

In the course of the three-week study, the position of the design practitioner was reflected upon, and the complex relationship between design and climate justice was deepened. Starting with the complex and difficult to understand documents within the school, the group attempted to reveal how the unequal distribution of resources, especially for students with disabilities, and the bureaucratic texts inherited from capitalism and colonialism, can become invisible barriers. However, by the conclusion of the project, it became evident that a 'solution' had not been found, but rather a profound realisation of the deeply entrenched nature of the problems themselves. This prompted the following reflection: if design is unable to provide 'balance' or 'fairness', can it attract more attention by amplifying, deepening, or even satirising the issues? This may be considered a methodology of design itself.

As Danah Abdulla (2022) emphasises in *On the Contradictions of Sustainability*, design is often rife with contradictions in terms of sustainability and social equity, functioning both as a problem-maker and a problem-challenger. She highlights the necessity for designers to recognise the socio-economic framework in which they operate and to critically intervene within it. The present endeavour was a direct response to systemic injustices, undertaken by amplifying and prolonging the bureaucratic text of the school, rendering it more arduous to read. This approach served to satirise its irrationality and to evoke a realization among the populace that these documents are not genuinely inclusive, but rather engender new exclusions. This approach prompted a re-evaluation of the boundaries of design, leading to the conclusion that its role is not solely limited to enhancing aesthetics or improving the user experience. Instead, design can function as a critical instrument that directly challenges unjust power structures.

Concurrently, *Ecofeminist Toolkit* (2023) proffers an intersectional environmental justice perspective that accentuates the robust connections between ecology, gender, race, and social structures. This perspective has led to the realisation that resource inequality within educational institutions is not merely a failure of individual policies, but rather a deep-seated systemic problem. The *Ecofeminist Toolkit* advocates for community-oriented, decentralised solutions, and our project is in part an experiment in this thinking. We did not attempt to design a single solution with a single solution in mind. Rather than attempting to rectify the issue with a solitary design solution, we seek to accentuate and critique the problem by rendering it more conspicuous, thereby prompting individuals to contemplate the rationality of the entire system. This design strategy finds resonance with the ecofeminist notion that design can serve as a medium for challenging power structures and amplifying marginalised voices in circumstances where prevailing systems are inadequate in ensuring equity. This series of explorations has prompted a re-evaluation of the designer's role.

The objective of design may not be to identify a 'perfect solution', but rather to encourage authentic social discourse by accentuating issues.

### Reference

Danah Abdulla (2022), *On the Contradictions of Sustainability*, Futuress.org, lecture via Futuress

Amira Chandni, Jarre Hamilton, Dr. Meg Perret, Diandra Marizet, and Kia Nakazemi (2023), *Ecofeminist Toolkit*, PDF via *Intersectional Environmentalist*

*Ahmed, S. (2012). On Being Included: Racism and Diversity in Institutional Life. Durham: Duke University Press.*

The present volume explores issues of institutionalised diversity and inclusion, with a particular focus on how institutions such as universities shape and sustain structures of exclusion. Ahmed argues that official 'diversity policies' are often only a formal commitment and can serve as a tool for masking systemic inequalities. This aligns closely with the research direction of our group, particularly in the analysis of complex policy documents within universities that purportedly promote inclusivity but may, in reality, impede access to resources for specific groups. Ahmed's critical analysis assists in comprehending that design encompasses not only the enhancement of readability and intuitiveness, but also the exposure and critique of power structures.

*Spade, D. (2020). Mutual Aid: Building Solidarity During This Crisis (and the Next). London: Verso.*

The book's discourse on 'mutual aid' underscores the significance of establishing decentralised, autonomous networks of mutual aid, as opposed to placing reliance on systemic change. Spade's advocacy for 'direct action' over 'solutions outside the system' has exerted a substantial influence on the team's project, as it has become evident that attaining fairness within the system is frequently futile. This theoretical framework has had substantial implications for the team's project, as it has been found that attempting to achieve fairness within the system is often an exercise in futility. Consequently, the design experiments undertaken by the team, which involved amplifying and satirising bureaucratic documents, can be considered a form of 'direct action', aimed at raising awareness about the absurdity of the system itself. Spade's theoretical framework offers a novel approach to design, emphasising not just the adjustment of existing rules, but also the fundamental challenge to these rules themselves.

*Metahaven – “Can Jokes Bring Down Governments?” (2013)*

Metahaven, a Dutch design research group operating within the fields of graphic design, political research and art, has been instrumental in the examination of the potential of humour and satire to act as a counteragent to established power structures. Their project, entitled "Can Jokes Bring Down Governments?", has sought to explore how information is disseminated in the digital age, whilst also investigating the capacity of humour and satire to serve as a means of resistance. This project has direct implications for our design strategy, as we employ satire to highlight systemic injustices by extending and elaborating upon the school's policy documents, thereby fostering social discourse through the utilisation of 'humour by design'. Metahaven's approach demonstrates that design does not merely 'solve' problems, but rather serves to provoke dialogue through the reconstruction of information.

*Forensic Architecture – Investigative Aesthetics*

Forensic Architecture is an experimental team that combines architecture, media and legal research, focusing on the use of visual and spatial analyses to expose human rights abuses and State violence (Forensic Architecture, n.d.). Their research methodology uses design as a tool of evidence rather than 'aesthetic optimisation' in the traditional sense (ibid.). The present project employs a deconstruction and reorganisation of texts in an attempt to reveal the inequality of resources within the university system. Forensic Architecture has made it clear that design can be used as a means of investigation, not just to inform, but to challenge existing power structures.

Ahmed, S. (2012). *On Being Included: Racism and Diversity in Institutional Life*. Durham: Duke University Press

Spade, D. (2020). *Mutual Aid: Building Solidarity During This Crisis (and the Next)*. London: Verso.

Metahaven – “Can Jokes Bring Down Governments?” (2013)

Forensic Architecture – *Investigative Aesthetics*