



# Amateur Craft: History and Theory

*Stephen Knott*

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## **Amateur Craft: History and Theory** Stephen Knott

*Amateur Craft* provides an illuminating and historically-grounded account of amateur craft in the modern era, from 19th century Sunday painters and amateur carpenters to present day railway modellers and yarnbombers. Stephen Knott's fascinating study explores the curious and unexpected attributes of things made outside standardised models of mass production, arguing that amateur craft practice is 'differential' – a temporary moment of control over work that both departs from and informs our productive engagement with the world.

Knott's discussion of the theoretical aspects of amateur craft practice is substantiated by historical case studies that cluster around the period 1850–1950. Looking back to the emergence of the modern amateur, he makes reference to contemporary art and design practice that harnesses or exploits amateur conditions of making. From Andy Warhol to Simon Starling, such artistic interest elucidates the mercurial qualities of amateur craft.

Invaluable for students and researchers in art and design, contemporary craft, material culture and social history, *Amateur Craft* counters both the marginalisation and the glorification of amateur craft practice. It is richly illustrated with 41 images, 14 in colour, including 19th century ephemera and works of contemporary art.

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