



Think tankers David and Elizabeth Dodson Gray save energy by cogitating at home.

relationships have become the norm, with neither partner much interested in housework. Inevitably, that means houses and apartments will shrink. And no room is likely to undergo more changes than the bedroom.

For one thing, designers say, reserving one room solely for sleep will increasingly be regarded as a luxury. There may also be no place for such niceties as a living room or family room. "Their roles will be assumed by the bedroom," says John Mascheroni, a New York furniture designer. And if a sizable share of the work force does become home-centered—linked to their bosses electronically—the bedroom may have to triple as an office.

Obviously, new ideas in furnishing are in order. Mascheroni, who has seen the past and concluded that it sometimes works, advises designers to "pay closer attention to the super-efficient designs of sailboat cabins."

One big problem is where to store the bed. Since no one has yet come up with a truly supportive foldable innerspring, the best bet for a good night's sleep will be a standard mattress and box spring stored vertically—what folks used to call a Murphy bed. Other "new" concepts: trundle beds that collapse under sofas, and modular urethane units that are beds by night and tables, couches and chairs by day.

The more dour researchers worry that all this activity might undermine one of the more traditional uses of the

bedroom. "If everything occurs in one place, then all activities are compromised," says Jeffrey Goldfarb of New York's New School for Social Research. A main victim, Goldfarb warns, could be lovemaking.

## A MOM AND POP THINK TANK

Alvin Toffler's heralded "electronic cottage" of the future exists today in suburban Wellesley, Massachusetts, at the duplex home of two former parish ministers, David and Elizabeth Dodson Gray. The residence doubles as the Bolton Institute for a Sustainable Future, an energy- and environment-conscious research organization that is run and staffed entirely by the Grays.

"We find we can live satisfactorily complex lives in the congenial surroundings of home," says David. "And our lives are complex," adds Elizabeth. If their cluttered living-room office is any indication, she's right. A pile of outgoing newsletters is spread over the dinner table; books—some written by Elizabeth and David—spill across the shelves beyond; and countless brochures, memos, pamphlets and reports are stashed in a jumble along the walls.

The Grays find that their telephone keeps them in touch with the world beyond their living room. "Technology can give you useful

leverage," says David. He uses a friend's word processor to typeset their Institute mailers. What's more, by working at home they can enjoy their daily "harvest" of passive-solar energy through the panel windows facing the lawn. They can also take breaks to nibble David's grilled cheese-and-alfalfa-sprout sandwiches, and to bang out Methodist hymns on the piano.

Besides writing and speaking about the more abstract environmental issues of the future, the Grays also encourage support groups for energy-wasting suburbanites who, like over-eaters, would like to reduce their consumption. The couple describe their experiences with thermal underwear, humidifying their house by drying sheets over the bannister, becoming lacto-vegetarians and showering only every other day. And working at home. "A lot of people have real emotional problems with it," admits Elizabeth. But she's still convinced theirs is the way of the future. "If anything," David claims, "we're not home enough!"

## ON THE HORIZON

- **Lazy lawns.** The 3M Corporation of St. Paul, Minnesota, has developed Embark, a product that is sprayed on grass in the spring, slowing down its growth so much, the company says, that you can mow your lawn as infrequently as twice a year. Right now Embark is available only to commercial users, such as golf-course caretakers.

- **A telephone number for life.** The number, says Susan Aames of Pacific Telephone, would accompany you wherever you moved, much like your Social Security number.

- **People who will wait for you.** And charge \$10 an hour for standing in grocery, gas and movie lines. The service is being provided in Washington State by an innovative new firm called Chores Truly.

- **Contraceptive tea.** Biochemist and Chinese herbalist Y. C. Kong of Chinese University in Hong Kong believes he has found an herb that, when brewed and drunk as a tea the morning after, wards off pregnancy. His research on the herb is funded by a \$300,000 grant from the World Health Organization. ■