One says that Design or its purpose is shifting. More and more it becomes a tool to address social problems and solve so called wicked problems. Not surprising, processes like critical design, social design and design thinking are booming. But is design a viable tool to create social impact?

The nature of Design is to innovate and is typically used as a tool to boost consumerism. This develops a problem, the focus of design should be to create a better world but instead is used for consumption and profit. This raises the question, can creativity solve social problems in addition to just a capitalistic interest?
What Design means to me

This is my personal story of how I see design and how I have made use of it. Dear reader, I am hoping that you can relate to these personal discoveries. This is the story of how to define your values, use your skills and to do something that matters to you. My hunger for learning is based on the fact, that I need to experience things first to gain a full understand. We all know that design solves problems and in my mind creativity is always a feature within the design process. This means when I bring up design I am talking about the importance of creativity. So this is for you, dear reader, and anyone who includes creativity in their thinking. Design uses a variety of powerful methods and tools such as, research, storytelling, prototyping and many more. It is often used for consumption, however, I believe we can use design methods to create a better tomorrow.
I enjoy the high diversity and interdisciplinary possibilities my university provides.

2) I start with basic knowledge about visualisation and communication. I realize it’s a powerful tool to tell stories that stick.

3) FHP is for me like Lego and I put together my courses of interest. Attending courses in Product Design, Communication Design and Interface Design.

4) I was mostly motivated to take courses within the field of critical design and social impact or sustainability.

5) Colloquium: Feedback to not shoot everywhere, be consistent.

6) Focus on analogue techniques as photography, screen print and book design, working a lot with print.

7) Very enjoyable to learn about design processes from scratch, old school, use my hands and feel and touch what I produce. To give my ideas a physical shape.

8) Produced a book for a book fair in Gothenburg, proved myself that I can be consistent, stick to one thing but got badly bored.

9) Realised I am curious, an explorer, I learn best if I try many different things, build analogies and connect all my experience. I learn faster and more joyful if I learn systematic and not just in clusters.

10) FHP was a good base to bring me on the way but I feel like I should learn from other networks as well, new location, new insight.

3) FHP is for me like Lego and I put together my courses of interest. Attending courses in Product Design, Communication Design and Interface Design.

11) I question Germany regarding creative confidence. I read a lot about design thinking, David Kelly and generating an environment of low hierarchy, comfort, diversity, co-creating with a low ego and less concurrence.

12) I want a change, empathy and an environment where I can grow protected in a cave before going out to the big ocean.

13) I grew up in Denmark, speak Danish but want something new within the Nordic Countries. I consider Sweden and Island.

14) I move to Stockholm in December 2014. I take courses in FHP on distance. My Goal was to learn the language, study and work in Sweden

15) Taking courses in Stockholm University, while starting my first position in a communication agency. Working and studying full-time, while practicing my Swedish.

16) I improve my skills in graphic design, print and digital design. I work mainly on a book project and online ads.

17) Went on a conference with my company to Athens for 5 days. Topic was the creative sector in the crisis. We discover the causes of the financial crisis in combination with the refugee wave that enter Greece.

18) We bring 300 Kg of sanitary supplies for refugee camps in Athens. A touching experience how design and business can touch social issues. YES, design is more than just aesthetics. It has the strength to change to better and solve real problems.

19) I get inspired, return to Sweden and wonder how we can use the amount of refugees in Sweden to create something positive. (I am involved in different projects, meet many refugees, try to understand the situation and try to see them abstract as resources and wondere how to turn a crisis in an opportunity.)

20) Since I arrived in Sweden I am out networking, involved in the startup scene. Realising if you want to create social impact – people are your currency, greatest investment and the manpower to make it happen.
21) A growing interest in business, entrepreneurship, and economy – Realising that you need capital and a network to realize the dream to create a better tomorrow.

22) I get boosted, in a circle of believers, we live the positive thinking approach, celebrate failures and support each other. I see the strength and impact of collaboration, sharing resources and insights. I decide that my future workflow will be based on love, respect, collaboration, curiosity, prototyping, and explorative playing to reach my goal.

23) Impressed by my position as a women in society, never felt so supported, respected it make me feel strong and confident to take upcoming challenges.

24) I start working in «The best creative company» in Stockholm, at Futurniture. A groupe of 40 people who love to play and care about sustainability by using communication and advertising to create impact. Their main client IKEA.

25) I start working in the best creative company in Stockholm, at Futurniture. A groupe of 40 people, who love to play, care about sustainability, using communication and advertising to create impact. Their main client IKEA.

26) Starting with an analogue approach in design in Germany and getting more and more digital in Sweden.

27) Time to get last credits and to finish my studies. Starting with communication design, I moved towards interaction design and a user-centered perspective. The reason I moved to Umeå was to learn, experiment and study for the last time in my life fulltime. Taking courses in prototyping, user-experience and get a scholarship to build an interactive sound system, reacting to the motion of the body. Kinda like an interactive DJ.

28) At the end of my studies and reflecting where I stand and what I want to achieve.

29) Taking off to Indonesia to prove myself what value my knowledge and skills have.

RESUME: Sweden was awesome regarding my personal growth, strengthen my values and beliefs. Societies can be economically successful and empathic. Especially if you are an ambitious woman it is a great place to be. If you are into tech and social entrepreneurship you will get a lot of support there. BUT: I got frustrated by bureaucracy, my refugee projects failed on the implementation, processes are long and tiring. I need an environment where I can prototype, evaluate and experiment on a faster pace. Necessity is mother of invention. I decide to go to an developing country to bring social impact and evaluate some ideas.
WICKED PROBLEMS IN A GLOBAL WORLD

"We begin with the assumption that human beings constantly strive to improve or bolster their life situation, and that in so doing they are constantly engaged in problem-solving activities." – Irving Tallman

“A wicked problem is a social or cultural problem that is difficult or impossible to solve for as many as four reasons: incomplete or contradictory knowledge, the number of people and opinions involved, the large economic burden, and the interconnected nature of these problems with other problems. Poverty is linked with education, nutrition with poverty, the economy with nutrition, and so on. These problems are typically offloaded to policy makers, or are written off as being too cumbersome to handle en masse. (...) These problems can be mitigated through the process of design, which is an intellectual approach that emphasizes empathy, abductive reasoning, and rapid prototyping.”

Horst Rittel, was one of the first to formalized the theory of wicked problems, and charactized it as the following:

1) Wicked problems have no definitive formulation. The problem of poverty in Texas is grossly similar but discretely different from poverty in Nairobi, so no practical characteristics describe “poverty.”

2) It’s hard, maybe impossible, to measure or claim success with wicked problems because they bleed into one another, unlike the boundaries of traditional design problems that can be articulated or defined.

3) Solutions to wicked problems can be only good or bad, not true or false. There is no idealized end state to arrive at, and so approaches to wicked problems should be tractable ways to improve a situation rather than solve it.

4) There is no template to follow when tackling a wicked problem, although history may provide a guide. Teams that approach wicked problems must literally make things up as they go along.

5) There is always more than one explanation for a wicked problem, with the appropriateness of the explanation depending greatly on the individual perspective of the designer.

6) Every wicked problem is a symptom of another problem. The interconnected quality of socio-economic-political systems illustrates how, for example, a change in education will cause new behavior in nutrition.

7) No mitigation strategy for a wicked problem has a definitive scientific test because humans invented wicked problems and science exists to understand natural phenomena.

8) Offering a “solution” to a wicked problem frequently is a “one shot” design effort because a significant intervention changes the design space

9) Every wicked problem is unique.

10) Designers attempting to address a wicked problem must be fully responsible for their actions. *

When I say my goal is to save the world, by solving wicked problems this is in fact incorrect. Because wicked problems will never be solved. Changes of one element will lead to new problems so my goal for the next 20 years is to discover how design in combination with other disciplines can lead to a better future scenario. While traditional circles of entrepreneurship focus on speed and agility, designing for impact is about staying the course through methodical and rigorous iteration. Due to the systemic qualities of these large problems, the knowledge of statistics, politics, economics and more are necessary for effective change. This demands interdisciplinary collaboration, and most importantly, perseverance.

Design is not just aesthetic, neither does it just drive consumerism, it has the strength to change the world. But I needed to proof my concept with a concrete example. My goal was to enhance education and charity in a developing country. In chapter two I describe how I would book a flight to Indonesia to find out what value my skills have and if my hypothesis was correct. But before we travel south let’s start the process with research to understand the problem. Design is a tool to solve these problems, but in order to understand a complex problem we needs to step backward and see the whole picture – that is why I will write about the correlations between Politics, Sociology, Education, Media, Psychology, Economy and Design.

* [https://www.wickedproblems.com/1_wicked_problems.php](https://www.wickedproblems.com/1_wicked_problems.php)

When we forget our ability to choose, we learn to be helpless.
MEDIA AND HOW IT FUZZS WITH YOUR MIND

Are your decisions really rational?

By Loretta Breuning

Our brain is not designed to create happiness, as much as we wish it were so. Our brain evolved to promote survival. It saves the happy chemicals (dopamine, serotonin and oxytocin) for opportunities to meet a survival need, and only releases them in short spurts which are quickly metabolized. This motivates us to keep taking steps that stimulate our happy chemicals.

You can end up with a lot of unhappy chemicals in your quest to stimulate the happy ones, especially near the end of a stressful workday. There are a number of reasons why your brain goes negative. The bad feeling of cortisol has its own survival purpose. It alerts you to an obstacle on the path to meeting your needs so you can navigate your way to good feelings. Fortunately, there’s a simple way to rewire this natural negativity.

Let’s start with an example I call the Dog Poop Paradox. Pet mess was everywhere when I was young because picking up after your pooch was not the norm. Then customs changed and the streets were gloriously cleaner. Did that make anyone happy? NO. People barely noticed. They do notice an ooops, however, and they get plenty mad about it. Our brain evolved to scan for problems and it is skilled at finding problems when it looks. For example, reporters predicted the downfall of civilized society when the bicycle was invented. They warned that people would flit from here to there instead of having long conversations, and that we’d retire early from exhaustion instead of conversing in the evening. We have inherited the brain that helped our ancestors notice threats in time to act. We are skilled at finding threats, even as we seek rewards.

Do you think your actions depend on your own perception? We would all like to think we are in control of our decisions. We receive five times more information now than we did 30 years ago and this over consumption of data might lead to a confusion or make you feel overloaded. In addition most of the data presented has a negative context. Open any newspaper or online news portal and analyze how many posts are negative or positive. Furthermore, receiving and consuming information might lead to anxiety, especially when you think about social media. One could get the impression that the mysterious dangers seem to be lurking around every corner—from terrorism to data hacks, crime, health, politics, corruption and celebrity scandals. But why are we so attracted to negative information? One answer may lie in evolutionary psychologists and neuroscientists. We seek for dramatic news and events, since your brain is trained for a hunter-gatherer environment and...
Thinking in a foreign language frees the decision making from the emotional and cultural "baggage" that we carry when we think in our native tongue.

In addition to your mother tongue you are less likely to be manipulated the way you take decisions and the way you think. Words such as capitalism or fear are processed different in the brain if used a foreign language because your brain runs the processes in the rational mind and not the emotional part of the brain! This is amazing! Fuck off advertising and media, in English you can't affect me that much!

Now with the development of the internet and technology, Media has the potential to make the world more equal. But on the other side, I see media as an institution controlled by interest groups that easily spread their content. Nowadays everybody checks Wikipedia first when a new and unknown topic pops up.

...
Now we are able to use creativity as a tool to display how unique and special everyone is. With the use of social media everyone can be a star and create a digital identity. Self-creation was never easier and with the possibilities and features that services as Snapchat or Instagram offers one can create their own world. Funny contradiction – everybody tries to be special but by following the trends they end up being all the same.

But in fact anyone can edit and change the content and certain industries do. Although Media should be free and everyone has the right to participate in the dialogue it is easy to manipulate. Even if we have access to information we can never be 100% sure of it’s quality or intentions. Which is my reasoning for relying on my own experience. Even papers or research projects are in many cases sponsored by the industry. Probably one of the most well known cases of such manipulation is the interaction of the Koch brothers. They are an American family engaged in business, most noted for their political activities and the second-largest privately owned company in the United States. With their foundations they sponsor many research projects, of which outcomes always favour their own business.

One very interesting reading is a New York Times best seller by Jane Mayer called “Dark Money”.

During my research in Indonesia I found out that the use of social media plays an massive role in developing countries. Most people have no access to a computer and the most common way to have access to news is via smartphone. In Stockholm, people would still read newspaper, in Germany we would have political debates on the television but in Indonesia majority gets their news through social media.

“At least in the West, politicians, corporations and media moguls can no longer take for granted their power to control the public discourse - and have it go unchallenged.” – David Puttnam

I become aware of the fear driven society that left no space for my thoughts and creativity which is also reason for leaving Germany. When visiting Germany from a foreign country the content that I view on all social media outlets is very negative. In Sweden in contrast the content was very positive. In Sweden, I would be confronted with more inspiring content about progress in science, social projects and engagement. But as soon as I landed in Berlin my social media outlets would show me depressing news. In television, they would talk about old-age poverty, our welfare system is collapsing and of course, their favorite topic, refugees or immigrants as terrorists. I see many similarities between Germany and the United States and it scares me. For example in the United States interest groups as insurances use fear for profit, which is why insurance cost have increased 300% since the 1950’s. Fear is used to manipulate, keep us in place and dictate trends. Using the United States as an example again, they would no longer be defined as a democracy but rather as an oligarchy, because power rests with a small number of people. Some latest trends make me wonder if Germany could follow suit.

David Rothkopf, believes with the use of internet and media everyone has access to a superpower.

Listen to this great talk by journalist David Rothkopf on how fear drives American politics.

Here an amazing TED TALK about the connection of media, economy and politics.
What fascinates me about psychology is the science about behavior and mental processes. If I want to understand and interact with the user I am designing for, or even if I just want to understand my own habits and actions, I will find answers in psychology. I have a special interest in topics like consciousness and the free will. In considering manipulation of advertisements, politics and social groups, I was curious about how they affect our lives. Being a fascinating field of science, psychology is a diverse science in terms of the methods it uses and disciplines it contains – as design does too. It is a huge interconnected melting pot. A representative and well-known psychologist or neurologist was Sigmund Freud, founder of psychoanalysis. His "Warnhemungsgesetze" or theory of perceptual laws is a great fusion between rationalism and empiricism. Empiricism believes that we gain knowledge only by experience, rationalism on the other hand claims that we were born with innate ideas or intuitions.

Gestalt Psychologists are interested in how the mind turns the individual stimuli and experiences into a greater whole that is entirely unique. So just right now, while you are reading this and the sound that hits your ears at the moment and the smell you receive from your environment your brain will create a whole experience. Gestalt Psychology also explains why we see a face in the painting of a portrait and not just colors and lines.

Freud’s theories helped us to build views on childhood, dreams, sexuality and personality. Another breakthrough was his finding about the unconscious motives in which he said that we are all affected by mental processes that we are not aware of. What was interesting about it, is that by analyzing our dreams, projection and free association we could understand our feelings and gain self-insight about our sub-consciousness. Another field of psychology that sparked my interest is behaviorism, represented by for example the work of Pavlov, Skinner and Watson. In comparison to Freud’s work, behaviorism doesn’t focus on inner processes, instead it observes the behavior and find patterns and explanations as to why we behave in a certain way. In this field of study I found great insights in motivation, learning and self-grow. In particular, the stimulus-response pattern, also known as classical conditioning, is something very relevant for design. You have experienced this. Have you ever seen a commercial of a yummy chocolate? Even if you hadn’t been thinking about food you would most likely get up and get a piece of chocolate just because you saw it so well presented some seconds ago and it triggered something inside of you. Oh yes, design can be equally manipulative by using psychological tools.

So think about it, psychology and design are closely related to each other because both seek answers as why things are the way they are. Psychologists want to understand their patient just as designers want to understand their users. We both analyze and attempt to answer questions by all kinds of data-gathering.

I have an interest in understanding creativity and am fascinated by how different each of us is thinking. I see this most of all in my observations with kids. There are no limits in there thinking, everything is possible and they are better problem solvers. Because of this I believe working with kids improves the creative quality.

Creative Psychology attempts to find answers through creativity on how our brain processes visuals. One of the first tests to accomplish this was the Rorschach test in which subjects’ were presented with inkblots and asked what images they could see. In the early stage of crea-
“Creativity is not just for artists. It’s for businesspeople looking for a new way to close a sale; it’s for engineers trying to solve a problem; it’s for parents who want their children to see the world in more than one way.”

– Twyla Tharp

In Stockholm’s School of Entrepreneurship I was taking a course in Human-Centered-Design in collaboration with IDEO and +Acument. By studying their process I learned that you should combine the strength of both convergent and divergent thinking. Divergent thinking creates a huge number of possible solutions or ideas and convergent thinking reduces ideas. Combining both methods creates a dynamic workflow and a results in a concrete and suitable solution for the problem you are addressing.

Do you know the feeling when you work and suddenly you forget about time? Everything comes together, you feel excited, and everything seems suddenly to make perfect sense. In psychology they call that “flow experience” discovered by Mihály Csikszentmihályi – I recommend to watch some ted talks on youtube. The flow experience a blissful feeling of achievement when our mind is align with the task and we suddenly see through the complexity of the problem. Everything makes perfect sense – or at least this is how it feels to me. And yes it is addictive and feels good, it is like standing on the top of a mountain! Interestingly, when solving a problem I have been thinking about for a long time, once I am in the flow I suddenly also solve other past problems. Abraham Maslow, known for positive psychology, talks about the peak experience and how we are affected by distraction. Think about our modern world, our mind is spread and distracted in all possible ways. When it comes to creativity we have a wide range of opinions. Some individuals might be a genius in their own right, but by analyzing the creative industry I believe that habits and experiences can help. Might widen our ability to be creative. Being a designer your job is to be creatively reliable when needed. If you mastered the pitch you have to deliver as a designer, usually in too short of time. The Creative Habit, a book by Twyla Tharp, provides you with the third party experience. The book is an interesting read, however, in my experience creativity comes when there is no pressure. For example, while traveling - when the world slows down and I surround myself with inspiring people. After working in Sweden, I’ve learned a lot about creative processes and what impact a healthy work environment has on creativity. The reason why I write this piece, beside the fact that my university requires it, is because I have a vision. I am fascinated with impact and have a vision to create a better tomorrow. In my opinion creativity plays a central role while considering other departments such as, psychology, politics, sociology, education and economy. I see amazing potential in design to turn insights not just into a thesis or a paper. Design create activism and has the strength to change.

Maslow’s hierarchy of needs, assess one’s ability to reach self-actualization, and must be realized to reach one’s full potential – including creative ideas. You might think now that I may talk about spirituality, yoga and finding your inner balance. However this doesn’t understand it’s values. Let’s take a closer look at Maslow’s hierarchy of needs: physiological needs (food, water, shelter, rest), than safety needs (security and safety), needs of belonging and love (intimate relationships, friends), esteem needs (prestige and feeling of accomplishment), and self-actualization: realizing one’s full potential, including creative activities. Let’s take a closer look at Maslow’s hierarchy of needs: physiological needs (food, water, shelter, rest), than safety needs (security and safety), needs of belonging and love (intimate relationships, friends), esteem needs (prestige and feeling of accomplishment). All these needs must be fulfilled for someone to
reach self actualization. Have you considered all of these needs? If you are facing a creative crisis, make sure that you stand on a solid foundation to grow self actualization.

When considering spirituality one could think it is hocus pocus, but it does have value in our modern world. For example, a spiritual person I began to follow is Russell Brand. I was surprised how deep thinking and knowledgeable he is. I thought of him as a funny comedian, however, he addresses big issues within society and politics. Check out his book and listen to 10 minutes of his ideas on spirituality in this YouTube clip. He made me think about consciousness and reality in a way I never thought before. I think realistically by searching for measurable data, however, I am aware that there is far more to learn which will be proved by data in the future. But spirituality can be extremely relevant and maybe a tool to answer big questions in our ever more complex world.

As mentioned previously, psychology leads the focus on self discovery and make aware what is happening in our subconsciousness. In order to become a more conscious human by making decisions without negative influences we must train our inner strength. This grow of the strength is an important aspect of becoming an healthy part of a society.

Consider our modern society: insecurity, selfishness, anxiety. All of these emotions are tools to control and manipulate us from larger social issues. What if we could see through this mess? Imagine what a world we could create. Designing a better world means putting other people first and improving their hierarchy of needs so that they can improve their position and role in society. I have connected insight from William Gordon about Synectics in my own life. Synectics is a problem solving methodology that stimulates the thought processes. In my experience, everything is connected. The more experiences I have, the faster my process of learning. It helps to make the unfamiliar familiar. In my opinion, crossover approaches in education could lead to a way better understanding of topics with more creative outcome. Gordon emphasized the importance of ‘metaphorical process’ makes the familiar strange and the strange familiar. He expressed his central principle as: “Trust things that are alien, and alienate things that are trusted.”

Max Wertheimer was one of the founding figures of the school of thought also known as Gestalt psychology. As mentioned before, the Gestalt approach focused on looking at things as a whole, suggesting that the whole was more than simply the sum of its parts. This could be contrasted with the structuralist school of thought, which was focused on breaking things down to their smallest possible elements. Gestalt psychology tries to understand the laws of our perception in a chaotic world by analyzing cognitive processes. Gestalt Psychology turned into a movement and was practiced in the Berlin’s school of experimental psychology. Beside the fact that it provides a general understanding on perception by giving gestalt principles as an explanation, Gestalt psychology is also a tool that focuses on problem solving. When you look in the sky your brain connects the shape of the clouds with something that seems familiar. Design makes use of those processes to find pattern and familiarity in the strange and unknown. If skills like this would be taught in school the perception of kids would be trained to think creative and recognize patterns in order to solve a problem. When you finished school or university have you also been wondering what to use the knowledge gained through education in real life for?

“Education is what remains after one has forgotten everything he learned in school. It is a miracle that curiosity survives formal education.”

– ALBERT EINSTEIN
Sociology is the scientific study of human behavior and it tries to find answers on culture and territory. It might be the broadest social science we have and same as design it is looking for patterns and events as it tries to understand the general in the particular and seeing the strange in the familiar.

What fascinates me about sociology is how each individual forms a part of the pattern. By looking at the choices individual do, sociologists can see the elements of the whole pattern. For me as a Designer, sociology is extremely important in my research period because it helps me to understand the problem and backs up my observation and insights, from a scientific point of view. Often I felt that I didn’t understand the problem or my user well enough to design a better change. Sometimes as a designer you would be asked to just fast design something that looks good, without matching the needs of the user or the problem.

To my mind, one has responsibility as a creator, designer use resources. And it feels like wasting it when your only goal is a good looking product that nobody wants or needs in the end.

Moving to Sweden my goal was to understand the culture and processes in the Swedish labour market. I was curious how teamwork, traditions, low hierarchy, and a relaxed environment had an influence on creativity. My outtake from that period was that David Kelly, founder of IDEO has a point when he talks about creative confidence and fun at work as prototyping crazy ideas. I found that in Sweden and I was growing a lot.

Before I went to Indonesia I was wondering why systems as communism and socialism failed and capitalism established. In my early years I thought that capitalism is evil. Now I think that it has great opportunity for social change if the purpose and processes are made with good intentions. By fact capitalism is motor for innovation. As profit and business itself is not a bad thing. In general I can say that all charity motivated associations should think more about their profit and business opportunities. Think of an NGO as a car, it drives with high speed as soon as it receives a donation. When the money runs out, they invest a lot of energy and resources to desperately get new money to then speed up for 5 meters and brake hard again. This business model is not dynamic and very unstable, instead all Charities need to think about an income. This is where charity can learn from economy and profit based businesses.

I believe that life runs on circles and nothing is totally new and has happened before. Humanity has used pattern since the beginning to predict the future. They would watch nature and created the four seasons, as the moon calendar, seasons when to hunt or harvest. Napoleon, Hitler, civil wars, industrialisation, economic boom and crises run in circles and repeat over again.

Now is the best moment in history to be alive, but we have never felt more anxious or divided. Human health, aggregate wealth and education are flourishing. As scientific discovery is racing forward.

"In an age when we must act, we hesitate instead."
– Age of discovery, by Ian Goldin and Chris Chris Kutarna.
“Business and science are working giant revolutions upon our societies, but our politics and institutions evolve at a much slower pace. That’s why, in a moment when everyone ought to be celebrating giant global gains, many of us are rightly angry at being left out and stressed about where we’re headed.

To make sense of present shocks, we need to step back and recognize: we’ve been here before. The first Renaissance, the time of Columbus, Copernicus, Gutenberg and others, likewise redrew all maps of the world, democratized communication and sparked a flourishing of creative achievement. But their world also grappled with the same dark side of rapid change: social division, political extremism, insecurity, pandemics and other unintended consequences of discovery. Now is the second Renaissance. We can still flourish—if we learn from the first.”

– Age of discovery by Ian Goldin and Chris Kutarna

After reading the book I felt positive about the future, since I know that nothing happening at the moment is really new. If I don’t find creative solutions on how to save the world tomorrow we might still survive. It encouraged me to understand the pattern and circles properly and have a look in history.

How much does your vote count? Good intentions vs reality.

POLITICS – OR THE DREAM OF IT

I HAVE A DREAM

If I am honest, I don’t have any relation to politics, neither have I trust or any hope that it will change the world. I remember my excitement when I turned 18 and I could give my vote, now I don’t know what I am voting for anymore. If I give my vote, than just that the right wing would not get enough votes. We don’t vote anymore for someone we truly believe in, we just vote against other parties. Is that really democracy, I wonder? But I stopped to feel frustrated about it – I decided to be the change myself instead. I can’t wait for anyone else to fix the problems I am frustrated about, if I want a change, I have to be the change myself.

Do you understand politics or economy? They seem highly complex and it’s nearly impossible to see through the structures. As I mentioned before, if we have too many options we tend to feel overwhelmed and want an easy solutions. No wonder that politics seems messy and most people give up on it.

Adam Curtis’ documentary Hypernormalisation made me think a lot. After watching it I was shocked and speechless, wondering if it is really that bad. One might wonder if politics is not just a sexy lie. Given to people as a illusion to participate. But to be honest, the political lie in the end serves economy pretty well. It seems like all systems that create power are infiltrated by corruption and interest groups that make use of it, and this is as old as world history – I wonder why I am surprised. It is money that controls politics, one very interesting book I highly recommend is Dark Money by Jane Mayer and Blueprint for Revolution by Srdja Popovic. It talked about successful strategies visionaries as Nelson Mandela, Martin Luther King or Donald Trump: ’I could shoot somebody and I wouldn’t lose any voters’.
Gandhi used for a change. It reminded me that one needs to search for the sources of power and often it is economy. The purpose of design is to understand the problem in order to create a better alternative, that’s when I realized that I need to understand politics and economy as well.

Thinking about a better system one might mention Swiss political system, and in direct democracy. Power to the people. In comparison to parliamentary democracy citizens in Swiss would have the chance to give a direct vote for new laws and decisions made. But now I try to picture what would happen if more counties had more direct democracy. Is that really a good idea? To be honest, I don’t know. Since media is in most cases not neutral, people are already manipulated before taking a decision. Easily media becomes a superpower, creating hate, fear and manipulating. In general, I am very impressed how Germany managed the so called refugee crises. What I admire about German politics is that they take the decision straight forward and put the facts on the table. Swedish culture is very polite and harmony seeking, often problems aren’t discussed open and issues unspoken. I still believe in a system that gives power to the people, not to representatives that will act in favor of lobbies, corporates or third parties that promise politics power and money. Another point of view that I support is to free the data and support transparency. I am proud that people as Julian Assange or Snowden sacrifice their lives to reveal what politics tried to conceal. But honestly I don’t see that much innovation or opportunities in politics for me at the moment. I know also if I would become a politician, instead of solving the problems I would feel like hacking or fighting the political system itself. I don’t expect that much support from politics, but I need to understand its rules, limitations, processes and follow latest moves. My Grandpa is very engaged in the left party and he has a great impact with his work, so I am very happy that people like him with the right intentions take the challenge and make a change. But for global wicked problems I don’t see great potential in politics. I think we are in a systematic problem, we need new political structures to make a change.
ECONOMY – MY NEW LOVE

BETWEEN EVIL AND GENIUS

Love it or hate it, money has power. I viewed capitalism and its processes with dislike and rejected, way too fast, before really knowing so much about it. But if life gets pure discovery without judgement, understanding and learning in all moves you make, unknown opportunities grow. I am honest with you, I just start to understand this topic but if I see the relation to design and my goal to create impact, I know that this domain keeps the most possibilities and the biggest strength for an impact on a big scale.

Think about influential people, that really changed the game. Bill Gates Foundation put great pressure on the social movement, while investing in micro businesses and doing so realizing measurable impact in fighting poverty. Moreover, what do you think why the States still decline that there is no climatic change, it is because a huge lobby would lose a lot of money and power if they would be more strict on protecting the environment. Decisions taken on a big scale are always in favor of profit, not people, not the environment. Economy don’t know responsibility, neither human values it is independent and its own goal is to make profit.

I first disliked economy a lot, but now I look at it with fascination. The more I learn about it the more I realized how uneducated I was. At school I learned a lot of things that had no value to me but education in economy and business that would have helped me a lot to understand many processes in the world. Design and sexy marketing makes you desire. By triggering the right buttons consumption kicks in – the more you buy the better. And I agree, we need consumption but if profit is the only goal many social and environmental factors will be ignored.

After my time in Indonesia, analyzing NGOs, I understood that charities have great value for business. Employees and people working in those projects are highly motivated, they keep amazing levels in energy and they push very hard because they believe in their mission. But their business model is very undynamic and does bad in the long term on human resources. In the early stages the concept of economy was simple, it was a trade: I have something to offer and you have something that I desire so let’s just trade our goods. But by time things have changed and economy went global and became a powerful tool to control. The Dawes Plan was a financial support for Germany to solve the World War I reparations, which had damaged international politics following World War I and the Treaty of Versailles. The hyper-inflation crisis in Germany affected economy heavily but by agreeing on the Dawes Plan Germany also bound itself to USA and Britain by loaning 800 million marks. In this example Economy is a tool to control. Not too far away from Germany’s intervention in the financial crisis in Greece, right? The more global and linked economy got the more infiltrated it.
became in a huge amount of processes that had massive impact in all scales. We end up in a world where poor workers in China produce under bad working condition product that they could never afford to consume them self. Produced for people in the western world with better living conditions and a strong purchasing power. A perfect system where the buyer is far disconnected to the producer in the manufactory. What an entertaining contradiction that one can buy kids toys cheap in the shop in Europe and the product went trough kids hands somewhere in China. We don’t know too much about the things we consume and although the wish for transparency is growing, the industry is not reacting: too difficult, too many steps and unnecessary information if you ask the suppliers. I believe the consumer is not as stupid as the industry always want us to believe, of course the price is one of the main motivations but educating the consumer will change their activity for sure. Phosphate will be used by 2030 and no more resources will be available. Since most of our agriculture is monoculture depending on massive amounts of pesticides and Phosphate. But it will take an end soon. Think about the consumption of food by one family in Bolivia in 1 week and compare it with the consumed food of Americans. The food in Bolivia will be based on lenses, rice, fruits and veritable and in the States you might barely see a tomato since their whole consumption is based on refined products with many production circles, produced cheap with genetically manipulated vegetable and fruits, spiced up with a lot of sugar and fat. You see how connected and complex economy, production, transport are just by the example of food production. Maybe the human capacity is not the best to control economy since humans are vulnerable, manipulative and weak. What if economy was run by technology that is independent from banks, politics or the government. Reacting to changes, learning itself by the mistakes done? What is the alternative to economy and money we know by now? Bitcoin and blockchain has been mentioned recently a lot and although everyone seem to like and support the idea, most struggle understanding it and don’t get involved because they don’t trust in the unknown and the amount of people really using it is low as it is so far mainly an investment rather than a trade or way to pay. Circular economy seems to be another model that is debated at the moment and companies as IDEO desire to create their processes according to its mindset. But what is a circular economy? “Looking beyond the current “take, make and dispose” extractive industrial model, the circular economy is restorative and regenerative by design. Relying on system-wide innovation, it aims to redefine products and

* https://www.ellenmacarthurfoundation.org/circular-economy
services to design waste out, while minimising negative impacts. Underpinned by a transition to renewable energy sources, the circular model builds economic, natural and social capital."

Our world is obsolescence and products are programmed to die after certain amount of time. Did you ever wonder why your printer and other products have a guarantee of 2 years and die right after that period. Updates on phones made to program them for a slow shutdown - we have the technological capability to make products everlasting but the consumption would go down which is of course a problem for profit. One documentary regarding this topic I really enjoyed was “Planned obsolescence - Buying for the rubbish”.

While Nylon stockings in the 50’s were made to last for long time account managers were unsatisfied by the profit, people don’t consume it enough - now when I buy stockings it became a one time usage. In the DDR Germany’s resources were limited and money was invested in science. With the goal to make product last as long as possible. Now things are produced to die fast. I see a responsibility in design to break those circles, we designer have a responsibility and together with science we need to find ways to use the resources we have in a better and more effective way.

WHAT ABOUT BLOCKCHAIN

POWER TO THE PEOPLE?

It takes the power of old traditional third parties and gives power to the people. Blockchain and cryptocurrencies could be essential in designing a better future. In fact most people don’t understand it really jet and because people are not really sure about its value the number of users is still low. But I believe it can be a powerful tool to stop corruption as it’s a totally new way of banking where you eliminate banks and middle men that take time and cost money as I believe it will be a big opportunity for NGOs to gain trust. As it even gives access to the poorest bottom line of society that never had any access to accounting and open new opportunities.

But what is this Blockchain? Blockchain is a technology that enables a direct transaction of rights or assets between two parties without involving a third party or middleman that slows down the process or costs extra money. Its benefits are: It has great potential to reduce corruption and it gives poor people access to world commerce. As it will be possible to directly support a poor family in Indonesia doesn’t matter if with money or other assets as property or a new generator. Blockchain might be the first shared economy where value is created and distributes where it’s really needed. After the Haiti Earthquake, the red cross received billions of dollar as donations but according to a report I found in the Guardian, 125 Million dollar disappeared for management and other expenses. It is not the best time that charity organisations make it into the news with scandals on how the money went in their own pocket. People lose trust and the result is that people don’t support charity anymore.

In 2008 the blockchain technology was released on the market and got attention among computer scientists, privacy advocates, anarchists, media theorists, banks and simply anyone that was wondering how to establish trust on two parties on the internet. The blockchain is a decentralized database. So far buyer and seller have been legitimated a transaction for let’s say the buy of a house through a middleman, the bank. And new services as airbnb have taken this position of a reliable middleman that takes care of the transaction, however but middleman are not always the most trustworthy. Banks can go bankrupt and lose your money and “free” services as uber or dropbox can sell your data. With the invention of the internet privacy issues have been tackled and got improved and now with blockchain maybe a new era is just about to begin. This protocol makes every process of a transaction transparent. And everyone using it, supports it decentralized, incorruptible database. When a transaction is made it gets time stamped and added to an database when it is agreed upon all parties it gets legitimized. In this process there is no opportunity for hackers or thieves to make changes that go unnoticed, as the system also doesn’t allow changes or entries from people not involved in the transaction. And since no one owns the Blockchain, everyone can trust it. Every transaction is called a block, which is linked to similar previous
ones – like a chain. Which is reason why the system is so secure. If adding a new block it must fit perfectly the links to the history of previous blocks. Another advantage is that it makes finances faster and cheaper than traditional banks. In fact banks are nowadays unnecessary complicated and slow, and believe it or not, many of them are still using mainframe computers from the 1970’s. You might be misguided buy the thought that with the invention of online banking money travels as fast as an email but because of large number of middleman the system is just bugged down. But they do not just slow down the process, they also cost you money. Bitcoins in comparison takes about 10 minutes from one bank account to another. The way banks operate is especially unfair and makes it inaccessible for the poorest. Payments under 20 cents aren’t profitable for banks – but there are 2.5 Billion people living which have to survive on less than a dollar a day. So it’s no wonder that 2.5 billion people have no access to a bank account. But blocks are not used for transaction within money it also keeps track on land ownership or the ownership of songs or copyright material. Property law is a especial in need of a reform, it is estimated that 70% of the world population have no enforceable claim to the land they own. You might look up Ethereum, which stores small mini programs which are automated to react to certain programs in the blockchain. Governments, NGOs and anyone doing a transaction has a signature. In my case a NGO could gain trust and transparency by showing their investments and gain trust since their signature is trackable and visualized. Can you imagine how interesting it would be to track your tax money and how it was spend, this would put great pressure on governments to act in favour of people who elected them. Also privacy is full under your own control, as you define through protocols which data is published. And if you feel for it you can even sell your data to an advertisement agency – but finally you own your data and not a sketchy middleman that make profit on it. Or you could even donate your data to medical research, by still keeping it anonyme and safe – all totally in your control. Also it would lead to new businesses and new ways of gaining revenues, it makes the process of starting and operation a new business way faster and easier. If you might now wonder if this is too good to be true and why aren’t more people using it? Well the first big challenge is to make the general public understand how it works, to gain trust and more user activity – as you can imagine large industries and probably most of all banks are not really interested to change. But I believe always when a system isn’t good enough it will be replaced, so it’s just a matter of time. Another factor that slows the progress down is because governments are slow in understanding or implementing new technology. The government could even make it poorly regulated or even use it against the public, that’s why the public needs to be informed. Another problem that needs to be fixed, is the amount of energy it would take to maintain blockchain, so far bitcoins cost around 100 million a year in electricity. Of course every currency costs money to maintain, and don’t forget about the hidden cost from big skyscrapers banks own to and armed trucks transporting the cash. As also the questions comes up, how this will have an impact on the labour market. People that worked in the bank before would lose their function as many jobs would be automated on blockchain, but I believe as with all new changes new positions and markets will develop too. So all in all there might be problems to overcome but in general I believe that this could be a powerful tool to bring economy, power and equality back to the people not to third parties anymore.

Here a great podcast from two amazing people traveling the world and sharing their insights about technology, society and consciousness. They recently shared some interesting content about blockchain as cryptocurrencies and what opportunities it has. To my point of view Bitcoin is still too unreliable and mainly seen as an investment, rather than a way of payment or trade. But I believe in the idea of the blockchain as it can be used in many different cases and empower the rights of people like you and me. Or even more it gives equality to those who haven’t been heard jet. Check some of the videos on their website they talk about social projects that already integrate the blockchain technology in their process.
“SEE NO EVIL, HEAR NO EVIL, SPEAK NO EVIL”
There are a lot of problems in the world today. War, inequality, malnutrition, a dying planet to name a few. There is more than one reason for this happening but is it possible to find an area, one root cause for most of them? An area that effects all aspects of our day to day life?

We live at an amazing moment in time we have developed technology that has multiplied our effort 100 fold, since the 1950 and have brought the hitchhiker's guide to the galaxy in our pockets in the form of smartphones and other communication technologies that lets us access unlimited information and communicate wirelessly across the world. Against what most people are led to believe that world is getting safer and safer. The risk at dying at the hands of another man is the lowest that they have ever been. It is hard to make a case against the fact that this is the best time to be alive ever in human history. Things are going great! However, there’s still a lot of problems that we face as humans living together on this planet. Even though we live in at this amazing time in history something is fundamentally wrong! Although we have this abundance and relative safety, our collective psyche seems to be taking a big hit as we are currently experiencing a global epidemic of existential distress. Anxiety and depression are being diagnosed at levels we have never seen before. The UN has estimated that 800,000 people a year now are committing suicide across the globe. That is a larger number than armed conflict and natural disaster combined. Something is seriously out of whack! Right now there is a lot of polarization in the world. People feel disenfranchised and fed up with their current situation. They see that fewer and fewer people are getting richer and richer at the expense of more and more people and this out of a dying world. People are getting angry which they have a right and should be. The problem is that that anger gets directed in all the wrong directions. They direct it at the trivial or at each other. At other poor people, races, religions or classes. Instead of directing it where the real power lies. It’s not immigrants that taking your jobs, its technology through automatization whom have done it for hundreds of years and the politicians who draft the policies that benefit those multinational corporatons. These Corporations are laughing all the way to the banks whilst making record profits whilst we, thought the media (which is owned by and governed by the same interest) is getting more and more divided amongst each other. We are falling for the oldest trick in the book which been used throughout the centuries by those in control. Divide and conquer A lot of people who start seeking answers for the world’s problems outside conventional knowledge and means get sucked into the rabbit hole of conspiracy theories and often end up all too focused on certain families or events, failing to see and put focus on the bigger picture and thereby alienating big parts of the population by doing this. Instead of focusing on the real overarching problems which are a structural systemic and a paradigm problem that now is collapsing this world at this very moment.
The current monetary and banking system

In my understanding, the fundamental problem with the current economic system is its inherent unsustainability and its tendency to make us evermore unhappy in an ever-increasing technological world of abundance. The fiat banking system is the motor of this debt based system, meaning a system that requires infinite growth on a finite planet to function and not collapse. This also means that profit is the main goal of this system and automatically gets priority over everything else when the system always moves towards ever increasing profits and not making the world into a better place. All the major advancements that have been made for humanity have been a lucky side effect of this system rather than anything else. This system cannot grow forever but it has to. To quote the comedian Lee Camp:

"Our world under this system is like a hot dog eating contest where the rules are: Keep eating. Without any time limit. Eventually, in this competition, you will run out of hot dogs but the rules would still say: Keep eating. So then you would have to turn to your opponent and eventually, eat him."

In this system institutions and corporations have turned into a superorganism within humans are embedded where the community acts in the interest of the organism, rather than the world this organism functions in. People within this system aren’t bad people but they have become dependent on their host and has to succumb to it to maintain themselves (to support their families, loans, lifestyle etc) When you make the profit your number one priority, essentially this thing becomes your GOD, the thing you have to put over everything else, to maintain your system. This inevitably has turned the people under this system into its religion of materialistic consumerism. Where people on a daily basis through institutions and cooperation are being indoctrinated to confuse happiness with money and things. This requires the system to create a reality of having people define themselves and seek happiness in external things. Instead of internally and in their connection to others. Basically, this requires it to create an artificial need in people to buy ever more things they don’t need with money they often don’t have, to impress people they don’t like. To fill this manufactured void in people that this system has forced cooperation to create in order to maintain themselves. This has been done through the use of Corporate and institutional propaganda (PR). Mainly with Freudian tactics by constant marketing and creating a culture which is aimed at people’s subconscious mind and appealing to their innermost desires of belonging, safety and love. Tactics that are more or less can be seen as psychological warfare. This is leading to an ever increasing collective consciousness of mass (un)consciosness or insanity. Where people in their desperation are trying to accumulate as much material wealth as possible and thereby constantly are moving away from the self and more and more into the egoic mind. In this system the measure of the success of a country is more seen by its GDP rather than the happiness level of its inhabitants. Where the assumption is that wealth is connected and comes mainly as a product of the former. But...
this has time and time been proved to be wrong. Studies have shown that being monetary success is not the key to happiness and that the riches people aren’t the happiest people at all. To study this insane system and see how and the behavior of it and the actors involved in it one could just look at what happened in 2008, when this economic system broke after the American subprime mortgage market collapsed creating the worst financial crisis since the Great Depression. To summarize what happened:

- Banks run a business model based on fraud
- Gambles and crashes the global economy
- Hundreds of thousands of Americans lose their money, jobs, and homes
- These banks then repossessed those homes and then got a 16 trillion dollar bailout from the American people
- Now they are as big as they ever been, making record profits to a historic low interest rate

This system corrupts industries across the board. When banking needs ever increasing returns on the interest creating more and more debt. Which is essentially turning those in debt into their slaves. Where there’s more profit to be made by big Pharma of sick people than healthy ones. Where war is more profitable than peace. It used to be that weapons were being manufactured to fight wars with. Now wars are being manufactured sell weapons. And where media and news companies goal is foremost profit, are currently leading to an every deluded public perception of reality when they realised that they can make more money by scaring the public rather than informing them.

In this current paradigm, we now live in a post-truth world where our economic and ecological system is falling apart. A system that has trapped our minds and are turning us more and more into its slaves.

“Much like in the Soviet Union in the 70s when their system started to crack, and its inhabitants could see that what their leaders were saying to them were not real because they could see with their own eyes the economy was falling apart. But everybody had to play along and pretend it was real because nobody could imagine any alternative. One Soviet writer called it: Hyper normalization. You were so much a part of the system that it was impossible to see beyond it”
Our paradigm is defined by the questions that we ask so in order to tear down this system it’s crucial that people start questioning their embedded beliefs and ask more and better questions. Before the system has ruined their minds and destroys the planet that they are living on. Questions like:

**Why do only 8 people own as much as half of the earth’s population?**

Oxfam

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What are the chance of having a world free from war or any militarized conflict whilst having a for profit military industrial complex?

**Why is everything amazing but nobody is happy?**

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What kind of casino are we running where everyone loses? If it’s not people or the planet that is winning, who are? It’s the corporations and the institutions who benefits from this system. It’s the superorganism that is winning. What do we call an ever growing organism that is just growing out of control? We call it cancer. Everything in this reality is ALL ONE system coexisting with everything else and right now one of the driving forces in this system, the monetary system is literally the cancer that is killing us and the planet we all live on. It’s time we all wake up and reclaim our minds for this system before it’s too late and it brings down everything we know and love.
Think about the education system 100 years ago. Picture it. I guess you might see a room with desks and chairs, one teacher in the front, books on the table, kids waving their hands. Neat in place following the orders from a higher authority. Now think about telecommunication or transportation. Picture it. How did it look 100 years ago. Big difference right? So one might raise the question why our education system did not develop during the last centuries when we are living in a constant changing world.

Let’s talk about public education and its purpose. It is a smart creation between the government and corporations. Just imagine how corporations and the raising industrialization was scared to become efficient and lose its workers through good education. Imagine if the factories would run out of workers or they would need to pay higher salaries with the rising level of education.

So go back to the picture of the classroom and your own memories of education. There is a reason why education still looks the same. The purpose of education is to train people to become compliant factory workers who follow orders, wealthy enough to consume. I remember those voices telling me to be motivated at school and deliver good marks so that I could get a good job and have a good life. You remember them too?

If I think about my own experience with education I remember a lot of sadness, disappointment and struggle. I was wild and curious, the kid that would ask millions of questions. Out in nature a lot, very independent discovering the world, building things and fascinated by everything new that would cross my way. I started my education in Denmark in the kindergarten and preschool which were years full of joy. Later we moved back to Germany my notes doped down, I was not motivated, frustrated and felt unfair treated by some teachers. I remember one teacher, Frau S. saying “Annika you will never become something!”

A depression of motivation hit me at the age of 10, what was the point of school? I hated the competition and pressure that was put on me at this early stage. I lost my curiosity and my marks were bad. And art was one of my most disliked subjects. I was lucky that my parents supported me and got very involved, a privilege not all kids have. I can understand why many kids lose their creativity and ambition due to public education. But thanks to a few teachers boosting and parents supporting me, things got better. I remember that especially my teacher in politics was very inspiring. I got skills in critical thinking, storytelling, arguing, proper research and the curiosity to understand a problem. But I know that the motivation of learning and good education is extremely depending on the teacher. You may have experienced that too. You always hated physics, language or another subjects and then with the change of a teacher you got amazingly involved and maybe even decided to study the subject in college. So far public education in most cases is a standardized program that teaches you that A+B=C. Furthermore following the rules and working hard, will get you a good job, which will make you a happy part of a consuming society.

Carl Sagan once talked about the importance of education and he would refer to Thomas Jefferson (which was the third President of the United States, who wrote the Declaration of Independence as the Statue of Religious Freedom). He said: “The people had to be educated and they had to practice their skepticism in education. Otherwise we don’t run the Government, the Government runs us.”

Take a second to reflect on what kids learn nowadays in school and how they are taught. Knowledge is transmitted neat in boxes with main focus on mathematic and science. Have you also felt unprepared for the real life when you dropped out of school? Many of my friends who even got their Master after 5 years in University got the same feeling too. But after university, did you know how to create a company, get a refund from taxes, or be an empathic citizen that has creative ideas and the ambition to solve all those big and difficult problems our civilization will have to fight in the upcoming years?

One reason why I moved to Sweden was because I heard that the Swedish labour market is characterized by low hierarchy and a lot more teamwork, which I found
essential for a creative environment. I missed teamwork in school and university. If it happened to be teamwork, it felt unnatural and was often a frustration for me. Am I really surprised in a highly competitive world? Beside co-creation we might also rethink the way we separate the different subjects in boxes. Our modern world is interconnected and problems are wicked. Think of the refugee crises, you can’t look at it just from one department, it is communication, politics, psychology, media, culture science, sociology, economy and much more. What if we could have a project called Coffeeshop at school. It would be a project work, where you would own a coffee shop. You need to calculate how many coffee beans to buy, how many people to employ, how to keep the customers satisfied and keep a team motivated. Short: how to run a business. What if an engineer would teach a project in math and the class would calculate how to build a bridge. How much material would be needed to build it, how would the construction look like and in the end they would build the physical product together. Maybe people from all industries should give a social year and go to schools and teach what they know by their own real life and experiences made in their industry. We have to question what and how knowledge is taught.

What education can learn from Design? Subjects in science such as mathematic and physics are valued and respected but art and design seems like a commercial break in education to just entertain and fill the gap in-between. Now six years later I believe creativity and design are valuable tools that should be implemented in public education. For example it teaches storytelling, problem solving and prototyping among others.

I always found gaming a very easy and fun way to learn. Which is why I got very inspired when I visited Hyper Island and Kaos Piloten in Sweden and Denmark. They are known for an alternative way of teaching and I was very impressed by the people I met in both schools! I share with you the toolbox that Hyper Island uses in their creative process and I just simply love them! Beside economy I see greatest potential in creating a better tomorrow in education. It is the motor of innovation and opportunity to make a change. I should run a project supporting education, I was thinking. Which leads me to chapter two and the concept of proof how my design skills helped me to support education.

I would pack my bag, book a flight to Indonesia and evaluate my ideas with a prototype on how to collect money for education.

After defining the problem I needed a place where I could run the project. So I opened a map of the world, wondering where to go. Indonesia seemed a great challenge! look at it on the map: 13,466 islands, second highest biodiversity after Brazil 7th-largest country in terms of combined sea and land area. It has an estimated population of over 260 million people and is the world’s fourth most populous country. A lot to discover and improve regarding education. The fact that it is separated in many islands is a real challenge and makes it hard to find a general answer on how to make a change. As Charles Darwin already discovered: isolation on a island has an impact on the development of a species. Regarding Indonesia you might think about politics, economy, education, transportation, nature and many other factors – so I thought challenge accepted! If there is a country where I could collect diverse experience than Indonesia. But for my first prototype I needed to choose a place that would be safe for a women to traveling alone. Reason why I choose Bali and Lombok, other Islands will follow in the next steps.

Think about this: 20% of the world population are students but they are 100% of the future, so why not invest in good education that raises critical, creative individuals that have an empathic understanding for the world, willing to co-create and drive the world with the resources we have towards a better tomorrow?
My journey to Indonesia

BETWEEN TRADITION AND GLOBALIZATION

I watched a TED talk from Joe Gebbia, the co-founder of Airbnb. He talked about designing processes of trust.

That was the beginning of my trip to Asia, designing for trust and a better tomorrow.

My goal was to prove myself that I can use my skills to create social impact. I love the concept of prototyping. It is fabulous to test an idea with little resources in short time. So the general go was to support education in Indonesia.

Things I wanted to evaluate in Indonesia:

- **Processes of trust:** How to design a process that is transparent, trustworthy, easy to understand and comforting enough that people invest money.
- **Cashflow:** How to deal with the flow of money, main focus on mobile payment services as Swish in Sweden in comparison to normal online banking in Germany.
- **Communication:** everything from facebook posts, copyright and storytelling, how to show the artifacts of success as a prove to the donors in Europe.
- **User Experience:** People who donate money and people who receive the money.
- **Research:** Education in Indonesia, culture, tradition, politics and economy.

My goal was to start with a small test group (my friends on Facebook) but I was hoping to go viral and receive money from people I don’t know.

**Germany**

The economy of Germany is well developed, it has the largest national economy in Europe and the fourth-largest by nominal GDP in the world. In 2016, Germany recorded the highest trade surplus in the world worth $310 billion, making it the biggest capital exporter globally. Furthermore, Germany is the third largest exporter in the world with 1.21 trillion Euros in goods and services exported in 2016. The service sector contributes around 70% of the total GDP. The top 10 exports of Germany are vehicles, machineries, chemical goods, electronic products, electrical equipments, pharmaceuticals, transport equipments, basic metals, food products, and rubber and plastics. In addition too economical success Germany started investing and developing in renewable energy. And is by doing so the first major industrialized nation to commit to renewable energy. Germany is, for example, the leading producer of wind turbines in the world.

**Sweden**

Sweden is the third-largest country in the European Union by area with only a population of 10 million. Most of the population is located in the south and approximately 85% of the population lives in urban areas. Sweden is a mix of old tradition and modern economy, it’s a constitutional monarchy and parliamentary democracy. It has been said that Sweden has been since more than 200 years neutral (But necessary also to mention that Sweden’s second biggest income is weapon industry, which makes them not so neutral to my mind). Furthermore, they haven’t been affected by world war I and II which gave them time to continuously strengthen their economy. Sweden is a competitive mixed economy featuring a generous universal welfare state financed through relatively high

**A developing country on the fast track**

Germany

82.6 million

Currency Euro

3,479,232 M.S

on GDP

Germany is the

4 largest economy

by nominal GDP in

the world.

National Debt

2,368,776 M.S

Germany is No. 10 of

least corrupt

countries.

No. 16 on global

peace index.

16.7% are

at risk of poverty

1. USA

2. China

3. Japan

4. Germany

16.7% average wage

81 years of life expectancy
income taxes that ensures that income is distributed across the entire society, a model sometimes called the Nordic model. Approximately 90% of all resources and companies are privately owned, with a minority of 5% owned by the state and another 5% operating as either consumer or producer cooperatives.

Out of the 10 Million inhabitants 2.3 million have a foreign background. Sweden had a great wave of emigration in the end of the 1800s, many left to America as Sweden was characterised by bad living condition and poverty. Followed by the post war immigration with refugees from the second world war mainly from Germany, the baltic country and other nordic country. After the war a lot of German refugees left but many remained and explain Sweden’s high level of diversity with foreign nations. Other than the rest of Europe that was recovering from world war II, Sweden’s economy was steadily growing.

Since the beginning of 1980’s Sweden reached the next wave of asylum seeking people, Sweden welcomed immigrants from countries like Iran and Iraq, Lebanon, Syria, Turkey, Eritrea and Somalia. As well as South American countries with repressive regimes. Furthermore, 2000-2012, as a side effect from the Iraq war, Sweden welcomed refugees. The same happened 2014 when the war in Syria was boiling. And Sweden opened their gates and was after Germany the country who took the largest amount of refugees. Sweden has always been a country with social engagement and integration of foreign culture and building a framework of diversity.

Sweden has a stable economy with a appealing mix of capitalism and social features. The investment on social expences as education and health care are high but results are visible. But regarding the amount of refugees welcomed during the last two wars in Iraq and Syria, it should be mentioned that Sweden’s second largest income is made through the weapon industry.

Indonesia
The Republic of Indonesia is located in Southeast Asia and is the world’s largest island country. Furthermore, it has a population of over 261 million people and is the world’s fourth most populous country. The country has abundant natural resources like oil and natural gas, tin, copper and gold. The main religion is Islam with 87.2% (After Christianity: 9.9%, Protestantism: 7%, Hinduism: 1.7% and Buddhism: 0.7%). Indonesia’s economy is the world’s 16th largest by nominal GDP and the 7th largest by GDP at PPP (Explain in Marginal) but it comes with challenges of urbanisation, crime, pollution of the environment and deforestation. But thanks to the development of Indonesia is able to tackle challenges such as the level of education, health care and poverty. Here are some outtakes about the status quo:

- Due to Indonesia’s geography, natural disasters are a much more costly threat than in other nations, and they disproportionately affect poor people.
- Poverty reduction in Indonesia has been very effective in the 21st century. Approximately 11 percent of the population lives in poverty, a more than 50 percent reduction since 1999. Between 2006 and 2013, 10 million people climbed out of poverty in Indonesia.
- Despite the clear downward trend in poverty numbers, according to Indonesia Investments, “the Indonesian government applies rather easy terms and conditions regarding the definition of the poverty line, resulting in a more positive picture than reality.” As a result, Indonesia has a high population of people who are “near poor,” or in danger of falling into extreme poverty in an economic downturn.
- In recent years, however, the economy of Indonesia has been performing very well. Indonesia has the largest economy in Southeast Asia and the 16th largest in the world. The Indonesian economy has seen steady annual growth rates of between four and six percent annually since 2004. Furthermore, the unemployment rate is very low, recorded at just 5.5 percent in 2015.
- There has been a recent uptick in public spending by the government to improve public services in the country. The Indonesian government now invests about $30 million every year in its five major poverty reduction programs. The government has also been increasing its loan allocations in order to help small businesses.
- The country has a positive growth outlook for coming years. The Indonesian government has shown its commitment to fiscal reforms to increase foreign investment, and economic growth is expected to increase in coming years.

The first month in Bali I started with research. I met many NGOs and people who worked with that industry. I started writing a blog where I summarized my findings. In addition, I began collecting money to invest in education. Once I received donations, I invested it in a kids shelter in Bali and since then started to evaluate each donation in a different way. All posts on Facebook looked different. I evaluated Instagram as well but decide later to stay mainly with Facebook. Instagram’s stories are a great tools for behind the scenes content, however, not effective

* https://borgenproject.org/poverty-in-indonesia/
for donations. After one month I moved to Lombok, which is the neighbor island to Bali, and worked with local NGOs. In total I had 7 donations, where each of them included a group of people investing an individual amount of money. I didn’t want to publish the exact amount of how much each individual invested that’s why I always put a group of 3 to 10 people together. Furthermore it’s a metaphor that you are stronger in a group than alone.

For each donation I made a short video to show where the money ended up mentioning the school and location in Bali or Lombok to create a connection between people who donate money and the kids who received it.

The amount in my donations were rising. Starting with an investment of 40 euro to the last donation of 600 Euro. In the last facebook posts I linked the names of my donors (if they wanted).

During my time in Lombok, I was invited to stay at home with one of the founders from Lombok’s Forgotten Children. I would live with this family, understanding culture and society, and visit the many terrible cases of sick children. I was able to attend a big conference and meet some of the most influential politicians. I also learn how the foundation executes and how they make money with social media. I witnessed how this became an amazing movement from Indonesia, for Indonesians, and I saw the impact that social media had on their lives. I saw how illegal gold mines are tolerated on the islands and simple people with an education ending at elementary school, have to pay the bill for a dirty environment. I saw a different perspective on the world. We privileged western people act like we know but experiences wakes you up. I went to an exhibition in Sweden about radiation before leaving. It made me think when I was in Indonesia. I saw so many really tragic cases of cancer, mutations and genetic diseases. Now back in Sweden, it feels weird when I sit in the underground listening to people’s problems. I know by now about 60% of those kids I met on Lombok are death.

It is hard to believe that people on the other side of the world really die because of tuberculosis, dirty water, bad nutrition and contaminated environment because illegal gold mines washing with mercury. I remember watching the documentary “Before the Flood”, and they mentioned that poor people on the other side of the globe pay the bill for our consumption. It was hard to imagine but got very real to me now. I see how the world is doing better and better. For example the level of education has risen globally, poverty has been reduced, innovation and human rights have been establish and even in underprivileged countries technology, design, entrepreneurship and media have put great pressures on politicians to take action, however, the impact is still too little. I believe we have the resources to make the world a better place but this does not favor the economy. 1% of the world, which holds most of the money, don’t give a shit about the kids I met, which are buried by now. By questioning and learning from sources of power I believe processes can be changed and impact will be created. Sometimes it starts with little actions, as doing this rapid prototype in Indonesia but the more we learn and understand the problem the more we will achieve. It makes me glad to know that many people besides me are right now at the moment working on the same mission. We are many and I met a lot of them in Indonesia!

In my case a stranger wrote me an amazing message. Saying that usually he doesn’t do things like that but for some reason want to support my project in Indonesia. We had no common friends, which means I went even out of the second circle of people sharing my post. Hold on for a second.

I went through all those different departments, I mentioned some pages before. By analyzing the problem with politics, sociology, economy, education and design. Furthermore, I could use my skills to spread the word through social media and succeed to relocate resources from a privileged part in the world to a part that is in need. But as the last masterpiece I even reached out to the emotions and mind of a stranger that trusted in my project and supported it. Dear reader and everyone else, I still keep believing in you. In fact, I was able to collected 960,00 Euro from people like you and me. I motivated people to donate money. I designed a process of trust and made people think and feel. I made many kids happy by relocated resources. Lastly I collected enormous amounts of insights and know that this was just the first sprint and more prototypes will follow.
I am so happy DONATION ALL! Thanks to Christa Lindahl David Fennman and Ahmed Sadek who donated 1.000 Sek which is 1.5 Million IDR (106 Euro). I will visit now three schools and donate the books. Your help is just MAGNIFICENT. You can help too, Swich to +62 73 930 4509 or contact me if you need the details for the bank account. You really keep me busy - I love it!

Half a million books, inspiring people and amazing kids later I wrote a short review on my blog https://kuchenbuchtour.tumblr.com it really works and the money keeps coming. - THANK YOU! I am just about to go to Lombok for some days and support projects there. On Lombok the resources and situation will be way worse but I am just arranging your donations and am about to buy school material.

SO FAR: This is great fun and I am still going strong - thank you for your support! 😊

You can be part of this too! Swich to +62 73 930 4509 or contact me if you need the details for the bank account.
Let’s put it in a nutshell, design is for me a tool to solve problems. Since problems nowadays get very complex on a global scale we need to work and think interdisciplinary if I really want to understand the problem. Wicked problems in my case are strongly connected to education, sociology, economy, politics, psychology and media. After the research period the goal of each designer is to build something that is better, to get active and make a change. While the other departments helped me to understand the problem I know by now that design together with economy creates impact.

Where does power come from? Money! I think business models needs to be rethought, I believe we reached a time where big profit margin are not the only motivation. To my mind it can be beneficial for all businesses to include a social aspect and human values in their business model. Short: We are tired of the hamster in the wheel and we have the freedom, education and possibility to change now!

What did I learn in Indonesia? I thought the goal was to build a school in Indonesia to support education, but while researching the situation I understood that this is not the right solution. I should not be one more western person who steps in a different culture and think she can change the world and teach them better. I met so many great Indonesian who run amazing projects. Indonesians should create their own better future. They know their culture and maybe my support as a western person is just so relocate resources and make sure they end up where needed.

Design is definitely a tool to create a better world. But I believe it is not complete to make a change. Design is rather the car driving innovation and change, but without petrol it goes nowhere. All those good ideas generated through design remain dreams if not combined with capital. As a conclusion I would say that entrepreneurship and economy in combination with design have the capability to solve wicked problems.
Hello dear reader, thanks for reading to the very end – I appreciate your efforts. I am sorry if my writing was not the best, I wouldn’t consider it as one of my super powers. But beside that I know that I am good with people, analyzing processes, get started and get stuff done. At the moment life is like an all you can eat buffet and I am curious to try. How do I know what I am good at if I don’t do it. I believe in the human capacity. I believe in you. Fun and challenges are best if shared. If you see value in what I do than I want to know more about what you do.
Events that have been relevant

- Art and craft classes in University: such as book design, letter print and analog photography. (1)
- Slow Design, Monika Hoinkis. A course about the possibilities of design in relation to society. And what factor does time have in a ever more speeding society. (2)
- Pappeldesign Award 2014 in Amsterdam. (3)
- Producing Gilgamesh and Enkidu for a bookfair in Gothenburg. (4)
- Working in Stockholm for Futurniture and Pool. (5)
- Studing Interactive Design in Umeå. (6)
- Working for Stagecast in Stockholm. (7)
- Thesis project: going to Indonesia and see what my skills can be used for. (8)
“Now that we can do anything, what will we do?”

Pappeldesign Award is a prize that the University of Applied Sciences Potsdam hands out every years. In 2014 I was part of the jury and went to Amsterdam searching for unique design. Outcome was a printed publication and website. Beside organisation I was responsible for editorial and photo editorial.
I am an innovative problem solver which focuses on the needs of humans. All kinds of resources are limited – doesn’t matter if time, energy, material or money, I believe it is our responsibility to consume them in a sustainable way. I love all kind of challenges and go bananas on learning new things – here some projects. You really want all the details? Check on my page www.kuchenbuchworld.com or write on any social media. I love fanpost!

Experience

I was working at Futurniture with clients such as IKEA. I supported building the website IKEA.today by using WordPress. Furthermore I created content for IKEA’s social media on Instagram as I helped on a campaign called HÅLLBARA IHOP (sustainable together). As I builded an internal website for IKEA on squarespace for a new shop opening in Umeå. Another great project I was allowed to support was BATTERIÅTERVINNINGEN (battery recycling) and their events Elektrisk Loppis (electrical flea markets). I supported everything from graphic design to event management. During our event in Stockholm we collected 1140 kg electronic trash and 42 kg of batteries. Hell yes! It was a great experience to work at Futurniture as I was allowed to get involved in many different projects. The team was super supporting which is a great opportunity when you are young and still developing your skills as trying new things. I never felt alone and always integrated as wild ideas were welcome. Being bold and doing fancy things was part of the company culture.
What an honour to work with Fernando Caceres, an art maker and architectural heritage consultant, who has studied at Cambridge University, the Courtauld Institute and the Architectural Association AA, London. Together we worked on a book about The Epic of Gilgamesh which is often regarded as the earliest surviving great work of literature. I worked on the book design and your book even went straight to Gothenburg book fair and is available on Amazon.

Study design was the right decision. I enjoyed the years of my education and also the work experience I made. I know I am stronger in conceptual design, rather than visual design. I feel that the skills I collected through design have great value, even in a everyday practice. As I gave prove to myself, that I can also use them as a tool to solve wicked problems. In all those years I haven’t found my niche in design, I thought by trying a lot of different things it will help me to find my passion. I don’t know if I ever gonna find it. Maybe my quality is to do a lot of different things, learn with analogies but I realize the risk. I should not end up in the situation where I do too many things but nothing really well. Also I realized the past years that idealism and the wish to make a change, always gonna stay. But the world is not made of dreams. We live in a capitalistic society and as long as models like the Universal Basic Income not establish you will need capital to realize dreams. The generation of my parents got raised with the believe that if you work hard you gonna have a good life. I think it is better to work smart instead of hard. The most valuable asset we have is lifetime. Time to think, reflect and question. I will have to go trough 3 steps in order to succeed with my dreams: 1. kapital, 2. experience and 3. social impact. You can’t make social impact without kapital or experience, reason why I need to take the steps at a time to reach my goal.

"I choose a lazy person to do a hard job. Because a lazy person will find an easy way to do it."
– Bill Gates
Impossible to mention everything I have done the past years, so check my social media or just write me. I am out to learn and look for likeminded people.

NEWS – WHAT HAPPENED THE LAST MONTH

COACHING ON A HACKATHON

Great honour to lead the creative process on a live hack in collaboration with Stagecast. Usually I am the geeky girl sitting on the table, but this time I was responsible to lead 11 teams through the creative process with ideation, team-building, prototyping and problem solving. Stagecast is a kick-ass start up who creates engagement between the user as interaction on the live concerts or events. And with partner as Ericsson, Telia and KTH they have done amazing things the past 20 month. I later joined the team and became Head of Partner Management. (7)

BUILDING AN INTERACTIVE SOUND SYSTEM

I have never worked with sound engineering and thought programming can’t be to hard so together with my roomie we decided on a Monday morning at 2 am to go for it! In 3 month we builded an interactive sound system and got even a scholarship from the maker space in Umeå. We capture movements of the body with a motion capture system called OptiTrack and import the xyz coordinates in Unity which is a game engine. Depending on the movement your body produces sound, like an interactive DJ. It’s amazing and we’re looking currently for collaborations! (6)

EASY PEASY TO SAVE THE WORLD

I have no religion but believe in love and humanity. It has never been easier to make a change, millennials are spoiled by resources available. Entrepreneurship, social media, prototyping, creativity, research and user- centred design became great assists to evaluate an idea I had on how to support education in developing countries. Check my Facebook and see the progress, or read all the details on my blog. This was just the beginning, I am super into it and move soon back to Asia to collect more insights and bring education, positive energy and love out there. Follow my social media and stay tuned!(8)
Fucking educate yourself, the data is available.

Books I recommend

Think like a Freak
Steven D. Levitt and Stephen J. Dubner, 2014

Blueprint for Revolution
Srdja Popovic, 2015

The Making of Donald Trump
David Cay Johnston, 2016

The Obstacle is the Way
Ryan Holiday, 1985

Blueprint for Revolution
Srdja Popovic, 2014

Ready for Anything
David Allen, 2004

The 4-Hour Workweek
Tim Ferriss, 2007

Tools of Titans
Tim Ferriss, 2016

The Power of Full Engagement
Jim Loehr and Tony Schwartz, 2004

The Quarter-Life Breakthrough
Adam Smiley Poswolsky, 2016

Your Best Just Got Better
Jason W. Womack, 2012

Outliers
Malcolm Gladwell, 2009
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   3. https://mic.com/articles/73821/why-is-it-that-everything-s-amazing-but-nobody-s-happy#.M2GqMS2sS 22.06.2017
   7. A. Tversky, D. Kahneman, The framing of decisions and the psychology of choice, 1982,
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   23. Ian Goldin and Chris Chris Kutarna, Age of Discovery, 2017
   24. Blake Masters and Peter Thiel, Zero to One, 2015
   26. Steven D. Levitt and Stephen J. Dubner, Think like a Freak, 2014
   27. Tim Ferriss, Tools of Titans, 2016

Most of the books I mentioned, I listened to as Audio Books. Check all Books I used for research on page 44-45. Here some I read.
VIDEO

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imgrc=Z4Jh8HeRon3SHM:

2. https://fourthbitmb.it/fa/blogs/102048

3. Banking on Bitcoin, https://www.netflix.com/watch/80149706?trackId=13426226&ct=0%2C0%2C63076a4-a32d-4f53-84bd-0ef802471bb-814234531

4. Rotten, https://www.netflix.com/watch/80075560?trackId=13752289&ct=0%2C0%2C40677de5-d124-4e13-a882-44cf19c60ce-11229153

5. Short Big, https://www.netflix.com/watch/80075560?trackId=13752289&ct=0%2C0%2C5a1ad269-999c-403a-8083-f0832796b68e-3337345


8. David Putnam, What happens when the media’s priority is profit, 2014, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Br1AiVMrvAE&ti=t=356s


12. Cosima Damianor, (The Light Bulb Conspiracy) Geplante Obsoleszenz (Doku) Kaufen für die Müllhalde, 2010


15. Abraham Maslow, on Peak Experiences, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zeOHMGce7Yg&feature=youtu.be


SOURCEs PICTURES

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MY INSPIRATION

Prince Ea 👉
1,988,369 Abonnenten

Prince E.A: 
maker https://www.youtube.com/user/thamagicsho2003
An American spoken word artist, poet, rapper and film

The Jimmy Dore Show:
289,695 Abonnenten

The Jimmy Dore Show: 
https://www.youtube.com/user/TYTComedy/videos
Best comedy-news-truth-straight shooter on youtube atm

WeAreChange 👉
509,114 Abonnenten

We are change
https://www.youtube.com/user/wearechange
Independent news company

Russell Brand 👉
1,346,210 Abonnenten

Trews - Russell Brand
https://www.youtube.com/user/russellbrand/videos
Mostly posts full episodes of his podcast on here now

Redacted Tonight
156,994 Abonnenten

Redacted tonight
https://www.youtube.com/user/redactedtonight
Russian founded satire news show

ColdFusion 👉
1,410,683 Abonnenten

Cold Fusion
https://www.youtube.com/user/coldfusion
science and technology

Secular Talk 👉
513,341 Abonnenten

Secular Talk
https://www.youtube.com/user/SecularTalk
Independent news show

Tim Pool 👉
151,103 Abonnenten

Tim Pool
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCG749Dj4V2fKa-143f8sE60Q
Independent traveling journalist

TechCrunch 👉
322,571 Abonnenten

TechCrunch
https://www.youtube.com/user/techcrunch
TechCrunch is a leading technology media property, dedicated to obsessively profiling startups, reviewing new
I always write in the books I read. So dear reader, here some space for your thoughts.