Although, according to Bernard, the architecture was ordinary, and without any particular
aesthetic appeal, this was of no great consequence, for both the design and its location accommodated and facilitated their needs and desires. They had made only one significant alteration to the design in their time there. The house was made to fit them more conveniently and comfortably when they built a verandah at the back. The addition of the back verandah provided a “sort of halfway outside”, extending the available space for all. It supplied children with extra play-room, and adults with the preferred place to entertain visitors for, as Bernard said, the verandah had “always been the social meeting place. When people came we always ended up on the verandah.”

Spaciousness was another prominent aspect of convenience. Joe, Michelle, and Brandon all valued spaciousness, and the enclosing and structuring properties of such integral structuring elements as the roof and the floor. For Reuben, convenience lay in the quantity of rooms, but both he and his sister Marissa idealised and desired bigger houses. Michael enjoyed the height of ceilings and the quantity of storage space in his new house, and suggested an overall satisfaction with its embodiment relations. For Brandon, by contrast, a combination of realism and childish fancy at first acknowledged, and then rejected, certain architectural essentials. Brandon noted the importance of the frame and roof of his house, but said walls were not necessarily necessary. He further subverted their necessity in a playful refusal of the house as a relation of embodiment in an imaginary construction of a private swimming pool, installed in a ditch that apparently ran beneath the house. Servicing only leisure and pleasure, this image disregarded the usual sheltering structure and function of houses, a reminder of how ageist and conventional ideas of ‘good’ household design can be. Pleasure and convenience, in other words, were understood predominantly as the pleasure and convenience of adults, and around these notions the pleasure and convenience of children must adapt and adjust.

Christine addressed the spatial and platial aspects which facilitated comfort and comfort’s associated pleasures. The most comfortable room in her house was, she said, the games room, as this was a place “where everything can be.” It was the most convenient room, as it was large, centrally placed, and contained technologies for both work and pleasure purposes. The games room mediated both work and leisure in Christine’s house, without compromising comfort. The multiple purposes accommodated and facilitated by the games room and its contents illustrate the principle of multi-stability, and how it prevails via the sub-series of oppositions that inhere in the dichotomy of work and leisure. Christine enjoyed being among the activities of her children, and could work without especial solitude or peace and quiet. The front room, on the other hand, was
the room of ‘first impressions’ where visitors were received. It was not possible to obtain the same degree of comfort in the front room, observed Christine, although it was ‘comfortably furnished.’ Though it was kept tidier, it was regarded as less comfortable than the games room and used infrequently and for solitary pursuits, like reading and jigsaw puzzles, but was an important medium for cooling the house when its windows were opened.

Melissa was not as content as Christine, and her satisfaction with her house was compromised by structural and functional shortcomings. Though she claimed her family had tried to fix up the garden, it had been in a very poor state when they moved in, and the project failed. The windows were, she said, too easy to break, and there were lots of cracks in the walls in which cockroaches and spiders sheltered.\textsuperscript{58} The state of both the garden and the house was due to a lack of care and maintenance by the MoH who, as has already been suggested, both create and confront all kinds of challenges in housing Aboriginal people.\textsuperscript{59} The doors coming off cupboards were however a different matter, and Melissa admitted their damage to be the result of children’s careless play. For Melissa damage was troubling, rather than just inconvenient. Damage to the house harmed her sense of secure embodiment, and exacerbated the psychological and physical tension delivered by incidents of domestic violence.

Some domestic technologies were seen as essential pieces of equipment. Michael adopted a pragmatic perspective. For example, unlike his peers, Michael used common utility as his measure when he pronounced the telephone the most important household technology because of the amount of use it received. Bernard nominated electricity as the technology of greatest importance to his household experience. Electricity could be thought of, said Bernard, as a master medium whose availability was taken for granted in using a multitude of electrically powered technologies. But Bernard also alluded to the ambiguous nature of electricity, which was powerful but anonymous and indiscriminate. Electricity, in other words, could not be blamed for the frequent nonsense and excesses of client technologies such as television.

For Christine, light, hot water and her car were key household technologies, though it was light that she stressed the most. Light facilitated vision, and ample windows and a host of electric lights contributed to a sense of spaciousness and warm cheerfulness that was important both to her and her children, who had grown up accustomed to generous amounts of illuminated space.\textsuperscript{60}
Both Michelle and Joe pointed out how impossible it was to list technologies in a hierarchy, when they belonged together as a domain of equipmentality, without which, according to Michelle, one “does not have a house much less a home.” Taking their Australian context into consideration, Michelle nevertheless made an attempt to list the essential technologies in order of their importance. The roof, for its protection against sun and rain was the most important, then walls against wind, followed by the floor, doors and windows. Yet Michelle hardly knew where to begin when it came to essential technologies inside the house. Michelle moved from individual items of essential household technology, to those technological systems whose presence and use were assumed and assured. These technologies were considered such core, staple ones that, “if you didn’t have these systems you would have very little else.”

Having ordered the basics, Michelle moved into matters of content. Her priorities, with regard to these extras, were headed by “decent cupboards and wardrobes” which, together with the sun room, the jarrah wood floorboards, and the trees in the area, had greatly influenced their decision to buy this house rather than another. Cupboards were part of the technological background that leapt into the perceptual foreground when their number or functionality became impaired. An adequate number of storage places, to extend the energy storing capacities of the body, can be crucial when a decision to purchase a house is being taken. At such times, transformations which convert inconvenient things seen as ill-fitting or unbecoming also came to the fore. In Michelle’s case, the most discomforting feature of her house at the beginning was the disturbing state of the carpets. Once lifted, and the floorboards polished and scattered with rugs, this background technology moved into the foreground, due to its association with aesthetic satisfaction and tactile enjoyment. Michelle was in fact quite comprehensive about the ways her house gave comfort and convenience, feeling that indeed the “whole (technological) kaboodle” was important. Some things were of course more essential than others, which, in Michelle’s case, were technologies which facilitated child-care and the preparation of food.

Peter emphasised the importance of the fridge’s extension of the body’s capacity to store food. He compared Australia with Jamaica and America where, for frequently quite different reasons, people often go out to eat. In Jamaica, people eat out because they’re so poor they cannot afford a fridge, while in America, though the fridge is ubiquitous, people tend to eat out because they can afford to choose between a huge range of food vendors. American sources had told him that it was indeed because of the choices in ‘eating out’ that, for a large number of apartment dwellers, kitchen size and amenities had been drastically reduced to just a few functions. As extensions of
digestive and metabolic functions, kitchens had been marginalised, with a small area with a few technologies for simple eating and cleaning requirements. However in his Australian context, Peter felt the fridge was more important than a television. Indeed, the fridge shared the designation of “basic” with his music reproduction system. Peter said he had “never been into things that are too fancy” but liked to “keep things pretty basic.” Claiming that, as long as he had “a bed, a fridge, a shower and some way of keeping warm”, then he was “pretty happy.” Living on his own, Peter’s understanding of what should be considered essential technology was, like Janet’s, a simple matter, and thus quite different from Michelle and Joe, who found it hard to know where to begin. Along with simplicity as a technological virtue there was some anxiety about the rise of complexity, and the lack of simplicity in domestic domains of equipmentality.

5.4.2 Simplicity versus Anxiety

As simplicity’s negation, complexity fomented anxiety. The rate, pace, and speed of technological development were, for some in Coolbellup, a source of concern. In particular, the constant turnover of new electronic technologies, attracted unfavourable comments from several people, who felt alienated by complex functions which had the capacity to undermine self-assurance, and so become the antithesis of comfort and convenience. Bernard pointed out however, that what was important was not so much change itself as the pace of change. He felt that while there was nothing particularly new in technological development, the times in which we lived were in this respect fairly eventful. Quite a number of people talked about their concern over environmental degradation, and the extent to which the demands we make on the earth are way in excess of what the earth can bear. From an Indigenous perspective Christine regarded the future with great concern and felt that as a nation we had “stopped dead” and had “taken a few steps backwards.” At the same time that Christine appreciated the comforts of modernity, and reflected on the physical privations of the pre-colonial era, she was highly critical of the of the way in which acquisition and possession now dominated social relationships.

Michelle was uncomfortable with the pace of contemporary life and found time management a problem. She felt the number of tasks to be accomplished was inversely proportional to the time available to accomplish them. Such ratios of time to task made the technology with which to accomplish the plethora of tasks imperative and indispensable, and she exclaimed: “God, if I didn’t have the washer or the microwave then lots of things would be just so time consuming, time that nowadays is going by ever faster.” Yet, even as Michelle acknowledged the essential labour and time-saving quality of domestic technology, she wondered why so much speed and so
many activities were necessary, “I sometimes can’t help wondering like, where did all this speed come from?” Michelle felt that for many people life was “so full of stuff to do and think and work.” Labour-saving and time-saving automation technologies were welcome in her domestic experience, but like Christine, Michelle also fantasised about relinquishing housekeeping responsibilities altogether. She linked such desire to adult responsibilities, and envied children their comparatively carefree existences. The pressure to perform and stay in control as one negotiated a daily round of tasks, as well as understand, at least functionally, the technologies one employed, were experiences about which children were generally allowed to remain ignorant. Dropping out of the loop of involvement, however desirable, was unrealistic. “Its not as though” Michelle sighed, “its really possible to just goof off and stop… but I can’t imagine myself actually leaving all this behind.” The idea was wholly fantastical, and only realisable if some unexpected fortune from an unexpected source bought her time out or, even less likely, a special dispensation from some special authority gave her official permission.

Janet was wary of new electronic technology. The huge variety, and inherent complexity made her anxious. Janet valued unmediated and simplified relations with the world from her dwelling place, epitomised in an account of a time when, for three months, her only shelter was a tent high on a cliff by the ocean overlooking a bay. The most important things about this place were, she said, the very simple technological mediation involved in the provision of shelter and the meeting of basic everyday needs. Janet compared the properties of this simple dwelling place with more structured and mediated environments, by noting how the latter missed something very experientially important. A tent above the bay made available an experience of “at homeness.” Janet hoped for a dwelling place in her future which would again give her access to that “wonderful feeling of place and shelter” One which did could, she felt, be considered “an extension of that tent.”

Anxiety about too much and too complicated technology, meant that simplicity of need tended to place limits on the depth and range of Janet’s technological ensemble. She said, “I try not to have appliances for every use item” and gave the example of making do with a saucepan to heat water on the stove rather than owning a kettle. There was the sense that technology made for clutter, as well as unnecessary complexity. Janet’s furniture was a case in point, there being both too many pieces and many of these far too heavy. Some of it was also not especially functional, since it did not provide comfort, and was rather useless, only tolerated because it was inherited, and the disposal of these pieces was in tension with their memorial significance. Antique value was also a
consideration. Though Janet heartily disliked this furniture, she thought it “a bit too good to throw out.” Nevertheless her antipathy may eventually mean that disfunctional furniture would be ousted, for she aspired to “a house of light, mobile things” that gave bodily ease and were easy to move around. Comparisons with her Indian experience participated in Janet’s fantasies about her ideal house. The simple domain of equipment in India relative to Australia, was something she treasured and wished to realise again. Squatting over a toilet and cooking over a single stove, owning and employing a minimum of simple functional utensils, were for Janet simpler, healthier, and thus altogether more desirable. She wished she had the resources to start afresh and build her ideal house, eliminating everything except the land it would stand on. Even more ideal was simplicity that involved, not only a radical material transformation, but a radical relocation to a community of community-spirited people.

Pat did not like much current technology per se as it was just “too fast.” Pat was not so much anxious about some contemporary domestic electronic technologies, as sceptical, scornful. This contempt arose in response to her perception that domestic technologies could be alienating and disempowering. The arrival of new, unfamiliar and complicated technology into the familiarity of her home, was a form of alienation she met by refusing to learn how to operate it. Rather than allow alienation to prevail, Pat cultivated ignorance and made fun of it. She joked, for example, about her refusal to learn how to understand the many functions of the video recorder, whose flashing lights she hid under a tea towel if it became disconnected or the power went down. Pat frankly declared herself “not geared up for the nineties.” Indeed, she felt she would be happier if she could “go back to the fifties and sixties” and thus to an era which she identified as one in which she could feel technologically competent.

Reuben, by contrast, showed charming indifference to technological matters. At first, the question of technological importance was dismissed whimsically, as he cited flowers and the garden as the most important domestic technology. A nice garden, it seemed, attracted his attention in ways which technology could not. Reuben did, however, acknowledge the importance of machines for others. Yet, even this recognition was directed at equipment his father used to extend and improve the house, but his relationship with its location in the front yard was to imaginatively incorporate it into games. Indeed, with descending degrees of participation Michael, Melissa, Marissa, Reuben and Brandon displayed little interest in, or concern for domestic technologies, except those which offered relations of alterity.
5.4.3 Relations of Technological Alterity

While television, radios and computers were the most often mentioned technologies delivering relations of alterity, there were others. For Marissa the living room was the most important feature of her house, because it was a medium of engagement and communication for the family, and ensconsed there were the mediating icons of Jesus and Mary.\textsuperscript{73} While Peter was not religious like Marissa, and did not have a family around him, he valued communication with both his inner and outer world. Peter said he liked to sit on his back and front porch, because they allowed him to cultivate different aspects of himself. Before the disintegration of his marriage and family, his back porch had been a place for dreaming and reflecting, or watching and listening to his kids play. He also used to rely on the back porch as a place to be alone in an evening with the sunset and, as he said “just wander off in my thoughts.” The back porch was a place to be private with attention oriented to either the play of his children or his own interior world. The front porch, on the other hand, promoted a projection towards the public world, where interaction was privileged. For Peter, the back porch was in a sense an extension of his unconscious mind, while the front porch realised extensions of the ego and superego, a place where alterity was active, and could be casually theorised and understood. The front of his house acted as a medium in which it was safe to advertise oneself and interact with others, thus offering sociability and a display of interest in the community. Only a few people passed by Peter’s front porch, however, and the number who responded to his presence even fewer.\textsuperscript{74} Peter’s house was closely associated with his subjectivity, and could help negotiate relations between himself and the world.

Radio was a favoured piece of technology among the children, although it did not claim as much time, nor such a wide allegiance, as television. Before remembering her enthusiasm for their new washing machine, Melissa for instance had already noted the importance of television and radio. Melissa and Michael made highly appreciative mentions about the radio for delivering a reasonably constant supply of “good music.” Reuben only liked radio for pop music and in particular the playback of the most popular songs as charted according to votes of the radio audience. While for Christine and Joe the radio was never more than a “background thing”, for Janet and several of the other adults, radio was more important than the television. Since Janet listened for such long periods of time she was unable to estimate how much time she listened altogether.\textsuperscript{75} The radio she said was “like a having another person. You invite the other person into the house.” Also living on his own, Peter, as he recovered from the shock and pain of marital dissolution found that radio, and in particular ‘talk-back radio’, engaged his attention, helping
him get some perspective on his situation. These other perspectives, combined with the on air advice of the helping professions, renewed Peter’s desire to engage with other people.⁷⁶

An almost complete indifference and other worldliness characterised Brandon’s responses, as he glibly embraced as important every bit of technology in his house. Really though, the only important technologies were his Sega play-station and the television monitor that provided the stage for the games. According to Brandon, the television had been the premier technology before the Sega play-station arrived, and now his favourite place in the house was the place in front of this gaming equipment. Computer games offered a whole new series of alterity relations, and were his current passion. Brandon gave me thickly intricate (but to me barely comprehensible) descriptions of many of the features of his many games. What I did manage to understand, though, was how their most important feature was their capacity to facilitate interactivity of the game player with the plot and characters of the game. These games were fascinating for their capacity to render and dismember relations with a host of fictional others, each of whom possessed a variety of qualities and powers. For Brandon, the power to determine and control characters and participate in the alterior relations of computer games was completely absorbing. With the arrival of computer games, the usual candidates like television, video and radio had receded into the background of awareness. Somewhat surprisingly none of the other children mentioned any interest in, much less an obsession with, computer games. Television was, however, regarded as an essential household technology, and there were strong expressions of like and dislike regarding its channels, genres and programs.

Marissa and her brother Reuben lived in a family of ten and with either three or four televisions (depending on whom you asked). So important was the ability to control the television and video, that Reuben had directed the money he earned from a paper round to renting one, with his brother. At the same time, though, he denied any importance to videos, which were he said “wastes of electricity and money.” Nonetheless, wasted resources on videos did not transfer into any ambivalence about television, as Reuben estimated he watched about five or six hours a day – one of the highest levels of consumption in Coolbellup. At one level television was important for its news values, as Reuben recognised that “on the news you can know what happens, happy things and bad things.” More important, however, was entertainment and he listed a small host of favourite programs and movies. After quite a pause indicating uncertainty, his sister Marissa decided television was the most important domestic technology, because of the news and the cartoons. In particular Marissa appreciated the local news, because it kept people informed of
local events especially local crime, and thus gave people the opportunity to take extra precautions. News programs, however, needed to be presented using vocabulary which children could follow and, rather than dwell in depth on items, move quickly from one item to another, so as to not bore a young audience. Television was of course also important for entertainment, still Marissa, unlike her brother Reuben, watched only an hour or two a day, and seemed to prefer actual relations with actual others.

For most of the adults in Coolbellup both television and time spent television watching were marked with ambivalence. During the period following the breakdown of his marriage, Peter was watching five hours a night. On his own, television and radio were, he said, his main contact with the world beyond the house. For Peter, television gave rise to ambivalence because of its capacity to capture attention and intention from more important activities. There were, however, some programs Peter went out of his way not to miss. He enjoyed comedies and documentaries with educational value, but never wasted time on soap operas. As with most other adults in Coolbellup, there was ambivalence about the attention capturing capacity of television as well as its content. For Peter it was a tension of values between time invested watching, and time which could have been spent doing more beneficial things. Peter’s intention to improve his house and give some attention to his children’s education had to compete with the temptation to ‘cop out’ and watch ‘too much’. He also felt that watching too much television seriously challenged the formation and sustenance of ‘community’. The problem was that “if you spend all your time when you get home inside watching T.V, you’re not going to get to talk to too many people.”

Television for Bernard was pleasurable, when it programmed things of an ‘educational nature’, but appalling when these kinds of meaning were missing. Television was a place marked by ambivalence. It had self-stabilizing features as a focus of desire and a source of distraction. Yet, these same features possessed qualities of otherness that had pleasing and attractive aspects, as well as disturbing and repellent ones. The latter, declared Bernard “have no philosophical concept whatever, absolutely none!” After tuning in to the television which his grandson watched, it was, he felt difficult to believe “that people could produce so many somewhat similar and silly programs.” By way of contrast, the telephone was regarded as unequivocally “useful”, and connection to it a sine qua non for contemporary life. Bernard was content with his technological lot, though this contentment included the awareness that nowadays, attitudes of indifference or inertia towards new technology, are represented as contrary to the constantly reiterated theme of progress by its promoters. Awareness of the push to remain technologically ‘current’ prompted
Bernard to refer to himself, sardonically, as “technologically backward”, thus raising the issue of the ways in which domestic technology participates in economies of novelty and luxury.

5.4.4 Novelty and luxury

As the modus operandi that powers all manner of domestic technologies, electricity for Bernard was a source of much that was convenient and pleasurable, but also much that was disturbing. Electricity was an article of human progress whose realm of application required thinking and questioning. Bernard respected technology which did not require electricity, and could allow a person to escape the mode of electrical dependency, and so promote instead a degree of independence beyond its range of determinations. He also respected old technologies, like the fridge he had purchased for ten dollars whose functionality was intact, though it no longer had “the looks”. So long, said Bernard, that it continued to be “operational it will continue to be used.” Works of individual craftsmanship also attracted Bernard’s respect. He owned for example a very sharp, eighteenth century sword, which functioned as a ‘security system’. While he conceded that mass produced items were undoubtedly necessary in mass societies, he found them uninteresting, for they lacked singular characteristics and thus some crucial quotient of integrity that was present in a crafted object. Mass produced objects were, he claimed, “neither particularly artistic or individual” They lacked, in other words, a kind of personality which could only be acquired through the investment of intention, and the cultivation of attention. However, to remain in Bernard’s house, even crafted objects had to function according to their original job description. Novelty could be rediscovered in the technology of previous eras, and restored to serve its initial purpose, and thus offer a check and a snub to the constant forward thrust of innovation. According to Bernard, the ‘progress’ of current trends had to be qualified as ‘so-called progress’, and conventional assumptions about what was technologically needed or desirable required careful questioning.

Michael’s new house provided many opportunities for the introduction of new technologies, and he saw it as important to have technologies which fitted the needs and desires that this new house provided. There was the opportunity to include things which would have been unnecessary or inappropriate to the old house in Coolbellup. Investments of time and attention were crucial to making the most suitable and desirable selections for each item installed in the new house, from paint to light fittings. Across the board, the introduction of new technologies required decisions, which both accessed specialised knowledge and consulted popular choice. The degree of technological novelty to be incorporated, was both a responsibility and a privilege. Michael
counted as luxuries items like a new hot water system, and was especially impressed by the scope and flexibility of innovative lighting which were, he said, a distinct improvement. Technologies like the television and stereo had once, he claimed, counted as luxuries but such attitudes had evaporated over time, and they now formed part of the assumed technological background. Viewing television and listening to the radio had become, he observed, “just a part of our life.”

Melissa was impressed by and expressed enthusiasm for, the brand and expense of a new computerised washing machine, while Brandon was excited about his new Sega play station, but otherwise technological luxuries, novelty and progress were not prominent features in Coolbellup. On the contrary, it was obvious that new additions to the vast domestic domains of equipmentality soon became part of the technological background, whose use became assumed within the scope of everyday intentionality in the bestowal of attention and perceptual receptions. In contrast with Coolbellup, domains of domestic equipmentality were much less opulent in Diu, less likely to be taken for granted, or absorbed into a technological background.

5.5 The Complex Textures of Dwelling with Technology in Diu

Taken in the broadest sense of a collection of artefacts, there is not a lot of technology in Diu houses, even the wealthier ones. When compared to Coolbellup, there is something of a dearth of domestic technology in Diu houses. Not only are the ‘leading technological’ objects far fewer in number, and their level of sophistication much lower, there are just fewer objects overall. Relative to the majority of Indians, the urban population of Diu is reasonably prosperous, as is reflected in access to infrastructure such as electricity and water and in the range of technologies such access makes possible. Televisions, VCR’s, refrigerators, music systems (mostly of the easily portable variety) and cylinder supplied gas ring cookers (without ovens) are now commonplace. There is, however, little in the way of built-in, or free standing, furniture in rooms. Wardrobes and chests of drawers are much less common than clothes racks hung from walls or across a corner on a rope or storage chests. The storage chests serve a dual function as surfaces for other things such as televisions, pictures or fans, and tend to be used for cloth and clothing not in everyday use. Front rooms often have some odd bits of seating and one or two small tables, but there are no elaborate suites of furniture nor a dining table capable of seating everyone around it.

Diu households with a large number of members proportional to rooms tend to ‘sleep’ everyone by using thin mattresses that are rolled away during the daytime. The manchester of beds
Chapter 5 Dwelling with Technology or Technologically Mediated Dwelling.

typically comprises a pillowcase and a bottom sheet but no top sheet. People tend to sleep in their clothes of the day (for women this is often a house-coat worn over the sari’s petticoat) and, when it is cool (as it is at night in the middle of the cool season) blankets are used. Windows rarely have curtains, and floors are most often polished concrete and, though occasionally tiled, are never carpeted. Electricity is nearly universal, with the front room power board supplying the source from which all domestic appliances are run. Regardless of the level of prosperity, most front rooms will have only a single electric light bulb or tube and an electric fan. Other rooms are lit, but only in richer households will there also be a fan. Municipal water is supplied early in the morning to a domestic storage tank to which someone must attend, to ensure the tank fills and does not overflow. Running water depends on the flow of gravity from the tank, and a single tap is common, usually in the kitchen, bathroom and toilet. In poorer households, the tap is at floor level, and because there is no built-in sink, washing is done from a plastic basin. In richer households, though there is often a sink below the tap, these are usually small and without an associated draining area. Hot water services are available only in the very wealthiest households. For the majority of Diuites, hot water is usually prepared over a stove, or warmed in buckets in the sun. Houses sometimes have showers, but never baths, and most people bathe out of a bucket. Laundries are very rare, as are washing machines. The washing of clothes and dishes is invariably done either by the women in a poor household, or by professional washermen (dhobis), or by servants in the better-off ones. Labour is cheap, and all except for the very poor can usually afford some household help in a part-time servant. Kitchen tools, as might be expected, comprise the largest range of domestic technology. In well-off and appointed households fridges, gas cookers and blenders are common and, though proportional to wealth, there are almost always generous supplies of storage utensils.

The front room will typically display photographs of paternal forebears and contemporaries, though not very often one’s children or portraits of the wife’s family. If the mother’s kin are represented, it tends to be in photo albums, and these are quite common for most households access the services of a photo studio for special purposes, or an itinerant ‘camera wallah’ on sightseeing excursions. On the walls of the front room of every Hindu home there will, almost certainly, be religious pictures depicting the gods and goddesses of the divine pantheon, and scenes from mythological stories that illustrate the nature and extent of their powers. These depictions are invariably brightly coloured and compelling, providing a visual focus to the front room or sitting-hall. Household altars are usually located in kitchens or front rooms, in which there is often also a show case or display cabinet (show kabaat). Altars bear an icon (murti) of the
household deity, which also draws the eye, decked as they are with bright cloths and flowers. The altar may also have other ritual objects, and this can mean it gets quite crowded. Display cupboards on the other hand are invariably crowded. All kinds of vessels and plates in stainless steel, glass, and ceramic are displayed therein. There are also considerable numbers of other ornaments, whose non-utilitarian nature categorically separates them from the crockery with which they are otherwise united as objects for exhibition. Show cabinets offer hermeneutic relations as one reads them as conscious statements of status or sentiment. Nonetheless, the scale of ornamentation in Diu rarely, if ever, approaches that in Coolbellup. This of course must be considered as potentially subject to change as India continues to open its markets to the globalised trade and decreases in price, combined with increases in the standard of living, make more technology more available.

5.5.1 Relativities of Technological Relations and the Developmental Pull of Modernity
Diu houses have complexes of relations and associations rather different in kind and scope from those one encounters in Coolbellup. Awareness of the technological gap with highly developed societies such as Australia, combined with everyday concerns about sustaining economic security, meant that certain technologies were given especial mentions, and there were expressions of satisfaction when certain technologies were present in a household. Context can conceal as much as it reveals however, for while emphasis was given to those technologies the household possessed, and there were few explicit complaints about technologies it did not, an unrequited desire for certain technologies can be discerned. between the lines. In other words, discussion of those technologies owned and appreciated, sometimes contained the suggestion of ones which were missing, difficult to afford, and would perhaps always remain unobtainable.

Such purposeful and conditional suggestions were articulated by the verbs ‘should’, ‘ought’, and ‘prefer.’ Ashwin said his house ‘should have’ a nice garden, “with colourful flowers of various kinds as well as hammock or swing for relaxing.” Also that his “house should have separate rooms for children to sleep, and to conduct their studies.” Ashwin desired, but did not yet possess, a colourful and restful garden where he could cultivate the soil. Gardens are also technologies, forms of poiēsis, able to imitate the productions of nature (physis), because special kinds of knowledge of plants, and the cycles of growth and decay, have been acquired. In the affluent West, the desire for a garden with a hammock and flowers seems a modest desire for home improvement, in the context of an absence of ‘staple technologies’, such as a house with a bedroom for each child, multiple power points and a range of functional and decorative furniture. But rather than complain, Ashwin on the contrary, praised the simplicity of design in his house,
and emphasised in particular how good ventilation facilitated the flow of fresh air and the pleasing penetration of sunshine. In a tropical climate, the circulation of air in the provision of good ventilation that extends the body’s respiratory system, was marked by many Diu respondents.  

By the technologically maximalising norms of western cultures, the circulation of air and the penetration of light, are also modest technological aims and regarded as essential criteria of house design.

Shrivesh Kumar expounded his ideal house in detail, with a degree of unrequited desire expressed in a litany of ambitions for more technology including: a big house comprising kitchen, sitting room, store room, bathroom, toilet and several extra bedrooms in which to accommodate guests. This dream house would also have an electric generator to ensure a constant power supply, and more furniture, fittings and utensils all of which were wanted in the latest and most stylish fashion. Alternately realistic and whimsical, grateful and censorious, Shrivesh, while accepting the technologically meagre hand fate appeared to have dealt him, articulated dreams of technologically mediated ease and comfort, from within economic circumstances that would probably always prevent their realisation.

For Riswan, the most important architectural feature of her house was the window, though she also nominated as essential the contribution doors made to her idea of the ideal home. According to Riswan, the worst possible home are ‘the huts’ by which she meant the rudimentary structures in slums, on pavements and pieces of wasteland that are home to hundreds of thousands of people in every major Indian conurbation. She draws, thus, a comparison with her own relatively salubrious circumstances in a solidly built, three room house with an appropriate number of doors and windows. Pavement shelters often consist of nothing more than a few pieces of hessian, rag and plastic, and have neither doors or windows as such. Without doors and windows, one lives almost without shelter, and in full view of the world, exposed to unsolicited surveillance. Slum dwellings are less elementary, but because space is very constrained many domestic events may occur outdoors weather permitting. Slum constructions do not usually include windows, and have a single entrance and doors of rag, plastic, or scrap metal. The exposure and negation of air and vision in the huts of the destitute people, dismayed Riswan, and evidences an acute consciousness of the relativities of wealth and technological power in India.

Dwelling places without basic amenities are everyday realities for millions of very poor people in India. The millions in India who are poor, but not abjectly so, cannot help but be aware that, by
contrast, their dwelling conditions are relatively good. And it is with this in mind, that I suggest that such awareness can have the effect of reducing, or silencing complaints about personal circumstances of lack and inconvenience. Poor, though by no means destitute, was the economic lot of Jinabhai, Hiraben, and Laxhmiben. Hira and Laxhmi echoed one another almost word by word, as they described what the concept house meant to them. For both Hira and Laxhmi, a house was whatever was essential. What was essential were consumables, either purchased in bulk and stored (oil, rice, wheat, maize, kerosene salt, sugar, tea and pulses) or, as neither had a refrigerator, perishable goods (meat, fish and vegetables) bought only on the day of consumption. Like Jina, Hira did not complain of the physical constraints of her living condition, which was so cramped that one could only stand upright in the middle of the only room. Hira suggested that to “look good enough”, and for enjoyment, a house required technologies like a TV, a tape-recorder and a display cupboard. But Hira was expressing wishes rather than realities, for unlike her friend Laxhmi, Hira’s household possessed none of these things. Also quite poor, Vijayaben said she would have “preferred” her house to be “well furnished, with materials like a refrigerator, a television set, a sofa set, tables, chairs, stools, fans, and colourful curtains hanging over the windows and doors.” However, though she marked the absences she wished were present, Vijaya was not complaining. Similarly, Kajal and her mother Varshaben, spoke of home as a place of technologies they did not own. A home, said Kajal “should” have a washing machine, a telephone, and a dining table. Though they did not possess any of these items, such differences with their actual situation were unstressed, and could have been misunderstood as technological presences, had interviews not been accompanied by a tour of the house.

Often warranting especial mention, were those technologies seen as part of standard modern domestic equipment, such as the infra-structural systems of electricity and water, or technologies which depended on them. Marianne was one of a number who remarked on the importance of supplied water for the household as an indispensable utility. A much larger number of people, however, identified the provision of electric or gas power, and such ordinary technologies as fans, stoves and refrigerators that are powered by them. Technology, in Ashwin’s understanding, meant only sophisticated electronic equipment. In Ashwin’s discourse, technology did not include the kerosene and LPG stoves, with which they earned their living as cooks. In her minimalist telegraphic style, Riswan described her house as a list of domestic appliances. A house was a “refrigerator, fan. T.V, clock and tape recorder.” Similarly, speaking of the term house, Natwar, Kajal and Levita echoed this focus on modern, electrically powered, technologies. Kajal conflated the categories of house and home. Both house and home, for Kajal, were almost
exclusively concerned with equipment, especially technologies based in the kitchen. The kitchen was furnished by technologies that offered relations of embodiment, extending teeth, hands and facilitating the purposes of the digestive system.\textsuperscript{95} Home, for Kajal, consisted of material things. Home was “all the household things, the L.P.G stove, the household grinder, the cupboard for clothes, small containers for putting things in, and for keeping crockery, the stainless steel rack stand.”\textsuperscript{96} The most important things about home were its cooking appliances and the things required for house-work and school-work.\textsuperscript{97} The children’s highlighting of the material and technological, infra-structural dimension of the house, was echoed to a considerable extent by the adults. Varshaben, Kajal’s mother, claimed that the most important things about her house were its facilities, and, though she owned neither, esteemed technologies such as the washing machine and the telephone, which saved labour.\textsuperscript{98}

Marianne’s attitude to a technologically facilitated household was unusual, in that it stressed the importance of unsophisticated, classical background technologies, like kitchen vessels and utensils and simple furniture. Marianne, Pareshbhai and Vikrambhai were all fairly prosperous, but articulated needs that were simple in scope. Paresh said he was content so long as he had a functioning computer, but that, on the whole, he did not care very much for things technological. Paresh was also wary of technological over-consumption, and noted how the more power points and lights one operated, the greater the electricity bill became. One light and power point per room were, he said sufficient, and more than that was unnecessarily excessive. Vikram was similarly content. A combined radio and tape recorder was one of his few possessions, as well as his most valued technology. Marianne had no ambitions with respect to the possession of household technologies. She said: “some people will want some nice soft Dunlop bed to sleep on, a lovely tellie and a beautiful toilet. But for me all these things don’t matter.” For Marianne, what was most important was comfort, especially as provided by a spacious and airy house. With decent, dependable incomes and houses, it is interesting how simplicity for Marianne, Paresh and Vikram was positioned as a virtue, rather than a problem of lack, as was suggested in the responses of poorer people. Most poor people in Diu had unfulfilled desires for technological media they did not, and would be unlikely to, own.

5.5.2 Technological Relations as Articulations of Desire
Shrivesh Kumar lived in conditions which did not adequately extend his body’s sense of itself. A tall, large framed man, the limitation and squeeze his room imposed on him was discernible in his insistence on very generous minimum dimensions for his main room, so as to “live in a correct
fashion”. In chapter four I examined house size and shape in relation to circumstance and desire, and discovered that for many people in Diu, their house was the same as their home, which, on the whole, satisfied personal and household needs, though there was a widespread wish for more room. For Shrivesh, the relationship between the size of the man and the size of his only room was, however, a relationship with a simple and inadequate container. Shrivesh and his possessions were contained, secured and maintained, by his living quarters, but he felt no sense of physical or psychological extension or enrichment. His room formed, he said, an adequate but basically uninspiring part of his life, and he suggested that, though the room’s ambience was relatively peaceful, its furnishings were poor and meagre. So much so, indeed, that even the bed, arguably the room’s principle technology, was uncomfortable, as it gave him back aches, and this necessitated his sleeping on the floor.

Shrivesh’s dream house included both very general, and quite particular, kinds of embodiment and extension. For this unwilling, but confirmed, bachelor, the dreams of improved relations with the world via technology focused on improved embodiment for many aspects of his home life. He wished his home life to be facilitated by technologies which offered luxury. Shrivesh wanted a dwelling place where, he said, “I can sleep, I can work, and I can eat, in a very luxurious manner.” To extend his body’s metabolic functions, Shrivesh wanted a fully equipped kitchen, in which he would either have to learn to cook, or hire a cook. Partial to, and particular in, the choice of his civilian clothes, he desired that his dream house reflect the care he took with his personal appearance, extending the aesthetic surface of the body to every surface of his house. He wanted a generator to ensure a continuous supply of electric light, thus extending vision, as well as a motorbike to extend the range of his legs. The antithesis of such desire was confirmed, by negation, in his idea of the worst possible home. The worst home had only one room, poor ventilation, and no infra-structural facilities. It would thus necessitate all sorts of trips out of the house to keep the body clean and fed, a state of such serious inconvenience that Shrivesh likened it to a form of “hell on earth”. In the last analysis however, Shrivesh believed the most important aspect of a house was the security it offered. And the security provided by the house required reciprocation from the occupant, for he said, “if the house secures me, I will secure the house, that is the main thing. …If it secures my belongings, I have to maintain it.”

Ashwins’s satisfaction with the favourable ventilation and overall spaciousness in his house, can be seen as an appreciation for their extension of the breathing and kinetic body. Yet there was also a sense in which Ashwin understood his house as forming the background to, or a stage for,
several essential kinds of activity. He suggested that certain activities, especially those associated with sleeping and waking, were under-privileged while others, such as devotional and ritual worship, cooking, eating and socialising received special attention, and could be considered not only privileged, but central. It is possible to see in Ashwin’s representation of his house, a horizontal ambience of simple, but core activities. As he presents them, breathing, moving, worship, talking and eating constitute its main investments and expectations. However, while Ashwin’s house may be well ventilated, and provide liberal quantities of ‘breathing space’, this extension of the respiratory and kinetic needs of the body constrained other needs in a disproportionate distribution of public and private places. As already mentioned, privacy and the availability of private space around a house, can be conceptualised as relations of embodiment that extend the psyche and inner self. Private places can also be seen as inverted alterity relations, in which they are a medium for keeping others away, and so enclose, rather than disclose, the self. As was evident in chapter four, an absence of privacy and private space was not uncommon in Diu. Privacy was not usually part of most people’s dwelling practice and experience, except when these were the product of certain kinds of social status, such as bachelorhood.

Ashwin’s house facilitated public and private purposes, as the house was also an active temple, conducting the ritual business of devotions, and a refectory. It was a place shared by Ashwin’s family, the goddess Laxhmi and her consort Narayana, devotees and customers. The central courtyard (osri) functioned as the temple precinct, but also served as a dining room, and the equivalent of the front room of the house. With the exception of the kitchen, there were only three small rooms beyond the intrusive reach of wet weather. In one of these slept parents and children; in the second was stored food and ritual paraphernalia, while the third functioned as a tiny sitting room, used for viewing television. With room enough for a quite a large number of people, and the locus of so many activities and interactions, Ashwin’s temple – house facilitated many relations of embodiment and alterity. The worship of the gods involves the facilitation of relations of alterity with divine persons. In serving food three times a day, the refectory extended functions of mouth and stomach. However, the scope of these relations tended to mean that public concerns dominated, at the expense of private ones. Thus, there was a sense in which the temple and refectory relations constrained family domesticity, and privacy was, as a consequence, compromised.

As might be expected given their relative poverty, for Hiraben, Jinabhai and Laxhmiben the priority, after the provision of sufficient food had been taken care of, was increasing embodiment
potential with household extensions. Jina, and Hira however, showed an unwillingness, or habitual inability, to think beyond the primary necessity of food. Jina claimed that any improvements to one’s house could only be important to, and undertaken by, those with enough money to always feed themselves properly, for, as Jina said, “a poor man thinks only how to maintain his stomach free from hunger.” Though he lived in a large house, it had to house a large family, and Jina felt his house was crowded and rather congested. Yet there was no question of any extension, as more room was not as essential as the provision of the more basic necessity of food. Like Jina, Hira was also too poor to consider any changes to the progressive decrepitude of her house. Improvements were an extraordinary consideration, that only an extraordinary amount of money could realise.

Laxhmiben was unique, in the sense that she was the only person to see her house as the most important technological feature in its own right. She was also unusual in giving especial emphasis to the aesthetic satisfactions of house decoration when, she said, “we have done lots of decoration which call in attraction to the house. To me everything in a house has similar importance and architectural beauty. …There is a special look and attraction in the house.”

Both television and radio were considered essential household technologies and valued for both news and entertainment, yet television was regularly among those technologies that people most valued among household technologies. Television was regularly among those technologies that people most often singled out among their most esteemed household technologies. Almost everybody liked to be informed and entertained, and spoke of the interest, liveliness and variety of television programs. Televisions were appreciated as a source of alterity relations, as news, entertainment and music were beamed into the house. There was very little ambivalence in Diu about television. Natwar, for example, thought television one of the most important household technologies and spent a good deal of time watching it. He enjoyed the advertisements as well as programs, and especially liked watching and gossiping about them with his family. Like many others, Natwar’s mother Laxhmi watched television, and valued it as one of those electronic technologies whose cost made them prestigious. Vijaya didn’t own a television, but accessed one at her neighbour’s. Vijaya spoke enthusiastically of television’s ability to capture and hold her attention, so that there was, as she said “no chance of getting bored.” For those accustomed to its presence in the house, the television was a source, not only of alternative realities, but of substitute company so that, as Krishnaben observed, if we have television “we don’t feel alone.” Many people liked “serials” of which there were a large number on broadcast television ‘Serial’ is the term in India for soap operas, and the themes for these tend to divide between mythological
texts and those which focus on, and are fuelled by, the intricate complexities of contemporary family life. Both legendary serials and family serials set the stage for the narrative problematisation for the many issues that enter the realm of family life, and accounts for the level of their popularity.105

Communication with, and knowledge of, the world beyond Diu has promoted knowledge of other modes of life, as well as the desire for many kinds of things. Affluence in India would appear to be a common state, if television advertisements and roadside hoardings were taken as representing the purchasing power of a majority of the population. The revolution in television ownership, which occurred during the 1990’s, has meant however that television has now become something of a prestigious ‘background technology’, a reality illustrated by the fact that, although the television may be on, this is no guarantee it is being watched. As in Australia, television sets in India are now so prevalent as to have acquired the familiarity of a casual presence, and are used as a monitor on the world. Attended to every now and then, television is monitored for items of interest that might deserve closer attention.106 Television is an established phenomenon in popular consciousness in Diu, even when it does not form part of the domestic technological texture. In the final section, I review the relative technological textures of Diu and Coolbellup.

5.6 Dwelling and Technological Texture

The potential of houses and other technologies to communicate, via hermeneutic relations of appearance, notions of status and prestige was present in both Diu and Coolbellup. Such awareness was a general awareness, however, and applied only occasionally to the actual house of my respondents. Background technologies, in terms of simple tools and utensils, were similarly seldom mentioned. Despite all other differences of technological wealth and sophistication between Coolbellup and Diu, technologies like forks and spoons, cups and plates still lie beneath the radar of people’s awareness of their technologically furnished domestic environment. However, technologies moved into the background in Coolbellup, which were in the foreground in Diu. In Coolbellup, technology moved out of the background when it became the subject of inquiry. In Diu, domestic technology was to the fore in lists of technologies which were owned or desired.

As we have seen, houses in both Coolbellup and Diu were strongly marked by embodiment relations. As technologies of embodiment, houses were generally regarded as satisfying bodily needs, though many articulated desires for more room. Bodily sense was extended, via the
furtherance of the function of the skin given by walls, roofs, and those technologies, or technological ensembles, that extend the body systems especially the respiratory and digestive systems. In Diu however, considerably more emphasis was placed on naming important individual technologies. Also more evident in Diu were technological gaps and absences. Perhaps because there was in Diu much less technological infrastructure than in Coolbellup, equipment of importance existed in lists, and technologies were placed in hierarchies of need. Nonetheless, functionality and purpose were obvious criteria in both places. Domestic technology was owned for the practical, labor-saving instrumental reasons for which it was designed, marketed and sold.

More evident in Coolbellup, however, were satisfactions and dissatisfactions with houses and the technologies they housed. Perhaps the quantity of technology in Coolbellup had something to do with the greater level of ambivalence evident there towards complex technology, especially complex, alterity facilitating technologies. In Coolbellup, technologies that facilitated relations of alterity were owned and encountered much more frequently than they were in Diu. While televisions and video machines were very popular in Diu, and many houses invested in watching their productions, there were more relations with actual others. Besides those mediated by television, radios, the occasional telephone, and the rare computer, the quantity of relations of alterity in Diu far exceed those in Coolbellup. Due to the proximity of larger concentrations of people in smaller houses and neighbourhoods, and the facilitating mediums of verandahs, doorways and windows and streets, as well as much less technologically mediated alterity, it is hard to avoid the conclusion that in Diu there are relations with others which are either not required, not desired or, just not available in Coolbellup.

Relative to Coolbellup, Diu has an effusive, garrulous and demonstrative atmosphere. Its inhabitants however consider it a quiet place compared to most of India’s highly urbanised areas. As mentioned, atmospheres have horizontal relations, and communicate the environments from which they emanate. Atmospheres are discernible, though not tangible, since they derive from a concatenation of relations, and are often dominated by alterity relations that have high quotients of regular interactions and projections. Horizontal qualities emerge from the sounds, sights, movements and smells of a place. An atmosphere in other words is a gestalt phenomenon, that communicates a general sense of place as a combination of a host of particularities. The atmosphere of a place is also known as its ‘feel’, ‘vibe’ or ‘sense’ and is taken seriously, even if it is hard to attribute causality, or define how these perceptions are gained, or impressions formed. Houses have atmospheres, because they act as a medium for a host of other relations. A house’s
atmosphere may be discerned as much by the relations between the occupants, as in the facilitation or constraint of desire and intention. In the next chapter, I consider the horizontal relations, as produced by the members of a household. Household members constitute what I call ‘the familiar zone’, which, together with relations of place and technology, participate in how humans beings enact dwelling as, everyday and more or less consciously, they perceive the nature of their dwelling and thus, perhaps, engage in an ongoing inquiry into its nature, so as to understand and learn life-sustaining ways to dwell.

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Endnotes

1 The term lifeworld belongs originally to Edmund Husserl. For good commentary on the genesis, connections and circulation of the concept lifeworld in Husserl’s phenomenology see Dermot Moran, Introduction to Phenomenology (London: Routledge, 2000), 179-186. The phrase technologically mediated environment is Don Ihde’s, an intellectual mentor of this chapter. In his book Technology and the Lifeworld: from Garden to Earth (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990) Ihde has done much to take the phenomenology of technology into the realm of empirical use and applying phenomenological theory, from Husserl, Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty, to garner some of the most important aspects of the nature of technology. Chapter Five ‘A Phenomenology of Technics’ proposes the taxonomy of relations between human beings and the world I adopt here.


3 Heidegger, The Question, 32.

4 Michel Foucault’s epigraph to The Archaeology of Knowledge. Trans. A.M. Sheridan Smith. (London: Tavistock, 1974), that “language, is not for thinking but for cutting” is a bold statement that cuts to the marrow of the nature of language even as it overlooks the tissues. But, we could also say the same of knowledge. Knowledge is also about cutting or dividing the world. Indeed language is knowledge. They are coeval and concomitant with one another. In cutting with language, we proceed to build the world by linking concepts, signifiers, and their signifieds, into ideas and theories which unfold in action, in application, and this includes the instrumental knowledge that is technology.

5 For a fruitful account of Heidegger’s philosophical aims in the deconstruction of productionist metaphysics, see Michael Zimmerman, Heidegger’s Confrontation with Modernity: Technology, Politics, and Art (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990), especially chapters 10 and 11.

6 “It is of utmost importance that we think bringing forth in its full scope, and at the same time in the sense in which the Greeks thought it.” Heidegger, The Question, 10-11.

7 In Thinking Through Technology: The Path Between Engineering and Philosophy (Chicago : University of Chicago Press 1994), 118 -122, Carl Mitcham discusses the “tension between techne and technology after comparing Plato and Arisistotle, who have related, but still divergent notions, of the nature of technê and logos. For Plato technê is that which grasps and knows form (morphê) and ideas (eidos), the “whatness of the thing to be made” and is thus epistemologically separated from poësis. For Plato the ‘how to do it’ of technê is ultimately sourced in the belief and trust in perception, though it may also be apprehended by logos. The apprehension of both the being and making activity of physis, on the other hand, is like matter itself, essentially unknowable. For the early Plato technê was associated with art and episteme, or systematic, scientific knowledge. Hence technê was associated with the logical character of language, with logoi words, speech and reason. Logos was not however the same as mere technique, or that habitual experience grounded in unconscious or routine ways of operating. Those modes which do not depend on language were considered by Plato to be atechnos. Hence, for the early Plato, technê had a logical nature that depended on consciousness for its expression and could include non-utilitarian aspects. In his later writings, however, Plato refines this to make a distinction between two major kinds of knowledge, the latter of which divides in two further kinds. There is knowledge concerned with education and the transmission of culture and knowledge, and that which is associated with making and producing. The knowledge associated with making and producing is
distinguished according to whether it uses conjecture and intuition, or whether it embodies and derives from the application of calculation and precision. The latter, says Mitcham, was considered by Plato to be “technê in the primary sense.” Not however content with his distinctions between modes of knowledge, Plato ceased to talk about techne in association with the knowledge that is arithmetic or which is only concerned with theory, and unrelated to any practical activity. Hence, technê for the later Plato was knowledge which employs calculation rather than that which is only calculation. Mitcham advises that, for the later Plato, technê was thus “a conception easily associated, at least intuitively, with modern technology [or] production made maximally efficient through mathematical analysis”(119). For Aristotle, on the other hand, technê was associated with a special kind of knowledge that was sourced in, and emerged from, our capacity for action. Technê was activity. For Aristotle technê could also be involved with episteme. Thus, for Aristotle, technê embodied a much broader conception of knowledge, a knowledge more inclusive in terms of modes of cognition, and causes that are not necessarily utilitarian in orientation. Aristotle argued that technê imitated physis by uniting idea and matter, and could be defined as the ability to make that “depends on correct awareness of or reasoning about the thing to be made”(120). In Aristotle’s work, the lack of logos, or the presence of a false logos, resulted in the absence of technê. Thus, concludes Mitcham, Plato and Aristotle agree on “stressing the ‘logical’ character of technê even though they disagree on their understanding of the character of the logos involved” (121). Crucially, as Mitcham points out however, neither felt “ drawn to join these two words – to speak of a logos of techne. Techne simply uses logos” (121). Ultimately, Aristotle and Plato understood technê as “special of knowledge of the world that informs human activity accordingly” (120). Thus, “what can be grasped or known by technê through logos is the form, or idea (eidos), the whatness of the thing to be made. What is not able to be grasped is the activity, the “how to do it of the actual making, poiesis” (121).

8 Heidegger said,“Occasioning has to do with presencing…of that which at any given time comes to appearance in bringing-forth. Bringing-forth brings hither out of concealment forth into unconcealment. Bringing-forth comes to pass only insofar as something concealed comes into unconcealment. This coming rests and moves freely within what we call revealing. …What has the essence of technology to do with revealing? The answer, everything. For every bringing-forth is grounded in revealing. What is decisive in technê does not lie at all in making and manipulating nor in the using of means, but rather in …revealing. It is as revealing, and not as manufacturing that technê is a bringing-forth.” Heidegger, The Question, 11-13.

9 In Heidegger’s words, the four causes are “(1) the causa materialis, the material, the matter out of which for example, a silver chalice is made; (2) the causa formalis, the form, the shape into which the material enters; (3) the causa finalis, the end, for example, the sacrificial rite in relation to which the chalice required is determined as to its form and matter; (4) the causa efficiens, which brings about the effect that is the finished, actual chalice, in this instance the silversmith. What technology is, when represented as a means discloses itself when we trace instrumentality back to fourfold causality.” The Question, 6.

10 As Heidegger observed, it tends to be the efficient cause, the causa efficiens or that which brings something about, which though “but one of four causes has set the standard for all causality” and “goes so far that we no longer even count the causa finalis, telic finality as causality.” The Question, 7. To understand the relationship between modern and pre-modern technology, Heidegger thought it essential to understand the way the notion of causality has evolved. This is explicated on the following three pages as Heidegger shows how “Causa, causus, belongs to the verb cadere, “to fall,” and means that which brings it about that falls out as a result in such and such a way …What we call cause… and the Romans call causa is called aition by the Greeks, that to which something else is indebted. …The four causes are the ways, all belonging at once to each other, of being responsible for something else. …The principle characteristic of being responsible is …something on its way into arrival. It is in this sense of such a starting something on its way to arrival, that being responsible is an occasioning or an inducing to go forward.” (7-9).

11 Mitcham, Thinking, 128.


15 Typically in Australia, as in the overdeveloped West in general, an abundant supply of technology is assumed to be present in every house. Reified and simplified notions of complex technology can also help explain the production
of dwelling as ‘lifestyle’, in which life intentions are arranged to suit the employment of certain kinds of technology. When the technology changes, so does the lifestyle.

16 Many people admit to not understanding how so called ‘advanced technology’ works, or how to fix it when it ceases to function properly. Thus when they cease to work many people must decide whether to replace them, or depend on the services of an expert in the field.

17 In the technologically driven lifestyle booms after the industrial revolution, constant technological innovation and improvement was taken as evidence of evolution, and dwelling with technology advanced with capital ‘p’ Progress. To progress was to manage the changes in lifestyle and world which were made necessary, or possible, by technological development. Progress tied to technology reifies both terms, because desires for control and mastery of the life-world are prioritised. Though they should be long past their use by date, such reifications are of course grist to the mill of both commodity capitalism and its well demonstrated ability to breed and multiply consumer appetites for ‘newness’, in the sense of continual improvement and innovation. Novelty is fundamental to the success of capitalism, as new or improved instances of technology are constantly developed and marketed. On ‘novelty’ see Colin Campbell ‘The Desire for the New: Its Nature and Social Location as Presented in Theories of Fashion and capitalism, as new or improved instances of technology are constantly developed and marketed. On ‘novelty’ see Colin Campbell ‘The Desire for the New: Its Nature and Social Location as Presented in Theories of Fashion and Modern Consumerism.’ in Consuming technologies: Media and Information in Domestic Spaces Roger Silverstone, Eric Hirsch and David Morley (Eds), (London: Routledge, 1992.). Indeed, the twentieth century could be said to be characterised by the seduction of consumer desire by novelty, as seen in the introduction of ever more new or improved forms of technology into the dwelling environment, and our resistance, indifference, or apathy to any sustained re-evaluation of this practice. Household life in economically privileged countries, seems on the whole, content to experience a household variety of ‘Progress’ in the face of mounting evidence of unsustainable levels of ‘Progress’ and dependency on the extractive, industrial and disposal practices which drive it. In the twentieth century, there have been more than enough technological disappointments and disasters to caution against pure enthusiasms for ‘Progress.’ But although the consequences of technological hubris in indiscriminate, inappropriate, callous or incompetent applications of technology are increasingly flagged, and demands for a re-evaluation of the idea of progress grow, the idea continues to dominate human practice, at least in over-developed countries. For a penetrating analysis of this phenomenon, see Robert Romanyshyn, Technology as Symptom and Dream (London: Routledge, 1989).

18 Dwelling in conjunction with technology may be transformative, but soon its presence, and the practices it facilitates and enables, become commonplace. Many household technologies are now so domesticated as to attain a contemporary and alternative sense of the epithet ‘traditional’. Such ‘traditional’ technologies’ may only be realised as such when a question, or unusual situation, draws attention to them in comparative juxtapositions with less sophisticated technologies which have been superseded, and rendered ‘out of date.’ Ironically ‘traditional’ may be said to have acquired a ‘non traditional’ sense, because of its reference to the length of our association with technologies that are now so widely assimilated as to be completely familiar parts of the quotidian technological texture of the domestic landscape. Of course, this sense contrasts with the usual connotation of traditional as inter-generationally transmitted custom or heritage. The radical difference between what I call the traditional sense of the traditional and its potential for reinterpretation, addresses the way in which quantitative technological change bestows qualitative change. In my own experience, the reification of technology by the notion of Progress is standard and unremarkable. Life in the presence of electricity, television, and telephone has been ‘normal’ all my life, and has become in this sense ‘traditional.’ Microwave ovens and computers, on the other hand, entered my experience only twenty years ago, and though they are not considered traditional by me, they are by my children. For some general and more particular discussions of the notion of tradition and the traditional, see the collection of essays in Jean Paul Bourdieu and Nezar Al Sayyad (Eds), Dwellings Settlements and Traditions (Lanham, Maryland: University of America Press, 1989) especially, Yi Fu Tuan, ‘Traditional: What Does It Mean’ and Amos Rappoport, ‘On the Attributes of Tradition.’

19 See Cynthia Cockburn, ‘The Circuit of Technology: Gender, Identity and Power’ in Silverstone et al, Consuming 32. As Langdon Winner shows in great detail in Autonomous Technology: Technics Out of Control as a Theme in Political Thought (Cambridge, Mass. MIT Press, 1977), technology has tended to been primarily thought of as neutral and determined by its own instrumental developmental impetus or, by social and individual forces. No matter how technological neutrality is positioned however, the idea encourages utopian and dystopian fields of belief around the issue of control i.e, does or will technology essentially control us ,or is it we who, by controlling ourselves, essentially control technology ? Neither technological or social determinism works, however, because each of these pure positions requires the denial of evidence of the other side. Technologies are multiply determined and determining. While the contexts in which they were designed and produced have determined their form and attributes, the context in which are used or consumed determines both our knowledge of them and of our world. A
Human—technology relations are essentially multilateral in nature, since the introduction of technology into the domestic environment may be anything from radically transformative, through mildly modifying, to negligible. For instance, the variety of telephonically delivered services continues to multiply. A surge in the use of mobile telephones has seen the act of telephoning come out of predominantly enclosed environments into whatever environment its consumer happens to occupy at the time calls are placed and received. Telephones for decades have been negotiated with degrees of pleasure, displeasure or merely the practised indifference of custom. In my house, the telephone is seen by all as a necessity but, while my husband tends to regard it as an exasperating intrusion, for myself and our children it is usually appreciated as a pleasure.


In The World of Goods: Towards an Anthropology of Consumption (London: Routledge 1979), Mary Douglas and Baron Isherwood departed from the meanings associated with the production of goods to offer one of the first interpretations of the significance of consumption of all kinds of ordinary goods, as meaningful from a symbolic point of view. Rather than merely satisfying basic and abstract human needs consumption is an engine which generates culture. Also from an anthropological perspective, and substantially advancing this idea to challenge the idea of alienation and simple objectification in capitalist production, Daniel Miller in Material Culture and Mass Consumption. (Oxford: Blackwell, 1987), sees the praxis of consumption of everyday commodities as a matter of cultural self-construction. Miller’s work is indebted to that of Michel de Certeau who, in The Practice of Everyday Life Trans, Steven Randal (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1984), argued that consumption was primarily about “ways of using”. People appropriate and use objects in innumerable contexts and these need to be analysed if their meaning is to emerge. (See the introduction and chapter three ‘Making Do; Uses and Tactics’). In The System of Objects Trans. James Benedict (New York: Verso, 1996), Jean Baudrillard reads the technology of interior design and home furnishing to understand their value as objects of economic and cultural exchange. With his neo-Marxist perspective, Baudrillard is interested in the distribution, consumption, and articulation of domestic objects, to discern their semiotic possibilities in the “new global technical order” they represent. Baudrillard classes the objects according to their functionality. Along with the functional there are ‘non-functional’, ‘marginal’ and ‘meta-functional’ objects. In Material Culture in the Social World: Values, Activities, Lifestyles (Buckingham, England: Open University Press, 1999), Tim Dant adopts an eclectic approach to delve into the cultural practices as themselves a response to material objects.

The collection of essays in Consuming Technologies: Media and Information in Domestic Spaces (London : Routledge ; New York, 1992), by Silverstone et al is very representative of the surge of interest in domestic quotidian. As the title suggests, this collection of articles is dedicated to exploring household relations and practices in the consumption of domestic technologies. The opening essay ‘Information and Communication Technologies and the Moral Economy of the Household’ theorises the different, but related, articulation in the home of information and communication technologies in relational practices of appropriation, objectification, incorporation and conversion. Tim Putnam in ‘Regimes of Closure The Representation of Cultural Process in Domestic Consumption’, argues that the consumption of anything at home is more informative than abstracted needs and demands for understanding the diversity of meanings attributed to home and the complex projects of home-making. Sonia Livingstone uses the categories suggested by her interviewees of necessity, control, functionality, sociality and privacy, to document a realm of need and desire with respect to domestic technologies and the maintenance of gendered identities, in ‘The Meaning of Domestic Technologies: A Personal Construct Analysis of Familial Gender Relations.’ In ‘The Long Term and the Short Term of Domestic Consumption: An Ethnographic Case Study’, Eric Hirsch discusses the ‘mute’ technologies of the kitchen and the ambivalence they represent to women. See too the recent collection of essays edited by Daniel Miller Home Possessions (Oxford: Berg, 2001).

With regard to the huge topic of gender and domestic technologies, some forty years ago Lewis Mumford, in Technics and Civilization (London: Oxford University Press 1952),10-12, was perhaps the first to comment, albeit briefly, on this relationship. Mumford considered such forgotten technologies as pots and pans vital to the development of civilisation, saw in them extensions of the human body and compared them to the large scale mechanistic technologies of modernity. Though Mumford was not making a feminist point, the masculinity of the latter category was inescapable. It was quite some time later that the wave of critical interest rose from feminist

25 Dant, Material Culture, 83-84.

26 One of the first remarks with which Csikszentmihalyi and Rochberg-Halton opened this seminal book was “how little we know about what things mean to people” an observation that is much less remarkable now than it was twenty five years ago, though the book remains one of the most interesting treatments of the significance attributed to object relations (aka technological relations) across a North American sample structured by gender and age.


31 Heidegger, Poetry, 151.

32 Heidegger, Poetry, 151.

33 Heidegger, Poetry, 151.


35 For a trenchant analysis and critique of the ideology of purposive – rational action and technological instrumentality, see Jurgen Habermas ‘Technology and Science as “Ideology”’ in Toward a Rational Society: Student Protest, Science and Politics Trans. Jeremy Shapiro. (London: Heinemann, 1971). In this essay, Habermas’ critique of purposive-rational action is juxtaposed with its main rival and alternative, symbolic interaction. Despite his antipathy for Heidegger, it is remarkable how Habermas’ argument, expressing itself in altogether different terms, nevertheless has obvious resonances with Heidegger’s exposition of the subject in The Question Concerning Technology.


38 According to Carl Mitcham, Ernest Kapp, the founder of a philosophy of technology, was also the first to notice the extension or prosthetic aspect of technology. In two ground breaking volumes, Kapp argued for technology to be understood as largely unconscious projections of human capacities. See Mitcham, Thinking 23-24. Much later, Marshall Mc Luhan took up and popularised the idea of technology as extensions of human capacities in technological prothesis. See Marshall McLuhan Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man. (Cambridge, MA:
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39 Ihde, Technology, 72-123.

40 My re-presentation of the first three (embodiment, hermeneutic and alterity realtions) of Ihde’s five fold phenomenology derives from Ihde, Technology, 72-108.

41 Marshall McLuhan called clothing and housing extensions of our skin, and heat control mechanisms. They are thus media of communication, since they help “shape and rearrange the patterns of human association and community.” Understanding. 127.

42 The importance of clockwork technologies in contemporary domestic settings cannot be overestimated. In everyday acts, from the rising from, to the return to, sleep, time is mediated and measured by the clock, and is central to the structuring of our experience. The passage of time, as measured by clocks, has indeed become a perpetual daily obsession. Since the proliferation of personalised ‘timekeepers’, the idea has become deeply entrenched that if we ‘watch’ time we can somehow ‘save’ it!

43 Jean Baudrillard, Xerox and Infinity Trans. Agitac (Originally published as Le Xerox et L’Infini Paris 1987), 2


47 Ihde, Technology, 144–151.

48 Ihde, Technology, 112-115.

49 Gaston Bachelard, The Poetics of Space (Boston : Beacon Press, 1969), 1

50 Jeff Malpas, ‘A Taste of Madelaine: Notes towards a Philosophy of Place’ in International Philosophical Quarterly V 34, 4, 136 (December 1994), 450 and n 448.

51 This picture of technological wealth is substantially augmented by dozens of other technologies in a host of devices and gadgets, such as clothes drier, dish-washer, hair-dryer, toaster, computer, printer, camera, ‘play-station’, lawn mower, juicer, blender, yogurt maker, sandwich maker, bread maker, not to mention choices in crockery, cutlery, pots, pans, jugs, glasses, carpeting, cushions, curtains and manchester, and hardware such as a wheelbarrow, ladder, pliers, drill, hammer, saw etc - the length of such a list is clearly too long to continue. Those who are poor and/or young, old, indigenous or mentally ill may not have technologically sophisticated houses containing the now commonplace array of equipment, but poverty is relative, and the ‘technologically poor’ in Australian terms are ‘technologically rich’ compared to the majority of the world’s citizens. For instance, my family, and all of our neighbours, live with a huge technological ensemble, yet we inhabit one of the ‘poor’ suburbs of Perth. An excellent comparative study of technological wealth occurs in Peter Menzel, Material World a Global Family Portrait (San Francisco, California: Sierra Club Books, 1994). This is photojournalism at its best as Menzel vividly juxtaposes the artefactual differences of thirty households across the world in which location and architectural contexts are also quite apparent. Another section depicts televisions, meals, and toilets from a selection of these places.


53 Peter also recognised the need for a satisfactory fit between himself and his house but was less ambitious than his father who, Peter said, “never stops working on his house.” Peter was not into order for order’s sake, nor change for the sake of change. House renovations must have sound motivating reasons. Once he had decided not to sell his house, after a painful divorce that left him depressed and listless, Peter wanted to stabilise his life and attend to the
things he could control. It became important to lighten and freshen his mood by lightening and freshening the colours that surrounded him. For Peter, the house itself could be enlisted, not only as tool with which to accomplish physical aims, but as a tool for psychological repair.

54 “I would say that if there’s a good atmosphere in the late afternoon the sun comes in, it has a nice presence to it. Sometimes when I’m watching the programs on television or listening to good radio, there’s some kind of communion there.”

55 Despite Joe’s satisfying relations of embodiment with his house, these were not enough to keep him in Coolbellup. Like Michelle, and to a lesser extent Peter, Joe wanted to transfer out of the area when the transformations he had worked on his house were seen as eventually less important, compared to the comfort of living somewhere more salubrious than Coolbellup.

56 “If you’ve grown up without it I think you appreciate it more when you’re older. As a kid most of my life was spent in a sleeping bag either on top of a load of dynamite, which my father used to cart, or underneath a truck on the roadside.”

57 According to Christine, the games room housed almost every purpose, except those of eating, sleeping, washing and elimination: “I have my computer where I do my paperwork and my study, work and everything. And the kids have their games in there, and the TV’s in there, and the lounge with whoever’s laying over it. We’re all in that room.”

58 “Oh well the height of the ceilings and that, is okay. The windows and that are okay, but I just think they should be a little bit stronger. They’re easy to break. We’ve got lots of cracks and that in the floors and walls where massive cockroaches live, and there’s one in the lounge room near the wall where cockroaches and spiders and all get in.”

59 See chapter three.

60 When the sun went down Christine liked to have all the lights on in the house for if they were not, she said, “dark and cold and you feel miserable.” Her preference for plenty of light and well lit space had, she believed, been reproduced in her daughter, a circumstance that pleased her, since she associated light with warmth and comfort and the light, sunny aspect of her daughter’s house was thus very welcoming. Self-stabilisation was facilitated for Christine by light, enabling personation and authentication of her place and her self as bright, warm and cheerful.

61 Joe also struggled in trying to place technology in a hierarchy of necessity. Joe felt there was “not much point to having furniture or anything” that requires shelter, unless one acknowledges the pre-eminence of those ‘foundational things’ which are “just so central” to a house. Joe echoed Michelle’s difficulty of placing domestic technology in a hierarchy of importance, but decided that ‘the system stuff’: the power, gas and water supplies were the key technologies. He emphasised how both basic needs and particular pleasures would be negatively affected by their absence. “You soon realise as soon as you’re without them how important they are. No power and no water especially. You can’t move, can’t have any of the stuff you realise you have come to depend on.” The absences he thought would affect him most, he called “basic homey comforts’ comprising such things as hot dinners, hot water, computer games and television. The supply of systemised services also enhanced, indirectly, the value and meaning of other cardinal features such as the floor to ceiling bay windows in the front room that extended Joe’s view of the world, and which he appreciated for the distant and minimal, and therefore, comfortable level, of contact with the rest of Coolbellup that they provided. For Janet, a hierarchy was also impossible as one essential technology led to another. The importance of gas for cooking reminded her of heating and hot water, which in turn, prompted appreciation of the economical and ecologically friendly shower-head. The latter she considered a necessity, given the unsustainable standard of living to which the over-developed world has become accustomed.

62 “It’s so hard to say - cooker, microwave, washer, coffee, if I was just talking about me, but ‘our car’, and ‘his bike’, and the stroller - so many essential things that we’ve got to rely on in our lives everyday.”

63 I heard a sales representative from the Swedish based international furniture retailer *Ikea* in panel discussion on the radio talking about household style and comfort. The sales representative keep stressing that she couldn’t help but notice how sufficient storage space was one of the most important considerations for *Ikea’s* customers when they came to select furniture. Certainly, the constant accumulation of things and the problem of whether or where to store them is a problem in my house, even with our relatively modest standard of living and a small disposable income.
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64 Joe was also impressed by the aesthetic appeal of his jarrah floor boards which, since they were also highly polished, had shifted from the background to the foreground of his perception.

65 Though some may feel that considering food as technology over stretches the notion of technology, it should be pointed out that food production is as engineered as other manufactured articles. Since the Neolithic revolution in agriculture, food for human consumption in most parts of the world has ceased to be the result of physis and has become a form of technology. Food supplies the kitchen to extend the life of the body. With the application of various forms of technê or techniques, food undergoes technological mediation, and becomes a technology in its own right. Food is a nourishing technology which, via its literal embodiment, facilitates metabolic functions and the extension of embodiment via relations of embodiment. For Janet, food, and the techniques involved in its preparation, provided a means of self-stabilisation and comfort. In physical, psychological and symbolic senses, the technology of food preparation was central, as her health was problematic, and she saw attention to diet as essential. Many kitchen technologies had importance for Janet, but the grinder had become “a vital feature” while the gas stove was indispensable.

66 “I suppose I’ve lived through fairly eventful times. We’ve seen, in the farming world, quite a change from family farming which I grew up with. And labour, that was in the local village or lived on houses on the farm, has seen a change (and I’ve taken part in it) to large scale farming which was far more dependent on machines made somewhere else. I mean the local blacksmith disappeared, the horses disappeared, but I think that has been the story of mechanisation and progress for a very long time, so there’s nothing odd about it, its just accelerated. I find the pace of change is more important than the change itself. And the people complaining here, you know, of the farms getting no labour, and the bigger machinery, and it displacing people. But then it has been doing it for the last two hundred years so I don’t think its particularly terrifying.”

67 “I’m looking at the Aboriginal perspective of what all these…parliament and all these people want to do …and half the time they’re ruining the place, people are just ruining the country. I mean you look at the ozone layer. Everyone knows that’s getting worse. And the only reason it wasn’t bad before was because there was trees everywhere to clear the air and the oxygen. But, what are they doing? They’re killing more trees. So the only thing I look at for my kids is there’s going be no bush left for them to go running round in. No, its just gonna be smog.” Looking from a child’s perspective Reuben’s view was equally pessimistic when he said, “I reckon it might be worse in the future, all the sorts of things are getting worse now and will do in the future. Like pollution. Pollution’s getting worse. Whales are getting quite extinct because people hunt them for things, medicine, perfumes and things like that…Sea pollution, pollution in the sea that’s killing lots of the coral reef…some fish are dying.”

68 “You know, it’s what you possess with money. Back then it was respect, and friendships, and survival, getting through the day. You know, looking after everybody. Because in them days everybody took care of everybody. And now it seems like everybody’s just wanting it all for themselves. And the more money that they have, the more respect they’re supposed to have. And like, the respect back then, they needed to have back then. You knew you had a place. Now, you’ve only got a place really if you’ve got money, haven’t you?”

69 See Christine in chapter four.

70 “I get so het up about technology, I wonder, its only because I’ve now got used to mine, but I’m usually all completely anxious when a technology comes out. I’ve only just recently been able to speak on a tape recorder without getting completely, you know, nervous and confused.”

71 For Janet the ideal house would “be really simple. It would be light, it would have the most minimum of possessions. I’d like to leave everything here and start afresh.”

72 “If I had the money to build an ideal place it would be, perhaps, half a dozen people or more. I wouldn’t build just one little place for me.”

73 The living room was where Marissa’s family was “supposed to go and talk to our problems.” It was the place where her Mum and Dad ‘lived’ and hence, a place where one went to get their help as well as, less directly, help via the ritual technologies of the Catholic faith in the icons and pictures, which shared available surfaces with family memorabilia.

74 “The front porch is the public face, like the outlet on the neighbourhood. And that’s a good place to be too, because you can look and speculate on the things that take place at this intersection and across in the park. You make yourself more available there and it’s as though sometimes, it feels like you are an advertisement. Nobody round
here does this sort of thing that much, and your presence says: “Hey you can talk to me now if you want! Here I am waiting for the world to pass by me and give me the time of day, but generally you know, no one much comes who does.”

75 Michelle also favoured the radio over the television preferring the portability of the medium to the anchoring affect of television. “I’ve got to say, that compared to the tellie, which you have to watch as well as listen to, I much prefer the radio. …Unless like you’re totally a couch potato type slob, who doesn’t know anything else, it seems to me that the tellie tells you what to do, and its not like you can do a whole lot else while you’re watching.” Even so, Michelle called the radio a “gap filler” since she was usually busy as she listened, and so missed a lot of things she was interested in. Still it was her main source of news and current affairs: “Certainly, I would say that for me, its like the only way, really, that I get to stay in touch with the events of the world.”

76 “I started listening because I started getting interested in I suppose current affairs a bit more, sort of talk-back radio and listening to different peoples opinions. I’ve always been interested by what other peoples opinions are on different subjects. And they have psychologists, and people from the child support agency and things like that who come on the radio and answer questions and that. I’ve got an interest in that because it affects me directly.”

77 Christine thought she could “live without the tellie”, since it was, “so stupid a lot of the time. It makes me laugh and makes me think too what a lot of crap it shows.”

78 Christine concurred, soapies were both predictable and unrealistic and she liked realistic drama and comedy though she didn’t usually watch a great deal of television altogether. Pat, by contrast, watched three to four hours a day and the television was usually on in the background. There were a number of programs Pat tried very hard to avoid missing. Though she liked some soap operas, she disliked those she deemed “unrealistic” because, as she put it, on these programs “you never see anyone eat or drink or go to the loo. No one has diarrhoea, no one vomits, no one has a headache, it’s just not real. And they’ve all got money, there’s never any poor people!” On the other hand, soap operas such as The Sullivans, A Country Practice, the hospital drama ER and the ‘murder dramas’ were “realistic” and regular viewing appointments. In particular, The Sullivans’ was rarely missed, since Pat identified with its representation of “basic old fashioned living” set as it is during World War II. In a related way, A Country Practice presented the community-spirited ambience of contemporary small country town life, and, for Pat, was reminiscent of Coolbellup “where everyone will help each other.” These realistic soap operas provided relations with others in circumstances that resonated with past or present experience, and gave models of successful community.

79 Like most of the other adults Janet enjoyed television and watched quite a lot. And like others, her viewing produced critiques about content and laced with ideas for improvement. She strongly disapproved for instance of television’s relentless mode of presentation, which she said, lacked reflectivity and sensitivity “So quite often I get angry I shout at the television you know. And, sometimes when there’s you know documentaries that go around the world and that do more in-depth things, you might see some totally horrendous thing and then it just goes onto something light. But I find that horrendous when you actually see something that’s stunning you know, and really need to think about, but television just goes on, a commercial might come on, or ‘we’ll change the subject now.’ I feel there should be time for reflections.” In support of more reflection and more representative representation Janet would like to see panel shows which delivered comment from a wide range of ordinary people on current affairs. “I’d like to see panels. I’d like to see other people talk about it and see if some people represent my point of view about what happened. So there’s a lot of things on television that are not there that I feel should be there.”

80 Michelle had similar concerns over the television her son watched and said, “I’m glad he loves books so, hopefully he’ll watch less television and do a little bit more reading. I certainly don’t want him to become a ‘four-eye’ and just sit in front of the box.” It was, in other words, encouraging that her son liked books, since television was very seductive. Because it offered such an easy form of entertainment Michelle welcomed competition from other technologies in a spirit of resistance. Pat, on the other hand, was not concerned about too much television. There were three in her house, and the one in the kitchen, where Pat spent most of her waking time at home, was usually on all day, every day. Pat was however ambivalent, about television, because she felt it did not fulfill its potential as a medium. It neither offered enough comedy to remind us not to take the world so seriously, nor enough programs of practical information. The absence of the latter was especially regrettable, as Pat believed there was knowledge which people needed that their circumstances did not necessarily provide. In particular Pat wanted programs designed to teach children “how to deal with life.” These, she felt, were essential if children were to eventually accomplish the myriad important tasks that surround house-keeping and parenting.

82 “I tend towards tools [so that for example] when the power goes off the clock still runs, which quite pleases me. I don’t have to hunt around trying to find what the time is. So, its a little bit of independence as well.”
Learning new technologies, and the technical knowledge associated with them, can facilitate the move of background technology into the foreground. Michael for instance, was enthusiastic about learning, under his father’s guidance, how to use the tools and machines with which their new house was constructed and their car repaired. Cultivating an operational knowledge of the household technologies, such as drills, saws and car engines, and acquiring ‘hands-on’ experience facilitated relations with his father, and encouraged self-stabilisation by providing an insider’s knowledge of technological capacities that previously had lain beyond his comprehension.

While recent Australian Censuses in 1995 and 2000 have measured income, with the exception of houses, they have not measured assets. The Indian Census of 2001 by contrast measured assets but not income. Furthermore, though it counted houses and recorded details of the materials used in their construction and the number of rooms they possess, it did not record facts of tenancy versus ownership. The Indian Census for 1991 differs again as it did not record income, but only the provision of such household amenities as electricity, water and sanitation. Hence with no data on income it is possible, using the 2001 census data on assets, to see the extent of technological wealth in India. In the Census of India, Table S00-020 Distribution of Households Available Banking Services and Number of Households Having Each of the Specified Asset @ http://www.censusindia.net/2001housing/S00-020.html, (accessed Monday April 12th 2004.). This data shows that while 31.6% of Indian households owned a television and 35.1% had a radio, 43.7% had a bicycle. Only 9.1% had a telephone and 11.7% a two-wheeled motorised vehicle. Banking services were accessed by 35.5%. Only 2.5% however own a car and thus belong presumably to India’s upper class. The percentage of people with none of these assets was 34.5%.

There is also a state by state rendering of Census of India data for 2001 and it is interesting to show the relative technological wealth of the Union Territories of Daman and Diu with that of Gujarat, one of India’s most prosperous states. Household possession in Daman and Diu with a total of 34,342 households: of a television 49.3%, radio 39%, telephone 15.7%, bicycle 38.3%, two-wheeled motor vehicle 27.2% and car 4.5%. Firewood for fuel was used by 16.1%, LPG gas for cooking was used by 50.4% and 97.8% had electricity as a source of lighting. In Gujarat with a total of 9,643,989 households household possession of: television 38.7%, radio 30.2%, telephone 12.5%, bicycle 37.3%, two wheeled motor vehicle 21.1% and cars 3.5%. Firewood for fuel was 44.6%, LPG gas for cooking was used by 50.4% and 97.8% had electricity as a source of lighting. In Households Having Television, India and States http://www.censusindia.net/2001housing/tv.htm; Households having radio/ transistor http://www.censusindia.net 2001 housing/radio.htm Households having telephone http://www.censusindia.net/2001housing/telephone.htm; Households having bicycle http://www.censusindia.net/2001housing/bicycle.html; Households having car, jeep, van etc http://www.censusindia.net/2001housing/car.htm; Households using Liquified Petroleum Gas (LPG) as fuel for cooking house/lpg.htm and Households with source of lighting as electricity housing/electricity.html (all accessed April 12th 2004). For an historical comparison Ismail Merchant’s recollections in the technological ensemble of his middle class childhood home in Bombay in the 1950’ presents a portrait in which the radio is the only technology from the preceding lists to make an appearance. In Suzanne Slesin and Stafford Cliff, Indian Style (New York: Clarkson N. Potter, 1990), x. These are cited in notes 41 and 42 in chapter four.

The categorical criteria for inclusion in a display cabinet varies little, for they are dedicated to the presentation of crockery, stainless steel and ceramic vessels. Overwhelmingly, they are stuffed with good quality, surplus to requirements, crockery. After the obligatory display of the ‘best plate’, the criteria for inclusion are more liberal, with the only limiting factor being size. Display cases are always full and items which can’t be accommodated will be displayed on high shelves around the top of walls. Typically these shelves hold an impressive display of gleaming copper and stainless steel utensils that are superfluous to everyday needs but used occasionally to cater to large feasts. In addition to size, the other main limiting factor for a display cabinet would seem to be sentimental and heritage value. The variety of items in a display cabinet include all kinds of children’s toys: especially kewpie dolls or riding in hay ricks (invariably these again have white skin) and artificial flowers in a range of materials plastic, ceramic, metal and fabric. There are also occasionally some enigmatic objects, like an empty but highly polished can of Pepsi. The show cabinet collects items in the service of both prestige and sentiment, but these are interestingly not Indian produced arts and crafts. Indeed handcrafts are largely absent in display cabinets, while mass produced objects seem to rule. Moreover, with the exception of religious iconography and an occasional hand woven hanging,
traditional arts and crafts do not tend to feature inside houses, while there is an obvious preference for objects which at least look foreign rather than indigenous.

87 The opposite situation of unwanted technology was uncommon. Pramilaben was one such exception. Her family was wealthy enough to own an electric sewing machine, yet it was redundant, as there was, she said, no material necessity. They could afford to have clothes custom made or bought off the peg.

88 Like many others, Pramila voiced the great importance of good ventilation, and claimed Diu’s climate was so good there was no need to install air-conditioning.

89 The Census of India in 2001 reports the proportions of ‘permanent houses’ in India as 51.8%. While slums are categorised either as ‘semi-permanent houses’ or ‘serviceable temporary houses’, the sheltering structures of pavement and wasteland dwellers are counted as ‘non-serviceable temporary houses’ See Table S00-010: Distribution of Census Houses used as Residence and Residence cum other Use by their Type of Structure http://www.censusindia.net/2001housing/S00-010.html (accessed May 2nd 2004). The India at a Glance Institutional and Houseless Population records the houseless population in 1991 as 2,007,489 or 0.24%. at, http://www.censusindia.net/houseless.html (accessed May 2nd 2004). Like Riswan, Varsha felt the worst possible home was one without windows or natural lighting, electricity or toilet, and was aware that many Indians live in such places. The most important thing about home, for Varshaben, was its water supply for she said, “without that we cannot live.” Following water, importance was attributed to the electricity, fan, and gas stove. Varsha’s comments draw attention to the complex infrastructures that provide water and electricity (not to mention gas and telecommunications) which in India do not so often tend to constitute, as they do in the West, a sine qua non for residential dwelling.

90 For Varshaben too, the worst possible home was one without key technologies like electricity, sewerage and windows.

91 Vilasbhai was also poor, and his house, the technologies within it, and his technological expectations, were all very modest. Vilas insisted that only richer, bigger houses could expect not only to own, but to accommodate, such things a televisions and tape recorders. Krishnaben, by contrast was very aware of her house as a hermeneutic medium communicating affluence and status, and noted its important appearance in its height and tiered balconies. She thought many people must wonder at how many facilities the house possessed.

92 Varshaben, Kajal’s mother, illustrated the modest level of technology owned by most people, but also privileged the television. Home was important, for Varsha, for lots of technological reasons, yet eventually she declared the most important technology was the television.

93 Levita covered a spectrum of technological bases when she listed technologies of greatest importance:”The electricity, and the water supply, and also the television and all. All are important, as the electricity gives us first of all light, and fresh air from the fan. Then, the water supply gives us water. And television, when we are bored gives us some refreshment to our minds and also we tape from it and all.”

94 Most of the women had lists of the domestic technology on which they placed importance. Laxhmi, for example, listed quite a few and then, sensing that it seemed to be getting too lengthy, allowed an etcetera to suffice.

95 Laxhmi made special mention of the containers which store the bulk food-stuff extending the capacity of the body to store energy and underlining the centrality in consciousness of food, among the poor, as an essential technology.

96 Kajal who lived in an apartment with only one door and one window, claimed to be uninterested in doors and windows. She was joined in this respect by Natwar, who also, rather enigmatically, suggested that there was not much value in doors and windows. Natwar had a similar, though smaller, list of important household technologies, and made special mention of the television, but, paradoxically, dismissed the importance of electricity. Rejecting the importance of electric light, he cited the equal benefits of a torch for extending night vision. Such remarks recall Brandon’s impractical fantasy of a house without walls. Comment of this kind, from children, seems to reflect a greater readiness to suspend reality, and depart into daydreams. In this state of wishful whimsicality, it is irrelevant how a house would function as a house without such essential features as doors and windows. It could also be argued that what is disclosed here, is how taken for granted certain features are, so that, without anxiety, these features are put at the bottom of considerations about what is important about houses.
TV, you can listen to the TV news. If you don’t have a TV you can always take the newspaper, the daily newspaper. The principle means of receiving information.” I would say it’s a kind of form of entertainment, the radio in the sense of a tape recorder cum radio was enjoyable, it was not an essential household technology as there was now television as the dominant medium of information. However, she also called it an ‘idiot box’, because of what she felt to be the silliness of many programs.

Varsha desired a washing machine, but their economic circumstances were not such that she was ever likely to own one. Indeed, even amongst the comfortably off middle classes, I did not know anybody in Diu who had a washing machine. Such knowledge contrasts with the small torrent of advertisements on television for washing machines, and the detergents used with them.

As I pointed out in chapter four, more room might have been desired but not necessarily to furnish more privacy. For Krishnaben, on the other hand, money was no object, and her house was comparatively rich, technologically speaking. Purchasing power in Krishna’s house was accompanied by a good deal of choice and included technologies for the children, like play-equipment, television and video games. There was also a television for the household’s elder, more house-bound members. Krishna was of the opinion that these days such items ‘should’ be there, and should thus be considered essential.

Laxhmi mentioned the aesthetics of her display cabinet when she said, “Other objects beautify the house in all kinds of manners. These things seem to be important to me.” Her son Natwar, however, though he cited the cabinet as among the most important things about home, was really repeating the opinion held by his elders. Later he disparaged the cabinet and even went so far as to classify it as a piece of rubbish, that merely took up space. In other respects, however, Natwar echoed his mother’s sentiments about the importance of projection of beauty in the design and decoration of his house.

Hira did not own a radio and said that she didn’t “consider it essential when the house runs in such a poor way. It’s essential, but not in the situation of poor economic condition like mine.” Hira caught the broadcast music from her Dalit neighbours, but was usually too busy in her paid work and housework to keep special program appointments. Vijaya did not own a television but did own a radio, which she thought was an essential household technology. Along with appreciation of its informative capacity, if Vijaya had time she especially enjoyed broadcast music “It enables listeners to have news bulletins, entertainment by means of music and songs as well as all kinds of knowledgable programs too. …I certainly feel like singing when some of the songs of my choice are heard over the radio. I instantly commence singing almost copying the singer’s voice though I’m unable to sing well. Yet I can’t resist the temptation to do so as soon as the song starts with music.” Marianne observed how, though tape recorder cum radio was enjoyable, it was not an essential household technology as there was now television as the principle means of receiving information. “ I would say it’s a kind of form of entertainment, the radio in the sense of like a tape recorder, it’s a lovely form of entertainment. For those things, like news and things, I wouldn’t say so because there are other means of communication, no? Like if you want you get news of the outside world with the TV, you can listen to the TV news. If you don’t have a TV you can always take the newspaper, the daily newspaper. I don’t think radio is essential.”

For example, as was demonstrated above, home was important to Varshaben for lots of technological reasons yet she declared that, ultimately, there was only one important technology, the television. Similarly certain was Nirmalaben, who said, “My house will do without gas stove but it will not do without television.” Pramilaben, on the other hand, made the gas stove and the television equally important.

There was no television in Marianne’s household, though she considered it an essential technology, as a source of information. However, she also called it an ‘idiot box’, because of what she felt to be the silliness of many programs. Paresh also had a critical stance in the reservations he had about the representative accuracy of documentary programs. He had seen one on Diu which he thought especially uneven, because it focused almost exclusively on its hotel facilities while minimising or neglecting many other aspects. Vijaya’s main concern about television, by contrast, was that too much viewing might badly affect one’s eye-sight.


Those who have television like to show the fact, and it seems that if you’ve got it, then you should flaunt it. I would often see televisions playing to empty rooms, while their owners attended to other things in their vicinity, or wandered sat outside to watch and participate in, the latest live episode of ‘Days of Our Diu’.
Chapter Six

The Familiar Zone

6.1 House-held Dwelling: The Family in Australia and India

There would be few who would dispute the link between the home and the family. Houses, more often than not, connote households, and in Australia and India a household, whatever else it may shelter and provide for, is usually the principle domain of a family and as such a privileged crucible for the transmission of culture. Pierre Bourdieu saw houses, and the family life they facilitate, as the first and principle locus of the series of acquired generative and maintenance dispositions of habitus. Home embraces family life with the residential forms of habitus, in practices and processes that condition perception, learning, thought and action, and as Gaston Bachelard has argued, come to “constitute a body of images that give mankind proofs or illusions of stability.” As Bachelard’s feminist critics point out, however, family life may also be abusive and provide conditions that prevent felicitous proofs and illusions of stability. In short though, home whatever its ambience, is a social place. Whether a family is primarily amiable and cooperative, or aggressive and agonistic, the family, the socio-cultural order of home, is as T.S Eliot suggested, the place “where one starts from.” At home, we are among people who place us and facilitate the formation of our identity, though this influence wanes “as we grow older, the world becomes stranger” and “the pattern more complicated.”

In both Australia and India, the prevalence of a close association of home and family is assumed with the taking of a periodic census. In both countries, not only is the household a basic unit of measurement, but also provides the organisational base-line from which to quantify, though not all of the frames they use to constitute data and thereafter their statistics. The unanimity of the measuring unit of the household, is in other words, a place where difference begins and multiplies in the collection and use of information. The Australian Bureau of Statistics Census (ABS) for 1996 for instance was concerned to show living arrangements and asked about the relationships for up to six people in a household. Assuming the household to comprise of one or two responsible adults, the census asked questions on whether married, defacto, a child, brother or sister, another sort of relationship or altogether unrelated. The Registrar General of India Census for 1991 meanwhile, presumed partnerships outside of marriage to be extremely rare, and with the exception of death, divorce, separation or supplementation by other relations, over nine kinds of household structure, there were no categories besides ‘other’ to account for house-holds which were not constituted by kinship relations. In India, while men may live on their own, women living on their own, and communal households of mixed sex, unrelated people, are
virtually unheard of. 7 ‘Household units’, in other words, are described rather differently in India than they are in Australia. 8 They are differently described because, though there are overlaps, they are, in many respects, quite differently constituted, a subject to which I return.

Before moving into characteristics of households however, as a prelude to the central discussion of house-held opinion on relations between home and family, I want to address the treatment of the family in Australian and Indian social inquiry. In the West, though the family has been, since the end of World War Two, a topic of significant research, interest burgeoned with the challenge and influence posed by the rise of the second wave of feminism in the seventies. In Australia, research interest in the family increased, and reached something of a crescendo, during the 1980’s. It continues to be a major preoccupation at the start of the third millennium. The constitution, concerns, problems and politics of the family, is a vast, complex and proliferating subject, and thousands of possible citations could be chosen to illustrate the topical eminence of the family in Australia. 9 In the extremely extensive literature dedicated to its study, many kinds of family and household types have been described, analysed and criticised.

In the early days of research on the family most of the attention was directed at abstracted discussions of structure and function. But diversification, which targeted ideologies and mythologies of the family, arrived with the challenge of second wave feminism. Describing the general complexion of contemporary approaches at the Australian Family Studies Institute (AIFS), Funder and Edgar et al, observe that, though there is without doubt, political and social discussion which “retains a functionalist view of the family” and ignores structural and ideological context, the AIFS has, from its inception assumed that “every individual has a family.” It has also worked under the assumption that, “no one family form is normative.” Furthermore, say the authors, “standard assumptions about what is ‘functional’ for internal family processes, or for society in general, need to be tested and challenged.” As families have changed along with the nature of work and technology, research on the Australian family has reconfigured the paradigms of structure and function, and according to Funder and Edgar, now adopts, “very much a pluralistic and multi-cultural approach” as a matter of course. 10

According to the AIFS, although 70 percent of children in Australia are still born to married couples and mother, father and 2.2 children is still the typical family type, the married partnership of a heterosexual couple with dependent offspring no longer constitutes the normative house-hold type, and cannot be assumed. 11 Neither, nowadays, can family form be assumed, but must
always be specified and placed in context. In the academy, modes of description for family form proliferate, and represent their topic with appellations which use sexual, marital, ethnic, age or health of both the adults and/or the children present.\textsuperscript{12} Even so, it is widely recognised that the term ‘the family’ acts as an umbrella term, a convenient cover for every situation regardless of constitution. However, despite statistical demonstration and one’s own experiential confirmation that Australian families do indeed take a variety of forms, the concept of the so-called traditional nuclear family still tends to occupy the centre of political and popular thought.\textsuperscript{13} Yet, as the ABS census for 2001 and a variety of other studies combine to show, there are substantial numbers of Australian families whose adult members are single, who cohabit rather than marry and whose ethnic identity derives from non-British places.\textsuperscript{14} There are also minorities of families, who are not heterosexual but whose numbers are not wholly ascertainable.\textsuperscript{15} Each of these characteristics may, of course, introduce still further variety into a family when they combine with one another, to produce ‘blended’ households in which for instance, two women (ex Bosnia and El Slavador) bring two and four children respectively, from prior heterosexual unions into a lesbian partnership.\textsuperscript{16}

In the last decade, a major shift in research interests has been under-way. While there is no doubt that the form and experiences of family-life in Australia are central to the transmission of culture, the family is no longer seen as well served by the term ‘institution’ as it used to be. The idea of an institution is regarded as burdened by a clutch of relatively monolithic and static connotations. While family structures are considered an essential place of departure, it is now more likely that attitudes to the family by its members and the variety of practices in which its members are engaged, form the target of research. Attitudes and practices are informative of the way families make sense of themselves, and the variety of contexts they engage with. The shift, in other words, is away from preoccupations with how families are composed, and the nominative roles of their members, towards the plethora of things family members may think and feel and do. As David Morgan argues, accounts of family life must respond to the flux, fluidity and change of family life, in which all kinds of relationships are relevant, and not just those between family members.\textsuperscript{17} Morgan stresses that the family is an “an active process rather than a thing-like object of detached social investigation.”\textsuperscript{18} The multiple implications of the family, understood as a series of practices rather than an institution, are far beyond the scope of this thesis. Nonetheless, it is appropriate here to see the family as an open-ended process, and so place the attitudes from within its ranks within the complex socio-economic contexts to which they inevitably react and respond.
As in Australia, the family has figured prominently in Indian social inquiry, and almost invariably, has been treated as an institution of enormous influence. So powerful is the institution of the family considered to be in India, that it is seen as both keystone and lodestone in the immense diversity that constitutes Indian culture. The family is considered the place that provides the force which energises those other major institutions of caste and religious identity. The centrality of Indian family-life is evidenced in the myriad activities for which the family is the source and the mediatrix. It is no exaggeration to state, that family modes and mores are regarded as informing, directly and indirectly, most aspects of India’s diverse culture. Thirty years ago, David Mandelbaum collected and distilled a mass of anthropological research, and showed the depth of the consensus on the institutional eminence of the Indian family. Regarded as fundamental to the practice and transmission of culture, and as the principal field for the realisation of individual satisfaction, achievement and reputation, the family in India is not only a reproductive unit and a socializing agency, but for each member is the context for ritual transitions within the life cycle, embedding whole-life experiences, as well as a primary reference point for, and link to, the wider society. As Mandelbaum states, “Kinship ties are generally taken to be the most durable, reliable and worthy and moral of all social relations. Kinship begins with the family and is extended through the family.”

Yet, social research conducted across regional, urban, rural or caste divisions, has almost exclusively concerned itself with the structure and functions of family life, even as the family responds to the challenges and changes encouraged, or demanded, by the globalising forces of modernity.

In distinguishing between different types of family groups, a labeling dilemma prevails in Indian social inquiry, as it does in Australia, though it has rather different determining conditions. According to Mandelbaum, “many classifications of family form are logically possible” as there are many combinations of kin relations. Along with a couple and their children, an Indian family may contain; widowed mothers and fathers, unmarried sisters of the father and grandfather; resident sons-in-law; their wives and children, and distantly related orphans. Even as they set out to try and clarify the murky waters of structural and functional classification, Premilla D’Cruz and Shalini Bharat emphasise how research on the family in India looked almost exclusively at the “structure of the family while family processes and dynamics were side-lined.” Nuclear or simple families in a single household are not as rare as many stereotypes tend to communicate. At the same time however, the simple conjugal family in India cannot be considered as merely the Indian counterpart of the Western model. Indeed, ‘family plurality’, claim D’ Cruz and
Bharat, has been, and will remain, an essential feature of Indian society, which means acknowledging that “change and continuity are not mutually exclusive but simultaneous.”

These days, the family must be especially adaptive in form and function, so as to cope with rapid shifts in economic conditions, combined with the absence of a social security system. The dynamic flows and processes of urbanisation and globalisation have overseen the formation of more complex and more alternate families. However it was not until the mid-eighties that research on the family began to move away from the knotty problem of the joint-nuclear debate, and look at ‘alternate family forms’ that include; single-parent families; dual-earner families and adoptive families, that are alternate not so much out of choice, as in response to economic imperatives and circumstances beyond their control.

Feminist research in India has detailed what Mandelbaum and his peers generally did not, namely, that family life in India is saturated with gender determined roles and practices, which, derive their form and content from the reciprocal sanctions religion gives to patriarchy and patriarchy gives to religion. Regardless of the religious faith concerned, much of the government of everyday family life is either drawn directly from, or creatively manipulated by, religious tradition. Law, mythology and legend have, for centuries, been selectively politicised to justify discriminatory divisions of caste and gender.

Despite India’s egalitarian constitution and sheaves of legislation for positive discrimination, the mutual support which religion and patriarchy offer each other continues to subordinate females within Indian society. For both Hinduism, India’s major religion, and Islam, its largest minority faith, traditional law regarding men’s and women’s respective roles in the structure and processes of the family enshrine male domination. Though Leela Mulatti can be accused of generalisation, in a sense only such generalisation can capture the scale on which religion mediates family life in India.

Every Indian is believed to be born with duties to family, relatives, community elders, and children of the neighbourhood. This sense of duty is imbibed very strongly in the minds of the children, not merely through books, but through their family elders who are living models of love and sacrifice towards all the family. A child is believed to be a fruit given by God. No sacrifices for the well being and unity of the family and maintenance of its high traditions and honour, are considered inessential. This religious dictum of the family unity seems to continue to exist in Indian society in spite of its multitudinal problems in today's modernised world. Similar to life cycles, the day to day activities of the individuals in the family are believed to be religious
activities, right from the morning bath to the nightly sleep. Hence, Indian families in general, and Hindu families in particular, mirror Indian religion.\textsuperscript{31}

A similar level of generalising about the Australian situation would describe Australian attitudes as casual and adventitious. Though there has been of late a significant, but still small, uptake of fundamental forms of Christianity in Australia, formal religious beliefs and practices generally, have a low and even tokenistic profile and are more likely to find expression in private rather than public. In India, rapid economic change and the social fluidity it has necessitated, have meant that traditional legitimations for patriarchy have paradoxically experienced both breakdown and reinvigoration.\textsuperscript{32} Religious and social orthodoxies are finding empowerment, even as countervailing forces of secularisation are at work, especially among the middle-classes whose numbers, affluence and education are expanding at the same time as, and often in tandem with, their entrepreneurial and familial networks. Simultaneously, conservative reinterpretations of tradition and orthodoxy which attempt to stem the alleged tide of dilution and corruption wrought by religious conversion and modernisation, have also experienced invigoration. Amongst the ebb and flow of such forces of emancipation and reaction, however, family life remains a locus for oppressive distributions of power and role according to sex, and though changes are afoot, they are gradual. The inequality of the sexes still leaves India, as Mulatti claims “by and large patriarchal in structure.”\textsuperscript{33}

Ideological support for the traditional role of the sexes and the family has not suffered the same degree of attrition in India that it has in Australia and the rest of the West. Research shows that within Australian heterosexual households it is still true that women’s contribution to housework and childcare, and their representation in paid and unpaid ‘caring professions’ greatly exceeds that of men.\textsuperscript{34} It is also true that women’s paid employment is still under-valued, and that equal pay for equal work is by no means systemic.\textsuperscript{35} Nonetheless, unlike India, in Australia, women do not tend to be the recipients of direct forms of discrimination and oppression, nor are they likely to accept explicit directions from men, nor refrain from criticising gender oppressive circumstances and representations. Gendered forms of inequality and discrimination against women certainly exist in Australia, but are arguably, less visible and more likely to be exposed and contested.

While the constitution, functions, processes, cycles and activities of the family are, in both countries, unmatched for the influence they wield in the assimilation and transmission of culture,
in Australia, the influence of the family seems mild next to its pervasive potency in India. Family in India determines so much more than it does in Australia, and consequently means much more. That this is so is due, in large part, to the weak and weakening influence in Australia of institutionalised religion, whose creeds and practises no longer provide rationales which embed and surround the practices and notions of family-life, as they do in India. Family practices in Australia are now grounded less on the traditional Christian dogmas that came with colonisation, than on the roles, bonds, and processes of shared space and sentiment, as these are affected by the nature and entailments of employment, education, health and leisure interests of its members. India has undergone increasing exposure to the liberating powers and individuating disciplines of modernity. Due to the inertia of a closed economy and chronic and systemic underdevelopment, India, when compared to Australia, has experienced in recent years quite rapid and widespread change. In Australia by contrast, regular technological and economic change has accompanied the loss of traditional forms and practices, to produce a certain accustomed acceptance, of ‘new traditions’, though I do not mean to suggest that such familiarity necessarily entails approval. These ‘new traditions’ are practises that gather values as they develop. Though some endure, new traditions have a tendency to form and gain ground only to lose it again to another new tradition. One only has to think, for example, of the new traditions that have coalesced and then obsolesced around motor cars, televisions and telephones.36

Compared to India, the nature and process of Australian families are more fluid, open, and contested, and the structural and practical adaptations in the family have known both more erosion and more innovation. Yet, no matter how orthodox or alternate family forms are, the study of attitudes to the family from within the family, has been rather meagre. However differently configured and influenced, attitudes to the family encompass a wide range of concerns, from within and beyond the home. Domestic dwelling is a crucial place in which many issues, interests and concerns converge and mingle, with different degrees of resonance and dissonance. Issues of employment, health, education, transport, technology and entertainment quite literally come to live at home, and cannot help but contribute to the family and to attitudes to the family.

Before discussing actual attitudes to the family from within the family, it hardly needs saying that almost invariably, writing on the family, whether academic or popular, looks at family life as centred on a residence.37 Behind any representation is the assumption of a household of residential accommodation of one sort or another which, like a membrane, holds the members,
and understands them more or less as a functional unity, continuing to cement the impression of the house-held family. With the exception of those studies which are specifically directed at houses per se, most research on the family assumes that a house-held dwelling of some description provides a frame for the family relations in question. No matter what their composition, the families and the houses with which they are automatically associated, are an undisputed norm. Thus, the family can be described as a *house-held* family, with all this implies in terms of the presence or absence of love, belonging, care, threat and constraint. Within the vast corpus of study on the family, lies a specific body of work that focuses on the significance of home as the locus of the house-held family. In the West, a good deal of this work comes from feminist perspectives which, understandably, have examined the thesis that homes, in Lyn Richard’s phrase, are “little boxes made of ideology”, gendered in countless ways by sex associated roles, rights and responsibilities. Richards draws on the large body of work in women’s studies to discuss the nature of family-life in a new suburb in Australia. Her comments on the convergence of notions of home with those of family, illustrate well the commonsense association of home and family, and of family with children.

Ask about home, and women and men talk, albeit in different ways, about family life. While the reasons for owning varied, the necessity of a home for a family was taken for granted. ...Ask about ‘a good family life’, and women and men talk not about new homes but about old ideals. ...Definitions of good family life also rarely included but always assumed that a good family has children. 

Like in Australia, every piece of research in India assumes that families, however constituted, will occupy some kind of residence, no matter how minimal or marginal this may be. In marked contrast to the attention paid to families, residences in India have not attracted even a small portion of the attention they have received in Australia. Yet, as so much research casually attests, the prevalence of the association of house and home with family is extremely strong. Even without explicit mention of platial location, it is clear that family life in India centers on, and circles around, a residence. And, as in Australia, ‘house-life’, and more particularly ‘home-life’, can be said to be synonymous with family life. Mandelbaum, for example, confirms as much when he states:

A family in India, as else-where, is a corporate group whose members act together to meet their common purposes. Typically they live in the same house and eat food prepared in the same kitchen; they work together, pool their income, expenditures, and property, and perform religious rituals as a family.
The vast majority of work on family relations in India presents no more than the most perfunctory sorts of reference to the home, or indeed, any other places the family is found. The exhaustive descriptions and analysis of kin relations in Mandelbaum’s text invariably take place without reference to any locations, except the mention of villages and districts but hardly ever in domestic residences. Even when places are mentioned, there is little reference to platial or spatial relations, much less discussion of these relations. Of course, to include such aspects would seriously increase the size and scope of such works, and thus it becomes plausible to argue that relations of place should, for this reason, be neglected. Nonetheless, such neglect is so common as to be near universal, and should not always be the case. It could only extend the interest of such discussions for kin relations to be placed where they occur, whether this is within or beyond the household.

While social inquiry has delivered research that shows the importance of the family, these discussions tend to focus on the bones of structural and functional convention, and neglect the flesh of content. Rare is research which actually asks how members of a family regard their family. Fictional literature, of course, addresses this lack in representations of home and family that can be so natural as to seem ‘drawn from life’ 42 Though less intense and evocative than a story or a poem, this chapter hopes to bring to the formal representations of research on the family, some poetic balance and make a bridge with wholly fictional representations. The counterpart of greater levels of sensitisation and commitment to the attitudes to the family is that the homes they do so much to produce are better understood as the source and object of the ideas and actions they are. At home, the house-held family warrants closer examination than it has hitherto been given, though this thesis is but a beginning gesture, as many questions will occur which cannot be accommodated here.43 The next two sections traverse the relationship of house/home and family, and discuss the qualities of connections and identifications that have emerged in Diu and Coolbellup.

6.2 “The meaning of the home is the family”: Essential Family Values in Diu
6.2.1 “A home is made of hearts”: Emotional Reasons, Resonant Emotions
Of Catholic heritage, born in Goa, Marianne accepted the fact that, as a married woman, she must live with her husband a long way from her parental home. Marriage, for the vast majority of Indian women entails leaving the house of their childhood for the house of their husband’s family.44 Marianne demonstrated how taken for granted this exile was, when she observed that, of course, marriage meant she must “forget everything of her parents and home.” Although
recognising that Diu was the place she now “belongs to”, the presence of her mother in Goa beckoned her still, though visits were constrained by the unfamiliar, and slightly uncomfortable relations, with the families, and especially the spouses, of her brothers and sisters. However, her new identity, as a married woman with two young daughters, had provided Marianne so much satisfaction and fulfillment that she considered herself more than merely pleased with the transition she had made, despite the unpleasant eruption of conflict in her husband’s family. Since marriage, they had lived next to, and shared some household facilities with, her husband’s mother and brother’s family. But after the mother’s death there was such serious conflict between her husband and his brother’s family, that she and her husband decided they must live separately and build their own house. Home, in Marianne’s opinion, was more than anything else the abode of her family, which meant only the immediate nuclear family rather than the joint family. For this intimate little group, home was quintessentially a matter of the heart and built with love. “When I think of home, I feel that home is made of hearts” said Marianne and emphasised the distance and difference in meaning by declaring houses to be only “made of bricks.” Ideally for Marianne, family life was a congregation of hearts beating as one, an old metaphor for the unconditional love and care of the family.

Levita’s conception of home closely resembled Marianne’s. Levita lived with four other family members, her mother, sister, paternal grandmother and maternal uncle. A few years ago her father had died unexpectedly. It is useful to recall that, for Levita, the term home covered both the dwelling place and dwelling experience, and that these were both invoked by the presence of her family. Levita loved her family and was sure her love was returned. Hoping to avoid the pain of another loss, Levita said she regularly asked God to preserve her family’s togetherness, keep them from harm and help them resolve their problems. Levita showed the extent to which the family forms the raison d’etre of home when she equated home with the presence of her family: “the meaning of home is as the family.” Ideally, home meant that the family lived together in constant cooperation and peace, and Levita’s chief wish was that her family would be harmonious and never disintegrate. For Levita, a lack or a breakdown of understanding and trust would seriously threaten her sense of home as a place of peace. Affective identifications with her family, and commitment to household peace were privileged over all other material and platial aspects except shelter. Indeed, material concerns could disrupt and damage household harmony when the house became the object of disputes over inheritance. Disputes were deadly, and killed the peace Levita valued, and for the most part enjoyed, at home. The antithesis of
homeliness was distress perpetrated by family quarrels which, along with home invasion and violation, constituted for Levita the worst possible home.

Like Marianne, Pramilaben spoke of how the house of her parents, after marriage, had long ceased to claim the same sense of home it once had, as distance and marriage had created family relations which were now her first priority. Pramila lived in a simple family situation along with her husband (a ship’s engineer), one grown son, a grown but unmarried daughter, and one adolescent son. She described her experience of home as synonymous with her family, using collective pronouns. She lived “peacefully with them.” The emphasis on the importance of peace in the family was strongly marked.

Krishnaben’s family situation had changed radically over the years of her marriage and looked set to continue to do so, as she and the children were to emigrate to Britain to join her husband. When a child, she had lived in a joint family and observed how far so many of its members now lived from one another. While she waited for her husband to establish himself in London, Krishna and her children lived with her husband’s parents and sisters-in-law in a three-storied, six roomed house. The importance of this family, as a friendly, cooperative congregation, was stressed when Krishna said her favourite place in the house was the sitting room, because it was where “the whole family will sit together.”

Twelve year old Kajal lived with her father and mother and two younger brothers, in a simple family in two rooms above her father’s shop. Like her mother Varshaben, Kajal tended to emphasise the material and functional aspects of home as the main source of interest and pleasure, and thus whose meaning converged with the meaning of house. Yet Kajal also declared that pleasure at home was family togetherness, and her ideal home would be one where, in contrast to her experience of the father’s disturbing drinking habit, familial forms of propriety and regularity were pre-eminent.48

There were also many male expressions of friendly, loving and cooperative relations at home. Laxhmiben’s son, Natwar was very earnest in his reflections on home, which were replete with references to the family. The everyday presence of his family made him “feel good and happy.” Togetherness in his family was important in every kind of activity, from simple pleasures such as watching television, to the more sedate ones like ritual worship at the temple. The temple was a favourite place because “to pray means we come together.” Ideal and worst possible homes were
defined by the respective presence and absence of family harmony and happiness. An ideal home was “where there is peace, and there is no unhappiness” while, “unhappiness in the home is the worst possible home.”

Ashwinbhai and Vilasbhai, in their different ways, spoke of their appreciation of home as harmonious family relations. Vilas shared the two room house he called home with the five other people of his immediate family, and saw his primary association with it sourced in the provision of domesticity, as assisted by all necessary household equipment. Yet to these utilitarian concerns he also added the desire that his house be the home of a “joint family living very peacefully.” A close and congenial society of people in which arguments did not persist, and so qualified as the ideal kind of home.

Ashwin shared his temple home with his wife and their two children, but was visited nearly every day by his wife’s sister, brother and father, who lived nearby. On the actuality and desirability of harmony and affection as the mainstay of family life, Ashwin was quite passionate, and declared he loved “home with family and peace.” Also of great importance to the home were the practical aspects of family, since bonds of love meant mutual care and support in times of trouble, such as when a member fell ill. As he described his conception of his ideal home, Ashwin iterated some of these as cultural and religious ideals. In India, the ideal was “the entire family living happily together under one roof maintaining decency in terms of respectful manners and cultural aspects.” Love, peace and cooperation in the family made home, and was only complete when these qualities were given the recognition they deserved, for a united family was a profound embodiment of traditional values. Across India, Hindu, Muslim and Christian traditions stress the importance and social eminence of the family. Yet shared cultural values do not necessarily emanate from, or translate into, a shared reality, and Ashwin’s easy realisation of traditional family values was not Vijayaben’s experience.

### 6.2.2 “What will happen to me?”: Cultural Ideals versus Actual Traditions of Feminine Disadvantage at Home in the Family

Vijaya, like Ashwin, believed that the family was a venerable institution, claimed by an ancient tradition. As imaged by Vijaya, home was a lofty and complex ideal that privileged inter-familial unity, loyalty, mutual aid, and deference to the wisdom and wishes of the elders. Yet such a home had eluded her when, “citing no proper reasons” her husband suddenly abandoned her and their newly born son. The irregularity and poverty of Vijaya’s situation vis a vis the Indian ideal,
was evident in her description of the worst possible home as the rejection and desolation she suffered with her husband’s desertion, which was especially distressing, since it followed the precedent of her father’s abandonment of her mother, that had created a legacy of bitterness and conflict with that side of the family. Vijaya lived in a house that belonged to her mother’s brother, with her son, her mother, one unmarried sister, and two brothers and felt home to be realised in the cooperative relations between the members of this maternally oriented household. As described by Vijaya, cultural ideals did not place women in subservient and obedient relationship to men, but stressed the mutual service and cooperation that families should strive to exemplify. Ideally, home was the traditional ideal of romanticised harmony without systematic inequalities related to gender. Still, Vijaya deeply detested all talk of any remarriage, since such talk only re-ignited the memory of “bitter experiences.”

Vijaya’s consternation at her husband’s desertion had been great, for along with the devastating shock of this abrupt abdication of mutual care and responsibility came practical issues and questions of survival. Her hopes of economic security remained unfulfilled, and the negative counterpoint of the home and a happy, stable family were associated with the bleak economic facts of her existence. She believed that if she had a working and cooperative husband, she would belong to the Hindu ideal with which most other Indian women were blessed. Despite equal opportunity legislation at the national level, work done by women in India is not paid nearly as well as that done by men, and Vijaya’s lack of a husband placed her in an economically precarious situation. In India, the economic life of women is seriously affected by the difficult economic circumstances that a marriage breakdown can entail. By the tyrannical standards of Indian patriarchy, a woman’s honour and worth are made dependent on the integrity of her marriage. When a woman is deserted or separated a negative stigmatisation of her character is a typical outcome. The lack of a husband, especially within low social strata, is frequently the cause of financial and material hardship. When combined with the shame which women suffer after marital separation, economic discrimination tends to exacerbate the former, and this in turn contributes to further economic marginality and social ostracism. Amidst these tensions, a deserted woman’s natal family may be her only haven, and Vijaya’s mother and siblings had rallied round with love, sympathy and support. The centrality and importance of family life at home figured powerfully in Vijaya’s discourse. She saw houses as categorically different from homes, and the difference lay in her emphasis on the family as an investment of much greater importance than the material technologies of dwelling, though she was also keenly aware of the economic bonds. The mutual support and collective harmony of her family was both her
everyday experience and her foremost desire. For Vijaya, home concerned familial dynamics rather than the materiality of platial arrangements. With her family, Vijaya said she could relax.

They were a pleasure and relief in difficult circumstances, a group of intimate companions who, at the end of day, could together discuss all that had happened and was happening in and beyond the family.

Hiraben and her neighbour Laxhmiben both had husbands who were alcoholics, and regularly drunk. Habitual drinking caused considerable social and economic grief for their families in general, and their wives in particular. Hira shared a garret room with her husband and four children under twelve above her brother-in-law’s diminutive house. Though poor, Vijaya had found relief and comfort in the extent of care and cooperation of her family, while for Hira, economic insecurity was compounded by painful marital and emotional insecurity, as she lived without the degree of family support Vijaya enjoyed. Though the family did not approve of her husband’s frequent drunk and abusive behaviour, they did not offer her much help or consolation.

Moreover, along with the social pain and shame of her husband’s alcoholism, he was an economic liability. His work was irregular and he drank away an unsustainable amount of their meagre income. Desperation at her marital situation made Hira threaten desperate behaviour, such as suicide. Their precarious economic existence prompted Hira to look with longing at the ideal of “mutual understanding between husband and wife” as something she would value most about home. For Hira, the ideal home was a place where there was peace in the house between the family.” Yet, even with all her worries, Hira still felt home as refuge, as she said, it was possible to “feel all kinds of relief when there is peace in the house between the family.” Indeed, Hira considered the family house to be a holy place, for the togetherness it embodied and symbolised. Thus, despite adversity, Hira did not want to live anywhere else, for she was after all “accustomed to life here.” Family integrity was decisive and paramount and Hira was willing to live elsewhere only if the whole family went, for it was inconceivable that she “live separately or alone in an unknown place.”

Laxhmiben, with her husband, four children, and her husband’s parents, lived in a two-roomed house with separate kitchen and annex on a roof terrace. The “gentle and loving” people with whom she shared, enabled her to feel that the house of her in-laws had become her own. Like Hira, Laxhmi had no desire to live elsewhere, and only the prospect of an improved economic situation would induce her to go, and then only on condition that her family were also present. Laxhmi’s family was economically more secure than Hira’s, yet her husband’s addiction to liquor
was still a source of shame and embarrassment and this upset her sense of home. In an otherwise happy and cooperative house-hold, in which the family got along well and shared fun and understanding, her husband was a problem. Unity and mutual support in the family through good times and bad, was an ideal of extraordinary value for Laxhmi. Like many others, Laxhmi also claimed an ideal home entailed the harmonious coexistence of an extended family who, either sharing the same household or living close by, shared with, cared for, and supported one another. Such an ideal included respect for the family’s most senior members who, in India, are considered its greatest source of authority.

6.2.3 “We obey their sayings”: The Wisdom of and Respect for Family Elders

Despite their differences, India’s religious traditions uphold the giving and receiving of respect between all humans, and believe that especial respect and wisdom should be accorded to people of advanced age. In general, a tradition of respect and reverence for one’s social elders is meant to cultivate respect, loyalty and obedience for the knowledge and power that age is supposed to confer. In particular, values of propriety, obedience and attention to family elders are expected to create a harmonious environment at home. According to Vijayaben, rather than self-serving ambition or pursuit of relations of creature comfort, respectful relations with one’s elders were axiomatic to the praxis of successful relations in both her home and community. However to work well, respectful and deferential relations required reciprocation, and Vijaya’s filial deference to her mother meant that, in return, her mother never enforced obedience.

Customary respect for the elders in the Hindu tradition is often seriously qualified by gender, with widowhood, by regional and caste differences, and by the processes and pressures of modernisation and globalisation. As in other family matters in Diu, gender played a role governing the respect accorded the family elders. As the elder patriarchs of their households, Jinabhai and Musakhan both remarked on the courteous level of care they received from their respective families and the gratification this respect afforded them. A relatively prosperous Dalit, Jinabhai was the elder in an extended family with nineteen members sharing a large two-storey, seven room house. His satisfaction at the respect he received from everyone was evident when he said “all the family living together respect me, and this is a special pleasure for me.” For Jina, the service he received at home, especially the housekeeping and nurturing as performed by the women of his household, were his home’s most important feature, and he had no complaints of the care and service they provided. However, reflecting the customary patriarchy in India, that holds a household’s males to be its chief figures of influence and reputation, Jina referred only to
the male contingent of his household. In describing the nature and attitude of his household, he equated its honour only with its males when he said: “in our house, all are gentlemen.”

Musakhan, like his fellow patriarch Jina, also greatly enjoyed the respect he received at home. His three-roomed house overflowed with people, and resulted in a great deal of noisy commotion, which he singled out as the only thing he disliked about his home. Musa especially appreciated the friendly respect his wife gave him when he was at home, and so long as this occurred without surrounding hubbub, then wifely attentions could help defuse and solve his problems.

Nirmalaben, the most elderly of my female respondents, was a widow and the senior member of her household. She lived with her son’s family on one floor of a three-storied haveli. Two other sons and their families lived on adjacent floors of the same building. Nirmala was self-deprecatory and reticent, and did not mention respect as a salient feature of relations in her household. Although timid and minimal in her responses Nirmala emphasised home as a matter of peace and cooperation which, in the context of her age and sex, could be understood as implying the presence of much less authority and respect than would be accorded a senior male.

My friend and research assistant Pareshbhai’s understanding of home was strongly marked by the traditional beliefs of the importance of the family in the lifecycle of individuals and society and thus, of the respect which should be accorded to advanced age. Occasionally, Paresh made retreats to remote jungle hermitages, to live with sages who had reached the life-stage at which detachment from the things of the world, including home and family, are seen as appropriate. Renouncing attachment, the remaining part of life is meant to be dedicated to the realisation of the unconditioned state of being. Paresh juxtaposed such sojourns with sages with the meditative life of a yogi, though he was nevertheless still very much involved in the world. Living on his own, Paresh used the household in which he had grown up, and to which he periodically returned, to reference the bonds of filial love and duty he recognised and felt. Though he had made a home for himself as a bachelor, Paresh’s true home was, he declared, where his parents were. Bachelorhood in India only sometimes entails an absence of proximate, house-held family life and the establishment of a single man’s household, as was the case with the three bachelors in my study.

### 6.2.4 Bachelor Ways
In the three bachelor situations I encountered in Diu, the absence of the family might have been expected to mean that the appellation home would refer to the abode of the natal family. However, this was so only in the case of Pareshbhai. The bitterness and hostility of longstanding conflict with his father, meant an ostracism of many years from his natal home for Shrivesh Kumar, while Vikrambhai made no mention of his family home, except to name its location. Vikram had lived on his own for four years, and did not have any proximate relatives, but had made several friends in Diu including Paresh. Paresh, was both a much older man, and more experienced career migrant, and it was evident that for Vikram he was a mentor for, apart from his government apartment, the only other place he felt at home was, he said, at Paresh’s residence.

At the time of our interview Paresh was a bachelor, but is now married and has a son. Then, Paresh’s sense of self-determination was oriented towards the yogic ideals of introspection and self-realisation, as far as possible given his professional and filial duties. However, the center of gravity at home in his apartment has now shifted and expanded to include marriage and a family. Bachelorhood had involved many transient periods that included tertiary education, a period of naval service, and several positions of hotel management in Diu. Such transience involved many temporary dwellings, not all of which evoked the epithet ‘home’. During the first few months of our acquaintance, he had shared two very small rooms in a haveli with another bachelor, but because of a lack of privacy and space, felt more at home in the lodgings of friends. Ultimately though, these neither equalled the satisfaction he anticipated from a place of his own, nor the sense of homeliness he knew with his parents. Long acquainted with the bachelor life, Paresh was well aware of the gaps that existed between this current version of home, and the one in which he grew up. This was suggested by the way he changed his mind, as he reflected on the most important things about home. At first, the most important things about home were, he said, its “technological things” and “secondly the family.” However, realising the inaccuracy of this depiction, Paresh restated and reversed the hierarchy. At its most profound, home for Paresh meant the abode of a loving family and never “more than that.” Paresh’s reflection on the absence of his natal family, illustrates once again the pivotal significance of love and peace to the notion of home in Diu. That home was, or ought to be, ‘peaceful’ in its familial nature and functions, was for most a primary consideration though somewhat qualified according to gender.

6.2.5 Gendered Emotions and Notions
A broad ground of consensus of the desirability of peace between members of the house-held family was evident in Diu, though it tended to be differentially inflected according to gender. Krishnaben, Pramilaben, Vijayaben and Marianne each articulated the idea of harmony and cooperation, involving open-minded or free communication within the family, while Varshaben, Kajal, Laxhmiben, Hiraben, and Levita had no special attitude towards the quality of intra-family communication, and both Nirmala and Riswan gave timid and minimal responses, irrespective of the topic. By contrast, none of the men or boys presented any trouble with the projection of self, or gave any indication that there was any special need to cultivate or value equal opportunity for the expression of ideas. Meanwhile, the three bachelors were unique in addressing the issue of peace as the absence of noise, or external sources of disruption and interruption. This bachelor mode of dwelling did not include others, except as invitations or unsolicited influences from outside, and it is perhaps not surprising that, without the claims and clamour of family-life to remind them, these significant others received no mention. The gendered contrast is clearest however, when one considers that, among the women and girls, only Marianne commented on her desire for a peaceful intra-familial environment and for platial resources that would allow her to remove herself from household mess and commotion. However, it must be pointed out, that Marianne’s remarks occurred within the context of a family feud. Yet, it was not only the misery of living next to hostile relatives which prompted her to articulate a desire for refuge, since Marianne also placed considerable value on having the capacity to relax, out of range of the gaze of others, or sudden interruptions from unsolicited visitors.

For the most part, the noise and clamour in the domestic environment would seem to be something which the women and girls in Diu accepted as concomitant with house-held family life. Though these interviews cannot wholly represent what is always a partial vision, they show how female understanding and desire can differ from those of males, and thus subtend the extremely gendered approaches to household labour and parenting which are considered normal in India. As women are responsible for raising and nurturing the family, it is as normal and necessary for them to accept the cyclic inevitability of mess and commotion as it is to accept the serially repetitive nature of housework. While it would be going too far to extrapolate to the distribution of power and decision making, it can nonetheless be argued that while peace at and around home are issues for males, the nature of communication within them is not. Moreover, it is also suggested that the expression of a desire for peace at home among females is facilitated or enhanced by the recognition that it is both right and interesting that women’s voices be, not simply heard in the family, but listened to. Good dialogue, in other words, makes a good home.
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Intra-familial peace is in part the result of equality, rather than the product of deference to masculine authority.

It makes sense in a densely populated country, in which people live in ‘check by jowl’ proximity with one another, that the desire for a peace be a prevailing value. Thus, even in Diu, where conditions are not nearly as crowded as they are in many other urban situations, people placed a premium upon a peaceful home environment. Indeed, in Diu, where households tend to have ratios of people to space in inverse proportions to suburban Australia, it would not make sense not to espouse peace as a desirable quality in one’s home. Yet it is not sufficient to merely espouse peace. It takes effort and practice on a daily basis. In Diu, family life is constrained by the limited amounts of house-held space, and its harmony an ideal reiterated like a musical refrain. In Australia, by contrast, with much more space but much smaller families, not only was harmony not really an issue, but the family itself seems to have a reduced significance in the constitution of home.

6.3 More Muted, Less Expressive: The Familiar Zone in Coolbellup

The connections between home and family in Coolbellup are not as marked, nor have the same resonance, as they do in Diu. In Coolbellup, though there were connections between home and family, these tended to be more muted and less expressive representations. Relative to Diu, the family not only lacked the same level of categorical endorsement, but did not get much explicit mention either. As in Diu, contextual nuance and conditions of surrounding articulation, are analytically crucial and one must note the ways in which notions of the family are situated, and the things that surround its mention. Unlike Diu, especial endorsements of the family in Coolbellup tended to coincide with references to the family per se. The relatively restrained level of association which home and family elicited in Coolbellup, shows a ‘structure of feeling’ which brings a different tone to the nature of home and dwelling. In the next six sections, I look at the ways in which the family enters discourse within the conditions and contexts of Coolbellup, and participates in perceptions of the nature of dwelling at home. The seventh and final section discusses comparisons with Diu, pondering the ways in which they intersect and diverge.

6.3.1 “Home is Family and Kids” : Expressions of Belonging in the Nuclear Family.

One of the two most explicit identifications of home with family, was from Peter who, at the time of our interview, owned, and lived on his own in an unimproved ex MoH house since the break up of his marriage, and the departure of his wife and two children. Peter identified both house and
the home, briefly but definitively, as the presence of “family and kids.” Peter found living alone in the house, that had held a family, a wretched experience, and emphasised, in poignant reflections on fatherhood, the importance of home and family. In a position of eminence, was his ideal home that equated home with the presence and play of children, embedded within the friendly happy relations of a contented family in a commodious and congenial house. Despite being alone, Peter continued to place his children at the centre of his concern in all decisions to do with the economics and socio-logistics of his location that might affect relations with them.

Peter’s notions of house and home were about the different kinds of emotional and financial security they respectively offered. The difference between house and home, was the difference a family made, so that if one didn’t have a house-held family, then a house could not be fully a home. A house was necessary but insufficient for Peter, who said that a family was “important to what makes a home.” A house was merely a background, with the centre and foreground provided by the presence of a loving family.

Michelle’s feeling was as strong as Peter’s in emphasising the centrality and importance of her nuclear family, who lived in a significantly improved ex MoH house. For Michelle there was no doubt that home equalled the family unit. The connections between home and family were stressed by drawing comparisons with neighbouring households. The serious deficiencies of attitude and behaviour Michelle perceived in some of her neighbours illustrated, by way of contrast, the qualities and values she treasured in her home and family. Coolbellup depressed Michelle with the amount of neglect and abuse she saw in her neighbourhood, and the threats and realities of social dysfunction provided a framework to her entire discourse. The anxiety these fuelled was especially profound when she considered the current effects of such grave dysfunction on her family life, and anticipated more in the future. Her indictments of the delinquent parenting of problematic neighbours, and unkempt houses, made her family and home seem the standard by which they failed. While ‘they’ neglected their children, and had no care for the state of their homes, her child and home emerged, by implication, as exemplary models of care and concern. Her disreputable neighbours represented the antithesis to her husband and child, and the unstable and disordered situation of her neighbours, threw into relief Michelle’s implicit claim to moral and organisational superiority.

For Pat, who had raised two children with her husband in a substantially improved MoH, house, home was a place that could only manifest when the house and its location were satisfyingly appropriate. The ‘cocoon effect’ was the name Pat gave to the pleasure derived from the
enclosing, screening and protective effect of home. Her nominal ‘hearth’ was the kitchen, especially the stove and table. The stove embodied warmth and home-cooking, while around the table family and friends gathered for meals, or simply to chat over ‘a cuppa.’ Though Pat did not explicitly equate home and family, it was clear that the comfortable and sociable ambience of the kitchen was a metaphor for them. 

77 Husband, grown-up children and friends were, for Pat, the *sine qua non* of home, since allusions to them littered her discourse from reportage of the friendly banter when her son visited, to her daughter’s kitchen activities. Yet, though more of a sub-text than a set of explicit endorsements, there was no mistaking the strength of these associations, and Pat’s discourse made obvious affiliations between home and family.

Among the children in my Coolbellup study, Marissa’s responses though brief, were unusual in their explicit association of home and family. Marissa lived with her parents and six brothers and sisters, in an extended and improved MoH house. As well as a place to eat and shelter, home for Marissa was “where you stay with your family”, as well as a refuge, a place with the certainty of comfort and without trouble: a haven and a heart centred place, where the family was a repository of unconditional love and acceptance.

79 Responses from Reuben, Marissa’s fraternal twin brother to the family they shared were however rather different, focusing as they did on notions of home that were without many points of convergence.

### 6.3.2 ‘Home is where you eat and sleep’: Family as the Assumed Horizon of Home

Addressing his notion of the house, Reuben drew attention to the relationship between the material aspect of home and his family, and especially to the gender of his home. Reuben’s home was more or less identical with his house, and unconsciously identified with his mother in an association that considered the awful possibility that the sudden collapse of his house would also kill her. 

80 Were his thoughts about house and home unpacked, they might read something like this: ‘If the house collapses, what would become of the very important people who live there with me, especially my mother who, as the centre of my home and the main house-keeper, is the one most likely to die?’ In a nightmare scenario, the connection between home and family, and the implicit gender of home, emerges in a way which rationalised reflections about home, as the supplier of necessary needs, did not produce. This connection between home and mother, shows a latent anxiety that lies behind the only three other brief mentions of his family. One alluded to the kitchen as a place where the family gathered, one to what the absence of parents meant to his personal freedom of choice when he was home alone, while the third glossed the house of an auntie as an alternative place to stay. With the exception of the imagined event, Reuben’s
allusions to his family make them seem as incidental as shadows. Such casualness takes the family for granted, as though their presence can simply be assumed, and does not deserve any special privilege. Joe, Bernard, and Brandon also presented casual attitudes to their families, and did no more than allude to either the presence of their family, or the idea of the family per se. Yet, Joe had a wife; Bernard had a wife and four grown up children; and Brandon’s mother was present as we sat in his house and talked.

Brandon lived with his mother and brother in a duplex. His interview was unusual insofar as it took place with his mother present. He did not seem to mind his mother’s presence in the least, was cheerful and relaxed, and even looked to her for her responses to his opinions. Though Brandon obviously felt quite comfortable in his house, and seemed fond of his mother, it did not prompt or translate into reflections on family relations. Mother slipped easily into the place of a stable, secure and assumed presence, and contrasted with his brother, who occupied an invisible and frictional presence in the background of his discourse. Despite these companionable and conflictual relationships, Brandon had almost entirely material concerns on the subject of home. Prompted to think about home, Brandon suggested family and shelter, but only after mentioning food and sleep. Most of all though, home was about “playing the computer and going out with friends, and those fun things.” The only other reference to family, told of feeling at home with relatives, who because they lived in a rural district, provided an enjoyable place to holiday. However, visits were enjoyed only occasionally, and were thus regarded as special, both for the activities of a rural location and the company they provided. A less casual, but nonetheless similar assumption of family as a background to the idea of home, was evident with Janet.

6.3.3 “I feel relaxed there but it’s not my place”: Expressions of Family and Autonomy

Janet was an emigrant from England, single, and dwelling on her own in an unimproved ex MoH house. While Janet saw home as the now long forsaken house of her parents, she neither talked about her family, nor discussed any notions, qualities or values associated with families. While Janet did not love her un-partnered life, she was used to it, and resigned to it, and had indeed come to appreciate her independence and autonomy without a partner. However, to enhance life without a partner and live fully, it was essential, she felt, to live among a community of “like-minded people.”

Autonomy and self-determination at home were also important issues for Christine’s negotiation of home and family. Complementing the roles of mother and daughter, in an Aboriginal family
which extended throughout nearby and outlying areas, Christine’s main concern for her home was to assure its social and platial autonomy. A definite distinction existed between house and home, for houses preceded homes, and only an evolutionary development process could produce the latter. The transformation of her house into her home was, in other words, an effect of time over place. Home was a process, and at its core were the activities involved in appropriating and renovating her house and raising four children. Once these were entrained, the most important thing about home, for Christine, was the anchoring function it provided for relationships. Although “people and people’s relationships” were the most important things about home, these varied in significance, from the very casual to the very intimate. However, whatever their value it was important that Christine’s relationships with others did not restrict her autonomy. The fabric of relationships had to be a loose weave, with open uncommitted places in which solitude and self-determination held sway.\textsuperscript{81} Within a matrix of mutuality, responsibilities and rights, autonomy literally required room for home to become actualised. Christine required control of some personal time and space, and only with such control could she feel free and ‘at home.’ Thus, while her mother’s and daughter’s houses were welcoming and relaxing, Christine did not feel at home, as she had neither sufficient identification with their social order, nor autonomy in their platial order.\textsuperscript{82} While Aboriginal people are used to close relations of mutual succour and support in extended families, Christine’s situation shows this does not necessarily mean that they necessarily embrace co-residence with their extended family. Despite the tsunami of dispossession and dispersal which Aboriginal people suffered with colonisation, the loss of ‘country’ and social fragmentation has been most profound in urban areas, where home for most Aboriginal families involves strong links of kinship.\textsuperscript{83}

\subsection*{6.3.4 “We didn’t know anybody”: Traditions of the Extended Family}
Also Aboriginal, and twelve years old, Melissa at the time of our interview, lived with her mother, brother, two aunts and four cousins as tenants of an MoH house. She had lived a transient life with sections of her extended family, but also for a lonely depressing time isolated by distance from everyday contact with their relatives.\textsuperscript{84} Melissa’s house was fairly crowded. With her immediate family lived some aunties and cousins, who needed, not only accommodation, but refuge from the domestic violence perpetrated by abusive boyfriends. Melissa’s account of home describes an atmosphere thick with issues pertaining to their acts and threats. She told of threats to her home, as the security of the house was breached by unwelcome visitors, and there was a sense of general insecurity, surmounted by some anxiety over the vulnerability of her family.\textsuperscript{85} There had been many transgressive and violent incidents, and the near certain probability of
more. Moreover, in addition to concerns about domestic violence, their tenancy had been threatened by complaints from disgruntled neighbours. The combination of such anxieties, gave Melissa’s account of home the impression of being a place of menacing misfortune, a home which could not easily be appropriated. Melissa’s home seemed to exist in a shifting and unstable manner that verged on the precarious. Thus, when imagining her ideal home, it is understandable how Melissa’s thoughts, though they began with the wish for a bigger house and garden, soon evolved into the wish for a home without the threat of domestic violence. It is worthwhile comparing Reuben’s perceptions of house and home with Melissa’s. Anxiety concerning his family was for Reuben displaced onto an imaginary plane, in which he imagined a collapsing wall as a device with which to project fears for his family in general, and his mother in particular. Melissa however, had anxieties based on experience, which involved threats to the order and integrity of her home and family. For Melissa, house and home and family were sites of actual or potential vulnerability and insecurity. House, home and family met for Melissa in a dual sense of welcome possibilities and corrosive harm. This sense oscillated as improvements to their material or familial relations in one moment were displaced in another in recalling depredations to the physical and psychological environment. For Reuben however, both the material and familial constituents of home were stable, assured and carefree, as commonplace as eating or sleeping. Indeed compared to Melissa, the other three children enjoyed an untroubled family life.

For Michael, like his cousins Reuben and Marissa, house and home were different words for the same nonchalant phenomenon. As immigrants from Portugal, their families had lived close to one another until Michael’s family moved to the nearby suburb of Success and were obviously accustomed to the practical support and multiple parties and celebrations of a large extended family network. Yet, though they have this family in common, only Michael explicitly drew attention to its nature, by associating home with family in its extended form, and describing the pleasures such a lively host of cooperative and convivial relations gave him.

In chapter four, I suggested that the dialectic of progress and modernity was active in easing Michael through the transition he was making from the old, small house, in the familiar ambience of Coolbellup to the large, sophisticated house in Success, in his favouring the modern over the traditional. His account of home and family however reversed the emphasis somewhat, and affirmed the traditional over the modern. Michael drew comparisons of family values and traditions, sourced in tales told by his parents’ generation of the differences between the ‘old’ and
‘new’ country. Stories of home and family forty years ago in Portugal, were contrasted with Michael’s own experience and knowledge of family life. Such reflections produced a de-facto nostalgia for home and family, as represented by his parents. Their family relations seemed, to Michael, more loving and intimate than the present, despite comparative material deprivation and much more demanding of physical labour from every able-bodied family member.88 For Michael, family relations in the past had been represented as healthier, because there was more communication and cooperation between family members, but also because people were not so busy as now, nor did both parents work outside the home.89 Yet Michael could also see that compared to his parents’ generation, he enjoyed much greater freedom of expression and movement, and felt lucky that the strict disciplines of his parents’ childhood did not apply to his own.90 However, Michael did not wish for any simple trade of the past for the present, but wanted a mix of the old days with the new, blending past and present qualities of family life, so that traditions were not lost in the rushes and pressures of modernity. Vanishing traditions and contemporary pressures, are the subject of the next section.

6.3.5 “Back to basics” : Divisions of Gender and the Pressures of Modernity

The most explicit connection of home and family, for Pat, was her belief that one had a responsibility to teach one’s children general housekeeping and specific home-making skills. Home was seen by Pat, as the repository of traditional knowledge and of the private, homely pleasures that ought to be esteemed above the bustle and expense of fashionable commercial pleasures. From Pat’s point of view, it was essential to inculcate housekeeping and home-making knowledge in children, in order to teach them how to make the most of home. There was a need to return to tradition, to go “back to basics” so as to “teach people to how to stay home, and enjoy being home” instead of constantly pursuing pleasure beyond home and spending a lot of money.91 Leaving the obvious amenities and comforts of home, for Pat, constituted evidence that people were essentially ignorant of how to create a homely environment.92 The fault lay with parents, who did not educate their children properly. Thus, to make good such parental failures, Pat wanted to see schools and television dispensing the knowledges that accompanied good house-keeping and home-making.93 It was also important that the gender of traditional home-making skills be reaffirmed. As the principal home-makers, it was crucial that girls learn the necessary skills though, as Pat conceded, boys should also have some basic knowledge, in case they found themselves without a wife or a mother to cook and clean.94
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Pat’s love of home received definition from memories of her grandparents’ house, where, the model of her grandmother and her cooking stood at the centre. Pat was proud of her daughter who, she said, was likely to prove “a bit of a homebody.” Thus, as her grandmother had taught her, so Pat had insisted that her daughter learn how to cook properly rather than serve pre-prepared meals, and cited her ability with approval. The teaching of the ‘back to basic’ knowledge meant that the culture of her home had been introduced to her daughter’s ‘uneducated’ boyfriend. As a couple, she said, they “rarely went out” but were “quite happy stay at home.” Similarly her daughter-in-law, though initially oriented toward outside forms of entertainment, had adjusted, and adopted the ‘home-body’ disposition of her husband, Joe. Conscious of the rate at which such traditional knowledge and values seemed to be disappearing, Pat had become their deliberate advocate, affirming the certainties of identity as realised within traditional household tasks and roles, and criticising the marginalisation of the home in modernity, as the promotion of style and convenience over cosiness and comfort.

6.3.6 Critiques of Modernity: The Loss of Respect and the Loss of the Extended Family

The theme of relations between self and society summarises a series of observations Peter made on the problem of the modernity in the West. Lacking love and support after the dissolution of his marriage, Peter suggested that it had provided the catalyst for meaningful reconnection with his natal family. To try and regain a sense of home, Peter turned towards his childhood home, to reconnect and recultivate the sense of home he had been missing in Coolbellup. Prompted by the shock of the failure of his own nuclear family, Peter held pessimistic observations of the fragmenting nature of families per se. Not only was the dissolution of his own family depressing for Peter, but five out of the seven marriages in his ex-wife’s family had ended in divorce, which was, he observed, “a rate of divorce higher than the national average.” A high rate of marriage breakdown showed, he thought, an unhealthy society, whose punishing and damaging conditions lay behind such alarming rates of marriage and family disintegration. The break-up of homes and families was attributed, by Peter, to the breakdown of certain essential and traditional values. Mutual aid, cooperation and respect were, he claimed, disappearing and being replaced by their self-serving opposites of individual eminence and gratification.

The disappearance and loss of values and traditions, meant that essential attitudes of care, which used to be considered normative, had eroded and been replaced by attitudes which prioritised cost-effectiveness and convenience. In particular, the lack of respect and proper care of elderly people in general, and family elders, was a cause of concern. These perceptions were drawn from
perceptions of the respect accorded the elderly in Indigenous Australian, and non-Western
cultures generally, amongst whom, said Peter, a person “wasn’t anybody until you’re sixty years
old” and became “important to the tribe.” Peter desired to pass his own experientially derived
wisdom to his children, but feared it being dismissed by them as a series of irrelevant and
outmoded clichés. Set as he was within Australian society, Peter drew comparisons between
past and present notions of effort, sacrifice and honour, yet acknowledged these were merely
abstract notions, unless contextualised by history and circumstance. Thus for Peter, the worst
possible home was characterised by loneliness, and he reiterated the idea that family values are
lost when traditional family structures disintegrate. Compared to the mutually supportive
structure of family life observed among local Aboriginal people, Peter saw White family life as
weak and impoverished, as a network of family and friends lay at the centre of what makes a
home.

Michelle had left her natal family in New Zealand soon after she became old enough to travel
alone, but years later the distance involved had given her renewed appreciation of the potential of
the extended family. With another baby on the way, Michelle lived with her husband and toddler
and held a view of family values that had been informed both by travel, and the satisfying
experiences of inter-generational support among relatives. Like Peter and Michael, Michelle
referenced an inherited and nostalgic vision of intra-family care and support, and compared
Australia and New Zealand unfavourably with her perceptions of European countries which, she
said, gave much more emphasis to the ways and means of the extended family. For Michelle,
functioning extended families were rare phenomena in Australia, unless one looked to immigrant
cultures like the Yugoslavs, Italians and Indians. Blame for the fragmentation of family life, lay
she felt with the pervasive assimilation in Australia of the ‘soft culture’ of American
individualism and materialism. That Australia had lost cultural sensibility towards the family
was, she said, a result of increased exercise of personal and social mobility. The greater
incidence of divorce and separation these days could be attributed to high levels of individual
autonomy and mobility. For Michelle, Australia had passed the point where family members
could be expected to be found living in close proximity to one another. In particular, the parental
home no longer functioned as a gathering point, except for exceptional occasions, yet these
tended to be so episodic as to hardly compensate for the general attenuation of family life. Yet,
for all of the implied critique, there was also the tension of unresolved contradiction. While
Michelle obviously valued both the nuclear and extended forms of family, she showed she did
more than merely tolerate the distance to her family in New Zealand. Mobility was important,
and inevitably, she said, people these days “branched out and moved on” just as she had done. Thus, though it was important to “keep in touch”, the flexible independence of the nuclear family was a paramount value, since this form enabled moves away from harm or toward advantage. For Michelle the traditions of the mutual aid of an extended family, had to be set against a focus on the expanded opportunities and choices of the members of a nuclear family, and meant, she admitted, that “in the day in, day out part of life, it’s my family, my husband and my child that are the most important things to me.” Evaluations of the family and its values, adjust and mutate with changes of context or circumstance, and thus alter the structures of feeling and nature of home.

6.4 The Familiar Zone as Structures and Contrasts of Feeling

Homes constitute what anthropologist Mary Douglas calls a ‘virtual community’ a notion that, by logical extension, suggests that homes are usually families. Anthony Cohen has argued that community is

\[\ldots\text{a boundary expressing symbol held in common by its members and best understood as an aggregative rather than an integrative device, in which a commonality of forms, or ways of behaving need not indicate a uniformity of meaning.}\]

Thus, though the meaning of the boundary will inevitably vary with the orientation of the members, a “sense of the primacy of belonging” persists, because differences are acknowledged, at the same time that similarities and common interests are privileged. All of which means, observes Cohen, that “the triumph of community” is to contain this variety so that “inherent discordance does not subvert the apparent coherence which is expressed by its boundaries.” Thus, for a community “relative similarity or difference is not a matter for ‘objective’ assessment [but] is a matter of feeling, a matter which resides in the minds of the members themselves.” Communities, whether virtual or otherwise, come into being and continue to exist because of the recognition, generation, and maintenance of forms of cooperation, reciprocity, and solidarity. Mutual aid and trust, in other words, lie at the centre of a community’s survival and success, just as they do for homes and families. Mobilizing the idea of home as a virtual community should help us understand Diu’s difference from Coolbellup. The virtual community of home is a community conditioned and governed by bonds which, having a limited operational field and a large number of embedded expectations, rights and responsibilities, embody both belonging and the sense of belonging.
From the above, it is obvious that notions of family and home have a more overt, active and potent resonance in Diu than they do in Coolbellup. Although home was identified in both places with family relations, in Diu the identification of home with family received much greater positive emphasis than it did in Coolbellup. Family had a sense of prominent self-consciousness in Diu, where its health and harmony were placed at the centre of home. In Coolbellup however, though it was never suggested that family was not important to home, the importance of family was more often unstressed than stressed, and it was on a number of occasions almost overlooked. Home, as a process of cognitive and emotional involvement wore a salience in Diu that was much less evident in Coolbellup. However, and this is crucial, family tended to be understated in Coolbellup, except when it was discussed in terms of loss, in particular, the loss of traditional family values, of mutual aid, and of respect accorded to elders. In Coolbellup, the presence and value of family to home tended to be implied or assumed, unless it was seen as damaged or threatened.

Home, for many Diu people, embodied and mediated experiences and expectations of familial, social or environmental peace. Most people spoke of the idea of home, whether ideally or actually, as involving ‘peace’, and referred to peaceful relations amongst members of the household or with one’s neighbours. The term ‘peace’ thus operated as an umbrella term, covering a repertoire of meritorious household and neighbourhood relations. According to context and circumstance, ‘peace’ was the term used to cover a number of qualities, such as empathy, compassion, patience, tolerance, and synergy. And, though these are my terms rather than those of my respondents, it is evident that these are ingredient qualities and that they combine to create climates of ‘peaceful’, ‘happy’, ‘harmonious’ ‘cooperative’ or ‘loving’ family relations. Harmonious and honourable relations in the house-held family were expressed, most often, as available with the desire for, and practice of, reciprocal understanding and mutuality. While Vijayaben, Levita and Ashwinbhai articulated specific concerns of the importance of love and peace in the family per se, almost everyone spoke of home as actually or ideally involving peace, as a general principal of everyday relevance. Family-life either was, or was felt ‘ought to be’, positively peaceful, in the sense of cooperative attitudes and behaviour, as well as in the sense of an absence of conflict, and the desire that negative moments of conflict and discord be transcended, so that harmony and happiness might restore synergy. Peace was the positive value that lay behind the denunciation of negative states of misunderstanding, quarrel, and conflict that were considered to be responsible for producing the condition of an unhappy home, and thus for producing unhomeliness. In Diu, descriptions of actual or desired homes were typically
unqualified endorsements, articulated with emphasis and emotion, for the daily realisation of a peaceful family, and thus a cultural ideal which sculpts subjective experiences, to produce collective ‘structures of feeling.’

That people in Diu were more sensitive to the practice and theory of family than they were in Coolbellup may, I suggest, be explained by considering the nature of the field called ‘home’. First, an argument of relative quantities and proximities. In Diu, there are generally both larger numbers and smaller residences than in Coolbellup. Families in Diu live in relations of greater proximity to one another, and thus the family is almost always present at home. The family is so unavoidably close as to be, quite literally, presenting and announcing itself ‘to your face.’ Living together successfully in a confined space necessitates the cultivation of mutual forbearance, if not respect. Two small rooms housing five people, or six rooms and nineteen people, would make a house but not a home, were the values of peace and harmony not features of the daily praxes of household members. In such platially restricted situations, one would have to learn to project and manage one’s ego with care and consideration for others. For the sake of house-held harmony, it would be important to govern one’s reactions, to actively practice compromise, patience and constructive criticism. But, short of administering tranquillisers, in close living conditions there is no method which can regularly accommodate the dispositions of every person, other than an inculcation of values that seek to nourish peace and harmony. To provide contentment and happiness to the greatest number in a house-hold, means abstinence from interaction that has the potential to cause acute acrimony, or foment chronic rancour. This sort of conduct is precisely what is avoided by adhering to the attitudinal and behavioural precepts of religious scripture, as promulgated by cultural tradition. However, although household numbers and proximity are undoubtedly significant at the quotidian level, this was not how the cultivation of peaceful attitudes and behaviours within the family and home were generally justified in Diu. So widespread and influential are the suggestions designed to foster peace in the teachings of Hinduism, Islam and Christianity, that living conditions are bequeathed an epi-phenomenal status. Moreover, it is sheer guesswork as to whether the size of houses and families followed, or influenced, the religious precepts which sacralise and idealise the family, and describe its cardinal values. The balance of probability lies, however, with the idea that large families, small houses, and religious injunctions for peace, harmony and the sacred community of the family, are symbiotic developments – the one needing the other to succeed.
In Diu, whatever else was mentioned as to the constitution of home, it was rare for people to omit mention of the family, and the importance attached to peaceful and cooperative relations within it. In Coolbellup, by contrast, contingent emotions and events influenced whether family was mentioned, and how it was described. If there were no special prompt, or nothing extraordinary happening in the family, then its role and feel in relation to home tended to be casually invoked, or even ignored. Exceptions to this general state of affairs existed with Peter, Michelle, and Marissa who explicitly equated home with family and in Pat’s series of positive and enthusiastic allusions. Furthermore, just as there are different investments of culturally crafted aspirations for the individual and collective futures of today’s children, it is interesting to compare how, in the matter of home and family, the attitudes of Diu children differ from their Coolbellup peers, and thus, in a sense, help to determine the nature of both their present and future dwelling. With the exception of a brief declaration from Marissa, the Coolbellup children, though they may have referred to their home as the place where their family lived, and though positive feelings toward them were certainly implied, there was little overt passion in their responses, unlike the Diu children.

In Coolbellup, there was a vector of culturally informed casualness and complacency towards the idea and practice of the family. There, responses deliver the distinct impression that, in Australia, the ideas and practices that surround family life, though by no means ‘taken for granted’ are guided by fewer conventions and prescriptions than they are in India. Diu manifested a level of family consciousness that was not present in Coolbellup. In Australia, awareness of the family tends to be less conscious, because the praxes of family life do not occur at the intense intersection of shared codes, beliefs, behaviours and rituals that they do in India. Australia has much less formally observed religion and social stratification than India. The social stratification that does exist in Australia has little connection with traditional precepts which, in India, prescribe and regulate the hierarchies of caste, gender and age and the large number of family praxes that acknowledge, instantiate and illustrate them. Because there are fewer directions for, and expectations of, family members in Australia, family praxes are less prescriptive in design, less definitive in aim and eventually, perhaps, less consequential in outcome.

The presence of the family in Coolbellup is less of a presence at home, and in the world, than it is in Diu. In Coolbellup, there were fewer reflections upon the co-presence or importance of one’s family, and the focus tended to gravitate towards an individualistic perspective. However, it would not be appropriate to call the weaker resonance of the family praxis in Coolbellup
inadequate, just because in comparison with Diu its pitch is less audible. Family praxes are hard to apprehend except with intensive attention. Thus, assessments of the force or intensity of family praxes must be considered within cultural contexts which, because they can never be wholly explicated or defined, must restrict the claims of this research. A much longer, more intimate, more intensive and expensive study than mine is needed, in order to understand the relative satisfactions and disappointments of the virtual communities of family consciousness disclosed here. Using a musical analogy, levels of family consciousness could be expressed as matters of scale, pitch, rhythm, and harmony, wherein family praxes prompt questions like: How are they pitched? What themes recur? What sorts of family praxes show what kinds of orchestration? What causes dissonance? How is dissonance expressed? What praxes of the family, in other words, make dwelling at home a success and a pleasure, and further, rather than hinder, dwelling in the world? In the final chapter, as I conclude this thesis, I bring the suggestions that have emerged here into contact with those of the preceding chapters to conduct a final meditation on the nature of dwelling at home.

Endnotes

1 Tim Ingold, for example borrows Merleau-Ponty’s ‘the homeland of thought’, to illustrate the intimate connections of embodiment and environment, and argues that human children, “grow up in environments furnished by the work of previous generations,” and so literally come “to carry the forms of their dwelling in their bodies – in specific skills sensibilities and dispositions.” In ‘Building Dwelling, Living: How Animals and People Make Themselves at Home in the World’ in Shifting Contexts; Transformations in Anthropological Knowledge Marilyn Strathern (Ed), (London: Routledge, 1995), 77.

2 As Pierre Bourdieu puts it, the family “as an objective social category (a structuring structure) is the basis of the family as a subjective social category (a structured structure,a mental category which is the matrix of countless representations and actions (eg., marriages) which help to reproduce the objective social category. The circle is that of reproduction of the social order.” In ‘On the Family as a Realized Category’ Theory Culture and Society 13 (3), 21.


5 See the Australian Bureau of Statistics Directory of Census Statistics Content of Census from 1911 to 1996 at http://www.abs.gov.au/websitedbs/d3110120.nsf (accessed May 2nd 2004). The notes in this document reflect the changes to the assumptions about family constitution guiding the collection of data. For instance, prior to and including 1976, the term relationship to head of household was used. In 1981, the term ‘head’ was considered inappropriate, and relationship to Person 1 was asked. Since 1986, the relationship of Person 1 to Person 2 is asked. The duration of existing marriage was used up to 1986, but only in 1996 was the year of first marriage used to frame situations in which more than one marriage had occurred. The 1996 census showed that 70.6 % of the households in Australia were family households, with ‘family’ defined as two or more people. Meanwhile, 40.6% of Australian households were comprised of couples with dependent children, a decrease since the census in 1991 of 3.6%, see The Australian Bureau of Statistics Census 1996, Population and Housing Selected Family and Labour Force Characteristics for Statistical Local Areas at http://www.abs.gov.au/websitedbs.(accessed May 2nd 2004)

6 Households categorisations and statistics for the Indian Census of1991were:- ‘Single Member’ 5.8%; ‘Nuclear’ = Head and Spouse and Head and spouse with unmarried Children 38.74%; ‘Nuclear Pair’ = Head and spouse, 4.98%;
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2004).

family situation: Ailsa Burns, Penny Jools and Gill Bottomley (Eds),
dominated Western countries in the early 1980’s would do well to include the following. Focusing on Australian
http://www.censusindia.net/number.html (accessed May 2

Give an impression of the different scales. Of the categories in Note 6 the quantity of households in India (Single
members and Nuclear pairs) that have 2 or less people in them was just less than 11% of the total number of


8 Although not made available in the Indian Census in either 1991 or 2001, comparisons of household numbers can give an impression of the different scales. Of the categories in Note 6 the quantity of households in India (Single members and Nuclear pairs) that have 2 or less people in them was just less than 11% of the total number of households. See India at a Glance Number of Households and Household at http://www.censusindia.net/number.html (accessed 2nd May 2004). By contrast, in the Australian census for 1996, the number of lone person households was 22.1% increased from 19.3% in 1991. This census also recorded an average household size as 2.2 people, a decrease from 1991 when the figure was 2.8 people. See Population and Housing Selected Family and Labour Force Characteristics for Statistical Local Areas.


11 Research compiled from the Australian Bureau of Statistics by the consulting firm KPMG shows that the traditional ‘nuclear family’ now make up only 19% of Australian households, a decline from 26% in 1976. Households of single persons, and childless couples have demographically overtaken the nuclear family, and as measured by the ABS, it is the only one of six types of households to experience a statistical decline. KPMG’s figures for the six types of household are: ‘Couples’ 2.2 million; ‘Singles’ 1.7 million; ‘Nuclear Family’ 1.3 million; ‘Group’ 1.1 million; ‘Single Parents’ 294,000 and ‘Extended Families’ 500,000. In Family Values, Justin Healey (Ed), (Rozelle, NSW: The Spinney Press, 2001)


13 For instance, a large, cross-generational study conducted by the Australian Institute of Family Studies and reproduced in part in Healey’s Family Values, reports generally conservative attitudes on child-rearing, women and careers, divorce, single parents, homosexuality and extra-marital sex. It seems that the majority believed that: “a family suffers if a mother works full time, that divorce is too easy to get, that it is not acceptable for a single parent
to bring up a child and that men should be the primary breadwinners” There were however enormous variations held by different age groups and subtle variations between men and women with “women in their twenties being the least likely to oppose single parenting (36% compared to 62% in the general population), disapprove of male homosexuality (54 % compared to 72%), and think that married people are happier than single people (11% compared to 37%)” (31).

14 An interesting and concise collection of articles that present and discuss contemporary figures and future projections of the shape and the nature of Australian households and families, are collected in Healey’s Family Values. For instance, compared to 25 years ago when there were 62 marriages per thousand single people, in 2000 there were just 34. (4). About 43% of all marriages are likely to end in divorce, 8% within 5 years, 19.5% within ten years, 32% within twenty years and 39% within 30 years (23). Every year there is one divorce for every two marriages (31). According to ‘A Profile of Families in W.A’ in 1991 30% of the population had been born overseas. Migrants from the U.K accounted for 45.5% of these, while 34 % were migrants from Asia, primarily Vietnam and Malaysia. There were 8, 831 Aboriginal families in W.A. In Looking at Families: A Profile and Discussion on Families in Western Australia 1994, prepared by the policy branch of the Department for Community Development with data collated by W.A Consortium for Social Policy Research.

15 Although in 1996 the Australian Census for the first time provided an option that inquired after sexual identification that revealed 4,301 lesbian households, this figure is reckoned to be conservative by a spokeswoman for the Prospective Lesbian Parents Group, since she claimed that many homosexual people did not respond to the option of declaring themselves in same-sex partnerships Healey, Family Values, (6).

16 Such configurations challenge the usual representation of the family in media and common speech, yet ‘family’ looks set to remain the preferred term as Elizabeth Silva and Carol Smart discuss in ‘The ‘New’ Practices and Politics of Family Life’ in The New Family Elizabeth B. Silva and Carol Smart (Eds), (London: Sage,1999). They acknowledge that the term family now stretches to cover all kinds of family, and that there are two very different ways of understanding the lack of new terms to describe new realities of family life. On the one hand they argue, that the continued use of the concept of ‘family’, and the lack of new terms to connote new realities, can be seen as the product of conservative use which, in obscuring change, facilitates the impression that nothing much is changing. Silva and Smart seem eventually persuaded, however, by David Morgan’s argument that the term family prevails despite the differences it represents, because of the qualities with which it is associated (like belonging, care and love). As Silva and Smart point out, though such stretching of the term will mean that “ the sharp boundaries which are presumed to exist between proper families and less desirable families can no longer operate conceptually or politically” (10 emphasis in original). Whatever proves to be the case, it seems that vernacular invention describing different forms of family may take place only as experience accumulates and condenses, to leave a history of visible precipitates. Gradually the obvious evidence of difference will supply the necessary vocabulary, and displace perceptions of the centrality of the nuclear family. Questions of semantic evolution are ones social linguistics will probably explain, eventually, but at present what is certain is that popular discourse resists adopting academic jargon to talk about itself.


18 As Morgan explains, “family practices are not necessarily practices which take place in times and spaces conventionally designated to do with ‘family’, that is the home.” Morgan gives the example of a gender sensitive approach to ‘family practices’, in which the behaviour of men, “even if they seemingly have nothing to do with the family (working late at the office, attending a union meeting, drinking with mates on the way home from work) are family practices, in that they reinforce certain constructions of fatherhood, and by implication, motherhood as well.” The New Family, 20.


21 In India the problem of how to talk about families divides differently and discussions and definitions of what is meant by the family are a constant source of debate and theoretical ambiguity. Indian families are problematic for social analysts because of the considerable variation they may entail. While it is not possible to engage in this complex debate here, it is desirable to show something of its shape, and introduce principal names and forms. There is a basic distinction made between ‘elementary’ and ‘joint’ families which in reality is frequently a maze of possible permutations of affinal and consanguinous family groups.
The number of people in a family tends to fluctuate according to phases of development, for example when the family expands as sons marry who, with their wives and children, form part of the son’s natal household. The family shrinks as the limits of accommodation (subdivisions of land and house extensions), are reached and separate households are established. Mandelbaum was unconvinced of the usefulness of detailed classifications, which he said, only create a plethora of typologies. He argues that much of the discussion of Indian family life wrongly assumes one of two things. Either it has assumed that there is a basic discontinuity between the single couple (commonly homogenised as the ‘nuclear’ or ‘elementary family’) and the family of two or more couples and their children, (homogenised as the ‘joint family’ or ‘extended family’), or, it is assumed that joint families are mergers of nuclear families. (Society 43). Sociologist A.M Shah, in The Household Dimension of the Family in India (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1974), agreed, observing that, typologies create such elaborate representations that it becomes “no exaggeration to state that no two scholar’s typologies agree with one another.” (139). The profusion of all typologies, said Shah relies on the basic dichotomy of elementary and joint/extended family types. To bridge the difficult differences of dimension and composition, Shah proposed an uncomplicated pair of concepts making a distinction between ‘simple’ and ‘complex’ households (140). D’Cruz and Bharat’s overview of research on the family supports Shah, though they argue that simple family groups in a single residence not only tend to represent stages in a larger developmental cycle of family relationships, but also engage in the religious, ritualistic and economic life of the joint family. Journal of Comparative Family Studies, 11-13.

D’Cruz and Bharat, Journal of Comparative Family Studies, 15.

Dedicating an entire work to describing the problem of non-correspondence and concomitant unevenness that surrounds the representation, in Indian social inquiry, of family groups, A.M Shah wanted future discussion in the study of the household dimension of Indian family life to be situated differently. Arguing that, though it had been typical to see the family in terms of a developmental process which observed the principle of the residential unity of the patrilineal descent and patri-local residence, such typifications did not include the non-patrilineal and non patri-local relatives found in many households. Nor, says Shah, has there been much discussion of the different kinds of complete and incomplete elementary families. Shah, The Household, 139.

D’Cruz and Bharat, Journal of Comparative Family Studies, 11. Rather than joint families breaking down in response to urbanisation and industrialisation, as was previously claimed they adapt their form and ways to new conditions of employment and business. Nowadays more functionally joint families, albeit not necessarily co-resident, are found in both urban and rural communities. Research from the 1960’s and 70’s, say D’Cruz and Bharat, shows that, although the joint family was known to be changing, it was not seen as necessarily morphing into conjugal nuclear forms, but towards the development of what, following A. A. Khatri, they call ‘the adaptive extended family’ (12). Similarly, for Leela Mulatti, in ‘Families in India: Beliefs and Realities’, it is important to see the changes engendered by the new economic order in India, especially in urban situations, as manifestations of the joint family in a merger of tradition with new business arrangements and practices. Mulatti regards the nature of the family as actually and continuously ambiguous as many Indian families are functionally joint though they live in separate residences. In the Journal of Comparative Family Studies, V 26, 1 (Spring 1995), 9. At InfoTrac Web: Expanded Academic ASAP Int'l Ed, Article A17716108 at http://0-infotrac.galegroup.com (accessed 6th May 2002).

D’Cruz and Bharat, Journal of Comparative Family Studies, 7.

Prior to the 1980’s the few documented numbers of alternate forms was attributed not only to their relatively small numbers, and thus relative invisibility, but to biases which arose from the weak position of women, and the high value attached to marital wholeness and stability in India. The research paradigm has however shifted as the complex of forces of globalisation of increased flows and transfers of capital, industry, technology and migration, have substantially boosted the numbers of alternate family forms. See Shalini Bharat, "Alternate Family Patterns and Policies." in M. Desai (Ed.), Enhancing the Role of the Family as an Agency for Social and Economic Development (Mumbai: TISS, 1994).

For accounts of the pernicious intersections between India’s sex segregated religious philosophy, and the gender based conventions and oppressions of Indian patriarchy, see Leela Mulatti Journal of Comparative Family Studies; M. Mies, Indian Women and Patriarchy (New Delhi: Concept, 1980); B. R. Sharma, Women, Marriage, Family, Violence and Divorce (Jaipur: Mangal Deep Publications, 1997) and T. Patel, ‘The Precious Few: Women’s Agency, Household Progressions and Fertility in a Rajasthan Village’ in Journal of Comparative Family Studies, V30, 3 (1999), 429-451. As Patel points out, one of the consequences of pervasive male dominance is the existence among women of modes of complementary power in specific domains, such as the kitchen and the care of children, a phenomenon she describes as “structured muted-ness.”
In Indian families, women are officially considered subordinate to men, since religiously inspired custom is mobilised to support suppression of, and discrimination against, women. The male dominated government of the family is primarily for the fulfilment of religious obligations. In a patriarchal family, all adult male members make decisions on behalf of the family, and are considered responsible for its physical and moral protection. Such observations are widely supported see for example, David Smith ‘Women Caste (Aurat Jati) and the Gender of Modernity’ in ‘Hinduism and Modernity’ (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2003) and Lindsey Harlan and Paul Courtright (Eds), From the Margins of Hindu Marriage: Essays on Gender, Religion and Culture (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995) and Mulatti, Journal of Comparative Family Studies, 16. For fascinating discussion using psychoanalytic methods of women and the dominance of patriarchal Hinduism see Sudhir Kakar, Intimate Relations: Exploring Indian Sexuality (Chicago: University of Chicago, Press, 1990). Preceding and beautifully complementing Kakar’s study of relations between the sexes is a psychoanalytic take on family relations in general in The Inner World: A Psycho-Analytic Study of Childhood and Society in India (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1981).

The institutionalisation of authority in Hinduism informs the nature and the role of men and women. M.N. Srinivas, writing on the creation of orthodoxy within Hinduism that models Brahmin patriarchy for the whole society, called the institutionalisation of authority in Hinduism ‘Sanskritization’ See his The Cohesive Role of Sanskritization and Other Essays’ (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1989), Islam claims approximately 12% of India’s population of one billion and is thus a minority faith though it is India’s second biggest religion. In India, Islam like Hinduism has experienced the rise and consolidation of patriarchal authority in its relations with modernity. See Richard Martin (Ed), Islam in Local Contexts. (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1989) and Anne-maire Schimmel, Islam in India and Pakistan (Leiden: Brill, 1982).

As Weber taught, authority has at least three faces; the first charismatic, ecstatic and transformative, the second traditional, and the third rational-legal. The machinations, transformations and contradictions within the establishment and transformations of mainstream religion in India present no exception to this typology. Charismatic and traditional authority are both features of Hinduism, with the former generally lasting for the duration of the charismatic personage’s lifetime, before reconsolidation within tradition. Such legacies are almost always routinised and institutionalised and suffer both preservation and dilution as fresh approaches harden into new traditions. For example charismatic personages such as the late M.K Ghandi and Swami Vivekananda insisted on women’s social and spiritual equality, and served a challenge to Hinduism’s patriarchal tradition, even while other aspects of their teachings are used to support conservative aims in narrow forms of nationalism. See DalmiaVasudha, Martin Christof, and Angelika Malinar, (Eds), Charisma and Canon: Essays on the Religious History of the Indian Subcontinent (Oxford University Press 2003. Also Smith, Hinduism and Modernity.

For example summarising her paper ‘Patterns of Change and Stability in the Gender Division of Household Labour in Australia, 1986-1997’ Janeen Baxter says “The gender division of labour, in terms of both the gender gap in time spent on childcare and housework and gender differences in the kinds of tasks men and women do in the home, is still clearly evident. Women do about two thirds of childcare tasks, at least three quarters of the routine everyday indoor housework tasks, and spend about three times as many hours as men on the latter. If we consider the full range of domestic tasks, including traditional male outdoor activities, we see a more equal division of labour. Overall, however, as earlier research has indicated, the gender division of labour in the home appears to be one of the most enduring patterns in modern social life ” in Journal of Sociology V38, 4 (December 2002), 399 in the Expanded Academic Asap at http://0-web1.infotrac.galegroup.com. (accessed May 2nd 2004)

For example in their paper ‘The Employment Effects of Gender Discrimination in Australia 1994-95. Michael Kidd and Ivan Ferko conclude ‘Utilizing a sample of data drawn from the Australian Income Distribution Survey 1995, the analysis finds evidence of gender discrimination which affects both wages and employment. The wage effects of discrimination appear to play the dominant role, accounting for the majority of the overall impact on female welfare. However, there is also evidence of female employment losses associated with discriminatory offer wages.” In Economic Record, V77, 236 (March 2001) 71 in the Expanded Academic ASAP at http://0-web1.infotrac.galegroup.com (Accessed May 2nd 2004). For critical comments that offer views which counter or qualify the notion of women’s social liberation from discriminatory or oppressive practices see Judith C. Blackwell, Murray E.G. Smith and John S. Sorenson "Feminism is no Longer Relevant": Delusional Statement by People who Think Women "Have it All" and "Modesty and Virtue are the Essence of Femininity": Who needs Genital Mutilation, When Ideology can Cripple Sexual Fulfillment Just as Effectively? in Culture of Prejudice : Arguments in Critical Social Science (Peterborough, Ont: Broadview Press, 2003).
When television first arrived, a new tradition of family viewing accompanied the installation of a single set in the living room. Nowadays with *inter alia*, a proliferation of television sets around a house, observation tells me that family viewing is no longer such a regular practice that it could be considered a tradition.

I do not mean to imply this is at all an unwarranted assumption, or that the lack of a residence or ‘homelessness’ is not a cause or profound concern. For example, the section in ‘Looking at Families’ headed ‘Family Housing and Homelessness in Western Australia’ begins by detailing ‘Housing Tenure’ followed by ‘Types of Dwellings’ ‘Housing Costs’, ‘Housing Assistance’, Homelessness/Housing Crisis’, ‘Homeless Juveniles’ and ‘Housing and ‘Non-English Speaking Background Families’ Using 1991 ABS census figures this publication reports that in 1991, 90% of all Western Australian families occupied single residential dwellings, 6% occupied townhouses, and 2% occupied apartments. A very small proportion (less than 1%) live in caravans or ‘Other’ types of dwellings.


The procedure of the Indian Census takes the household as its principal unit of enumeration, and defines it as “usually a group of persons who normally live together and take their meals from a common kitchen unless the exigencies of work prevent them from doing so. Persons in a household may be related, unrelated or a mixture of both. …The important link in finding out whether it was a household or not was a common kitchen.” in the Census of India 2001 *H Series tables: Concepts and Definitions*, 5. However, it is evident from the way necessity structures joint families, that this definition may not be entirely suitable when, for instance, married couples set up separate kitchens to avoid domestic conflict, while continuing to share the same house, property, and work. See also Mandelbaum, *Society Volume One*, 44.


More intensive studies than I can produce on my own, would no doubt, reveal things I have not been able to. It would be good to see other cultural juxtapositions researched perhaps in a team effort, and more time, questions and participants than I have managed.

For discussions of the customs and expectations which accompany marriage in India according to caste and region see Mies, *Indian Women* and Sharma, *Women, Marriage*.

“My home in Goa, my mother’s house, I feel at home in the sense that I feel that it’s a place I belong …But still when I went to Goa I told Mummy ‘Mummy as you’re alive I’ll be coming. But once you are no more, then I couldn’t say anything, because I couldn’t expect my brothers and sisters to invite me or entertain me.’…I might not feel that much at ease or at home, because then their wives will come and life will be different. …But it makes a lot of difference because of the children.”

Home was where “ the whole family lives together in a peaceful atmosphere.” “ I want my home to be peaceful and happy. And also that we will always be living together and never get separated.”

“When all my relations fight for my house, ‘I want this part. ‘You give me this part’, that is the worst home.”
“In an ideal home all are living together. The children are going to school regularly, doing homework regularly. Mother and Father are doing work properly. Father is going to work on time. They are taking an interest in school work and matters. Papa is coming home regularly on time from work. … The worst possible home is where the children are not going to school on time, where Papa is not coming to home on time, and there is drinking of liquor, the housework is not regularly done, and the children are wandering.”

“My home is absolutely peaceful, with family members affectionately helping each other and maintaining harmony in every respect. When I think home, if I have the entire family living together happily and peacefully and mutually sharing all sorts of days, whether of the happy or sad kind, by dwelling under one single roof. It should be precisely like I said just now. I love home with family and peace.”

“We can say the ideal home is that as per Indian culture and society. The family lives well, when husband and wife are there, their children are there and each gives support in joy and sorrow. In the time of festival, or in difficulties we should support; that is counted good in India. I believe we all at the home front, should live according to our Indian culture, as well as yield moral cooperation to each other, help each other when needed, and share both happy and unhappy events altogether, leaving no-one isolated in any respect, at any time. Indian tradition teaches all these things as wholesome, and considers them vital, and hence they should be on the whole followed by each and every individual.”

“Day and night only one question was there, what will happen to me? How can I be self dependent, so I can know how to live my life?”


An abandoned or divorced woman is generally considered to have contributed to a failed marriage, to bring disgrace to her family, and be potentially a source of moral disruption. Divorce, separation and desertion are much more serious for women than men, as a single woman tends to be regarded with suspicion. In addition to the challenges of economic insecurity, divorced, widowed and abandoned women are also challenged with the many practical difficulties that arise in the wake of the breakdown of their marriage. In general, though available and made easier by law, divorce is not considered a real option. The fears and allegations of failed marriages bear the authority of the ancient scriptural law in the civil code devised by Manu, a stern and rather misogynistic sponsor whose dictums could be said to provide many of the original codifications of Indian patriarchy. The prevalence and persistence of such discriminatory attitudes means that widowed, divorced or deserted women often have to manage to live with ignominy and social disgrace. This is especially true in the lower social orders, where poverty considerably complicates discarded and abandoned women’s situation. See Shalini Bharat, “Single-Parent Family in India: Issues and Implications.” in the *Indian Journal of Social Work*, V47 (1986), 55-65 also, her ‘Single-Parent Families: Consequences for single parents’ in the *Indian Journal of Social Work*, V49 3 (1988), 227-238.

“Of course whatever I earn is insufficient, yet I try my best to look for better employment that may help me earn better, and live a better life with my son, as well as my family.” If a deserted or divorced woman is already poor then further impoverishment of herself and any children she cares for is almost a certainty. The sustenance of life for the long term, casually employed and lowly paid single women is a constant problem and a chronic source of stress. Without a social security system to paper over economic gaps, large cracks can open through which deserted women fall. For in general economic security of the household for the economically marginal in India is a much more parlous affair than it is in Australia. Indeed unless the household is comfortably well off attitudes towards economic concerns rarely tend towards complacency. Hinduism understands all conditions of life according to the mysterious design and chance of dharma or social/religious duty and karma or individual providence. Thus, common but crude interpretations of these esoteric laws view women left alone as blame and shame worthy because they were not following the social dharma of all women to be respectable and exemplary wives and mothers. Their situation is readily interpreted as evidence of their bad karma, carried over from a previous incarnation. See Shanthi’s examination of the incidence of female headship of households in India in ‘Growing Incidence of Female Headship’ in *The Family in a Changing World Women, Children and Strategies of Intervention*. Rudolf Heredia and Mathia Edwards (Eds), (New Delhi: Indian Social Institute, 1995). Discussing poor households headed by women, Santhi says, “The main cause for concern is the relative deprivation suffered by female headed households compared to male headed households. The former are poverty stricken, and discriminated against. Not only are the female heads burdened with multifarious responsibilities, but also the children of such households suffer social stigma and the deprivation of education that would enable better prospects in the future (253). Other studies of female headed households, and the frequently negative social consequences for women of divorce, desertion and widowhood

55 ‘Whenever I think of home, the basic and major thoughts strikes in my mind are always about the betterment of my family. I keep on thinking, should I do something to support my brother and sisters in various ways !”

56 “He drinks, eats and then abuses me. When it’s too much I say, I will go away. Either I threaten him saying ‘I will jump in the sea or a well, or I will burn myself.”

57 “The house is holy place because there the family live together, eat and drink.”

58 “We are not living a happy life as my husband is excessively used to liquour, and never takes much trouble to look towards the home’s condition, and is entirely an irresponsible person in every respect.”

59 “When I think of my home I think of my husband, my children and I. All of us should live unitedly and share our sufferings and feelings. We live in our house with understanding to each other. We have enough fun living with each other.”

60 “I feel every family must live happily in the society. An ideal home can be only when all old and young, weak and strong, happy and sorrowful members in the family combine and support each other or one another.”

61 For discussion of traditional value accorded the eldest members of families and communities in India and the contemporary pressures on these values from a diversifying economy and society see M.L.Sharma and T.M. Dale (Eds), *Ageing in India: Challenge for Society* (Delhi: Ajanta, 1987).

62 “Before any work we have to take permission of my parents. We obey their sayings, Other elders also, I believe. The most important thing about home is to listen and implement whatever the parents say or advises to the youngsters. I never deny whatever my mummy asks me to do.”

63 “Of course she never forces me to obey her order or saying, for she is gentle and understands me well.”

64 “My family they serve me. My sons’ wives are taking care of me. I don’t have any complaints.”

65 When Musa and his sons arrived home from their work in their butcher’s shop, Musa wanted peace and quiet, about which he remarked, “If we come to the house and too much noise is there it is in that sense that I mean I do not like my home.”

66 “The special pleasures I get from home are when we come from the outside work and my wife gives me tea with good manners. So when we come in from outside all the tensions disappear when this is so.”

67 “We live with cooperation. The most important thing about home is that no quarrels should be there. The ideal home is one which is quiet with people living in cooperation.”

68 “At Bhavnagar is my native place, where my Mummy, Daddy live. That is the place I can say: ‘Yah I feel at home here.’ Particularly in Bhavnagar, my home is there.”

69 “I was separated from my family in 1965. My father is a very fixed man, a very strong man, and he asked me to get out from the home. So up to this time, they have not called me and I never went to them. The last 33 years time they haven’t, but if they will make the peace by my father calling me, then I will return.”

70 “The other place I feel at home is Pareshbhai’s home, there I feel like it is my home, because it is in town and it is peaceful and quiet, and I feel happy there.”

71 I can say that Dr. Makwana’s place, it’s like my home, Vikram’s place, a little bit Raju’s place, and little bit at Kirap’s place. Other than that, I would not like to make my home there with my friends. Just because the relations and the friendship are there it doesn’t mean that I would make my home there.”

72 “The most important thing to me is to get love from someone. This is the most important thing. Home, that’s the place where you can live peacefully with your family and that’s all, not more than that.”
In my interviews, I asked who was responsible for the housework and the approximate quantity of time it took everyday. Invariably, as long as there were women and girls in the household, it was they who were wholly responsible for the household chores. This was just as true when they also had forms of paid employment. The estimated quantity of time varied greatly, depending on how many females there were, and whether people were estimating their own, or the collective contributions.

“The ideal home, something with wide open spaces, big, brand new and no doors that need to be locked and the kids playing. Somewhere where you can go when you've finished work, put your feet up, and feel that you're happy and contented, that life is wonderful.”

“The major consideration in anything I do are my children - how far away I’m going to be from them?”

“My home is the family unit, definitely. I mean, this isn’t a house this is a home, that’s family. …Everyone can walk through my door at any time and I’m always be there for them, but my family will come first it’s as simple as that. …That’s the most important thing.”

“Home, it’s the kitchen table [and] friends around it, [and a] roast in the oven. I think the most favourite room of my home is the kitchen because it’s where everything happens. People tell you about births, deaths, marriages, marital break-ups, divorces, winning Lotto all that happy things and sad things. And it all centres around the kitchen table, and the coffee cup, and the stove.”

“Everything you want is in your home. I really like home, Joseph does, Rebecca’s the same. I think most people here are the same.”

“My family is a peaceful and loving one. I’m pretty happy with my family.”

“I suppose I think of maybe if the house went and crashed down, or broke. You know if our Mum got hurt. If a wall falls over no-one should get hurt, I think of that.”

“If you want to come home, this is my place where I can do what I want to do in it. You know it’s a place where you can do what you want to do without worry of what anyone else is saying. And that’s what homes is supposed be, where you’re thinking you’re the king, or queen.”

“I go to visit my mother and even my daughter, and I like their places, but it’s their house. I go to my mother’s house and I feel claustrophobic… I like to get out into space and have room around me. You know, there’s freedom to move in here. So yeah, I feel relaxed there, but it’s not my place.”


“I lived in Balga until I was about two or three, and then I moved to Yangebup with my aunty and uncle and then I moved up the road to my other auntie’s, place. And, a couple of years before then I lived in Lee street, at my Nanna’s and Pop’s. I prefer it better with all my family than in Balga, because we didn’t know anybody and it was very lonely. …there wasn’t any of my relations. [The reason we moved here was because] we needed more help, because we struggled, living out in Balga, and we needed our family support, and we just needed everybody in Coolbellup, that’s where all our family lives and we felt more safe and didn’t feel as lonely.”

“We’ve had a lot of people come to our house, and we’ve had at particular times, people get into our house while we’re asleep or not home and lots of family problems. Like now my families are fighting because of my mother’s boyfriend.”

“[My ideal home’s] something that’s a bit bigger, carpets, trees, and a place where, like, no one is allowed to go on your property without getting permission from you or something.”

“I’m lucky I’ve got a big family. My Dad’s got a big family, lot of brothers and sisters here. Because if you’ve got a lot of cousins then you’ve got a lot of people, a lot of kids which you can associate with. And you’ve got older
cousins where you can ask them things about how, like, life is at high school and stuff. And, you’ve got younger cousins that you can help out, and you can have a lot of fun with. It’s a lot of fun having a mixture of people.”

88 “Like back in Portugal I’ve heard stories all about the way that people lived back then. And the way it sounds, the way we live today makes me wonder, makes me think that we’re really lucky because back then they didn’t have a shower, they didn’t have a toilet, they didn’t have nothing. They had a little bit to eat each day. There was no snacking. They had to work. They got up at five o’clock in the morning, and went up into the hills to collect food for the goats and sheep. They went to school. They had their homework to do and they had to do all their chores. And really, kids now don’t care as much about their parents, or they do, but they’re not as loving as back then.”

89 “These days both parents are usually working and children don’t get enough time with their parents. Back then, you could talk to your parents. Some things you couldn’t really talk to them about, but you could just talk to them. Back then, you could talk to your brothers and sisters. You’d get into some arguments, but they’d need to help each other because things would happen with, like, with other groups, specially when those teenagers’ things happened and they’d help each other out. These days, friends and kids argue a lot. Me and my sisters for instance, we argue with each other a lot, and then we’re close when something goes wrong.”

90 “These days children answer back to their parents, where if you did that back then, they were really strict. People then were really strict, and you weren’t really allowed to do much. We can go to discos and things, and they weren’t allowed to do that back then, not even when they came to Australia at first. So I feel really lucky.”

91 “I think you can, if you open your eyes, everything you want is in your home. And I think, people who are immature in their way of thinking are the ones who hit the night spots in every week. And then, half the young ones up here that you talk to in the shop, especially that girl with the earrings and body piercing. Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights, it’s the nightclub scene and bands and stuff like that. And then Monday morning she’ll tell you ‘Oh god, I spent a hundred bucks on the weekend, I got drunk and oh, I was so sick, and oh, I’ve got a shocking headache.’ And I’m thinking, well, that $100 dollars could have gone off your car payment. Use $90 for that, and ten bucks to buy a video some Twisties and a bottle of Coke and stay home, mate.”

92 “My son knows how to cook, none of his mates do. So why wait until they’re thirty, not married, and moved out of home? Throw them in the deep end. Teach them when they’re young, bring back the basics. Then you wouldn’t have the crime rate, because the kids would be at home, the parents would be there showing an interest in the kid, so children wouldn’t need to go out to find entertainment and fun and thrills, and steal cars at two o’clock in the morning.”

93 “Teaching kids how to deal with life. Teach kids how to change nappies on babies, how to feed a child, how to cook soup, how to make a stew with dumplings, how to make an apple pie, without going to the bloody supermarket and buying a frozen one. They need to get back to basics.”

94 “To me, it’s very important that girls in particular, know how to cook and to keep a home together. Also, boys should know how to do it as well, just in case they never get married, and Mum drops off the perch. They need to look after themselves. But, more so for girls I think. A female woman to me is an apron, the oven, looking after kids, hanging the washing out, doing the ironing.”

95 “My grandmother made her own bread right up until a couple of years before she died, and there was always the smell of cakes or bread or soups or stew as you walked into the house.”

96 “Everyone works together. Like, if her boyfriend is here, he’ll mop the floor... he’ll hang out the washing, he’ll bring it in. And, they’ve had a housekeeper all their life. It was a bit of a culture shock, when he came here.”

97 Joe had “ never been one for going to clubs and pubs, and she got a bit of a shock. She soon slotted-in too, being content to watch a movie at home, rather than go to the movies.”

98 “I always feel at home when I go visit my parents. It doesn’t feel like a home to me living here. My parents live two hundred miles away and I go up to their place and walk in, and that feels like a home. But being in my situation now of being single again, and not having the kids around, I think that affects the way I feel about this not being a home as well. Whereas, whenever I go up to my parents…”
99 “At this point in my life I could quite easily live with my parents again, and feel quite comfortable about it. I haven’t been near my family for probably fifteen years, we’ve always been at other ends of the State or the country, and I’ve never felt close to them, and I wish I had.”

100 In looking at refrains of nostalgia for lost tradition, impressions from both Left and Right tend to converge on the idea that the West suffers from the cumulative pressure of modernisation, that its problems and stresses are concomitant with modernity. Though they disagree fundamentally on the solutions to this extremely complex problem, they do tend to agree that the innovations and changes of modernity demand all kinds of personal and social adaptations, and that these can exact some high personal and social costs. Indeed, there is a pervasive feeling that modernity has required such heavy tolls on psyches and bodies that the modes of mutuality which should serve to ameliorate them have themselves become one of the principal losses. Both sides of politics talk about the values of mutual care and reciprocity that have suffered marginalisation because it has been to readily sacrificed to the displacing, disruptive and dispersive centrifugal forces which fuel and drive modernity. Analysis converges on the intrinsic incompatibility of modernity, with the connective and centripetal aspects of humanity. As pace and changes of style quicken, so to does the proportion of academic discussion devoted to understanding how these challenges are received, and responded to. For analysis and reflections on the manifold aspects of modernity, and the transformative powers of globalisation as grown, consumed digested and exported by the West a great deal has already been written. A focus on modernity’s catalysts, consequences, structures and affects is well articulated in David Harvey, *The Conditions of Postmodernity: An Inquiry into the Origins of Cultural Change* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989). For a sustained look at modernity as the processual outcomes of continual innovation in media and our engagement and participation with media see David Morley, *Home Territories: Media, Mobility, and Identity* (London: Routledge, 2000). On the nature of modernity as reflected in literature and urban planning see Marshall Berman, *All That is Solid Melts Into Air: The Experience of Modernity* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1982). A recent meditation on the fluid nature and qualities of modernity in social and political terms is Zygmunt Bauman, *Liquid Modernity* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2000). Bauman also zooms in on the now common response to modernity of the current preoccupation of reviving or reinventing a sense of community in *Community: Seeking Safety in an Insecure World* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2001).

101 “We tend to just chuck people on the scrap heap. We retire them when they’re 55, 60, 65, ‘they’re good for nothing’. We get rid of our old people, and that’s wrong, because they’re the ones with all the knowledge, they’ve been through it all and we don’t listen to them.”

102 “You always remember your parents saying ‘when I was your age.’ I never thought I’d say that to my kids, but you do, because it’s true. I try to think of other ways, so I try to use examples so I don’t have to say that. So yeah, I think older people have a lot to offer, and younger people today seem to know everything. Like, I know I did when I was a teenager. But I was somehow different than the way they’re different today. Unfortunately, it takes them a bit too long to realise.”

103 “[These days] a lot of people are struggling in relationships, they probably think its a bit hard…a bit of an effort. A bit of sacrifice can help them get through these things. I think my parents stayed together for the kid’s sake. Some people I know say that’s a bad thing, others say it’s the right thing to do and I mean the jury’s still out. I’m not sure really. I won’t really know until my kids are a bit older, on whether it has any affect on the way they feel. I hope not.”

104 “The worst possible home? I think being by yourself in a house is possibly the worst, I think that family and friends in a group is very important to what makes a home.”

105 “And I notice that in the Aborigines around here how the families are very tight knit and there is, if your part of the family, then you’ve always got somewhere to go. Unlike ours.”

106 “European countries are all very family orientated, and its not just immediate family but extended family. And that’s great in a lot of ways. That’s one thing I think Australia and New Zealand have lost. We’ve lost all of that extended family.”

107 “America has a huge influence, I’m sure, on all the shit we get this way. I’ve travelled extensively round the world, and I’ve been right through the States, Canada, and Europe, and places in Europe they’re very backward. They’re very backward, and it’s beautiful. So I see a lot of this coming from America, where attitudes over there are all very different.”
“European girls and all don’t find it half as much of a struggle raising children as what we do, because we’ve all either travelled and we’ve ended up away from our families, or the families that are living next to each other aren’t talking, or something’s going on. Or, they’re just not getting on. No longer are Nanna and Poppa, or Aunty or Uncle around to help you out, and give you a break and all that, that’s fizzling out.”

“I’d say [my place is] here in this house with my family, my son and my husband, and soon there’ll be another one. So yeah, just us is where my place is. But I know, this area is not for us. There’s been just too much damage, and its just too dangerous for us. It’s not a healthy place for my family. My place is a safe place, not another incident every other day. Not wondering about the awful sorts of neighbours, but enjoying the area that I live in.”

Mary Douglas, ‘The Idea of Home: A Kind of Space’ in Social Research V 58,1 Arien Mack (Ed), (Spring 1991), 287-307. Douglas acquired the notion of home as a virtual community, by adapting the term as used by the philosopher Susanne Langer. Langer used the term ‘virtual’ to address what she saw as a rift in philosophy in the “separation of artistic appreciation from the theory of rational thought” (290). Thus, ‘virtual thought’ is a mode of analogy that offers the opportunity to move between one dimension of experience and another. Douglas discusses Langer’s idea for considering one form of art in terms of another, and thus as useful for the translations and transitions which similar kinds of analogy could offer philosophy. Virtuality has autonomous temporal and spatial properties that Douglas calls “presentational thought” and she recalls how, in this context, Langer herself briefly talked of architecture as “a virtual ethnic domain”.


Cohen, The Symbolic, 15. Cohen has not encountered Douglas’s idea of the family as a ‘virtual community’, as he separates kinship from community by describing it as an entity greater than kinship, but less than the abstraction of society. Indeed, he describes community as able to define kinship by making it possible to see kinship’s boundaries, and, like kinship, community is also an entity where one both learns and practices how to be social. The implied obverse of this, however, is that the boundaries of family must also be able to show the boundaries of community. Given that families are where culture and sociability are first contextualised, it makes sense to say that the symbolic boundaries of the family, and the sense of the primacy of belonging of a family, are like a community, and thus a ‘virtual community.’(292-293)

Cohen, The Symbolic, (20, emphasis added)
Sheltering Significance

Epistemologically speaking, dwelling comes from a context in which to dwell could mean to stay as well as to wander. It is probable that initially the tension between staying, or hestial, and wandering, or hermetic modes, was present in our language, because it reflected our experience. Whether or not Adam and Eve were told to leave the garden of Eden, the tale provides a metaphor for the coexistence of the desire for, and the pleasure taken in, both sedentary and nomadic forms of life. Nevertheless, the original duality of meaning in the word has been so submerged as to be almost unavailable. Or rather, until quite recently, dwelling as wandering has been a submerged quality but, given that meaning abides only with recognised practice, I contend it probable that dwelling in the mode of wandering has been a submerged quality, because it was a submerged praxis. But this is changing.

Recently, dwelling as staying has collided with, and been complicated by, the fluid nature of modernity. To an extent which did not exist thirty years ago (a shift over the course of a generation) in the over-developed world, dwelling as staying now incorporates dwelling as wandering. Even as we have a permanent address where we live in a house that we call home, we are also always leaving it for other places. Not only are we more mobile than ever before, but the address we call home, is the recipient of all kinds of goods, imported from all kinds of places. Whether the mode of transport is actual or virtual, departures from this location are so regular, they have become habitual. Less obviously, commodities that have been produced elsewhere, and become the subject of complex regimes of transport before our consumption of them, involves deterritorialisations. Moreover, although reterritorialisations occur as commodities are brought home, their production elsewhere and the movement they have undergone, contributes to the constitution of our dwelling. Again, our knowledge and participation in this process has an habitual character. Various kinds of wandering have come to define and inform staying. The departures of our person, mind or senses from our usual address, deterritorialise our experience of dwelling as staying. Experiences of dwelling as wandering are reterritorialised as they are brought into the residential home. Thus, on a more or less daily basis, dwelling as staying is made to incorporate dwelling as wandering. A shorthand way of expressing this is to say that the global is also the local, since globalisation enters and resides in everyday experience. As phenomena get so close they merge into new phenomena, so do the terms that describe them. In this case, the contraction yields the simultaneously apt, but awkward, ‘glocalisation.’ It’s important to see home’s glocal context underneath and inside the many ways it is constituted. Of course, as is
implied, the qualification ‘over-developed’ glocality is determined by complex matters of context, and must be seen as levels or degrees. Despite their inherent complexity, contexts ought to be initially distinguished according to a straightforward economic taxonomic division. Initially at least, it is fair to claim that as affluence increases, so does the degree of glocality. This study shows degrees of household glocality; how some homes are more glocal than others.

Shelter is indubitably significant. Our shelters are significant, but significance varies according to the ways inhabitation is perceived. But perception is a multiply determined apparatus, since it depends on subjective, cultural, contextual and circumstantial factors. There is some success to be realised in the attempt to apportion significance to each of these factors separately. But since they are, for the most part, realised together in a warp and weft of thread, the best one can do is apply a design and cut accordingly.

Shelter’s significance has archi-texture. However, although shelter’s significance has many strands, not all bear equal significance. Some strands are thicker, the fabric they create is denser, and the figures and motifs that emerge from the weave are more distinctive, and consequently attract more attention. Extending this metaphor, I have in this thesis presented you with two pieces of cloth, that is two culturally distinct locations, each the product of a different weaving cooperative. The fabric of each piece of cloth has a warp of time and place, interlaced by a weft of respondents. I have cut these cloths using the same tools, or themes, and ordered them according to a predetermined design. The design imposed and presented here is, as I hope I made obvious in chapter two, a once-off, contrived, and singular design. And, just like the fabric she cuts, this fabricator has brought to her design a mixture of subjective, cultural, contextual and circumstantial elements. The design and cutting tools are mine, while the fabric is not. The former has been imposed on the latter. The pattern-governed cuts into these two cloths established the style of the garments I tailored. Each chapter has made different cuts, and has sought to lift from each of the two cloths the pieces of a garment. Because there have been so many pieces juxtaposed with one another, it does to some extent appear as a collage. Nevertheless, despite the plethora of pieces, certain styles are apparent. Although they are not as close to our bodies as our clothes, we wear our homes with the same mixture of deep appreciation and forgetful nonchalance. Like our clothes, we take our homes for granted, even while we use and depend on them for shelter. Time now to group the pieces, stitch them together and undertake fabrication.
Although aware that the idea of home lay at the middle of a concentric series of often circularities, and could be invoked for a wide variety of purposes in many contexts, I had to limit its purview. I wanted to discuss and compare the dwelling that took place within two distinct, geographically defined areas, Coolbellup and Diu, whose inhabitants became representatives of two meta-cultural formations, Australia and India. The limited purview, according to the metaphor of fabric and fabrication, was the imposition of a pattern on two cloths. Ironically, to discern some of the principals which shape residential dwelling, it was necessary to impose some principles of my own, and then pay attention to what they revealed, to let them show me how important or relevant they were. Along with culture and geographical location, my pattern imposed a material bias. To have a place to dwell, a residence of whatever kind was essential. As far as this thesis is concerned, whatever else dwelling may involve, at the outset it was understood as sedentary, identified as a residence of some kind providing a more or less permanent address. There were to be no nomads, in the sense of a constant transient pattern of dwelling that shifted from one temporary abode to another. Everyone in this study was sedentary and domesticated, in the sense that they were thoroughly conditioned by, and knew intimately, the experience of living behind walls. Other patterned cuts occurred along social, technological, architectural, historical and biographical lines, to disclose whatever significance they might have for a structure of feeling called home. For, to have a place to dwell, a residence, is to inhabit a ‘structure of feeling’ as much as it is to inhabit a building. As notions house and home, in other words, act reflexively on one another, hailing or interpellating each other. Structures of feeling meanwhile are multiple structures, having both affective, sensual and cognitive constituents. Structures of feeling evolve out of habitus or, put the other way, habitus gives structure to our feeling.

In chapter three I wanted to look at Diu and Coolbellup as recipients for structures of feeling that expressed the extent to which my respondents felt at home-in-the-world. The cut of the questions was directed at how it felt to live in one or the other of these two places. A pattern of dialectics, platial, temporal and social, was used to discern structures of feeling. Feeling was apprehended as levels of care expressed as appropriation, connection and identification. Certain aspects of Coolbellup and Diu attracted respectively certain kinds of attention. Firstly, there was near unanimous aesthetic appreciation in Diu for the platial environment. Although there were expressions of support for Coobellup’s social and platial environment, there was no equivalent endorsement of its aesthetics. Indeed, in Coolbellup attitudes towards Coolbellup were altogether more divided and ambivalent, than attitudes in Diu towards Diu. In Coolbellup articulations of
disapproval, disappointment, fear, alienation and insecurity were more numerous than those articulating satisfaction and confidence in the suburb. The children were the most appreciative, and took some pleasure in the environment beyond their house. Still, this enjoyment was qualified by some concerns about rising crime on the one hand, and the circumscribed possibilities for playful adventure on the other. For Coolbellup’s adults, the social and platial environment was either regarded as no more problematic then other suburbs, or was seen as threatening, and treated as the source for anxiety and insecurity. Inadequate levels of social interaction and mutual concern were, moreover, seen to be reflected in the uncongenial nature of the platial environment. Coobellup, in short, was felt to lack certain crucial kinds of care, and offered quite a contrast to Diu. In Diu, despite a few expressions of distaste or disappointment over shortcomings of mutual civility and hospitality, the social environment was declared to generally be one of peace and cooperation. Anxious articulations over the rate and direction of developments to cater for tourism, served to underline the value which was placed on harmony in and between Diu’s social and platial environments. In Diu, substantial levels of appropriation, connection and identification were evident. The difference with Coolbellup was the experience of a high level of meaningful community. In Coolbellup, an inadequate level of care was at once the source and result of inadequate levels of appropriation, connection, and identification, and so concomitantly, the lack or even the complete absence of meaningful community. Structures of feeling that include the idea of the value of meaningful community, seem to be pivotal in structures of feeling at home-in-the-world.

Meaningful community is not simply a matter of reciprocating forms of mutuality however, because these tend to be encouraged or discouraged by the disposition of platial forms and platial order. Building shapes dwelling, and contributes to the formation and maintenance of habitus. Potentially, alterations to the built environment can entail alterations to the social environment, although it must to be stressed that changes in the former are no simple guarantee of changes in the latter. In Coobellup, where the majority of residences are houses located in the middle of a substantial block of land, the result is the production of considerable distances. Furthermore, Coolbellup houses have a sealed and insular construction, and together with the spatial spaciousness, create a platial order that encourages a focus inward, thus contributing to, and illustrating the claim for, and value of, privacy. Intra-household privacy is also important.

Compared to Diu, Coolbellup houses host fewer people in larger areas, with more rooms. More rooms and fewer people allow for more privacy, but convention also implicitly designates certain rooms more private than others. These designations can vary according to whether one is a
member of the household or not. In Diu by contrast, most residences front directly onto the street, and house quite a few people, in a small number of polyvalent rooms. Compared to Coolbellup, Diu residences are outward tending, and together with their open doors and glassless windows, promote higher levels of proximity, and thus raise the level of visibility and collectivity, and inhibit the provision of privacy. Inside too the ratio of people to floor space inevitably conditions visibility and collectivity, and militates against private places and the sequestered privacy they offer. In Diu, platial order in the house is such that privacy has a low level of possibility, and consequently, though with a few notable exceptions, the concept has low profile, and desire is seldom invested in order to realise it. The exceptions among the bachelors in Diu, serve to underline the extent to which privacy is learned. A desire for privacy is conditioned by private experience, which modifies the existing dispositions of habitus. As a set of learned dispositions the need for, expectation of, or desire for, privacy is heavily influenced by platial forms and platial order. The number of household members in relation to the proximity, orientation and size of houses comprise, *inter alia*, the most salient dimensions in influencing the development of a need, or desire for, privacy.

The household forms and order to which one is accustomed, also shape desires aimed at improving them. In both Coobellup and Diu, there were substantial quantities of desire directed at possible home improvements. Because the platial forms and order in Diu houses are modest by comparison with Coolbellup, articulations of desire for their improvement are also more modest. In both places, desire was directed at increasing suitablity, comfort and convenience, which together articulated the importance houses had as technologies that enabled relations of embodiment. Suitability, comfort, and convenience motivated modest desire for home improvements in Diu, in the form of an extra room, or more household technology. In Coolbellup to a greater extent than in Diu, suitability included desire directed at the house as a hermeneutic technology, as expressed by the wish to improve house design and location. Considered as objects bearing an important semiotic function charged with communicating values, improving the appearance or location of one’s house conveys messages about the merit and respectability of the occupants. Finally, in seeking to identify any differences between the terms house and home, I asked after conceptual distinctions, while continuing to remain alert to the way these might be contradicted by praxis. It seems that, in both Coolbellup and Diu, house and home were widely recognised as connoting product and process respectively. However, it was also the case that house and home were often used interchangeably with one another. As practical concepts, or praxes, house and home regularly overlapped. However, convergence in use tended to correspond
with less emphasis on the social dimensions of process, and more emphasis on the material product, while less convergence tended to reverse the emphasis.

Just as wealth conditions household forms, and orders and shapes desires aimed at improving them, so it is instrumental in conditioning relations with technology. Most, if not all, technology in households nowadays is mass produced rather than hand crafted. The inter-changeability and substitutability characteristic of mass-produced technology makes access a matter of finance, and removes investments in the cultivation and development of technique. This is particularly relevant in our use and relations with the world via complex modern technology. For in these we often engage with functions and operations we do not understand well, and must thus accept a degree of technologically induced perplexity that comes with technological complexity. In Coobellup, where there was much more domestic technology of all kinds relative to Diu, there were also more expressions of satisfaction or dissatisfaction regarding technology. In addition, there were also more comments of discomfit or anxiety about technological complexity, and these extended into concerns over the nature, quality and orientation of modernity. Nonetheless, it was evident that tension existed between the value of technological comprehension and simplicity on the one hand, and an uncritical fascination and pleasure with technological complexity and novelty on the other. In Diu, less household technology corresponded with an ardent desire for more, and there was very little critique or ambivalence about technology. Aware of the possibilities for the technological improvement of household labour and leisure, Diuites tended to make lists of the technologies they desired especially those of the electronic kind. As already mentioned however, there was some concern over the direction evident in development oriented to capture the new market in tourism. In this respect, technology, and in particular motorised vehicles and lavish hotels, were bound to transform Diu for the worse.

Selective reifications in vernacular discourse, work as limits on what is understood as technology. While new, sophisticated or electronic technology tended to represent all technology in both Diu and Coolbellup, this occurred to a greater extent in Diu. To counter selective reifications in popular apprehension, technology needs to be understood in relation to the way it mediates our relations with the world. Technology involves intention and attention or modes of cultivation. It one sense, it is through our differential application of intention and attention, to the world via technology, that the world is differentially, apprehended, and interpreted.
Using a phenomenology of technics to discern several of the most prevalent applications of technologically mediated relations, it was clear that embodiment relations that extended the body in various ways were very important, in both Coolbellup and Diu. Embodiment technologies that satisfied the basic need for food and shelter, or which extended the body’s senses or functions, were especially prominent. Background systems technology, like electricity and water supplies, were frequently mentioned as essential prerequisites for the maintenance of life, as well as for the operation of other valued technologies. In this sense their characterisation as technologies of the background, that receive less attention, but whose importance shoots into the foreground if withdrawn, is somewhat misplaced. Having said this, however, it is also necessary to point out that there are background technologies of other less conscious kinds. These are background technologies which are overlooked as technologies, because of the aforementioned collapse of distinctions in the prevalence of the tendency to represent technology by its newest or most sophisticated examples. Thus, the equation of technological development with capital p Progress, together with the greater comparative wealth, and complex technological texture of Australia, meant that what was background technology in Coolbellup tended to be foreground technology in Diu. In a related fashion, there was in Coolbellup a tendency to equate technological luxury with technological novelty, with the implication that, with the growth of familiarity, these newer technologies would recede also further into the background. Against this trend, in both places, the alterity technology of the television was accorded a powerful place. This is due, perhaps, to the combination of television’s fascinating capacity to act as a quasi other, and its hermeneutic ability to ‘read’ the world by extending vision and audition. Although a very familiar technology, television still managed to capture a lot of attention, both positive and negative. In this respect, attitudes to television in Coolbellup were more critical and ambivalent than those in Diu. It was evident that in Diu, where there were altogether fewer relations with technologically mediated others, and a much greater proximity between both houses and people, that relations with actual others received much more encouragement. In house and home, a host of particularities combine to create atmosphere, or horizontal gestalt. In Coolbellup, the distance between houses, and their comparatively closed and sealed architecture, delivers a quiet and quiescent atmosphere to its neighbourhoods. In Diu, by contrast, relative architectural openness, as well as platial and social proximity, combine to create an atmosphere that hums with activity.

The conventional association of families with house and home required some discussion of the way families are understood in Australia and India. In both places, demographic characteristics of the census are qualified and enumerated at the level of the household, albeit with different
assumptions guiding them. Households in Australia are not assumed to be ‘headed’, and matters of marital status and other relationships are matters for inquiry. In India, on the other hand, a household, with the single exception of the category ‘other’ is assumed to have a ‘head’ and a ‘spouse’ and all other members in collateral or lineal relationship. Differences in understanding households as the repositories of family life, rest with differences in the manner of family constitution as an expression of their insertion in the habitus of their respective cultural milieux.

In Australia, the cultural milieu is now more officially secular than openly religious, with a dramatic waning of the influence of Christianity and concomitant decline of the influence of religious authority on morality, and hence on social and sexual behaviour. In Australia, although most households contain families who are heterosexual couples, married or de facto, and with or without children, a plurality of household forms are recognised in the significant minorities of singles, single parent households and extended families. There are also group households to which the label family is applied, in a friendly rather than formal application. Composing an accurate description of families in Australia these days, lies less in consideration of them as representing an institution, and more on the way they act as a node in a network of social practices. Supplanting a narrow focus on family form and function, is the focus on family practices. For example, the manner in which gender relations are inscribed in family practices discloses the extent to which women are still responsible for the majority of housework and childcare. Nonetheless, as in the wider Australian society, gender roles and inequality in the household are known to be contested informally, in everyday interaction, and formally at the level of legislation.

In India, the family is considered to be a pivotal institution which provides the foundation upon which socio-economic and religious practice rests. This privileged status comes in a variety of forms, the precise nature of which, and extent and effects of which have been a major preoccupation and matter of debate. Clearly however, both change and continuity are at work, since the family must adjust to lifecycle changes of membership and economic conditions. While this has always been true, as India enters ever further into, and is penetrated by, the economic and cultural forces of globalisation, family form must adapt to less continuity, and more change. While family form has been shown to be highly adaptive, within the family, gender and age are still powerful conditioners of family practice. The sanction which religious scripture and custom have provided to patriarchy, and for the wisdom of elders, officially prevails in families with the oldest male member officially invested with most authority. Whatever the actual extent of
women’s unofficial power in the household, the gendered division of labour remains firm, with women wholly responsible for housework and childcare, even if they also earn a living outside the home.

The reported importance of the family in India was reflected in Diu, where the family lay at the centre of discussions about house and home. In Diu, the family was acclaimed and venerated, and its interests placed in the foreground. Peace, harmony and cooperation in the family were common desires, and the presence of these values was considered essential for a happy and successful home. In Coobellup, by contrast, although the family was not left out of discussions about the home, and there were several strong expressions of its importance to the home, its presence was, compared to Diu understated, and there was a tendency for it to be taken for granted. However, in tension with this complacent casualness towards the family, there was obvious concern over the demise of its nuclear form, and the rise of unanchored individualism, linked to the social and economic pressures of contemporary life. Although there were several examples of the value and practice of extended family relations, the extended family was not, for the majority, a part of everyday experience. In relation to this, there was some concern over the attrition of the tradition of the extended family, which also drew on a perceived loss of respect for social and family elders. At the same time that family ties were to some extent seen to be unravelling, the pressures of modern life were seen as harder to negotiate in the absence of a supportive surrounding community.

At one level, family consciousness was strong in Diu and relatively weak in Coolbellup, but, moving deeper, it seems that their respective structures of feeling emphasise concern for the virtual community that is the family. The strength of the former, and the weakness of the latter, is produced by the intersection of the differential force of tradition and the way the platial order of the household structures relations of proximity. In Diu, the house-held family was a constant presence. The family is always close by, as the size and division of the house, and the ratio of household members to available area, makes household space limited and polyvalent. In Diu, the great importance and respect accorded to the family by tradition, coupled with proximity of members, means that the family’s collective interests of peace and cooperation are not merely acknowledged, but privileged on a day to day basis. Without private places, and the concept of personal space that these embody, the harmony of the house-held family becomes a matter of daily precept and practice. Relations within a closely positioned and tradition-conscious family must be handled judiciously, with the projection of subject-centred individuality, if not
subordinated to a collective ethos, then at least seriously conditioned by it. In Diu, the virtual community of the house-held family mirrors the attitude to the family across India. In a cultural milieu in which religion divides and redivides societies into a multitude of communities as a way of assigning value and dividing labour, the virtual community of the family is, in a very real sense, the premier community. Its importance lies in the power it has to confer and mark identity, as well as represent and mediate relations between its members and the world. In Coolbellup, the family should also be seen as a virtual community, because of its house-held nature. However, because the family no longer commands an institutional status, it lacks the powerful rationales that provide it with robust attributes of self-awareness and assertion.

In both Diu and Coobellup, place is of the essence. In Diu the importance of the virtual community of the family was made manifest and underlined by the kind and quality of platial relations around the house. The house, that is the home, is a polyvalent place in both a social and platial sense, since the domestic realm usually accommodates a large number of persons and purposes, and there is little recognition of the need for private places or personal privacy. In Coobellup, the domestic realm is divided into more and less private places, in the expectation that privacy is a right, which the virtual community of the family mirrors the wider society in respecting and providing. Having said this, however, I do not think the role of privacy in the constitution or maintenance of family consciousness is wholly unambiguous. First of all, the strength and force of tradition is likely to be more germane than the presence or absence of private places, as the strong emphasis on the family, and the division of the household in upper and middle class Victorian Britain must readily attest. The presence or absence of privacy is relative, and should be evaluated in-situ, and alongside other prevalent conditions, such as the degree of technological development, and insertion of the local context in a global one. Second, it seems obvious that the need or desire for privacy is a learned one, and, while heavily imbued with culturally sensibilities, it remains open to alterations that may be wrought by subjective experience. In Diu, both the absence of a need for privacy and the subjugation of personal need, are manifestations of habitus expressed as a structure of feeling. Likewise, when a desire for privacy was expressed after an experience of privacy had been gained, then the usual dispositions of habitus and structure of feeling were challenged by personal predilections, reinforced by experience. In Coobellup it is, however, I think possible to argue that the loss of community is linked to an overdevelopment of privacy. That a sense of local community is lacking or even lost, is in large part an outcome of too much privacy. Together, the distance between houses, their insular nature, the domination of the neighbourhood by the technological mediation of the car,
and the complex busy-ness of modernity, each contribute to the attrition of community and the structure of feeling it represents in the social imagination.

So, you may well ask, where have the last six chapters and this concluding preamble led? Indulging in what is here the ultimate question: What does it all mean in terms of the Heideggerian questions which motivated this thesis? The short answer to these questions is, I’m afraid, rather anti-climactic, in the sense that, as I warned, answers can only be present in tendencies and impressions. To claim otherwise would be arrogant, since it would be unsupported. It is, however, an open question as to whether a much larger body of research than I have been able to undertake would be able to do otherwise. I cannot claim to know whether anyone in my study engaged in a search for the nature of dwelling, or whether, if they did, they learnt to dwell. But, although I do not possess profound answers, I do have distinctive intimations that accumulate in tendencies, and can be gathered together in impressions. The idea has been to meditate on the mediations of dwelling, rather than draw absolute conclusions. The idea is to identify archi-texture, or the threads that combine to produce the particular kind of dwelling that takes place in the buildings we call home.

The guiding questions in this thesis: what is it to dwell? and how does building belong to dwelling? were prompted by Salman Rushdie’s reflection of Heidegger’s claim that here, in modernity, we experience a kind of homelessness, that we experience a predicament in the way we dwell. Our response to this “plight of dwelling”, said Heidegger, must be an existential inquiry into the nature of dwelling itself, with the expectation and understanding that, in the process of undertaking such an inquiry, we come into dwelling, and learn to dwell.

The real plight of dwelling indeed lies in this that mortals ever search anew for the nature of dwelling that they must ever learn to dwell.\(^3\)

The claim is that, if we gave thought to dwelling, the nature of dwelling would not only reveal itself, but as it was revealed, we would understand what dwelling involved and required. Giving thought to the nature of dwelling is, declares Heidegger, “the sole summons that that \textit{calls} mortals into their dwelling.”\(^4\) “To bring dwelling to the fullness of its nature” he concludes means nothing less than that we “build out of dwelling and think for the sake of dwelling.”\(^5\) For Heidegger, to accomplish the search for the nature of dwelling necessarily involved, not only the perception of platiality and mortality, but their active recognition. Dwelling occurs at the
intersection of the fourfold axes of earth and sky, mortals and divinities. In acknowledging our place and time, we also apprehend how our stay is a “staying with things.” According to Heidegger, in apprehending how our stay on earth is a stay with things, we recognise the fundamental character of dwelling as the preservation of the fourfold unity. “The basic character of dwelling is to spare, to preserve” and “to spare and preserve means to take under our care, to look after the fourfold in its presencing.”

For Heidegger “dwelling preserves the fourfold by bringing the presencing of the fourfold into things.” It is not, then, merely a matter of contemplation, but of thought, accompanied by acts of preservation that realise dwelling. Place and time presence in things, just as they presence in us. Unlike things however, our being is an issue for us, and this awareness makes it necessary that we let things be in their presencing. Letting be should not be construed as simply a matter of passive contemplation, because to care for is to act on an awareness of the need to care. To dwell at the intersection of place and time involves active care. This involves not only nurturing those things which grow, thus assisting the action of nature (the bringing-forth or presencing of *physis*), but constructing and cultivating those things which do not grow (the bringing forth or presencing of *poiesis*). As Heidegger concludes: “Dwelling insofar as it keeps or secures the fourfold in things, is, as this keeping, a building.” In the buildings in which we live are places, locations which are things that admit and install, and so gather the fourfold. In the buildings in which we live, however, we dwell only insofar as we think of it and care for them. The fourfold is the intersection of time and place. The fourfold interleaving of earth and sky, mortals and immortals, is another way of saying time and place or, indeed, time and being. Where-ever we live or stand is always a particular instantiation of history and topography. To dwell is to take care, and to care is to keep and build. Thus, we accomplish dwelling when we recognise the gathering of place and time in things. This makes the dwelling undertaken at home an especially rich and profound aspect of our dwelling in the world per se.

Can we see a restating, or a working through of these claims here? I believe we can, but this entails two qualifications. Firstly, some translation into the modes and terms of thesis must take place. I have dwelt on certain aspects of dwelling at home chosen for their capacity to disclose this dwelling. Secondly, I am not making these statements below on behalf of everyone in my study, merely pointing at some instances and tendencies. Searching for the nature of dwelling occurs to the extent that this interrogation on the subject has elicited affirmations and questions from others concerning, not only dwelling undertaken at home, but dwelling in the world as such.
It is my belief that the perceptions of, and affirmations of, the importance of community, family and material/technological well-being that have merged here, speak of both the need and the desire to cultivate, secure and preserve them. To build, in the widest sense of the term, should not be construction for the sake of construction, nor merely the taking down of the old in order to replace it with the new. To build is an act that requires care-full consideration, and so preserves the right to presence of all things, as well as our right to cultivate and build.

Our dwelling, as a stay with things, inevitably seeks a stay that is suitable, comfortable and convenient. Material or technological well being is sought, and we build to actualise it. However, inasmuch as suitability, comfort and convenience are produced and consumed without care for the things themselves and the world from which they emerge, then our well-being is compromised. To the extent that the people in my study had, or desired, material and technological suitability, comfort, and convenience, with recognition of an appreciation for the things which served or delivered them, then dwelling, as a staying with things was underway. Given the dominance of the mode of Gestell (Enframing) to reveal things as standing reserve (Bestand), instances from the cumulative experiences of daily dwelling that contradicted or questioned this dominance can be seen as elements of dwelling as a concern-full staying with things.

In fostering their growth at home, in one’s house or in cultivating or building subjective goods, and a social common good, the nature of dwelling was recognised even while the search to preserve and enhance it may continue. In desiring the continued emergence of familial and/or social care and connection, the search goes on, for these need to be conceived and desired, before they can be cultivated and achieved. Moreover, perceptions of, and questions about, the loss of community and virtual community of the family, and of an indecent rush in the changes and developments of modernity, serve to confirm the sense that dwelling must involve care-full cultivation and construction. Dwelling as a stay amongst family and/or community is a constant opportunity to realise and practice mutuality and cooperation. To the extent that the people in my study reflected the importance of family and/or community, they reflected the presence of, or the desire for, family and/or community, and so demonstrated that the search for the nature of dwelling, in one aspect or another, has either been realised or is ongoing.
Finally, a few words about the two-fold nature of dwelling as both staying and wandering, about which I have some retrospective intimations in the context of this work, but which, I believe, are of great importance if we, as a species, are to make a contemporary success of dwelling at home in our houses, and in the world as such. The search for the nature of dwelling must be concern-full and care-full to honour and realise staying and wandering. Dwelling with others involves both stayings and wandering, comings and goings, hestial and hermetic relations. Our relations with ourselves and with others will be mistaken if we attempt to suppress or ignore the ongoing nature of this twofold process. To dwell with is to gather the twofold nature of dwelling in the fourfold intersection of the time and place in which we find ourselves. Similarly, our relations with the things which constitute our homes are technologically mediated relations and, to the extent that they serve both stayings and departures, they can enhance our stay among things. Once again, to the extent that technologically mediated relations show care-full concern, they gather the twofold nature of dwelling in the fourfold. They gather, in other words, the intersections of time and place in which we find ourselves in our house-held, technologically mediated environments. Dwelling is hestial and hermetic, involving settlings into place, departures from place and movement between places. Recognition and acceptance of these entries to, stays with, exits from, and the transitions between them, constitute a constant and unfolding hallmark of congenial and successful dwelling. Heidegger said “Thinking itself belongs to dwelling” but, “only if we are capable of dwelling, only then can we build.”

I would wish to add that it is only when we accept, seek and accomplish dwelling, as both staying and wandering, that we turn to another mode of revealing.

Endnotes

1 On the mutually constitutive process of deterritorialisation and reterritorialisation see Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari. A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia Trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis University of Minnesota Press, 1987) Deterritorialisation is a principle of asignifying rupture, characteristic of rhizomes, the metaphor Deleuze and Guattai use to describe multiplicities of semiotic heterogeneous connectivity. Deterritorialisations, also known as “lines of flight”, are the departures towards and the movement into connections, and so bestow change to the territory from which they emanated. Deterritorialisations are moments of alteration and transformation. Reterritorialisations are like domestications or recuperations of change and the reconstitution of forms of territorial order. “Every rhizome contains lines of segmentarity according to which it is stratified, territorialised, organised, signified, attributed etc., as well as lines of deterritorialisation down which it constantly flees. There is a rupture in the rhizome whenever segmentary lines explode into a line of flight. But the line of flight is part of the rhizome. These lines always tie back to one another.” (9) Territory is thus always a provisional state, since its propensity for connection introduces deterritorialisation. Fixing and stabilising territory involves preventing, or otherwise removing, the rhizomatic capacity for connection. Captures of this kind however are possible in conditions of isolation or imprisonment. If home is a signified organised territory, its familiar stratifications are potentially subject to constant deterritorialisation with every connection beyond itself, and reterritorialisation as these connections are received and more or less incorporated. Though this is by no means a new processual phenomenon, the quantity of connections, and the quantity of their affects have so multiplied over the course of the last century that home must be thought of a constantly renegotiated territory, and its of its continual incorporation and domestication of its connections and the changes these entail.
2 ‘Glocalisation’ coined by Paul Virilio in *Open Sky* (London Verso 1997) 56


4 Heidegger *Poetry*, 161.(emphasis in original)

5 Heidegger *Poetry*, 161.

6 Heidegger *Poetry*, 151.

7 Heidegger *Poetry*, 150-151.

8 Heidegger *Poetry*, 151

9 Heidegger *Poetry*, 151.

10 Heidegger *Poetry*, 160.
Appendix One Interview Questions

Initial Questions for Coolbellup

1. Could you tell me how long you have lived in Coolbellup?
2. Where did you live before you came to live in Coolbellup?
2a. For how long? Why?
3. Has Coolbellup changed?
3a. What do you remember about what Coolbellup was like ‘x’ years ago?
4. Why do you live here now?
5. Do you like living here in Coolbellup?
5a. Do you identify as an Australian?
6. Would you rather live somewhere else, if so where?
7. Do you have any ideas about how people and cultures outside Australia perceive Australia as a place?
8. How would you describe Coolbellup?
9. How would you describe your experience of living here in Coolbellup?
10. What sort of things do you think of when you think of ‘house’?
11. What things do you think of when you think of your house?
12. What sort of things do you think of when you think of ‘home’?
13. What things do you think of when you think of your home?
14. What is your idea of the ideal home?
15. Describe your idea of the worst possible home?
16. Do you feel at home here in Coolbellup?
16a. What things contribute to this sense of home?
16. Could you tell me what you think the ideal place?
17. And the worst possible place?
18. Are there other places you feel at home?
19. Why do you feel at home there (in these other places)?
20. Would you like to make any of these places your current home?
20a. Why, what differences do you think there would be?
21. Generally, how do you view the past (ie history)?
22. And how does this generally relate to your past situation?
23. And how about the present generally speaking?
24. How does this view relate to your present situation?
25. So generally, how do you see the future?
26. Similarly speaking, how do you see your future in terms of the generalised view (of the future) you just described?
27. What do you define as your space or place?

Supplementary Questions for Coolbellup

1. What architectural features of your house are most important to you?
2. What technological features of your house are most important to you?
3. Do you have any favourite places around the house?
3a. Why are they favourite places?
4. Are memories of places you have lived important to you?
5. Do you consider television to be an essential household technology?
6. Do you listen to the radio?
7. Do you consider radio an essential household technology?
8. What are your favourite radio channels?
9. Can you imagine yourself on radio?
10. Do you watch television?
11. What are your favourite T.V channels?
12. Do you ever see places that you have been to on T.V?
13. Can you imagine yourself on T.V?
14. Do you make any collections?
14a. Why, and what are they?
15. Could you tell me how the housework is divided, who does what around the house?
15a. How much time do you work in the house?
16. How would you define your place/ space?
17. Are any places in your home sacred to you?
18. Do you think that the world/earth is sacred?
19. Is there anything you would like to ask me about?

**Initial Questions for Diu**

1. Could you tell me how long you have lived in Diu?
2. Where did you live before you came to live in Diu?
3. Has Diu changed during the time of your stay?
4. Why do you live in Diu now?
5. Do you like living here in Diu?
6. Would you live somewhere else, if so where?
7. What languages are spoken at home?
8. Do you identify as an Indian?
9. Do you have any ideas about how people and cultures outside India perceive India?
10. How would you describe Diu?
11. How would you describe your experience of living here in Diu?
12. What sort of things do you think of when you think of ‘house’?
13. What sort of things do you think when you think of your house?
14. What sort of things do you think of when you think of ‘home’?
15. What sort of things do you think of when you think of your home?
16. What is your idea of an ideal home?
17. Describe your idea of the worst possible home?
18. What is the most important thing about home?
19. Do you feel at home here in Diu?
20. Are there any other places you feel at home?
20a. Why do you feel at home there [in these other places]?
20b. Would you like to make any of these places your current home?
21. Could you tell me what you think is the ideal place?
22. And the worst possible place?
23. Do you have visitors? How many?
24. How do you feel about visitors?
25. What sort of things do you classify as rubbish?
26. Generally how do you view the past (i.e., history)?
27. And how does this generally relate to your past?
28. And how about the present, generally speaking?
29. How does this view relate to your present situation?
30. So generally how do you see the future?
31. Similarly speaking, how do you see your future in terms of the generalised view (of the future) you just described?
32. What architectural features of your house are most important to you?
33. What technological features of your house are most important to you?
34. Do you have any favourite places around the house?
34a. Why are they favourite?
35. Are memories of places you have lived important to you?
36. Do you listen to the radio?
37. Do you consider radio to be an essential household technology?
38. What is your favourite radio channel?
39. Can you imagine yourself on radio?
40. How much time would you estimate you spend listening to the radio?
41. Do you watch television?
42. Do you consider television to be an essential household technology?
43. What is your favourite TV channel?
44. Do you ever see places that you have been to on T.V.?
45. Can you imagine yourself on T.V.?
46. How much television do you watch?
47. Do you make any collections?
47a. What are they and why?
48. Could you tell me how the housework is divided. Who does what around the house?
49. How many hours do you work in house?
50. How would you define your place or space?
51. Are any places in your home sacred to you?
Appendix One Interview Questions

52. Do you think the world or earth is sacred?
53. What is the most important thing about home?
54. During the interview how much were you aware of the presence of the tape recorder?
54a. Was it a problem?
55. Is there anything you’d like to ask me about?

Supplementary Diu Questions

1. How many people live in your house?
2. Who owns the house?
3. Who will inherit it?
4. Do you know the round-about value of the house where you live?
5. Please give a description of your house?
6. Do you have a room or some storage place where things not often in use are kept?
7. Would you describe yourself as a tidy person?
8. How many generations of this family have resided in this house?
9. Where do you sleep?
10. Do you have a room of your own?
11. Who lives in the house nearby?
11a. Are they from your community?
12. How well do you get on with your neighbours?
13. Are there any special pleasures that you get from your home?
14. Are there any things that you dislike about your home?
15. How much time approximately would you spend per day in the house, at home?
16. How much time approximately would you spend outside or away from home?
17. When out of the house in which places do you spend most time?
18. What kind of transport does the household use?
19. Is your house conveniently situated with regard to amenities such as schools shops markets and places of employment?
20. Do you know of the Vastu Shastra?
21. Have you any ideas about what Australia is like?
22. How do you feel about the tourists who visit Diu?
23. Do you have any pets?
24. Please look straight ahead of you and describe as far as you can what lies in the room behind you?
25. Finally, is there anything you would like to add about yourself or you home?
n.b Dalit is the most often preferred designation of the Hindu peoples who used to be called ‘untouchable’ and thus outside the caste hierarchy. The name Dalit means ‘the oppressed.’ They are also known as Harijan coined by Mahatma Ghandi which means ‘children of god’ but this is nowadays less popular because it does not forcefully draw attention to their marginal social status. The four principal castes Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shudra constitute the theoretical framework of Hindu caste hierarchy. In practice however caste hierarchy is a complex and often contested ranking of sub-castes or jati.

Hiraben; Hindu Dalit, 35 years old, married, with four children. She and her husband (who is often drunk) casually employed as municipal rubbish disposal workers (sweepers) in township of Vanakbara about 14 kms away at other end of the island of Diu. Lives with her husband and children in a one room garret of three room Portuguese era house. House owned by mother-in-law and shared with her and her brother-in-law’s family of four, who occupy the slightly more spacious area on the ground floor. Her brother-in-law will inherit the house. There is a very small courtyard with toilet out back. The house faces onto a narrow cul-de-sac and this area is recognised as ‘belonging’ to the Dalit community whose houses surround it.

Kajal : Hindu, Shudra (Mochi, tailors and shoemakers), eldest child of Varshaben (see below)13 years old and a student at a Gujarati medium primary school

Krishnaben. Hindu Brahmin, 33 years old married with two children. Husband working in London and she and the children will join him once there are adequate resources. It will be the first time she has left India. She and the children live with her husband’s parents and her sister-in-law. The house is owned by her parents-in-law and her husband will inherit it. The house is Indian modern, four storey, five room, three terrace house situated at the highest point on the island and painted a light, bright blue (a very prominent landmark) My immediate neighbour in Diu, our house was overlooked by theirs.

Levita: Catholic, 12 years old student at the Catholic English medium primary school located next to the church, St Paul’s. Lives with her mother, grandmother, mother’s brother and sister. Father died two years before. House is single storey, six room house with a large roof terrace and a small front porch on a large block of land but no garden and looks directly onto the church and school. House owned by mother and Levita and her sister will jointly inherit it.

Laxhmiben: Dalit 36 years old Married with four children. Lives with parents-in-law, husband and four children in Indian modern, two-storey, four roomed house with a separate kitchen situated across narrow cul-de-sac. Towards the end of my stay the house gained another storey into which moved her husband’s brother and his wife. The house is owned by parents-in-law. She and her husband (also like Hira’s husband regular drunkard) have permanent employment by the municipality as rubbish disposal workers (sweepers)

Marianne: 28 years old, Catholic, married with two children. Lived at time of first interview with husband and daughters in one room in a partially constructed Indian modern house built on large block of land husband had inherited from recently deceased mother. Prior to this they had taken a series of temporary accommodations. Due to conflict with sister-in-law’s family they had vacated the two storey Portuguese house they would otherwise have remained in. The house is owned by herself and her husband. Her husband Agnello was my first research assistant as well as a full-time English teacher at a Gujarati medium primary school and a lay social worker for the Catholic church. Marianne became my closest female friend in Diu. She worked part-time as secretary at the Catholic English medium school and employed some part-time housekeeping help

Nirmalaben: Hindu Vaishya (Vania, traders), a widow, 82 years old. Lives with two sons, daughters-in-law and six grand children in an old twenty one room haveli with roof terrace and anterior courtyard. The house is owned by her and her eldest son will inherit it.

Pramilaben : Hindu Shudra (Kharwa, fishing folk) married with three adult children and one adolescent child, 48 years old. Lives with her husband (a ship’s engineer), two adult daughters and son in Indian modern detached two storey four room house with roof terrace and a small anterior courtyard. Twelve years ago the family used to live in Ghogla on the mainland but moved to Diu to escape unpleasant relations with neighbours. Pramila works as the principal housekeeper and part-time tutor for primary school students. The house jointly owned with husband, children will inherit equally.
Appendix Two Respondent Profiles

Varshaben: Hindu Shudra (Mochi, tailors and shoemakers) 28 years old, Married with three children (including Kajal see above). Lives with husband (a tailor in shop below) and children in two rooms in old haveli tenement in pol with central courtyard. The haveli is owned by her father-in-law and will be inherited by five brothers.

Vijayaben: Hindu Shudra (Salat, construction workers/stone masons) 27 years old Married but deserted by husband soon after birth of only child.. Lives with mother, sister and two brothers in late Portuguese era semi detached house of two-storeys, five rooms, roof terrace and anterior courtyard in Fudam, a village about 6 kms from Diu town. The house belongs to her maternal uncle who works abroad. Vijaya had no regular employment but worked part-time as our housekeeper and took other employment wherever she could, such as operating a small kiosk outside a Gujarati Medium school.

Riswan: Muslim  (niece of Musakhan see below) 13 years old and a student at Gujarati medium primary school.

**Diu Males**

Ashwinbhai: Brahmin, married with two children 34 years old. Lives with wife and daughters in living quarters of the Laxhmi-Narayan temple a Portuguese era single storey building which, apart from altar room has four rooms arranged around an internal courtyard, has a generous front porch and a small anterior courtyard that functions as a scullery and is abutted by an enclosed uncultivated garden containing only rubble and several trees. He and his family literally walked into the unoccupied temple four years previously and Ashwin became its priest and, although previously run by the Gola community, current ownership cannot be definitely attributed. Ashwin was our immediate neighbour on the right hand side. Along with officiating as priest Ashwin with his wife and sister-in-law runs a refectory serving two meals and morning tea to regular customers.

Jinabhai: Dalit, 80 years old a widower once but has a second wife. Lives with wife and married sons, daughter-in law, their children and unmarried daughters in two-story Indian modern house with seven rooms, roof terrace and anterior courtyard. The house is owned by him although purchased with the help of remittances from overseas relatives. Jina is a retired municipal rubbish disposal worker and general labourer.

Musakhan :Muslim, 54 years old, married with an three adult sons. Lives with wife, unmarried son, two married sons and their wives and several children (including Riswan see above) in late Portuguese era semi detached, partitioned two storey, house of two rooms plus kitchen and bathroom, with small covered front porch verandah and anterior courtyard. He and his sons run a herding and butchering business. He and his brother own the house.

Natwar: Dalit, eldest child of Laxhmiben (see above)13 years old and student at Gujarati medium primary school.

Pareshbhai : Kshatriya (Lohana Rajput), 31 years old single and a career immigrant from Bhavnagar in Gujarat. Lived alone at first in one room in the haveli owned by Varsha’s Father in law but by the time of our interview as a government employee he was renting a three room flat (quarters) in a three storey Indian modern apartment block in Ghogla on the mainland. Paresh was my second research assistant and my closest male friend in Diu. Now married with one son and another expected Paresh works as a teacher lecturing in Hotel management and Catering at the local Polytechnic. He had also served in the Indian navy and has a diploma in computer science and a small side business in computer generated horoscopes. Paresh is also an adept yogi and, while I was there, was writing a book on it.

Shrivesh Kumar: Brahmin 50 years old, single. Lives alone in rented, one room on the ground floor of three storey Indian modern house with a roof terrace to which Shrivesh has no real access. There is a bathroom and toilet across foyer opposite his room. The house has an enclosed but gloomy and uncultivated garden. Shrivesh is from the city of Nasik in Maharhastra and as a sergeant in the Indian Army had been posted 14 years before to Diu serve as a guard at the Customs House. Though a government employee and entitled to rent government accommodation, Shrivesh to date, had waited in vain.

Vikrambhai : Kshatriya (Rajput) single, 23 years old. Lives alone in three room government flat on the ground floor of a two storey block situated in a complex of identical blocks. Vikram works as a veterinarian assistant for the Department of Agriculture and is a career migrant from Porbander in Gujarat.
Vilasbhai: Shudra (Machi-Koli - fisher folk), single, 24 years old. Lives with his mother, father and three sisters in a rented single storied Indian modern house of three rooms with an ante-room and washing area. Vilas helps to manage a tea shop with his father, but is also enrolled part-time in catering and hotel management courses at the Polytechnic. Several years ago the family used to live in Ghogla on the mainland but moved to Diu to improve business opportunities.

**Coolbellup Females**

Christine: Aboriginal; married and separated; with four children two of whom are adults, 40 years old. Lives with two youngest children in a somewhat improved ex MoH house. Works full time as an administrator in community child care.

Pat: White, married with two adult children one of whom is Joe (see below), 50 years old. Lives with husband (a Slav) and daughter in a substantially improved Ministry of Housing (MoH) house which they rent. Born and raised in Western Australia Pat had never left the state. Full time housekeeper.

Michelle: White married with one child and pregnant with another and 30 years old. Lived with husband and child in a substantially improved ex MoH. Intending to leave Coolbellup as soon as circumstances allow. Both she and her husband born in New Zealand immigrated to Australia approximately seven years ago. Principal housekeeper with some part-time work.

Janet: White, single, 52 years old, born in England immigrated to Australia approximately 20 years ago and became an Australian citizen. Janet lived alone in an unimproved ex MoH. Part-time student at nearby university

Melissa: Aboriginal, 12 years old. Lives with mother, brother two aunts and three cousins in MoH house and a student at Coolbellup Primary School.

Marissa: White, 12 years old, born in Portugal immigrated with parents to Australia soon after birth. Lives with parents, brother Reuben (see below), and four other siblings including adult sister and boyfriend in substantially extended and improved ex MoH house. Student at Coolbellup primary School.

**Coolbellup Males**

Bernard: White, born in England, 70 years old, immigrated to Australia 27 years ago with wife and four children. Rented and later purchased MoH house which since received minor extension but no improvements. Retired haulage truck driver.

Joe: White, son of Pat (see above) married but no children and 25 years old Lives with wife in substantially improved and extended MoH House. Works full time as sales representative for Horticultural products firm.

Peter: White, married but separated with two children who live with his wife and 35 years old. Lives on his own in extended ex MoH house. Peter works as a tug boat operator.

Michael: White, born soon after his parents immigrated from Portugal and 12 years old. Michael had lived most of his life in an extended and improved ex MoH but had just moved into a much larger house built by his father and uncle in the nearby newly developed suburb of Success. A Student at Coolbellup primary school.

Reuben: White, 12 years old, born in Portugal immigrated with parents to Australia soon after birth. Brother of Marissa (see above).

Brandon: White, 12 years old and lives with Mother and brother in rented MoH duplex house. A student at Coolbellup primary school.
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