

"For years I went to left-wing meetings trying to figure out what the hell was going on. Finally I started taking acid, and I realized what was going on: nothing. I vowed never to go to another left-wing meeting again. Fuck left-wing meetings!"

Jerry Rubin

Hobnail Press

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is
shit

by
jerry
rubin

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Introduction

Publishing with Radical Intent

November 26th 2004 sees the 10th anniversary of the death of Jerry Rubin, American radical. As a tribute, Hobnail Press reprints *"Money is Shit"*. On that fatal day in 1994 Jerry was killed crossing the road in L.A.

This short essay was originally entitled *"Money Is Shit - Burning Money, Looting And Shoplifting Can Get You High"*, written by Rubin circa 1968, and first published in a collection of his works entitled, *Do It! Scenarios of the Revolution*, in 1970. The theme of the essay is based on an intervention where Rubin, Abbie Hoffman, Stew Albert and a number of other activists from the San Francisco Diggers, entered the Stock Exchange in New York, to make an anti-war statement. A security guard tried to stop them; Rubin and Hoffman proclaimed they were refused entry because they were Jews. Fearing allegations of anti-semitism, they were eventually allowed in. Following a short speech on corporate financing of the war, protestors threw banknotes onto the floor. For a few crazy minutes trading was suspended, while the greedy

In a time of universal deceit, telling the truth is a revolutionary act

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The protestors were eventually evicted from the building.

The text was also distributed as a leaflet, at a May Day Rally in Newcastle-Upon-Tyne in 1973 by radical students and off-campus agitators, myself included. References to the Beatles, Fidel Castro and Bonnie & Clyde were omitted. The content of this pamphlet is based on this leaflet.

Rubin was a visionary, unorthodox socialist and anti-establishment activist. He rose to fame during the anti-Vietnam war demo's of the 1960's. He co-founded the 'Yippie' movement and became the 'voice' of radical and disaffected youth across the United States and beyond.

By the mid-seventies Rubin 'sold out' to the establishment. However, on a personal note, to a sixties teenager and aspiring revolutionary, Rubin was a source of great inspiration.

Ade Dimmick
November 2004

The Stock Exchange official looks worried. He says to us, "You can't see the Stock Exchange."

We're aghast. "Why not?" we ask.

"Because you're hippies and you've come to demonstrate."

"Hippies?" Abbie shouts, outraged at the very suggestion. "We're Jews and we've come to see the stock market."

Vision: The next day's headlines:

NEW YORK STOCK MARKET BARS JEWS

The stock market comes to a complete standstill at our entrance at the top of the balcony. The thousands of brokers stop playing Monopoly and applaud us. What a crazy sight for them - long-haired hippies staring down at them.

We throw dollar bills over the ledge. Floating currency fills the air. Like wild animals, the stockbrokers climb all over each other to grab the money.

"This is what it's all about, real live money!!! Real dollar bills! People are starving in Biafra!" We shout.

We introduce a little reality into their fantasy lives.

While throwing the money we spot the cops coming. The cops grab us and throw us off the ledge and into the elevators. The stockbrokers below loudly boo the pigs.

We find ourselves in front of the stock market at high noon. The strangest creeps you ever saw are walking around us: people with short hair, long ties, business suits and brief cases.

They're so serious

We start dancing "Ring around the Rosey" in front of the Stock Exchange.

And then we start burning the things they worship: dollar bills!

Straight people start yelling: "Don't! Don't do that!"

One man rushes to get a burning \$5 bill out of Abbie's hand, but it's too late. The money is poof!

A crowd assembles; emotions are high. The police come to break it up. We split into the subway.

Three weeks later *The New York Times* reports: "The New York Stock Exchange last night installed bullet-proof glass panels and a metal grillwork ceiling on its visitors' gallery for what an Exchange spokesman said were 'reasons of security.' Last August 24 a dozen or so hippies threw dollar bills from the gallery - a display

many Exchange members do not want to see repeated."

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The Great Socialist Debate Hall is decorated with personality posters of Trotsky, Malcolm X and Che on the wall. I was invited to debate 200-pound Fred Halstead, the Socialist Workers Party's 1968 candidate for president of the United States. The subject: "What policy next for the Anti-War Movement?"

I arrived at the debate with bodyguards, Keith and Judy Lampe, at my side. Keith wore an English bobbie's uniform and Judy was a pregnant CIA Agent with high collared trench coat and large hat; she held a blowtorch.

"I got a number of death threats before the meeting," I explained to the crowd of four hundred people.

These far-left ideological groups try to make us think their debates are of historical significance. Everyone in the audience must stay in his seat just as if he's in class. Each debater has 30 minutes to speak, then 10 minutes for rebuttal. Then a young Trot flunkie goes through the audience selling *Militants* and waking

everyone up for the question period. Finally the masterdebaters give three-minute conclusions.

Truth wins out in the end.

My turn. On a portable phonograph I played Dylan and the Beatles.

"Stupid schmuck," a woman shouted. "He's not saying a word."

It was the first time in the history of the Socialist movement that someone didn't say a word during the time allocated for political argument.

I burnt my draft card. The room became a carnival. Everyone talked at once. The music released inhibitions.

I burned a dollar bill.

"Why don't you give that dollar to people who are poor and who need it?" a 'socialist' called out.

I was shocked. The 'socialists' see money just like the capitalists do. As a real thing.

"How can you burn money when poor people in the ghetto need it?" another 'socialist' asked.

I smiled and burned another piece of green paper. Around the room short haired socialists hissed and booed the burning of money.

"You should join the circus!" they cried.

Yippies all around the room stood and burned bills.

Money is a drug. Amerika is a drug culture, a nation of crazy addicts. Money can be used for cigarette paper. Roll a joint. Smoke it.

"What do you do?"

That means: "How do you make your money?" Your work is that thing which produces your money. It defines who you are. Our very consciousness is warped by the green fetish!

Money causes the separation between work and life. People don't do what they dig because they want smelly money. People don't dig what they do because they work for the dollar.

No artist ever did it for the bread. If money motivates you, you're not an artist.

People see each other not as human beings, but as financial transactions. The medium is the message. Money corrupts every human relationship it touches.

Since money is the standard for the system, people judge themselves and their work financially. People consider their lives won or lost by their collection of fiscal feces.

Liberation comes when we stop doing it for the bread and do what we always wanted to do as children.

The money economy is immoral, based totally on power and manipulation, offending the natural exchange between human beings: an exchange based on common need. Looting is natural expression of the money system. Capitalism is stealing. A system based on stealing can never condemn stealing. Everything should be free for all if it is free for some.

All money represents theft. To steal from the rich is a sacred and religious act. To take what you need is an act of self-love, self-liberation. While looting, a man to his own self is true.

Schools and churches are pushovers when up against money. Schools have no soul because they know where they get their bread. Churches dig profit. In church an exploiter can feel at home and fancy himself in heaven.

Money is violence. Money is not so dramatic a killer as napalm, but Amerika kills far more people with her dollar than she does with her bombs. Instead of US-Latin American export-import statistics, read "infant deaths, human beings exploited and sacrificed, dignity denied."

Money is the way whites hope to continue to control blacks. Smell money and smell the desire for control.

Money is the bond between parents and children, holding the family together, but ripping it apart. Money introduces pride, guilt, debt, obligation, responsibility.

Kids should steal from their parents, because that is true liberation from the money ethic: true family.

Money means: Work today so you can enjoy "tomorrow." Which never comes. Money causes unnecessary discipline, boredom, suffering, pain.

Amerika will become free only when the dollar bill becomes worthless.

A society which makes eating a privilege, not a right, has no right to exist.

EAT YOUR MONEY AND DIE

Burning money (and credit cards and banks and property) is an act of love, an act on behalf of humanity.

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Hobnail Press: Publishing with Radical Intent

Hobnail Press was founded in 2003. It is an independent, not-for-profit, radical publishing initiative. All labour is freely donated and all proceeds from sales support future publishing ventures, unless otherwise designated.

The primary focus of Hobnail Press is to publish and disseminate information pertaining to small press and alternative publishing, from an anti-authoritarian and libertarian-left perspective. An intrinsic part of this process is the publication of Hobnail Review, a regular review and listings newsletter.

In the tradition of radical pamphleteering, Hobnail Press also publishes a diverse range of low-cost, readily-available and easily-accessible pamphlets; reprinting essays and extracts from the work of 19th and early to mid 20th century freethinkers and radicals; as well as documenting events and scenarios influenced by their message of revolutionary change. A message, largely unchanged by the passage of time, which remains of historical, social, economic and political relevance to working class people today. Hobnail Press believes that reclaiming the past is the key to building the future.

All pamphlets are published in good-faith as an educational medium. As part of this evolutionary process, Hobnail Press endeavours to engender increased awareness, class-consciousness, self-esteem and empowerment. Contemporary analysis and application is at the discretion of the reader.