

### *D.I.Y.: Design It Yourself*

edited by Ellen Lupton  
(Princeton Architectural Press)

**Just as** the Internet was coming of age in the early '90s, user-friendly graphics software spearheaded a desktop publishing revolution that put design tools in the hands of the people. Though the availability of such technology has raised “design literacy,” most of us must still be taught how to think like artists before we can crank out attractive-looking materials. That instruction is the promise of *D.I.Y.*, a visually rich

book catering to hapless draftspeople with a message to transmit. Early chapters on basic principles give way to sections on brands, logos, and stationery that illustrate the range and effect of possible design choices by executing imaginary projects in a handful of ways. On the offing are inspired suggestions for how to customize business cards, clothing, press kits, and zines. If you've got creative juice, *D.I.Y.* will get it flowing.



### *You Can Wear It Again* by Meg Mateo Ilasco (Chronicle Books)

As an homage to the most maligned of all formal garments—the bridesmaid's dress—*You Can Wear It Again* is both satirical and sincere. Author Meg Ilasco tapped friends, relatives, coworkers, and wedding photographers for snaps of bridesmaids in all their frilly

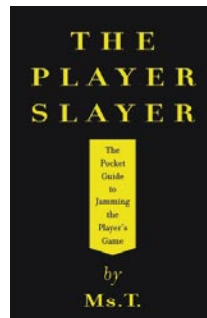
finery. The result is a collection that spans the ages: '60s-era Shirelles-like party dresses and tiaras give way to floor-length hippie frocks and puff-sleeved Jessica McClintock gowns. It's easy to laugh at the fads of the past (and you will), but the deeper conviction expressed by the photographs is that no fashion faux-pas can diminish the dignity and pride of a woman and her inner circle on that special day. Not even those hideous floppy hats.



### *If We Ever Break Up, This Is My Book* by Jason Logan (Simon & Schuster)

One thing about breakups: knowing that they're going to hurt doesn't make them hurt any less. The Really Bad Period can't be rushed or outsmarted—a fact that writer and illustrator Jason Logan knows all too well. After ending a seven-year relationship, Logan began keeping this “breakup sketchbook,” exploring the ins and outs of his newfound single status in childlike block handwriting and wry cartoons inspired by Venn diagrams, signage, and flow charts. Graphing

away the pain might not work, but Logan's opus suggests that recovery eventually—even inevitably—follows the bitter finale.

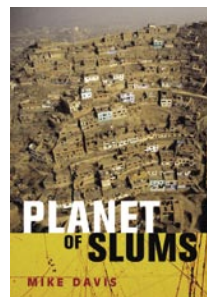


### *The Player Slayer: The Pocket Guide to Jamming the Player's Game*

by Ms. T.  
(Agate)

Why do you start a new fling flush with promise, only to be reduced, months later, to groveling for your honey's ever-scarcer attentions? Because you're getting played! In *The Player Slayer*, Ms. T. expertly guides readers through the clash of egos known as The Game. She replaces sympathetic self-help with hard scrutiny of the words and deeds that form the currency of exchange in any relationship, and offers advice on how not to lose your shirt. Cold calculus

aside, the player-slaying practitioner needn't give up on romance. Instead, the author suggests that to find a suitable mate, you must first take control of your own heart.



### *Planet of Slums* by Mike Davis (Verso)

In his seminal 1990 book *City of Quartz*, Mike Davis—urban theorist and socialist extraordinaire—painted a portrait of Los Angeles in apocalyptic colors. The megalopolis, Davis argued, was in danger of splintering into factious city-states. In *Planet of Slums*, Davis revisits the theory, but on a global scale. The book builds from a slow beginning about the explosion of mega-slums to a thunderhead of a conclusion. The governments of the world, he claims, have reconciled themselves to the pres-

ence of a permanent class of the dispossessed, and the outcome, he warns, will be bleak. In “a world of cities without jobs,” the urban poor are doomed to become marginalized and militant. It's a sobering message, to be sure.