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Design, When Everybody Designs: An Introduction To Design For Social Innovation (Design Thinking, Design Theory)



Synopsis

In a changing world everyone designs: each individual person and each collective subject, from enterprises to institutions, from communities to cities and regions, must define and enhance a life project. Sometimes these projects generate unprecedented solutions; sometimes they converge on common goals and realize larger transformations. As Ezio Manzini describes in this book, we are witnessing a wave of social innovations as these changes unfold -- an expansive open co-design process in which new solutions are suggested and new meanings are created. Manzini distinguishes between diffuse design (performed by everybody) and expert design (performed by those who have been trained as designers) and describes how they interact. He maps what design experts can do to trigger and support meaningful social changes, focusing on emerging forms of collaboration. These range from community-supported agriculture in China to digital platforms for medical care in Canada; from interactive storytelling in India to collaborative housing in Milan. These cases illustrate how expert designers can support these collaborations -- making their existence more probable, their practice easier, their diffusion and their convergence in larger projects more effective. Manzini draws the first comprehensive picture of design for social innovation: the most dynamic field of action for both expert and nonexpert designers in the coming decades.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Design, When Everybody Designs by Ezio Manzini is a timely, provocative, and essential read for all those that are engaged in or are affected by design and design processes -- in other words, all of us. Whether one is an elite designer, a grassroots activist, a design educator, or a bureaucratic or

corporate decision maker, Ezio Manzini challenges us all to rethink the role of design and that of the 'designers' in contemporary society. He wants us to reimagine design's relationship to addressing social innovation and building a sustainable and resilient culture. To say it is must-reading is an understatement--it is a clarion call for a conversation to be launched to rethink what is normal and what ought to be. (Ronald Shiffman, Professor Emeritus, Pratt Institute Programs for Sustainable Planning and Development, Pratt Institute School of Architecture; coauthor of *Building Together: Case Studies in Participatory Planning and Community Building*) In this extraordinary new book, Ezio Manzini challenges us to imagine a future that is more ecologically and socially resilient and more desirable to live in. Through compelling examples of local social innovation around the world today, Manzini shows that it is possible to begin to change the way we think and live, to change how we relate to each other and the world around us, and in the process begin to make the world anew. This book arrives at a critical juncture in human history and provides a way forward. (Joel Towers, Executive Dean, Parsons School of Design, The New School) There is a deep humanism in the work of Ezio Manzini, and it is evident in the clarity and insights of his latest book. I am glad to recommend this book to anyone interested in the role of design in the new culture that we are all creating. (Richard Buchanan, Professor and Chair of the Department of Design & Innovation, Weatherhead School of Management, Case Western Reserve University) Ezio Manzini's utterly inspiring book describes an emerging social economy in which human and environmental interests converge. We are introduced to an archipelago of microworlds in which a new economy, so long awaited, is being born. In this world, collaboration counts for more than consumption, and relationships are the true source of value. (John Thackara, founder, *Doors of Perception*) Ezio Manzini's new book grapples with the very pressing question of the emerging role of the (professionally trained) designer in a new global dispensation wherein varying degrees of design can be effected by just about anyone with some basic knowledge of its agency. The book's relevance is enhanced through the generously illustrated and accessible case studies from diverse sociocultural, economic, and geopolitical contexts. This important text is highly recommended to anyone keen to understand the evolving role of the designer, and how this (r)evolution impacts upon the pedagogic, research, and professional practice imperatives of design in the future. (Mugendi K. M'Rithaa, Professor at the Department of Industrial Design, Cape Peninsula University of Technology)

Ezio Manzini, a leading thinker in design for sustainability, founded DESIS: an international network on design for social innovation and sustainability (<http://www.desis-network.org>). He has been

Professor at the Politecnico di Milano and is currently guest Professor at Tongji University, Shanghai, Jiangnan University, Wuxi, and University of the Arts London.

Excellent!

Great book! A fundamental book to understand design application beyond products.

First thing first: If there were a "Book of the Year" award in design, I would vote for this one. *Design. When Everybody Designs* is an insightful contemporary account on designing social-technical conditions for initiating and supporting collaborative social changes. However, the work is more a (design) proposal and a call for action than an academic examination on the topic. A more precise sub-title might have been: *An Introduction to Manzini's Vision, Stories and Guidelines of Design for Social Innovation*. The delimitation would not only be helpful to orient readers' expectation and but also acknowledge the fruits of Manzini's decades of labour, and his intention of writing the book. Manzini aims to offer a specific design point of view written in its own language. "(I)t is a contribution to a specific design culture parallel and complementary to others" (p.5). Once it is clear about what the book is and about, it is easier to understand its slight evangelist tone of voice and the omission of other positions that an "Introduction" normally includes. I will come back to this point later, but first the juice. Manzini masterfully assembles and interprets, in short creatively synthesizes, numerous third-party and own projects, concepts and theories from different disciplines to construct his arguments and positions. The key points are: we (particularly in the post-industrialized world) cannot and must not go on living as we did: individualistic, passive and excessive in consumption. Everyone, as "diffuse designer", ought to participate collaboratively in redefining and creating social, economical and environmental well-being sensible to her own contexts. Expert designers should remake themselves and play the new role of activist, initiator, facilitator or supporter in co-designing for social innovation. There are promising design cases, principles, methods, and tools to be employed and improved, as shown and discussed in the book. Expert and diffuse designers should "make things happen": experiment, replicate and connect. Together slowly but hopefully a new sustainable and meaningful civilization will be created to replace the current dysfunctional one. On the one hand, I am totally inspired and feel that I can follow this book and start experimenting. On the other hand, I am curious

about how Manzini draws the lines when he says: “The book crosses various specialist ambits that mingle together in design practice, seeking to elaborate its own point of view and its own language: in short, its own culture. So, although it touches on different disciplinary fields, it is not an interdisciplinary book; it is a contribution to a specific design culture, parallel and complementary to others. This is a culture to whose growth all other social actors may contribute, but it is the design experts who should be its major producers.” (p.5) What specific design culture does he refer? Surely it is not Politecnico Milano since Manzini is interested in contributing to an international debate. Does his design culture includes Tony Fry in Australia, Cameron Tonkinwise in the USA, or Wolfgang Jonas in Germany; or to step a bit further and backward to “Designing Social Systems in a Changing World” by Bela Banathy who has also advanced the idea of creative participation of ordinary citizens for social change. Was Banathy a design expert writing from a design point of view in a design language? Well, I think, Harold Nelson, for example, would think so. And so would Klaus Krippendorff whose idea of design as sense making (The Semantic Turn) has been taken by Roberto Verganti and to whom Manzini refer. Despite its brilliance, this book, like many other design books, is a stand-alone disconnected from other relevant design discourses. Now, to be fair, the other living design thinkers do not necessarily seek connections to Manzini. The academic design culture is rather individualistic. Perhaps in design, a social innovation in which everybody not only designs, but also reads, examines, corrects and builds on others is needed. Best Regards, Rosan Chow, Germany

Excellent book, not for social innovation, but to explain the power of design to change our relations and the power of human society

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