



Maker Library

Harper, Douglas. *Working Knowledge: Skill and Community in a Small Shop*. University of Chicago Press, 1987.

“This little known visual ethnography of a car mechanic named Willie offers a fascinating window into the micro-practices of repair and its social and economic conditions at a particular moment when expectations for computational competencies have begun to seep into rural American communities. Willie owns a repair shop in upper New York where his customers often ask for inexpensive solutions to costly mechanical failures such as broken car transmissions. When this demands what Harper calls bricolage, the artful appropriation of parts and pieces for useful ends, we see Willie distill the spirit of this embodied craft-based intuition: ‘just like your fingers got eyes,’ he describes.”

Daniela K. Rosner
Featured Librarian
September