

THE STRENGTH OF A KNITTED HOME

Retrieving Histories Through Janet Morton's Wool Installations

by

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For my parents, Brenda Stanton Rothwell and Paul Rothwell,
and my sister, Janet Rothwell

And for my grandmother, Velela Ladouceur Stanton Amm, a single mother of four
children, whose brave and creative life choices inspired this thesis

The places of everyday urban life are, by their nature, mundane, ordinary, and constantly reused, and their social and political meanings are often not obvious.

Dolores Hayden¹

¹ Dolores Hayden, *The Power of Place: Urban Landscapes as Public History* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1997) 227.

Abstract

This thesis focuses on the ways in which Janet Morton's installations explore geographic and architectural spatial arrangements, and the ways in which these arrangements reproduce hierarchies of gender, race, and class. As cultural geographers and architectural historians have argued, and as I argue in the context of Morton's work, architecture and geography exist in a reciprocal relationship with the social context in which they exist. Consequently, social histories that amass in politicized spaces referred to as "home," such as gendered suburban houses, urban shelters, segregated neighbourhoods, are often marginalized. By discussing the way Morton's work alludes to marginalized social and spatial histories within home environments, I demonstrate the ways that mainstream understanding of the subordination of marginalized groups is informed by sociospatial histories.

I explore these issues in the context of three of Morton's installations. I first discuss Morton's installation, *Cozy*, a work that consisted of sweaters stitched together to form a knitted cozy, which was then installed in 1999 under the auspices of the Textile Museum of Canada around a house on Ward's Island near Toronto. I argue that Morton offered a point of entry to discuss marginalized histories of Anglo-Canadian, middle-class women's cultural production in Canada. The second installation I discuss is *Domestic Interior*, a knitted living-room setting that recalled 1950s-60s domesticity --installed as part of the larger exhibition, "wool work," at the Textile Museum of Canada in 2000. I posit that Morton's installation could be seen as a point of entry into an exploration of marginalized urban histories of post-war suburban Toronto. I examine another installation of *Cozy*, a work in which Morton used the knitted sheath from her earlier Ward's Island *Cozy* to cover a metal scaffolding in Trinity Square Park in downtown

Toronto. I argue that the archetypal house-shape of this *Cozy* can be seen to critique the way all levels of government have ignored the crisis homeless individuals face in Toronto. Lastly, I argue that Morton can be seen as working within museums with “reformist purposes” as a means of negotiating her own role as an artist working within hegemonic institutional structures.

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Chapter One: introduction

This thesis focuses on the ways in which Janet Morton's installations explore geographic and architectural spatial arrangements, and the ways in which these arrangements reproduce hierarchies of gender, race, and class. As cultural geographers and architectural historians have argued, and as I argue in the context of Morton's work, architecture and geography exist in a reciprocal relationship with the social context in which they exist. Consequently, social histories that amass in politicized spaces referred to as "home," such as gendered suburban houses, urban shelters, and segregated neighbourhoods are often marginalized. By discussing the way Morton's work alludes to marginalized social and spatial histories within home environments, I demonstrate the ways that mainstream understanding of the subordination of marginalized groups is informed by sociospatial histories. Better understanding of such histories, I would argue, leads to increased awareness of the ways in which, for subordinated groups, staking a claim towards self-determination was, and continues to be, an everyday struggle.

I explore these issues in the context of three of Morton's installations. These installations offer viewers a means of understanding the histories of those who have been denied equal access to modes of production based on not only societal marginalization, but also spatial factors, such as geographical and architectural segregation. I first discuss Morton's installation, *Cozy*, a work that consisted of eight hundred recycled sweaters stitched together to form a knitted cozy, which was then installed in 1999 under the auspices of the Textile Museum of Canada around a house on Ward's Island near Toronto. Drawing from *Cozy's* visual cues, as well as on feminist art history scholarship, I argue that Morton offered a means to discuss marginalized histories of Anglo-Canadian, middle-class women's cultural production in Canada, which was focused on the

production of craft both in the informality of the home and, since the early-twentieth century, for such formal associations as the Canadian Handicrafts Guild. Accessing these histories, in turn, provides a possible point of entry into discussion of the colonizing relationship Anglo-Canadian women artists of the Canadian Handicrafts Guild had with Aboriginal artists who were also working with the Guild early in the century.

The second installation I discuss is *Domestic Interior*, a living-room setting that recalled a specific model of 1950s-60s domesticity. Installed as part of the larger exhibition, “wool work,” at the Textile Museum of Canada in 2000, it consisted of a seemingly ordinary domestic space in which all the objects were encased in knitted sheaths. I focus on the ways in which Morton’s installation could be seen as an exploration of marginalized urban histories of suburbia, in this instance, the suburban regions of mid-twentieth century Toronto. I discuss briefly the diverse industrial suburbs that were made up of working-class individuals throughout the twentieth century and the hidden labour that also occurred inside homes, rather than in those conventional geographic locations labeled as workplaces. In turn, I complicate this perhaps more-familiar feminist discussion of erased labour in suburbia by drawing from recently published histories of live-in domestic workers, who often worked for Anglo-Canadian middle-class women and yet were segregated from suburban communities based on differences in race and religion. Drawing from *Domestic Interior*’s visual cues and on the work of anti-racism scholars, I discuss the installation in terms of these histories in order to complicate the more common feminist interpretation of Morton’s work. By drawing on anti-racism feminist discourse, I seek to demonstrate the ways in which Morton attempted to use *Domestic Interior* to address audiences and allude to more histories than have been represented in the media and in critical writing about her work.

I examine another installation of *Cozy*, a work of 2000 in which Morton used the knitted sheath from her earlier Ward's Island *Cozy* to cover a metal scaffolding in Trinity Square Park in downtown Toronto. Morton selected the park deliberately because a homeless population lived there, occupying what has been traditionally regarded as public space. I argue that the archetypal house-shape of this *Cozy* can be seen to quietly critique the way municipal, provincial, and federal levels of government have ignored the crisis homeless individuals face, specifically, in Toronto. I draw on the work of policy scholars and social historians to discuss the history of homelessness in Canada from the 1970s onward. In doing so, I hope to demonstrate the ways in which *Cozy* contributed to discussions that question both the rise of poverty in Canada in a globalized capitalist era and the exile of the homeless from public spaces, such as parks in municipal Toronto.

Lastly, I argue that Morton, a successful mid-career artist, can be seen as working within museums with "reformist purposes" (to use Tom O'Regan's phrase) as a means of negotiating her own role as an artist working within hegemonic institutional structures.² In other words, I argue, she works within authoritative institutions as a strategy to garner funding and personal security while subtly critiquing dominant groups and encouraging others to continue such critiques through various means in their everyday lives. Although Morton's installations have not been considered protest art, because of resistance to her works and their implicit critiques of institutional authority they have required her to negotiate her position within the museums in which she has worked. Using her collaboration with the Textile Museum of Canada as an example, I trace Morton's negotiation with the museum to explore the ways in which an artist can collaborate with,

² Tom O'Regan, "(Mis)taking policy: Notes on the cultural policy debate," *Australian Cultural Studies: A Reader*, ed. John Frow and Meaghan Morris (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993) 201.

and use the space of an institution, and yet avoid being fully complicit in the institution's mission. In Morton's work, this is achieved through the artist's subtle critiques of the dominant group power the museum space reinforces.

Chapter Two *Cozy at Ward's Island: patchwork histories*

Morton's installation, *Cozy* (fig. 1), offered a means of accessing less prominent histories of Anglo-Canadian women's artistic production, both within and beyond the politicized space of the home. The work, which can be best described as a knitted sheath, surrounded the house of Morton's friend, Sean Tamblyn, on Toronto's Ward's Island for eighteen days in November 1999 (fig. 2). Cloaked in over eight hundred recycled, cream-coloured sweaters, the post-war suburban house became a surreal installation. For several weeks, Morton knitted the pieces together by sitting atop the roof and slowly attaching the knitted pieces together to form the house's wool exterior (fig. 3). The details Morton produced included knitted flaps to cover the windows and doors, which were buttoned and unbuttoned by Tamblyn, who continued to live in the house during the installation.³ Morton thought that monochromatic wool would help to emphasize the distinct textures and diverse sweaters used and, in doing so, encourage viewers to think about the different stories and histories that corresponded to the lives of people who wore the sweaters, and the women who knit the sweaters in other spaces and contexts.⁴

³ Janet Morton, personal interview, 8 October 2005.

⁴ Morton, personal interview.

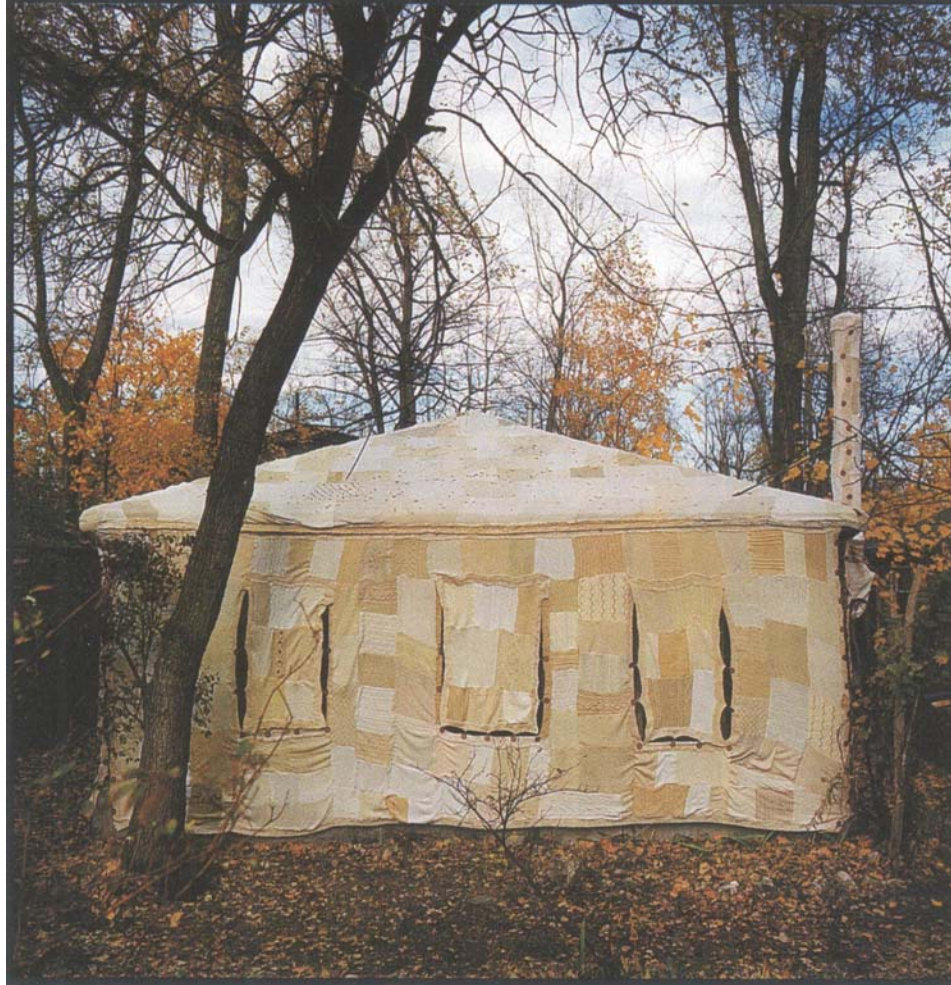


Figure 1. Janet Morton, *Cozy*, 1999; wool, Ward's Island installation.

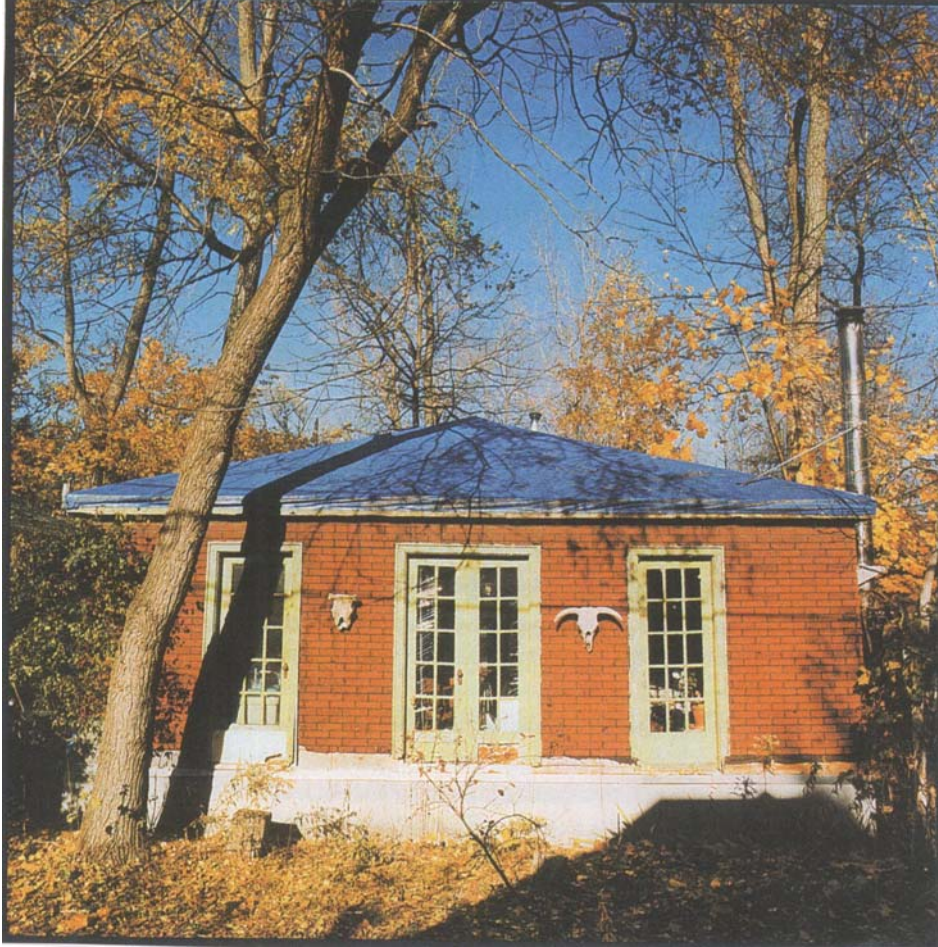


Figure 2. Sean Tamblyn's Ward's Island house prior to installation, 1999.



Figure 3. Janet Morton, *Cozy* (Detail), 1999; wool, Ward's Island installation.

In this sense, her Ward's Island *Cozy* explored marginalized histories of Anglo-Canadian middle-class women's artistic production within and beyond the gendered space of the home. Morton explained to me that such a retrieval of Anglo-Canadian women's histories interests her and, in exploring it, she draws inspiration from feminist movements of the past and present.⁵ As in other Morton installations, the artist used wool, a medium historically associated with women's textile arts, to stimulate the idea that the work recalled middle-class women's histories. The allusion to the middle class was produced because *Cozy* could be seen to access the histories of women's groups in the early twentieth century who formed formal, artistic associations outside the home while continuing to work on informal art and craft production within the so-called domestic sphere.

An example of a significant artistic association that encouraged middle-class women to exhibit cultural production, such as textile art, was the Canadian Handicrafts Guild.⁶ Founded in January 1905 out of the Montreal Branch of the Women's Art Association by Alice Peck and May Phillips, the Canadian Handicrafts Guild offered a means of remuneration to women for cultural production undertaken in middle-class homes, such as those in downtown Montreal's Anglophone neighbourhoods.⁷ It encouraged arts and craft production, such as beadwork, quillwork, needlework, weaving, textiles and embroideries, and offered a means of income to women who were prohibited

⁵ Morton, personal interview. Morton told me that while it is considered old-fashioned and questionable in contemporary critical theory to turn to second-wave feminism, she still believes that the "personal is political" when it comes to feminist movements.

⁶ Ellen Easton McLeod, *In Good Hands: The Women of the Handicrafts Guild* (Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1999) 2.

⁷ McLeod 1, 15.

from working outside the home, and yet were not remunerated for their labour within it. The Guild sought to disrupt the contextual prescription of femininity that situated women as caregivers of the domestic hearth and not as artists. In other words, it challenged the lingering, Victorian cult of domesticity and the ideal of “feminine” women remaining in the private sphere as caretakers of post-Victorian domesticity.⁸ For thirty years, the Guild worked out of Montreal and constructed a network for privileged women to show their work in masculinist venues such as the Art Association of Montreal. Peck and Phillips organized to exhibit women’s handicrafts in the Association, despite the fact that women were not permitted to vote or serve on Association committees.⁹ The exclusion of women from such patriarchal art associations ensured both the slowing of the professionalization of women artists and the marginalization of their cultural production from exhibitions, art criticism, and art histories.

In this context, I argue that the Canadian Handicrafts Guild was a British-Canadian first-wave feminist project.¹⁰ It sought to intervene in upper-middle class

⁸ Daphne Spain, *Gendered Spaces* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992) 12. Dolores Hayden, *Redesigning the American Dream: The Future of Housing, Work, and Family Life* (New York: W.W. Norton & London Co., 2002) 58. The histories of both the cult and the construction of domesticity and the Victorian ideal of femininity in North America cities has been well documented by second-wave feminist scholars in the past thirty years. The patriarchal, capitalist model of using binary logic to divide male and female existence into private/public, female/male, reproductive/productive and housework/work has been critiqued by scholars over the last ten years as essentializing “women” and ignoring race and sexuality. For more recent discussions of gendered spaces in built environments in North America see Jane Rendell, *Gender, Space, Architecture* (New York: Routledge, 2000).

⁹ McLeod 5.

¹⁰ I define first-wave, Anglo-European feminism as encompassing a specific group of women who challenged patriarchal contexts from the late nineteenth century until the 1940s. This group advanced a feminist agenda, seeking suffrage, equality rights, labour

women's marginalization from masculinist art associations in Canada such as the Art Association of Montreal (created 1860), the Ontario Society of Artists (established 1872), and the Royal Canadian Academy (founded 1880). Although historian Ellen McLeod describes their class status as "comfortable" but not "wealthy," May Phillips and Alice Peck were cultural leaders in Montreal's Anglophone community.¹¹ Their brand of feminist activism, of intervening in women artists' marginalization, would have been particular to a certain race, sexuality and class between 1905 and the 1930s. Upper class British-Canadian women, Phillips and Peck addressed other women who also belonged to this group and celebrated their art and craft production from within their middle-class homes.

The way in which the gendered and institutional space of the home contributed to the exclusion of histories of art and craft production by these women artists was alluded to in Morton's Ward's Island *Cozy*, and *Cozy's* allusion to these histories was picked up in the curatorial and media reception of the work. This is evident in the way in which curators and reviewers, when discussing *Cozy*, emphasized the middle-class, Anglo-Canadian women's history surrounding the institution of the nuclear family home in North America. To begin, curator Sarah Quinton described Morton's installations as alluding to the theme of domesticity and of home-based arts and craft production by generations of women.¹² Similarly, Robert Windrum, a curator for the Stratford Gallery, which toured "wool work," described Morton's choice of medium as one that reinforced

rights and benefits, such as equal pay for equal labour within the framework of the nation state.

¹¹ McLeod 5.

¹² Sarah Quinton, ed., *Janet Morton: wool work* (Toronto: Textile Museum of Canada, 2000) 17; Sarah Quinton, personal interview, 7 October 2005.

“the history of knitting and understanding of knitting in the domestic sphere.”¹³ When interviewed recently, Sarah Holland, former director of the Textile Museum of Canada, stated that viewers were drawn to Morton’s work because of memories attached to knitted works and the affinity people have with those in their families who knit.¹⁴ Holland argued that “people are quite charmed by her work because if they don’t knit themselves they have a granny who knits.”¹⁵ It can be argued that the curators involved in exhibiting *Cozy* and other works by Morton in the show aligned her installations with a specific history – that of Anglo-Canadian women and their art and craft production in the home.

Media coverage also reinforced the idea that a primary way of reading Morton’s work was to view it as a means of reclaiming the history of domestic art and craft production. For example, reviewers characterized *Cozy*, and Morton’s other installations, as being linked closely to domestic “ideas of home” and as tied to the central theme of “knitting as a domestic craft.”¹⁶ This theme, of retracing a particular domestic history and artistic production, pervaded media reception of Morton’s art and informed the gendered language and metaphors used to describe *Cozy*. One prominent example of the use of such language appeared in a *National Post* review of *Cozy*. In it, the owner of *Cozy*’s house, Sean Tamblyn, was quoted as saying that living in *Cozy* during the installation was tantamount to “living in a womb.”¹⁷ The *National Post* chose to headline this quotation,

¹³ Robert Windrum, personal interview, 22 September 2005.

¹⁴ Sarah Holland, personal interview, 21 September 2005.

¹⁵ Holland, personal interview.

¹⁶ Barb Hesterman, “Gallery show expresses themes using knitted craft,” *Beacon Herald* (Stratford) 3 February 2001:C4.

but did not discuss the implications of using such language in understanding Morton's work. In other words, the reviewer upheld a reductive, patriarchal definition of *Cozy*, using a metaphor of women's bodies to describe the installation and reducing the work to a metaphor for women's biological roles, while also promoting the narrow view that *Cozy*, and Morton's installations generally, prompted viewers to remember a particular set of histories. In this way, media reception and curatorial response to Morton's installations, especially *Cozy*, helped to perpetuate the notion that there is one, monolithic form of feminist history to reclaim –the histories of women who produced art and crafts in middle-class, Anglo-Canadian homes.

Ironically, this idea has been perpetuated to some extent by practitioners of feminist cultural studies and art history, who have worked hard to foreground previously marginalized histories of middle-class Anglo-European women's artistic production. Rozsika Parker's feminist scholarship, for example, has recovered marginalized histories of bourgeois Anglo-European women by exploring the production of embroidery and domestic arts in the West from the medieval period to the 1970s Western contexts. She argues that the practice of embroidery not only informed dominant constructs of femininity, but was also bound up in women's negotiation of their identity and their resistance in patriarchal contexts. In doing so, she contributed to the art historical debate of "art versus craft," a common theme in feminist art history discourse through the 1990s. Parker, like other scholars, argues that women's cultural production in the home, whether

¹⁷ Mark Gollom, "Artist creates woolly womb with house cozy," *National Post* 8 November 1999: D2.

labeled domestic arts or crafts, should be formally validated as “art” in the same way that men’s artistic production has been validated.¹⁸

Similarly, feminist philosopher and historian Naomi Schor has investigated the root of women artists’ exclusion from so-called “high art” categories in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in Europe. To do this, she traces the construction of the notion that female cultural production resides in detailed or craft-based work. In other words, she literally traces the construct of the so-called “feminine detail.”¹⁹ Schor’s investigation of the historical construction of the detail as an essentially feminine quality in Western philosophical and art historical scholarship explores the ways that critics, such as Adolph Loos, aligned the feminine detail and women’s artistic production with decadence, degenerate behaviour and racist stereotypes of “primitive” cultural production by colonized groups.²⁰ An immense undertaking, her study has critiqued Western art historical, psychological and philosophical discourse from Ruskin to Freud and Hegel to Barthes, offering a critical history of the ways in which the erasing of women’s artistic production has unfolded through discursive practices. Together, Parker and Schor suggest that the hierarchical art over craft debate should be critiqued for its patriarchal roots and marginalization of women artists.²¹ If this is done, then the “detail,” such as that found in

¹⁸ Rozsika Parker, *The Subversive Stitch: Embroidery and the Making of the Feminine* (New York: Routledge, 1989) 100.

¹⁹ Naomi Schor, *Reading in Detail: Aesthetics and the Feminine* (London: Methuen, 1987) 12.

²⁰ Schor 50.

²¹ For a contemporary discussion and summary of the “art versus craft” debate in art history, see McLeod and Parker; Sandra Alfoldy, *Crafting Identity: The Development of Professional Fine Craft in Canada* (Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2005); James H. Sanders, “Moving Beyond the Binary,” *Objects and Meaning: New*

Morton's *Cozy*, (fig. 3) can be seen as a material history of such marginalization and a celebration of the detailed work that was positioned as merely "feminine" by masculinist scholarship. It can also be viewed as a critical reference to middle-class women artists who, in art history's dominant narrative of the "artist as male genius," were previously deemed artisans rather than artists.²² In other words, *Cozy* can be seen as alluding to this feminist history in a critical fashion and as offering viewers a chance to memorialize those women artists who until recently were dismissed as efficient knitters.

Such an interpretation of *Cozy*, however, is predicated on a "universal" definition of "woman" and on Anglo-European constructs of femininity. In other words, while Morton, a self-proclaimed feminist, is eager to help viewers refer to previously marginalized histories of Anglo-European women artists, it is possible to argue that this strategy is reductive in its scope. Feminist cultural scholars such as Rita Felski argue, for example, that merely inserting marginalized histories into the dominant canon only validates the very hierarchies that excluded women's artistic production in the first

Perspectives on Art and Craft, ed. M. Anna Fariello and Paula Owen (Oxford: Scarecrow Press, Inc., 2004); Marcia Tucker, "A Labor of Love," *Objects and Meaning: New Perspectives on Art and Craft*, ed. M. Anna Fariello and Paula Owen (Oxford: Scarecrow Press, Inc., 2004); and Whitney Chadwick, *Women, Art, and Society* (London: Thames & Hudson Ltd., 2002). These authors engage in a vigorous debate; however, contemporary feminist and cultural scholars have begun to question the dominant role the debate plays in discussion of histories of women's cultural production. Many scholars question the recurring use of the debate in contemporary scholarship given that historical women's craft production has recently been critically labeled as artistic practice and practitioners referred to as artists. In addition, such categorization focuses solely on the professionalization of craft and a particular history of middle-class women. While this discussion is necessary and continues to enliven an otherwise exhausted debate, it is vital to look to the artistic production of women who have been marginalized in this history. The labeling and categorization of such cultural objects are indicative of the field of production in which the objects are produced. Further, the debate only bolsters the hierarchies that effected marginalization in the first place.

²² Several publications focus on the theme in Western history of the artist as male genius. For an introductory discussion see Schor; Chadwick.

place.²³ In her view, rather than inserting these histories into the dominant narrative, scholars should question why these histories have been marginalized in the first place, and seek instead to contribute to the writing of multiple histories. Felski also argues that too much weight is placed on the quest for an essential, feminist aesthetic that represents “universal” experiences held by women in various social contexts, and of diverse classes, sexualities, ethnicities and abilities.²⁴ As sociologist Janet Wolff and film studies scholar Susan Lord point out, feminist scholarship and histories must not rely on supporting a canon, or searching for a universal female aesthetic in artistic production.²⁵ Rather, it is vital to work from a sociological perspective and to discuss gender, race, and class constructions, as well as marginalized histories, in terms of their relations to power structures, among them the family and the work place. Both insist that it is vital to relate marginalized histories to the social contexts in which such exclusionary practices occurred and occur. Morton’s *Cozy* can be seen to allude to domestic contexts in which Anglo-Canadian women produced art and crafts in the middle-class post-war home. This is evident, for example, in the knitted exterior that surrounds the house and recalls the artistic production of the women who worked and produced in these contexts. Following Felski’s, Wolff’s and Lord’s argument, it is useful to think of such an interpretation not as

²³ Rita Felski, *Beyond Feminist Aesthetics: Feminist Literature and Social Change* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989) 441.

²⁴ Felski 441.

²⁵ Janet Wolff, *Feminine Sentences: Essays on Women and Culture* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1990) 71; Susan Lord, in review of *Chick Flicks: Theories and Memories of the Feminist Film Movement*, by B. Ruby Rich; *Feminism and Documentary*, ed. Diane Waldman and Janet Walker; *Feminism and Film*, by Maggie Humm; *Feminist Film Theory: A Reader*, by Sue Thornham; *Passionate Detachments: An Introduction to Feminist Theory*, by Sue Thornham; *Canadian Journal of Film Studies* 8.2 (1999): 93.

inserting marginalized histories into a dominant canon, but rather as shedding light on parallel histories, which have only begun to be reclaimed, and which do not require permissive attention from those who continuously refer to a “canon of art” or a “dominant narrative.”

In this sense, the history of Anglo-Canadian women’s artistic production can be described as an introduction that requires critical, contributory additions. Among the histories that can be added to the dominant histories of artistic production by marginalized Anglo-Canadian women are those arising from the colonizing relationship these women had with Aboriginal women in early-twentieth century Canada. Specifically, *Cozy* can be described as having had an exaggerated appearance --a giant cozy knit to scale to surround a post-war home-- that encouraged viewers on one level to recall histories of knitting and the idea of homemaking. This interpretation, spurred by *Cozy*’s surreal, knitted exterior and grand construction, encouraged curators and reviewers to refer casually to a specific history of artistic production by Anglo-Canadian women. In so doing, it prompted them to write about the histories of a specific group of knitters or textile artists who produced in post-war houses similar to the house that *Cozy* enveloped. Yet this focused analysis of *Cozy* can be seen as perpetuating the idea of a monolithic history of women’s artistic production, such as textile arts, and as fostering the idea of knitting as a medium common to all women. In other words, this interpretation of *Cozy* is predicated on an argument that universalizes women’s artistic production. Simultaneously, the universalizing of women’s artistic production conceals other marginalized histories of women’s production. An example of such marginalized histories, which the discourse surrounding *Cozy* occludes, are the histories of Aboriginal

women artists who worked with Anglo-Canadian women artists in women's art associations such as the Canadian Handicrafts Guild.

Historians Ellen McLeod and Sandra Alföldy trace a sampling of histories of Aboriginal women artists who worked within the context of the Canadian Handicrafts Guild. McLeod highlights the role of Aboriginal women artists in relation to the Canadian Handicrafts Guild and the degree to which Anglo-Canadian members of the Guild encouraged the collecting and exhibiting of Aboriginal arts and crafts.²⁶ She points out that leaders of the Guild, such as Alice Peck and Amelia Piaget, were “not aware they were appropriating another culture for their own,” but she concedes that it is evident the Guild's relationship with Aboriginal women artists was informed implicitly by the cult of primitivism, which permeated Western, modernist artistic practices in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries.²⁷ While the cultural phenomenon of primitivism informed the Guild's interaction with Aboriginal women, McLeod points out that the intentions behind the activities of the Canadian Handicrafts Guild were to “oppose the assimilation policies of the Department of Indian Affairs” by aiding in the exhibition of “living traditions” and cultural production by Aboriginal artists.²⁸ Similarly, Alföldy recognizes the Canadian Handicraft Guild's attitude toward Aboriginal women artists and the arts

²⁶ McLeod 217.

²⁷ McLeod 108. McLeod defines primitivism as a nineteenth-century European cultural phenomenon, which was linked with romanticism, realism, positivism and academic disciplines such as art history, literature, anthropology, and philosophy. These cultural movements, combined with Jean Jacques Rousseau's idea of the “noble savage” and “a utopian belief in peasant, folk, and tribal life as pure, simple and good, all [contributed] to the Romantic assumption that direct, artistic expression naturally flowed from ‘primitive’ cultures.”

²⁸ McLeod 108.

and craft they produced as “legitimate” and “philanthropic.”²⁹ She argues that, while the Canadian Handicrafts Guild saw its role as noble and philanthropic (because it purchased “souvenir crafts” in order to avoid what was seen as the disappearance of such “authentic” Aboriginal objects), a colonial relationship also existed between the Guild’s members and Aboriginal women artists in mid-century Canada.³⁰ Alföldy draws from Ruth Phillips’s scholarship and argues that cultural production by Aboriginal women artists, specifically objects they produced, can be seen as embodying “cultural resistance” to colonialism by both maintaining “traditional artistic concepts” and allowing Aboriginal peoples to contribute to their own economic well-being.³¹ Alföldy offers a specific example of an Aboriginal woman artist who worked within the system of colonialism by

²⁹ Alföldy 110. In this context, the philanthropic intentions and actions of the Guild can be seen as the material manifestation of what cultural theorist James Clifford calls the “salvage” paradigm. In the Guild’s quest to collect, preserve, exhibit, and “save,” “diminishing” art objects produced by what they viewed as “vanishing” Aboriginal populations, it unwittingly worked within the primitivist and Western trope of “salvaging” art objects produced by “diminishing” Aboriginal artists. Clifford argues the Western trope of salvaging Aboriginal populations and Aboriginal artists’ cultural production can be found in dominant anthropological, philosophical, art historical, and literary discourse from the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. He traces the ways in which the salvage paradigm informed racist and neocolonial representations of Aboriginals by, for example, Western ethnographic writers. For further discussion see James Clifford, “On Ethnographic Allegory,” *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography*, ed. James Clifford and George E. Marcus (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986).

³⁰ Alföldy 110. Alföldy discusses the relationship between the Guild members and Aboriginal women artists. She argues that Aboriginal women would have been perceived as having a “seemingly naturalized relationship” in which the Guild members were “noble” consumers and facilitators of Aboriginal women’s artistic production. In fact, she points out, borrowing from Ruth Phillips’s scholarship, that this colonizing role was part of a colonial relationship and the so-called “civilizing mission” adopted within dominant imperialism. See also Ruth B. Phillips, *Trading Identities: The Souvenir in Native North American Art from the Northeast 1700-1900* (Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1998).

³¹ Alföldy 110.

working with the Canadian Handicrafts Guild in the mid-twentieth century; Gladys Taylor was a quillmaker and Objibway artist from Curve Lake, Ontario who originally exhibited at shows sponsored by the Guild.³² Taylor's popular exhibits at the Canadian Handicrafts Guild no longer required the sponsorship of the Guild when, in 1966, because of the opening of a store nearby, Curve Lake members no longer had to travel to sell their art objects.³³ The store, Ojibwacraft, was owned and organized by Objibway Councilor Clifford Whetung and his wife [sic] as a way to underwrite Curve Lake's population of six hundred.³⁴ With its inception the Curve Lake artists began administering the sale of their art and crafts within their own framework and according to Whetung's organizational strategies, removed from the Canadian Handicrafts Guild.³⁵ In this sense, McLeod and Alfoldy suggest the importance of discussing Aboriginal women artists who worked in the context of the Canadian Handicrafts Guild. Future scholarship can be added to their research by offering specific histories and the names of Aboriginal women artists whose identity and cultural production goes beyond anonymous categorization or is traced in relation to such Anglo-Canadian art associations as the Canadian Handicrafts Guild. More examples of artists like Gladys Taylor are needed to convey the ways in which Aboriginal women artists worked within what scholars Katie Pickles and Myra Rutherdale characterize as a historical "contact zone."³⁶ Interactions between Anglo-

³² Alfoldy 112.

³³ Alfoldy 112.

³⁴ Alfoldy 112.

³⁵ Alfoldy 113.

Canadian women artists and Aboriginal women artists can be understood as working in a colonialist contact zone in which an Aboriginal artist such as Gladys Taylor produced art objects as a means of cultural resistance to both overt and covert colonizing projects. Pickles and Rutherford argue that the complicity of Anglo-Canadian women, in this case artists, in colonizing projects can be seen as resting on a continuum, with overt colonialist agendas at one end and implicit philanthropic purposes at the other.³⁷ McLeod and Alföldy offer an introductory discussion that can be supplemented, in this case, by tracing the specific histories of Aboriginal women artists with whom Anglo-Canadian women artists worked. By informing the dominant, celebratory histories of Anglo-Canadian women artists in this way, readings of installations such as *Cozy*, which privilege histories of Anglo-Canadian women's artistic production, are complicated and enriched.

Chapter Three *Domestic Interior: working at home*

In this section I discuss Morton's installation, *Domestic Interior* (fig. 4), and the ways in which it privileged suburban middle-class women's labour history, cast light on suppressed histories of working-class women's suburban experiences, and suggested labour histories of live-in domestic workers. *Domestic Interior*, which was installed as part of the Textile Museum of Canada's exhibition, "wool work," in 2000, comprised 1950s- and 1960s-era household furniture and objects wrapped knitted coverings made

³⁶ Katie Pickles and Myra Rutherford, "Introduction," *Contact Zones: Aboriginal and Settler Women in Canada's Colonial Past*, ed. Katie Pickles and Myra Rutherford (Toronto: University of British Columbia Press, 2005) 2. Pickles and Rutherford borrow this term from literary scholar Mary Louise Pratt.

³⁷ Pickles and Rutherford 4.



Figure 4. Janet Morton, *Domestic Interior*, 2000; wool, found furniture, Textile Museum of Canada installation.

from *Cozy's* cream-coloured wool.³⁸ Every detail on each object was covered by a knitted casing. The room's objects and the upholstering style of several pieces of the furniture heightened viewer awareness that this room connoted the specific domesticity of a particular moment in history.

While I argue that various histories are represented at once in *Domestic Interior*, a commonality among them is the era represented --post-war 1950s to 1960s North America-- and the place --the interior of a post-war house. The post-war consumer era in which household objects were mass-produced for a burgeoning consumer culture was evoked in *Domestic Interior* by a small fan that sat atop a modernist side table, a television set (complete with a rabbit-ear antennae) and a stand-up vacuum cleaner. These objects, newly affordable to a growing middle class, and manufactured for the time, were snugly covered in knitted sheaths and complimented by a neatly potted houseplant, its leaves delicately covered in knitted skins. The realm of domestic work was suggested by the stand-up vacuum cleaner, which also recalled the onslaught of post-war consumer products that were promoted as time-saving devices for homemakers. In an ironic twist, the hanging picture on the wall, which reflected the realm of sanctioned "high art" in art history's hierarchy of art versus craft, helped to draw attention to the knitted sheaths and crafted environment of the installation. The environment, cloaked in wool and exaggerated in size, alluded to the artistic production of women who worked on textile arts such as quilting and knitting in the home. Such work may have been completed while sitting in the 1950s reclining, modernist chair under the light of the swing-arm lamp that sits beside it in the installation. The lamp, lit for the installation with a low-wattage bulb,

³⁸ Quinton 12.

shone through its wool sheath and helped to illuminate the setting for viewers, creating a warm, living-room atmosphere. The intimacy of a living room was also visually expressed by the seemingly momentary placement of a knitted teacup on the side table beside the chair; it indicated a pause in the day's work, or a refreshment taken while chatting on the phone. The telephone was set to the left of the teacup, sheathed in wool, with pearl buttons to indicate the finger-holes needed to use its rotary dial.³⁹

There are numerous possible interpretations of the covered furnishings and objects in *Domestic Interior*. One way of perceiving the work is to discuss the degree to which the objects and furnishings coalesced to privilege a particular history of middle-class women's labour. In order to discuss critically the women's histories *Domestic Interior* privileges I first discuss the visual allusion *Domestic Interior* makes to a particular moment in post-war North America, one in which middle-class women worked at home, but were not compensated for their labour. Specifically, I look to the picture frame, teacup, telephone, and vacuum as art objects in *Domestic Interior* that recalled the labour and artistic production of a specific group of women in suburban, post-war North America. I also discuss *Domestic Interior* in terms of the ways that curators and reviewers responded to it. In their writing about *Domestic Interior*, both emphasized the history of middle-class women's labour in the home. I then explore the ways in which *Domestic Interior* also suggested occluded histories of women's labour in working-class suburbs. When focusing on the setting of *Domestic Interior* in terms of the working-class family, I turn to historians of urban life in twentieth-century Canada to complicate the reading of *Domestic Interior* as a middle-class scene of "feminine" domesticity. In so doing, I trace

³⁹ Quinton 12.

the histories of diverse suburbs and working-class women's labour in post-war contexts, drawing from the installation's visual cues to allow for multiple interpretations of "women's labour." Finally, I turn to *Domestic Interior's* stand-up vacuum and teacup to explore the hidden histories of live-in domestic workers who would have maintained, cleaned, served, and worked for the families who inhabited such middle-class houses. By drawing on the installation's objects, which indirectly attest to domestic workers' experiences, I seek to complicate the reading of *Domestic Interior* as an installation that privileges one type of women's history over others. In so doing, I endeavor to shed light upon another way of perceiving *Domestic Interior* –a way that emphasizes diverse viewers' experiences, and yet acknowledges that the installation, in the end, visually privileged middle-class women's labour histories.

In a sense, the period aesthetic and knitted setting of *Domestic Interior* encouraged a particular critical response to the work. The writing surrounding *Domestic Interior* unwittingly positioned it as conjuring for viewers histories of Anglo-Canadian women's labour in the home in the context of mid-twentieth century suburban expansion. Specifically, writing about *Domestic Interior* by curators and critics had the effect of leaving readers with the impression that the installation addressed an Anglo-Canadian middle-class audience. In effect, it foregrounded a universal definition of feminism and of so-called women's experiences in the post-war house. In other words, writing about the piece reinforced the idea that the installation addressed one, middle-class audience with the purpose of revisiting this one group of women's histories of the post-war home to the exclusion of other women's labour histories. This reception was likely encouraged by the 1950s-inspired furnishings and decorative theme, which suggested middle-class domesticity of that period. Reviewers interpreted the installation's objects, such as the

vacuum cleaner, as the subdued representation of middle-class women's labour in the home.

An example of such an interpretation is that of Quinton who, when interviewed in the *Globe and Mail*, expressed the view that Morton's work allowed "feminist activists to have a voice and [to] appreciate their own history."⁴⁰ Similarly, when I interviewed her, she discussed Morton's use of knitting in the space of the domestic setting as one that addressed issues of labour from "the feminist angle."⁴¹ She described the way in which *Domestic Interior* suggested a middle-class feminist commentary in the sense, as she put it, that "time is labour" for a specific group of women who worked and continue to work at home in various capacities in both their housekeeping and artistic production.⁴² Her use of the phrase "time is labour" is a word play on the expression "time is money," and was perhaps a reference to Anglo-European second-wave feminism's fight for the compensation of women's labour in the home. In the catalogue to the exhibition in which *Domestic Interior* was installed, Quinton also argued that the hanging, knitted picture could be seen as a reference to the patriarchal hierarchy that positions what she terms "public 'high art'" above "domestic craft."⁴³ For Quinton, the picture frame was ironically depicted as "high art" and hung as a humorous reference to the notion of categorizing artistic production as art or craft. Such categorization, as I have discussed, is arbitrary because such classifications are based on the cultural field in which the objects

⁴⁰ "There's social meaning in all of these objects." *Globe and Mail* 6 November 1999: F2.

⁴¹ "There's social meaning in."

⁴² Quinton, personal interview.

⁴³ Quinton 12.

are produced.⁴⁴ What Quinton refers to as historically termed “public high art” has been situated in art history writing in opposition, and as superior to “private domestic craft.”⁴⁵ Quinton views Morton installation as playing with such hierarchies, which were imposed on middle-class women’s artistic production, by cloaking the room’s objects in what would be perceived by some audiences as a craft form –knitted, wool cozies. In this sense, as well, the knitted teacup and saucer (fig. 5) could be perceived as a feminist art history reference to female, Surrealist artist Meret Oppenheim’s *Object* (1936) –the well-known fur teacup, saucer and spoon (fig. 6).⁴⁶ Oppenheim’s Surrealist work, which was produced in the same time and context as that of artists Andre Breton and Man Ray, was repositioned by feminist art historians in the 1990s as an example of a female artist’s work that had been marginalized within art history’s masculinist discourse. Feminist art historians argued that, because of the artist’s use of ordinary objects and choice of medium, a Surrealist work such as Oppenheim’s *Object* can be seen to suggest poetic allusions to women’s histories --to women artists who lived and worked amongst the bourgeois avant-garde in the early twentieth-century.⁴⁷

Another salient effect of writing about *Domestic Interior* is the indirect foregrounding of Anglo-Canadian women’s experiences in the post-war house without discussion of other women’s histories. The tone of the writing produced by reviewers and

⁴⁴ Pierre Bourdieu, *The Field of Cultural Production: Essays on Art and Literature* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993) 30-31.

⁴⁵ Quinton 12.

⁴⁶ Quinton 12.

⁴⁷ Jacqueline Burckhardt, Bice Curiger, Josef Helfenstein, Thomas McEvelley and Nancy Spector, *Meret Oppenheim: Beyond the Teacup* (New York: Independent Curators Inc., 1996).



Figure 5. Janet Morton, *Domestic Interior* (Detail), 2000; wool, found furniture, Textile Museum of Canada installation.



Figure 6. Meret Oppenheim, *Object*, 1936; fur-covered cup, saucer, and spoon, Museum of Modern Art.

curators had the effect of presenting *Domestic Interior* as universalizing women's experiences within a single historical framework, that of middle-class experiences in post-war Canada. This interpretation can be seen in Windrum's thoughtful interpretation of the installation as recalling "the domestic sphere" and "everyone's daily experience."⁴⁸ This assumption that one group's experiences is "everyone's experience" also informs Quinton's well-meaning description of the objects in *Domestic Interior* as "things we knew only too well."⁴⁹ The implied "we" signals, I argue, the foregrounding of middle-class experience in the specific context of idealized women's histories in the home. The assumption that viewers of *Domestic Interior* will automatically privilege this dominant history is indicated in Holland's belief that the "charming" appeal of Morton's work is linked to the (universalizing) assumption that everyone has a "granny or aunt" who knits.⁵⁰

The effect that the writing about *Domestic Interior* had, which was to indirectly portray the work as alluding to a universal definition of women's histories based on post-war middle-class experiences, continued to have a similar effect in critical discussion of the installation. When reviewers presented *Domestic Interior* as the inverted "interior" version of the Ward's Island *Cozy*, their writing had the effect of representing the installation in the same way they discussed this earlier installation. Such discussions helped to frame *Domestic Interior* in a fashion similar to *Cozy* --as an installation that privileged histories of middle-class women's artistic production and work in the home.

⁴⁸ Windrum, personal interview.

⁴⁹ Quinton 12.

⁵⁰ Holland, personal interview.

Reviewer Marc Balles stated flatly that *Domestic Interior* was “Janet Morton’s imagined interior of the *Cozy* home,” as did journalist Mike Beitz, who also stated that the installation was clearly “the interior of the *Cozy* home,” and Andrea Raymond, who referred to the installation as the “imagined contents of the *Cozy* home.”⁵¹ This interpretation of *Domestic Interior* privileged a specific history of middle-class women working and producing at home, one that is also found in much feminist scholarship dealing with post-war histories of this group.

As a result, it can be argued in turn that the wool-covered objects in *Domestic Interior* provided access to the history of middle-class women’s work in the post-war home. Key among these objects is the homemaker’s stand-up vacuum, which was placed in the installation in such a way as to suggest that it has just been used; it remained plugged into the wall. Both the media and the curators involved in the exhibition interpreted it as an icon of middle-class women’s labour in domesticity. More than any of the other objects, it referred explicitly to notions of housekeeping, housework and women’s unpaid labour in the context of the post-war domestic setting.

Middle-class women’s unpaid labour in the post-war suburban home has been well documented by feminist scholars in art history, women’s history, cultural studies, urban studies, architectural history and sociology. Recent scholarship builds on second-wave feminist Betty Friedan’s seminal book, *The Feminine Mystique*, in which Friedan traced the plight of 1950s and 1960s American middle-class housewives in suburbia. She coined the term “feminine mystique” to refer to what she called the “problem that had no

⁵¹ Marc Balles, “Spotlight on the Museum for Textiles,” *Surface and Symbol* June 2000: 6; Mike Beitz, “Taking Knitting to New Lengths,” *Beacon Herald* (Stratford) 12 February 2000: 3; Andrea Raymond, “Getting cozy,” *Surface and Symbol* June 2000: 7.

name;” in other words, the sense of isolation many women felt while they worked as homemakers, without remuneration for their labour.⁵² She argued that women’s labour -- the unpaid housework that comprised their working day-- only increased with the invention of so-called time-saving appliances, and contributed to the severe depression, anxiety and psychological disorders often associated with being a housewife in the post-war era.⁵³ Friedan posited that the division of labour between genders in the home remained unequal, despite post-war appliance companies’ marketing campaigns declaring the opposite. An example of Friedan’s thesis can be found in the reception of *Domestic Interior*, which focused on the vacuum cleaner as an emblem of women’s unpaid labour; the knitted stand-up vacuum is a visual reminder of what Freidan saw as the anti-thesis of a “time-saving” appliance. It was also a product that was marketed to the main consumer of the house –the homemaker– in the context of post-war capitalist consumption. While Friedan’s arguments have since been challenged, namely those resulting from her focus on a narrow, middle-class segment of the population, her work was a catalyst for second-wave feminist discussions about, and scholarship dealing with, the subject of middle-class women’s experiences in suburbia, which *Domestic Interior* focused upon closely.

The well-documented historical isolation of middle-class women who worked at home in post-war suburbia was also suggested by the presence of the rotary-dial telephone (fig. 7). Sitting atop the wool-covered 1960s-inspired side table, with its parts covered in cream-coloured wool sheaths, and jewel-inspired pearl-button finger holes for dialing, the rotary-dial telephone was one of the main means of communication for homemakers. Without cars during the day, middle-class suburban homemakers whose

⁵² Betty Friedan, *The Feminine Mystique* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1963) 18.

⁵³ Friedan 240.



Figure 7. Janet Morton, *Domestic Interior* (Detail), 2000; wool, found furniture, Textile Museum of Canada installation.

spouses commuted to work sought contact with fellow homemakers by telephone. The rotary-dial telephone can be seen as visual expression of the friendship women found in communicating with other homemakers. For some, life had changed drastically after the Second World War, when middle-class women were forced to return to work at home from jobs they took outside the home to support the war effort. In a sense, *Domestic Interior* can be seen to portray the domestic context to which these women “returned.”

Architectural historian Dolores Hayden argues that the impact of the isolating, built suburban environment on these women’s lives was significant. She posits that the spatial design of North American suburban plans –labyrinth-like, curved roads designed for the two-bedroom houses of veteran families– were constructed with the idea of reinstating the institution of the nuclear family and the idealistic home in a post-war North American political climate of neo-conservative, patriarchal nationalism.⁵⁴ The built environments of such suburban, single-family developments were intended to house the ideal of a feminine housewife who would revive the Victorian idea of domestic femininity –the figure commonly referred to in the nineteenth-century as the “angel in the house.”⁵⁵ In other words, Hayden argues, the “return” of previous “Rosie-the-Riveters” to domesticity was the latest embodiment of long-prescribed Victorian ideals of femininity informed by post-war nationalism in countries such as Canada, the United States, and England.⁵⁶

⁵⁴ Hayden, 59-60.

⁵⁵ Hayden, 61.

⁵⁶ Hayden, 59-60. For further discussion of the isolation of women in suburban, built environments as a means of maintaining Victorian ideals of femininity and advancing the

In the same way that the rotary-dial telephone can be seen as a reference to the need for friendship, the television suggests the period of post-war, middle-class consumerism in the context of veteran housing markets in suburban developments. The knitted television, covered in stark white wool, which exaggerated its industrial appearance, faced the easy chair and came complete with a rabbit-ear antennae, which helped to pinpoint the historical post-war period it referenced. During that time, the inaugural purchase of the television was seen as both a status symbol for the middle class and a post-war technological luxury. The television was emblematic of the prevailing technocracy or “ethos of rationalism, bureaucracy and technoscientific progress” that was embraced during so-called peace-time –the economically “booming” 1950s.⁵⁷

The return of middle-class Rosie-the-Riveters to domestic work simultaneously ensured their dutiful place as the full-time consumers for their households. Corporations aggressively marketed to this group of women in order to facilitate the post-war climate of nationalist, consumer consumption.⁵⁸ This group often initiated the household’s purchase of the new “cornucopia” of post-war objects, as architectural historian Joan Ockman describes them.⁵⁹ Purchases such as the television referred to in *Domestic Interior* might have been made in the interests of “contributing to the national economy” and of buying “North American,” as the plethora of government-sanctioned advertising

project of post-war nationalism, see Dolores Hayden, *Building Suburbia: Green Fields and Urban Growth 1820-2000* (New York: Pantheon Books, 2003).

⁵⁷ Joan Ockman, “Mirror Images: Technology, Consumption, and the Representation of Gender in American Architecture Since World War II,” *The Sex of Architecture*, ed. Diana Agrest, Patricia Conway, and Leslie Kanen Weisman (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1996) 191.

⁵⁸ Ockman 196.

⁵⁹ Ockman 196.

encouraged post-war consumers to do.⁶⁰ This consuming phenomenon was documented as early as 1948 with consumer-minded, middle-class housewives being described by cultural anthropologist Margaret Mead as “managers of consumption.”⁶¹ Such consumerism facilitated the conversion of the economy from war to peace-time, and women from war-time employed “heroines” to “redomesticated neurotic” housewives.⁶²

Another way of discussing the influence of post-war nationalist agendas on the daily experience of middle-class men and women is to explore the extent to which North American governments regulated the financing of the single-family houses to which *Domestic Interior* refers. The imaginary single-family dwelling, within which *Domestic Interior* would have been contained, can be seen as an allusion to post-war suburban housing development. Hayden argues that North American government housing agencies, such as the American Federal Housing Administration (FHA) and the Central (now Canadian) Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), encouraged proliferation of the institution of the nuclear middle-class family in the interests of furthering the nationalist, capitalist economy.⁶³ In Canada, the CMHC was set up as a means of controlling access to mortgage financing in an era in which “communist infiltration” was feared.⁶⁴

⁶⁰ Ockman 196.

⁶¹ Margaret Mead as cited in Ockman 203.

⁶² Ockman 203.

⁶³ Hayden, *Redesigning* 59. For further discussion see Denise Scott Brown, “Through the Looking Glass: Reply to Joan Ockman,” *The Sex of Architecture*, ed. Diana Agrest, Patricia Conway, and Leslie Kanes Weisman (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1996) 191; Peter Hall, *Cities of Tomorrow: An Intellectual History of Urban Planning and Design in the Twentieth Century* (Malden: Blackwell Publishers Ltd., 2002) 295-351.

Government housing agencies aimed to reward members of a specific segment of the population –Anglo-Canadian/American middle-class veteran families-- who were considered essential to the conversion of North American post-war economies from militaristic to domestic consumption. The nuclear family, with the male breadwinner acting as “productive” counterpart to the “consumptive” female housewife, would remain relevant well into the late-twentieth century and would inform middle-class women’s histories, as *Domestic Interior*’s knitted television set and imagined house frame suggested.⁶⁵

In this context, it is also possible to argue that *Domestic Interior* resonated as well with histories of the working-class in Canadian post-war suburbia. Even though it did not easily recall such histories, except for the knitted television and possibly the telephone, the installation could also represent the post-war living space of a working-class family. Geographer Richard Harris argues that the idea that Canadian post-war suburbs were

⁶⁴ CMHC was the cornerstone of federal housing policy in Canada and was comparable to the American FHA, although urban studies scholar Richard Harris notes that the American FHA was more explicitly nationalist, while CMHC took a more implicitly nationalist approach. The Canadian predecessor was the 1938 National Housing Act. This genealogy of federal housing policy indicates the then pervasive ideology of institutionalizing the home and family in the interest of maintaining a “Red-free” nation in anti-Communist, 1950s, post-war Canada. The spatial design of these interests, through housing and suburban planning, is one way of tracing these histories. A famous example of an early post-war housing development that worked to further such agendas in 1950s American suburbia was developer William Levitt’s Levittown in Long Island. Levitt famously commented, “No man who has a house and a lot can be a Communist...he has too much to do.” For further discussion of the ideologies behind the build environment of American suburbia and North American federal housing policy see Hayden, *Redesigning*; Hayden, *Building Suburbia*, and Richard Harris, *Creeping Conformity: How Canada Became Suburban, 1900-1960* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004).

⁶⁵ Ockman 201; Veronica Strong-Boag, Isabel Dyck, Kim England, and Louise Johnson, “What Women’s Spaces? Women in Australian, British, Canadian and US Suburbs,” *Changing Suburbs: Foundation, Form and Function*, ed. Richard Harris and Peter J. Larkham (New York: Routledge, 1999) 177.

uniformly middle-class is incorrect.⁶⁶ He uses Toronto as a case study to repudiate the myth of the uniform, middle-class suburb. He dismantles this myth by tracing the effects that the decentralization of industry had in Toronto by the late 1920s.⁶⁷ Although factories had been located in Toronto's downtown core in the 1880s, between the 1920s and 1940s companies moved their operations to the suburban regions of Toronto.⁶⁸ Working-class populations followed these essential jobs and moved into the industrial suburbs in a struggle to survive the Depression, during which housing growth in the downtown core was at a standstill.⁶⁹ These industrial or "blue collar" suburban regions included New Toronto and Mimico, and would expand, during the post-war years, to include North York, York Township, and East York.⁷⁰ As Harris describes, the demographics of these industrial suburbs included first-generation immigrants and working-class veteran families, which contributed to class and ethnic diversity in suburbs. Even during the so-called booming post-war economic climate, those in industrial suburbs such as Toronto's North York struggled to survive; they were often the first workers fired as Toronto firms

⁶⁶ Richard Harris and Peter J. Larkham, "Suburban Foundation, Form and Function," *Changing Suburbs: Foundation, Form and Function*, ed. Richard Harris and Peter J. Larkham (New York: Routledge, 1999) 7, 17. Harris defines suburbs as eluding easy description, but he does argue that the notion of "fringe" location informs the cultural myth of the uniform suburb. He challenges the myth of suburbs as middle-class enclaves that were "politically distinct" and homogeneous.

⁶⁷ Richard Harris, *Unplanned Suburbs: Toronto's American Tragedy, 1900 to 1950* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1996) 56.

⁶⁸ Harris, *Unplanned* 59. Examples of companies that moved to Toronto's suburbs included Massey-Harris, Canada Foundry, Goodyear, the Canadian Cycle and Motor Company, the Canadian Northern Railway Company, the Canadian Bank of Commerce, and the Toronto Railway Company.

⁶⁹ Harris, *Unplanned* 65.

⁷⁰ Harris, *Unplanned* 59.

attempted to save on “city relief payments” and to avoid paying municipal taxes.⁷¹ Until the late 1950s, when corporate developers began to plan and organize these regions, the majority of these households were offered no municipal support and suburbs were planned unofficially.⁷²

One object in *Domestic Interior*, the stand-up vacuum cleaner, offers a point of access to the class diversity found in industrial suburbs that surrounded the post-war city. While I have suggested that, save for the television set, the entire imagined space of *Domestic Interior* referred to the main sitting room of a post-war house, it is the stand-up vacuum that can be seen to have visually suggested histories of working-class women in Canada. Specifically, these histories include the dual work roles women held by working inside and outside the home as both sanctioned wage-earners and non-remunerated homemakers. Many post-war working-class women occupied both roles at a time when holding such dual labour roles carried a stigma and solidified perception of the household as working-class, rather than middle-class –when it was still a mark of status for middle-class women not to work outside the home.

In such a reading, the stand-up vacuum could allude to working-class women who returned home from their compensated work to unpaid labour –housework, cooking and childcare-- in what sociologists and cultural geographers have labeled “the second shift.”⁷³ Harris focuses more on class diversity than on gender as he challenges the myth of a single Canadian suburb prototype, a myth that had become commonplace by 1960

⁷¹ Harris, *Unplanned* 241.

⁷² Harris, *Unplanned* 263.

⁷³ Strong-Boag 177.

and was fostered in a post-war nationalist climate.⁷⁴ Yet, as Harris argues, the pervasive myth of a uniform suburb has worked to suppress the histories of labour, class, and ethnic diversity that make up a multiplicity of historical narratives of the industrial suburb.⁷⁵

While Harris does not recount the histories of working-class women in suburbia closely, his research demonstrates that working-class women would have endured patriarchal contexts, cyclical poverty, and racial discrimination. In other words, they could have encountered triple and quadruple layers of marginalization based on hierarchies of race, gender, and class.

As I have mentioned, the setting represented by *Domestic Interior* did not easily recall the labour histories of working-class women in industrial suburbs, although a tentative case can be made that the vacuum alluded to working-class histories and women's labour both outside, in the sanctioned workplace, and inside, within the post-war house's deceptive domesticity. In the same way, the stand-up vacuum, covered in shades of cream-coloured wool, could also be seen as a quiet allusion to the marginalized histories of live-in domestic workers. I see it as a possible point of access because it was the live-in domestic, working in the middle-class environments of Anglo-Canadian women and families, who would have used such an appliance.

In other words, while reference to female live-in domestic workers was not suggested as readily to curators and reviewers of *Domestic Interior* as were histories of female middle-class homemakers, the presence of the knitted vacuum cleaner suggested that multiple histories of women working in post-war domestic environment could be

⁷⁴ Harris, *Creeping* 11.

⁷⁵ Harris, *Creeping* 11.

accessed through the work. In reconstructing the histories of domestics in Canada and the contexts in which they worked, historian Sedef Arat-Koc argues that the inaccessibility of this history of domestic service lies in the institutionalized servitude that the Canadian government sanctioned and that immigrant, working-class women experienced. Arat-Soc traces the history of the stigma attached to domestic work that existed in the post-war climate of 1940, when middle-class women were inclined to hire domestics.⁷⁶ Hiring domestic workers helped to solidify middle-class women's class status and freed their time for other activities such as philanthropic work and social networking.⁷⁷

Arat-Koc argues that the stigma attached to domestic work was result of the “geographic, economic, social, and ideological separation of a public work sphere from the home [that occurred with] commodity production under capitalism.”⁷⁸ Yet, both the stigma and demand remained through the post-war economic boom, so that by the late 1940s middle-class women seeking to hire domestics were being assisted by the Immigration Department; the government helped to “supply” possible employers with non-Anglo-Canadian female domestics by baiting workers with promises of Canadian citizenship.⁷⁹ Historical discussions of the exploitation of live-in domestic workers,

⁷⁶ Sedef Arat-Koc, “The Politics of Family and Immigration in the Subordination of Domestic Workers in Canada,” *Inequality in Canada: A Reader on the Intersections of Gender, Race, and Class*, ed. Valerie Zawilski and Cynthia Levine-Rasky (Don Mills: Oxford University Press, 2005) 367.

⁷⁷ Arat-Koc 367.

⁷⁸ Arat-Koc 367.

⁷⁹ Arat-Koc 367, 376; Geraldine Pratt, in collaboration with the Philippine Women Centre, “From Migrant to Immigrant: Domestic Workers in Vancouver, Canada,” *A Companion to Feminist Geography*, ed. Lise Nelson and Joni Seager (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2005) 124. Arat-Soc outlines Canada's history of colluding with female middle-class employers to ensure they had domestics workers' labour. She describes this

however, barely scrape the surface of these workers' experiences in Canada's institutionalized servitude. This sanctioned servitude occurred primarily in the middle-class home, peaked in post-war households, and was suggested by *Domestic Interior*.

The central presence of the teacup atop the side table in *Domestic Interior* could also be seen to allude to the act of service embedded in the serving of tea and preparing of food for the middle-class family who ostensibly inhabited such a living room. As I describe earlier, the formal reception of the installation focused on the teacup as an object that visually expressed the lineage of Anglo-European women artists, such as Meret Oppenheim, whose work addressed middle-class women's lived experiences within the confines of bourgeois domesticity. At the same time, I would argue that the teacup in *Domestic Interior* could also be seen as a wool-covered object that offered a means of recalling histories of domestics who lived within such a middle-class setting.

Certainly, the genteel scene of *Domestic Interior* did not easily reflect the grim conditions in which domestic servants worked and lived. Arat-Soc reminds us that domestic workers in Canada were subjected to intense, physical work while also enduring an exhausting, unstructured work schedule. They were expected to be at their employer's

history by summarizing Canada's complicity, from the nineteenth century until 1992, in "bonding" domestic workers to their employers in order to facilitate rigid, lengthy contracts in exchange for possible citizenship. In 1992, the Federal Ministry of Employment and Immigration developed the Live-In Caregiver Program (LCP), a program that was seen as progressive in that it limited the domestic worker's work week officially to forty-plus hours, and removed the two-year term of bonded service required for citizenship --although many employers disregarded it and continue to disregard these legislated labour regulations today. As Arat-Soc and Pratt argue, although the LCP's regulations sought to improve the conditions in which domestic workers live and work, it remains an example of Canada's covert participation in labour trafficking. Both scholars point out that Canada's LCP, and other historic labour importing agencies, sanction middle-class employers to obtain "higher qualified labour" for less pay within the nationally-reinforced structure of the capitalist middle-class household.

disposal twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, working as a “submissive servant” without health benefits or compensation for overtime work.⁸⁰ The psychological effects of servitude in the environment in which one also lived are difficult to measure, but Arat-Soc argues that serving tea and food to a middle-class family at all hours would have been psychologically devastating. With the live-in domestic worker perceived as neither as middle-class “wife,” nor a publicly-compensated “worker,” Arat-Soc posits that the worker would feel psychologically “squeezed between the public and private spheres labour,” and would endure a feeling of isolation and alienation from her labour because she lived in her workplace and had little reprieve from its spatial, physical, and mental boundaries.⁸¹

While the teacup could be seen as a gentle reminder of domestic worker’s experiences in Anglo-Canadian post-war households, what it did not convey was the lived experience many domestic workers endured while working in segregated neighbourhoods for racist employers. The inadvertent effect of the curatorial writing was that it universalized the Anglo-Canadian middle-class experience as common to all and rendered

⁸⁰ Arat-Koc 369. Only in 1984 was the Employment Standards Act extended to domestics in an attempt to standardize their work week to 44 hours. Nevertheless, few employers follow this regulation rigidly and domestic workers are often reluctant to mention such ill-treatment for fear of being denied the reference from their employer required for citizenship.

⁸¹ Arat-Soc 368; Pratt 133. Understanding of the psychological effects of living in a constant state of institutionalized servitude, as post-war domestic workers did, is difficult to effect. However, Pratt’s recent interviews with contemporary Filipino domestic workers in Vancouver can perhaps help to shed light on the sense of isolation and despair post-war domestic worker may have felt. Pratt recently interviewed a domestic worker, whose name she revealed only as April, who described the effect the servant lifestyle had on her: [crying] “It lowered one’s self-esteem because of the way people looked at you and treated you.” Such accounts can perhaps be used as an initial means of accessing the ways in which workers, who continuously poured tea, cooked, and cleaned for their employers, felt while working in middle-class environments.

oppressive hierarchies such as race invisible. Yet it would be possible for a viewer with a personal or family history of domestic work, and who endured segregation, to mobilize histories of working in such environments. The conditions in which these workers laboured, of course, were informed by hierarchies of race, class, and gender, which determined the way they were treated by their employers in the middle-class suburban neighbourhoods in which they worked. Anti-racism scholar Roxana Ng argues that understanding the impact of such hierarchies on groups such as domestic workers requires an understanding that no one hierarchy marginalizes more than another and that gender, race, and class are not “fixed entities.”⁸² Rather, they are relative to one another and constantly shift according to the ways in which both subordinate and dominant groups have access to the economic means of production in capitalist Canada.⁸³ In other words, patriarchal contexts that informed the decision of Anglo-Canadian women to employ domestic workers simultaneously intersected with hierarchies of oppression based on class, race, religion, and ethnicity.⁸⁴

Although the knitted teacup and vacuum cleaner were situated in an installation that privileged middle-class histories, it is possible to argue as a result that both of these objects could also act as visual cues for a viewer of the installation whose mother or grandmother was a domestic worker or who grew up in a working-class neighbourhood where such employment was common. Viewers with such a background could easily interpret the teacup or vacuum cleaner as palimpsests, or objects that recalled traces of

⁸² Roxana Ng, “Sexism, Racism and Canadian Nationalism,” *Inequality in Canada: A Reader on the Intersections of Gender, Race, and Class*, ed. Valerie Zawilski and Cynthia Levine-Rasky (Don Mills: Oxford University Press, 2005) 9-10.

⁸³ Ng 9-10.

⁸⁴ Ng 9-10.

memories --that aided in memorializing the labour of those who dutifully worked in middle-class homes. In short, such a reading of the installation's emblematic teacup and vacuum cleaner could occur because objects such as these activated the histories of the women in their families who worked to maintain the middle-class environments that *Domestic Interior* celebrated.

Chapter Four *Cozy* at Trinity Square Park: where home resides

In this section I discuss Morton's exhibition *Cozy*, which was exhibited at Toronto's Trinity Square Park in 2000 under the auspices of the Textile Museum of Canada (fig. 8). I explore the ways in which the installation addresses suppressed histories surrounding homes and homelessness in a city such as Toronto. Specifically, I discuss the ways that the two installations offered visual cues to the histories and contemporary crisis of homelessness in Toronto, as well as to histories of municipal public parks in both housing and excluding homeless and nomadic individuals. Such discussions, inspired by Morton's installation, were prompted by the artist's successful negotiation of her role within the Museum, which would not overtly acknowledge these histories.

The appearance of this *Cozy* changed considerably from the Ward's Island version that had been installed in November 1999. This *Cozy*, installed at Trinity Square Park for three days in April 2000, was made from knitted pieces of the Ward's Island *Cozy*, but was now draped over a large metal scaffold framework in the park. As Quinton described it, the knitted cozy was "draped with apparent effortlessness on its architectural



Figure 8. Janet Morton, *Cozy*, 2000; wool, metal scaffold, Trinity Square Park installation.

skeleton.”⁸⁵ Because *Cozy* at Trinity Square used the same materials as those at Ward’s Island it also had cream-coloured and near-white sweaters and scraps knit, buttoned and Velcro-ed together to achieve the effect of a draped tea-cozy hanging over the scaffold.⁸⁶ Morton described the work involved in gathering these wool pieces and knitting the architectural pieces, such as the chimney’s knitted sock cozy, as doing endless hours of knitting.”⁸⁷ The effect of Morton’s effort was a comforting, knitted-house cozy in a downtown Toronto park.

Visually, *Cozy*’s impermanent status at the park was evident in the way the breeze was able to catch the four, draped walls of the house cozy and blow them gently back and forth. Quinton described this effect as adding to the ephemeral appearance of the installation. Combined with the ephemeral quality of this *Cozy*, the knitted scraps of wool, sweaters and scarves allowed for light and air to breathe through the installation and contribute to this *Cozy*’s translucent effect. One way viewers might have conceived of this effect would have been to view the warm and inviting *Cozy*, in Quinton’s words, as “inhaling and exhaling” as it “billowed in the breeze.” The welcoming quiet of the knitted, billowing wool *Cozy* stood for three days in stark contrast to the environment that bordered Trinity Square Park, which is located in the downtown core of Toronto surrounded by the corporate environment of the contemporary city. Flanking both sides of the park are sky rise condominiums, commercial buildings and various corporate headquarters. On the third side of the park is the Eaton Centre –a giant shopping hub and tourist destination-- and on the north side a church and a hotel. A full range of urban

⁸⁵ Quinton 8.

⁸⁶ Quinton 9.

⁸⁷ Morton, personal interview.

activities and commercial interests surrounded *Cozy*. The juxtaposition of the installation as an imagined, quilted, wool home with corporate skyscrapers only contributed to the multiple meanings and histories that could be accessed through *Cozy's* installation at Trinity Square Park.

The installation of *Cozy* at Trinity Square Park offered visual cues to viewers that suggested marginalized histories surrounding the idea of home and the realities of the homeless population who lived in the park and continue to live in it today. The installation was perceived as offering an accessible means of addressing such concealed histories and pointed to what Quinton called the “symbol of home.”⁸⁸ Perhaps one of the reasons that varied histories surrounding the idea of home as an institution were deemed relatively accessible to *Cozy's* audiences had to do with Morton's deliberate choice and use of medium. In constructing *Cozy* by knitting, gathering and stitching scraps together, all through the use of soft wool, Morton produced a “cozy-looking” house that held great appeal to viewers and contributed widely to the installation's approachable appearance. *Cozy's* fluid walls, which moved with each breeze, conjured ideas of a flexible dwelling. The cream-coloured and “near-white” choice of soft wool normally used for sweaters and scarves suggested a welcoming shelter or a comfortable stop for viewers moving through the park. Additionally, *Cozy* may have conjured personal memories attached to the fabric of wool –whether these involved a sweater, scarf or old afghan knit by an aunt or grandmother.⁸⁹ Such a response from passers-by strolling through or lunching in the park would have arisen from a specific audience –a middle-class demographic who perhaps had familial ancestry tied to the tradition of knitting.

⁸⁸ Quinton 8.

⁸⁹ Holland, personal interview.

Middle-class viewers could begin to understand *Cozy* as being linked to histories of the home by first engaging with the installation on a level of recognition. The inviting quality of the installation, which was brought about by the choice of medium and the soft, yet familiar architectural details, allowed viewers to respond to the work through a sense of familiarity with the ideas of knitting and of tea-cozies –both familiar to Anglo-Canadian middle-class audiences. Reviewers responded to this aspect of the installation and focused on the charming or disarming aspect of the work. Quinton suggested that the most common way of perceiving both *Cozy* installations was to focus on the accessibility of Morton’s medium –knitting – and the way it resonated with viewers as homey and inviting.⁹⁰

For reviewers, the aesthetic used in constructing *Cozy* was central to their discussion of the work and to the idea that this so-called ordinary medium could entice their middle-class readers. Reviewers took comfort in *Cozy*’s familiar allusions --evident in Robert Enright’s description of the work as a “surrogate tea pot.”⁹¹ The aesthetic of knitting, welcoming to viewers, was articulated by reviewers such as Richard Moll, who called Morton’s use of the medium as a “blatantly low-tech metaphor,” and Robert Enright, who described it as a “process of reclaiming the ordinary.”⁹² Morton herself was quoted in the *National Post* and *Now* as saying that the use of wool was deliberately

⁹⁰ Quinton, personal interview.

⁹¹ Robert Enright, “The Collectress,” *Border Crossings* 19 (2000): 5-6.

⁹² Enright 5-6; Richard Moll was describing another, early installation by Morton; see Richard Moll, “Art in Review,” *Whig-Standard* (Kingston) 7 June. 1997: D3.

chosen as an “empathetic” medium because many people “know what it feels like to wear a sweater.”⁹³

Employing similar logic, curators who worked on *Cozy* played up the installation’s welcoming aesthetic, linking the process of knitting to the meditative time required to knit. Windrum described Morton as using “knitting and its history” as an “essential part of the work that she’s done.”⁹⁴ Quinton emphasized the way in which *Cozy* could be seen to suggest the process of knitting and the way such production is “meditative, lap work” that speaks to those who belong to the wide, middle-class “knitting world.”⁹⁵ Holland characterized Morton’s *Cozy* as “friendly,” “not elitist,” and “homey,” and described the “charming,” exaggerated size of *Cozy* as suggestive of a fairy tale world or of Gulliver’s world.⁹⁶ Together, reviewers’ and curators’ introductory comments about *Cozy* described it as a comforting piece that paid direct homage to the process of knitting in middle-class contexts.

Such emphasis on the act of knitting and *Cozy*’s comforting aesthetic afforded middle-class viewers an introductory means of understanding the installation, in this case, as anchored in the lineage of Anglo-Canadian knitting histories. Reviews of *Cozy* at Trinity Square Park presented the coziness of *Cozy* as a universal definition of hominess and comfort predicated on middle-class experiences and histories, creating an effect for the work that addressed a middle-class viewer/readership. On site, the work also had the

⁹³ Gollom; Deidre Hanna, “Wool’s clever wrap,” *Now* 5 March. 2000: 21.

⁹⁴ Windrum, personal interview.

⁹⁵ Quinton, personal interview.

⁹⁶ Holland, personal interview.

effect of welcoming the park's pedestrian audience and offered a point of entry for them to contemplate other levels of understanding surrounding histories of home life and homelessness in Toronto. These combined effects are one aspect of Trinity Square Park *Cozy* that demonstrates the ways it evoked middle-class experiences for that specific audience.

In a way, *Cozy*'s installation at Trinity Square Park maintained allusions to middle-class histories that the Ward's Island installation of *Cozy* reinforced explicitly. The Trinity Square *Cozy* was constructed of the wool scraps of the Ward's Island *Cozy* and was transplanted directly into the park from the intimate community of Ward's Island outside of Toronto. As I have argued, the writing about both *Cozy* installations by reviewers and curators reinforced middle-class histories of knitting and the accessible way in which Morton allowed viewers to retrieve such histories. The physical appearance of *Cozy* at Trinity Square Park resembled the Ward's Island *Cozy* to such a degree (save for the fact that it enclosed metal scaffolding rather than a post-war house) that viewers who had seen both could have aligned the installations as similar in the histories they alluded to visually. Both installations enclosed a house-shaped structure, and, through the knitted detailing, suggested architectural features such as windows, a door, and a chimney. The patchwork of cream-coloured wool squares was used in a precise manner so as to construct the front façade of the house. While the Ward's Island *Cozy* encased an archetypal-looking middle-class home on Ward's Island, the Trinity Square Park *Cozy* was loosely draped over scaffolding that befit the shape of an imagined house.

Although each installation could be contrasted with the other, *Cozy* at Trinity Square Park used the same knitted, hanging cozy that had covered Sean Tamblyn's Ward's Island house. The details of the first installation, that of *Cozy* on Ward's Island,

had been transferred, and with this move, the effect of the former installation's middle-class referent lingered on the Trinity Square Park installation, despite the change of venue. Reviewers wrote about *Cozy* at Trinity Square Park in a way that had the effect of positioning it either as a secondary installation to the so-called "real" installation on Ward's Island or as a reinstatement of the Ward's Island piece. Critics such as Mike Beitz described *Cozy* as "transplanted to a downtown parkette," Deidre Hanna characterized it as a "remount somewhere on the mainland," and *Canadian House and Home* noted simply that it was being "exhibited outdoors again."⁹⁷ Clearly, reviewers assumed either that this *Cozy* was a replica of the first *Cozy* installation, rather than an installation in its own right, or they recognized significance in the trajectory it had taken from middle-class neighbourhood to public park.

In a milder, but similar, tone, curators involved with the installation inadvertently presented *Cozy* at Trinity Square in comparison to the Ward's Island *Cozy*. Quinton, in referring to the address at which Ward's Island *Cozy* was installed, suggested that this *Cozy* carried "with it the indelible imprint of 13 Third's marks of experience." She also suggested that the more obvious character of protective warmth and shelter "seeped" through into the second installation.⁹⁸ Windrum described *Cozy* at Trinity Square Park as a "departure from the original" that did not carry the same "impact or effect" because the downtown *Cozy* seemed to be "academic," although he did not explain what he meant by this.⁹⁹ Holland described the Trinity Square *Cozy* as more clearly a "piece of art," while

⁹⁷ Beitz 3; Hanna 21; Deidre Hanna and Si Si Penalosa, "Best of 99," *Now* 23 December 1999: 65; "House Warming." *Canadian House & Home* February-March 2000: 28.

⁹⁸ Quinton 8; Quinton, personal interview.

⁹⁹ Windrum, personal interview.

the Ward's Island installation was "clearly a little cozy on a real house."¹⁰⁰ Both Holland and Quinton explained that the Ward's Island installation garnered the most media attention and that the Museum's target market responded to the first installation immediately.¹⁰¹ The curators were positive and laudatory in their remarks about *Cozy* at Trinity Square Park, but like the reviewers, a sheen of bias towards the first installation on Ward's Island could be found in their descriptions of both installations. An indirect effect of both the reviewers' and curators' writing and comments on Trinity Square Park is that any discussion of the significance of the change of locale for this *Cozy* was left undeveloped.

While this was one of the effects of the writing that surrounded the installation of *Cozy* at Trinity Square Park, nevertheless, the new location altered viewers' understanding of the piece. In the context of this downtown municipal park, the house-shaped dwelling was imbued with multiple definitions of what constitutes a home and dwelling. One of the ways to understand *Cozy* is to follow its visual reference to urban underclass dwellings that pervade cities like Toronto. In this way, while *Cozy's* appearance could be seen to portray middle-class domesticity, it also quietly conveyed the idea of shelter. With the ephemeral-looking *Cozy's* walls gently blowing in the wind, the knit installation reinforced the idea of a fragile shelter in a challenging environment. This shelter withstood three days of unpredictable seasonal weather, while standing in contrast as well to the buildings and the whirling street traffic around the park. The visual effect of this quiet contrast is that *Cozy* at Trinity Square Park could be seen as a wool-clad refuge.

¹⁰⁰ Holland, personal interview.

¹⁰¹ Holland, personal interview; Quinton, personal interview.

A woolen and cream-coloured dwelling, *Cozy* evoked the idea of a haven for those actually seeking refuge from the weather. In this sense, *Cozy* could be seen as way of addressing the underclass and homeless population who need shelter, but who live and sleep in Trinity Square Park and parks like it.¹⁰² This understanding of Trinity Square Park's *Cozy* may have been possible for the homeless population who lived in and frequented the park, and for middle-class audiences who are all too aware of the crisis of homelessness and poverty in downtown Toronto. Yet, prompting viewers to perceive of the newly located *Cozy* as a kind of underclass dwelling was a reading too laden with politicized meanings for the Board of Trustees of the Textile Museum. While the curators and organizers involved in the installation did not explicitly address issues of poverty in relation to *Cozy*'s installation, they did not resist it the way the Board initially did.

According to Quinton, the Board was "very resistant to the idea" of financially supporting and administering *Cozy*'s installation, and wanted to censor what it saw as the potentially controversial aspect of the work.¹⁰³ While the installation of *Cozy* at Trinity Square Park and Ward's Island did go forward, despite the Board's desire to police it, those involved in the installation frame *Cozy* at Trinity Square Park in a positive, but apolitical light.

Notwithstanding the homeless population's presence in the park and the poignancy of the woolen dwelling situated amidst this underclass, curators did not comment directly on this juxtaposition. Windrum saw the installation in terms of a public art installation "done

¹⁰² For a contemporary, inclusive definition of "homeless" see Rae Bridgman, *StreetCities: Rehousing the Homeless* (Peterborough: Broadview Press, 2006) 21. She defines "chronically homeless" as "people living on the streets," "those who move from shelter to shelter," "those barred from existing shelters, and individuals who are barred from access to physical and mental health facilities. For additional contemporary statistics on homelessness in Canada see Bridgman.

¹⁰³ Holland, personal interview; Quinton, personal interview.

by an institution.”¹⁰⁴ Holland described *Cozy* at Trinity Square Park as drawing a large contingent of visitors, but questioned whether they would have “understood what it was about because that space has now become quite sterile [in that it has] corporate buildings on two sides and the Eaton Centre on the third.”¹⁰⁵ Inadvertently, her comments framed Ward’s Island *Cozy* as the installation more easily celebrated by middle-class audiences and the Trinity Square *Cozy* as a challenging puzzle.¹⁰⁶ In short, curators and organizers worked to install *Cozy* and were aware of its political significance, but were quiet about the link between *Cozy*’s installation and histories of the shelterless underclass.

Despite the apolitical aspect of the curators’ and administrators’ comments, Quinton and Holland, working within a conservative institution, helped to ensure that Morton was able to choose a site for the installation that would engage diverse viewers and add layers of significance to the piece. Holland stated the change of locale altered the meaning of *Cozy*, indicating by this the financial district and “sterile” appearance of the downtown area and streets that surrounded the work.¹⁰⁷ More specifically, Quinton described the process of selecting Trinity Square Park as an intellectual and pragmatic “struggle.”¹⁰⁸ As Quinton recalled, the challenge for Morton lay in selecting a park that would resonate on multiple levels for different audiences and open up dialogues involving social histories, ranging from abstract ideas of domestic comfort to the tangible crisis of

¹⁰⁴ Windrum, personal interview.

¹⁰⁵ Holland, personal interview.

¹⁰⁶ Holland, personal interview.

¹⁰⁷ Holland, personal interview.

¹⁰⁸ Quinton, personal interview.

homelessness.¹⁰⁹ Morton told Textile Museum organizers and Quinton that the choice of locale was paramount to understanding the piece, adding of the location, “I’ll know it when I see it.”¹¹⁰ At the same time, Quinton was concerned with the practical and administrative need to meet a spring deadline for installation –the deadline the Textile Museum had promised its funders.¹¹¹ At last a site was found at Trinity Square Park that fulfilled Morton’s intention to select an installation space that would stand in contrast to the knitted comfort of *Cozy*.¹¹² As Quinton described it, Morton wanted to select a park that offered a series of visual juxtapositions, while alluding to marginalized social histories of the underclass that inform urban municipal park spaces.¹¹³ Notwithstanding the Textile Museum Board’s resistance, the political undercurrent that informed the installation of *Cozy* at Trinity Square Park was palpable. The curators and organizers, who also worked within the institution, helped Morton to install *Cozy* in a politically loaded, prominent locale. While curators were reluctant to comment on the work’s suggestion of concealed social histories or to use polemical language to promote the work, the organizers stood behind the piece in their persistent handling of bureaucratic obstacles leading to the installation the work.

Despite curators’ and organizers’ willingness to support Morton in initiating a subtle discussion of homelessness, they also worked to dilute the political significance of

¹⁰⁹ Quinton, personal interview.

¹¹⁰ Quinton, personal interview.

¹¹¹ Quinton, personal interview.

¹¹² Quinton, personal interview.

¹¹³ Quinton, personal interview.

Cozy in the interests of the museum they represented. One way they accomplished this was through the press release issued by the Textile Museum, which served to frame *Cozy* in ways that softened its political edge. One perspective that Museum organizers chose to emphasize in their press release, for example, was that *Cozy* would act as a catalyst for middle-class viewers to contemplate the idea of “personal security” and warmth during the last season of winter in the millennium.¹¹⁴ The language chosen to represent *Cozy* in the Museum’s formal press release included phrases such as “house-warming” and “dress warmly” to describe the opening of the first installation, and it conjured images of a more winter-based, seasonal installation than of a multifaceted installation that questioned, amongst other things, homelessness.¹¹⁵ Consequently, the implied authority behind the Museum’s press release suggested that conventional reviewers follow suit. Reviewers aligned *Cozy* with dominant histories surrounding traditional middle-class domesticity, the warmth of the old-fashioned hearth and the last winter of the concluding millennium, allusions to which were plentiful during 1999. Examples of phrases that framed *Cozy* in this way included those of the reviewer in *Canadian House and Home*, who described the installation as a work designed “to usher in the new century,” the reviewer expressing the hope that the Trinity Square installation would not be mounted “during a heat wave.”¹¹⁶ In a similar vein, the *Toronto Star* reviewer and headline editor called *Cozy* a “giant knit

¹¹⁴ The press release for the Ward Island *Cozy* stated, “*Cozy* will be installed in preparation for the last winter of this century –our transition into the millennium—and will remain at 13 Third Street (weather permitting) for two weeks”; see “*Cozy*: A House Warming Project by Janet Morton,” media release, *Textile Museum of Canada* 4 November 1999.

¹¹⁵ *Textile Museum of Canada*.

¹¹⁶ *Canadian House & Home* 28.

cozy that warms the hearth,” emulating the Museum’s press release by referring to the work a “house-warming project.”¹¹⁷ Finally, the *Globe and Mail* continued this trend and described *Cozy* as a “house-sized cozy” produced “in preparation for the last winter of this century.”¹¹⁸ In other words, the authoritative influence of the Museum’s press release as a guiding template for reviewers to represent *Cozy* worked to depoliticize one aspect of the work by reframing its meaning in terms of mainstream values.

Despite the seemingly neutralizing effect of the Museum’s press release, the ability to view *Cozy* as a quiet, political commentary on social histories of homelessness in downtown Toronto was possible. The appearance of *Cozy* suggested multiple meanings, so that another way of contemplating *Cozy*’s presence, for both underclass and middle-class audiences, was to view it as an allusion to the physical structure of a tent, which countless homeless individuals use as make-shift homes. Put another way, while one way of viewing *Cozy* was to perceive it as an archetypal post-war house, another way to view it was to understand it as echoing elements that inform our idea of a tent.

While *Cozy*’s installation addressed middle-class audiences and social histories pertaining to middle-class domesticity, it could also be seen as a knit, sculptural dwelling that literally addressed underclass viewers and quietly acknowledged their struggle to find warmth and shelter in the neighbourhoods surrounding Toronto’s financial district. *Cozy*’s appearance could be viewed in the Trinity Square Park context as an actual make-shift house. Certainly, the Ward’s Island *Cozy*, knitted to fit and enclose a post-war bungalow for the 1999 installation, recalled the iconic image of a North American, post-

¹¹⁷ Mike Conlin, “Giant knit cozy warms hearth,” *Star* (Toronto) 13 November 1999: E7.

¹¹⁸ “The Art: Janet Morton’s Cozy House,” *Globe and Mail* 6 November 1999: F4.

war house, with a standard, triangular-shaped roof and picture window façade, and with window-shapes stitched into the wool. It was not a conceptual stretch for audiences to view the park installation as “house,” even in a space devoid of the conventional dwellings found in residential neighbourhoods. The use of such a template was a strategy employed by Morton to address audiences about ideas surrounding the mythical idea of home.¹¹⁹ Situated in the middle of Trinity Square Park on a lawn of green grass, *Cozy*, draped in shades of beige and ivory-coloured wool, sat in contrast to the surrounding park perimeter (fig. 9). Such a contrast would only have reinforced the iconic image of a cream-coloured house sitting on a green lawn. For both middle-class, and possibly underclass viewers, this play with visual contrasts and with an archetypal idea of the so-called dream house in downtown Toronto may have encouraged them to contemplate the social histories of those who are excluded from house ownership or who are homeless. The irony of *Cozy*, a house-like installation, sitting in the very park where those without house or home reside, was clear. The fact that *Cozy* could be seen to delicately address marginalized social histories about homelessness, while also commenting on dominant histories that appealed to the Museum’s Board and middle-class audiences, was a testament to Morton’s willingness to work within the institution and produce a work that effectively negotiated the various avenues of interpretation it offered viewers.

In a visual sense, *Cozy* was a temporary structure that could blow over in the breeze and, like a tent, that would not withstand severe weather. It was also made of malleable materials and connoted the idea of a blanket draped over a metal frame, the way a tent could be constructed. In this sense, it may have suggested to many Toronto’s Tent City –a lakefront community of dozens of tents and make-shift shelters located south

¹¹⁹ Morton, personal interview.



Figure 9. Janet Morton, *Cozy*, 2000; wool, metal scaffold, Trinity Square Park installation.

of the city beside Lake Ontario. Tent City manifested a strategy for survival and thus an expression of agency by those most often represented as abject.

For Morton, and the curators and organizers involved in relocating *Cozy* downtown to Trinity Square Park, the change of locale contributed a layer of understanding to the work and offered a pointed means of addressing histories of homelessness in the city. Quinton stated that she sought to offer Morton a supportive environment to mount *Cozy*, which “very much [had] a politic to it.”¹²⁰ Morton stated that the location of Trinity Square Park and “the fact that homeless people lived [there]” may have aided viewers in visually accessing such social histories.¹²¹ Morton described “thinking about homelessness” prior to producing *Cozy*, asserting that one of the motivating forces behind the work was a chance to draw attention to the homelessness crisis in a city such as Toronto, where the class divide grows more polarized each year.¹²² Morton advocated alerting reviewers to this, and when interviewed during the installation, she told critics that “there had been delays in getting clearance” from the institution’s bureaucratic authorities because the work initiated conversations about “homelessness, which is a political time bomb.”¹²³

Despite Morton’s willingness to engage in pointed discussions with critics and reviewers, the Textile Museum’s organizers still had to mount the show from within an authoritative cultural institution. Working within the institution, the artist and organizers had to deal with both the neutralized language of the press release and the keyword

¹²⁰ Quinton, personal interview.

¹²¹ Morton, personal interview.

¹²² Morton, personal interview.

¹²³ Hannah 21. See also Gollom D2.

“homefulness.” By using the word “homefulness” as a strategy, Quinton argued, the Board was able to conceptualize the work as more apolitical, and the artist and curator were able to negotiate their political stances from within the institution, which would then financially support the installation.¹²⁴ Such negotiations demonstrate the complicated context within which Museum representatives close to the project of installing *Cozy* worked in facilitating its completion. On the one hand, they helped Morton in initiating potentially controversial questions about the neglect of homeless individuals in Toronto and Trinity Square Park, and the other hand, they promoted the Board-friendly idea that the show was about seasonal themes and genteel domesticity.

As I posited earlier, *Cozy’s* appearance at Trinity Square Park could be seen to take on multiple meanings that addressed the idea of homeless individuals surviving daily --despite a lack of social support at all levels of government. Visually, *Cozy’s* loosely knit and stitched window-shaped outlines and cream-coloured canopy combined to produce the effect of what Quinton called an “itinerant” home or ephemeral tent standing in the cold wind.¹²⁵ In other words, *Cozy’s* tent-shaped structure, despite its cuddly presence, could also have acted as a foreboding reminder to viewers that it was this kind of ephemeral structure that many homeless survivors call home. This was the socioeconomic reality in Toronto in the late-twentieth and early twenty-first centuries that the Museum Board did not wish to underscore.

This physical component of *Cozy* at Trinity Square Park --its allusion to Toronto’s tent city—helped remind viewers of the material reality that comprises the experience of

¹²⁴ Quinton, personal interview.

¹²⁵ Quinton 8.

being homeless in Toronto. Underlying the aesthetic allusions was statistical evidence that demonstrates the severity of the homelessness epidemic and its exponential growth in contemporary Toronto. Statistically, the irrefutable spread of homelessness points to municipal, provincial and federal levels of government dismantling both the welfare state and funding for social programs in favour of various neo-liberal forms of governing within globalized capitalism.¹²⁶ Put another way, social policy scholars attribute the rise in homelessness to lack of public funding for the mentally ill and for low-income housing, as well as the soaring rental and housing prices in the context of the deterioration of the welfare state.¹²⁷ Sociologists and social workers argue that, at a broad socioeconomic level, access to modes of production and class relations are the basis of

¹²⁶ For a detailed account of the implications of neo-liberal governance in Canada see Ian McKay, *Rebels, Reds, Radicals: Rethinking Canada's Left History* (Toronto: Between the Lines, 2005). In addition, anti-poverty scholar Barbara Murphy and Thomas O'Reilly-Fleming, using statistics drawn from their own interviews and reports from the Canadian Council on Social Development, argue that the willingness of governments to cut social programs and privatize mental health facilities is one of several reasons homelessness in Canada is at crisis level. A contributory element to the crisis of homelessness is the diminishing number of social programs that address the need for low income affordable housing. Murphy posits that the combined effect of the endless poverty cycle and the cutting of such social programs is the reason Canada holds the notorious distinction of receiving the "strongest rebuke ever from the United Nations for its inaction on homelessness and poverty." Such inaction is based on Canada's neo-liberal approach to social program spending, or the lack thereof. See Barbara Murphy, *On the Street: How We Created the Homeless* (Winnipeg: J. Gordon Shillingford Publishing, 2000) 15, 18, 35; Thomas O'Reilly-Fleming, *Down and Out in Canada: Homeless Canadians* (Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press Inc., 1993) 24.

¹²⁷ Murphy 21,79,107. For further discussion of the failure of all levels of government to provide funding for the homeless, from affordable housing to mental health facilities and shelters, see O'Reilly-Fleming 99-100. O'Reilly-Fleming argues that illogical, bureaucratic decisions, such as the need for a mailing address in order to collect social assistance cheques, that perpetuate the cycle of poverty in Canada. He posits that a lack of public funding in these areas exacerbates the homelessness crisis.

the ongoing poverty cycles that create contemporary homelessness.¹²⁸ Closer analysis of the statistical landscape is even more grim. With over five million Canadians officially living in poverty in the year 2000, one in three people are poor.¹²⁹ For marginalized groups, who contend with class, but also race, gender, and sexuality discrimination, the numbers are staggering, with one million Aboriginals, or double the proportion of non-Aboriginals, living in poverty.¹³⁰ A Canadian Council on Social Development (CCSD) report in the early 1990s estimated the number of homeless in shelters to be about 35 000 to 40 000 on any given night in a major urban centre such as Toronto, with this number increasing steadily in the last ten years.¹³¹ Nevertheless, these scholars are quick to point out that the propensity for census-taking and the “counting of heads” is futile, given that

¹²⁸ Murphy 19. For further discussion of the significance of the family of origin and the institution of the family as influencing generational poverty, see John Hagan and Bill McCarthy, *Mean Streets: Youth Crime and Homelessness* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997) 11-12. Anti-poverty scholar Margaret Michaud also emphasizes that socioeconomic conditions perpetuate generational poverty cycles within Canada’s neo-liberal structure. Michaud focuses on childhood experiences, in extreme poverty, that contribute to lack of education, abuse, and drug and alcohol dependency in the family of origin. In particular, she draws parallels between histories of sexual abuse of young girls and prostitution. In most cases, homelessness was statistically more probable among those experiencing second- and third-generation poverty –poverty being defined as living below the state-defined poverty line. She concludes that any solutions to the problem begin with changes to Canada’s legal framework, which attacks those who are impoverished. See Margaret A. Michaud, *Dead End: Homeless Teenagers a Multi-Service Approach* (Calgary: Detselig Enterprises Ltd., 1988) 7-10, 116.

¹²⁹ Murphy 19.

¹³⁰ Murphy 107.

¹³¹ Murphy 12. For a case-study discussion of the number of deaths in the year 2000 brought about by government cuts to social programs and lack of shelter, see Murphy 18. For a detailed, first person account of life in Toronto and Ontario during Mike Harris’s provincial government see Pat Capponi, *Dispatches from the Poverty Line* (Toronto: Penguin Books, 1997). Capponi has first-hand experience of unemployment, mental illness, abuse and surviving poverty and homelessness.

the problem of homelessness is a political one with human consequences, and should not be solely a matter of statistical findings.¹³² The paradox of Toronto is that as a major, commercial centre of globalized capitalism, the city is also a centre for extreme poverty and homelessness, which is evident in the homeless population that sleeps in parks such as Trinity Square.¹³³

Anti-poverty activist and scholar Jean Swanson argues that neo-liberal agendas are perpetuated by the language and phrasing used by the mainstream media to describe the underclass. She examines the editorial license taken by print media in Canada in order to shed light on the ways in which the stigma attached to the poor is disseminated through conglomerate-owned media.¹³⁴ Swanson focuses on the manifestation of poor-bashing in print media and the way the choice of language contributes to neo-liberal criticism of the so-called leftist argument in favour of more social programs and a stronger social net for the underclass and homeless.¹³⁵ For example, she cites the use poor-bashing phrases such as “welfare fraud,” “those dependent on welfare,” “the welfare trap,” and “dependency” in conglomerate-owned newspapers such as the *National Post*, the *Winnipeg Free Press*, the *Ottawa Citizen*, and the *Vancouver Sun*.¹³⁶ Swanson posits that such language, used to

¹³² Rae Bridgman, *Safe Haven: The Story of a Shelter for Homeless Women* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003) 27.

¹³³ See Bridgman, *Safe Haven* and *StreetCities*, for detailed discussions of shelters and the phenomenon of tent city in Toronto and its destruction by municipal governmental powers. Morton, personal interview. Morton stressed this aspect of her work; it is difficult to access whether she was successful in initiating questions about homelessness.

¹³⁴ Jean Swanson, *Poor-Bashing: The Politics of Exclusion* (Toronto: Between the Lines, 2001) 33.

¹³⁵ Swanson 33.

¹³⁶ Swanson 87.

further an implicit globalized corporate agenda, acts to subtly sway newspaper readership. Readers are lulled into the belief that the pressing need for municipal, provincial and federal governments to intervene and offer more funding for social programs is a superfluous expense. In other words, instead of asking a vital question such as “how do we end poverty?” the mainstream media, complicit with corporate and neo-liberal governing interests, make the issue a question of how to end what they call a “welfare dependency problem.”¹³⁷ *Cozy*, standing in Trinity Square, where it appears as a tent-structure, while standing up to the elements with woolen-made masonry, quietly addressed the brand of poor-bashing that pervades such representations of the underclass and homeless. *Cozy* quietly reminded viewers of the means by which the underclass and homeless survive on a daily basis within the tent-structures they construct, design, and call home in seemingly public, green spaces, such as Trinity Square Park.

At a glance, *Cozy* presented this side of the social histories of those who are at the receiving end of sanctioned poor-bashing and who live in tents in Toronto’s downtown

¹³⁷ Swanson 33,71. Swanson posits that the hegemonic and eerily Orwellian use of language by mainstream media is not a new phenomenon. She argues that the humanist and post-Enlightenment style of liberalism informs neo-liberal media representation of the poor as a kind of plague. She draws parallels between contemporary right-wing political questions, which ask what is to be done about those who are dependent on welfare and who are draining the system, and the eighteenth-century Western political philosophical phenomenon known as social darwinism in which conservative pamphleteers asked the question “how can we change the behaviour of the poor?” In other words, Swanson traces the influence of humanist, Western philosophy and economic frameworks to examine the historical roots of contemporary neo-liberal exclusionary practices. Furthermore, Swanson emphasizes the importance of recognizing the influence on the North American neo-liberal media of Judeo-Christian religious frameworks --and specifically, what sociologist Max Weber called the “Protestant work ethic”-- in understanding the persistent reinforcement of global capitalism and suspicion of social program funding advocated by socially-minded non-governmental organizations, scholars, and politicians.

parks and on its lakefront. Specifically, *Cozy's* conflation of the image of an archetypal house, complete with chimney, with the representation of a pitched woolen tent allowed the idea of tent-as-home to resonate with sympathetic viewers. Given the city of Toronto's public debate about what municipal authorities deemed the Tent City problem, it is not a stretch to imagine that multiple readings of *Cozy* as an itinerant house/tent home at Trinity Square Park were possible. According to anthropologist and urban studies scholar Rae Bridgman, what came to be known as Tent City began in the winter of 2000 as dozens of tents.¹³⁸ With growing pressure from conservative national and transnational media, and with the *New York Times* calling the tent community a "civic embarrassment," the two hundred residents were evicted on 24 September 2002.¹³⁹ This eviction, Bridgman argues, was akin to actions taken by the government during sanctioned segregation.¹⁴⁰

In contrast, *Cozy's* allusion to the agency or self-determination of the chronically homeless underscored the idea that those who live on the street should not be represented only as victims, but also as survivors who use all their skills to endure and stay alive. Bridgman argues that exploring the self-determination and agency of the homeless is rarely broached.¹⁴¹ She posits that, instead of perceiving the homeless and underclass as the "walking wounded," it is important to acknowledge the strategies they employ to survive collectively and individually; for example, by constructing their own itinerant

¹³⁸ Bridgman, *StreetCities* 91.

¹³⁹ Bridgman, *StreetCities* 91.

¹⁴⁰ Bridgman, *StreetCities* 91.

¹⁴¹ Bridgman, *StreetCities* 21.

homes and by panhandling.¹⁴² The way in which *Cozy* alluded to such activity stirred audiences to contemplate such social histories. *Cozy* was an installation that was created to generate discussion, but did so in a sophisticated manner; the installation was not meant to speak for those who are chronically homeless or to essentialize and generalize the experiences of classes of individuals. Rather, *Cozy* could be seen as a catalyzing installation --an impetus for broaching complex, marginalized social histories.

Finally, the fact that *Cozy* was installed in a city park added layers of significance to the work. Situating the installation in the middle of Trinity Square Park, a seemingly public, green space in Toronto, was a purposeful act on the part of the artist. Morton, along with her collaborators at Textile Museum, selected a location that was actually part of marginalized, urban social histories of homeless and underprivileged persons in Toronto. The appearance of this *Cozy* as a nomadic, but welcoming house dropped in this downtown context allowed for questions about hidden or marginalized social histories to be raised.

The segregation of certain individuals from a park, a space identified with the public sphere, can be understood through philosopher Jurgen Habermas's theories of the public and private spheres. He argues that the public sphere arose with the ascent of the post-Enlightenment bourgeois liberal class, and that spaces comprising the public sphere could allow both a public critical debate and a place of mediation between the state and society.¹⁴³ Habermas's prescribed, ideal framework of the public sphere has since been

¹⁴² Bridgman, *StreetCities* 100.

¹⁴³ Jurgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1989); John Michael Roberts and Nick Crossley, "Introduction," *After Habermas: New Perspectives on the*

critiqued by postcolonial and feminist scholars for its masculinist focus on Western humanist narratives; these critiques nonetheless work with his framework to suggest alternative means of understanding his theories.¹⁴⁴ What I argue, following Habermas, and in relation to the installation of *Cozy* in this public park, is that the dispute over the homeless person's right to sit in the public park is part of a Habermasian debate over what

Public Sphere, ed. Nick Crossley and John Michael Roberts (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2004) 4. Habermas describes the public sphere as belonging to the larger context of the what he terms the lifeworld. The lifeworld contains human value, culture, critical reasoning, political debate and the public and private spheres –the private sphere pertaining to the personal, and a sense of self. The other side of Habermas's duality is the system, which comprises the economy and state administration.

¹⁴⁴ Disadvantages of maintaining Habermas's binary framework have been pointed out by feminist critical theorists, art historians, and sociologists. Feminist scholars Nancy Fraser and Lisa McLaughlin argue that Habermas's binary of public and private spheres, found in the lifeworld and in tandem to the system, is problematic. Both scholars work within Habermasian frameworks, but look to feminist theory to offer new ways of rereading Habermas. Fraser posits that a multidirectional model is necessary so that static definitions of the word "private" are challenged, traditional women's labour is not ignored, and socioeconomic relations in the family are complicated. For Fraser, such a multidirectional model allows space for what she terms counterpublics and for agency to be recognized. Likewise, McLaughlin argues that it is necessary to perceive of public spheres in terms what she calls the Westphalian, or masculinist, Western and nationalist globalized frameworks that comprise a multiplicity of transnational public spheres. McLaughlin argues that feminist scholarship, in this Habermasian debate, must now focus on transnational public spheres in globalized capitalism so as to maintain any non-essentialist, inclusive feminist approaches and interact in dialogues with differing publics. Feminist art historians Rita Felski and Rosalyn Deutsche both champion the need for multiple definitions of public spheres, and the need to turn to "public" artistic production as a means for seeing new constructions of the idea of what is deemed public. They argue that the static, patriarchal, Eurocentric definition of the public sphere should be complicated and elaborated upon by artists who explore identity politics through projects in unfolding public spheres. See Nancy Fraser, *Unruly Practices: Power, Discourse, and Gender in Contemporary Social Theory* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989) 119; Lisa McLaughlin, "Feminism and the political economy of transnational public space," *After Habermas: New Perspectives on the Public Sphere*, ed. Nick Crossley and John Michael Roberts (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2004) 156, 168; Rosalyn Deutsche, *Evictions: Art and Spatial Politics* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1996) 312; Felski 165.

he calls the “refeudalization” or colonization of public space.¹⁴⁵ For Habermas, this refeudalization has occurred with a globalizing capitalism that collaborates with all levels of government and takes over the public sphere. Refeudalization of the public sphere occurs as the system, or state administration and economy, collides with the lived realm of the public sphere.¹⁴⁶ In other words, the exclusion of individuals from spaces, an ancient practice based on race, gender and class, can now be seen in relation to those who own city parks and who advertise on the surrounding park billboards. If these corporate interests are threatened by middle-class exodus from the park, based on a perceived fear of the underclass and homeless, they will reclaim the space, but still call it public.¹⁴⁷ Put another way, seemingly open or public spaces such as Trinity Square Park are threatened by encroaching corporatization and capitalist interests acting in combination with municipal authorities.¹⁴⁸

In a similar vein, philosopher Hannah Arendt, an advocate for radical democracy, warns against blurring the lines between public and private realms. She argues that understanding what is “public” is a theoretical strategy for understanding and determining which marginalized groups are segregated from what public spaces.¹⁴⁹ Trinity Square

¹⁴⁵ Roberts and Crossley 9.

¹⁴⁶ Roberts and Crossley 9.

¹⁴⁷ Again, feminist scholars, attentive to issues of discrimination based race, gender, sexuality, ability, religion, and class criticize Habermas’s idealistic version of the public sphere as a Jeffersonian square of debate and post-Enlightenment rationality; see Fraser and McLaughlin.

¹⁴⁸ Roberts and Crossley 9.

¹⁴⁹ Philosopher Hannah Arendt’s radical democratic interpretation of the public and private realms, as she terms them, can be aligned with Habermas’s. She also sees the necessity of maintaining a strong division between both realms. For Arendt, it is in the

Park, while deemed a public space in the traditional sense, is not open to everyone. Municipal and corporate voyeurs, who call city by-law officers and police to remove so-called vagrants, help to exclude the chronic underclass from this space consistently or prevent them from feeling welcome in it. Arendt's argument implies that because spaces, such as public parks, are labeled public in an absolute, narrow manner, it is easier to see where democratic violations occur. In other words, because a city park is technically described as a public space, the fact that it segregates or excludes underclass groups is more transparent than if the park were described as a semi-private space, a third space, or identified by another moniker that connoted the power of the city and demeaned the rights of individuals to gather there.¹⁵⁰ Despite the implicit powers of all three tiers of government --federal, provincial, and municipal-- those homeless and underclass individuals who are removed or made to feel unwelcome reclaim their dignity. As Bridgman and Murphy point out, homeless individuals or the underclass who panhandle and endure names such as "squeegee kids" find their own agency and self-determination

public realm that critical reason or "action" occurs. Conversely, that which is private should remain "hidden" in the private realm to ensure that acts that are not rational or critical remain separate and excluded from the public realm. However at odds this thinking is with feminist scholarship, in the case of the Trinity Square Park, Arendt's argument holds. Nevertheless, many feminist scholars would theoretically find Arendt's notion problematic in the sense that it marginalizes women's labour, maintains the patriarchal power framework of the imposed nuclear family, and supports the possibility for sanctioned counterpublics; see Fraser, McLaughlin, Deutsche, and Felski. Arendt's critical theory provides a concrete way of understanding the ways in which segregation is rampant in contemporary society. Such an understanding of sanctioned segregation is available, as I have described, through Arendt's argument that the public and private realm be delineated clearly; see Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998) 73-74.

¹⁵⁰ Arendt 69. Arendt does not deny that the rise of semi-public spaces is inevitable in a "modern age." However, she cautions against blurring the realms too easily as this can help to theoretically erase the material segregation that occurs daily in parks such as Trinity Square.

through such strategic action.¹⁵¹ Murphy and O'Reilly argue that the determination of the homeless to maintain their presence in segregated spaces speaks to their agency and their questioning of the segregation of the visibly poor from public spaces supposedly meant for everyone.¹⁵²

As I have already stated, the presence of a cream-coloured, constructed wool house –in one way a beacon of exaggerated sweetness in Trinity Square Park– can be seen as an ironic allusion by the artist. The surrounding front lawn of this post-war dream house, Trinity Square Park, carried the traces of historic and contemporary battles over who had the right to enjoy this green space. In constructing this quaint, imagined house in the centre of a downtown, central park where homeless people seek refuge, but are excluded either implicitly or explicitly, Morton and the Textile Museum helped to raise questions about the social histories of those who were invited to and segregated from the historically complex, public space known as the city park.

Chapter Five: working within the cultural institution

Over a year in the making, both of Morton's *Cozy* installations came to fruition within the Textile Museum and with the help of Quinton. Quinton characterized the two works as having had appeal because they could be seen as “working outside the institution”; they were, simply, “textile outside.”¹⁵³ Holland recalled that it was

¹⁵¹ Bridgman, *StreetCities* 100; Murphy 133.

¹⁵² Murphy 133; O'Reilly-Fleming 6.

¹⁵³ Quinton, personal interview.

“something quite unusual to have an exhibition outside the Museum –literally outside.”¹⁵⁴

The consensus, the Textile Museum’s administrators argued, was that because both the Ward’s Island and Trinity Square Park *Cozy* installations were physically removed from the Museum, the institution’s sponsoring role was less apparent to the public. In other words, the hegemonic control the institution might usually embody within the ritualistic space of its own building was veiled in the installations on Ward’s Island and Trinity Square Park.

Nonetheless, I would suggest that both works actually served to extend the Museum into new environments which, acting as new museum spaces, art historian Carol Duncan would argue, were not neutral.¹⁵⁵ According to Duncan, the museum may appear to present “objective knowledge,” but it actually fosters its own ideologies and colludes with hegemonic forces.¹⁵⁶ Similarly, Lynda Jessup argues that an ongoing critique of cultural institutions is imperative in order to understand the role that they play as “ideological spaces” in the field of cultural production.¹⁵⁷ Both Jessup and Duncan point out that museums promote hierarchical thinking, both knowingly and unknowingly reinforcing the marginalization of certain social groups.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁴ Holland, personal interview.

¹⁵⁵ Carol Duncan, *Civilizing Rituals: Inside Public Art Museums* (New York: Routledge, 1995) 8.

¹⁵⁶ Duncan 8.

¹⁵⁷ Lynda Jessup, “Hard Inclusion,” *On Aboriginal Representation in the Gallery*, ed., Lynda Jessup with Shannon Bagg (Hull: Canadian Museum of Civilization, 2002) xvii.

¹⁵⁸ Jessup xvii.

This was evident in the debate surrounding the development of *Cozy* within the Textile Museum. As I have discussed, Holland and Quinton pointed out the degree to which the Board opposed Morton's installation. While I suggest *Cozy* was always an extension of the Textile Museum, its Board may have felt a need to assert more control over its installation because of its removal from the contained, ritualistic space of the Museum –a space that was most conducive to the Board's implicit control.

Quinton and Holland discussed the resistance that they met in seeking approval to install the work. Holland described the Board members' reaction to *Cozy* and their feeling that it was "quite controversial." The chairperson wondered "whether this was something the Museum should do."¹⁵⁹ Quinton was candid; she described the work as having a "politic to it."¹⁶⁰ She also suggested that the Museum is reluctant to talk about it publicly.¹⁶¹ Yet she asserted that the real issue at stake was the Board's resistance to any project that would explicitly "address homelessness in the city."¹⁶² Such a politically-loaded installation ran counter to the Board's perceived mission and was therefore more likely to be questioned severely.

Quinton stated that her and Morton's reaction was to "dig our heels in even further" and quietly resist the Board's powers, and what they saw as its efforts to preserve the institution's cultural capital through savvy public relations and to cater to its corporate

¹⁵⁹ Holland, personal interview.

¹⁶⁰ Quinton, personal interview.

¹⁶¹ Quinton, personal interview.

¹⁶² Quinton, personal interview.

and municipal funders.¹⁶³ The exercise of this form of power in a cultural institution is what Jim McGuigan calls the new managerialism; it pervades administrative decisions and is based on post-Fordist, free market thinking that emerged in British and North American institutions in the 1980s.¹⁶⁴ McGuigan argues that, by focusing on bottom-line strategizing in the context of globalizing capitalism, managerial thinking made institutions even more wary of even vaguely radical projects. In the new managerial era that began the 1980s, institutions like the Textile Museum had to work with less federal funding, stronger neo-liberal cultural policies, and with a business-minded philosophy that made cultural workers who did not conform appear incompetent.¹⁶⁵ Morton's "digging in of her heels" can be seen as her working within an institution to articulate ideas about hidden social histories pertaining to living spaces in urban and suburban contexts. The artist has stated that she is not "overtly political."¹⁶⁶ Nevertheless, she cooperates and works with institutions as a strategy for sustaining herself economically, as a way of "playing within the system" to acquire grants and, finally, as a means to engage in quiet conversations with her audience.¹⁶⁷ As a result, Morton's work within the institution leads to subtle and non-didactic projects. This is evident, as I have discussed, in the media reception *Cozy* garnered in 1999-2000; at that time, it was consistently described as "warm" and "accessible," *Now* magazine's Deidre Hannah touting it as the

¹⁶³ Quinton, personal interview.

¹⁶⁴ Jim McGuigan, *Culture and the Public Sphere* (New York: Routledge, 1996) 61, 67.

¹⁶⁵ McGuigan 61, 67. For a further discussion of cultural policy in the wake of globalized capitalism see O'Regan.

¹⁶⁶ Morton, personal interview.

¹⁶⁷ Morton, personal interview.

second “best” exhibition of 1999 in Toronto.¹⁶⁸ I suggest that the adjective, “accessible,” is the media’s interpretation of an art installation that contradicts the contemporary art institution’s desire to seek cachet for its exhibited works by representing them as esoteric and exclusive. Morton is aware of the 1980s critique of institutions that sought cachet through the exhibition of esoteric projects, and so she deliberately uses an accessible medium, unafraid of being seen as a populist artist who makes her viewers laugh.¹⁶⁹ She employs humorous visual choices, makes emotionally potent works, and creates bold, ironic images that result not in a “one liner” but in the evocation of various social histories.¹⁷⁰ She also uses an accessible tone and exhibits with prominent institutions to convey complex narratives through seemingly ordinary choices of medium.

Another way of articulating the effect of Morton’s practice of working within the institution is to describe it as a counterhegemonic exercise within the hegemonic museum. Her installations destabilize the implicit hegemonic role of the museum and offer a quiet form of resistance from within. In other words, she negotiates her role within the institution, a common route for mid-career artists.¹⁷¹ If I follow historian Ian McKay,

¹⁶⁸ Hannah and Penaloza 65.

¹⁶⁹ Morton, personal interview.

¹⁷⁰ Morton, personal interview; Quinton, personal interview. Windrum described Morton’s use of humour as “immediately disarming. He also described it as having “that subtlety that doesn’t offend, but it’s not such a one liner that it’s dismissed,” Windrum, personal interview. Morton describes her use of accessible visual plays and humour as a “bridge” to connect to “people” or her audience.

¹⁷¹ For consideration of the strategies that mid-career artists working in Canadian institutions employ see Chris Creighton-Kelly, “Bleeding the Memory Membrane: Arts Activism and Cultural Institutions,” *Questions of Community: Artists, Audiences, Coalitions*, ed. Daina Augaitis (Banff: Banff Centre Press/Banff Centre for the Arts, 1995). For discussion of the need for artists to employ such strategies, given the context

who productively links neo-Marxist materialist methodology with Foucauldian methodology, then Morton's work can be seen as a counterhegemonic installation within the all-pervasive, relational, "capillary-esque" power of the museum. However, this does not mean that the neo-liberal political context in which the Textile Museum operates should be seen in essentialist terms.¹⁷² In expressing wariness of this possibility, I draw on Joanne Sharp, Paul Routledge, Chris Philo and Ronan Paddison's rereading of Foucault's definition of power. They posit that Foucauldian power is relational, productive, and operates as a dyad of domination and resistance. They also argue that neither dominant nor resistant powers are total, but rather can be seen as unfolding in fragmented, fluid processes.¹⁷³ In this light, Morton's installations can be understood as working within an ebb and flow of resistance: she collaborated with the Museum's employees, who are themselves also agents of resistance, and yet she too collaborated with the dominant, hegemonic institution.

of reduced governmental funding by cultural bodies such as the Canada Council for the Arts see Clive Robertson, "Launching a new ARTSWORLD Trusted? Connected? Canadian?," *Fuse* 28.1 (2005): 9. For discussion of artists working within institutions for activist purposes in the 1980s and 1990s, see Nina Felshin, *But Is It Art? The Spirit of Art as Activism* (Seattle: Bay Press, 1995). For a case study discussion of activist, artistic practices see Lindsay Leitch, "tacti|c|le: the everyday politics of the Revolutionary Knitting Circle" (MA thesis, Queen's University, 2006).

¹⁷² Ian McKay, *The Quest of the Folk: Antimodernism and Cultural Selection in Twentieth-Century Nova Scotia* (Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1994) 305. What I mean by neo-Marxist or materialist is that the relation to labour value and a group's access to the means of production within globalized capitalism is the basis of understanding these class relations. In addition, these class relations also overlap with other hierarchies of discrimination based on gender, ethnicity, sexuality, ability, religion etc. The term Foucauldian is a reference to philosopher Michel Foucault's definition of power as relational, pervasive and fluid in its ongoing state; see Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality Volume I: An Introduction* (New York: Vintage Books, 1990) 84.

¹⁷³ Joanne P. Sharp, Paul Routledge, Chris Philo, and Ronan Paddison, *Entanglements of Power: Geographies of Domination/Resistance* (New York: Routledge, 2000) 9-11.

Chapter Six: epilogue

Morton's ability to stimulate questions about hidden social histories continues to make her work resonate for viewers. After Morton's work with the Textile Museum, which resulted in "wool work" and the installation of *Cozy* in two very different locations in 1999-2000, the artist found herself working with other institutions. I have chosen to focus on two recent examples. In both instances, Morton's ability to conjure diverse social histories and narratives is demonstrated. Yet the difference between these recent projects is that, in one case, Morton's work was appropriated by an institution and, in the other, she worked collaboratively within it.

In the first case, one of Morton's works was used without the artist's permission by the corporation, Condé Nast Publications, in the May 2006 United States issue of *Vogue*; Morton's *Domestic Interior* was used by *Vogue* editors as the inspiration for a replica of the piece (fig. 10), which was then used in photo spread profiling Christopher Bailey, the new head fashion designer for the British couture label, Burberry and Company. Pictured with Bailey in this faux *Domestic Interior* was famed British model Gemma Ward. The two are pictured in the *Vogue*-designed set, which editors noted in a small side caption was "inspired by the work of Janet Morton."¹⁷⁴ The *Vogue* set mimicked most of Morton's *Domestic Interior* --the wool-sheathed, cream-coloured easy chair, the rotary phone, the television set, potted plant, picture frame, and teacup. *Vogue* editors had Burberry designer Bailey and model Ward clad in cream, camel and beige Burberry outfits to match the set. Reproducing Morton's work without permission, Condé Nast Publishers sought to make a photo shoot that carried the cachet of Morton's art, and

¹⁷⁴ Sarah Mower, "Master of the House," *Vogue* May 2006: 264-267, 302.

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master of the house

On Christopher Bailey's watch, Burberry has grown exponentially, cleverly balancing the classic, the funky, and the English eccentric. Sarah Mower reports.

My God! Look at that avalanche!" exclaims Mario Testino to Stella Tennant as she loops off the runway in a four-trimmed trench coat and skids to a halt at his side. They're backstage at Burberry, looking at the spot where Christopher Bailey — with his big enthusiastic grin, tousled sandy hair, blue eyes, schoolboy sweater, and polished shoes — has suddenly disappeared beneath a sea of TV crews. Kate Moss, also wearing Burberry (a black leather quilted jacket and a black long-sleeved dress), is apparently somewhere in there with him. Bailey's design team strives to quell the waves of jostling well-wishers with platters of champagne. Finally, impatient journalists turn and start interviewing one another in the mode: "So! We are here tonight at Burberry's hundred-and-fiftieth-anniversary celebration! What is the secret of its success today?"

It is a good question. The Burberry story is now one of the great corporate wonders of the world: the improbable tale of how a staid British raincoat company became a hot and fashionable multibillion-dollar brand in the few short years since 1997. At the center of the phenomenon, the "skinny man" (as Bailey cheerfully calls himself) responsible for overseeing the design end of the phenomenal Burberry boom holds many of the answers. The egalitarian 35-year-old Yorkshire boy can talk up a veritable storm about it. "It's a democratic point of view, and the trench coat signifies everything we stand for — it's not just for a fashion person, it's for a classic person, old, young, everybody!" he declares. But to get a real insight into Bailey's knack, you have to track him back to base.

Bailey works in London, in the light-drenched attic of what was once Burberry's 1912 department store in the Haymarket. When he stepped over the threshold in 2001 at the age of 30, he arrived forearmed from working closely with Tom Ford

MAKER'S MARK
Bailey and model Gemma Ward in Burberry's new spring/summer 2006 line. Gemma: Souleiman for TGI; St. Baker; models: Sam Bryant for H&M; Coco; set design: Andy Hillman, inspired by the work of Janet Marston. Details, see in This Issue. Styling: Editor Edward Enninful.

Photographed by Tim Walker

Figure 10. Tim Walker, "Master of the House," photograph, *Vogue* May 2006: 264-65.

yet was accessible to viewers. Here, Morton's humourous, accessible and layered work fit the criteria *Vogue* stylists and editors were seeking. Through the cozy gentility of the work, and its allusions to comfortable middle-class histories --constructed in the ordinary, but humourous medium of wool-- *Domestic Interior* referenced the history of a class editors wished to align with Burberry designer Christopher Bailey. The fact that Morton's work was used is a testament to the range of audiences and histories that her work can address. Yet, it does not erase the fact that her work was appropriated and plagiarized to further two sets of corporate interests: those of Condé Nast Publications and Burberry and Company.

In contrast, Morton's *Domestic Interior*, when installed at the Textile Museum of Canada, addressed the social histories of middle-class domesticity in order to trouble these histories. Morton achieved this in collaboration with curators who were aware of the histories being presented. In the Condé Nast use of *Domestic Interior*, Morton was not voluntarily working with the corporate institution. Nevertheless, one implication was that savvy use of Morton's work would heighten the profile (and ultimately the year-end profits) of Burberry and Co., and Condé Nast Publications. Here, the modernist construct of the "artist as genius," "conduit," or "avant-garde" was exploited by the two companies to advance their own interests.

Morton is now seeking legal representation through a free legal clinic provided to Canadian artists, Canadian Artists Representation/Le front des artistes canadiens (CARFAC). CARFAC sees Condé Nast's reproduction of Morton's work as a case of intellectual property theft.¹⁷⁵ Morton stated that she would not have given permission for

¹⁷⁵ Janet Morton, email interview, 11 September 2006.

the use of her work as a “prop for the Burberry millionaire,” explaining that the issue was one of authorship, and of the use of her work in ways that ran counter to her own principles.¹⁷⁶

In the second case I have chosen to highlight, Morton voluntarily worked with another institution, Museum London, in London, Ontario. Here again, Morton’s practice of working within an institution was employed to initiate alternative narratives about the idea of house and home. From 17 September 2005 to 8 January 2006, a third installation of *Cozy* was constructed on the front lawn of Museum London as part of the Museum’s show, “CAMPSites.” However, “CAMPSites” *Cozy* was constructed in this case, not with a metal scaffolding, but with 2 x 4” wooden boards and a roof support of chicken wire, which was not visible to viewers.¹⁷⁷ It is fair to say that, like its predecessors, this installation of *Cozy* offered layered means of accessing marginalized histories concerning home, homelessness, and housing. The appearance of the work remained the same, the iconic shape of the house providing a point of entry for viewers to contemplate ideas of domesticity.

As the focal point of the exhibition, “CAMPSites” curator Melanie Townsend developed the ideas of transience and nomadism, and explored the shifting definitions of what makes a home. Using the exhibition as a forum, she explored middle-class transience, in the form of camping and vacations; shifting transnational identities created by war and natural disasters, as well as the transience chosen by an underclass struggling

¹⁷⁶ Morton, email interview.

¹⁷⁷ Melanie Townsend, email interview, 21 October 2005.

to survive in conditions created by globalized capitalism.¹⁷⁸ Townsend also brought together other artists who participated in “CAMPSites” in connection with an earlier version of the show at Banff’s Walter Phillips Gallery to engage in discussion about transience, home and homelessness in contemporary contexts.¹⁷⁹

In this case, Morton also worked with Townsend and the institution as a means of effectively reaching a broad audience with her work. Townsend pointed out in a press release for the show that Museum London is in London, Ontario, a town polarized in its class make-up both by insurance and academic industries, and by the fledgling “rust belt” of Southern Ontario’s almost extinct manufacturing “blue collar” industries.¹⁸⁰ In this context, *Cozy* again alluded to the homeless and the underclass, as well as to middle-class domesticity. Yet, this time, the work was installed on the front lawn of a museum, tying it closely to a dominant, cultural institution.¹⁸¹ Morton was “working within” an institution to address social histories of middle-class domesticity, and shifting notions of home, shelter, and homelessness.¹⁸²

The degree to which “CAMPSites” *Cozy* addressed diverse, marginalized social histories depended on shifting variables such as audience, context, and time of year. A

¹⁷⁸ “CAMPSites,” media release, *Museum London*, October 2005.

¹⁷⁹ Morton did not participate in the Walter Phillips Gallery “CAMPSites show,” which occurred in the summer of 2005. The artists who participated in the Museum London “CAMPSites” exhibition included Rebecca Belmore, Ellen Driscoll, Tsuyoshi Ozawa, Adriana Kuiper, Ana Rewakowicz, Faye Heavysield, Liz Magor, Robin Collyer, Fred Douglas, and Kim Adams.

¹⁸⁰ *Museum London*.

¹⁸¹ Windrum, personal interview.

¹⁸² O’Regan 201.

mixture of social histories ranging from those of middle-class domestic leisure time to those of the struggling, but surviving underclass can be said to have been alluded to by Morton's nuanced method of avoiding didactic, overt statements. Social histories of domestic space overlapping like layers of sedimentary rock, are explored by the artist through inviting, humourous, and complex means. As she does so, she embraces the idea that her works might act as catalysts, leading to new ways of thinking about the social spatial histories of "home," and of acting in response to them.

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