An investigation into how social design can be used to create inclusive spaces for the LGBTQIA Community.

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Contents

Introduction

In this dissertation I explore how social design can be used to create inclusive public environments specifically for the LGBTQIA community. Through my research I have discovered that often people who are ageing, disabled or of low income are addressed in social design but the LGBTQIA community is very overlooked. Resnick states that "there is a need to identify further issues and concerns for different social groups in order to expand and define the scope of universal design practice" (Resnick, 2019). This is indicative of the need for more academic research into social design for underrepresented groups in society.

My dissertation consists of three chapters, firstly I look at social design in the wider area of social design and look at what defines it and the key designers involved in it's emergence. In the second chapter I look at the history of LGBTQIA spaces and the LGBTQIA community's relationship with the built environment. In the third chapter I outline factors to consider when making public spaces more inclusive and then I look at a public space in Edinburgh and suggest how social design could be used to make it more inclusive. Finally, I look at the social design innovation from Perkins & Will that's been used to create more diverse and inclusive spaces.

As a straight ally I can not fully understand the needs of LGBTQIA people and the discrimination that they face within society and the built environment. However, through my research and a first-hand experience of attending an LGBTQIA society throughout the semester I have learned to understand the importance of being an ally with the LGBTQIA community and advocating for LGBTQIA rights.

Through my dissertation I hope that I can highlight the importance of the role of an interior designer to acknowledge underrepresented communities and design spaces that are inclusive

to them by catering to their needs through social design, specifically for the LGBTQIA community.

Chapter 1: Social Design

1.1 Introduction

In this chapter I examine the definitions of social design and the designers who played key roles in the creation and continuation of social design practice. Then I look at a case study of a social design project that demonstrates how social design can be used to benefit minority groups in society run by Collectivo Chopeke.

1.2 Defining social design

In the Social Design Reader, Resnick (2019) describes social design as "the practice of design where the primary motivation is to promote positive social change within society." (Resnick, 2019). This indicates that the sole purpose of a social design project is to enhance the society it is implemented within. This is true as social design begins with the identification of a 'Big Problem' that needs to be addressed as it is impacting the local society or a particular group within a society.

Social design can be understood as '…contextual design directed at the creation of systems and places that support particular kinds of social activities' (Tokinwise, 2015). It is an umbrella term that can be used to describe other forms of design that overlap such as 'design for social innovation, socially responsive design and design activism' (Armstrong, et al., 2014) they all have the common goal of social justice. Within social design other methods of design can be utilised, such as universal design and collaborative design that can make social design possible with optimised outcomes. Arguably, for designers it can be useful to use a combination of these design strategies to create well thought out and resolved projects that are led by social innovation.

Prior to the emergence of social design during the industrial revolution there were huge developments in production processes and material discovery that occurred rapidly. They were then used at a large scale there was little to no thought into the sustainability or long-term impacts of these new materials and manufacturing methods (Fine & Leopold, 2008). At this time the common format of design production was directed more towards mass production, 'Since the Industrial Revolution, the dominant design paradigm has been one of design for the market, and alternatives have received very little attention' (Margolin & Margolin, 2002). After this, in post modernism social design has moved away from this model of consumerism to look more at the social issues within societies and how these can be addressed through design to be more socially responsible.

Social design is a relatively new area of design and despite there being a rise in interest in the subject there is limited resources in terms of theories and models, 'little thought has been given to the structures, methods, and objectives of social design' (Margolin & Margolin, 2002). This makes industry change difficult as the model of 'design for the market' is frequently adopted by companies throughout multiple markets and industries. This also means that social design is not widely taught to design students in education institutions and not really applied in students' design work. While Margolin & Margolin's paper is primarily directed towards social design within product design, it has interdisciplinary relevance.

A contrasting approach to a social design model based on social innovation is Horst Rittel's 'wicked problem' approach that emerged in the 1960s, this approach is a lot more linear because 'the design process is divided into two distinct phases: *problem definition and problem solution*' (Buchanan, 1992). This is a very rigid design process structure and leads to definite results with no room for further expansion. In juxtaposition the open-ended nature of social design allows for future development and adaptation to new issues that arise, 'design processes are very often open-ended: they never finish because there is no longer a clear

separation between the design and management stage of a project' (Manzini, 2015). I believe that having an open-ended project through social design considers the iterative nature of design practice and therefore, can optimise a project's potential and allow it to maintain it's relevance for future generations.

1.3 Key Designers

1.3.1 Victor Papanek

One of the key leaders in the social design movement in the 20th century was Victor Papanek, he was born in Austria and moved to America in 1939 to flee Nazi persecution, in America he became a prominent designer (Scarzella, 2020). Papanek was passionate about socially and economically sustainable design projects for social justice, he released a book called '*Design for the Real World: Human Ecology and Social Change*' (Papanek, 1971). It brought to light the need for social, economic and environmental sustainability for social justice in design.

Papanek's voice in the design world called for social justice and stated that design was "a luxury enjoyed by a small clique who form the technological moneyed, and cultural "elite" of each nation" (Papanek, 1971). This is true still today as minority groups like the LGBTQIA community do not have equal access to innovative design projects due to the oversight of the LGBTQIA community within the design industry. However, with social design practice this can become more accessible as social issues can be addressed and resolved for minority communities.

1.3.2 Ken Garland

The 'first things first manifesto' by Ken Garland and a group of designers published in 1964 called for a move away from the use of graphic design for 'gimmick' marketing and a return to the celebration of the arts and its use for good (Zurich University of the Arts , 2014).

Garland was one of the first people to come out against the design 'norm' at the time, he kickstarted the shift in design thinking that moved towards social responsibility. This social responsibility of designers inspired by Garland can be used to create inclusive spaces for the LGBTQIA community.

1.4 Case Study – Collectivo Chopeke

A good example of how design thinking has moved towards social responsibility to help minority communities develop is Collectivo Chopeke, a Mexican architecture practice whose work is directed to serving the poorest communities in Mexico and designing for social good through their architectural solutions (Chopeke, 2017). In 2015 they visited Santa Luisa de Marillac, a village outside the city Ciudad Juárez, in the visit they discovered that the community did not have a space for meetings and spiritual activities. A lack of infrastructure within the community and little to no economic resources had led to people to move out of Santa Luisa de Marillac more towards the city. The community felt as if the space they were currently using (a main room of a house) was an 'unworthy place to meet god' and that they needed something better to have better community prayer time (Zatarain, 2018).

Figure 1: Community of Luisa de Marillac, Ciudad Juárez *(Chopeke, 2018)*

Collectivo Chopeke proposed the construction of a new chapel for the community and they organised the plans and resources for this. Traditional construction methods and local natural materials were used for the chapel, throughout the project local people in the community worked on the chapel and they offered their labour on good will in support of the community. Even those who could not contribute through manual labour such as some of the elder women within the community offered their support through the provision of food and drinks for labourers. This case study supports Tokinwise's definition of social design as discussed earlier, '…contextual design directed at the creation of systems and places that support particular kinds of social activities' (Tokinwise, 2015).

Figure 2: Construction of the chapel by locals *(Chopeke, 2018)*

This is an excellent example of social design in practice as even though an outside group (Collectivo Chopeke) came in to support the community through the creation of the chapel, they truly listened to the community. Collectivo Chopeke tackled the construction appropriately using traditional sustainable methods rather than using modern construction methods which could not be maintained by the local people. This approach was socially sustainable as arguably the resulting space is suitable to the community.

The use of readily available natural local materials makes this project social design, as it contributes to the preservation of resources for future societies. These materials were used in conjunction with traditional construction methods preserving the historical culture of the Mexican community. Part of the sustainability of social design can be interpreted as keeping

alive historical traditional building methods and the use of historical materials so they will not be forgotten about and are preserved for future generations.

Overall, this case study effectively demonstrates social design well because a connection to the chapel was made when it was constructed by the people in the community. Involving them in the design and development of this project invested the community in its success. It supports the social activity of the community by giving them jobs to work on the chapel and then a place to gather and pray together, it was made by the community for the community. The connections made with the community and the methods used to involve the community during the design process can also be applied to social design projects for the LGBTQIA community to create spaces that better meet the needs of the LGBTQIA community and are more diverse and inclusive.

1.5 Conclusion

Overall, although social design is a relatively newer design movement it presents significant potential for creating more diverse and resilient communities as described by Ezio Manzini in 'Design when everybody designs' where he compares the use of innovative design to wildlife habitats. Manzini (2015) explains that the more species in a habitat the more resilient it will be and therefore last longer, by using innovative design to address social injustices we can create more resilient societies.

Designers by training are problem solvers, to solve problems correctly we must investigate the places and societies that these problems occur in and identify why they occur. So, I question whether there actually is such a thing as social design or if all design is social design? I think that currently not all design is social design but as our societies evolve and more social issues are identified all design will become social design.

Chapter 2: LGBTQIA Spaces

2.1 Introduction

Social design addresses a multitude of different groups in society however one of the overlooked groups in society is the LGBTQIA community. This is due to several factors but mainly due to a historical lack of acceptance of the community by society as homosexuality until recent times was a criminal offence and was only decriminalised in Scotland in 1981 (National Records of Scotland , 2013). Therefore, some designers have only been catering openly to the community for just over 40 years, in comparison to the long-standing history of designing for the rest of society.

Therefore, I believe that it is important to look at LGBTQIA spaces and how social design could be used to create more inclusive spaces for future societies. But first I need to look at what has happened in the past and what is existing and successful, and changes that can be made in the future. In this chapter I look at significant LGBTQIA spaces and the community's relationship with the built environment.

2.2 LGBTQIA Spaces & the Built Environment

An LGBTQIA space is a safe space that is free of judgement because of your sexuality or gender and is inclusive of all LGBTQIA people. In the book Queer Spaces, queer spaces are described as 'Spaces where you can express yourself without fear or shame. Spaces where you can act freely in a manner that is truly consonant with your inner self' (Furman & Mardell, 2022). LGBTQIA spaces include historic spaces within the community such as Stonewall Inn in New York, queer owned businesses, allied spaces and includes the homes of people within the LGBTQIA community (Furman & Mardell, 2022). Irrespective of their size or popularity they are all LGBTQIA spaces as it is about being able to express yourself freely and truely.

There has been a long-standing relationship between the LGBTQIA community and the built environment through terms such as 'coming out of the closet' which refers to someone who comes out as having a sexual preference that doesn't fit within the heterosexual binary. There is also the term of being 'the only gay in the village' (Little Britain, 2003) which came from a BBC show called Little Britain it refers to gay people usually in a more rural setting where it is less common for LGBTQIA people to be 'out.' This in itself is a big issue as the lack of infrastructure and diversity in rural areas leaves LGBTQIA people in these areas isolated.

2.3 Gayborhoods

The emergence of 'gayborhoods' in the 1950s led to the creation of areas that contain predominantly gay and/ or lesbian or more commonly now LGBTQIA bars, restaurants, shops and community centres (ARUP; , University of Westminster, 2021). Some examples of gayborhoods include Soho (London), West Village (New York), The Gay Village (Manchester) and the 'Pink Triangle' (Edinburgh), these often contain iconic spaces for the LGBTQIA community such as Admiral Duncan one of Soho's oldest gay pubs (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Admiral Duncan Pub in Soho *(Stanley, 2018)*

One of the key problems with gayborhoods is that 'they are overly structured around gay white males, sometimes to the exclusion of trans and gender nonconforming people (TGNCP) and LGBTQ+ people of colour;' (ARUP; , University of Westminster, 2021). This highlights that there is discrimination of LGBTQIA people even within the LGBTQIA community itself and therefore projects that are set out to be inclusive may not actually be because of this bias.

In the Queering Public Space report written by ARUP and the University of Westminster they state that 'Planners should think beyond the gayborhood and move inclusive practice towards LGBTQ+ people' (ARUP; , University of Westminster, 2021). Whilst these gayborhoods are significant in LGBTQIA history and at the time were important for the presence of the LGBTQIA community in big cities, there should be a movement to a more integrated society where queer spaces are not confined to specific geographical areas (gayborhoods).

Due to a rise in popularity of gayborhoods many LGBTQIA people can no longer afford to live in these areas forcing people to look elsewhere. Within the real estate and property development industry there is a significant interest in the 'pink pound,' which refers to 'the spending power of gay men and lesbians, or as an increasingly lucrative target market courted by some savvy marketers' (Bengry, 2018). Many companies choose to target such groups not to make their properties more inclusive but due to the common assumption that gay men and lesbian women are wealthier than the average consumer as they are less likely to have dependents so can have higher disposable incomes. This is not true for a large percentage of the gay and lesbian community as there are now more LGBTQIA people who are starting families through surrogacy and adoption.

2.4 Queer Bookshops

LGBTQIA bookstores have played an important role in the history of the creation of queer spaces in major cities, 'providing venues through which lgbtq authors and publishers could market their work, these bookstores served as incubators for the literary and cultural development of the modern gay rights movement in the United States and abroad' (Pettis, 2015). These bookstores gave LGBTQIA people somewhere to go and learn more about their culture and explore different relationships and fantasies that haven't been given room in mainstream books and media.

Lavender Menace is an Edinburgh based bookstore that originated in the Fire Island nightclub created by Sigrid Nelson and Bob Orr who started selling gay and lesbian books from the cloakroom of the popular nightclub on Princess Street (National Galleries Scotland , 2022). As the books grew in popularity they were able to open a storefront in 1982 in Broughton, the first of its kind in Edinburgh with close proximity to the gayborhood of the 'Pink Triangle.'

Figure 4: Lavender Menace Forth Street *(Orr, 1982)*

Exposure to discourse and media that excludes LGBTQIA people has created misconceptions about the community by non-LGBTQIA people. Therefore, I believe that the preservation of such bookstores and queer spaces alike not only empower the LGBTQIA community but also educate non-LGBTQIA people and create a queer presence in history giving newer generations LGBTQIA people to look up to.

2.5 Education in Architecture and Construction

There is a lack of diversity in mainstream bookshops, this lack of LGBTQIA education transfers to professionals such as architects, urban planners, engineers and interior designers who create the built environment. These industries are also predominantly white males (ARUP; , University of Westminster, 2021) showing the lack of diversity and therefore a lack of understanding for the needs of LGBTQIA community's needs. Applicants for jobs in the fields of architecture or construction are required to have a degree in the necessary field however there is very little, if any LGBTQIA inclusive content in curricula taught at this level. This could be because 'Traditionally, the term 'inclusion' has been quite strongly associated with the realm of compulsory schooling and particularly students with disabilities; yet there is a broader scope in which the term is increasingly being used, to refer to equity and social justice for all groups (Ainscow 2020)' (Steniford & Koutouris, 2022).

Through my own experience at design school at university I have noticed a lack of significant push in creating inclusive spaces particularly for minority groups including the LGBTQIA community. If the people designing the spaces are not diverse and are not taught how to create inclusive spaces, then how are their designs going to be inclusive for these minority groups, specifically the LGBTQIA community? Ultimately curriculum for the construction industry is defined by the building industry standards which currently are not as inclusive of the LGBTQIA community as they could be.

2.6 Legislation

Legislation has historically played a huge role in the discrimination against LGBTQIA people even after the decriminalisation of homosexuality such as Thatcher's 'Local Government Act 1988 Section 28 which stated that local authorities shall not intentionally promote homosexuality or publish with the intention of promoting homosexuality' (National Records of Scotland , 2013). People follow by example and in the past the government shamed people for being homosexual therefore it was normalised to be discriminative and abusive towards people who were from the LGBTQIA community. This type of legislation directly impacts society norms and the attitudes towards the LGBTQIA community, because of this building regulations are not reflective of our diverse societies, 'Even well-meaning policies can have a negative effect on social life if underlying attitudes do not support social participation,' (Steinfeld & Maisel , 2012).

However, legislation such as building standards and regulations can have the power to impact the inclusivity of the built environment and influence changes in society norms in public spaces. The 'Building Standards technical handbook 2019: non-domestic' published by the Scottish government outlines the minimum number toilet sanitary provisions required in public spaces, there is no explicit standard that sets a minimum number of gender neutral or unisex toilets. Unisex toilets are mentioned under section 3.12.1; 'Unisex sanitary accommodation may be provided where each sanitary facility, or a WC and wash hand basin, is located within a separate space, for use by only one person at a time, with a door that can be secured from within for privacy,' (Scottish Government, 2019).

There is a suggestion of 'at least 1 unisex accessible toilet,' (Scottish Government, 2019) be provided within public spaces however in reality this isn't the case for many public buildings, it marginalises the LGBTQIA community particularly the transgender and the gender non-conforming community. The government have the means to enforce legislation that could make

spaces more inclusive for the LGBTQIA community through the regulation of public building standards, so why don't they?

2.7 Conclusion

It is vital that the LGBTQIA communities relationship with the built environment and historic LGBTQIA spaces such as gayborhoods be preserved for future generations particularly with the rise of virtual spaces that have led to the closure of many LGBTQIA spaces across the UK, researchers at UCL found that in London between 2006 and 2017 LGBTQIA nightlight venues fell by 58% (Marshall, 2021). From my research I question whether there should be specifically LGBTQIA spaces because by designing for a specific group you are segregating them further from the rest of society by not including the rest of society in these spaces. We should be moving towards a more integrated society where there is less of a separation between LGBTQIA spaces and non-LGBTQIA spaces and creating more unified and diverse spaces.

Chapter 3: Social Design and the LGBTQIA Community

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter I look at how spaces can be made to be inclusive of LGBTQIA people through different social design interventions and strategies. Next I look at the inclusiveness of St. James Quarter shopping centre in Edinburgh and suggest areas for improvement using social design practice. I also discuss my experience of joining an LGBTQIA society within the art college and reflect on how the spaces it used for its events mirrored how society often overlooks this community. Finally, I review work from the architecture firm Perkins & Will that is in line with social design principles for the LGBTQIA community and the work that they are doing to improve LGBTQIA inclusivity within the industry.

3.2 Making public spaces inclusive for the LGBTQIA community

3.2.1 Lighting

For people to feel safe in spaces there must be a lot of thought about the visibility of that person taking into consideration factors such as lighting of public spaces, the amount of daylight at the time they are in the space, the number of other people in that space and their sightline relative to these people and vice versa (Croydon Council, 2006). Discrimination often occurs in areas where public view is limited (Parton, 2022) this allows the attacker the advantage of not being seen. This is not exclusive to the LGBTQIA community but also true for other minority groups including women, ethnic minorities and old people etc.

Hoa Yang from ARUP along with Monash University conducted a lot of research into lighting and its importance for safety within cities, 'Being marginalised in society, whether through gender, ethnicity, class, age, sexuality, or ability, can limit and hinder one's ability to feel safe and comfortably navigate public spaces at night' (Yang, 2022). Yang's research found that even if a space had lots of lighting it would need to be of good quality and the right level of

illuminance as glares can also create insecurity. From this diagrams and lighting strategies were designed to improve safety on streets for pedestrians. Consideration of the lighting in the design process of public spaces arguably is social design as it looks at why people are being marginalised and discriminated against within society and how this is happening within public spaces. This helps to resolve issues such as discrimination giving the freedom to people in minority groups to feel safer in such spaces.

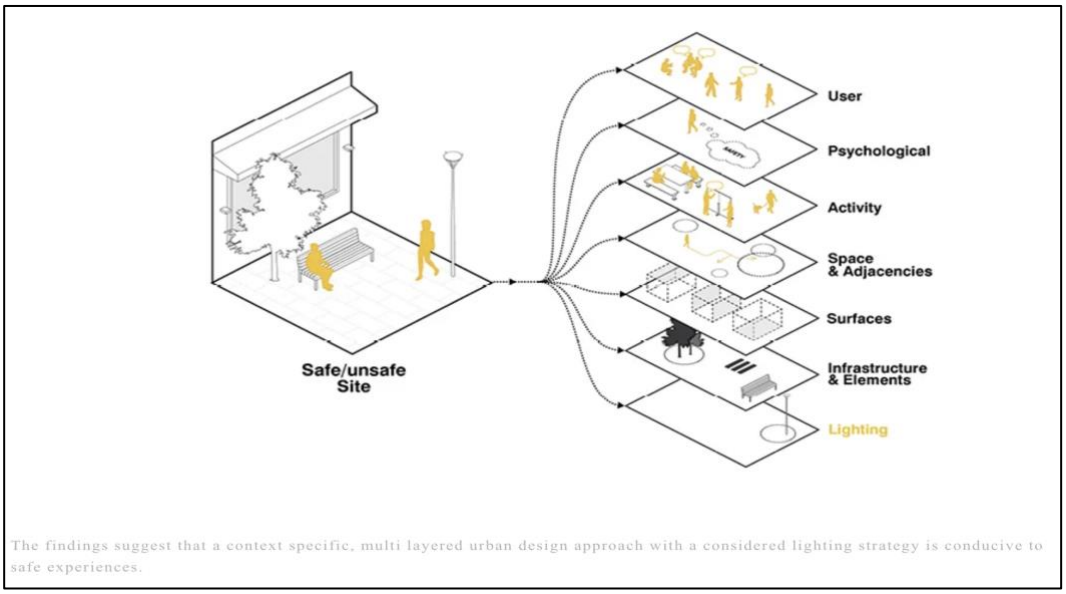

Figure 5: Safety Factor Diagram *(Yang & Monash University , 2022)*

3.2.2 Accessible WCs

Probably one of the most essential facilities in public spaces are toilets however, for a long time these have been put in public spaces using a binary system, with most places providing female toilets and male toilets and in more recent years through the implementation of the 'Equality Act 2010' (UK Government, 2010) a disabled access toilet. However, this approach fails to acknowledge and include those who are non-binary or transitioning and other people within the LGBTQIA community who do not fit into the gender binary.

By also providing gender-neutral toilets it allows the option for LGBTQIA people to choose which toilet they use, and they are not confined to the binary toilet options which could put them in a vulnerable position as 'transgender people often experience gender policing,

hostility and exclusion when accessing sex-segregated spaces' (Colliver & Duffus, 2021). I believe that the provision of gender-neutral toilets can make spaces inclusive for the LGBTQIA community, it gives people the option to choose which toilet they use making them more comfortable and more included in public spaces.

It is a basic right in public spaces to have appropriate toilet provision and there is a mandatory building standard that these spaces must meet under section 3.12 (Scottish Government , 2020) (Figure 6). The publication of more legislation by the government to advocate for LGBTQIA rights could help improve inclusivity across the industry. Through the creation of more building standards and guidance that make it necessary for all public spaces to have an adequate gender-neutral toilet option this basic right of appropriate toilet provision in public spaces is given to all LGBTQIA people. This can be considered as social design as people's needs are being acknowledged and catered for in public spaces making it more accessible for LGBTQIA people.

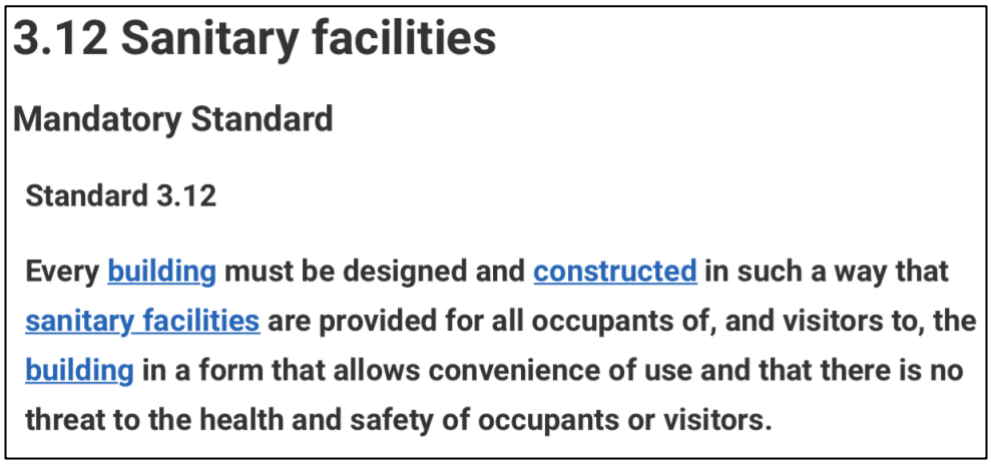

Figure 6: Mandatory Building Standard 3.12 Sanitary Facilities *(Scottish Government , 2020)*

3.2.3 The use of the Pride Flag

The pride flag has been used by the LGBTQIA community as a symbol of liberation and pride since 1978 when Gilbert Baker designed the original 'Rainbow Flag' (Figure 7) (Campbell, 2019). Although now there has been lots of different adaptations of the flag to represent different groups within the LGBTQIA community. The flag used the most to represent the

community is the 'Progress Pride Flag' which was a redesign of Baker's original 'Rainbow Flag' by Daniel Quasar in 2018 (Victoria & Albert Museum , 2020).

Figure 7: 35th Anniversary Rainbow Flag hand dyed and sewn by Gilbert Baker *(Baker, 2013)*

The pride flag is used by many people and businesses as an indication of inclusion for the LGBTQIA community within public spaces, it can make LGBQTIA people feel more comfortable and accepted by societies in these spaces. However, many commercial brands and businesses over the years have used the pride flag as part of campaigns and marketing without actively advocating for the LGBQTIA community. This is called 'Rainbow Washing' and negatively impacts the community by large companies profiting off the use of the pride flag without supporting the LGBTQIA community (Hardcastle, 2021).

Figure 8: Bud Light Pride Bottle *(Bud Light Media Release, 2019)*

Despite the pride flag being used for rainbow washing by some large companies, it is still significant as it is indicative of acceptance for LGBTQIA people in public spaces. Using a historical icon for the community such as the pride flag means that the history of the LGBTQIA community can be preserved and remembered for future generations.

3.3 Case Study – St. James Quarter

Public spaces should be accessible for all people to participate in society irrespective of their age, ethnicity, gender, sexuality or disability. Whilst this should be true it isn't always the case, through the example of St. James Quarter I explore its inclusion of the LGBTQIA community in its interior design approach and refer to the factors for inclusive spaces I discussed earlier in this chapter. Then I will suggest how social design could be used to improve the inclusion of the LGBTQIA community.

Figure 9: St. James Quarter *(Luma 3D Interactive, 2019)*

St James Quarter spans 850,000 square foot with a variety of shops and food & drink venues (AMA Studio, 2020). Unfortunately, in this large of a space there are only binary female and male toilet options which is disappointing as LGBTQIA people and specifically trans and non-binary people could be made to feel uncomfortable in the shopping centre. However, there are disabled gender-neutral toilets that can be used this is an option however the use of this toilet by disabled people takes priority.

Lighting throughout and around St. James Quarter is good with well-lit paths to the exterior of the shopping centre and through to St. Andrews Square making these spaces safer as visibility is increased due to the additional lighting implemented. The centre can also be used as a navigation path to other parts of the city due to its multiple entrances and exits which open out on to Leith Walk, York Place and Princess Street (Figure 10), this gives people options for routes where there is a higher footfall in comparison to other routes. This may lead people to feel safer as they are less likely to be targeted when there are more people around (ARUP; , University of Westminster, 2021).

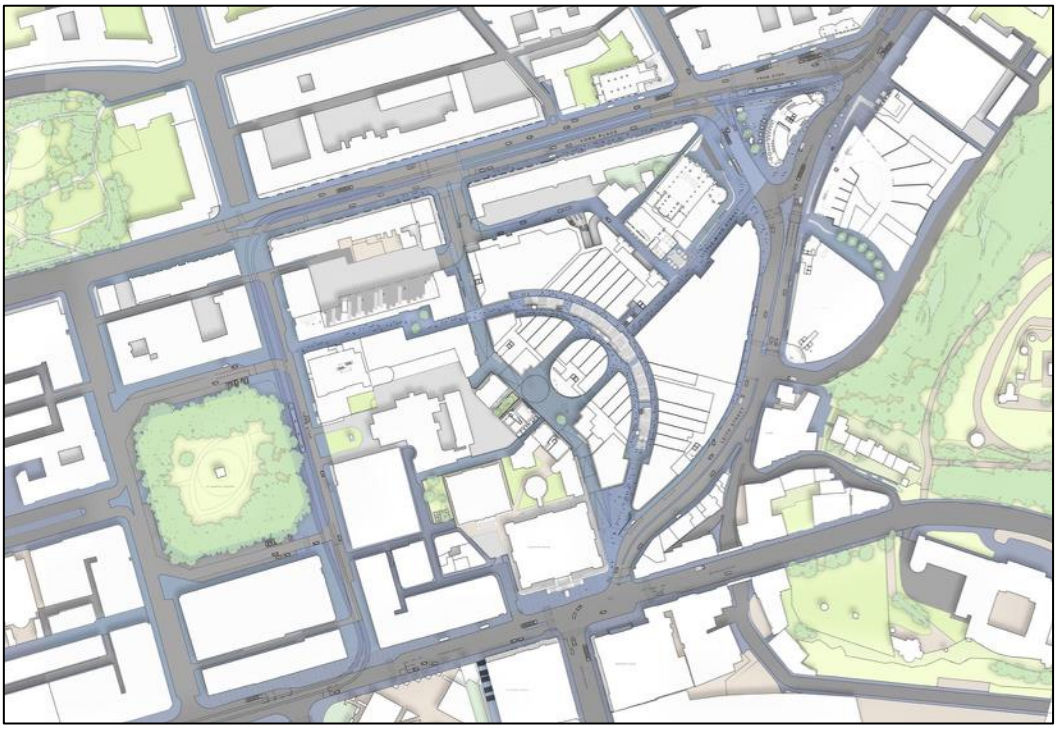

Figure 10: Master Plan St James Quarter *(Alan Murray Architects, 2019)*

There is no sign of pride flags or LGBTQIA inclusion in the shopping centre or on their website this could make it an intimidating space for LGBTQIA people to visit for fear of discrimination and a lack of acceptance within this public space. I don't believe that St. James Quarter is unaccepting of the LGBTQIA community however they do not openly advertise or share that it is an inclusive space, if they did they could diversify and increase the number of shoppers.

The inclusivity of St. James Quarter for the LGBTQIA community could be improved by having a gender-neutral toilet option for visitors, this could make people feel more comfortable and reduce the chances of discrimination or homophobic behaviour towards LGBTQIA people as they will not be confined to decide between binary toilet options where they could be misgendered. The inclusivity could further be improved if St. James Quarter showed that they were supportive of the LGBTQIA community through using the pride flag whether this is in a physical flag, on shop fronts or even a pride lanyard worn by employees. This could be successful as the pride flag demonstrates their support and acceptance of the LGBTQIA community.

3.4 Gay Club

Throughout the semester I have attended 'Gay Club' run by an art tutor at ECA, the club was set up as a safe space for LGBTQIA students and allies to share their work and watch LGBTQIA produced films. It took place every other Wednesday in the Wee Red Bar on campus, this is a bar and social space in the evenings and at the weekend. However, in the daytime it is a dark room with little day light and at the start of each session we had to move some of the furniture so that we could use it for film screenings.

The Wee Red Bar was not designed for the activity that takes place in it which can be seen as furthering the marginalisation of LGBTQIA people within society. Other clubs and societies within the university such as sports teams are provided with funding and gym spaces to meet in, if the Gay Club had been given a purposely designed space using social design then there arguably could have been even more positive outcomes from Gay Club. Despite the space not being fit for purpose Gay Club was able to flourish throughout the semester with members learning about the queer film industry and bonding with each other creating new friendships within an existing society of the art college.

3.5 Case study – Perkins & Will's work with the LGBTQIA community

An example of LGBTQIA inclusive social design is global architecture firm Perkins & Will's Whitman-Walker Health, health centre (2015) in Washington DC, the health centre is focused on providing safe 'stigma-free healthcare and legal services' using a 'holistic model of care' (Perkins & Will, 2015). This health care centre included careful consideration of lighting and public and private space within the centre giving patients the appropriate privacy when needed.

Arguably by reducing the stigma around poor health care by creating appropriate and inviting spaces they have made LGBTQIA people feel more comfortable increasing their

chances of accessing necessary healthcare services. This demonstrates good practice of social design project as they have identified that the stigma and fear of discrimination played a role in LGBTQIA people being unable to access healthcare and created a design solution to combat this truly listening to the needs of the LGBTQIA community. This is a good example of social design as the primary motivation was to create a positive social change within society about LGBTQIA healthcare, this aligns with Resnick's understanding of social design discussed in chapter 1 (Resnick, 2019).

Figure 11: Whitman-Walker Health, Health Centre *(Perkins & Will, 2015)*

Not only have Perkins & Will worked on LGBTQIA projects they have also produced a handbook with the American Institute of Architects that advises firms on how to become more diverse using JEDI (Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion) principles. This demonstrates their commitment to advocating for LGBTQIA equality and inclusion within society and the built environment and that they are not 'rainbow washing' for advancement but they are actively working to improve JEDI within the industry.

The handbook features a 7 step guide to improving JEDI with there being no final step, 'Even when your firm achieves the goals you set for it (and that will likely take at least several

years), there is always more that can be done-in outreach, in building the pathway, in recruitment, in training' (Perkins & Will, 2021). The open-ended nature of the Perkins & Will JEDI handbook is in line with the social design principles and enforces that there is always something more that can be done to improve JEDI. This demonstrates the acknowledgement by some firms within the industry that there is a need for further inclusion of minority groups and specifically LGBTQIA people.

Legislation and publications like the handbook 'Creating a culture of Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion for Your Architecture Practice' (Perkins & Will, 2021) have the potential to change the way we design and practice in the building industry by creating safe spaces for LGBTQIA people. This will ultimately help to create a more diverse society as previously mentioned in chapter 1 that can help us to have more resilient societies.

3.6 Conclusion

In this chapter I looked at how social design can be used to make inclusive spaces for the LGBTQIA community and the leading Companies in the industry that are paving the way for more diverse societies to flourish. Through the case study of St. James Quarter, I have demonstrated how public spaces can exclude the LGBTQIA community through its design strategy and suggested how social design could be used to change this. Arguably this lack of inclusion in the design of public spaces plays a big role in how the LGBTQIA is marginalised by the built environment.

Conclusion

Overall, I believe that social design can create specific solutions for problems within marginalised communities as shown in the case study of Collectivo Chopeke in chapter one. Their focus on understanding the Santa Luisa de Marillac community helped deliver a solution that not only gave this community the prayer space they needed but actively engaged them in the process of how this space should be created. This proves the idea that a social design approach can help solve problems for marginalised groups and diversify societies.

I have found that despite legislation historically marginalising the LGBTQIA community, the introduction of legislation and building standards protecting the rights of LGBTQIA people and guidance from design practices such as Perkins & Will's (2021) handbook are able to drive change in the industry's approach to the design of public spaces. For the first time the needs of the LGBTQIA are being considered which is empowering for them. Changing legislation and building standards can be a slow difficult process but through this dissertation I hope to raise awareness for the need for a shift within the industry towards the inclusion of the LGBTQIA community in public spaces.

Finally, I believe that designers of the built environment at all levels have a responsibility to identify the lack of inclusion for the LGBTQIA community in public spaces. They need to drive more purposeful interaction with the LGBTQIA community in order to learn more about the problems the community face so they can use their skills to help them. More academic research is required on this subject, and this can further encourage positive change within the industry. By understanding the needs of the LGBTQIA community through a social design approach it takes steps to reduce the segregation between LGBTQIA spaces and non-LGBTQIA spaces, this will help move towards more resilient diverse societies.

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