

Co-creating Creativity

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Technology cannot 'save us', especially when we overestimate its importance, or see it as isolated, 'quick-fix' gadgets, such as greener cars, solar panels, etc. We need more comprehensive, 'joined-up' ways to feed, clothe, shelter, assemble, and communicate. But this amounts to a paradigm change, requiring radical innovation on many levels at once. Unfortunately, this is beyond the reach of democratic governments, which use the least effective measures (c.f. Meadows, 1999). Designers are, therefore, important, because they know how to attract behavioural change in more direct and imaginative ways. Unfortunately, as design evolved as part of a growth-oriented economy, most designers are trained to be part of the problem, rather than the solution. For example, in the 21st century, many corporations now see the designer's creativity as an egocentric (MacLeod, 2009) and 'disruptive' weapon (Phillips, 2012) for competitive advantage, or for increasing GDP (Cox & Dayan, 2005), rather than as a synergising tool that enables humans to adapt to the ecosystem. A voluntary paradigm change would, therefore, require us all (including designers) to change how we see the world, because language, and belief systems, play a vital role in sustaining paradigms. We must therefore re-design design, and reframe the meaning and purpose of 'creativity'.