

Home/Screen

The Domestic Architecturalization of Television and Televised Space

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As architecture becomes television, television becomes architecture. Televised spaces become extensions of residential spaces, creating windows into other realities. At the same time, spaces of these other realities are presented as flattened images. Using perspectives ranging from the social to the architectural, this article argues that the television and the spaces it depicts are vital parts of our domestic architecture. Television has adopted spatial aspects and profoundly transformed domestic environments. The way in which we interact with television, and the type of content it depicts, greatly impacts the architectural implications of its presence. This article also examines changing methods of television consumption in the context of this relationship.

The televised image and television itself are both aspects of domestic architecture, and they shape our ideas of domesticity. Regarding them as important elements of domestic architecture would benefit architectural discourse and help to contextualize the effects they have had on the design of homes, as well as the idea of “home.”

The television screen is an extension of the architecture of our homes. It shows images of domestic environments, and it mirrors what we wish to see in our own homes, both physically and socially. It shows us places entirely different from our homes and welcomes these foreign environments into the visual and psychological domain of the spaces in which we sleep, eat, and go about our daily lives.

But what demarcates this “architectural” space? Are furniture and appliances less “architectural” than walls or windows? In this article, I argue that television is an architectural element and the spaces it displays become extensions of the domestic sphere. While there have been many

changes in the ways television is conceptualized in recent years, television's evolving form and methods of consumption alter, but do not sever, this relationship between it and domestic space.

Previously, before the popularization of television, architecture was the setting for events: if you watched something happening in your home, it was because something was happening, live, in your home. Now, with television, we watch things happening in our home that happened far away, in other locales, homes, fake homes, and non-homes. However, these events are still happening in our homes; the images are localized to us, so the surrounding settings become part of our homes as well, a visual extension of domestic architecture. In this process, there are two layers of "architecturalization": that of the television integrating itself into domestic architecture and that of the spaces it depicts being introduced into the domestic environment.

The Architecturalization of Television

Like doors and windows, the television set marks a line between what is included in our physical space and what is not. However, unlike doors and windows, the television brings external spaces into our homes. Albeit temporary and representational, televised realities are contained within yet also extend our homes, and constitute parts of our domesticity. Paul Virilio describes the television screen as a "third window" that "doesn't function at all as a medium like radio or newspapers, but as an architectonic element: it is a portable window, insofar as it can be shifted. It's part of the organization of a city, a definitive, final, terminal city" (Virilio, 1988, pp. 191–2). His description is largely specific to how the television is used at one end of the attention spectrum: as part of the domestic background. At the other end of that spectrum, the television set crosses into another medium and shows us a film we are intently watching with the lights off, or a video game we are playing: instances in which the television set is involved but shows us media other than that for which it was created.

If the television screen is considered to be like a window, then everyone watching the same show at the same time has the same view from their window, like multiple tenants in one apartment building who have

nearly identical views. Milly Buonanno, in her book-length study *The Age of Television: Experiences and Theories*, uses a similar metaphor to distinguish between generalist television content and niche television content (or “broadcasting” and “narrowcasting,” terms widely used in the field of media studies) as the difference between a town square and a club (Buonanno, 2008, pp. 25-26).¹ Similarly, while once this building metaphor would be the primary mode of television, with all concurrent viewers distributed among a relatively small number of buildings, with the advent of streaming services viewers are increasingly solitary, with no immediate neighbors. Even those watching the same show would likely not be watching the same episode at the same time. However, this greater freedom in content also has architectural implications, as it allows viewers to truly design part of their domestic spaces, to play the role of amateur architect in their own homes.

In their influential 1977 book, *A Pattern Language*, Christopher Alexander, Sara Ishikawa, Murray Silverstein et al. examined the patterns underlying the built environment and sought to codify them for design use by architects and lay people alike. In pattern 129, “Common Areas at the Heart [of a Building],” the authors write of the family room in a low-income Peruvian house, though per the book’s modus operandi, it is spoken of in the context of a universally applicable pattern. They write:

The room is so placed in the house, that people naturally pass through it on their way into and out of the house. The end where they pass through it allows them to linger for a few moments, without having to pull out a chair to sit down. The TV set is at the opposite end of the room from this through-way, and a glance at the screen is often the excuse for a moment’s further lingering. The part of the room for the TV set is often darkened; the family room and the TV function just as much during midday as they do at night (Alexander et al., 1977, p. 618).

At the same time, in pattern 181, “The Fire,” they write: “There is no substitute for fire. Television often gives focus to a room, but it is nothing but a feeble substitute for something which is actually alive and flickering within the room” (Alexander et al., 1977, p. 839).

The fireplace is historically considered essential and central to domestic architecture, but the television must be accorded similar architectural recognition. The television may not have the same level of physical

integration into domestic architecture as the fireplace, but it replaces the fireplace as a locus for gathering and as a vital part of a household. Today, the fireplace is no longer utilitarian, but rather an amenity or luxury often connoting social status.

In Rem Koolhaas et al.'s encyclopedic compendium, *Elements of Architecture*, one of the fifteen elements of architecture to which a section is devoted is the fireplace.² Within this section, the authors are certainly cognizant not only of the fireplace's waning importance but also of the role of the television in supplanting it. A graph within this section shows "fireplace" splitting off into both "fire" and "place": "fire" further splits into "cooking" and "heating," with ends going to items such as "microwave" and "HVAC," while "place" ends with items such as "radio," "TV," and "Nintendo Wii" (Koolhaas, 2018, pp. 1406–7). The idea of the social space of the hearth being supplanted by the television set is certainly no longer radical. In fact, they even write that "[a]s a gathering place – the focal point of the home – the fireplace is usurped by radio then the TV" (Koolhaas, 2018, p. 1490); and in a section entitled "Conversion: How to Destroy Your Fireplace," they depict a fireplace being replaced with a television set (Koolhaas, 2018, p. 1529). Yet there are reasons why the fireplace is considered an element of architecture while the television is not: the authors address the historical importance of the fireplace, its utilitarian and symbolic heat, and its permanent physical installation, which all contribute to this place of importance. However, in future studies of the basic components of architecture, perhaps theorists will accord the television set the same importance that the fireplace once had.³

While the thermal and nutritive elements of the fireplace have been completely supplanted in the modern American home by HVAC systems and kitchen appliances, it is still invoked for its representational power as a gathering place. However, now that its practical uses are hardly associated directly with the fireplace anymore, it is time to retire this model and recognize the television for its necessity in this regard. Since much of the reason for gathering around the fireplace was due to the warmth it put out, and any social and familial benefits were largely a byproduct of this physical closeness, we should recognize the television as the true innovation in this field, as a source of in-home entertainment that gives the family a reason to

gather that is not dependent on practicality. The radio, of course, was first in this regard, but its domestic impact is largely as a forerunner to television and it has not had nearly the lasting significance of its visual successor.

The Architecturalization of Televised Spaces

When we acknowledge that the television set itself should be considered part of our home's architecture, we can then accept that the spaces depicted within the television screen are an extension of our domestic architecture. The recognition of the former is essential for the recognition of the latter: there is no view without a window; there is no entrance without a doorframe; there is no fire without a fireplace; there is no wall decoration without a wall. Like these elements, the televised depictions are not so much an integral part of the home as much as a fulfillment of the function of a home: a space tailored to one's own needs and desires. This also is what prevents this idea from passing into the realm of the fantastic; of course, we are not physically in the environments depicted on screen, the television set is our mediator.

Donald Horton and R. Richard Wohl's influential 1956 study "Mass Communication and Para-Social Interaction" analyses the "para-social interaction" between the subjects of television programs and their audiences. While their study focuses primarily on shows led by "personae"—that is, shows such as talk shows and variety shows hosted by a non-fictional (or purportedly non-fictional) personality—it can extend to other genres such as the sitcom and the soap opera. They write that the persona "tries as far as possible to eradicate, or at least to blur, the line which divides him and his show, as a formal performance, from the audience in both the studio and at home" (Horton and Wohl, 1956, p. 217). This theory provides a basis for recognizing that this level of interaction between subject and audience creates a condensation of space, whereby the distinction between televised location and viewed location is collapsed. Joshua Meyrowitz writes that Horton and Wohl "overlook ... a shrinking of the distances between live and mediated encounters," but while they "do not link their framework to an analysis of the impact of electronic media on physical place ... they do offer observations that support such an analysis" (Meyrowitz, 1985, p. 119–121).

Still, the camera does not provide a full overview of the televised space; it only provides a certain portion at any given time, while the localized space of the audience is never transmitted the other way. However, that does not negate this condensation; rather, it mediates its terms and forces us to acknowledge that the relationship is not equal; we welcome televised events and people into our homes, but they, as simultaneous guests in thousands of homes, have no knowledge of us, and we only access as much of their spaces as they are willing to show us.

When we watch shows that take place in the home, whether they be reality shows that take place in real homes or sitcoms that take place in fake homes, the television screen also becomes a mirror, depicting domestic settings as we watch it in our own domestic settings. Yet it is, in a sense, a distorted mirror because television is always false, idealized, or sanitized. American television shows reflect the conceptions of American homes by industry creatives; while a show may depict families of any socioeconomic class, it will always do so from the perspective of those who create the show, as well as in a way that is conducive to the genre of the show. In Denise Scott Brown's essay "Learning from Pop," she cites as an architectural source of inspiration "physical backgrounds in the mass media, movies, soap operas, pickle and furniture polish ads," and notes that "the aim is not to sell houses but something else, and the background represents someone's (Madison Avenue's?) idea of what pickle buyers or soap opera watchers want in a house" (Scott Brown, 1984, p. 27). This logic can be extended beyond the physical architecture of the show, as the entire concept of the show has to be sold to be believed. The design of sets on television shows are meant to sell to the viewers; in the case of sitcoms, for example, we are sold the idea that these characters are believable as a real family or social unit; the creators of these shows convince us that this is how people of a certain social status, location, etc. would act, and the humor often arises from conflicts that seem plausible to the average viewer. This is what sets most sitcoms apart from other genres of television: while parts of it require a suspension of belief, most sitcoms try to be a mirror of a segment of the general public. Their situations, while sometimes far-fetched, are always meant to tell a story that seems relatable; there is none of the manufactured melodrama of soap operas and "reality television,"

nor the realism of dramatic programs which may accurately portray their subjects but which rarely focus on average everyday life. On the other hand, while the characters of sitcoms may represent diverse demographics, they are simultaneously meant to mirror the “average person” and appeal to those watching. Roger Silverstone writes that television “is... a means for our integration into a consumer culture through which our domesticity is both constructed and displayed” (Silverstone, 1994, p. 24). He goes on to write: “Television provides a link between home and identity in a number of ways, both in its status as a domestic object and through its mediation of images of domesticity which can be seen to be reflective or potentially expressive of images of home” (Silverstone, 1994, p. 31). Television both reflects “home” to us and helps us to construct what “home” means to us, thus forming part of our social identities.

In her illustrated essay about sitcom couches, “Seat of Comedy,” Mame McCutchin writes that couches in American sitcoms are “the primary signifiers of class and family unity,” and provides a plethora of examples about how not only the couches themselves, but the placement of couches within sitcom sets, reflect these values (McCutchin, 2010, p. 100). For example, she notes how shows about middle-class white families starting with *I Love Lucy* have sofas “squared off to the central camera,” presenting “viewers... with a mirror image of themselves,” how Will’s chair for watching TV in *Will & Grace*, upstage and far away from the couch, represents Will’s lack of a family, Will being “gay and therefore forced into exile when he engages in that all-American activity of watching TV,” or how the use of the couch as a pull-out bed in *Good Times* “invite[s] identification from nonwhite and/or poor households” (McCutchin, 2010, pp. 101, 103). While the whole set of a sitcom is meticulously designed to help communicate a specific class and social identity of its characters, the couch is often the center of attention and thus the most important single element. It is also the most direct example of mirroring happening between the audience and the show: when sitcom characters sit on a couch, it is often facing towards the camera which represents an unseen television set, much as the viewer is likely watching the sitcom from their couch with their family. The television set becomes the portal connecting their world to ours.

The domestic sitcom is in a feedback loop with our domestic spaces, which makes its power of architectural representation stronger: their homes are conscious attempts to mimic our real homes, where we watch them from. These two domestic spaces—the real and the televised—become linked and therefore essentially continuations of each other. However, just as our homes are inextricably influenced by our family structure, our age, our economic class, our race, and other social factors, each show depicts a different combination of these factors and thus diversifies our homes. Television producers have long used this fact to introduce virtual guests into our home in efforts to effect social change. Without discussing the social implications of sitcoms in great depth, as numerous social studies of sitcoms have covered this topic in far greater detail and expertise, we may observe that the fact that American sitcoms are both representative of a wide range of American demographics and simultaneously intended to be successful across many of these demographics is not coincidental to shifting social ideals.⁴

Because the television set is a focal point and not mere decoration, its settings become part of our domestic architecture. A focal point can be liminal (background watching is a valid and common engagement) yet it competes for attention. In the same way that art requests attention, so does the television set, even when consumed passively. We would not go through the effort of buying, framing, and hanging art if it did not improve our space, if we didn't examine it closely on occasion, and if we didn't find it beautiful. Similarly, even with the television set on in the background, we wouldn't let it make noise and consume energy for no reason. Television sets in public settings, such as bars and restaurants, define aspects of the atmosphere. Even when muted and ancillary, they offer opportunities to distract us. We may think that in our homes we treat the television set differently because there's only one, it's unmuted, and we are seated in front of it, but this is not necessarily the case. Television does not have the social power to bring groups of family and friends together because it demands our full attention—it has this power because even at its most socially engaging, as when we have large groups over to watch an important show, it still encourages us to focus some of our attention on those with whom we are watching it.

Joshua Meyrowitz writes that, thanks to the non-physical nature of electronic media, their messages “can no longer be stopped at the door” and that “[o]nce a telephone, radio, or television is in the home, spatial isolation and guarding of entrances have no effect on information flow” (Meyrowitz, 1985, p. 117). However, he also notes that while electronic media “weaken[s] the distinction between people who are ‘here’ and people who are ‘somewhere else;’ their messages are often “context-bound,” and “electronic media ... binds both people and their messages to the originating environment” (Meyrowitz, 1985, p. 122). He briefly touches on how radios and telephones transmit environmental sounds, but the true major effect in communication here is the visual, rather than the audible. Televised messages come into our homes; they don’t remove us from our homes, we are left in place, but they bring foreign environments and backgrounds into our homes. In this way, the filmed location of the message changes not only its overall meaning, but also the environment of our homes. Meyrowitz also goes on to note that, while other media, such as books, require full attention, radio and television can often form the background to other activities: “electronic media invade places, yet do not ‘occupy’ them in the way that other media such as books do” (Meyrowitz, 1985, p. 124). Virilio touches on this as well, noting that with reading, “[t]here is a rupture, there are pages you have to flip through,” while “[w]ith film, either movie or video ... you have a continuity” (Virilio, 1988, p. 190). Television will continue running on in the background if we don’t stop it, but we can always choose to pay less attention to it. Books, on the other hand, only take up space when we give them our undivided attention. Like the physical architecture of our homes, the televised message may become just one part of an overall environment; while it may at times be our primary focus, it is never decontextualized from where we view it.

The television set is in a unique situation compared to any other household object in that it is both stationary and transporting. The two major household technological advances to arise since the television, the personal computer and the cell phone, are also transporting but not stationary. While stationary desktop personal computers were and, to a certain extent, still are common, they have largely been supplanted by laptops, especially with younger users. Desktop computers are now associated with the office

and with those who need a more powerful computer, and so they are no longer the primary example to focus on when thinking about the average computer in the home. What this means is that, unlike television, they are not an element of architecture: personal computers have been optimized in the laptop, thus proving that they do not need to be large or stationary. In fact, it is more desirable when they are not. They also are “personal computers” because most interaction with them is done one-on-one, with no direct social element. Meanwhile, smartphones have replaced regular cell phones and, in many instances, even stationary landlines, which are increasingly antiquated. They are also used, for a large percentage of time, outside of the home. Just as the laptop did for personal computers, the cell phone decouples the phone from the domestic environment and proves that, unlike television, it does not need to be anchored to the home. While television programs can be (and are) watched on laptops and smartphones, most households still have television sets because television programs are meant to be watched on the larger, higher-definition screens of televisions. They are also essential for the social element of television, since the laptop and smart phone can only be used comfortably by one person at a time. The small screens and the personal nature of these devices cannot match the familial warmth of the television set. The television set, therefore, is part of our home’s architecture because it has resisted the impulse to be incorporated into the portable and the small, and has remained steadfast in the necessity of its being seen in its designated location on a larger scale.

Television Today

The sea change over the past ten years in the way television is consumed is undeniable. However, this hasn’t severed its relationship with domestic spaces, but rather changed it. In Amanda D. Lotz’s *Portals: A Treatise on Internet-Distributed Television*, she writes that “[t]he revolutionary impact of new media upon television has not been as a replacement medium, but as a new mechanism of distribution,” and that “[i]nternet distribution enables personalized delivery of content independent of a schedule” (Lotz, 2017). Similarly, Michael Wolff, in his book *Television is the New Television: the Unexpected Triumph of Old Media in the Digital Age*, examines the ways

in which television, despite many predictions otherwise, has continued to be a cultural behemoth. With regard to one of the most notable streaming services, he writes that “Netflix had almost nothing to do with the conventions of digital media—in a sense it rejected them. . . . In every way, except for its route into people’s homes—and the differences here would soon get blurry—it is the same as television. It was old-fashioned, passive, narrative entertainment” (Wolff, 2015, pp. 93-94). The way in which television content comes into our homes, and the way in which it is organized and selected, has changed. There is some difference in modes of consumption, thanks to the freedom of choice and lack of a linear schedule. However, television is not a different medium thanks to these differences; we are simply interacting with it in a more direct way. With a channel broadcast, a viewer can tune in to a channel and keep it on indefinitely, thus allowing it to become part of a domestic atmosphere; with streaming services, a viewer must choose what to watch, although many services do have an “autoplay” function to continue showing episodes of the same series.

Catherine Johnson, in an article on the rise of apps used for watching television on smart TVs, writes that “TV apps silo content and users within self-contained spaces, making discoverability central to the dynamics of the contemporary television marketplace,” a clear architectural analogue in the way the consumption of television has changed (Johnson, 2020, p. 177). Returning to Buonanno’s metaphor, the town square and club are both going extinct; the architectural aspect of television is more localized. Homes are no longer linked through their shared receipt of the same broadcast; rather, the streaming service is used to redesign and augment the home in whatever way the audience wishes. Johnson also notes that, while “apps are most commonly associated with smartphones and tablets . . . the vast majority of television viewing (in the United Kingdom and the United States) takes place on a TV set” (Johnson, 2020, p. 165).⁵

One major difference in television consumption thanks to streaming television content is the concept of “binge-watching” or “binge-viewing.” In former modes of consuming television, watching many episodes of a single series at once was impossible outside of a marathon or owning a DVD set, and so the show could only be consumed on a daily or weekly basis (or whatever basis was determined by the channel broadcasting it). In his article on

the concept, Graeme Turner writes that “[t]here is reason to argue that what we might once have designated as binge-viewing . . . has now become part of everyday social practice within many households. For them now, perhaps, it is just how they ‘watch television’” (Turner, 2021, p. 234). For the increasing number of television audiences who have completely moved away from broadcast television, the linearity of a broadcast schedule is gone, but there is the new linearity of being able to watch a series continuously and in order. This applies to older series, the whole archive of which is available, but also to current shows that are released on streaming services one season at a time, as opposed to the once-universal broadcast mode of daily or weekly episode release. When viewing a channel broadcast, the environment of the home is continually changed as the schedule shifts from show to show. However, with binge-watching, this environment remains constant as the same show continues to form a large part of it.

This also means that the choice of which show to watch is more active. In her article on reruns in relation to streaming television, Anne Gilbert writes that, while “[r]eruns distributed via streaming services do not offer the same pleasures of passive entertainment that are possible with syndication practices,” this method of consuming reruns does “restore the possibility of narrative linearity and serialization to rerun content” (Gilbert, 2019, pp. 694–695). The distinction between watching “reruns” and “new TV” is less clear than it was previously; as Gilbert writes, including reruns in “a larger media matrix reconfigures how viewers engage with older content, as the demands of navigation and selection complicate the understanding of reruns as a passive entertainment” (Gilbert, 2019, p. 695). With streaming television viewers must choose the shows they watch and cannot rely on the channel to do it for them. However, the television content is also distanced from organizing principles such as production date, genre, and target audience. Rather than relying on and switching between channels that group shows by criteria like these, viewers can intermingle disparate television programs as much as they desire as long as all their choices are available on the same streaming service.⁶

Now that television consumption is more active, the role of television as a window is called into question. We cannot decide what happens outside our windows, just as at one time we could not fully decide what was

on our televisions. Now that we can, how should the television screen be conceptualized in relation to our domestic architecture? I would argue that this means the television has grown beyond the need of a conceptualizing metaphor and has justified its presence in our homes on its own. The television set is the television set: an important piece of domestic architecture that situates our domestic settings in relation to the media we consume. It is an opportunity for viewers to create the home they want through media by deciding what television content (or other content) they want it to show. It is the easiest way to change the atmosphere of a domestic environment. It is not essential, in the same way that not every home has a fireplace, a basement, or a balcony. Yet like these items it is an important architectural element that needs to be conceptualized properly.

Nonetheless, changes in the distribution of television content and in the ways viewers select it does not change the television experience wholesale. Marika Lüders and Vilde Schanke Sundet examine this in their article “Conceptualizing the Experiential Affordances of Watching Online TV.” They write that “[a]lthough the materiality of television changes, we cannot simply infer changes in viewer behavior, but need to consider long established viewing practices, as well as how the material level of technologies shapes but never fully determines experiences” (Lüders & Sundet, 2021, p. 3).⁷ They also write that “[v]iewers may for example have opportunities to watch shows that fit their individual preferences but may still experience a pull toward the social role of television: watching together with family and friends and talking about the same shows” (Lüders & Sundet, 2021, p. 3).⁸ After conducting a study of twenty Norwegian participants, they note that “while online TV may have a stronger component of individualized viewing, viewing as a collective activity remains central” (Lüders & Sundet, 2021, pp. 6-7). There are also ways of considering the architectural implications of online television that may be unique to different subcultures or cultural groups. In her study of forty Koreans living temporarily in the United States on study or work visas, Claire Shinhea Lee writes that “transient migrants make home materially, affectively, and relationally in their diasporic space” (Lee, 2020, p. 280). She also writes that, for this group, “two kinds of ‘home’ exist: first, the home that means the domestic and familial, and second, the imagined and distant home where memories of exile and nostalgia are

situated” (Lee, 2020, p. 281). Because they watch primarily Korean content, only three of them paid for cable. Instead, the majority of television content was watched on streaming or download websites, both legal and illegal, that focus specifically on Korean television. Television, for them, acts architecturally by helping to recreate a home in the diasporic sense and by acting as an important aspect of a home in the most immediate sense. Put simply, watching television helps to create a home; watching Korean television helps to create a Korean home in the United States.

Ultimately, which elements comprise the architecture of our homes is not a question definitively answered by architects or academics, but by the inhabitants of these homes themselves. The patterns of usage associated with these elements are much more important than how they are designed: domestic architecture should try to make domestic life better, easier, or more beautiful; it should not try to tell people how to live in their own homes and what they should want their homes to look like. Acknowledging that the television is a profound element of domestic architecture would thus strengthen architectural discourse around the home. To dismiss it as mere appliance or decoration is to dismiss the greatest tool to alter how we perceive our home; to consider it a subpar replacement of the fireplace is to denigrate the importance of shared household leisure. There is no other object which simultaneously brings the members of a household together, entertains them, changes the visual environment of their home, and can function as both the center of attention and part of the background. While the fireplace is functionally replaced by heating systems and ovens, there is no functional replacement for the television within the confines of our homes. Without it, the world outside our home might be more interesting, but where we spend most of our time, our homes themselves, would be dreadfully boring.

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NOTES

- 1 Buonanno also argues that the television was never inherently domestic, but was made to fit into a domestic role to which it still does not entirely belong. While this contention is essentially diametrically opposed to the argument of this paper, both her argument and the argument of this paper are rooted in the fact that the presence of the television in the home is profound.
- 2 While the book as a whole is credited primarily to Koolhaas along with a large list of collaborators, it should be noted that Sébastien Marot is credited as “contributor” on the title page of the “Fireplace” section.
- 3 It is worth noting, however, that on the book’s own terms, this could be a possibility: contributors James Westcott and Stephan Petermann note that, while earlier treatises “claimed a definitive list” of elements, it “makes no such claim” and that the book’s contributors “tended towards elements that might be considered scenography rather than structure,” a category which could easily include the television (Koolhaas, 2018, p. LXXII).
- 4 For an example of a paper that covers both the architectural and social implications of a specific sitcom in detail, in this case *Good Times*, see Joseph Godlewski’s “The Tragicomic Televisual Ghetto: Popular Representations of Race and Space at Chicago’s Cabrini-Green.”
- 5 Johnson cites “The Viewing Report” from 2019 by the Broadcasters’ Audience Research Board, or BARB, which claims almost 99 % of U.K. television viewing is done on the television set, as well as a 2017 Nielsen report (“Over 92 % of All Adult Viewing in the U.S. is Done on the TV Screen”) which claims that 92.4 % of television viewing in the U.S. is done on a television set. Both of these companies are considered the primary television audience measurement agencies in their respective countries.
- 6 It is important, in the age of streaming, to make the distinction between being able to watch any television show that one wants to and being able to watch any television show that is available to stream. While a viewer may choose to watch a wide variety of shows, there will always be shows that are unavailable. Gilbert addresses this: “As streaming services build desirable commercial content libraries that construct archives of televisual history, it is important to note the purpose, practices, and gaps in those archives because programs that are unavailable to stream may be left out of evolving concepts of television altogether” (Gilbert, 2019, p. 697).
- 7 In this sentence, Lüders and Sundet reference the following sources: “The Affordances of Social Media Platforms” by Taina Bucher and Anne Helmond; “Pushing Music: People’s Continued Will to Archive Versus Spotify’s Will to Make Them Explore” by Marika Lüders; and “Imagined Affordance: Reconstructing a Keyword for Communication Theory” by Peter Nagy and Gina Neff.

- 8 Lüders and Sundet reference James Lull's *Inside Family Viewing: Ethnographic Research on Television's Audiences* in this sentence.

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