



## *Martha Stewart Roundtable*

# **Martha Stewart's Living Landscapes**

**Matthew Gantert Hyland**

If you happen to be *living la vida Martha*, your passion for good living cannot be confined just to the house. You must also refine your private grounds—the flower garden, the kitchen garden, the lawn, the entire homelot. This is the imperative of Stewartism—improvement through the tradition of gentility—that domestic advisor Martha Stewart prescribes and performs. Judging by the impressive visibility Stewart has achieved in the popular media, the cultural practices historically known as gentility persist in the late-twentieth century—and, into the twenty-first.

This paper analyzes the landscaped, cultivated world of Martha Stewart as a subject of garden history and the material culture studies of consumerism—the demand for things. Examining Martha Stewart against a backdrop of the historical record and the consumer revolution demonstrates her tendencies of appropriation. Tracing Martha along the contours of prescriptive gardening, domestic literature (see Sarah Leavitt's essay in this roundtable), and the way her garden grows provides a suggestive account of her campaign and goals for the latest mode in commodification—both things and self for sale. In addition, this essay is motivated by a concern for the spatial dimensions, in this case the homelot, of Stewartism as a cultural production. Flowers, seeds, lawns, shrubs, and tools, among other objects, signify meaning in Martha's world and the contemporary moment. Material culture studies demand archaeological thinking: following form through time and space. Such a methodology guides this essay about Martha.

Gentility, especially refinement of property, emerged in the Italian Renaissance. So it is that Martha stands in a long line of apostles of taste and good living who exhort people with similar material aspirations to polish all aspects of their circadian habits—to dazzle one another with the complexity and high level of finish embedded in their material assemblages. Thus, Martha is also a vector of the consumer revolution and a benchmark of class standing. She has added a new strain of commodification to an old tradition of improving one's grounds to signify one's improved life.

As a lifestyle guru and social worker for consumerism Martha Stewart coaches the ambitious gardener toward success with directions (found in "The Guide" at the back of her magazine *Martha Stewart Living*) to the latest botanical materials and ideas. A goodly portion of these may be purchased through her own retail operation, "Martha by Mail," which provides the essential gardening kit. The kit includes all the requisite accouterments for a day of refined gardening: a sensible, canvas tool bag, the same bag with a full array of instruments—pruning shears, forged-steel cultivator and trowel, jute twine, aluminum garden labels, a permanent marker, and fleece-lined cotton gloves with protective nitrile-coated fingers and palms, a hand-care kit, a professional and a smaller-sized hiker's plant press for artistic botanizing, and, finally, a sun-impression-making kit of light-sensitive blueprint paper. In addition, she points the way to nurseries and plant suppliers as well as to extra-Martha purveyors of specialty garden tools and ornaments. She has achieved a presence on the seed racks of Kmart through a licensing agreement with Burpee; she has her own line of seeds elegantly packaged. (See Shirley Wajda's essay on Kmartha in this roundtable.) She encourages large orders of the latest heirloom and exotic seed varieties. She revels in amassing catalogs to fuel her backyard fantasy with botanical fodder. Hers is the manner of gardening that has stimulated a boom in the gardening market which grew from \$6 billion in sales in 1989 to \$22 billion in 1993—a market that she profits from as well. When Martha recommends hydrangeas, for instance, nurseries across the country cannot keep them in stock.<sup>1</sup> The mind of the imperial plant collector and botanist is alive and well in her world by way of features on the latest acquisitions of foreign plants. For example, the June 1999 edition of *Martha Stewart Living* showcased a California gardener who collected Mexican plants for his estate, chosen "for its quiet and unspoiled agrarian charm."<sup>2</sup> This is celebrity gardening for the new consumer economy, characterized by internet media advisers for the click-and-downloaded garden and homelot with guaranteed success, a garden that will turn out right the first time like a Betty Crocker cake. Through such media means Martha Stewart has shrewdly positioned herself as a brand name.

Although the bulk of Martha's world is presented via the virtual realm of broadcast, narrowcast, internet, and magazine media, there is a real Martha Stewart landscape, a proving ground that demonstrates the role of outdoor space in her commodification of refinement. Martha steeped her homelot at Turkey

Hill, in Westport, Connecticut, in refinement: first in the ordered rows of flowers and rose bushes, the smoothness of her bowling green (or turf for lawn sports), and a chicken coop which she refers to as a *palais des poulets*, then in the rigidity of her geometric *parterres* and the grid pattern of her orchards. All restate her efforts to smooth out what used to be a coarse, six-acre, onion farm into a neo-picturesque landscape suitable for television and other mass media productions.

Martha dreamed of this bucolic idyll from the grim urban landscape of Manhattan where she lived while working as a stockbroker in the 1970s. Before she envisioned a catering business in Connecticut, she coveted the persistent fantasy of pastoral living in the American middle landscape. Turkey Hill became her Graceland: massively real, permanent, and visible proof of Elvoid success. Attaining that elusive prize, the American dream was reified in a house, a house to match the ambition. Just as Gladys Presley enjoyed keeping house at Graceland, Martha's mom Martha Kostyra enjoys visiting to film TV specials and telling friends about her daughter's big white mansion in Connecticut. With Turkey Hill as the stage for her elegant dinners and pleasurable, leisurely horticulture, Martha Stewart's fantasy of petite farm life, attended by suburban Connecticut levees and estate sales, and then leading up to nationwide exposure of her quotidian minutia, took shape—by the force of her will and her husband's connections in the publishing industry. She had fulfilled the material aspirations of her father and the dreams of twentieth-century American immigrants: independent living in a manor on the hill.

Martha shaped Turkey Hill into a symbol of refinement—and then some. Although the surface effect of her estate was refined, the intensity of Martha's aesthetic demands that the means to that end show refinement too. Determined not to be a woman of superficial taste, she overcompensated by refining her world right down to its roots. Not satisfied with the unpredictable visitations of local wild bees, her garden's pollination needs are served by a colony of its own bees housed in an apiary. Keeping her own bees is indexical of her efforts toward self-sufficiency as well as her wish to display specialized knowledge—a theme in her cultural practice. The tools of her garden reflect the intensity of her refinement. Her dibber, a polished and round handled bulb-planting tool, makes a smooth hole in perfectly tilled soil. And when ploughing her furrows, her delicate heart-shaped hoe leaves crisp trenches that are neatly backfilled by turning the hoe blade on the bias. According to Martha, all gardeners need two greenhouses as a necessity, not a luxury. Admitting that she has “always dreamed of having lots of greenhouses,” she described hers as “my own little crystal palace,” a reference to the grand conservatories at European botanic gardens.<sup>3</sup> As for the homelot, even the wood must be stacked with “sculptural possibilities” in mind.<sup>4</sup>

When cultivating tomatoes she requires latex gloves. How odd, especially when compared to the techniques of Rebecca Kolls, another TV gardener. While

Martha's rhythm, pacing, and movement in the garden is rigid, poised, and posed, Rebecca Kolls acts lively on her show "Rebecca's Garden." While Martha wears latex gloves to protect her dainty hands from soil-borne pathogens, a bare-handed Rebecca Kolls throws clumps of composted cow manure into her garden beds and finishes off every show with her slogan: "Remember to get out there and keep those hands dirty." Compared to Rebecca, Martha moves like a 1950s car show model revolving on a podium, and Martha's garden features and style reinforce her rigid and formal aesthetic. Discipline reigns: from staked peonies to trellised peas and meticulously pruned fruit trees no ragged edges or unmanaged growth spoil Turkey Hill.

All of the pieces and features of her homelot have been arranged into a conventional vista derived from the visual codes of the British gardenesque landscaping tradition (improving nature through art): formal plantings organized in grid or loose geometric form close to the house, a middle ground of plantings in drifts and masses of color, and wilderness in the distance. The planting beds and orchards at Turkey Hill demonstrate Martha's emphasis on horticulture—the defining element of the gardenesque style. She faithfully composed these grounds accordingly, except for the requisite water view. She claims to have a view of Long Island Sound, but such a prospect would be conceivable only if looking out from an attic window between louvers, not from the ground level of the garden, as this British tradition demanded.

What Martha has at Turkey Hill, in spite of her claims of being inspired by Giverny gardens in France or gardenesque landscape design in Great Britain, is a derivative plot of ground governed by a commercially successful choice of taste in gardening: a brief parody of immense European pleasure gardens. Yet, her decision to garden in this mode demonstrates her shrewd ability to avoid making critical errors in matters of taste. By staying within the contours of traditional gardening, the imitative character of her method becomes evident.

The order and regularity in her formal garden carried over to her life—as she displays it in the monthly calendar of *Martha Stewart Living*. For this public account of her monthly activity she has borrowed a page from Benjamin Franklin's *Autobiography* and has set her own life to a grid, but not for the attainment of rational and virtuous republican citizenship, instead for visible progress toward personal refinement through the proper accumulation of tasteful goods.<sup>5</sup> Martha's cultural program of affluence and influence through material acquisition never overtly suggests a political dimension, but her faith in the certain happiness attending all good things reveals her vision of national welfare. She has a goods message. For example, in defending her Kmart contract against criticism of brand confusion, Martha declared that the common herd should have access to good things: "Why not take good messages to less fortunate people?"<sup>6</sup> (One wonders what Kmart executives think of their premier spokesperson characterizing their shoppers as less fortunate.) On the other hand, there are to be no sumptuary laws in Martha's vision of the world—a world

which would be a better place only if people redecorated with her paints from Sherwin-Williams and spruced up their yards with her Kmart line of garden tools. Furthermore, the home has long been the locus of republican virtues and instruction in civic decorum in the United States: for example, the cult of domesticity and the paradigm of republican motherhood were political ideologies in the guise of domesticity, but both were considered key to the national welfare. From this history she draws the authority for her prescriptions and projects. Yet she does not quite fit the historical image of “angel in the home.” “Domestic drill sergeant” may be more like it.

Martha's prescriptions for homelot refinement do resemble close order drill. Martha's 1991 gardening book, *Martha Stewart's Gardening*,<sup>7</sup> shares the spirit of Bernard M'Mahon's *The American Gardener's Calendar*, which featured, among other advice for improving the state of gardening in the Union, numerous projects for the gentle gardener such as building a pea rod (a support structure), hot bed frames and lights, and greenhouses. M'Mahon also described the process of forcing early flowers, a favorite activity of Martha's.<sup>8</sup> M'Mahon, like Martha, prescribed tasks for all seasons and included plans for building garden structures such as greenhouses. In Stewartesque tone, he detailed the steps of a “hot bed, frames and lights” project. In general, he imagined himself inspiring the United States gentry “which has not yet made that rapid progress in Gardening, ornamental planting, and fanciful rural designs, which might naturally be expected from an intelligent, happy, and independent people, possessed so universally of landed property, unoppressed by taxation or tithes, and blessed with consequent comfort and affluence.”<sup>9</sup> *Martha Stewart's Gardening* also resembles Thomas Jefferson's *Garden Book*,<sup>10</sup> with its close attention paid to garden cycles, timing, and plant varieties. They share a similar trait—perfect confidence in that all they do is worthy of documentation and public emulation. Both Jefferson and Stewart relentlessly recorded all of their thoughts. Martha's work, however, is less focused on improving American horticulture, political economy, or landscape design: “What I'm writing about,” Martha wrote, “is a life style and a catalog of material I've paid attention to for a long time. I want my books to be a standard—a standard of perfection from which people can pull ideas.”<sup>11</sup> Her gardening book became a catalog of the seasonal round at Turkey Hill and shares the same tone of confidence in gardening found in Jefferson's memorandum book.

Martha's homelot landscape stands as an example of a suburbanized descendant of the villa and the Frenchified *ferme ornée*—that ornamental and pleasurable, yet practical, working farm that was Americanized in the eighteenth century at Mount Vernon, Montpelier, and Monticello, to name a few examples.<sup>12</sup> Minus the slaves, Turkey Hill adopted the form and content of their estates: the sovereign gaze, curvilinear plans, shrubs, a greensward, and water views. These were the landscapes of George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, and James Madison—landscapes meant to preserve and solidify agrarian virtue in the early

American republic. Indeed, James Monroe recognized the signifying power of a well-kept homelot. For instance, in the midst of building his Albemarle County, Virginia, home he invited James Madison to visit, but he was forced to apologize in advance: "Our house is unfinished in all respects, the yard in confusion, & ca, but you shall have a warm chamber & be made as comfortable as we can make you."<sup>13</sup> The homelot signified social standing and marked class affiliation, then as now. Like those founding fathers, Martha has followed the principles of British landscape gardeners such as Batty Langley and Lancelot "Capability" Brown.

When the Stewarts occupied Turkey Hill their gardening style and arrangement parodied the spirit of republican self-sufficiency which Madison and Jefferson had in mind as the bedrock of their idealized agrarian republic. The first time a reporter from *The New York Times* visited Turkey Hill in 1982 she was struck by the early American republican pastoral idyll the Stewarts had recreated: "Two barns, an apiary from which the Stewarts have learned to make their own honey, half an acre of vegetable gardens, flower gardens and orchards, chickens, sheep and turkeys, all enhance the sense of natural bounty and wholesome foods that are aspects of the Stewart life style and catering style. The latest addition to the property is a 6-by-6-foot cedar shingle smokehouse."<sup>14</sup> Before long, Martha had commodified that style and packaged it for the mass market in her book *Entertaining*.

As for women gardeners in the historical record, an antecedent for Martha as a female garden adviser exists in Margaret Tilghman Carroll of Mount Clare, Maryland. She built up a considerable garden in the eighteenth century which drew the attention of George Washington who inquired about her orangery when he sought plans for one of his own at Mount Vernon.<sup>15</sup> Martha's treatise on gardening style vaguely echoes the patrician restraint of British garden designer Gertrude Jekyll; however, the common ground that they share is narrow. They both claimed to represent tasteful plantings of the best sort and wrote volumes on the refined aspects of their daily lives, but Jekyll would have disavowed any comparison to Martha who is ever ready to wring a garden idea into a commodity form. Jekyll, a woman of independent means, designed gardens without a profit motive. Her garden designs were executed mainly for friends, in particular architect Sir Edwin Lutyens.<sup>16</sup> She operated a small-scale commercial nursery, but its purpose was to support her designs, not turn a profit.<sup>17</sup> Furthermore, Jekyll's aesthetic was predicated on singular craftsmanship antithetical to machine-made objects, such as Martha's line of green glass collectables. Such items held no "vigorous vitality and individual interest" to Jekyll.<sup>18</sup>

Most importantly, Jekyll never strove for the celebrity status Martha has achieved. Jekyll once wrote, "May I go one step further and say that, while it is always pleasant to hear from or to see old friends. . . I venture to plead with my kind and numerous, though frequently unknown friends, that I may be allowed to retain a somewhat larger measure of peace and privacy."<sup>19</sup> Quite to the con-

trary, Martha has turned her whole world inside out to public scrutiny, particularly when she is thinking about what to do in the garden. Martha models the media star phenomenon based on ubiquitous public visibility and incessant commodification. Constant public exposure has turned her into an emblem of refinement and domesticity.

Martha's version of the picturesque landscape is not necessarily shared by others. For example, where Martha has tried to follow the example of Capability Brown, who rearranged vast landscapes on British estates to achieve naturalistic settings, she has been constrained by neighbors unappreciative of her encroachments. At her second house in East Hampton, New York (formerly the Gordon Bunshaft residence on Georgica Pond), her Capability Brown-style of landscaping and drastic tree reorganization to improve her view of the pond landed her in the State Supreme Court of Appeals.<sup>20</sup> She justified this landscape gardening project as an attempt to re-establish native wetland vegetation, but the intention was more toward improving the grounds and bringing her art of gardening to the pond's edge.

Martha overtly praises this historic, English aesthetic, admitting that she has collected garden ideas from her trips to Great Britain: "It has long been my habit to go to England once a year for a gardening holiday. . . . It was a visit to an English garden that inspired me to create my long perennial borders."<sup>21</sup> In 1998 Martha broadcast a television segment to the United States from the Chelsea Flower Show via "CBS This Morning." She showcased her appreciation of the English landscape gardening aesthetic by touring Kew Gardens. Therein, Martha gloried in the "majestic" gardens and announced her intention to gather new ideas for her garden at Turkey Hill.<sup>22</sup> This Euro-tropism in Martha's garden is consistent with other historical forms of genteel culture that look outside of the United States, particularly to Great Britain, for validation.<sup>23</sup>

Martha has implemented and exploited the genteel aspect in gardening for her own cultural program—a program that also clearly echoes the nineteenth-century exhortatory texts of Andrew Jackson Downing, Frank Jessup Scott, and John Claudius Loudon in their essential adherence to "polished curvatures and undulations."<sup>24</sup> For instance, we can find in the pages of Martha Stewart's many texts<sup>25</sup> exactly what Downing hoped the genteel gardener would find in his own: "From the inspection of plans like these," Downing wrote, "the tyro may learn something of the manner of arranging plantations."<sup>26</sup> Like Martha today, Frank Jessup Scott intended "to aid the family of moderate income, who knew little of the arts of decorative gardening, to beautify their homes." In fact, Scott beat Martha to her signature term "good things" in 1870. Martha's trademark restrained informality in gardening comes on the heels of Scott's 1870 prescription for gardeners who may be inclined to plant in "the common mode of cluttering the yard so full of good things that, like an overloaded table, it lessens the appetite it is intended to gratify."<sup>27</sup> (Amy Bentley recognized a parallel aesthetic change in Martha's food styling for photographs in *Martha Stewart Living*.)

Of all these men Martha's refined gardening campaign most closely resembles Loudon's. Known for his naturalesque landscape designs, Loudon became an energetic popularizer of refined gardening through the media as Martha has. His numerous books, encyclopedias, and *The Gardener's Magazine*, started in 1826, secured his reputation. In his 1838 *The Suburban Gardener and Villa Companion* Loudon laid out a plan for nineteenth-century homeowners, and eventually Martha Stewart, to become tasteful and critical of homes and grounds: "How great a source of enjoyment this is, and how great an interest it enables its possessor to take in suburban scenery, in landscape and in architecture, generally; or in short, wherever he sees a house or a tree; those only can know who have gone through the necessary preparation."<sup>28</sup> Martha took this challenge.

She followed Loudon's cues as an advisor on all manner of gardening and architecture, in particular his general recommendation that new homeowners emulate the designs of elite landscapes, as well as upper class rural affairs and estate management. In one instance, however, she strayed from his prescriptions. In *The Suburban Gardener and Villa Companion*, Loudon offered recommendations for the placement of a museum as a conversation piece within the home. Recently Martha installed display cases filled with her collection of bugs, desiccated shark carcasses, and birds in her villa on Lily Pond Lane in East Hampton, Long Island, New York. Yet she did not heed his advice about keeping the collections of animals and insects in a building outside of the villa to prevent the introduction of their noisome odors. Instead, they are displayed in a foyer adjacent to bathrooms that are opened to the public when Martha holds fund-raisers at the estate.<sup>29</sup>

As it was for Loudon, nothing escapes Martha's notice. Both advisors have dedicated their attention to the most basic elements of domestic economy: from chimneys to plumbing to the arrangement of trees in the landscape. Sarah Leavitt examined this topic elsewhere in this roundtable. While Martha is less forthright about the intentions of her cultural program, Loudon was explicit: "If we can succeed in rendering every lady her own landscape-gardener, which we are confident we can do, we shall have great hopes of effecting a general reform in the gardening taste, not only of this country, but of every other for which this work is calculated: and we intend it for circulation in the temperate climates of both hemispheres."<sup>30</sup> She has become, in Loudonesque term, a lady who is "her own landscape-gardener," and she wants to do the same to her audience.

Moreover, she is an heir of Loudon. Martha and Loudon shared an audience whose characteristics and peculiar demands have changed little over time—the hands-on leisure class, which Amy Bentley described in her essay in this roundtable. Specific to Martha and Loudon though, there was little promise to plan for a patron-client relationship; instead, their goal, as advisors, was to reach broadly the gentry through publishing to achieve recognition and profit. They had to become textual advisors, bound as they were to the changing streams of



cultural capital. Their authoritative writings put in the hands of the gentry information to act on as they saw fit. Like the nineteenth-century gentry, Martha's audience too likes the control of the creative process that would be denied to them by the presence of an overbearing, expensive architect, landscape architect, or interior decorator. Martha's business strategy developed out of the social conditions created by the newly rich gentry two hundred years ago and the solutions of Loudon, et al.

Martha's efforts to improve the tastes of Americans, from the color of paint on their walls to the feel and look of the soft furnishings they might buy at Kmart, have followed the lines of benevolent prescription drawn out years ago. (Shirley Wajda explored Martha's involvement in Kmart in this roundtable.) But Martha's interest in improving social relations has taken a different trajectory. For instance, Martha's world includes strained personal relations not only with her daughter and ex-husband, but also with a former gardener who sued her in a local Connecticut court for \$26,000 in unpaid overtime wages. This labor dispute demonstrated the extent to which a media superstar could be her own gardener. Renaldo Abreau formerly worked the landscape at Turkey Hill, but unlike the labors of Andrew Beckman who not only works her land now and also appears as a senior editor of gardening for *Martha Stewart Living*, he remained in the background. While Martha reaped the symbolic fruits of gardening, Abreau bore the drudgery plus did odd jobs around the house. In his 1996 suit Abreau claimed she overburdened him with non-garden chores such as washing the cars, walking the pets, and cleaning up their feces. Martha's lawyer successfully argued that Abreau was an agricultural worker who was not entitled to overtime pay according to the Federal Fair Labor Standards Act of 1939. Even though grounded in rural virtues, Martha's pastoral fantasy does not necessarily earn the hired help all the prizes of the leisure class. While she may appear to some as a mercenary grasswidow and taskmaster, she has redeemed herself in the eyes of her followers through her determined statements on taste and satisfying gardening projects.<sup>31</sup>

For Martha, however, garden projects further the commodification phenomenon of self as brand name. There is no limit to possible good things for sale as long as she and her staff can think them up. The secret of Martha's success and the function of gardening in her demimonde is a shrewd commodification of the pastoral ideal and the British tradition of landscaping. (Likewise, Amy Bentley identified the source of her success in the Yankee whiteness of her foodways.) Martha derives the placid demeanor which she brings to the video screen and the pages of her books from the pastoral ideal—fleeting moments of uninterrupted bliss. She writes of gardening at Turkey Hill as a therapeutic and pleasurable routine which she has turned into an admixture of harmony, beauty, and taste. She claims to have liberated herself from the frame of mind that dreads physical exertion outside. Even weeding is worthy of refinement. She weeds with grace and ease by working in easy, moist, loose soil with her pets and

headphones filled with delightful music.<sup>32</sup> As for gardening in general, she proclaims, “I no longer say, as I once did, ‘I have to work in the garden today.’ I say, with deep contentment, ‘I’m gardening today.’ I have truly reaped the bounty of the garden.”<sup>33</sup> The middle landscapes at Turkey Hill and her resort havens in Maine<sup>34</sup> and East Hampton, Long Island, offer the acolyte of Stewartism an attenuated courtly mode that satisfies the American gentry’s taste for the bucolic aesthetic and nostalgic rural virtues—with the added bonus of a boundless celebrity playing out the dramas of a material life on such a stage.

Leo Marx pointed out that “The mass media cater to a mawkish taste for retreat into the primitive or rural felicity exemplified by TV westerns and Norman Rockwell magazine covers.” Obviously, Martha Stewart qualifies for enumeration into his assessment. Her ubiquitous face and name have achieved an unprecedented visibility on Main Street and Wall Street. Equally, the bulk of images and project ideas in her world express, as Leo Marx wrote, a “yearning for a simpler, more harmonious style of life, and existence ‘closer to nature.’”<sup>35</sup> Martha has equated her own television programs to “Dallas” and “Dynasty,” prime-time soap operas of the 1980s that portrayed deluxe living and dramatic personal relations, because of their shared appeal of living luxuriously.<sup>36</sup> Martha Stewart’s gardening projects exaggerate such a fantasy, inchoate in the ideal house. It is a fantasy which strives to make every American home the happiest place on earth—just as Walt Disney imagined for his theme parks. In the same vein that Walt’s backyard, with a mini-scale locomotive and rolling stock, inspired him to realize Disneyland, Martha’s own homelot propels her chase of the commodified pastoral fantasy—a pursuit she expects everyone to join.<sup>37</sup>

This essay began by positioning *la vida loca de Martha Stewart* in the tradition of refinement via her cultural landscape. By widening the context of her homelot prescriptions to include historical agents and their landscapes, Martha appears in a light that reveals the roots of her privilege of prescription. Consideration of historic gardeners with ideas for a world farther afield than their own lots allows for a quick recognition of the derivative character of her cultural program. Gardening projects bring spatial context to this roundtable theorization and examination of Martha Stewart as an arbiter of taste, lifestyle expert, and domestic *dueña*; they bolster her authority, as they have for cultural advisors in the past. Refinements to the homelot, the garden and yard, further Martha’s reputation as social worker of consumerism and a success coach. The choice to garden a la Martha reflects a willingness to transfer the artifice of refinement onto the landscape as a more public and visible display of wealth, class, and improved taste. The response of Stewartism to home grounds relies on a selective reinvention of traditional techniques and ideas into individual practices of essential refinements that are facilitated by her merchandising and licensing contracts. Lastly, Martha Stewart’s landscape is a living commodification of a past British aesthetic and eternal pastoral idiom that sustains and validates her brand of gentility.

## Notes

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