



The Electronic Curb-Cut Effect. International Center for Disability Resources on the Internet (ICDRI),

Reviewed by Penny L. Richards

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This website documents a chronology of "the curb-cut effect," or technological advances that have been inspired by disability, but have grown to have much broader applications. It includes, for example, the first workable typewriting device, built in 1808 for a blind countess in Italy. Also mentioned among many other inventions are books-on-tape, amplifiers, and closed captioning. <p> Most entries also have links to other web references (though some were broken, and others didn't necessarily provide much extra information). <p> The site's content emphasizes twentieth-century inventions, and concentrates (perhaps too heavily) on the works of Bell and Bell Labs. To note some of the site's omissions, I didn't see the jacuzzi mentioned--although it was invented by engineer Candido Jacuzzi (1903-1986), who was trying to ease his son's pain from rheumatoid arthritis, while allowing him to avoid unnecessary and unpleasant clinic visits. Believe it or not, there is indeed an official site for jacuzzi history (<http://www.jacuzzi.com/history/>)--but this isn't mentioned in "the curb-cut effect" chronology. <p> The chronology may be a good discussion starter for an undergraduate course, especially if there's resistance to the notion of studying disability at all. One might even give students the assignment to look out for other inventions not listed, that might qualify as "curb cuts."

If there is additional discussion of this review, you may access it through the network, at
<https://networks.h-net.org/h-disability>

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