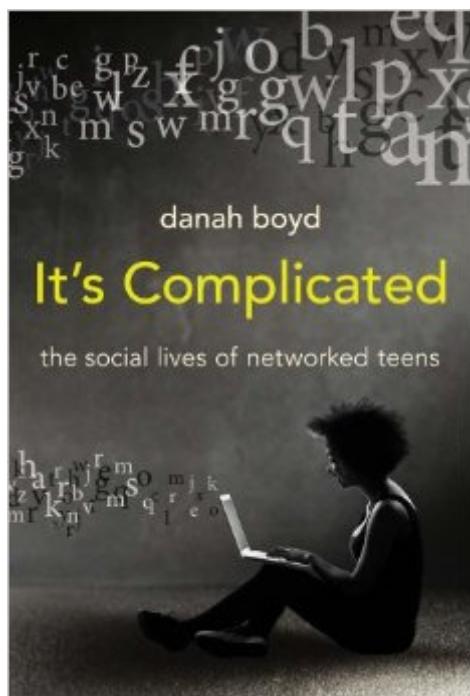


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It's Complicated: The Social Lives Of Networked Teens



Synopsis

What is new about how teenagers communicate through services such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram? Do social media affect the quality of teens' lives? In this book, the author uncovers some of the major myths regarding teens' use of social media. It explores tropes about identity, privacy, safety, danger and bullying.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

It sure is complicated. Spoiler Alert: As a psychotherapist, school counselor and educator, having spent much of my adult life working with teens and families, I have some serious problems with "It's Complicated." The main problems: This book was written by a researcher who neither takes a political stand on an inherently political issue nor does she make clear her biases in analysis of the "data" under consideration. In the end, the book suffers from a kind of blindness about what's right in front of her--that the impact and bi-directional effects of social media in the lives of our teens may not (and cannot) be seen for decades. The jury is and should be still out, and boyd's work may function to close the case on an incredibly complex set of issues that will require decades of study. What's the big deal, and why write such a long review? Because boyd is highly influential, because this book will be a best-seller and make her a bunch of money and because while she may be an expert in media studies and a preeminent researcher, she is NOT an expert in adolescent development. While this book clearly demonstrates a mastery of what teens are doing with social media, it demonstrates glaring errors and highly problematic interpretations of WHY they are doing

what they do and say they are doing.boyd has been called the "high priestess of the Internet" by the Financial Times, an internationally-recognized authority on how people (mostly teens) navigate the online world. Thought of as a brilliant ethnographer of adolescent digital natives, danah (that's not a typo, with the lower-case "d" and "b") boyd's rise to the top of the top of the world of experts about what teens are doing online has been meteoric.

For anyone who has been following research around youth and social networks over the past decade, this book has long been awaited. boyd has been and remains one of the most important cultural scholars of her generation, someone who is deeply grounded in the everyday practices around new media, someone who herself speaks as a member of the first wave of the so-called "digital natives" (a concept she deftly critiques and dissects throughout this book), someone who has been actively involved in public policy debates, who has developed a deep and intimate understanding of the lives that young people are living in the digital age, and someone who, through her vantage point at Microsoft Research, is on top of the cutting edge developments coming out of the digital industries. In short, she's the best possible person to write a book like this, and the book she has produced does not disappoint me in any way. The book is a consolidation of danah's greatest hits through the years -- building upon her early work that sought to explain what distinguishes online social interactions from earlier venues where teens hung out and cut the crap with their classmates, taking us through her startling discoveries about various forms of segregation within online communities, and into her more recent work on bullying and harassment in cyberspace or her growing interest in understanding how youth manage their privacy while dealing with the range of unintended eyes that often are reading everything they post online. Each of these contributions to the field were significant on their own, but they gain greater clarity and resonance when read against each other across the flow of this book.

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