
*Design Meets Disability* is a fascinating exploration of how design (ideas working broadly from "an art school culture") and medical engineering relate to and inform one another when developing aides for the disabled. In seven chapters, concluding with selected design briefs or case studies, Pullin convincingly argues how design, when harmonized with medical engineering, yields an empathetic, highly functional concept transcending painfully labored discretion or flavorless, orthodox practicality. Beginning with eyeglasses, the classic example of alignment between fashion and corrective device, and moving on to wheelchair capes, prostheses, and radios designed for those suffering from dementia, Pullin illustrates how symbiotic the disciplines can be, how they can inspire each other through completely different perspectives.

As a medical engineer and an industrial designer for the mainstream consumer, Pullin addresses how the "creative tension" between these disciplines yields an effective yet glamorous or beautiful product. Chapters such as "Feeling Meets Testing" and "Identity Meets Ability" alongside concepts such as "experience prototypes" and "emotional prostheses" convey the congruity between traditionally disparate areas while challenging designers in both camps to reorder design priorities. Pullin calls for fashion design to incorporate stylized yet functional concepts and urges medical engineers to approach a brief not as a problem to solve but as a means to synthesize functionality with simplicity, feeling, and cultural sensitivity.

Pullin's discussion of critical design (design which provokes public debate) as informing designs for the disabled is a little muddled and one with which the disabled community might take issue. Should design raise awareness of a disability through provocation? Perhaps, but the case is not discussed clearly. Nevertheless, this is an important book, emphasizing how design can impact personal identity as well as societal attitudes and perceptions of the disabled. Pullin's arguments bring to mind William Morris's famous adage, "Have nothing in your house that you do not know to be useful, or believe to be beautiful." The same sensitivity to beauty and function, as Pullin explains, vastly improves this unique and complicated design process.

Readers should not be surprised when, after finishing Pullin's book, they find themselves wondering why the Detroit Auto Show rarely highlights cars designed for the physically disabled or why the Milan Furniture Fair seldom if ever showcases wheelchair design. Perhaps then, the greatest success in *Design Meets Disability* is how it evokes an acute sensitivity to the design challenges and needs of the disabled; the goal to good design is not to pander to or conceal a disability but to enhance how one functions with it. *Design Meets Disability* is a key addition to any professional design firm and research library alike.

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