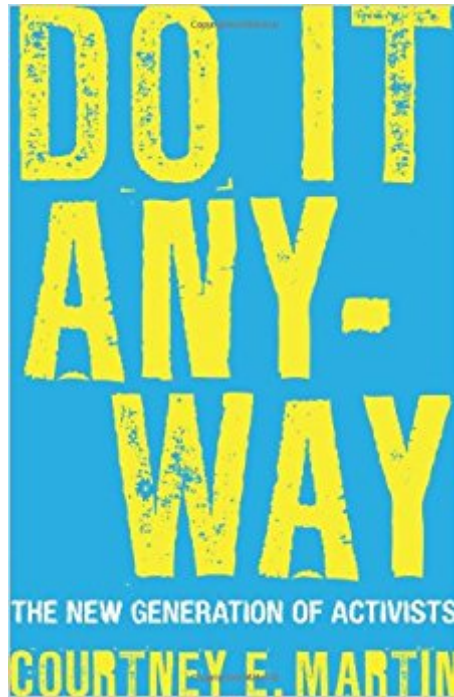




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Do It Anyway: The New Generation Of Activists



Synopsis

If you care about social change but hate feel-good platitudes, *Do It Anyway* is the book for you. Courtney Martin's rich profiles of the new generation of activists dig deep, to ask the questions that really matter: How do you create a meaningful life? Can one person even begin to make a difference in our hugely complex, globalized world?

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Martin (*Perfect Girls*, *Starving Daughters*) attempts to galvanize a new generation of activists, exhorting them to abandon puffy "save the world" rhetoric in favor of action. A passionate champion for social justice work of all stripes, she profiles eight activists who have managed to "soothe the critics and pessimists in their own heads and act," among them Rachel Corrie, the young American crushed to death under an Israeli bulldozer while protesting the demolition of Palestinian homes. While Martin's intentions are good and the individuals she writes about are compelling and complex, there's a lingering naivete and puzzling ahistoricism. She writes about the need for a new generation of activists without addressing what battles have been fought and how. Without an attention to the past, she cannot speak to the efficacy of certain tactics above others or how to tailor social justice work to be of maximum benefit to specific campaigns and communities. Nonetheless, Martin is successful in cheering on would-be activists to struggle and fail and struggle again. And while the book may raise more questions than it answers, it initiates a vital conversation at a time when the world and its challenges seem more intractable than ever. Copyright © Reed

“Courtney Martin’s portraits of eight young activists reveal people who are flawed, scared, and human—which makes them all the more inspiring. An elegant, effortless read that confirms what we already know: young people continue to change the world.”

•Jennifer Baumgardner and Amy Richards, authors of *Manifesta* and *Grassroots*

“Do It Anyway asks the most difficult question possible: how can I make my life meaningful? The answers are varied, transformational, and necessary for us all.”

•Jane Fonda “Courtney Martin is one of our most insightful culture critics and one of our finest young writers. She’s written a lively, compelling, and very important book for people of every generation who want to be fully alive in and to the world. Take in what she says and you may find yourself turning to that impossible cause you care about and doing it anyway.”

•Parker J. Palmer, author of *Let Your Life Speak*

“Unlike a lot of authors, Courtney Martin isn’t trying to sell you activism and why you should (yawn) get involved. Instead, she goes deep into the stories and lived experience of eight individuals. Do It Anyway is a treasure and deeply affecting.”

•Billy Wimsatt, author of *Bomb the Suburbs* and *Please Don’t Bomb the Suburbs*

“Put this on your must read list! Courtney Martin, of *Feministing* and *Perfect Girls*, *Starving Daughters* fame, has just launched a new book. *Do It Anyway: The New Generation of Activists* profiles the work of eight activists, doing what they can to make this world a better place.”

- The Real Deal

This brilliant book is a must read for anybody who is despairing about the state of our world, looking for real examples of positive changes that are being made, interested in what those under 35 are doing to have a positive impact and finally, anybody who needs a comprehensive listing of organizations and resources that speak to these topics. A major advantage regarding how Courtney E. Martin has written this book is the fact that she is brutally honest about the realities we are facing and the challenges that confront anybody who endeavors to create positive change. This is no fairy tale about simply needing to envision change and it will happen; this is a hard-hitting book full of concrete examples about what real people are doing about real problems. The author states this focus quite clearly in her introduction, “Activism is a daily, even hourly, experiment in dedication, moral courage, and resilience. This book is an exploration of that effort.”

The author writes about eight individuals and the changes they are trying to

make. The stories are quite different regarding the details of each act of activism since she is telling the true stories of a peace activist, prison reentry social worker, veterans' activist, filmmaker, radical philanthropist and others. Because of the diversity of individuals under thirty-five who are honored, each story is a deep learning experience. The author's concluding chapter provides the reader with well thought out ideas about how to move forward with "good failures" broken down into five ways of acting that are practical and relevant. The multiple pages of resources include organizations, readings and films that are comprehensive and diverse in their perspective about the realities of activism. Courtney E. Martin's closing statements were well written and thoughtful, including the following challenge, "Our charge is not to save the world, after all; it is to live in it, flawed and fierce, loving and humble." This book energized me to think more deeply about how to do that in these times of compelling and terrifying change.

stories about people who try to change the world. By the end of the book I cared less about changing the world than when I started reading. Overall it is depressing and demotivating but the stories are real. It's just most of the characters are irrelevant to the common person or brutally ineffective in their role.

As someone who drank a lot of the "save the world" cool-aid as a kid in the 90s, and experienced major activist burn out after college, this was a great read. I particularly loved the wisdom shared in the last chapter, framed in a discussion of good failure (as opposed to some simplified list of recommended actions). Inspiring, truthful, wise and helpful book, especially for anyone overwhelmed by socio-econ-political realities.

The author challenges us to do something vs. nothing, to know we can't save everyone yet to make a difference anyway. This same wisdom has been hard earned in my own life but the alternatives are despair or moral failure or sheer self-indulgence. I also came away appreciating her generation more.

It kicks into gear about half way through. Will be returning to this for inspiration when our collective problems seem too overwhelming.

If you have a nagging feeling inside of you that there are changes you want to see happening in the

world... you MUST read this fantastic new book by Courtney Martin. One of the driving forces behind today's feminist movement and a committed champion for change - Courtney will literally unleash your inner activist. Her compelling, moving, and insightful portraits in this book of 8 modern day activists make you want to jump off the couch, head out the door, and say - "Enough with my armchair rantings. I'm going to DO IT ANYWAY and make a difference with my life!"

I saw Courtney at a retreat in Boston and heard her speak about her inspiring story. I immediately bought the Kindle book and then ordered copies to give away to all my family for holiday gifts. I even "proposed" to her for my son, but darn it, she has a boyfriend, so that's out. :-) Do yourself a favor. Buy and read this book. Then pass it on to a friend. Or buy them a copy, as I didn't want to part with mine. If you were ever thinking our world is going to hell in a handbasket, you'll find Courtney and her generation are hope for the future.

The book is written in "blog style." It is casually written, and doesn't go very in-depth into the biographies. However, it is still a unique perspective that is worth while to read.

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