



Author of the Week: Henry Petroski

Henry Petroski (February 6, 1942) is an American engineer specializing in failure analysis. He is a professor, both of Civil Engineering and History at Duke University. He is also a prolific author.

Petroski has written over a dozen books – beginning with *To Engineer is Human: The Role of Failure in Successful Design* (1985) and including a number of titles detailing the industrial design history of common, everyday objects, such as pencils, paper clips, and silverware. He is a frequent speaker and a columnist for the magazines *American Scientist* and *Prism*.

Life and education:

Petroski was born in Brooklyn, New York, and was raised in Park Slope and Cambria Heights, Queens. In 1963, he received his bachelor's degree from Manhattan College. He graduated with his PhD in Theoretical and Applied Mechanics from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in 1968.



Born: February 6, 1942
Brooklyn, New York

Alma mater: Manhattan College (B.S., 1963) University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (Ph.D. in Theoretical and Applied Mechanics, 1968)

Occupation: Professor and author



"As engineers, we were going to be in a position to change the world - not just study it "

"Successful engineering is all about understanding how things break or fail."

"It is really want, rather than need, that drives the process of technological evolution."

"Read and write with a sensitive ear. The craft of writing is very important. Practice the craft "

Career:

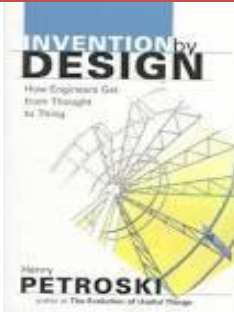
Before beginning his work at Duke in 1980, Petroski worked at the University of Texas at Austin from 1968–74 and for the Argonne National Laboratory from 1975-80.[2] Petroski is the Aleksandar S. Vesic Professor of Civil Engineering and a professor of history at Duke University. In 2004, Petroski was appointed to the United States Nuclear Waste Technical Review Board[3] and was reappointed in 2008. Petroski has received honorary degrees from Clarkson University, Trinity College, Valparaiso University and Manhattan College. He is a registered professional engineer in Texas, a Distinguished Member of the American Society of Civil Engineers, and a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, the American Philosophical Society and the National Academy of Engineering.

Henry Petroski

"Success and Failure in Engineering: A paradoxical Relationship"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mQ8oSTtq9FM>

Books by Henry Petroski



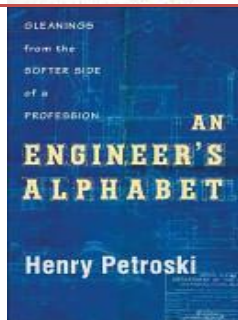
Title: Invention by design: how engineers get from thought to thing

Author: Petroski, H.

Publisher: Cambridge: Cambridge Universities Press

Call No.: 620.0042 PET

Acc. No.: 004775



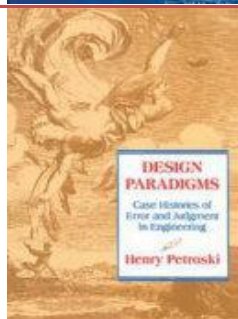
Title: Engineer`s alphabet: gleanings from the softer side of a profession

Author: Petroski, H.

Publisher: New York: Cambridge Universities Press

Call No.: 601 PET

Acc. No.: 012943



Title: Design paradigms: case histories of error and judgment in engineering

Author: Petroski, H.

Publisher: New York: Cambridge Universities Press

Call No.: 620.0042 PET

Acc. No.: 012944



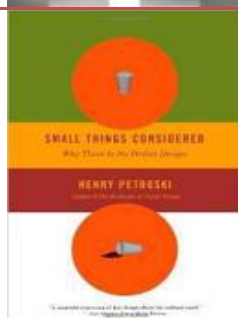
Title: Success through failure: the paradox of design

Author: Petroski, H.

Publisher: Princeton: Princeton University Press

Call No.: 620.0042 PET

Acc. No.: 015466



Title: Small things considered: why there is no perfect design

Author: Petroski, H.

Publisher: New York: Vintage books

Call No.: 620.0042 PET

Acc. No.: 016154



Title: To forgive design: understanding failure

Author: Petroski, H.

Publisher: Harvard University Press: Cambridge

Call No.: 620.00452 PET

Acc. No.: 020786

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