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 * (IN)DANGERED *
 * DOMESTICITY: *
 * TACTICS FOR A *
 * SAFER HOME *
 * By Harriet *
 * Harriss, *
 * Naomi House, *
 * and Benjamin *
 * Koslowski *

Between 2001 and 2012, twice as many American women were murdered by their partners or ex-partners in their own homes as US soldiers were killed in Afghanistan and Iraq during the war. [1] Safety in the home, by implication, takes on new meaning, as an environment generally considered to offer refuge and intimacy instead poses a great and mortal threat. By shifting the narrative away from home security and towards interior interventions that offer safety *within* the home, we aim to destabilize the idea of home as a benign typology and posit it instead as an actively (*in*)*dangering* one.

This threat becomes a provocation: are there ways for designers to proactively engage with deep-seated problems like violence in the home?

The notion of "anterior space" offers a way of thinking differently about the domestic interior. Anterior space - located near the front, or toward the edge - supports the needs of women, children, and vulnerable bodies at risk of violence from inside the home. Dispersing spaces of safety and retreat within the peripheral anterior zone - instead of hiding them away deep within the interior - avoids the risk of building a trap.

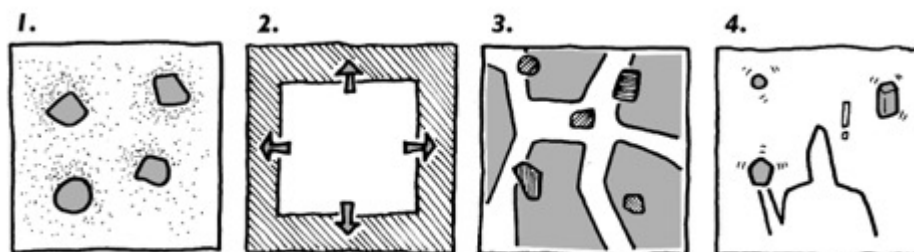
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the home mitigate domestic violence?

To move from the "interior" to the idea of "anterior" space is one tactic for subverting this *(in)dangering* typology. Rather than anticipating an external perpetrator and considering only threats from the outside, an "anterior space" could offer a buffer that prevents containment from becoming imprisonment and enables more possibilities for interactions with a network of trusted people.

Designing an anterior space would demand a supportive infrastructure of architectural interventions and devices that would reduce isolation but nevertheless provide protection. At an architectural scale, walls, screens, apertures, and less static elements, such as curtains, could "hold" the occupant without incarcerating her. In a space less hermetically sealed than the panic room and less exposed than an open plan, these devices - dispersed throughout the home - can be manipulated to offer privacy and permeability, giving the dweller more control over how they are hidden and from whom.

Are there architectural tactics that could temper domestic violence? These proposals are only a beginning: they are intended to fuel debate, to be challenged and appropriated further - our aim is to enhance the role we as designers play in providing safe environments to live in.



1. *Establish* interstices within existing home environments that offer safety and control.

2. *Locate* these interstices at the edge, rather than embed them inside the inside, in order to mediate between private and public realms.

3. *Disperse* safer interstices across neighborhoods and cities, generating a network of spaces that reimagine the urban environment as a continuous domestic landscape.

4. *Empower* domestic objects and devices to offer agency and control to the inhabitant.

[1] Alanna Vagianos, "[30 Shocking Domestic Violence Statistics That Remind Us It's An Epidemic](#)," *The Huffington Post*, October

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