The spatial implications of homeworking: a Lefebvrian approach to the rewards and challenges of home-based work

Abstract:

In this theoretical paper we propose an approach to the spatial implications of homeworking derived from the work of social theorist Henri Lefebvre. By highlighting the processes involved in the inherently contested and (re)constructed nature of space in the demarcated home / work environment we suggest a collapse of this demarcation and consider the impact of such a collapse on questions relating to the rewards and challenges of home-based work for employees and their co-residents. We argue that a traditional, Euclidean conception of space risks ignoring the important, symbolic nature of social space to the detriment of both effective research and practice.

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As technology encourages alternative ways of working for an increasing number of people, interest in the rewards and challenges of conducting paid work within the home has enjoyed a revival in organizational research. Studies in this area have highlighted that working at home has important spatial implications but there have been limited attempts to theorise these implications. This paper will begin by discussing the existing literature on home-located work, highlighting the importance of place and space to understanding this phenomenon. We will discuss the work of social theorist Henri Lefebvre in order to develop an approach to identifying the spatial implications of homeworking, moving beyond a simplistic 'Euclidean' conception of space as an empty container and towards appreciating the social implications of a fluid, multi-faceted spatial construct. The final section of the paper will draw out our approach to discuss the broader implications for current debates in the academic literature.

The challenges and rewards of homeworking

The term 'homeworking' is applied to many diverse occupations and domestic contexts (Felstead et al, 2001; Heyes and Gray, 2001; Sullivan, 2003). The breadth of potential economic activities that can be performed is reflected in recent research that has included studies of contractors (Osnowitz, 2005), packers (Dart, 2006), hair stylists (Cohen, 2010), white collar teleworkers (Tietze and Musson, 2005) and guest-house proprietors (DiDomenico and Fleming, 2009). While they each share certain characteristics derived from locating economic activity within a primarily domestic environment (Felstead and Jewson, 2000), it is important to acknowledge the inherent

differences between the types of occupations and workers falling under this category (Fraser and Gold, 2001; Hotopp, 2002). However, this theoretical paper is interested in the common, spatial issues that can be potentially encountered in some form by different types of homeworker. We therefore define 'homework' loosely as those paid tasks which take place in the home, or what Felstead and Jewson refer to as 'home-located production'. Specifically, Felstead and Jewson (2000: 15) define such work as "economic activity by members of households who produce within their place of residence commodities for exchange in the market." It is this type of economic activity that we will argue has important spatial implications for both the individual worker and, potentially, their co-residents.

Compared with the frustrations of daily commuter traffic and canteen queues, working at home is a seductive proposition (Baruch, 2001), making it easy to forget that, even as the technological barriers to homeworking fall away (Gray et al, 1993; Bailey and Kurland, 2002; Ruiz and Walling, 2005), other challenges associated with re-locating work in the home remain. Despite regular presentation as a form of flexible working that facilitates workers' opportunities to cope with both work and non-work demands (Lim and Teo, 2000), the ability of homeworking to achieve these aims has also been subject to critical examination (Phizacklea and Wolkowitz, 1995; Moore, 2006; Tietze et al, 2009). Furthermore, notions of 'home' itself have also been contested (Moore, 2000; Mallett, 2004). These critical accounts of homeworking have challenged the treatment of 'home' and 'work' as uncontested or unproblematic and opened discussions of how such broad labels can mask the complexity associated with homeworking (Pennington and Westover, 1989; Surman, 2002; Crosbie and Moore, 2004; Mallett, 2004; Taskin and Edwards, 2007).

The potential combination or overlap of work and non-work spaces and actions is demonstrated by a third of Harris' (2003) respondents who found work became more intrusive in their personal lives when they took up homeworking. This intrusion is often approached in terms of work-life balance and has led to a frequent focus on role conflict (Kahn et al, 1964; Greenhaus and Beutell, 1985). In particular, studies have explored the tensions arising between the fulfilment of public (work) roles in a context more readily associated with private (domestic) roles (Marsh and Musson, 2008). The problems such tensions may (or may not) provoke can be viewed as a matter of perspective such that their positive or negative aspect is contingent on the individual's circumstances (Berke, 2003). Differences in outcome can depend upon different personality types (O'Neill et al, 2009) or institutional environments and sub-cultures (Peters and Heusinkveld, 2010). Perceptions, both of the individual homeworker and others around them (Surman, 2002), are important and this relates to the crucial roles of control and choice in the successful implementation of moving work into the home (Mirchandani; 1998; Lee and Brand, 2005; Maruyama et al, 2009).

A worker's control and choice are primarily important in the setting of goals and priorities (Fenner and Renn, 2010). Homework can be carried out at various frequencies (Felstead et al, 2001) and with differing potential for job satisfaction (Redman et al, 2009), overwork, 'spillover' (Vittersø et al, 2003) or 'self-exploitation' (Jurik, 1998, also see Westman et al, 2009, on 'crossover'). However, the sense of control may itself be illusory. This reflects the constraints of working from home in the face of policies and practices that hide persistent rules, prohibitions and other means of control and constraint derived from organizational and societal norms and expectations (Lewis et al, 2007: 366). Dichotomies such as work/public versus

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domestic/private are little more than a 'guiding fiction' (Saegert, 1981: 108) that can mask the nature of interactions between work and domesticity and the associated roles or behaviours that accompany this complexity (Halford, 2006; also see Sheller and Urry, 2003).

The complexity of these interactions may also impact upon the experiences of co-residents, a traditionally under-researched group in homeworking debates (Fitzgerald and Winter, 2001). Co-residents have reported the (partial) erasure of the psychological distinction between work and home, although this has been variously described as positive or negative (Sullivan and Lewis, 2001). Traces of flexibility can be found in a loosening of existing identities and practices, impacting on both the homeworker and co-residents as they erect boundaries and new household systems and processes to cope with the introduction and maintenance of work carried out in the home (Tietze, 2005). These changes can produce restrictions and modifications to the behaviour of co-residents (Sullivan, 2000) and even to their taking on unpaid employee roles in support of the homeworker (Sullivan and Lewis, 2001; Baines and Gelder, 2003).

Critical examinations of how homeworking impacts upon those in the domestic environment, whether as a homeworker or a fellow home user, provide insights into the potentially problematic nature of homeworking. Understanding the ways in which different homeworkers claim or negotiate space for work within the home environment must incorporate the demands placed upon the individual in their own, potentially idiosyncratic context (Felstead and Jewson, 2000). The relevance of spatial factors for understanding this context has gradually emerged in the academic literature, for example through observation of changes in the material and symbolic

nature of the domestic space, resulting in "a new object, a new or least [sic] partially changed temporal/spatial map of the household" (Tietze, 2005: 58). While discussions of the temporal disruptions encountered through homeworking have received a great deal of attention, there remains little theorization of the spatial implications of homeworking (Felstead and Jewson, 2000; Tietze et al, 2009; also see Ahrentzen, 1990). We will now provide a brief overview of the contributions to understanding these spatial implications from, which starting point the present paper will develop our approach.

Homeworking and space

Home-based work can be viewed as a domestic interruption, a "challenge to the idea of housing as a united space" (Hardill and Green, 2003: 214). The existing organization literature demonstrates a range of potential implications from changes to other working environments, including problems for sensemaking processes (Bean and Eisenberg, 2006), adaptation in the face of organizational change (Rooney et al, 2010) and the negative impact of losing the 'transition time' involved in travelling from home to the office (Kurland and Bailey, 1999). There is something ill-defined in the multi-layered nature of space encountered by many home workers (Sullivan, 2000; Dart, 2006) that reaches out beyond the work itself, almost to the point of infecting, or infesting the home, giving pause to the urge to embrace, unquestioning, the much-discussed benefits (Felstead et al, 2002; Sullivan and Smithson, 2007). It is this multi-layered complexity that suggests the redundancy of simplistic, Euclidean conceptions of home space as an empty container.

It is increasingly common for white collar homeworkers (especially teleworkers) to work both at home and at the office, highlighting the role of virtual technologies in

creating 'hybrid work spaces' (Halford, 2005; Hislop and Axtell, 2009) in which the distinction between office and home is adopted "as a method of dealing with issues of isolation and motivation while at home" (Halford, 2005: 25; also see Cooper and Kurland, 2002). The distinction is made between work and non-work areas, or domains (Campbell-Clark, 2000), through physical boundaries or the use of symbolic systems of control, such as traffic light systems (Tietze, 2005: 55), which seek to reinforce the boundaries. This approach contains some advantages: roles within different spaces are clear and there is little prospect of factors from other spaces impacting upon the domain in question, for example through people not discussing home life at work or vice-versa. At the same time it is important to recognise the multiplicity in styles responding to the rewards and challenges of working at home, developing different types of boundary, some very clear and rigid (Sullivan, 2000), others less so (Halford, 2005), varying their permeability and flexibility (Hall and Richter, 1988). However, some form of boundary will almost certainly exist, some relationship between space and time, between being 'at work' and 'at home'.

Many white collar homeworkers try to replicate some aspect of the office in their home, whether through setting up a computer at a desk or the outfitting of an entire spare room (Tietze and Musson, 2005). Private spaces become working spaces through the addition of computers, files and other artefacts of traditional office environments; at times, such artefacts are expressly made available by organizations encouraging the adoption of new homeworking practices (Halford, 2005; Maruyama et al, 2009). Such behaviour is not, however, restricted to white collar workers, others have also been found to construct boundaries and re-form areas of the domestic space into something approximating the 'normal' workplace, with varying degrees of success (Tietze, 2002; Dart, 2006). This practice can be distinguished from that of office

workers personalising their work space with photos and other paraphernalia on their desks. In the case of home offices and work spaces, there is a concerted effort to replicate the traditional work space (Ng, 2010) in a way which would be deemed inappropriate if an employee attempted to replicate their home space in many work locations, for example by importing home furniture.

No matter in what way the home is partitioned or modified, the impact of paid work being conducted in or around the domestic space can permeate beyond the designated area, with co-residents experiencing impositions such as having to moderate their noise during working periods and other challenges to their ordinary behaviour (Sullivan, 2000). Household objects can come to be re-categorised, co-opted by the needs of work, manifested in choices such as not to answer the phone at particular times. Dart (2006) demonstrates how individual improvisations are required to make such circumstances work, for example, storage boxes left in the living room may become impromptu coffee tables when the work day is finished. The fluid, multi-faceted nature of space is suggested by these improvisations.

Space is an important element when considering the context and influence of different individuals and different homeworking outcomes and adaptations; it is, at root, the fundamental difference between the experience of those people who work in an office or other non-domestic setting and those conducting similar work from home (Golden, 2007). The existing studies briefly discussed above highlight the ways that space is impacted upon by workers' decisions to co-locate work and domestic roles. Not only does their work environment change but their home will almost certainly change too. Prior research demonstrates the significance of decisions to work at home but the spatial implications of such decisions are relatively under-theorised. An important

figure for an understanding of space is the French philosopher and social theorist Henri Lefebvre and the next section of this paper will develop an original, Lefebvrian approach to understanding the space of the homeworker before discussing the contribution of such an approach to our understanding of homeworking and its implications for the individual worker and their co-residents.

Lefebvrian space and homeworking

Since the English translation of Henri Lefebvre's (1974) *The Production of Space* in 1991, his conception of space as dynamic, dialectical and full of meaning(s) has been broadly cited and has come to supersede the Euclidean 'empty container' understanding of space that overemphasizes its purely physical characteristics (Merrifield, 2006). Space is not an inert stage on which actions are played out, it is alive with meanings and influence. Lefebvre argued that "(social) space is a (social) product" (1991: 26) and, in doing so, he moved away from a simplified consideration of absolute space to emphasize the social aspects of space, throwing into stark relief both its manifest and latent contents. In this way, we can conceive of a complex space that is not *either* a work or a home space but a dialectically engaged, symbolically rich *combination*, derived from multiple sources and providing a range of multi-layered social meanings.

Lefebvre's (1991) key theoretical contribution, growing out of his focus on a philosophy of everyday life, is his conception of a spatial triad. This triad identifies the different aspects of space and the dialectical relationship between them. For Lefebvre, these aspects, or 'moments', are: spatial practice, representations of space and representational spaces.[1] 'Spatial practice' corresponds to *perceived* space; that understanding of space gained through experience, which is "understood as practical

perception and 'common sense'" (Shields, 1999: 163). 'Representations of space' is Lefebvre's term for the *conceived* space, "the space of scientists, planners, urbanists, technocratic subdividers and social engineers" (Lefebvre, 1991: 38). It is the aspect of space that can be communicated and is therefore most easily accessed by researchers seeking to describe a particular space. Finally, 'representational space' refers to space as it is *lived* "through its associated images and symbols, and hence the space of 'inhabitants' and 'users'" (1991: 39). This aspect is more difficult to understand and communicate; it is that which Lefebvre argues is "[r]edolent with imaginary and symbolic elements, they have their source in history" (1991: 41). The ways in which spaces are 'lived in' come to define them through the ways in which they engage an individual user's symbolic understanding and imagination. The meanings can be very personal but they are also socially negotiated.

The identification of power relations and the spatial processes involved in social practices is at the heart of Lefebvre's project. He argues that "[a] society is a space and an architecture of concepts, forms and laws whose abstract truth is imposed on the reality of the senses, of bodies, of wishes and desires" (1991: 139). In wanting to move beyond structuralism, he suggested that a conception of power is absent from Barthes' semiological approach and that "power can in no wise be decoded. Power has no code … It may on occasion invent new codes and impose them, but it is not itself bound by them." (Lefebvre, 1991: 162). This poses a problem for researchers seeking to describe the nature and processes of power in spatial terms.

It is the dynamic, multi-layered nature of space and its relationship with power, of space "inscribed upon, collapsed into, defined by and constitutive of psyches and bodies" (Ford and Harding, 2004: 828) that has proven valuable for organization

studies (Watkins, 2005; Taylor and Spicer, 2007). Organizational researchers have used these ideas to discuss control (Cairns et al, 2003; Dale, 2005), mergers (Ford and Harding, 2004), 'hyper-organizational space' (Zhang et al, 2008) and gender (Tyler and Cohen, 2010). These studies have helped to highlight the implicit contestation in the space of everyday life through the imposition of power relations, between the *conceived* space of its planners and the *perceived* and *lived* space of its inhabitants. It is this approach that the present paper will develop as one particularly well-suited to understanding the spatial implications of homeworking.

Lefebvre (1991: 64) viewed spaces in terms of the "highly significant distinction between *dominated* spaces and *appropriated* spaces" and it is this distinction that we believe is particularly useful in developing the spatial triad for the study of homeworking. Lefebvre's use of the terms 'domination' and appropriation' were developed from his career's deep engagement with the works of Marx (see, for example, Lefebvre, 1968), but he transformed them through the way he believes they relate to space. Lefebvre highlights the importance of domination and appropriation as the forms of power and resistance that produce and transform space (1991: 343). This sense of a contested space finds an echo in the homeworking literature concerning the metaphorical discourse of homeworkers where the home comes to be described in terms of a 'battle' (Tietze and Musson, 2005: 1340) and work as an 'invasion' (Mirchandani, 1998; Cohen et al, 2009). This paper will suggest a theoretical model for problematising the ways in which the spaces of the home are contested, what constitutes the 'battlefield' described in much of the homeworking literature, and the role played by Lefebvre's spatial processes of domination and appropriation.

Domination

Lefebvre described representational space as "...the dominated – and hence passively experienced – space" (1991: 39). Domination is the process by which the behaviour and lives of the 'users' of a space are dictated to and prohibited. Lefebvre believed that modern advancements such as new forms of homeworking could come to dominate space and reduce it to something demarcated, functionalised and controlled (Lefebvre, 2005: 151). In this way, spaces can come to lose their specificity, fall victim to the "economic wish to impose the traits and criteria of interchangeability" (Lefebvre, 1991: 343). The commodification of space, which we suggest is a direct result of this form of domination, is beginning to find a valuable place in the homeworking literature (Cohen, 2010).

Domination can be found in the use of boundaries to reinforce the work/home demarcations that has been shown to be highly prevalent for many homeworkers (Harris, 2003). Boundaries give rise to "slices of reality…that have particular meaning for the individual(s) creating and maintaining the boundaries" (Ashforth et al, 2000: 474). It is not only the physical intrusion of work into domestic spheres but the associated mental, emotional and social intrusions that require 'boundary work' (Nippert-Eng, 1996; Mirchandani, 1998). The boundary itself is an imposition on space, marking it, inserting particular meanings and associations that can begin to change the surrounding space. They involve representations of space that attempt to control, to dominate, the spatial practices and therefore the lived (representational) space of users.

Nansen et al (2010: 143) provide the example of Mary and John who both work in the home they share with their children and where attempts have been made to strictly demarcate different spaces within the home, dedicating them to specific purposes.

Viewed in a Euclidean sense, these spaces are then filled with the appropriate tools and, in common with many homeworkers who have sufficient space (Ng, 2010), the home's study-room is equipped with several computers and other pieces of office equipment . This equipment has no other use than its dedicated work function, representing a clear physical boundary between 'work' and 'home' space. The strict demarcation enforced by Mary and John affects the rules governing the use of the (potentially multipurpose) tools such that "[t]he computer and mobile phone are for work, the landline phone is for communicating with friends and family..." (Nansen et al, 2010: 143). While such strong boundaries exist to isolate work in the home, they also effectively curtailed Mary's use of e-mail, previously used for social purposes, because of its associations with work and location in the home office.

Homeworkers' efforts to build boundaries around 'work' by giving it a specific location in the domestic space does not prevent the emergence of new rules introduced to maintain these boundaries. While work is restricted to a study or corner of a shared room, that space is also made off-limits for other possible uses (or users), its previous role over-written by its current work function. It might be the case, for example, that fellow residents are not only expected to remain quiet when close to this area of the house but to vacate shared areas altogether (Baines and Gelder, 2003). As a result, spatial practices are altered and so too are the understandings of the home's users, the physical boundaries that contain the study do not prevent the symbolic meanings of the home changing. Representational (lived) space beyond the confines of the study is altered by its presence. This is suggested by the fact that it is not only the homeworkers themselves who reinforce these boundaries but co-residents, including children (Tietze, 2002: 392; Surman, 2002: 218; Baines, 2002: 96),

contribute to their creation and maintenance, even acting as 'gatekeepers' to the workspace (Ahrentzen, 1990).

Alongside the erection of boundaries, by installing office equipment homeworkers often attempt to refigure spaces such as a study-room to replicate the 'traditional work space'. Here we adopt the term 'mimesis' to describe such attempts. Brocklehurst (2001: 456) discusses how homeworkers in his study pursued this type of mimesis in an attempt to overcome domestic distractions and impose some structure on their working day. While most participants in Brocklehurst's research adopted office attire when working, others went as far as to incorporate a whiteboard, flipchart and even their name badge on the door. Again, not only is the physical space altered, the socially negotiated and engaged-with reality of the home also changes.

This process can lead to a symbolic contestation in the representational (lived) space of the home. We argue that, by importing aspects of the workplace, there is a resultant process whereby the pre-existing meanings are displaced as a consequence of the changing function of the room. As what was once a 'domestic space' becomes a 'work space', the values and rules of work are imported and accumulated. The representational space of this part of the home, if not the entire domestic space, will be altered. If the physical boundaries that contain the area set aside for such strategies cannot prevent new representations of the home from 'seeping out' to infect other spaces then the spatial practices of co-residents will also be altered. In these instances, mimesis acts as a means of domination.

Dart (2006) provides the example of Monica who, having recently carried out a mailshot from her front room, found herself:

> … stressed out having all these boxes. I wasn't able to relax, I got pretty fed up with it. We worked in the lounge. It stayed 'the lounge' even with all the boxes in here. It was all messy and the room became less homely … it felt like a workshop 'cos of all the boxes. When it was time to stop we had to move all the boxes round so we could see the telly. (Dart, 2006: 323)

The original nature of the space has begun to be overwritten and displaced as new meanings are imported with the boxes. Even if they are adapted into tables, these boxes cannot suddenly become part of the domestic furniture, removed of their occupational associations and the homeworker and their co-residents are therefore unable to relax.

This mimetic domination suggests something of the context for one of Tietze and Musson's (2003) participants who explains how, during the working day, he will treat his children in a business-like manner:

> When I have to go downstairs, I treat the children professionally, that means courteously, but briefly (p.450)

The children suddenly have very different expectations of their behaviour, new rules they have to learn to obey long before they enter a "real" workplace. These new rules have been found to extend even to the deputising of family members who are expected to be polite and helpful to customers or to become designated IT experts (Baines and Gelder, 2003).

However, this is only one side of the 'battle' of a contested space. The contestation that we argue takes place within a spatially understood domestic environment of

homeworkers invokes an inseparable dialectical push and pull between domination and appropriation, through which non-work priorities may be asserted.

(Re)appropriation

Lefebvre argues that dominated space "attains its full meaning only when it is contrasted with the opposite and inseparable concept of *appropriation*" (1991: 165). The process of appropriation refers to the acts of resistance engaged in by an individual or group to appropriate the space(s) they inhabit. Lefebvre (2003: 130) argues that, through appropriation, the users of a space "can alter, add or subtract, superimpose their own ideas (symbols, organization) on what is provided." It is manifested in acts that contribute towards a refiguration of the space, such as making use of work-based artefacts outside their normal meanings or functions. They can be enacted both by the homeworkers and their co-residents. These acts need not be deliberate or acknowledged. They involve the undermining of intention and power, often of the conceived nature of a space. Appropriation "overlays physical space, making symbolic use of its objects" (Lefebvre, 1991: 39), and therefore can be considered in relation to representational space.

The dialectical contest between domination and appropriation is such that the transformation of space is by no means simple or final. An interesting potential product, an element alive in representational space, is created because "[n]o space ever vanishes utterly, leaving no trace", it is fundamental to the nature of (social) space that "each new addition inherits and reorganizes what has gone before" (Lefebvre, 1991: 164). This conception of the 'afterlife' (Benjamin, 2004: 254) of a space is particularly relevant where the nature of the space's original use will live on after the mimetic creation of a work space in the home.

Tietze (2002) provides the example of Suzi who is excluded from her mother's home office, a room that had previously been available to play in. Although now designated as an office, the room is still used to store Suzi's old toys, albeit out of sight and with access to them strictly prohibited. For Suzi, therefore, the room may retain attributes of a playroom in addition to its newer role as an office, which may explain some of the frustrations she voiced at being denied entry and use of the room. The symbolic aspects of the 'old', of defunct uses of the space lives on in the representational space in an almost mythological memory. It is in these terms that Suzi might fight back to stage a hijacking, an imaginative re-appropriation of the space that had once been her play area.

Were she to do so then her imaginative re-engagement with this space, re-activating the symbolic interpretation of her play area, would cause the symbolic boundary between work and home spaces to become more permeable or collapse altogether. One might also therefore expect a resultant impact on the homeworker, possibly to the detriment of their work. Such an outcome may resemble that demonstrated by Tietze and Musson (2003: 446) where a homeworker's work space has gradually become cluttered with toys and other domestic artefacts, what the homeworker describes as an invasion by the domestic sphere and actors. This partial return to domestic use suggests how changes in the use of space are never final; traces of an 'afterlife' (Benjamin, 2004: 254) remain, leaving open the prospects for ongoing change.

The areas of the home dominated by work can be (re)appropriated, as can the objects associated with the workplace, for example through acts of what, in France, is termed 'la perruque' ('the wig'). Certeau (1984: 24-8) defines 'la perruque' in terms of enunciative spatial practices as "the worker's own work disguised as work for his

employer" (1984: 26). The potential behaviour of the homeworker has not yet received much attention in these terms, which Certeau clearly distinguishes from theft: an employee engaged in la perruque does not set about removing objects or goods, he or she makes use of their work space or the resources at their disposal for their own non-work related ends. Such acts can take many different forms (D'Abate, 2005) and provide an example of appropriation in which the conceived space (and objects within that space) is subverted from its original intentions, away from the objectives of those in power and towards the user or inhabitants of the space. Particular spatial practices re-emerge, or are improvised afresh, and the representational space, the ways in which resources and space are understood, is altered.

In homeworking, with less direct observation of the worker and a greater access to domestic spaces, there are ample opportunities for the appropriation of the employer's time and material objects. While artefacts and rules can come to dominate and introduce the symbols and practices of the work space, they can also be subverted. La perruque can be identified in multi-tasking between work and domestic tasks (Mirchandani, 1998) and in the use of work-based artefacts in the 'home space', both by the homeworker themselves and their co-residents (Tietze, 2002).

Nansen et al (2010) describes the Coles, who do not distinguish between work-related technologies and those connected with the home and leisure time. Homeworker Todd uses email and a mobile phone extensively for work but uses the same email account and phone for personal and social uses:

I only have one email address, so everything is coming through work, and I've often wondered if I should actually have a separate one for non-work email.

It's probably safer sending it through work because there is that much security

in place. (p.145)

The study-room includes a desk for Todd's work that is co-opted by family members for various leisure usage. The landline telephone, household calendar and laptop are also used for both work and non-work tasks by different family members. It is in these ways that the rules imposed by mimetic domination may come to be undermined.

Tietze (2002) describes the similar situation of homeworker Tom who, when returning from a coffee break, might expect to find his wife, Sarah, at the computer in the work area. Sarah appropriates the work space, using the computer for a variety of domestic tasks such as keeping track of household expenditure. As if to underline the blurring of work and home space, on those occasions when the computer is needed for *both* business and domestic tasks priority is given to whichever task is more urgent, rather than work-needs automatically taking precedence. There is an ongoing negotiation and contestation between the domestic and work as the objects that have been imported into the home are appropriated and begin to form part of the 'home routine'. While the artefacts and 'rules' (e.g. 'work time') seek to dominate and introduce the symbols and practices of the work space, there will often be some form of resistance where the non-work space seeks to reassert itself and the boundaries between the two spaces became more permeable.

It is through the inseparable mix of domination and appropriation that the domestic space of the homeworker can become a 'battlefield', a space of contestation, of the dialectical push and pull of different interests and interpretations. The behaviours exhibited by those who occupy such a space, described in much of the homeworking literature, is not solely the preserve of those explicitly opposed to the situating of

work in the home, they are an implicit element of the merging of work and home, of the types of border crossing that erode the work/home demarcation. If the space of the home worker is treated in a simplified, Euclidean sense then the causes bubbling under the surface of a fluid, multi-faceted space can be easily ignored or misunderstood.

The spatial implications of homeworking

The relationships between paid work and the home are multi-faceted and complex. Decisions to work at home, accommodating the public sphere of work within a typically private realm, bring numerous consequences for the homeworker, their families or fellow residents and their employers. Such decisions can lead to a contestation of the space of the home and a realisation that working from home cannot be fully considered without some appreciation of the spatial processes involved. In this discussion, we will outline our theoretical problematisation of space for homeworkers, drawing on the more general spatial theories of Lefebvre, before highlighting the relevance of a more detailed reading of space to debates concerning the impact not only on the homeworkers themselves but also their co-residents and those attempting to manage them.

The space of the homeworker can be understood in terms of Lefebvre's spatial triad. The representations of (conceived) space are found in the attempts by homeworkers to explicitly control or demarcate the spaces of their home. It is most clearly represented in the mimetic attempts to replicate the traditional, familiar workplace within the home. This is the space that is most clearly articulated and, therefore, most easily accessed by the researcher. A danger in conducting homeworking research is that only this aspect of space may be researched, to the exclusion of other, significant, aspects

of space, namely spatial practices and representational space. Such exclusions risk diminishing the nuanced complexities of locating work in the home. Similarly, therefore, there are dangers for the individual homeworker in ignoring these complexities when seeking to exercise the choice and control believed to be necessary for successful homework (Mirchandani, 1998; Lee and Brand, 2005; Maruyama et al, 2009).

What can be missed in Lefebvre's conception of representational (lived) space is that aspect of space "[r]edolent with imaginary and symbolic elements" (Lefebvre, 1991: 41). This concept represents the ways in which we occupy and come to define spaces, in which we imaginatively engage with negotiated meanings, rules and prohibitions. It is within this aspect that we suggest the contestation between appropriation and domination can be understood and that is potentially downplayed or disregarded by researchers. While we have discussed the processes of domination and appropriation separately, they in fact co-exist in an inseparable dialectical tension that revises and (re)constructs the nature of space itself. In the ever-changing reality and conception of a given representational space, there will be a push and pull between the conceived intentions for the space, the power that is exerted on its occupants, and the reaction to these 'rules' by the inhabitants. From the mimetic nature of the importation of work objects (actions relating to the representations of space) and the symbolic rules and prohibitions they bring with them as well as the boundaries they encourage, lived (representational) space is altered for the whole household.

In this way spatial practices, perceived spaces, are affected. Perceived in this sense is not the explicit, conscious awareness of experience or environment that can be easily communicated to the practitioner or researcher. Rather, it is a form of learned,

practised 'common sense' that informs behaviour and interactions. It is here that the output of the contestation within the representational space can be felt, even as spatial practices secrete or reform space anew. This suggests an almost hermeneutic, revisionist relationship between the three aspects or moments of space that engage with one another in a dialectical tension. It is the impact on the domestic space of the contestation that suggests the removal of the demarcation between work and home altogether, a contest much more subtly influenced than that understood in Euclidean terms of physical space.

This has potential implications for the discussions of moving paid employment into the home and its potentially positive outcomes (Maruyama et al, 2009). Our analysis develops the recognition of 'work' and 'home' as co-existing symbolic constructs. By introducing work into the home, the home space can come to be 'dominated' by the needs and demands of the work as previous spatial practices or understandings are displaced and new spatial practices emerge. The "cult of efficiency" (Hochschild, 1997: 46) can be identified in the practices and relationships enacted by homeworkers within the domestic environment. The construction of boundaries to demarcate areas of the home may not be sufficient since these boundaries themselves carry meanings, rules and prohibitions, aspects of home life can come to be dominated by the values and proscriptions of the workplace. As space changes, as the external rules and prohibitions of 'work' come to dominate the home, unspoken expectations for behaviour also change. Distinctions between 'home' and 'work' seem to underplay this intrinsic, dialectically contested fluctuating nature of space and its influence on behaviour. The decision to alter some aspect of the home for work should not be taken without consideration of the impact of importing these symbolic meanings. A space

cannot be emptied of meanings and associations at the end of the working day and nor can these meanings be contained behind a locked door.

The impact of spatial domination is not limited to the homeworker themselves, any co-residents of the homeworker can also be affected in numerous ways (Sullivan and Lewis, 2001; Sullivan and Smithson, 2007). Through these processes, both the spatial practices and the representational space of the home are altered; the co-resident may find they have an entirely new set of rules to follow. Not only might their access to particular parts of the home be strictly governed by boundary restrictions but, at times, their behaviour is dominated by the needs of the work space, even taking on unpaid employee roles in support of the homeworker (Sullivan and Lewis, 2001; Baines and Gelder, 2003). In such instances, it would appear that the homeworker has not only co-opted a part of the house but also a member of the household. Through the processes of domination, one set of behaviours is superseded by another set, one linked to the work of the homeworker, bringing with it accumulated rules and prohibitions. Space that exudes symbolic meanings that enforce particular rules and prohibitions will impact upon fellow residents, both the identity of the user of the domestic space and their relationship with the space they inhabit will become altered.

The homeworker's transformation of space, especially in seeking some form of replication of traditional work spaces, is an act of translation in which one space is translated, transformed to another use. However, as with all forms of translation, a perfect mimesis is not possible and some 'afterlife' (Benjamin, 2004), some lingering reality of the original space, and therefore the representational space, remains. Spaces contain a history in which meanings can become layered or even abstracted, 'mythologised', over time, "each new addition inherits and reorganises what has gone

before" (Lefebvre, 1991: 164). Traces of what has been can live on in the representational space, or even the spatial practices of a space's users. The domestic space of the home will carry a very different afterlife than any other space converted to the needs of economic activity. The extent to which any space can be controlled should therefore not be overstated.

The dynamic, multi-faceted approach to space developed from Lefebvre allows us to move beyond a conception of the homeworker and any co-residents as the passive victims of the importation of external capitalist power. The type of acts we have characterised as appropriation have been presented by some homeworkers as resistance, a (re)assertion of rights by, for example, co-resident children (Mirchandani, 1998). This type of protest can be taken further, the symbols re-imagined to create something new, or to recreate something lost, through the transformations of (re)appropriation. So, for example, the makeshift traffic light system used to control a work/home (Tietze, 2005) boundary might be subverted and used as part of a game, perhaps one that explicitly violates the rules of the work space, "modified in order to serve the needs and possibilities" (Lefebvre, 1991:165) of the user. The child's imaginative re-engagement with this space, re-igniting the embers of its afterlife, the symbolic interpretation of what might, for a child, have once been their play area, causes the symbolic boundary between work and home spaces to become more permeable or collapse altogether.

Perhaps partly because of processes and acts of (re)appropriation such as la perruque, when work is performed in the home the relationship between managers and workers also alters, particularly in relation to management control (Lautsch et al, 2009). It is in the fluid, dialectical nature of social space that such forces of (re)appropriation

provoke further implications for the domination of space. Perceived freedoms obtained from working at home may turn out to be illusory (Allen and Wolkowitz, 1987) as, physically separated from their employees, some managers may feel anxious to ensure their staff are focused on their work (Halford, 2006). Managers can make random phone calls to workers' homes to confirm their activities during working hours, request frequent updates or notification of movements (Brocklehurst, 2001). Further, technology provides simple opportunities for remote desktop viewing, activity logs and other means of recording work time. Intrusions of this sort are not limited to the experiences of teleworkers. Other types of worker might find themselves subject to significant controls such as jobs designed for very limited worker discretion or piece-rates being used as a mechanism to influence output in addition to tight delivery deadlines or work schedules (Allen and Wolkowitz, 1987; Felstead and Jewson, 2000).

As technology changes, so too does the way in which work-based artefacts alter the representational (lived) space of the individual and/or the domestic group. This all adds to the rules and social constructs that begin to alter the domestic space through the processes of domination. In these ways, although beyond the immediate reach of personal supervision, homeworkers can access varying levels of discretion in relation to their work, which suggests limits to the association of homework and employee freedom (Moore, 2006). Surveilled in this way, the homeworker may come to feel they inhabit a panopticon (Foucault, 1977) where, in every moment, there is the possibility of observation or intrusion (Zweig and Webster, 2002; see also, Cairns et al 2003). How would one experience such a space when the working day is formally finished? Our Lefebvrian approach suggests that remnants of a sense of surveillance

may persist. Managers may have a greater presence in their workers' homes than they realise.

These observations reveal the complex, dialectical nature of the co-located associations of 'work' and 'home' beyond a simple work/home demarcation. Lefebvre argues (1991: 46) that "[r]elations between the three moments of the perceived, the conceived and the lived are never either simple or stable, nor are they 'positive' in the sense in which this term might be opposed to 'negative'." The symbolic, intangible contents of space, contested via the processes of domination and appropriation, have important implications for the homeworkers themselves, their co-residents and, possibly, their managers. It is these multi-faceted, mutually complicated meanings that cannot be appreciated by the practitioner or researcher through a Euclidean conception of space as an empty container. Our Lefebvrian approach to understanding the space of the homeworker suggests a way forward in appreciating the spatial implications that should form part of debates around the rewards and challenges of homeworking.

Conclusion

Studies investigating the nature of homeworking and the implications for those affected by it have underlined the complexity inherent in co-locating work and home lives. While a reversal of the home/work divide created through mass-industrialisation might be under way (Hakim, 1996), the experience of homeworking could remain far removed from the "rather glamorous, post-industrial image of home-based working" associated with certain types of homework such as teleworking (Phizacklea and Wolkowitz, 1995: 1). Drawing on Lefebvre's dialectical, multi-faceted conception of space, specifically in relation to his spatialized understanding of power through

domination and appropriation, this paper has demonstrated a structured analysis of spatial relationships in the home when homeworking is taking place (and space). If a homeworker does not take heed of some elements beyond the easily communicated representations of space, if they ignore representational space and spatial practices, they risk failing to exercise the informed choice and control that are considered key to successfully meeting the challenges and rewards of homeworking (Mirchandani, 1998; Lee and Brand, 2005; Maruyama et al, 2009). It is possible that, for such individuals, despite the best of intentions, the lives of their co-residents as well as their own are detrimentally affected.

Although the types of complexity experienced in relation to homeworking can vary with the nature of work conducted and domestic circumstances, recent empirical work has highlighted the pressures on space associated with the siting of paid employment within the home. Studies of homeworking have suggested the 'battles' (Tietze and Musson, 2005) occurring over space in the home when work tasks must also be accommodated. This paper has sought to build on these empirical descriptions and contribute to ongoing debates by offering a detailed theoretical perspective on the spatial implications of homeworking. We have thus sought to demonstrate that researchers must be aware of the limitations of relying solely on the conceived nature of (representations of) space that usually finds its way into discourse. Even if one records and analyses some sense of spatial practices, the directly lived representational spaces in which we argue the ongoing dialectical contestation of domination and appropriation principally takes place cannot be ignored. Future research should therefore allow for a nuanced, dynamic understanding of space and the fluid, multi-layered meanings, understandings and prohibitions that can hide behind or within the Euclidean surface.

As homeworking (and teleworking from the home) are expected to continue to grow, the impact on domestic space should not be assumed to be positive. The distinctions between work and home are never fixed, if they ever truly exist at all (Halford, 2006; Warhurst et al, 2008). We suggest that further research and practice should look for new ways to adapt approaches to work and that, in doing so, it is important to be sensitive to the spatial implications. Further, this theoretical approach could potentially be extended to contribute to related debates of work-life balance. Both researchers and practitioners must have an awareness of the ways in which space and, as a result, the lived experiences of individuals, is changed by the importing of work into the domestic setting. These potential impacts can be valuably understood by utilising the Lefebvrian perspective to the rewards and challenges of homeworking that we have developed in this paper.

Notes

[1]Some researchers prefer the term 'spaces of representation' to 'representational spaces'. The difference is one of translation. Shields (1999: 165) believes that 'spaces of representation' muddies the water less when read in the broader context of Lefebvre's work. However, for this paper we will use Nicholson-Smith's commonly adopted translation of 'representational space' (see Lefebvre, 1991).

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