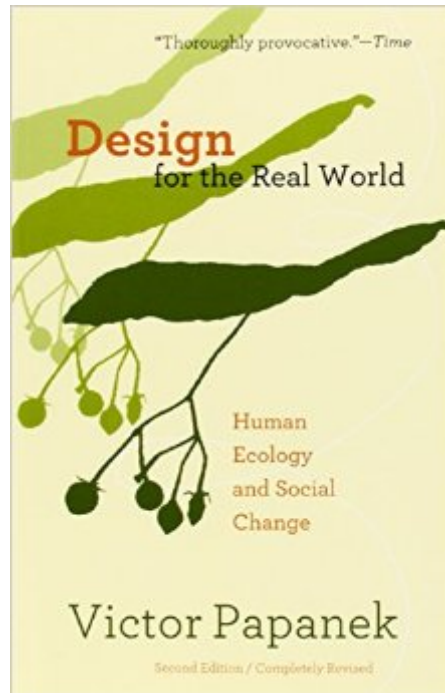


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Design For The Real World: Human Ecology And Social Change



Synopsis

Design for the Real World has, since its first appearance twenty-five years ago, become a classic. Translated into twenty-three languages, it is one of the world's most widely read books on design. In this edition, Victor Papanek examines the attempts by designers to combat the tawdry, the unsafe, the frivolous, the useless product, once again providing a blueprint for sensible, responsible design in this world which is deficient in resources and energy.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I first heard a lecture by Victor Papanek about 20 years ago, shortly before this revised edition was released. He was a very impressive speaker, drawing from a seemingly bottomless well of ecological design ideas. His work has taken him far and wide and in the process allowed him to revamp many of his views on environmental design. This book is an extensively updated version of his seminal book on the subject. It has become a bit dated in the 20 years since its release, especially in regard to computer software design. But, most of the material he covers is still relevant to the present, as we have only begun to scratch the surface of sound ecological ideas. Having read the more recent books on ecological design by Sim Van Der Ryn and William McDonough, I was surprised to see that neither mentioned Papanek, who prefigured many of the ideas they present in their current books. Papanek long ago advocated the lease/use principle, which makes much more sense in a rapidly changing technological world than does the buy/own principle that continues to dominate our social thinking. Papanek notes the many cultural and psychological blocks we have

created for ourselves when it comes to ecological design, but also illustrates how we can overcome these blocks with methods such as bisociation, first proposed by Arthur Koestler. But, what really makes this book stand out are the great number of illustrations that Papanek uses to demonstrate his ideas. This is one of the most practical books written on environmental design. While Papanek was an industrial designer, his ideas are equally germane to the field of architecture and biology.

I have just read about V. Papanek's recent death. I can't believe I wrote my past comment just 4 days before his death. I feel very moved, it's a big loss for the design world. I am copying here what the IDSA wrote about him: Victor Papanek Passes Away (1926-1998) Internationally renowned designer, professor and mentor Victor Papanek, IDSA, passed away at age 72 on January 10. His health had been failing him for the past three years. Papanek was widely admired for his advocacy of socially responsible design. He once summed up his chosen field this way: "The only important thing about design is how it relates to people." In remembering Papanek, Honorary IDSA member Ralph Caplan, remarked that "He was the first industrial designer to really begin to talk critically about design as a force for good and suggesting that, conventionally design wasn't necessarily that." Papanek was the J.L. Constant Professor of Architecture and Design at the University of Kansas since 1981 and was author of eight books on design. In his revolutionary and best-selling *Design for the Real World*, first published in 1971, and since translated into 23 languages, Papanek suggested something both startling and prophetic: the necessity for designers to adopt a morally responsible and holistic approach, adapting technology to the individual's real needs and tapping into the wisdom and experience of other societies, particularly those of the Third World. He traveled around the world giving lectures about his ideas on ecologically sound designs to serve the poor, the disabled and the elderly. He was closely connected with folk art and crafts and studied Oriental, Eskimo and American Indian cultures to better understand basic human needs and their relationship to design.

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