

Social Movements and Their Technologies Wiring Social Change

Stefania Milan

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Stefania Milan (stefaniamilan.net) is curious about social movements and activism, the interplay between technologies and society, and the politics of code. She is Assistant Professor at Tilburg University, Netherlands, and a fellow at the Citizen Lab, University of Toronto, Canada. Italian by birth, world traveler by design, she is currently based in Amsterdam.

"Stefania Milan's study of emancipatory media activism represents a distillation of her considerable research into its many forms over a number of years and in a number of countries, inflected by her own experience as an information activist. She gives full weight to the critical gender dimension of the subject, to a spectrum of technology uses, and the intersections with vital policy issues. Hers is a very substantive contribution to debate around social movement media."
- John D.H. Downing, editor of the *Encyclopedia of Social Movement Media*

"Emancipatory communicative practices are at the basis of social movement action. Through innovative ideas and rigorous research, this volume has much to contribute to our understanding of media and political activism."
- Donatella della Porta, *European University Institute, Italy*, and co-editor of the *Encyclopedia of Social and Political Movements*

"*Social Movements and Their Technologies* provides a rich overview of the Internet-enabled social movements that are working from the 'outside-in' to promote Internet openness and rights. Backed up with detailed empirical research, this book is a must-read for those interested in grassroots and alternative forms of political participation in the digital age."
- Ron Deibert, director of the *Citizen Lab, University of Toronto, Canada*, and author of *Black Code: Inside the Battle for Cyberspace*

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"Stefania Milan's *Social Movements and Their Technologies* is a comprehensive work on dissent networking and a must-read for anyone wishing a thorough understanding of the topic."
- Oxblood Ruffin, member of the hacker group *Cult of the Dead Cow*

About the book

Social Movements and Their Technologies explores the interplay between social movements and their "liberated technologies". It analyzes the rise of low-power radio stations and radical internet projects ("emancipatory communication practices") as a political subject, focusing on the sociological and cultural processes at play. It provides an overview of the relationship between social movements and technology and investigates what is behind the communication infrastructure that made possible the main protest events of the past 15 years. In doing so, Stefania Milan illustrates how contemporary social movements organize in order to create autonomous alternatives to communication systems and networks and how they contribute to change the way people communicate in daily life, as well as try to change communication policy from the grassroots.

Read an excerpt from the book

"The question of infrastructure might sound trivial in times of abundance of "free" social media, microblogging platforms and apps allowing people to voice their opinions and share pictures and videos at will, and at virtually no cost. But we often forget that these platforms are owned and controlled by media and telecoms corporations whose agenda focuses on profit and corporate interests rather than participation, empowerment, and social justice. With this in mind, in recent decades activist groups have increasingly challenged media corporations and state-owned broadcasters on their own terrain. They have created alternatives to existing communication infrastructure by setting up community radio and television stations, and alternative websites for self-produced information. Such grassroots media have allowed broader swathes of the citizenry to access media production and secure communication channels. They have become what DeeDee Halleck calls "infrastructures of resistance" (2002, p. 191) to the neoliberal order in the media realm."

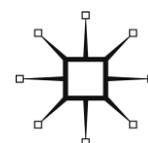


Hardback Nov 2013 ~~£50.00~~ **£25.00** 9780230309180

240pp 216 mm x 138 mm

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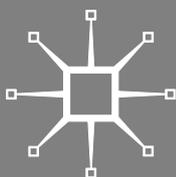
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