

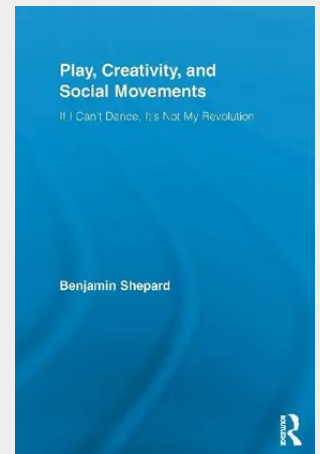
Shepard

Play, Creativity, and Social Movements

If I Can't Dance, It's Not My Revolution

As we play, we step away from stark reality to conjure up new possibilities for the present and our common future. Today, a new cohort of social activists are using it to create social change and reinvent democratic social relations. In contrast to work or routine, play must be free. To the extent that it is, it infuses a high-octane burst of innovation into any number of organizational practices and contexts, and invites social actors to participate in a low-threshold, highly democratic process of collaboration, based on pleasure and convivial social relations. Despite the contention that such activities are counterproductive, movements continue to put the right to party on the table as a part of a larger process of social change, as humor and pleasure disrupt monotony, while disarming systems of power. Through this book, Shepard explores notions of play as a social movement activity, considering some of the meanings, applications and history of the concept in relation to social movement groups ranging from Dada and Surrealism to Situationism, the Yippies to the Young Lords, ACT UP to the Global Justice, anti-gentrification, community and anti-war movements of recent years.

The streets of cities around the world have been filled with a new theatrical model of protest, with creativity, fun, pleasure, and play as the cornerstones of this new approach. This book examines the historical use and development of 'play' as well as the recent ways in which it has infused protest and community building.



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