

Press release

Peace and quiet? No way!

It's all go in public places, but that doesn't mean that chaos and vandalism have to be inevitable. Easy-care, robust toilet fittings made of stainless steel are simple to clean and difficult to damage – and things that are already clean usually stay that way.

In the railway station by night, or waiting in the transfer lounge at the airport, at the stadium, on the university campus or the motorway service area – you can find them anywhere: badly-illuminated washrooms, looking like they've been hit with a bomb containing something you'd rather not mention, with broken toilet seats and blocked urinals. Night-time at the train station, (and so on, you know all about that already). But check out the state of what you find on the typical motorway service area: squeaky-clean toilet facilities with decent lighting and well thought-out design layouts. Including – just to cite an example – the Franke CAMPUS range of toilet fittings.

But why make a toilet out of industrial-grade stainless steel? And, come to think of it, how come public toilets always seem to be the evergreen favourite target of vandals' destructive impulses? The three theories offered all have something plausible to add to the debate. They are: the pressure-leads-to-worse theory, the frustration theory and the clean-stays-clean theory.

If you want to make something bad even worse, just ban it

The point of departure of theory number one (pressure just leads to something worse) is that in a society where even the smallest misdemeanour is punished, the result of repression is more vandalism and

crime – not less. In other words, public pressure, ostracism and criminalizing produce revenge attacks on public property. Or, to put it yet another way, toilet facilities – whose outward appearance is already pretty cold, repressive and negative – are more often than not the objective of these revenge attacks. This is particularly so in places where young people congregate – youths being one of the groups that have been most strongly associated with criminality in the past ten years or so.

Now we come to theory number two (frustration), which sees vandalism as a way of hitting out. This sees vandalism as the untargeted result of sudden annoyance, frustration and disappointment. People don't just go to the toilet for the obvious reasons – but also to freshen up in general, and even to unwind. People who fail to find this desired feeling of harmony quickly get annoyed. And they show it by hitting and kicking out, scratching or dirtying any suitable surface.

Human, not criminal

Just as frustration leads to blind and unreasoned destructive anger, dirt begets even more dirt. Which brings us to theory number three (if it's already clean, it should stay that way). It has been demonstrated that people who come across a clean and hygienic public toilet behave far more prudently. Places that are already dirty and unhygienic become more so. This is a result of the human condition rather than any criminal tendency.

The CAMPUS toilet range from Franke prevents vandalism on several fronts: The outer surface of 1.2mm-thick stainless steel goes right up to the wall. Screw-in items are designed to prevent removal and mating surfaces are made of extra-robust profile sections. The silken-matt surface barely – if ever – comes to show signs of wear or scratches. Dirt, above all, has little chance of accumulating on the surface of the acid-resistant 18/10 chrome-

nickel steel: dirt resulting from normal use, paint stains and graffiti are all easily removed.

The CAMPUS toilet range from Franke is available with an extra-hard wearing moulded seat, or a white toilet seat with stainless steel fittings. The design is fully in tune with the restrained minimalism of today's architecture. Those who come across this toilet in a public washroom will thus feel neither disdained nor provoked, they will just be satisfied to find clean, hygienic facilities. Even if the place is the most heavily-used imaginable.

Wall-mounted CAMPUS toilet from Franke

Outer surface enclosed right up to wall

Anti-vandal screw fittings

Reinforced seat area

Suitable for use with surface-fitted installation elements

Stainless steel 18/10 (1.4301/AISI 304)

1.2 mm thick

Satin-matt surface finish

Available with moulded seat or hinged toilet seat with stainless steel fittings

Some websites that deal with vandalism as a phenomenon

<http://www.snf.ch/nfp/nfp40/bulletin4.pdf> (juvenile delinquency - just amyth?)

<http://www.bonn.iz-soz.de/publications/periodicals/fokus/school/ursachen.htm>

(information on texts and projects that deal with the subject area of violence and vandalism among schoolchildren and youths)

http://www.nibis.ni.schule.de/~infosos/kommun_.htm (arguments in favour of prevention rather than repression)

<http://www.learn-line.nrw.de/angebote/friedensfaehigkeit/k9850.htm> (theories on conflict management)

<http://www.welt.de/daten/1999/08/18/0818b01125922.htx> (media report on the increase in incidents of vandalism)

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