

This edition looks at Information Beautiful by David McCandless.

Each zine in the series explores a single book or theme through illustrated spreads, diagrams, and design elements rooted in fieldwork, annotation, and care. This project reimagines academic literature reviews as something personal, tactile, and creative. - a collection of visual literature reviews combining research, reflection, and design.

THE LIT REVIEW PROJECT



Every
DATASET
HAS A
SHAPE
WAITING
TO INSIDE!

DATA has
a SHAPE!

information is beautiful
David McCandless
the lit review project No 12

The book Information is Beautiful is an extension of McCandless' blog with the same name, and focuses mainly on showing examples of information design. The design choices of the book use minimal text to reveal patterns, connections, and stories within data, covering topics from movie plots to nuclear fusion, and is known for its beautiful, colorful, and insightful illustrations. This approach is to show that data is not neutral, dry, or boring. The job of an information designer is to find the shape within a dataset that was always there and make it visible.

The book's most memorable charts are not the most technically complex but instead the ones where the shape of the data produces an emotional response. Surprise, recognition, grief, delight. The moment of a response is the whole point.

This book shows a few key features on how information can be effectively communicated. Using scale (time between a century and a millennium, or size between a teaspoon to an ocean). Most examples in the book work with scale to give an impact: text in different sizes to show what is more important, using circles to show population sizes over time. The designs in the book also really rely on color in displaying data. Red can mean danger or loss or heat, green may mean growth or safety. The rainbow to symbolize radiation exposure.

THE BEST
VISUALIZATIONS
MAKE YOU
FEEL
SOMETHING



this zine is part of the lit review project
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zine #12 - designed & illustrated
by zahra baxi