



University of the
West of England

Health: The Design, Planning and Politics of How and Where We Live

- **Paper / Proposal Title:**

Happy Homes

- **Format:**

Conference presentation with written paper

- **Author(s) Name:**

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- **University or Company Affiliation:**

Manchester School of Art, Manchester Metropolitan University

- **Abstract (300 words):**

Happy Homes

This paper will argue that using anthropological methodologies such as placing people and their 'stuff' (Miller) as the focus of the Interior Design and Architectural process, will create more emotionally durable new homes for people to live in.

Currently in the UK, new home building is a priority as demand vastly outstrips supply. This paper will argue the long revered Le Corbusier mantra that residential buildings are 'machines for living' is now defunct and a more socially aware and inclusive process is needed to ensure the well being of new inhabitants and aid the establishment and longevity of communities in high density city areas.

Specifically, this paper will focus on Interior Design process as the medium by which institutional architecture and detached occupants can conciliate. The paper takes as its primary case study a research project conducted with first year undergraduate students who were moving to University accommodation as their first 'home away from home' (Cieraad). It discloses the efforts and dilemmas new occupants of purpose built institutional accommodation face in their endeavours to make a 'home' and establish a community for the first time. It compares the experiences of these students to those living in other institutional places such as council estates or prisons (Clarke, Miller et al). Drawing on these findings, it suggests that designing interior spaces with people and their possessions is key to establishing harmonious communities and better relationships between occupant and landlord.

• **Author(s) Biography (200 words each):**

Shelley McNulty is a practicing Interior Designer and academic in the Design Department at Manchester School of Art, MMU, where she teaches on the BA(Hons) Interior Design and runs the MA Interior Design. Having spent many years in the commercial realm, Shelley's research is now concerned with home making, in particular, how we make 'home' with the stuff we accumulate, and questioning the role of the designer in this process.

She is interested in the social sciences, design anthropology and co-design. Her research aims to re-position Interior Design process as something more complex than an aesthetic or commercial venture, by drawing upon social anthropological data and theories, to create better spaces for people and their stuff.

Shelley is Chair of Engagement for subject association Interior Educators, and together with David Littlefield (UWE), she is Co-Editor in Chief of the on-line pedagogic journal, IE:Studio (<https://interioreducators.co.uk/studio>) which is concerned with the teaching of the interiors discipline, with focus on the design studio and it's dynamic pedagogy.