

Understanding Design
Prof. Nina Sabnani
Prof. Geetanjali Sachdev
Department of Engineering Design
Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay

Module 03
Start of Section 5
Lecture - 16
Meeting needs, necessity or luxury?

Inspiring, both from the point of view of design and the human spirit itself. Perhaps we could look at this as an aspect of design thinking that aims to make things like products and services and spaces more accessible to more people.

Yes, very much so, such initiators go beyond special needs groups and they serve society as a whole.

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So, coming back to the chair as an object that we have in our midst for centuries, we discover that through the ages people have simply kept modifying the fundamental idea, we might call this a learned idea.

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We have learned the basic idea of the chair a seat and legs.

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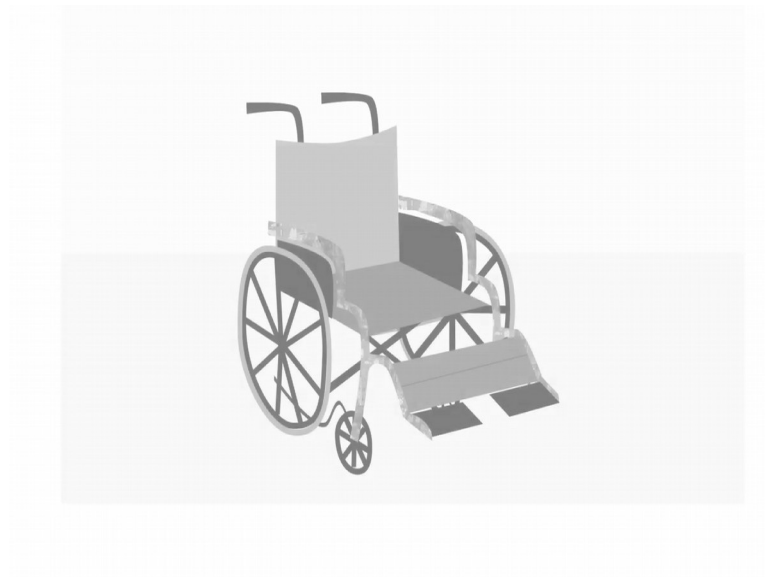


And then based on need function and context we have designed a variety of chairs including the wheel chair.

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So, some things are based on ideas that humans learn and learn to modify, that is the fascinating way of looking at things that we take so much for granted what else leads to new objects in design?

Every time an interesting or useful ideas thought of new methods come into play to give form to these idea. Often making old forms redundant or obsolete and bringing about changes in the process. Take the idea of portability, we can see how design has joined hands with technology in two products. The mobile phone and the laptop have changed

our lives in the process it has allowed us to work on the move, our social lives have altered considerably. We order our food on our devices, we can make travel bookings, watch movies on the go and much more.

Yes, those two devices have certainly transformed our lives and they have had a big impact on society, but have all these changes been for the better?

That is an important question because technology has also facilitated the speed and scale at which these products are produced. There are many issues pollution, depletion of resources, power consumption and products becoming obsolete. Older models rapidly get replaced which creates hazardous waste in huge quantities. We might even say that sometimes new products create unwarranted means, overconsumption and overproduction both have negative impacts.

So, the designer who designs for society must also think carefully about long term consequences and design things that help to sustain society rather than not just towards self destruction.

That is right, but you know sometimes even accidents can produce creative designs.

Accidents. Is design sometimes just a matter of chance then.

Well chance may play a role, but I do not think its enough as French scientist Louis Pasteur famously said, "In the field of observation chance favours only the prepared mind". What he said in 1854 is still relevant today.