HUMANE DESIGN FOR HOMELESS POPULATIONS

BY JACKSON BERIGAN

A thesis exhibition presented to OCAD University in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master's in Design in IAMD.
205 Richmond, room 106.
Toronto, Ontario, Canada.
March 14 – 17.

3/31/2025

Abstract.

‘Humane Design for Homeless Populations’ or HDHP is a speculative public design project, engaging the homeless residents of Dufferin Grove Park to craft the graphic language used in two concept designs: a park bench doubling as an emergency sleeping pod and a wireless charging station. Their utilitarianisms engage practical problems like warmth/shelter and access to mobile charging, while employing speculative, participatory design techniques to encourage discussion and social reform surrounding stigma and misconceptions about urban homelessness.

Key Words.

speculative design, critical design, empathetic design, wicked problems, hostile design, public space, design justice, urban homelessness

Table of Contents

- What am I Doing Here? (Positionality) 4
- Introduction 6

- Urban Homelessness: The Wicked Problem
  - The Problem 9
  - Manifested in Public Space 10
  - Arms of Control 11
  - Section Conclusion 13

- Power of Public Space
  - The Erasure of Space 14
  - Equitable Public Space 16
  - Section Conclusion 18

- What Kind of Designer am I?
  - Desing Justice 19
  - The Critical Speculative Approach 22
  - Section Conclusion 24

- Working Process Journal
  - Barriers, Scope, and Evolution 25
  - The Design Process (Thus Far) 27
  - The (Beginning of) the Research Process 30
  - Interview/Codesign Script 35
  - Consent Form 36

- Bibliography 40

What am I Doing Here?

Design is a loaded word for me. I think I've focused on its meaning to the extent that I have because of my relative infancy in an expansive field. In broad terms, it's the systematic organization of chaos. 'Design' describes any methodological system, meaning it describes a lot of human activity – religion, food production, and military strategy, are meticulous 'systems' we've used to order the world around us. The natural world employs design, often doing it far more elegantly than we do. Evolutionary responses to environmental factors are 'designed.' The geometry in the molecular structures found in crystals is a methodological system of control imposed on particles. Design is everywhere and is an incredibly powerful and versatile tool.

I've learned about 'design' in a different way than I think most are introduced to its concepts and practices in academia. My formal education began at the graduate level. I've always had the informal inclinations of a creative - an affinity for understanding mechanisms, and an appreciation for elegance and beauty around me. But I didn't study design theory or have access to a fabrication studio before my time at OCAD. Even since starting this program, my learning has been for the most part, self-directed because our curriculum is almost devoid of structure. I've been tempted to call this a bad thing, and it is certainly a challenge, but the more time I spend thinking about the degree of freedom we've been afforded in meeting our degree requirements, the more I see it informing my general design practice and certainly my thesis work. Two principal factors have driven my work: the intrinsic passion I have for learning about what I'm interested in, and my willingness to make the most of an opportunity.

I had hoped this project would diverge from the self-exploration that creative theses often engage in, but seeing as my understanding of design, of its power and agency, of my responsibility as a designer, and my methodological approach to a design problem have evolved and continue evolving, it's proven difficult to separate the themes in my work from a degree of personal reflection. Because what I'm addressing is a very real societal issue, my positionality, my ideologies, my social role as 'designer' becomes a very important part of the conversation.

The HDHP project is a confrontation with a wicked problem. If you're not familiar, wicked problems are called such because they are fundamentally complex issues ingrained into complex human systems and don't have defined or immediate solutions (Rittle & Webber, 155-169). Wicked problems are institutionalized, often-times so normalized that their symptoms are not easily recognizable. Human-accelerated climate change is a wicked problem. Its contributors don't hail from one industry, country, ideology, or culture, and there is no single solution capable of combatting its development. Global educational disparity is another without any single, easy solution. Its causes range from varying degrees and distributions of economic prosperity, cultural values, religion, geography, you name it.

It is incredibly easy to let such a beast overwhelm you into inaction, but not everyone has the same opportunity to affect change or a loud enough 'voice' to advocate reform. I am lucky to have that agency. I'm a young, white man in the global west with a background of privilege, in a post-secondary institution, given the luxury to study and to pursue my creative passions. My

voice is more likely to be heard than that of many others. This is not right, but it is our reality. For this very reason, it is even more important that I and my peers use our voices in the right way.

I've decided to use my voice to interrogate urban homelessness as it exists in Toronto. There is a great degree of stigma surrounding the title 'homeless,' but I think the word only carries as much stigma as you let it. For me, it elicits only empathy. At its core, my interest in the subject comes from a place of compassion. It's so important to be clear about one's motives in undertaking a project with a marginalized group of people. I was raised in a progressive household, and this has fundamentally shaped my worldview and sense of social justice. It's no use pretending I'm not approaching my work with a certain bias. But I happen to think this bias is little more than the empathy and understanding we should all have for our fellow humans. Its foil, authoritarian conservatism, preys on greed and ignorance, and is, for the record, a principal contributor to many of the complex problems we humans face on a global scale. Look no farther than the populist/fascist wave that has overtaken my home country, the United States, this past decade. Under its banner, educational funding has been halved, rights for LGBTQ communities and women repealed, climate protections withdrawn, the middle class shrunken; believe me, I could go on. So, I tend to think there is an ideological right and wrong.

I want to reiterate my position of privilege. I have never experienced anything close to 'sleeping rough' or gone without a meal when I was hungry; so even though my intentions toward homeless communities are earnest, I must consistently temper myself with such a reminder. This means paying close attention to the language I use in my interactions with this at-risk group, It's played a major role in the construction of my research proposal to the Research Ethics Board (REB) and is the very reason 'Humane Design for Homeless Populations,' (HDHP) is centered upon giving a homeless community some of the agency that I and people like me enjoy. When I applied to OCAD, I was prompted to share my vision of what I might create in my time here. I responded with something to the effect of 'a modular living solution for homeless communities.' At the time, the idea was little more than my belief system speaking. But by the end of my first semester, I put more weight behind this philanthropic theme and first conceptualized HDHP as a critical theory project, interrogating urban homelessness as a wicked problem and proposing two concept designs in response to hostile architectural[1] mechanisms in public spaces. I took myself through a thought exercise recounting some of my observations of and interactions with members of the homeless community in my day-to-day. I think intimate human moments like these are what really prompted me to pursue HDHP.

"It's Monday. On my way to the TTC I see the same man on the short journey. Either in the partitioned walkway around the Highrise construction site, outside our local café, or around the station. We talk sometimes – I'll buy him coffee, we might smoke a cigarette or exchange that nod of recognition when you don't know quite what to say. He's very soft-spoken, and his eyes are some of the most melancholic I've seen. I think about him a lot. That night – a cold one by my southerner's standards – traipsing back from my latest class, I see a bundle that is a woman

[1] An urban design strategy that uses the built environment to (aggressively) direct human behavior. See: Savičic, Gordon. *Unpleasant Design*.

huddled onto a steam vent breathing scant warm air into a smothering, windchilled night. Her fingers are cracked and bleeding, poking out of her blue fingerless gloves, and she looks at me, squinting. I look back, and am again, reduced to my awkward nod, unable to think of something to say. Effectively invisible. We like to pretend they are, and it's easy to do so with a home, a car, a bed, class, and the cool Gore-Tex shoes I just bought. And still, these faces, these people, because that's what they are – people – dancing in the background of my resting mind."

Introduction.

The COVID pandemic has ushered in an age of rapidly growing cost of living, shrinking middle class, and a desolate job market. We've likewise witnessed another sharp increase in homeless populations across the global west. Toronto has been no exception. This past winter, the headcount at shelters in the greater Toronto area sat just under 11,000 at maximum capacity and turns away hundreds of candidates every month due to stringent shelter policies and an already overloaded system. This is more than double the headcount of a decade earlier. There are over 250 camps across 130 parks and public spaces in the GTA, with certain spaces like Allen Gardens, Riverdale Park, Trinity Bellwood, and Dufferin Grove Park reaching dozens of structures.

There is a glaring insufficiency of public access to living necessities in the spaces our homeless populations are forced into. These spaces of last resort are likewise under constant threat of being cleared. The official position on the regulation of homeless people occupying public space, put forth by the City of Toronto via the 'Toronto Shelter & Support Services' (TSSS) website, masks hostility behind reconciliatory rhetoric. Whenever public spaces reach a degree of occupation that the City considers unacceptable, it will callously clear homeless encampments, often, forcefully, and without available housing alternatives for displaced residents. Allen Gardens was cleared this past October 2024[2]. But this is not new information. In fact, it has been a practice for decades in cities across the global west. Resource scarcity, hostile architecture, and policy also dog the public settings our homeless communities are forced into. Water fountains are few and far between, public restrooms are often closed or nonexistent, benches are partitioned to prevent would-be users from lying on them, 'no loitering' policies are fiercely enforced by private security companies, access to free, public internet and electricity are scarce, and subsidized housing funding along with other progressive funding allocations are consistently put on the backburner. Developers and investors, players bringing the promise of capital, are instead given preference by a city government prioritizing maximizing economic growth. This situation Toronto and other cities face is then exacerbated and perpetuated by widespread and powerful stigmas and misconceptions surrounding urban homelessness.

[2] This is one example of many, see this local news story on the most recent clearing of Allan Gardens: Toronto city crews dismantle encampment in Allan Gardens | CBC News

The battleground on which the rights of homeless populations, and all of us for that matter, are fought is in public space. Public space is reflective of the socio-political landscape under a constant struggle between its stakeholders to define the space with their ideologies. This ritual of democratic citizenship simultaneously informs and is in turn affected by dominant societal norms. And because ours is a global, capitalist economy, money dictates much of how public space is designed and treated. A person experiencing homelessness is forced into this battleground of ideology by default. They lack capital that grants citizens power in our system and are ostracized by the very same stigmas founded in the rise of private land ownership and, you guessed it, capitalism. They are thus excluded from that discourse and cast out of society.

Who will advocate for those our system fails? Thankfully advocation, charity, and efforts to reform exist to an extent in nonprofits, government organizations, and even some for-profit companies. But by no means can their efforts stand alone. It also falls on designers, architects, and city planners to shape our environments responsibly. This means designing public space for a multiplicity of people, it means including a multiplicity of viewpoints in public design works, and it certainly doesn't mean whitewashing and/or privatizing public spaces. Designers (in the general sense of the term) are the architects of physical space and although our industry is so enmeshed in this free-market landscape, our skills need to drive more than an economic system where there is always a loser. I recognize how difficult it is to exist in such a marketplace and design responsibly, but it is a valuable thing to at least consider what ideologies should drive your work. Collaborative, user-centered design is key to creating more equitable futures. Projects don't need a lot of capital or external support to set new precedents and question existing social power structures. There is such a difference between an attempt to design ethically – no matter its perceived levels of success – and resignation.

To inform my theoretical framework and research methodology, I explore a variety of sources engaging with themes of speculative/critical/discursive design, public space politics, and engineering of design responses to social issues. Principal texts include the following: Don Mitchell's *The Right to the City: Social Justice and the Fight for Public Space* examines the relationship system societal problems (like homelessness) have to public space and rights of citizenship. Anthony Dunne and Fiona Raby's *Speculative Everything: Design, Fiction, and Social Dreaming* offers a comprehensive introduction to themes of critical and speculative design as well as a multiplicity of examples and applications. Victor Papanek's *Design for the Real World* is a landmark piece of literature and an early call for socially responsible design practices, informing myself as well as many of the authors in my bibliography. Bruce & Stephanie Tharp's *Discursive Design: Critical, Speculative, and Alternative Things* expands upon and responds to many of the themes introduced in Dunne and Raby's Speculative Everything, with specific focus on practical applications of experimental design beyond 'design art.' Warren Magnusson's *Brave New Neighborhoods: The Privatization of Public Space* is a provocative analysis of the relationship homeless communities have to public spaces. And Nicola Morelli's *Social Innovation and New Industrial Contexts: Can Designers 'Industrialize' Socially Responsible Solutions?* builds on the manifesto of best practice introduced by Papanek.

‘Humane Design for Homeless Populations’ or HDHP is a speculative public design project, engaging the homeless residents of Dufferin Grove Park as collaborators in two concept designs: a park bench doubling as an emergency sleeping pod and a wireless charging station. Their utilitarianisms engage practical problems like warmth/shelter and access to mobile charging, while employing speculative/discursive and participatory design techniques to encourage discussion and social reform surrounding stigma and misconceptions about urban homelessness.

HDHP began as a conceptual design project in my first semester in Toronto, where I began interrogated homelessness as a wicked problem. This assignment directed my interest toward concepts of participatory/empathetic/speculative/etc. design to combat complex societal issues and is the basis for my working project. I will work with park residents at Dufferin Grove Park to collaboratively design the graphic exteriors of two concept designs. Since moving to Toronto a year and a half ago, Dufferin has been a home to me, by virtue of the DIY skatepark in front of its clubhouse center. There, I’ve found community and belonging in public space that everyone is equally entitled to. My connection to the place is what ultimately moved me to select it as my site of intervention (there were many potential sites to choose from). Dufferin Grove Park, situated in the 9th ward in Toronto’s western downtown area, is a public space like so many others - a home for homeless people. They are forced into public parks, plazas, alleys, and sidewalks and denied the agency of full citizens in their state of last resort.

Projects like mine are powerful because they not only hold a potential to ease or save lives, but they are also opportunities to interrogate and challenge societal power structures and belief systems. How? Through visual cues and messaging in public spaces as well as empowering a populous suffering extreme marginalization through collaboration. We are so susceptible to our environments, places and people alike; so, think about what impact public sleeping pods and charging ports might have on what you normalize and accept. What about working with its beneficiaries, how might that humanize you?

In the first portion of this paper, I explain the academic and historical precedent for the HDHP project: Exploring the phenomena of modern homelessness as a wicked sociopolitical disease, public space as a battleground of ideology and a mirror of sociocultural values, as well as my evolving relationship to and understanding of design. Through this literature review and establishment of my theoretical framework, I inform the methodological approach I take to my research and design process. The second section details that design process from its beginnings as a loose resolution to an actionable project that will very likely continue after this semester reaches its conclusion. This project contributes to relevant academic and societal discourse surrounding participatory, speculative design practice as a tool with immediate utility and the ability to question the status quo’s existence in urban homelessness and public space politics.

Urban Homelessness: The Wicked Problem.

> *Those living "on the street" are perceived by society at-large as a "marginalized" population. To live on the street is to be an "eyesore," to be ostracized, to have nothing, to be nothing, to be invisible, the object of anger, the object of guilt, painfully ignored or pitied. Life on the street is a liminal life, a shadow life, often a life of violence. It can also be a life of comradeship, fleeting alliances, a life of just one more day of surviving.* (Bridgman, 55)

The Problem.

Webster's Dictionary defines stigma as " a set of negative and unfair beliefs that a society or group of people have about something." There are many groups of people, practices, and beliefs that face this kind of discrimination. But stigma in an increasingly globalized, capitalist economy certainly has its favorite targets. Poor people are an age-old victim of the practice, but, as they exist more directly in the public eye, homeless communities experience the extreme more acutely than any other social group in western society. I was generally aware of this before making it a point of research but have benefited from streamlined history of the phenomena. Randal Amster's explanation of the birth of this pattern of exclusion in *Patterns of Exclusion: Sanitizing Space, Criminalizing Homelessness.* He points to the establishment of landownership and the market economy in sixteenth-century Europe as a catalyst for the modern redefinition of 'vagrancy.' Its very existence came to challenge the sanctity of the capitalist system. But why? Because "...the homeless are often in plain view and therefore are subject to the most direct forms of official exclusion and public persecution." (Amster, 196) Their very existence threatens the worldview crafted by our system to appeal to a very specific subset of the public. The default social realities that our homeless communities are forced to live in are the very constructs that have created and perpetuated these stigmas that in turn marginalize homeless people and reinforce the fears and stereotypes held by the upwardly mobile.

To better understand the problem, I found it helpful to examine the arms of its illogic. There exists no shortage of analysis on the thought processes behind this warped perception. It is after all, based on such misconceptions that hostile design and policy are imposed to levy control over, and even to eradicate homelessness (at least from the public eye). In a 1997 edition of 'Social Psychology Quarterly,' *The Stigma of Homelessness: The Impact of the Label 'Homeless' on Attitudes Toward Poor Persons,* the impulse to blame members of the homeless community for their lot hails from "two mutually reinforcing social psychological processes," - social stratification hierarchies promoted ruling classes – the notion that their stations in society are as such for a reason, and something called the fundamental attribution error – an underestimation of the power of situation. (Phelan et al. 325) This grossly exaggerated importance in one's nature in the age-old nature/nurture debate disregards the power of environment and external factors in the predicaments of the vagrant. It's a misjudgment hailing from a place of privilege.

Largely misguided associations with homelessness are the culprit of perceptions held by popular culture. They are means by which the dominant worldview of the bourgeoise is

perpetuated. Most discoverable among these fallacies are two constructs of belief. The first is that homeless people are ‘dirty’ and inexorably linked to disease. It doesn’t take a stretch of the imagination to understand. Instead of recognizing external factors like a lack of access to hygienic resources, past trauma, addiction, mental illness, and the efforts of those in power to maintain a narrative, they are regarded as a monolith and innate symbols of sickness and filth. The second is the ‘Broken Window Theory,’ an idea that street people “signal the deterioration of community and the ready availability of a neighborhood for crime,” (Mitchell, 199) and are thus legitimate targets for law enforcement. The claim is that their mere presence is enough of an indicator of drugs, violent crime, and general danger to warrant being targeted by policies, hostile design, law enforcement, and the subject of public ire. Mitchell points out that defending these actions “...against the homeless asserts that the aesthetics of place outweigh other considerations, such as the needs of homeless people to sleep, to eat, or to be.” (Mitchell, 201) Although it’s never defined so boldly by its actors, this is absolutely the case.

Why target the most marginalized group among us? Why do people experiencing homelessness inspire so much vitriol among the bourgeoise? What about their presence in public space elicits such strong reactions? The threat posed is one of perception rather than reality; homeless populations are victims of guilt by nebulous association and assumptions based on dated historical tropes. Contributors to stigmas against homelessness are rooted in a capitalist system that encourages social stratification, separation, and the ‘survival of the fittest’ dogma. Here is where the conversation also becomes one of physical space politics. Capitalism always has a winner and loser. To profit, to advance oneself, you must do so on the backs of others. It’s inescapable. In the urban context, this manifests itself in sharp class disparity and the hyper division of public space into strictly zoned communities separating socioeconomic classes along with the resources and degrees of access respectively available to them. Gordon Savičic, author of *Unpleasant Design,* attributes this disparity to the “...popularization of ‘trickle down’ economics by Margaret Thatcher, (where) governments often chose to invest in infrastructure for the rich, with the hope that this investment will gradually ‘trickle down’ to everyone.” (Savičic, 55) This is the same economic strategy promoted by Ronald Regan, a conservative and free market capitalist, who introduced a wave of policies that fundamentally benefit the wealthy at the expense of the poor.

Manifested in Public Space.

Inevitable conflict arises when the society of this privileged world encounters their far less fortunate counterparts in public space. Thus, the battleground of ideologies is set - because their very presence unsettles the sheltered realities that people of means often live. What this boils down to is ‘feeling uncomfortable.’ In *Brave New Neighborhoods: The Privatization of Public Space*, Margart Kohn captures the outrageousness of this line of thought by applying its logic to other situations.

> *My subjective discomfort is not necessarily a legitimate reason for prohibiting otherwise acceptable behavior. I may feel a certain class rage when I see a Prada bag, a Rolex*

> *watch, or a Lexus SUV but that does not mean that such objects are objectively harmful and should be banned or even excluded from ninety-five percent of the city center. Or to take a more serious example, major social transformations such as the civil rights movement would have been impossible if we had taken racist whites' feelings of resentment, hatred, and fear into account when deciding if equal treatment of minorities was legitimate.* (Kohn, 132-133)

It is certainly a practice regarding homeless populations. Although the direct parallel between citizenship and landownership has ceased to exist in the global west, its ethos has invaded our perceptions of a citizen's legitimacy. They conduct their private lives in public space, challenging bourgeoise preconceptions of what that space should be and its implications for those forced to live out their private lives on such a stage. I think Talmadge Wright describes their lack of agency perfectly in *New Urban Spaces and Cultural Representations: Social Imaginaries, Social Physical Space, and Homelessness,* observing that street people are "...living with 'spoiled identities ... categorized, inspected, dissected, and rendered mute in the public discourse about their future by those who have the power to enforce categorical distinctions." (Wright, 199) How is this power enforced, though? It is enacted through anti-homeless laws and hostile design techniques that aim to cleanse communally owned spaces of a specific group of people.

Arms of Control.

Hostile, or 'Unpleasant Design' as it is coined by Gordan Savičic, author of *Unpleasant Design,* is a design strategy by which elements of the built environment enact control on behavior. An obvious example of this would be the spike edifices atop buildings and even in front of them, be they nails, metal spikes, shards of glass, or sharp stones, designed inhospitably as possible for pigeons and people experiencing homelessness alike. Savičic takes the definition a step further, identifying that it not only enacts control over the physical environment to direct behavior, but does so in a targeted way. It is directed at specifically disenfranchised demographics, be they animal or human, often discouraging any form of congregation. (Savičic, 4) But design aimed at behavioral patterns is fundamentally responding to the effect, rather than the cause of a problem. Savičic cites other common examples hostile design like partitioned or irregular park benches (designed to discourage would-be sleepers) as well as strategic lighting, camera, and sound systems with designed aggression toward specific social groups. One of my two earliest HDHP concept designs responds to these anti-homeless benches. You can find them all throughout Toronto, as well as much of the world. Usually unassuming or even artistic facades are in fact quietly designed to disrupt or completely prevent anyone from lying down. It is in these instances that "...even though most of the problems derive from social incompatibilities, we observe a tendency toward outsourcing the problem to the so called 'silent agents.'" (Savičić, 6) But I think hostile design employs even more subversive tactics. Hostility in public space design is not always apparent as anti-homeless benches, anti-loitering mechanisms, and hostile building ventilation systems. Hostile design also operates in what's missing in public spaces – lacking restrooms, electricity, clean water, shade, seating, etc. In Christopher Giamarino's dissertation, *Planning 'Just' Public Space: Reimagining hostile designs through do-*

it-yourself urban design tactics by unhoused communities in Los Angeles, he names the distinction between these two arms of hostile design, referencing his professor Anastasia Loukaitou-Sideris' research in which she categorizes them as 'hard' and 'soft' controls.

> *Soft controls are designs of public spaces that simply do not provide facilities for unwanted groups, including benches, bathrooms, and shade, among other things or provide design elements that reduced their access—gates, walls, fences, above and below the street spaces, among other design features. Hard controls in privately-owned public spaces include CCTV monitoring, the presence of police and private security, and the enforcement of ordinances to displace groups like the unhoused.* (Giamarino, 32)

Anti-homeless laws are the next piece in this miserable puzzle. Discriminatory practices are not only coded into the built space, but into policy as well – laws. In the same manner as hostile design, anti-homeless laws target behavior. Ironically, this is a principal excuse used by its proponents, who claim that targeting specific behaviors is not targeting any specific group, but voluntary actions. (Mitchell, 202) That is a difficult lie to sell, especially when those laws pertain to the very spaces homeless people are forced into. Common examples of this kind of discriminatory public space law include anti-sleeping ordinances and no panhandling laws often enforced in high-density urban settings. A wealth of literature I'm reviewing cites numerous, early landmark instances. Santa Ana, California's 1992 'anti-camping ordinance outlawed sleeping in public spaces, often made punishable with jail time. (Michell, 205) Seattle's 1996 sidewalk ordinance ban made it illegal to sit or lay on sidewalks across major swaths of the city's downtown between 7 am and 9 pm. This law was challenged in *Roulette vs. The City of Seattle and* upheld in the interest of 'public safety.' In one of the most unapologetic instances of anti-homeless legislation I've read about, in 1997, Tempe, Arizona, passed a city-wide anti-urban camping ordinance that outlawed all forms of living in public spaces - parks, alleys, bus stops, plazas, the sidewalk. Enforcement of this city-wide ordinance extended beyond the police department. The City went so far as to contract private security companies or 'downtown ambassadors' to enforce their new laws. (Amster, 211) In 2001, the City of Tempe terminated its contract with TEAM, the private security firm, but the company was promptly "...employed by DMB Associates, a commercial development company with one of the largest private property stakes in downtown Tempe." (Amster, 211) In 2018, the original ordinance was amended and strengthened, and in 2025, the City of Tempe has yet again promised to crack down on its homeless population.

When I first began project research this past fall, I tried desperately to find examples of public spaces designed to accommodate some of the needs of homeless communities. This kind of public space design is nearly non-existent, at least not on the scale that I was hoping for. Two of the examples I believed I'd found were public parks that, at least at one point in their history, had taken more accommodating stances on homeless occupants. The first of these parks, Oppenheimer Park of Vancouver, has weighed enforcement and safety in the park with accommodations for the area's homeless population. The City has often allowed encampments to grow in a controlled fashion while maintaining site lines and lighting across the park to promote public safety. But in response to an out-of-control 'tent city' started in 2018, that had

grown to nearly two hundred structures by 2020, the park was cleared and all its residents, many of whom did not have access to other housing accommodations, were evicted.

I discovered a similar story in (formerly) Eddie Maestas Park of Denver, Colorado. Because of its proximity to a variety of charitable resources like the Denver Rescue Mission, Samaritan House, and the St. Francis Center, a triangular plot of land, a parkette, became a natural gathering place for a growing homeless population in Denver. A 2006 renovation of the space added elements to the parkette, designed to accommodate its homeless population – seating and shade, as well as service programming. By 2012, the effort to revitalize this troubled plot of land had failed as it became a hotspot for crime, littered with trash and needles. By 2013, Denver passed anti-camping laws, criminalizing encampment in wide swaths of the city's public space and pushing 'designated camping spaces' to isolated suburbs. Finally, in 2015, a metal fence was erected around the parkette, and the space was renovated again, becoming a community garden (for its residents with houses). I don't want to make excuses for the problem that Triangle Park became after its 2006 renovation, but the fact remains that the problem was confronted on a behavioral, site-specific level and merely pushed outside the public eye. These parks are a stage for social discourses that have become particularly one-sided since the popularization of anti-homeless laws and hostile design. Allen Gardens in western downtown Toronto is an example of this. It has simultaneously been a site providing sanctuary (with a degree of tolerance shown to certain structures), and access to amenities and programming, but has also systematically erased homeless encampments year after year from the park. Numerous parks across the greater Toronto area have encountered systematic clearings whenever encampment sizes reach a profile and size the City feels it cannot ignore. Dufferin Grove (my site of intervention) is one of those parks and, as I write this, under threat of being cleared[3].

Section Conclusion.

The persistence of such cruel control tactics mystifies me, especially when they are proven to be misfires rooted in bigotry and made to protect the fragile worldviews of a selective 'public.' As early as 1999, the National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty (NLCHP), that published *Out of Sight? Out of Mind? Anti-Homeless Laws, Litigation, and Alternatives in 50 United States Cities,* found that anti-homeless laws as well as their enforcement act as "...barriers to self-sufficiency, unduly burdening the criminal justice system, wasting scarce municipal resources, and subjecting cities to legal liabilities and expenses" (NLCHP, 1999; Mitchell, 166) in an extensive, multi-city study with aggregate data spanning years. I think continued support for these laws is telling in the face of evidence that they do nothing to really solve the problem. The problem – at least its causes – are not the concern of a capitalist. This kind of policy has an ideological title: revanchism, coined by Neil Smith (1996) in The New Urban Frontier: *Gentrification and the Revanchist City*. It is usually a nationalist, conservative will with a political

[3] See relevant local news demonstrating the tension existing in this 'debate': Residents spar at City of Toronto consultation on new approach to ending Dufferin Grove homeless encampment - TorontoToday.ca

manifestation reclaiming any sort of territorial loss. In the western urban context, it is a "...revenge-themed urban policy regime that shifted from service and shelter provision toward increased policing of the unhoused to displace them from urban spaces." (Giamarino, 24) Behavior is thus controlled in public spaces to the point that homeless populations are unable to live in places of last resort without breaking the law. Survival itself is criminalized in these newly ordered urban landscapes that prioritized their appeal to capital.

> *Anti-homeless legislation, by seeking to annihilate the spaces in which homeless people must live – by seeking, that is, to so regulate the public space of the city that there is literally no room for homeless people – recreate the public sphere as intentionally exclusive, as a spere in which the legitimate public only includes those who have a place governed by private property rules to call their own. Landed property thus again becomes a prerequisite for legitimate citizenship. Denied sovereignty, homeless people are reduced to the status of children...* (Mitchell, 183)

It is here, in this ethereal redefinition of the 'public,' created by anti-homeless laws and hostile architecture, that homeless people lose their agency as citizens. This loss of full citizenship is to be considered in context with the fundamental position of weakness homeless communities already find themselves. Already at the mercy of the elements and reliant on good will, homeless communities experience what can only be described as a social death - being denied the legality of living in even the most meager sense of the word.

Power in Public Spaces.

The Erasure of Space.

It is through public space that the erasure of homeless people is enacted. Hostile design as well as anti-homeless legislation target the behavior of specific social groups in the public domain. Homeless communities are, in turn, forced by the very system imposing this control on that public space. The system of domination is rooted in urban 'revanchism,' a term revisited by Don Mitchell in his influential book, *The Right to the City: Social Justice and the Fight for Public Space*. He cites urbanist and anthropologist, Neil Smith, in Smith's 1996 analysis of class warfare levied by oppressive laws rooted in right-wing revenge for advancements in social welfare programs and initiatives enjoyed in the sixties and seventies, also noting the wealth of 'liberal urbanists' participating in the practice across dozens of traditionally leftist, urban enclaves. (Mitchell, 163) He observes that revanchism has even expanded beyond its traditionally conservative origins, transforming into a relatively mainstream urban ideology, "...and has even taken on the cast of common sense. It is a powerful movement reacting to what seems to be a powerful set of trends shaping urban areas, trends that are organized under the capacious banner of 'globalization.'" (Mitchell, 164) These urban centers enacting its creed are the bases of liberalism. And yet, city after city becomes a testament to the unequaled influence that the global capitalist system has on public space.

I've grown up thinking of globalization as a social, economic inevitability, but Mitchell considers it an ideology as well. He's lamenting the changed relationship to space that middle- and upper-class members of western society have undergone. With the power and resources to easily traverse space, physically and digitally, the purposes of physical spaces are transformed in the face of digitization, high-speed travel, and money. This space ideology infers that 'image is everything,' and that space should be built to maximize economic investment in a globalized economy that has moved past the age of site specificity. (Mitchel, 165-166) The intense competition in urban centers encouraged by global capitalism means that space is even more intensely coveted as an opportunity to attract capital. Image is everything, and the commons of cities are under threat.

Athenian Democracy was the first form of societal governance. Although it originally excluded women, slaves, and non-citizens, and was sharply divided by class, its foundationally inclusive principals of legislature via community forum have informed the notions of modern democracy and citizenship on which western societies are founded. Core parts of this democratic identity include communal participation in decision-making processes as well as shared ownership over, and welfare of, the commons – the cultural or natural resources belonging to the whole of a community. The public spaces in cities are commons. Margaret Kohn quantifies a broad categorization of public space as it exists in modern democracies using three criteria: government-owned (a government owned by the people), freely accessible to all, and facilitating communication and human interaction. (Kohn, 9) Shared ownership is not so simple in a modern world driven by hyper-privatization. In fact, many modern public spaces subject to the arms of control we've witnessed are employed by anti-homeless legislation and hostile design to erase the agency and livelihoods of a targeted social group. Public spaces are not always for everyone. In *Constructing Inequality: City Spaces and the Architecture of Citizenship,* Susan Bickford identifies mechanisms of control like anti-homeless benches and anti-panhandling laws as powerful controls of behavior and responsible in part for self-reinforcing belief systems likewise encoded into the environment by dominant groups that stifle the voices of marginal populations like homeless people.

> *From Bentham to Foucault and beyond, social theorists have recognized the role of architecture in constructing subjectivity. But the built environment also constructs intersubjectivity, and it is the form of intersubjective relations currently being generated and entrenched that is especially pernicious: the world is being constructed, quite literally, in ways that adversely affect how we regard politics and who we recognize as fellow citizens.* (Bickford, 356)

The environment promoted by the homogenization and sterilization of space erases the rights and safety of certain citizens to maintain the illusory comfort of others. Physical spaces in this context act not only as physical directors of behavior, but also serve to promote subjective truths, often hailing from a single ideological position and adopted as the status quo. With their adoption, democratic politics begin to erode, "particularly when we become so accustomed to the walls that we forget they are there, for then we begin to imagine that the world consists only of those inside our gates." (Bickford, 363) This would be the trap reinforced by intersubjectivity

imposed by public spaces. We have already identified a pattern of subversive privatization of public space in cities like Seattle, Tempe, Vancouver, Denver, and Toronto, but as I'm sure you're aware, it plagues more than just a few cities. R. Van Deusen conducts an ethnographic analysis of a particularly relevant case in Syracuse, New York, in *Public Space Design as Class Warfare: Urban Design, the 'right to the City' and the Production of Clinton Square, Syracuse, NY.* The study focuses on the designer's role in "...producing exclusionary public spaces, or they figure as entrepreneurs that complement economic renewal schemes through beautification measures that bring business and jobs to the city." (Van Deusen, 149) I think this paper is especially relevant to my research and its broader topic because it acknowledges the critical and often antithetical role that designers have come to play in shaping space. The utopian ideals that we have classically shared for cities have been replaced by a hyper-fixation on 'aesthetic' and inevitably, on profit. Since it's renovation in the 1960s, Clinton Square in Syracuse's historic downtown had become a gathering place for the city's homeless community and drug users. The tree canopy in the square and erasure of previous sight lines fostered this perceived degradation of space. To 'revitalize' the square and return it to a facilitator of commerce, the City began renovating in the 1990s, debuting its makeover in 2001. With sight lines reinstated, trees removed, and street vendors strategically controlled, much of the appeal the square held for homeless people was lost. How was this exodus of the 'illegitimate public' justified? On the basis of promoting economic growth in Syracuse's downtown. (Van Deusen, 150-157) The common understanding that there exists an 'illegitimate' and 'legitimate' public is a dangerous and sadly, popular social understanding today. This prioritizes order and aesthetic of public space over true inclusivity and democracy, messy though it may be. French Marxist philosopher, Henri Lefebvre, an inspiration to me and other designers similarly concerned with social equity in 'the right to the city,' echoes this ideal in his collection of work: *The Production of Space (1974).* He compares cities to 'Oeuvres' or 'works' in which all its citizens participate, and the heterogeneity of space is upheld by inclusive public design where the rights of inhabitants are a conversation instead of castrated by executive decisions. Sounds nice, right? Both he and Van Deusen recognize the design of space and of policy in the public realm for what they are: producing new precedents of public space and the respective rights of citizens.

Equitable Public Space.

We've seen public space scrubbed of equitable access to appeal to the comfort of specific groups at the expense of others. But how does vibrant public space operate and through what means is it achievable? It's characterizable as facilitating a multiplicity of perspectives, especially "...marginal or dissenting views that are underrepresented in the corporate-dominated media," (Kohn, 147) and by blurring the lines of classes and of the space's function. Public space can alienate and make certain types of interactions and alternative social groups a rarity; equally, it has the potential to foster new kinds of interactions and the promotion of a multiplicity of viewpoints. It isn't as if reform is achievable overnight, or there exists a quick-fix to such a complex problem that we've witnessed hard-coded into lives by law and design. But as Susan Bickford points out by the same logic that "...construction of social space makes certain

interactions rare, so can it create and foster better interactions-ones better for a democratic polity." (Bickford, 371) A reconfiguring of public space and of the agency robbed so often from the homeless populations living in that space, requires a messy, conversational approach – it requires interjection into the space, demonstrating in the spaces – acting in such a way that a reconsideration of the constructs of the space is critically evaluated. Only then can an equitable redistribution of resources attentive to the voices of its most marginalized inhabitants occur.

Christopher Giamarino, an urban planner at UCLA, documenting do-it-yourself design responses employed by homeless communities to hostile design and policy across greater Los Angeles, makes a series of insightful observations about what is required to transform such hostile space. More specifically, he points to major role that grassroots movements, independent of official sponsorships, assume in the refiguring of equitable public space that provides public services and human necessities like restrooms, access to food services, shelter, and medical care. "These processes and practices can be achieved through design, spatial occupation, and protest, and can be done in partnership with formal institutions but usually take place due to a lack of assistance from policymakers and service providers." (Giamarino, 23). While collaborative efforts to construct equitable public spaces are indeed possible, they are few and far between.

Try as I might to extend some form of partnership, collaboration, or even acknowledgement to a variety of formal institutions like the Park & Rec Dep., Toronto Shelter & Support Services (TSSS), Councilwoman Alejandra Bravo (of the Toronto's 9th Ward), and even a couple advocacy groups for Toronto's homeless communities, the responses I fielded were either lackluster and dismissive, or nonexistent. It is thus, even more important to recognize the power to affect public space through grassroots organization and execution. People's Park in Berkley, California, illustrates the social conversations achievable through unofficially organized movements. This landmark battleground of public space rights made its first waves in 1969 as a site of protest of the Israeli/Palestinian conflict raging at the time. An abandoned lot on university property had been transformed by the city and student community into a beautiful and green, if not slightly chaotic, public space. The State governor at the time, Ronald Reagan, pressured the university to curb the development of such space, erecting a massive fence around the make-shift park. In response to the congregation of around three thousand protestors and student activists peacefully assembled in People's Park, two hundred riot cops violently gassed the gathering and brutalized attendees. This had a national fallout and resulted in days of city-wide rioting. A similar story unfolded in 1991 in response to university plans to build volleyball courts in the existing park. "By taking public space, social movements represent themselves to larger audiences. Conversely, representatives of mainstream institutions argue that public space must be orderly and safe in order to function properly." (Mitchell,152) People's Park, regardless of its controversial history, is illustrative of the ability to incite societal conversations outside the walls of official sponsorship.

Section Conclusion.

In the case of homelessness, fighting for such conversations is imperative. A refiguring of public space has the power to transform livelihoods in homeless communities by recognizing "...different claims to and activities in public space, and provide compassionate landscapes for social and political discourse, conviviality, and opportunities for service provision and transition into housing without criminalization." (Giamarino, 27) To achieve such results, homeless people must be given the agency they are denied. It is far too uncommon for public space to be interrogated or reformed using the voices of marginalized, stigmatized social groups. There is no secret formula for creating equitable space but there are several attractive places to begin pursuing such a goal. Low and Iveson (2016) set forth five guiding propositions in *Equitable Cities: Propositions for More Just Urban Public Spaces,* to creating such ideal urban landscapes: the redistribution of access and availability of resources in public space; the cognizance of a multiplicity of perspectives and their accommodation in public space; the facilitation of interaction across a variety of social groups in public spaces; the practice of care for the space itself; and procedural fairness and the practice of inclusivity in future public space design projects. (Low & Iveson, 11) While part of what the authors encourage is indeed material change, what they are really proposing is that public space and people encourage understanding and facilitate interaction in addition to enacting material changes. Designers are confronted with a choice in how we think about people. Margaret Kohn broaches the choice in an interpersonal context, creating a 'good and evil' construct which people need to choose between:

> *We are faced with two different ways of relating to strangers. One is marginalization. This is the strategy pursued by many shopping malls, gated communities, and business improvement districts, which are structured to prevent unsettling encounters with people who cast doubt upon our favored narratives of community and equality. The other is understanding, the capacity that "makes it bearable for us to live with other people, strangers forever, in the same world, and makes it possible for them to bear with us.* (Kohn, 159)

This is also a choice that designers must make. Our social and moral judgements should be clarified before any design process begins and used to weigh the moral efficacy of the project. Will your work exist on the side of social good?

What Kind of Designer am I?

"It is the prime function of the designer to solve problems. My view is that this means that the designer must also be more sensitive in realizing what problems exist." (Papanek, 159)

My review of homelessness and its position within the politics of public space has brought me back to how I define design. What kind of responsibility do I have, given the established relationship between design and the power it exerts on space and people? Design objects, be

they graphic, industrial, architectural, or otherwise, are contributors to culture virtue of the values they embody and propagate. As it stands, design is by and large, a mouthpiece of the dominant economic system and despite its incredible range of applications, is “unambiguously a service industry bonded to the economic status quo.” (Fry, 75) This means that we are culpable, or complicit in man-made disasters. I know that sounds dramatic, but in regard to wicked problems like educational disparity, global warming, and the homelessness crisis, it’s undeniable. Victor Papanek made this point decades ago, pointing out that “If we have seen that the designer is powerful enough (by affecting all of man’s tools and environment) to put murder on a mass production basis, we have also seen that this imposes great moral and social responsibilities [on design].” (Papanek, 83) So, yes, it should be a relevant – even pressing – concern of every designer, regardless of their field, to ask themselves what their work should say. I’ve prioritized this introspection into what design means in the HDHP project, because “What is regarded as the designer's style, then, is sometimes more than just a personal preference for certain types of visual forms, materials, or techniques; it is a characteristic way of seeing possibilities...” (Buchanan, 13) that exist in designs – our ‘styles’ are our values.

Design Justice.

A traditional understanding of design positions it as a methodological problem. It is the role of designers to analyze, synthesize, and formulate solutions to these problems. But what about complex ones? Homelessness isn’t something that’s solvable with a single policy change or increasing attention to providing shade or access to city water in public settings. It’s worked its way through the fabric of culture, government, and space. It is an indeterminate problem and begs for a refiguring of how design is approached. One of the first advocates for this revolution was Victor Papanek. In the preface of *Design for the Real World*, he proclaims that “Design must become an innovative, highly creative, cross-disciplinary tool responsive to the true needs of men. It must be more research-oriented, and we must stop defiling the earth itself with poorly designed objects and structures.” (Papanek, xxii) This cry for a systemic overhaul of the industry went widely ignored beyond interested circles in 1971 but has gained traction amid a wider societal recognition of the need for responsible design, becoming somewhat of a manifesto for its practitioners. It suggests a more equitable world is achievable if only designers can refocus their efforts toward what the world and its people actually need. Perhaps the most significant part of Papanek’s argument is that design is a universal practice. This ties directly to the first point I made in this paper: Design – the systematic organization of chaos – is something every human does, even if they don’t know it. All people are designers, not just architects, industrial designers, and the host of other official professions that categorize legitimate and illegitimate design. It is a gatekept profession with global, societal ramifications. Sasha Constanza-Chock, professor, activist, and author of *Design Justice,* introduces her concept of ‘Design Justice’ as the alternative to the commonly exclusionary nature in design processes. She also sites Papanek’s work, acknowledging the tremendous, and often brushed-over impact design has on our realities, and in the same breath, notes that of all the impacted groups, those “...most adversely affected by design decisions—about visual culture, new technologies, the planning of

our communities, or the structure of our political and economic systems—tend to have the least influence on those decisions and how they are made." (Constanza-Chock, 6) That isn't design justice, it exacerbates complex problems like homelessness. Design Justice reimagines the design process, centering "...people who are normally marginalized by design, and uses collaborative, creative practices to address the deepest challenges our communities face." (Constanza-Chock, 6) This evolved notion of design goes by a few names: empathic design, inclusive design, responsible design - you get the point. And what they all ask for is a reframing of our work around people. I found the host of considerations posed by Constaza-Chock, concerning designer's reimagination of their projects especially directive.

> *What values do we encode and reproduce in the objects and systems that we design? Who gets to do design? How do we move toward community control of design processes and practices? What stories do we tell about how things are designed? How do we scope design challenges and frame design problems? Where do we do design? How do we make design sites accessible to those who will be most impacted by design processes? What design sites are privileged and what sites are ignored or marginalized? How do we teach and learn about design justice?* (Constanza-Chock, 24)

Design suffers from a lack of ideological pluralism that only a broader consideration for who we include in the design process can assuage. What I'm really doing, and what Prof. Constanza-Chock is really asking of designers, is to adopt social justice values. Sure there's a political bias in including social minorities in design processes and in working "...against the unequal distribution of design's benefits and burdens, and to attempt to understand and counter white supremacy, cisheteropatriarchy, capitalism, ableism, and settler colonialism, or what Black feminist thought terms the matrix of domination," (Constanza-Chock, 68) but deep down, we all know that true equity in society and governance is 'the right thing to do.' Not only is confronting the matrix of domination a just crusade, but it also represents an aggregate of minorities and oppressed social groups that are together, a silent majority of the population. Homeless communities are certainly a part of this silent majority and equally deserving of our advocacy as any of its members. I would argue they need it more than most.

If 'Design Justice' is the theoretical approach, empathetic design is its application. Empathetic design is guided by four principals of approach (1) practicing empathy – intimate research into understanding to the user's perspective, ensuring a base of understanding that will accurately represent the needs and desires of the user; (2) using participatory design techniques – engaging product users as collaborators in the design process to ensure a more holistic result; (3) embracing experimentation and feedback - facilitating the active generation of ideas throughout the design process; and (4) evaluating project success based more on user satisfaction rather than economic gain. (Lauche, Postma, Stappers, 32) Though the development of terminology surrounding 'Design Justice' is still in its infancy, its practice is not new. Rae Bridgman's 1994-1998 case study of a government subsidized, communal housing project begun in the late eighties and early nineties here in Toronto is a great example of the practice. In *The Architecture of Homelessness and Utopian Pragmatics,* Bridgman analyzes the projects as exemplary of Constanza-Chock's 'Design Justice.' StreetCity, opened in the winter

of 1988, retrofitted a Canada Postal Service warehouse as a low-cost housing alternative for the city's homeless community. The project was founded on the ideas of a group of seven homeless community members, formerly homeless, and shelter staffers, as a utopian, communal housing model for people experiencing chronic homelessness. There was special attention in StreetCity given to rehabilitation and user empowerment, specifically between design of the built environment and social organization. This should remind you of the power relationship between design and behavior discussed earlier in this paper. To this point, Bridgman observes that "...the built environment reflects certain values and in turn reinforces those in a somewhat circular fashion." (Bridgman, 50) StreetCity was founded in a wealth of knowledge by virtue of its early, principal collaborators, consistently including its target population as valuable members of the design team, and contracting residents to build StreetCity 2.0: Strachan House, considering the first StreetCity's impending closure in 1997. Communal empowerment was also central to the project's mission, using its transitional model to help residents find permanent housing solutions and entrusting community governance and organization to its residents. Empowerment in this context should be understood as "...involving a process of not just individuals, but also groups mobilizing for purposes of creating social structural change to benefit oppressed people." (Bridgman, 59) Through the agency created for residents of StreetCity and Strachan House, "The marker of marginalized, isolated, alienated identity, "on the street," has been transformed into a powerful vehicle for the growth of a supportive community, a community ever in flux..." (Bridgman 59) Sadly, the province's funds allocated to subsidized, transitional housing projects were finite, and the funding that the project did receive had to be fought for tooth and nail. Nonetheless, the project challenged preconceptions wider society has toward homeless communities as 'cases' and instead, repositioned a community as successful members of a collective, collaborative project. Although StreetCity was only made possible as a nonprofit project subsidized by the provincial government, Bridgman notes that:

> *...without the experiment, without taking the risk of offering those who have experienced the extremes of homelessness a chance to recoup a sense of hope, without bringing to life that which was a wish, without "[disrupting] . . . what. . . society [understands] as the real and the natural" (Holston 315, quoted at the beginning of this article), there would be no inspiration for others to take action, and to build further upon the foundations of what more could be done."* (Bridgman, 66)

Indeed, the bravery to experiment mentioned by Bridgman is a key characteristic of empathetic design techniques, of Design Justice. Without the precedent created by StreetCity and similar works, what would designers working in the interest of social good build their research on? This is a big part of my own motivational matrix in the HDHP project. In the face of systemic barriers, bureaucratic processes, and a lack of funding allocated to socially responsible work, it is easy to feel that your efforts amount to nothing, which is never the case in social justice work. Resignation and inaction are not an option in the fight for people's social wellbeing.

The Critical Speculative Approach.

In addition to adopting a 'Design Justice' ideology, I want to frame my work as speculative design that not only imagines alternative solutions to some of the challenges confronted by homeless communities in public spaces but interrogates the status quo of representation and equity they are afforded in these spaces. Design's power as a driver of social conversations is rooted in its physicality as opposed to "...mere verbal or symbolic argument – the separation of words and things, or theory and practice that remains a source of disruption and confusion in contemporary culture. Argument in design thinking moves toward the concrete interplay and interconnection of signs, things, actions, and thoughts." (Buchanan, 20) Recognizing this extra agency that design holds as a discursive tool is essential in using it to affect human behaviors and social concepts. Anthony Dunne and Fiona Raby's book, *Speculative Everything: Design, Fiction, and Social Dreaming,* addresses how this approach to design might be used as an alternative way to confront complex problems as opposed to the traditional problem-solution orientation that designers are tempted to take. Dunne and Raby point out that as we realize "...many of the challenges we face today are unfixable and that the only way to overcome them is by changing our values, beliefs, attitudes, and behavior....one is to use design as a means of speculating how things could be— speculative design." (Dunne & Raby, 2) Speculative design is a futuring version of critical design, concentrating on scientific and technological concepts. (Malpass, 66) It's also normally centered around encouraging discourse around wicked problems and how we position ourselves in relation to those issues. Wicked problems are so wicked because of their complex societal roots as well as their being manifested in the physical environment. Speculative design operates in space between the probable and plausible futures – the preferable, reimagining an alternative design response/object of the not-too-distant future to inspire and trigger new conversations around the design work. I think Dunne and Raby say it best: "Critical Design uses speculative design proposals to challenge narrow assumptions, preconceptions and givens about the role products play in everyday life." (Dunne & Raby, FAQ)

Design is often made the arm of establishment because of the critical role it plays in the construction of public space and inevitably, its politics. It is simultaneously a key architect in creating Henri Lefebvre's 'rights to the city' through its shaping of space. But simply using the generalization 'design,' does little to affect our understanding of how design practices might achieve an interrogation and reform of the current order. Designs function beyond their physical utilities because they are also the bearers of messages and shapers of norms. In *Criticism and Function in Critical Design Practice*, Matt Malpass positions Critical Design as an instrument of potential social reform, arguing that:

> *By embracing a concept of function beyond practical functionality, these critical designers strive for an extended role for the designer beyond being an agent of capitalism. In their extended role, designers use their functional capacity as designers, still drawing on their training and practice as designers but re-orienting these skills from a focus on practical ends to a focus on design work that functions symbolically, culturally, existentially, and discursively.* (Malpass, 60)

This denomination of design is commonly relegated to the status of ‘designart.’ It’s often cast as artwork playing with place, function, and style of art by fusing its often exaggerated, exploratory nature with architecture, furniture, and graphic design. But, to acknowledge the power that public space design is capable of, one is obligated to recognize as well, the power design holds beyond its most immediate, physical application. Dunne and Raby seem to agree. In fact, their argument is anything well designed is critical design, simplifying the rationality to classical design solution to a problem, but this time, a complex one - “Critical design applies this to larger more complex issues. Critical design is critical thought translated into materiality. It is about thinking through design rather than through words and using the language and structure of design to engage people.” (Dunne & Raby, 35) Designs operating on more than ‘practical functionality’ were employed in the built environment long before designers began inventing a plethora of terms to subdivide ‘Design.’ I think Critical Design – based on your own personal definition – exists on a grayscale, equally capable of producing ‘designart’ as it is of utility and social impact. It is similarly capable of engaging people in a plethora of ways: “raising awareness; satire and critique; inspiration, reflection, highbrow entertainment; aesthetic explorations; speculation about possible futures; and as a catalyst for change.” (Dunne & Raby 33) Malpass makes a further clarification between well-executed Critical Design and its useless counterpart (designart). He echoes Dunne and Raby’s idea that critical designs need to exist near the ordinary to be effective, remarking that “It is only when read as design that critical designs can suggest that the everyday as we know it could be different that things could change.” (Malpass, 63)

If critical, speculative design is to be used in the name of social progress, it doesn’t serve to wait for an industry commission that will rarely present itself, if ever. For the time being, this is a kind of design that exists fundamentally outside the design industry. It’s on designers to work with other industry professionals, independently, or with "organizations focused on society in the broadest sense, not just business. Like architects, designers could take this on as a profession using some of our time for more civic purposes. This is also a role designers in academies could take on.” (Dunne & Raby, 31) Professors and students at universities exist in a bubble, protecting their work from market pressure and thus have the rare freedom to experiment and speculate on alternative, more equitable futures. Victor Papanek thought so, as well. In *Design for the Real World,* many of his documented design projects are conducted via educational institutions and in collaboration with students. One such project was the prototyping and production of one-transistor radios that didn’t require an external power source or a battery. Papanek and his student, George Seegers, developed these radios for an impoverished community in Indonesia. This community in turn began decorating their new simple utilitarian devices with felt, glass, and shells, even augmenting the can-radio with a hook to hold it. Papanek embraced the modifications, hailing it as a welcome personalization feature to his and his student’s simple design - “This a new way of making design both more participatory and more responsive to people in the Third World.” (Papanek, 192) Another project Papanek and a student oversaw was the codesign of packable homes for a First Nation tribe with a deep tradition and religion connected to the construction of their homes. The student developed a culturally appropriate shelter prototype in with the tribe, and in doing so,

> *He has exposed (a) the needs of the group to society. (b) the lack of knowledge on the part of society regarding the needs of the group, or the very existence of the group. (c) the cynical indifference of the governmental power structure and industry to most of the genuine needs of people. (d) the inability of traditional design, as it is taught, to cope with genuine social problems.* (Papanek, 318)

Perhaps one of the designs most informing my work is the *Homeless Vehicle Project* (1994) by Polish artist and designer Krysztof Wodiczko. The design is, as its name implies, responding to the urban homelessness crisis in the form of a simple vehicle fashioned out of a cart, simultaneously providing shelter and can-collecting capacity. Wodiczko had originally intended the discursive/critical element of his mobile pod to be an 'official' tool laying claim to a public space that people experiencing homelessness are normally not afforded, but it came to function in an even more multifaceted way. Not only did it underline its user's living conditions, but it also served to facilitate interaction with the public. This was something Wodiczko homeless participants embraced, becoming ambassadors and storytellers for the project and of their plights.

> *They testified as existential and political witnesses to a city undergoing rapid transformation. Communicating their often-traumatic pasts and present ways of life was ordinarily a challenging task; however, the Vehicles acted as a catalyst for speech. Through its design, a 'scandalizing functionalism,' 1 the Homeless Vehicle communicated a great deal of the conditions and techniques of homeless survival.* (Wodiczko, 295)

Section Conclusion.

My project, *Humane Design for Homeless Populations (HDHP),* is interested in this same level of discourse. HDHP employs two conceptual designs – an emergency sleeping pod and a public charging station to operate as a form of design futuring of alternative redistribution of resources to homeless communities, as a potential public design canvas of expression for a marginalized community, and as platform giving social agency in the design process to a populace normally robbed of the opportunity. My methodological approach adopts Constanza-Chock's 'Design Justice' as the moral framework guiding my intervention. I do so with adherence to the four rules of empathetic design: practicing empathy through the design process, engaging my target audience as design experts, embracing feedback and open-endedness, and by determining projected success based on human impact. In addition to HDHP's empathetic design approach, I aim to leverage my work's critical speculative potential to encourage discussion and social reform surrounding stigma and misconceptions about urban homelessness, by harnessing rhetorical, semiotic, critical, and sociocultural strategies in the design process to take full advantage of the agency in my work. *Humane Design for Homeless Populations* should be informative to fellow designers interested in understanding what their work should mean. It adds to the discourse surrounding the complex relationship between the power vested in the design of public space, the epidemic of modern urban homelessness, and the ethical duty in the design

profession to affect change. There is no better time than the present to act for social good, especially in this very moment when the fabric of western society walks a tightrope between bigotry and understanding.

Working Process Journal.

Barriers, Scope, and Evolution.

As I document my project progress in the eleventh hour of our semester's timeline, *Humane Design for Homeless Populations* (HDHP) finds itself in a state of profound open-endedness. I know I just claimed that (in adherence to the four principles of empathetic design) I would embrace a continuous design process and project open-endedness but not a stunted one. I haven't yet had the chance to conduct codesign sessions, engage with any members of Dufferin Grove's homeless community, much less interpret any data, receive feedback, finalize, or interpret the first iteration of my design process. I suppose it's an ugly look to point fingers when it's your work that you're dissatisfied with or at least dissatisfied with where it finds itself at the end of March. But it remains that external factors throughout my thesis process have fundamentally retarded its progress. A degree of this is because mine is a design project interrogating the public realm and working with one of society's most at-risk groups. It is nonetheless disheartening, coming to terms with the wall of bureaucracy and lack of interest I've confronted through this past fall and winter in attempting to collaborate with any organizations outside the university setting. These include Toronto's Parks & Rec Department, Toronto's Shelter & Support Services, city council members, and even two fellow anti-homeless initiatives. At least this was a handicap that I partially expected – design for the public is always messy and frustrating (just as it has the capacity to be incredibly rewarding). There were also internal factors delaying its timely progress, one of these being the chaos and tardiness characterizing my search for advisors, only beginning regular meetings in late September and early October. This is something other programs in the School of Graduate Studies, like Digital Futures, helped their students iron out at the outset of their summers. Perhaps most damning was the significant sloth of my Research Ethics Board (REB) process. The REB is the organization responsible for reviewing research efficacy and preparedness of proposals to conduct research involving human participants in the post-secondary setting. Ethical reviews tend to take longer when project proposals involve at-risk populations like a homeless community. However, my REB application, which I began in the early fall of 2024, only saw its conclusion in late February of this year, a mere few weeks before my exhibition in early March. I had hoped to exhibit work a little more finished than a project 'in-progress.' I'm going to cut my complaints short here. I hope this critique at least provides a basis of understanding as to why my design process is not actualized and analysis of the effects of my work are nonexistent.

Although HDHP was first imaged in a precursory project in the winter of my first year in Toronto, I only decided to pursue it as thesis work toward the end of the following spring. At its outset in the summer of 2024, my research of urban homelessness and space politics was as specific as a vague resolution to 'use design to confront urban homelessness as a wicked problem

somewhere in Toronto,' and I plunged into my research without any kind of defined project scope. Making meaningful progress in design projects before you define the scale of your intervention is next to impossible, and my summer was limited to blindly trying to put an REB proposal together, still unaware that the ROMEO portal even existed or that I could have logged in and looked at the application questions.

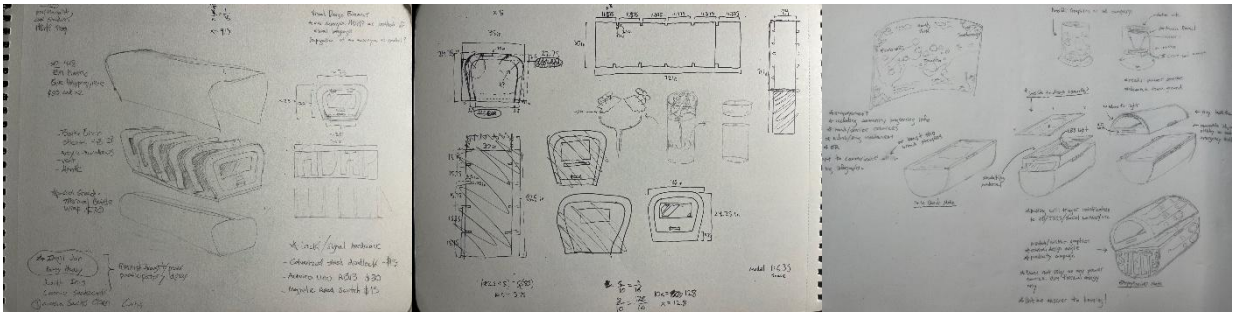
Concept designs (Dec. 2023) – comfortable bench inflatable & street vent warming station.

HDHP Mind Map.

It was only when I was assigned to my advisors in September that I had a soundboard for my ideas. I think it was then that I understood the full value of having someone knowledgeable with whom to discuss my work. My primary advisor was able to help me focus my scope, assuming a site-specific interrogation, and encouraged me to utilize Figma as an organizational and thinking tool. What began as an exercise to identify key parties' vested interest in public spaces, has become my whiteboard, including a plethora of links to statistical information, bibliographic

resources, notes, case studies, lists, photographic documentation, etc. Because my understanding of the project evolved to such a degree by crafting my REB and research gathering process, this digital whiteboard has become a live testimony to the development of my relationship with design. By November, the mind map had developed enough to narrow down the specific design interventions I would make into which public space. As I've indicated, my ultimate decision to work within Dufferin Grove Park was made based on my preexisting connection with the place. Otherwise, the decision was arbitrary. The greater Toronto area has no shortage of homeless encampments in constant danger of being cleared. It isn't a story limited to one park, but confronting the erasure of truly public space is far more accessible on a case-by-case basis. Even if I'm not responding to every instance of injustice, the manner of my response is a framework for approaching the wicked problem that can be applied in similar scenarios. Because my lack of REB approval barred me from gathering any user data before the research application was submitted/reviewed, I was forced to use my own inferences and existing understanding of the hostilities and access deficits facing homeless communities to inform the nature of my design interventions. I chose an emergency sleeping shelter as the first of these concept designs as a potential protective measure against brutal winters that claim many lives of people experiencing homelessness across Toronto. What this pod is interrogating is a public safety issue deserving of attention. The second concept design is a public charging station and hotspot for mobile devices. Most people experiencing homelessness have cellphones; what they don't have are readily accessible power sources or data plans giving them access to the internet. The internet is critical in constructing a person's agency today. We just aren't as aware of that because access to electricity and to Wi-Fi or cellular data isn't something most people in the western world need to worry about.

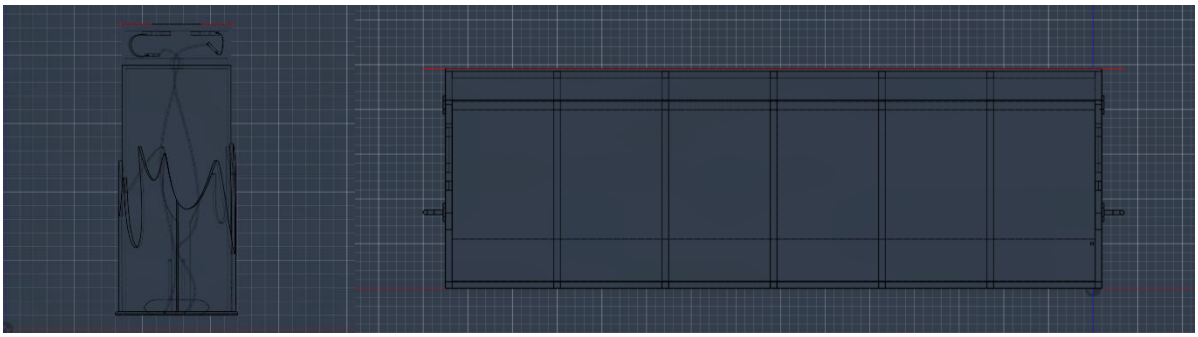
The Design Process (Thus Far).



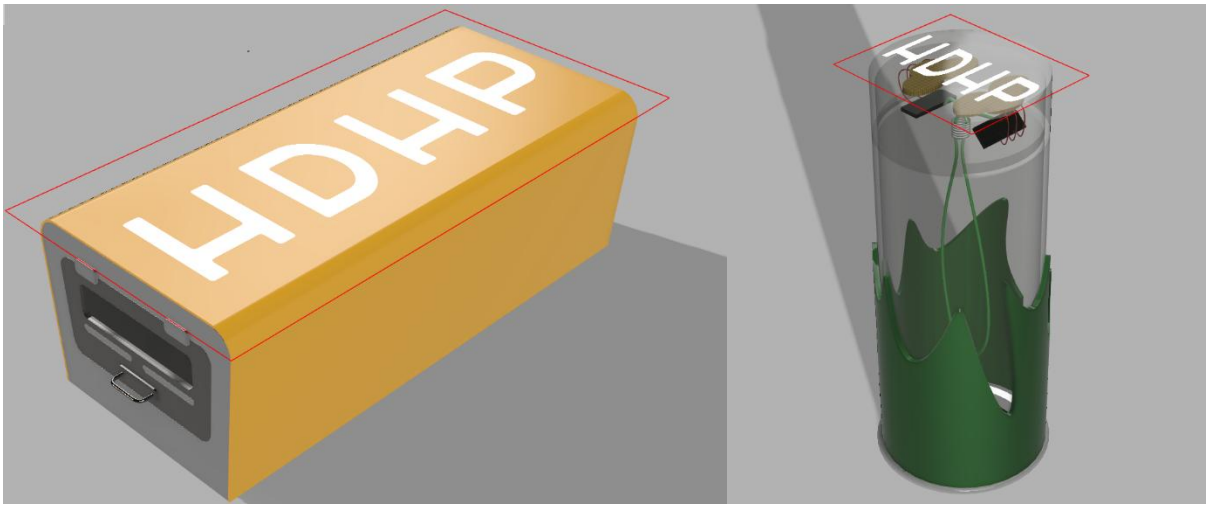
Preliminary technical sketches – emergency sleeping capsule & public charging station.

My process always begins with sketching. Before committing any of my ideas to a CAD program, much less physical production, I like to thoroughly hash out what I'm going to do on paper, take dimensions, and conduct thorough material and production process inquiries to measure what I'm capable of. This part of the design process is essential to developmental success. To that point, it's a good idea to iterate through the idea a few times on paper before translating it into more permanent forms of development. In the next part of my process, I copy

my ideas into a sleeker, more exact 3D model. It's an opportunity to not only refine the aesthetics of the work, but also to dimension my designs with an exactitude lending themselves to physical fabrication.

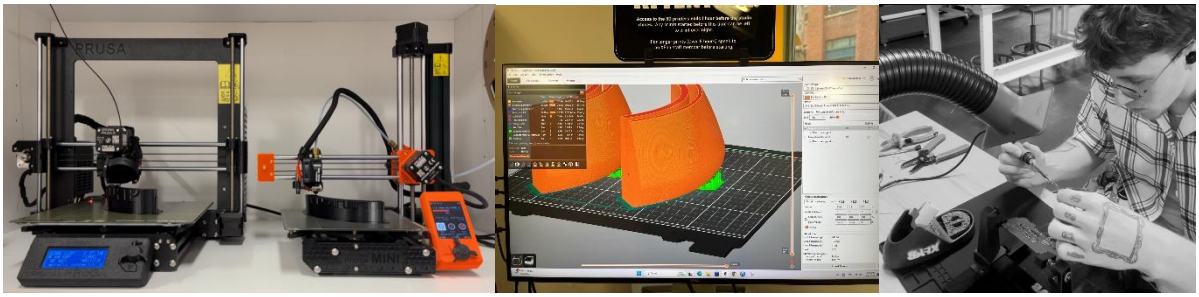


Profile Views sleeping capsule & charging station prototype CAD models.



Concept designs (Dec. 2024) – emergency sleeping capsule & public charging station.

Other designers will know that one of the most time-consuming parts of the fabrication process is allocating the materials. Even though my initial fabrications are conceptual works and not intended for actual use (partially because I don't have the industrial resources to produce them on my own and partially because the City would likely send me a cease and desist order if I tried to employ them in public space without its approval), my prototypes were labor-intensive and represent a wide range of material requirements as well as a significant cost.



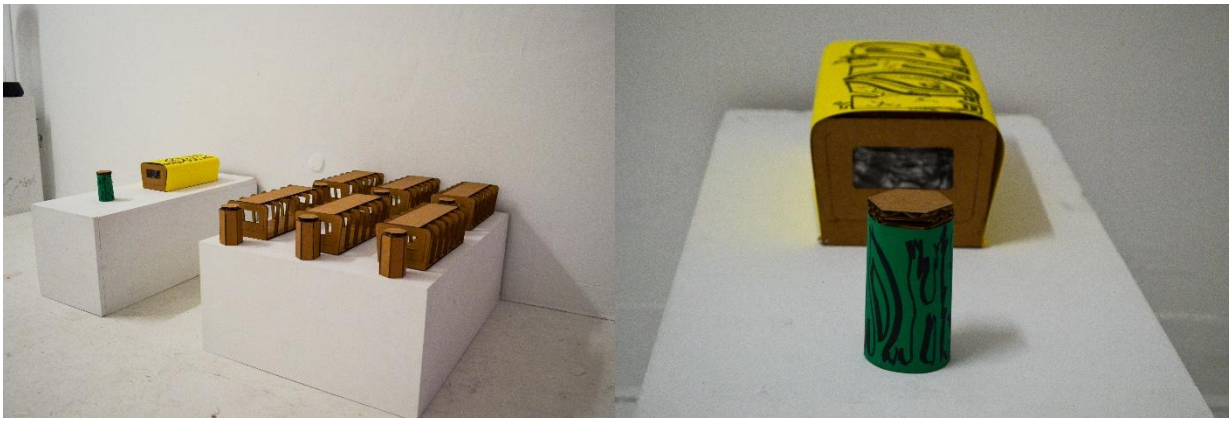
Fabrication process documentation.

To build the sleeping pod, I prepared a two-dimensional print file with Autodesk 360 and Adobe Suites and CNC milled two 8x4 sheets of plywood; laser cut acrylic sheets to fit on the frame's ends, serving as windows and air vents; used an electric sander to smooth the cheap plywood's surface on either end of the frame; and used an electric drill to install the door hardware and assemble the frame. I also lined the interior of the pod with insulating fabric, designed to conserve heat without a power source. I haven't yet had the time to wrap the interior with vinyl (making it easier to clean), fill the cavities of the pod with spray foam insulation (another measure to conserve heat and provide structural support), program and install the magnetic door sensor that would send an email alert whenever the pod's doors are opened, or apply the fluted plastic shell that will serve as the canvas for the pod's graphic design.

Working Prototypes (Mar. 2025) – emergency sleeping capsule & public charging station.

Because larger acrylic tubes are incredibly expensive, I used an injection molded plastic vase I found online as the principal structural component in my public charging station concept design. Using a band saw, I cut the base of the vase off, 3D printed connecting pieces and the base to fit snugly around the cylindrical body, laser cut a circular floor and ceiling out of an acrylic sheet to construct the housing for the circuit boards and wrapped copper coils providing charge to the top of the device. I soldered the circuit boards and charging coils connecting wires, extending them, and used electrical tape to bond the copper coils to the roof of the housing space. I

allowed a margin of one-quarter around the outside of the 3D printed base for a second acrylic sheet on which I'll laser print the graphic design and heat bend to fit the cavity.



Low fidelity models of sleeping capsule & charging station to be used in codesign sessions.

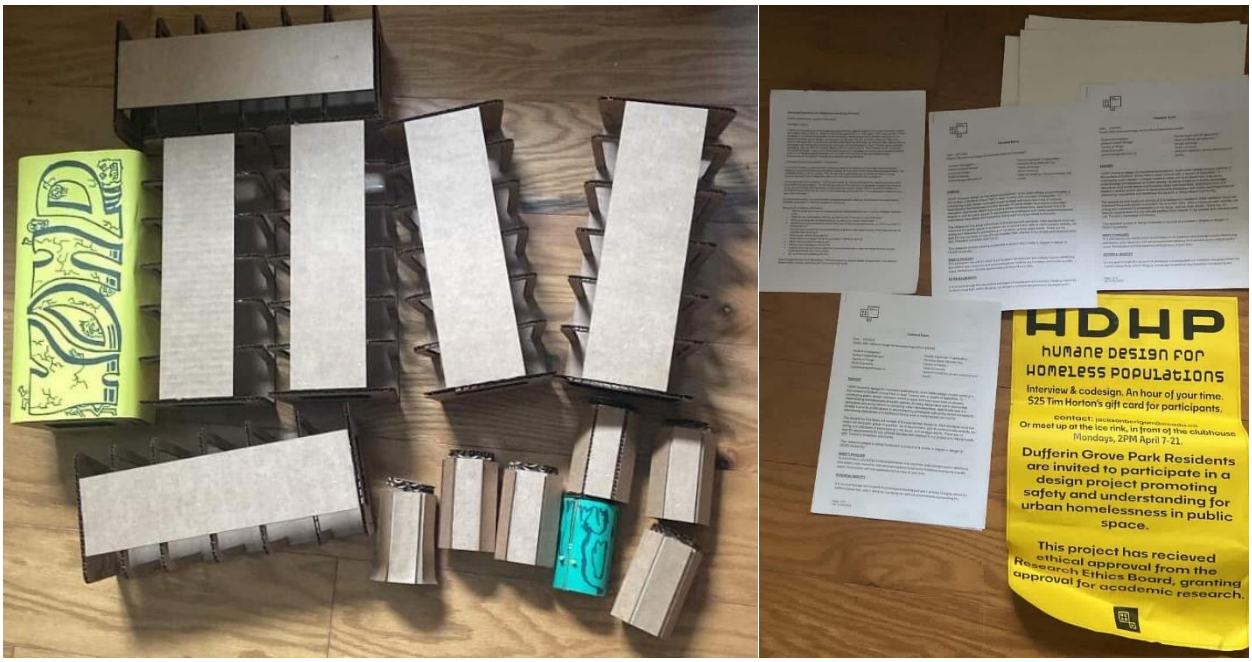
Codesign sessions will be guided by low-fidelity cardboard models of the sleeping pod and charging station concept designs, on which participants in my study pin their drawings. This is a simple tool that will encourage engagement and help my collaborators better visualize their work in context. To create these, I used a similar file preparation process to the CNC file but used a laser printer at around a sixth the scale and assembled the models using hot glue.

The (Beginning of) the Research Process

Early April 2025 Postering Campaign

I was only recently able to start outreach to Dufferin's unhoused community in April, beginning advertising with posters and respectfully engaging with park residents about my study a week before the codesign/interview sessions advertised on my posters. In preparation for these sessions, I booked private meeting rooms at the Dufferin/St. Clair library branch (approximately two blocks from the park) and prepared codesign kits for between two and six participants on

each scheduled date. Codesign kits entail low fidelity carboard models of the sleeping pod and charging station prototypes at a 1:7 scale, paper, markers & pencils, thumbtacks, consent forms for participants, a loose interview script, and Tim Horton's gift cards for $25 CAD. With my filmer (and classmate) in toe, I attempted three codesign and interview sessions on the 9th, 16th, and 23rd, arriving at the advertised time and location on my postering and waiting between one and a half and two hours each date, periodically circling through Dufferin's encampment holding a brightly colored study advertisement. But this was to no avail. No one showed up to any of the three sessions.



Codesign & interview kit components (partial)

April 9th codesign/interview attempt documentation

There are a variety of possible contributing factors in this poor showing. Although it's springtime in Toronto, it was cold, overcast, and windy on every one of the scheduled sessions. This presumably served as a strong deterrent for most to even come outside. The variety of schedules held by camp members and limited meeting times are other possible reasons for the lack of showing. But I'd guess the principal contributor to the lack of turnout is the short

gestational period I've had for conducting research of this nature. Usually, the trust required to conduct delicate research with severely marginalized groups needs to be built with extended outreach and the establishment of real relationships. I predict much more fruteful results given the time to connect with residents of the park over a longer period of time and better weather.

Figure 1April 16th & 23rd codesign/interview attempt documentation

'Broken' water fountain in front of Dufferin Clubhouse & vandalized poster

Although I have yet to actualize successful interview and codesign sessions, *Humane Design for Homeless Populations* embodies a cohesive, empathetic approach to the design process in the structuring of my research. In addition to a carefully crafted interview script designed as a platform to humanize participants, and a meticulously planned consent form using accessible language, I establish my knowledge through extensive research on urban homelessness in and outside of the Toronto context, ensuring a base of understanding that will accurately represent the needs and desires of the user. I've organised my research plan to engage the homeless community as collaborators in the design process, as opposed to a resource for data. I've designed open-ended questions, encouraging discussion and social critique in the codesign exercise as well as interview portion of the process to facilitate the uninhibited generation of new ideas. I'm also measuring the success of my work not on academic accolades or institutional recognition, but on the impact HDHP has on Dufferin's homeless community. This design project is as much about the process of arriving at 'the end result' as the result itself.

That's why I'm offering participation incentives, ridged privacy protection, and have structured codesign workshops to accentuate the roles of my participants; no, my collaborators.

To clarify, participants should be considered collaborators in an empathetic/inclusive design setting. Developing the HDHP project has required an acute sensitivity to dynamics of power in research as well as in process results. The process has informed my own reformed relationship with the role of designer, not as the creator, but as the facilitator; as the microphone for disadvantaged groups. Design justice – the ideological framework directing this project – is concerned with centering "...people who are normally marginalized by design, and uses collaborative, creative practices to address the deepest challenges our communities face." (Constanza-Chock, 6) My understanding of how I'm to facilitate this kind of work is still evolving and informed by my failure. The first attempt to create this environment for empowerment (to achieve a fruitful, equitable interview and codesign session) did not work. But that's okay because the failures of the present inform more successful futures. Designers need to be flexible and receptive to things not working and to criticism if they are to work in the public realm, let alone against a wicked, pervasive problem like modern urban homelessness.

HDHP In-Progress Exhibit (March 14-17, 2025)

In a second iteration of the study, there are a few things I'm already sure that I'll change about my approach. The first – and perhaps the most difficult – is to establish trusting relationships with Dufferin Grove's homeless community. I'm talking about relationships that extend beyond the bounds of my project. This could be via an informal approach with a token of friendship in-hand, be it a six pack, pizza, cigarettes, or donuts and coffee. It could take the form of volunteer work with nonprofits in the area like *Carol & Crew*, *Homes First*, or the *Salvation Army* to familiarize myself to a greater extent with Toronto's wider homeless community. It could mean doing both over the course of weeks or months. Another small, though, critical change I plan to make to my research plan is changing the rendezvous point to a more accessible location for homeless residents than right in front of Dufferin's clubhouse (run by Toronto Parks & Rec). My failed attempts to conduct interviews/codesigns revealed a degree of subversive hostility in the park, including but not limited to private security contractors patrolling the park, specifically around the clubhouse, nonfunctional water fountains, and public bathrooms within the clubhouse that I have yet to see a single resident of the park enter. Instead of meeting outside their perceived bubble of comfort, it makes far more sense to rendezvous in a more accessible location – like around one the encampment's two communal fire pits. I also plan to update postering with more frequent meeting times and updated calendar dates. But there is no guarantee that even these changes to my approach will yield better results. They will at the very

least inform a more developed understanding of my study and wider research topic, and if need be, inform a third iterative attempt.

I've been frustrated to say the least by this project's timeline. However, my evolving relationship with design, specifically empathy in design and Design Justice suggest I consider my journey in a different light. Though it is not devoid of frustration, I think my perspective is most impacted by how I've defined my project. In my context, it's about continuousness and not being deterred by roadblocks (because there will be many). Let's remember the nature of this problem HDHP is confronting. Urban homelessness is an epidemic. Its complexity and publicity do not lend themselves to clean conclusions or finality that one might expect to accompany the end of a semester, or even the end of a graduate program. This is an ongoing struggle I've inserted myself into and results simply do not appear in a timely nor organized fashion. HDHP is my last project before I graduate with a master's degree. It's also my first interjection into this sociopolitical conversation surrounding how our society treats urban homelessness. My REB approval is valid for an entire year and relatively speaking, I'm still at the beginning of that timeline. This isn't the incomplete end of a thesis project, but the beginning of my campaign to reform and upset how homeless communities are treated by policy and by society.

Codesign/interview Poster (April)

Homeless Population Co design/Interview Script Overview:

[review consent form, explain project goal]

Codesign Activity:

'Thank you for joining me in the codesign portion of this research project. It's my view that public spaces like Dufferin Grove Park can better accommodate people with no other option but to occupy them. I want to design a park bench that doubles as an emergency sleeping pod and a wireless charging port, as speculative public space designs (prototypes of what could be) with your help. Ideas like these are powerful because they not only have the potential to ease or save lives, but they are also opportunities to interrogate and challenge societal power structures and belief systems. How? Through visual cues and messaging. We are, after all, heavily influenced by our environment. That includes places and things, not just other people. I want you to think about what kind of message you would put on a public sleeping pod or on a charging station installed here in Dufferin Grove Park. What should these design interventions tell the public? This can be a drawing, writing; anything.'

[Thematic mapping and ideation, 10 minutes]

'The HDHP project is concerned with changing negative perceptions of homeless communities and triggering conversations around empathetic design as much as it is with immediate physical function, like providing shelter or phone charge. This is meant as a guiding theme, but there are also no wrong answers because these designs are about you, the target community for my designs.'

'I've brought with me low fidelity, 1:6.35 scale models for the bench/emergency sleeping pod as well as the wireless charging station. You are going to design their facades using sheets of paper and markers. When you've finished drawing/writing, pin the paper around the scale model's cardboard skeleton to simulate the realized prototype. If you're having trouble getting started, I have reference models you can look to for inspiration.'

[20-30 minutes allotted to a collaborative discussion/thematic mapping, and ideation/drawing/modeling exercise using paper & markers, cardboard, and glue.]

Perceptions, Problems, and Needs:

- Tell me a little about how you've experienced homelessness here in Toronto, whatever comes to mind…
- What are the most difficult parts of your day-to-day? How do you confront them?
- What personal/public items/services do you feel you'd benefit most from?
- What kinds of misconceptions about folks experiencing homelessness do you think the public is susceptible to?
- It's the view of some that encampments are a problem that needs solving. What does solving the problem look like to you?
- What do you dream about doing?
- What makes you happy? What do you enjoy? Like to do for fun?
- What might surprise me about you?
- What is your message to the world?
- Is there anything you'd like to add? Is there something that I have not asked but that you feel might be important for me to know?
- Do you have any questions for me?

[thank subject for their time and review TCPS consent form, contact details (if applicable), and research dissemination timeline, distribute $25 Tim Horton's gift card]

Consent Form

Date: 4/5/2025
Project Title: Humane Design for Homeless Populations (HDHP)

Student Investigator:
Jackson Crowell Berigan
Faculty of Design
OCAD University
jacksonberigan@ocadu.ca

Faculty Supervisor (if applicable):
Parantap Bhatt, Michelle Gay
Faculty of Design
OCAD University
(416) 977-6000 Ext. [Insert extension and email]

PURPOSE

HDHP (humane design for homeless populations), is an urban design project working in the context of Dufferin Grove Park in west Toronto with a couple of objectives. 1) prototyping public design concepts meant to ease and even save lives of persons experiencing homelessness in public spaces, 2) using design as a tool to encourage discussion and social reform surrounding urban homelessness, specifically how it is treated in and by public space 3) accompanying prototypes with policy recommendations addressing inequalities and hardships facing such a marginalized community.

The sample for this study will consist of 6 encampment residents. Park residents must live in/around the public space in question, be of sound mind, able to communicate verbally, be willing and interested in participating in my study, and be legal adults. There are no specific requirements for city officials besides their interest in my project and relevant work with Toronto's homeless community.

This research project is being conducted in pursuit of a master's degree in design at OCAD University.

WHAT'S INVOLVED

As a participant, you will be asked to participate in an interview and codesign session identifying pain points, lacks resources, and social perceptions faced by the homeless community in public space. Participation will take approximately an hour of your time.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS

It is my goal through this research to prototype a sleeping pod and a wireless charging station for Dufferin Grove Park, and in doing so, use design to confront discrimination surrounding the concept of homelessness. Beyond HDHP's immediate purpose, the project adds to a relevant conversation surrounding how we treat public space, designing inclusion, and industrializing compassionate responses to homelessness in urban centers.

POTENTIAL RISKS

Psychological or emotional risks or harm for encampment residents (e.g., feeling distressed, embarrassed, worried, upset, loss of self-confidence, regret over the revelation of personal information, disruption of family routine) is possible, however minimal.

In the interview setting I will be asking encampment participants about their experiences with urban homelessness. This is a sensitive subject and could cause distress to participants. That's why in the interview portion of the activity, participants are not required to answer questions nor answer in specific ways. If they are uncomfortable, embarrassed, etc. they have every right to not respond.

CONFIDENTIALITY

All personal information you provide is considered confidential; your name will not be included or, in any other way, associated with the data collected in the study. Participants will instead be referred to numerically in any presentation of study findings.

Raw audio and video records will be stored securely on an external hard drive, only accessible to the student investigator and his primary advisor and destroyed at the end of the thesis project in May 2025.

Confidentiality may be broken if the participant reveals to the researcher any involvement in criminal activity, abuse, self-harm, harming others, etc.

Audio Recording (mandatory):

☐ I agree to be [audio-recorded] for the purposes of this study. I understand how these recordings will be stored and destroyed.

_____ _____

Signature of Participant Date

Video Recording (optional):

☐ I agree to be [audio-/video-recorded] for the purposes of this study. I understand how these recordings will be stored and destroyed.

☐ I do not agree to be recorded for the purposes of this study.

_____ _____

Signature of Participant Date

INCENTIVES FOR PARTICIPATION

A $25 CAD gift card is to be distributed to each camp resident participating in the interview/codesign activity upon its completion.

VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION & WITHDRAWAL

Participation in this study is voluntary. If you wish, you may decline to answer any questions or participate in any part of the study.

Further, you may decide to withdraw from this study at any time, or request withdrawal of your data before the final exhibition date (when codesign results are used to finalize prototype graphics) and you may do so without any penalty or loss of benefits to which you are entitled. Your choice of whether to participate will not influence your future relations with OCAD University [and/or other institutions/partners of the research] or the investigators [please include names] involved in the research.

To withdraw from this study, let me know at any point during or after the study by contacting me by email at jacksonberigan@ocadu.ca no later than April 1st. In this case, all participant data written and recorded will be erased and omitted in every way from the project.

PUBLICATION OF RESULTS

Results of this study may be published in professional and scholarly journals, students' theses, and/or presentations to conferences and colloquia. In any publication, data will be presented in aggregate forms. Quotations from interviews or surveys will not be attributed to you without your permission.

Feedback about this study will be available via my website:

Opera Creative Studio – Portfolio (opera-creative.com)

CONTACT INFORMATION AND ETHICS CLEARANCE

If you have any questions about this study or require further information, please ask. If you have questions later about the research, you may contact the Student Investigator Jackson Berigan or the Faculty Supervisor (where applicable) Parantap Bhatt using the contact information provided above. This study has been reviewed and received ethics clearance through the Research Ethics Board at OCAD University [insert REB approval #].

If you have questions regarding your rights as a participant in this study, please contact:

Research Ethics Board c/o Office of the Vice President, Research and Innovation
OCAD University
100 McCaul Street
Toronto, M5T1W1
416 977 6000 x4368
research@ocadu.ca

AGREEMENT

I agree to participate in this study described above. I have made this decision based on the information I have read in the Information-Consent Letter. I have had the opportunity to receive any additional details I wanted about the study and understand that I may ask questions in the future. I understand that I may withdraw this consent at any time.

Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Thank you for your assistance in this project. Please keep a copy of this form for your records.

Bibliography

Amster, Randall. “Patterns of Exclusion: Sanitizing Space, Criminalizing Homelessness.” Social Justice 30, no. 1, 2003, pp. 195–221. http://www.jstor.org/stable/29768172.

Bickford, Susan. “Constructing Inequality: City Spaces and the Architecture of Citizenship.” Political Theory 28, no. 3, 2000, pp. 355–76. http://www.jstor.org/stable/192210.

Bridgman, Rae. “The Architecture of Homelessness and Utopian Pragmatics.” Utopian Studies 9, no. 1, 1998, pp. 50–67. http://www.jstor.org/stable/20719742.

Buchanan, Richard. “Wicked Problems in Design Thinking.” Design Issues 8, no. 2, 1992, pp. 5–21. https://doi.org/10.2307/1511637.

Byrne, Thomas & D. Fargo, Jamison & Montgomery, Ann Elizabeth & Munley, Ellen & P. Culhane, Dennis. “The Relationship between Community Investment in Permanent Supportive Housing and Chronic Homelessness.” Social Service Review 88, no. 2, 2014, pp. 234–63. https://doi.org/10.1086/676142.

Costanza-Chock, Sasha. “Design Justice.” The Mit Press, 2020.

Don Mitchell. “The Right to the City: Social Justice and the Fight for Public Space.” The Free Library, 2014. Retrieved Dec 18, 2024.

Dunne, Anthony & Raby, Fiona. “Speculative Everything: Design, Fiction, and Social Dreaming.” Mit Press, 2013.

Dunne, Anthony & Raby, Fiona. “Critical Design FAQ.” 2019. http://www.dunneandraby.co.uk/content/bydandr/13/0. Retrieved Dec 18, 2024.

Foscarinis, Maria & Cunningham-Bowers, Kelly & E. Brown, Kristen. "Out of Sight- Out of Mind? The Continuing Trend Toward the Criminalization of Homelessness." Georgetown Journal on Poverty Law and Policy 6: 145, 1999.

Fry, Tony. “Design As Politics.” 2011. Retrieved Dec 18, 2024.

Giamarino, Christopher. “Planning ‘Just’ Public Space: Reimagining hostile designs through do-it-yourself urban design tactics by unhoused communities in Los Angeles.” 2023. Retrieved Nov 23, 2024.

Kohn, Margaret. “Brave New Neighborhoods: The Privatization of Public Space.” Perspectives on Politics 3, no. 4, 2005. https://doi.org/10.1017/S1537592705510491.

Krasny, Elke. “Divided We Share: On the Ethics and Politics of Public Space.” In Shared Cities Atlas. Post-socialist Cities and Active Citizenship in Central and Eastern Europe, edited by Helena Doudová, pp.126-132, 2019.

Malpass, Matt. “Criticism and Function in Critical Design Practice.” Design Issues 31, no. 2, pp. 59–71, 2015. http://www.jstor.org/stable/43829380.

Papanek, Victor. “Design for the Real World.” London: Thames & Hudson, 1985.

Miller, Henry. “On the Fringe: Dispossessed in America.” Toronto: Lexington, 1991.

Morelli, Nicola. “Social Innovation and New Industrial Contexts: Can Designers ‘Industrialize’ Socially Responsible Solutions?” Design Issues 23, no. 4, pp. 3–21, 2007. http://www.jstor.org/stable/25224129.

Ney, Steven & Verweij, Michael & Verwij, Marco. “Messy institutions for wicked problems: How to generate clumsy solutions?” Environment and Planning C: Government and Policy 33, pp. 1679 – 1696, 2015.

Phelan, Jo & G. Link, Bruce & E. Moore, Robert & Stueve, Ann. “The Stigma of Homelessness: The Impact of the Label ‘Homeless’ on Attitudes Toward Poor Persons.” Social Psychology Quarterly 60, no. 4, pp. 323–37, 1997. https://doi.org/10.2307/2787093.

Postma, Carolien & Lauche, Kristina & Jan Stappers, Pieter. “Social Theory as a Thinking Tool for Empathic Design.” Design Issues 28, no. 1, pp. 30–49, 2015. http://www.jstor.org/stable/41427808.

Rittel, H.W.J. & Webber, M.M. “Dilemmas in a general theory of planning.” Policy Sci 4, pp. 155–169, 1973. https://doi.org/10.1007/BF01405730

Savičić, Gordon. “Unpleasant Design.” Belgrade: G.L.O.R.I.A. 2013. Retrieved Nov 23, 2024.

Sparkes, Jon & Downie, Matt & Halpern, David. “A New Approach to Ending Homelessness.” In Using Evidence to End Homelessness, edited by Lígia Teixeira and James Cartwright, Bristol University Press, 1st ed., pp. 21–36, 2020. https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv10kmc3j.7.

Tharp, Bruce & Tharp, Stephanie. “Discursive Design: Critical, Speculative, and Alternative Things.” MIT Press, 2019.

Van Deusen, R. “Public Space Design as Class Warfare: Urban Design, the ‘right to the City’ and the Production of Clinton Square, Syracuse, NY.” GeoJournal 58, no. 2/3, pp. 149–58, 2002. http://www.jstor.org/stable/41147761.

Wan, Calvin & Shen, Geoffrey & Choi, Stella. “Underlying relationships between public urban green spaces and social cohesion: A systematic literature review.” City, Culture and Society, Volume 24, 2021. Underlying relationships between public urban green spaces and social cohesion: A systematic literature review - ScienceDirect

Wright, Talmadge. “New Urban Spaces and Cultural Representations: Social Imaginaries, Social Physical Space, and Homelessness." Research in Urban Sociology 5: 23. Out of Place: Homeless Mobilizations, Subcities, and Contested Landscapes. New York: SUNY Press, 2000.

Wilson, James Q & Kelling, George. “Broken Windows: The Police and Neighborhood Safety.” Atlantic Monthly (March), 1982.