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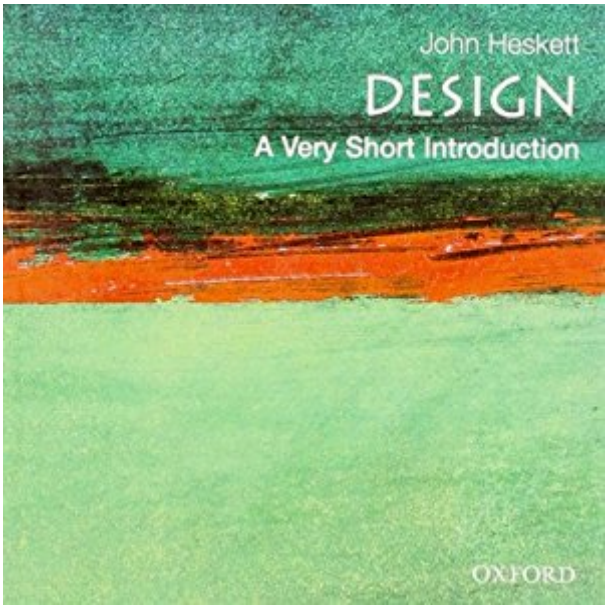
Design: A Very Short Introduction



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Synopsis

John Heskett wants to transform the way we think about design by showing how integral it is to our daily lives, from the spoon we use to eat our breakfast cereal, and the car we drive to work in, to the medical equipment used to save lives. Design combines 'need' and 'desire' in the form of a practical object that can also reflect the user's identity and aspirations through its form and decoration. This concise guide to contemporary design goes beyond style and taste to look at how different cultures and individuals personalize objects. Heskett also reveals how simple objects, such as a toothpick, can have their design modified to suit the specific cultural behavior in different countries. There are also fascinating insights into how major companies such as Nokia, Ford, and Sony approach design. Finally, the author gives us an exciting vision of what design can offer us in the future, showing in particular how it can humanize new technology. ABOUT THE SERIES: The Very Short Introductions series from Oxford University Press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area. These are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly. Our expert authors combine facts, analysis, perspective, new ideas, and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly accessible.

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Customer Reviews

I read a few books from the Very Short Introduction (VSI) series such as Law, Economics and Logic, and found them to be clear, systematic, packed with information, and fitting of their titles.That and curiosity led me to read this book on design. Instead of being interesting and enlightening, I found

this book to be boring, poorly written, and confusing.I'm not very a good writer and that really ought to stop me from making any criticism. But then I thought it is important that others gets a preview of this book before they buy it. The problem with the writing is that it uses many long and big words that carry little meaning, words that are abstract and can mean a number of things, and when crammed together along with five six other abstract words, can mean nothing and everything, e.g. "`Communications' is here used as a shorthand term to cover the vast array of two-dimensional material that plays such an extensive role in modern life."Then there are those strange metaphors, that I suppose make sense but are really forced, e.g. "design should be the crucial anvil on which the human environment, in all its detail, is shaped and constructed for the betterment and delight of all." of all things, why an anvil, why a monolithic piece of metal that is the antithesis of design. And this is irony.As you slowly go through the paragraphs, you glean an occasional insight, a fitting example, a powerful well phrased argument, and you wonder if you cut out all the crap in between, all the redundancies and tautologies, all the fluff, whether this wouldn't be a decent book.At the end of the book however, you realize the answer is no.

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