

# COUNTER CULTURE

## design vignette 01

due 27 sept 2011

*What if, rather than speaking or dreaming of an absolute beginning,  
we speak of a leap?* - Kierkegaard

activating objects  
fall 2011 / eric paulos / cmu / hcii

The kitchen counter is your site of investigation. Kitchens come in all shapes and sizes. More importantly, kitchens have recently become a focal point of the home - a place for preparing meals, eating, snacking, socializing, performing chores, working, reading, etc. As a flexible space, it often serves as the command center for the home. As such, the kitchen atmosphere is an extremely important part of domestic living and happiness. In fact it is often the most used room in the home. The kitchen has also become a natural habitat for technology in a variety of forms from toasters and coffee makers to smart refrigerators and interactive tabletops.

In this vignette you will be designing and prototyping a novel kitchen object. This could be an improvement on an existing kitchen artifact or an entirely new one. For your site of investigation you are free to choose any kitchen - your own, a friend's, your childhood kitchen, your bus driver's kitchen, etc. It should be a relatively contemporary or near-future kitchen (i.e. do not choose a fantastical kitchen of the future scenario).

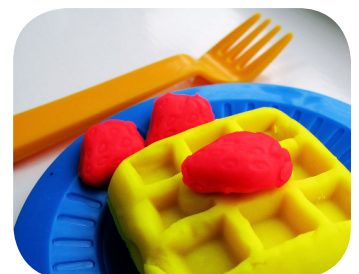
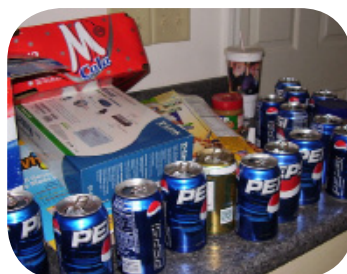


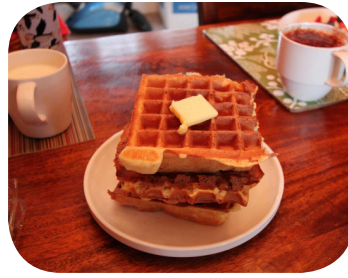
Take note of the life of your own kitchen and its daily routine. Log the activities over the course of several days. Catalogue the technologies and map your kitchen? Do the same for the kitchen you have selected for your design vignette.

Keeping in mind the balance of the social and functional role of the kitchen, your challenge is to design a novel interactive kitchen object. Your new object should be motivated by the cultural activities of the kitchen and provide a new narrative there.

You are encouraged (but not required) to include the following elements in your design:

- foamcore
- LEDs
- motors
- audio/piezo
- buttons
- knobs





Your team will be required to deliver a 10 minute presentation communicating:

- documentation and images of your kitchen investigation
- motivation (and/or need) for your design (why should we care?)
- a brief demo in class of your working prototype
- a brief video (1-2 min) of your prototype in situ

You will need to hand in the following materials:

- a title for your project
- one paragraph of text describing your project
- your observational documentation
- design process documentation (intermediate designs, sketches, ideas)
- a brief video (1-2 min) of your prototype in situ
- an instructable style process document describing the step by step making of the work

