Philosophies for the purpose of designs

In philosophy, the abstract noun "design" refers to a pattern with a purpose. Design is thus contrasted with purposelessness, randomness, or lack of complexity.

To study the purpose of designs, beyond individual goals (e.g. marketing, technology, education, entertainment, hobbies), is to question the controversial politics, morals, ethics and needs such as Maslow's hierarchy of needs. "Purpose" may also lead to existential questions such as religious morals and teleology. These philosophies for the "purpose of" designs are in contrast to philosophies for guiding design or methodology.

Often a designer (especially in commercial situations) is not in a position to define purpose. Whether a designer is, is not, or should be concerned with purpose or intended use beyond what they are expressly hired to influence, is debatable, depending on the situation. In society, not understanding or disinterest in the wider role of design might also be attributed to the commissioning agent or client, rather than the designer.

In structuration theory, achieving consensus and fulfillment of purpose is as continuous as society. Raised levels of achievement often lead to raised expectations. Design is both medium and outcome, generating a Janus-like face, with every ending marking a new beginning.

Terminology

The word "design" is often considered ambiguous depending on the application.

Design and engineering

Engineering is often viewed as a more rigorous form of design. Contrary views suggest that design is a component of engineering aside from production and other operations which utilize engineering. A neutral view may suggest that design and engineering simply overlap, depending on the discipline of design. The American Heritage Dictionary defines design as: *"To conceive or fashion in the mind; invent,"* and *"To formulate a plan"*, and defines engineering as: *"The application of scientific and mathematical principles to practical ends such as the design, manufacture, and operation of efficient and economical structures, machines, processes, and systems."*.[12][13] Both are forms of problem-solving with a defined distinction being the application of "scientific and mathematical principles". How much science is applied in a design is a question of what is considered "science". Along with the question of what is considered science, there is social science versus natural science.