
home is where* | Pernilla Hagbert
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“A house is made of wood and beams. A home is made of love
and dreams.” (From painting found in Greensboro, Alabama)

Abstract

Home as a concept is vague and basic, but charged with [underlying] meaning. This thesis looks at the constructions and significance of the concept of home in order to critically review the image of home in terms of political policies, design attitudes and physical development. The aim is to see what role [re]defining home can play in a sustainable development. Intended to further personal research experience, the thesis provides the platform for testing different methods. By literary studies of precedent material, the basis for mapping the concept is established. Interviews and participatory image projects constitute additional means of information gathering.

The image of domestic home developed from industrialist movements and evolved into the comfortably efficient Modern home as we know it today, where the Bourgeois ideals of intimacy and privacy are mixed with the technological advances and rationalization of the 19th and 20th centuries. The [Western] home has come to symbolize personal identity, where physical needs are weighed against the desire embedded in the concept. The way home is portrayed in a commercial and political context emphasizes personal consumption and ownership, but relates to a cultural communality based on societal consensus. The current definition and significance of home can be questioned, as the housing market and political agendas are not managing to provide sustainable living environments. Architects need to get better at conveying experienced values for a socially responsible development while critically examining the contemporary image of home.

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introduction



Welcome Home

Home- a word, unavoidably democratic linguistically, sufficiently vague and general by its very nature, basic enough to be present in almost any conversational context, but yet a concept so intricate and charged with [underlying] meaning. The immediate sense of identity a home seems to provide and suggest to others, makes it a powerful piece in the puzzle that is human interaction as well as emphasizes the social relationships formed around and with the built environment. What defines a home and what significance do we give the sense of home in society, interpersonally and individually?

Never having a clear answer to where home is and finding that home can be created anywhere; my personal relationship to the concept raised the question of how we relate to people and places and how this ultimately contributes to what we claim as home. One question that has stayed with me is whether these are necessary relationships and why we have the need to construct a concept such as home. My experiences tell me that the ratio of spatial to social significance seems to be fairly free when people discuss what a home is, and the ambiguous connection to the physical seems to be quickly replaced by alternative ties if needed. This adaptation and flexibility suggests that we would be able to create home in different ways, but it also implies a deep need for the concept in general, an interesting aspect when discussing the [especially physical] manifestation of home. How do we provide everyone with the right to a home and can we use the concept of home to develop more sustainable living environments than the ones created in today's situation of housing shortage, inequality, financial distress and mortgage crisis?

One of the most basic questions to start with would be what differentiates a home from the pure physical connotations of a house, a dwelling or the equivalent. When does a house become a home and why do people feel the need to accredit physical space with an emotional title? The lack of home and the social challenges in the creation of a home are just as relevant, especially in the context of changing attitudes as new ideologies and lifestyles have emerged throughout history and continue to do so, fueled by a streamlined global acculturation. The concept is something that seems basic to humans (or any creature), but the way we define it and the significance we give it can differ immensely depending on variables such as social, political, cultural or economic context, geographical realities or ideological incentives, and ranges from tangible to intangible in nature. The UN states that:

“The human right to adequate housing is the right of every woman, man, youth and child to gain and sustain a safe and secure home and community in which to live in peace and dignity.” (www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Housing/Pages/HousingIndex.aspx)

The question here is what adequate entails, and the UN goes on to state that this is determined in part by social, economic, cultural, climatic, ecological and other factors, but that it is nevertheless possible to identify certain aspects of the right that are general. Cultural adequacy is called out as one of those general aspects. As the only aspect not connected to physical or legal conditions, it underlines the importance of an “emotional” right to home. Dignity is also upheld as key to the right to housing, but then what is a dignified home?

“Everyone, rich or poor, deserves a shelter for the soul.”

(Samuel Mockbee, founder of Rural Studio)

After having participated in Auburn University’s Rural Studio (a unique design/build education where architecture students get to be part of the whole process from conceptual design to hands-on construction experience), I came back to Chalmers in the fall of 2010 to do this thesis on a subject I’ve long considered interesting. The project I worked on at the Rural Studio was the 20k house, where the aim is to design a house for \$20, 000, including material and labor costs. The premise of the project is to challenge the extreme housing conditions of Western Alabama, where the studio is based. In an area where almost a third of the population lives below the nationally defined poverty limit and 35% live in mobile homes, the need for adequate, affordable housing is pressing. Working with my fellow Outreach students to design and build a house we felt was a dignified home for a client in desperate need of improved housing, I could not help but ask myself what exactly home means. It struck me how irrelevant much of the housing debate seems in comparison to the very basic needs of someone without a proper shelter or a place to call home. It also provided me with the opportunity to reassess some of my previous thoughts on what a home means to me personally. Perhaps more importantly, it has also sparked an interest in how we value home and the values we as architects put into creating dwellings and living environments, including the terminology used and the general discourse within the professional field as well as public forums.



Larsson, M., 2010. home is where*.

Purpose

The concept of home is a general theme, not limited to architecture or the pure production of environments we call home. On the contrary, one might suggest that focus or interest in the concept is sometimes lacking in the professions dealing with the physical creation of dwellings, written off as something too abstract and limited to a private task of the resident. Precedent research on the concept of home and its emotional implications is often found in other disciplines. Not to say that the subject has been avoided within the realm of architecture, but has historically been closer linked to the physical parameters of residential design and a more “traditional” architectural discourse. Home is an influential part in human interaction, on everything from a practical scale to theoretical platforms. As such, it bridges over into where architecture interlinks with general societal structures and gains importance as an element in changing and challenging these structures, further developing the discussion on the relationship between concept (home) and physical reality (built environment).

This work is meant to revolve around the exploration of the definition and significance of home in a sustainable context. Sustainability as a term is used more and more loosely, leaving little meaning in an age where everything is being “green-washed”. Nonetheless, I will use the term to describe a balance between economic, environmental and social interests. Relevant as a measure of the ability to uphold and maintain a stable society, not only in the present, but also suggesting a system adaptive to future changes and challenges. Social and economical sustainability is here regarded partly as goals in themselves, partly as means to reaching an environmental responsibility and ecological balance.

The interest will be to see how the concept of home relates to the built reality and the implications of this relationship. Why do we need home and does it have to take on the shape it has today? From this point of view one can question how sustainable the current manifestation of home really is. To investigate this, I need to review how home has been constructed historically and how the current image of home continues to evolve. The bigger discussion on how we achieve a sustainable balance between interests in society is here boiled down to a main thesis questioning if a home and our constructs of home can be used to further enrich this development. Can [re]defining the concept of home possibly suggest applications that are more in line with a sustainable future?

In examining the concept of home, I hope to contribute to a greater discussion on what societal values we push and why, focusing on the issue of how the concept of home is used to signify these values. When speaking about pressing related issues, such as housing standards or over-population, we avoid “emotional” aspect, as this is, by its very nature, hard to grasp and often too subjective for any general approaches. Moore (2000) touches upon this, stating that spiritual, cultural and symbolic aspects have received little attention in recent research. This work is an addition to the vast material already written on the subject of home, but with an approach to spark questions that have been given less attention (or, in fact, that might have been given more space in the discussion lately, in which case this work further contributes to this critical focus of the [image of the] modern home).

On a personal level, this theme is one of many that I follow in my observations of the world. As I am interested in pursuing further academic opportunities, a sub goal of this thesis is to learn more about theoretical development. In a field where the work is mainly practical and research is not seen as the most common route, I’ve been intrigued by other subjects where theoretical development is

pursued. The junction between architecture and social science is one I find very interesting and I see this work as a step to aid me in future endeavors within adjoining fields such as for example Environmental Psychology. Using this work to discuss questions about the profession and possible roles it can take is also a stepping stone towards finding my own future balance between theory and practice. At the same time relating to a general notion I have of socially responsible actions and routes.

This work is supposed to be a comment or reflection in the ongoing discussion on how we build sustainable communities, perhaps more directed to the design professions than a general public, but still relevant for other professions in practical and theoretical forums. The audience of fellow architects are perhaps used to a different discourse, in a different form, where best practices and debate on projects are carried out within a predefined (although by habit or subconscious) framework. My choice of subject is at the same time an attempt of reaching beyond the architectural realm. Even though the explorations made in this thesis revolve a lot around the role and approach of the architect or designer, I have attempted to keep a level of discussion that might still be interesting for other professions to take part of. As environmental concerns are gaining speed and influencing business decisions, most share a conviction that sustainability is an important agenda, but with different vantage points on what this is, to what extent we are willing to go, and what the benefits are. The tone of the text is purposefully set to be critical. With the realization that objectivity has not been the main concern, the arguments pursued are not always ones shared or equally prioritized by all. Hopefully, this does not however eliminate those less critical of the state of the living environments we are creating.



Hagbert, P., 2010. home is where* postcard.

Format & Method

The structure of this project is text-based, which was a choice made early on in the formulation of a thesis subject. Throughout my architecture studies, I have been intrigued by the theoretical and text-based courses offered, but still felt that a more thorough literary study was something my educational experience could benefit from. The combination of having completed a year at the Rural Studio characterized by a hands-on approach with pursuing a purely theoretical vantage point was also a motivation for the format of this thesis. Trying the width of my analytical scope from conceptual design studios to mapping an abstract concept such as home is something that felt relevant to me personally and that could add to my set of skills as a future practitioner. To critically review a topic I do not myself see as a given premise is not without its challenges, but perhaps made even more valid by that very condition.

By presenting established theories as well as those formed by myself during the course of the project, I have attempted to attain more experience with precedent research and orient myself at least a bit better in the realm of architectural research (and adjacent fields). Literary studies create a base for most of the exploration into the selected subject, but I also tried to discover ways to discuss and interact with people, places and precedent projects. I pushed myself in methods I was not as comfortable with, using different ways to acquire information and collecting opinions and views on the concept of home. I also took the opportunity to learn more about general methods of academic writing and methodology in my attempt to map this theme, as well as build upon my analytical and critical exploration of how architectural research deals with issues

of this nature.

The work was organized around two main areas: definition/construct and significance. By selecting certain perspectives to study, I created a focus curated to contrast or correlate in a desirable way. Mapping the work, I however realized that certain areas overlap and that there perhaps is no clear division between definition and significance, but saw it as a way of structuring the information. This division is used to examine the image of home, the societal constructs and how it relates to a political, commercial and architectural discourse. The perspectives chosen had to be limited as the work progressed and the scope got narrower. I chose specifically not to deal with the development of housing design more than as a tool of illustrating the image of home, as this was deemed important to limit the work. It also made the focus clearer on discussing the implication of societal constructs in the built environment rather than a pure design evolution.

A general idea was also to portray the negative aspects of home along with the more affirmative views. By critically studying how we define and signify home, we can gain understanding of not only the “positive” or developmental characteristics, but also how the significance of home can produce negative outcomes and marginalize, suggesting an unbalance in sustainable interests. Moore (2000) suggests that new research exploring the meaning of home

“will need to focus on the ways in which home disappoints, aggravates, neglects, confines and contradicts as much as it inspires and comforts us”. (p.213)

The need to limit the scope however meant leaving certain areas unexplored. This was sometimes a hard process of elimination, but also a necessary lesson.

One notable field that had to be cut was going deeper into issues of homelessness and how we regard not having a home at all. This, along with a closer look at legal and political specifics and a more elaborate discussion on the concept of home in different scales are worth further study.

As a starting point and to get an overview of the range of literature, I made a few very general searches and chose to go ahead with some of the books and publications I found. Much of the material was rejected as less relevant, dealing with specified design publications or collections of different houses. It became apparent that sociological and psychological research was of interest, along with accounts of historical development of the concept of home. A range of literary material thus made the base for much of the background as well as contemporary theories on home.

Even though I am fond of literature studies (and to avoid relying solely on that) the use of simple tools to create platforms for communication and interaction to quickly generate impulsive response was one of the methods I set out to test. Since the subject is one where one would be safe to assume everyone has an opinion (we all have some sort of relationship to the concept of home and it requires no specific qualification), I felt it would be appropriate to explore on a very elementary level. Because of the relatable nature of the concept, even though our relations to it might differ, getting as many as possible to share their views on home is an important part of building up a general base for discussion. In no way representative of the population or based on formal survey methodology, the idea was to create an easy tool, graphically fetching, containing adequate information, but yet vague enough to spark interest in learning more. The material was designed as postcards with two sets of motifs, based on simple, but highly associative graphic pictograms associated with the common

conception of home. The back displays directions to photograph the card in a place that feels like home and send the image to an email account set up for the project. Motivation for the choice was also requested if possible. 300 printed and 50 handmade postcards were distributed, reaching places like Gothenburg, Frankfurt, Copenhagen, the Netherlands, the US and Tanzania. Some cards were handed out while others placed in public spaces, shops and restaurants. As a second step, a blog was set up where the images people submitted would be collected and displayed. Instructions were posted here as well as on Facebook and distributed via email, and were reblogged by friends to try and spread the reach. The images are displayed simply and on their own, no explanation or identity offered, but mixed with quotes on the topic. The motivations people submit with their images are gathered in a separate document.

The result, perhaps not too surprisingly, is not very satisfactory when it comes to amount or range in participants (overrepresented by young middle-class individuals in creative professions), but was nonetheless an interesting exercise. The gathering of people's images of home is something I can see as a continuing project, reaching beyond the format of this thesis. Interacting with people over the project gave a great input, but hold little quantitate value, something that became less important as the project progressed and was instead replaced by an interest in more qualitative measures.

To further gather information for a comparison of different professional views, I therefor also conducted interviews with people from different forums, trying to get a sense of the definitions or work concerning home carried out in the field. A first observation is of the method itself. Interviewing is not something I am familiar with, and it might be interesting to observe that my architectural education has not significantly added to this tool, especially when it comes to giving

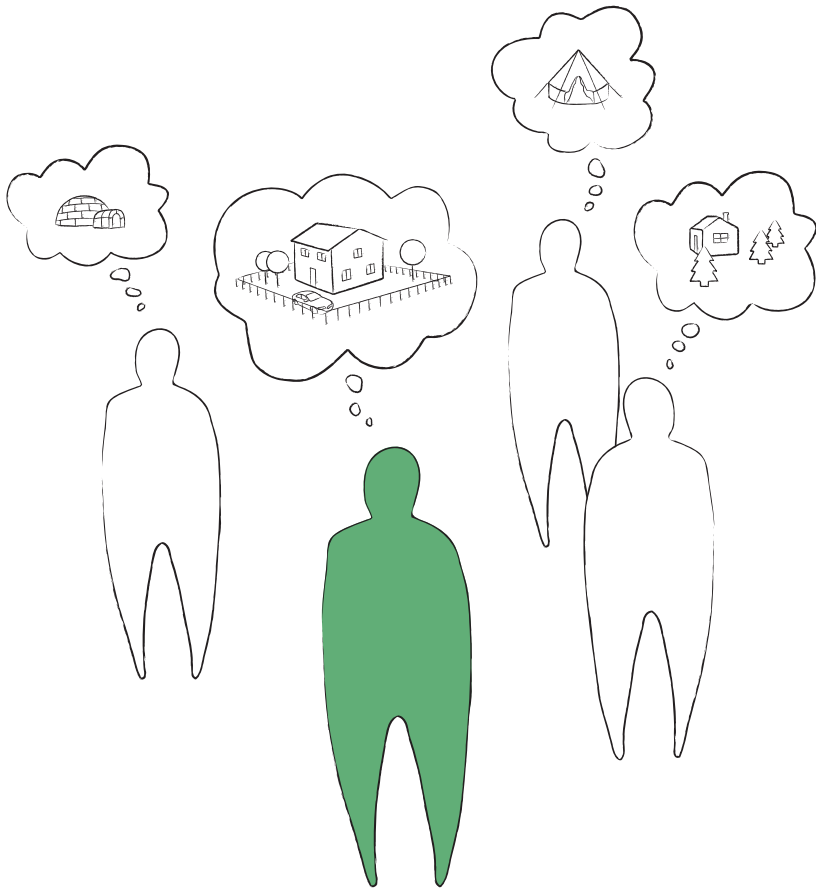
an outlet or guidelines for techniques and approaches to conduct a professional, yet relaxed interview. The art of the objective and relevant question is another aspect where it is hard to find help in my architectural academic background, and where I had to turn to general social science methodologies to find directives and precedents. Nonetheless, as this is also a first attempt at research, studying methodologies was an important aspect in information acquisition.

As with the postcard exploration, the interviews were meant to help build up a base for analysis and serve as a way of testing a hypothesis. Another important observation about the method is that the planning phase of interviews is often underestimated and my initial schedule did not account for the time spent getting in contact, setting up meetings, preparing questions, etcetera. Even though the aim was to get a broad base by interviewing a diverse set of people, organizations and companies, there are of course problems in acquiring this diversity and the scope (and time) restrictions I put on myself demanded a much shorter list of interviewees, among others architects and a real estate agent. Since the material gathered was to be considered as part of more general discussions, and not pointing out individual opinions, I chose not to present direct quotes or remarks. Perhaps less rigid from a scientific point of view, where references and sources are key, this was also an attempt to get a more free discussion going, not based on representing a company or employer.

The trial of methods was helpful in defining what it was I actually wanted to pursue, and contributed in different areas, in particular to the review of different discourses and uses of the term home, something then supported by literary material and presented in the original structure of definition; home as a construct and the image portrayed, followed by a look at the significance; the underlying meaning of how we relate to the concept.



image of home



Definition

Could the way we define home be said to define us? How we talk about home not only defines the term, but also the relationship to home, the importance of having a home and the way we create home as a process of defining ourselves and our place in a larger context. The way in which a definition of home emerges could then also be said to express something about the system in which it originated.

The need to define something is surely born out of the necessity for an equal, meaningful communication. The definitions we set are based on cultural norms and previous definitions, and of course, usually holds no validity without a majority consensus. This is fairly clear when it comes to more concrete and tangible terms, but when speaking of abstract notions, such as home, it gets harder to quantify, and thus, harder to find one true common definition. Perhaps rightfully so. Instead, we might be governed by other emotional impulses, that are less rigorous and hold greater dynamic values.

“Another /.../ development is the use of vague, subjective, and emotive terms in ways that can mean whatever users want them to mean at any given moment.” (Rapoport, 1995, p. 25)

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Being of the opinion that a term or concept is constructive only if it is easily defined and consensually accepted, Rapoport (1995) claims that theoretical terms and concepts that lack this are irrelevant in the advancement of research. The use of the term home is according to Rapoport today too broad and used too liberally to describe something precisely defined.

Brink (1995) similarly comes to the conclusion that the term is ambiguous by definition and can range extensively in a personal conceptualization, stating that one can really only go to oneself for the meaning of home. When asking people to define home, the likelihood is that the result will be a variety of subjective accounts. Why then is it important to try and map a definition of home? Perhaps it could be essential to reach a determined consensus within certain scopes of the wider meaning of home. To define the whole spectrum of home is however not the focus of this work. Simply by attempting to define, multiple interesting questions arise. Since the discussion on what home means, could mean, should mean, and by whom this meaning is established is very intricate it is only speculated on here. The challenge is instead to try and define aspects that could (or could not) be important for the understanding of how home is and has been created.

Benjamin (1995) lists the fields where studying the meaning of the concept and its societal role might further research or practice. Although they all pose appealing larger questions, perhaps some are more easily accessible to the design professions, where evaluating, promoting an open discourse and developing our understanding of the social implications of spatial realities are key.

“1. the study of an informant delimited category in the built environment, an environment-behavior relationship (EBR) from empirical research, and thus generally relevant to environment-behavior studies (EBS)

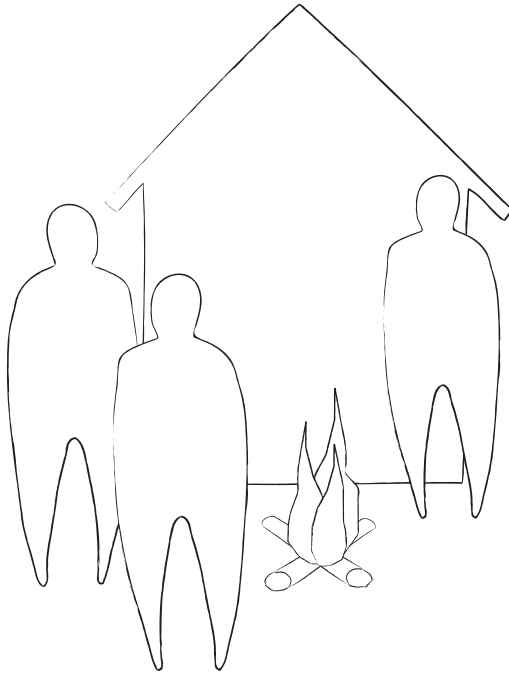
2. the study of cultural history where written records are few or non-existent, such as in the ancient past, or in contemporary non-literate societies

3. to view environmental debate in a new way, since the home is an expression of the values and attitudes with which societies and individuals relate to their surroundings

4. to look at therapeutic or healing environments in a new light, since the home is reported to represent the initial place of birth and growth, and the memory of this place in later life, serving as a reference for the origin of pathologies or wellness

5. to see the socio-political significance of the home, especially topical today when masses of people both escape from economic hardship and warfare, and fight to remain at home”
(Benjamin, 1995, p. 3-4)

The last point is possibly the one where we face the largest struggle, both as an architectural profession and society as a whole. It is here that a sustainable social and economical development is dependent on trans-disciplinary understanding of home based in political and commercial considerations and resulting design solutions. Benjamin also stresses the need to investigate the built environment in a specific social, cultural, geographical and historical context when studying homes and theorizing about the conceptual meaning of the term. This chapter is as such meant to give a general overview of the images of home constructed in society. The material is just an edited amount of the full scope, and has been limited to specifically present a historical, political and commercial context.



Origins

The term home is estimated to have been around for a couple of thousand years (Benjamin, 1995), but the way we have viewed and defined home over the centuries has varied and to understand the origins and evolution of the concept is, besides an interesting study in itself, highly relevant to how we characterize home today. Especially within architecture, the historical study of home is connected to the origin of the field.

Vitruvius (transl. 1960) suggested that the discovery of fire brought about the occurrence of organized social gatherings, and that the origins of architecture came out of the need to provide shelter for the assembly around a fire. The construction of shelters gradually evolved and the first dwellings were born around the protective nature and comfort of a hearth. Social codifications of the early shelters were rich and intricate. The development has since then been lined with the constant competitive, innovation seeking and imitative nature of human improvement (Vitruvius, transl. 1960).

This connection to the fire, and the hearth, is illustrated when put in the context of Vitruvius' theories, but also poses an interesting observation in the development of the term and the definition of home used today. Moore (2000) brings up the reference to the Greek goddess of home and hearth, Hestia. The idea of hearth as connected to family and household ties is evident where the fire as a symbol of home was brought to new colonies or settlements, keeping ties with the mother city. A sense that could be invoked and ensured by fire perhaps shows the deep connections and need for the safety, and safekeeping, of the fire and the key role it has played in human survival.

The idea of the public hearth as the communal “source of home” further connects to the term home itself as the sense of community and gathering around a mutual protected and preserved object or feeling. Brink (1995) gives an account of the etymological origins, tracing the word back through early Germanic forms, connecting it to meanings of world, village, farm, country (as opposed to town), resting place, lair and camp. He also connects it to family, household servants, love and marriage. These derivatives, along with current words related to home, deals with dwelling and affection, even suggesting the affection developed for one’s dwelling. What might be interesting here is Brinks observation of the early meanings of home as being connected to collective ideas of home; country and world, that share a larger emotional meaning. He also brings up the semantic connections to fire and the hearth as symbolic use for family dwelling house.

The German use of Heim and Heimat shows the wide definition of home as meaning different things in different scales. Heimat is used to define more collective notions, connecting to Heimatland (homeland) or Heimatort (hometown) as a sense of greater belonging, not as isolated to the private as the more commonly used Heim is, which more commonly focuses on the home in the sense of spatial specifics. Perhaps it is also relevant to note the linguistic differences, where the Latin languages for example more closely connect home to the immediate dwelling (as with the Spanish translation for home - en casa - meaning, literally, in one’s house).

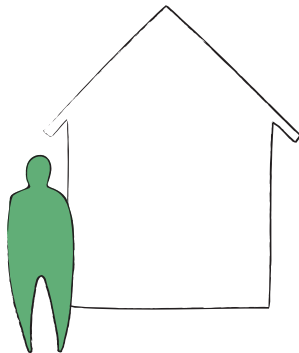
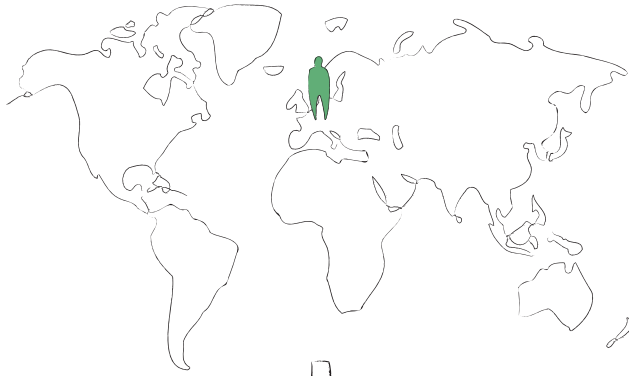
The opposite scales represented in the terminology, the collective and general versus the personal or specific, give an interesting dimension to the meaning of home. The original meaning is debated, but most scholars, according to Brink, seem to think a place-specific settlement represents the older meaning of home rather than alternative meanings found to suggest an area or district.

“...some kind of semantical core, regarding the word home and its cognates, is the area and place where you live, A place with its surroundings that you normally take an affection to and have a very special relationship to, throughout your lifetime.” (Brink, 1995, p. 22).

The use of home to refer to national belonging goes back to ancient precedents, where country, birthplace or homeland is used widely in stories of migration and exile. The emphasis of home in this sense is often described the strongest when detached from whatever home is referring to. In an age of globalization coupled with worries of climate change, much focus is put on emphasizing large scale responsibility, our common home, planet earth. The use in different instances becomes even clearer when looking further ahead in the terminology of home, where the use of home associates to national identity (Moore, 2000). The rise of the nation, intertwined with 18th and 19th century industrialization, brought about uses of home as a concept to evoke national/regional spirit. The widespread early 19th century song “Home, Sweet Home” by John Howard Payne was for example used by both sides in the American Civil War to raise a united battle spirit and most likely as a reminder of why home was important to protect.

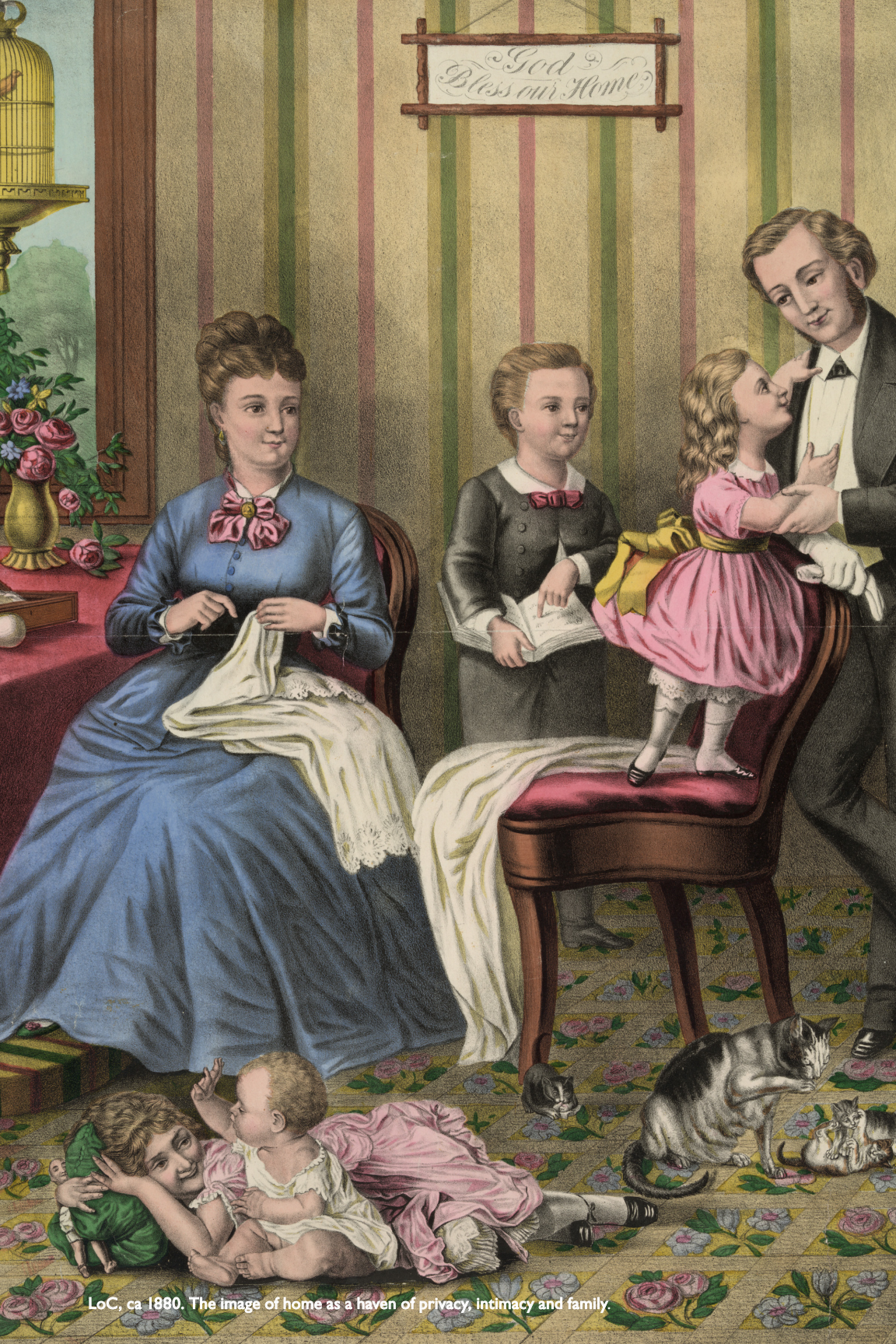
“Mid pleasures and palaces though we may roam, be it ever so humble, there's no place like home.” (John Howard Payne)

The connection to home in the sense of national roots can also be observed in the contemporary emergence of colonies, either by militaristic force, cultural influence or mass-migration. The little Italy or Chinatown phenomenon, where



the massive urbanization of the industrial area combined with increased global mobility provided the opportunity to relocate, often bringing cultural identity and “parts of home” with you. As we are seeing it ever so clearly today, the clash between home as in the past tense, your background, and home in the reality of the physical environment or sociopolitical circumstances proved difficult, causing waves of nationalism where home was again used to display a certain geographic, ethnical or linguistic belonging.

This study of home on multiple levels also relates to regional belonging, which touches upon the etymology of resources within a larger, but still sequestered area. The historical connection to larger plots of land or farms shows this sense of home as within a native district or neighborhood. As the industrial urbanization disconnected rural ties, the projection of social structures or conditions was brought to urban environments, creating enclaves of neighborhoods. Many still kept rural memories and communities alive in the urban setting, following through generations, but gradually the Western urbanites created their own urban home with new hierarchies. Rural belonging is however still strong in certain cultural contexts. The older kinship home or the family farm no longer holds the same significance as a reference of origin, but it is worth noting how people tend to differ between home and home-home, the latter representing the family home, the place where you grew up or the region you claim, as opposed to the home you currently occupy. Bäcklund (2009) describes the Kenyan context within what is said to be a second wave of urbanization, where the rural home is regarded as a very strong element in people’s lives, and where the urban home is often seen as temporary, if not in physical reality, but in emotional ties. From this perspective, home relates to community and the presence of a social network, often coinciding with a geographically bound area, village or homestead.



LoC, ca 1880. The image of home as a haven of privacy, intimacy and family.

Industrial Domesticity

The shift from rural to urban home becomes even more relevant when looking at the correlation to the definition of home as we know it. Moore (2000) explores how the concept of home became entangled as the domestication of the word altered the general meaning from birthplace or native environment to referring specifically to the family dwelling or house. As the rise of capitalism and the industrial age, the concept of home came to represent and subsume many new ideas and ideologies. Moore points at the domestication of home beginning in 17th and 18th century England, something that could perhaps be expanded to Europe as a whole, even though the development of the English term is here singled out as the country was one of the leading industrialist nations. The change in definition to the more specific family home is further supported by the presence in Romantic literature and poetry, where Moore notes that

“... psychology and phenomenology was greatly influenced by the increasing focus on the domestic hearth as the context and subject of literary writers.” (Moore, 2000, p. 209).

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Domesticity can also be discussed as a product of the emerging Bourgeois class, where concepts such as comfort and privacy gained meaning and came to define the home in addition to that of family. The Bourgeois urbanities can be put at the center of domesticity as they differed from other social classes by their form of residence. They lived not in the castles of nobility, nor the humble dwellings of the peasants, but in houses (Rybczynski, 1986). The medieval urban home was



Boucher, W., 1900. Mid 19th century English domestic,



a public domain, not only a private sphere, while the 17th century home started to display more focus on privacy and the assignment of specific attributes to the spatial separation of rooms. The sense of home became more important as well as the development of the novel concept of homeliness.

“To speak of domesticity is to describe a set of felt emotions, not a single attribute. Domesticity has to do with family, intimacy, and a devotion to the home, as well as with a sense of the house as embodying — not only harboring — these sentiments.” (Rybczynski, 1986, p. 75).

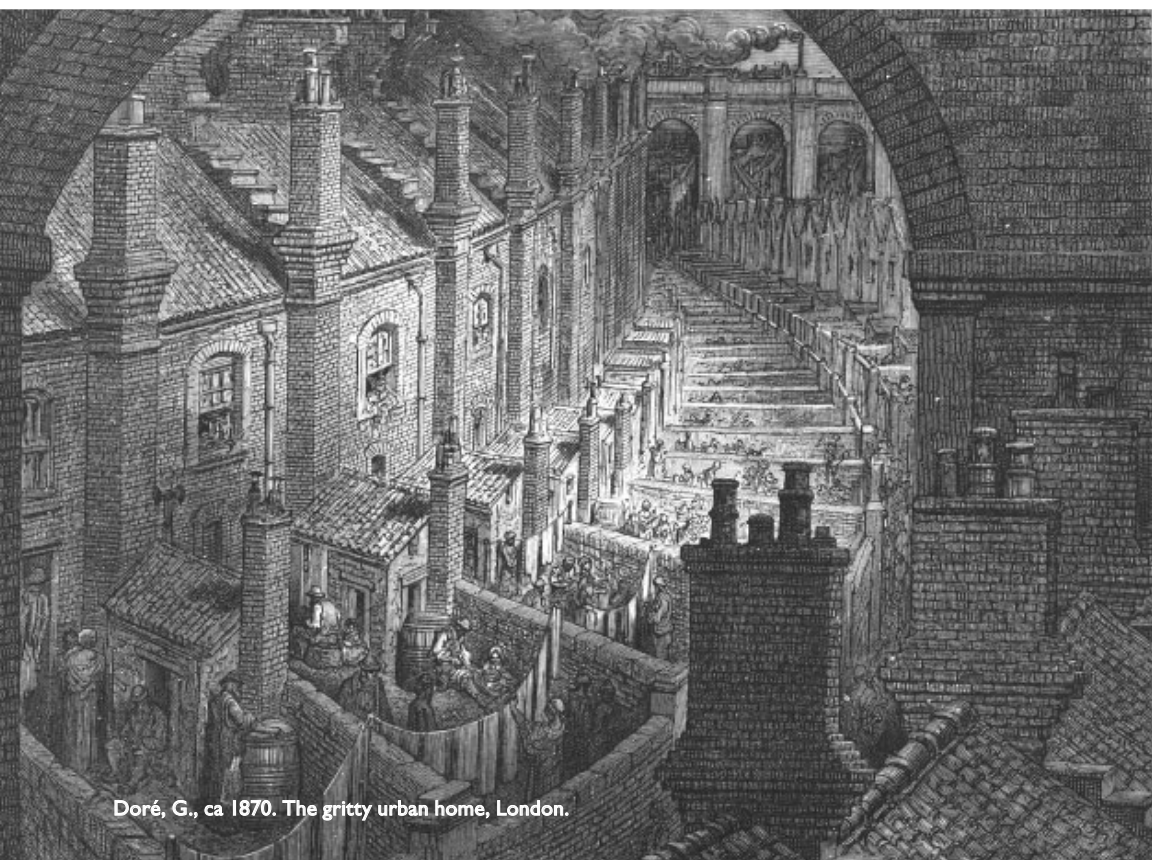
Rybczynski connects the more intimate and private nature of home to the parallel increase of female control and the role of the woman as the bringer of homeliness. This connection between gender and the concept of home is a controversial proposition, and can be discussed further in the context of the modern home. The increase in domesticity in facilities, amenities and furnishing is also described by Rybczynski, who explores the English words *comfort* and *comfortable*. Referring to Jane Austen’s prolific use of the terms to express the enjoyable, cozy *Bourgeois* world often used as the backdrop for her stories, the undramatic and soothing nature of the concept of *comfort* is accentuated. The intimacy, seclusion and feeling of homeliness made the *Bourgeois* home a place where you could be personal and find relief in introspective exploration, which is also the object of much 18th and 19th century literate accounts of home. Although this image of home was yet far from the norm amongst urban dwellers, it gained authority with a growing middle class. The functional aspects of home that the rural context stressed were replaced by constructs of *comfort*, *leisure*

and retreat. This general shift did however not change the realities of home as a practical premise of labor and the urban context of locating businesses or crafts within the close vicinity or immediate connection to the home, especially in the case of the urban working class.

The urban poor lived in crowded houses, where any real family life was limited and the privacy of the Bourgeois concept of home was distant. Rybczynski speaks about the conditions for the majority of the poor population and the question whether the concepts of home or family even existed in such a context. The domestication of the concept of home made the common definition a matter of class belonging and social standing. One could suggest that to be able to attend to such things as interior furnishings was a sign of excess, the creation of homeliness a luxury. This, of course, can be debated, as with any historic review. In the context of defining home, only certain aspects might have been considered to make a home a home, but this does not necessarily mean that homeliness by another name was lacking from the common dwellings, although caution in assuming the latter is needed as well. The romantic nostalgia we today choose to attribute as “rustic” or charming picturesque has shaped how we view a historic sense of home and the correlation between such things as size and coziness.



Graves, C., 1904. Humble conditions at the turn of the century, Ireland.



Doré, G., ca 1870. The gritty urban home, London.



Standard Scenic Company, 1906. Family life in the comfort of home.



H.M. Smyth Printing Company, 1904. Advertising for the country estate,



Gottscho, S., 1924. Older style kitchen (from the home of John Howard Payne).



LoC, 1924. Sink, western electric stove, and cabinet in a model kitchen.

Comfortably Efficient

As a new industrial society started to take shape and a greater part of the population was introduced to the amenities of the “comfortable home”, technical inventions and the mechanization of dwelling functions were integrated into the art of creating a home (Rybczynski, 1986). Even though the concept of home as we define it and signify it today can be said to have developed along with the birth of other revolutionizing ideas and concepts during Industrialization, the emphasis of home as a machine and the organization of dwellings in the fashion we are used to was accelerated with the Modernization of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Something that could be argued to have been influenced by trends and a changed societal mindset, rather than direct architectural responses to advancements in technology.

Even though here overly simplified, the shift from the rural functional to the Bourgeois excessive, back to the conveniently functional is an interesting one. The practical aspects of the home that were dismissed in favor of the contemplating ones in Jane Austen’s comfortable abodes were making themselves reminded as general welfare rose in the Modern Western world. As previously, it is here worth to note that home was defined by how the upper classes constructed the concept, not necessarily by a general representation, but also that the middle class influence as we have come to know it started to dominate much of the discourse. The reliance on and occurrence of servants was diminished along with the rise of the middle class, where the notions of conducting labor in someone else’s home were shunned, along with the financial concerns that such services were a luxury. The physical reality of household work was also that it was heavy and simply not

pleasant (Rybczynski, 1986). As new technology made such tasks simpler and as the general opinion swayed, the focus on the home turned to managing the domestic tasks as swiftly and comfortably as possible. Labor-saving inventions were introduced and proceeded to be the norm by mid 20th century. The female role as providing homeliness and control of the private domain was enforced as the tasks previously done by servants were transferred to “wifely duties”.

Rybczynski also highlights the tension between architecture and function, when he goes back to the end of the 19th century and accounts for the [male] architectural aesthetics and the functionality raised by new [female] attitudes in domestic work. American writer/educator Catherine Beecher among others had during the 19th century contributed to a change in the image of home from a predominantly male area (even though Beecher in particular used this domestic domain to strengthen her argumentative powers as an anti-suffragette, promoting the woman’s place as mothers and teachers). These female perspectives enriched the definition of home, as it invited new objectives to what the home entailed.

“The masculine idea of the home was primarily sedentary – the home as a retreat from the cares of the world, a place to be at ease.” (Rybczynski, 1986, p.160).

The female perception of home was according to Rybczynski a lot more dynamic, comprising both of relaxation and work, placing emphasis on the kitchen. As the Industrialization had moved much of the economical [male] interests from the home to the industrial sphere, there was no longer the same need for a male place in the home. While the place of employment became more important and much effort was put into the forming of unions and improving work conditions,

the home was not on the political agenda, not helped by the opinion that women were considered best left out of politics. (Thörn, 1994). This would color the political sphere, as mixing politics and home life was regarded with caution.

The new demands of efficiency, control and comfort were almost exclusively a female matter, and the time spent at home had to be divided between household work, “motherly duties” and an increasing rate of gainfully employed women. The Bourgeois view of the home as a place for comfort was thus extended to include the comfort and convenience of housework. A modern home served as a domain of domestic power and the sense of homeliness as the bonus of a well-organized and efficient household. To go from the view of home as the woman’s responsibility to the perception of home as a female burden is not too difficult, where the everyday lifestyle along with efficient and comfortable just as easily could turn monotone and limiting.

“Home is the girl’s prison and the woman’s workhouse” (G.B Shaw, 1903).

Home could be seen as a confinement of sorts, where the exploring nature was tied down or the comfort of homeliness not achievable behind the layers of domestic work. Even as women’s right were established, the pull towards a domestic placement and the modern female relationship to home can in some ways be argued to be even more restrictive than the Romantic home, offering a comfort and control that could not be achieved in an otherwise limited female social reference. The wave of labor-saving ideas reduced the hardships of domestic life, but also pointed out labors that now could performed by a woman, further establishing the woman’s relationship with the modern domestic comfort.



LoC ca 1912. Demonstration of a kitchen appliance.

The woman's place in the home came to shape much of the attitudes on home design, kitchen design in particular. Rybczynski (1986) points at the rift between architecture and technological advancement and how much of the development in housing solutions came about through the pursuit of female "expertise" in matters of the home. Architects were not principally regarded as a profession knowing much about interiors, especially not the realities of household work. Therefore, the field of [American] home improvement came to see the development of "household technicians" and the involvement of the architect varied. In some cases, architectural advances lead the way, and at other times it was solely diminished to aesthetics and art. Christine Richards and Lillian Gilbreth shaped much of the American discourse on home design with their publications *Household Engineering* and *The Home Maker and Her Job* amongst others, where they gave accounts on how to create an efficient and well managed house by the help of technical innovations. Much of these theories were based on the growing interest in Taylorism and the use of industrial scientific studies to determine household designs and practical modes of procedure.

The additional focus on managing household tasks as neatly and proudly as possible provided growing ground for a surge of various household products not only making life easier, but also essentially leading to modern product design theory and advertising. The effects of these new attitudes concerning home, household functions, and a prevailing comfortable middle class lifestyle were especially noticeable in the extensive housing research that followed during the 1900's. The rise of consumerism as the product of a Modern society can be closely connected to this, where the home took the center stage, making it a very attractive commercial arena. Rybczynski attributes the quick ascent of the "comfort-as-efficiency" concept to the mass education and rapid spread amongst

women, further showing the definition of the early 20th century home as a predominantly female domain.

Another thing that made the new efficient home so widely accepted was the purposeful omission of aesthetics. The “household technicians” view of the appearance of home was pragmatic, where function and not decoration was highlighted. According to Rybczynski, they simply assumed that people wanted to decorate according to individual liking, not advocating for one particular style. This differed greatly from the contemporary architectural notions, where a new style emerged, responding to the new century and the “Machine Age”. Rybczynski mentions in particular Le Corbusier and his attitude to the 20th century home:

“His was not simply a modern home, but a home that looked modern.” (Rybczynski, 1986, p.193).

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The rational Modern introduced new stylistic features; the personal and private was replaced by spatial fluency and new (or at least new uses of old) materials. Rybczynski makes no attempt to hide his disdain for Modern architecture and states that he sees the Modern interior as a break in the development of the comforts of home. The Modern home was more than simply a new style, as it changed social habits and the underlying cultural meaning of home comfort. By this definition, the 20th century home can perhaps be seen as both the introduction of universal technological improvements and the [at least aesthetic] abandoning of Bourgeois ideals of homeliness and intimacy in favor of a minimalist ornamentation and downscaling of the sentimental and contemplating home in favor of the rational and reasonable.



HSB Exhibit "Bostad och färg", showing older style decor 1933.



From same exhibit, showing a "more appropriate" style.



Widfeldt, O., 1950. Women working in kitchen while being timed.

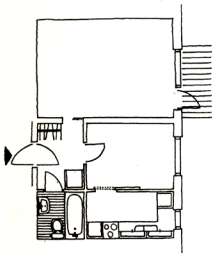
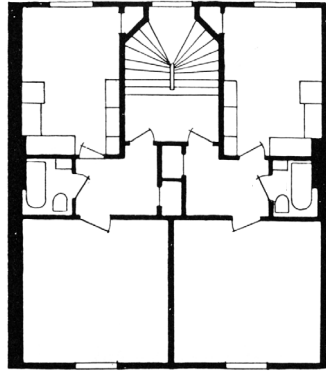
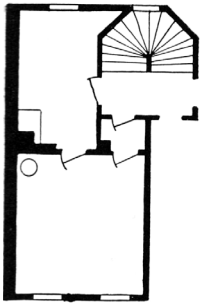
Standardization

Rybczynski's account of the widespread rise of the rational Modern might have been made in an American context, but it must still be noted that a similar development was occurring in Europe, although at a slightly different rate. The population saw a fast improvement of general living standards, and the definition of the Modern home held key words such as open, light, sanitary and equal. In Sweden, the extensive housing research of the early and mid 1900s continues to inform standards. Even if the progression of the efficient household came out of a changed view on the comforts of home, the large-scale reforms that swept over much of the Western world in the early 20th century were very much political.

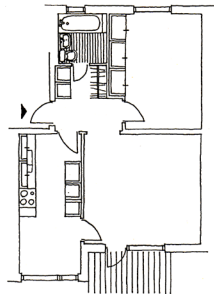
The standardization of the housing stock was one of the key components of the 20's and 30's political social agenda, whether in Roosevelt's "New Deal" or Per Albin Hansson's "Folkhemmet" (The People's Home). The latter likened society to a family, where personal freedom for a greater number of people only can be achieved by collaboration (Ruberg, 1994). What eventually would become the Swedish Social Democratic emblem of social policy was initially a sensitive question of how much you could or should meddle with people's homes. At the beginning of the century, the dwelling was considered a private affair, not a matter of local or national political responsibility. (Thörn, 1994) As the rapid financial and societal transformations progressed during the first decades of the 1900's, the situation became untenable and the housing issue slowly gained acknowledgement as a general social concern. The lack of adequate housing for the increasing number of urban working class residents had been a social agenda since the late 19th century, and was now met by a wider Social Democratic debate

on the right to a decent life and how improving housing standards was not only of essence for the poor, but for society as a whole (Heideken, 1994).

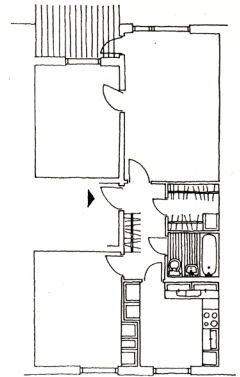
This new social interest was displayed in an array of government research, studies and reports, sparking further political incitement, especially after WWII. The home was not only to be a personal goal, but one shared by the whole of Sweden, building well-being and welfare for all. In this instance, Sweden was one of the first [Western] countries to take a public responsibility for supplying a general need of sorts, not only providing specialized category housing, which was the case in many other contemporary international programs. The housing market had been dominated by private initiatives where the home was a commodity (Ruberg, 1994). The common family home around the turn of the century most often comprised of a bigger kitchen and one adjoining room, something that would be replaced by a view on the home as less focused on the kitchen in favor of more space for living and relaxing. The Modern dwelling was designed according to new research, which suggested a more compact, practical and more hygienic kitchen to be separated from the bigger room. This break with the traditional focus on the kitchen was said to respond to a new urban lifestyle (although the trend would later shift back to the spacious appeal of the “country kitchen”). The female role in the home thus also shifted somewhat, once again. She still held together a sense of homeliness (the Bourgeois domestic) and managed the scarce resources available (the household technician), but her direct physical space was made smaller as the kitchen shrank (Thörn, 1994). The kitchen was instead concentrated to hold the actual kitchen functions and other household activities were moved out into the main room. This meant the rest of the family no longer needed to use the kitchen and gradually the living room became the center of the home. With a growing middle class and changing



1940s-39 m²



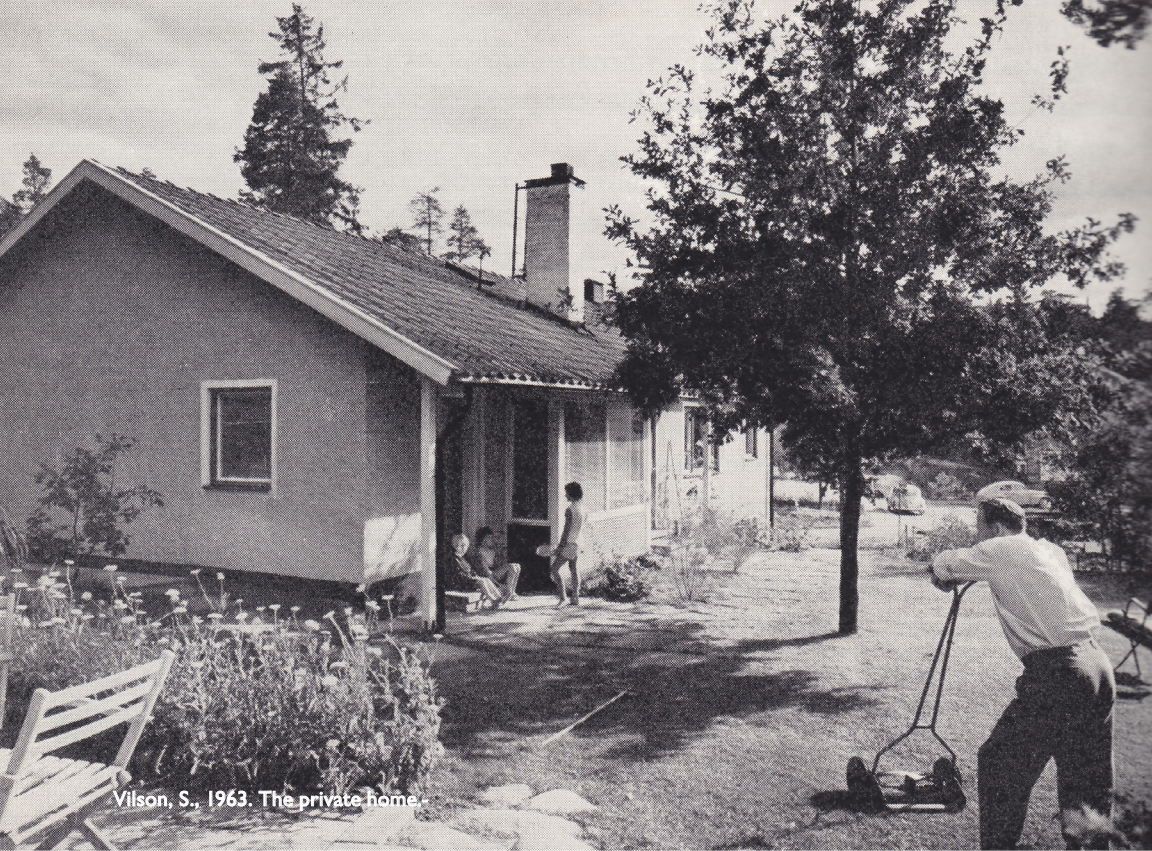
1950s-55 m²



1960s-66 m²

Top: Acceptera! 1931. "Pre-Modern" apartments, with less differentiated spaces.

Below: Järperud-Engdahl, C., 1963. Evolution of the Modern family apartment.



Vilson, S., 1963. The private home.



Lindgren, H., 1960. Family portrait in the living room.

societal values, the image of the housewife became the norm for many women, with the role of homemaker, creating a home from a house.

“Teach the women and housewives that the kitchen is not the home. That the kitchen is not what is essential in a home. A home is the rooms, the paintings, the books, the flowers, all this, which gives a home a personal character, individuality, charm, which makes us and others enjoy it.” (Thörn, 1994, p. 72, translated, citing a 1929 housing publication).

The Modern “good home” provided an acceptable place for the husband to escape the worries of work and to not be exposed to the messiness of the kitchen. The home was portrayed as somewhere the family could enjoy their spare time together, another concept that the Modern age introduced, contrasting the rational productive 20th century Western society. As the standards improved under the different national public projects that would result in for example the Swedish Million Program of the 1960’s and 70’s, the access to “good” housing was dramatically changed. This was an intense period of development, with the Million Program aiming at providing one million new units within a ten-year span. This was made possible, in part, by new industrial and rational methods, prefabrication and standardization of building elements. One reason why Modern architecture spread so fast was because it offered an unsentimental simplicity, preferable to mass production and appealing to the businessman. The general public, according to Rybczynski, would have favored a more homely style to set the tone for what would become the standardized home, but the obvious economic advantages of a style lacking ornamentation and celebrated large scale

symmetry made it applicable in a discussion promoting better homes for all.

The units created focused on the things the dense city centers at the time lacked; space, light and air. The new neighborhoods that grew up at the outskirts of the urban areas were ultimately a place with clean air to breathe, had well-lit dwellings, access to modern sanitation and often with emphasis on closeness to green space. For many, these new apartments offered a chance for a new life, a new job, or the start of a family. The social importance of the dwelling design made a case for the rational aesthetics, but it is questionable which ideals actually informed many of the architectural considerations. Andersson (1977) discusses how the architectural response to the housing exigency was not coherent with the ideals of the people it was built for, rather an emergency solution brought about by economical and political preconditions. She goes on to state that while the Functionalistic architects rejected the Bourgeois housing culture, they did not anchor their new ideas with the working class they were designing for, something that seems just as relevant in a current architectural debate.

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The politically promising new areas have since they were completed been subject to aesthetic, political and social scrutiny, with a common critique of the way the planning disconnected people more than it actually provided the rich home life or stimulating living environments it aimed for. The financial strength did not lie with the residents, but with the construction companies and the housing organizations. Instead of the normal market chase, the units provided a new, general norm to compare to. The new areas offered a uniform upgrading, relying on good standards and not necessarily the elements of the comfortable Romantic home, which had less to do with physical or technological comfort than emotional and social qualities.

As a result of the new industrial device, the role of the architect became

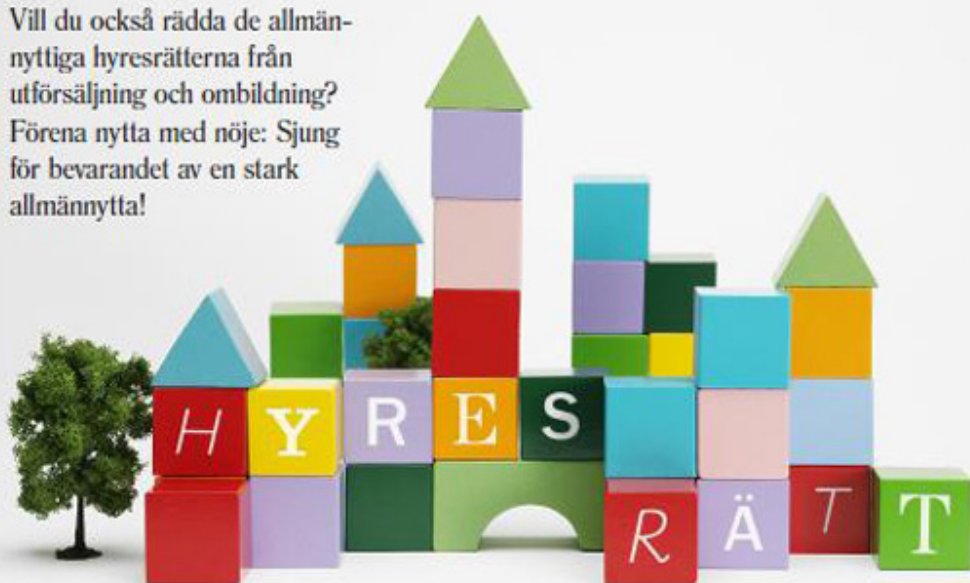
much the same as that of the resident it had according to Rybczynski neglected to consider. The Functionalistic approach opposed aesthetics constituting the base for architectural designs and instead claimed it is as a result of rational planning principles. Andersson (1977) states that this contributed to the dismissal of aesthetics as personal taste and goes on to discuss that when taste becomes arbitrary and publicly unanchored, the occasional ambitious design becomes rather irrelevant. Basing architectural solutions purely on economical concerns, the architects undermined themselves and could be rationalized off along with the designs. Another point brought up by Andersson is that even in the cases where architects made progressive attempts to find solutions in correspondence with the inhabitants, the visionary political housing policies were not supported in other societal financial reform.

“A modern, harmonic and lively architecture is the visible sign of an authentic democracy.” (Walter Gropius, cited in *Sveriges Arkitekter*, 2009, p. 32).

It might be fitting that Gropius stated the correlation between Modern architecture and democracy, as the ascent of Modernism was the style of the “free World”, representing a break with an “immoral past” and the start of a new unimpeachable democratic society (Rybczynski, 1986). The view of architecture as a physical representation of politics is an interesting thought, as it suggests a mutual dependence. As the market started to regain influence in the 1980’s and 90’s, the ideals of the publicly directed and standardized “Folkhemmet” were shunned as hindering personal freedom and prescribing living environments unfit for new types of lifestyles, family constellations or social patterns.

Allsång för allmännyttan

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Gröna stugan i Sundbyberg
Torsdag 12 augusti kl 19 – 21

Medverkar gör bland annat Johan Johansson från KSMB, Uje Brandelius från Doktor Kosmos, riksdagsledamoten Josefin Brink (V) och den tidigare EU-parlamentarikern Jens Holm (V).

Arrangör: Vänsterpartiet Sundbyberg i samarbete med ABF Norra Stor-Stockholm



Vänsterpartiet

At Home in the Market

The debate on dwellings and physical environments cannot really be disconnected from a political or social discussion. Neither can an analysis of the current housing situation go without basic assumptions of what political incentives make up the base of a market driven system. The political motivation is of importance to the way home is portrayed in a general societal perspective, where the emphasis put in the pursuit, possession and control of home is reflected in the attitude within the market operates. Housing policies have been strong ammunition in ideological showdowns, and the debate regarding to what extent home can be considered a private matter is in essence pretty much the same sensitive issue it was a century ago. As shown in the flyer to the left, some issues came to deal with forms of tenure and the existence of the government programs or subsidies.

“A man’s home is his castle.” (Old English proverb)

How we view having a place to call home is perhaps best reflected in the legal ties to home-ownership and tenure that residents operate within, but also in the normative practices that work outside of the legal framework. When discussing the definition of home, the legal determination is therefore probably the most obvious reference to investigate. As the legislative process is intricate and in essence purposefully slow, it can show larger societal tendencies than those of short-term political policies. Bäcklund (2009) discusses the common Western (and especially American) view on property rights, which strongly protects the sovereignty of the private, the right to possess. The origins of these ideas

coincide, once again, with the rise of industrialism and capitalism, where the private gained importance and the security of monetary capital investments had to be preserved. To suggest that these legal matters in turn correlated with the development of the Bourgeois concept of home would perhaps not be too far-fetched, although somewhat simplified.

The Swedish statutes concerning property rights, ownership rights and other forms of legal possession are extensive, and in the case of dwellings, the private interests are often weighed against the public benefits or disadvantages. Even though the private is firmly upheld and highly protected, is interesting to notice that in the Code of Land Laws, “Jordabalken”, the utilization of private property is also put in context of taking appropriate consideration to one’s surroundings. Legal reflections of this nature indicate the sensitive question of possession, where the personal domain is not always a matter of the individual. Despite this established legal meaning of rights under responsibility, societal trends are just as throughout history continuing to challenge judicial simplifications. The right to a private place to call home is upheld in Western society as something extremely important, something that defines you, something that validates you and your accomplishments. This most would agree on, and even though it is considered a human right to have a safe place of shelter, many lack even the simplest form of what in a Western frame of reference is considered *lawful* possession.

When limiting the discussion to solely a Western context, the question of lawful possession is especially interesting, as the concept of home is not in any way limited to what legally would be considered someone’s property or place of residence. Hagström (2009) writes about the pressing situation for those in search of a permanent residence, especially describing the inconsistent situation those moving between illicit contracts and never being able to fully settle down.

The aspect of control is illustrated, as the dream of a home of one's own is not controlled by oneself, but depending on someone else. The position of tenants, of not feeling that you are in a position to make any claims, inevitably leads to the question of who has the right to demand a home?

The Swedish housing and planning authority, Boverket, does not use the specific term home in their publications, as their field of research deals more directly with the legal or practical definition of dwellings or households (Hedenmo, 2010). Instead, a definition of home might be found in the opposite, in what is categorized as homelessness. Homeless is according to the definition given by The National Board of Health and Welfare, "Socialstyrelsen" someone:

1) who is staying in emergency housing, a harborage or on the street;

2) who is admitted to a correctional institution, rehabilitation facility or support housing and does not have an arranged place of residence upon a release within three months

3) who is admitted to a rehabilitation facility or support housing and does not have an arranged place of residence upon an eventual release.

4) who temporarily and without a lease is staying with friends, relatives or family, or who is temporarily lodging or subletting and has requested help or been in contact with social services. (Socialstyrelsen, 2010)

By looking at this regulative definition, it could be concluded that home means having a roof over your head, a place to call your own to sleep, a place you know remains even when you are not living there, a place that is not temporary and that you cannot be evicted from without notice (Hedenmo, 2010). With this “counter-definition” in mind, it might be relevant to examine the housing situation for a number of people who do not have legal contracts or own their dwelling.

The rights we are provided and obligated by are in many cases bound to a place of residence. Not having an address you can legally claim in the way the current system is composed is problematic and spirals other issues, not being able to settle down or make plans for the near future. This might be disconnected from the actual design of living environments, but nonetheless is reliant on the decisions made throughout the chain of the market, as the concept of home, or lack thereof, in this sense can either emphasize or weaken efforts put into building ties to a community.

To understand how the concept of home relates to the current housing situation it is necessary to highlight the legal and political framework, but the global arena within which much development now works has also contributed to the relationship between policies, investments and maximizing revenue. Boverket describes the current Swedish housing situation in their publication *Bostadsmarknaden 2010-2011*. Based on a survey carried out in 2010, they give a brief demographic development connected to an analysis of the housing market and make future predictions.

One of the fields of analysis is the reported housing shortage, and Boverket gives a few interesting comments in regards to the actual shortage and perceived shortage in the housing stock. Often we discuss housing shortage in terms of low or non-existent addition to the housing stock. Boverket suggests that regardless

of whether reflecting an unbalance between the number of units on the market and the number of people looking for housing, or if the supply exceeds the demand, reported housing shortage is not necessarily the same as the need for new construction. This attitude is pertinent for a sustainable approach to housing. The housing stock might simply be inadequate functionally, but the actual need for new (or converted) housing units continues to put pressure on production and design of new dwellings, even if a bigger percentage of municipalities mention that the overall shortage is not as pressing as in previous years. Despite the fact that the number of new units initiated in 2009 was the lowest it has been in eleven years (p. 48), there are high expectations for an increase in production as the market has started to pick up after the recession. Multi-unit buildings are also slowly starting to increase in percentage of new projects, but with a continuing majority in the form of condominiums.

Much faith is often put into housing chains, where new, high-end construction is justified by the fact that it will free up more affordable units further down the line, as people pursue a housing career. This is thought to help adjust housing shortage, as it provides the opportunity for a generational shift in the housing stock. The issue however is just how adaptable the housing stock is in the first place, and that the need of affordable housing is for example not the same for elderly as it is for students. This becomes especially important when discussing the potential for a diverse market, reflecting various views on what a home is, not only physically in the form of concrete differences in usage between different groups, but also the different meanings and importance put into the concept.

Mainly young people, elderly and large families are subject to housing shortage, showing the need for a housing stock with greater multiplicity in size and accessibility. One could suppose that these are also groups with less

financial power, as Boverket suggest in the comparison of the demand for rental apartments and the demands of these groups. This is of course connected to specific situations of each group, who's needs might demand more from the available housing stock, but with insufficient power to affect the market. The need for rental apartments is increasing, even in municipalities that are not expressing a general housing shortage or where there is said to be an excess.

Another interesting point made in the analysis of the survey is the lack of housing units in "attractive" locations. Attractiveness could be connected to factors such as proximity to social services, cultural facilities and entertainment, commercial centers and eventually, especially in the larger urban regions, social stigma. This, it would seem, does not necessarily demand physical actions, but has more to do with political incentives on infrastructure, care and education, the financial climate, strength of local business and social tensions.

These issues propose a situation where the supply is not meeting the demand, since a market needs to rely on economical survival where certain forms of tenure or ownership are more profitable than others. The necessity for a financial growth is the basis of a market driven economy, but the housing shortage is in large a public matter, and the current housing market is not on its own providing the diversity required. The price we are willing to pay for "the right" type of home says a lot about what kinds of dwellings are being built, as well as how they are being distributed. It also shows where we are not meeting a general level of what could be considered an "acceptable" home. Of course, the actual societal views on what a desirable home is and how much you are willing to pay might not always be connected, as high prices can be based on speculation or internal market hype. People's personal views on what a good home is might be overshadowed by what is publicly perceived as "good value" or "a good investment".

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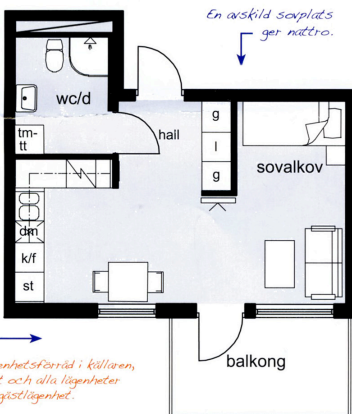
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Oavsett vilken lägenhet du väljer får du ett helt nytt hem där du är först på plats. Bilen parkerar du i garaget under huset. Först till kvarn gäller alla lägenheter!

6 SKÄL ATT VÄLJA FLINTGODSET

1. Alltid fasta priser – ingen budgivning, först till kvarn
2. Välj pris – påverka din månadskostnad
3. Helt nytt boende
4. En hållplats eller ett par minuter med cykeln till innerstan
5. Skönt läge vid Kvillebacken
6. Hiss direkt till garaget under huset

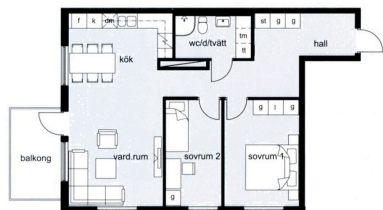
VÄLJ PRIS, PÅVERKA DIN MÅNADSKOSTNAD

PRISEXEMPEL LGH 626

GRUNDPRISS:	MÅNADSAVGIFT:	LÄGRE PRIS:	MÅNADSAVGIFT:	HÖGRE PRIS:	MÅNADSAVGIFT:
879 000 KR	2 148 KR	679 000 kr	2 861 KR	1 079 000 KR	1 435 kr

EXEMPEL LÄGENHET 621

3 ROK, 74 kvm



VÄLJ PRIS, PÅVERKA DIN MÅNADSKOSTNAD

PRISEXEMPEL LGH 621

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1 849 000 KR	4 183 KR	1 649 000 KR	4 897 KR	2 049 000 KR	3 470 KR



INFLYTTNING: FRÅN VÅREN 2012
SÄLJSTART: LÖRDAG 30 OKTOBER, KL 10
PLATS: ÄLVRUMMET

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Commercial Image

When we browse through the window at a realtor's office, we picture what could be. The real estate world revolves around how to sell property, but many profile themselves as not only selling a dwelling, but in fact a home. The regular exposure to the concept and the modern definition of home helps instill certain images and popular portrayals. Once again, the general nature of the concept lends itself to a variety of meanings. The commercial image of home has come to be one of consumerism, making it hard to distinguish exactly what is being sold and what is offered as a "lifestyle package deal". Much of the commercial narrative is based on telling us we can purchase a sense of home, as long as we have the right assortment of objects, the appropriate atmosphere or type of residence, and behave in a certain way when interacting in and with what we buy.

The advertising industry uses the concept of home, alluding to feelings of homeliness and familiarity, to bring out certain [favorable] responses to what is being presented. Perhaps most notable in a commercial context of actual household products, the ad image of home can however range from selling cars to cough medicine. To be in control of one's home is one of the focuses, where products or services that help you manage, maintain or facilitate an easier home life are highlighted. Personal security and home insurance advertising often paint a picture of a "good home" and how it could potentially be threatened by accidents or crime. These practical aspects are often connected to raising a concern about your possessions, but as could be noticed in a new campaign called "Känslobarometern" (emotions barometer) by Swedish insurance company Folksam, the aim was to stress the emotional ties to what you treasure and how

you best protect it, using a more sensitive and sentimental rhetoric.

To evoke the romantic notions of home seems to be a trend in much of the commercial discourse of late. Perhaps this observation is brought about solely in light of the theme for this thesis, but nonetheless, it is an interesting one to make. The use of warm, abstract connotations of homeliness coupled with the edgy image of emerging spotlight lifestyles is marking a preoccupation with selling complete solutions that feel well-considered and catered to personal preferences, even when selling in bulk. This might have been a conscious tactic for many companies for a period of time, but as we see the introduction of more and more products and services, the concentration of “home-oriented” businesses and their marketing strategies would be an interesting factor to study (but will not be further investigated here, instead the assumptions are based on less rigorous personal observations).

Especially in real estate, it might be interesting to observe a shift from minimalist décor and advertising to emphasizing the life a certain object could provide. The way realtors sell objects vary immensely between firms, of course, and much personal interest is reflected in the types of objects sold or the way these are portrayed. In general though, it seems like the images have become the strongest selling point, obvious in most real estate catalogues or online showrooms. The concept of homestyling is becoming well known, but it is not only a matter of a new type of service provided by emerging businesses, most customers are said to be styling themselves, naturally bringing out the best sides of the object to be sold. Getting prospective buyers to picture themselves at home is perhaps the main agenda, after all. The latest trend is thus not to remove furniture, as done previously, but actually adding. Some even add live models, for example showing children at the kitchen table to paint a “more real” picture of



the life you could lead. When looking through the photographic material, many realtor firms choose to show abstract shots of details or fruit bowls, seemingly unrelated to the physical housing object being sold. Building up this kind of narrative is proving extremely successful, as it tells the story of a place simply waiting for the right inhabitant to make it into a home.

Media plays a big part in portraying contemporary definitions of home, but it is not only a passive means of display, as it in itself can be traced through many of the new trends in for example the abundance of interior decorating magazines and the domination of television programs either showing us the homes of the rich and famous or the do-it-yourself rendition. The question is of course, as with any modern social occurrence, if the surge of media coverage is reflecting a societal development or if the intense exposure to the unilateral medial perspective has created a situation that then fuels itself. A look in the glossy design magazines shows what a “successful home” should look like. This is not only limited to listing and effectively styling the products displayed, but often involves a story of the life that takes place in the snapshot of a home. The glorification of certain styles or aesthetics is sometimes pushed to extremes, which is also a conscious strategy to profile certain readers or viewers.

The division between different social groups or economical conditions can often vary depending on media, where some show greater focus and others offer a more diverse appeal. Specific media shape the content according to a certain reader, whether attracting design professions or the common consumer, altering the material and jargon accordingly. In general though, one could note that the art of decorating is no longer by any means restricted to the upper classes as in the origins of domesticity, something that has changed not only the way businesses profile themselves but also how we talk about home. The political

“People’s Home” has morphed into a commercial vernacular; at the same time the popular image of home is still one of unattainable ideals for the majority. In the mid 20th century consumer market, this fueled the opportunity for businesses trying to bring people closer to the ideal in a more affordable way. Most notably is perhaps the success of companies like **IKEA**, that challenged the expensive and somewhat elitist Swedish post-war furniture industry by bringing affordable “design” into the homes of the working class, including the rural farmers.

“Rather than selling expensive home furnishings that only a few can buy, the **IKEA** Concept makes it possible to serve the many by providing low-priced products that contribute to helping more people live a better life at home.” (www.ikea.com)

What exactly a better life at home means is of course subject to interpretation, but might be an interesting notion to keep in mind when looking at the current image of the company. Quite a few would probably associate **IKEA** with home management, organization or efficiency, all attributes connected with emphasis on making time for life by structuring the households functions as seamlessly as possible. Much of the contemporary commercial discourse goes along the same lines, where creating spaces to live is made a selling point. The question then comes back to what kind of life we are supposed to be living at home? **IKEA** actively design sets for their stores, where the customers are forced to interact with not only furniture, but also scenes of everyday life, what could be your life.

IKEA “livet hemma” is a new blog/community venture, targeting a more personal approach, sharing inspiration and ideas. This attempt is not unique for

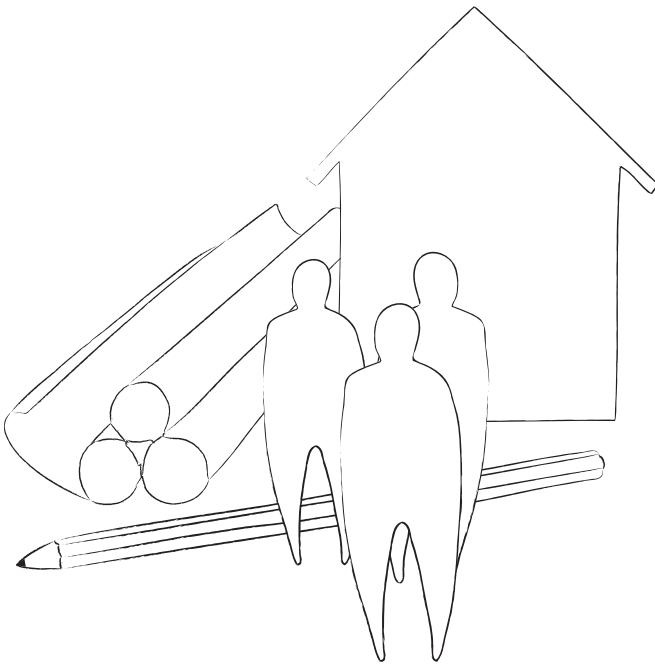
IKEA, and the spreading of interactive platforms where customers can share the commercial experience are becoming more and more common, putting focus on the everyday usage and function of the products supplied. Especially in the field of interior decorating, house design and home-ownership, new digital media is proving to be a powerful tool to not only show glimpses of people's lives, but edited or occasionally even curated by someone else. The commercial home is the common living room, where we receive and upload information, sometimes to an extreme. This focus on sharing, blogging or discussing what home looks like can overshadow actually enjoying the life we are told we will have time for.

The increased use of selling images, or money shots, also helps paint some sort of picture of an architectural perspective on home design. The approach has been somewhat in opposition to that of for example real estate, even if the means resemble. Architects work hard at distancing architectural ambitions from the commercial interests of a market, but in the reality of selling home, this inevitably becomes merged into one. Architectural photographers know what not to capture, how to highlight "pure architectural experiences". What that experience really is and how well it correlates to the piece of architecture created is however often quite fuzzy. This self-editing of the architectural profession differs little from the one-sided communication of the home-styling blogger, but might be interesting to contrast the apparent trend of adding life both in the case of the realtor and the push for new interactive media to share everyday homes.

An interesting reaction to the environments depicted in many design magazines is the emergence of parodies on the styles and lifestyles pictured. One example, unhappyhipsters.com, takes images from magazines like *Dwell* (with the motto "at home in the modern world") and adds captions of their own, illustrating their spin with the tagline: "it's lonely in the modern world". In the

case of Dwell, it is particularly fitting, as their “Fruit Bowl Manifesto” speaks of challenging the common design magazine’s fixation with the perfect, distorted home. This very attempt of showing how the modern home is a livable one thus still appears constructed and irrelevant in a bigger context of what lifestyles it showcases and the ones left off the pages of magazines.

This is only one of many similar commentaries pointing out the discrepancy between the profession (or the image of the profession) and the reality for the part of the public it fails to serve. Another recent example is the intense reactions and counteractions spurred by an article showing a high end Stockholm home (Trus, 2010). The form of the article – an in-depth look into someone’s home, is by no means unique, as the digital and printed medias are overflowing with similar expositions. However, an unfortunate journalistic style coupled with an increasing discontent with an insistent housing shortage led to a piece of journalism publicly perceived as provocative. The story featured a couple with a luxurious lifestyle, accompanied by a luxurious home. The article’s author presented the home as an example of what she identifies as a trend of attic/loft renovations. A quick google search for “har blivit ett sätt att leva” (about 3 680 000 hits) shows the many counter-articles and parodies that have been created since the article was published. Some of them are spin-offs, satirically portraying starkly contrasting conditions, which could be said to illustrate something about how this image of home is far from the norm for those without a permanent dwelling and how elitist the lifestyle portrayed appeared compared to the everyday housing situation of the common resident.



Architectural Constructs

The retail industry might have perfected the image of home as a platform for profitable renditions of how we can perfect our dwellings, and the real estate business can be said to set somewhat of a market focus, but where does architects come into all of this? It would not be completely inaccurate to say that architects as much as any other profession in the realm of housing influence the commercial image of home. Most architectural practices are, after all, commercially driven and dependent on market fluctuations. Yet, how influential has the profession actually been in the contemporary public view on home? Many architects would say that the creation of home is completely up to the future inhabitant, but nonetheless it would be pointless (and frankly quite degrading to the own profession) to say that architecture has not contributed to the contemporary image and ideal. To get a sense of how the image of home effects and is effected by architectural practices and theories, perhaps it would be appropriate to first question where architecture fits in when it comes to defining home.

The construction industry in general is driven by various internal motives architects have to map and understand in order to execute any project, let alone the tangled web of political, financial or legal issues that have been touched upon earlier. It would be very simplistic to say the image of home is the product of one single area, but it is interesting to discuss what exactly this means for the creation of homes and especially in terms of architects as pitching an idea or concept. Selling an image of home could potentially be linked to the visualization of a concept that most people already are biased to. Since everyone has a relationship to home, trying to define specific aspects are based on previous knowledge,

experiences and assumptions. For an architect this means trying to convey a message from which a consensus can be made, but angling the desired outcome of that consensus.

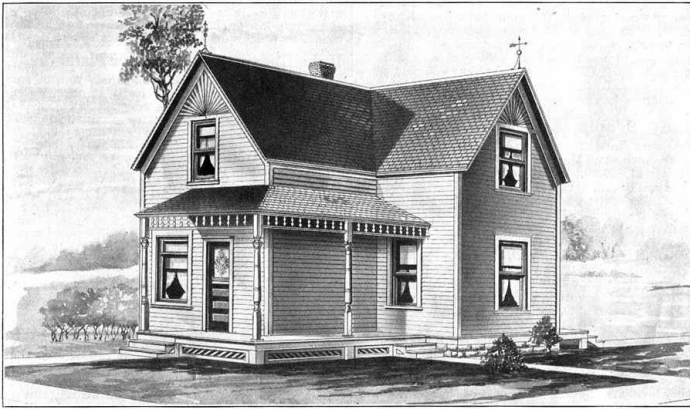
Rybczynski (1986) gives a brief historical background as he describes how designing houses was not considered a profession, but rather an art. To dabble in decorating was in the 18th century not the work of architects, but amateur gentlemen. The architectural design of dwellings, according to Rybczynski, was not as much a practice of holistic knowledge as it was based on historical observations and theories, rarely dealing with the functional or technical aspects of what a home should contain. Instead, the historic development of an image of what home looks like seems to have fallen into the hands of other professions such as carpenters, cabinetmakers or craftsmen working more closely with the design and execution of interior spaces.

The modern home and modes of production, as has been indicated before, omitted much of the individual craftsmanship and carpentry from the design. In terms of architectural participation, it is thus interesting to note the rise of the modular systems and prototype houses developed, where many prominent Modernist architects made their mark, combining the holistic skills and new stylistic focus of the profession with mass production. In some cases, the aesthetics of craftsmanship were attempted to be carried through, with various results.

The development of the catalogue house is an interesting one, as you see both sides of the spectra. In the example of the American Sears Catalogue Modern Home Program of the early 20th century, the 400+ models produced were not exactly innovative, but instead Sears excelled at offering popular home designs with added flexibility and customer specific options. Appealing to the common perception and preference was part of what made model homes such a success.

Individuals could even design their own homes and submit the blueprints /.../ customers had the freedom to build their own dream houses, and Sears helped realize these dreams through quality custom design and favorable financing. (<http://www.searsarchives.com/homes/index.htm>, 2010-11-22).

The Swedish model home industry can be said to have originated out of the late 19th - early 20th century home-croft movement “Egnahemsrörelsen”, but evolved into the catalogue house industry that today dominates most new private home construction. The first major businesses, like Myresjöhus, might have developed models in conjunction with architects, but focused on rational construction solutions and optimizing revenue while providing affordable detached homes. The catalogue house market has since the 60s been dominated by a small group of architects, as the industry has come to be disregarded as having little to do with architectural skills and knowledge. It is quite remarkable how these fairly limited few have come to shape the public image of the Swedish home and the basis from which new solutions and designs are judged, while the spotlight still lies on the exceptions; the architectural pieces that make it to the cover of magazines. Especially as a part of the sales strategy among businesses in the catalogue house industry today seems to be emphasizing the participation of an architect as an emblem of quality. Occasionally teaming up with big name offices to produce type houses to give the customers an opportunity to get their own “starchitect” house, the price is increased exponentially. The model home has been criticized for not considering issues such as site, disregarding individual needs or even expressing “faulty” aesthetics. The main criticism in terms of sustainability has been the lack of specific environmental considerations, which



MODERN HOME No. 115

With Wood Foundation, Not Excavated.

On the opposite page we illustrate a few of the materials we specify on this, our \$725.00 house.

The arrangement of this house is as follows:

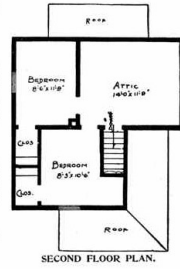
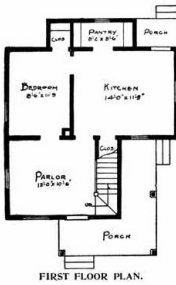
FIRST FLOOR.

- Parlor - - - 12 feet by 10 feet 6 inches
- Bedroom - - - 8 feet 6 inches by 11 feet 9 inches
- Kitchen - - - 14 feet by 11 feet 9 inches
- Pantry - - - 8 feet 2 inches by 3 feet 6 inches

SECOND FLOOR.

- Front Bedroom, 8 feet 3 inches by 10 feet 6 inches
 - Rear Bedroom, 8 feet 6 inches by 11 feet 9 inches
 - Large Attic - - - 14 feet by 11 feet 9 inches
- All bedrooms have roomy closets.

Size: Width, 24 feet; length, 28 feet, exclusive of porch



Sears Catalog Homes, 1908-1914. Model 115.



Myresjöhus, 2010. Kornett model home.

might ring true in the case of exporting models to other geographical regions, but holds little merit when compared to some of the benefits of securing “green standards” and increased awareness of energy conservation that are spreading among the catalogue house manufacturers. As always, the discussion is never one-sided and the debate as a whole rarely takes social or financial sustainability in consideration, where the spread of prototype houses historically has been one of the most effective architectural moves towards affordable housing solutions.

Housing expos are another venue that has provided the opportunity for emerging architecture to be tested, displayed and discussed. The dual nature of expos - internal trade shows or public exhibitions - offers some interesting contradictions that seem to follow the architectural profession and the image of home presented. The Modernist expos of the 20s and 30s showed a new style and in particular, new ways of organizing a modern open floor plan (something that would not catch on within the mainstream households until around mid 20th century). The Stockholm Exhibition in 1930 was one notable example, where the subsequent propaganda book; *Acceptera!* (Accept!), called for the general acceptance of an impending Modern architecture (and lifestyle). The housing portion of the exhibition pushed for ideal type houses that were affordable, rational and resource-efficient, made possible in part by the functionalist aesthetics. The visiting public was however not too willing to immediately accept the new aesthetics and the environments presented were partly accused of being too bare and ascetic (Rudberg, 1999).

The criticism of building expos have often revolved around the fact that they seldom offer much social or economical variation, often initiated for a specific typology or with a certain clientele in mind. The degree of public/private participation of course determines much of these issues. Big, public projects,



Cronqvist, G., 1930. Pavillions, Stockholm Exhibition 1930.



Cronqvist, G., 1930. HSB model apartment, Stockholm Exhibition 1930.

such as many of the European post-war housing initiatives, were often based on the vision of improving the general housing stock, matching social agendas with at the time highly experimental and modern architecture, leading to the development of a multitude of new construction techniques and materials. Trade shows initiated by the industry instead focus on the advancement of different proposals or attracting customers, developers and financiers. In both cases, one can question to which degree architectural exhibits really relate to a discussion on how we define home in the public sense, and on what values this is based on. Although expos are known for being a forum to show off innovation made within a certain field, it is not always clear what this innovation is and the danger of becoming a platform only for the own profession is sometimes debated. One recent example is the Scotland Housing Expo 2010, where much focus was put on sustainable building practices, with environmentally conscious solutions presented as integrated rather than isolated. Especially in the context of sustainable attitudes in housing development, one can't help but wonder what is better: adapting the industry to a more sustainable conduct, or challenging the entire industry and the image it is built on?



significance

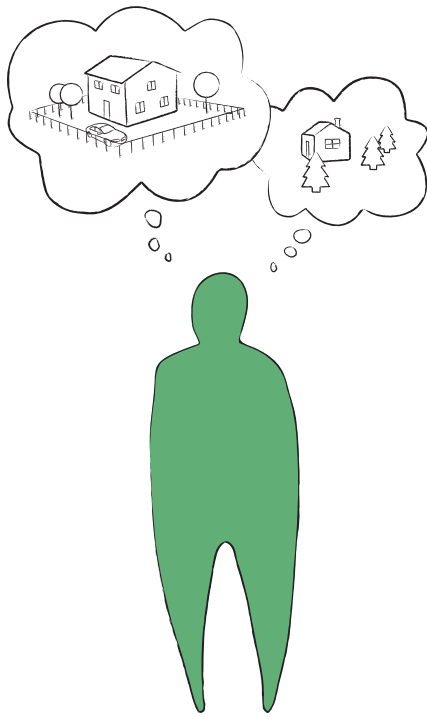


Hagbert, P., 2009. Rural home.

Meaning of Home

To fully map the meaning of home is a great attempt and this thesis makes no such claim. It is however of essence to begin to study the significance a sense of home has and how the image of home constructed in society correlates with the importance the concept holds. Besides informing how we relate to the built environment, the significance we give home says something about how we value others and ourselves in certain contexts. This less tangible aspect of home is harder to pin point, but also holds relevance in the question of a sustainable approach to housing development. Emotional and social ties that we form with places we call home hold significance also in other aspects of our lives. The different meaning home has for different people is intriguing as it relates to the definition we use and the common significance we ascribe home. The definitions studied earlier are especially relevant to observe when connected to the social constructions associated with home. As is the discussion on the power embedded in concepts such as home, the basis in cultural connotations and how this is changing with acculturation. Serving as a brief introduction to emotional and social references, the connection to home is here based on a look at two dialectics: need/desire and identity/communality, both intriguing to examine in association to the relationships created with and within home.

“A house is more than just a shelter from the storm. How we shape our homes, and how we behave within them, speak volumes about our history, our values and our way of life.”
(Living Rooms, 2010)



Need & Desire

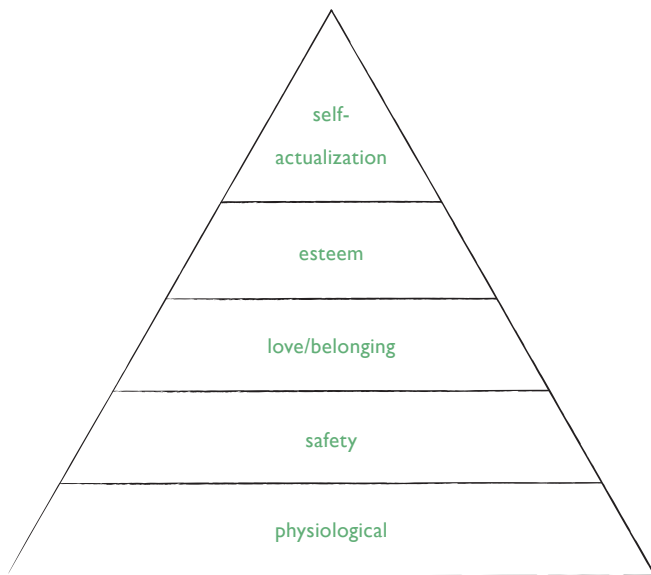
Much of contemporary design (practice and theory) struggles with the perceived conflict between need, or functionality, and desire- some sort of higher concept (the desire of the designer or the supposed desire of the user). The latter is harder to quantify and thus often gets written off as superfluous, or not worth spending money on. This might be due to the fact that communication in these matters falter, especially on the part of the designer, to emphasize these types of values. Another issue facing the design community is the very design itself. A client quite understandably cares little about the process and more about the product that they are paying for. Design, however, is powerful in matching one need with others and finding solutions that can aim at fulfilling them, often by visualizing ideas that add qualities that are not necessarily asked for (since the skill of the designer, many would argue, is providing more than what the client can conjure up). Weighing needs against desires is fundamentally what adds complexity to architecture. This aspect of the need/desire dialectic is easily relatable to the housing market, where practical matters often overshadow the desire of the architect, the politician or the developer. As for the needs and desires of the people occupying the living environments created, the concept of home might play an important part in how we relate to the preconditions we are given.

To understand the needs concerning home, it seems appropriate to begin by exploring the basic assumptions that have been made about how we rate activities and functions. In Maslow's (1954) hierarchy of needs, pure necessities for human survival are separated from more intellectual aspirations or desires. Maslow presents five levels ranging from physiological to more "advanced" mental stages,

but all are deemed basic to human motivation. Dwelling as a physical reality and home as a concept could more or less be analyzed respective to all of the levels, but perhaps obvious only on the first levels of primary needs. Interesting to consider might be that home as a concept has evolved to signify much more beyond the original shelter, but our most basic requisites of a dwelling remain. Home can play an important role in facilitating human needs, but the conditions and preferences of society demands certain frames of reference, limiting or enabling the potential of “advancement” in the hierarchy.

Physiological needs, at the base of the pyramid, include for example the human requirements of breathing, drinking and eating, as well as the for the context of home perhaps most relevant; sleeping. Despite this evidentially being fundamental needs, one can note that a number of habitats, not isolated only to economically challenged parts of the world, lack these basic functions with threats of pollution, water shortage and lack of adequate local food sources. Tending to these needs are vital for a sustainable progression through the hierarchy.

The second level of need according to Maslow talks about safety in different forms, among others the security of property. Home is referred to as a safe place, but many people live in uncertain housing conditions, not able to attain a secure tenure, not knowing how long they will be able to stay in their home, having to flee their home for different reasons or simply not having a home at all. Perhaps the most important paradox of the power of home and the human right to shelter is how the image built up around positive attributes of home is in fact rendered futile in the presence of domestic disturbances. The number of offences committed in domestic environments undermine the very freedom and right a home has come to represent. Home in this case sets the scene for a power play, where sentiments of the opposite spectra such as distress, discomfort



and insecurity might dominate. These issues all start to deal with more than the physical space and thus reach beyond the first level in the means necessary to realize. Here political incentives and economic systems play a part, but the question is also how the creation and maintenance of a safe home is made possible by design solutions. Especially interesting is the challenge this poses for the development of new configurations, and to what extent the implications of “secure housing” are included in sustainable practices.

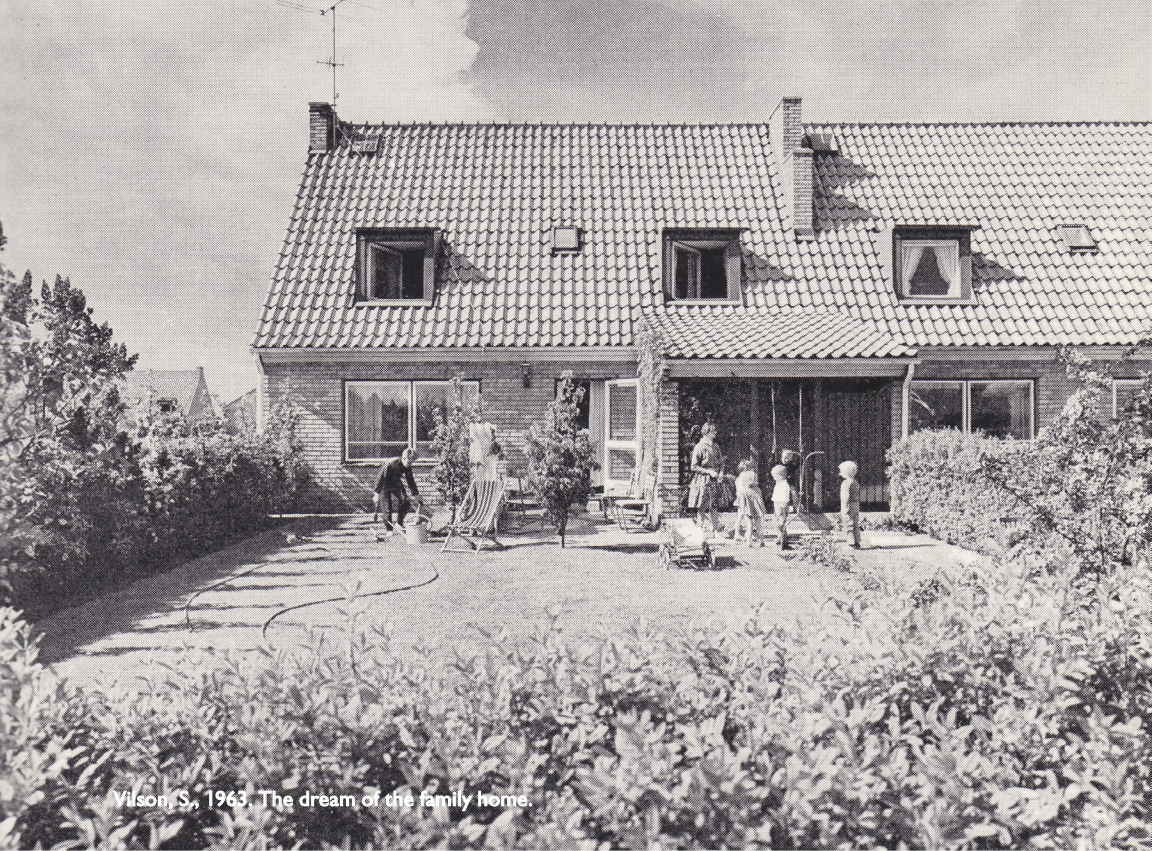
Another level in Maslow’s hierarchy with an undisputable connection to home is that of love and belonging. Belonging also helps in creating community, where safety can be established by a shared responsibility and trust. Although generally lower needs are stronger, belonging, or the desire for love and acceptance that the search for belonging can bring, can sometimes even overpower more basic needs. As evident in cases where the protection of home can lead to extreme measures, the need for love/belonging is significant enough for people to give up other needs, sometimes even risking survival. Connected to this is of course the next hierarchal level of esteem. In the cultural context of contemporary Western society, home is arguably one of the most important sources of esteem, weather it be external in the form of respect or status generated or the internal pride, self-esteem and freedom a home can provide.

The highest of needs, self-actualization, is perhaps where the concern of home is not as immediately evident at a pragmatic first glance. Maslow suggests that even when we have satisfied all of the lower needs, we will strive to fulfill ourselves in the ways in which we are equipped for. The individual variations are here more prominent than lower in the hierarchy, where one might be more driven to a certain path than another. How this relates to the concept of home is probably part of the more politically loaded aspects of the built environment.

Where most would agree everyone is entitled to fulfill the four lower needs, the possibility for self-actualization is not regarded quite the same. Maybe this is self-explanatory considering that we first tend to basic needs before reaching for a more philosophical fulfillment. Yet, it is at this level we can expect to fully develop and flourish.

In addition to the levels established by Maslow, there are other renditions and additions to the hierarchy. Lawrence (1987) gives an account of a modified hierarchy of housing needs, where aspects such as comfort, socialization, self-expression and aesthetics are brought in along with basic shelter and security. These factors are all said to be connected to the well-being of home. Lawrence also highlights the way needs fluctuate over time, and that needs established (and fulfilled) at one point might become unsatisfactory later. Similarly, a house design might function well to serve a set of needs, but only if the needs stay constant or if the design allows for a wider range. The latter, however, might be problematic, as an increased flexibility might also result in a more shallow treatment of all requisites. An appropriate response might also vary depending on individual or shared needs, two sometimes very different premises.

When discussing home and appropriateness, especially in an architectural context, the higher levels of self-fulfillment becomes interesting. If we are to pursue how the built environment is going to develop and sustain socially (and in the long run economically), questions of how we promote such “fuzzy” values as realizing individual potential and reaching self-actualization, are key. Certain environments are said to induce productivity, creativity and so on. This is not only limited to physical factors, but also how the perception of and meaning attributed to space can determine how we interact with each other and the built environment. The concept of home is particularly strong in doing this, as it offers



Vilson, S., 1963. The dream of the family home.



Hagbert, P. Temporarily established home in Kobe, Japan.

a base for much more than the need of shelter. Worth noting though is how home as much as it can promote self-actualization in different forms can also be associated with fear, confinement and the lack of stimulating outlets. In the context of the theories presented here, home could just as easily deprive people of the possibility to accommodate their needs, thus giving little room for further aspirations. Something that contrasts the strong Western belief in the private home as a tool for self-actualization and where the desire for home is expressed as a goal in itself, considered a healthy part of social and personal development.

“[Home exists] between reality and desire, between body and dream, between what is possible and what remains to be longed for.” (Verdú, V. 1987, cited in Zabalbeascoa, 1996, p. 6)

The power entailed in the concept of home and this manifestation of the house as bearing all kinds of emotional and idealistic notions appear very foreign to the pragmatic reality that is current housing design, development, and market. Yet we see a clear focus on these aspects, especially in the real estate business, as mentioned in previous chapter. The potential of one house is weighed against another one, and the aim of housing advertisement is often to show just how well you and your family could flourish in this particular environment, as opposed to somewhere else. This would seem to show that people are much more easily persuaded by desire than by need. The part of the world’s population not having to worry about securing lower needs can instead imagine how well their house will meet their desired lifestyle. In a sustainable frame of reference, this becomes problematic, as the individual needs and desires have to be constantly weighed against those of the group or community.



Identity & Community

The functional essence of the house has evolved beyond the first, strong symbolic origins of the shelter and the hearth. (Zabalbeascoa 1996). A house does not simply represent a protection of assemblage around a fire. The social codifications developed in society are very much applicable to the way we apply new symbolic significances to and identify with home.

The importance of home to both personal and collective identity is multifaceted, but suggests a strong connection between the idea of physical space and the possession of personal places. This attachment in turn is something further used to define identity, and contributes immensely to forming a sense of belonging, not only geographically, but also emotionally and ideologically.

The psychologist Lynn Liben (p. 8, 1981) discusses the intricate concept of space and spatial experiences:

“space is not simply location /.../ It also is the expression of feeling; a conceptual abstraction; a tool for memory and problem solving and more”

95

When relating to home, this statement suggests the importance of the concept and notion of home as more than the physical specifics, where it instead takes on the role of a tool, or perhaps more adequate in the discussion of identity, a stage upon where you place certain parameters and conditions.

Liben further discusses the relevance of how socioemotional factors inform spatial activities and how these activities in turn inform the way we shape space:

“For example, although individuals alter their environments, the form of these alterations is determined, in part, by environmental considerations.” (ibid., p. 26)

Inevitably, this raises the question about how we might differ in ability to shape space, the limitations in collective or individual identity and how our possibility to shape our living environments is effected by possible social, political and financial hurdles. The cultural differences in how we create relationships both interpersonal within an environment, as well as between people and that environment, also imply that the way we view spatial limitations vary depending on societal attitudes and norms.

Home as a social concept is a potent cultural and individual ideal. In modern Western, highly individualistic societies, the discussion often revolves around status. Social standing is today measured in multiple ways, where historically, if allowed to simplify, factors such as profession, title or family name to a much higher extent determined your potential and living conditions, rather than the other way around. Where we today talk about physical realities possibly emphasizing segregation and socioeconomic disconnection, you are identified by your living environment and geographic belonging.

The theme for the 2008 IKEA catalogue was “Home is the most importance place in the world”. According to the survey “livet hemma” by nVision, ordered by IKEA, “having time just to relax” is the thing that best describes a sense of luxury in people’s lives and IKEA chose to focus their theme on the importance of home in achieving this. Especially the quality of “slowing down to enjoy everyday life” and the ways in which you can set up a home to inspire and allow for relaxation were highlighted. In reference to the survey “Changing Lives in

Europe” from 2005, also done by nVision, IKEA concludes that 40% of the respondents (in 15 different European countries) stated that your dwelling is the thing that says the most about you and defines your identity. Much more so than your job, what car you drive, or your clothes.

The value of home to show status is undoubtedly true in certain contexts, but perhaps more interesting is where home does not play the biggest role and thus is given less importance, either by choice, or by necessity. One example is the context of rural Alabama, where the status of a dwelling is sometimes secondary to that of the car, or other possessions. The social acceptance of the reality that the mobile home is the only widespread option for affordable housing in a region with high levels of poverty means that the dwelling in itself is not upheld as a symbol. Other difficulties with the poor quality of mobile homes and the difficult maintenance means that tending one’s home is not as high of a priority as it might be in other contexts. A car, on the other hand, receives much attention and you can see well-kept vehicles in front of dilapidated houses. In such a situation, home-ownership and pride over one’s home are sensitive, but the common approach is still one of strong connections to what can be identified as home. Here, the larger scale of home as within a community or on a plot of land can be manifested stronger than the mere physical realities of a dwelling.

Altman (1981) explores the social-physiological features of homes and suggests that home is connected to the “dialectic interplay of individuality and society” (p. 283). This, he defines as the opposing interests of guarding one’s individuality against external pressure, while simultaneously seeking belonging. Altman states that each of these opposing forces operate within a unified dialectic system, but that the degree to which one is more present than the other can be connected to different variables, most notably a cultural comparison.



“Homes are tangible reflections of cultural adaptations, practices and beliefs.” (Altman, 1981, p. 287)

People often put effort into expressing individuality and identity in their home, while still being careful to share communality with a broader culture, thus remaining unique but keeping within the frames of community norms. This balance is complicated by specific conditions and situations that influence temporary references and irregularities within cultural contexts. The personal is by no means opposed to the communal, but still it can be regarded as threatening to be too close to the either one of the polarized simplifications of the identity/communality dialectic.

Privacy and home has become synonymous in many discourses on the importance of home as a refuge and place where you can retreat without being scrutinized. Lawrence (1987) refers to the importance privacy had held throughout history as a feature of sociopolitical institutions and proposes the different interpretations of privacy made by the individual and the state. Privacy can be discussed from the viewpoint of the individual experience, but also put in context of societal norms. These two views might be dependent on each other, as the personal privacy is set against a normative construct. Connecting to the political debate on home as a public concern, this struggle between interests also tie back to the dialectic of need and desire. Altman suggests that:

“dwellings reflect the degree to which cultures and their members must cope with common dialectic oppositions, namely, individual needs, desires and motives versus the demands and requirements of society at large.” (ibid. p. 287)

The extent to which homes could be considered to display identity or communality differ regionally, often historically more connected to climate conditions and building practices. Altman goes through a series of comparative studies of cultural variation, noting the ways in which the identity/communality dialectic is balanced in different parts of the world. One can however quickly make the shallow (and sad) assumption that these observations might be different today, almost 30 years later. Global trends and exported values are claiming more and more influence over regional or cultural variations of the balance between individual identity and communal conformity.

The things we surround ourselves with have come to be synonymous with what type of person we are, we want to be, and how well we fit (or not) within a social structure. Hardly anything new, fluctuating throughout history, the intensity with which we aspire to procure, appropriate and display our belongings (and belonging) however seems to be reaching a new high. Being one of the biggest investments people make in their lives, one's home is undoubtedly a sign of this. This is both in regards to a financial risk taken to buy a house or a social enterprise in the emotional value put into creating a home. Home-ownership is frequently portrayed as marking an achievement, serving almost as an emblem of success in society. The recent recession, however, showed the vulnerability and hollowness of that "success", where many aspire higher than they financially are capable of. The differentiation (or sometimes lack thereof) between the property and the constructed image of home here marks an interesting structure of a market entangled with societal values. Perhaps especially visible in the constructed home, since it is viewed more than anything to reflect a lifestyle, we might aspire to other lifestyles by imagining the spaces we could live them in.



Family
Home
Evening
Manual
1967



House vs Home

The view of home as something both spatial and emotional is reflected in much research, often focusing on the attachment developed with a place, but also the bond that appears between people inhabiting that place. Proverbs such as “home is where the heart is” or “home is where ever I am with you” indicate an affective tone, based on people and emotions rather than physical constants. The power of habit adds to both the spatial and emotional associations, where the daily exposure to the same usage and emotional states induced create a meaning.

The connection between the meaning of home and the relationships you form within a home often suggest the equation of home as a factor of spatial circumstances and family situation. Home as a concept can then be expanded to an umbrella term encompassing the combination of emotional attributions of the built environment, social codifications and constructs, and the familiarity of community or family relationships. Leveling these different factors against each other and vis-à-vis parameters such as time, cultural influence, personal experiences etcetera offer some cues as to how we relate to home.

“It is possible that the idea of home, as a combination of house and family, goes back to the representation of a nuclear family associated with domestic architecture. Moreover, it is quite likely that a home could refer its inhabitants not only to a particular space but to a shared origin, to similar ideas, to a common history, and even to analogous thoughts and criteria.”
(Zabalbeascoa, 1996. p. 7)

Even if this might not always be very straightforward, the values built up within the social codification of home are often identified as part of what a home means. Just the value put into home differs between households (another term relevant to study), and the definition we create communally within a home has great importance for personal definition of that home. This could either be in accordance, or as in the instance of adolescent development of concepts, contrast the communal definition or values.

General definitions of home function as a comparison to the own evaluation and individual positioning. The emotional and personal identification of home has led to a powerful common notion of what a home should mean. Universal understanding or consensus of the importance of home is based on a public definition celebrating values much like those of the early Bourgeois domestic and often mixing personal meaning with social constructs. Rapoport (1995) refers to examples of how home as a term is used instead of house as it mixes the physical object with warmer and comfortable aspects it is intended to emphasize. Home also deals with intellectual or mental states, where it is used to describe a feeling, for example that you are at home with something; confident, comfortable and in control. This usage can be read as closely connected to the physical reality of the control enforced over a place of residence, a sphere of domestic power.

Rapoport further addresses the confusion between the use of home to refer to a product, a building or a thing, and the use to describe a process, the mental state or positive evaluation. The usage of home or derivatives such a “homely” or “homelike” gives others a sense of what you like and value as well as determines the nature of certain environments. It offers us a positive evaluation of physical attributes and gives a template, or reference, from which experiences and environments are compared.

Even though this thesis has presented the interdependency of the concept of home and living environments governed by market interests, home can still be considered a sense that cannot be taken away, even if the residential situation or the physical circumstances change.

“Home is not where you live, but where they understand you”

Christian Morgenstern

This mental or intangible aspect of home is interesting, as it could imply that the balance between emotional attachment and spatial circumstances that has been presented here could possibly lean more toward sharing intellectual home ground than an actual physical manifestation of home. Initial observations of home on larger scales and the historic pre-industrial home can then be connected to a future development of the built environment. Trying to enforce spatial configurations that allow for more of this type of relationships, where home is used as an intellectual as well as emotional tool instead of a place-specific object (or collections of objects). Perhaps it is with this broader approach that we can challenge the prevailing constructs of home, in order to evolve beyond the current social, financial and ecological rut that has become the 21st century housing situation.



conclusion



D	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
°	24°	25°	25°	25°



D	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
°	34°	34°	33°	33°



D	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
°	9°	12°	12°	11°



Convert to

- Name of Bank (obligatory)
- Account number
- IBAN (obligatory)
- BIC (obligatory)
- Post address of the bank (if applicable)
- First Name / Last Name of the beneficiary (obligatory)
- Private address
- Postal code

Evolving Values

With a changing world where certain values are gaining strength, how do we keep the image of home up to date? The discussion often comes down to where change begins. Quite simply; it begins with you and me! Perhaps less idealistically; where exactly can change happen? It can begin with what aspirations we as designers or individuals have, as this is closely connected to which aspirations we give others the possibility to have. A different approach to sustainable homes begins by first teaching ourselves how to live smaller, cheaper, denser, together and any other ways I have not yet imagined.

“The world will not evolve past its current state of crisis by using the same thinking that created the situation” (Albert Einstein, cited in Sveriges Arkitekter, 2009, p. 62)

As we see a need for a better balance in financial, environmental and human resources, the big changes needed are often too daunting and politically loaded to be commonly accepted. The traditional ways of implementing change are not working at a fast enough pace, be it in light of a supposed threat of climate change or present and future escalating social injustices in terms of shelter and habitats. By reassessing what we need and discussing the potential for future built (or unbuilt) environments, we take responsibility for creating something that can last, that can make a change. Home, it would seem, is one of the most important notions we have and something that continues to be treasured, even when societal norms alter the prerequisites.

One possibly alarming fact is the rate by which the variations in how we create home are being streamlined, in favor of certain cultural ideals. Bäcklund et. al (2009) writes about the effects of globalization and the “import of values” that is introducing aspirations perhaps not always applicable within a certain context, pushing an unsustainable development towards living environments more conformed within a greater, global norm and less cohesive with a desirable balance between financial and social interests.

As globalization and the movement of people as well as information is getting easier, should we be making the concept of home more flexible to accommodate a more diverse view on what a home means and the forms it can take? When discussing the topic of this thesis, many have been quick to suggest that home could mean different things and than for some, it could be a backpack or a hotel room. Perhaps it is fitting that new nomadic lifestyles have emerged where old ones have disappeared (traditional nomadic ways of life have gradually been dismissed in favor of a normative fixed home as social and political schemes have tried to equalize living standards). Building up global networks, these young jet setters are making it a point to be able to move, and to constantly be on the move. An international job market is making it attractive to not hold ties or big investments in one place. The more tied you are to a home the less flexible you are perceived as. Is this a positive development or are people like myself, who lack strong ties to home and perhaps because of that can create home anywhere, actually hollowing out a need for a stronger sense of local community? Place attachment and rootlessness are subjects that have not been dealt with in any depth here, but a study of these concepts in the context of home and dwelling design might be a relevant addition to the discussion on how we can develop new ways of talking about, and ultimately creating, homes.

One concern is how we create functional and attractive environments for new types of lifestyles? The nomadic demands an arrange of public and private services, quick connections (both infrastructure and digital), and small, cheap, but flexible locations to quickly inhabit and easily leave. Architectural responses to such a program have resulted in projects trying to combine high levels of flexibility with a strong need for personalization. New modular structures are designed to address the financial interests these types of dwellings could provide, built on the idea of rental or leasing systems for the needed space and facilities.

Although many architects might long for that one project where they get to design the perfect home tailored for a specific client, the reality is that a custom home might be unfitting for the next inhabitant. That people demand different things from their homes seems inevitable, but perhaps more relevant would be to question exactly what components we know have as good as universal qualities and what are purely speculative in a housing market preoccupied with notions of size, not spatial configurations. The real estate business tries to emphasize that there is a buyer for every object and work hard at trying to enhance the size in relation to the number of rooms, amenities or potential. Still, we most often measure our homes by floor plan area, not necessarily what we can do within it. Naturally, this is also dependent on the construction costs, where you want to maximize the space for as little money as possible.

The idea of a rigid housing market or making an investment might not be in reach for many dwellers or might simply not be desirable in a fully flexible and sustainable manifestation of home. Having a “trial system”, where you get to know a dwelling before you commit might sound unreliable, but is nonetheless an interesting thought. Testing a place, a neighborhood, a furniture arrangement might be less absurd if the housing shortage wasn't as acute and the chance of

creating alternative living environments wasn't purely governed by the financial interests of what future buyers might value.

New industries promoting second hand markets and the combination of a generation raised in consumption with an alternative way of consuming and new ways of distributing products might however change the premise for a more flexible financial interest. New trends, like IKEA introducing second hand furniture sections in their stores, could perhaps be indicative of the attention businesses who profile themselves in these areas are getting. Even though similar initiatives are often just examples of green-washing a company brand, it does provide cheaper options and pose interesting alternatives for the development of more trade-like approaches, even within housing - something that might be more suitable for modern global societies than the traditional property and home furnishing market? The question however still remains; how sustainable is this detachment and globalization to begin with? Are we erasing the values needed to create good, sustainable living environments? At the same time as these new creative nomadic lifestyles are getting a lot of attention, counter-movements are occurring, where it is said that the new generation of the 90s and 00s will return to more traditional values, reacting to the questioning nature of the gen X and Y's. These emerging traditionalists are predicted to put much emphasis on the home and the family values that originate therefrom. Home plays a central role in establishing a constant, and the house is still viewed as a measure of stability, connected to long overdue norms governing family constellations, forms of employment and views on private consumption. This will be an interesting development to follow and will most definitely effect the discourse on what values could evolve and what constructs of home might stagnate as the housing situation continues to demand a stronger political and architectural approach.

Even though housing research today comes nowhere near the extent and funding of the early 1900s, the projects being pursued show interest in exploring new configurations and the reconversion of old ones (such as recent Chalmers Master thesis topics dealing with co-housing, dwellings for shared custody arrangements or alternative “theme living”). The many existing experiments in niched communities have touched upon this, where certain values are carried through the design, while still financially feasible as parts of larger developments. Such communities of alternative living are positive insertions into an otherwise troubling monotone housing stock, but one can also question the true sustainability of building enclaves. The financial benefits of producing multiples of one type are evident, and in the case of new environmentally friendly housing solutions, new eco-villages or urban neighborhoods, the development is pushing new techniques and building processes to be tested. It is a question of whether we aspire to a variety in these types of living environment, which is a valid step in the right direction, or if we should aim for mixing different dwellings and lifestyles without grouping or separating the “sustainable projects” from the general.

The environments with the best chance for survival are those with the greatest diversity, something evident in both economic theory (where spreading investments are securer) and ecology (where a rich ecosystem comprises of many species). The same could perhaps be said for the constructs of home. A strong and prosperous living environment that can withstand external as well as internal threats would be dependent on how varied the image of home is and how well it could accept deviations from the norm. A socially sustainable development, I would propose, is reliant on such a flexibility and diversity. I expect to see more projects dealing with questions of how the concept of home can continue to evolve at the same time as the market continues to portray a [skewed] mainstream.



Project M, 2010. M Minneapolis, challenging the norm. "Welcome home".

Redefining Home

In an age of globalization coupled with worries of climate change, much focus is put on emphasizing large scale responsibility for our common home, the earth.

“Of the total 5,9 hectare global footprint per capita per year in Sweden, households contribute on average 3,2 hectare /.../ If households decrease its footprint by 70% /.../ over the next 40 years, Sweden can achieve ecological footprint that is below the *fair Earthshare* and become ecologically sustainable.”
(Haraldsson, 1998)

Even with “green solutions”, we fall short when trying to minimize energy consumption in the housing sector. As the average space per capita has grown, we focus more and more internally, for example seeing an increase in single households. Although good housing standards have provided us with adequate physical spaces, we are not becoming happier in the grand scheme of things. To reach a socially and financially stable housing situation and a sustainable evolution of the built environment, I believe there is a need to redefine the concept of home. Pushing the definition of what a home could and should be opens up opportunities to apply the ecologically considerate housing forms already available in a broader context. How can we discuss getting more for less without turning the debate into the already tired clichés of environmental concerns? Simple resource economics tell us that the less we claim individually, the greater the access for all. Yet this is regarded a politically controversial claim.

As we can come to anticipate an even greater influx of people to regions already struggling with housing shortage, other areas are depopulating, leaving an untenable market situation where demand and supply is forcing prices to either extreme. This is an economical development that will undoubtedly shape future manifestations of home just as well as continue to influence societal constructs of the image of home and the meaning attributed. Much of the current [Western] political discourse on home deals with such opposing issues as housing shortage, mortgage foreclosures, inadequate housing conditions and in some cases the depopulation of urban or rural areas. Especially in a time of financial recession, the [same old] questions of an unsustainable housing market are raised, as the 2008 crisis highlighted an extensive over-borrowing, living beyond one's means and investing artificial capital in a property market hyped up by a growing [Western] norm of home-ownership.

“We need to stop building mansions that we can't afford /.../
What we need to stop doing is pretending that its more cost-
effective to build bigger homes - you just don't put someone
into more debt and tell them that is economically correct.”
(Pickworth, 2010)

As politicians struggle to bring societies out of this economic slump, few have taken the opportunity to fundamentally question the evolution of home and community that led to the situation they attempt to salvage by reinstating the same types of systems. With an increasingly more complex housing situation, the political debate needs to follow the development. This, from an architectural point of view, also dictates the focus of where design and development will take

place. As financially strong developments (both privately and publicly) in high-intensity spots continue to frequently push new design, separating underlying political, financial or social agenda and architectural evolution quickly gets blurry. Not that is necessarily of importance, but it does make for a harder evaluation of architectural progress. So how then can we relate to the concept of home within this architectural climate, where generally speaking, the market is often what is pushing the direction of design?

“At what point did the house become more about the future tenant than the current resident? It’s hard to trace the moment, but let’s hope it’s passed. Because for too long, home design has been hijacked by the allure of resale value. Maybe now we can begin again to think of our houses not as investments but as homes.” (Arieff, 2010)

The main issue is perhaps how we get new development to ask for a different architecture. Or do we perhaps need a different architecture to lead the way? By for example allowing a more flexible housing stock, I do believe the possibility for different types of desired homes would increase. I am however not convinced is it enough to provide this, without changing the attitudes of the people supposedly seeking a different manifestation of their needs and desires for a home. Is it enough to change the parameters or do we need a paradigm? If so, how do we create the premise for a paradigm? Some argue this is not the responsibility of architects, but I think it is really a question of the chicken or the egg; is architecture born out of need or does architecture actually inform needs? I would like to believe in the latter and feel that we as designers can envision and

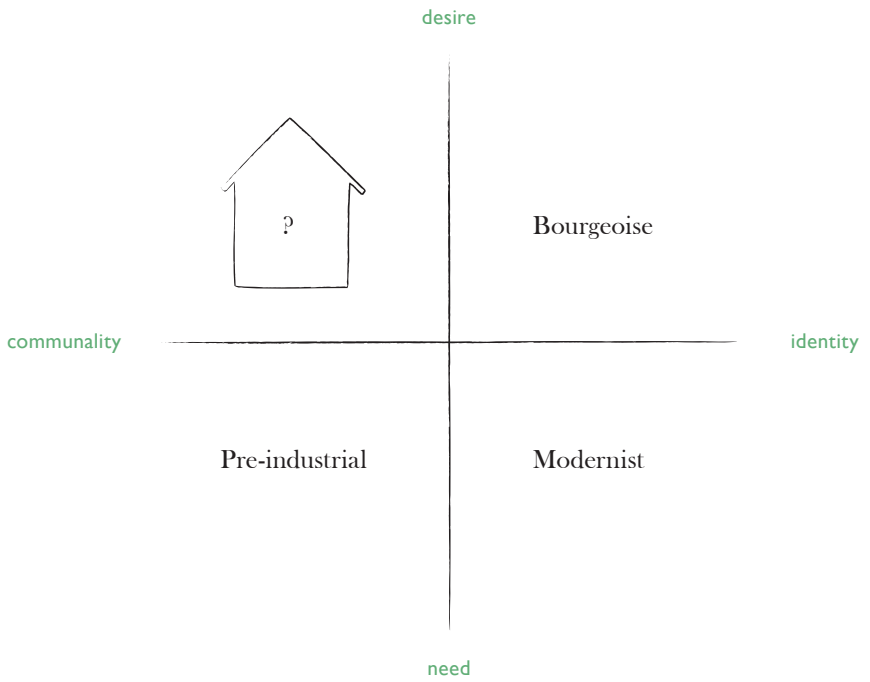
visualize what new housing constellations could look like. One thing to keep in mind, perhaps something that has been a bit too ambiguously touched upon throughout this thesis, is that a house does not make a home. This is something that is often stressed by architect as they distance themselves from the construct of home. Architects cannot create homes for others, but can create the premise for people to fill with meaning, and have a responsibility to critically review the images of home we are contributing to with the environments we design.

“A critique of the architectural process of creating space for living by “boxing” a limited set of predefined activities, arguing that such practice omits less normative activities and excludes the occupier from the “space-making act”, and so restricts the scope to explore changing living conditions that can no longer be so rigidly defined”. (Offsea, 2003)

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If we can say to operate within the need/desire and identity/communality dialectics, what would the extremes be? Both are necessary and the tension between them is what becomes interesting when discussing the premise for evolving the concept. If we look at the two dialectics as intersecting, we can add another layer of complexity to the polarized scheme. The overlapping fields might be interesting to very speculate about in simplistic terms of what type of society it relates to and what image of home the dialectics propose.

Where communality relates to need, the will to fit in and conform is very strong and the basic fulfillment of needs might even be reliant on the common. Here we could perhaps place the pre-industrial, rural home, where a more collective ideal was a necessity and the home was more connected to bigger



concepts of family, kinship and regional ties.

The Bourgeois home on the other hand, might fit in somewhere in the identity/desire overlap. Such a society would put high premium on expressing or exploring personal identity, as was the case with the excessive Bourgeois idea of home, where the home was a domestic showroom, and portrayed as a place for reflection, dreaming and intimacy. In reality, the contemporary common home was far from both desire or identity, but the image was a strong driving force in the struggle for finding industrial employment, the allure of the city and the new ideals that came along with it.

If we consider the mix of identity and need we might come close to what modernization would come to bring about in terms of universal welfare combined with a capitalistic individualism fueled by the industrial revolution. Functionalism introduced a rational approach to the need/desire dialectic, by enforcing aesthetics that spoke to the bare necessity and utilitarianism of what a home could be. The previous lavish styles were dismissed as frivolous and overly nostalgic. As the growing political interest and importance of home called for a common standard, seeing to everyone's needs became first priority. As the general welfare improved, the image of home came to grow with the strong commercialisation of what exactly the needs of a household meant.

What we see today is of course not as simple as this dialectic diagram, where individuals and micro societies can be situated in all fields. The individualistic nature of Western society is however striving for different things at the same time. As we deem home to be more and more important for personal identity and relaxation, we also consume more and invest more false capital into the communality of what is considered a good investment. To reach that ultimate level of self-actualization, we find ourselves stuck in trying to advance in a housing

career, creating the perfect living room showcase.

An appropriate future housing development is not necessarily the same as a home solely based on desire, nor one purely tending to the common interests, but perhaps a sustainable manifestation of the concept home can be found in a different balance between need/desire and identity/communality. The ultimate aim, I might suggest, would be to create the prerequisites to place a future image of home in the symbiosis of communality and desire. To create stimulating home environments that allow for self-actualization is of course a given aim in architectural conceptualizations, but perhaps it would be simpler to say that we should look for ways the built environment can offer more than the physical components of the commercial home. Distinguishing this construct of home as a place for potential from the Bourgeois desires and still basically restrictive social codes and gender hierarchies, it is also important to emphasize the importance of integrating the communality of the pre-industrial home. To truly create a sustainable future, not only in light of a hyped environmental crisis, the social and financial benefits of sharing resources outweigh the consequences of continuing to push idealized images of the individual home; for example the conceived housing bubbles that we see reappearing in cycles, segregation, increased perceived insecurities and the alienation of what used to be the one point of social comfort: the home.

We search for social belonging, and the biggest question is how to remain open to individual differences while pursuing a common agenda. Something that has always been the main argument for a capitalistic fear of the collective; that is erases variation. If we continue with the parallel to an ecosystem, competition is a natural part of human motivation, and perhaps the right question to ask is if we can change the framework of what that competition aims at instead of dismissing

its occurrence completely. Historically, the home has been designed to ensure individual as well as common survival with a shared responsibility and protection. As we turn the concept inwards, the isolation of property has shown an alarming trend of fencing off traditionally shared spaces, losing the collective protection. Another issue is how the architectural knowledge of location and site seems to be caving in to other interests, where we see apparent troubling formations and placements of new housing developments in disregard to climate, relying on technology instead of communality to guard from wind or water. Maybe not that remarkable, the innate qualities that create a sense of home are also often those we today uphold as sustainable. The single most important thing people have told me during the course of this work is that home represents safety. Connected with the Bourgeois ideals we still value, intimacy and relaxation, these aspects of home are quite commonly found in the small-scale, the personal, or the well balanced meeting between private and public.

To try and find cross-overs between individual and collective needs should revolve around trying to counteract the introvert focus on home, while at the same time not denying this reflective or private facet of home. By creating attractive environments in the middle zones, in the semi-public or semi-private, I would think trying to shift focus to these common interests and values would be made easier. One idea could be looking at what different solutions for a more collective design there are, where the extreme of sharing every single aspect of home life might not be applicable and not as interesting to pursue as for example the idea of having your own unit or house and sharing bigger spaces for social activities, services, possibility for cooperative land ownership and agriculture as well as responsibilities ensuring varied levels of commitment.

I would suggest that the base for a sustainable approach professionally could

come out of how well the extremes of the dialectics are balanced in the initial concepts of what future homes could look like, and by extension what type of society we want to build. It is also in this weighing of different aspects of the dialectics the issues of how we define home as a profession and how well this correlates to the public image appears. The sensitive issue of anchoring new ideas with the users we are designing for is of course still difficult and something I expect will continue to divide the architectural profession.

To work with materials and careful architectural consideration that does not encroach the common image of home but that concurrently challenges how needs, desires or identity can manifest themselves is not a simple task, but is one way of taking over the idealism surrounding what a home is and can be. However, putting too much attention in the small steps might also render these efforts negligible. If we are to try to add to the debate, without remaining idealistic and radically challenging in the periphery, we need to take a bigger part in influencing or controlling the elements we actually can. As architects we do, or at least should, have the capability to design the building process, not only the product. It is not only what we are building, but how, that effects the market, the financial and ecological costs and the political discourses, something many architects are afraid to approach too aggressively. This, however, is where I think the combination of a theoretical base anchored in contemporary research with practical experiences of construction and social realities is what will bring architects closer to a position where we will be able to inform or visualize what the future definition of home could look like.

“all really inhabited space bears the essence of the notion of home” (Bachelard, 1964, p. 5).



The Office of PlayLab, 2010. From the project "Craigshouse".



Vanderbilt Av

CHASE

CHASE
NOW
OPEN

SUBWAY

FIERY
FOOTLONG

OPEN

FREE

FREE

FAN



Hagbert, P., 2010. home is where*.

Reflection

This thesis has been about finding questions as much as answers, but mostly about trying to present a theme in a way that would be informative to me while working and researching. One that might spark new questions for those reading. I have opposed trying to suggest what a future definition of home might look like, but also realize that the work is dependant on a clear positioning and that I as an architect should have the tools to visualize different proposals. Perhaps these two objectives cannot be separated, as design is essentially both looking for questions and answers. The architectural skills include managing the entire spectra, but it is nonetheless a pondering I will carry with me.

I started this thesis with a desire to learn more about why home is such an important aspect of human interaction and personal motivation, partly to answer my own criticism of the environments of ranging quality I have experienced and the new developments that continue to dominate the image of what a good home is and could be. My personal agenda is to continue questioning the skewed and unsustainable manifestations of something so rudimentary as striving for a place to call home or a place to develop ones potential. Something that can sustain as a part of a bigger development toward a more responsible approach to what kind of society we are trying to build. Architects do not create home, but we create the premises to change the image of home, something I have chosen to see as a tool or strategy for redefining the concept. I believe a first step is what I have attempted to do here; to open up for and highlight a much needed discussion and critical review of what home looks like and how I as an architect can gather the appropriate skills to design a sustainable development, not only follow it.



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