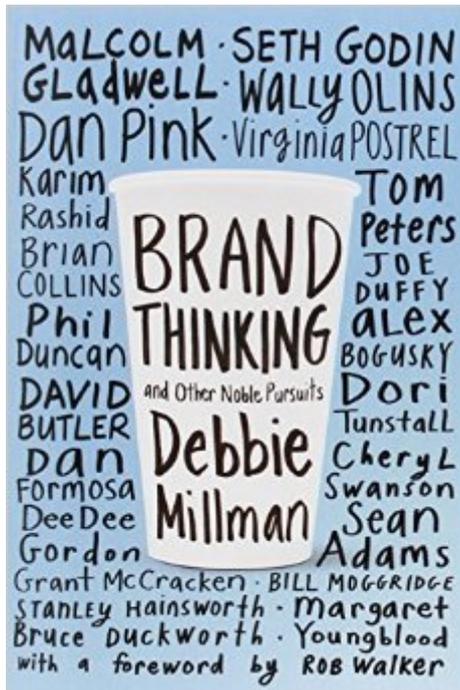


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# Brand Thinking And Other Noble Pursuits



## Synopsis

The notion of the brand, like any concept that dominates markets and public consciousness, is a challenge to define. Is it a simple differentiator of the cereals in our cupboards, a manipulative brainwashing tool forced on us by corporations, or a creative triumph as capable as any art form of stimulating our emotions and intellect? For those of us who grapple with these questions on a daily basis, *Brand Thinking and Other Noble Pursuits* elevates the discussion to the level of revelation. Each chapter is an extensive dialogue between Debbie Millman, herself a design visionary, and a different leader in the field. By asking questions deeply informed by her own expertise, Millman coaxes lucid, prescient answers from twenty-two interview subjects, among them Malcolm Gladwell, Tom Peters, Seth Godin, and godfather of modern branding Wally Olins. This engaging and enlightening book is an unprecedented forum on the state of modern branding and how companies and consumers can best understand the behavior behind why we brand and why we buy.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

My husband, a corporate design strategist, bought this book recently and couldn't stop talking about it. I borrowed it and read it cover to cover in what felt like five minutes. Not only is it entertaining, it's full of insights about our culture now and how it has developed over the course of the past century. The anthropological side of branding and design is even more fascinating than I had realized, and Millman and the people she interviews (including Malcolm Gladwell, my all-time favorite New Yorker writer next to Calvin Trillin) interpret and articulate it beautifully. Enthusiastically recommend!

I listen to Debbie Millman's podcast and was very excited to read this book. I work in marketing and enjoyed her dialogue with brand thinkers; many were very thought-provoking. However, it was definitely more about "brand thinking" than "other noble pursuits." While there was a range of folks interviewed, I did feel it got a little repetitive towards the end.

I've always been a fan of Debbie Millman's podcast "Design Matters." Her books and interviews are invaluable resources designers have access to today. Brand Thinking gives the reader a backstage pass to the great design minds behind varied industries and global brands. It is most definitely worth the read (and re-read) for aspiring designers like myself or even seasoned designers who are looking to find a different angle on what 'branding' is all about. It may even resonate in the avid consumer of today's society as brands affect everyone, whether we realize it or not.

This is a great continuation to How to Think Like a Great Graphic Designer. This book is full of great interviews with some of the best minds in branding today by one of the top design thinkers and supporters of our field. The format is similar to How to Think and Debbie's Design Matters podcasts. The interviews have a casual tone, almost as if we were joining a conversation with friends over coffee, except these friends are some of the smartest experts on branding and beyond, and the conversation is an exciting discussion about the state of branding today. Rather than a dry interview, Debbie drives the conversation through interesting routes, sometimes leading to what initially seems curiously off-topic, but always comes full circle to expand on the main idea. As you read the interviews, it's easy to pick up on Debbie's insight, but she always focuses on her guest and his or her perspective. Combine this with an impressive roster of interviewees, from Sean Adams, to Malcolm Gladwell to Deedee Gordon, Alex Bogusky, (just to mention a few), and you get this gem of a book. It's easy to read, yet very smart and informative. I particularly enjoy the way Debbie interacts with her guests, making the text so much more approachable, honest and enjoyable. The book approaches branding through every-day eyes, making it both a very educational and recreational read. And of course, as a visual person, I mustn't forget to mention the beautiful cover, for which Debbie did the lettering herself.

The depth and width of the interviews collated here are very impressive. While a lot of the speakers focus more on design, there are a few critical insights shared on brands and branding as a discipline and from a futuristic perspective.

This book was a parade of branding and marketing demi-gods whose perspectives were delightfully varied. They covered everything from the company-first to the human-first world views and everything in between.

I'm not in the "branding" world, but I've always been fascinated by why we buy things. Brand Thinking provides insight into socio-psychological underpinnings of what brands mean. I liked reading about some of the inner conflict that the best branding agents struggle with. Branding is certainly a double-edged sword that is omnipresent. By understanding the motivations of the people who direct their ads and influence at us, we can be better consumers and more aware citizens.

An extension of Debbie's fantastic podcast 'Design Matters'. Nothing more. Wished for her own ideas and reflections to help me gain clarity. Instead I find myself more confused by notion of brand.

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