Profit From Paranoia:
Design Against Paranoid Products

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1. Introducing the Design Against Crime (DAC) research centre at UAL

2. What is our practice-led DAC methodology/ design process?

3. What are "paranoid" products?

4. Is there a role for parody and paranoia in secure design?

5. What is "stealth utility" and how is such a strategy relevant to DAC?

6. Bomb proof bins

7. Conclusion - why DAC methodology has relevance to anti terrorist design as "socially responsive design"?

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;

2. **To equip design practitioners with the cognitive and practical tools** and resources to design out crime; 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.

DaC **DESIGN AGAINST CRIME RESEARCH CENTRE**

We bring designers, researchers, criminologists, the police and other stakeholders together to design out opportunities for crime.

Safe: Design takes on Risk,
Museum of Modern Art,
New York, 2006

*   Index Awards 2006, Copenhagen, Denmark
    October - September 2005

*   Silver Winner - British Female Inventor and Innovator
    Awards; Education and Learning Institution 2006

*   Sir Misha Black Award 2006,
    Innovation in Design Education

Our aim is to empower people.

Crime is about opportunity, objects and environment not just about perpetrators.

Situational Crime Prevention (SCP) considers "opportunities" to be the "root causes" of crime.

Design out criminal opportunities and you can design out crime.

Felson & Clarke "Opportunity Theory", 1998, Rutgers University, New Jersey

The philosophy behind the centre is linked to a practice-led design research agenda and the simple idea that secure design does not have to look criminal or ugly. It suggests that beautiful design can also address "abusers" and "mis users" as well as "users", and that even security can have humour.

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The Design Against Crime tone-of-voice is never paranoid, domineering or authoritarian, but instead personal, humane and friendly.

The main theme of our work is linked to 'empowerment' and 'protection' against crime. Current focus is on bag and bike theft.

2. What is Design Against Crime's practice-led methodology?

Design Against Crime
'In the Bag' Research CD ROM

The acronym CRAVED has been used to describe the characteristics of items most likely to be stolen - 'hot products'.

Concealable

Removable

Available

Valuable

Enjoyable

Disposable

Bag theft - 'hot products'

Perpertrator Techniques

Dip: Removal of articles from a bag without the owner's awareness.

Lift: Removal of bag and contents without owner's awareness.

Slash: Removal of articles from a bag, without the owner's awareness by cutting the fabric.

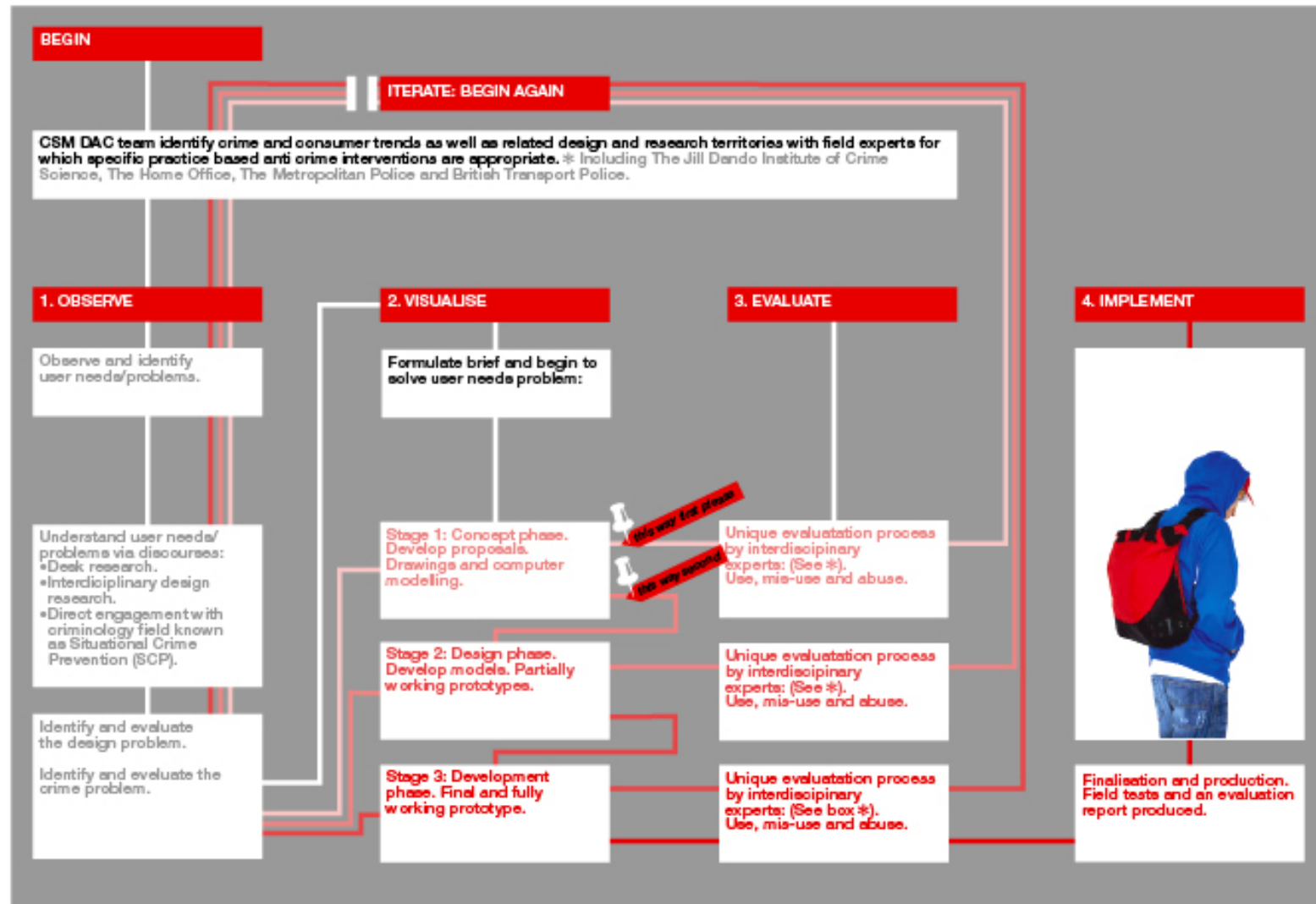**Grab:** Removal of bag and contents by grabbing it away from the owner's grasp.

Expert review helps us looks at use, mis-use as well as abuse of products.

The iterative process is a design method. It is based on interaction design and addresses mis-use and abuse, as well as use. It is constantly re-evaluating and improving design thinking based on user feedback/expert advice.

Create and consult, adapt and test, iterative process

BEGIN

ITERATE: BEGIN AGAIN

CSM DAC team identify crime and consumer trends as well as related design and research territories with field experts for which specific practice based anti crime interventions are appropriate. * Including The Jill Dando Institute of Crime Science, The Home Office, The Metropolitan Police and British Transport Police.

1. OBSERVE

Observe and identify user needs/problems.

Understand user needs/ problems via discourses:
• Desk research.
• Interdisciplinary design research.
• Direct engagement with criminology field known as Situational Crime Prevention (SCP).

Identify and evaluate the design problem.

Identify and evaluate the crime problem.

2. VISUALISE

Formulate brief and begin to solve user needs problem:

Stage 1: Concept phase. Develop proposals. Drawings and computer modelling.

Stage 2: Design phase. Develop models. Partially working prototypes.

Stage 3: Development phase. Final and fully working prototype.

this way 1st please

this way second

3. EVALUATE

Unique evaluation process by interdiscipinary experts: (See *). Use, mis-use and abuse.

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4. IMPLEMENT

Finalisation and production. Field tests and an evaluation report produced.

Our practice-led research methodology results in the best possible design solutions for the people who are affected by the issue/research topic:

DAC raises questions about planned obsolescence.
It also raises questions about the fact that the costs of crime and policing are not sustainable.

DAC takes its place alongside eco-design as an ethical design movement.

3. What are "paranoid" products?

Dictionary definitions summarize paranoia as :
a psychotic disorder, whose characteristics include delusions of persecution, grandeur, suspicion and/or excessive distrust. A delusion is of course, a false or unrealistic belief / perception.

Paola Antonelli - Safe Design Takes on Risk, 2005, p.12) defines the way fear impacts on design for us, when she argues objects:

"speak directly to our paranoia, such as parachutes

for tall buildings, a consequence of the shock of 9/11."

By exaggerating risks and exacerbating public fears mediated through design some products hook into public fears. They exemplify paranoia via design which exhibits:

i)   "over-determined fortification"

ii) "moral panic" (Cohen 2002) design

iii) "delusional design" and

iv) "normalizing of emergency conditions" products / services.

The ultimate SUV?
Over-determined fortification

Houses of Parliament, Westminster
Moral panic (Cohen 2002) design

Commuter Pak

Delusional design

Equipment list for this product includes:
1 Ultra bright aluminium flashlight
1 High Intensity Whistle
1 Disposable FFP3 Bio protection mask
1 Nylon carry bag with belt loop and strap
2 pairs of latex gloves
2 chemical light sticks
2 Anti septic wipes

NYC subway card vending machine with anti-terrorist functionality
Delusional design?

"Security and health concerns in Western culture have promoted an "exaggerated sense of risk" which has serious consequences as not linked to calm, rational or scientific assessment."

Bill Durodie of Defence College, Cranfield University.

Durodie's point is that commonpractice in terms of riskmanagement is "never mind the evidence, just focus on thepossibility". This approach does not promote more scientific assessment and prioritization of the real risks that we face as a society.

Anti Terror Bag and Tag
Normalizing of emergency conditions products / services

Remember Marshall McLuhan:
"The Medium is the Message"!

4. Paranoia and Parody

Vexed Generation Parka, 1994

Vexed Generation Ninja, 1996

Vexed Retail Installation, The White Shop, London, 1995

What is Vexed Generation?

We apply research-led socially responsive design to clothing and accessories for urban environments.
We use clothing design to raise awareness of social and environmental issues, including :

* promotion of two wheeled transport

* air pollution

* surveillance culture

* civil liberties i.e. relationship of individual to the state

In 1995 Vexed used clothing design to warn against a future we didn't want to happen. We used parody and over determined functional aesthetics to generate antagonism and debate. This approach has been described as 'proleptic'.

Can proleptic design shift the public consciousness or does it bring the distopia closer?

On a good day, the public get it, we are part of the solution - on a bad day we are part of the problem.

The function of parody, of dramatic depiction and enactment, is always to generate debate, to catalyze a response, to try and produce a cathartic reaction.

Catharsis : *The term in drama refers to a sudden emotional* breakdown *or climax that constitutes overwhelming feelings of great pity, sorrow, laughter or any extreme change in emotion that results in the* renewal*, restoration and* revitalization for living*.*

Aristotle, Poetics (on Tragedy) 6th Century

There may be a role for parody toward catharsis in design.

In terms of anti-terror design this may be inappropriate as dissemination of the terrorised aesthetic furthers the terrorist objectives of public paranoia and fear.

5. Stealth Utility

What is Stealth Utility?
Thorpe and Hunter, Vexed Generation Design, 2001

Stealth solutions offer protection.

Not by catalysing a shift in public consciousness but rather through the invisible hand of the designer.

This strategy deployed by Vexed in 1999 may be appropriate for designing out risk without causing moral panic.

6. Bomb Proof Bins

Blastshield by Aigis,Derby, Britain, 2001

BlastShield has a number of features to help it absorb a blast big enough to blow up a car:

* double-layer, five centimetre thick tubular body.
* flaps designed to let rubbish in but not to let the explosion escape.
* outer layer of tough, glass-reinforced plastic, with an inner layer of a proprietary material called TABRE - a porous and permeable resin-bonded stone-like substance absorbs blast energy, slows fragments down.
* dome lid containing water and air. When the shock wave penetrates the lid, the water is converted into steam, absorbing all the energy.

Pros:

Informed design and sensitivity of designers means these bins do not forego public sanitation for security; but contain the risk in a covert manner.

Cons:

Blastshield bins are very expensive.They may be useful in some locations but see-thru dustbins and floor sweepers provide more jobs and more eyes on the street (Jane Jacobs)

7. Conclusion

Conclusion

* Objects communicate.

* Overt communication is appropriate when users can act to determine their destiny.

* Covert responses are appropriate when knowledge brings no profit to the wise.

Designers need to be aware of issues about fear of crime. In particular to understand the relationship between crime and terror tactics, and to take care to inform their own perceptions with robust research and significant evidence.

Our contention is that without complex appropriate design forethought, linked to a clear framework of questions about crime and terror tactics (we use Ekblom's CCO framework in our paper) inappropriate design and paranoid products are likely to be the result.