THE MOST HARMFUL PROFESSION

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THERE ARE PROFESSIONS MORE HARMFUL THAN DESIGN.
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BUT ONLY A FEW OF THEM.
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— VICTOR PAPANEK
Influential designer of the 60, 70, 80s. “Design has become the most powerful tool with which man shapes his tools and environments (and, by extension, society and himself).” There is only one phonier. Advertisers.
Never before in history have grown men sat down and seriously designed electric hairbrushes, rhinestone-covered file boxes, and mink carpeting for bathrooms, and then drawn up elaborate plans to make and sell these gadgets to millions of people. We must stop defiling the earth itself with poorly-designed objects and structures.
We’ve all heard that there are soon to be more cells than people. That happened in the US in 2011. But in 2009 (the last year for which I could find statistics), in the US alone there were 140 million phones that ended up in landfill. Every two years we throw away our entire population.
In fact, 70% of all heavy metals in landfills comes from discarded electronics. Our affect as designers is huge. You begin to see why he views himself and us as the most harmful profession.
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And along with just landfill, he argued that we define the thing that people want. We are part of the consumer capitalist problem. “When you can make things that make people want it. That’s a huge responsibility. You better make sure you make things you are proud to make people want.”
Victor said this of industrial designers. But it is more true today. Never before in history have so few people been able to directly influence billions.

<Story about Instagram? Also, Songza story.>
Victor said this of industrial designers. But it is more true today. Never before in history have so few people been able to directly influence billions.
<Are you sure you want to save? Then: Story about Instagram naming. Also, Songza story.>
Undo Typing

Undo

Cancel
Hint: they are white.
Hint: They are male.
IT TOOK PHONES 75 YEARS TO REACH 50M USERS
RADIO 38

It took phones 75 years to reach 50M users.
FACEBOOK 3.5
ANGRY BIRDS

.1 years. 35 days
YOUR THING
So what kind of harm do we do? Mental clutter.
We are creating attention scarcity. Wendellen’s Cat and mouse story.
If you as a designer don’t think about biz models, or the ecosystem in which your product will be used, it will go down the path of least resistance. And enter into the cat and owner game, where no matter your intentions, the business will slowly pull your design to steal people’s attention. As a designer you MUST THINK ABOUT THE BIZ MODEL. Else it’s like designing a physical product without thinking about how it will be disposed. Eco-sustainable design to Mind-sustainable design.
Skinner box. You are in a laboratory in the mid 1930's. Before you is a box, sound-proof and light-proof, with a single pigeon and a single lever inside. When the pigeon pecks the lever, a small food pellet is automatically delivered to the pigeon. The pigeon makes the connection and pecks again. It's learnt a new behavior. The box you are looking at is the foundation of modern behaviorism and experimental psychology. What you are looking at is a Skinner Box, named after its inventor, one of the most influential psychologists of the 20th century.
Operand conditioning is so strong that the US Navy tested homing missiles using conditioned pigeons in the early 1940s. Then HS Story
100m of photos get shared. 10s of billions of likes. Brown University showed get addicted three to four times faster to slots than other forms of gambling. Make up one-third and two-thirds of all casino income.

Pull-to-refresh. Now you know why you go to the bathroom to check your email. It’s turning us into zombies.
Pretend to fiddle, as if it's broken. Everyone will start playing with their phone.
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It's affects on teen girls.
MORE
PROVOCATIVE
EQUALS MORE
LIKES

It’s affects on teen girls. <<Add Quote>>
Loneliness ratio increases. Both short term and long term effects on well-being and happiness. 82 person study.
Email aptnea. 80% of people hold their breath or breath more shallowly. Email is the worst slot machine of them all.
* Correlation: Children/young adults who spend the most time on phones are nearly twice as likely to suffer from a variety of ADHD-related effects.
* Map reliance (people driving into lakes). In 2011, three women visiting Bellevue, Wash drove into a lake following GPS.
Social bubble.
Autocomplete steals our train of thought.
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Every generation has at least one major fundamental human-right issue.

My grandparents generation had a huge fight. A fight for gender equality. We now find it painfully obvious, but it was a struggle. It still is a struggle.

For my parents generation it was racial equality.

For my generation, it's sexual-orientation. It was only last year that same-sex couples in my home-state of California can get married.

Here’s my question, and it’s a big one. What’s the next generation's major human-right issue. Something we will find obvious in hindsight.

It’s health.
By 2020, one in two people in the US will be diabetic or pre-diabetic(!)

A kid, by the time she is in pre-kindergarten will have one of her two parents suffering from a form of diabetes.

Now, in the lab we can reverse the symptoms, etc.
1 out of 3 US citizens is obese.
Three fourths of the US is overweight.
And in the UK the rate of being overweight is projected to be 80% by the year 2020
Half of the world is overweight.

Half of the is nutrition starved.

That's both depressing and an opportunity.
It's not just a snapshot in time which looks particularly bad. It's getting worse at an accelerating pace.
Okay, but how about real Europe. How about the Netherlands? Childhood obesity doubled in each of these years.
Go back 100 years, the biggest causes of death were communicable diseases.

The biggest causes of death now are chronic disease including cancer. The highest cost to our systems (to the tune of xxx billions of dollars).

1/2 of adults have at least one.

3 out of every 4 dollars are spent on chronic disease.

In many ways, we are our own worst enemy.

Of course us in this case is our behavior in combination with the environment we live in.
3 out of 4 dollars in the US is spent on chronic disease
The top 5 costs to the healthcare system are all solved with one thing.
What do all of these have in common. Our own behavior is both part of the problem and the solution. Sitting is the new smoking. And guess who is driving all that sitting
So... what are the solutions?
The problem with doctors.

We know how to fight all of these chronic diseases. The problem is we don’t know how to help people do them.

The medical system is set up as a reactive system, not a proactive system.
Half of the docs are below average.
2nd opinions
crisis
Positive: Hanging door hangers. Social only win.

The just used social to go public.
Recycling bins as social proof. Can be anonymous!
Describe the UP. A holistic, system’s approach to health, data, and behavior change.
At the end of the day, what people care about is “how does this all affect my life?”
Our job is to help people make sense of the data – to help them understand it and understand what to go do with it. The market will be won by solving that problem. And it’s a real competitive advantage for us.

<<<Strengthen this part…>>>
We did a study with 40,000 people. Using commitment to action and small-step behavior change. Gave them a TIW at the right time, with the right message.
Those that accepted slept for 23 more minutes.
And increased their chance of beating their sleep goal by 72%.
7 HOURS
Those who get 7 hours of sleep or more feel 15.9% more energetic than their less than 7 hour counterparts.
24% more beautiful
7h5m
Social bubble.
FB example
It’s about surrounding yourself with those who share an aspirational identity.

- Bit about self-sacrifice as a way of predicting commune longevity.
Noom and Omada. Problem of attrition (especially with Noom).
Flickr example. Default to share is on.
What's the journey of health?
BEHAVIOR CHANGE
WILL BE THE NEXT BLOCKBUSTER DRUG
What do all of these have in common. Our own behavior is both part of the problem and the solution.

The rate of blockbuster drug discovery has been going down and down. [people variability etc.]

Behavior change is the next major drug.
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Behavior change is the next major drug.
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USE YOUR POWERS
FOR GOOD
Science goes where the data is.

And where does the data come from? Consumer products.
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