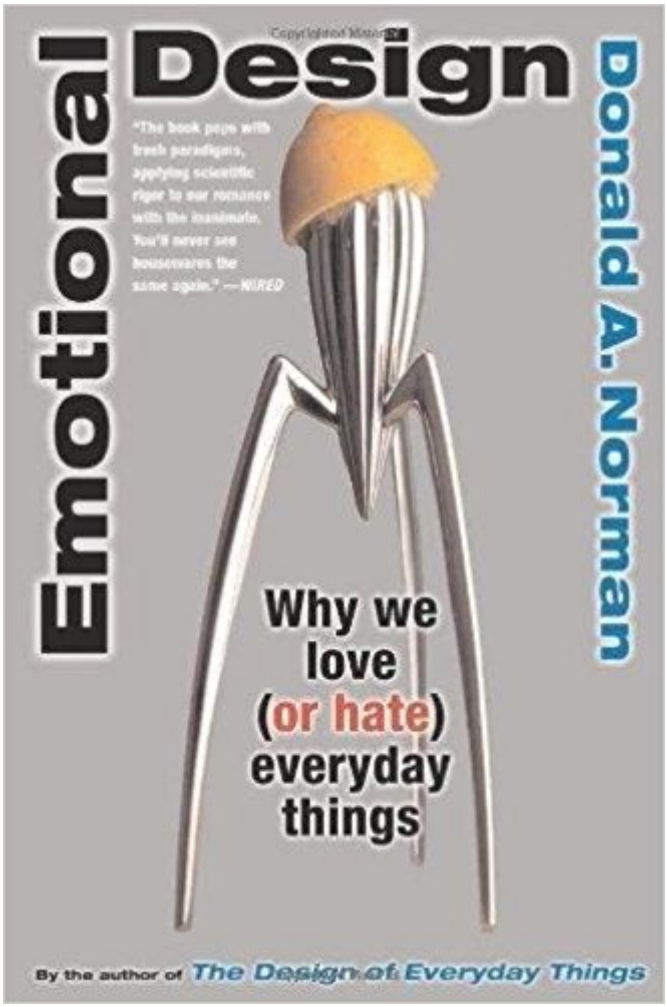
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Emotional Design: Why We Love (or Hate) Everyday Things



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Synopsis

Did you ever wonder why cheap wine tastes better in fancy glasses? Why sales of Macintosh computers soared when Apple introduced the colorful iMac? New research on emotion and cognition has shown that attractive things really do work better, as Donald Norman amply demonstrates in this fascinating book, which has garnered acclaim everywhere from Scientific American to The New Yorker.Emotional Design articulates the profound influence of the feelings that objects evoke, from our willingness to spend thousands of dollars on Gucci bags and Rolex watches, to the impact of emotion on the everyday objects of tomorrow.Norman draws on a wealth of examples and the latest scientific insights to present a bold exploration of the objects in our everyday world. Emotional Design will appeal not only to designers and manufacturers but also to managers, psychologists, and general readers who love to think about their stuff.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Techno author Norman, a professor of computer science and cofounder of a consulting firm that promotes human-centered products, extends the range of his earlier work, The Design of Everyday Things, to include the role emotion plays in consumer purchases. According to Norman, human decision making is dependent on both conscious cognition and affect (conscious or subconscious emotion). This combination is why, for example, a beautiful set of old mechanical drawing instruments greatly appealed to Norman and a colleague: they evoked nostalgia (emotion), even though they both knew the tools were not practical to use (cognition). Human reaction to design

exists on three levels: visceral (appearance), behavioral (how the item performs) and reflective. The reflective dimension is what the product evokes in the user in terms of self-image or individual satisfaction. Norman’s analysis of the design elements in products such as automobiles, watches and computers will pique the interest of many readers, not just those in the design or technology fields. He explores how music and sound both contribute negatively or positively to the design of electronic equipment, like the ring of a cell phone or beeps ("Engineers wanted to signal that some operation had been done.... The result is that all of our equipment beeps at us"). Norman’s theories about how robots (referred to here as emotional machines) will interact with humans and the important jobs they will perform are intriguing, but weigh down an already complex text. Copyright Ã Â© Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Computer science professor Norman also advises design firms. He brings his background in academics and business to bear on the emotional valence surrounding objects of daily use, be they kitchen utensils, automobiles, or a football coach’s headset. Norman’s analysis of people’s emotional reactions to material objects is a delightful process, replete with surprises for readers who have rarely paused to consider why they like or loathe their belongings. He breaks down emotional reactions into three parts, labeled "visceral," "behavioral," and "reflective," asserting that "a successful design has to excel at all levels." Norman’s examples of items ranging from bottles to hand tools fulfill this dictum, although he feels that designers do not often take emotion into account when formulating what an object should look like. With household robots on the horizon, Norman implores designers to redeem their mistakes in designing personal computers. His readers will take away insights galore about why shoppers say, "I want that." Gilbert TaylorCopyright Ã Â© American Library Association. All rights reserved --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Kind of picking at Donald A. Norman double standards between his books, his newer titles seem to have a more open outlook. He has some good ideas and insights, but I do not think this is the whole picture of design. I would recommend reading more stuff fromHerbert A. Simon"An interesting exception to these problems comes when designers or engineers are building something for themselves that they will frequently use in their own everyday lives. Such products tend to excel. As a result, the best products today, from a behavioral point of view, are often those that come from the athletic, sports, and craft industries, because these products do get designed, purchased, and used

by people who put behavior above everything else. Go to a good hardware store and examine the hand tools used by gardeners, woodworkers, and machinists. These tools, developed over centuries of use, are carefully designed to feel good, to be balanced, to give precise feedback, and to perform well. Go to a good outfitterÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s shop and look at a mountain climberÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s tools or at the tents and backpacks used by serious hikers and campers. Or go to a professional chefÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s supply house and examine what real chefs buy and use in their kitchens."Norman, Don (2007-03-20). Emotional Design: Why We Love (or Hate) Everyday Things (p. 82). Basic Books. Kindle Edition."Engineers and other logical people tend to dismiss the visceralresponse as irrelevant. Engineers are proud of the inherent quality of their work and dismayed when inferior products sell better ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Å“just because they look better.ÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã Â• But all of us make these kinds of judgments, even those very logical engineers. ThatÃƒÂ¢Ã â ¬Ã â„¢s why they love some of their tools and dislike others. Visceral responses matter."

Like many of the other reviewers, I would like to state that I firmly see Don Norman as one of the leading researchers in the field of design. His two main design books have changed the way design is done nowadays, and had a huge impact on user experience design (the field I have been working in myself for many years). However, it was written in 2004, and unfortunately, it keeps picking examples that have long been superceded by new designs that are much better than the things Don Norman suggested. Strongest case in point are the recent generations of smartphones that go way beyond Norman’s wildest dreams. And that is the problem of the book: because his imagination wasn’t strong enough, the second half of the book feels very outdated, and after I had finished the book, I cursed myself for not just stopping after the first hundred pages or so.The book starts well and comes straight to the point of Norman’s main theory: design perception happens on a visceral, behavioural and a reflective level. He then continues with his explanation of what that means for design. This is all pretty good stuff, and although it’s quite theoretical, it’s easy to see that there is a lot of clever thinking involved. This theory is the reason why I gave the book 3 stars and not 2 - students of design should be acquainted with this theory, and I’m a strong believer in students hearing theories from the horse’s mouth. However, I would then continue to recommend reading it until examples and predictions of the future start, and then simply put the book down and tell everybody you’ve read the whole thing. Nobody will challenge you on that.

Donald Norman has always written "usable" books. Easy to read and full of anecdotes and

examples that nearly everyone can relate to. His classic work, The Design of Everyday Things, still sits proundly on my bookshelf; I pull it down a couple times a year when I need a mental refreshment.This book, like its predecessors, is a fast read. It is written at a low level and nothing in it is too hard to grasp. However, it is too long. I found myself skipping whole paragraphs simply because Normas was repeating something he had written just a few sentences back. I feel the book could be half its length and not lose any content.It’s also not as inspirational as his previous books. There were none of the "a ha!" insights that permeated The Design of Everyday Things or Turn Signals Are the Facial Expressions of Automobiles.Still, it’s a good read. The next time I’m in the store, I’ll be more cognizant of the reasons why I prefer one brand over another of otherwise identical products.

If you are a design junky this should be required reading. Much of this also applies to art making. Being an artist myself, this sounded interesting. Talks mainly about the discussion of form vs. function and how our emotions play a role in what we perceive to be a well-designed object. Kind of changed my perspective on the objects around me and why I liked certain objects I used on a regular basis and why some I didn’t like as much. If you need a reason to understand why you love your favorite teapot or despise the only can opener in your house, this book may help...and may make you buy a new can opener.

This book is for the most part, a very good distillation of what is good and bad about product design of all kinds. It’s subtly humorous and very detailed in its dissection of what makes up a user experience. It ties in very well actually with Alan Cooper’s book on software design and vice versa. It’s well thought out and adequately concise for the range of topics it covers.The only problem I really had with this book, was Norman’s obsession with robots. The robot section gets a little agonizing to read through, especially with his unsubstantiated claim that they must have human-like emotions. Though his definition of ’robot emotions’ technically drifts from that of our own, calling it that is just too close to the general term.If there’s one thing I don’t need, it’s an angry robot.Otherwise though, I found it helpful to my work and enjoyable to read.

Overall a great read. I gained a deeper insight on how and why attachment to objects occurs. I didn’t care for the robot section of the book (my own lack of interest in technology and robots.)

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