

**Interrogating The Concurrence Of Graffiti And The Built Environment For Future  
Urban Renewal**

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## Abstract

Interrogating the concurrence of graffiti phenomenon  
and the built environment for future urban renewal.

Mitchell Lanecki

The main purpose of this paper is to examine the phenomenon of graffiti in the urban environment in relation to urban design and architectural decisions. This research creation hopes to shed light on areas of the city that require a more insightful evaluation prior to the consideration and adaptation as pre design research for future urban design projects. Post occupancy evaluation at the scope of a city can benefit from a new metric, one that has always been dismissed as irrelevant yet may have a trend that can help future evaluations or propositions of urban proposals. An emphasis on transdisciplinary research using autographic visualization to extract intersubjective data seeks to ameliorate future projects. Using a phenomenological inquiry perspective to navigate the results of qualitative methodologies results in recommendations for the future of our cities.

## Dedication

For Mila & Monica,  
For making the impossible possible.

xo

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# CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Graffiti is not the problem, it's your perception of graffiti that is the problem - Omen  
(TEDx Talks, 2014)

## BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

My years as an illegal graffiti artist in Montreal and abroad led me to many hours of traversing, observing, and interacting with the urban environment to create my work on various structures in the city. The movement was never random, and the outcome was a thought-out consideration regarding the impact and "rejuvenation" of a given area I used as a "canvas." My embodied choices reflect an innate natural interaction with the built environment that took no premeditation to consider the factors of the area to paint. The origin, or reasoning for creating graffiti, is rooted in factors beyond this research's scope but contributes to the epistemological approach for this research.

My immersion in academia has prompted me not to rely on my own interpretive perspective to convey my research but rather from a positivist perspective. My personal bias and connection to the world would make it more challenging to be impartial. In a possibly oversimplistic explanation, I also want to find a pattern that links what many experts consider bad urban design decisions to the prevalence of graffiti in these areas.

The urban environment is a dynamic space where various elements interact continuously and where regeneration is a constant. Among these elements, graffiti stands out as a form of artistic expression and a sign of urban neglect. This study explores the relationship between urban design and graffiti in Montreal, shedding light on how urban spaces influence and are influenced by graffiti, specifically how the neglect of certain urban spaces will always lead to the invitation of graffiti. It is meant to bridge a gap between environment research and design.

## RESEARCH PROBLEM

This study examines the complex relationship between urban design and graffiti, exploring how ineffective design strategies can fail to prevent graffiti and may even encourage its presence.

The study aims to gather data that can contribute to the advancement of design practices.

Urban environments and graffiti have a dynamic influence on each other. Certain design flaws can provoke graffiti as a psychological and ecological response, while the presence of graffiti can shape perceptions and interactions within those spaces.

No real literature ties the phenomenon of graffiti resulting from the environment in a strictly aesthetic way. It usually relies on the graffiti artist's social or criminal behaviours rather than on the underpinning of an individualist attempt at beautifying existing structures.

Drawing on Offenhuber's concept of autographic design, this research will view graffiti as a result and a critical data source (Offenhuber, 2020). Graffiti, viewed as a material trace left on the urban landscape, provides valuable insights into the origins of the underlying environmental and psychological conditions that led to its creation. By analyzing these traces, the research will try to uncover the design elements that contribute to and are influenced by graffiti, proposing solutions that consider the interdependence of urban design and human behaviour.

## INTENT OF STUDY

- Explore how specific urban environments influence the occurrence and nature of graffiti and, in turn, affect their surroundings.
- Painting graffiti, thought to be an individual impulse, may be indeed a systemic affordance due to ecological factors brought on by design decisions. The resulting phenomenon of graffiti may be a tool to indicate a re-evaluation of the site for improvement.
- Help bridge the gap between research and design. A post-evaluation of People-Environment data that can help future design.
- Reveal any connections between the built environment and the proliferation of graffiti.
- Pre-design research would benefit future designers, architects, and city planners.

## GUIDING QUESTIONS

- What urban design features attract graffiti?
- Does graffiti influence the perception and use of urban spaces?
- What contribution can this data supply to future design?

## INDICATIVE REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The following works will be the seminal literature on the subjects indicated forming my core literature review.

### Urban Design and Graffiti

*The Right to the City: Lefebvre and the City* by Andrzej Zieleniec (2016) will provide a theoretical framework for graffiti as a response to urban design, weighing heavily on the writings of Henri Lefebvre's views on the built environment and comparisons to graffiti and graffiti culture.

### Environmental Psychology

In *the Handbook of Environmental Psychology and Quality of Life Research* (Després & Piché, 2017) Carole Després and Denise Piché focus on the built environment itself as a learning tool to promote knowledge for future generations of urban designers.

### Urban Design Principles

*Creating Defensible Space* by Oscar Neuman (1996) will be the foundation for urban design principles and is crucial for understanding how urban design can prevent and provoke certain behaviours, such as graffiti.

### Affordances and Urban Spaces

James J. Gibson's: *The Ecological Approach to Visual Perception* (2015) introduces the concept of affordances, showing how urban environments might prompt or discourage graffiti. This ties into the interaction between design and human behavior.

### Human Experience

The book *Welcome to Your World: How the Built Environment Shapes Our Lives* (2017) and the article *Architecture-Boring buildings* (2001) by Sarah Williams Goldhagen serve as my 'spirit

animals' in understanding the impact of architecture on our lives.

## **OBJECTIVE**

The written component of my thesis aims to demonstrate how graffiti, as a form of spatial appropriation, can inform future urban design considerations. By interpreting the phenomenon of graffiti as trace data, I seek to highlight its value in improving the understanding of pre-existing built environments and its relevance in Participatory Design Research (PDR) and Post Occupancy Evaluation (POE).

The artifact or creation component will explore the process of translating this theoretical framework into a tangible, physical experience for the viewer. The goal is to create an object, or series of objects, that embodies the proprioception of urban space from two perspectives: that of the graffiti artist (the active agent) and that of the everyday citizen (the passive observer).

## **METHODOLOGY**

To explore the relationship between graffiti and urban environments, I will focus on two specific Montreal boroughs, Montreal-Nord and Le Plateau-Mont-Royal, for data collection. These boroughs were chosen because they represent contrasts in socioeconomic status, architectural design, population density, and the prevalence of graffiti. Following Oscar Newman's theory of defensible space (1996), which emphasizes the impact of urban design on social behaviour and community control, as well as the connection to crime (of which graffiti is an intersubjective subheading), these two boroughs provide a clear juxtaposition that will allow for a deeper investigation into how urban form influences the occurrence and nature of graffiti.

## **VISUAL SURVEYS**

I will be using visual surveys to gather information for this thesis (Muratovski, 2016). This approach will focus on the interpretive analysis of visual elements within their natural environment, without the need of participants. It aligns with qualitative research principles,

where understanding visual phenomena' cultural, social, and spatial significance is key. This method allows for a nuanced examination of how graffiti interacts with the built environment, using visual documentation to uncover patterns and meanings that emerge organically from the urban landscape.

In this research, the visual survey method is essential for collecting data highlighting the active relationship between graffiti and urban design. This approach allows me to systematically capture and document visual elements within the built environment, shedding light on how graffiti interacts with, critiques, and even renovates the urban space. By focusing on the visual elements without direct engagement with participants, I can observe the organic placement of graffiti and its context within architectural and social settings without influencing or disturbing it.

The strength of the visual survey as a research method comes from its ability to document visual phenomena in their natural state. In urban settings, visual documentation provides an authentic snapshot of how public spaces evolve, offering deeper insights into graffiti's role as a spatial intervention. This is especially relevant for research in design, where the visual field drives understanding, and incorporating visuals into the data collection process adds an extra layer of interpretation to the study.

### ***PHENOMENOLOGICAL INQUIRY***

Given my background as a graffiti writer for over 20 years, phenomenological inquiry emerged as an essential research method for this study (Muratovski, 2016). This approach allowed me to explore and document the lived experiences of graffiti writers, including my own, and how we interact with the built environment. The method focuses on uncovering the essence of these experiences, delving into how graffiti functions as both a form of expression and a critique of urban design.

Phenomenology emphasizes subjective experiences (Merleau-Ponty & Landes, 2012), which aligns perfectly with the nature of graffiti—an art form driven by an intense personal mission, deeply connecting the creator to the spaces it inhabits. Drawing on my

wide experience, I am able to provide an insider perspective, interpreting not just the physical act of creating graffiti but all the underlying emotions, intentions, and responses to the urban landscape that guide these actions (Schön, 1983). Through this lens, I will document and analyze graffiti as it exists in response to specific urban design features, social influences, and architectural flaws, revealing the invisible tensions of city spaces.

This methodology complements the visual survey, which was initially used to capture visual data of graffiti in various urban contexts. While the visual documentation provided a foundational understanding of graffiti's spatial relationships, the phenomenological approach allowed me to delve deeper, capturing the experiential dimensions that shape the interactions between graffiti and the city. The combination of these methods enables a holistic analysis, situating graffiti both as an aesthetic phenomenon and as a lived, experiential practice that critiques and redefines urban space.

### ***LITERATURE REVIEW***

In this research, the literature review serves as a foundational component of the methodology, guiding the development of my research focus and informing the selection of appropriate methods. By critically examining existing studies on graffiti, urban design, and spatial theory, the review highlights key insights and gaps that shape the trajectory of my study. It ensures that my phenomenological inquiry and visual survey methods are rooted in the context of established academic discourse, allowing me to build on existing knowledge while addressing unexplored areas. Although the literature review itself is not the primary research method, it plays a crucial role in justifying and refining the methodologies applied in this thesis.

### ***GROUNDING THEORY***

Grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 2017), will be used to develop theories based on the data collected through autographic visualization and documentation, mainly focusing on the processes and what are the urban design factors that lead to the emergence of graffiti in specific

urban environments. Data will be collected and analyzed simultaneously in an iterative process, allowing emerging themes and patterns to inform subsequent data collection efforts (Müller, 2021). As themes emerge, they will be categorized and linked to form a theoretical framework that explains the relationship between urban design and graffiti.

### ***PHOTOGRAPHIC DOCUMENTATION***

Originally, photographs were taken to capture the environmental context, spatial relationships, and visual characteristics of graffiti sites. These images were meant to be used as a basis for identifying recurring themes and patterns, as well as exploring the symbolic meanings embedded in the graffiti. In the end they did do that however, they ultimately played a more complementary role to the primary methodologies, such as phenomenological inquiry, rather than becoming a central focus of the analysis. The visual documentation, while useful, primarily served as a preliminary exploration tool, offering a visual context that informed subsequent research phases.

### **RESEARCH CREATION**

In the course of this research, I created an artifact that embodies the findings of the study. This artifact represented the psychological impact of urban design and graffiti—explicitly focusing on intangible and often invisible effects that urban environments have on individuals and communities. The artifact captured the emotional and cognitive responses to poorly designed urban spaces, mainly how these responses manifest through graffiti.

Given my long-standing obsession with making the invisible visible, the artifact seeks to translate the often unseen psychological reactions to urban spaces into a tangible form. This process involved taking abstract, qualitative psychological outcomes and visualizing them in a way that communicates the deep, yet often ignored, impact of urban design. This artifact serves as a creative expression of the research, merging both the visible signs of urban design flaws and the invisible psychological responses they evoke.

## CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Twisted little people go out every day and deface this great city. Leaving their idiotic little scribbles, invading communities and making people feel dirty and used. They just take, take, take and they don't put anything back. They're mean and selfish and they make the world an ugly place to be. We call them advertising agencies and town planners – Banksy (2002)

### GRAFFITI DEFINITIONS

Graffiti is not a new phenomenon nor strictly used artistically or destructively; it is more of a social construct that serves as a litmus test of community sentiment and, at times, a reactionary manifestation.

#### ***Graffiti Definitions: Historical and modern perspectives on graffiti.***

The oldest graffiti was found in the Scribe's Cave in the Theban area of Egypt, or MMA 504<sup>1</sup>. It dates to the Egyptian Middle Kingdom (c.1500 BC). Graffiti played host in all of ancient Egypt's territories (Ragazzoli, 2017).

Fifteen hundred years later in 79 AD the eruption of Mt Vesuvius blanketed the city of Pompeii under volcanic ash and was smothered. Centuries later, when it was being excavated, thousands of hand-engraved etchings were uncovered, documenting the lives of those who lived there. They were etched in the city's plaster walls by any literate person with a sharp implement (Ragazzoli, 2017). "Graffiti" was the original scholarly term used by the archeologists who excavated Pompeii in the 19th century. It described the scratchy writing that covered all the houses and public buildings they uncovered. The Italian noun "graffio," meaning "scratch," was transformed into an adjective to describe these findings as "iscrizioni e disegni graffiti."

<sup>1</sup> The tombs in the Theban area all receive an official name or number. Scribe's tomb is numbered 4 in necropolis 500 which corresponds to the north slope of the Deir el-Bahari area, excavated by the Metropolitan Museum of Art, leading to its Egyptological descriptor MMA 504



(Avellino, 1841). In a sense, it showed that there was a time in history when the literate or upper class were the perpetrators of 'graffiti' as opposed to the legal classification of graffiti artists (writers) as criminals.

As time passes, graffiti is documented in every era of humankind in its original form of scratching (Ragazzoli, 2017; Reisner, 1971). There hasn't been much change in graffiti documenting the lives of everyday citizens from the Pompeians to the Industrial society. However, a new development occurred with the introduction of markers and ballpoint pens, which led to the proliferation of existential graffiti in public urinals across North America (Reisner, 1971).

Graffiti has always been an individualistic, opportunistic phenomenon for the general public and societies. It was always constrained either to a specific area, or occasionally, political situations would spark more graffiti expressing the direct commentary of the people. That was until 1926, when Norwegian engineer Erik Rotheim patented the first aerosol spray can and valve capable of holding and dispensing fluids, which allowed for the development of modern spray painting graffiti (The History of Spray Paint, 2021). In Philadelphia in the 1960's, Mr Rotheim's invention was used for the first tentative steps of modern aerosol graffiti. A young boy went around his local borough and started spray painting "CORNBREAD" on as many walls as possible. This practice introduces a sub-form of spray paint graffiti as well as the concept of signature graffiti (sprayplanet, n.d.).

The advent of aerosol graffiti enhanced to the meaning and sentiment behind the word "graffiti" ever since. The Oxford online Dictionary, as a result, has two distinct methods of classifying graffiti<sup>2</sup> :

Graffiti (n)– Esp. in archaeological contexts: a drawing or piece of writing scribbled or scratched on a wall or other surface. Also: a piece of graffiti (graffiti n.).

Graffiti (n) - Words or images drawn, written, scratched, or sprayed, often illegally, on a wall or

---

2 Oxford online dictionary has 3 entries but one of the descriptors is for "A method of decoration in which designs are produced by scratching through a surface layer of plaster, glazing, etc., to reveal a ground of a contrasting colour" which is not related to the subject of this paper.

other surface in a public place.

The polysemic definition demonstrates that there are two perceptions of the phenomenon of graffiti even if the only difference is, in a sense, temporal. It also should be noted that the graffiti makers have changed in perception. Its earliest discovery showed that it was the highest levels of society, the literate, to now a lowly status related to criminals.

Graffiti has existed since some of the earliest recorded periods. Certain unique classifications are relevant to specific eras. Shifting cultural mores force graffiti into not only different forms but also introduce the hypothesis that different types of graffiti may serve different functions.

As mentioned, graffiti has been a constant presence from the discovery of the first graffiti to the present day. Graffiti can be categorized in an academic context as either existential or political. These two types of graffiti are distinct in that they are open-system types, meaning that anyone who encounters them can understand their message and are legible; however, there are some subtle differences between the two.

Existential graffiti- the most common form of graffiti, consists of individual commentaries ranging from crass to informative (Ragazzoli, 2017).

Political graffiti – the public uses graffiti to present its ideas and comments against the establishment in the safest, cheapest and most direct way to reach its target audience (Raento, 1997).

### ***MODERN GRAFFITI***

Modern graffiti from hereon in shall be referred to as the illegal, unsanctioned painting or drawing on walls. The legal form of graffiti will be referred to as 'murals' either in the form of sanctioned graffiti style or illustrative murals.

Contemporary graffiti is a product of urban life's social and cultural complexities. Its true essence cannot be understood outside of the city. The meaning of graffiti is open to various interpretations. For anyone walking in any major city, it is impossible not to witness the

underground language that manifests as a global urban presence.

Graffiti can be viewed as an attempt to overcome isolation and transform the city into a different image from the one presented by developers, who are supported by finance, corporate capital, and a local state apparatus that is increasingly entrepreneurial (Harvey, 2008). Graffiti is an “embodied creative colonisation of urban space” (Zieleniec, 2016) in direct opposition to capitalistic control of visual space imposed on citizens through advertisements, built environments and the like.

### **The writer**

The writer is a term for someone who illegally either etches, spray paints, or writes their street name or ‘tag’ on surfaces in the given, usually urban, area of their surroundings to achieve fame and status in the graffiti subculture. The common makeup of a writer includes but is not limited to an affinity to

nocturnal adventure, a distinct and recognizable creative aesthetic, spray can or marker control, and an undefinable need to paint as much and as many surfaces in the city they live in. This act is often referred to as getting up (Fig. 1). One of the most important features of being a graffiti writer is the ability to select and execute graffiti in the best spots (Ferrell & Weide, 2010).

### **Why does graffiti exist?**

When recording these graffiti, it pays us to take careful note of their material features as well as where they were written and how they relate to one another, their audience and their authors. In this way we could understand the events to which they bear witness and the actress who

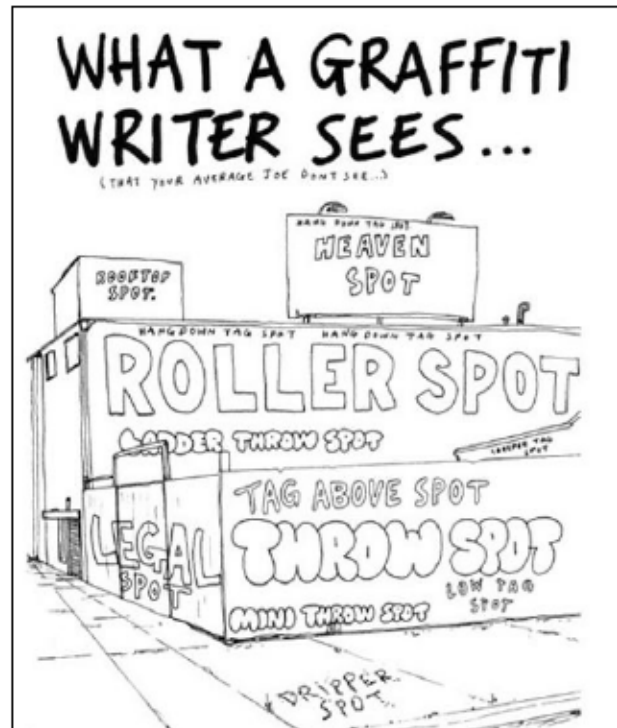


FIG.1 A SATIRICAL, YET STRIKINGLY ACCURATE, PORTRAYAL OF THE GRAFFITI WRITER'S SELECTION PROCESS @LUSHSUX.

took part in them. The resulting record provides a unique opportunity to explore the factors and processes at work in secondary epigraphy. It shows how this type of graffiti, or specific form of writing, crosses over into the realms of speech and action. These graffiti create places and reveal communities (Ragazzoli, 2017).

Before modern graffiti, there was a long history of social commentary, regardless of the built environment. The perpetrators of this graffiti, whether their mind state or social factors, are beyond the realm of this literature review. Moving forward, when analyzing graffiti, consider the many factors behind its creation, including social, psychological, situational, environmental, temporal, political, and criminal elements. I aim to perform a gestalt switch, suggesting that if we foreground the environment as a key visual provocateur, graffiti becomes merely a by-product. We will observe that all graffiti is in the realm of human habitation: the built environment. More specifically, we will focus on urban environments, which supply considerably more graffiti than their rural counterparts. Ragazzoli's quote implies that the placement and context of graffiti can shed light on the provocation that led to it.

## THEORIES ON ENVIRONMENTAL AND URBAN PSYCHOLOGY

Renowned architect Richard Neutra (1969) championed embodied empiricism, aligning with contemporary advances in cognitive science, neuroscience, and phenomenology. He promoted a design philosophy that placed the human body and sensory experiences at the forefront of architectural practice. For him, architecture should be functional yet attuned to the physiological and psychological needs of its users. Neutra asserted that humans exist solely in relationships—whether with their environment, those they live with, or the broader world—and that architecture can either nurture or undermine these connections.

Historically, buildings possessed design criteria that were neither negotiable nor arbitrary. They were less focused on the algorithmic results of cost-effectiveness or substance but rather on kinesthetic factors that shape human experiences and patterns. Has some of this been lost?

Future design practices must listen to multiple collaborators using multiple collaborative methods. We must honour and not turn away from our bio-historical roots when we think about designing a sustainable future. For “today design may exert a far-reaching influence on the nervous make-up of generations” (Neutra, 1969).

Jan Gehl's work *Cities for People* (2010) emphasizes the need for urban spaces to prioritize human experiences and interactions. Gehl argues that urban spaces often fail when they focus solely on visual aesthetics, neglecting the needs of people who use these spaces.

“All over the world are examples of city districts and city space where visual and aesthetic considerations have unilaterally dominated design. Perhaps these urban projects and urban spaces will be pictured in architectural magazines but in the real world these city spaces typically work poorly or not at all because key considerations for people and life in public spaces are missing. All quality criteria must be part of deliberations—every time” (p. 181).

Graffiti can initially be interpreted as ambiguous due to its unpredictable autogenesis. The ambiguity and imposition create a veritable unavoidable symbol or hallmark that needs to be interpreted. It may cause the viewer to grapple conceptually with the systems that brought it on and their contexts, thus establishing deeper and more personal relationships with the meanings offered. It would be necessary for people in the environment in which graffiti presents itself to be understood. Recognizing objects and then using them as a guide for environmental understanding has long been a central focus of human evolution and survival (Kaplan & Kaplan, 1983).

Is there ever an effective method of tracking or cataloguing people's reactions to a space better than graffiti? In all other forms of design, there are many avenues to report a problem or voice a concern that can be brought into the research needed or after a prototype has been built. Graffiti is a silent collaborator who critiques the choices missed in the blueprints before execution. If its existence were absent, another indicator would exhibit itself to speak for those without agency. There is rarely, if any, form of redo of a skyscraper or a neighbourhood. How

can we move forward to a better world if there are no guardrails to manage the checks and balances of something as impactful as the built environment in our lives today?

## DEFINITIONS OF KEY TERMS AND CONCEPTS

We must be clear on the definitions moving forward. These will help navigate the preceding chapters. They are mostly defining principles that need to be kept in the forefront to see the larger picture relating to urban design and graffiti.

### ***Defensible Space***

This concept is spearheaded his book *Creating Defensible Space* by Canadian architect and city planner Oscar Newman (1996). It is a concept that refers to a residential environment where the physical characteristics, such as building layout and site plan, allow residents to maintain their security actively. It is a sociophysical phenomenon that combines social behaviour and physical design to reduce crime. The main idea is that people are more likely to protect spaces when they feel a sense of ownership. By promoting territoriality, natural surveillance, and a secure image, defensible spaces deter criminal activity by creating environments where potential intruders feel observed and insecure.

Key elements include:

Territoriality: Residents' sense of ownership over their space.

Natural Surveillance: Design features that allow inhabitants to easily observe activity in the area.

Image: The perception of a safe and well-maintained environment.

Milieu: External factors like proximity to police stations or commercial areas that impact security.

Safe Adjoining Areas: Design elements that enhance the security of neighbouring areas through increased surveillance.

## **Spot theory**

Spot Theory originally appeared in *the journal City: Analysis of Urban Change, Theory, Action* written by two veteran graffiti artists: Jeff Ferrel and Robert D. Weide (2010).

Using field research and lived experience, they were able to distinguish factors that graffiti artists instinctively consider when they choose their spots to do graffiti. It refers to the concept within urban and graffiti studies that explores how specific locations, or “spots,” are chosen by graffiti artists based on factors such as visibility, accessibility, and the symbolic or social significance of the site. According to this theory, graffiti is not randomly placed but is strategically located in areas where it will have the greatest impact in terms of audience visibility, durability, and artistic recognition.

Key considerations in Spot Theory Analysis include:

Visibility – How easily a wide audience can see the graffiti.

Accessibility – How easy it is for the artist to reach and work on the site without being interrupted.

Level of Competition – The presence of other graffiti, which may influence the artist’s choice of location to stand out or align with other works.

Cultural Significance—The cultural or social meaning of the site, which may add layers of significance to the graffiti.

## **Post occupancy evaluation & Pre-design Research (POE & PDR )**

### POE

Post Occupancy Research is a versatile methodology used to assess how well buildings or environments function in relation to the people who use them. Initially championed by Robert Betchel (1996) and continued by others in contemporary architecture academia, chiefly Carole Després & Denise Piché (Després & Piché, 2017). It typically involves various evaluation

methods, such as surveys, interviews, and archival analyses, to gather data on a space's performance and usability. Initially developed to encourage designers to adopt quality control measures in the building process, POE has become a central environmental psychology paradigm.

POEs help bridge diverse fields such as psychology, anthropology, architecture, and sociology by evaluating how environments impact human behaviour. Though not always tied to a specific theory, POEs often lead to insights that inform management policies and building codes, making them powerful tools in practical design and urban planning.

### PDR

Pre-design refers to the initial activities before the design process starts. These activities include tasks such as business justification, developing a project brief, conducting feasibility studies, and evaluating different options. Pre-design research may involve creating diagrams or assessments to explore site potential or project feasibility.

However, these activities are not actual design efforts. Instead, they aim to clarify the client's requirements, ensure feasibility, and determine the project's direction before moving to the concept design phase, where the creative design process truly begins.



## CHAPTER 3: SEMINAL LITERATURE INTERSECTING WITH GRAFFITI

“The purpose of graffiti is to re-enchant and stimulate debate, discussion, and discord” – Ken Knabb (2007)

In extracting and reviewing the following literature, I am able to back the claims that I will propose in the future parts of my thesis. Also, this will give a picture of the state of knowledge and of major questions on this topic (Bell & Waters, 2018).

### SARAH WILLIAMS GOLDHAGEN – IMPACT OF THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT ON LIVES

#### *Welcome to your world*

In *Welcome to Your World* (2017), Sarah Goldhagen argues that the built environment significantly shapes human behaviour, emotions, and well-being. She contends that our relationship with the built environment is unique, influencing us continuously, even when we are not consciously aware of it, echoing Neutra’s sentiments (Neutra, 1969). Buildings, streets, and public spaces shape how we move, interact, and think, affecting our moods, actions, and sense of identity. Goldhagen emphasizes that architecture and urban design deeply influence our daily lives, creating settings that either enhance or diminish our quality of life.

Key points from her work include:

Impact on Emotions and Cognition: The built environment affects how people feel and think, from influencing their mood to shaping their sense of self in space. Goldhagen asserts that well executed design can invigorate people, while poor design can lead to alienation and disconnection.

Perception and Affordances: Drawing on J.J. Gibson’s (2015) concept of

“affordances”- what the environment provides for the perceiver to, temporally, decide their following action- Goldhagen explains that people perceive their surroundings regarding how they can engage with them. Environmental elements suggest how they can be used, and buildings without positive engagement leave people feeling disempowered.

Well-Being and Biophilia: Goldhagen discusses the innate human connection to nature, known as biophilia (Kellert, 2005). Even in urban settings, people thrive when they feel connected to natural elements. She argues that the built environment should facilitate this connection to support human well-being.

Design as a Social and Democratic Act: She advocates integrating humanistic approach to urban design to create spaces fostering community, inclusivity, and democratic engagement. Good design expands horizons and invites people to feel more alive and connected.

Challenging the designs of poorly designed urban spaces, graffiti seems to arise in opposition within the very same areas that are challenged for their design decisions. The agency of graffiti artists overrides the standard POE critique method by pushing the focus of an overlooked space to the foreground. It makes it known that there is a possible need for re-examination. It integrates itself with the actual environment in the form of graffiti for assessment that may be used to add another dimension to PDR for future projects.

The following is how it would relate to graffiti in her perspective:

Graffiti as a Response to Poor Design: Graffiti artists perceive spaces that lack thoughtful design—those that alienate or fail to foster community engagement—as opportunities for creative intervention. Goldhagen argues, that unqualified or poorly qualified space by urban designers can negatively affect people’s emotional and cognitive states:

Our relationship to the built environment differs from that of any other art. It affects

us all the time, not only when we choose to pay attention to it ... It profoundly shapes the narratives we tell ourselves and construct out of our daily lives (pg. xiv)

Graffiti artists reclaim these spaces by turning them into canvases that reflect human presence and creativity. This supports the idea that graffiti is more than defacement; it is an alternative means of engaging with and revitalizing the city.

Affordances and Graffiti: Goldhagen's references of Gibson's of affordances ties directly into how graffiti artists engage with the built environment. "Since any space contains multiple affordances, the environments we inhabit are anything but mute, homogeneous voids: they are vibrant, settings for life filled with imagined and actual actors in motion" (pg. 111). Similar to Gehl, she sees failed design elements — blank walls, neglected spaces, underpasses — as opportunities for self-expression. Graffiti redefines how these spaces are used, turning what was once lifeless into dynamic and meaningful public art.

Connection to Nature and the Urban Commons: Graffiti often brings vibrancy and organic forms back into urban settings, filling the void left by rigid, functionalist designs. This echoes Goldhagen's biophilia argument, suggesting that humans are naturally drawn to environments that feel alive, whether through nature or through human creativity. Graffiti adds a layer of humanity to spaces that might otherwise feel disconnected from their inhabitants.

Democratic Engagement in Urban Spaces: Goldhagen's theory of democratizing design practices mirrors the role of graffiti in reclaiming public spaces. Graffiti often challenges the top-down control of urban spaces by planners and developers, asserting the right of everyday people to shape and influence their surroundings. Just as Goldhagen advocates for inclusive design, graffiti represents an alternative form of engagement, where individuals make their mark

on the city, creating spaces that reflect the diversity and vitality of urban life.

### ***Architecture: Boring Buildings***

Goldhagen (2001) critiques American architecture<sup>1</sup>, highlighting how uninspiring and poorly designed structures shape not only the physical environment but also the social fabric of communities. She reflects on the iconic Twin Towers, noting their absence reveals the void in American architectural quality. Americans appreciate notable international structures like the Guggenheim, yet domestically, architecture is often treated as a luxury. A key issue, as Goldhagen points out, lies in capitalism, private interests, and systemic failures that stifle public architecture.

Goldhagen identifies three key failures contributing to the state of modern (American) architecture:

Regulatory schemes that fail to protect public interest: These regulations often favour private developers and minimize the role of design in creating vibrant urban spaces.

A flawed system for selecting architects: Non-professionals dominate the selection process, often lacking the expertise to evaluate visionary designs.

Inadequate demand for good architecture: The general public is indifferent to architecture, and this apathy allows uninspired designs to proliferate.

The endless bureaucracy that prevents new architectural developments mirrors the way graffiti disrupts the sterile monotony of controlled urban design. In spaces where planning commissions and zoning boards stifle innovation, graffiti reintroduces a sense of spontaneity and human presence. Where official processes fail to foster community engagement, graffiti becomes the voice of the streets, transforming overlooked corners into vibrant, expressive places.

Goldhagen's comparison of European architectural processes with those in the U.S.

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<sup>1</sup> The use of American in the definition of American architecture is just to differentiate it from European architecture practices and standards. This definition can loosely be associated with Canadian architecture as well. I am not implying a bias of superiority.

underscores the difference in approach. In Europe, architectural competitions and inclusive juries lead to thoughtful urban spaces.

For example, in Canada, the Block 2 Project in Ottawa (expanded in Canada, 2023) employed a more inclusive approach, similar to Europe. This project invited multiple architectural firms to compete, and a jury of architects, artists, and Aboriginal leaders judged the proposals. This inclusivity resulted in designs that reflect a more comprehensive range of values and cultural narratives, which graffiti inherently strives to do in its own form. Graffiti is, at its core, a reflection of a community's voice, especially in spaces where official architecture has overlooked or failed to account for diverse perspectives.

Perhaps the most significant factor in the state of architecture, according to Goldhagen, is the public's indifference. While many people can name famous artists like Michelangelo and Leonardo da Vinci, few can name even three important architects. This lack of public engagement with architecture has allowed mediocrity to thrive. Goldhagen suggests that introducing architectural education in schools could help cultivate a more informed and engaged public. This would not only improve the built environment but also lead to more vibrant urban life—goals that graffiti actively pursues by drawing attention to the failings of urban design and advocating for a more inclusive and expressive city.

“Educate your children,” she suggests.

## **OSCAR NEWMAN – DEFENSIBLE SPACE AND URBAN SAFETY**

In areas where graffiti is prevalent, Newman's defensible space theory offers insights into why certain urban spaces attract graffiti and other vandalism. Graffiti often occurs in areas lacking territoriality or natural surveillance, creating opportunities for people to mark spaces that feel neglected or unmonitored.

Lack of Territoriality: In high-rise buildings and other dense urban areas, residents may feel disconnected from the public spaces around them due to the absence

of clear boundaries between private and public areas or what is referred to as unqualified space. This lack of ownership can result in spaces being seen as “no man’s land,” where graffiti artists feel free to intervene without fear of repercussion.

Insufficient Natural Surveillance: Graffiti tends to flourish in areas where there is little natural surveillance—such as alleyways, large blank walls, or underpasses—places where residents or passersby cannot easily monitor activities. Without the ability to observe these areas, they become targets for graffiti, as artists feel emboldened by the anonymity these spaces provide.

Weak Social Control: Newman’s defensible space theory suggests that when residents have more control over their surroundings, crime decreases. In contrast, areas where residents feel powerless, such as poorly designed high-rise buildings, often experience higher levels of graffiti. The design of these environments may isolate residents from the public spaces, leading to a lack of informal social control, which invites graffiti and other forms of vandalism.

Perception of Neglect: Graffiti can also be interpreted as a response to spaces that appear neglected or abandoned by the community. When urban spaces are poorly maintained or designed without consideration for resident engagement, they usually fall to neglect, and eventually, they become susceptible to graffiti. In this sense, graffiti is both a symptom and a critique of failed urban design, highlighting the need for environments that foster a sense of ownership and care among residents.

Newman’s concept of defensible space highlights the importance of design in shaping how residents interact with and control their environment. In areas where graffiti is prevalent, applying the principles of defensible space—such as improving natural surveillance,

strengthening territorial boundaries, and fostering a sense of ownership—can help mitigate graffiti and other forms of vandalism. Graffiti, in this context, serves as an indicator of spaces where urban design has failed to provide residents with a sense of security and control. By integrating defensible space principles into urban planning, designers can create environments that discourage graffiti while promoting safety and community cohesion.

## JAN GEHL – HUMAN-CENTERED URBAN DESIGN

Jan Gehl's principles of human-centered urban design emphasize the importance of creating vibrant, inclusive, and engaging urban spaces that cater to the needs of people, not just cars or aesthetics. His key insights into urban planning highlight how cities often fail when designed at the wrong scale or prioritize efficiency over human experience. Graffiti, in this context, can be seen not just as an artistic expression but as a symptom of the flaws in urban design—an indicator of spaces that have neglected fundamental design principles.

Gehl advocates for:

Modest Space Dimensions: Urban spaces should be scaled for pedestrians, not automobiles. Spaces too large, devoid of detail, or designed for high-speed traffic become uninviting and impersonal.

Hierarchy of Decisions: Good urban design should start with the needs of the people. Planning decisions should prioritize creating spaces that encourage social interaction and pedestrian activity.

Compact and Direct Routes: Cities thrive when they are designed with compact, walkable routes. Urban environments that are too sprawling or car-centric create disjointed spaces that lack human engagement.

Kevin Lynch (1996) introduced the concept of the soft edge —the concept of breaking up flat, monotonous spaces with human-scaled elements like storefronts or gathering spots—of which Gehl highlights how essential it is to urban design to create engaging public spaces.

When this principle is overlooked, graffiti often becomes the visual manifestation of this neglect. Rather than enhancing an already vibrant environment, graffiti signals that these spaces lack the architectural or urban features necessary to invite human activity, forcing people to express themselves on the walls instead of within the designed flow of the space.

Gehl argues that cities built on a car-centric, monotonous scale are cold, lifeless, and difficult to rectify. When cities fail to consider human scale and experience from the start, graffiti often surfaces as a critique of the disconnected, non-engaging spaces that result from poor planning.

Rather than seeing graffiti purely as colourful artistic interventions, it can be understood as a direct response to the failures of urban design. Where Gehl's principles of human-centered design are ignored, graffiti becomes a marker of design flaws. The following points explain how graffiti reflects hidden issues in urban spaces:

Modest Space Dimensions and Graffiti: In environments designed at a scale too large or detached from human interaction, graffiti frequently appears. These vast, unwelcoming spaces signal a failure to create intimate, human-scaled environments. Graffiti does not fill these spaces with vibrant life but instead highlights how disconnected they are from the needs of people. It serves as a reminder that these spaces are not being used as intended because they fail to foster human engagement.

Soft Edges and Engagement: Gehl emphasizes that successful urban spaces incorporate "soft edges which encourage people to stop, interact, and engage. In spaces where these features are missing, graffiti is often a symptom of the lifeless, unbroken surfaces that dominate the urban landscape. Graffiti in these areas points to the failure of urban planners to consider human needs, as blank walls and vast concrete expanses leave little room for interaction or community-building.

Interaction with Bland Spaces: Cities designed with large, flat surfaces meant



for high traffic fail to engage pedestrians. Graffiti in these spaces is less about artistic expression and more about drawing attention to the alienation caused by poor design. The presence of graffiti in such environments highlights how disconnected these areas are from the lived experience of the city. Instead of fostering interaction and social life, these spaces repel human activity, with graffiti serving as an informal critique of their failures.

Graffiti as a Response to Poor Urban Design: Gehl's critique of urban spaces that focus solely on aesthetics without considering human interaction is central to understanding graffiti as a reaction to design flaws. In spaces where urban design has failed to integrate public life—whether by prioritizing aesthetics over function or by creating spaces that feel alienating—graffiti surfaces as a form of protest. Graffiti, in this context, is not about enhancing the beauty of space; it is a marker of neglect and poor design, signalling that the space does not serve the people who inhabit it.

Small-Scale Interventions: Gehl argues that urban spaces should be designed at the scale of pedestrians, focusing on small-scale architecture. Graffiti, often found in areas that feel too large and impersonal, can be seen as an attempt to bring human scale back into these environments. By marking walls, underpasses, and large structures with graffiti, artists are signalling that these spaces have failed to consider the pedestrian experience. Graffiti thus becomes a tool to reintroduce human presence into places where design has alienated the public.

Jan Gehl's principles of human-centered urban design provide a framework for understanding graffiti as an indicator of design flaws rather than purely as an artistic intervention. In areas where urban design fails to engage residents—through poor planning, oversized spaces, or lack of attention to human needs—graffiti emerges as a critique. It signals that the space is not functioning as intended, pointing to the failures of architecture and urban planning to create

inclusive, engaging environments. By applying Gehl's insights, we can see graffiti as a response to the disconnect between people and their built environment, emphasizing the need for more thoughtful, human-centered design.

Graffiti often appears in such environments, not as a form of beautification, but as a visual marker of the failure to engage people on a human scale. It draws attention to the oversized, cold design that pushes pedestrians away. When the need of community is ignored, urban areas become sterile, disconnected, and prone to vandalism. Graffiti reacts to this lack of consideration for public life and once again signals that the urban space is devoid of meaningful interaction.

## **ANDRZEJ ZIELENIEC – GRAFFITI AND THE RIGHT TO THE CITY**

In his paper, Zieleniec (2016) argues that graffiti, as a widespread phenomenon, plays a crucial role in the urban environment by challenging social norms and asserting ownership of space. It acts as a social regulator, transforming spaces into public forums that encourage use beyond the constraints of capitalism, surveillance, and security constraints. Graffiti contests the power structures embedded in urban planning primarily concerned with order and consumption.

Citing Henri Lefebvre (1996) Zieleniec maintains that urban spaces should allow for encounters and diversity, rather than merely serving as sites for consumption. Graffiti reclaims this right by turning public spaces into platforms for expression and resistance, where citizens assert their right to inhabit and influence how the city is formed, used, and developed. This reaffirms the idea of the urban commons, a situation where public spaces become resources shaped by the community (Goheen, 1998). The practice of graffiti offers an alternative perspective through which to see and experience the city. It re-enchants public space by initiating debate and discourse, serving as an antidote to the sterile commercialism imposed by advertisers and urban planners (Knabb, 2007). Zieleniec further claims that graffiti represents creative engagement and spatial appropriation through artistic interventions that challenge dominant discourses and the regulation of space.

In summary, graffiti, whether artistic or political, is not just a form of defacement; it reaffirms the lived experience and the communal value of urban spaces, acting as a counter-narrative to the control exerted by city planners and advertisers. It is a dynamic force that shapes and transforms urban spaces, fostering a more democratic and inclusive urban society.

## CAROLE DESPRÉS & DENISE PICHÉ – THE IMPORTANCE OF TRANSDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH

Contemporary ideas are substantial in this document and are most a critical guide of what transformations should be implemented and pursued.

They, too, argue that the design of the built environment is a powerful tool for improving people's quality of life. However, its success depends on prioritizing the needs of the city and building users throughout the design process. Therefore, it is essential to teach future designers approaches and methods that treat people and the environment as interconnected systems. A growing disillusionment has led architects to abandon interdisciplinary work with psychologists, mainly because they didn't receive the insights they hoped for. This shift stems from a recent paradigm where environmental psychology was used primarily as a form of guidance.

Unfortunately, the environment often fades into the background, lacking a clear definition of its nature or functional character. Its ecological functions are frequently generalized, and this oversight is seen as problematic. Designers are now invited to contribute to building or rebuilding cities, neighbourhoods, and buildings to foster sustainable behaviour while ensuring the well-being and harmonious living for all citizens.

It is crucial to initiate multi-sectoral collaboration to find solutions, not just identify issues. They advocate for maintaining and renewing collaborations between environmental psychologists and designers, as these partnerships are vital for "future-proof" design.

Environmental psychology has significantly contributed to understanding the relationship between people and their environments. Today, this understanding is often integrated into the

curricula of designers in many universities, where various fields—interior design, architecture, urban design, and landscape architecture—focus on the simultaneous consideration of human and physical environments.

Several key concepts from environmental psychology have historically shaped the field, including work on imageability (Lynch, 1996), the understanding of personal space (Hall, 1990; see also Sommer, 2007; Stokols, 1972), using neighbourhoods as a social schema and planning principle (Lee, 1968), how people are affected by their environment (Barker, 1968), where they fit in that environment (Proshansky et al., 1983) and how the environment interacts with the individual (Gibson, 2015).

However, many of these foundational theories are often forgotten today. For example, Gestalt principles, once integrated into architectural language, are now rarely discussed. Despite their significant contributions, such theories have faded, with some even relegated to historical footnotes.

To make new concepts usable in the design process, they must be reorganized into overarching methods. Often, this work is carried out by design professors. Unfortunately, biophilic theory and other important psychological considerations are frequently overlooked today.

Examples of publications of architects and psychologists on the impact of the built environment on the lives of children (Rivlin & Wolfe, 1985), the differences between homes and institutions (Robinson, 2006), the social life of small urban spaces (Whyte, 2010), and the spaces between buildings (Gehl, 2011) all contribute to the translation of empirical findings into practical design principles.

Integrating psychological aspects of the built environment remain crucial and have been carried forward by leading architects and urban planners. For example, at Université Laval, until 2001, the course “Housing Forms, Uses, and Regulations” taught students the morphological properties of housing, design methods, and urban-scale principles. When the Master’s in Architecture was required to have access to the profession in Canada, this course was replaced with a seminar on urban form and cultural practices, integrating many environmental psychology

concepts into the curriculum (Després & Piché, 2017).

To strengthen the link between environmental psychology and design, researchers and designers must understand each other they claim (March, 2010). Scientists use deductive and inductive reasoning, while designers use abductive reasoning, which aims at envisioning possibilities. To inform the design process, designers need access to various types of knowledge and must be trained to collaborate with experts across disciplines.

In his book *Inquiry by design: tools for environmental-behaviour research*, John Zeisel (1981) proposes a “toolbox” for the design process, representing each stage of the design cycle—from programming to post-occupancy evaluation. This approach emphasizes using multiple data sources, including observation, interviews, and physical traces, to inform the design process. This participatory and collaborative approach to design is essential for creating buildings and communities that reflect the needs of their users.

Evidence-based design has also emerged as a method for interior designers, architects, and facility managers to make better decisions during planning and construction. Access to credible evidence and knowledge translation are essential for effective design.

The gap between environmental psychologists and designers seems to be widening (Mira, 2005). One hypothesis is that the focus on sustainability has shifted psychologists’ attention away from everyday settings, leading to a loss of interest in specific, smaller environments (Pol, 2007). Another hypothesis is the entrenched “studio culture” in design schools, where interdisciplinary approaches are often undervalued, making it harder for candidates with multi-disciplinary backgrounds to gain recognition.

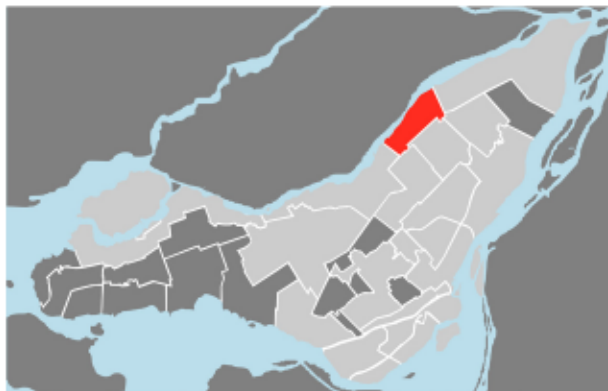
# CHAPTER 4: COMPONENTS OF RESEARCH-CREATION

My object[ive] is to show what I have found not what I am looking for – Pablo Picasso  
(Goldwater & Treves, 1974)

## THE RESEARCH

To explore the relationship between graffiti and urban environments, I chose two contrasting Montreal boroughs: Montréal-Nord and Le Plateau-Mont-Royal. These areas were selected based on their significant differences in socioeconomic status, architectural design, population density, and the prevalence of graffiti. Drawing on Oscar Newman's Defensible Space theory, which links urban design to social behavior and crime, including graffiti, these two boroughs offer a clear contrast that will enable a deeper analysis of how urban form influences the occurrence and nature of graffiti. This includes a reflexive approach (following Schön, 1983) and speculative design (drawing on Dunne and Raby, 2013), culminating in an installation that highlights graffiti through a phenomenological lens.

### *Montréal-Nord*



Montréal-Nord is a diverse and densely populated borough in Montreal, with a strong working-class presence. The architectural landscape is primarily characterized by modest single-family homes, low-rise apartment buildings, and public housing developments. The area experienced

significant growth between 1950 and 1976, which saw the rise of housing projects and urban developments typical of that era. These developments were often utilitarian, with a focus on functionality over aesthetics, a pattern that can be seen in many of the public spaces and buildings in the borough today.

Architecturally, Montréal-Nord consists primarily of residential areas with a mix of single-family homes, duplexes, walk-ups, and some high-rise apartment buildings. The area is known for its suburban-style developments alongside industrial zones, reflecting its post-World War II rapid urbanization. It features many parks and public spaces, contributing to a sense of community, though the urban design has not always been well integrated with the needs of its residents, particularly with regards to safety and accessibility.

### ***Plateau Montreal***



The Plateau Mont-Royal (the Plateau) is a vibrant and historically rich borough in Montreal, known for its bohemian culture and artistic communities. The architectural landscape of the Plateau is diverse, with a mix of 19th-century row houses, triplexes, and duplexes, many featuring Montreal's iconic

exterior staircases. These buildings are often characterized by colourful facades, ornate details, and a human-scale urban fabric that promotes walk-ability and a strong sense of neighbourhood cohesion.

The area's urban design focuses on pedestrian-friendly streets and bike paths, promoting a more sustainable and community-oriented lifestyle. An integrated commercial district runs through the borough and the island.

## **Survey & Survey Results**

I developed a survey based on key literature, focusing on theories by Newman, Gehl, and Spot Theory (Fig. 2). The survey assesses graffiti characteristics, spatial analyses, and urban design considerations. According to Newman, areas with lower income, higher immigration, and more single-parent (women) families tend to experience more crime (Newman, 1996). Using census data (Government of Canada, 2001), I identified Montréal-Nord as fitting this profile, while Le Plateau-Mont-Royal represents the opposite: higher income, lower immigration, and fewer single-parent (women) families<sup>1</sup>. However, when cross-referencing this data with police reports (2022 SPVM Activity Report, 2022), I found that crime rates, including graffiti-related incidents, were actually higher in Le Plateau and lower in Montréal-Nord. This inverse relationship effectively challenges Newman's theory within the Montreal context<sup>2</sup>, suggesting that factors beyond simple statistical correlations or demographics are at play. The cultural dynamics in question include the boroughs' differing attitudes toward public art and graffiti, the socioeconomic character of their populations, and their historical relationships with urban development. Forms of community control also vary significantly: in Le Plateau-Mont-Royal, a more affluent and culturally liberal community may perceive graffiti as an acceptable or even celebrated form of artistic expression, whereas in Montreal-Nord, stronger community cohesion and higher surveillance by residents may lead to quicker graffiti removal or deterrence. These nuanced factors point to a more complex relationship between urban design, social behavior, and graffiti—an analysis that lies outside the realm of this paper—requiring context-specific examinations to understand these interactions fully.

The case studies forms (Fig. 3) were complimented with photographing and documenting the parameters of the graffiti in a given area<sup>3</sup>.

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1 In leading up to creating my survey, I had done a demographic search, and strangely enough, single-parent homes led by men were in the richest neighbourhoods while the ones led by females were in the poorest following the premise put forward by Newman(1996)

2 Interestingly enough, in his book, Newman uses NYC as one of his areas of focus, and the results are the opposite findings compared to Montreal, where the poorest, immigration rich, and the single-parent (women) have the most crime.(Newman, 1996)

3 The complete catalouge is in the appendix



# Urban Site Analysis

Quartier:

Address:

## GRAFFITI CHARACTERISTICS

Type of Graffiti:  Signature (Tag)  Throw Up  Bubble Fill  Piece  Production

Complexity:  Simple  Moderate  Complex

Graffiti Location:  Wall  Shutter  Rooftop  Highway  Abandoned Storefront

## VISUAL AND SPATIAL ANALYSIS (SPOT THEORY)

Audience:  Prominent Spot (High Visibility)  Hidden Spot (Low Visibility)

Visibility:  High Visibility  Moderate Visibility  Low Visibility

Longevity and Durability:  Expected Short-Term (Temporary)  Expected Long-Term (Durable)

Availability and Competition for Space:  High Competition  Moderate Competition  Low Competition

Seriality and Accumulation:  Isolated Instance  Part of a Series  Accumulation of Multiple Graffiti

## URBAN DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

Public/Private Space:  Public Space  Private Space

Pedestrian Traffic: High  Moderate  Low

Negligence or Maintenance:  Well-Maintained  Neglected

Building Condition:  Excellent  Good  Poor

Public Transport Proximity:  Close (within 500m)  Moderate (500m - 1km)  Far (>1km)

Commercial or Residential Area:  Commercial  Residential  Mixed-Use

Security Measures (CCTV, Lighting):  Extensive  Moderate  Minimal

Population Density:  High  Moderate  Low

Accessibility: Highly Accessible  Moderately Accessible  Inaccessible

Aesthetic Quality of the Area:  High  Moderate  Low

Visibility and Surveillance:  High Surveillance  Moderate Surveillance  Low Surveillance

Social Interaction:  High Interaction  Moderate Interaction  Low Interaction

Cultural Significance:  Significant  Moderate  Minimal

Economic Activity:  High  Moderate  Low

Environmental Features (Green Spaces, Water):  Present  Absent

Street Furniture and Amenities:  Ample/Moderate  Minimal/None

## ADDITIONAL NOTES AND OBSERVATIONS

General Observations:

Any additional comments or notable observations about the site or its environment.

FIG 2 SURVEY USED TO OBSERVE SITE PHENOMENON



<b>Address</b>	150 Mount-Royal
<b>Montreal</b>	Plateau
<b>Public/Private Space</b>	Public
<b>Pedestrian Traffic</b>	High
<b>Maintenance</b>	Well-Maintained
<b>Building Condition</b>	Excellent
<b>Public Transport Proximity</b>	Close (within 500m)
<b>Commercial or Residential Area: Commercial</b>	Commercial
<b>Security Measures</b>	Minimal
<b>Population Density</b>	High
<b>Accessibility</b>	Moderately Accessible
<b>Aesthetic Quality of the Area</b>	High
<b>Visibility and Surveillance</b>	Low
<b>Social Interaction</b>	High
<b>Cultural Significance</b>	Significant
<b>Economic Activity</b>	High
<b>Environmental Features</b>	Absent
<b>Street Furniture and Amenities</b>	Ample / Moderate
<b>Graffiti Type</b>	Throw Up
<b>Graffiti Complexity</b>	Simple
<b>Graffiti Location</b>	Rooftop
<b>STA - Spot Prominence</b>	Prominent Spot
<b>STA - Audiences and Visibility</b>	High Visibility
<b>STA - Longevity and Durability: Short-Term (Temporary)</b>	Long-Term (Durable)
<b>STA - Availability and Competition</b>	Low Competition
<b>STA - Seriality and Accumulation</b>	Part of Series

FIG. 3. EXAMPLE CASE STUDY

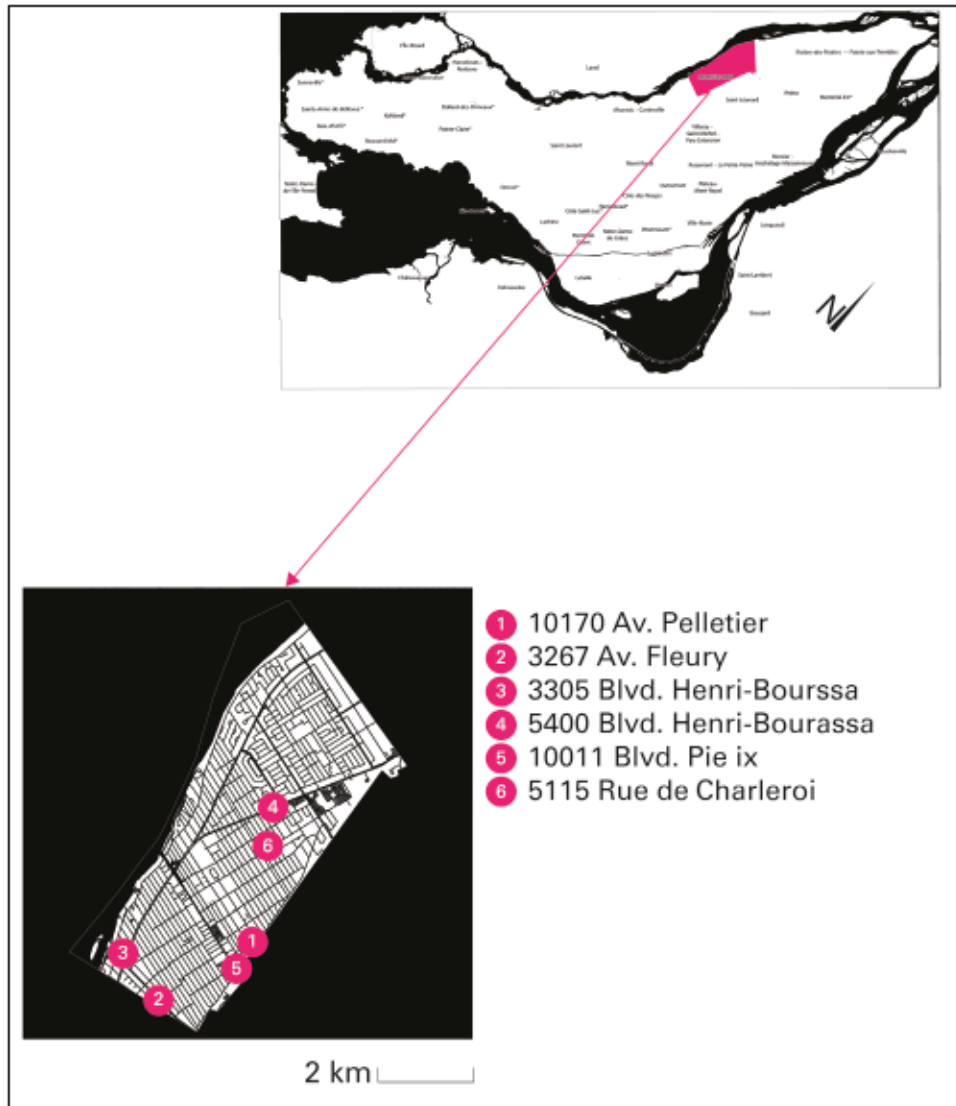


FIG. 4 LOCATIONS OF GRAFFITI IN ALL OF MONTRÉAL-NORD

In Montréal-Nord (11.07 sq km), there was a total of 6 areas with graffiti that I was able to find after over 4 hours of driving through all the streets at 2 separate intervals. This is an extremely low graffiti density area (Fig. 4).

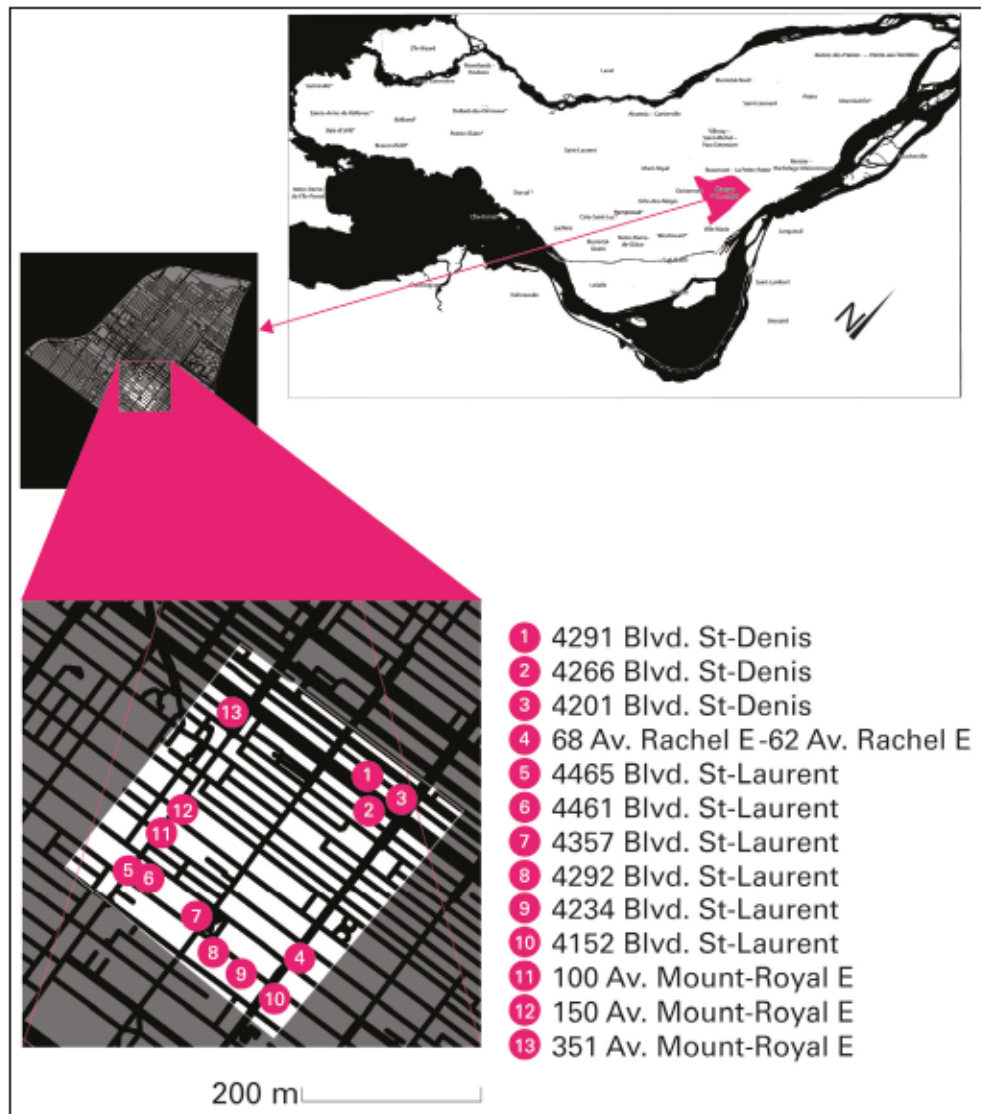


FIG. 5 LOCATIONS OF GRAFFITI IN A SAMPLE AREA OF THE PLATEAU

In the Plateau, I was able to document 13 distinct and notable graffiti areas walking around in one small area (0.2 sq km) of the plateau in 2 hours. With those 13 samples I had enough information to make a reliable enough inference. My scope in this research had to be constrained as there could have endless images but for the purpose of this thesis I found all I needed in a relatively small sample size. The patterns that appeared in my data gathering became repetitive and therefore the amount of case studies although not irrelevant became redundant (Fig. 5).

## PHENOMENON ANALYSIS

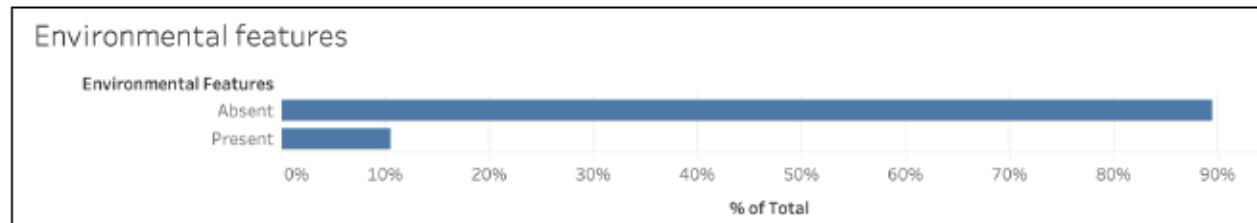


TABLE 1 ENVIRONMENTAL FEATURES

As far as urban design considerations, the number one culprit that was present at 89% of my sites was the lack of environmental features (green space, water...) (Table 1).

Cross-sectioning the data from the surveys the top three factors (Table 2 ) which were present together 63% of time graffiti presented itself were:

1. Lack of environmental features
2. The area was a public space
3. There was minimal to no security measures.

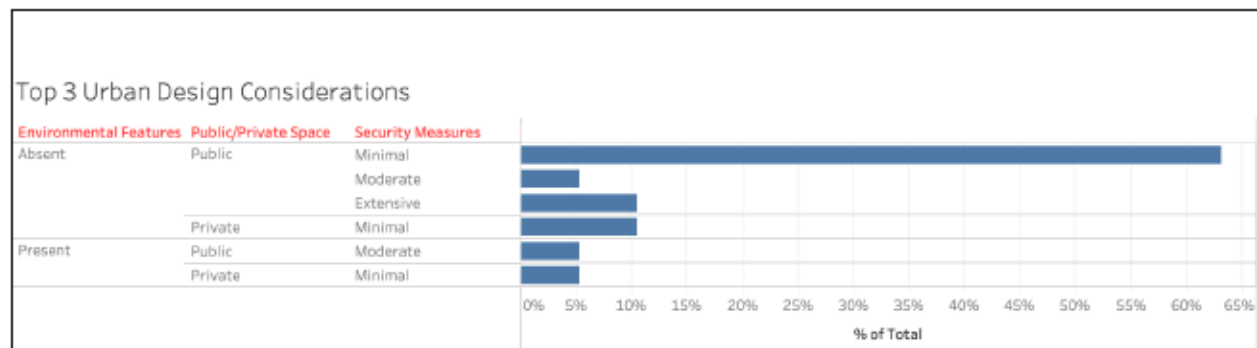


TABLE 2 TOP 3 ENVIRONMENTAL OBSERVATIONS - TOP 3 FACTORS IN RED

To test and validate my analysis grid, I use specific example to show the relations between these aspects of the environmental features and the presence of graffiti. To see if the data is consistent with an area outside my data set yet still in Montreal I used the intersection of Rue Queen and Ottawa Street in Montreal. This location houses the Poste Adélar-Godbout, an electrical substation in Old Montreal, and the Darling Foundry, a recognized cultural heritage site in Quebec. The substation, Canada's oldest, has been in continuous operation since 1901, and



FIG 6. 2007 IMAGES OF POSTE ADÉLARD-GOUBOUT WITH GRAFFITI (IN GREEN). IMAGE GOOGLE.

the presence of the Darling Foundry underscores its cultural significance; however, since 2007, this area has garnered graffiti (Fig. 6).

The persistence of graffiti here can be attributed to two of the key urban design considerations mentioned above: the absence of distinct environmental features and the lack of effective security measures.

These issues, left unaddressed, create conditions conducive to the production of graffiti. The recent addition of a pedestrian-only section (Fig. 7) in this area has further transformed it into a public space, increasing its visibility and accessibility, which will most likely make it even more alluring for future



FIG 7. PAVED AREA THAT ONCE WAS A STREET TO CREATE MORE FOOT TRAFFIC MAY INADVERTENTLY INVITE GRAFFITI.

FIG 8. 2024 IMAGES OF POSTE ADÉLARD-GOUBOUT AND DARLING FACTORY WITH GRAFFITI (IN GREEN AND MAGENTA ).

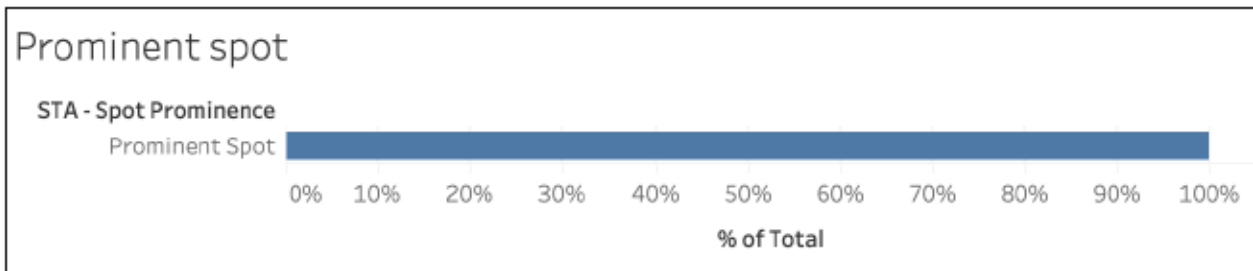


TABLE 3. SPOT THEORY ANALYSIS: SPOT PROMINENCE

graffiti (Fig. 8), serving as an indicator of the broader dynamics between urban design and spatial critique.

According to factors of spatial analysis derived from the graffiti perspective based on Spot Theory (Ferrell & Weide, 2010; see also Chapter 2) the standout factor was spot prominence. This helped with my survey as every piece of graffiti I found was vying for my attention. A highly visible prominent spot accounted for 100% of all the graffiti sites in this study (Table 3)<sup>1</sup>.

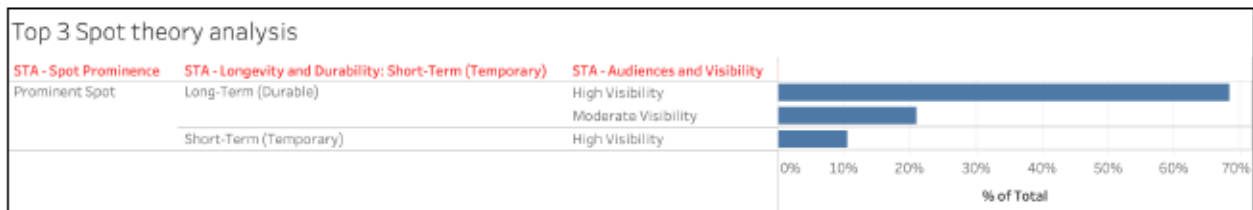


TABLE 4. TOP 3 SPOT THEORY ANALYSIS OBSERVATIONS (TOP 3 FACTORS IN RED)

The top 3 Spot theory factors were found together in 68% of all instances (Table 4). They were:

1. Prominence- high visibility
2. Longevity and durability - expected long term (durable)
3. Audiences– high visibility<sup>2</sup>

1 A complete and detailed catalogue of all the sites used for this thesis are located in the appendix.

2 The difference between the 2 high visibilities is how prominent the graffiti is on a building (prominence) versus how many people can witness it (audiences).



FIG 9. SPANISH GRAFFITI



FIG 10. AMERICAN GRAFFITI

To illustrate these factors, I will present two sets of visuals. The first example, from Bilbao Spain (Fig. 9), features graffiti along a main walkway leading to the Guggenheim Museum. This prominent position guarantees high visibility and exposure to a diverse audience. The second example from 7th Avenue in New York City (Fig. 10) showcases graffiti on a frequently used shutter in a densely populated area. The effort required to remove it, combined with the constant flow of people, demonstrates the importance of permanence and audience reach.

Locally, graffiti on rooftops in Montreal also aligns with Spot Theory's principles. Elevated positions on 2 of Montreal's most prominent streets (Fig. 11; Fig. 12) ensures that the work stands out and commands attention, while restricted access protects the graffiti from quick removal, allowing it to endure over time. These examples highlight how prominence, durability, and audience intersect to reinforce the strategic placement of graffiti, enabling it to serve as a visible critique of urban spaces and design decisions.

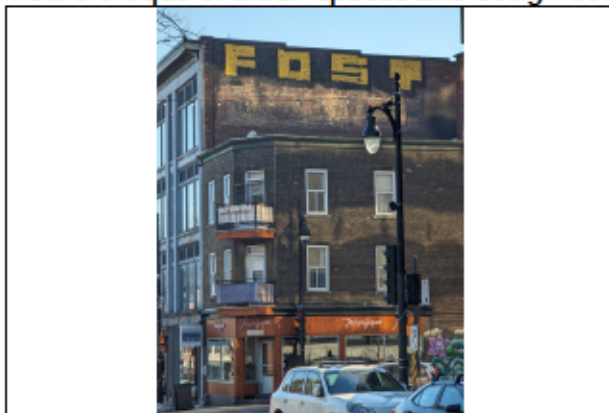


FIG 11. GRAFFITI ON MONTREAL'S ST. LAURENT BOULEVARD



FIG 12. GRAFFITI ON MONTREAL'S ST. DENIS BOULEVARD



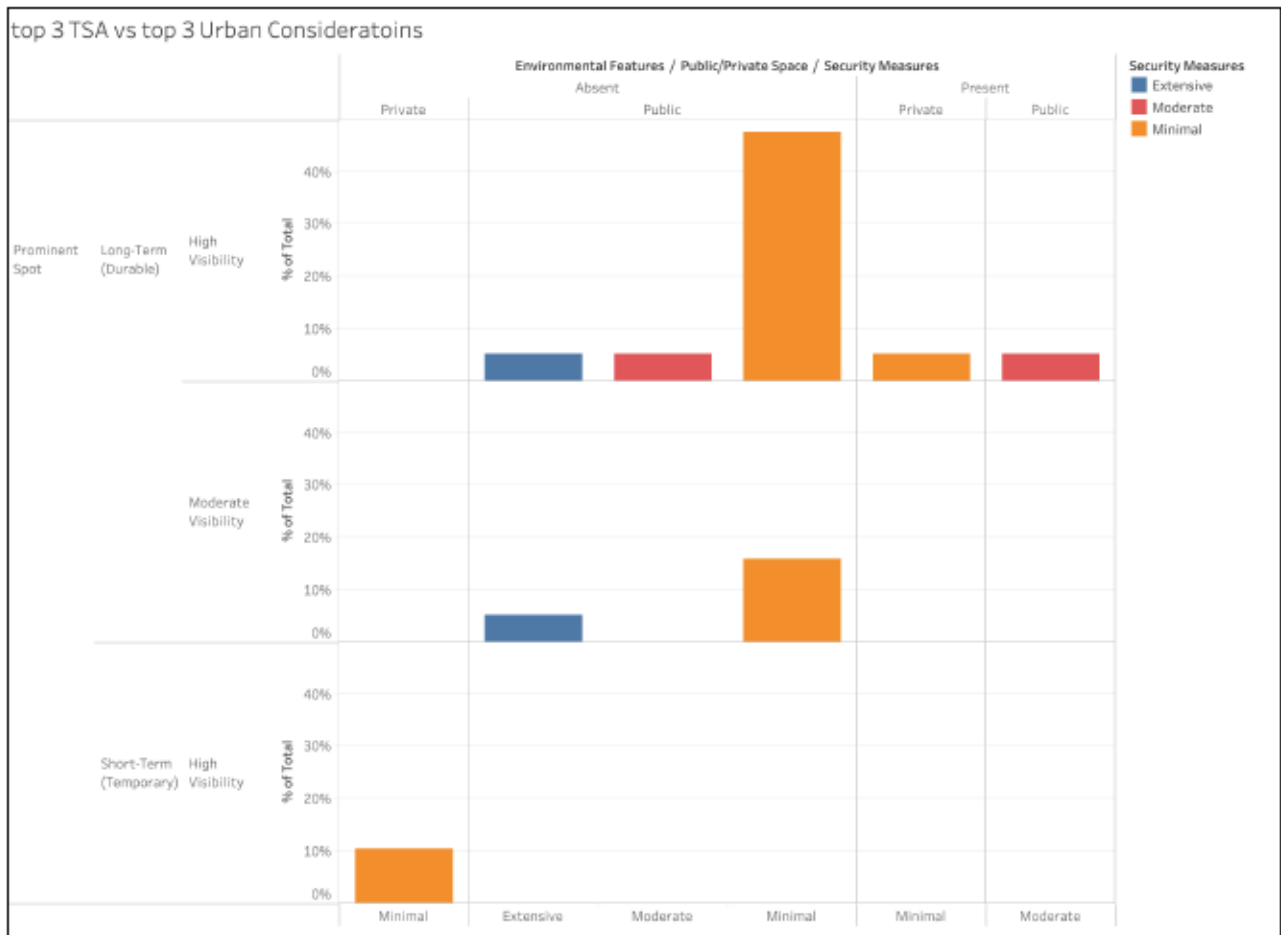


TABLE 5. TOP 3 SPOT THEORY ANALYSIS COMPONENTS VERSUS TOP 3 DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

I then compared the top 3 factors of spot theory analysis and design considerations mentioned before and cross referenced them side by side to see what was the underlying commonality that they both shared (Table 5). A prominent spot coupled with an absent of environmental features creates an area prime for graffiti. I was expecting this kind of response but never expected it to be so dramatic of a result.

I once shared in a TEDx talk (2014) that one of the main reasons that there is graffiti in some areas is the lack of focus or consideration of the natural world. This sentiment is echoed in many other urban designers, notably Stephan Kellert (2018, 2005) who suggests that humans have an inherent connection to nature, a bond that has evolved over millennia and remains critical to our well-being. As rapid urbanization and large-scale construction projects increasingly isolate people from natural environments, integrating nature into the built environment becomes one of the most urgent challenges in contemporary design. He

argues that nature-inspired spaces can significantly enhance human health and well-being by re-establishing our lost connection to nature, thus improving mental, emotional, and physical outcomes. I believe that is what we are seeing here. To illustrate this, I used one of the sites from my primary survey that embodied what I describe as the “perfect storm” of these factors. This busy location exemplifies the prominence of an urban area devoid of natural elements and features, making it a focal point for graffiti. In this setting, the absence of biophilic considerations and the prevalence of an uninspired space have created the ideal conditions for graffiti to thrive (Fig. 13).



FIG. 13 THE INTERSECTION OF RACHEL ST. AND ST. DENIS BLVD IN MONTREAL

## OBJECTS OF PROTEST

The trans-disciplinary approach to design argues that multiple disciplines in design research at times are necessary to make a viable end goal successful (Després & Piché, 2017; Loveless, 2019). My leanings on what can be viewed as irrelevant or esoteric fields of ecology and psychology, to name a few, may in fact be the disciplines that create a new paradigm to push the user experience to a level of satisfaction and completeness that has not been achieved by merely referring to golden ratios or archaic standards that merely scalable standards (Neufert & Neufert, 2012) with no consideration of the phenomenological dimensions of human experience and embodiment.

Originally, I had wanted to show a causation between the effects of the urban design and human psychology as a direct correlation. This was not the right direction and therefore I was advised not to pursue this research direction. The theory of causation in design will never be provable. However, an undeniable factor exists when interacting with the built environment: each place feels different and makes us feel different, so maybe there exists form of influence?

Compare how you feel if you are walking through the markets in Barcelona's old town, the hectic pace of the Hong Kong financial district, or the New York City skyline. Even if you have never been, simply researching these places gives you a sympathetic proprioceptive experience of each place. Each one of these experiences evokes an embodied feeling that differs from the other, and to say they don't influence our sense of being would be almost absurd.

The behaviourists initially called this "behaviour setting" (Barker, 1968) due to its deterministic connotations, but it has since been rebranded by Goldhagen (2017) as "action setting" to include the agency of humans as they are able to make choices within their environmental settings. But consider what would happen when communities like these were not consulted and massive urban changes take place for the benefit of those same communities? Consider Haussmann's Paris and Robert Moses's New York to illustrate the dispossession and displacement caused by urban development. Academic David Harvey (2008) advocates for a

collective right to the city, emphasizing the need for democratic control over urban spaces to counteract disempowerment and marginalization. He asks us to recognize and enact the right to the city as a fundamental human right, challenging the neoliberal urban agenda and fostering a more inclusive, equitable urban future.

In the process of constructing the city on your behalf, without prior consultation, communities emerge as the affected group when urban planners execute the urbanization plans. Now, once entrenched, the city is difficult to rectify (Gehl, 2010). Throughout history the betterment of the built environment was never the builders' focus; it always focused on the best interest of those who would profit from them, the stakeholders. Nothing would have ever changed until people started to critique what had been done. So, to say that city planners had the interest of the citizens over the shareholders can be seen as nothing but pure fiction (Marmot, 2002).

*People need to take to the streets to protest!* (Metaphorically, that is)

Earlier, I mentioned that political graffiti is one of the most direct and visible ways to raise the voice of the people (Raento, 1997). As a form of spatial critique, graffiti transforms urban surfaces into platforms for expression, challenging authority and identifying an underlying discourse. Its presence in public spaces is critical, as these areas inherently carry the collective identity of a community, serving as venues where individuals can engage with shared struggles and ideas. Public spaces hold unique power—they are spaces for civic engagement where protest, resistance, and social commentary can be witnessed and experienced.

If not on the streets, where else could these urgent messages find their voice? (Zieleniec, 2016).

Public spaces, with their accessibility and visibility, offer the perfect backdrop for this form of communication, mostly for those without agency. They are simultaneously physical and symbolic places where individuals have historically reclaimed power, sparked debate, and resisted systemic silencing. The streets serve as more than canvases; they act as battlegrounds for ideas, making public spaces essential for graffiti's existence and resonance. As Latour (2005) points out, "anything that modifies a state of affairs, acts"; thus, graffiti can now express the agency of many who cannot.

### ***The spray can***

Chapter 2 shows how graffiti's anonymous nature always had its roots in social commentary and expression for those without agency (Fig. 14).

The new iteration of graffiti called culture jamming (Klein, 2010), sometimes known as subverting, is a subversive practice that draws on techniques like appropriating, otherwise known as *détournement* (translation : kidnapping), to the Letterist International and later the Situationist International (Debord, 1957). It involves repurposing the language, symbols, and rhetoric of mainstream culture to critique the very institutions that produce it, such as altering corporate logos to expose or mock the companies or concepts they represent. In line with speculative design's adoption of the dark and humorous aspects of design which the authors argue is often ignored in design (Dunne & Raby, 2013). Using the spray can I chose to, in essence, bottle up one of the best minds on architecture and urban theory so that it can be sprayed when needed.

I used the Molotow<sup>1</sup> brand spray paint as my template (Fig. 15). I dissected and catalogued all the size, fonts and colour ways needed to kidnap the brand and use it as a subversion through graphic design (Fig. 16; Fig. 17; Fig. 18).



FIG. 14 AN ANONYMOUS ANTI-POLICE GRAFFITI



FIG. 15 MOLOTOW PREMIUM BRAND SPRAY PAINT CAN

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<sup>1</sup> Pronounced Molotov. The irony is not lost on me. It was actually one of the reasons I chose this brand, but I don't want to digress into a social-political rabbit hole.



FIG. 16 SUBVERTED BRANDING OF SPRAY CAN



FIG. 17 SUBVERTED SPRAY CAN



FIG. 18 SUBVERTED SPRAY CAN

## ***The Brick***

If there was a poll for the most symbolically charged object, I would argue for the modest brick. This humble building block represents many things: part of a strong home, as in the famous tale of the three little pigs; a witness to both modern use and ancient civilization, having helped build the city of Jericho; a global standard, used on nearly every continent; conformity, another brick in the wall; and, finally, a symbol of protest (Fig. 19).



FIG. 19 PROTESTOR THROWING BRICK

The duality of something that symbolically builds up and tries to take down the same institutions is a very powerful symbol to me. Also, the actual shape is one of the most simplistic yet recognizable and ascribed shapes that exist in the world. Using this object a design element is a powerful reminder of us as a species for recognizing objects and then using them as a guide for environmental understanding has long been a central focus of human evolution and survival (Kaplan & Kaplan, 1983).

In my final exhibition, I display a multitude of bricks, each with different implications and meanings.

### ***The Jacobs brick***

With the Jacobs brick I applied the same détournement treatment to the common brick as I did to the spray can. The dichotomy of the individual versus buildings (control versus resistance, large versus small, David versus Goliath) comes into play as well. I used a quote from Jane Jacobs pivotal writing *The Death And Life Of Great American Cities*:

Dull, inert cities, it is true, do contain the seeds of their own destruction and little else. But lively, diverse, intense cities contain the seeds of their own regeneration, with energy enough to carry over for problems and needs outside themselves  
(Jacobs, 1993)

I used a Trotec SP 500 laser engraver for all my engravings (Fig. 20). I inscribed/imbued the object with the same manner subversion as the spray can (Fig. 21; Fig. 22)



FIG. 20 THE SPEEDY 500 IN ACTION





FIG. 21 THE JACOB BRICK 3/4 VIEW

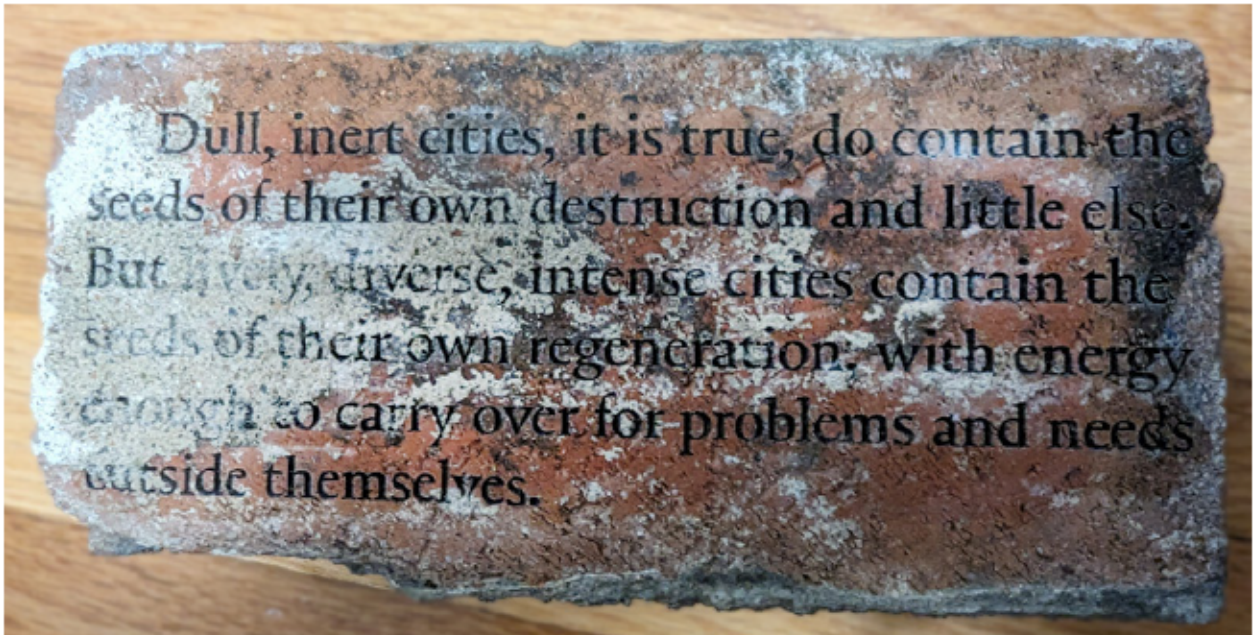


FIG. 22 THE JACOB BRICK TOP VIEW

## *The borough brick*

Using the two major boroughs of my research (Fig. 23; Fig. 24), I created a brick to display each of the neighbourhoods. Symbolically these can be seen as the structured or atypical representation of urban design and architecture (Fig. 25)<sup>1</sup>.



FIG. 23 TYPICAL PLATEAU BUILDING ALONG ST.LAURENT BOULEVARD



FIG. 24 TYPICAL MONTRÉAL-NORD BUILDING



FIG. 25 ENGRAVED BRICKS

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<sup>1</sup> The images have been modified for input into the laser engraver.

### ***The embodied brick***

I aim to construct an artifact that merges the urban materiality of bricks with the symbolic elements from graffiti culture, such as spray can caps, to reveal the ecological relevance of graffiti to the urban environment. By embedding spray caps into bricks, I intend to evoke a deeper connection between the materiality of graffiti and the built environment, highlighting the hidden layers of interaction that graffiti represents in our cities. In a sense, graffiti is imbued in the essence of the built environment.

This artifact will act as a commentary on the prevalence of graffiti in society—a presence that is often ignored or suppressed, much like fossils are hidden within rocks, waiting to be discovered. In this context, graffiti is similar to how ancient life is revealed through amber or stone, demonstrating that it is an essential part of urban life, just as these natural phenomena are crucial to our understanding of history (Fig. 26).

I will incorporate spray caps, which are symbols of rebellion, agency, and subversion. I want to highlight that graffiti is more than just a visual disruption of these surfaces; it is a physical critique of urban design. This can also tie into the Spot Theory framework, as graffiti highlights failures in urban planning and design flaws that are otherwise invisible to the public.



FIG. 26 INSECT IN AMBER (L), FOSSILIZED FISH (R)

To create a prototype, I constructed a brick mold by first 3D capturing it (Fig. 27), printing it (Fig. 28), and casting it in silicon (Fig. 29; Fig. 30; Fig. 31).

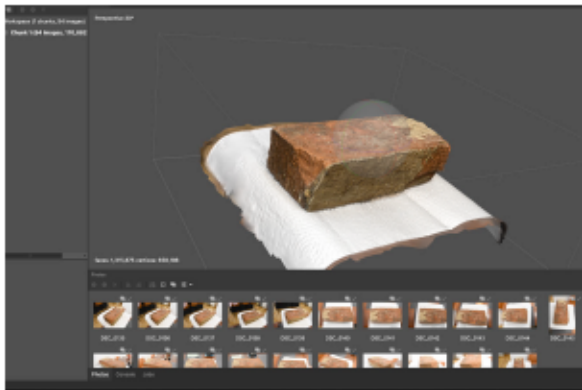


FIG. 27 BRICK SCAN

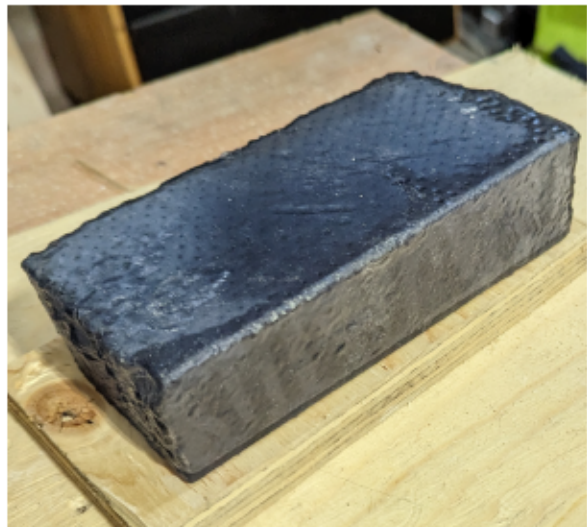


FIG. 28 3D PRINT OF BRICK



FIG. 29 MOLD CREATED TO RECEIVE SILICON

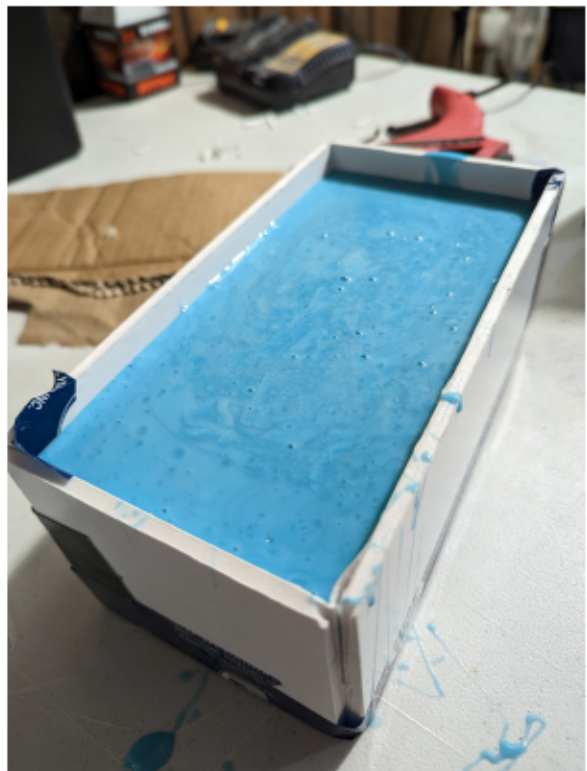


FIG. 31 MOLD OF BRICK

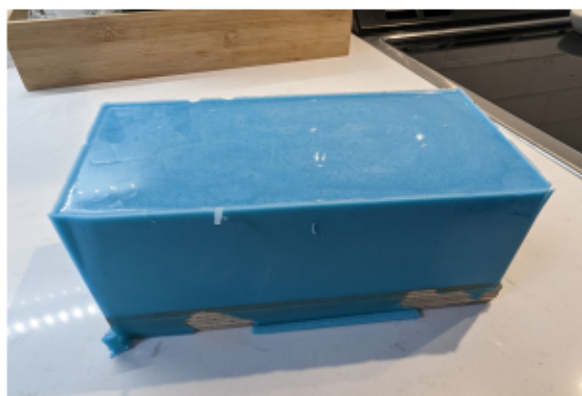


FIG. 30 MOLD FILLED WITH SILICON



FIG. 32 MOLD FILLED WITH BEE'S WAX AND SPRAY PAINT CAPS BEFORE HEAT



FIG. 33 MOLD FILLED WITH BEE'S WAX AND SPRAY PAINT CAPS



FIG. 34 BRICK COOLED AND HARDENED

After completing the casting process, I chose to fill the cast with beeswax (Fig. 32)—a material that symbolizes community and collaboration in the insect world, making it the perfect representation for this project. I slow-cooked it the oven until all the wax melted (Fig. 33). After some trial and error, I was able to complete the brick (Fig. 34).

The brick didn't have the impact I needed, so I cracked it open to make it look more like a visual depiction of a found fossil (Fig. 35).



FIG. 35 BRICK PIECES LOOKING LIKE FOSSILS

### ***The mixed-media brick***

Using the previous methods to create marriage between the last two models (the mixed-media and the borough brick) to create a visual abstract version of the representation of what graffiti is actually become part of the brick and thus a part of built environment with equal validity. (Fig. 36; Fig. 37; Fig. 38; Fig. 39)



FIG. 36 MIXED MEDIA BRICK VIEW PORT



FIG. 37 MIXED MEDIA BRICK



FIG. 38 MIXED MEDIA BRICK



FIG. 39 MIXED MEDIA BRICK



## THE EXHIBITION

### *The set up*

In the book *Urban Psychology for Design*, David Kopec (2018) states, “[according to the] Law of proximity in the organization of a community where individual homes are clustered together in a neighbourhood. How the individual components are grouped together influence how they are perceived”. Accordingly, a controlled walkthrough would guide the observer an opportunity to interpretate the space.

My rationale behind this exhibition method comes from my interpretation of Offenhubber’s (2020) methods of rendering and displaying phenomena so that they can be witnessed in a controlled manner. Everyone has a life story that differs from everyone else. I want to be able to display my exhibit in a manner that precludes all unnecessary noise when observing the intent of the display. With autographic visualization, the observer becomes a participant and has to tune into the phenomenon (2020). Let’s assume that everyone sees traces differently due to their own personal biases, therefore, the phenomenon will present itself differently according to different people. I want the observer has become the center of the experience therefore I want to constrain the observer to see the way I see something is the object of the presentation.

Considering how semiotics can be understood as a method of analyzing and interpreting texts, cultural phenomena, and, in this case, social structures through the lens of underlying systems of signs and meanings (Hawkes, 1977). I want to mitigate this and reduce the level viewer variance so that everyone can have the same perspective.

Perspective is the cornerstone of this exhibition. I wanted to include a form of gestalt switching where I emphasize what is happening in the background becomes the focus of discussion, thereby rendering it to the foreground. This fore-grounding (Kopec, 2018) was achieved by creating a very rigid method in which the piece should be observed: I drilled holes in two of the mix media bricks in order to create two separate viewpoints (Fig. 40; Fig. 41) that represented two different perspectives (outsider and insider) of the same experience (Fig. 42).



FIG. 40 VIEW THROUGH A VIEWPORT



FIG. 41 VIEW THROUGH VIEWPORT

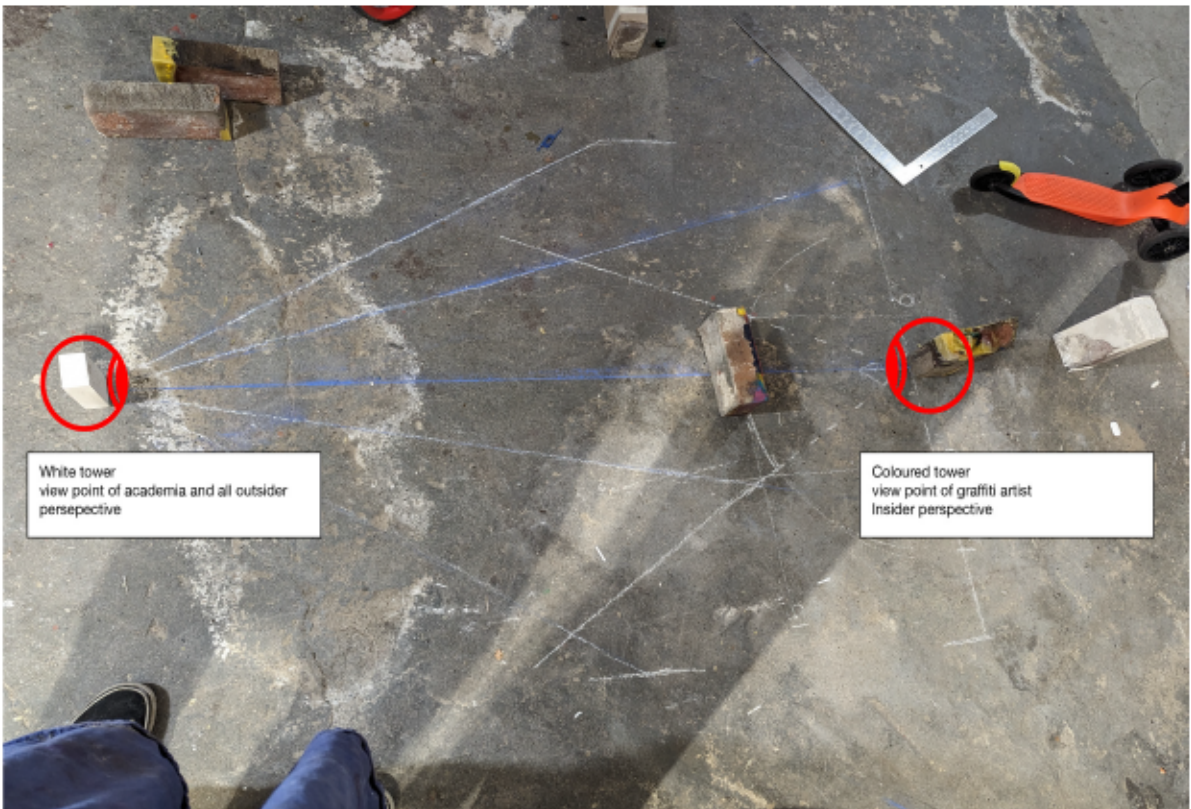


FIG. 42 PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS IMAGE IS THE CONCEPT STAGE.

## ***The exhibition***

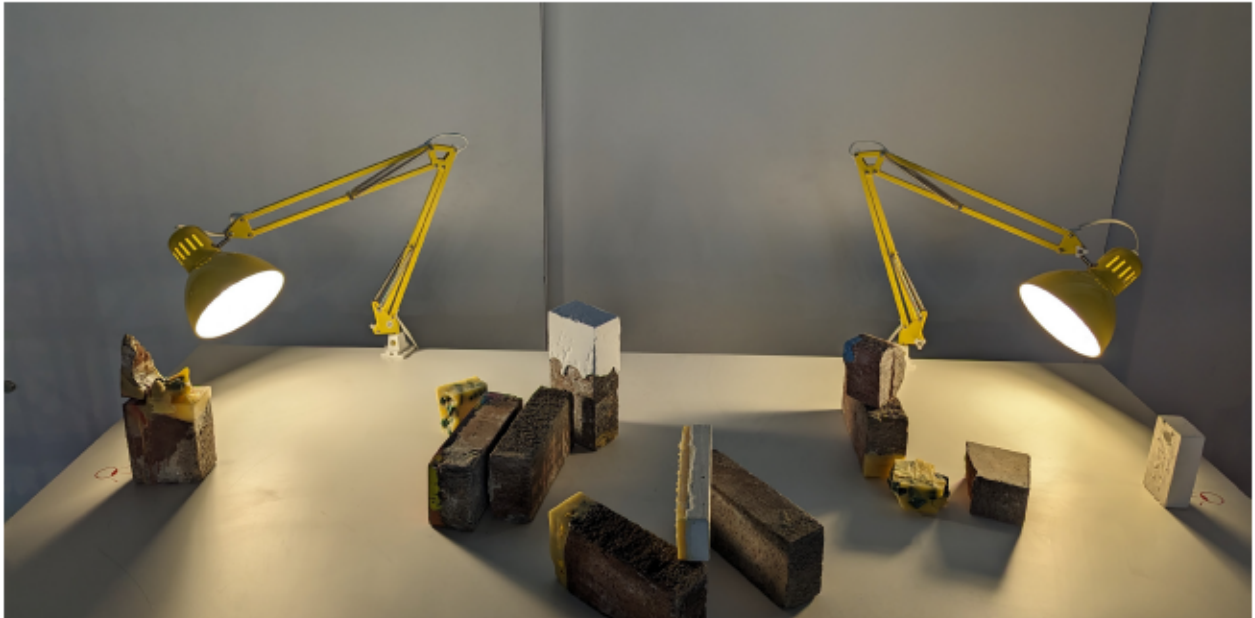


FIG. 43 FINAL EXHIBITION

The arrangement of all the bricks types that I mentioned allows the viewer to see two distinct realities depending on their position (Fig. 43).



FIG. 44 VIEWPOINT OF ACADEMIA AND PROFESSIONALS

From one angle (Fig. 44) the bricks present a clean, academic representation of the built environment, void of any graffiti or disruptions. This side reflects an idealized, controlled vision of urban spaces, focusing solely on the design intentions of planners and architects, and catering to the perceived needs of the community. However, this is a false or incomplete view, representing the often sanitized perspective of urban spaces found in academia or professional discourse.



FIG. 45 EXAMPLES OF UNIFORMITY (CINQUE TERRE, ITALY) VERSUS MONOTONY (KRUTYYE KLYUCHI, RUSSIA) IN URBAN DESIGN.

In the aforementioned view, the urban environment mirrors what Jan Gehl (2010) refers to as uniformity (and boring), where the design seeks to create a visually cohesive and controlled landscape<sup>1</sup>. While uniformity aims for simplicity and clarity, eventually lending itself to harmony (Neutra, 1969). More often than not it crosses into monotony, erasing the diverse and dynamic elements that give urban spaces their vitality (Fig. 45). Furthermore, the absence of graffiti, in this case, symbolizes the erasure of human expression and the lived experiences of the inhabitants, presenting a space that is overly structured, sterile, and disconnected from the reality of its users. This false view reflects the dangers of prioritizing uniformity construction practices to the extent that it leads to a monotonous, lifeless urban environment.

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<sup>1</sup> Not to overlook the fact that at a smaller, lived-in scale, the residences are able to affect their individual environments.



FIG. 46 VIEWPOINT OF WRITERS

On the opposite side of the display (Fig. 46), the bricks reveal a more complex, “real” version of the lived in urban environment. These bricks are hybridized with color, texture, and layers of graffiti, representing the lived experience of urban spaces. This side embodies graffiti’s phenomenological perspective—an unfiltered, authentic appropriation of space that reflects the interactions between the environment and its users.

This dichotomy between the academic and phenomenological views is central to my thesis: graffiti acts as a multifaceted spatial critique, serving as trace data that should inform urban design considerations to provide a deeper, more nuanced understanding of the built environment. The academic view, which often favours a detached, quantifiable analysis, overlooks the complexities of how individuals experience and respond to urban spaces. In contrast, the phenomenological perspective acknowledges that graffiti is not the result of a singular factor but a reaction to multiple interconnected forces—social, cultural, spatial, and political. Through this lens, or in this case view port, my thesis approaches graffiti as a critical commentary on urban spaces, shaped by unseen tensions and embodied experiences.

The design of my brick installation, with its dual viewpoints, mirrors this tension between positivist and interpretivist approaches. On one side, the clean, ordered bricks represent the academic perspective—a constructed, detached view of urban spaces that ignores or sanitizes the disruptions graffiti creates. On the other side, the altered, colourful bricks reflect the phenomenological reality—graffiti as a form of spatial critique that engages with the lived experience of urban inhabitants. This separation of perspectives forces the viewer to confront two intersubjective realities, prompting them to consider both the constructed, institutional narrative of urban spaces and the unspoken, often invisible narratives that graffiti reveals.

## CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

First we shape cities and then they shape us. – Jan Gehl (2010)

Graffiti could be on the sides of the city. Created by the will of the public space, as opposed to the bureaucrats and the City Hall. A true form of POE- Andrzej Zieleniec (2016)

Man, on the contrary, is the creator of fairly permanent atrocities, which surround us 'for the duration' and beyond - Richard Neutra (1969)

Many turn a blind eye on graffiti, ignore it at our peril"-Oscar Newman (1974)

Our relationship to the built environment differs from that of any other art. It affects us all the time, not only when we choose to pay attention to it. What's more, the built environment shapes our lives and the choices that we make in all the ways that these other arts do — combined. It affects our moods and emotions, our sense of our bodies in space and in motion. It profoundly shapes the narratives we tell ourselves and construct for our daily lives- Sarah Goldhagen ( 2017)

After taken my observations and through my analysis grid and I was able to show a relation between certain aspects of the environmental features and the presence of graffiti I hope to introduce a new way of interpreting and challenging the reasoning of it's presence in the urban environment. All the key literature in my thesis shows others before me pointing towards the need of a underlying correlation how the built environment is incorporated in our lives and the psychological impact it may have on those lives. I feel more research into the subtle, sometimes invisible, factors of our environment will be able to present more insight to the acts of disruption that occur in our urban environments.



## SUMMARY

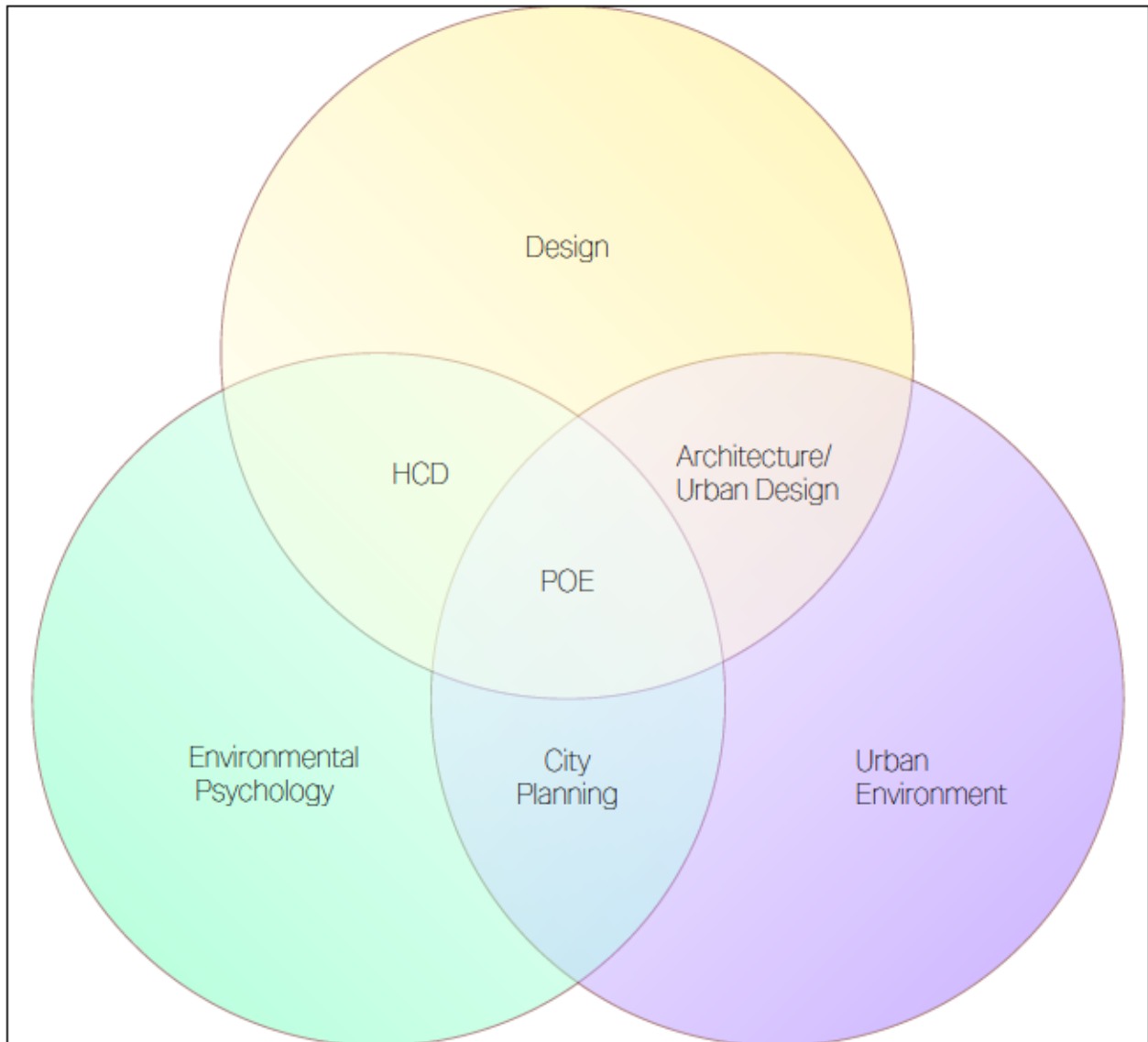


FIG. 47 VENN DIAGRAM OF FACTORS OVERLAPPING TO SUPPORT POE

The complexity of urban design requires a multidisciplinary approach, as no single discipline can fully address the diverse needs of the urban environment. This Venn diagram (Fig. 47) illustrates the interconnected nature of Post-Occupancy Evaluation (POE), which sits at the crossroads of various fields: design, architecture, environmental psychology, city planning, and urban environments. POE's position in this intersection highlights its role as a key method for evaluating how well designed spaces function in practice, incorporating insights from user-centered design (HCD), environmental psychology, and urban planning.

Graffiti serves as a material trace of where urban design falls short of engaging its users and fostering meaningful interactions with the built environment. In incorporating these signs, POE can provide the necessary feedback to improve future designs by incorporating a better understanding of how environments are actually used and experienced.

The overlap of these disciplines also underscores the importance of integrating more biophilic principles and human-centered approaches. We can do this by designing with a deeper connection to nature and a focus on user experience: urban spaces can better fulfill both psychological and social needs. The evaluation process should not stop once construction ends but continue as a means to understand how spaces evolve and how people adapt to them over time.

POE's role in connecting city planning, environmental psychology, and architecture ensures that future designs are grounded in both empirical data and the lived experiences of the community. It provides architects, urban planners, and policymakers with the tools to refine their designs based on real-world outcomes, ensuring that urban environments become more engaging, functional, and reflective of the needs of their inhabitants. In this sense, the Venn diagram emphasizes the importance of a transdisciplinary approach, making it clear that the built environment is not just a physical structure but a dynamic space shaped by its users and their interactions.

## **DENOUEMENT: THE IMPACT OF DESIGN ON HUMAN EXPERIENCE**

The consequences of poor urban design are not only seen in the physical degradation of spaces but also in the social and psychological responses of the people who live within them. Graffiti, often dismissed as vandalism by those who study the phenomenon through a positivist approach, is a response to environments that fail to engage, protect, and nurture their inhabitants. It serves as a silent protest against the rigid, monotonous, and disconnected spaces that dominate much of modern urban life.

The key to improving urban design lies in recognizing the need for environmental

elements in the spaces we create by embracing a trans-disciplinary collaboration methodology in order to future-proof future generations. This approach seeks common ground across disciplines while respecting their unique contributions. Without considering how people experience and interact with their environment and focusing on the latest trend in architecture and urban design even the most aesthetically pleasing designs will fall short. By improving the ability of environmental psychologists and designers to translate research into design solutions, we can create more meaningful connections between theory and practice.

Therefore, the four types of knowledge must be integrated through more thorough pre-design research, post-occupancy evaluations, inclusive competition processes, and the integration of biophilic principles, urban design can evolve to better meet the needs of the people it serves (fig 48).

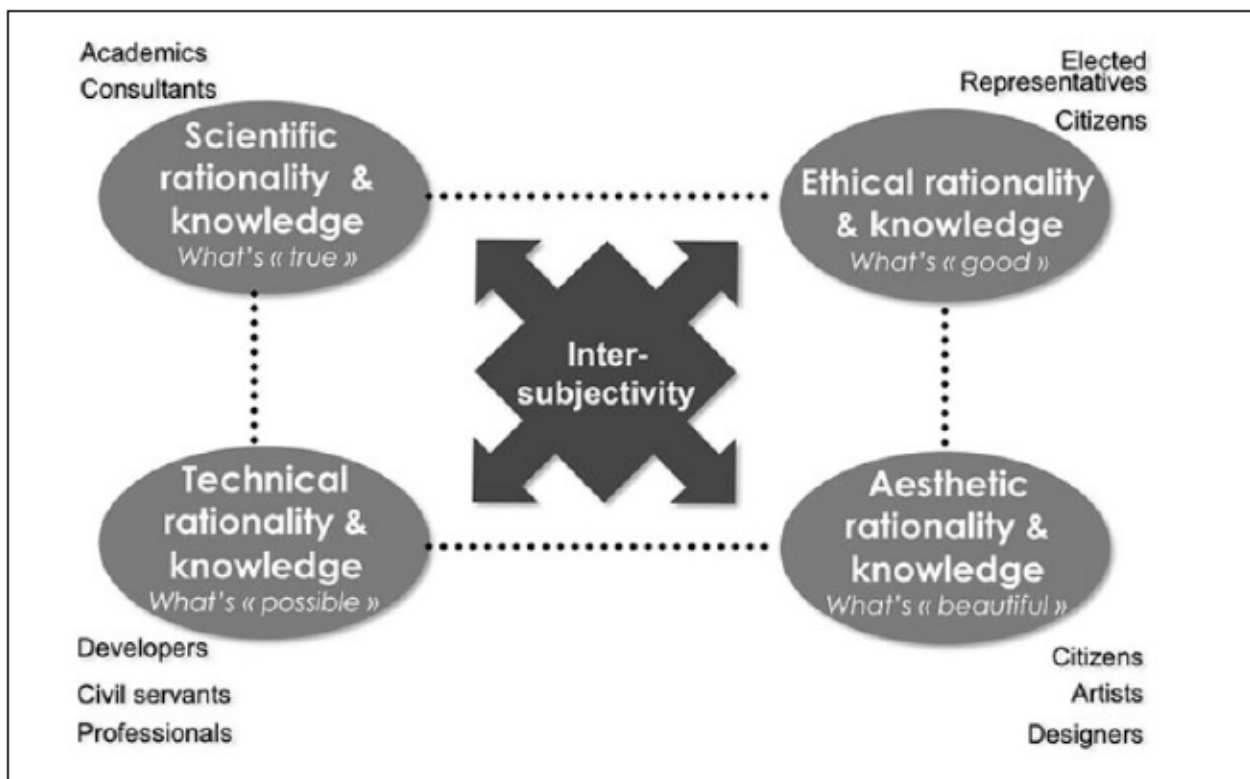


FIG. 48 MODEL OF COLLABORATIVE DESIGN RESEARCH (GIRBA, LAVAL UNIVERSITY, QUEBEC, CANADA)

I hope these strategies will offer a path forward, allowing for designs that are not only functional but also emotionally and psychologically fulfilling thus ensuring net positive for future generations.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The complexities of urban life demand that we rethink how we approach design. By incorporating comprehensive research, fostering inclusivity in decision-making, and reconnecting people with nature, urban spaces can become more engaging, supportive, and resilient. Graffiti, which often manifests in poorly designed areas, reflects the frustrations of communities that have been overlooked in the design process. Addressing these frustrations requires a holistic approach that prioritizes human experience, values diverse perspectives, and restores a sense of connection to the natural world.

### Need for more POE for future PDR

In urban design, incorporating more PDR would allow for a better understanding of how spaces will function in practice and prevent design failures that contribute to graffiti.

While POE is a widely accepted practice, many evaluations lack a solid theoretical framework (Després & Piché, 2017), limiting their ability to diagnose larger systemic urban design issues. By anchoring POE in a robust theory such as Oscar Newman's Defensible Space or Jan Gehl's human-centered design principles, future designers could better understand the relationship between urban design and the social behaviours that occur within these spaces that are often not even considered. Using graffiti as a visual trace of these phenomena, offers us a unique post-occupancy data point for evaluating urban key points to focus on for a more comprehensive evaluation processes in design.

### Need for juried competitions

By incorporating more juried competitions into urban design processes, cities can invite a wider range of creative voices, mitigating the monotonous, predictable design trends that often provoke graffiti as a form of protest. This inclusivity would energize a design process that truly reflects the needs of diverse communities and the complexities of modern urban life. Graffiti

serves as an informal, grassroots jury, critiquing spaces that fail to meet these standards.

### Need for More Biophilic Design

By integrating more biophilic elements such as green spaces, water features, and natural materials into urban designs as well as architecture, designers and planners can create environments that reduce alienation and promote mental and emotional well-being. Kellert's principles (2005, 2018) highlight how nature-inspired spaces can enhance the human experience and reduce the likelihood of non-conformist behaviors like graffiti. Urban environments designed with biophilia in mind may indeed foster a sense of belonging and care, mitigating the frustrations that often manifest as graffiti in neglected areas which is evident in the data that I collected.

### ***Final thought***

I feel by addressing these three areas, urban design can evolve the discipline to something that not only focuses on shaping physical spaces but also on the elevation of the social, psychological, and emotional lives of those who inhabit them. The future of urban design depends on our ability to create spaces that reflect the complexity of human experience and therefore promote a more inclusive, connected, and harmonious urban environment.

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# APPENDIX

## Urban Site Analysis

Quartier:

Address:

### GRAFFITI CHARACTERISTICS

Type of Graffiti:  Signature (Tag)  Throw Up  Bubble Fill  Piece  Production

Complexity:  Simple  Moderate  Complex

Graffiti Location:  Wall  Shutter  Rooftop  Highway  Abandoned Storefront

### VISUAL AND SPATIAL ANALYSIS (SPOT THEORY)

Audience:  Prominent Spot (High Visibility)  Hidden Spot (Low Visibility)

Visibility:  High Visibility  Moderate Visibility  Low Visibility

Longevity and Durability:  Expected Short-Term (Temporary)  Expected Long-Term (Durable)

Availability and Competition for Space:  High Competition  Moderate Competition  Low Competition

Seriality and Accumulation:  Isolated Instance  Part of a Series  Accumulation of Multiple Graffiti

### URBAN DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

Public/Private Space:  Public Space  Private Space

Pedestrian Traffic: High  Moderate  Low

Negligence or Maintenance:  Well-Maintained  Neglected

Building Condition:  Excellent  Good  Poor

Public Transport Proximity:  Close (within 500m)  Moderate (500m - 1km)  Far (>1km)

Commercial or Residential Area:  Commercial  Residential  Mixed-Use

Security Measures (CCTV, Lighting):  Extensive  Moderate  Minimal

Population Density:  High  Moderate  Low

Accessibility: Highly Accessible  Moderately Accessible  Inaccessible

Aesthetic Quality of the Area:  High  Moderate  Low

Visibility and Surveillance:  High Surveillance  Moderate Surveillance  Low Surveillance

Social Interaction:  High Interaction  Moderate Interaction  Low Interaction

Cultural Significance:  Significant  Moderate  Minimal

Economic Activity:  High  Moderate  Low

Environmental Features (Green Spaces, Water):  Present  Absent

Street Furniture and Amenities:  Ample/Moderate  Minimal/None

### ADDITIONAL NOTES AND OBSERVATIONS

General Observations:

Any additional comments or notable observations about the site or its environment.



<b>Address</b>	10170 Pelletier ave
<b>Montreal</b>	Montreal North
<b>Public/Private Space</b>	Public
<b>Pedestrian Traffic</b>	Low
<b>Maintenance</b>	Neglected
<b>Building Condition</b>	Average
<b>Public Transport Proximity</b>	Moderate (500m - 1km)
<b>Commercial or Residential Area: Commercial</b>	Commercial
<b>Security Measures</b>	Minimal
<b>Population Density</b>	Moderate
<b>Accessibility</b>	Highly Accessible
<b>Aesthetic Quality of the Area</b>	Low
<b>Visibility and Surveillance</b>	Low
<b>Social Interaction</b>	Low
<b>Cultural Significance</b>	Minimal
<b>Economic Activity</b>	Moderate
<b>Environmental Features</b>	Absent
<b>Street Furniture and Amenities</b>	Minimal / None
<b>Graffiti Type</b>	Tag & Throw Up
<b>Graffiti Complexity</b>	Moderate
<b>Graffiti Location</b>	Wall
<b>STA - Spot Prominence</b>	Prominent Spot
<b>STA - Audiences and Visibility</b>	High Visibility
<b>STA - Longevity and Durability: Short-Term (Temporary)</b>	Long-Term (Durable)
<b>STA - Availability and Competition</b>	Low Competition
<b>STA - Seriality and Accumulation</b>	Accumulation of Multiple Graffiti



<b>Address</b>	4152 Blvd St-Laurent
<b>Montreal</b>	Plateau
<b>Public/Private Space</b>	Public
<b>Pedestrian Traffic</b>	High
<b>Maintenance</b>	Well-Maintained
<b>Building Condition</b>	Excellent
<b>Public Transport Proximity</b>	Close (within 500m)
<b>Commercial or Residential Area: Commercial</b>	Residential
<b>Security Measures</b>	Moderate
<b>Population Density</b>	High
<b>Accessibility</b>	Inaccessible
<b>Aesthetic Quality of the Area</b>	Moderate
<b>Visibility and Surveillance</b>	Moderate
<b>Social Interaction</b>	High
<b>Cultural Significance</b>	Minimal
<b>Economic Activity</b>	Moderate
<b>Environmental Features</b>	Present
<b>Street Furniture and Amenities</b>	Ample / Moderate
<b>Graffiti Type</b>	Throw Up
<b>Graffiti Complexity</b>	Simple
<b>Graffiti Location</b>	W+R
<b>STA - Spot Prominence</b>	Prominent Spot
<b>STA - Audiences and Visibility</b>	High Visibility
<b>STA - Longevity and Durability: Short-Term (Temporary)</b>	Long-Term (Durable)
<b>STA - Availability and Competition</b>	Low Competition
<b>STA - Seriality and Accumulation</b>	Isolated Instance



<b>Address</b>	Between 68 Rachel E and 62 Rachel E
<b>Montreal</b>	Plateau
<b>Public/Private Space</b>	Public
<b>Pedestrian Traffic</b>	Moderate
<b>Maintenance</b>	Well-Maintained
<b>Building Condition</b>	Excellent
<b>Public Transport Proximity</b>	Close (within 500m)
<b>Commercial or Residential Area: Commercial</b>	Mixed-Use
<b>Security Measures</b>	Minimal
<b>Population Density</b>	High
<b>Accessibility</b>	Inaccessible
<b>Aesthetic Quality of the Area</b>	Moderate
<b>Visibility and Surveillance</b>	Moderate
<b>Social Interaction</b>	Moderate
<b>Cultural Significance</b>	Minimal
<b>Economic Activity</b>	Moderate
<b>Environmental Features</b>	Absent
<b>Street Furniture and Amenities</b>	Minimal / None
<b>Graffiti Type</b>	Tag & Throw Up
<b>Graffiti Complexity</b>	Simple
<b>Graffiti Location</b>	W+R
<b>STA - Spot Prominence</b>	Prominent Spot
<b>STA - Audiences and Visibility</b>	Moderate Visibility
<b>STA - Longevity and Durability: Short-Term (Temporary)</b>	Long-Term (Durable)
<b>STA - Availability and Competition</b>	High Competition
<b>STA - Seriality and Accumulation</b>	Accumulation of Multiple Graffiti



<b>Address</b>	150 Mount-Royal
<b>Montreal</b>	Plateau
<b>Public/Private Space</b>	Public
<b>Pedestrian Traffic</b>	High
<b>Maintenance</b>	Well-Maintained
<b>Building Condition</b>	Excellent
<b>Public Transport Proximity</b>	Close (within 500m)
<b>Commercial or Residential Area: Commercial</b>	Commercial
<b>Security Measures</b>	Minimal
<b>Population Density</b>	High
<b>Accessibility</b>	Moderately Accessible
<b>Aesthetic Quality of the Area</b>	High
<b>Visibility and Surveillance</b>	Low
<b>Social Interaction</b>	High
<b>Cultural Significance</b>	Significant
<b>Economic Activity</b>	High
<b>Environmental Features</b>	Absent
<b>Street Furniture and Amenities</b>	Ample / Moderate
<b>Graffiti Type</b>	Throw Up
<b>Graffiti Complexity</b>	Simple
<b>Graffiti Location</b>	Rooftop
<b>STA - Spot Prominence</b>	Prominent Spot
<b>STA - Audiences and Visibility</b>	High Visibility
<b>STA - Longevity and Durability: Short-Term (Temporary)</b>	Long-Term (Durable)
<b>STA - Availability and Competition</b>	Low Competition
<b>STA - Seriality and Accumulation</b>	Part of Series



<b>Address</b>	4461 Blvd St-Laurent
<b>Montreal</b>	Plateau
<b>Public/Private Space</b>	Public
<b>Pedestrian Traffic</b>	Moderate
<b>Maintenance</b>	Well-Maintained
<b>Building Condition</b>	Excellent
<b>Public Transport Proximity</b>	Close (within 500m)
<b>Commercial or Residential Area: Commercial</b>	Residential
<b>Security Measures</b>	Minimal
<b>Population Density</b>	Moderate
<b>Accessibility</b>	Highly Accessible
<b>Aesthetic Quality of the Area</b>	High
<b>Visibility and Surveillance</b>	Moderate
<b>Social Interaction</b>	Low
<b>Cultural Significance</b>	Significant
<b>Economic Activity</b>	Low
<b>Environmental Features</b>	Absent
<b>Street Furniture and Amenities</b>	Minimal / None
<b>Graffiti Type</b>	Tag
<b>Graffiti Complexity</b>	Simple
<b>Graffiti Location</b>	Wall
<b>STA - Spot Prominence</b>	Prominent Spot
<b>STA - Audiences and Visibility</b>	Moderate Visibility
<b>STA - Longevity and Durability: Short-Term (Temporary)</b>	Long-Term (Durable)
<b>STA - Availability and Competition</b>	High Competition
<b>STA - Seriality and Accumulation</b>	Accumulation of Multiple Graffiti





<b>Address</b>	Between 351 Mont-royal E and 359 Mount-Royal E
<b>Montreal</b>	Plateau
<b>Public/Private Space</b>	Private
<b>Pedestrian Traffic</b>	High
<b>Maintenance</b>	Neglected
<b>Building Condition</b>	Excellent
<b>Public Transport Proximity</b>	Close (within 500m)
<b>Commercial or Residential Area: Commercial</b>	Commercial
<b>Security Measures</b>	Minimal
<b>Population Density</b>	High
<b>Accessibility</b>	Highly Accessible
<b>Aesthetic Quality of the Area</b>	High
<b>Visibility and Surveillance</b>	Moderate
<b>Social Interaction</b>	High
<b>Cultural Significance</b>	Significant
<b>Economic Activity</b>	High
<b>Environmental Features</b>	Absent
<b>Street Furniture and Amenities</b>	Minimal / None
<b>Graffiti Type</b>	Tag
<b>Graffiti Complexity</b>	Simple
<b>Graffiti Location</b>	Wall
<b>STA - Spot Prominence</b>	Prominent Spot
<b>STA - Audiences and Visibility</b>	High Visibility
<b>STA - Longevity and Durability: Short-Term (Temporary)</b>	Short-Term (Temporary)
<b>STA - Availability and Competition</b>	High Competition
<b>STA - Seriality and Accumulation</b>	Accumulation of Multiple Graffiti



<b>Address</b>	4291 Blvd St-Denis
<b>Montreal</b>	Plateau
<b>Public/Private Space</b>	Public
<b>Pedestrian Traffic</b>	High
<b>Maintenance</b>	Neglected
<b>Building Condition</b>	Excellent
<b>Public Transport Proximity</b>	Close (within 500m)
<b>Commercial or Residential Area: Commercial</b>	Mixed-Use
<b>Security Measures</b>	Extensive
<b>Population Density</b>	High
<b>Accessibility</b>	Moderately Accessible
<b>Aesthetic Quality of the Area</b>	High
<b>Visibility and Surveillance</b>	Low
<b>Social Interaction</b>	Moderate
<b>Cultural Significance</b>	Minimal
<b>Economic Activity</b>	Moderate
<b>Environmental Features</b>	Absent
<b>Street Furniture and Amenities</b>	Minimal / None
<b>Graffiti Type</b>	Throw Up
<b>Graffiti Complexity</b>	Simple
<b>Graffiti Location</b>	Storefront
<b>STA - Spot Prominence</b>	Prominent Spot
<b>STA - Audiences and Visibility</b>	Moderate Visibility
<b>STA - Longevity and Durability: Short-Term (Temporary)</b>	Long-Term (Durable)
<b>STA - Availability and Competition</b>	Moderate Competition
<b>STA - Seriality and Accumulation</b>	Isolated Instance



<b>Address</b>	4201 blvd St-Denis
<b>Montreal</b>	Plateau
<b>Public/Private Space</b>	Public
<b>Pedestrian Traffic</b>	High
<b>Maintenance</b>	Well-Maintained
<b>Building Condition</b>	Excellent
<b>Public Transport Proximity</b>	Close (within 500m)
<b>Commercial or Residential Area: Commercial</b>	Commercial
<b>Security Measures</b>	Extensive
<b>Population Density</b>	High
<b>Accessibility</b>	Inaccessible
<b>Aesthetic Quality of the Area</b>	High
<b>Visibility and Surveillance</b>	High
<b>Social Interaction</b>	High
<b>Cultural Significance</b>	Significant
<b>Economic Activity</b>	High
<b>Environmental Features</b>	Absent
<b>Street Furniture and Amenities</b>	Minimal / None
<b>Graffiti Type</b>	Tag & Throw Up
<b>Graffiti Complexity</b>	Simple
<b>Graffiti Location</b>	Storefront
<b>STA - Spot Prominence</b>	Prominent Spot
<b>STA - Audiences and Visibility</b>	High Visibility
<b>STA - Longevity and Durability: Short-Term (Temporary)</b>	Long-Term (Durable)
<b>STA - Availability and Competition</b>	High Competition
<b>STA - Seriality and Accumulation</b>	Accumulation of Multiple Graffiti



<b>Address</b>	4266 Blvd St-Denis
<b>Montreal</b>	Plateau
<b>Public/Private Space</b>	Private
<b>Pedestrian Traffic</b>	Moderate
<b>Maintenance</b>	Well-Maintained
<b>Building Condition</b>	Excellent
<b>Public Transport Proximity</b>	Close (within 500m)
<b>Commercial or Residential Area: Commercial</b>	Residential
<b>Security Measures</b>	Minimal
<b>Population Density</b>	High
<b>Accessibility</b>	Highly Accessible
<b>Aesthetic Quality of the Area</b>	High
<b>Visibility and Surveillance</b>	High
<b>Social Interaction</b>	Moderate
<b>Cultural Significance</b>	Significant
<b>Economic Activity</b>	High
<b>Environmental Features</b>	Absent
<b>Street Furniture and Amenities</b>	Ample / Moderate
<b>Graffiti Type</b>	Tag & Throw Up
<b>Graffiti Complexity</b>	Simple
<b>Graffiti Location</b>	Wall
<b>STA - Spot Prominence</b>	Prominent Spot
<b>STA - Audiences and Visibility</b>	High Visibility
<b>STA - Longevity and Durability: Short-Term (Temporary)</b>	Short-Term (Temporary)
<b>STA - Availability and Competition</b>	High Competition
<b>STA - Seriality and Accumulation</b>	Accumulation of Multiple Graffiti



<b>Address</b>	4234 Blvd St-Laurent
<b>Montreal</b>	Plateau
<b>Public/Private Space</b>	Public
<b>Pedestrian Traffic</b>	High
<b>Maintenance</b>	Well-Maintained
<b>Building Condition</b>	Excellent
<b>Public Transport Proximity</b>	Close (within 500m)
<b>Commercial or Residential Area: Commercial</b>	Mixed-Use
<b>Security Measures</b>	Moderate
<b>Population Density</b>	High
<b>Accessibility</b>	Inaccessible
<b>Aesthetic Quality of the Area</b>	High
<b>Visibility and Surveillance</b>	Moderate
<b>Social Interaction</b>	High
<b>Cultural Significance</b>	Minimal
<b>Economic Activity</b>	Moderate
<b>Environmental Features</b>	Absent
<b>Street Furniture and Amenities</b>	Minimal / None
<b>Graffiti Type</b>	Throw Up
<b>Graffiti Complexity</b>	Simple
<b>Graffiti Location</b>	W+R
<b>STA - Spot Prominence</b>	Prominent Spot
<b>STA - Audiences and Visibility</b>	High Visibility
<b>STA - Longevity and Durability: Short-Term (Temporary)</b>	Long-Term (Durable)
<b>STA - Availability and Competition</b>	Low Competition
<b>STA - Seriality and Accumulation</b>	Accumulation of Multiple Graffiti



<b>Address</b>	4357 Blvd St-Laurent
<b>Montreal</b>	Plateau
<b>Public/Private Space</b>	Private
<b>Pedestrian Traffic</b>	High
<b>Maintenance</b>	Neglected
<b>Building Condition</b>	Poor
<b>Public Transport Proximity</b>	Close (within 500m)
<b>Commercial or Residential Area: Commercial</b>	Commercial
<b>Security Measures</b>	Minimal
<b>Population Density</b>	High
<b>Accessibility</b>	Highly Accessible
<b>Aesthetic Quality of the Area</b>	High
<b>Visibility and Surveillance</b>	High
<b>Social Interaction</b>	High
<b>Cultural Significance</b>	Significant
<b>Economic Activity</b>	High
<b>Environmental Features</b>	Present
<b>Street Furniture and Amenities</b>	Ample / Moderate
<b>Graffiti Type</b>	Throw Up
<b>Graffiti Complexity</b>	Simple
<b>Graffiti Location</b>	W+R
<b>STA - Spot Prominence</b>	Prominent Spot
<b>STA - Audiences and Visibility</b>	High Visibility
<b>STA - Longevity and Durability: Short-Term (Temporary)</b>	Long-Term (Durable)
<b>STA - Availability and Competition</b>	High Competition
<b>STA - Seriality and Accumulation</b>	Accumulation of Multiple Graffiti



<b>Address</b>	3267 Fleury ave
<b>Montreal</b>	Montreal North
<b>Public/Private Space</b>	Public
<b>Pedestrian Traffic</b>	Moderate
<b>Maintenance</b>	Well-Maintained
<b>Building Condition</b>	Excellent
<b>Public Transport Proximity</b>	Close (within 500m)
<b>Commercial or Residential Area: Commercial</b>	Commercial
<b>Security Measures</b>	Minimal
<b>Population Density</b>	High
<b>Accessibility</b>	Highly Accessible
<b>Aesthetic Quality of the Area</b>	Low
<b>Visibility and Surveillance</b>	Low
<b>Social Interaction</b>	Moderate
<b>Cultural Significance</b>	Minimal
<b>Economic Activity</b>	High
<b>Environmental Features</b>	Absent
<b>Street Furniture and Amenities</b>	Minimal / None
<b>Graffiti Type</b>	Throw Up
<b>Graffiti Complexity</b>	Simple
<b>Graffiti Location</b>	Wall
<b>STA - Spot Prominence</b>	Prominent Spot
<b>STA - Audiences and Visibility</b>	High Visibility
<b>STA - Longevity and Durability: Short-Term (Temporary)</b>	Long-Term (Durable)
<b>STA - Availability and Competition</b>	Low Competition
<b>STA - Seriality and Accumulation</b>	Isolated Instance



<b>Address</b>	3305 Henri-Bourssa
<b>Montreal</b>	Montreal North
<b>Public/Private Space</b>	Public
<b>Pedestrian Traffic</b>	Low
<b>Maintenance</b>	Neglected
<b>Building Condition</b>	Excellent
<b>Public Transport Proximity</b>	Close (within 500m)
<b>Commercial or Residential Area: Commercial</b>	Mixed-Use
<b>Security Measures</b>	Minimal
<b>Population Density</b>	Low
<b>Accessibility</b>	Highly Accessible
<b>Aesthetic Quality of the Area</b>	Low
<b>Visibility and Surveillance</b>	Low
<b>Social Interaction</b>	Low
<b>Cultural Significance</b>	Minimal
<b>Economic Activity</b>	Moderate
<b>Environmental Features</b>	Absent
<b>Street Furniture and Amenities</b>	Minimal / None
<b>Graffiti Type</b>	Throw Up
<b>Graffiti Complexity</b>	Simple
<b>Graffiti Location</b>	Wall
<b>STA - Spot Prominence</b>	Prominent Spot
<b>STA - Audiences and Visibility</b>	Moderate Visibility
<b>STA - Longevity and Durability: Short-Term (Temporary)</b>	Long-Term (Durable)
<b>STA - Availability and Competition</b>	Low Competition
<b>STA - Seriality and Accumulation</b>	Accumulation of Multiple Graffiti





<b>Address</b>	10011 Blvd pie ix
<b>Montreal</b>	Montreal North
<b>Public/Private Space</b>	Public
<b>Pedestrian Traffic</b>	Low
<b>Maintenance</b>	Neglected
<b>Building Condition</b>	Poor
<b>Public Transport Proximity</b>	Moderate (500m - 1km)
<b>Commercial or Residential Area: Commercial</b>	Commercial
<b>Security Measures</b>	Minimal
<b>Population Density</b>	Moderate
<b>Accessibility</b>	Highly Accessible
<b>Aesthetic Quality of the Area</b>	Moderate
<b>Visibility and Surveillance</b>	Low
<b>Social Interaction</b>	Low
<b>Cultural Significance</b>	Minimal
<b>Economic Activity</b>	Low
<b>Environmental Features</b>	Absent
<b>Street Furniture and Amenities</b>	Minimal / None
<b>Graffiti Type</b>	Throw Up
<b>Graffiti Complexity</b>	Simple
<b>Graffiti Location</b>	W+S
<b>STA - Spot Prominence</b>	Prominent Spot
<b>STA - Audiences and Visibility</b>	High Visibility
<b>STA - Longevity and Durability: Short-Term (Temporary)</b>	Long-Term (Durable)
<b>STA - Availability and Competition</b>	Low Competition
<b>STA - Seriality and Accumulation</b>	Accumulation of Multiple Graffiti



<b>Address</b>	5400 Henri-Bourassa
<b>Montreal</b>	Montreal North
<b>Public/Private Space</b>	Public
<b>Pedestrian Traffic</b>	High
<b>Maintenance</b>	Neglected
<b>Building Condition</b>	Poor
<b>Public Transport Proximity</b>	Close (within 500m)
<b>Commercial or Residential Area: Commercial</b>	Commercial
<b>Security Measures</b>	Minimal
<b>Population Density</b>	Moderate
<b>Accessibility</b>	Highly Accessible
<b>Aesthetic Quality of the Area</b>	Low
<b>Visibility and Surveillance</b>	Low
<b>Social Interaction</b>	Low
<b>Cultural Significance</b>	Minimal
<b>Economic Activity</b>	High
<b>Environmental Features</b>	Absent
<b>Street Furniture and Amenities</b>	Minimal / None
<b>Graffiti Type</b>	Throw Up
<b>Graffiti Complexity</b>	Simple
<b>Graffiti Location</b>	Wall
<b>STA - Spot Prominence</b>	Prominent Spot
<b>STA - Audiences and Visibility</b>	High Visibility
<b>STA - Longevity and Durability: Short-Term (Temporary)</b>	Long-Term (Durable)
<b>STA - Availability and Competition</b>	Moderate Competition
<b>STA - Seriality and Accumulation</b>	Accumulation of Multiple Graffiti



<b>Address</b>	5115 rue de Charleroi
<b>Montreal</b>	Montreal North
<b>Public/Private Space</b>	Public
<b>Pedestrian Traffic</b>	High
<b>Maintenance</b>	Neglected
<b>Building Condition</b>	Poor
<b>Public Transport Proximity</b>	Moderate (500m - 1km)
<b>Commercial or Residential Area: Commercial</b>	Commercial
<b>Security Measures</b>	Minimal
<b>Population Density</b>	Moderate
<b>Accessibility</b>	Highly Accessible
<b>Aesthetic Quality of the Area</b>	Low
<b>Visibility and Surveillance</b>	Low
<b>Social Interaction</b>	Low
<b>Cultural Significance</b>	Minimal
<b>Economic Activity</b>	Low
<b>Environmental Features</b>	Absent
<b>Street Furniture and Amenities</b>	Minimal / None
<b>Graffiti Type</b>	Tag & Throw Up
<b>Graffiti Complexity</b>	Simple
<b>Graffiti Location</b>	W+S
<b>STA - Spot Prominence</b>	Prominent Spot
<b>STA - Audiences and Visibility</b>	High Visibility
<b>STA - Longevity and Durability: Short-Term (Temporary)</b>	Long-Term (Durable)
<b>STA - Availability and Competition</b>	Low Competition
<b>STA - Seriality and Accumulation</b>	Accumulation of Multiple Graffiti



<b>Address</b>	4292 Blvd St-Laurent
<b>Montreal</b>	Plateau
<b>Public/Private Space</b>	Public
<b>Pedestrian Traffic</b>	High
<b>Maintenance</b>	Neglected
<b>Building Condition</b>	Average
<b>Public Transport Proximity</b>	Close (within 500m)
<b>Commercial or Residential Area: Commercial</b>	Mixed-Use
<b>Security Measures</b>	Minimal
<b>Population Density</b>	High
<b>Accessibility</b>	Moderately Accessible
<b>Aesthetic Quality of the Area</b>	High
<b>Visibility and Surveillance</b>	Moderate
<b>Social Interaction</b>	High
<b>Cultural Significance</b>	Significant
<b>Economic Activity</b>	High
<b>Environmental Features</b>	Absent
<b>Street Furniture and Amenities</b>	Ample / Moderate
<b>Graffiti Type</b>	Tag & Throw Up
<b>Graffiti Complexity</b>	Simple
<b>Graffiti Location</b>	W+R
<b>STA - Spot Prominence</b>	Prominent Spot
<b>STA - Audiences and Visibility</b>	High Visibility
<b>STA - Longevity and Durability: Short-Term (Temporary)</b>	Long-Term (Durable)
<b>STA - Availability and Competition</b>	High Competition
<b>STA - Seriality and Accumulation</b>	Accumulation of Multiple Graffiti



<b>Address</b>	100 Mount-Royal E
<b>Montreal</b>	Plateau
<b>Public/Private Space</b>	Public
<b>Pedestrian Traffic</b>	High
<b>Maintenance</b>	Well-Maintained
<b>Building Condition</b>	Excellent
<b>Public Transport Proximity</b>	Moderate (500m - 1km)
<b>Commercial or Residential Area: Commercial</b>	Commercial
<b>Security Measures</b>	Minimal
<b>Population Density</b>	High
<b>Accessibility</b>	Moderately Accessible
<b>Aesthetic Quality of the Area</b>	High
<b>Visibility and Surveillance</b>	High
<b>Social Interaction</b>	High
<b>Cultural Significance</b>	Significant
<b>Economic Activity</b>	High
<b>Environmental Features</b>	Absent
<b>Street Furniture and Amenities</b>	Minimal / None
<b>Graffiti Type</b>	Tag & Throw Up
<b>Graffiti Complexity</b>	Simple
<b>Graffiti Location</b>	W+R
<b>STA - Spot Prominence</b>	Prominent Spot
<b>STA - Audiences and Visibility</b>	High Visibility
<b>STA - Longevity and Durability: Short-Term (Temporary)</b>	Long-Term (Durable)
<b>STA - Availability and Competition</b>	High Competition
<b>STA - Seriality and Accumulation</b>	Accumulation of Multiple Graffiti



<b>Address</b>	4465 Blvd St-Laurent
<b>Montreal</b>	Plateau
<b>Public/Private Space</b>	Public
<b>Pedestrian Traffic</b>	High
<b>Maintenance</b>	Well-Maintained
<b>Building Condition</b>	Excellent
<b>Public Transport Proximity</b>	Moderate (500m - 1km)
<b>Commercial or Residential Area: Commercial</b>	Commercial
<b>Security Measures</b>	Minimal
<b>Population Density</b>	High
<b>Accessibility</b>	Inaccessible
<b>Aesthetic Quality of the Area</b>	High
<b>Visibility and Surveillance</b>	High
<b>Social Interaction</b>	High
<b>Cultural Significance</b>	Significant
<b>Economic Activity</b>	High
<b>Environmental Features</b>	Absent
<b>Street Furniture and Amenities</b>	Minimal / None
<b>Graffiti Type</b>	Throw Up
<b>Graffiti Complexity</b>	Simple
<b>Graffiti Location</b>	Rooftop
<b>STA - Spot Prominence</b>	Prominent Spot
<b>STA - Audiences and Visibility</b>	High Visibility
<b>STA - Longevity and Durability: Short-Term (Temporary)</b>	Long-Term (Durable)
<b>STA - Availability and Competition</b>	Low Competition
<b>STA - Seriality and Accumulation</b>	Accumulation of Multiple Graffiti