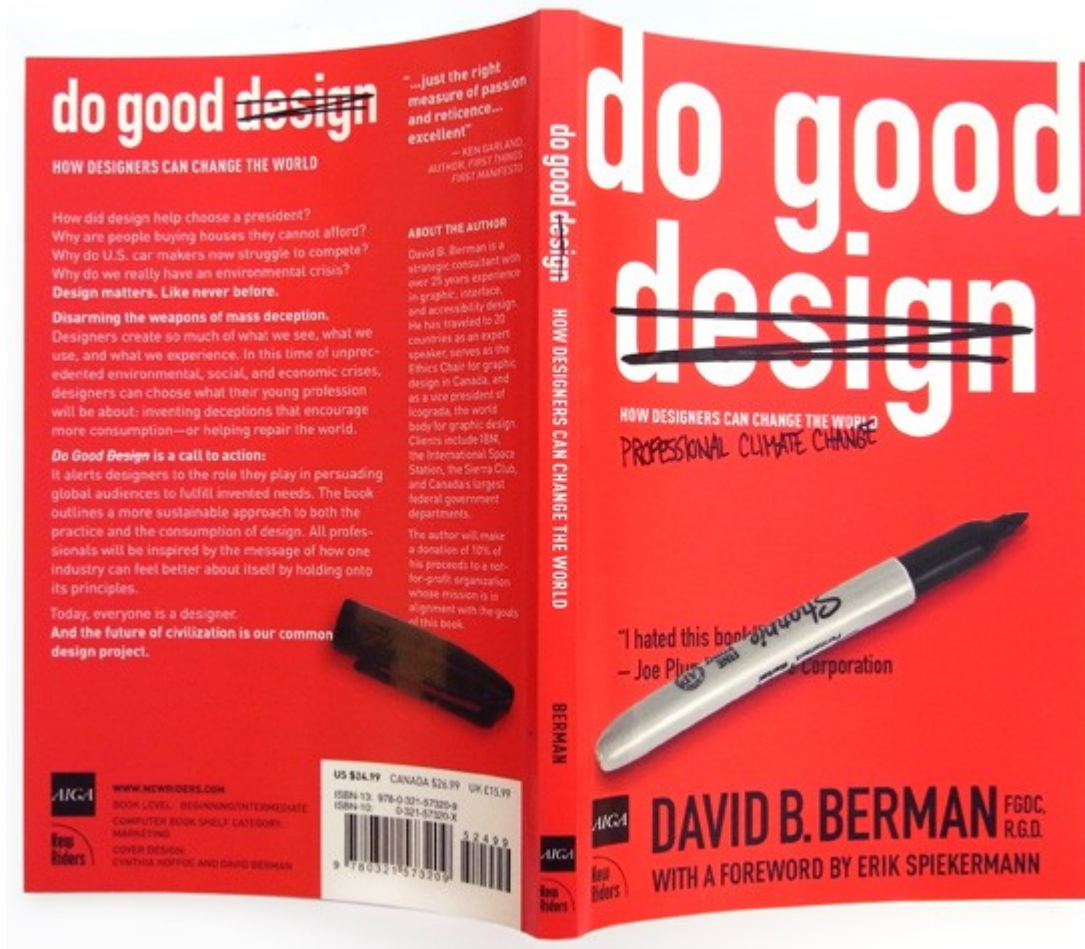


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david berman - do good design



'do good design: how designers can change the world'

author: david b. berman

forewords: erik spiekermann, min wang and ric grefé

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designboom rating: 

at the recent [icograda world design congress](#) in beijing, the canadian communication designer david berman presented his book 'do good design: how designers can change the world'. a chinese edition was released.

designers create much of what the world sees, wants, buys, uses and experiences. at this time of unprecedented environmental, social and economic crises, should we be creating the deceptions that encourage continuous consumption or figuring out a way to help counter it?

in this provocative and dramatically-illustrated book, david berman argues that global branding strategies are the most powerful tools used today to encourage over-consumption amongst growing developing world populations, the largest long-term threat to global harmony and environment. he believes that communications professionals have more conspicuous power than they realize, and play a core role in helping some corporations mislead audiences in order to invent unfulfilled 'needs' in larger and larger markets.



Which future should we choose?

A 4,000 BCE 4,000 BCE 2,000 BCE 0,000 BCE 2,000
 Human civilizations combine, then shatterly implode. End of experiment.

B 4,000 BCE 4,000 BCE 2,000 BCE 0,000 BCE 2,000 4,000 4,000 1,000 12,000 14,000 16,000 18,000 20,000 22,000 24,000 26,000 28,000
 Human civilizations combine, work it out, proceed with long sustainable future.

So which iceberg threatens us the most?
 Is it terrorism? I don't think so. Though timely and freshly
 horrible in our minds, terrorism is not a new phenomenon and has
 yet to pose a serious threat to civilization. (I do think it is worth
 pondering why intelligent, and not particularly radical, people



Italy's Diesel brand presents a bizarre juxtaposition of Asian poverty and American poverty

from around the world are increasingly angry at and offended by Western culture. Perhaps they are outraged about being lied to continually by the most sophisticated deception process in history. (More on this later.)

Perhaps the iceberg is a pandemic. A global pandemic is a highly probable catastrophe that deserves attention, including well-designed messaging to mitigate its effects. The spread of infectious disease is not new. In today's world, infectious diseases spread farther and faster than before, due to international travel

and shipping. The likelihood of a global pandemic of deadly, drug-resistant influenza or tuberculosis grows every day. Health authorities tell us that the question is not if, but when. Nonetheless, the worst scenario, while devastating, wouldn't likely end civilization as we know it.

Is the iceberg financial collapse? Or corruption? We'll consider design's role in these ills in the next chapter; however, we have overcome this type of challenge in the past and we will again.

No, the answer is "none of the above." When our children's children look back at the biggest issue of our era, they will see the most deadly threat as the devastation we wrought on our physical environment.

It is unfortunate that the culture that was the most influential of the 20th century also happens to be perhaps the world's most environmentally unsustainable.

**"There are no passengers on Spaceship Earth.
 We are all crew."**

HERBERT "MARSHALL" MCLUHAN (1911-1980)¹²



portrait © designboom
canadian designer david berman, author of 'do good design: how designers can change the world'



david berman signing the book

berman's main thesis is: *'rather than sharing our cycles of style, consumption, and chemical addictions, designers can use their professional power, persuasive skills, and wisdom to help distribute ideas that the world really needs: health information, conflict resolution, tolerance, technology, freedom of the press, freedom of speech, human rights, democracy ...'*

'in my 30 years of running a design studio, I have come up to the conclusion that there is one thing we can do that nobody can stop us from. we alone decide 'how we work'. (...) charity starts at home.'
excerpt from the foreword by erik spiekermann, german information designer and typographer, founder of metadesign and fontshop.

'we think of ourselves as designers, not decision makers; lacking a strong voice to change society's behaviors. we fail to admit our responsibility for the decline of the natural environment. we must reevaluate, and discover our share of influence.'
excerpt from the foreword by min wang, dean of the CAFA central academy of fine arts school of design and design director for the 2008 beijing olympics.






content

(here are a few titles of chapters)
beyond green: a convenient lie;
the weapons: visual lies and manufactured needs;
where the truth lies: the slippery slope;
the design solution: convenient truths;
why our time is the perfect time;
how to lie, how to tell the truth;
how we do good is how we do good;
...

is it for me?

this [book](#) aims to help readers to responsibly identify then fulfill business objectives, through strategic consultation, communications design, facilitation, training, and systems development.
in a world where design has become a recognized corporate asset, designers and their clients have the opportunity to use their persuasive skills responsibly and to accelerate awareness.

designboom ratings:

-  interesting
-  good read, worth a look
-  very good
-  excellent, recommended
-  must have