

Architecture & Design versus Consumerism: How Design Activism Confronts Growth

By Ann Thorpe

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The mentality that consumerism and economic growth are cure-alls is one of the biggest obstacles to real sustainability, but any change seems impossible, unthinkable. Our contemporary paradox finds us relying for our well being on consumer-driven economic growth that we actually can’t afford ? not in environmental, economic or social terms. Although architecture and design have long been seen as engines for consumerism and growth, increasing numbers of designers are concerned about the problems resulting from growth. But designers face a paradox of their own; in scenarios of sustainable consumption, where people consume or build significantly less, what will be left for designers to do?

This book, informed by recent research into the viability of a "steady state" economy, sets an agenda for addressing the designer’s paradox of sustainable consumption. The agenda includes ways that architecture and design can help transition us towards a new kind of economy that prioritizes real wellbeing rather than economic growth. Packed with examples and illustrations, the book argues that taking action, or activism, is an important but so far underexplored way for architects and designers to confront consumerism.

The first chapters explore how economic growth and consumerism shape and are shaped by the professions of architecture, product, and landscape design and how we can understand the problem of consumerism as four main challenges that designers are already addressing. The book maps out the main issues surrounding the development of metrics that designers and others can use to measure wellbeing, instead of simply measuring economic growth. The second half of the book looks at how design activism works and its connection to growth and consumerist issues. These chapters examine how activist practices are financed, highlight five specific methods that designers use in working for social change, and investigate the power of these methods. The book concludes with a consideration of what design’s role might be in a "post-growth" society.

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Editorial Review

Review

'Architecture and Design versus Consumerism **provides a highly productive and authentic investigation into what design means in the twenty-first Century. Through her lucid analysis, Thorpe surfaces the most important questions the design industry needs to ask, and offers a new way of thinking about answers. In a crowded market of design books that seem to range from self-help to self-congratulation,** ***Architecture and Design versus Consumerism*** **offers a contextualized and timely framework that is powerful in any designer's toolkit.'** *– Valerie Casey, founder and executive director of the Designers Accord*

'It is exciting that a new generation designers want to take responsibility for creating alternatives to business-as-usual. But making a difference in situations of complex politics and economics is fraught: good intentions, no matter how creative, can be co-opted or have undesired consequences. The comprehensiveness of Ann's ***Architecture and Design After Consumerism*** **ensures that designers will not be naive in how they go about trying to make real differences. With a wide array of both theories and examples - a rare combination - this book will alert social designers to the dangers that attend to their efforts; but it will also inspire them with all the strong work that designers around the world are accomplishing.'** *– Cameron Tonkinwise, Associate Professor of Design and Sustainability, Parsons The New School for Design*

'The book proposes a compelling overview on current directions in design in a post-growth society. It addresses design as an activist practice which challenges consumption patterns and life styles but also proposes more sustainable futures. Bringing a number of relevant examples, Thorpe demonstrates that design can play a political role in generating change in society.' *– Professor Doina Petrescu, University of Sheffield*

'Thorpe's argument is concise and clear, the content well-structured and her prose entertaining to read. What's more, the book is also short enough to read in a a single week-end. With its mix of scholarly thinking, a wide knowledge of activist practice, and a clear political mesage, this book is just as ground-breaking as most of the projects discussed within it.' – *Jakob Schoof, DETAIL Green, Germany*

"Facing the economic crisis, climate change and the end of the world anxiety of a globalized public, Thorpe urges designers and architects to question and change the foundation of modern design and architecture: mass production, consumption and economic growth. We need a design revolution to survive." *– Dr Thomas Markussen, Kolding School of Design, Denmark*

About the Author
Ann Thorpe is currently based at the Bartlett School of Architecture, UCL

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Reading can called imagination hangout, why? Because when you find yourself reading a book particularly book entitled Architecture & Design versus Consumerism: How Design Activism Confronts Growth your mind will drift away trough every dimension, wandering in every single aspect that maybe unfamiliar for but surely will become your mind friends. Imaging every word written in a guide then become one type conclusion and explanation which maybe you never get prior to. The Architecture & Design versus Consumerism: How Design Activism Confronts Growth giving you an additional experience more than blown away the mind but also giving you useful information for your better life in this era. So now let us show you the relaxing pattern at this point is your body and mind are going to be pleased when you are finished reading through it, like winning a sport. Do you want to try this extraordinary investing spare time activity?

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Architecture & Design versus Consumerism: How Design Activism Confronts Growth can be one of your starter books that are good idea. All of us recommend that straight away because this book has good vocabulary that will increase your knowledge in vocab, easy to understand, bit entertaining but delivering the information. The author giving his/her effort to put every word into joy arrangement in writing Architecture & Design versus Consumerism: How Design Activism Confronts Growth yet doesn't forget the main level, giving the reader the hottest and based confirm resource details that maybe you can be certainly one of it. This great information can easily drawn you into brand new stage of crucial considering.

Hazel Fletcher:

The book untitled Architecture & Design versus Consumerism: How Design Activism Confronts Growth contain a lot of information on that. The writer explains her idea with easy method. The language is very easy to understand all the people, so do not really worry, you can easy to read the item. The book was written by famous author. The author provides you in the new era of literary works. It is possible to read this book because you can read more your smart phone, or model, so you can read the book with anywhere and anytime. In a situation you wish to purchase the e-book, you can open their official web-site and order it. Have a nice read.

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