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Front Yard Machines:
Interpreting Cultural Landscapes in Thunder Bay

By
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Dedications

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Introduction

The house and the yard have ceased to be solely functional objects. Rather, today they are often invested with tremendous amounts of time and money resulting in objects which transcend traditionally functional roles to become objects of expressive communication. What follows is an investigation of the house and yard, looking specifically at one aspect – the front yard. The term 'front yard', to cite the City of Thunder Bay's by-laws, "means a yard extending across the full width of the lot between the front lot line and the nearest part of any building or structure or open storage use on the lot" (820.1.5). Or more simply put, the front yard in a broad sense defines a myriad of objects that exist or come together in the forefront of a property or boundary. A typical front yard has a part sectioned for grass and lawn; another part is usually set aside for plantings (flowers, trees, shrubs, etc.); there is in many instances a defined path onto the property, from the sidewalk and from the street, as well as a path to the entrance of the house. For my purposes "the front yard" is the totality of objects within a particular space defined from one edge of the property to the next, and beginning at the front edge of an individual's private space up to but not including the front of the house.

The front yard is an artificial creation and there exist preferred genres or models that define and structure spatial organization, construction and/or deconstruction. Thick green carpets of grass, structured gardens and bright flowers, manicured bushes and shrubs, and paved pathways are not natural occurrences. These objects create a geo-social artifact, which should be recognized as a mixed medium. The front yard is created through the selection and assemblage of choice objects; it communicates both cultural and personal factors intentionally and unintentionally. The front yard's encoding and

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decoding process organizes codes and subcodes, which govern the combinatorial possibilities of its components, into a message. There are active agencies of society, technology and an ideology of consumption present in this spatial structure but it is not overly determined by just one factor. The combination of such elements into a socially understood and recognizable display needs to be acknowledged and understood.

My project does not analyze machinic theories for their strengths and weaknesses but uses them as explanatory tools for understanding how the front yard "works' in North American society. Machinic theories are a way to "acknowledge and understand" the combination of elements in the front yard, as there are many different object assemblages that define front yard spaces. The assembling of differing elements and objects at one point or one place, throughout this work, will be referred to as *machinic* and the whole process will be referred to as a *machine*. Machine theory has been used by contemporary philosophers, like Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, to examine and investigate abstract social relations (i.e. capitalism and schizophrenia). It is a particularly interesting theoretical approach in that machine theory encompasses humans, technology and nature into a communicative-reality-construction-relationship. For there is only "a process of production" in which no distinction exists between humans and nature and where only the process exists to produce "one within the other" as heterogeneous aggregate parts functioning together as a whole (Deleuze and Guattari, 1977, p. 2). This *whole* is "a sum that never succeeds in bringing its various parts together" (Ibid, p. 42) - it is a product, a part working within a "particular place within the process of production, alongside the parts that it neither unifies nor totalizes" (Ibid, p. 43).

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A classical schema of machines views them more in line with tools or extensions and projections of human beings rather than as a single entity. According to the classical schema the only real distinction between a machine and a tool is the degree of independence the object possesses from humans. Tools are simply agents of contact, while machines are just removed or separated agents of participation that began with the tool (Guattari, 1995, pp. 121-122). Contemporary theorists diverge from the classical schema's categorization of independent spheres. Humans do not exist apart from the world; our actions create a communicative interaction with the world in which "humans *are a component part*" of a machine, or they combine "with something else to constitute a machine" (Ibid, p. 120) - machines are everywhere and everything is a machine.

Machines consist of connections (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987, p. 82). Encoders and decoders of front yard machines are part of the machine to the extent that they are in the communication loop. Deleuze and Guattari conceive of the machine as a "process of production" that involves all spheres together, including the experiences of "nature" in the front yard. That the front yard includes the body of the homeowner means simply that she and/or he is in "intimate contact" with it, engaged in its encoding and the decoding of social codes that inform encoding. Encoding practices engage desire and desire is production, for Deleuze and Guattari, machinic production. Desire is not a personally intended production, though people do have personal repertoires. Instead, subjective desires emerge through the kinds of syntheses, the couplings of desiring-machines, that Deleuze and Guattari (1977) describe: *connective* drives and investments that energize a person, makes them feel alive; *disjunctive* syntheses like pleasure and desire that assemble when the habits from connective systems are neutralized through

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differences (breaking and remaking repetition); and *conjunctive* syntheses that create

relations through which subjects pass and emerge, subjects which then claim that which

constituted them (Deleuze and Guattari, 1977, p. 18).

Machines are not metaphors. There is nothing particularly metaphoric about a

woman's or man's attachment with his or her lawn mower or hedge trimmer. Yard tools

illustrate beautifully the point that machines create interruptions or breaks by entering

material flows and shaving bits (of grass, or branches, etc). For every interruption of a

flow there is a connection to another machine that produces the flow (Guattari, 1995) -

like for example a lawn care regime, a horticultural model, and a bag of fertilizer.

An assemblage consists of parts (components) distributed around nuclei by a

variety of connections with degrees of probability. The components are heterogeneous.

Within assemblages certain consistencies emerge around coordinates that are weak,

strong, and/or abstract. Potential is realized in terms of a component's mutational

capacity for escape or at least release or extraction. For example, Deleuze and Guattari's

idea of a rhizome is reflected in how a weed escapes the monoculture determination of an

overgrown despotic lawn when it is reclaimed as a "heritage" plant or regional plant or

"flower" (i.e. new term of reference emerges for dandelions in yuppie cuisine and

immigrant cooking, including such things as cornflowers, etc.).

My project attempts to apply machine theory to matters of physical reality –

landscapes. In chapter one the codes and subcodes structuring the front yard are

examined as a machine, a system of connected structures webbing together flows that are

more than the sum of their parts to create the *front yard machine*. Examined

pansemiotically front yard codes and subcodes create a particular landscape with an

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immense input-output matrix that is not separate from humans, technology and nature, but a networking of all. This network is a compilation of related and non-related elements coming together under the direction of certain flows. Humans as interpretive and structural agents repeatedly shape land for new uses and pleasures, bringing different code webbings into the construction and interpretation of front yard spaces. With numerous possible influences or alternative codes front yard machines are a kind of spatial communication assemblage that delivers messages through the structure of particular landscapes, the inseparability of individuals, technologies and geography. The different flows, which come together, influence the construction and/or de-construction of this codified flow-web space.

Using Manuel DeLanda's reality flows (the slow, the thawing and the fast) it is possible to construct a model which describes a particular front yard code. "Natural" front yards are spaces that are unmarked and often assumed to be 'the way things are' due to slow code flows. Slow flowing codes are a seemingly solid communication loop between a sender and interpreter. Here the communication is taken to be one way, from the sender to the user (as an encoder or decoder of space), yet the truth of the matter is, communication is a continuous loop. The communication back from the user to the sender (as questioning and testing) is simply very slow or so infrequently occurring that the structure appears to be static and solid; thus creating a 'naturalness' of traditional ideas and perceptions concerning front yards. When concerns or issues do arise the code flow begins to thaw and the speed of the communication loop increases.

With thawing, problems and issues occur with the existing codes or code structures. Personal changes to interpretive repertoires, social change, fads and fashions

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become new ways to understand front yards, thereby increasing the speed of flow between senders and receivers via a variety of sub-codes and "official" codes such as the neighbourhood norm or city by-laws. Change is much like that for Kuhn's scientists, but takes place instead in the minds and opinions of landscapers, gardeners, homeowners and neighbours with regard to front yard machine structures. As the loop becomes fluid and fast-flowing communication is ready to institute change, change that may be irrational and aberrant or chaotic.

Fast flows then occur: the thawing of solidified code flows become frenzied and unable to re-solidify within front yard machines. These will typically result in a challenge to traditional or existing structures. During this time new codes and subcodes will be tried and used in order to solve issues or concerns. The use of the new structures can then result in either the adoption of the newer or new codes and/or subcodes, or may validate existing codes and/or subcodes. In either case, once the new codes or existing codes are in place the communication loop will eventually once again begin to slow or re-solidify.

Re-solidification occurs as a code is repeated or maintained within the front yard machine. It may either become a new 'norm' through its adoption by a critical mass of people, or it may just become a new part of an individual's interpretive repertoire. Re-solidification slows the communication loop as questions and concerns of encoders and decoders decrease. It should be noted that this process is in no way isolated, re-solidification may be global or it may be local. Front yard machine structuring is a social and natural process that can take place individually, on a community basis, regionally, or globally.

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Chapter two discusses the front yard machine as a complex sign by examining the status producing elements within the spatial structure. Since consumption has become a particular way of life in contemporary society, the objects one consumes say much about the person or his or her social group. Objects of consumption become invested with meaning and are consumed for their sign value. Goods and objects constitute signs in a system of communication based on acquisition and display of minutely defined differences; differences that place individuals on a hierarchical and indefinite scale, in relation to what Jean Baudrillard refers to as 'models'. Thus, concrete differences are done away with and instead differentiation is achieved through display and consumption of sign values – communicating difference through sameness or 'conformity'. Objects of consumption create distinctions among consumers by assigning them a place in relation to a code, which then marks status.

Since lawn and landscaping in North America is growing fast and proving to be a very lucrative business, its links to individuals and groups becomes important. The front yard machine displays in tangible and visible form homeowner consumption; ability, that is, directly related to the person's economic well-being and/or physical capabilities. The front yard machine, with its direct link to the homeowner or homeowners, may be viewed as an extension of this person or group of people. Its organization and structure become ingrained with 'value' that encoders and decoders are aware of and use to construct and interpret the space. Front yard machines may be used to manage societal impressions by communicating consumptive normality or acceptability.

Front yards are a coupling with human bodies and landscaped space where space is not a simple static domain free from social structures, institutions and the biographies

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of its inhabitants. The objects and products used within front yards become imbued with socially perceived significance, a value instilled upon them due to their expense. Functionally, the value of differing front yard products is done away with; instead, the products become associated with a particular sign value. For instance, the different products used for surfacing driveways and walkways all function relatively similarly – they are all effective ways to construct 'useable' surfaces. Yet the differing expenses that accrue with each product installation become a means to hierarchically rank and rate them. This happens with all the elements and structures that create front yards. Each has a certain place or association on a relativity scale, which becomes a system for assessing the value of particular landscapes, and thereby assessing the status of particular homeowners. Front yard machines are spatial cues using 'average' consumption ideas to mark or restrict those unable to socially participate (to consume objects) in the same manner as unmarked persons. As a result socially aberrant status is labelled and those individuals or groups (associated with a particular local) who are unable to consume similar quantities or levels of objects as the majority of the population are distinguished. Like it or not your front yard says 'something' about you. Yet, because yards by and large grow and thus change, this 'something' is not static.

Finally, chapter three discusses the front yard machine as another sign, but this time by examining it as a surveillance apparatus. Surveillance in a very general sense simply refers to the watching and observing of others. Within contemporary society surveillance is said to be increasingly more common and we as a society are becoming voyeuristic. No longer is surveillance simply thought to occur from a centrally located figure or organization (Big Brother): instead, everyone is becoming an involved

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inspector. Suddenly visibility moves from the direct realm of personal physical

observation to entail all extensions of the human body, (i.e. clothes, cars, home and

yards). Bodily extensions are read to tell personal stories of ideologies, values and social

cohesion – a recording of behaviour that can be used to make assessments about a person

or group of people. Front yard machines, like the human body, possess a particular

significance in society crucial for everyday recognition and identification. It is possible

for the front yard to become a socially understood communicative system, whose surface

provides information and knowledge for an inspector or inspectors. Front yards and

human bodies form a network through which occurs a particular landscape as an

introduction for visitors or viewers. Since much of human interaction is materially

constituted, front yards as human modified spatial arrangements provide a visible surface

which records the lived experiences of homeowners and displays social acceptability or

aberration through individual encodings and decodings of the space.

As a form of physical surveillance front yard machine inspection is used socially

at many levels; it provides inspectors with encoded signs that allow people to judge and

determine others' social fitness. Within municipalities there are by-laws that restrict and

determine 'appropriate' front yard assemblages, which are enforced by municipally

employed by-law officers, whose duty it is to ensure homes and yards meet set standards.

In addition, the province of Ontario also encourages physical surveillance and front yard

inspection by the municipality, and also by private citizens. Locally, in Thunder Bay, two

separate cases of physical surveillance, supported municipally and provincially, will be

discussed. The first concerns the case of the two Kasstana sisters, Clara and Micalda, and

the second involves the discovery of the decomposed body of Tovio Sistenin. In both of

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these cases the front yard machine, as part of a larger social machine whose function is to ensure normality, becomes a surveillance apparatus that begins with private citizen inspectors and eventually includes both local and provincial levels of government. The front yard machine therefore is simply another visible feature of a person. It is viewed as an extension of the physical body, and is a recording surface that interpretively informs any interested inspectors about the social acceptability and aberration of an individual or individuals involved with the space in question.

Methodology

The choice of the three areas within this project was made primarily on a personal basis. The areas attempt to provide a rough coverage of literature about landscapes, in particular the front yard, within North America. Sources used were not predetermined and are by no means exhaustive. Research began by reading professional texts and literature on landscaping, urban geography, cultural geography and semiotics. The texts included in chapter one's discussion provided a general platform for texts in chapters two and three. Additional texts came to be included in chapters two and three simply due to increased awareness and exposure to the literature and discourses within the field. The method of research used dealt mostly with reading and searching to fit together the structures that seemed so disparate at the beginning of the project. Each chapter does investigate other themes, and the entire project aims to bring together some of the broad discourses of front yards.

Limited fieldwork, within Thunder Bay, was performed over the course of summer 2003. During these outings, and especially during the 2003 Pond Tour, impromptu discussions occurred between the creators of landscaped spaces and myself.

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As well, I visited local garden centres and stores where brief discussions with staff occurred. This was done so that I could familiarize myself with local products and thus gain an idea of the regional preferences and styles, as most of my own experience and background is of Central Ontario, specifically Simcoe County and the City of Toronto.

My employment background has been very useful; over the course of the previous five summers I have worked as a 'hard' and 'soft' landscaper. As a 'hard' landscaper I installed many different natural and manufactured stone products in applications such as paved walkways and driveways, retaining walls, and built flowerbeds. In addition, I have worked on residential ponds, decks, and fences, allowing me the opportunity to familiarize myself with other landscaping products and equipment. While working as a 'soft' landscaper I had the chance to labour on some of the gardens within the 'Bridle Path' in Toronto, Ontario. My duties were performed under the supervision of a licensed Horticulturalist, who was hired to care for and maintain the splendid gardens and lawns within this one area of Toronto.

In a sense it has been my summer employment, while a student, that has been most influential in determining the course of this investigation. I believe that much of my previous experience has helped to structure my understanding of landscaped space, especially front and back yards. I know that my experience has provided a general expertise that helped me begin and continue discussions about landscaping, landscaping products and services with homeowners, landscapers and landscape product retailers. I wonder though if it has not somewhat limited my view of the front yard and restricted other venues of investigation. To that I have no real answer. Yet to conclude, I do not

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feel that my search and investigation for new knowledge is overtly hindered: who I am

and what I know is very much a part of this thesis.

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CHAPTER 1

Interpreting the Front Yard Machine

A dark dense green carpet with the fine leaf texture of Kentucky bluegrass blended with perennial ryegrass and fine fescue greets the eyes of passers-by. The well-manicured and maintained lawn is neatly trimmed and ordered to distinguish where the homeowner's 'natural' space begins from the public space of sidewalks and roadways. The lawn's distinguishing boundaries also set up and define other features and characteristics of the privately landscaped area. Grass and flowers neatly border the driveway, black asphalt recently tarred to blacken and preserve its surface. Terracotta colored interlocking stones pave a walkway from the driveway to the front steps, which too are distinctly outlined visually by grass. In front of the house, separating the walkway from the foundation of the home is a planter box, a mound of dark earth made conspicuous with a stone boarder material. Similarly on the other side of the steps along the house's foundation is another such planter box this time separated from the thick green lawn. On the lawn's edges, closest to the driveway and furthest from it, are miniature evergreens trimmed to give a characteristic triangular shape. On the other end just by each side of the steps leading up to the front door is a juniper bush, a short billowing shrubbery. Separating the evergreens and junipers is a maintained grassless earth planted with well-ordered and multi-coloured perennial and annual flowers. Tulips, daffodils and a rose bush provide colour in the planter box.

The scene described, or something very similar, is regularly seen throughout communities in North America. Certain features may change: the products used to create walkways and driveways can be different; there may be trees, shrubs and gardens, or

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maybe a pond within the grassed space of the front yard, but the similarity of the entire system is typically preserved. The commonality and repetition of the entire system produces a static space that appears to be outside of time – a 'natural' landscape. Yet in some cases variation does occur, movement away from the typical.

Dominant cultural codes of the developed western world enable one to discern and interpret space and the organization of landscapes; to differentiate between individual spaces and make meaning in, on, and before these areas. The front yard is a learned interpretative process of landscape identification where the collection and assembly of objects within this defined space has resulted from the organizational and structural flow of shared codes and subcodes. To understand the front yard phenomenon – its coded naturalization and its coded change – first requires one to understand that the space is a machine. As a machine it is a system of information and communication flows and breakflows between non-related systems assembled together; the front yard machine brings together humans, society and nature into one system. Communication occurs at different speeds between encoders/decoders and codes used; the speed of this flow determines code solidity and acceptability (its naturalness) or code fluidity and unacceptability. By examining this particular space pansemiotically and using a machine model to describe the construction and de-construction of the space provides an encompassing theory to explain front yards.

The Front Yard Machine

A front yard is a landscaped space within which, as within all landscaped spaces, exists an immense input-output matrix, a network with flows and interactions (Meinig, 1979, p. 38); an assemblage of non-linear connections, heterogeneous materials and

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unrelated elements structured and put together in order to create a working whole (DeLanda, 1995, p. 5). Front yards are an ordered assemblage of objects that act as a signifying system, a social system that can communicate, be reproduced, "experienced, and explored" (Duncan, 1990, p. 17). Its codes come from other significant cultural systems; there is not only one signifying or determining system in use. D.W. Meinig (1979) said it well when he recognized that, "any landscape [like the front yard for instance] is composed not only of what lies before our eyes but what lies within our heads" (brackets added, p. 34). The front yard is a system of couplings, different objects and social systems flowing together in the creation of a space, a system - a front yard machine.

Working from a radical claim that "everything is a machine" (Deleuze and Guattari, 1977, p. 2), it is then possible to consider the front yard as a machine possessing a system or webbing of structured interruptions or breaks in the productions and transferences of information and/or knowledge - communication. Unlike a tool, which is more an agent of contact, machines are more than distinct processes removed or separate from humans and nature. They are not the totality of their parts or connections because machines consist of a process through which "structures can be created by bringing together heterogeneous materials, that is, by articulating the diverse as such, without homogenization" (DeLanda, 1995, p. 5). In a machine there are components or other 'flows' connecting with existing assemblages or flow-webs that create a continuum or Deleuze and Guattari's (1993) 'machinic phylum'. There are ruptures in flows and flow directions; each new connection is a break in relation to the one it replaces, but in the end the entire thing is simply one entity, one machine. The entirety of the machine, the

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'socius', forms a surface where productions of communication are recorded so there are no distinctions between the social and the technical; there is only the process.

A machine, like the front yard, is based upon flows that enmesh the process of communication and its production into a 'web'. The front yard therefore is a 'web' or production structure connecting and coupling together humans and nature – in essence the two are one reality or one machine whose flows need not be linear relationships. DeLanda in *A Thousand Years of Nonlinear History* recognizes and provides a narrative process of communicating through non-linear couplings. Reality consists of matter-energy and information flows that harden for periods of time in reaction to other flows that attempt to constrain the matter-energy and information in a variety of ways. DeLanda uses the oceanic crust to serve as a metaphor for his nonlinear history. On this crust continents are "constantly being created and destroyed (by solidification and thawing)," as such, "the rocks and mountains that define the most stable and durable traits of our reality would merely represent a local slowing down of this flowing reality" (DeLanda, 1997, pp. 258-259). Let's say, then, that a regional ecology is machined in a lawn-style that slows and stabilizes it. There are numerous possible influences or alternative codes that could flow into the front yard machine, into the communication that flows between all front yard connections.

The ability to perceive front yard spaces results from learning how to recognize codes that form and organize this medium (Lewis, 1979, p. 12). Poststructuralist thinkers like Derrida presuppose that "texts have a web-like complexity, characterized by a ceaseless play of infinite unstable meanings" (Duncan and Duncan, 1988, p. 118). Within front yards there are different code webs that flow together in the creation of space and its

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interpretation; other sources like religious beliefs, cultural beliefs and values, gender, region, class, and etc., all provide different active flows that construct and de-construct this space (Duncan, 1990, p. 4). Thus for any sort of meaningful combinations to occur in front yard machines there needs to be a structure or grammar that influences and in some cases determines communicative structures (flow-webs); the existence of front yard codes or conventions (Jakobson, 1971). Codes are a set of recognizable instructions (e.g. phonetic, grammatical, and/or lexical) that humans use to convert information from one sign form (e.g. words and/or verbal text) into another comprehensible format or system of signs (e.g. messages and/or communication) (Danesi, 2000 & Nöth, 1990). As a system front yards provide a framework in which their signs make sense. Traditionally meaning has been viewed as "conventional and arbitrary, as neither unique to an individual nor inherent in signs, objects, texts, actions, etc" (Duncan and Duncan, 1988, p. 118); front yards are more complex than conventional signifying systems because they create a sign system that is a combination of visual, tactual, aromatic, acoustic and in some cases aural types of discourse. It is the conventional and arbitrary nature of codes that allows for change to occur in front yard machines.

Change in front yard machines result from breaks in code flow, which occur when traditional or 'naturalized' flow-webs are perceived as unable to deal with or correct anomalies and/or weaknesses. From Kuhn's (1996) *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* it will be useful to retrieve how this kind of change is accounted for. 'Conversion experiences' (Kuklick, 1972) or 'paradigm shifts' (Kuhn, 1996) become a vital part of the machine model because of the importance placed on external and in some cases irrational influences in flow-web structure. Breaks in code flow and the adoption

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of new code flows occur because they solve problems and not because of their superiority. Therefore, code selection (possible flow-web structures) might result from circumstances as simple as aesthetic value, socio-economic value or value based upon a variety of other reasons. Front yard machines are part of the histories of those involved in creating them; therefore for all those who have encoded and decoded them through their development the front yard machine's couplings of flow-webs possess significance.

Humans bring a web of codes into the construction and interpretation of landscaped spaces. For instance, the political landscape is a code in which there is a dominant and widely accepted 'encoding' and 'decoding' of front yard space (e.g. 'private carpet), where spatial organization is developed and organized for a distinct purpose around an artificial, archetypical, coherent design inspired by some model of 'pastoral' retirement, let's say. The political landscape has evolved to insure order, security and continuity – to give citizens a visible status through their displays. The typical space in a political landscape formalizes communication with the outside world (Jackson, 1984, p. 42). It sets up standardizations of landscape styles and symbols, prominently using and displaying technology. While the front yard is a machine, and it involves the use of many well-known machines such as lawn mowers and hedge trimmers, its machinic character is irreducible to engines, "motor forces or design forces" (Welchman, 2000, p. 1235).

On the other hand, the vernacular landscape is a code system that understands and reads space as involving the recognition of non-dominant cultural aspects. This non-dominant 'encoded' and 'decoded' message reveals a distinct way of defining and handling landscape that is governed by personal relations. The vernacular landscape,

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unlike its counterpart, is not designed to impose or preserve a unity and order in the space

and structure of the land (Jackson, 1984, p. 150). Certain forms of vernacular landscape

construction are marked[1], containing signs and symbols that exclude the outsider. Lack

of perceptual understanding of the signs insures that inclusion occurs only with those

who are familiar or closely tied to that spatial flow-web or 'folk' tradition even if the

precise meaning of the object is unclear. Isolation and exclusivity from the dominant

outside world gives the vernacular landscape character (Ibid. p. 150).

Humans are cultural agents who repeatedly shape land for new uses and

pleasures. Landscapes, like the front yard reflect, as Alexander Wilson (1992) writes, "a

way of seeing the world and imagining our relationships to nature" (p. 14), an active and

humanly involved process of creating a useful and pleasurable site (Nye, 1999, p. 14).

Front yards are a natural phenomenon only so far as they represent a cultural milieu. The

space that defines the front yard is a landscape and thus inseparable from the individuals,

technologies and geography which flow together in the shaping and construction/de-

construction of this space.

Code Flows and the Organization and Structuring of the Front Yard Machine

The front yard machine model is constructed from flows, thawing and cracking of

flows, and breaks in flows to code systems/structures within a defined and understood

landscape arrangement. The theoretical stance adopted concerning the front yard, as with

landscapes in general, is that the landscaped space can be interpreted pansemiotically,

meaning that all forms of nonverbal behaviour can be seen as forms of communication

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[1] The idea of markedness was introduced by Jakobson to refer to "an opposition of two logical contradictories: the presence of an attribute ("markedness") in contraposition to its absence "unmarkedness") (Lechte, 1994, p. 62). Markedness implies that paired signs consist of a marked and an unmarked form.

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Diagram 1. The front yard machine process

Diagram 1. The front yard machine process

Code used in the constructing and de-constructing of spatial assemblages

Slow communication flow

Thawing - increase in communication

Fast communication flow

Encoder and/or Decoder - point of communication flow with code

Re-solidification - slow communication

Process

New code or justification of existing code

The production of the front yard occurs through communication amongst codes and code users that structures flow-webs, or the front yard machine

(Patterson, 1983, pp. 37-38). Diagram one (previous page) is an illustration of a modeled process of landscaped front yard construction, its encoding and decoding. The front yard consists of a myriad of assemblages that couple in the forefront of a property or boundary. It is artificial in that this space connects heterogeneous objects and part objects into a flow that can be recognized by many individuals. What emerges joined together is "a social framework of intelligibility within which all practices are communicated, negotiated, or challenged" (Duncan, 1990, p. 16). Front yard machines possess nonlinear connections and couplings, codes or rules and conventions that structure the spatial organization of the front yard, which encoders and/or decoders are continually interpreting. The codes are both enabling and constraining ways of thinking and acting; the structural systems seem natural in that many people who have learned the structure have a difficult time straying from it (Ibid, p. 16). The problem of 'nature' is one that haunts semiotic reflection: 'nature' is the common sense, the hidden ground, of cultural convention that semiotics tries to uncover and describe.

Codes

Codes represent an organizational system used in the creation and interpretation of spatial assemblages. Without a framework in which sign systems make sense the front yard as a recognizable space could not exist. Human interactions use predominantly socially constructed symbolic and/or sign systems to relate to ourselves and to the world around us in a number of ways (Israel, 1988, p. 32 & 48). Essential structures or code meanings in flow-webs (communication) do not exist but rather the meaning is an

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exchange between the medium and the socially situated interpreter[2]. Code systems typical of front yard machines – geo-historical human spatial interaction – consist of cultural myths and ideologies that have been internalized into the repertoires of interpretive communities and individual persons. Two speeds of information (communication) flow exist relative to one another. A slow flowing code can only exist with the possibility of thawing code structures (cracks in flow) and then the speeding up of communication flows within the machine. Fast flows similarly can only be recognized with the possibility of freezing or re-solidification and the possible slowing down of new code flows within the front yard machine. Speeds of flow result from the positioning and subjective interpretations of 'encoders' and 'decoders'.

Encoder/Decoder

Hall's work on the communication model within cultural studies acknowledges encoders (the constructors) and decoders (de-constructors) (2001, p. 125). Encoders and decoders can either be one person taking on a number of different roles in the front yard machine or they can be a compilation of separate individual flows. In either case flow construction and/or de-construction by the encoder/decoder, using their personal repertoire within the front yard machine, affects the interpretation of code flows and code flow-web development. Meinig (1979, pp. 34-45) exemplifies the positioning of encoders/decoders and landscape interpretation with his identification and discussion of ten different ways varied groups or individuals may describe a common landscape scene,

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[2]Individual and unique expressions of individual creativity have been viewed as "instances of a synchronic system generated either by deep structural regularities, as in the case of Levi Strauss, or by narrative structures and rountinized patterns of behavior which are viewed as self-contained self-determining systems" (Duncan, 1988, p. 118). As such codes could be viewed as determining behaviour; as with Searle's *regulative rules*, which regulate activities independently existent of rules, and *constitutive rules*, which create and regulate new interactions that are dependent upon rules (italics added, Nöth, 1990, p. 241).

like a front yard. A personal interpretive repertoire consists of signifying practices,

meaning-making behaviour, that are personally modified in the production and reading of

texts and that may result in differing interpretations of a single landscape. Eco (1986)

calls such recordings of all interpretive codes since birth an 'encyclopedia'.

It is Hall (2001) and Fiske (1987) who highlight the significance of decoder and

encoder positioning. This is especially true in regards to flow-webs (the communicative

flow between different assemblages) within front yard machines. Meaning in the front

yard machine, as in a text or other communicative structure, is constructed from the

"conjuncture of the text with the socially situated reader" (Fiske, 1987, p. 66) – an

exchange process flowing between the medium and the interpreter. For Fiske there are

two kinds of subjects or interpreters: one is the textual, inactive and passive subject for

whom ideological power is subjugated from the text or in the case of front yard machines,

from the hegemonic flow-webs. A second type of interpreter is an active and socially

formed one who negotiates and grapples with the positions that the text, or front yard

webs imposes (Ibid, p. 66). It is this positioning that in part affects the encoder/decoder's

interpretation of front yard machine flow-webs and which may lead to breaks in flow –

change.

For Hall (2001) the role of social positioning of interpreters or interpretive

groups affects the understanding of texts (Chandler, 2002, p. 192). Hall (2001) notes

three hypothetical codes or positions of a reader/interpreter to a text. There is the

dominant or *hegemonic* reading, in which one fully accepts and understands the codes

and reproduces a preferred interpretation – much like the hegemony of slow flowing code

interpretation. A second possible interpretation is a *negotiated* one in that the reader

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partly shares the text's codes and mainly accepts the preferred reading. This interpretation shows resistance and modification of the text in such a way as to personalize the reading, to reflect a person's own position, experiences and interests – it could be the beginnings of the thawing or breaking of solidified code flow. A third interpretation is an *oppositional* or *counter-hegemonic* reading in that the interpreter understands the preferred recording but his or her social situation places him or her in a directly oppositional relationship. As such these readings reflect infinite possibilities and are the most diverse in that they bring alternative frames of reference and reject the dominant or preferred readings (Hall, 2001, pp. 130-132; Chandler, 2002, p. 192; and Chandler, n.d., chpt. Encoding/decoding) – this is the fast flow and its increase of code information to the encoder/decoder. All of these positions are important influences to code flow-web development and the interpretation involved between front yard codes and human code users.

The position and the competence of front yard machine encoders and decoders are not linear abilities (a straight forward application and/or process) and are affected in many ways. Encoder/decoder subjects, their interpretive repertoires and positioning towards the front yard machine, can be static, grow as an individual gains maturity and experience, or become redundant and reductive. There is great redundancy in slow codes. Choice systems, alternative flows, enable the social function of human communication, while ideological constraints within a society can determine the choice of elements and rules of meaningful combination (new flow-webs in the machine). Dialectically that which is produced may in turn affect the society's ideological constraints. Communication therefore is content, grammatical and structural codes, as
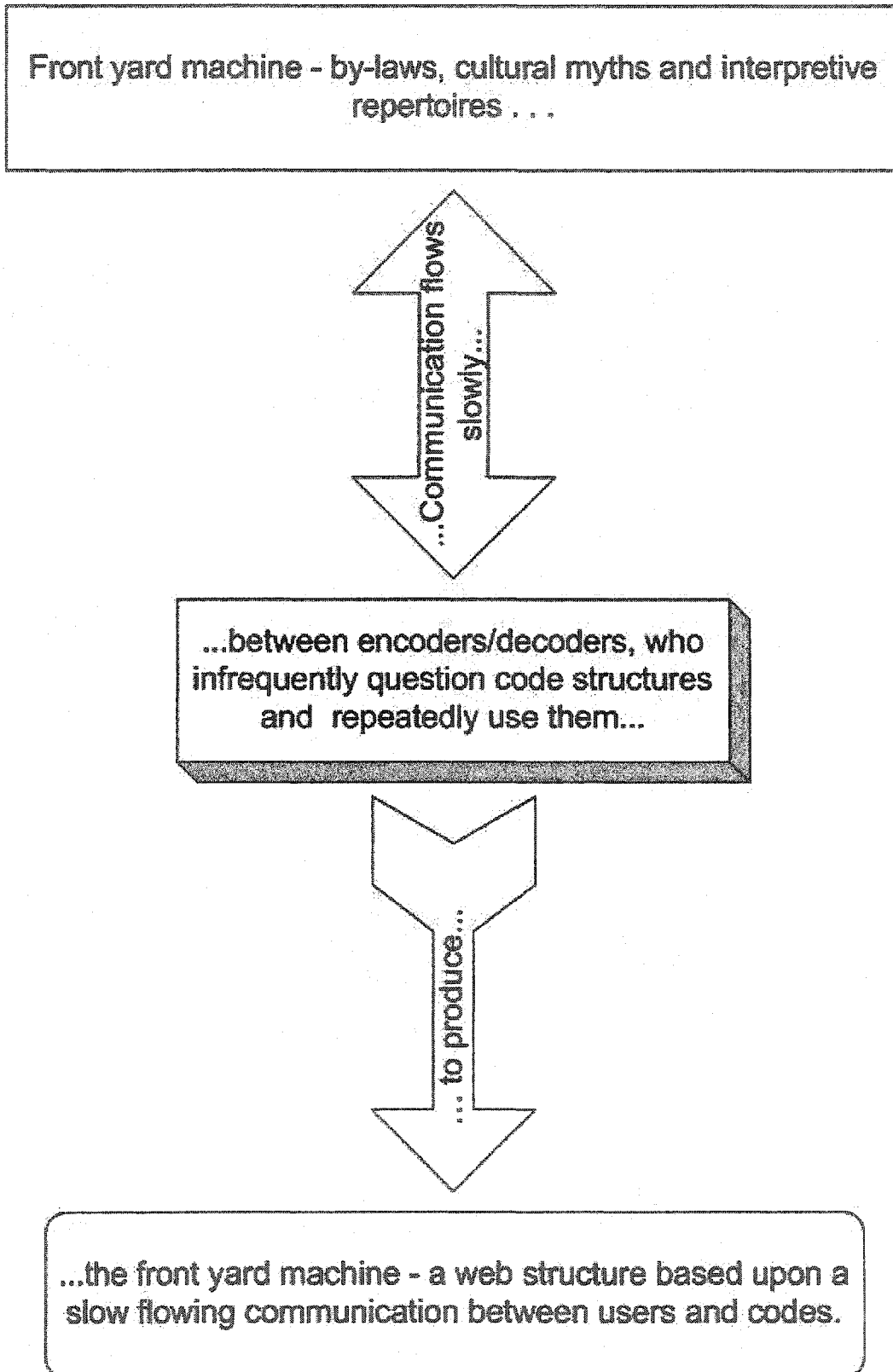
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well as style, personalized and expressive codes (Israel, 1988, p. 61& 64). The

personalized style and expressive choice of individual repertoires constitute an

interpretive flow-web used in front yard machines. Front yard flow-webs could very

likely stay slow, they may thaw or the flows may speed up and become fast flowing with

new developments in personal codes, like those governing gender attitudes and

expectations; class and socio-economic status; ethnicity and culture; religion and etc. It

is the encoder/decoder who validates code webs and produces slowly flowing

communication between the person and code, questions the flow and begins the breaking

or cracking of code flow, or challenges existing structures and speeds up code flows. Yet,

as far as the assemblages of the front yard go, not everything happens in codes of human

communication. Front yards engage the non-human as well.

Slow Flows

Slow moving or solidified codes are ones that are not often consciously

interpreted by encoders/decoders – codes that have become 'naturalized' (Diagram 2 next

page). In other words, slow codes may be comfortably inhabited – a series of actions that

have become "automatic and seemingly divorced from conscious thought" (Wise, 2003,

p. 115). In the front yard these codes include systems like by-laws, cultural ideology and

myth, and interpretive community repertoires that are often taken to be stable and

naturally given. The flows of such codes are so slow that they appear to be only one way

– the source of all value. coder. In actuality this process is a loop, an interactive

interpretive relationship between the encoder/decoder and the code. With the slow

moving or solidified codes there is little dialogue in the form of questioning and

contested interpretation between the encoder/decoder and the code itself. If there is any

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Diagram 2. The slow flow communication process

Front yard machine – by-laws, cultural myths and interpretive repertoires . . .

Communication flows slowly...

...between encoders/decoders, who infrequently question code structures and repeatedly use them...

...to produce...

...the front yard machine – a web structure based upon a slow flowing communication between users and codes.

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'contest', it occurs quite infrequently and gradually and cannot connect with the machine that repels it. As such these codes become perceived as solid and naturalized rather than constructed. A person may spend their entire life using a particular code to create his or her front yard and never contest it. Such a code is seamless; there's no place to get a foothold.

Cultural ideology and 'myth' have naturalized many codes. Perhaps the most distinguishing and prominent feature of home landscapes in North America is the lawn. The 'naturalness' of lawns within front yards began in the formal gardens of André Le Nôtre's Versailles, where garden designs proved that "man was a better landscape architect than nature" (Primeau, 2003a, p. 10). Next post- WWII landscaping created a large standardized flow-web in the front yard machine as the lawn became part of the homeowner's psyche concerning front yards. As a result the lawn-and-foundation-shrub model became a solidified part of the front yard machine in our culture (Webber, 2002, p. 2); an unwritten rule that grass is the dominant feature of the front yard, with evergreen foundation plants included (Primeau, 2003a, p. 9). This particular flow-web slowed and its ideology of domination, containment and standardization incorporated a culture of suburbs, golf course like grass and chemicals into the front yard machine (Wilson, 1992, p. 93). The 'naturalness' of such stable flow-webs are a construct whose repeated manifestations over time have been incorporated into the front yard machine and thusly into the Western homeowner's psyche.

Here in Thunder Bay the 'model' front yard code, as just discussed, is supported by municipal by-laws. Thunder Bay by-laws support naturalized code systems through repetitious application by residents; even though many individuals do not realize that they

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are perpetuating state supported and controlled maintenance of social flow-webs and front yard machines. In Thunder Bay, as in most municipalities and cities, there exist structural codes that determine just how the front yard can be landscaped - everything from land contours to grass height is pre-set.

The City of Thunder Bay's connection to the front yard machine specifies grade patterns (858.1.3), water flows within front yard space (858.3.1) and even a maximum height of 20 cm for weeds and grass (874.3.5). There are also municipal flow linkages to the front yard machine with simple landscaping changes such as dumping soil for lawn dressing, landscaping, and adding flowerbeds or vegetable gardens by requiring approval for any elevation increase of more than 100mm (858.2.5). The municipality covers and sets out everything from maintenance standards for steps, walks and driveways to even the pruning of trees and shrubs (846.25.5 & 846.25.8). As well, the city limits couplings to the front yard machine by inserting social codes that define the appropriateness of the assemblages and products used in the construction of landscaped space. Objects connected to the front yard machine that are considered 'waste', as defined by Thunder Bay by-laws, can result in a fine or penalty to the homeowner (874.3.3 and 874.2.6) – material like crockery, broken glass, cans and containers, products and items often used in folk art. The rationale for this control is to keep the front yard free from objects or conditions that "may create a health, fire or accident hazard" (Ibid, sec. 3, subsec. 3).

Slow flowing code webs within front yard machines are often accepted unconsciously; as such one gets a lot of similarity between front yards on the average street. By-laws should be recognized as social codes and conventions that are dominant within the specific socio-cultural context of Thunder Bay and which are naturalized by

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many of the inhabitants of the city through socialization. In essence they provide

members with founding fictions, myths or codes that may be taken-for-granted (Nichols,

1981, p. 30) that become the slow codes used to construct front yards. It is not just by-

laws that constitute 'commonsensical', 'self-evident', 'natural' or 'normal' flow-webs

systems used to construct front yard machines. The community or neighborhood a

person lives in is another code or structure that influences slow code flow structures that

manifest in front yard machines.

The front yard is a semipublic space; it is part of a neighborhood and a broader

regional landscape – welcoming visitors and making visual statements to passers-by

(Weekend Gardening, 2003, p. 44). The front yard's spatiality is required to visually tie

existing connections, like the house, to the surrounding landscape by giving the house a

personality and a sense of place (Webber, 2002, p. 5). The front yard machine

distinguishes it at the same time it tries to structure itself so as to blend into a community.

Conformity with an individual's neighborhood is a type of code solidification that flows

from encodings based upon 'interpretive communities', a group of individuals who share

familiarity with particular codes in setting up and developing the front yard (Fish, 1980).

Evan Fraser, in a correspondence regarding his Master's of Science thesis, states

> one of the surprising features of my results were that there were no
> significant differences in what members of different cultural groups
> planted in their front yards … in my opinion my results show that there
> was a homogenizing force that smoothed out differences on the parts of
> the house that were visible from the street. This may seem counter-
> intuitive, since it's easy to find very obvious examples of culturally
> distinct homes, however, my data showed that these are outliners and
> when you do an analysis of variance, these differences are not significant
> across entire populations (June 06, 2003).

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Research by Zmyslony and Gagnon (1998 and 2002) confirm Fraser's remarks and in addition Julien and Zmyslony (2001), in other research, have determined that "front-yard landscapes (vegetation and non-vegetation elements) are replicated non-randomly by residents" (p. 337). The organizing structure of front yards appear to be 'modeled' from the surrounding spaces; ideas and concept are borrowed from neighbours and other community members.

By sharing code structures the interpretive community helps to slow flows within front yard machines. Julien and Zmyslony (2001) state that other authors (Routaboule et al.,1995; Jim,1993; Eveillard, 1991; Rowntree, 1998; and Cooper, 1975) have suggested the sharing of front yard codes in various forms constitute as landscape replication, a 'mimicry' (p. 338). Mimicry is also noted by Zmyslony and Gagnon (1998 and 2002) where proximity, same street side and similar front-yard characteristics (depths, widths and types) within a "street section increase similarity in front-yard landscape" (2002, p. 370). Landscape is not a random process; front yard replicated code flow-webs are statistically highly significant in the creation of spatial organization (Ibid, p. 370). Neighbourhoods constitute particular groups which differentiate themselves from others by implicit or explicit reference (implicit or explicit slowing down of code flow) to a particular 'model' (discussed in more detail in Chapter 2).

Duncan and Duncan (1988) have likewise recognized the connection of interpretive communities and spatial construction. In Vancouver, for example, Duncan and Duncan examined Shaughnessy, an upper-income neighborhood, where by the late 1970s the neighborhood property owners' association "constituted an interpretive community around a particular textual model of what the landscape of the neighborhood
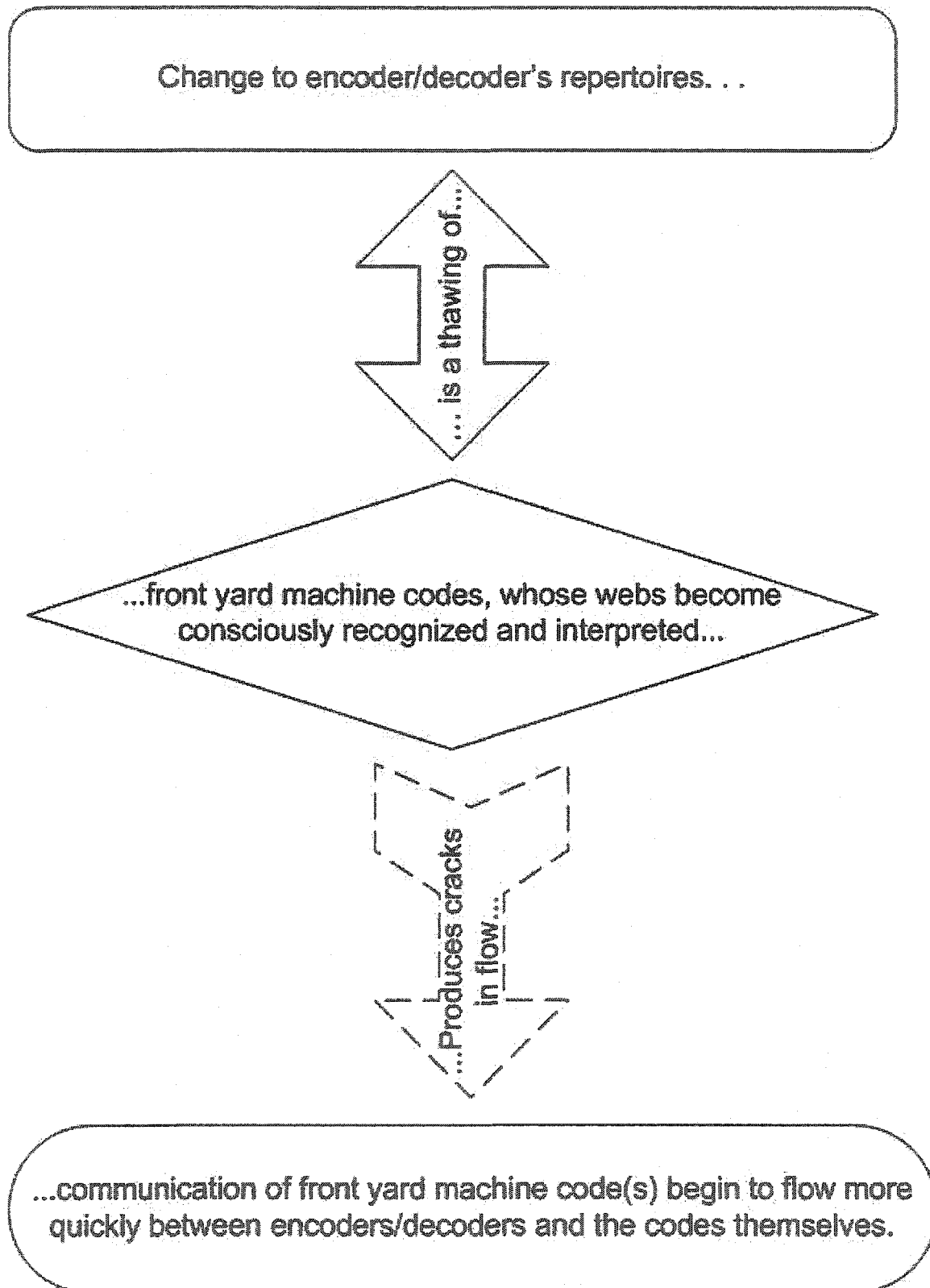
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should be" (Duncan and Duncan, 1988, p. 122). This textual community used a particular flow-web, which was focused around a "textual model that would be legally forced upon all future development" (Ibid, p. 122). The property owners' association forced slow flow-webs and in the process produced a homogenization and legalized naturalization of landscape, similar to what Thunder Bay's by-laws do to the front yard machine.

Slow moving or solidified flows within the front yard machine appear to be static. They represent uncontested interpretations or interpretations so infrequently contested that their flows have been taken to be natural parts of the machine. The flow of these systems goes unchallenged in the construction and understanding of their respective front yard machines. By-laws, cultural myths and ideology, and community or neighborhoods provide a flow to the front yard web, which many individuals do not interrupt. People allow these codified flow-webs to continue and in so doing socially and culturally internalize the system - creating the 'that's just the way it is' reality, which dismisses or at the very least does not acknowledge the social creativity of front yard construction and de-construction. The slow flow of codes, their settling and naturalization in front yard machines, are subject to repertoires of encoders and decoders.

Thawing or Cracking of Flows

Thawing or cracking (Diagram 3 next page) occurs as a by-product of the encoder's/decoder's interpretive process of code structuring within front yard machines. When codes become contested, consciously recognizing the code flow-webs within front yard machines, the speed of the communication loop between the encoder and/or decoder and code is increased so that more communication flows take place. This may happen

Diagram 3. The thawing process

Change to encoder/decoder's repertoires. . .

. . . is a thawing of. . . .

. . . front yard machine codes, whose webs become consciously recognized and interpreted. . .

. . . Produces cracks in flow. . . .

. . . communication of front yard machine code(s) begin to flow more quickly between encoders/decoders and the codes themselves.

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because 'anomalies' occur, or weaknesses and problems arise within the code flow-web, and so it becomes contested. In some cases the contest happens once, the fast flow eventually slows down as other people use the code and it becomes naturalized with its adoption by others. At other times the contest is constant or quite frequent; there is no *point* at which a code flow-web becomes naturalized. This process occurs in the minds and opinions of landscapers, gardeners, homeowners and neighbours in regards to front yard machine structures and their representations. In either case it is the increase in speed of contesting flow codes that creates a thawing or cracking of solidified codes. Thawing, to use Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari (1987, p.23) terms, speeds up in the middle, not from above or below, or from left or right.

The speeding up and/or thawing of solidified front yard machine codes begin with changes to an individual's interpretive repertoire. Allan Jacob Greenbaum (2000) investigates conflicts between advocates of natural versus manicured lawns and as well as those amongst proponents and opponents of lawn herbicides, and notes that these instances are disagreements over values, perceptions and meanings within interpretive repertoires. Similarly, Michelle Lynne Purchase (1997) documents, that alternative lawn users, who have changed their landscape repertoire to include materials other than traditional turf grass, do so due to changes to their interpretive repertoires. In both instances, Greenbaum's and Purchase's research reveal that changes are rationalized through arguments for aesthetics, enjoyment of gardening, or the low maintenance and the reduction of chemical use alternative landscapes require. In the end the results are the same: traditionally held individual or group code flows speed up and become a frenzy of

communication flowing between codes and users. Thawing energizes machinic

connectivity.

Fast Flowing Code Webs

Fast flowing codes result when the thawing of solidified code flows become

frenzied and unable to re-solidify within front yard machines. With thawing the code

system starts to melt and the interpretation of front yard flow-webs stay consciously

active. If the thawed flow-webs are not slowed by encoders/decoders front yard machine

codes keep breaking or cracking and communication flow loops between the code and the

individual or group gain speed. Communication occurs quickly between the object and

the encoder/decoder until finally a new code flow-web/structure is naturalized resulting

in the re-solidification of a flow and the creation of a new slow flow within the front yard

machine. Diagram four (next page) illustrates the process of fast flowing codes within

the front yard machine.

Pat Murphy (1996) wonderfully illustrates how change can take place in the front

yard machine through the thawing of codes and the speeding up of flows. In the short

story, *A Flock of Lawn Flamingos*, Murphy's protagonist Joan acts as a front yard code

contester. Joan speeds up code flows between herself and the codes structuring

'appropriate' lawn ornaments within the interpretive community. In doing so she

challenges the traditional values and puts on display the results or her interpretations of

the codes. Joan's interpretation of front yard codes result in the use of 50 pink flamingos,

a talking garden gnome and finally a giant Yap stone; all of which are challenged at the

Home Owners Association. Finally, with Joan's third challenge a critical mass of home

owners support her interpretations and codes, which then are validated and justified –

slowing down and re-solidifying the fast flowing codes that Joan introduced to the front

yard.

Diagram 4. The fast communication flow process
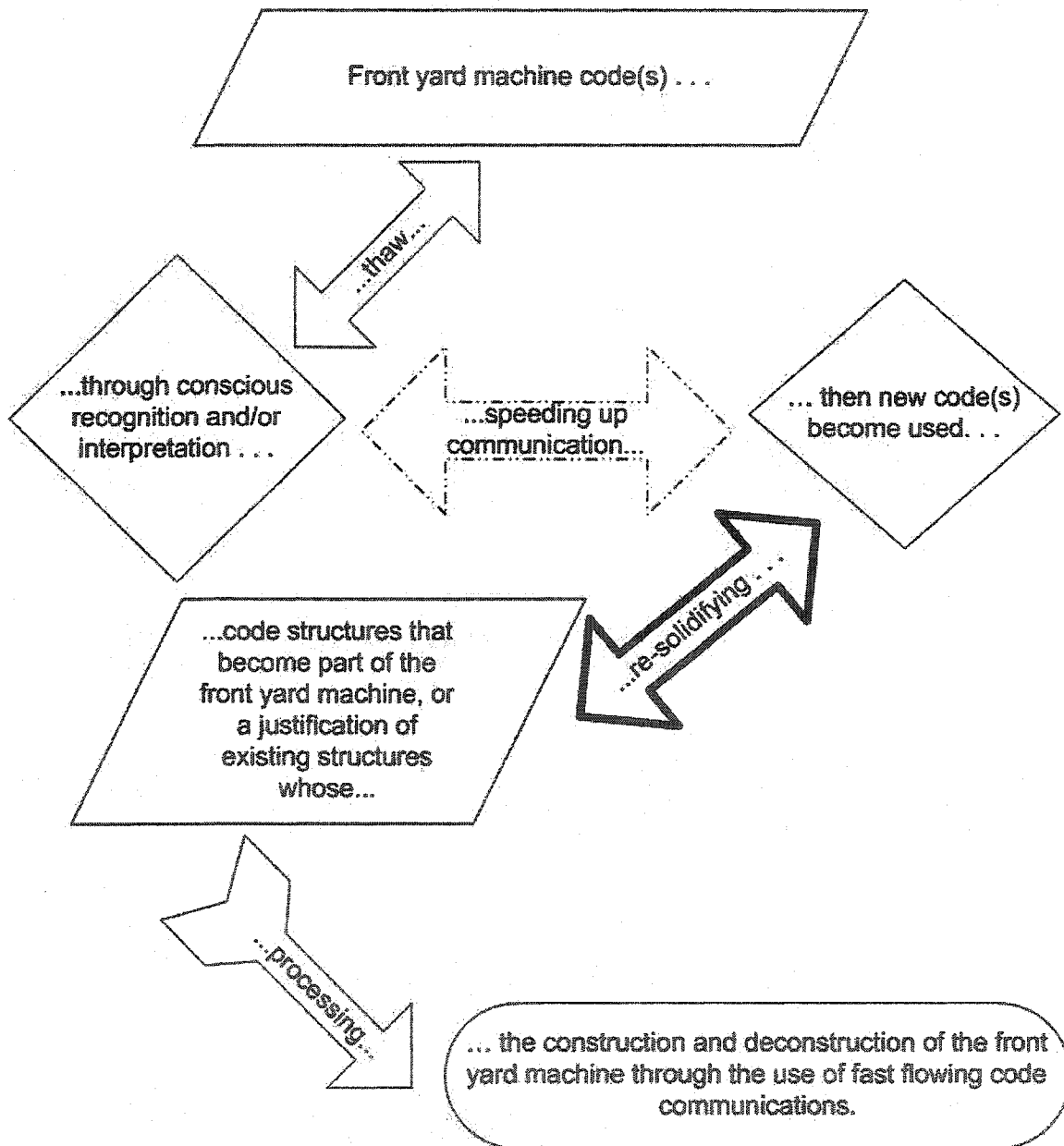
In Murphy's story the process that the community members personally go through when Joan challenges the interpretive community is a change in their own interpretive repertoires. As Joan introduces new code flows to the front yard machine, community members' code webs are challenged, and result in a contest or interpretation of code structures concerning cultural primacy and religious beliefs within the front yard machine. Obviously this period of change succeeds in establishing new codes for some people but, for the antagonist, Mr. Hoffer, his personal repertoire (front yard code web) stays the same and may be validated, and thus his trouble accepting the new front yard codes. Similarly Primeau (2003a, pp. 9-10) has personally noticed how change to the dominance of the lawn within her front yard is perceived as a challenge to institutional codes and beliefs. When she decided to dig up her lawn and replace it with an eco-friendly front yard garden she faced difficulty in that her new work was deemed out of place and ludicrous. Primeau's new front yard codes were not deemed acceptable until they were copied and/or used by other people in the community. That is, until they achieve a certain level of redundancy.

Changes or challenges to one's personal interpretive repertoire may increase communication flow due to personal fetishization and 'doping' flowing into the front yard structure. These new challenges enter the front yard machine as a 'buzz' or desire flows, connections of a flow-producing machine (individual or traditional front yard machine flows) that interrupts or draws off part to another machine's flow (desire). Desire itself is a cut off of flow between constancy and couplings (Deleuze and Guattari, 1977, p. 5); a reality in which front yard couplings are really only one machine with a

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break flow process – a new individualized flow-web. "Desiring-machines work only when they break down, and by continually breaking down" (Ibid, p. 8).

Desire's flow in front yard machines increases communication through the incorporation of 'junkie-flows' - a constant seeking of a particular flow. In Guattari's essay (1996) "Machinic Junkies," mechanisms that make a person feel a sense of belonging, of being somewhere, of forgetting, and that produce 'machinic' subjectivity are considered 'drugs' (p. 101) and identified as "junkie-flows". In addition, Guattari (1996) notes, "a 'drug machine' can generate collective euphoria or oppressive gregariousness, but it is nonetheless the response of individual urges. The same thing occurs with minor buzzes" (p. 102). Drugs speed up communication between the code and encoder/decoder because they are the "flow-producing machine that interrupts" or draws part of the flow between a machine and that to which it is coupled (Deleuze and Guattari, 1977, p. 5). The 'drug' or desiring-machine breaks into the person-and-object flow by bringing a doping sensation and an intense buzz into the process. One could describe this in terms of the release of hormones and endorphins. These chemical flows become the desired break-flow and new solidification in the dynamics of the front yard machine – the web connection of objects, persons and the front yard spaces. "It is a way of making yourself *be*, of personally incarnating yourself, while the ground of the existential image is blurred," writes Guattari (1996, p. 102). The drug-flow breaks into the coupling of individuals/objects and solidifies a 'desire' so that the process of creating and nurturing the yard space becomes a way to get 'high'. Machine eroticism with its self-intoxication and its desires creates a return to the individual and as such machine-junkies – an unending communication frenzy within front yard machines. Examples of

machine eroticism are illustrated below by the 'Mow Your Own' generation of property

owners, as well as following examples (e.g.. comical Canadian Tire commercials, and the

satirical TV show *King of the Hill*)[3].

Like the millions who ritualistically practice golf swings (Guattari, 1996, p. 103),

the 'mow you own' generation is a regime of desire for the selection and attachment to

specific devices within front yard structures. Patrick Reilly, a Staff Reporter for *The Wall*

Street Journal, has identified certain flows that he views as playing directly into the lust

and fetishism of property owners. Code webs that challenge or justify traditional code

structures tend to modify personal interpretive repertoires by incorporating obsessions

with lawns and lawn equipment; compulsive needs to assert control and to be competitive

with others are played out on the surface of front yard machines. Front yard equipment

and machines, the selection of non-motorized versus motorized or brand name versus

non-brand name, are a flow attachment that physically link objects and people within

front yard machines. To quote Sibley, one of Reilly's interviewees, "I am having too

much fun…Mowing with it (his antique mower) gives me the same supreme feeling as I

get driving my '53 Bentley" (n.dt, n.pg). Obession is a recurring thematic in television

advertisment for yard equipment (e.g. Canadian Tire).

Fetishized objects produce a flow (desire) between a homeowner or user and a

front yard object, which increase the flow of communication between object and user

every time a craving or 'desire' occurs, and re-solidifies with every use of the desired

object or assemblage. For instance the young capitalist entrepreneur in the *Canadian*

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[3] It is interesting to note that the front yard, a semi-public space and the creation of desire between a
homeowner and object, might related to a masculine performance or gendered connection between
homeowner and front yard. Interpretation of code relies on gender position/interpretation and may be an
opportunity of expressing gender position.

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Tire television commercial illustrates the flow of desire when he is able to exploit the

'mow your own' homeowners by getting them to pay for the use of his (the young

capitalist's) lawnmower to cut their own lawns. The desired objects and their connection

to the front yard machine are also satirically portrayed on the Fox Television show *King*

of the Hill. The main characters Hank Hill, Bill Dauterive, Dale Gribble and Boomhauer

all fetishize lawn mowers which become a flow-web connection in their respective front

yards. They connect through their mowers, but they retreat into their own trips. The

desire for riding lawn mowers creates tension in Hank's, Bill's, Dale's and Boomhauer's

lives, specifically love lives (Aibel and Berger, 1997), friendships (Dauterive, 1998; Vitti,

1999) and family lives (Cohen and Freedland, 2001). The machinic buzz becomes so

desired and sought after by Bill, Dale, Hank and Boomhauer that they try and incorporate

the lawn mower into as many facets of their normal lives as they can but only by

breaking flows in other areas. Thus desire flows and breakflows produce more possible

couplings of the fetishized object, user and front yard machine due to breaks and flows

within desiring-machines.

Fast flows become breaks in communication within front yard machines. These

flows result from the challenging of traditional or existing code webs that thaw and begin

to flow quickly. When codes crack and become fast flowing what happens is a break in

flow, the flow of the old code is consciously registered and then perhaps broken off and

eliminated from the existing web/machine. New flows become used when they are

deemed acceptable and are usefully adopted within the front yard machine. Yet personal

interpretive repertoires and their constant change and growth challenge existing systems,

that could lead to an ongoing construction and/or de-construction process. So the flow

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between the encoder/decoder and the code may keep cracking and speeding up or the flow may be validated and naturalized (re-solidified). Fetishization and doping, the breakflow of desire, creates in-between moments of self-gratification in personal repertoires that challenge traditional codes through attempts to gratify oneself. Desire within the front yard machine may make people act erratically and strangely when dealing with subjects or elements linked with the space. Individuals seeking a particular flow may mow their lawn daily; they may incisively replant and organize the front yard, or they may redundantly create a space, where their need forever maintains a thawed, fast flowing flow with the front yard organizational structure. All in all, fast flows provide the changes to systems by interrupting and breaking existing code structures. It is not unusual for some to get hooked on their John Deere equipment.

Re-solidification

The process of re-solidifying fast flowing codes occurs once a code is repeated or maintained within the front yard machine. For instance, changes to individual repertoires may account for a number of fast flowing codes but once a code becomes established or part of a person's 'encyclopedia' (used to interpret and understand the world) it re-solidifies the fast flow of information/communication into a new slow flowing code. Interpretive community re-solidification of front yard machine codes is established once a critical number of individuals recognize and accept a fast flowing code. When this happens fast flowing communication slows down because it is not as 'marked', consciously recognized and questioned, and the flow structure becomes established. The repeated use of the newly established code makes it appear static and eventually

perceived as 'natural'. This process of re-solidification is, however, uneven, or striated according to context and the extent to which thawing has occurred.

Desire works both as an individual slow flow code as well as an individual fast flow code within the front yard machine. The constant existence of desire connects a semi-permanent frenzied flow to individualized front yard machines; desire's reality is that it is a fast flow of communication between the person and their precious objects or connections. The satisfaction of desire, using landscape equipment or connecting to the front yard through work, is the solidification of desire's flow, which thaws or cracks immediately once the sensation subsides and begins a fast information/communication flow once 'need' is re-established. There's always a new model to admire.

When communication loop flows re-solidify a code structure becomes perceived to be acceptable and is used by people as an additive flow within their respective front yard machines. New slow flows establish new code relationships or new code structural references within front yard machines. It once again sets up a web structure, which eventually may be socially approved and supported (e.g. laws and legislation), and that may eventually become seen as a solid, permanent code structure. The new slow flow of communication in the front yard machine may over time again become contested and thawed, and perhaps even fast flowing. Front yard machine organization and structure is a continual communication loop between encoders/decoders and codes, which set up socio-historically contingent yet acceptable constructions and de-constructions of front yards.

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Conclusion

The front yard machine enmeshes a web of codes; it incorporates different code systems and speeds. Slow moving codes solidify and naturalize the front yard through infrequent contest of codes by encoder and decoders. By-laws for instance enforce certain flow formations and as such they solidify the reality of space. In Thunder Bay there exist standardizations concerning the organization of the landscape in front yards, as well, a limitation of what may be incorporated and assembled. Cultural myths and ideologies also decrease flow speeds. Through conformity and 'unwritten' expectations myths and ideologies propagate expected front yard models. That is how the lawn-and-foundation-shrub model became ubiquitous after WWII. The community a person resides in works as an interpretive location from which code structures are typically borrowed for the front yard. Just to note, there are a myriad of magazines and brochures that educate and provide reference for code and subcode interpretation to those interested in front yards. This semipublic space as an area balances personal creativity and cultural conformity.

Change to code systems occurs as cracks or breaks – a frenzied contesting of codes by individuals. The challenge speeds up the loop's flow in the process of which cultural values and beliefs come into question. The outcome of the sped up flow is either a break or maintenance of the old system. In the case of change the old code flow is broken off and replaced with a new one. Typically a challenge to existing codes occurs when personal interpretive repertoires change, a person grows and experiences more and their existing code structure is unable to account for or explain certain anomalies and weaknesses within front yards. The story by Pat Murphy, Patrick Reilly's article, the works of Purchase and Greenbaum exemplify the process of change. Yet when desire

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becomes the breakflow something different happens. Instead of a single frenzied event that eventually leads again to code solidification, desire maintains a constant frenzy; this constant commotion results from a need for self-gratification, and once the gratification is experienced and satisfied there comes again a desire for it to occur. Every morning at six a.m...the lawnmower motor roars into action!

The flow of communication within front yard machines organizes and structures the space. There are immense input and output matrixes that incorporate the collective existence of humans and landscapes, such as the front yard. Humans and 'nature' are one big system – one big machine. Jackson, Meinig, Wilson and Nye describe landscapes, like front yards, not as natural phenomenon but rather as space that is representative of specific cultural milieu. The front yard is inseparable from the individual and technological flows that are used to shape and contort it – hence, the front yard machine. The model of machines applied to the front yard explains well the flows that come together to create this particular space. The machinic front yard allows for the incorporation of differences in interpretation and structure by building off of the works of Hall and Fiske. As well, DeLanda's theory of nonlinear couplings, taken together with elements of Kuhn's ideas of revolution and change, highlight the process of flows and breakflows with the front yard machine.

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CHAPTER 2

Status from the Front Yard Machine

Many theorists regard consumption as a defining element of contemporary culture (Featherstone 1991, Bocock 1993, Edwards 2000). Specifically, consumption is an indicator of an individual's sense of self. For Jean Baudrillard, goods and objects constitute signs in a system of communication based on acquisition and display of *differences* minutely and subtlety defined. Differences, like those found in front yard machines, for instance, do not set individuals against one another but instead place them on a hierarchical and indefinite scale; a scale shaped to abstract 'models' to which people conform. Real concrete differences are eclipsed and instead differentiation is achieved through display and consumption of homogenized products, paradoxically communicating difference through sameness or 'conformity'. Differences and the inessential aspects they mark proliferate as genuine singularities recede. The emphasis placed on differences in this chapter, acquired from Baudrillard, is *not* meant to reduce the relations of machine assemblages to the interdependency of terms defined relatively and negatively (in terms of what a term is not). Rather, the use of sign value and difference is particularly valuable in the discussion of consumption as it pertains to relationships between parts and machinic connections.

Communication occurs in many different forms, taking place constantly, and the front yard is no exception. Landscaped space communicates to the outside world, through the display of objects and forms, individual tastes, aspirations, values and social status. Front yard machines are extensions of the human body through the work and interaction that occurs in creating this landscape. Being a semipublic space, front yard machines

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tend to try and impress upon the outside world social ability and social acceptance. Interpretation of the front yard machine extends onto the homeowner the socio-natural or socio-semiotic significance that is given to this space.

The front yard machine, like the human body, becomes a surface space where social relations are played out. The recording surface of front yard landscapes projects outward ideas of physical capital, power and status. These ideas are perceived through, but never solely determined by, interpreting consumption displays within front yard spaces. Consumption that is perceived to be in conformity with an ideal 'model' produces an 'able' status for the homeowner, while consumption displays which are seen as abnormal convey the homeowner's 'aberrant' status. It should be noted that status is not static; it can be changed or modified intergenerationally, regionally, culturally, ethnically, etc. Thus 'able' or 'aberrant' status may come about as a result of a particular time and culture's concepts of normal and average front yard networks.

Lawn and garden servicing is a growing and lucrative field in Canada – averaging over seven billion dollars US a year. The idea that image is everything becomes a mantra that extends to front yard machines. The front yard owner's ability to maintain and create a socially pleasing space becomes a *marker* of his or her status, which is linked to his or her production capabilities, labour abilities and saleable labour. The amount of labour a person or family can provide for front yard space is recorded upon the surface space of the front yard machine. Everything from the condition and maintenance of lawns, driveways and pathways, gardens, and ornamentations are looked at and used to determine the person's or family's social position.

Front yards are not simply static domains free from social interactions.

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These spaces are a coupling with the human body, whose surface space becomes a history of its inhabitants. The particular space of the front yard machine becomes a social signifier. By extension all the status producing traits associated with the human body become worked into the front yard and part of the front yard machine, as such they become perceived as an expression of the individuals who create the particular landscapes. Front yards and their associated couplings are a form of communication that takes place through the display of accepted or aberrant signs in an elaborate game of socio-semiotic differentiation. Simply put, the front yard becomes a sign whose value, based upon but not solely determined by socio-economics, marks status.

Commodification and Consumption

Almost all aspects of life have become commodifed, everything from daily life, health care, and education, the production of news, culture, sports and entertainment (Holt and Schor, 2000, p. viii). Featherstone (1991) describes individuals living in the new 'consumer' society as characterized by a culture of consumption. Over the past twenty years, particularly since the 1970s and 1980s, there have been changes in consumers and their behaviours. Bocock (1993) believes these changes have developed new kinds of groups for whom consumption is a way of life (p. 27); for whom finding a sense of identity is a process that requires objects. Life-style within contemporary consumer culture connotes individuality, self-expression, and a stylistic self-consciousness. "One's body, clothes, speech, leisure pastimes, eating and drinking preferences, home, car, choice of holidays, etc. are to be regarded as indicators of the individuality of taste and sense of style of the owner/consumer" (Featherstone, 1991, p. 83). In contrast, consumer habits of the 1950s were defined in a time of mass

consumption; changes in production techniques, market segmentation and consumer demand for a wider range of products simply made it possible for greater pseudo-choices.

In our time of 'post-mass' production and consumption, clearly defined distinct patterns of social status groups have become mixed up; people who were once supposed 'to know their place' in the social hierarchy are ceasing to think in such terms (Bocock, 1993, p. 81). Featherstone (1991) believes that "we are moving towards a society without fixed status groups in which the adoption of styles of life (manifest in choice of clothes, leisure activities, consumer goods, bodily disposition) which are fixed to specific groups have been surpassed" (p. 83). Thomas Csordas (1996) states, "in the milieu of late capitalism and consumer culture the body/self is primarily a performing-self of appearance, display and impression management" (p. 55), which with the use of objects can mark visible categories of culture (Douglas and Isherwood, 1996, p. 38) that provide meaning and cues to behavioural and organizational behaviour (Stryker, 1980, p. 55). So, the use and display of consumer sign objects acts as both a "metaphorical food 'filling up' the self and as a statement of identity" (Falk, 1994, p. 40). Individuals, as Edwards (2000) states, distinguish between 'sign value' in consumption rather than the utility value of an object.

Baudrillard argues the system of consumption works as a form of communication: it "constitutes an authentic language, a new culture, when pure and simple consumption is transformed into a means of individual and collective expression. Thus, a 'new humanism' of consumption is opposed to the 'nihilism' of consumption" (2001a, p. 15). Robert Torres (2003) notes "Baudrillard borrows from Saussure the basic semiological relationship of language, arguing that Marx's basic formula for the analysis of

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commodities needs to be supplemented with the category of sign value" (n.pg.); a

coupling of semiological theory and a Marxist critique of political economy.

Consumption is the chief basis of social order; objects structure behaviour through a

linguistic sign function. The object of consumption is a particular articulation of a set of

expressions that pre-exist the commodity. The system itself is not a language because it

"lacks a true syntax" rather it is "a system of classification" (Baudrillard, 2001a, pp. 15-

16).

The consumer object is a myth as the object/sign entails all the different types of

relations and significations that attach to it (Baudrillard, 2000, p. 57). The object/sign is

arbitrary and can be substituted for another as a signifying element. No longer being tied

to a function of defined need the object of consumption serves as a fluid and unconscious

field of signification (Baudrillard, 2001b, p. 47). Torres (2003) notes that for Baudrillard

commodity is much like Saussure linguistic sign, a signifier abstractly related to the

signified or referent (n.pg.). The meaning of objects comes about through a system of

differentiation and in relation to other object/signs (Baudrillard, 2001b, p. 50); we never

consume objects-in-themselves (simply material things) but instead manipulate objects as

signs. Objects of consumption must be released from being psychic symbols,

instruments, or products; to be a sign, an object needs to portray a "logic of

differentiation" (Baudrillard, 2000, p. 61).

Objects of consumption are either objects of "psychic investment and

fascination" or they are objects that specify by means of trademarks, signifying status,

prestige, fashion and social standing (Baudrillard, 2000, p. 58). In a consumer society

objects always signify some form of social relationship, "of production and the reality of

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the division of labor" (Ibid, p. 59). A person demarcates his or her social relation through

the object/sign system, which formalizes a universal system of social status recognition: a

code of 'social standing' (Baudrillard, 2001a, p. 22). Status tends to be increasingly

simplified and to coincide with social standing within a consumer society.

> Yet 'social standing' is also measured in relation to power, authority, and
> responsibility. But in fact: There is no real responsibility without a Rolex
> watch! Advertising refers explicitly to the object as a necessary criterion.
> You will be judged on . . . An elegant woman is recognized by . . . etc.
> Undoubtedly objects have always constituted a system of recognition, but
> in conjunction, and often in addition to other systems (gestural, ritual,
> ceremonial, language, birth status, code of moral values, etc) (Baudrillard,
> 2001a, p. 22).

Objects of consumption replace all other means of hierarchical societal division (e.g.

ethnicity, gender, class). The display of personal consumption is a "systematic act of the

manipulation of signs" that signify social status through difference (Ibid, p. 25). The

object itself is not consumed but rather the idea of a relation between objects; as such

Baudrillard (2001a) claims that, "all individuals are described in terms of their objects."

Sign value considers "the status of objects as expressive symbols" (Gottiener,

1994, p. 32) and consists of the ideas and concepts accredited to the product, its mark of

status, prestige, power, etc. that makes the sign/object desirable. The referential system

that objects of consumption propagate in displays of lavishness or luxuriousness connects

"particular sign values of objects to monetary expenditure, social ranking, taste, and/or

style" (Torres, 2003, n.pg.). Thus, certain commodities become imbued with greater

significance than others in a society of consumption. This can happen by retaining

something from early systems of distinction or through advertising rhetoric (e.g. certain

sports retain vestiges of class distinction like polo or tennis). The display of consumption

is a kind of labour in which the individual invests his or her private world with meaning

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by actively manipulating signs. The consumer object's meaning comes not from its symbolic relation with the subject, nor is it from a utility relation with the world; instead the object finds meaning through differences with other objects in a hierarchical code of signification (Baudrillard, 2000, p. 58).

The need for objects of consumption may no longer be explained using 'naturalist-idealist' theories (Baudrillard, 2000, p. 73). One's desire, a systematically produced need and the corresponding system of products "constitute a system of signification, and not merely one of satisfaction" (Baudrillard, 2001a, p. 17). Needs are produced, Baudrillard (2000) says, as a "function induced by the internal logic of the system" (p. 73). Desire or "abstract happiness" is produced as a 'need' created by the system of production or the objects of consumption to move the system along an "indefinite calculus of growth rooted in the abstraction of needs, on which the system this time imposes its coherence" (Ibid, p. 74). The relationship of the consumer to the object of consumption is buried under falsified and mythologized subterfuge. The 'need' for the object is not a result of desire so much as it is a desire to produce difference and social meaning. The objects of consumption are "*categories of objects* which quite tyrannically induce *categories of persons*. They undertake the policing of social meanings, and the significations they engender are controlled" (Baudrillard, 2001a, p. 20).

Baudrillard (2001b) defines the activity of consumption as "a function of production that is directly and totally collective" (p. 49). He also states, "every group or individual experiences a vital pressure to produce themselves meaningfully in a system of exchange and relationships" (Baudrillard, 2000, p. 67). Consumption is a system of meaning because "consumers are mutually implicated in a general system of exchange

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and in the production of coded values" (Baudrillard, 2001b, p. 49). The coded values

allow for subtle and minute differences to be signified.

Front Yard Machine Consumption as an Indicator of Able or Aberrant Status

Lawn and garden servicing is "one of the fastest growing and most lucrative

niches", states Deirdre McMurdy, writing for the *National Post.* Demand for lawn and

garden care is growing; the Canadian Nursery and Landscape Association estimates the

value of annual domestic horticultural sales is approximately $7 billion dollars (US) a

year, a 10% increase from the previous year. In comparison, in 1994 the United States

spent an estimated $30 billion dollars (US) on lawn and garden related implements and

accessories; in addition, $13.5 billion dollars (US) was spent on professional landscape

and lawn services (McMurdy, 2003). Cecilia Paine, a professor and faculty member of

landscape architecture at the University of Guelph, states that the fixation and desire for a

perfect lawn "represents a standard of care, something that society values and something

that represents *status"* (*italics* my addition, Ibid). Well-designed and well-maintained

landscapes are a pleasure for the family, enhance a community, and add to the property's

resale value, says William Welch a Professor and Extension Landscape Horticulturist for

the Department of Horticultural Sciences, Texas A&M University (2003, online). In

addition, Welch adds that a good landscape will significantly improve a "building's

appearance by adding warmth, livability and personality" (Ibid). The front yard, as a

space, is very important because it can either add or take away from the appearance of a

home (Nordmark, 2003, online). Front yard objects are a signifying code linked to the

structure of the front yard machine

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Communication occurs everywhere and at all times; all forms of nonverbal behaviour may be interpreted as a form of communication (Patterson, 1983, pp. 37-38). The front yard is like all landscapes in that it is a recording surface which displays in tangible form meanings that reflect social behavior and individual actions, tastes, values, aspirations and fears (Lewis, 1976 and Meinig, 1976) – a "homo-historia" (Deleuze and Guattari, 1977, p. 21). It is a space that couples with the human body and socio-historical networks to create and define a certain assemblage – which is the *front yard machine*. The machine is simultaneously a social, individual and geographical creation – a single entity. Within is a myriad collection of objects assembled together to create a landscaped space that others may interpret. The process occurs through signification, which in essence is "derived from and determined" by those who use signs, by the encoders of the space and the decoders as well (White, 1973, p. 118). Front yard machines have a history and its history is reflected and communicated through the displays of landscaped space. This space "serves as an introduction to visitors", its "quality, arrangement and standard of upkeep reflect upon those responsible for them (front yard and their objects) as much as do the interiors of the owner's home or the clothes they wear" (brackets added, Everett, 1975, pp. 5-6). The conglomeration of couplings within front yard machines becomes perceived as an extension of the homeowner's body or homeowners' bodies, of the individual and/or individuals responsible for it.

Human bodies provide an important linkage to front yard machines. Bodies are indexes of society: they are receptors and generators of social meaning and sources of cultural encoding and decoding significance (Strathern, 1996, pp. 26-27). As socio-historical productions bodies can be 'plugged in,' connected, fused fluidity with the

environment or they can be fused disjointedly and/or discontinuously (Osborne, 1997); but as natural entities bodies are constantly mediated by human labour and interpreted through human culture (Turner, 1984, p. 34 & pp. 38-39). The surface history of bodies provide a recoding of the 'body politic' (Shilling, 1993, pp. 72-73) whose specific features possess a particular significance in society, "a basis for theorizing social commonality, social inequality and the construction of differences" (Ibid, pp. 22-23), which is crucial for everyday recognition and identification (Turner, 1984). The body and its network extensions are the most readily available image of a social system in which it and its extensions are shaped, constrained and even invented. The proxy association of machines to human bodies extends bodily characteristics, likes those Shilling (1993) notes which communicate ideas of physical capital, of power, status and distinctive forms integral to the accumulation of resources, onto the front yard machine.

Through the networking of the body-front yard, ideas and concepts are communicated to the outside world. Put simply, the front yard is an expression of our public image, states Tom Paradis, an Associate Professor with the Department of Geography, Planning and Recreation at Northern Arizona University (addition, 2002, online). Accordingly,

> The front yard, after all, is very much like our persona - that ideal self, the mask we try to present to the world, or at least to those we think we need to impress. Anyone walking or driving by sees it and forms their impressions of us accordingly. And we, mindful of this fact, often try to create front yards that represent all the traits that we find desirable - or at the very least those traits that we imagine the neighbors find desirable ... the front yard says, "I want to be seen as someone who has really got it together" (Wallace, 1998, n.pg.).

The spatiality of front yards is a semi-public space open for all to see and interpret. As such front yard machine couplings are used to impress neighbors near and far by

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communicating one's normality or acceptability. It is a recording surface that is networked to the body - the front yard machine encompasses a web-flow structure that links to the human body, which in essence makes the front yard machine a *front yard/body machine*. This spatial representation of the front yard owners' bodies is built of signs and is socially situated making firm and visible a "particular set of judgments in the fluid process of classifying persons" (Douglas and Isherwood, 1996, p. 45). Landscape Ontario: Horticultural Trades Association in a publication made it clear that "like it or not", the front yard and its objects lead "people to draw instant conclusions about you, your family and your lifestyle" (n.date, n.pg).

Within the front yard machine human labour becomes a sign system to communicate ideas of an owner's physical capital, power and status. Labour "is no longer a force of production but is itself 'a sign among signs'" (quoted in Kellner, 2003, n.pg). Through the use of cultural logic, individuals share assumptions of particular cultural ideas that provide a common premise for interpreting and making assumptions about others (Enfield, 2000, pp. 35-36). "The social world is an ecological complex in which cultural meanings and knowledge (linguistic and non-linguistic) personally embodied by individuals are intercalibrated via common attention to commonly accessible semiotic structures" (Ibid). Attention to labour in the front yard does not simply scrutinize it as "primarily productive in this situation but is a sign of one's social position, of one's servitude and being integrated into the social apparatus" (Kellner, 2003, n.pg.). The sign value of labor in front yard machinic assemblages can signify status.

"Image is Everything," reads the first tip offered in a three-page (pp. 51-54) notice developed by the City of Thunder Bay Parks Division, with the assistance of the

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Beautification Coordinator (appendix A). This notice is found in the summer 2003

edition of *the key: Thunder Bay's guide to community programs and services*. The

helpful hints precede notices and entry forms for the 'Beautify Thunder Bay 2003'

competition (appendix B), as well as the 'City of Thunder Bay 2003 Civic Beautification

Awards' competition (appendix C). The competition advertisements and tips read

together appear to suggest to homeowners that their landscapes will be judged[1], so here

are some tips offered by the city on how to appropriately display one's space in order to

impress others. The tips offer different ways to care for one's property: ideas and

concepts used for developing landscapes, passive and aggressive maintenance techniques,

and the management of visual impressions. These elements seem to possess a common

thread in their concern with the display of acceptable or unacceptable abilities.

When front yard machines possess 'normal' objects whose sign value is

unmarked or unnoticed by passersby, these couplings can be said to be socially enabled.

In other words, the owners of the front yards have the ability to consume and display

'normal' objects whose significant value is comparable to the surrounding landscaped

space. The normalization process, being unmarked, occurs through the comparison and

interpretation of one space in reference to those around it (the community). Surrounding

spaces constitute one interpretive source assemblage by which a particular front yard is

evaluated and its owner's status judged. Thus differing communities, groups with

differing characteristics, are able amongst themselves to develop ideas concerning normal

or average yards. Decoders and encoders to interpret the space then can use these

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[1] Formal judging is performed by the Kiwanis Club of Westfort for the 'Beautify Thunder Bay 2003'
competition, and by the Thunder Bay Horticultural Society for the "City of Thunder Bay 2003 Civic
Beautification Awards'.

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expectations. The unmarked front yard machine is much like its neighbours, possessing objects within a space whose symbolic value is normal or average within the community.

The process of classification or categorization that occurs from associations with front yard machines is because of socially existing ideas of an average or normal front yard assemblage – front yard model. 'Normality', 'normal', 'norm', 'average' are features of a particular kind of society (Davis, 1997, p. 9). Normal a term "that permeates our contemporary life …[and]… is a configuration that arises in a particular historical moment. It is part of a notion of progress, of industrialization, and of ideological consolidation of the power of the bourgeoisie" (quoted in Linton, 1998, pp. 22-23). The concept of 'normal' or 'average' stems from a perception that most of the population is or at least considered to be part of the norm - seen to conform to a model. With the idea also comes the concept of deviation or extremes, e.g. the normal distribution curve in statistics and the idea of the 'bell-curve'. In societies where 'norm' is at play degrees of human variations in the front yard model will come to define acceptability and unacceptability of front yards.

The more front yard machines, the display of consumptive abilities, diverge from the 'model' the more socially unaccepted is the spatial assemblage. With marked yards, the surface space is perceived to be socially abnormal or different. This is the front yard whose machine couplings are socially perceived as aberrant. On the surface of the front yard machine, aberration means that others have defined appropriate assemblages, which allow for certain social privileges and exemptions (e.g. fines, paying taxes, being unmarked and/or being unnoticed). In certain cases more is better. With the body more height and intelligence is sought after and desired, likewise with the front yard more

displays of consumptive objects and more labour hours are desirable, typically only if the

objects and labour are spent on 'normal' objects of consumption and not upon 'aberrant'

ones. A possible determination of the unmarked nature of space is a person's individual

interpretive repertoire. This repertoire constitutes the lived experiences of the individual

and is used when trying to make sense or meaning. An individual uses their knowledge,

their ideas and values to interpret and determine symbolic value. Thus, objects are able

to bear hierarchical values based upon socially determined codes. This allows

individuals the ability to compare different front yard machines, to classify and

categorize them, and thus assess consumptive abilities, which in essence then mark social

status. But here codes are learned from various sources – sometimes from

intergenerational experience; other times through advertising (diverse models).

Differences inhabit models and mark out sources of distinction.

Diagram 5 (next page) illustrates the process of caring for one's property and how

the maintenance and care of a homeowner's lawn, flowers and plants displays their status

through acceptable or unacceptable consumptive habits. Caring and maintenance of front

yards usually means weeding, watering and "paying careful attention to the correct

amounts of fertilizer applied" (*key*, 2003, p. 53). To do all of this requires tools and

equipment, everything from shovels and rakes to lawn mowers and trimmers, let alone

pesticides, herbicides and fertilizers. Proper care of one's landscape requires proper care

of one's tools, without which the work cannot be accomplished. Yet it does not stop

here. According to the notice in *the key*, "Lawn Care" may require the additional use of

other equipment like de-thatching equipment, which the City of Thunder Bay Parks

Division says, "can be found at local rental agencies" (p. 53). To properly care for and

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Diagram 5. Status Displayed Through Care and Maintenance of Front Yards

Care and maintenance of space

Entails . . .

Cutting grass, weeding, watering, applying chemical, etc.,

Requiring . . .

Ability to acquire equipment and labour

Requiring the. . .

Equipment and other machines and tools; plus their maintenance.

Resulting in . . .

Communication of homeowner's acceptability or aberration - through the display of objects of consumption in the front yard machine

Reflecting . . .

Status: sharing codes and signs; or discriminately sharing codes and signs within hierarchical strata.

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maintain one's yard requires extensive labour; labour in the sense of using the equipment oneself or by having someone else perform the work. Labour is also required as a sellable 'good'; it needs to be sold in order to afford and purchase necessary items and human capital for the maintenance and creation of this space. Labour connects to the web structure of front yard machines; the latter are no longer functionally defined, but as Baurdrillard (2001b) notes, serve as a fluid and unconscious field of significance (p. 47). Labour becomes a brush to paint distinction and status upon a landscape canvas.

Front yard machine objects like driveways and walkways or paths are visible signs of consumptive ability and mark status[2]. Baudrillard (2000) accredits the assigning of significance and meaning for consumer objects in regards to differences set out in a hierarchical code of signification (p. 58). There exists a hierarchical relationship amongst the different products available to create certain areas, in this case driveways and walkways. The hierarchical relationship amongst the differing consumer objects depends upon the difficulty and amount of labour hours necessary for the installation of certain products (Diagram 6 next page)[3]. For instance the most economic method is simply to do nothing; to leave the driveway and walkways wild and just create a natural pathway through use. This is not a common practice; most people who choose to pursue an economically efficient means use gravel or some form of granular product as a surface. Gravel and granular products are cheap to purchase, easy to find locally and do not require expensive equipment. Basically a shovel and labour is all it takes. The most

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[2] It should be noted that exchange value is not the sole determining principle in this hierarchical category, even though I have chosen to pursue the socio-economics of front yards.

[3] I have over the past five summers worked in landscape and landscaping. My personal experience runs in both soft and hard landscaping. I have an extensive background in the installation of manufactured stone.

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Diagram 6. Differences in Finished Surfaces

Types of surface finishing materials

Gravel | Asphalt | Paving Stones

Material
- gravel

Material
- gravel
- asphalt

Material
-gravel
-limestone crush
-silica or fine sand
-paving stones

Labour
- skill and time low
to none

Labour
-skill and time low
to moderate

Labour
-skill and time
moderate to high

Equipment
-basic

Equipment
-basic to high
(depending on
size)

Equipment
-moderate to high

COST | COST | COST

Status
Low

Status
Moderate

Status
High

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popular choices are to use 'A' gravel or a crushed limestone, since both compact into a hard surface. A more costly and labour extensive driveway or pathway is a 'finished' one.

The most popular and common finished surfaces for residential driveways and walkways are either of two products, asphalt or a commercial paving stone. Though some driveways and walkways are concrete pours, meaning the surface is sectioned into large areas of concrete with expansion joints in between. Concrete driveways and pathways are less common because of the difficulty and cost involved in the installation process, and for this reason asphalt or paving stones are more prevalently used. With asphalt and paving stones the initial process is much the same, in that both require a solid base upon which to be installed; the base is usually six to eight inches of paced gravel. Here already specialty equipment becomes necessary in the form of 'tampers', machines that vibrate and compact surfaces. Asphalt is directly applied upon the gravel surface then it is spread and rolled. Depending on the size of the job the asphalt is either spread by hand (using a shovel) or through small dumps (a truck or other machine dumps small quantities) that are spread by hand. Finally the asphalt is compacted with a roller. For a doublewide driveway (approximately 1200 square feet) it requires two to four people and consumes about 30 hours of labour. Maintenance for this space requires that the asphalt be sprayed each year.

On the other hand, paving stones or manufactured stone driveways require additional ground preparation over asphalt. In addition to a base the site requires a secondary surface like limestone screenings or sand. The finished granular surface must be free of stones; this makes it easier to produce a level finished surface and have a final product free of 'waves' or non-level areas. The installation of paving stones is done by

hand according to a predetermined pattern. Once the stones are laid out, silica sand or

fine beach sand is spread on the surface and swept by hand into the crevices. In

comparison to the asphalt driveway, a doublewide manufactured stone driveway

(approximately 1200 square feet) using a basic pattern will require at least four people

and will take about 120 hours of labour[4]. The surface of the stones can be finished with a

protective agent after a couple of years, but then has to be reapplied yearly.

In essence the cost of required labour determines the price of different materials

for driveways and walkways as well as the price of the installation. When we talk about

status we do so socio-semiotically; the sign-value places consumers in a hierarchy of

subtle discriminations. Significant differences are in this sense shown with economic

concerns and the display of expenditures of labour; objects of consuptions are *categories

of objects* which quite tyrannically induce *categories of persons*" (Baudrillard, 2001a, p.

20). Plain gravel driveways and pathways possess a lower status than asphalt driveways

since they cost less. Asphalt as a finished surface possesses a lower status than

driveways and pathways done with paving stones because of the difference in labor and

thus in costs. The same relationship is found with gardens and flowers. The more

extensive and labour intensive a garden is the higher its status. Perennial gardens require

more care and maintenance. For instance, perennial gardens have to be 'put to bed' for

winter to ensure that the following year they flower again, in addition, these gardens

require spring and fall pruning and cutting. With annual gardens the labour is less

intense and because they can simply be replanted each year, these gardens do not require

the same levels of maintenance as perennials. With annual gardens the labour hours are

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[4] A 2003 pamphlet for Unilock (a popular manufactured stone producer and retailer) products recommends a minimum of four people and determines at least 130 hours of labour for this size of a driveway.

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not as extensive and thus the status these gardens convey is not the same as conveyed by

perennial gardens, whose labour is more extensive and thus whose status is higher.

Minute differences in the front yards have the body extending labour in a number

of ways into front yard machines. Objects' interpretive values within front yard

machines are determined through a hierarchical code developed amongst differing sign

values. The code is set with reference to cost – cost of the objects in monetary value,

which itself is based upon cost of labour. So labour becomes a descriptive factor used

when interpreting the normal or aberrant consumptive ability of front yard owners. Since

the front yard is built through the use of homeowner's physical labour in the space, as

well as their saleable labour; the purchase of additional labour for this space if required

becomes an 'operational variable', "a system of classification" (Baudrillard, 2001a, p.

15), used in social institutions and practices to signify social participation (playing the

game) and social cohesion (fitting in). By examining Yards 1 and 2 (below) you can

Yard 1.
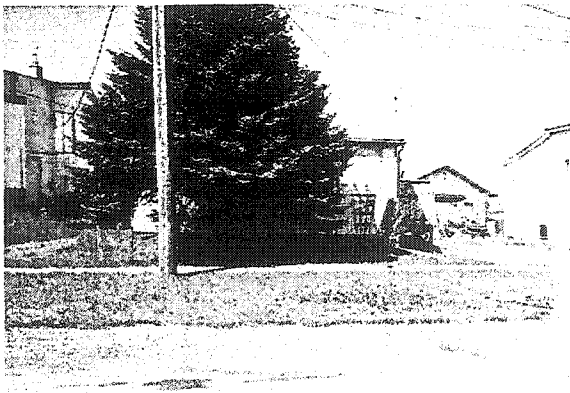
Yard 2.
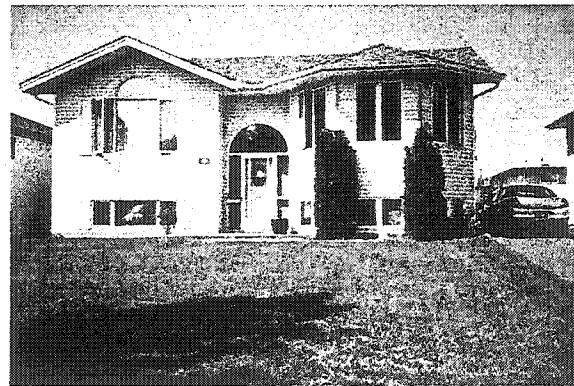
witness just how interpretations of front yard labour prove a means to mark the sign value

of a space. Yard 1 has less developed areas than does Yard 2; and the driveway and lawn

are not as defined and appear less maintained in Yard 1 than in Yard 2. There is an

encroachment of grass and a nonspecific separation of the lawn and driveway space in

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Yard 1, while Yard 2 has very sharp and distinct sections. In Yard 2 the shrubs in front

of the houses appear to be more maintained thus giving an impression of a different level

of maintenance than in Yard 1.
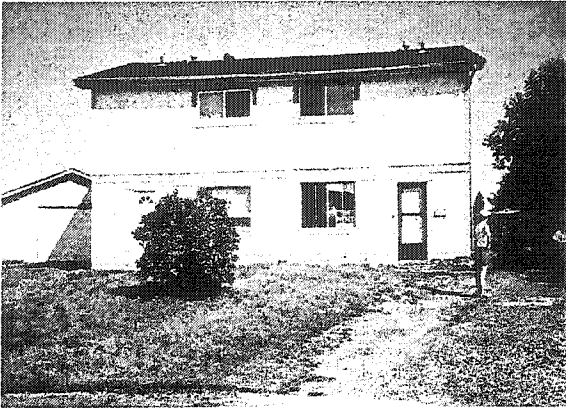
Yard 3.   **Yard 4.**
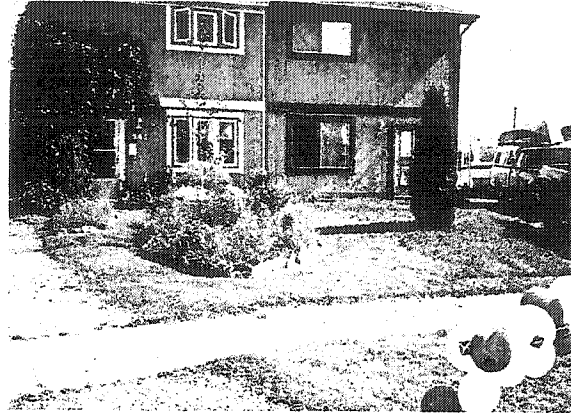
Likewise Yards 3[5] and 4 (above) for example are distinguishable from one

another through the interpreted sign value of objects within the front yard machine.

Though the two yards (3 and 4) are side by side, there exists a hierarchical relationship.

Yard 4 possesses more visible status producing objects, (e.g. cultivated flower beds,

flowers and shrubs, etc.) than does Yard 3, which possesses very little in the way of

status producing objects. Difference is detectable because a basis of interpretation exists

where value and status can be made meaningful (Baudrillard, 2001a). As well, the

pictures (Yard 5 and 6 next page) possess front yard sign values, which communicate a

totally different idea of the two-yard owner's abilities. In these two examples

Baudrillard's (2001a) "system of classification" is possessed by objects not simply as

material things or as solely functional objects but rather as malleable signs to demarcate

social relations. As such, the sign value of labor in Yard 5 communicates an aberration in

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[5] Note that Yard 3 is a rental property, which entails minimal landscaping.

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Yard 5.

Yard 6.

front yard machine structure (the model front yard) in comparison to Yard 6. The space

of Yard 5 has long grass, and indistinct spatial areas (the driveway, walkways and lawn

merge into one rather than being cleanly separated, flowerbeds if any are indiscernible

from the grass). On the other hand Yard 6 possesses normal or acceptable labour

displays with its short grass, discernable flowerbeds and shrubs, and clearly distinctive

spatial areas or features (the walkway, driveway and grass possess defined boarders).

While on the other hand Yard 7 and Yard 8 (next page) can be interpreted to

communicate similarity concerning the owner's social production abilities. Though

different front yard assemblages are developed from distinct orientations (different

products of recording being displayed as a result of differing network couplings in the

front yard machine) these differences are displayed in an identical code structure, the

'model' front yard. So differences that could have been accounted for by socio-economic

status and class, as well as, gender and ethnicity which tend to result in the creation of

various spaces (e.g. Japanese gardens verses traditional English gardens, differing

degrees of consumer objects and differing degrees of body networking) constitute minute

discrepancies. These minute discrepancies in Yard 7 and 8 are a code within the front

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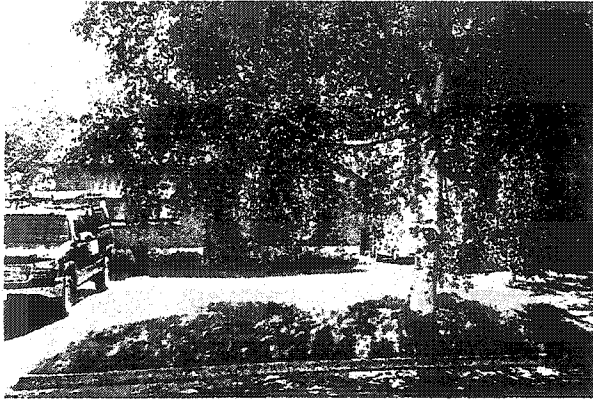
Yard 7.   Yard 8.
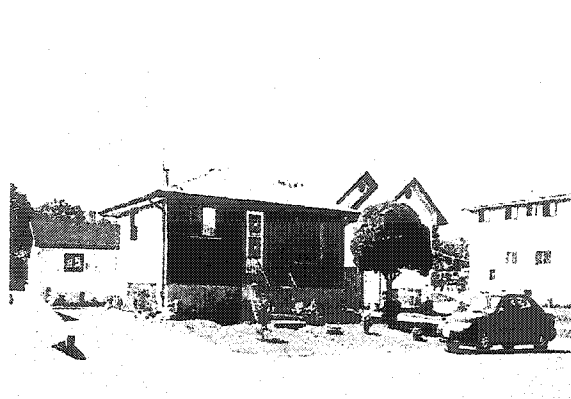
yard machines, which itself conforms or models to a code, allowing viewers to mark the

homeowner's communication of status through interpretations of objects (in this case

conforming objects) displayed within the space.

Likewise, Yards 9 and 10 (below) communicate similarity. Within this "systems

of classification" (Baudrillard, 2001a) the objects of consumption's differential

connotations are close enough to assign similar sign values. The two have distinct areas

in which lawns are separate from driveways and walkways. The large trees appear to be

cared for and are balanced with small shrubs and gardens. As well, the lawns appear to

be similarly maintained. The perceived labour cost that occurs in the care and

maintenance of Yards 9 and 10 appears to be equal. In Yards 7, 8 and Yards 9, 10 the

body/front yard networking process (the front yard machine) by displaying its objects and

Yard 8.   Yard 10.

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labour provide a codified means to interpret a person's accepted ability to consume. The objects and perceived labour couplings communicate to the outside world perceptions of social standing – perceptions of an individual's status.

Aside from labour as an indicator of status, taxes too are a strong marker or as Baurdrillard notes, "a system of classification" (2001a, p. 15). Theoretically, the more one can consume (more consumable income they possess) the more they are taxed. Property tax, therefore, can be viewed as a 'status' agent in that the more tax one pays on their property (the greater their socio-economic status) the greater their social status. The Municipal Property Assessment Corporation, MPAC, is "a not-for-profit corporation funded by all Ontario municipalities. It is responsible for determining the CVA *(current value assessment of a property)* and tax class for all properties in Ontario for purposes of municipal and educational taxation" (*italics* added, 2003, online). MPAC prepares for municipalities an annual assessment roll for use by a municipality in calculating property taxes. To figure tax rates MPAC assess the value of a person's property based on what the property would likely sell for on a specific date (June 30, 2001 for the 2003 taxation year). Using local property sales around a date provides the basis for this assessment. MPAC also considers the 'last sale amount' in the Homeowner's 'Property Profile Report'[6] and 'on site variables' as elements for data collection from residential or condominium properties for assessment purposes (appendix D). Though not directly used in assessments, the front yard machine does indirectly affect the level of taxes one pays.

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[6] A copy of the Homeowner's Property Profile Report can be viewed on their website or at: http://www.mpac.ca/pages_english/questions_answers/amp_profile.htm.

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Let us consider the 'last sale amount' for instance and how it may increase rates of taxation (Diagram 7 below). Should the homeowner decide to work or 'improve' their front yard – increasing the acceptability of the front yard machine – this owner may indirectly lead to the municipality increasing the rate of property tax. Increasing sign value as displayed through consumption in landscaped space, within front yard machines, increases the desirability of a home especially as an object of consumption. According to

Diagram 7. Potential Increases in Property Tax Rates Due to Front Yard Amelioration
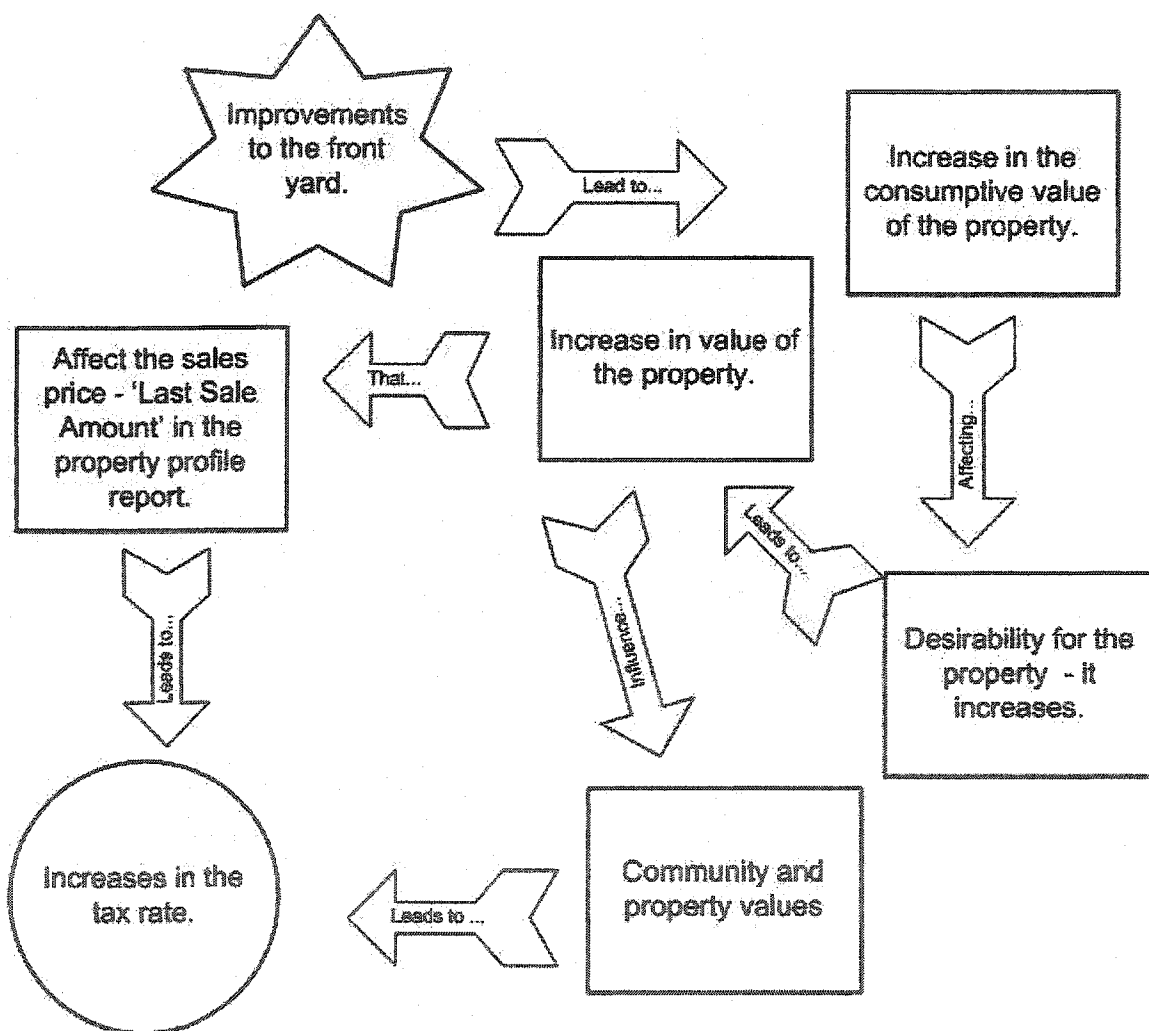
real estate agents and representatives, everyone from Century 21, RE/MAX, Coldwell

Banker to small agents agree[7] that good impressions help make a sale; a well-manicured

lawn, neatly trimmed shrubs and a clutter-free porch welcome prospects.

The concept of 'welcoming' is not defined solely around entry to a specific site as

in, 'welcome to my home' but the concept also expands to form a definition around ease

of movement, that is, mobility of action. For instance, increases in desirability

'welcomes' more demand for the home and possibly increases its selling price.

Amelioration may hide assessment factors that otherwise would decrease the taxes, e.g.

construction quality or depreciation (Welch, 2003, & Nordmark, 2003). Increases in

desirability of front yards means that the property 'welcomes' prospective purchasers,

'welcomes' possible comparisons with properties that previous to the work were

considered 'above' or 'higher' by MPAC, as well as improving the desirability of a

community by 'welcoming' visitors to stop on a horticultural tour at a landscaped front

yard in an otherwise not notable area. These increases to desirability 'welcome' a raise in

the price of homes within a community and 'welcomes' increasing the possible sales

prices of comparable homes. Additionally 'welcoming' influences to property assessment

and tax rates, which in turn influence perceived status associated to homes, the front

yards, and thus the owner or owners. 'Welcome' value is a real estate signifier that

appears through assemblage of signs; to put the matter in terms of mobility, it stops you

and draws you in. It assembles more efficiently than other yards in the real estate code.

Front yards are a coupling with human bodies, technology and landscaped space –

the front yard machine. Space is not a simple static domain free from social structures,

institutions and the biographies of its inhabitants. Some theorists have argued for a view

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[7] Information is based upon information collected from websites September 4, 2003.

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of space "as socially produced; a socio-spatial inter-relation which sees society and space as mutually constituting material-symbolic dynamics" (Gleeson, 1998, p.107). In terms of ease and comfort most spaces are accessed around 'average' consumption and average sign values, but in so doing restrict those unable to socially participate (to consume objects) in the same manner as 'normal' persons. As such a socially aberrant status results from not consuming at similar levels as those deemed 'normal' by the general population. This creates a situation that is socially defined and experienced as an element of front yard machines with their web of human social relations brought unto landscaped space. Front yard machines as constructed projects promote 'model' values, which legitimize oppressive and discriminatory practices against aberrant consumers. The front yard machine, as a sign, is composed of a landscaped space that communicates to the outside world. Sign value signifies through the display of objects of consumption, perceived in reference to 'model' front yards, a homeowner's status.

Conclusion

Front yards are a network or coupling of landscape and the human body – a front yard machine. Communion of the human body, technology with landscape projects elements of the individual onto a landscape space; through modification and change natural space becomes an extension of individual or social beliefs, values and aspirations. These modifications and changes become signs that other members of society use to interpret and base actions upon. Front yards have a history; this history is projected through the objects and maintenance of the space.

Different objects and different spaces have greater or lesser social value. Sign value for objects of consumption is based upon minute marks of difference, status and

thus desirability for certain front yards. Certain commodities become imbued with greater significance, greater social value than others, usually simply based upon monetary expenditure – labour power. This is evidenced in the hierarchical rankings of driveway and pathway products (plain gravel compared to asphalt compared to manufactured paving stones). Similarly status too becomes associated to perceptions of gardens and garden maintenance. Exchange value, should be noted, does not solely determine the sign value of front yard machines; it is part of the web which structures the sign significance of the assemblage.

City of Thunder Bay published in the summer of 2003 a notice describing ways in which to prepare front yards for "socio-aesthetic" judgment. The notice is very similar to the advice given by real-estate agents. To create a socially appealing space requires labour, the likes of which is used by MPAC, for instance, to judge and determine an individual's consumptive abilities. MPAC passes along the information and allows municipalities to determine whether or not higher rates of property tax will be assigned. In essence labour's sign value as displayed through front yard machines becomes a marker of either normality through conformity or aberration through non-conforming practices

An able status conveys normal or average consumption rates. Front yards that project such value are often similar to those around them. The landscaped space is like the majority of landscaped space, which authorizes social normality. Deviation from the normal, from the assemblages of the majority, is abnormal. Yet this abnormal rate is only aberrant when the rates fall below the levels of the majority. When the rates exceed the norm, in a socially accepted manner, the front yard is said to display lavishness and

luxuriousness. Should consumption rates exceed in a socially marked manner the space issues and challenges tradition with its oddness.

Particular judgments and classification of persons is removed from the body alone and may refocus on body networks. As such cars, dress, and homes are a place of struggle and a 'body politic'. Front yard machines, as a sign is a form of communication that in a milieu of commodification impress upon other social members ideas and concepts of social standing and status. The landscaped space of front yards is not a static domain; it is a performance, a display and requires impression management. The sign value of front yard machines can mark status, which is just one significant interpretation of space. Very simply, the front yard machine communicates to the outside world an impression or picture of those who live and create this space.

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CHAPTER 3

Front Yard Surveillance Machines

A front yard is a window to the homeowner; its surveillance is generally socially accepted. The organization, creation and maintenance of the front yard machine's spatial assemblage bring together into one area all sorts of connections and flows. The front yard machine is a recording surface that displays in tangible form the geo-historical experiences of individuals and society. The sedimentary collection of objects textualizes information and knowledge in a form that can be widely understood. It allows for the assessment and categorization of individuals; since we posses culturally constituted methods that allow for participation and interaction with the world that is then used to establish micro or macro relationships. The front yard machine as an assemblage is decodable and this is crucial for everyday recognition and identification. One reading of front yard machines (the spatial matrix of home owner, front yard and society) produces an arrangement which communicates an individual's 'status'. This status is based upon perceptions of 'normal' or 'aberrant' consumption abilities, sanctioned at many levels of social interaction. Front yards provide a coded system, whose messages categorize individual bodies and body extensions in space.

The front yard machine is a coupling of assemblages that communicate ideas about the owners and workers of landscaped spaces and thus functions as a kind of surveillance. Front yard space is always in some form on display; whether or not a person wants it to be so, the landscaped space of front yards is used to make assumptions about homeowners. Front yard machine messages may be decoded in certain ways against norms (e.g. ideas about physical observations, for instance in child welfare

statutes and legislation, municipal by-laws, and provincial legislation). Aberrations are

categorized as suspicious categorizations or messages (e.g. see below the Kasstana

sisters), while acceptable front yard machine messages are categorized as unmarked and

socially perceived 'normal' communications (e.g. see below the case of Tovio Sistenin).

As banal as the front yard machine can be, it connects and influences many features of

human relations which are cued consciously or unconsciously to provide information and

knowledge.

Surveillance

Surveillance in a general sense refers to the monitoring and supervision of others.

Lyon (1994) recognizes that "in modern societies people are increasingly watched, and

their activities documented and classified with a view to creating populations that

conform to social norms" (p. 26). In a society of surveillance we are all 'objects of

information'; if visibility itself becomes a trap (Foucault, 1969, p. 200) so is

categorization. William Staples (1997) argues that the "Big Brother" discourse of

surveillance is inadequate, there is no simple one-way paternalistic relationship involving

the state and human observation; instead North America is a "culture of voyeurs" (p. 57).

"Surveillance permeates almost all aspects of modern society, but there is no central

figure or tower from which the gaze is fixed upon a supine, segmented populace" (Radke,

2002, p. 22). The observer, or Staples' "eye behind the camcorder", is as likely to belong

to a friend, neighbor, or some stranger as it is to belong to a state agent (Staples, 1997,

pp. 131-132). Surveillance provides all members of a community with the knowledge

that their actions are being observed and it allows for the possibility of punishment;

today, the many watch the many.

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As agents of surveillance observers are not simply concerned with the physical but instead attempt to understand the motives behind the actions of those watched. Questions concerning a person, his or her nature, way of life, mind set and past have led to a system more for the production of knowledge rather than physical punishment (Foucault, 1969, p. 99)[1]. According to Foucault, "no knowledge is formed without a system of communication, of record-keeping and record-collection...no power is exercised without the extraction, appropriation, distribution, or retention of knowledge" (quoted in Cooper, 1981, p. 79). The knowledge gained by observers through observation advance power, which in turn discovers 'new objects of knowledge', such a process of knowledge formation and increase in power is reoccurring and circular (Foucault, 1969, pp. 202-204). The body and its extensions are an accessible recording surface that objectifies "evidence of any possible deviance" (Staples, 2000, p. 3). This entails that the front yard machine is a productive surface – a sign machine capable of generating interpretable meaning.

Additionally, Cooper (1981) recognizes that the techniques of power operate according to 'laws of optics and mechanics' (p. 86), and as Staples (2000) notes "are often local, operating in our everyday lives...to bring wide-ranging populations, not just the official 'deviant', under scrutiny" (p. 5). The prevention of possible wrongdoing may take place "by immersing people in a field of total visibility where opinion, observation and discourse of others would restrain them from harmful acts" (Foucault, 1980, p. 153). So normalizing judgments will look and examine people as to rehabilitate them into productive social beings. As a model of power relations, which objectify and create a

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[1] Note, although psychiatric assessment is a form of knowledge production it involves some pretty severe restrictions on personal freedom.

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body of knowledge concerning individuals, surveillances (as a flow of power) establish ideas of normality (Barker, 1998, p. 58). Examination of differing divisions of people allows for the establishing of an idea of 'norm'. Norm presupposes homogeneity; deviation is the removal of self from the homogenized. Through expert observation knowledge is attained about the "location of bodies in space, of distribution of individuals in relation to one another, or hierarchical organization, of disposition of centers and channels of power, of definition of the instruments and modes of intervention of power" (Foucault, 1969, p. 205). The body and its extensions becomes the "object of a technology of power" that increases possible disciplining potentials; people become subjected and practiced, 'docile' (Barker, 1998, pp. 56-57). Through observation contemporary society investigates bodies and bodily extensions by extracting, combining and accumulating knowledge-power. So to be 'normal' is to manage personal impressions, which make oneself invisible, anonymous, or just part of the crowed.

Surveillance ensures the ordering of human variances; the body and its extensions become "an essential component for the operation of power relations in modern society" (Dreyfus and Rabinow, 1982, p. 112), constructing a hierarchical order of humans in an institution or society. As such, body-machines become involved in politics and as Foucault (1980) recognizes, a "potent combination of knowledge and power, localized on the body, is actually a general mechanism of power of the greatest import for Western society" (p. 113). Surveillance creates a 'micro-physics of power' that highlights the productivity or productiveness and usefulness of bodies in space.

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Local Surveillance of Front Yards

Physical surveillance is a common aspect of society; it is used widely to make determinations concerning individuals and their abilities. Body and body extensions, like the front yard machine, provide professionals with encoded signs, which once decoded allow these persons to judge and mark social fitness through consumption – a 'soft' surveillance technique (Staples, 2000). This surveillance feature is prominent in child welfare statutes and legislation; it is also part of Thunder Bay's municipal by-laws, as well as provincial legislation. The observation and interpretation of the encoding/decoding of front yard machines is socially accepted and often deemed positive (e.g. the 2003 Pond Tour of the beautiful homes and gardens). I will focus on two local examples – the two Kasstana sisters, as well as the case of Tovio Sistenin. These examples illustrate and exemplify the social use of front yard machine surveillance.

Physical surveillance enhances visibility and allows for monitoring. The practice is institutionalized at many levels. Physical characteristics are typically used in 'assessment' procedures (appendix E); the body is used to detect 'symptoms' that help the determination of unacceptable (e.g. abnormal) behaviour. Within the 'health profession' physical symptoms allow 'specialists' and 'qualified personnel' to judge the 'mental' or 'social' fitness of individuals[2]. Within child welfare the body and the physical environment are used to assessment whether 'neglect of child's basic physical needs' has occurred. The *Ontario Child Welfare Eligibility Spectrum*[3] clearly defines and

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[2] Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorder 4th Edition – Text Revision (DSM-IV-TR) with multiaxial assessment use a domain of 'psychosocial and environmental problems' to help plan patient treatment and to predict patient's outcomes. Psychosocial and environmental problems include negative life events, environmental difficulties or deficiencies, inadequate social supports and/or personal resources. 'Housing problems' and difficulty maintaining housing standards, according to the DMS-IV-TR, results from and are exacerbated, for example, by extreme poverty, inadequate finances or insufficient welfare.
[3] The *Ontario Child Welfare Eligibility Spectrum* is a policy manual.

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exemplifies such issues as 'personal hygiene', 'household sanitation', 'living conditions' and 'clothing conditions' (appendix F). Neglect of a child's basic physical needs is interpreted as the failure to provide "the child with adequate food, shelter, clothing and safety" (Section 2, p. 27). Physical surveillance is also an issue when assessing caregiver problems (appendix G). "Specific parental characteristics such as physical and/or mental and/or behavioural factors can impair a parent's abilities to provide appropriate and adequate care of the child and/or place the child at risk for maltreatment (Belsky, 1993)" (cited in Section 5, p. 61). In both instances where physical surveillance is used body and bodily-extensions (clothes and home) are perceived by state inspectors to be recordings of individual abilities. In addition at the municipal and provincial government level there is legislation outlining 'normal' physical environment standards – expected consumption level.

The front yard surveillance apparatus is used at the municipal level in Thunder Bay to ensure that front yard machine surfaces conform to acceptable and 'normalized' expectations. Under city bylaws, 874.3.3, "an owner shall keep land clean and free from waste and from objects or conditions that may create a health, fire or accident hazard", as well as, "no owner of land shall cause or permit the existence or continuance thereon of any holes, pits, excavations or trenches which constitute a health, fire or safety hazard" (874.3.11). Front yard surfaces that deviate from expected standards can be forced to 'normalize' spatial arrangements, made to consume objects of consumption or labour, since "every person who contravenes any of the provisions of this Chapter is guilty of an offence and upon conviction is liable to a fine or penalty as provided for in the Provincial Offences Act. By-law 226-1996, 28 October, 1996" (874.4.1). Thunder Bay possesses a

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charter that empowers the city to intervene in situations that it deems are deviations from

'normal' spatial arrangements; this power is supported by provincial legislation.

At the provincial level front yard machine surveillance has been institutionally

supported with legislation. Front yard observation is passively encouraged in Ontario

through legislation that defines appropriate consumption behaviour – property standards.

Active observation by the state is sanctioned under the *Health Protection and Promotion*

Act. Under 'duties to inspect complaints regarding health hazards to occupational or

environmental health', when a complaint is issued to

> a board of health or a medical officer of health that a health hazard
> related to occupational or environmental health exists in the health unit
> served by the board of health or the medical officer of health, the
> medical officer of health shall notify the ministry of the Government of
> Ontario that has primary responsibility in the matter and, in consultation
> with the ministry, the medical officer of health shall investigate the
> complaint to determine whether the health hazard exists or does not
> exist. R.S.O. 1990, c. H.7, s. 11 (1).

Provincial backing encourages observers to inspect yards and it positively enforces

surveillance as a social good and empowers 'institutional enforcers'. Building Code Act

S.O. 1992, c.23, permits municipalities to:

> 1. Prescribing standards for the maintenance and occupancy of property
> within the municipality or within any defined area or areas and for
> prohibiting the occupancy or use of such property that does not conform
> with the standards.
>
> 2. Requiring property that does not conform with the standards to be
> repaired and maintained to conform with the standards or the site to be
> cleared of all buildings, structures, debris or refuse and left in graded
> and levelled condition. 1997, c. 24, s. 224 (8).

Institutional enforcers work as government inspectors who may "enter upon any property

at any reasonable time without a warrant for the purpose of inspecting the property" to

determine whether or not the space conforms to prescribed standards (Building Code Act

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S.O. 1992, c.23, s.15.2 (1)). These inspectors can then prescribe reasonable repairs or

site alterations, which may be legally enforced.

Property owners are expected to comply with orders and in instances where they

do not "the municipality may cause the property to be repaired or demolished

accordingly" (Ibid, 15.4 (1)). This occurs at the expense of the property owner. "The

municipality shall have a lien on the land for the amount spent on the repair or demolition

under subsection (1) and the amount shall have priority lien status as described in section

1 of the Municipal Act, 2001" (Ibid, 15.4 (4)). Under the *Health Protection and*

Promotion Act "every person who is guilty of an offence under this Act is liable on

conviction to a fine of not more than $5,000 for every day or part of a day on which the

offence occurs or continues. R.S.O. 1990, c. H.7, s. 101 (1)". Normalization is legally

enforced at the provincial level and even requires a 'certificate of compliance' issued by

an inspector once he or she deems the property is in compliance with by-law standards

(Ibid, 15.5 (1)) and or health standards. The state, their inspectors and even citizen

inspectors are part of the front yard machine surveillance apparatus.

Citizen inspections ensure compliance with by-law and provincial legislation, but

it also takes place with celebrated venues – above expected levels of consumption.

Landscape surveillance in some venues is a socially accepted and a socially deemed

positive experience. Since 2002, Thunder Bay, like many communities in Ontario and in

North America in general, hosts a tour of socially marked and recognized landscapes.

The 2003 Pond Tour featured residential landscapes deemed to be 'outstanding'.

Spectators were provided with a brochure that maps and gives a general description of

each site. Upon arrival visitors at each particular locale were required to present their

brochure, which gets stamped and thus signifies approval for entry. The Pond Tour is quite a popular activity and provides opportunity for many people to view and ingest celebrated landscapes. This experience is a conscious organized surveillance of landscaped space; by contrast, many times individuals unconsciously survey space during walks, bicycle rides, and/or car rides around the community.

A local Thunder Bay example of front yard machine surveillance concerns the case of Clara and Micalda Kasstana. In September 1997 they were admitted against their will to Lakehead Psychiatric Hospital (LPH). They spent 14 days at LPH because "the City of Thunder Bay had Kasstana (Clara) and her sister…Micalda Kasstana, removed from their Frederica Street home after the municipality's bylaw enforcement department came to believe they were living in substandard conditions at their Westfort residence" (Andrews, 1999a, p. A1). Assessments of the sisters found Micalda to be mentally competent but Clara was deemed incompetent to manage her own affairs and her own property; thus, she became a ward of the state and was given a 'public guardian officer' (Andrews, 1999b, p. A3). At a later psychiatric assessment at LPH Clara was found competent to manage her property but no conclusions were made as to her ability to care for herself (Ibid). During the sisters' incarceration at LPH the city of Thunder Bay spent approximately $15,000 in "emergency clean up and remediation work at and around the property" (Ibid). The city's removal of the "publicly discarded material" (garbage) was billed to the sisters (Ibid).

The City of Thunder Bay interfered with the lives and lifestyles of the Kasstana sisters after a state inspector observed 'unacceptable' living conditions. The city questioned the sisters' social abilities because of the spatial assemblage of their Frederica

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Street home – the condition of the front yard and the rest of the property was an issue.

The front yard machine was decoded as a sign of below normal abilities – the sisters'

labour was deemed to encode an aberrant status, as such they were perceived to be unable

to maintain a 'normal' or 'standard' home condition. The city stepped in and

'normalized' the sister's physical environment and at the same time had their mental and

physical competence determined. By removing the 'decades of old junk' and 'rotting

garbage' the space was once more recoded as socially acceptable, and because of the

condition of their front yard cast so much suspicion on Micalda's and Clara's social

abilities, they were required/forced to validate and justify their social ability via intensive

psychiatric assessment. The front yard surveillance apparatus empowered observers to

determine the acceptability and aberration of the two sisters through the sign value of

their yard and their home. In other instances, however, the front yard machine has

obstructed inspector-subject observations and assessments.

Another local example of front yard machine surveillance in Thunder Bay

concerns the strange circumstances surrounding the discovery of Tovio Sistenin. Unlike

the two Kasstana sisters' predicament, Sistenin's front yard hid him from outside

scrutiny. Sistenin was a recluse and previously had only contact with his common-law

wife, Jeanette Garrow. In January 1999 Sistenin's remains were found in his Westfort

home; supposedly he had died sometime four years earlier (Lammens. 1999, p. A1). The

house in question was described as permeating a "gagging stink of garbage" much like

"rotten eggs and rotting meat" (Enrkamp, 1999, p. A1). A neighbour interviewed stated:

"We always knew there was a dead body in there…A few years ago, the stench was so

bad that we couldn't sit in our back-yard" (Ibid, p.A1). What is interesting is that, as

others have noted, even with the terrible smell "why didn't the neigbours do something?" (Andrews, 1999, p. A1). Throughout the Sistenin controversy it was often cited that allegedly Garrow and her daughter regularly picked up mail and maintained the yard (Enrkamp, 1999, p. A1; Lammens, 1999, p. A1, Lammen, 1999a, p. A1; and 'Brown Street', 1999, p. A3), as well as, " a neighbour maintained the garden outside the home" (Enrkamp, 1999, p. A1). The terrible incidents inside the home were hidden by maintaining a 'normal' front yard and property.

The maintenance of Sistenin's front yard, the normal and expected decoding of consumption and its display eased neighbours' concerns about the smell and the fact that utilities had been shut off (Lammens, 1999, p. A1). In this case front yard machine surveillance linked the 'supposed' abilities of Garrow, her daughter and a neigbour to Sistenin even though he was dead. The front yard machine in this case was decoded as suggesting the encoding of the homeowner's abilities – hiding the death and real abilities of Sistenin. When the truth of the situation was revealed the city of Thunder Bay and the Thunder Bay District Health Unit were given responsibility for the clean up of Sistenin's home under the *Health Protection and Promotion Act* (Lammen, 1999b, A3.).

How the Front Yard Surveillance Machine Functions

Front yard machines, like the human body, possess particular source significance crucial for everyday recognition and identification. Through a collection of signs whose significance has developed through a social sedimentary process, front yards create a surface that influences the perception of their owners and occupants. Surveillance is a characteristic of the encoding and decoding of consumption within landscaped space. Encoders/decoders become more proficient over time in the use of signs and signifying

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systems. Proficiency here is the ability to meaningfully interact or communicate with others – commonly shared sign systems provide "human groups with common premises for predictable convergent inferential processes. This process of people collectively using effectively identical assumptions in interpreting each other's actions...may be termed *cultural logic*" (Enfield, 2000, p. 36). With the front yard machine cultural logic shapes and determines certain sign values that become inscribed in the encoding and decoding of space - thus a surveillance apparatus.

By building from Enfield's (2000) assumption of individual's 'private representations, "thoughts, concepts, and sense/sensorimotor images (in many possible forms) that are structured and can be recalled and privately manipulated" (p. 37), or what Eco terms 'encyclopedias', one recognizes the vital need for a means to share experiences. An effective recognizable communication structure will presuppose humans to possess culturally constituted methods, conceptually expressed and shared signs that would enable people to participate and interact with others and the world (Hallowell, 1977, p. 131). Conventions and other kinds of precedents "form personal libraries of models and scenarios which may serve as reference material in inferring and attributing motivations behind people's actions, and behind other mysterious phenomena" (Enfield, 2000, p. 37). While individuals have their own private worlds they are compelled to consider the representations of others. Proficiency with such consideration and the establishment of communication flow is what Enfield (2000) terms 'cultural representation' – shared private representations which are assumed and assumed-to-be-assumed by another or by all people (pp. 45-46). Proficient communication is an ability to use cultural logic and cultural representations to 'normalize' the encoding/decoding

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structure of sign and/or signifying system of consumption. With the case of Sistenin his

common-law wife, Garrow, was able through the use of cultural logic (maintenance of

front yard) to communicate normality and was able to hide the situation inside.

Through the encoding and decoding process of front yard construction a

surveillance feature becomes part of the front yard machine. The repeated and accepted

routine practice of front yard construction and maintenance is illustrative of Staples'

(2000) 'ritualistic' micro technique of social monitoring. In many urban communities

front yards are close to one another. The observation of a number of spaces by individual

inspectors occurs as a result of a centrally located or lodged point of periphery. Being on

a street or on a sidewalk enables one to observe and compare close spaces. Though

surveillance can and may include numerous observations as one travels along the street or

throughout the neighbourhood. In Diagram 8 (next page) front yard machine surveillance

features are detailed. Any person is able to inspect or observe the spatial construction of

front yards (others or their own). Comparing the space of one particular front yard to

either those surrounding it or to the preconceived ideas of expected assemblages

(models), front-yard-inspectors are able to classify the space as 'acceptable' and 'normal'

or as 'aberrant' or 'abnormal'. The classification process is important because front yard

spatiality is perceived as an extension of homeowner bodies (surfaces of recording).

These surfaces provide information and knowledge to the inspector or inspectors. The

consumption associated with a particular landscaped front yard is a self-produced 'system

of communication' or 'record keeping'. The front yard machine, with its "extraction,

appropriation, distribution or retention of knowledge" (quoted in Cooper, 1981, p. 79),

comes to represent the associated homeowner.

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Diagram 8. Flow Chart of Front Yard Machine Surveillance

Diagram 8. Flow Chart of Front Yard Machine Surveillance

- Inspector or observer
- Sights a front yard assemblage
- Front yard space is either/or
- ...compared to surrounding landscapes
- ...compared to expected assemblages
- Space becomes marked or unmarked
- Front yard is an extension of homeowner
- Judgment or decoding of homeowner occurs based on the landscaped space
- Decision about the front yard-body takes place. Status is determined by the perceived labour abilities of the front yard-body coupling. Determination of whether or not some type of interference is required may result.

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Front yards and human bodies network through the work and interaction that occurs in creating a particular landscape. The front yard machine "serves as an introduction to visitors", its "quality, arrangement and standard of upkeep reflect upon those responsible for them (front yard and its objects) as much as do the interiors of the owner's home or the clothes they wear" (my addition, Everett, 1975, pp. 5-6). The couplings within the space become extensions of the individual body, an association of the bodies who inhabit the space. Front yard machines are associated as body extended surfaces upon which social relations occur and are recorded. With the Kasstana sisters their so called "incompetence" was first detected from the condition of their yard. The use and display of signs in the front yard act as a metaphorical filler and as a statement of identity (Falk, 1994, p. 40). Front yards as spatial and temporal matrixes presuppose and embody relations of production: "socially produced space and time are the concrete manifestations, the material references, of social structure and relations" (Soja, 1985, p. 95). The geo-historical content of the front yard machine communicates ideas of physical capital, of power and status.

Human interactions are materially constituted in landscaped space through repeated shaping of land for new uses and pleasures. Front yards are a human modified spatial arrangement, and each age and each society develops unique ways of organizing this space. It is an intricate webbing of natural space, cognition and social relations that communicate and/or display the connectedness of human history and geography. Human geography and history create an ever evolving sequence of landscaped space, "a spatio-temporal structuation of social life which gives form not only to the grand movements of social development but also to the recursive practices of day-to-day activity" (Soja, 1985,

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p. 94). Landscape is shaped and developed by human information producers into sign

value systems (displays of objects of consumption) that result in a means of

distinguishing identity and social relations – "to shape and be shaped by a constantly

evolving spatiality which constitutes and concretises social action and relationship"

(Soja, 1985, p. 90) - self produced recordings marking status. Front yards record and

reflect "our tastes, our values, our aspirations, and even our fears, in tangible, visible

form" (Lewis, 1979, p. 12). Communication occurs and takes place constantly (like the

different communication forms of clothing or automobiles). As a product of communal

habitation, the front yard creates a sedimentary layering of "social behaviour and

individual actions worked upon particular localities over a span of life" (Meinig, 1976, p.

6). The collection and assembling of all the elements that comprise front yard space

possesses both substantial form and a set of relations between technology, individuals

and/or groups.

Individuals and groups through an interpretation process carry out assessments or

appraisals of others that may be conscious, preconscious or unconscious, but most often a

combination of all three (Hollingshead and Redlich, 1981, p. 230). With front yard

machines what occurs is an assessment of sign behaviour and communication. By

assessing *action language* – all movement not used exclusively as signals (e.g. walking

and/or drinking are statements to those who perceive them); and *object language* – "all

intentional and non intentional display of material things such as implements, machines,

art objects, architectural structures, and last but not least, the human body and whatever

clothes it" ('Nonverbal', 1972, p. 727), observers with the use of cultural logic are able to

assign value to front yards. By observing the material displays front yard machine

surveillance can identify 'acceptable' or 'aberrant' behavioural traits of its subjects. It is a 'soft' technique of surveillance that displays human bodies, monitors them and their extensions in order to provide justification and validation for 'official' interference, intent upon social order – the molding, shaping and modification of actions and behaviour (Staples, 2000). With the Kasstana's front yard, 'soft' surveillance was not-so-soft as it led to the city of Thunder Bay exercising "power over" the sisters - definite physical restraint and punishment by the City via the sisters forced stay at LPH.

Acceptable behaviour is usually not likely to come to the attention of observers, as was the case with Sistenin's front yard. In most cases acceptable front yards are unmarked, meaning they go unnoticed by decoders and encoders. When front yards are noticed or marked, this means that they deviated from expected patterns. This deviation can come in two forms of abnormality. The socially or culturally approved abnormality is one that is seen as desirable and sought after. With front yards these are the celebrated sign systems, e.g. celebrated gardens, lawns, walkways and driveways and their sign values (as discussed in Chapter 2). In these spaces observer expectations are exceeded, the spaces become socially valued and highlighted (e.g. garden tours). The consumption of objects and labour in these spaces is greater than that associated with 'average' or 'typical' front yard assemblages.

The second form of abnormality, perhaps most commonly used, is a trait that is socially devalued, and/or deemed a burden or problem. With front yards negatively marked traits are associated with observations that fall below expectations; these are assemblages that are not perceived as desirable. For instance, front yards that fail to match or compliment neighboring spaces, spaces typically associated with being 'unkept'

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or 'uncared for', most likely come to the attention of observers, as with the case of the two Kasstana sisters. The aberrant front yard – unacceptable physical environment and/or space – displays socially unacceptable consumption because it is viewed as an extension of the human body of the owner or occupant. By trying to control the encoded message of front yards, homeowners effectively participate in the construction of the front yard machine as a (self) surveillance apparatus, as a Foucaultian self-disciplining gaze, a gaze interiorized and turned against the self (Foucault, 1980, p.155).

Another feature of the surveillance apparatus is that human observers are indistinguishable. A homeowner cannot always be sure as to who is watching or looking at his or her front yard at any particular time since an observer looks just like any other person who may not be actively watching. Crowd anonymity works just as well as the 'blinds' Bentham proposes to install in his inspection house (Bentham, Letter 2). As well, the constant display of front yard machines functions as another part of the surveillance apparatus. No matter where the homeowners are their front yard will communicate impressions of them to observers decoding the space. Front yard space is an 'all-displaying space'!

So one begins to wonder then, what kind of space is a 'natural' front yard made of? The idea of a 'natural' front yard certainly is not one of unrestricted growth, or of nature being free to do what it will. There are simply just too many restrictions upon this space for it to flow freely. As witnessed, neighbourhoods restrict and limit front yard space to acceptable assemblages, as illustrated by the Kasstana sisters' experience with community discontent regarding their front yard, as well as what Primeau (2003a) experienced when she introduced a 'new' front yard style into her community. At a

municipal level by-laws limit the structuring and assembling of front yards. It is the same with provincial legislation. Suddenly the human observer has a very important role in maintaining 'natural' front yards. It is their vigilance of front yards, which ensures a seemly static conformity of space. So simply put, 'natural' front yards are culturally approved landscapes. Spaces organized along *approved* and *accepted* ideas, guidelines, and expectations of what front yards are suppose to be like.

Conclusion

The front yard machine is perceived as an extension of the abilities of its owners. These abilities are used to make assessments and observations of social acceptability (normal) or aberration (abnormal). In the case of Tovio Sistenin the front yard and the rest of the property's maintenance hid the fact of his death. The flows in the front yard machine were perceived to be acceptable and unbroken thus the space raised no questions or concerns. On the other hand, the Kasstana sisters' front yard was seen as aberrant or inconsistent with appropriate standards. The perceived normal front yard machine flow in this instance was disrupted and as such the yard and property came to the attention of Thunder Bay's bylaw enforcement department.

As an observation tool the front yard is a sign, which offers passers-by the means and opportunity to decode homeowner's communiqués (encodings). Front yard machine surveillance is incorporated in assessing social and mental health through the interpretation of the physical environment. Physical environments speak volumes to psychiatrists when using multi-axial assessment, to child welfare professionals, to municipal or provincial enforcers, or to ordinary citizens.

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Front yards through connections with human bodies, objects of consumption, and landscape create the front yard machine. Through a sedimentary process front yards accumulate and create a representation of a particular human geo-history. The intentional or non-intentional display of objects in space creates a recording of 'homo-historia'. Front yard machine communication is based upon a codified system, like dress, which humans use to organize their participation and interaction with the world. Encoding and/or decoding this system enables individuals to understand and make judgments of themselves, as well as, others. There is uncertainty about whether or not one is being observed, of who is inspecting the front yard machine. Contemporary technology and 'post-mass' production have evolved to create a surveillance apparatus, which records self-produced and self-maintained information and knowledge concerning a subject.

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Conclusion

This thesis has tried to show the reader a new way of understanding a cultural landscape often consider banal. The front yard is far from a naturally occurring landscape – it is a socially produced geo-historical artifact. As a space the front yard is transformable; it is a space produced from "the simultaneous co-existence of social relations" at a particular geographical scale (Massey, 1994, p. 168). It is a by-product of communal life, a symbol, an expression of cultural value, of "social behaviour and individual actions worked upon particular localities over a span of life" (Meinig, 1976, p. 6). Front yards are artificial, synthetic, subject to change, complex, and their history like that of landscape, is part of our social history and as such autobiographical.

Many influences affect the development and structure of front yard space. No single influence overly determines it. J. Macgregor Wise, associate professor of communication studies at Arizona State West, notes that, "no space is enclosed but is always multidimensional, resonant, and open to other spaces" (2003, p. 11). Large social and historical forces, one's neighbours and community, personal growth and change are possible influences that organize differing elemental flows at one point and merge them into a single understood and recognized entity. The encompassing entity of sedimentary objects and social actions is a 'material' machine of production – of communication. The front yard machine as an expressive territory is an accretion of culture, in that "each milieu affects the space, bends it, inflects it, shapes it" (Wise, 2003, p. 110). Therefore, I contend that humans and technology do not exist within separate spheres; our lived experiences are a coupling of humanity, technology and *geography*. To understand or

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investigate one requires the recognition of the others. Reality is one great machine in which humans are simple cogs of a larger working structure.

The front yard machine also has a "rhizomatic" dimension that works against the structure of the lawn machine (Deleuze and Guattari, 1987); it ceaselessly establishes connections and dimensions, its metamorphic potential becomes apparent as "connections between semiotic chains, organizations of power, circumstances relative to the arts, science and social struggles" (Ibid, p.7) are brought into play as "directions of motion" (Ibid, p. 21) to structure the machine. In its solid stasis the front yard machine projects a "notion of unity" because its multiplicity is not blatantly obvious. Our desire for static and still things in front yards (i.e. solid code, a bamboo deer covered with Christmas lights, etc.) create a naturalized ideology of front yard space. When movement becomes an obvious dimension of the front yard machine, the thawing and the speeding up of flows, multiplicity and connectivity of the front yard machine is truly realized (i.e. changing of front yard codes, real deer "reterritorialize" front yard space, etc). Things like weeds can suddenly become a new code and enter personal repertories as "regional wild flowers", or garbage may become seen as folk art for example. The question then arises to what degree is the mutation of front yard space allowed to occur without interference? When will the city, municipality, neighbours, or other inspectors stop and get involved?

Certain flows are preferred over others and these slow down the code flow of front yards – making the particular slow codes acceptable and expected. The slow flows become perceived as a static stasis of organizational behaviour. As such, society develops cultural myths and conventions (i.e. by-laws, provincial legislation, and

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community or personal repertoires) that create expectations of what particular landscapes are supposed to be like, the 'that's just the way it is' mentality. Static front yard space results from a solidly perceived stasis of code. But front yards are not static because change does happen especially when 'anomalies' or questions are raised concerning the appropriateness of the spatial assemblage.

Traditional or typical assemblages of front yard machines may be seen as problematic or limiting for some people. What takes place with change is the increased speed of code flow within the communication loop between the user and code. Thus new ideas or concepts in landscaping and gardening may be tried, a person may be erotically attached to lawn equipment or landscaping and create a redundant space (i.e. all grass for more mowing or nothing but tulips planted in the area). Or the space may mutate: a front yard void of grass but covered with a mechanic's carpet upon which rests cars and car parts; a piece of folk art made from recycled material; or a space filled with large homemade bird houses. It doesn't matter what the new lines of assemblage are for eventually the flow begins to slow down again and re-solidify as the new machine construction becomes acceptable and perhaps eventually leads to a new organizational structure for the front yard machine – a new expressive territory.

The front yard machine as a sign is an invested space that individuals and groups take a lot of time and money to modify and change. Objects of consumption possess culturally constructed significance (Holt and Schor, 2000, p. xii) that become associated with those who possess them. So the modification and change, because of the commitment involved, becomes an association to those drawn in to the space - a perceived extension of the owner's physical bodies. In other words, another surface

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space (i.e. clothes or automobiles) that communicates ideas about who and what you are to the world at large.

Sign value of front yard machines may be based upon exchange value, but is never solely determined by it since significance and meaning grow from shared expectations and social interaction (Stryker, 1980, p. 53) that then entail culturally expressed and shared signs for the configuring of social participation and interaction (Hallowell, 1977, p. 131). Yet hierarchies do develop amongst landscape products and equipment because of minute differences; differences such as socio-economics may become a key characteristic for determining and categorizing objects of consumption since functional differences are gone.

The logic behind front yard sign value is not that of language but of the categorization of distinct and significant elements. Status thereby becomes induced or marked through the display of objects of consumption and their respective hierarchical category. Objects of consumption make and maintain social relations (Douglas and Isherwood, 1996, p. 38). People are their objects – displayed objects are their respective owners. The front yard machine is a means of impression management through the communication of acceptable or unacceptable consumptive behaviour.

The encoding involved with impression management and its decoding make the front yard machine a surveillance apparatus. Physical surveillance is a common aspect of society. The perceived association of front yards to their corresponding owners creates a sign, which can signify social acceptability or aberration. As a spatial creation, front yards offer to those interested a means and opportunity to make value judgments about owners and inhabitants. Front yard inspectors are very similar to 'professionals' who use

physical surveillance to assess mental, physical, and social competence. Private citizen inspectors compare front yards with neighbouring spaces, and in regards to personal and social expectations about 'appropriate' landscaping. In contrast, professional inspectors, like municipal By-law Officers, inspect for standards that are locally and provincially defined. It is the duty of the professional inspectors to ensure that landscaped space, its mutations, conform to building codes and standards as set out through municipal by-laws and provincial legislation. Front yard machines are a sedimentary assemblage of objects, human interaction and geography, which is in some form always on display – it is a self-produced and self-maintained recording.

Machinic theory presents a viable model for the investigation of many different objects and ideas that coalesce in a single recognizable and understood structure. I have applied this contemporary theory to front yards within our post-mass production society, in order to offer an alternative method of understanding the codes and subcodes that encoders and decoders use to construct and de-construct front yard space. Front yard and landscape investigation still has a lot to uncover. D.W. Meinig said it well when he recognized that, "any landscape is composed not only of what lies before our eyes but what lies within our heads" (1979, p. 34). So what is actually recognized are the assemblages of objects and items that we give significance to (Jackson, 1987, p. 32). There are still many directions to investigate and to pursue concerning landscapes and social geography. The use of machine theory offers a venue for such an investigation, for the examination of non-typical or non-traditional associations.

Finally, I have noted a number of key points made throughout this work. They are organized so as to tie together the ideas, concepts and information presented thus far.

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- *'Machine'* theory can be an encompassing method to discuss and model physically real structures – like landscapes.

- The front yard is not a 'natural' space. It is an artificial creation structured and influenced by social forces – an interconnected geo-social artifact of a particular culture and cultural milieu.

- The structural development of front yards takes places through codes and subcodes, which govern the combinatorial relations of differentiated elements. At certain times, particular codes and subcodes are used more often and widely accepted, slowing down the flow of front yard assemblages. Change does occur within front yards. It acts as an increased flow of discontentment amongst code users.

- In some instances, there is a euphoric eroticism or fetishization of front yard objects. Desire acts as a breakflow, a 'buzz', within front yard machines redirecting or interrupting flows.

- Front yard machines consist of mixed signs; semiological difference is thus not exhaustive.

- The conglomeration of all the different elements within front yard machines may take on socio-economic sign value that sign users use to communicate and structure social hierarchies – mark status.

- There are 'model' front yard machines, which define acceptable or aberrant sign value of differing landscapes and spaces.

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- The sign value of front yard machines may be a surveillance apparatus, in which case the assemblage gains sign value from expected ideas of acceptability (physical surveillance) and not from exchange value.

- As a surveillance machine, the front yard machine is at all times communicating ideas about its inhabitants. It can illuminate social deviance or aberration (i.e. Kasstana sisters' residence). Alternatively, the front yard machine may hide individuals from social observation (i.e. Tovio Sistenin).

- At all times the front yard machine is on display – communicating to all those interested ideas and perceptions about you and your family.

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Appendix A

Beauty Matters

The City of Thunder Bay Parks Division, with the assistance of the Beautification Coordinator, is pleased to share with you the following tips and suggestions for creating a more attractive and eye-catching landscape.

Image is Everything

Using local materials is a very effective way to create a strong identity for your property. The list of items may include native plantings, local rock, driftwood, found objects such as old signs, which can be used as art and the list goes on. Finding your style is the first step to developing a site with strong character, a clear image and effective presentation. The easiest place to start is with what you love and let it be the catalyst for a theme. Art or colour can be your inspiration or perhaps a specific garden style such as 'cottage' or Japanese. Let this be your lifting off point for future plans and decisions.

Scale

Scale can be a difficult design technique for individuals to master. While vertical objects speak more strongly than horizontal ones; the height of trees, for example, may not always be welcome. If you opt for creating a planting bed with low height you can compensate for this by making the bed wider or longer or both. Select a landscape treatment that is appropriately sized for your home. If you have a 2-storey house you could probably incorporate a small tree. If the building is only 1-storey be careful not to dwarf it with plants that will grow too big or tall - a common problem is cedars that can grow to be giants. Explore the many medium to large sized shrub options available at your local garden centre. Shrubs provide excellent foliage and stem colour and may grow to a decent width rather than just up.

Low Maintenance

While zero-maintenance landscaping is a myth, low maintenance can be a reality. There are many techniques you can apply that will help cut down on the maintenance time required to maintain your property. Installing an irrigation system that is both adjustable and on a timer will considerably save the watering time required by you. It can also be adjusted to water less during wetter periods. Another simple way to lower your maintenance requirements is to install weed-barrier fabric and mulch in your planting beds. This fabric is designed to allow water but not sunlight through. This virtually eliminates weed growth while at the same time cutting water requirements considerably. Shrubs and trees can also offer less maintenance needs than perennials or annuals. They require less frequent watering, little or no division and usually only require an annual pruning. Consider the amount of time you are able to provide for maintenance and choose garden plants accordingly.
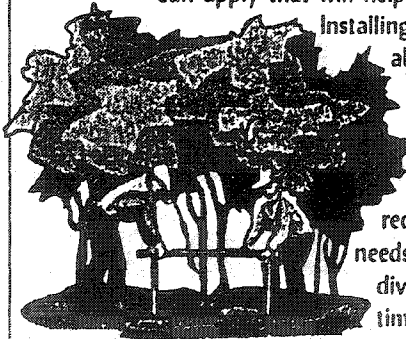
Looking for a Boulevard Tree?

If the City boulevard, in front of your home, is lacking a tree give the Parks Department a call at 625-2351. A thorough assessment will be made of the site both above and below ground and if the location is approved you may be added to the following years list.
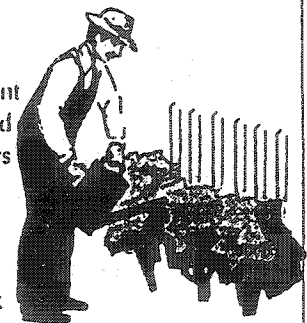
Beautification Programs

Check this issue of the key for entry forms for both the Westfort Kiwanis Best Block Award and the City of Thunder Bay's Annual Beautification Awards. Be sure to nominate yourself or a friend before July 31st.

Appendix A cont'd

Environmental Tips

The City of Thunder Bay Parks Division is pleased to share with you the following tips and suggestions for creating a healthier landscape.

Lawn Care

Leaving grass clippings on your lawn is the most effective way of recycling the nutrients. By following the One-Third Rule - mowing the lawn often enough to remove only one third of the grass blade, the short clippings are able to deteriorate quickly thereby allowing the nutrients to quickly return to the soil. The City Parks Division leaves most of the grass clippings on the city's public parks and we encourage you to do the same. Removing grass clippings is not only unnecessary, but it can add a significant burden to our landfill site. A 3" (2") layer of thatch is considered ideal as it helps to retain moisture in the soil, but thatch buildup can create thin and unhealthy grass. Deep and thorough watering and paying careful attention to the correct amounts of fertilizer applied can prevent this common problem. If the thatch layer becomes too thick, your lawn can be rejuvenated using de-thatching equipment, which can be found at local rental agencies.

Mowing

Mowing your lawn with a sharp blade, set at a high-cutting height is an excellent way to help your grass develop a deep root system. It is not how short you cut the grass, rather how even you mow that gives the lawn a smooth carpet-like look and feel. A sharp blade is essential because a dull one can shred the tips of the grass blades and create entry points for disease organisms. Shredded grass tips tend to turn brown and in turn give the lawn a dried out appearance. In spring, when the soil is wet, a dull blade can also pull the grass plants out of the ground. Grass is soft in spring and is easy to cut. As summer wears on, the leaves become tough and wiry, dulling blades faster. Remember to sharpen the blades frequently either yourself or take them to a professional. The most common grasses, Bluegrass and Fine Fescue, should be mowed in the range of 2-3" (5-8 cm) in height. When finishing the mowing project with the weed eater, it is important to avoid damaging the bark around the base of your trees. Weed eater damage to trees will affect the rate of water uptake and the transfer of the nutrients produced by the leaves. It can also provide entry points for disease and insects.

Watering

Most professionals recommend infrequent, but deep watering of your lawn. Depending on your soil conditions 1" (2.5 cm) of water can soak into your soil up to 6-8" (1520 cm). Deeper watering encourages the deep root growth that helps your lawn resist excessive drying in warmer temperatures. If you aren't sure how long 1" (2.5 cm) of water takes put out a small bowl when you turn on the sprinkler. When you can measure 1" (2.5 cm) of water in the bowl you have watered enough. This time duration can vary depending on your water source and type of sprinkler.
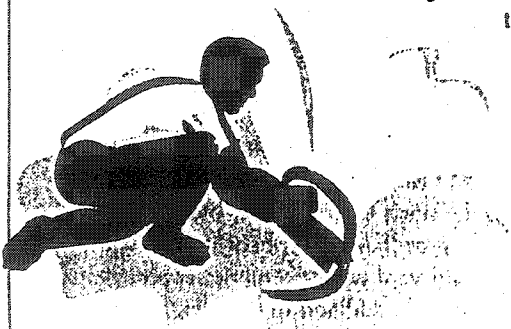
Appendix A cont'd

Tree Planting Tips

* Plant trees so that the root collar is at ground level. This is where the stem begins to flare towards the root.
* Do not fertilize until the tree is established
* Keep grass and flowers away from the new tree trunk.
* Add amendments to improve soil structure, but remember to include a large portion of the original soil. For example sand or granular material can be added to clay soils to open up the small pore sizes.
* Trunk wrap is for winter protection only and should be removed when the days begin to lengthen (or after tree is planted).
* Wound dressings, flush cuts and cut leaders are all signs of a tree that has not been properly cared for. Be careful when shopping for a new specimen.
* Know the growing requirements of your trees. Do not plant trees that will grow tall and big under power lines or in small spaces.
* Prepare the whole planting site and not just a small hole.
* Remove only dead and dying branches and cleanly cut all broken or bruised roots.
* Tree supports are not always necessary. If you install one remember not to make it too tight and that it should be removed after 1 or 2 growing seasons.
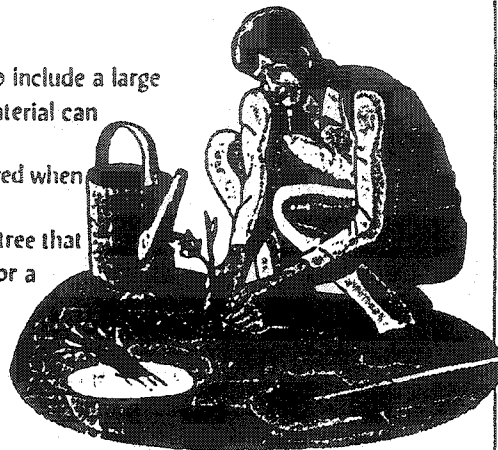
Did You Know...

* Trees assist in the cycling of carbon and have the ability to turn excess carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and turn it into oxygen.
* Trees filter out dust, dirt, pollen and other pollutants from the air we breathe.
* Trees help conserve energy. Properly located trees can cut air-conditioning and heating bills by 10 to 15 percent.
* Tinfoil and other wraps put onto your tree to protect it from caterpillar infestations should be removed at the end of the season. This protects the bark from unnecessary damage caused by high temperatures achieved under the wraps.

Why Not to Top a Tree?

If you think a tall tree can be a hazard, read the following reasons why you should never top or head your trees. This is also a reminder that it is an offense to cut City owned trees.
Topping stresses trees-new shoots and suckers are not a good sign but rather are a sign the tree is stressed.
- Topping causes decay-the tree cannot grow over the wound and heal itself
- Topping can lead to sunburn-you are changing the environment that the lower branches have been growing in
- Topping creates hazards
- Topping makes trees ugly
- Topping is expensive-not a one time event, in addition to liability issued created
- It is an offense to prune City trees.

Why Compost?

Composting is a natural, biochemical process of decay in which bacteria, fungi, worms and other soil organisms break down organic matter. The organic breakdown of kitchen and yard waste will result in a dark, nutrient rich soil conditioner known as humus or compost. Compost is the single best and most economical additive you can put in your garden. It conditions soil and improves plant growth. Another benefit of composting is the diversion of organic material from our landfill sites. Kitchen and yard wastes comprise approximately 33% of residential solid waste. If you compost kitchen and yard waste in addition to recycling cardboard, newspapers, glass, plastics and cans you can cut your waste almost in half!

CITY OF
Thunder Bay
Superior by Nature

Appendix B

City of Thunder Bay
Superior by Nature

The City of Thunder Bay
2003 Civic Beautification Awards

The City of Thunder Bay in conjunction with the Thunder Bay Horticultural Society seek nominations for Business, Industry and Homeowner efforts that beautify our city. Excellence in property care will be awarded garden tools and other prizes at our awards ceremony in September.

To enter, fill out the nomination form below and attach up to 8 photographs. Submissions are due before July 31, 2003. Open to all residents of the City of Thunder Bay. For more information call the Parks Division at 625-2313.

The organizers of the Civic Beautification Awards reserve all rights to reproduce, publish or exhibit any photographs entered. The City of Thunder Bay Parks Division will notify winners.

Select a Category:

☐ Mail Carriers Front Yard Award
☐ Mayors Commercial Frontage Award
☐ Institutional/Public Grounds Award
☐ Horticultural Society Vegetable/Community Gardens Award
☐ Residential Property Award (as seen from the road)

Name _____

Address _____

Postal Code _____ Telephone _____

Mail your entries to:
Thunder Bay Horticultural Society
c/o Pat Izsak
4155 Mapleward Road
Thunder Bay ON P7K 1A2
Re: Beautification 2003

Beautify Thunder Bay

City of Thunder Bay Parks Division

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Appendix C
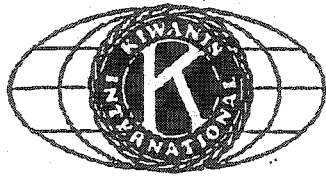
Beautify
Thunder Bay 2003

BEST CITY BLOCK NOMINATION FORM

The Beautify Thunder Bay 2003 competition is sponsored by the Kiwani Club of Westfort, to promote the beautification of our city and to encourage neighbourhood pride. You are encouraged to participate by nominating a block for an award — enter your own street, if you wish.

Judging will take place at the beginning of August, and will be based on initial visual impression, elements in the landscape, and maintenance.

The winning block will be treated to a neighbourhood barbecue, hosted by the Westfort Kiwanis. In addition, the City of Thunder Bay will erect a sign at each end of the block, designating it as this year's "Best City Block" in the Beautify Thunder Bay campaign.
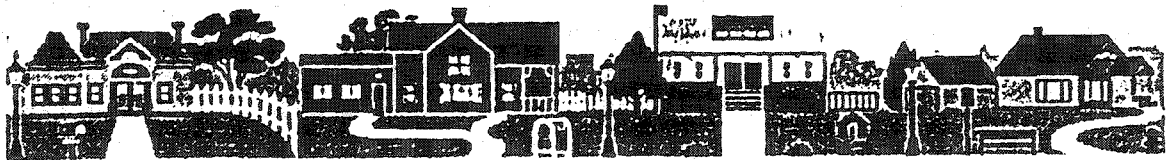
NOMINATED BLOCK:

_____

SUBMITTED BY: _____   _____
                    (name)   (phone)

DATE: _____

Mail your entries to:
Kiwanis Club of Westfort, Inc.
Beautify Thunder Bay 2003 Competition
P.O. Box 10007
Thunder Bay ON P7B 5W4

(Entries must be postmarked prior to July 31, 2003)

Appendix D

DATA ELEMENTS COLLECTION FORM FOR RESIDENTIAL/CONDOMINIUM PROPERTIES

PROPERTY ROLL NUMBER: [   ] ADDRESS:

( ) CURRENTLY A NON-OASYS VARIABLE   OASYS CODES   ( ) CURRENTLY A NON-OASYS VARIABLE   OASYS CODES

VARIABLE DESCRIPTION	ABUTS	PROXIMITY	ON SITE VARIABLES	
AIRPORT	A	A	CATCH BASIN	A
INDUSTRIAL	B	B	CUL-DE-SAC / COURT / DEAD END	B
COMMERCIAL	C	C	CORNER LOT	C
INSTITUTIONAL	D	D	EXCEPTIONALLY TREED (To be removed - use or recode to % Treed)	E
EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION	E	E	PREDOMINANT TOPOGRAPHY - LEVEL	F
FARM	F	F	PREDOMINANT TOPOGRAPHY - SLIGHT SLOPE	G
GOLF COURSE	G	G	PREDOMINANT TOPOGRAPHY - STEEP SLOPE	H
HYDRO CORRIDOR	H	H	PREDOMINANT TOPOGRAPHY - CLIFF	I
HIGHWAY (To be removed from OASYS - Select appropriate Traffic Pattern instead)		I	PREDOMINANT TOPOGRAPHY - LOW / WET	J
(TRAFFIC PATTERN - EXTREMELY HEAVY)	(8)	(8)	NO CURBS AND GUTTERS	K
(TRAFFIC PATTERN - HEAVY)	(9)	(9)	NO STREET LIGHTING	L
TRAFFIC PATTERN - MEDIUM	J		NO SIDEWALK ON STREET	M
TRAFFIC PATTERN - LIGHT	K		GRAVEL ROAD	O
ODOUR NUISANCE		J	PREDOMINANT VIEW - OBSTRUCTED	P
LANDFILL SITE - DUMP	L	L	PREDOMINANT VIEW - PANORAMIC	Q
MULTI-RESIDENTIAL	M	M	PREDOMINANT VIEW - LAKE	R
MASS TRANSIT - SUBWAY LINE / BUS STOP	N	N	ZONED FOR COMMERCIAL USE	S
SPORTS FIELD / PLAYGROUND	O	O	ZONED FOR INDUSTRIAL USE	T
PUBLIC WALKWAY	P		ZONED FOR MULTI-RES USE	U
CEMETERY	Q	Q	NONCONFORMING USE	V
RAILWAY	R	R	OVERALL QUALITY OF SITE = POOR	W
SUPERMAILBOX	S		OVERALL QUALITY OF SITE = FAIR	X
TRAILER PARK / CAMP / MOBILE HOME PARK	T	T	EASEMENT ON PROPERTY	(Y)
UTILITY BOX	U		OVERALL QUALITY OF SITE = GOOD	Z
GREEN SPACE	V	V	OVERALL QUALITY OF SITE = EXCELLENT	1
PLACE OF WORSHIP	W	W	POND ON PROPERTY	2
TRANSFORMER STATION	X	X	PROBLEM ACCESS	3
MARINA	Y	Y	(11% - 25% TREED)	(D)
PUBLIC DOCK / BOAT RAMP	Z	Z	(26% - 50% TREED)	(N)
RAVINE TYPE 1	1		(51% - 75% TREED)	(4)
RAVINE TYPE 2	2		(76% - 100% TREED)	(5)
RAVINE TYPE 3	3		(11% - 25% SWAMP)	(6)
NUISANCE 1:	4	1	(26% - 50% SWAMP)	(7)
NUISANCE 2:	5	2	(51% - 75% SWAMP)	(8)
PREMIUM 1:	6	3	(76% - 100% SWAMP)	(9)
PREMIUM 2:	7	4	HYDRO	
			NO	N
			YES	Y

ACCESS			WATER	
NO ACCESS - LANDLOCKED		N	MUNICIPAL	M
PRIVATE ROAD ACCESS ONLY		O	PRIVATE WELL	W
RIGHT-OF-WAY ACCESS ONLY		R	SHARED WELL	S
SUMMER OR SEASONAL ACCESS ONLY		S	LAKE OR RIVER	L
WATER ACCESS ONLY		W	NONE - POTENTIAL TO CONNECT TO / INSTALL ONE OF THE ABOVE	P
YEAR ROUND ACCESS		blank (Y)	NONE AVAILABLE (rare)	N

Region Defined Variables			Region Defined Variables	
Point of Land (Peninsula/Finger Shape)			Restricted Use Zoning on Land (EP, NS etc)	
Triangle Shape Lot (Comes to a Point)			Restricted Use Zoning on Water Frontage (EP, NS etc)	
Multiple Frontages (On different Body of Water)			Shared Island (2 Surveryed Lots on an Island)	
Double Frontage (On Same Body of Water)			Small Subdivided Island (3 to 8 Lots on Island)	

COMMENTS:

EMPLOYEE:

APPENDIX - C
M:\HOME\COMMON\FIELD_~1\FLDSHEET.WK4

Markus Christian Lahtinen

Appendix D cont'd

INFORMATION AS OF DATE OF SALE:
INFORMATION FOR MAINTENANCE:

( )CURRENTLY A NON-OASYS VARIABLE	OASYS CODES	( )CURRENTLY A NON-OASYS VARIABLE	OASYS CODES
WATERFRONT VARIABLES		**PRIMARY STRUCTURE VARIABLES**	
WATERFRONT - LAKE	A	PREMIUM ROOF FINISH - SHAKES, CLAY TILE ,ETC.	A
WATERFRONT - RIVER / OTHER NATURAL WATERCOURSE	B	BASEMENT WALKOUT	B
(WATERFRONT - SWAMP / MARSH)	(5)	CONCRETE SLAB FOUNDATION	C
WATERFRONT - CHANNEL / CANAL	1	OVERBUILT FOR NEIGHBOURHOOD	D
PREDOMINANT SHORELINE - SANDY	C	UNDERBUILT FOR NEIGHBOURHOOD	E
PREDOMINANT SHORELINE - ROCKY	D	END UNIT	F
PREDOMINANT SHORELINE - GRAVEL	E	CORNER UNIT	G
PREDOMINANT SHORELINE - WEEDY / ALGAE	F	PENTHOUSE UNIT	H
PREDOMINANT SHORELINE - SHALLOW	G	UNIT ON TOP FLOOR	I
PREDOMINANT SHORELINE - DEEP	H	GROUND FLOOR UNIT WITH WALKOUT	J
INDIRECT WATERFRONT - Road Separates (Ownership of w/front)	I	GROUND FLOOR UNIT WITHOUT WALKOUT	K
INDIRECT WATERFRONT- R.O.W. Access To Waterfront	J	OPEN BALCONY	L
INDIRECT WATERFRONT - No Ownership of Waterfront	K	MORE THAN ONE OPEN BALCONY	M
(ROAD DIVIDES LOT BEHIND STRUCTURE)	(4)	ENCLOSED BALCONY	N
PREDOMINANT EXPOSURE - NORTH	L	BOATSLIP	O
PREDOMINANT EXPOSURE - SOUTH	M	UNIT ABUTS ELEVATOR	P
PREDOMINANT EXPOSURE - EAST	N	UNIT ABUTS STAIRS	Q
PREDOMINANT EXPOSURE - WEST	O	UNIT ABUTS GARBAGE CHUTE	R
SHORELINE EROSION	P	STRUCTURE CLOSE TO ROAD	S
RETAINING WALL / GABIAN CAGES	Q	ONE BEDROOM BED & BREAKFAST	T
LANDSCAPING - WALKWAYS / STAIRS TO SHORE	R	TWO BEDROOM BED & BREAKFAST	U
LANDSCAPING - TERRACING	S	THREE BEDROOM BED & BREAKFAST	V
PERMANENT DOCKING	T	FOUR BEDROOM BED & BREAKFAST	W
DEEDED ACCESS to COMMUNITY BEACH / PARK	U	REAR UNIT	X
LEASED LAND	V	(INFILL)	(Y)
SINGLE OWNER ISLAND	W		
SUBDIVIDED ISLAND	X		
2ND TIER, YEAR ROUND RESIDENCE	Y	**DESIGN TYPE**	
BEACH	Z	A-FRAME	A
(FLOODPLAIN - RESTRICTED)	(2)	CENTURY	B
(FLOODPLAIN - DEVELOPABLE)	(3)	DESIGNATED / HERITAGE	C
		LOG	D
		PRE-FABRICATED / MODULAR	E
		R-2000	F
SANITARY		RAISED BUNGALOW	G
MUNICIPAL	M	TIMBER FRAME (POST & BEAM)	I
SEPTIC BED	S	WARTIME	J
HOLDING TANK	H	PANABODE STYLE (SMALL LOG)	K
NONE	N	QUADROPLEX - 4 Individual Units	L
DRIVEWAY		(STONE)	(M)
LICENSED OR ON-STREET PARKING	O	**CONDOMINIUM UNIT**	
MUTUAL OR SHARED DRIVEWAY	M	FLOOR LEVEL	
NO PARKING AVAILABLE	N	NUMBER OF EXTRA PARKING SPACES	
(REAR LANEWAY)	(R)	NUMBER OF EXTRA STANDARD STORAGE LOCKERS	
SEPARATE OR PRIVATE DRIVEWAY (Includes lawn)	S	NUMBER OF EXTRA OVERSIZE STORAGE LOCKERS	
Region Defined Variables		**Region Defined Variables**	
Abuts Water Lot (No Ownership)		Bay Influence (Property Located in a Bay)	
Abuts Water Lot (Owner has Title)		Non Buildable Lot (By-Law Restriction)	
Minimum Depth (Less than 200')		Large Subdivided Island (+8 Lots on an Island)	
Average Depth (Between 200' - 500')		Beach on Single Owner or Shared Island	

(PRINT)

DATE: / /
(YY   MM   DD)

Last Revised Date: MAY 18/99

Markus Christian Lahtinen

Appendix E

Scale 2
NEGLECT OF
CHILD'S BASIC PHYSICAL NEEDS

Child and Family Services Act References

37(2)

A child is in need of protection where:

(a)   The child has suffered physical harm, inflicted by the person having charge of the child or caused by or resulting from that person's,

    (i)   failure to adequately care for, provide for, supervise or protect the child, or

    (ii)   pattern of neglect in caring for, providing for, supervising or protecting the child

(b)   there is a risk that the child is likely to suffer physical harm inflicted by the person having charge of the child or caused by or resulting from that person's,

    (i)   failure to adequately care for, provide for, supervise or protect the child, or

    (ii)   pattern of neglect in caring for, providing for, supervising or protecting the child.

Interpretation

Neglect of a child's basic physical needs means the child's caregiver either deliberately or through a lack of knowledge and/or a lack of judgement and/or a lack of motivation (Cantwell, 1980) fails to provide the child with adequate food, shelter, clothing and safety (Tower, 1996). As a result of the omission of care or pattern of omission of care by the person having charge of the child, the child experiences injury or harm or illness, or there is a risk that the child is likely to be injured or harmed or become ill in one or more of these areas.

For situations where the child has been inadequately cared for as a result of deliberate action by the caregiver to punish the child, see Section 1 Scale 2 "Cruel/Inappropriate Treatment".

For situations where neglect of child's basic physical needs has not yet become apparent yet the caregiver has a condition (eg. substance abuse or mental health problem) where the child is at risk of having basic physical needs neglected, see Section 5 "Caregiver Capacity". If indicators of neglect as described below are apparent in the child currently, score in this section.

For situations where the caregiver is not feeding the child, score under this Section: "Neglect of Child's Basic Physical Needs". For situations where the child cannot eat/feed due to a medical condition and the caregiver does not respond with appropriate medical treatment, score under Section 2, Scale 3, "Caregiver Response to Child's Physical Health".

Appendix F

Section 2 - Harm by Omission

Description of Neglect of Child's Basic Physical Needs

1) Extremely and Moderately Neglectful Conditions (may exist in one or more areas)

Nutrition examples
- *young infant is missing feedings or is regularly being given diluted formula*
- *infant is being breastfed and does not receive adequate nutrition from breast milk and/or supplements*
- *older child is missing several meals or is deprived of water*
- *almost no food is available in the home and child may have been seen scrounging for food*
- *child often takes food on own, but sometimes only nutritionally inadequate food in insufficient amounts*
- *the child who is unable to feed himself is not being provided with meals*
- *child is fed or is eating food not fit for human consumption (eg. non-food items, rotten food), or food which is not age appropriate (eg. alcoholic beverages)*

Personal Hygiene examples
- *child not bathed for lengthy periods & child emits strong body &/or mouth odour*
- *teeth encrusted with green or brown matter, hair is matted with dirt or feces or food*
- *soiled diapers are not changed for several hours*

Household Sanitation examples
- *carpet, tiles, walls, doors, bathroom fixtures are layered with encrusted dirt, debris, food wastes*
- *human or animal waste prominent*
- *dust and dirt are layered all over and accumulated in corners*
- *smell in home of urine/feces/spoilage*
- *trash & junk piled up & layered throughout floor so it is difficult to get around or creates a hazard to the child's safety*
- *dishes not washed, family eats off dirty dishes or doesn't use dishes*
- *perishable foods found spoiled, spoiled foods not discarded*
- *may be rodent infestation, creeping vermin untreated*
- *family sleeps on dirty mattresses or on linen black with dirt and soil*

Physical Living Condition examples
- *leaking gas from stove or heating unit, peeling lead-based paint, recent fire in living quarters or building, hot-water/steam leaks from radiators, exposed or broken electrical wires*
- *dangerous substances (e.g. chemicals) or dangerous objects (e.g. guns, weapons) stored in unlocked shelves or cabinets or area that is accessible to child*
- *no guards on open windows, broken or missing windows, unprotected stairways*
- *child does not have a place of residence or the family is experiencing acute shelter problems (e.g. no heat in winter). This may include a family living in non-traditional residence (e.g. living in tents, cars, underground garages).*

Clothing examples
- *child lacks many basic & essential items of clothes or apparel for the season (examples include: woolen clothes in summer or light cotton clothes in winter, no mitts or hat in winter, no or inappropriate footwear, such as sandals in winter) to protect child from the elements.*

Other Neglect examples
- *child not protected from the elements even though appropriate clothes are available (e.g. not wearing winter clothing; prolonged exposure to the sun)*
- *child not protected from dangerous animals in the home*
- *parent plays games with the child; plays tricks on the child or makes the child do things that put the child in danger of being hurt*

Appendix F cont'd

Section 2 - Scale 2: Neglect of Child's Basic Physical Needs

2) *Minimally Neglectful Conditions (may exist in one or more areas)*

Nutrition examples

* marginal nutrition -- meals sufficient but unbalanced, child generally getting enough food but meals occasionally skipped or child supplements diet out of home, young child gets own meals

Personal Hygiene examples

* child is very unclean to occasionally unclean (e.g. hair visibly dirty or uncombed), child may emit some body or mouth odour, soiled diapers are changed regularly

Household Sanitation examples

* walls, carpets, windows, doors are stained with dirt, floor rarely washed, home very dusty & cobwebs frequent in house, stale, stuffy odours, home not picked up, things piled all over, untidy
* no piles of trash but garbage not kept in proper receptacle
* dirty dishes lay around & washed at night or next day, groceries & uneaten food lay around but generally perishable foods are refrigerated
* some creeping vermin, appearing mainly at night (no rats)

Physical Living Condition examples

* some hazardous conditions are in the home but they are not significant to child's basic needs (e.g. broken windows are not fixed but are covered up, holes in wall are not a risk to child)

Clothing examples

* while child is missing essential clothing items child manages by adapting clothes they have (e.g. wears extra sweaters or wears clothes not designed for the setting for which they are worn)

Other Neglect examples

* caregiver does not demonstrate consistently good judgement around dressing and playing with the child, but usually makes satisfactory attempts

3) *No Neglectful Conditions*

Nutrition examples

* child provided with regular and ample meals that usually meet basic nutritional requirements

Personal Hygiene examples

* child washes regularly, hair is clean & combed, clothes are changed regularly, soiled diapers are changed promptly

Household Sanitation examples

* clean & orderly house, carpet & tile swept & washed as needed, regular dusting, pleasant to neutral odours, dishes washed or put in sink after meals, groceries properly stored, daily living articles may be around (e.g. books, newspapers, toys)

Physical Living Condition examples

* there are no obvious hazardous conditions in the home, home is safe for child

Clothing examples

* child has all essential clothing & enough changes to be neat and clean, clothes may not be new but are in good condition and fit adequately, clothes are consistent with season & weather conditions

Other Neglect examples

* caregiver demonstrates consistently good judgement around the basic care needs of the child

Scale 3
CAREGIVER WITH PROBLEM

Child and Family Services Act References

37(2)

A child is in need of protection where:

(b) there is a risk that the child is likely to suffer physical harm inflicted by the person having charge of the child or caused by or resulting from that person's,

(i) failure to adequately care for, provide for, supervise or protect the child, or

(ii) pattern of neglect in caring for, providing for, supervising or protecting the child.

(c) the child has been sexually molested or sexually exploited, by the person having charge of the child or by another person where the person having charge of the child knows or should know of the possibility of sexual molestation or sexual exploitation and fails to protect the child;

(d) there is a risk that the child is likely to be sexually molested or sexually exploited as described in clause (c);

(f) the child has suffered emotional harm, demonstrated by serious,
  (i) anxiety,
  (ii) depression,
  (iii) withdrawal,
  (iv) self-destructive or aggressive behaviour, or
  (v) delayed development
and there are reasonable grounds to believe that the emotional harm suffered by the child results from the actions, failure to act, or pattern of neglect on the part of the child's parent or the person having charge of the child.

(f.1) the child has suffered emotional harm of the kind described in subclause (f) (i),)(ii), (iii), (iv), or (v) and the child's parent or the person having charge of the child does not provide, or refuses or is unavailable or unable to consent to, services or treatment to remedy or alleviate the harm;

(g) there is a risk that the child is likely to suffer emotional harm of the kind described in subclause (f) (i), (ii), (iii), (iv), or (v) resulting from the actions, failure to act, or pattern of neglect on the part of the child's parent or the person having charge of the child.

(g.1) there is a risk that the child is likely to suffer emotional harm of the kind described in subclause (f) (i), (ii), (iii), (iv), or (v) and the child's parent or the person having charge of the child does not provide, or refuses or is unavailable or unable to consent to, services or treatment to prevent the harm.

(l) the child's parent is unable to care for the child and the child is brought before the court with the parent's consent and, where the child is twelve years of age or older, with the child's consent, to be dealt with under this Part.

Interpretation

Specific parental characteristics such as physical and/or mental and/or behavioural factors can impair a parent's abilities to provide appropriate and adequate care of the child and/or place the child at risk for maltreatment (Belsky, 1993). For example, as a result of the parent experiencing symptoms of affective, somatic or behavioural distress, the parent may be incarcerated, institutionalized, a substance abuser, exhibiting a personality disorder or psychiatric disturbances (Kolko, 1996).

Even though the caregiver may demonstrate one of these conditions in many situations, only score in this section if the child is not eligible to receive intervention for any other reason previously outlined in the Eligibility Spectrum.

Cases to be opened in anticipation of the birth of a child, where the newborn would be at immediate risk because of the caregiver's problem must be rated in Section 10 - K as a non-protection case until the birth when a protection case could be rated in section 1-5 as applicable.