

**Christina Dunbar-Hester**  
**Low Power to the People: FM Radio Activism in the U.S.**

This talk considers the activities of a group of U.S.-based radio activists whose activities include advocacy around media ownership, and tinkering with and building low power FM radio (LPFM) hardware. In particular, I focus on two events, the "barnraising" (in which volunteers gather to build a new radio station and hold workshops over a weekend) and "Geek Night" (a weekly meeting where people tinker and solve technical problems). The actors conceive of both sites as radical pedagogical activities; I argue that these gatherings constitute attempts by the activists to transform the participants' understanding of and relationships with technology, through "demystification" of technology and identity work, in service of a wider range of goals, including building a movement around the issue of media reform, and political radicalization and/or empowerment of participants. Elsewhere, I describe a relationship with LPFM technology that the group of radio activists have self-consciously forged, encompassing countercultural, gendered, antiracist/global exchange, geeky, and political identifications with LPFM; in this talk I focus on countercultural and geeky identifications, discussing how these identifications are both constructed and performed, and suggesting ways in which they may come into conflict with other identifications.