

Methods of contextualising

Group statement

To comment on the tensions of hostile architecture, we exaggerated the use of architectural spikes. The object was made evident (altering its proportions), abundant, and added into new contexts. The images intended to contextualise the object as a practice that affects various communities and how we transit spaces. We wanted to highlight how architectural spikes are ineffective for unwanted behaviours and audiences. But rather, limit and detract the use of spaces.

The outcomes reflected different positions and approaches:

- ridicule spikes by abundant placing on pseudo-public spaces like playgrounds, establishments and home entrances, to make movement tedious. Hence highlight the restraining nature of architectural spikes, and how children, elders, and disabled communities are affected.

- Place hostile architecture in daily objects to provide a public opportunity to indirectly imagine the standpoint of homeless and question it's use.

- Appeal to behaviourism through spikes as elements that control and restrain behaviours like: use of stairs, movement in public transport and how many people can enter public spaces.

Further explorations where a result of us compromising aspects, rather than pushing all of our ideas forward. As a result, discussing the project's limitations was helpful to deepen how I could expand aspects of my position. For instance, explore the object's conflict of interests, by situating it in relationship to other contexts. Also, reflect on the reaction of audiences unaware of the context of the object, and develop spikes as traces of aggressive policies that define who has access to space and how. By setting a common lense, we could explore our individual positions in a way that embraces the tensions between them as tools to feedback, comment and reflect on each others perspectives.

Annotated bibliography

Our group's enquiry focused on how re-contextualising architectural spikes by transposing them from public to private spaces, will open questions about their use, and exclusive nature. This was explore by using posters as a medium to speculate on this exchange.

Hardworking goodlooking. Hardworking Goodlooking. Available at: <https://hardworkinggoodlooking.com/> (Accessed: February 17, 2023).

Some of the publications made by Harworking Goodlooking enhanced the possibilities of our project by becoming a reference on how to use graphic design and it's mediums to explore material qualities and real situations as well as communities. This also becomes possible when the mediums are also understood as elemental tools for education. However, at the same time it challenged how we executed and where able to achieve this.

For instance, Harworking Goodlooking's practice pushes forward publishing as an experimental medium. Having chosen posters as a method to explore our enquiry, we still have to continue iterating on the possibilities of this medium. How can we be effective in expressing our position of spikes as passive aggressive instruments without losing context? Hardworking goodlooking is successful at achieving this is by using vernacular tools in their publications.

This questions to our project since the final outcome felt slightly generic and out of context, heavily depending on being peered within real life hostile architect to make sense. As a consequence, in order to settle down the project and make it less speculative, the development can reference images, places and language from our local environments.

Room to breathe (2022) Migration Museum. Available at: <https://www.migrationmuseum.org/exhibition/room-to-breathe/> (Accessed: February 17, 2023).

Room to Breath had three relevant characteristics for developing our project further and shaping our positions. Firstly, the importance given to the use of space. It explores how spaces are constantly shaped on a personal level in order make them our own, thereby how we make use of them respond to individual experiences. This can be transposed to architectural spikes, where the object limits how we navigate public spaces and other people control the use these can provide. Consequently, reflecting on new shapes, dimensions and placing of spikes was a practice that pushed us to consider how alterations can affect or benefit communities, specific uses, and by doing so, what could does intentions be?

Furthermore, the framework used to explore migration was a journey through rooms. This narrative allowed the exhibition to have different devices to engage with audiences, and as a result obtain various responses. This was a good reference developing the project since, we focus our positions on decontextualising the spikes into private spaces to affect stages and moments that define daily living. As a result we transferred this framework by outlining three stages of living {bedroom, bathroom, and kitchen} to display how architectural spikes affect basic behaviours like sitting and resting.

Lastly, the exhibition used the feeling of being at home as a strategy to connect with the audiences. For the porject we followed an opposite approach. By having a troublesome relationship between texts and images, we intended to make people uncomfortable and incite question of why it felt this way, and what it means to have spiked in these contexts.

Reinforcement and punishment (2007) General Psychology. University of Florida. Available at: <https://pressbooks.online.ucf.edu/lumenpsychology/chapter/operant-conditioning/> (Accessed: February 17, 2023).

The reading was an interesting approach to expand the link we highlighted between architectural spikes and behaviourism and help us outline our position. The text backed up why we felt the object is characterised by conflict of interests; since it both responds to positive and negative operant conditioning principles. As a result, this reflects why it is disputable to define the type of reinforcer architectural spikes are, because interpretations depend on who is the commissioner and the targeted audience. As an object that generates tensions between audiences, it can have multiple behavioural response at the same time. However, as a group we where able to agree that spikes become punishment items that negativity reinforcer a certain behaviour: limit the use of public spaces and excluding who can make use of them.

On another note, the reading extends on the effectiveness of designs that appeal to reinforcement as methods to teach people new behaviours. The text expands on positive reinforcement as the best way to achieve desirable stimulus to increase a specific behaviour. However, my position challenges this arguments because rather than prohibiting unwanted loitering as a use of public space design should engage on questioning why this happen, why it becomes unwanted, and what possible public friendly solutions could be explored.

Manokha, I. (2018) "Surveillance, panopticism, and self-discipline in the Digital age," *Surveillance & Society*, 16(2), pp. 219–237. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.24908/ss.v16i2.8346>.

Manokha's examination of surveillance in contemporary age, challenged and made us think of new angles regarding the repercussions of hostile architecture; as well as how they respond to specific characteristics of control. Our initial approach heavily relied on Architectural spikes as objects of surveillance that increased the capabilities of controlling behaviours and audiences in public spaces. Even though this is true to an extent, the text questions how this structure of domination is only an aspect that currently defines these objects.

An additional exploration is engaging with spikes as visible objects that when placed in public spaces unravel self-restraint and even peer to peer surveillance. This happens since, the presence of such objects implies that that area is under surveillance. As a result, the text explores how the invisibility of an inspector, combined with an evident object of surveillance and awareness of possibly being watched leads people to exercise self-discipline. Consequently, it can be developed further how spikes not only achieve aggressive interference with physical bodies, but also have certain power over the mind.

Laranjo, F. (2014) "Critical graphic design: critical of what?," *Culture Is Not Always Popular* [Preprint]. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.7551/mitpress/11955.003.0010>.

Taking into account the time of the project the third approach to a critical design practice proposed by Laranjo was the most appropriate to start developing a critical practice. This approach expands on addressing pressing issues in society. A central and common theme in our positions towards architectural spikes was understanding them as objects of tension, that display space/urban areas and population constraints. This was an issue and conflict that we identified in contemporary cities, that is both a reflection of social and political legislations, which could be explored in graphic communication design. Specifically by choosing poster as a medium, we wanted to contribute to this conversation through non-traditional forums of public debate and legitimization.

At the same time, by transposing the spikes we wanted to reflect how this object in particular responds to tension between private and public interests. And by situating them in reverse, we wanted to highlight these tensions within the private spheres that are less likely to be affected by the use of the object.

Looking back at this reference it was refreshing to expand where some of the limitations of the project are. Laranjo could challenge the positions we explore by pointing out how the project's imagery and intentions are provocative. But it lacks a situated context and iterating with people's interaction with the material. These don't contribute to a better understanding and questioning on the debate of the use of architectural spikes.

Perec, G. and Sturrock, J. (2008) Species of space and other pieces. London: Penguin.

Perec's text became relevant as a methodology to understand and expand on different positions. The text coincidentally illustrates different approaches on how to navigate and understand a public space that the author explores through writing. As a result it is an exercise that invites to examine different levels of interpreting a same context. For instance, at the beginning there were differences regarding the usefulness of the object. Some of us admired how effortlessly it is an effective tool to curb unwanted behaviours. Others found it appealing because of its material qualities and appearance. Some of these discussions were able to take

place when we shared the different angles from which the object could be described, analysed and contextualised.

At the same time, Perec achieves a rigours level of detail when describing the different elements and situations that interact on the street. Some of this where method used to investigate and to draw near other's perspectives. This approach can still be used to develop the project further, by situating how new audiences read and interact with it.