INTERNATIONAL DESIGN CONFERENCE - DESIGN 2006
Dubrovnik - Croatia, May 15 - 18, 2006.

DESIGN 2006

DESIGN AGAINST CRIME AS SOCIALLY RESPONSIVE THEORY AND PRACTICE

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Keywords: theory and practice of design, design against crime, interaction design

1. What is design against crime?

Design Against Crime (DAC) at CSM is a socially responsive, practice-based research initiative, which uses the processes and products of design to reduce all kinds of crime and promote community safety whilst improving quality-of-life (www.designagainstcrime.com; www.karrysafe.com; www.bikeoff.org). It is linked to the theory of situational crime prevention (R. Clarke 1992); in a nutshell suggests that crime is significantly about opportunity, and that IF we can design out opportunity for crimes to occur in the first place, we can reduce crime, and perhaps also the number of people who become criminalized. DAC is a relatively new, interdisciplinary area of enquiry developed through innovative national and international research collaborations that commenced in the UK in 2000. It has three overarching aims:

1. To reduce the incidence and adverse consequences of crime through design of products, services, communications and environments that are 'fit for the purpose' and contextually appropriate in all other respects; to this end
2. To equip design practitioners with the cognitive and practical tools and resources and
3. To prove and promote the social and commercial benefits of designing out crime to manufacturing and service industries, as well at to local and national government, and society at large.

To realise these aims requires linking two worlds; helping designers to “think thief” and aiding crime prevention experts to “draw on design”. Recently completed research projects that embody both the theory and practice of DAC emanating from CSM include: Karrysafe anti theft bags and accessories (Image 1), Stop Thief anti theft chairs (Image 2) and Bike off – anti theft parking communication solutions.

Figure 1. Karrysafe range of anti theft bags and accessories

This methodology and approach to design research and the generation of products, services and environments positions DAC alongside other established thematic movements such as eco-design or inclusive design.

Figure 2. Stop Thief anti-theft chairs

1.1 Philosophy

The philosophy behind DAC as a practice led design research agenda is linked to the understanding that design should address security issues without compromising functionality, aesthetics or other forms of performance, i.e. the simple idea that "secure design doesn't have to look criminal or ugly". Our research projects attempt to think thief and to "... help designers keep up with the adaptive criminal in a changing world" (P. Ekblom 2000). This generative design approach has led to much innovation and many DAC design exhibitions from CSM at UoAL. Over the last five years a number of DAC objects have been presented to the international design arena, most recently at **Safe: Design Takes on Risk** – Museum of Modern Art, New York, 16 October 2005 – 2 January 2006 (Image 3).

Figure 3. Design Against Crime at Safe: Design Takes on Risk, MoMA

1.2 Methodology

The research methodology for DAC that is employed and under development at CSM is based on the "user" focus of interaction design, associated with design consultancies such as IDEO (J. Myerson 2001) who fully research user needs; but it is significantly extended to address "mis-use" as well as "abuse" in terms of the "ethnographic" review of factors to be drawn upon in the design process (Barab, Thomas, Squire, Newell 2004). In order to move beyond experiential data and interviews with users at the research stages, DAC coalesces the conceptual frameworks, methodologies and practices of situational crime prevention, social anthropology, and cognitive psychology in terms of user-centered design, to offer an interdisciplinary account. It introduces: theory, many forms of empirical research, as well as user data, and an understanding of criminal perpetrator techniques, into the design process (see Images 4,5,6,7 and 8 linked to DAC research into bag theft). Consequently, it develops hybrid approaches to the quantitative and qualitative specification and evaluation of products, services and environments, to help reduce the incidence, impact and fear of crime.

Figure 4. Perpetrator technique 1: Dipping

Figure 5. Perpetrator technique 2: Lifting

Figure 6. Perpetrator technique 3: Slashing

Figure 7. Perpetrator technique 4a: Grabbing

Figure 8. Perpetrator technique 4b: Scippatori

In this sense DAC at CSM/UoAL adopts an iterative and emergent approach to the generation of prototypes, and certainly conforms to what Christopher Frayling (1993-4) has defined as practice led research: 'research into, research for, and research through art and design…. Research where the end product is an artifact [system, or service]…where thinking is, so to speak, embodied in the artifact, where the goal is not [just] communicable knowledge in the sense of visual communication, but in the sense of visual or iconic or imagistic communication…" (C. Frayling 1993/4).

The difference between the practice led approach to the design process employed by DAC at CSM and the interaction design focus and methodology, is that DAC starts with a crime problem and draws on anti crime thinking, in order to adapt the interaction design model to address issues raised by crime. In order to bring some rigour into design thinking about the critical process of decision making, Paul Ekblom, has created a series of questions and prompts, in his model of the Conjunction of Criminal Opportunity: A Tool for Joined Up Thinking…" (P. Ekblom 2000), hereinafter called CCO, which DAC at CSM suggests should be applied by designers, to ensure that their address and visualization of the crime and design problem is comprehensive, systematic and well grounded in theory. CCO allows designers to fully understand the problem BEFORE and DURING the generation, selection and refinement of design concepts and solutions aimed at solving the crime problem. In this way it is linked to an iterative design process, one that has been adapted at CSM/ UoAL, to enable designers to test out design concepts (or hypotheses) in the context of a design advisory panel, made up of experts including crime prevention advisors, who have strategic knowledge of the criminal approach to objects in every day life. Like all approaches to design that contain some aspect of "forecasting" DAC advisors and designers engage, as Ekblom has pointed out with "practical consideration in handling the uncertainty which by definition surrounds the estimated risk. It is pretty likely that on average, some broad types of product will be riskier than others." (P. Ekblom 2005). The strategic "consultation" process, that occurs at stages during the development of design iterations can help manage such risks.

In terms of product design iterations, the criminologist Ken Pease has compared DAC iterative focus with the analysis of air crashes. He considers the questions the iterative process raises as being similar i.e. what factors, if arranged differently, could have prevented the event (crash or crime) happening in the first place. It has much in common with community based architectural research methods. DAC methodology has much in common with the emergent approach of Barab et al who state that:

'As designers with a change agenda…our agenda is always evolving and mutable. In fact, in our work, we have abandoned perspectives and goals that were at one point central to our agenda in favour of new goals and commitments that revealed themselves as more applicable, meaningful, and useful over time.'

Whilst our design model has emergent aspects within the methodology, this focus is considered by DAC to be of greatest stakeholder value. Its propensity to prohibit specific definition of research outputs at the outset means the most appropriate hypothesis can emerge. Yet this emergent identification of research questions can be viewed as problematic when seeking funding for research projects.

The diagram below created in 2004-5 helps visualizes the iterative process the DAC model engages with.

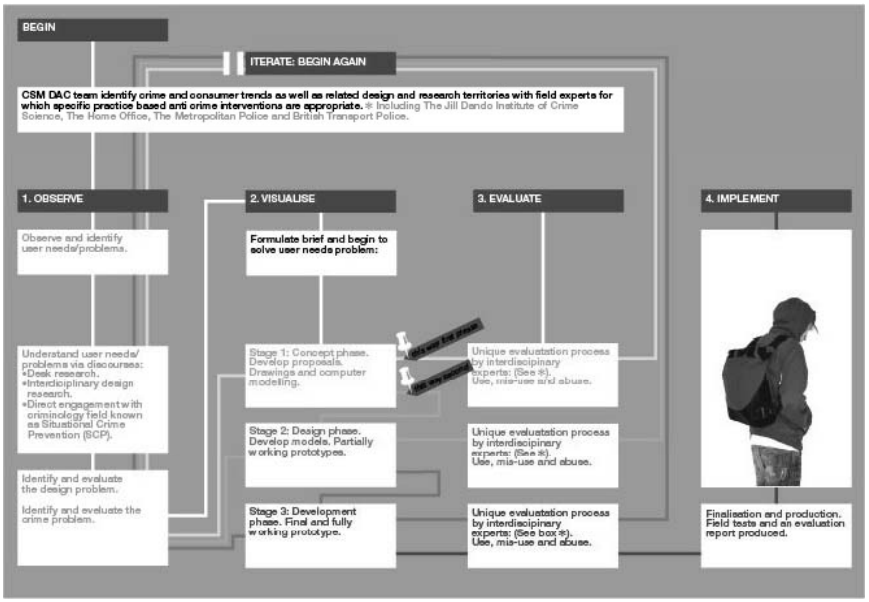

Figure 9. DAC Iterative Research Process

The diagram above created in 2004-5 visualizes the iterative DAC process. It shows the stages of prototype creation where the designer designs the product, system or service, to anticipate the interaction of many types of users (including victims) as well as abusers and mis-users (criminal perpetrator data), before showing it to the advisory panel for feedback. Several prototypes are generated and amended before the final iteration is agreed upon. Prototyping is of course constrained by project resources and time constraints. What is seen as the "best" or "final" prototype may be linked to funding break points i.e. what can be delivered on budget available. The "final" design prototypes created will aim to get the balance right between ensuring that user flexibility and desire for the product is not compromised by addressing security through modifications to enhance crime resistance. Whether the design goes into production will also depend on other commercial constraints linked to materials and manufacturing needs that the designer should have addressed as part of the iterative process as well as the economic performance of the business in question. To some extent, the DAC model moves beyond a functionalist rationale – problem solving is not the only aim of the design process. DAC tries to find a pleasing and creative 'resolution' for design (rather than compromise) in terms of the way security and criminal behaviour is addressed by the object, service or system, in order to give it salability. In order to ensure the object, service or system has met its specifications, some testing is necessitated by the process, and it is here that research funding is crucial, as testing of objects for public spaces, in particular, needs to be undertaken to exacting standards to ensure that anti crime functionality is perfected. Again, modification of small batch of prototypes may be undertaken, before mass production occurs.

The DAC iterative approach can significantly add to the time and cost of product development and may be viewed by business as problematic. However integration of DAC into mainstream product design could substantially ease the burden. There are two further common criticisms of the iterative process that perhaps also should be understood by the design community. Some designers object to the "design by committee" approach, which they see as implicit to the iterative process, and argue that it limits their creativity. Other designers say it increases creativity, and recognise with John Thackara that "Complex systems are shaped by all the people who use them, and in this new era of collaborative innovation, designers are having to evolve from [solely] being the individual authors of objects or buildings, to [acknowledge their role as] being the facilitators of change among large groups of people" (J. Thackara 2005). Indeed, the iterative process does focus on post consumption activities linked to the designed object, system or service. The notion that work is never "finished", but always

in the stage of "becoming", is linked to ideas about improvement and radical social innovation but also to monitoring the behaviour of adaptive criminals, competitive rivals and changing market requirements. This notion of the designs constantly needing to adapt is intrinsically linked to the DAC approach to a consumer and market led model of the design process. This consumer aspect, may be seen as negative i.e. linking DAC to a method with too many compromises. For example, a socially responsive design project led by Heineken, called 'WOBO', sought to use design to ensure their discarded mass-produced plastic beer containers could be more usefully employed for secondary use as building components in the third world. An account of its history revealed many contradictions, linked to the primary pursuit of profit logic. The project did not achieve what was hoped for it, because the marketing department objected to design solutions put forward, as not being the most commercial. Nigel Whiteley (1997) suggests that the story of WOBO rather "highlights the conflict of values between socially responsible design concerns and the social irresponsibility of consumerism in which profit is the overarching concern".

1.3 Crime and Market-led Design

DAC has so far been connected to a market led model of design aimed ultimately at making profit. For example, the impetus for the successful design of security into automobiles partly resulted from the British government publishing lists of the cars most frequently stolen, which shamed manufacturers into improving security and led them to compete over their security reputations. (Anti theft designs based on electronically coded ignition keys and immobilizers were made mandatory by EU directive). With this exception, DAC research and practice, in the wider context, has been funded primarily by police led initiatives such as Secured by Design (www.securedbydesign.com), by the public sector (local councils funding anti theft designs/schemes linked to pressure from the police and professional bodies such as the Designing Out Crime Association – DOCA: www.doca.org), by national government and its partners such as the Home Office/Design Council /Sheffield Hallam and Salford University, and Central Saint Martins who have promoted DAC linked to socially responsive and ethical education agendas, aided to some extent by funding councils such as the Arts Humanities Research Council (AHRC) and the Engineering Physical Science Research Council (EPSRC).

Criminogenic designs (those that cause crime) often do so because they are easy to steal as well as attractive. Criminologists identify a cluster of risk factors for theft in particular known as CRAVED (concealable, removable, available, enjoyable and desirable) (R. Clarke 1999). Many of these factors could be alleviated by design. Such action by designers would mean that governments could divert substantial public resources currently spent on policing, the criminal justice system and offender management (so-called 'cops, courts and corrections'), to more positive activities dedicated to improving people's quality of life.

Clearly it is not appropriate to simply "blame" poor design or designers for the culture of crime and punishment we live with. The culture of consumption where having (things) is more important than being (a decent person) also generates crime. Worse, many countries today continue to fill up the world with the debris of their consuming passions. But, as John Thackara points out some "of the troubling situations in our world ARE the result of … too many bad design decisions (J. Thackara 2005), and so DAC, as a pragmatic movement, starts from the premise that something needs to be done now in order to address poor design decisions and to correct them where possible, and that engineers and designers are likely to be the best architects of change.

1.4 DAC and Socially Responsible Design

DAC does not easily fit the model of socially responsible design in the rather narrow definition that Papanek originally argued for, when he insisted that " design" should be " independent of concerns for the gross national product if it is to genuinely serve rather than exploit society." (V. Papanek 1971). Its thirty-five years after Papanek wrote his tome, and consumerism has permeated many more aspects of our social lives as part of its acceleration. Yet there is more concern about environmental pollution than ever before, and perhaps more interest by young designers in design for the real world. So it is our view today that socially responsible design can be linked to ethical and responsible design rather than a naïve model of innovation, yet still engage with the marketplace and make profits or at least a

fair wage for the designers involved. DAC seeks to do this by addressing complex social problems in the design process, and building in anti crime functionality and user protection in order to address criminal behaviour and sustainable lifestyles, to improve the quality of life, whilst still being attractive to discerning consumers. Indeed, we believe to truly develop its work DAC absolutely needs to have a relationship with the public sector, but it also needs to make interventions in consumer led markets to gain evidence of the effectiveness of DAC. DAC may aid manufacturers to generate ideas about product differentiation for saturated markets, linked to anti crime functionality as will as profit margins. Indeed, it is precisely DAC's potential for generating "innovation' in terms of the marketplace, that may mean it does not simply equate with some purist definitions of socially responsible design, astutely summarized by Nigel Whiteley's Design for Society (1997). So it is to avoid problems of conflation, and the history of previous terms, prefer to use the phrase **"socially responsive design"** to describe DAC as a practice led design model, one that is ethical in its implication, and in tune with what Thackara calls "design mindfulness' linked to life in the 21st century. Socially responsive design tends to start with designers individually, or as a group, trying to make their intervention through practice. This is how DAC emerged, later supported by funding linked to its University base. To illustrate this practice lead approach, and also to locate the lead, of some socially responsive designers, the paper goes on to review the work of Vexed Generation. Before they too became involved in the DAC agenda, Vexed Generation, as early as 1994, were already making the case for socially responsive design through practice. Vexed developed some unique approaches to both retail and product design that are worth noting herein.

2. What is Vexed Generation?

Vexed Generation is a London based design company established in 1993. Vexed create clothing and accessories aimed at improving the individual's experience of the urban environment. This improvement may come from the use of the product or the communicative impact the product has on society, it's ability to influence 'fashion' and catalyse social change. Vexed products may provide 'an answer' through their functionality or may objectify a 'question' via their aesthetic. Product briefs are derived from issues of an environmental and social nature and design responses focus on providing the individual with utility to overcome their adverse effects. Vexed introduced the concept of 'Urban Mobility' to describe the focus for their design work with the aim of popularising transportation outside of cars in urban environments.

2.1 Socially Responsive Clothing by Vexed Generation

Vexed Generation Clothing produces 2 collections a year, and has done so since 1994. All Vexed clothing designs consider protection and performance in relation to Urban Mobility.
Vexed describe their design approach as 'socially responsive' in that their designs are realised within the following criteria:

- Products designed are ethically motivated – informed by society/ not the market which represents only one sector of the society it purports to serve.
- Use social scenarios to catalyse design of original objects that make a positive contribution to society either through the nature of their usage or the awareness they generate for social issues.
- Use design of products and their delivery to market to catalyse social change.
- Market interventionist. Designs seek to objectify and commodify social issues to catalyse market acceptance and thereby facilitate social acceptance and social change.
- Use social research and social scenarios to inform innovation and create economic opportunity
- Design which 'informs, reforms, and gives form' (Papanek, The Green Imperative, 1995)
- Combines social imperatives with commercial imperatives in an attempt to harness consumerism to facilitate positive social change.

For the purpose of illustrating Vexed's socially responsive design approach a focus on key pieces from the earliest collections, where the Vexed definition of socially responsive design is most readily identifiable, is appropriate.

Table 1. Collection 1. 1994

Social Issues	Design themes	Design considerations
• Air Quality • Civil Liberties (CJA) • Surveillance (CCTV)	• Mobility • Privacy • Protection	• Freedom of movement • Comfort • Durability • Adaptability • Concealed identity • Concealed storage • Physical protection • Respiratory protection • Weather protection • Wearable communication*

2.2 Vexed Parka 1994

The Vexed Generation ballistic nylon Parka was designed in 1994 when the Criminal Justice Act was being introduced to the UK. The Parka highlighted, via its design, issues linked to civil liberties, air pollution and CCTV. Designed as a parody of police riot gear, the Parka stimulated conversation and debate both in the media and on the street – 'why was this garment relevant?'

The parka is made from MOD grade, high tenacity ballistic nylon that is slash proof. This fabric had never previously been deployed within civilian street-wear, previously being utilized primarily in bulletproof vests and 'blast curtains' (curtains that contain flying fragments during controlled explosions). Onto this high tenacity fabric a fire resistant neoprene coating is applied. The parka features protective padding throughout the crown, spine, kidney and groin areas. The hood and collar are designed to obscure the wearer's identity and accommodate a respiratory mask that is stored in the sleeve of the garment. The distinctive 'tail', front and back, joins between the legs to protect the wearer from 'road spray' generated when cycling and also to negate the effects of the 'groin grab' which was often deployed by Police to bring an individual into the 'stack' position when making a street arrest, such as those made at demonstrations or picket lines. The chest pockets conceal a 'Velcro' lattice that enables items to be easily stowed and accessed.

2.2 Vexed One-Strap Backpack 1994

Designed in 1994 the Vexed one-strap backpack gives the wearer hands free carriage of up to 60 pieces of vinyl and also features 2 storage pockets on the strap that accommodate a mobile phone and keys. The bag was designed specifically for cyclist and scooterist DJ's, combining the storage capacity of the simple and popular 'record bag' or 'FlapSac' with the cross strap carriage and strap mounted, radio positioning of cycle couriers bags.

The bag started as a vest with a 'box' on the back and was then 'cut away' to realise the minimum amount of cloth required for supporting the 'box'. The Velcro fastening provided a universal fit when combined with the contoured strap. Velcro was favoured as a fastening by the untrained Vexed designers as it is easily applied using a straight stitch sewing machine. The whole bag is constructed from cloth with a single gusseted zip and pocketed strap. The simplicity and utility of the design have earned it international recognition and 'classic' status, and have since been widely copied.

2.3 Ninjahood and Ninjahigh 1995/6

The Vexed Ninjahood and high are so-called because of the anonymity they offer the wearer. The high collars perform a dual functionality, masking the wearers identity and providing a housing into which a respiratory filter may be fitted to 'clean' urban air (particularly when riding a bicycle or scooter). The distinctive hood shape is derived from an attempt to construct a hood that would fit over cycle helmets. This ambition was thwarted due to the fact that the hood pushed the helmet forward when in use. The shaping was maintained however, and has proven to be a popular and unique differentiator amongst the competitor products. The cut of the garment is close fitting to the body and articulated at the sleeve to maximize comfort when the arms are bent in a 'riding' position. This body conscious cut,

derived from functionality of streamlining for urban mobility was also unique at the time of its introduction as all other fleeces where shapeless garments considering only warmth. The fleece used by Vexed is PolartecTM – the premium material of this genre. Vexed chose to use Polartec 300 seriesTM a highly thermal polyester fleece derived from recycled plastic bottles.

2.4 S.A.B.S. Parka (See And Be Seen) 2001

An evolution of the Vexed Parka, the SABS Parka is fashioned from CorwoolTM, a composite fabric that combines the 'hang' and woven aesthetic of wool with the durability of high tenacity Nylon 66 (CorduraTM). The fabric has a waterproof breathable laminate and the construction seams are taped with polyurethane to ensure the garment is 100% waterproof. The hood is designed to hide the wearers identity whilst facilitating peripheral vision via a transparent 'vision strip' paneled around the hood at eye level. Arms are articulated to facilitate the 'riding' position and the hem is vented to allow freedom of movement around the legs when cycling. There are zips placed throughout the center back of the garment (collar to hem) and at the cuffs. When opened the zips expose 3m reflective material for increased visibility on the road. The center back zip provides the dual functionality of increased cross-back expansion when in the riding position. When the garment is worn off the bike the zips can be closed to offer a more tailored silhouette with reduced visibility. The garment is lined with OutlastTM, a phase change material that maintains an optimum wearer temperature of 37'c via a molecular heat exchange system integrated into its laminate. The garment also features concealed pocketing. This garment illustrates Vexed Generation's concept of 'Stealth Utility' where utility is not overtly displayed yet omnipresent. The name SABS is something of a 'pun' given that it is both an acronym for the functionality of the jacket and a term used to describe 'hunt saboteurs' whose activism against fox hunting and animal experimentation in the 90's brought them into conflict with the newly introduced laws within the Criminal Justice Act.

2.5 Why Clothing?

Vexed origins and focus primarily within clothing design is due to the fact that clothing is culturally evocative and the means of its manufacture are inexpensively available – the clothing industry is a low entry economy.

Additionally, 'fashion' by definition [(The prevailing style or custom, as in dress or behavior; Something, such as a garment, that is in the current mode; The style characteristic of the social elite; Manner or mode; way; A personal, often idiosyncratic manner)] this definition should be footnoted is an appropriate and effective arena in which to communicate a demand for, and effect, social change.

To the wearer, clothing is a means by which an individual can demonstrate their allegiances (brand/style tribe), and awareness for certain issues and facilitate their lifestyles (functionality).

To the onlooker, clothing tells us something about the environment in the wearer's location. If I am wearing Bermuda shorts and a vest it may be assumed that I am dressed for a warm, unthreatening situation? It is this method of communication, of "making strange" conventional practices, that Vexed uses to 'make apparent' issues to the public – seeking to objectify 'invisible' threats via the provision of products to overcome them – i.e. early warning or 'canary clothing'. For example, air pollution may be communicated by an integrated facemask, unlegislated CCTV by a face-covering hood, a physically threatening environment by a parody of Police riot gear. Thus, the garments Vexed design describe a Vexed view of the society we live in. Furthermore, we propose that the clothing people wear can help articulate as well as describe an individual's perception or opinion of the society they live in. In this way individuals use consumption patterns to demonstrate their view of what Papanek terms the 'Real World'.

2.6 Why sell these clothes not just exhibit them? – the argument for Market intervention

Relating to the proposition that the clothing we wear describes our opinion/experience of the society we live in, it can be argued that the products commercially available to us describe the society we live in as determined by market success due to social acceptance. However, if a socially responsive product is not considered relevant or viable by those bodies that control access to 'the market' then 'the consumer' will not be presented with the opportunity to affirm the relevance/opinion of the

designer that created it, and the potential social impact of the product will be denied. The commercial availability of an original, in this case socially responsive, product communicates to the consumer that the product is relevant, that there is a market for the product, 'otherwise how would it have got to the shelves and rails of this shop?' This commercial affirmation of rationality creates a comfort zone for the consumer and brings the issues the product reflects in from the margins of society toward mainstream acceptance. The availability of a socially responsive product on the shelves and rails of the high street demonstrates to 'the Consumer' that the vision of society the product serves is possible and plausible.

In his book Design for Society (London: Reaktion Books, 1993) Nigel Whiteley states that 'if history is a reliable guide, socially useful production is always on its way but seldom arrives, thwarted by the values of consumerist society'. He ask the question:' why is 'socially useful' design such a small part of industrial production?' and suggests that 'The answer lies in the nature of consumerism and the system in which it operates most tellingly – capitalism. Although consumerism is upheld by the Right as the mechanism which gives power to the consumer – reference is frequently made to the consumer being 'king', and 'consumer sovereignty' – it is often the manufacturer or producer who has the real power because s/he has control of the resources'.

Whiteley's account echoes Marxist assertions that control of the 'means to manufacture' is implicit in social self-determination. His statement also implies that capitalism and consumerism is adverse to what he refers to as 'socially useful' design. Whilst this is true it is only part of the story. The Vexed experience, located within the clothing sector, found it was not the means to manufacture that were inaccessible but entry to the marketplace. When dealing with low technology industry, such as garment manufacture, the Vexed experience is a microcosm of that which is apparent on a global scale. Given the post industrialised nature of many of the world's economies garments can now be constructed pretty much anywhere in the world. It is commercial access to the western consumers that is restricted. This fact is demonstrated by the quota systems, that are currently proving socially problematic to deconstruct, as illustrated by the delayed implementation of the 'Multi-Fibre Agreement' within the clothing sector, policy which aims to 'open up' western markets to Chinese goods.

Vexed sought to gain shelf space for their designs in 1994/5. Through networking, via friends and 'friends of friends' who purchased Vexed product, made and sold in the Vexed workshop in London, the relevance of the designs to those outside of Vexed started to become known. Many of these early customers were known in some circles as "early adopters", whose consuming patterns were watched and highly regarded.

Despite this commercial affirmation we were unable to gain retail stockists nor distribution. The feedback from mainstream retailers being that though the designs where 'good' and 'interesting' they had no precedent and where 'not right for our customers'. The initial Vexed products where often referred to as 'futuristic', a description that we found to be particularly frustrating given that the products where designed in response to a brief derived from the current social scenario. In this respect it appeared that Vexed designs were viewed as **proleptic**, in as much as they existed before their proper or historical time in that they anticipated and answered a socially responsive design brief that was not yet understood by many retailers, who felt Vexed designs were alternative and anachronistic as regards consumer demand. Vexed believed that these designs were deliberately anachronistic to market values, but not to consumer or social relevance, and that if the products could be presented to the consumers then the demand would follow.

To access consumers with their designs Vexed had to create their own distribution channel and open a 'shop'.

2.7 Vexed and Proleptic Retail

Vexed collaborate with designers, artists and musicians to create the spaces in which they display and retail their clothes. The spaces themselves are examples of socially responsive design – seeking to communicate Vexed concerns through the retail environment.

Shop 1/1995/96: The first Vexed Retail Installation, opened in 1995, and sought to create a proleptic environment which echoed the collection's focus on London's street environment in 1994/1995 –

surveillance vs. society, rights and responsibilities, air quality, civil rights (CJA). The front window of the shop was whited out, passers by could only view the interior via a small monochrome TV screen - the interior space was under constant surveillance, the walls were curved and backlit, displaying statistical information relating to the social and ecological urban environment. The floor was of white gravel – easy maintenance and effective at alerting those that entered to a 'change in space' from the street outside. The clothing was displayed in a glass case with holes cut to allow the viewers to touch and view the garments but not remove them. A key aspect to the installation was the absence of 'staff', the retail floor being surveyed only by cameras with no personal contact to introduce the customer to the clothing or the information displayed around the space. Those that ventured downstairs via a plastic curtain would find the Vexed crew within the public access gallery beside the record decks and 'alternative TV service' made up of combined video works from the public and 'news' broadcasts from 'Undercurrents' an alternative news service. Here garments could be tried on, though there where no mirrors, only TV monitors in which you could view your surveyed image.

Shop 2, 1996/7, 'The Green Shop'. Located on the 1st floor of 3 Berwick Street – a reclaimed building site office with a very low rent - down an alleyway, along a dark corridor and up a spiral staircase – continued the environmental theme. Clothing was displayed on inflatable bags which, linked to an air compressor, inflated and deflated on a timer giving the impression of 'breathing clothing and walls' bringing to mind issues regarding air quality and its effects on city dwellers. The open access gallery and decks were located in the changing area and counter respectively.

Shop 3, The 'Grow Room' 1998/99, saw the garments arranged in rows in the centre of the space, Fast growing plants such as Ivy, Clematis and Passiflora grew up through the clothing sprouting from armholes and neck openings, an optimistic reference to the strength and adaptability of nature. The walls were lined with blackboards inviting people to enter their personal details, an experiment in public/private access to information –

Would you consciously give details to the world? Those that entered their details did so in a formal impersonal manner, though many eschewed the headings requesting personal information and chose to use it as a message board or followed the headings but did so jokingly. Others left their mark by way of tagging. The floor covering was of one penny pieces, £750, an example of safety in numbers – in one pence pieces you can leave hundreds of pounds on the floor and not worry that it would be removed. People may also contribute thus creating a 'wishing floor'.

Shop 4, 'A Stitch In Time', incorporating 'The Label Database'. 2000/2001 The corridor downstairs is a water ramp, a trickle of water is reflected around black glass walls – the corridor moves towards you as you enter. Brush matting flooring on the staircase and display area dries your feet as you approach the changing/gallery area where your footprints are 'recorded' on a plasticine floor. Moving walls increase the wall mounting display areas and can separate off space for changing. Clothing is displayed on mannequins; some standing and some suspended over a black glass floor that reflects the padding on the ceiling and walls onto which people record their presence in thread. Those that want can print a name label and sew it to the wall, a textile database of customers and collaborators.

Toward the end of 2002 retail rents soared and the arrival of a new landlord and proposed new lease made Vexed's retail presence unaffordable. The experience of being 'priced out' of the retail sector was common to many of the more creative and independent businesses in the Soho area. As the global coffee chains and retailers moved in so the rents rose and the businesses that had been responsible for creating the 'buzz' in the area moved out. Vexed observed that many of the large chains that had acquired leases allowed their properties to lay dormant for many months – big ships turn slowly. Vexed proposed that a well designed, low maintenance, lightweight shop design could make use of these 'fallow' commercial terrains during the months that the large lease holders allowed them to remain uninhabited, and thus make the otherwise empty streets more vibrant, safer even? Vexed's final installation in Berwick Street ran between November 2001 and February 2002 and enacted this concept of 'Itinerant Retail'. The installation was entitled 'Here to Go – An experiment in Itinerant Retail' and was a shop in a tent in a shop. A white fabric 'clean room' was tailored to fit inside a derelict glass fronted shop space on Berwick Street. The dereliction of the unit juxtaposed with the perfect white tent within it. The tent pitched down to the front window and secured with suckers to the glass. The area of the window inside the tent aperture was pristine whilst the area of the window

outside the aperture was left filthy. Inside the 'clean room' Vexed Generations Autumn/Winter 2001 collection was displayed for sale. The resulting installation was a highly visible glowing white cube suspended in a derelict shell in a dynamic, garbage strewn, market street.

2.8 Commercial Impact of Vexed

Vexed's socially responsive design practice has lead to many product innovations. The nature of the design questions generating contemporary, relevant products for city dwellers. These products have received much acclaim and mimicry within the industry and further a field and have been discussed and recorded in numerous publications and exhibitions internationally. The best example of consumer success is the One Strap Rucksack that has been widely copied and has entered the pantheon of bag design as a classic solution frequently deployed. Additionally, the Vexed face covering silhouette and integration of performance materials and detailing in urban street wear is now omnipresent amongst urban brands.

The Vexed ambition to harness consumerism, via market intervention, to promote social change can be seen to be effective a decade later. Predominantly in the success of Vexed's Urban Mobility concept. As regards promoting urban transportation outside of the car socially the change has started to come and it is possible that Vexed's 'socially responsive' design activities have contributed. Vexed's contribution in this area is most apparent in the adoption, by Puma International AG, of Vexed's Urban Mobility agenda as a product category in 2003. This led to Vexed's proposal for an urban mobility bike integrating anti crime functionality (Image 9) being developed by Puma/Biomega and Vexed.

Figure 10. Puma Bike

Vexed's reputation for originality and functionality in design has lead to many 3rd party projects for global brands and research collaborations with DAC at CSM including the anti theft Karrysafe bag and accessories collection.

The Karrysafe product range served to generate international media coverage with a value in excess of £860,000 (Design Council Estimate 2004). The products sold via Selfridges in Oxford Street, and Fonehouse stores throughout the UK. The Karrysafe designs are currently being considered for licensing in Japan and the USA, where they have recently been featured in SAFE: Design Takes on Risk, MoMA, New York where the Karrysafe products have been successfully stocked in the MoMA shop. It would be interesting to assess the impact that the Karrysafe project has had in terms of availability of theft resistant products. When the Karrysafe range was designed a survey of 50 top selling bags found only 1 that had in-built security (source: Independent 2001). A similar survey 'post Karrysafe' would give an indication as to the effectiveness of Karrsyafe as regards catalyzing uptake of DAC design within the sector.

3. Conclusion

In describing the socially responsive methods and objects generated by Design Against Crime, and in featuring the socially responsive design approach of Vexed Generation, this paper has sought to offer a definition and illustration of socially responsive design, that is both designer led, and intervenes in the popular market place. Both DAC and Vexed practice may fall within Papanek's definition of

socially responsible design but in making the case for "socially responsive design" to describe the ethically motivated nature of our work we feel we have made a different contribution to knowledge. One that explains, some ways that design can address and drive social issues, and include as part of its objectives, the desire to bring about social change. We believe it is this responsive agenda that ensures its relevance to evolution and innovation within our designs and which in turn creates new economic opportunities.

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