

The MIT Press

DIY Citizenship

Critical Making and Social Media

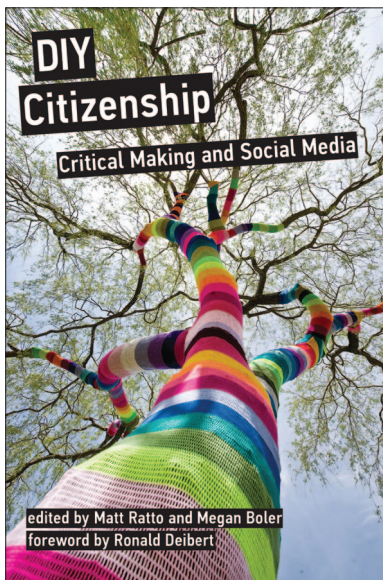
edited by Matt Ratto and Megan Boler

Today, DIY—do-it-yourself—describes more than self-taught carpentry. Social media enables DIY citizens to organize and protest in new ways (as in Egypt’s “Twitter revolution” of 2011) and to repurpose corporate content (or create new user-generated content) in order to offer political counternarratives. This book examines the usefulness and limits of

DIY citizenship, exploring the diverse forms of political participation and “critical making” that have emerged in recent years. The authors and artists in this collection describe DIY citizens whose activities range from activist fan blogging and video production to knitting and the creation of community gardens.

Contributors examine DIY activism, describing new modes of civic engagement that include Harry Potter fan activism and the activities of the Yes Men. They consider DIY making in learning, culture, hacking, and the arts, including do-it-yourself media production and collaborative documentary making. They discuss DIY and design and how citizens can unlock the black box of technological infrastructures to engage and innovate open and participatory critical making. And they explore DIY and media, describing activists’ efforts to remake and reimagine media and the public sphere. As these chapters make clear, DIY is characterized by its emphasis on “doing” and making rather than passive consumption. DIY citizens assume active roles as interventionists, makers, hackers, modders, and tinkerers, in pursuit of new forms of engaged and participatory democracy.

How social media and DIY communities have enabled new forms of political participation that emphasize doing and making rather than passive consumption.



MATT RATTO is Assistant Professor and Director of the Semaphore Research Cluster and the Critical Making Lab in the Faculty of Information at the University of Toronto. MEGAN BOLER is Professor in the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at the University of Toronto and editor of *Digital Media and Democracy: Tactics in Hard Times* (MIT Press).

CONTRIBUTORS

Mike Ananny, Chris Atton, Alexandra Bal, Megan Boler, Catherine Burwell, Red Chidgey, Andrew Clement, Negin Dahya, Suzanne de Castell, Carl DiSalvo, Kevin Driscoll, Christina Dunbar-Hester, Joseph Ferenbok, Stephanie Fisher, Miki Foster, Stephen Gilbert, Henry Jenkins, Jennifer Jenson, Yasmin B. Kafai, Ann Light, Steve Mann, Joel McKim, Brenda McPhail, Owen McSwiney, Joshua McVeigh-Schultz, Graham Meikle, Emily Rose Michaud, Kate Milberry, Michael Murphy, Jason Nolan, Kate Orton-Johnson, Kylie A. Peppler, David J. Phillips, Karen Pollock, Matt Ratto, Ian Reilly, Rosa Reitsamer, Mandy Rose, Daniela K. Rosner, Yukari Seko, Karen Louise Smith, Lana Swartz, Alex Tichine, Jennette Weber, Elke Zobl

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