

RGS-IBG Annual International Conference 2013

New geographical frontiers

Home time: temporalities of domestic life

Session Abstract: Please enter session abstract as it should appear in the online programme.	Domestic life contains within it traces of past homes and prospects of future homes. It is lived with senses of continuity and change between different times and spaces of home. This session brings together research exploring domestic life with a special attentiveness to temporality in the meaning and experience of home. This includes the home's own lived, material and imagined past, present and possible future; the nature and experience of home over the life course; the home as a site of looking back and looking ahead; and the ways in which both past and future homes shape on-going relationships with domestic space and practices of home-making. The session explores how themes of continuity, change, loss, nostalgia, memory and plans, prospects and expectations of the future cross cut the lived, material and emotional geographies of home.
Keywords: Please enter keywords separated by a semi colon (;). Maximum of five keywords allowed	Home; temporality; domestic

Session Convenors		
Session Convenor Name	Affiliation	Email address
Alison Blunt	Queen Mary, University of London	a.blunt@qmul.ac.uk
Caron Lipman	Queen Mary, University of London	c.lipman@qmul.ac.uk
Catherine Nash	Queen Mary, University of London	c.nash@qmul.ac.uk
Alastair Owens	Queen Mary, University of London	a.j.owens@qmul.ac.uk

Session presentation details			
Presentation 1 Title:	Tampering with Time in the House/Museum		
Presentation 1 Abstract	<p>When a historic house is opened to the public as a house museum a private dwelling is taken over by museological imperatives that seek to preserve the domestic past for perpetuity. The temporality of the museum becomes fused with that of the domestic environment. Daily activities and routines are re-presented as moment-in-time vignettes and static exhibitions. Permanent collections, architectural features and decorative finishes are made to reflect a single era or date—an interpretive period that corresponds with the site’s primary interpretive messages. Traditionally, staging the historic domestic interior for contemporary audiences entails stripping signs of accretion and evidences of modernization from the house. It must therefore be recognized that interpretive planning, restorative initiatives and curatorial manipulation simplify and skew our understandings of the temporalities of domestic life at house museums. Nevertheless, the house museum is a place where histories of home are presented, historic housewares are contextualized and our corporeal and emotional experiences of domestic spaces are discussed. This paper examines the ways that dated models, before-and-after photo-narratives and posted plans enable house-museum visitors to appreciate the ways that processes of construction, renovation and gradual deterioration alter the physical forms of historic houses. It analyses displays that expose layers of wallpaper or make visible different style of lath or wainscoting to explain architectural evolutions and design histories. Lastly, it argues that in recounting the lives of former inhabitants and detailing entire family trees museum guides reanimate historic residences with stories of how they were lived in over time.</p>		
Author name	Author affiliation	Author email address	Presenter?
Stephanie Radu	University of Western Ontario	sradu@uwo.ca	Y/N
			Y/N
			Y/N
Presentation 2 Title:	‘Living with the Past at Home’: Domestic Prehabitation and Inheritance		
Presentation 2 Abstract	<p>For many people the intimacy of domestic dwelling is mediated by varying degrees of awareness that their home has been the residence of prior occupants whose traces remain in its physical fabric, in the objects left behind, in stories circulating locally and in archived records. This paper focuses on how the past is imaginatively reconstructed and experienced in the home, in terms of experiences, meanings, knowledges, attitudes, practices and materialities associated with senses of domestic pre-habitation and inheritance in Britain. It seeks to examine the importance of the relationship between current and previous inhabitants, or that deemed to be inherited from them – objects, aesthetics, arrangements of domestic space, stories – in framing domestic belonging, home-making, ownership, belonging and experience of domestic space. ‘Home time’ is explored here in terms of people’s own homes as focus of their historical research, the senses of the past or appeal of particular historical periods that inform and are shaped by attitudes to prehabitation, and the ways in which the past is understood as only partially knowable or selectively kept in check. We consider the way the home is understood as site of temporary and custodial dwelling for present day inhabitants in a sequence of occupation that stretches back into the past and will extend into the future.</p>		
Author name	Author affiliation	Author email address	Presenter?

Caron Lipman	Queen Mary, University of London	c.lipman@qmul.ac.uk	Y/N
Catherine Nash	Queen Mary, University of London	c.nash@qmul.ac.uk	Y/N
			Y/N
Presentation 3 Title:	Moving on up and out: How the materiality of past houses and neighbourhoods shapes future homes and homemaking practices		
Presentation 3 Abstract	<p>Most people now occupy multiple homes during their adult life. This implies that meanings of home and homemaking practices are not bound to one time and place but are spread out and linked across multiple homes. Homes play an integral role, and arguably shape domestic routines of occupants. The dynamic relationship between homes and routines brings the materiality of houses to the fore, in the form of built structure, the shapes and spaces of rooms and things they contain, as well as a growing number of technologies and appliances. Drawing on examples from interviews with participants about to move into a new, master-planned community, this paper explores two fresh (interrelated) dimensions of the concept of home. Firstly, beyond the home or house itself, we expand the notion of 'home' to include relations with the surrounding neighbourhood in which homes are located, focusing on intersections of their materiality and spatiality in relation to practices of homemaking and domestic routines. Secondly, we explore continuity and expectations of the future in relation to moving from an 'old', at times 'unsatisfactory' home and neighbourhood into a new one. In concluding we reflect on how homemaking practices of the past intersect with and shape those of the future.</p>		
Author name	Author affiliation	Author email address	Presenter?
Cecily Maller	RMIT University	Cecily.maller@rmit.edu.au	Y/N
Larissa Nicholls	RMIT University	larissa.nicholls@rmit.edu.au	Y/N
			Y/N
Presentation 4 Title:	'After home-making': temporality and the Aylesbury Estate		
Presentation 4 Abstract	<p>Few phrases have become so central to a literature and, yet, so little considered as 'home-making' in the literature on home. This paper begins by thinking through the meaning of home-making. Arguing that this has provided a partial appreciation of home, it instead understands home as the outcome of both making and <i>un</i>making practices. Such a conception brings interesting questions about how these opposite actions relate temporally. This is explored through a new research project that is investigating a 'vilified' high-rise estate, the Aylesbury Estate in South London, as home. The paper aims to theorize the relationship between home-making and <i>un</i>making in the context of temporality. The terms suggest a linear temporal path whereby home <i>un</i>making comes after home-making. However, domestic life is, of course, connected to multiple past times and possible futures, which themselves involve making and <i>un</i>making processes. Even the home subject to demolition is related to multiple visions of the future made, or enacted, by actors in the everyday. Such associations suggest a more complex and non-linear home making-<i>un</i>making relationship and produce different lived times, or timespaces, amongst the general temporal arc of building.</p>		
Author name	Author affiliation	Author email address	Presenter?
Richard Baxter	Queen Mary, University of London	r.baxter@qmul.ac.uk	Y/N
			Y/N
			Y/N
Presentation 5 Title:			

Session presentation details			
Presentation 1 Title:	Experiences of 'home' over the life course for retired men living alone		
Presentation 1 Abstract	<p>In this paper, I reflect on the ways temporality has informed my research about the home lives of retired men who live alone in London. During repeat life history interviews, I gathered housing histories which included discussion of men's domestic routines, home-making practices and strategies for managing at home and reflections on how they were adapted when home was made anew. Drawing upon their personal narratives, I explore how the stories, memories and feelings that retired men have about their past living arrangements influence their experiences of their current home as well as their ideas about their imagined future homes. I argue the narrative structure of the interviews intrinsically orders different units of time, ranging from a brief moment associated with a particular event, such as the date when a house was sold, to a longer period, such as the transition between working life and retirement, which may be placed within the overarching time frame of a person's life course. I argue that re-telling the past through stories reveals that 'home' is a complex construct which invokes multiple times and locations as memories interweave within and beyond homes. Thinking about 'home' through temporality potentially unites and enlivens a range of everyday activities, routines, values, relationships and feelings that are part of domestic life in a meaningful way.</p>		
Author name	Author affiliation	Author email address	Presenter?
Eilidh Reid	Queen Mary, University of London	e.f.reid@qmul.ac.uk	Y/N
			Y/N
			Y/N
Presentation 2 Title:	The home making of British return migrants in older age: domesticity, emotion and the life course.		
Presentation 2 Abstract	<p>In this paper, I explore the intersection of home and (international) migration, with particular attention to the temporalities of domestic life. I draw on an on-going research project in which my participants are aged 65 and above, white-British, and were involved in two or more emigration events, their diasporic journeys marked by various routes and patterns of return through the life-course. I use in-depth repeat interviews akin to 'subject-oriented' life histories, analysis of domestic material culture, and participant photography. The resulting biographies of home suggest that current home making is constituted through multiple simultaneous temporalities, shaped by a combination of memory, pragmatism, and anticipation. The traces of past home making practices are often found in the modes of decoration, display and everyday life through which my participants inhabit their houses, but nostalgia is tempered by the challenges of ageing that demand a resilient approach to home as it is lived and imagined today. I focus on the emotions of these temporalities, specifically the way in which, during retrospective accounts of migration and settlement, home becomes associated with particular emotions at various stages of the life-course.</p>		
Author name	Author affiliation	Author email address	Presenter?
Katie Walsh	University of Sussex	Katie.Walsh@sussex.ac.uk	Y/N
			Y/N
			Y/N
Presentation 3 Title:	A moving home: exploring intergenerational relations in the homespace of the family farm.		

Presentation 3 Abstract	<p>Farm houses, on 'family farms' in particular, represent a unique space - simultaneously being seen as a public-private, home-work, business-leisure space. As recent geographical research has outlined, their position is often defined relationally with the wider operations of the farm and may thus be an important site of micro-politics and the expression of [commonly patriarchal] gendered identities. These home spaces have an important temporal element in that they are often places within which the same family may have lived for several generations. Moreover, these spaces can be transitory in that they belong (or to use the legal term are 'tied') to the farm in which they sit – often moving between and among families depending on changes to the management of the farm. This paper explores the temporal and geographical fluidities of the farm house through the findings of a recent project on farming [non]retirement. It examines how the meaning and nature of the homespace is [re]shaped in relation to the lifecourse transitions of those who live there – both past, present and future - and explores how [non]retirees [re]negotiate their position[ing] in the home as their relationship with the wider farmspace changes in older age.</p>		
Author name	Author affiliation	Author email address	Presenter?
Mark Riley	University of Liverpool	Mark.Riley@liverpool.ac.uk	Y/N
			Y/N
			Y/N
Presentation 4 Title:	Heteronormative hauntings: Loss, refusal and the temporalities of queer-homemaking.		
Presentation 4 Abstract	<p>In this paper I draw on biographical narrative interviews reflecting on home-making among those who define themselves as 'forever single' and who have no desire to have children or start a family of their own. I focus in particular on the notion of the 'non-reproductive' as a form of queer identity, exploring the alternative temporalities and spatialities this produces. I relate this to questions of haunting in two key ways. First, I consider what impacts remembrances of the childhood home have upon home-making, and how these memories shape desires for future homes. I explore how the nuclear family home can loom large in the imagination of those who have eschewed coupledness and reproduction, and show how the memory of the familial home can be a form of 'heteronormative haunting', associated with pain, and – at times – an overwhelming sense of loss. Second, I consider the current homes my participants live in, and outline how a number of my respondents displayed 'homing desires' (i.e. a desire to make, and feel, at home) whereas others professed a radical refusal of the domestic, seeing the process of 'home-making' as always complicit with bourgeois heteronormative desires. Finally, I draw upon the work of Elizabeth Freeman and Heather Love on queer temporalities in order to think about how queer refusals of the domestic alter across the life course, noting the increasing importance of creating some sense of 'at homeness' later in life.</p>		
Author name	Author affiliation	Author email address	Presenter?
Eleanor Wilkinson	University of Leeds	E.K.Wilkinson@leeds.ac.uk	Y/N
			Y/N
			Y/N

Session presentation details			
Presentation 1 Title:	"The heart of the home": locating the kitchen within the shifting emotional landscape of domestic life		
Presentation 1 Abstract	<p>The kitchen is not simply a place in which food is prepared. It is a space in which relationships are enacted, dreams are aspired to, and lives remembered. It is a space in which both past, present and future converge. Here, we report findings from an 18-month qualitative study into 'Kitchen Life' funded by the UK Food Standards Agency. Ethnographic fieldwork with 20 households highlights the ways in which subjectivities are influenced by, and lived out within, the physical and emotional space of the kitchen. For example, 'relics' of previous lives are often found here: family photos, appliances and other material objects which are perhaps no longer used but represent a connection between past and present. The study involved pre-school children through to individuals aged 80+, capturing insights into the meanings of 'kitchen life' to different users across the life-course. Older people, in particular, reflected on how their relationship with 'the kitchen' has shifted over the years, with other users having either passed away (partners) or left home (offspring), but whose presence continues to be felt. For some, this was represented via maintenance of particular routines or practices, for others there was evidence of non-resident adult children attempting to assert a level of control over the ways in which ageing parents use their kitchens.</p>		
Author name	Author affiliation	Author email address	Presenter?
Angela Meah	University of Sheffield	a.meah@sheffield.ac.uk	Y/N
Wendy Wills	University of Hertfordshire		Y/N
Angela Dickinson	University of Hertfordshire		Y/N
Frances Short	University of Hertfordshire		Y/N
Presentation 2 Title:	Linen and Human Life Cycles: Reconstructing Temporalities in the Eighteenth-Century Home		
Presentation 2 Abstract	<p>Scholars face serious difficulties when attempting to bring together time and domestic experience. This paper proposes a methodological approach which enables the reading of temporality in the home by analysing co-existent and co-dependent linen and human life cycles. Linen is uniquely placed to enable consideration of two domestic temporalities; life cycle and seasonality which influenced daily activities and material culture within the home. Linen was a daily necessity in eighteenth-century England. It accompanied people throughout their lives, inside and outside the home, on their bodies, beds and tables. The whiteness of a shirt, the most basic item of underwear signified an individual's personal decency, therefore provisioning and care of linen were fundamental domestic responsibilities. Patterns of provisioning and maintenance of linen altered over time, affected by marital status, age and family size, thus making life cycle a valuable means of reconstructing domestic activities and temporalities. A case study of a non-elite farming family, the Lathams, will be used to test this approach using Richard Latham's account book dated 1724-1767.</p>		
Author name	Author affiliation	Author email address	Presenter?
Alice Dolan	University of Hertfordshire	a.dolan@herts.ac.uk	Y/N
			Y/N
			Y/N
Presentation 3 Title:	The possibilities of a plant: anticipating domestic life		
Presentation 3 Abstract	<p>This paper explores relations between plants and skilled gardeners in suburban London. In his studies of plant growth and form, Goethe advocated a 'delicate empiricism' that attended to the 'possibilities of a plant': imagining the virtual space of the plant's birth, life and death. Since then, plants have been shown to be even more complex than Goethe could have known. Far from being mere automata that unfold according to an internal genetic destiny, plants are increasingly seen as active - even intelligent - beings. The</p>		

	<p>paper proceeds through three vignettes of specific gardeners and their plants that stretch across past, present and imagined futures. The first shows a mystery plant shaping biographical desire; the second the capacity of a plant to both embody and subvert a gardener's nostalgia for lost landscapes; and the third shows a gardener's attempt to calibrate herself to the unknown communication between 'her' plants. Attuning to the possibilities of a plant makes these gardeners aware that life lives in the shadows and that calling beings into material presence often decreases, rather than heightens, their vitality and the 'liveliness' of home. In attending to the more-than-human dimensions of domestic space, this paper decentres the home-maker from processes of home-making.</p>		
Author name	Author affiliation	Author email address	Presenter?
Franklin Ginn	University of Edinburgh,	franklin.ginn@ed.ac.uk	Y/N
			Y/N
			Y/N
Presentation 4 Title:	The Steps at Mariental: Photography, Memory and the Displaced Home		
Presentation 4 Abstract	<p>Photographs, and the multi sensory narratives which accompany them, immerse both the storyteller/presenter and the listener/ viewer in an interactive and multi-temporal space. Here memories can be made, shared, and remade. This paper explores the images, stories and interactions involved in the sharing of memories of home, and the practices, presences and absences of displacement that informed them. Drawing upon the narratives of former residents of Polish occupied Displaced Persons (DP) Camps in postwar Germany and their families, the complexities of nation, belonging and non-belonging are examined through several examples of family photographs from DP camps, and the stories and conversations which accompanied them. Here memories of displacement, home and childhood (and also of the subsequent revisiting and reframing of these over the years) are seen as being constantly negotiated from the perspective of the present through everyday actions, interactions, hopes and fears. With each revisit of the past a contemporary, malleable space is opened through which home (and all that it may mean) is remembered, reassessed, recreated and reinforced.</p>		
Author name	Author affiliation	Author email address	Presenter?
Tamara West	University of Birmingham	t.e.west@bham.ac.uk	Y/N
			Y/N
			Y/N