

*Ethics, Culture and Production of Anti-Capitalist Ideals: Emerging Craft Consumer  
and DIY Activities with Web 2.0*

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Abstract

Since the activity of craftsman contain unrealistic approach about future such as romantic, uneasy and return to primitive ages in industrial culture; it is considered as a pre-modern case and therefore underestimated. Those “romantic” activities generate DIY culture of 21 century. And now “DIY- do it your self” activities are of great importance since it has a structure dignifying hand-made activities mostly with the fields of art and design it has integrated. DIY-Do It Yourself projects began to mean un-transferable, humanist, authentic and creative study, like reshaped form of conceptual structure of Arts&Crafts movement in 21st century and transformed into activities about establishment of post-industrial utopias. In this way, today we witness that people who are alienated with do it yourself orientations that developed through social networks strive for gaining back methods of expressing themselves. This article targeted designer toys artists profiles as DIY participants, about working culture, education, and art.

**Keywords:** DIY ethics-culture, craft consumption, art, design, prosumption

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*“Something was made by hand, by someone who cares that you like it, makes that object much more enjoyable. And it makes you feel less lonely.”*  
(Cooper C., 2011)

Because of the great deal and standardized products are no longer capable of personal wants and needs also does not catch the everyday needs or tastes, DIY activities have increasing role in formation of future consumerist culture nowadays. According to Watson & Shove (2008), studies of ordinary (as distinct from spectacular) forms of consumption have generated new questions and new ways of thinking about mechanisms and processes of change and about the conceptual status of consumer goods.

Designer Toy, in other words Art Toys movement which emerges with DIY-Do It Yourself network and with possibilities provided by Web 2.0 in the sense of experience, generation and share of information set an important example in emergence and development of anti-consumerist DIY structure and the economic structure in which producer and consumer have become the same person defined as Prosumer. Since 1980's new type of mass-produced objects developed by the help of designers to reconstruct vanishing humanistic features like happiness or love. The reason why developing such things that marketed as work of art, as a result of need for rebuild the life as a whole to give pleasure intellectually and aesthetically design and production take shape together.

Experiences on DIY, transform all about design and culture. Education has the first response. A survey in 2012 that targeted education systems upon DIY participants, according to Hempill and Lescovitz, participants specify themselves of keen on learning. Although they haven't destructive thought about traditional education, they all agree that government-supported educational systems have not been fulfilled personal needs (Hempill, Lescovitz, 2012). They are advocate of cooperative and selective, autonomous learning also likeminded a non-hierarchical system as learning-sharing knitting on YouTube.

Designer toys artists' opinion is similar and favors to that DIY participants. Some famous artists didn't come from art or design education. Their ideas about education, work and design cover rejection of not only conventional education but also to be managing by the others. Frank Kozik for example, has no art background he came from army, and discover himself as an artist ages of 30. He specifies that:

“I didn't go to art school and do all this weird shit...

I just want to be able to be a freelancer forever. I haven't had a boss for 30 years. I want to die not having a boss “I come from nowhere. I'm an immigrant. I didn't graduate from high school. I worked blue collar for years. I was in the military. I didn't discover my artistic abilities til I was almost 30 (through the good graces of punk rock).” (<http://www.jeremyriad.com/blog/interviews/frank-talk-with-mr-kozik/>). Tim Biskup, another famous designer toy artist, has rejection of a traditional art education too (<http://timbiskup.com/cv/>).

Over 256 art toys designer of Flickr member profiles searched for self definition of, country, age and occupation/professions. According to the research although majority of participants not specify occupation, indicated professions are: Graphical designer, illustrator, 3D designer, industrial designer, model designer & SFX, character designer, sculptor, artist, plastic designer, creative media designer, web designer,

costume designer, urban designer, engineer, architect. Some of them state themselves as “like create things”, “toy obsessed” or “my dream is to see one of my characters ever made into a toy”. So they are enthusiasts about designing and sharing their own ideas, and aesthetic views, productions, material usages, and creativities.

Table 1. Distribution of ages of designer toys participants

<b>Age Groups</b>	<b>Number of participant</b>
Teens	28
20 s	156
30s	66
40s	3
50s	1

It is observed that the thing about that enthusiasm is being independent from traditional working and learning culture, and design something about self-reflection, and reflection about experienced culture, and produce something with numbers.

Table 2. Distribution of countries of designer toys participants

<b>Country</b>	<b>Number of participant</b>
USA	74
UK	23
Australia	13
Germany	8
Brasilia	9
Spain	6
Canada, Italy,	5
France,	
Holland,	4
Mexican	
Russia,	3
Indonesia,	
Swiss, Thailand.	
Turkey, Ireland,	2
Poland,	
Singapore	
Not mentioned	1

Group of participants who indicate their ages point that designer of toys majority of age distribution is 20’s and 30’s. Today nostalgic influence of electronic games and characters revealed middle-aged generation that keen on toys.

With synthesis of DIY craft movement and game, animation culture; Designer toys, identify a 3 dimensional figurative object between street art and product design. In other words it portrait of 21.century alternative young culture enriched with graphics or hand made, domestically produced gewgaw. These fantastic knickknacks defined

as a type of artistic movement, produced in limited number, promises the consumer that it is not an imitation of another form included by the theme of original aesthetics. Such toys generally collected by adult collectors are being produced by using materials like firm plastic, fabric, plush, wooden, metal within the framework of criteria against hand made textile and serial production or similar to artistic object under control of toys companies and they are being exhibited in important artistic centers of the world, in art galleries of New York, California or Los Angeles or Tokyo.

Toys which bearing the characteristics of artist; multiply the sentiments of designers, sense of story and perspective in a certain number. Today, they constitute an important market for adults with its sides inviting to dream. Sophie M, a cubicle collector whose passion is expanding out of the office: "Vinyl toys are like crack to me. I have tons of them in my office at work, and a few scattered about my apartment." Kirby Kerr explains the importance of the cubicle collector to Rotofugi's success.. The shop's proprietor, Luke Rook, who is currently in Japan, said his primary clientele "consists of middle-aged, affluent men who look to 'recapture their childhood' by frequently buying new toys. Mike Richardson, another toy collector said, "I set up my childhood over again". The 34-year-old (2011) toy designer Krissy Harris says, "My generation doesn't really think of themselves as adults for the most part. We want to play" (<http://clarisa-ramirez.com/2011/09/09/the/>).

As William Morris, contended that people need to be able to make their mark on the World and give shape their environment and share knowledge, ideas, and self-expression. Some of toy designer consider the key reason to take part of DIY activities are providing community, and friendship to share knowledge and feelings. For instance designer Rozsika Parker defines embroidery is a weapon of resistance.

Aim is awakening the art sensibility in the mind. As Huizinga said, in a defective world and confused life, to create temporary and limited perfection for healing human being (1970). If the lack of identity has not been corrected, it may be delayed. Instead of problematically stay with no identity Human may leave his or her body at the real life, and he or she could be create a hero from himself or herself in the virtual game world; in virtual life. Or create own a heaven in the cyber space. Try to ascribe happiness on surrounding objects hoping to bring back to the most beautiful lost memories and childhood times.

"Designer Toys" can be referred to as a sort of artistic or design movement, a work of a culture like Asian and American Pop culture, streets, Hip-Hop and roller skate. Artists of this new formation are designers who are specialized in graphics, drawing, comic books, fashion, textile considered to be serial production artists. Designer Toys movement interestingly comprises street and working environment, children and adults, academy and consumption all together.

It is also necessary not to miss out the structures of these toys which are mutually alike, that reflect loneliness, being forced and encountered with mutation. "Designer Toys" reflect Japanese animated types, anthropomorphic types (human character attributed) with caricature type structures; they are mutated images of Walt Disney characters. They are imaginary as well as being disaster; they are associated with utopia as well as dystopia. Exactly with these characteristics, they reflect the image of humans squeezed within post-modern life, made ironic under street culture. Deplorable monsters that came out of streets are as sentimental to require protection.

Still, these toys create a feeling of acting, imagination and dreaming of new worlds, distancing from truth.

Designer Toys which has been improving since the late 1990's, defined as art or design movement and named as "Urban Toys, Urban Vinyls, Art Toys" is an artistic and design movement which has become widespread and developed with the help of Web 2.0 and shaped with information and production exchange over electronic media. These toys which include authentic aesthetic perception and sometimes original story of its designer; which are the works of a product designer, artist or graphic designer are three-dimensional figures which are copied in specific amounts from wood, texture, surface material in vinyl or resin (plastic types) moulding or casting and characterized with attaching and breaching methods, putting picture on them.

This new form of approach set up with new generation toys is used in the field of product marketing as well as being effective on the new approaches of producers to object. Advertisements employing games and toys, and even childhood memories to impress consumers do not only use above-mentioned "designer toys" and similar objects but they also imagine fantastic worlds. Coca Cola advertisement, brings us into mechanisms inside machinery that operate after insertion of coins, to the world of fairy tales in our childhood, to toys which we operated, even to the nostalgic world of magical machinery which we consider having creatures in (see Image 13).

Besides indefiniteness of border between game and life, non-clarification of border between arts and products produced in industrial series is seen evidently in types of this product. These goods enable games and real life, these two opposing activities transform into each other. The view that the only factor determining the form, a proposal of modernism along with these objects is function, alters too. Limits of a specific universe that has a temporary value are determined in this purpose.

This art-design movement, which is formed with information sharing through YouTube; and become widespread in urban workshops and garages with small-scale production and e-commerce, contains Craftsman-Salesman-Consumer-Collector within the body of Designer/Artist. They give rise the thought everybody can make and produce number of something with hands that break the aura of capitalist product idea of every little perfect thing had to be passed the mass production.

Since the activity of craftsman contain unrealistic approach about future such as romantic, uneasy and return to primitive ages in industrial culture; it is considered as a pre-modern case and therefore underestimated. Designer toy movement is of great importance since it has a structure dignifying hand-made activities with the fields of art and design it has integrated. DIY-Do It Yourself projects began to mean un-transferable, humanist, authentic and creative study, like reshaped form of conceptual structure of Arts and Crafts movement in 21st century and transformed into activities about establishment of post-industrial utopias. In this way, today we witness that people who are alienated with do it yourself orientations that developed through social networks strive for gaining back methods of expressing themselves (Campbell, 2005).

Everybody can create something with the help of social media stuff or/and following workshops that lead the people how to make things, so everyone who attends that movement now or then rethinks about corporate culture and consumerism. That is give the craft to power of change the world and therefore craft works are political.

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