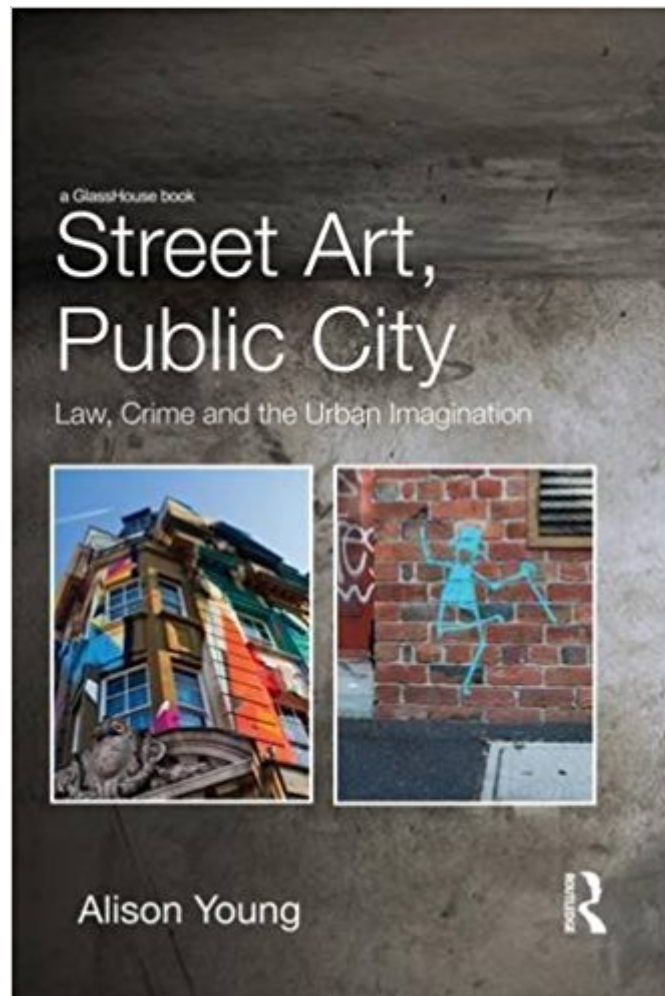




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Street Art, Public City: Law, Crime And The Urban Imagination



Synopsis

What is street art? Who is the street artist? Why is street art a crime? Since the late 1990s, a distinctive cultural practice has emerged in many cities: street art, involving the placement of uncommissioned artworks in public places. Sometimes regarded as a variant of graffiti, sometimes called a new art movement, its practitioners engage in illicit activities while at the same time the resulting artworks can command high prices at auction and have become collectable aesthetic commodities. Such paradoxical responses show that street art challenges conventional understandings of culture, law, crime and art. *Street Art, Public City: Law, Crime and the Urban Imagination* engages with those paradoxes in order to understand how street art reveals new modes of citizenship in the contemporary city. It examines the histories of street art and the motivations of street artists, and the experiences both of making street art and looking at street art in public space. It considers the ways in which street art has become an integral part of the identity of cities such as London, New York, Berlin, and Melbourne, at the same time as street art has become increasingly criminalised. It investigates the implications of street art for conceptions of property and authority, and suggests that street art and the urban imagination can point us towards a different kind of city: the public city. *Street Art, Public City* will be of interest to readers concerned with art, culture, law, cities and urban space, and also to readers in the fields of legal studies, cultural criminology, urban geography, cultural studies and art more generally.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

My favourite criminologist in the world - Banksy - Street art is an

elusive, complex subject, subject to misinformation and much prejudice. Alison Young offers readers a brilliant rigorous analysis, giving a comprehensive account of street art as a global phenomenon, and the tensions it frequently engenders in the control of public and private space, and the licit and illicit behaviour of artists who choose to stay away from the over-managed space of the museum or gallery.

— Sandy Nairne, Director, National Portrait Gallery, London

From graffiti to "guerrilla knitting", political "pieces" to place-making "paste-ups", the various homologies and diverse characteristics of contemporary street art can seem bewildering, even to the most hard-bitten of urbanites. This sharp, stylish book provides a reliable and theoretically informed route map that, not only demystifies the genre, but also poses some important questions about street art's democratic and political potential. Alison Young proves to be a most thoughtful and engaging tour guide as she takes us on a fascinating excursion across the contours of the international urban art scene and deep into the subterranean and ever-evolving world of today's street artists. Whatever your feelings about graffiti, tagging, and other forms of urban mark-making, this book, just like the very best examples of street art, will challenge your preconceptions and make you think more deeply about the affects and effects of the twenty-first century's most controversial art form.

— Keith Hayward, Professor of Criminology, University of Kent, UK

Alison Young's *Street Art, Public City* is an indispensable sociology of street art, guiding the reader through the streets of many of the world's major cities. Brilliantly intertwining the disciplines of aesthetics, urbanism and legal theory, it paints a rich and compelling picture of the contemporary urban landscape, subtly bringing into focus a vital dimension of public culture.

— Professor Jill Bennett, University of New South Wales, Australia

'Alison Young offers an intelligent and engaging account of her experiences as a spectator to and researcher of street art' (p. 9) drawing on two decades looking at art on city walls'

— Andrew Millie, Department of Law and Criminology, Edge Hill University, UK

"Notwithstanding her cursory consideration of graffiti, Young does an excellent job speaking to transgressive urban interventionism by way of her spatially conscious discussion of the act, aesthetic and legal response to art produced and placed in the public sphere. She accomplishes this not by analysing street art and its practitioners from an anthropological or sociological perspective, but by positioning street artwork as a spatial object' (p. 127) placed within the physical and ideological context of the city."

— Stefano Bloch, Brown University, USA, *Urban Studies Journal*

Alison Young is a Professor of Criminology in the School of Social and Political Sciences at the

University of Melbourne.

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