

homeless people were old men... the ones who you see in the park and the city.”

- Lack of understanding of HOME in the approach to solving homelessness: Homelessness is not referred to as houselessness or rooflessness – so why is there not greater understanding or interrogation of the concept of home in housing and homelessness policy. Understanding the importance of home in homelessness has clear positive policy outcomes. It would further the consideration of people being housed in locations close to their social connections (as well as formal connections like doctors, psychologists, support services and etc.), areas they are familiar with, areas they feel safe in and just as every citizen has the right – an area they want to be in. People who are in housing crisis or have a history of or are experiencing homelessness are entitled to safe, sustainable, accessible, long-term, affordable homes. We need to evaluate what home means and emphasise its importance to eradicating homelessness. Fox O’Mahony, L, 2013 ‘The meaning of home: from theory to practice’, International Journal of Law in the Built Environment, vol. 5, no. 2, pp. 156-171, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJLBE-11-2012-0024> considers home as:

- o Financial investment: Most present in societies that promote home ownership as the most ideal form of tenure. It involves considering home as an investment, an asset to be accumulated, improved and increased in value to be passed on to future generations. This also speaks to the political rhetoric of home ownership being idealised goal for all Australians.
- o As a physical structure/home as housing: This considers home as the physical roof over one’s head, the structure that provides shelter and protection from the outside world and elements. This understanding reinforces the idea of homelessness being ‘rooflessness’.
- o Home as territory: The idea that home is our ‘primary territory’ – it is where most of our time is spent, where we seek to satisfy our most basic needs, where we can exert control over our environment and where other’s do not necessary have the power to exert control over us. This reinforces the notion that a person who is oppressed in their home (through violence and abuse), is unable to experience home.
- o As identity and self-identity: The consideration of our emotional and affective responses to home, reinforced in saying such as “home is where the heart is”. It is experienced through a sense of pride people experience over their dwellings, the time, energy and resources that people invest into making their houses homes, how our memories and nostalgia are so uniquely tied to home and how cultural identity is reinforced and produced through one’s dwelling.
- o A social and cultural signifier: How does the social, cultural, economic and political landscape of where the dwelling sit influence how home is conceptualised and achieved? This involves considering architectural design, the geographic location of the dwelling, how the dwelling provides a space to perform and create cultural tradition, how rental processes are created, who lives within the home and why and how class is depicted as behaviour in relation to the dwelling. For example, we can make assumptions about the behaviours and traditions of a person who lives in a townhouse in South Yarra in comparison to a person who lives in public housing in Coburg.

Do you have any additional comments or suggestions?:

FILE ATTACHMENTS

File1:

File2:

File3:

Signature:

Michelle Welsh