



Design at Scale

by Rosenfeld

@Design\_at\_Scale #DAS2022

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THEME 1: Design Practices in Times of Crisis curated by Kit Unger



# Framing Tomorrow by Questioning Today

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APPLE PODCAST: BRAVE UX

Managing Founder - The Space In Between

@brendanjarvis

The design consultancy I'd founded was poised to leave "making" behind and focus purely on RESEARCH

It was a WEDNESDAY evening  
Not just any Wednesday

... AT HOME WITH MY WIFE & 20-month-old son.

MARCH  
25  
2020

At 11:59pm NEW ZEALAND  
LEVEL 4 LOCKDOWN  
complete social isolation  
HOUSEHOLD BUBBLE

I had just completed my  
custom-designed RESEARCH  
2 YEARS OF WORK • \$200,000 MY OWN MONEY



WHY ME?  
What have I done?

NZ bouncing in and out of LOCKDOWN  
NO PEOPLE for NINE MONTHS

It's not just COVID.

- SYSTEMIC RACISM
- POPULOUS POLITICIANS
- CHALLENGES to DEMOCRACY
- NUCLEAR ARMED IMPERIALIST GREED

YOU MIGHT BE ASKING YOURSELF

**What really matters to me?** WHY AM I DOING THIS?

Our ability to question our external and internal worlds is central to our HUMANITY.

AS DESIGNERS, we are motivated to challenge, understand, and change the STATUS QUO.

QUESTIONS ARE THE CATALYSTS OF OUR CURIOSITY

IF I DIED TOMORROW, WOULD I BE HAPPY WITH MY STORY SO FAR?

Every-one IS QUESTIONING ASPECTS OF THEIR LIVES

Impacts: famine  
100 SECONDS to MIDNIGHT  
Doomsday clock

OUR POTENTIAL TO CREATE VALUE in part DEPENDS ON OUR ABILITY TO ASK GREAT QUESTIONS...

then work with colleagues to bring great things to life

Asking questions is a provocative act.  
- DR. SAM LADNER

CHALLENGES the STATUS QUO

~2,422 years ago  
Socrates [AT AGE 70] WAS CHARGED WITH IMPIETY & MORE

EXISTING POWER STRUCTURE WAS THREATENED BY HIM  
Sentenced to DEATH by CUP of HEMLOCK POISON

He was known as a GADFLY for HIS INTENTIONAL & OVERT INTERFERENCE WITH POWER STRUCTURE

don't do this!

AS ENTERPRISE LEADERS, YOU MUST poke the bear but with a greater degree of care, and less directly.

GOOD QUESTIONS ARE CONSTRUCTIVE... born of genuine curiosity & reason

BAD QUESTIONS ARE CORROSIVE (limit potential)



yes, let's go there! (together)

HOW CAN WE CLAIM TO BE MAKING THE WORLD A BETTER PLACE IF A WIDE RANGE OF PEOPLE ARE MISSING FROM OUR RANKS?

WE CAN DESIGN the HARM out of OUR PRODUCTS BEFORE THEY TAKE FLIGHT.

Sometimes WE ARE the DE FACTO ETHICIST  
EXAMPLE: Amy Jiménez Márquez & Alexa  
It's hard to stay clean in a dirty world.  
NOT ONLY "How might we..." BUT ALSO "What might happen if..."

UNCOMFORTABLE TRUTH:

OUR FIELD REMAINS WHITE & MALE

USA DESIGN CENSUS: 71% of 9,400 = WHITE

When you look 3% " " = BLACK

When you look 3% " " = BLACK

around of YOUR DESIGN ORG, WHO DO YOU SEE?

who do you NOT see?  
When you look at your research participants, & job applicants

WHY?

DO THE WORK.



WHAT ABOUT OUR "SEAT AT THE TABLE" ???  
DON'T BE MYSTIFIED  
Highlights the importance of integrating various perspectives, taking a mixed-methods approach to  
HOW WE SOLVE PROBLEMS  
YES!