[CA]Grace Lees-Maffei

Globalization behoves us to produce internationally situated investigations in which national design histories are understood within international contexts. Clearly, nations are not isolated entities; rather, they engage in multidirectional dialogues, with neighbours, friends, influencers, trading partners and enemies. Given the importance of intra-national liaisons it is surprising, not to say concerning, that so many academic studies of design are bound by national borders. While the scholarship of globalization and national studies each raise methodological questions of coverage, treatment and representativeness, we need not choose between them. There is a third way: transnational design history, meaning design history which recognizes that design is not bounded by the borders of nation states, and that it is necessary to examine more than one nation and the relationships between nations to better reveal the histories of design.

Is it not the case that to truly understand what, if anything, is distinctive about a nation, we must leave it, perceive it from a distance, appraise it from a conceptual Archimedean point? Italian design, for example, is a myth as much constructed in the design stores, magazines and galleries of London, New York, Paris and Sydney as it is in the designs studios, factories and small- to medium-sized businesses of Milan, Florence, Turin or Rome (Lees-Maffei 2013a). Clearly, national studies may not only be written from outside the nation in question, or written by foreigners. But, design historians should more often undertake the greater work involved in transnational studies, supra-national regional studies (studies of more than one nation within a defined region) and/or comparative studies, in order to better reflect the ways in which design is,

and has been, conceived, produced, mediated and consumed. Just as designed spaces, objects, images, processes and behaviours are capable of communicating national identity, so a characteristic of globalization is the wider exchange of people, ideas, goods and services across national borders.

The consumption and mediation in one place of goods, images or ideas produced in another is a rich seam for historians of design and culture (Lees-Maffei and Houze 2010: 465–510). When people move, they undergo a process of acculturation or 'transculturation', as Fernando Ortiz put it in describing Cuba particularly (1995 [1940]: 98). Ortiz' concept of transculturation can be applied to the movement of goods, images and ideas which requires a process of acculturation on the part of producers, consumers and mediators. In his monumental work of postcolonial theory, Edward Said (1978) has critiqued the transcultural practice of 'Orientalism', characterized as exoticized representations of a generalized middle- and far-'East'. Said's orientalism is literary, but designed objects have been just as much the objects of orientalism, from the 'Chinoiserie' of the eighteenth-century British potteries' willow pattern, inspired by Delft blue variations on Chinese ceramics, to the mid- to late nineteenth-century trend for 'Japonisme'. Also highly relevant for a transcultural and/or transnational design history is Homi K. Bhabha's (1994) postcolonial notion of 'hybridity' as a dialogue between colonizer and colonized, rather than a binaristic and inflexible relation of centre and margin. More recently, Marwan Kraidy (2002; 2005) has defined 'hybridity as a space where intercultural and international communication practices are continuously negotiated in interactions of differential power' (2002: 317). He notes that this understanding of hybridity is informed both by critiques of cultural imperialism, which allow for hybridity as a form of 'resistance to domination', and warnings that 'hybridity and domination are not mutually exclusive' (Kraidy 2002: 317). A

2

tendency to celebrate cultural hybridity as a form of transnational or multicultural communication needs to recognize that the implicated nations are often engaged in unequal power relations.

Design is an excellent channel for symbolizing and mediating national identities, and much work on national identity in design examines visual and material culture which explicitly projects national identities. Here transnational design history is explored with reference to domestic advice literature – defined as textual and visual representations of the social and material home in etiquette, homemaking and home decoration books – a body of material intended for domestic readerships which does not explicitly communicate national identity. Domestic advice books are replete with 'real ideals' (Lees-Maffei 2013b) about the consumption of designed goods, spaces and services which communicate national tendencies and identities. Yet, while there is a burgeoning literature on nationalism and national identity, and a growing body of scholarship on domestic advice, the two have rarely been brought together satisfactorily.[1] Furthermore domestic advice books published in the UK and the USA exemplify transnational patterns of influence as US domestic advice developed through a transatlantic domestic dialogue with the UK, via published words about how homes should be designed, decorated and inhabited. This literature, based on English as a shared language, has been mutually informative and mutually constitutive. Proceeding from the position that national identity cannot be understood solely from within a given focal nation, this chapter argues that transnational or comparative design histories are better fitted to understanding national identity in design and the transnational nature of design and its histories.

[A]Ideal Homes? National Identity, Homogeneity and Diversity in US Domestic Discourse

3

Just as manners are markers of national identity – in that the people of different nations display different behaviours, as do people from different regions, whether sub- or supra-national – so advice literature has been a tool in the formation of national identity. Domestic advice literature constitutes a semantically rich genre of discourse in which the conceptualization and realization of the physical home, its production, consumption and mediation, are bound up with larger homes: the home nation and the nation state. These degrees of home are conflated in domestic advice which seeks to provide normative, shared designs for living in articulations of domestic practices which have been or are intended to be naturalized, if not as local, regional and national customs, then certainly as generally accepted patterns of behaviour.

For example, Sarah A. Leavitt (2002) has discussed the role of homemaking literature in Americanization (which should more accurately be termed 'US-ization'), the process of acculturation which turns immigrants into US citizens. Leavitt explains that lace curtains were seen in the 1930s as a symbol of aspiring to join the middle class, and as a decorative detail employed by immigrants, or the 'lace-curtain Irish':

[EXT]To domestic advisors, and to increasing numbers of Americans who encountered and learned from them, lace curtains represented the past, the unsanitary, stuffy, frilly, nineteenth century. The modern twentieth century, the age of efficiency kitchens and sparse furnishings, would welcome only those women who embraced the new ideals about American decoration. (Leavitt 2002: 96)[end EXT]

With reference to domestic discourse, Leavitt shows how lace curtains came to function as a metonymic symbol for immigrant domesticities, old Europe within the modern USA. The micro

domesticity of the home and the macro domesticity of the nation are fused in domestic advice discourse which presents the home as a microcosm of the nation. We can see the American Dream, meaning the US Dream, depicted throughout the genre of domestic advice literature as published in the USA. See, for example, Fig. 11.1 in which it takes the form of a red-roofed home set in landscaped garden with a white picket fence and a turkey (perhaps for Thanksgiving) alongside other indicators of plenty and hospitality, represented with the appearance of needlepoint tapestry on the cover of a book by General Mills' invented celebrity chef, Betty Crocker. <fig 11.1>

The national emphasis becomes problematic when it precludes adequate recognition of international or transcultural influences. A focus on homemaking literature as constituting the home nation can lead to a tendency to address cultures other than a dominant, normative mainstream (USA, in this case) only when those cultures appear in the form of immigrants and can therefore be claimed as US citizens, albeit the 'other' within the USA. For instance, the US character of some practices, such as outdoor living, promoted in home decorating books is asserted rather than comparatively demonstrated (Leavitt 2002: 85). Relatedly, domestic designs influenced by modernism appear in a single-nation frame as more associated with the USA than they might in a transatlantic, transnational study which takes account of their European roots in, for instance, British Arts and Crafts, Dutch De Stijl and German functionalism, and recognizes the role of European émigrés in promoting modernism in the USA (an influence so pronounced as to have attracted the satiric gaze of Tom Wolfe [1981]). Finally, although the early influence of European sources on US publications is mentioned, Leavitt's statement that 'Domestic advice manuals originated in the 1830s' (2002: 9) refers only to the US case. It obscures several hundred years of advice published in Europe in response to modern tendencies such as

individualism, industrialization and urbanization (Elias 1994 [1939]) and three hundred years of transatlantic interchange between the UK and the US (Maudlin and Peel 2013).

Leavitt is not alone in presenting a single-nation history of US advice; others include John Kasson (1990), C. Dallett Hemphill (1999), Barbara Ehrenreich and Deirdre English (2005 [1978]) and Lynn Peril (2002). Sue Currell's analysis of self-help and the USA in the 1930s consigns 'the complex transatlantic crossings in self-help traditions' to a footnote in order to focus purely on the USA (Currell 2006: 141). McHugh (1999) presents her analysis of the variable visibility of housework in sources as diverse as nineteenth-century advice books, Hollywood movies and later experimental films as one of 'American Domesticity' rather than domesticity *per se*. Insights into the US condition/psyche/dream are thereby implied, a promising marketing strategy for accessing the US book-buying market and American Studies curricula. In fact, McHugh's claims for the American-ness (or, rather, US-ness) of the cultural artefacts she examines are not made explicit and must therefore be assumed to be based on the location of cultural production rather than the transnational flow of ideas and ideals via transatlantic publishing activity and the international distribution and exhibition of Hollywood studio movies, for instance.

The studies mentioned above characterize the erstwhile American Studies project of determining 'what has been unique about the American experience' (meaning the US experience) (Campbell and Keane 1997:1). Towards the close of the twentieth century – aka the 'American century' (Edwards and Gaonkar 2010: 1; Ellwood 2012) – the notion of US exceptionalism was increasingly criticized as privileging dominant groups, promoting assimilation over pluralism and failing to engage in transnational comparison. American Studies scholarship has focused on the USA to the exclusion of the many nations spread across the

6

continents of North and South America, in a manner which 'compounded earlier imperial gestures' by asserting 'a particular nation-state's claim to the powerful historical concept of "America"' (Radway 1999: 6–7).[2] In response, Radway prescribes 'bifocal vision, a capacity to attend simultaneously to the local and the global as they are intricately intertwined' and 'a relational and comparative perspective' (1999: 23–24).

Reflecting the intervening 'transnational turn' in American Studies (Tyrell 2009), Radway et al close a recent American Studies anthology with a section on 'Internationalization and Knowledge Production about American Studies' (2009: 567–604). Therein Liam Kennedy promotes the study of the state (meaning government) rather than the nation as a solution to the problems resident in the European view of the USA and describes how Americanists, or scholars of the USA, have sought 'to dislocate the nation as an axis of focus' through examination of 'the transnational, the post-national, the transatlantic, the Black Atlantic, the circumatlantic' (Kennedy 2009: 574). Robyn Wiegman itemizes the internationalization of American Studies as: (1) 'explicating the project of empire in US national-state formation'; (2) 'rethinking identity formation as a material effect of the transnational history of US empire'; (3) border studies refuting 'notions of inside and outside that make nation formation distinct from the transnational circulations of people, goods, labor, culture and knowledge'; (4) diaspora studies, 'the intersection of African American and African Studies'; (5) comparative studies 'to decenter the US from its universal representation as the quintessential national form, thereby locating operations of culture in cross-national formulations that are multi-national in scope'; (6) 'the relation between the national and the international in the modes of knowledge production at work in American Studies as a global scholarly enterprise'; and (7) 'collaboration and comparative analysis' in the context of 'identificatory refusal with American American Studies' (Wiegman

> **Commented [JG1]:** Where does this quotation start?
>
> **Commented [G2R1]:** After (6) at 'the…'

2009: 581–583). Finally, Donatella Izzo cautions that 'the opening of national frontiers and the erasure of national labels often seem to operate as a unilateral assumption theorized as a universal intellectual need from the vantage point of a privileged position within a strong institutional apparatus' (Izzo 2009: 597). She points out that this practice entails an 'unacknowledged premise authorizing (and indeed enforcing) the reduction of multiplicity to unity' (598):

> [EXT]We should not delude ourselves as to the actual existence of an 'outside' of American Studies that is not always already coextensive with the inside, at the very moment that it is co-opted into its disciplinary field, drawn into its apparatus, and geared to its institutional mode of operation. However much we may intellectually and politically foster a recognition of cultural diversity inside the US and an awareness of its manifold world transactions, we'll be still tautologically differentiating and enlarging *the same* field. (Izzo 2009: 598)[end EXT]

She counsels treatment of the nation as a historical and political category, and a non-hierarchical approach to accessing 'the historically specific "otherness" of each individual other' (599). The transnational turn in American Studies is now established (Edwards and Gaonkar 2010; Fluck, Pease and Rowe 2011; Bieger, Saldívar and Voelz 2013).

Scholarship in the design history of the US (Meikle 1985; Margolin 1988) echoes the broader currents of American Studies in a shift from the articulation of an 'American' aesthetic in design (Meikle 1979; Bush 1975) to revisionist work which shows the so-called 'American' aesthetic to have been 'a transatlantic collaboration that embodied the contradictions of

modernity' (Maffei 2003: 369). But writing on national identity in design more generally has tended to communicate convergence around national tropes, rather than tracing divergence within national identities, and the same critique can be levelled at writing on domestic advice. National identity is the place we come together: in celebrations of our winning sports teams, in rituals of state leadership such as presidential swearings-in and royal coronations, in national holidays. But even while US national identity in particular is predicated upon ethnic diversity, the normalizing function of domestic advice discourses – which tends to mean that a white middle class ideal is published for white middle class readers to follow – has not allowed the close relationship between the physical home and the nation as home which underpins domestic advice literature to reflect the longstanding ethnic diversity of the USA, and the increasingly multicultural nature of the UK population since 1945. In turn, the few academic studies of domestic advice have been hidebound by the selective representations of national identity found in the source material and have overlooked cultural diversity.

How might this impasse be overcome? We can borrow from reception theory (Iser 1974; 1978) and feminist literary theory (Ardener 1975; Showalter 1979; 1981; 1986; Lerner 1979) the understanding that gaps and silences in domestic advice books are semantically rich: what is not said is as powerful as what is said in creating ideals which subjugate certain groups and voices. Emma Ferry's (2003) analysis of British home decoration literature is an exemplary design historical application of this method for better understanding gender. The approach may be extended still further to national identity in design and design discourse: because ethnic diversity is ignored in mainstream media treatments of domesticity, an analysis which reads between the lines to understand how race/ethnic and cultural diversities are encoded in domestic advice discourses may be fruitful.

An example of such work is Dianne Harris's *Little White Houses* (2013). Harris examines houses and their representations, including textual and visual sources from mass market magazines, trade journals and catalogues for what they tell us of race in the USA and its construction through building and domestic practices in an era when all-white housing developments typically excluded working-class, African-American and Jewish families. Harris confirms that postwar mainstream mass-market publications depicted only white families and presented whiteness (broadly conceived) as normative, to the extent that non-whites are virtually invisible in these sources. Harris sees whiteness, and therefore race, encoded in 'words such as informality, casual lifestyle, leisure, individuality, privacy, uncluttered, and even clean' (Harris 2013: 60). She perceives whiteness in the aerial perspective and axonometric views employed in architectural drawings published in magazine articles, advertisements and trade brochures, where 'no viewer is defined or specified, because the assumed viewer is white and middle class, an assumption of unitary/collective identity that suppresses alternatives' (Harris 2013: 89). Slavoj Žižek's notion of ideological cynicism is invoked to suggest that post-war US citizens were both aware of the ways in which economically valuable whiteness was instantiated in their homes and at the same time regarded 'themselves as entirely unracialized, their spaces as race-neutral' (Harris 2013: 13).[3]

But, by consulting only 'white' media sources rather than analysing *Ebony* magazine (founded in 1945), for example, or other publications that might have revealed more about postwar ethnic diversity, Harris has demonstrated the difficulty of finding meaning between the lines of domestic advice discourses. The risk is one of reproducing the ideological bias of mainstream media source material, so that a book critiquing whiteness in postwar US domestic advice furthers the discourse of whiteness. This approach is, I suggest, more limiting than the

10

retrieval and analysis of sources outside the mainstream media, which speak more directly from and of the constituencies of interest. Among a small number of valuable examples (Chambers 2006, Leslie 1995), Elisabeth Lasch-Quinn's analysis of 'Prescriptions for Interracial Conduct from the 1960s to the 1990s' (1999) makes a significant contribution to knowledge and understanding of the ways in which US ethnic diversity was addressed in a wide range of twentieth-century advice discourses, from mainstream Hollywood movies to etiquette guides for black and white readers respectively. Lasch-Quinn's account of the awkwardness, inconsistency, optimism and latent prejudices of this material is a model for design histories attentive to diversity in national identities.

Thus far, one methodological faultline has been discerned: the homogenizing normative ideals promoted in domestic advice books have (with a few very useful exceptions) mainly produced analyses which, however well-intentioned, have not adequately addressed the divergent nature of nations and national identities. Now I will turn to a second, related, methodological issue in the writing of national design histories using domestic advice: international interactions and the significance of transnational contexts.

[A]Hybridity at Home: A UK-US Transatlantic Domestic Dialogue

While the cultural homogeneity of the domestic advice genre and its failure to reflect the diversity of the national markets into which the books were published has been replicated in analyses of domestic advice, the single nation emphasis in the domestic advice genre has not precluded trans- and multinational analyses, of which there are several notable examples.

Historical sociologist Norbert Elias produced the first extended transnational analysis of domestic advice. He articulated 'figuration sociology' as a model in which individuals or

11

'personality structures' are conditioned by 'social structures' such as etiquette. Having worked in Germany, the UK, the Netherlands and Ghana, Elias understood that in order to analyse the structural place of individuals within society, it was necessary to examine more than one society. In *The Civilizing Process* (1994 [1939]) he used etiquette books published in Britain, Germany and France to trace increasing interdependence between individuals and states in Europe over the past four hundred years. International trade requires the maintenance of good relations with a wide range of people, and a generally acceptable standard of behaviour. Elias argued that societies become more civilized as the centralization of state violence influences individuals to increasingly internalize social codes of self-control and politeness. He regarded the apparent increasing informality of twentieth-century social relations as an external impression that obscured the internalization of restraint, or 'controlled decontrolling' (see Wouters 2007: 231).

Advice literature has been proposed as useful in understanding social interaction and international relations. Arthur M. Schlesinger Snr's *Learning to Behave* (1968 [1946]) closes with a postwar panegyric on the role of etiquette literature as a *lingua franca* for improving international relations and maintaining world peace, in that it could help people from different countries to understand and show respect for one another.[4] Schlesinger traced a history of US etiquette books beginning with the influence of European (and especially English) advice on emergent US advice, in the form of imported copies of British and French advice books being sold and otherwise circulated by the early settlers. Subsequently, copies of the imported titles were printed in the USA, before adaptations were published to combine European influences and American needs and preferences According to Schlesinger, it was not until the 1830s that a desire to cast off 'imported superfluities' of behaviour led to the production and consumption of distinctly US advice books.

Just as European codes of conduct reached a flamboyant apogee (Davidoff 1973; St. George 1993), books articulating specifically US manners were concerned with more basic living conditions in the new world. Following Lydia Maria Child's *The American Frugal Housewife* (1829) among other examples, Dr A.W. Chase's books for pioneers advised on making frontier country habitable (e.g. Chase 1873). Like Schlesinger and Hemphill (1999: 131), Linda Young agrees that the emergence of particularly North American or US modes of behaviour distinct from European habits did not remove an evident interplay between European and US mid-twentieth-century advice texts. But Young makes the important distinction that 'the growth of genteel etiquette in the United States encompassed one important condition that did not apply in Britain or its colonies: democracy. How could a system of manners grounded in class distinction have a place in a republic of equal citizens?' For US citizens, etiquette was a route to 'middle classness more than aristocracy' (Young 2003: 151). This insight derives from Young's comparative method. Whereas Schlesinger and Hemphill focus on the USA over the *longue durée*, Young's study rather extends geographically from the USA to Britain and Australia. Schlesinger's book remains an exemplary national study, in which the first section traces complex international influences and the closing part returns to transnational considerations, but Young's fully comparative transnational method contributes another dimension of understanding didactic discourses in all three of her focal nations.

Young's is one of several valuably transnational studies of advice which are more or less Eliasian. Jorge Arditi's *Genealogy of Manners* (1998) applies Elias's long view of changes in the social infrastructure to a comparison of France and England,[5] and Cas Wouters' comparative studies of etiquette in the Netherlands, France, Britain and the UK in the twentieth century (1995; 2007) counters Elias's model of controlled decontrolling through examination of the

13

dynamic relations between various classes, and between the sexes. Along with these properly transnational, multi-national and comparative studies of domestic advice, single nation studies are most effective when they are enriched and made more meaningful through the integration of the transnational capacity of domestic advice, as in Schlesinger's book. The ideas and ideals of home communicated in domestic advice books are not static, even though they may be seen to amount to a set of traditions. Rather, they are constantly negotiated, in a balance of tradition and modernity (Lees-Maffei 2001) in which the genre collectively takes on board new, including international, practices and discards the outmoded, point by point.

Penny Sparke has recognized reciprocity in the ideas and ideals of domesticity disseminated in US and UK publishing: 'Through the last decades of the nineteenth century, strong links were established between British and American [decorating] publications as editions of key texts appeared on both sides of the Atlantic' (Sparke 2003: 65). She cites Charles Eastlake's *Hints on Household Taste* of 1868, which was enormously influential in the USA on its publication there four years later, and notes the correlation between the titles published collectively by Macmillan in Britain as the 'Art at Home' series and the US writer Clarence Cook's influential manifesto about aestheticism in the household *The House Beautiful* of 1878. Sparke observes that 'publications of the 1870s and 1880s on both sides of the Atlantic shared a commitment to the concepts of good taste, good workmanship and the importance of "art" in the home' (Sparke 2003: 65). This convergence continued into the twentieth century (and persists today), so that many titles – including for example US doyenne of manners Emily Post's *Etiquette* (1922; 1927) and British writer Shirley Conran's *Superwoman* (1975) – were published more or less simultaneously in the UK and USA and the intertextual references which advice writers routinely make to the work of other advisors and existing works of advice are as likely to

14

be transatlantic as they are to reference material from the same nation (Lees-Maffei 2013b: 5). A concern for currency has led advice writers to use contemporary idiomatic expressions which may indicate varying levels of transatlantic influence, such as the increasing Americanization (US-ization) of the language used by Lady Troubridge in her successive books (Lees-Maffei 2013b: 18–19).

This dialogic publishing activity reflects similarly convergent domestic practices in the UK and the USA, and in the transatlantic relationship between the US and Western Europe. For example, as a leading exponent of the application of efficiency studies and Scientific Management to homemaking, Christine Frederick (1920 [1919]) exerted a transatlantic influence as well as a national one. Designer Margrete Lihostsky acknowledged her debt to Frederick in designing the first fitted kitchen, the 'Frankfurt Kitchen', for public housing in that German city in 1926 (Lees-Maffei 2013b: 123). Frederick also influenced leading US etiquette writer Emily Post in her recommendations about designing domestic spaces with a view to 'saving steps' as this diagram of 'An Ideal Kitchen Arrangement' (Fig. 11.2) from Post's book *The Personality of a House* (1948) makes clear. <mark>\<fig 11.2\></mark>

This rational domesticity also underpinned the consumer movement on both sides of the Atlantic which responded to the spread of consumerism seen in, for example, the identification of new consumer groups such as the teenager in the UK and the US (Abrams 1959; Life 1959). The consumer movement also responded to unease about the spread of consumerism and informed discourses of domesticity by introducing consumer education (see, for example, Fig. 11.3) and the tropes and techniques of rationalism (Lees-Maffei 2013b: 26). <mark>\<fig 11.3\></mark>

The shared project noted by Schlesinger, Young, Sparke and others continued into the twentieth century in a dialogical process characterized in part, but not exclusively, by

15

Americanization/US-ization. For example, in discussing the promotion of modernism by the BBC from 1912 to 1944, Julian Holder concludes:

[EXT]While considerable effort by Modernist design reformers was being put into influencing consumer behaviour, American films, music and products were forming much of the public's taste. […] The voice of the BBC as the 'Voice of the Nation' was unable to combat the Americanisation of British taste during this century. (Holder 1990: 142–143)

Americanization/US-ization was a concern for domestic advisors writing on issues ranging from youth culture to consumerism, and the increase of US brides in the British aristocracy (Cannadine 1990: 347) to the use of informal US conversational idioms. British advice author Pam Lyons insisted that 'even in younger circles, "Hi" is definitely "out"!' (Lyons 1967: 45l; Lees-Maffei 2013b: 155). In caricaturing the discomfort felt by the British in the face of US informality in a humorous advice book authored by a British aristocrat, the Duke of Bedford, illustrator Nicolas Bentley represents a US citizen as overly familiar in his use of informal language ('Hi-ya'), his use of nick names ('Johnny boy'), his dispensing with the formal necessity of a third-party introduction and following an entirely different sartorial code, not to mention his pungent and prominent cigar. **<insert fig 11.4>**

In turn, US advice authors were self-conscious about what they regarded as distinctly American habits. Californian teachers, Betty Allen and Mitchell Pirie Briggs, reflected in *If You Please! A Book of Manners for Young Moderns*: 'It seems to be a part of the American philosophy to welcome variety and change. In dress we are inclined quickly to discard the old

16

Commented [JG3]: Is there a word missing here?

Commented [G4R3]: Yes, terrible expression on my part, now remedied.

and eagerly grasp the new' (Allen and Briggs 1950 [1942]: 34). In *Behave Yourself! Etiquette for American Youth* they imply a distinctly US aesthetic when they assert that 'Good grooming is as much a part of modern life as is streamlining' (Allen and Briggs, 1950 [1945] [1937]: 16).

Informal manners have been presented as an US national trait, not only in British domestic advice literature with its implied fear of Americanization/US-ization, but also through analysis of claims in US-produced titles of the forging of US manners. The pre-eminent US advice writer, Emily Post, continually adapted her advice to keep pace with the informalization of US society (Lees-Maffei 2012), from the first revision of her book *Etiquette* which responded to the influence of competing advice writer Lillian Eichler (Eichler 1922 [1921]; Post 1922; 1927; Schlesinger 1968 [1946]; Arditi 1998; Lees-Maffei 2012) and in every subsequent edition of the book. Yet she was later ridiculed by authors of 'the new hospitality', Mary and Russel Wright (Wright and Wright 1954 [1950]), who saw her not as the arbiter of US etiquette, but rather as a proselytizer for English manners at odds with the 'easier', more informal needs of mid-century US citizens (Lees-Maffei 2011; Havenhand 2014). The Wrights' own *Guide to Easier Living* (1954 [1950]) was a landmark text in the development of informal 'American' home entertaining in the post-World War II period. See, for example, their advice on serving meals to guests at a 'Kitchen Buffet' (Fig. 11.5) and their recommendations that cleaning up after a meal can be part of the evening's entertainment (Lees-Maffei 2011: 189). **<insert fig 11.5>**

However, notwithstanding Victoria de Grazia's (2006) claims for the resounding victory of Americanization/US-ization, it was not a one-way street. Rather, two-way traffic might be a better metaphor for understanding the mutual influence of the USA and those countries in which Americanization/US-ization was bemoaned, if not a crossroads, or pile-up of multiple influences.

17

Recognition of greater complexity in twentieth-century Americanization in design is provided by Leavitt, for example, who allows for the influence of Swiss Architect Le Corbusier on US domestic advice writers (2002: 104, 121); by Kjetil Fallan, who has shown how design discourse bore evidence of a shift from enthusiasm to questioning of US influences (Fallan 2015); and by Maiken Umbach (2002) who traces the global relevance of the German notion of *Heimat*, and some useful transatlantic design history of the period before the twentieth century (Jones 2013; Hinchcliffe 2013; Styles and Vickery 2007).

[A]Broadening Horizons: America in the World of Advice

Studies of specific nations which have negotiated their identities in relation to external state(s) have been fruitful for the understanding of domestic advice and what it can tell us about ideals of the consumption of design in the home. This work extends beyond the understanding of a US-UK transatlantic domestic dialogue to encompass wider concern for America and Britain in the (rest of the) world. Young's analysis of *Middle Class Culture in the Nineteenth Century: America, Australia and Britain* derives from her curatorial practice in Australia. Rather than accepting the preponderance in her Australian collections of objects which had been imported from colonial power Britain and commercial power the USA[6] as being based on 'the Imperial agenda of supplying goods to the colonies' and 'American production strengths' in mechanized and domestic products respectively, Young regards the similarity of goods in Australia, Britain and the USA as evidence of a 'demand for certain kinds of items which both enabled and expressed a common pattern of values, behaviours and beliefs: middle-class gentility' (Young 2003: 6, 7, 8). Young points out that 'In the larger focus of transnationalism, the culture of the international middle class was neither "British", "American" nor "Australian" but characteristic

of "Greater" Britain' (7). She is aware of the political implications of de-emphasizing difference, and that 'admitting to continuity seems to let down the spirit of the American Revolution, or to endorse the Old World values that despatched the poor and the criminal from the motherland to the antipodes' (2003: 7). Yet Young makes clear the potency of consumer goods, and particularly those associated with gentility, in colonial contexts: 'The absence of a fresh tablecloth on the frontier table would indicate despairing failure in the project to re-create the genteel habitus. Wherever the tablecloth was victorious, the success of genteel culture was proved across the globe' (2003: 188).

Writing in her *Domesticity in Colonial India*, published a year after Young's book, Judith E. Walsh concurs that 'During the nineteenth century, a collection of middle-class European ideals and practices on home and family life became a globally hegemonic discourse on domesticity […] found in advice literature and other writings on home and family life published in England and the United States, as well as in colonial settings as diverse as India and Africa' (Walsh 2004: 11). As a postcolonial study of colonial discourse, Walsh's book is necessarily transnational and transcultural. The colonial Indian domestic advice books which Walsh examines:

[EXT]were shaped by a transnational domestic discourse. But they were also (and just as profoundly) influenced by local worlds and their conditions: by the structures of British power and presence in urban centers like Calcutta; by the changing nature and demands of life under British rule; and by the indigenous contexts of home and family life, the worlds of women, children and family elders. (Walsh 2004: 31)[end EXT]

By merging transnational and local concerns, Walsh's focal texts exemplify Bhabha's hybridity, but she is careful to point out that while hybridity is 'not a concept usually applied to works within a Western cultural domain', US advice books such as Catharine Beecher's *Treatise on Domestic Economy* (1841) instantiate an accommodation of the transnational and the local in the same fashion as her Bengali examples (Walsh 2004: 26). Her point is that Bengali advice writers were deemed imitative and derivative, while Beecher was not. We can take from this the qualification that hybridity is not a practice of collaboration that transcends political specificities; rather hybrid texts embed politics specific to the circumstances and geography of their production. For example, Walsh's primary interest is gender and she returns repeatedly to the politics of literacy, noting that 'Fluency in English, of course, gave the English-educated access to all the discourses of British colonial modernity. And it gave them access to each other' (2004: 33), and that 'this story of what women learned in nineteenth-century Bengal and India need not conclude with nationalism and the end of social reform in India […] It can also conclude – and reasonably so – with a large number of "literate and learning" women reading the texts of their pasts, beginning to consider their options for the future' (Walsh 2004: 159–160).

Literacy is critical, but it is not the whole story: Rosemary Marangoly George's interdisciplinary anthology explores 'the rhetoric and practices of domestication in contemporary cultures' and demonstrates how 'analyses of domesticity itself can be used to critique the racialized and gendered logic of nationalist and imperialist modernity from the late nineteenth century onward' (George 1998a: 16). Chapters examine architecture, film, literature and food packaging. George's own chapter uses novels and homemaking guidebooks as evidence of the perceived importance in the India Empire of Englishwomen's homemaking practices as imperial labour (George 1998b: 52). She observes 'the language of statecraft' in Indian imperial domestic

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advice books, which seek to persuade their English reader that 'her triumph is to replicate the empire on a domestic scale' (George 1998b: 58, 57). George's transnational perspective enables her to observe that English novelists and advice writers working in India enjoyed an 'autonomy afforded by their dislocation' which was not experienced by English women in England (George 1998b: 67). Similarly, Nancy R. Reagin's *Sweeping the German Nation: Domesticity and National Identity in Germany, 1870-1945* (2007) avoids the pitfalls of a single nation study by considering domesticity not only as a practice of national identity but also one of colonialism in regions such as south-west Africa and the attempts to 'Germanize' eastern European neighbours.

[A]Conclusion: A Special Relationship

Domestic advice forms a rich resource for understanding the macro 'home' of nation state via the microcosm of the physical family home, but this chapter has outlined some drawbacks to the convenient category of the national, and of national studies using US domestic advice as a case study. Domestic advice books have largely ignored the complexity of national compositions and identities and studies of this material have all too often followed suit. An insistence on national borders as borders for understanding domestic advice literature has obscured its role in mediating between nations and the development of a UK-US transatlantic 'domestic dialogue' of several centuries standing. It is not helpful to read domestic advice discourses on each side of the Atlantic separately, and contemporary audiences did not read them as such. To appreciate the importance of domestic advice literature in mediating national identities, we must also consider its transnational significance.

This chapter contributes to Wiegman's fifth project, of rethinking 'area studies models with more fluid and flexible ideas about nations as imaginary formations with deeply material

effects' (Wiegman 2009: 582). US domestic practices were forged in relation to European, and principally colonial British and French exemplars and yet the old world colonizer's influence, which extended long after the formal ending of the colonial situation, has been superseded by the post-colonial USA exerting a reciprocal influence on the UK and other nations around the world through political, economic and military power and via the processes of Americanization/US-ization, cultural imperialism and soft power in the 'American' twentieth century. If the power relations between the UK and the USA have undergone a revolution, both literally in the historical event of revolution and subsequently as a result of the USA's growing economic and cultural dominance, the direction of influence has not simply reversed.

Although Britain is now less powerful in its postcolonial relationship with the USA, a mutual influence prevails, perhaps particularly in the areas of etiquette, homemaking and home decoration due to the roots of this discourse. This domestic dialogue has seen the UK and the USA collaborating in the articulation of domestic ideals in a manner indicative of Bhabha's hybridity as occurring in the cultural interactions of the colonizer and colonized. Transatlantic negotiation is perceptible in, for example, advice which directly addresses the inadequacy of British models of homemaking and etiquette for the US settlers on the western frontier (Child 1829; Chase 1873), and advice about managing the increasing influences of Americanization/US-ization in post-World War II Britain (Lyons 1967). Notwithstanding successive revisions in response to the influence of other texts, the Anglo-centrism of one landmark US advice book (Post 1922; 1927) has been critiqued in another (Wright and Wright 1954 [1950]). Furthermore, UK and US ideals and the relationship between them resonated throughout the world so that the analysis of domestic advice, whether undertaken as a national study or as a transnational one, must encompass a transnational perspective and a postcolonial

22

recognition of domesticity as a colonial practice, and domestic advice likewise, wherever it is read.

Following extensive debates in fields other than design history, principally American Studies, this chapter has argued for transnational design history as a more challenging but ultimately more rewarding approach than default national studies. Work in American Studies which has responded to the critique of US exceptionalism has cautioned scholars of the USA about the need to recognize the vantage points from which they research, write and make judgments and the contexts within which they do those things, as a way of avoiding a shift from the frying pan of nationalist myopia to the fire of universalizing and totalizing world views. Transnational design history allows for multiple viewpoints which, rather than leading to universalizing statements about a nation's (in this case the US) influence in the world, instead allow for a specific analysis of transnational influence in historical context, and an understanding of cultural collaboration all too rarely acknowledged in national studies of design to date.

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23

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Notes

[1] This may be partly attributable to the marginal status of domestic advice literature (Lees-Maffei 2003).

[2] In her Presidential Address to the American Studies Association in 1998 (published the following year), Radway (1999) proposed alternative names for American Studies and its US subject association such as 'United States Studies', 'Inter-American Studies Association', the 'Society for Intercultural Studies', before proposing to stick with the current name and pursue methodological rather than nominative change.

[3] Harris' approach is consistent with other studies of whiteness and design such as Mark Wigley's now classic *White Walls* (1995), Kathleen Connellan's examination of the significance of white fitted kitchens in South Africa (2010) and Sara Ahmed's 'phenomenology of whiteness as a way of exploring how whiteness is "real", material and lived' (Ahmed 2007: 150).

[4] Similar claims have been made for design, in initiatives such as the International Council of Societies of Industrial Design (ICSID), founded in 1957 and now with fifty member nations, for example.

[5] Rachel Rich (2003; 2011) has also used advice literature to compare social practices in France and Britain in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

[6] Of course the USA has engaged in its own colonialist practices elsewhere.