

# **A REBEL'S HANDBOOK**

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DISRUPTING CAPITALISM  
FOR FUN AND PROGRESS  
IN 21 STEPS

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DISRUPTING CAPITALISM  
FOR FUN AND PROGRESS  
IN 21 STEPS

Dedicated to Thomas Paine;  
That words can spell revolution.



Also dedicated to T-Pain;  
Let's keep on grooving.



**“YOU MUST BE THE CHANGE YOU  
WISH TO SEE IN THE WORLD.”**

MAHATMA GANDHI

# WARNING

**T**his handbook includes the occasional use of graphic language and images. It is intended for adult audiences. All activities described herein should only be engaged in at a participant’s own risk. This handbook is not intended to be viewed as instructions or directions to engage in any particular acts.

Some of the actions in the handbook may be illegal in your hometown, state, or country. Laws vary widely from place to place, and actions that are legal in one state may be illegal in another. The author of this work is not a lawyer, has not reviewed the laws of all fifty states, and is not capable of advising you on the law in your jurisdiction. Laws also change over time and in response to events. Make sure you know the risks of any actions you are considering, and only act from a place of knowledge and certainty.

You are welcome to put the strategies contained within this handbook into action but do so at your own risk. Possible consequences may include injury, death, and/or legal repercussions including but not limited to NSA surveillance, fines, or jail. Jail really sucks. *A Rebel’s Handbook* does not recommend going to jail under most circumstances.

You’re also invited to simply just peruse *A Rebel’s Handbook* and mull this stuff over. Thanks to our First Amendment, there’s nothing illegal about reading through a few outlandish ideas...right?

**DISCLAIMER:** *ADDITIONAL SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS ARE OUTLINED MORE FULLY IN THE FINE PRINT SECTION ON PAGE 153.*

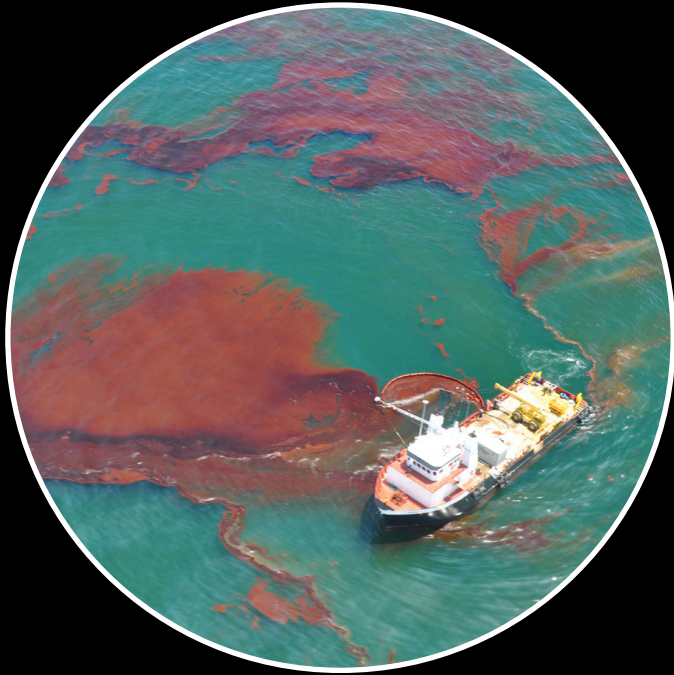
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WEAPON OF THE POWERLESS  
AGAINST THE POWERFUL."**

MOLLY IVINS

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P R E F A C E

# A CALL TO ARMS

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**"WE CANNOT SOLVE OUR PROBLEMS  
WITH THE SAME THINKING WE USED  
WHEN WE CREATED THEM."**

ALBERT EINSTEIN

## DEAR FELLOW CONCERNED CITIZENS:

Have we really entered this chapter of our nation's history? A time when so many of us question if everything in the world is fair and flawless. An age where rebel handbooks are even written in the first place. And a day in the life when people actually entertain the notion of reading funny words such as these.

At this crossroads of our human history, many of us – be it deep in our guts, peripheral vision, or daily existence – sense that something in the world is not quite right. That something has fallen out of whack.

Today, A.D. 2016, there are people who call us “thugs” for yelling rebel words when we decry the needless deaths of fellow citizens like Eric Garner, Michael Brown, and Sandra Bland. We are called “liars” and “troublemakers” each time we dare to raise our voice about the need for imminent climate change action.

Too often, our calls for peace and love are met by riot police and tear gas. Yet, even in this fog of war, many rebels keep on marching – compelled forward by the indelible hope of a brighter tomorrow.

But our streets are far from filled with marchers. There has been a silent

majority when it comes to public discussions about the problems we face today, and I thought this silence meant us rebels were small in number. But I was wrong.

I spent some time trekking around on the open road and during whispers of change with friends around a campfire or hushed conversations with strangers at coffee shops and bars around the world I learned this: there's a global landscape of discontent. Citizens everywhere are unsatisfied with the status quo.

People have different bones to pick in their complaints: we may focus on issues ranging from income inequality (#occupy) to racial inequality (#black-livesmatter) to climate change justice (#COP21).

In all the conversations I had, the basic concerns distill down to this: we're leery of our impotent government, our lives are being impacted by dysfunctional economic conditions, and we're anxious about the world's future. We've got different ideas about what problems in the world are most pressing, but our biggest area of agreement is this: things today are not on the right track.

What we share in frustration, some of us lack in hope. It's easy to get people talking about what's wrong in the world, but there is trepidation when the dialogue turns toward actions and solutions. “I'm just one person, what

can I possibly do?” Or, “What way of doing business could possibly better?” And, “Can I succeed in enacting meaningful change without making things worst?”

Rebel forebears like George Washington, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Dennis Banks, Harvey Milk, Cesar Chavez, Rosa Parks, and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. have demonstrated that answers to questions like these can indeed be realized. And many rebels in the world today are actively following in their very footsteps.

There are others who concede that things today are not on the right track but still grapple with the “what can I do” and “what comes next” question. *A Rebel's Handbook* is written for you – the silent majority. In the pages that follow, we examine how capitalism is emblematic of today's status quo and why the topic merits immediate attention. We explain how humor is capitalism's kryptonite and walk through 21 rebel jokes that can help lead to a brighter and more sustainable future.

*A Rebel's Handbook* is also written for the people who doubt the credence of our rebel fight. You may call us liars and you may call us thugs, but please remember that we are also your neighbors and friends. We, like you, are fellow citizens with the shared hope of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

These words are earnestly laid out before you to help assuage any fears you may have about our rebel fight. Our path is one of nonviolence. As such, we ask that you think twice before tacitly condoning tactics like tear gas, surveillance, and imprisonment to subdue our rebel jokes.

And rebels – these words are ultimately written for each and every one of you – penned with gratitude and love. You, like me, know that the world has long had rebel gadflies, warning of social ills and political missteps. But you, like me, have also witnessed that people today are growing increasingly numb to gadfly bites.

In these times of rising sea levels, growing inequality, and increasing armed conflict – perhaps what we need most is not the gadfly, but the buzzing of bees. The collective murmur of an entire species at risk of mass extinction. A collective awareness that we the people are awake and stand ready for change.

But we are ultimately neither flies that bite nor bees that sting. We the people are human. So let's do one of the things we do best and laugh. Rebels: if at any point in this rebel struggle we stop laughing, then we're losing.

In Solidarity,





INTRODUCTION

# REBEL ROADMAP

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**"THE HUMAN RACE HAS ONLY ONE  
REALLY EFFECTIVE WEAPON,  
AND THAT IS LAUGHTER."**

MARK TWAIN



**A** *Rebel's Handbook* is about addressing a question that lots of people in the world are asking today: "things suck, but what can I do about it?" In response, this handbook offers 21 simple strategies aimed at disrupting widely held assumptions that dictate our status quo.

The goal of these 21 disruptions is to 1) raise public awareness about pressing issues like climate change and inequality, 2) demonstrate that the simple forces of fun and laughter can be kryptonite for our formidable status quo and, 3) catalyze inclusive problem-solving towards a more sustainable future.

Because our status quo is fortified by billions of dollars and police with guns, any attempt for social change can feel daunting, if not impossible. But fortunately for us, every system has its weak points. After all, if every system were truly impenetrable, then wouldn't the gates of Troy have blocked that fateful Trojan horse?

With an eye toward identifying the biggest vulnerabilities around the central assumptions that guide our contemporary economic and political structures, *A Rebel's Handbook* begins by better understanding the underpinnings of the status quo itself. The handbook contends that the often-opaque concept of capitalism overwhelmingly interrelates with the litany of today's global injustices.

By focusing on a topic so emblematic of our status quo and pinpointing its biggest pressure point, the 21 tactics contained within *A Rebel's Handbook* illustrate that it's easier than someone might think to shift power from the boss's hands into the people's hands. In doing so, we demonstrate the inherent power that we the people possess.

Funnily enough, it turns out that capitalism's biggest vulnerability is that it has a terrible sense of humor. If the people are laughing and capitalists aren't, that means we're pushing hard on capitalism's pressure points and using the power of humor to drive change.

Adhering to established social change methodology, all 21 tactics call for nonviolence 100% of the time. However, in order to target capitalism's lackluster humor, some classic social change tactics have been revamped to be more fun and punchy.

Recognizing that challenges to assumptions informing our status quo are ultimately not enough to cultivate lasting progress, *A Rebel's Handbook* concludes by examining the vital role of disruptive innovation to create revolutionary change. Fostering this environment of innovation requires widespread calls for change from we the people. In short, disrupting assumptions about our status quo today can help usher in a proliferation of revolutionary disruptive innovations tomorrow.

## A REBEL'S HANDBOOK IS DIVIDED INTO THREE CORE PARTS:



### PART I **GET READY: REBEL SPEAK**

Defines capitalism and explains why it is something that's worth disrupting in the first place. Part I examines issues like inequality, climate change, and recent attacks on civil liberties.



### PART II **GET SET: REBEL ROAR**

Provides 21 strategies to disrupt capitalism and have fun by cracking rebel jokes. The ABC's of each tactic are explained here.



### PART III **GO!: REBEL REVOLUTION**

Examines our rebel past to inform a conversation about where all this disrupting takes us in the pathway to progress. Part III covers the vital role of disruptive innovation to help tackle the current challenges we face.

**REBELS: GET READY, GET SET, GO!**



PART I: GET READY

# REBEL SPEAK

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**"WE HAVE IT IN OUR POWER TO BEGIN  
THE WORLD OVER AGAIN."**

THOMAS PAINE



**“IT IS WELL ENOUGH THAT PEOPLE OF THE NATION DO NOT UNDERSTAND OUR BANKING AND MONETARY SYSTEM, FOR IF THEY DID, I BELIEVE THERE WOULD BE A REVOLUTION BEFORE TOMORROW MORNING.”**

HENRY FORD

## WHAT : **CAPITALISM**

Some rebel readers will have divergent viewpoints about capitalism from the outset (e.g., “capitalism is capable of great things” versus “capitalism is evil”). A word laden with many definitions, the topic is further complicated because there are multiple forms of capitalism in existence today.

*A Rebel’s Handbook* defines capitalism as the modern form of capitalism currently unfolding in the United States. For the purposes of the handbook, the singular term embodies the cumulative role of business, government, and workers as they interrelate with our status quo.

Because the term is often misperceived as confusing, this section covers capitalism’s guiding principles to distill what it actually is. The mechanics of how capitalism allegedly works in

theory and how it actually functions in practice are explained. A handbook for action rather than an econ textbook, readers interested in learning more about the economic intricacies of capitalism itself can refer to the handbook’s *Rebel Toolkit* (page 149) for additional resources.

**SHORTCUT:** IF YOU ALREADY THINK THAT CAPITALISM STINKS, FEEL FREE TO SKIP AHEAD TO ACTIONS THAT DRIVE CHANGE IN PART II (PAGE 61). BEFORE DOING SO, REBELS ARE ENCOURAGED TO READ THE ONE-PAGE REBEL BULLETIN (PAGE 25), A CAUTIONARY TALE ABOUT THE PERILS OF ATTRIBUTING THE ENTIRETY OF OUR WOES ON A SINGULAR PROBLEM.

## CAPITALISM UNPLUGGED

The term capitalism itself was first coined in the 1800s during the Industrial Revolution, when the capitalist framework we live in today was really revving to life. Lots of other competing or congruous isms, like communism and socialism, were being actively pitched to people during the same period.

Have you ever had a conversation with a friend about different political systems? You know, the one where someone says something like, “[fill in the blank]ism sounds promising in theory, but it just doesn’t work as well in practice.”

People typically make that statement about other isms but rarely about capitalism. That’s largely because capitalism has already succeeded in convincing most people that it’s the best way to go (even if some of these same people would simply argue that it’s the best of the worst).

The framework of big macro concepts like capitalism are so steeped in most of today’s culture that, at first glance, it can be hard to cull capitalism out and see what it is actually all about.

Paradoxically, lots of people would have a hard time defining the word even if asked. If you need proof, just ask a random stranger on the street to

define capitalism and see how they respond (likely, like you’re crazy for asking).

Although capitalism may be hard for someone to articulate, it’s considered today’s preeminent way of doing business. Capitalism is a driver for a whole lot of things happening in our lives. You know, stuff like needing to go to school, hold a job and pay rent. For all you econ geeks out there, also referred to as: marketplace credentials, monetary income, and privately-held property.

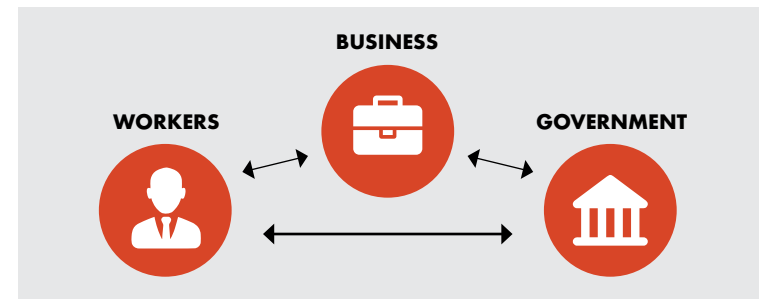
In theory, the opaque concept of capitalism definitely sounds pretty damn promising: an economic system where anyone can make it big and people have lots of freedoms (like the freedom of speech). Capitalism sells itself on the premise of ideals captured in the American Dream, that anyone has a shot to get rich if they work hard enough or conjure up the right winning idea.

So the question for you is this: if people are so quick to say other isms sound so much better in theory than practice, is it so unreasonable to place the world’s most applied economic theory under a magnifying glass and ask the same question of it?

## CAPITALISM DEFINED (IN THEORY)

To better understand capitalism, let’s begin with an impartial understanding about how the form of capitalism that we have in place in the United States is supposed to operate in theory. Don’t worry: we’ll make this econ101 lesson short.

Put simply, capitalism can be defined as the constant push and pull between its three biggest players: business, government, and workers. These three players exist a controlled market economy that is carefully designed to foster and encourage economic activity, while also promoting equality (or so the theory goes).



### WORKERS;

Provides the workforce for business and government to operate. Worker spending helps stimulate the economy, which in turn helps to generate more jobs. Capitalism requires a range of workers, from people in suits earning the big bucks to help stimulate the economy, to police carrying guns to enforce capitalism’s rules.

### BUSINESS;

Creates the jobs that pay people the salaries they need to live on. The golden rule for all businesses is that survival is based on turning a profit. For business corporations in particular, the golden rule is for this profit to help maximize shareholder value.

### GOVERNMENT;

Exists as a steward of capitalism, almost like a referee. Government’s job is to make sure that capitalism’s rules play out fairly and safely (AKA: legally). In a democracy like the United States, citizenry is supposed to be integrally involved in governmental decision making in order to help ensure that the government does not become a crooked referee.

America's form of capitalism runs on a constant and healthy tension between these three big players. A system of checks and balances. On a basic level: workers depend on having a job so they can earn a livable wage and rely on government to regulate business so that their working conditions are safe.

In turn, government is dependent on the salary of the worker and the profit of a business so that they can collect taxes to operate. Finally, business depends on government to ensure everyone plays by the rules and on workers to power their businesses and purchase their products.

So there's the premise of our modern form of capitalism in a nutshell. But that nagging question still remains: like so many other isms, does today's implementation of capitalism also sound superior only in theory?

## **CAPITALISM DEFINED (IN PRACTICE)**

Have you ever heard stories about how early U.S. coal mining camps worked? There's a good chance the answer is no because people don't like talking about it all that much. This is a fairly absent chapter from most history textbooks. It is a time period in American history when capitalism was thriving – but it didn't make capitalism look all too good in practice.

Most early coal camps worked something like this: employees put in really long shifts and faced extremely hazardous working conditions. Instead of being compensated with U.S. dollars, they were typically paid with scrip from the mining company, only good to cash in at mining camping stores (the stores were coincidentally owned by the camp owner).<sup>2</sup> Can you guess where this is going?

Groceries, drinks, clothes – basically everything – was purchased with scrip. And not surprisingly, some mining camp owners set the price of their store goods at exorbitantly high prices.<sup>3</sup> The boss got rich while the miners got poorer.

Recognizing capitalism's perils, like the mining camps debacle, capitalist governments are, in theory, supposed to help stand with the people and make sure things happen fairly. The U.S. government arguably helped do this for quite a while – with tools like antitrust laws to break up big monopolies and campaign laws to ensure that capitalists could not buy elections.<sup>4</sup>

Citizen demand for equal opportunity protections, like fair voting and equitable education, was particularly successful in the Progressive Era (1890-1920). Rebels writers, like Jacob Riis and Ida Tarbel, helped call out corporate greed and energize change with their photos of income inequality and stories about big oil companies during this era.<sup>5</sup>

Fast-forward to today and some people continue to critique capitalism, or at the very least, the contemporary implementation of it. Concerns range from the indirect and often non-priced costs of doing business (also known as externalized costs), to the scarcity of resources that can be pervasive in capitalist-based economies. There are others who praise modern capitalism for the economic opportunities they say it continues to offer and the innovations it helps to cultivate.

But comparing capitalism at work in early American coal mining camps, the Progressive Era, and today can quickly make reading eyes go glassy.<sup>6</sup> So in order to better understand how our current implementation of capitalism operates in practice, the following chapter overlays the theories of capitalism with the reality of our status quo.

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*“I AM NOT SO OPPOSED TO CAPITALISM THAT I HAVE FAILED TO SEE ITS RELATIVE MERITS. IT STARTED OUT WITH A NOBLE AND HIGH MOTIVE TO BLOCK THE TRADE MONOPOLIES OF NOBLES, BUT LIKE MOST HUMAN SYSTEMS IT FALLS VICTIM TO THE VERY THING IT WAS REVOLTING AGAINST. SO TODAY, CAPITALISM HAS OUTLIVED ITS USEFULNESS.”* DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.

## CAPITALISM IN ACTION: U.S. BANK BAILOUT

Capitalism in theory doesn't sound so bad. But today's capitalism in practice is arguably not always looking so hot.

An illustrative case study: how the government could have helped the people during the 2008 financial crisis but ended up helping out the big banks instead.

The largest banks in America messed up big time in 2008. In a bid to increase their customer base, banks loosened their standards for home mortgage loans. As a result, banks were doling out cash to some people who lacked the economic means to easily pay it back. For eager homeowners lured into perfect-sounding loans, it turned out that the deal was too good to be true.

Subprime mortgages were given to tons of people who could not make their make their monthly payments. As a result, many people who failed to make their mortgage payments accrued high debt and some ultimately ended up losing their homes.

The banks got themselves in dire financial straits: they needed money in response to all the debt they created.



**OUR GOVERNMENT SPENT HUNDREDS OF BILLIONS OF DOLLARS TO BAIL OUT THE BANKS.<sup>7</sup>**

Banks were the ones responsible for making the mistake in the first place: they knowingly deceived people. Doesn't it seem a little strange for our government to just bail them out?

Instead, our government could have figured out a way to loan the same amount of money directly to homeowners to help them out with their drowning debt and save them from losing their own homes.

This action, by its very definition, is arguably still capitalism: funds being utilized to provide credit and to keep the economy running. But it's a different kind of capitalism than the one our nation has grown used to because it is a kind where the government gives a hand up to the people instead of extending a hand out to big businesses.



**“STATUS IS ALWAYS RIPE FOR SATIRE.”**

STEPHEN COLBERT

W H Y :

# THINGS SUCK

**A**s this chapter’s title implies, and as you likely know, things are not all so fair and flawless in the world today. But as you also know, lots of people love to hate on today’s problems. Simply griping about our woes is nothing new. What’s new here is that we also explore capitalism’s hand in the challenges we face.

Specifically, we examine the role of special interests and the 1% as they relate to our current status quo. These well-endowed special interests are fondly referred to herein as fat cats (a term first coined during the Roaring Twenties to describe wealthy political donors of the time).<sup>8</sup>

The Capitalism at Work table in this chapter provides brief descriptions of a wide range of issues that we face today. When you flip through the table some of you will presumably be more

concerned with one problem over another. Or you may be most worried about an issue missing entirely from the table (which you’re encouraged to help fill in). Others may deny that some of these problems even exist.

This difference of opinion is okay: we can agree to disagree on the finer points. But at least there seems to be ever-growing consensus around this: things today feel like they’re increasingly tipping out of balance.

Under siege from a myriad of threats, we candidly place today’s status quo under a microscope in the table that follows. Not simply to blame all our woes on capitalism, but rather, to question a reality filled with issues like growing inequality, increasing armed conflict, and rising sea levels.

## THE ISSUE

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# Inequality is Rising



## THE LOWDOWN

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There are unprecedented levels of inequality in the U.S today. The top 1% of Americans now owns 40% of the country's wealth, while 80% of our population holds just 7%.<sup>9</sup> This disparate inequality is spreading all over the world. Nearly half of the world, or about three billion people, live on less than \$2.50 a day. At least 80% of the world lives on less than \$10 a day.<sup>10</sup> *Note: stats such as these are in a constant state of flux and vary by source, but the overall trend of rising inequality remains unchanged.*

## CAPITALISM'S HAND

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Now that the 1% is holding onto so much money and power, they don't seem to want to just give up their clout. According to reports from the United Nations, the divide between the rich and poor is continuing to widen.<sup>11</sup> Today's capitalist landscape is defined by the rich getting richer while the poor get poorer. Our time-tested system of checks and balances appears to be tilting in the favor of special interests and the one percenters (AKA: fat cats).

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*“THE GOVERNMENT, WHICH WAS DESIGNED FOR THE PEOPLE, HAS GOT INTO THE HANDS OF THE BOSSES AND THEIR EMPLOYERS, THE SPECIAL INTERESTS. AN INVISIBLE EMPIRE HAS BEEN SET UP ABOVE THE FORMS OF DEMOCRACY.”*

WOODROW WILSON

## THE ISSUE

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# People Are Being Tricked



## THE LOWDOWN

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By the numbers, we the people are clearly not too happy with today's state of affairs. 51 million eligible voters in America have not even registered into our system of voting.<sup>12</sup> And 42% of the citizens who are registered to vote are signed up as independents (with no stated affiliation to either the republican or democratic party).<sup>13</sup> Yet, America has only had a democratic or republican president.<sup>14</sup> With incongruous numbers such as these, we can safely infer that lots of people are tricked into the fallacy that their voice or vote do not matter.

## CAPITALISM'S HAND

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One of the biggest deceptions that fat cats like to propagate is this: that we the people are incapable of creating lasting and meaningful change. Why would fat cats trick us with such a rumor? Likely, because they realize that if lots of people learned about all the things that suck in the world today, they would start to raise their voice. So hide the truth from us they do – like their reaction to what unfolded in Ferguson, Missouri in the fall of 2014. When rebels started roaring the rebel roar over the killing of Michael Brown at the hands of police officers, multiple journalists were arrested and the federal government declared a no-fly zone, effectively curtailing freedom of the press from the ground and in the skies.<sup>15,16</sup> There are fat cats today who fool people into thinking that our voices do not matter.



## THE ISSUE

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# People Are Being Divided



## THE LOWDOWN

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Be it race, political ideology, religion, or gender – the fissures that divide us appear to be forever widening. For example, full-time female workers made 21.7% less than full-time male workers in 2013 median annual earnings. In 2014, full-time Hispanic female workers earned an average of 39% less than full-time white male workers on a weekly basis.<sup>17</sup> Distressingly, the partitions between people don't end with salaries alone. 1 in 6 African-American men have been imprisoned in the U.S.<sup>18</sup> Compare this to the one percenters at the top: approximately 4 in 6 Fortune 500 CEOs are white males.<sup>19</sup>

## CAPITALISM'S HAND

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Whether intentional or purely coincidental, stats such as these help indicate that today's implementation of capitalism is becoming increasingly inequitable. Skittish about the power of organizing, fat cats hold onto their power when the modus operandi is a people that stand divided. To put it another way, fat cats are rightfully afraid of the community-organizing wisdom that Benjamin Franklin imparted when he signed the Declaration of Independence: "We must all hang together, or assuredly, we shall all hang separately."<sup>20</sup>

## THE ISSUE

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# Civil Rights Are Under Attack



## THE LOWDOWN

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Classified government documents leaked by Edward Snowden reveal evidence of a systematic program to monitor phone calls and read emails of American citizens.<sup>21</sup> In addition, local police departments are militarizing. According to Pentagon data, small municipal police departments have been given tens of thousands of machine guns, armored cars, and military aircraft.<sup>22</sup> Despite efforts by the federal government to curtail these practices, countless phone conversations have already been recorded and police forces have been armored.<sup>23,24</sup>

## CAPITALISM'S HAND

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From a business perspective, fat cats win by collecting private online data that can optimize marketing tactics. Just think about how email vendors scan through your email so that they can deliver the most relevant ad to you. Stealthy marketing strategies like these are employed on the business front. On the government front, surveillance and militarization are often executed with safety as the primary rationale. Sure, no one wants to sacrifice safety, but as the police who protect us start to look more like soldiers than our allies, perhaps it is time to ask what civil liberties are compromised under the veil of protecting our freedom.

## THE ISSUE

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# Armed Conflict is Increasing



## THE LOWDOWN

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In addition to fissures among the people, nations themselves are becoming increasingly entangled in contentious disputes. According to United Nations reports, armed conflict is on the rise.<sup>25</sup> Over the last decade, 35 countries in the world experienced armed conflict.<sup>26</sup> Recent strife in geographically disparate places like Iraq, Crimea, and the South China Sea have resulted in countless lives lost and hundreds of billions of dollars in economic damages.<sup>27, 28, 29</sup>

## CAPITALISM'S HAND

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Many conflicts in the world today can be traced to fat cats' insatiable appetite for natural resources. For example, a maritime zone with underwater oil resources estimated to be worth trillions of dollars is right off the Crimea coast (ergo, Russia invasion).<sup>30</sup> Experts estimate that there are troves of valuable mineral resources under the South China Sea floor (ergo, China's territorial claims).<sup>31</sup> Furthermore, since the U.S. invasion of Iraq, Halliburton, a Fortune 500 company, has received \$39.5 billion in Iraq-related contracts (including one no-bid contract for over \$500 million).<sup>32, 33</sup> If you're still scratching your head in search for connections between fat cats, governments, and warfare: look no further than Dick Cheney, the former Vice President of the U.S. (2001-2009) and the former CEO of Halliburton (1995-2000).<sup>34</sup> Ergo, corporate greed.

## THE ISSUE

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# Government is Paralyzed



## THE LOWDOWN

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Partisan bickering between America's leading political parties boiled over in 2013: our federal government temporarily shut down due to the inability of Congressional leaders to reach consensus on a budget. The shutdown cost taxpayers billions of dollars in lost revenue and economic stagnation.<sup>35</sup> Today, people are taking note of this childlike behavior – approval ratings of U.S. Congress have dipped to an all-time historic low of around 15% in 2015.<sup>36</sup> Congress's self-inflicted paralysis and the public's eroding faith in them do not cast Congress in the best light to help solve the litany of issues we face today.

## CAPITALISM'S HAND

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Through aggressive lobbying and influential campaign donations, fat cats have long helped embolden elected officials to take certain positions on legislative issues. These fat cats received a massive victory over the people in a 2010 Supreme Court decision that continues to rattle America.<sup>37</sup> In a 5-4 ruling, the Supreme Court declared that donations from corporations are protected under the First Amendment – essentially removing any limits on corporate campaign donations. The ruling, *Citizens United vs. Federal Election Commission*, has ushered in a new era of fat cat spending in elections.<sup>38</sup> Today, less than 1% of Americans contribute 68% of all election funding in the U.S.<sup>39</sup> In the 2016 Presidential election, just 158 families have provided nearly 50% of all campaign contributions in the early part of the election cycle.<sup>40, 41</sup>

## THE ISSUE

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# Food & Water Supplies Are in Jeopardy



## THE LOWDOWN

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Contemporary agricultural practices provide cause for stomachs to turn: from the rampant use of pesticides (which have been proven to leach into drinking water supplies),<sup>42</sup> to deplorable conditions for farm animals,<sup>43</sup> to nationwide food recalls,<sup>44</sup> to the routine practice of feeding antibiotics to livestock to help fatten them up.<sup>45</sup> Actions such as these come with a cost. Take antibiotics for instance: approximately 15 million pounds of antibiotics are fed to the farm animals in the U.S. each year.<sup>46</sup> As a result, doctors are finding that people are becoming increasingly antibiotic resistant.<sup>47</sup>

## CAPITALISM'S HAND

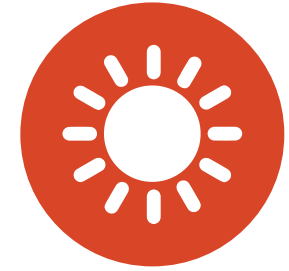
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Like other industries, agriculture is becoming dominated by a few fat cats at the top: almost 30% of federal agricultural subsidies go to the top 2% percent of America's biggest farms.<sup>48</sup> And as the legislative record indicates, these agro-fat-cats succeed in swaying our federal government. For example, amidst heavy industry lobbying in 2011, Members of Congress declared that pizza should count a vegetable on public school menus (claiming that tomato paste is a vegetable).<sup>49</sup> As fat cats fallow our farmland and overrun our aquifers, we the people face threats like antibiotic immunity and contaminated drinking water.<sup>50, 51</sup>

## THE ISSUE

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# Human-Caused Climate Change is Unchecked



## THE LOWDOWN

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Climate change is a hot enough issue that the next chapter is wholly dedicated to it. In a snapshot: climate-warming trends over the past century are very likely due to human activities. But don't take the handbook's word for it: Nearly 100% of the world's climate change scientists agree with this very statement.<sup>52</sup> These scientists warn that business-as-usual is causing the world to inch closer to an irreversible tipping point of unbearable living conditions and mass extinctions.<sup>53</sup> They tell us that all the issues outlined in the chapter will be further exacerbated by unchecked greenhouse gas emissions.<sup>54</sup>

## CAPITALISM'S HAND

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Capitalism is integrally linked to human induced climate change, beginning with the age of Industrialization when smoke stacks first starting dotting our horizons.<sup>55</sup> Today, there are fat cats who profit from our business-as-usual that wrangle off attempts to rein in our runaway greenhouse gas emissions. Some of them go so far as to propagate mistruths on the matter: there are over 90 climate change counter-movement organizations in the U.S. with a cumulative annual income of more than \$900 million.<sup>56</sup> And the myths these fat cats disseminate seems to work: to date, the U.S. government and global leaders have not taken the actions requisite for reducing our greenhouse gas emissions down to the levels that scientists implore.<sup>57</sup>

## THE ISSUE

### Et Cetera



## THE LOWDOWN

The issues captured in this table are representative of some but not of all of the significant problems we face today. What are some other issues you can think of that are not included in the chart? Readers are invited to think of a topic they find most problematic in the world today and build out their own list of grievances. These problems can be shared online with other rebels.

## CAPITALISM'S HAND

After thinking of the issue(s) that concern you most, distill down the issue and see if you can identify some of the underlying drivers that perpetuate this problem. If you peel back the layers far enough, can you find the special interest groups involved? Can you identify the linkage between the issue and capitalism? As all the points outlined in this chapter demonstrate, there is a good chance that the answers to these questions will be yes.

## REBEL BULLETIN : PLAY WITH CATS, NOT HUNT FOR WITCHES

America's history is punctuated by startling periods in which our citizenry mistakenly chased scapegoats and so-called straw men rather than confront the underlying issues they faced at the time.

- It began in 1692 when a wave of hysteria spread that witches were possessing people. In the ensuing Salem Witch Trials, dozens of citizens were accused of witchcraft and 19 people were executed.<sup>58</sup>
- Widespread paranoia struck again during World War II, when 100,000+ Japanese-Americans citizens were imprisoned in Relocation Camps for widespread fear they were allegiant to Japan.<sup>59</sup>
- Mass hysteria reared itself yet again during the Cold War, when the Red Scare gripped our nation. Citizens endured an era of surveillance and job loss because of their political viewpoints.<sup>60</sup>

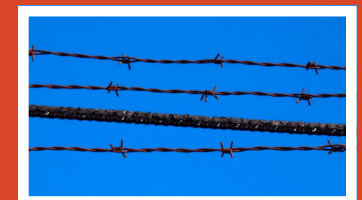
Each of these travesties occurred in monumental and challenging times. And as the table in this chapter highlights, we're also living in a difficult time, faced with significant hurdles like climate change and inequality.

Massive problems, like climate change, are complex and often have more than one underlying force at play. After all, there are non-capitalist countries that also have runaway greenhouse gas emissions. There are also some large corporations actively working toward reducing their environmental footprint.

If these previous periods of American history have but one lesson to yield, perhaps it is this: that there is futility to mistakenly chasing a straw man when faced with truly calamitous times.

As such, please dispel any notion to embark on a foolhardy witch-hunt for fat cats in a flash of group hysteria. It would be unfair and incorrect to simply ascribe all of today's woes on one group alone. In addition to compromised morality, there is nothing all that fun or productive about exerting energy on pointing fingers.

With principles like this in mind, we disrupt capitalism and crack jokes not to insult or harm fat cats, but rather, to raise awareness about the problematic status quo that we all share.





**“OUR LIVES BEGIN TO END THE DAY  
WE BECOME SILENT ABOUT THE  
THINGS THAT MATTER MOST.”**

DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.

W H E N :

# TODAY, CLIMATE CHANGE

**F**or those of us already schooled in the monumental threat of climate change, the imminent need to question our status quo is largely self-evident. For others, climate change can be shrouded in the same kind of mystery as terms like capitalism.

The fallacy that climate change is difficult to wrap our arms around is a strange one because nearly 100% of the world’s scientists have reached consensus about what causes climate change and have meticulously researched and documented its injurious impacts.<sup>61</sup>

In the same way that we placed capitalism under a microscope in the preceding chapter, let’s now shine some light on climate change itself to define what it is, what causes climate chaos, and why taking action today

is so critical. In tandem with defining climate change, we also assess how capitalism transacts with this threat.

## DEFINING CLIMATE CHANGE

There is widespread agreement about how climate change is defined.<sup>62</sup> According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, “climate change refers to any significant change in the measures of climate lasting for an extended period of time.”<sup>63</sup> Our climate is indeed changing. The earth’s average temperature has risen by 1.4°F over the past century and is projected to rise further in the coming decades.<sup>64</sup>

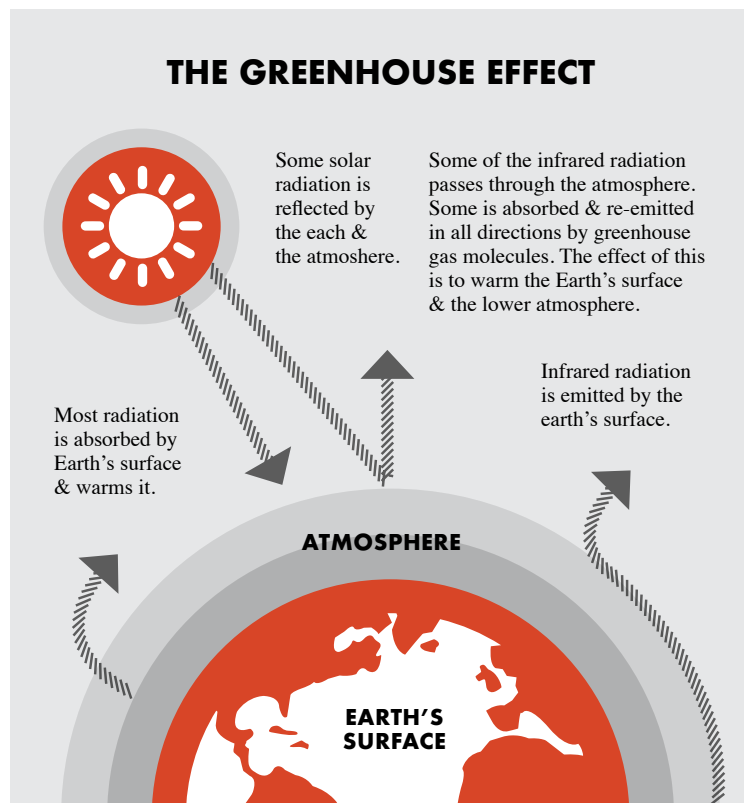
There is also widespread agreement about what causes climate change: 97% of the world’s climate scientists concur that climate-warming trends

over the past century are very likely due to human activities.<sup>65</sup> In the last 100 years, we have released unprecedented amounts of carbon dioxide and other noxious greenhouse gases into the atmosphere. Scientists explain that these emissions are the main driver of human-induced climate change.<sup>66</sup>

The term greenhouse gas itself encompasses a number of pollutants including carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, and fluorinated gases.<sup>67</sup>

Aptly categorized as greenhouse gasses, emissions from these sources help fuel the greenhouse effect that is changing our climate. According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency: “greenhouse gases act like a blanket around earth, trapping energy in the atmosphere and causing it to warm.”<sup>68</sup>

The process of the naturally occurring greenhouse gas effect (without human-caused warming) is illustrated in the graphic below.



If you've ever stepped into a greenhouse, then you already have an idea of how the greenhouse gas effect works when it works the right way. By trapping in the sunlight's heat, a greenhouse makes things warmer. According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, “the greenhouse effect is natural and necessary to support life on Earth.”<sup>69</sup>

If you have been in a greenhouse before, you've also likely observed plants growing within the greenhouse (warmed by the sun and insulation). But when inside this greenhouse, you probably felt a bit warm. Maybe uncomfortably warm. Now think about what would happen if people turned up the heat in that greenhouse in a big way. The plants that had been growing inside would die off and you yourself couldn't survive within that heat for too long.

And it is here where we get to the rub. According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, “the buildup of greenhouse gases can change Earth's climate and result in dangerous effects to human health and welfare and to ecosystems.”<sup>70</sup>

Recognizing that 97% of the world's scientists tell us that climate-warming trends are very likely caused by human activity, the obligation for action becomes all the more paramount. We are faced with a scenario where it is our hands are fixed on the world's thermostat.<sup>71</sup>

**“HUMAN INFLUENCE ON THE CLIMATE SYSTEM IS CLEAR, AND RECENT ANTHROPOGENIC EMISSIONS OF GREENHOUSE GASES ARE THE HIGHEST IN HISTORY. RECENT CLIMATE CHANGES HAVE HAD WIDESPREAD IMPACTS ON HUMAN AND NATURAL SYSTEMS. WARMING OF THE CLIMATE SYSTEM IS UNEQUIVOCAL, AND SINCE THE 1950s, MANY OF THE OBSERVED CHANGES ARE UNPRECEDENTED OVER DECADES TO MILLENNIA. THE ATMOSPHERE AND OCEAN HAVE WARMED, THE AMOUNTS OF SNOW AND ICE HAVE DIMINISHED, AND SEA LEVEL HAS RISEN.”**

INTERNATIONAL PANEL ON CLIMATE CHANGE, FIFTH ASSESSMENT REPORT

As the chart below demonstrates, the impacts of turning up the earth's thermostat will be far from fun. All information included in the Climate Change Impacts chart below comes from the U.S. Government's *2014 National Climate Assessment* to explain what human-caused climate change is projected to do to our world.<sup>72</sup>

## CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACTS



### DEADLY HEALTH RISKS

Historical episodes of extreme heat have caused widespread fatalities and extreme heat is only projected to increase with climate change. Climate change is also increasing risks of respiratory stress from poor air quality and increased heat.<sup>73</sup>



### FOOD SHORTAGES

Farms are expected to suffer from stresses due to extreme heat, disease, and heavy downpours. Changing weather will make growing seasons more difficult. Projected food shortages are expected to trigger forced migrations.<sup>74</sup>



### UNDRINKABLE WATER

Climate change is increasing the likelihood of water shortages. Water quality is currently diminishing in many areas from contaminant and sediment concentration after heavy downpours.<sup>75</sup>



### FISHLESS OCEANS

An increase in acidic ocean water will inhibit the formation of shells, skeletons, and coral reefs. This changing ocean chemistry, coupled with changing ocean temperatures, is expected to jeopardize aquatic ecosystems.<sup>76</sup>



### WRECKED ECOSYSTEMS

If left unchecked, climate change can cause the extinction of entire species. Stressors like droughts, wildfires, and pest outbreaks (for example, bark beetles in the West) are already harming ecosystems.<sup>77</sup>



### BROKEN INFRASTRUCTURE

Sea level rise, storm surge, and heavy downpours are causing billions of dollars of damage to U.S. infrastructure. Climate change is projected to further intensify this infrastructure damage.<sup>78</sup>



### ATTACK ON INDIGENOUS CULTURES

Climate change is undermining indigenous ways of life by altering the environment. Language, ceremonies, cultures, practices, and food sources that evolved in concert with the environment are being placed at risk.<sup>79</sup>

## FEELING THE HEAT

Since climate scientists first began warning about human-caused climate change in the 1970s, the world has been reticent to heed their calls and reduce our greenhouse gas emissions. And today, we're starting to feel the heat.

We use three ways to measure global surface temperature and all of them tell us that the earth has warmed since 1880.<sup>80</sup> The ten warmest years on record having occurred since 2000. Most of the U.S. has recently incurred unprecedented periods of high temperatures, heavy downpours, or drought.<sup>82</sup>

Today, ice sheets in Antarctica are melting. In 2014, climate scientists reported that a large section of a Western Antarctica ice sheet began

melting and that it is now impossible to curtail the melting of this particular section. Scientists predict that this ice sheet will destabilize neighboring ice sheets, leading to sea-levels rising by as much as 10 feet. Notably, scientists have warned about the impact of human-caused climate change on this particular ice sheet since 1978.<sup>83</sup>

The reverberations of climate change are not felt in Antarctica and America alone. Rising seas have also overtaken other parts of the world, like the Pacific Islands, where freshwater supplies are being inundated with undrinkable saltwater.<sup>84</sup> Alarming, recent episodes of armed conflicts have also been linked to climate change impacts. For example, the scarcity of resources in Sudan (triggered by desertification) helped precipitate a prolonged civil war and massive waves of refugees.<sup>85</sup>

If these climatic proof points are not conclusive enough to demonstrate that climate change is here, then consider this: the U.S. government is currently arming itself for climate change. Confidential Department of Defense documents leaked by Edward Snowden reveal the government is preparing for “future resource wars over water, food, and energy” caused by climate change.<sup>86</sup>

The Department of Defense warns that the resource shortages triggered by climate change could lead to “anti-government ideologies” that “threaten government stability.” Leaked documents reveal that the government is currently training 20,000 troops to respond to the civil unrest that they predict climate change will help engender.<sup>87</sup>

Although the world witnessed public calls for diplomacy during the 2015 United Nations Conference on Climate Change, Snowden’s leaked documents highlight that our government is simultaneously preparing for climate change by developing militarized tactics to subdue people who care about climate change action.<sup>88</sup> This leaked intelligence implores we the people to call for a more tenable solution.

## THE IMPERATIVE FOR ACTION

Put simply, if immediate action is not taken to substantially reduce our greenhouse gas emissions, we’re fucked. The overwhelming majority of climate scientists warn that simply keeping on with today’s business-as-usual will bring us to the feared climatic “tipping point” of mass extinctions, melting ice caps and unbearable living conditions.<sup>89</sup>

Scientists also tell us that: “the choices we make today will affect the amount of greenhouse gases we put in the atmosphere in the near future and for years to come.”<sup>90</sup> These climate scientists tell us that even with immediate action, we will still incur climate change impacts. They also tell us if we take meaningful action soon, then we can avert some of climate change’s most dire impacts.<sup>91</sup>

Heeding the call of the scientific community, global leaders started making some action toward a meaningful climate solution at the 2015 United Nations Conference on Climate Change. For the first time in the world’s history, representatives from 195 countries acknowledged the importance of climate change and reached a landmark accord committing their nations to lower greenhouse gas emissions.<sup>92</sup>

A milestone accomplishment, the accord is alleged to stop the atmosphere from warming to more than 3.6 degrees Fahrenheit over the preindustrial average.<sup>93</sup> 3.6 degrees marks the tipping point where scientists warn of irreversible climate impacts like melting ice, rising sea levels, increased flooding, and supply shortages.<sup>94</sup>

While the 2015 accord is widely acknowledged to be a critical step to drive climate change action, it is also widely recognized to fall short of some key steps that are requisite for lasting climate progress. Shortcomings include:

- The accord lacks any enforcement mechanism to ensure that the greenhouse gas reduction commitments are actually achieved.<sup>95</sup>
- Entire industries with significant greenhouse gas emissions, such as aviation and maritime, are entirely omitted from the agreement.<sup>96</sup>
- Not all sections of the agreement are legally binding; meaning that future elected leaders could renege on their nation’s commitments at anytime.<sup>97</sup>

These potentially fatalistic deficiencies urge us to ask: is token action that falls short of achieving climate justice more insidious than taking no action at all?

Recognizing that this tentative framework fails to tackle climate change’s most harmful impacts, the chart on the following page visualizes the amount of projected carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) atmospheric concentrations under two scenarios: business-as-usual with zero action taken and revolutionary change to rein in our emissions in a monumental way.<sup>98</sup>

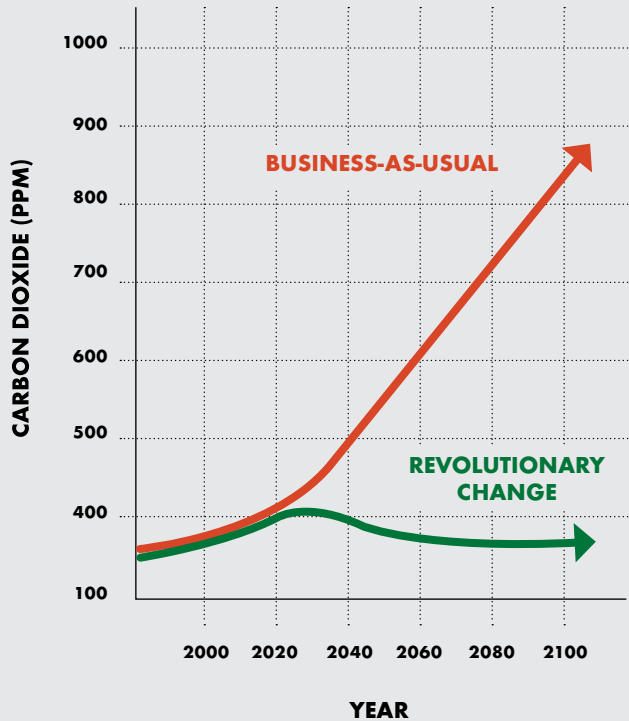
CO<sub>2</sub> measurement is a fitting indicator of climate change progress because it is the primary greenhouse gas that is emitted from human activity. The importance of CO<sub>2</sub> is especially paramount because over 80% of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions come from this particular source.<sup>100</sup>

As the chart on the following page highlights, the unchecked release of CO<sub>2</sub> is projected to bring the world to 800 parts per million (ppm is a ratio of carbon dioxide molecules to all other molecules in the atmosphere). 800 ppm leads us to the feared climatic tipping point of unbearable living conditions.<sup>101</sup>

On the other hand, the revolutionary reduction of our emissions would result in bringing our current 400-ppm levels of CO<sub>2</sub> down to 350-ppm – a target widely acknowledged by scientific experts as the necessary level for our future.<sup>102, 103</sup>



## PROJECTED ATMOSPHERIC CO<sup>2</sup> CONCENTRATIONS



To give some more flavor between the difference of what 800-ppm and 350-ppm means, the table at right overlays climate change with the same issues we examined in the Capitalism at Work table.

The table at right underscores how the problems we face today will either be magnified or alleviated by the business-as-usual or revolutionary pathway.

## CLIMATE CHANGE SCENARIOS

### TODAY'S PROBLEM

### BUSINESS-AS-USUAL

(CO<sub>2</sub> CONCENTRATIONS RISE TO 800 PPM)

### REVOLUTIONARY CHANGE

(CO<sub>2</sub> CONCENTRATIONS REDUCE TO 350 PPM)

#### INEQUALITY IS RISING

Low-income and at-risk communities are most impacted by climate change's injurious impacts.<sup>104</sup>

Innovations to reduce greenhouse gas emissions promote job growth and drive economic opportunities.

#### PEOPLE ARE BEING TICKED

Fat cats continue spend substantial sums of money to propagate climate change myths.<sup>105</sup>

Raising awareness about climate change helps spur national and international policies to address the issue.

#### PEOPLE ARE BEING DIVIDED

Climate change is projected to cause mass migrations and social turmoil: further dividing we the people.<sup>106</sup>

People band together to tackle climate change and rein in our greenhouse gas emissions.

#### CIVIL RIGHTS ARE UNDER ATTACK

The Pentagon is already training 20,000 troops to subdue climate rebels. Civil rights continue to crumble.<sup>107</sup>

Improved living conditions and a better quality of life curtail the need for repressive governments to subdue climate change activists.

#### ARMED CONFLICT IS INCREASING

Armed conflict is rises as much as 50% due to variations in climate and precipitation.<sup>108</sup>

Reducing greenhouse gas emissions has a direct correlation to curtail episodes of armed conflict.

## CLIMATE CHANGE SCENARIOS CONT.

### GOVERNMENT IS PARALYZED

Despite the overwhelming amount of scientific evidence, some Members of Congress continue to deny that climate change exists.<sup>109</sup>

People's demand for climate change action helps to compel our leaders to take the much-needed steps toward progress.

### FOOD & WATER JEOPARDIZED

Climate change substantially interrupts food production and reduces the amount of available drinking water.<sup>110</sup>

Sustainable farming practices are implemented to minimize environmental degradation.

### HUMAN-CAUSED CLIMATE CHANGE IS OCCURRING

All of the problems outlined throughout this table continue to magnify, leading to unlivable conditions.

Solving climate change means taking significant and courageous actions to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions.

## CAPITALISM = CLIMATE CHAOS

If climate change poses such substantial and immediate threats, why is so little action being taken to solve this problem? Further, why is the 2015 United Nations climate accord at such grave risk of failure?

Despite the overwhelming evidence of human-caused climate change, there is not a widespread public outcry for progress. Only 44% of Americans believe that humans are causing this problem.<sup>111</sup> In a perplexing point of

comparison, polling indicates that 77% of Americans believe that there are signs that aliens have visited our earth.<sup>112</sup>

To better understand the underpinnings of zany numbers such as these, we must revisit *A Rebel Handbook's* central antagonist, capitalism. Today, there are over 90 anti-climate change organizations in the U.S. operating with an annual budget of over \$900 million who are actively spreading climate change myths.<sup>113</sup>

Why, in today's status quo, would fat cats want to drop so much money simply to spread a whole bunch of hullabaloo? The answer is surprisingly simple: tackling climate change means changing business-as-usual and there are lots of fat cats who fail to see the market opportunity that lies with radical economic and social-based innovation.

Coincidentally, some of the most influential climate mythologists are fat cats with ties to the same industries directly responsible releasing large amounts of greenhouse gas emissions.<sup>114</sup> According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency: deforestation, industrial processes, and large-scale agricultural practices are all responsible for contributing to climate change. By far, the largest greenhouse gas emissions stems from burning coal, oil, and natural gas for energy.<sup>115,116</sup>

The lengths that fat cats in these industries have gone to in order to propagate climate mistruths ought to raise eyebrows. Recent reports suggest that large oil companies have known about the perils of climate change since the 1970s and have actively worked to hide its risks from the general public.<sup>117</sup>

Other fossil-fuel-hungry industries have gone even further to conceal inconvenient climate truths. For example, Volkswagen was caught red-handed

installing clandestine software into their cars in order to sidestep legally required greenhouse gas emissions testing. As a result, cars with this secret software emitted up to 40 times the allowable levels of pollution before the crime was uncovered in 2015.<sup>118</sup>

Some difficult questions arise when recognizing the direct hand of fat cats in human-caused climate change. But topics like if it is greedy individuals or the nature of capitalism itself that perpetuates climate inaction are complex ones to deliberate. As such, this is fodder for further discussion (examined more extensively in Part III on page 119, where we weigh the merits of capitalist and post-capitalist solutions).

At this point of the rebel fight, the bigger and most pressing takeaway is that no meaningful and substantial climate change action is being taken in today's rendition of capitalism. There are fat cats among us who are actively working to derail tenable climate solutions. The longer revolutionary change is delayed, the more injurious the impacts of climate change will become.

**“MAN IS A PART OF NATURE, AND HIS WAR AGAINST NATURE IS INEVITABLY A WAR AGAINST HIMSELF.”**

RACHEL CARSON



**“HOPE WILL NEVER BE SILENT.”**

HARVEY MILK

W H E R E :

# SEA TO SHINING SEA

The “where” is fairly straightforward: everywhere. As we have discussed, climate change will impact the entire planet – necessitating rebels from all corners of the world to link arms in our demand for a just future.

Today’s implementation of capitalism is marked by the relentless pursuit of global growth and expansion in order to maximize revenue. From clear-cutting forests in the Amazon, to natural resource disputes in the South China Sea, to recent attempts to mine minerals from asteroids in outer space – the tentacles of hungry fat cats and the environmental degradation caused by these exploits reach far and wide.<sup>119, 120, 121</sup>

As the result, the “where” is focused quite broadly: wherever there is

capitalism, there should also be people questioning the status quo and helping to drive progress. One particularly acute place of focus is the United States. As one of the world’s largest greenhouse gas emitters, the U.S. has a clear and integral role to play in helping to address greenhouse gas emissions.<sup>122</sup>

As the world’s wealthiest nation (measured by gross domestic product), the U.S. also represents the epicenter of modern capitalism.<sup>123</sup> However, we would be shortsighted if we did not also consider America’s rippling economic impact on other countries throughout the world when identifying the nature of global inequality.

In the subsections that follow, we examine what it means to question the status quo as a rebel in America.

We also explore what impact this concentrated power of wealth has on other countries by looking at economic theories like externalized costs. Importantly, we highlight how social media tools like Facebook and Twitter enable rebels to be connected everywhere in the world with unprecedented ease and affordability.

While the economics of externalities, technicalities of greenhouse gas emissions, and nuances of social media and can grow quite intricate in nature, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. summed it up quite simply during the Civil Rights struggle of the 1960s with his notion to pursue justice everywhere.<sup>124</sup>

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*“INJUSTICE  
ANYWHERE IS  
A THREAT  
TO JUSTICE  
EVERYWHERE.”*

DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.

## REBELS IN AMERICA

When reading through the colossal injustices we face in the Things Suck chapter on page 15, it can be easy to become overwhelmed. Someone might be inclined to make a statement like: “I’m just one person. The actions I take in my community cannot singlehandedly solve climate change or counter the big-time injustices inequality.”

If you yourself have a predisposition to make a statement such as this, you’re not wrong. One singular person can admittedly not solve massive issues like climate change. But being a rebel in America is not solely about working to tackle the biggest problems we face. Being a rebel in America is also about living out the words prescribed by Dr. Martin King Jr.: calling out all injustices, from the minute to the massive, when we bear witness.

For these readers that might remain unconvinced that localized injustices can and do occur in this great nation, the three examples below are intended to showcase the myriad of injustices we faced in 2015.

- **CENSORSHIP IN ACTION (NJ):** When insurrection occurs, like the people’s response to the police shooting of unarmed Michael Brown in Missouri, those in power like to curtail the people’s voice. Consider Trenton,

New Jersey for example: where an approved and installed mural commemorating Michael Brown was sandblasted away by authorities.<sup>125</sup>

- **SHAKING PEOPLE’S HOMES (OK):** The stories of environmental degradation in America are vast and numerous. Take Oklahoma for instance, which experienced over 500 earthquakes in 2014, placing both people and property at risk. The Oklahoma state government conceded that the state’s exponential rise in earthquakes is “very likely” caused by fracking for natural gas.<sup>126, 127</sup>
- **POLITICAL MALFEASANCE (MO):** Political injustices occur across states, in large cities, and in small towns. Let us consider what transpired in the small town of Parma, Missouri as one example. In November 2015, Tyus Byrd was elected to serve as the first African-American Mayor of Parma, replacing a politician who served as mayor for 37 years. Just hours before her swearing in ceremony, five out of the six town’s all-white police force quit and other municipal officials resigned.<sup>128, 129</sup>

Whether you are already aware of these three particular injustices or the stories are news to you, these disparate incidents are intended to help illustrate the range of grievances we rebels incur on a daily basis and the geographic diversity in which they happen.

By sounding the alarm about either specific or system-wide injustices, one voice helps to call out the problems we face, raises awareness around these issues, and creates linkages between seemingly disparate injustices. However, doing so across our 3,500,000+ square mile nation is not the simplest task.<sup>130</sup>

When America’s first rebels were fighting the rebel fight in the 1700s, their struggle centered within the confines of just 13 colonies. During the American Revolution, community-based militias were formed across the colonies. Instead of traveling far and wide, rebel militias remained in their hometowns to safeguard their local communities.<sup>131</sup>

While our country is certainly a whole lot larger today than it was then, the American revolutionary tactics of community solidarity, skepticism of authority, and co-operative self-help are still germane. The rebel fight for progress greatly benefits from people keeping their eyes open for injustices and crying foul if injustices occur within their communities. Unlike rebels

from the 1700s, no guns are required today: we have other rebel tools to raise awareness, like social media and nonviolent rebel jokes.

From the street corners of small towns, to the remote wilderness locations of capitalism's environmental exploits, to the centers of big cities – we rebels have long been there and we will continue to be there, roaring the rebel roar. And one of the best perks: no commuting time or travel expense required.

## REBELS IN THE WORLD

With America sitting at the epicenter of today's capitalist exploits, many of the strategies in this handbook are designed to target capitalism in America. These tactics can and should be reworked and repositioned because rebels of the world are equally critical to the success of the rebel fight.

There are two central reasons why rebels in America and rebels throughout the world need to link arms to combat the multitude of injustices we face today. One is that global action is needed to rein in the sum total of our greenhouse gas emissions and truly

**“CLIMATE CHANGE DOES NOT RESPECT BORDER; IT DOES NOT RESPECT WHO ARE RICH AND POOR, SMALL AND BIG. THEREFORE, THIS IS WHAT WE CALL ‘GLOBAL CHALLENGES,’ WHICH REQUIRE GLOBAL SOLIDARITY.” BAN KI-MOON**

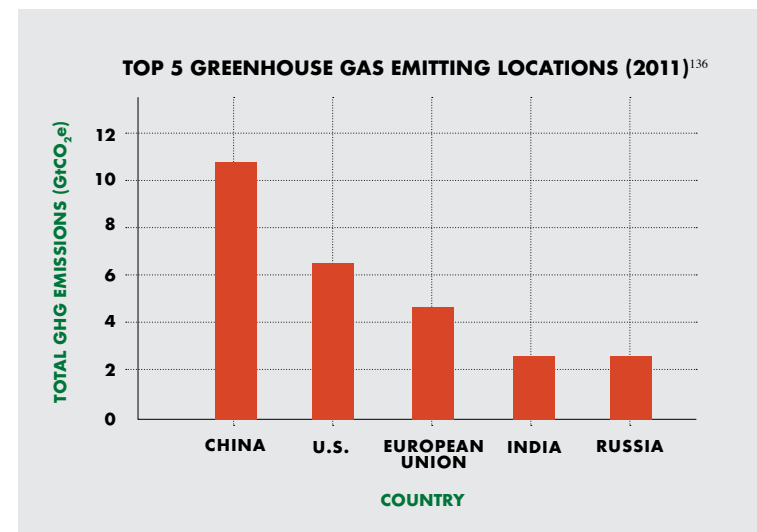
tackle climate change. The other is that today's implementation of capitalism in America has a direct impact on people all over the world.<sup>132</sup>

As discussed earlier in the Climate Change chapter on page 27, human-induced climate change started really revving to life during the Industrial Revolution – and America had a key hand in defining the age of industrialization.<sup>133</sup> Since the Industrial Revolution first began, humans have increased atmospheric carbon dioxide concentrations by approximately a third from pre-industrial levels.<sup>134</sup>

While early industrializers like the U.S. and Europe might not have as many carbon-polluting factories and incidents of compromised air quality that they once did when helping to birth the Industrial Revolution, the smoke stacks of Industrialization have not disappeared. They have simply migrated over to other countries.<sup>135</sup>

Today, some of the nations with ever-increasing greenhouse gas emissions are ones that are themselves going through the transformative process of increasing their manufacturing output.<sup>136</sup> With the luxury of retrospect in America's own episode of industrialization, there is an opportunity to learn from the past and help avert some of the harmful externalities generally tethered to industrialization.

For example, industrialization typically goes hand in hand with the painful reality of externalizing costs (like the price of polluting, child labor, and unlivable wages). Costs like these are not often reflected on the price tag of what's for sale in stores today. But if enough rebels around the world are roaring the rebel roar against injustice and inequality, we the people stand a greater chance of bringing attention to issues such as these. By doing so, we can help avert inhumane working conditions and environmental injustice.



## REBELS ON THE WORLD WIDE WEB

What do the Triangle Fire in New York, NY and seemingly unrelated factory collapse in Dhaka, Bangladesh have in common? In the case of the 1911 Triangle Fire, over 100 garment workers burned to death inside a New York City factory.<sup>137</sup> In the 2013 Bangladesh incident, a structurally unsound factory collapsed and over 1,000 garment workers lost their lives.<sup>138</sup>

Although separated by space and time, both incidents resulted in a significant loss of life for at-risk workers and underscore the ongoing struggle for workplace justice in the labor movement.<sup>139, 140</sup> In each case, workers faced hazardous conditions to drive down consumer costs (locked doors in New York and an unsafe building in Dhaka). Both also embody the externalized costs of capitalism in action.

Seemingly disjointed injustices can be overlaid and better understood when we employ social media to connect the dots between the true costs of commodities under capitalism. Entirely new conversations can take place with social media, like how the geography of externalized costs has shifted between 1911 and 2013.

The online world presents opportunities for rebels to band together like never before, soaring above geographi-

cally bounded constraints and bringing together various outcries of injustice. For example, police involvement in the geographically dispersed fatalities of U.S. citizens like Eric Garner, Michael Brown, and Freddie Gray have amplified into a unified call for action with the World Wide Web.<sup>141</sup>

Rebels throughout the world can now communicate and collaborate on ideas more easily. Conversations no longer have to be led by global world leaders or capitalist executives flying from country to country. As a result, rebel strategies designed for one community can be reworked and shared online to be more impactful in another community or country. Success with any specific rebel struggle can be disseminated widely to share lessons learned. And injustices can be broadcasted immediately when they occur.

Some rebels face political landscapes dominated by repressiveness and censorship. However, with the advent of the online world, rebels in some areas can more easily navigate through these roadblocks. When possible, they can share stories of the rebel struggle and learn how to safely and effectively pursue social change in their home communities.

The world is counting on it.

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*“CENSORSHIP IS SAYING: ‘I’M THE ONE WHO SAYS THE LAST SENTENCE. WHATEVER YOU SAY, THE CONCLUSION IS MINE.’ BUT THE INTERNET IS LIKE A TREE THAT IS GROWING. THE PEOPLE WILL ALWAYS HAVE THE LAST WORD - EVEN IF SOMEONE HAS A VERY WEAK, QUIET VOICE. SUCH POWER WILL COLLAPSE BECAUSE OF A WHISPER.”* AI WEIWEI



**“NEVER DOUBT THAT A SMALL GROUP OF  
THOUGHTFUL, COMMITTED CITIZENS CAN  
CHANGE THE WORLD; INDEED, IT’S THE  
ONLY THING THAT EVER HAS.”**

MARGARET MEAD

W H O :

# REBELS AND NON-REBELS

Unlike capitalism, which is often nebulous and difficult for people to define, the word rebel often evokes immediate concern or sharp criticism. We rebels are called liars by some climate change skeptics. We are labeled as troublemakers and rule-breakers. But ultimately, most rebels are simply concerned citizens who dare to question the status quo.

During America’s last revolution, people were broadly classified as loyalists or rebels. Loyalists, or non-rebels, were married to the status quo and did not rally behind American Independence. Rebels fought for the change that established the United States of America.

We’re faced with a similar plight around the myriad of problems we face today. Rebels: let the fun begin.

Non-rebels: you’re invited to join the rebel fun anytime.

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*“THE FIRST  
RESISTANCE  
TO SOCIAL  
CHANGE IS TO  
SAY IT’S NOT  
NECESSARY.”*

GLORIA STEINEM

## NON-REBELS

- Non-rebels do not believe today's problems are real.
- Non-rebels may be scared about today's problems but are under the illusion that there is not anything they can do to help.
- Non-rebels are loyalists committed to the status quo.
- Non-rebels may be too afraid to take action or too apathetic. They may be cynics who do not believe that change is possible.
- Non-rebels are generally the ultra-wealthy: the 1% of American's we discussed earlier that hold 40% of our country's wealth.<sup>142</sup> They may be the CEOs of large corporation making hundreds of millions of dollars a year.<sup>143</sup>
- Non-rebels include the oligarchs who have taken our government hostage, like that 1% of American's who contributed 68% of all United States election funding in 2012.<sup>144</sup>
- Non-rebels are Democrat or Republican leaders collecting campaign contributions from this 1%. There were 435 House

Elections in 2012. The candidates that outspent their opponents won 95% of them.<sup>145</sup>

- Non-rebels are also people who safeguard the 1%. They may be police officers, FBI agents, or soldiers.
- Non-rebels are anyone that has been sold on the idea that there is no way of doing business better than the way it is done today.
- Non-rebels are people with the freedom to switch teams and become rebels.

## REBELS

- Rebels are people that know how to have fun.
- Rebels come from all walks of life. Old and young, tall and short, conservative and liberal. Anyone from any race, religion, gender, or sexuality can enlist in the rebel fight.
- Rebels question why things are the way they are and dare to dream that the world can become a better place.
- Rebels are the 99%. We are the majority and we are agents of change.
- Rebels can be parents who take action to protect their children's future, or children who take action because they see the imperative for progress.
- Rebels are individuals who demand that all people have equal political, social, and economic freedoms – regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, creed, religion, age, or disability.
- Rebels might be academics who have learned that studies without action are not enough to incubate progress. This includes climate scientists who are ready to come out of hiding and agitate about the imminent need for climate action.
- Rebels could be families who have suffered from the pangs of hunger and are ready to demand their slice of the American Dream.
- Rebels can be immigrants that implore their fellow citizens for a level playing field to advance upon. Rebels could also be any of the 60 million refugees that question a status quo in which they are driven from their homes by war and persecution.<sup>146</sup>

- Rebels are indigenous peoples who organize to stop being trampled on by capitalism's way of doing business.
- Rebels are musicians, artists, dancers, and poets who help inspire us for change.
- Rebels are people who work together and have each other's back. They put petty differences aside and unite to work together for a global good.
- Rebels are nonviolent because they know that words and jokes, not weapons, ultimately win the war.
- Rebels do not simply complain about today's problems: they drive progress with disruptive innovations.
- Rebels have fun. Rebels create change.





**“IF YOU WANT TO TELL PEOPLE  
THE TRUTH, MAKE THEM LAUGH.  
OTHERWISE, THEY’LL KILL YOU.”**

OSCAR WILDE

H O W :

# **FUN, CAPITALISM’S KRYPTONITE**

**T**he “how” is easier than anyone who dictates our status quo wants us to think. The how is based on identifying the pillars that hold up capitalism and utilizing the principles of social change to disrupt these pillars. If we rebels chip away at the pillars that prop up capitalism, these actions help call out are perilous status quo and demonstrate that we the people stand ready for change.

In equally good news: the how is much more fun than fat cats would like people to think. Laughter has and always will be more everlasting than a bullet. And this, in essence, is our how.

Here, we identify the pillars of capitalism and tenets of social change,

and examine why fun ends up making social change a more powerful force to counter the myriad of injustices we face today.

## **CAPITALISM’S PILLARS**

Capitalism requires the success of businesses, the stability of government and the cooperation of workers. Capitalism’s twelve core pillars are outlined on the following page.



## BUSINESS

### PROFIT:

Businesses need to generate profit to stay in business.

### OWNERSHIP:

Business profit is contingent on capitalists owning economic assets, thus the concept of things like “private” property.

### CAPITAL:

Businesses need to raise capital to continue expanding. Think: lines of credit and the stock market.

### EFFICIENCY:

Time is money in capitalism. The more efficient a business can be, the more profit they stand to make.



## GOVERNMENT

### TAXES:

Government needs money to operate and it primarily collects these funds through taxes and fees.

### RULES:

Capitalism thrives on stability so it creates a set of rules for people to obey. For example, imposing an early curfew for rebels.

### ENFORCEMENT:

Government needs to be able to enforce its rule in order to keep capitalism as the ruling party.

### CURRENCY:

Capitalism runs on currency: the exchange of money between people is what keeps capitalism going.



## WORKERS

### CONSUMPTION:

The more people consume, the more their money helps pay other capitalists. Capitalism relies on this consumption.

### VOTING:

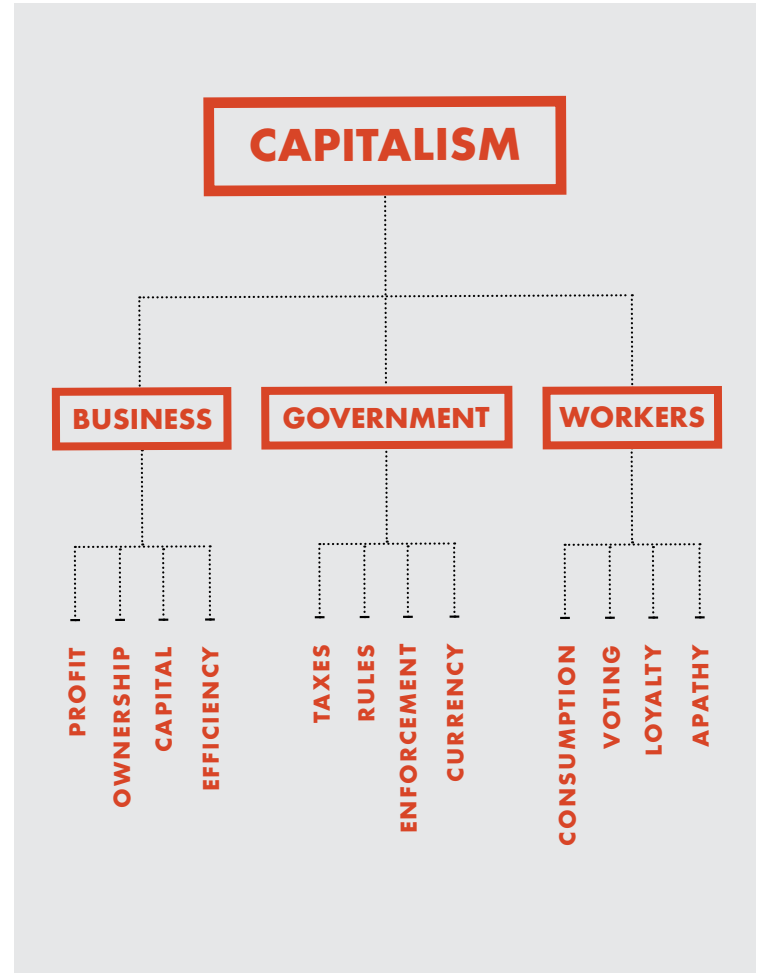
Voting helps keep capitalist government’s running: people have to support capitalist candidates to legitimize a victory.

### LOYALTY:

Capitalism wins if people think it’s the best way to live.

### APATHY:

If people have stable jobs and a decent quality of life, they’re not as likely to question capitalism or break the rules.



## THE CHAIN OF SOCIAL CHANGE

The chain of social change is based on simple and historically proven principles. Each of the strategies in the handbook is rooted in these principles because rebels linking together are stronger than capitalism's shaky foundation.<sup>147</sup>

### CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE:

Civil disobedience is about taking direct action and daring to disavow laws that are widely understood to be unjust. For example, breaking the Jim Crow laws (1890-1965) that legally called for African-American segregation. The premise of civil disobedience is that when lots of people start to say no to orders, compliance cannot be forced upon us.

### GUERRILLA TACTICS:

Successful social change movements generally employ clever and cunning guerrilla tactics that can outmatch and outpace the cumbersome bureaucracy of larger systems, like capitalism. The premise behind guerrilla warfare is that targeted disruptions that require few people can still have a strong punch. With historical roots in warfare itself, guerrilla tactics have burgeoned to include nonviolent strategies like performance art and guerrilla gardening.

### COMMUNITY ORGANIZING:

Movements are only successful if they organize lots of people. People working together are more effective than people working apart. There are lots of people fighting for different areas of social change today. Unifying around a singular theme, like capitalism, helps to grow rebel ranks.

### NONVIOLENCE:

Thinking about bringing a knife to the drone fight? Think twice because you'll most certainly lose. But that's ok, because organizing through nonviolence has proven to be more effective (think about the civil right success in the '60s against those unjust Jim Crow laws). Rebels should not only use nonviolence because it helps us win, but also because of our moral compass. How can we be agents of positive change if we perpetuate violence and harm?

### GENERATING AWARENESS:

Ultimately, all social change is for naught if the tactics employed do not help to raise awareness. Generating public awareness helps earn support and grows the ranks of rebels.



## CAPITALISM'S BORING TACTICS

*VERSES*

### FUN REBELS IN ACTION

Rebels have been at the rebel fight throughout our nation's history. American-Indian Wars. Shay's Rebellion. The Underground Railroad. The Bonus Army. Pullman Strike. Civil Right's Movement. Alcatraz Occupation ('69). WTO Summit. Occupy. Ferguson. Now. To name a few.

Fat cats have billions of dollars at stake and they always get scared when people start expressing discontent with the way that they've been running the show. Capitalism has generally beaten back us rebels in the same old way with the same old tactics. Check out the two photos at right to see how little had changed in their strategy from 1999 to 2012.



*America's Rebels (1999) World Trade Organization Summit. Seattle, WA.*

### Rebels: Laughter > Pepper Spray

*OUR FIGHT IS NOT NEW BUT  
OUR TACTICS ARE REVAMPED.  
WE'RE FOCUSED ON HAVING  
FUN AND TRYING TO MAKE  
CAPITALISTS LAUGH FOR ONE  
OF THE FIRST TIMES IN THE  
REBEL STRUGGLE.*



*America's Rebels (2012) Occupy Protests. Davis, CA.*

## FUN, CAPITALISM'S KRYPTONITE

Capitalism's survival is dependent on finding winning ways to beat back social change strategies. And capitalists have found lots of powerful tactics against classic social change methods. Cleverly, they often manage to do so without infringing upon the First Amendment protections of speech, press, and assembly.<sup>148</sup>

Take the case they make to try and persuade someone to sit out a protest, for example. Showing up to a protest is not inherently illegal, but getting pepper sprayed in the face at a protest blows. In fact, it sucks so much that lots of people might think twice about participating in the first place.

And consider what capitalists did to neutralize another rebel classic: hunger strikes. Capitalists watched Mahatma Gandhi use hunger strikes to nonviolently disrupt colonialism in India and they certainly wanted to find a way to stop a repeat.<sup>149</sup>

Now fast-forward to what capitalists do to hunger strikers in the present day. Jihad Ahmed Mujstafa Diyah was held for over 12 years at Guantanamo Bay without a trial. In protest, he went on a hunger strike. In response, the U.S. Government ruled that Diyah could be force-fed, effectively taking

away his singular right to dissent. The force-feeding procedure involved strapping Diyah into a restraint chair and inserting a tube through his nose and down his throat.<sup>150, 151</sup>

Some classic social change tactics, such as hunger strikes, have been rendered inert. But here's some good news: even though hunger strikes were once a preferred social change tactic, there are other nonviolent tactics that can be safer.

Today, becoming a rebel for progress does not have to go hand-in-hand with pepper spray or hunger strikes. Contrary to what fat cats might tell us, the road to progress can actually be a lot of fun. With this in mind, the strategies in *A Rebel's Handbook* are dually designed to disrupt capitalism's pillars and to have fun.

That's largely because capitalism's biggest weak point is that it takes itself too seriously. As you'll see in Part II on page 61, pranks, jokes, and laughter are all very dangerous forces for capitalism. If we can have fun AND disrupt capitalism, then we are at the beginning of an entirely new chapter in the rebel fight toward progress.

Though we rebels might march onward with the fortification of laughter, our forward steps for progress do not come at the expense of forgetting the rebel past and the countless sacrifices that have been made. While the high-pressure fire hoses and police dogs unleashed on nonviolent civil rights protesters in the 1960s is the antithesis of fun, the courage demonstrated by our rebel forebears remains everlasting.<sup>152</sup>

Mahatma Gandhi's rebel work in India serves as another beacon of hope from our rebel past. In 1930, Gandhi's enduring Salt March against British colonialism precipitated the arrests of nearly 60,000 dissidents in the months that followed. Gandhi's nonviolent act of civil disobedience during the Salt March were cunning and simple: breaking an unjust law that prevented Indians from collecting and selling salt in order to disrupt British profit margins.<sup>153</sup>

The making of salt in 1930s and standing up to water canons in the 1960s urges us rebels to acknowledge the historical sacrifices that have been made, and that will doubtlessly continue to be made in the ongoing rebel struggle for progress. This reality of risk grows all the more acute today: the powers that imperil progress demonstrate an ever-increasing willfulness to pepper spray us, force-feed us, and spy on us.

Despite the formidable power of those who impede the inevitability of progress, any attempt to subdue our rebel roar is ultimately in vain. No one can ever take away our freedom to smile and make someone else laugh with a rebel joke. The indelible power of laughter is an unbreakable foundation with which a pathway to progress can be built upon.

Rebels: if we're not laughing, we're losing.

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**“STRENGTH DOES NOT COME FROM PHYSICAL CAPACITY. IT COMES FROM AN INDOMITABLE WILL.”** MAHATMA GANDHI



PART II: GET SET

# REBEL ROAR

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**"IF YOUR REGIME IS NOT STRONG  
ENOUGH TO HANDLE A JOKE,  
THEN YOU HAVE NO REGIME."**

JON STEWART



**“THE TIME IS NEAR AT HAND WHICH  
MUST DETERMINE WHETHER AMERICANS  
ARE TO BE FREE MEN OR SLAVES.”**

GEORGE WASHINGTON

WHAT :

# REBEL HEATSHEET

**T**he 21 strategies in Part II are all designed to be fun and funny. Capitalism may hold billions of dollars and enough bombs to wreck the world, but laughter makes fat cats shake in their boots. Because humor is the one thing that capitalism, try as it might, can never eradicate.

With the principles of capitalism and social change in mind, the Rebel Heat-sheet offers 21 social change strategies to disrupt the assumptions around capitalism’s most vital pillars. The rebel fight is fortified by having fun: the key rebel ingredient in all 21 strategies.

The Heatsheet is divided into a four-step process to build lasting social change:

## **A) DISSENT:**

Social change begins by regular people deciding that they themselves are ready to raise their voice and take direct action.

## **B) COMBINE FORCES:**

Social change only succeeds when lots of people organize and unite around one problem, like capitalism.

## **C) CRACK JOKES:**

Social change will only win if a movement can identify their opponent’s weakest point. Humor is capitalism’s kryptonite.

## **D) VIVA LA REVOLUTION:**

Social change movements will only succeed if something entirely new can be put forward that’s better than today’s business-as-usual.

The Rebel Heatsheet on the following sums up all 21 strategies. The lowdown and As, Bs, and Cs of each tactic are explained more fully throughout Part II.

- **REBEL:**  
Provides the “how to” for each tactic.
- **DISRUPT CAPITALISM:**  
Explains why the tactic disrupts our status quo.
- **HAVE FUN:**  
If we rebels stop having fun, we’re losing.

Every tactic also includes a “bonus” because there’s always room for rebel creativity to improve and refine our rebel tactics (like taking a strategy that works well in one particular place and reworking it for another location).

Rebels: you’ve finished Part I, which was all about getting ready. Now you’re into Part II, all about beginning to roar the rebel roar. Are you set?

# REBEL HEATSHEET

HAVE FUN	DISRUPT CAPITALISM
<b>A) DISSENT: SPEAK OUT</b>	
<b>1) Smile, Be Happy</b>	Making people smile with random acts of kindness <b>DISRUPTS</b> capitalism’s myth that strangers are unkind.
<b>2) Walk on the Wild Side</b>	Learning local laws and defying the silly ones <b>DISRUPTS</b> capitalism’s meme to “follow the rules.”
<b>3) Get Weird</b>	Embracing funky styles, like spoof suits, <b>DISRUPTS</b> capitalism’s boring fashion rules.
<b>4) Take a Dive</b>	Recycling strategies, like dumpster diving, <b>DISRUPTS</b> capitalism’s drive for constant consumption.
<b>B) COMBINE FORCES: ORGANIZE</b>	
<b>5) Do a Little Dance, Make A Little Love</b>	Participating in “spontaneous” flash mobs <b>DISRUPTS</b> capitalism’s control of public spaces.
<b>6) Forward March</b>	Staging catchy protests with clever costumes <b>DISRUPTS</b> capitalism’s determination to hide from the media.
<b>7) Curb Penalty Fees*</b>	Filling empty meters to sidestep parking tickets <b>DISRUPTS</b> capitalism’s ability to collect government revenue.



# REBEL HEATSHEET (CONT'D)

HAVE FUN	DISRUPT CAPITALISM
<b>8) Pop a Squat</b>	Squatting with friends <b>DISRUPTS</b> capitalism's definition of property rights.
<b>9) Strike a Match</b>	Burning symbolic objects with Flag Burn Parties <b>DISRUPTS</b> capitalism's dependency for public apathy.
<b>C) CRACK JOKES: PUNCHY PRANKS</b>	
<b>10) Applaud Your Adversaries</b>	Issuing satirical awards, like "polluter of the year," <b>DISRUPTS</b> capitalism's plea for consumerism without question.
<b>11) Turn On, Tune In, Drop Out</b>	Surfing the web with free ad blockers <b>DISRUPTS</b> capitalism's investment in online infrastructure.
<b>12) Play Hooky</b>	Joining group hooky days out of the office <b>DISRUPTS</b> capitalism's foundation of workforce support.
<b>13) Take a Swipe</b>	Gaming classic payment methods with Penny Swipes <b>DISRUPTS</b> capitalism's insatiable appetite for cheap credit.
<b>14) Layoff The Pump</b>	Bypassing gas payments with "bike to work parties," <b>DISRUPTS</b> capitalism's bet on the stock market.

# REBEL HEATSHEET (CONT'D)

HAVE FUN	DISRUPT CAPITALISM
<b>D) VIVA LA REVOLUTION: CREATE CHANGE</b>	
<b>15) Share if You Care</b>	Using peer-to-peer platforms, like ridesharing, <b>DISRUPTS</b> capitalism's affinity for monopolies.
<b>16) Get By w/ a Little Help from Your Friends</b>	Using alternative payments, such as bartering, <b>DISRUPTS</b> capitalism's dollar dependency.
<b>17) Fix The Vote</b>	Electing funny fake leaders, like Mickey Mouse, <b>DISRUPTS</b> capitalism's legitimacy to operate.
<b>18) Fight Like a Guerrilla</b>	Developing new and nonviolent guerrilla tactics <b>DISRUPTS</b> capitalism's ability to laugh off funny rebels.
<b>19) Burn the Man</b>	Living the burner life at Burning Man <b>DISRUPTS</b> capitalism's sales-pitch that it's the best way to live.
<b>20) Brainstorm the Future</b>	Organizing rebel events to brainstorm our future <b>DISRUPTS</b> capitalism's plan to stick with business-as-usual.
<b>21) Spread the Word</b>	Writing messages in bottles to share #RebelCocktails <b>DISRUPTS</b> capitalism's attempt to stem a rebel revolution.

*\*Tactic seven is intended to be illustrative in nature in order to highlight the importance of revenue collection. Actually adding change into someone else's expired meter IS ILLEGAL and A Rebel's Handbook DOES NOT condone or encourage doing so under any circumstance.*



A) DISSENT

## **SPEAK OUT**

**SOCIAL CHANGE BEGINS BY REGULAR PEOPLE DECLARING THAT THEY THEMSELVES ARE READY TO RAISE THEIR VOICE. THE STRATEGIES IN SECTION A FOCUS ON FUN AND SIMPLE WAYS FOR YOU TO START SAYING "NO" TO CAPITALISM.**



# 1. SMILE, BE HAPPY

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MAKING PEOPLE SMILE WITH RANDOM ACTS OF KINDNESS **DISRUPTS** CAPITALISM'S MYTH THAT STRANGERS ARE UNKIND

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**THE LOWDOWN:** Helping strangers out with random acts of kindness starts breaking down the barriers that today's form of capitalism has placed between us. Think about how people typically avert their eyes from everyone on a big city subway, for example. Yet, in reality, almost any person in any city would be happy to assist you if you actually needed help. Being a rebel begins by helping other people to disrupt the myth that strangers are unkind.

## DISRUPTING CAPITALISM'S MYTH THAT STRANGERS ARE UNKIND

- A) REBEL:** Step one is an easy rebel recipe. It just takes you, a stranger, and one random act of kindness. For example: you can do something simple like hold the door open for someone you don't know. If you do, that stranger should end up smiling (Test: if they're not smiling, double check that you're not being a weirdo). Most people will smile, because the reality is this: who's not touched by someone doing something nice for someone else? Rebels: if you find yourself confronted by riot police, you can also help disarm them with unexpected kindness. How about sharing some warm coffee when you're out protesting on a cold morning?
- B) DISRUPT CAPITALISM:** Capitalism's myth that strangers are unkind or untrustworthy ends up making people feel more divided than we actually are. To put it another way, doesn't it feel like there are endless mountains and valleys dividing liberals and conservatives? But the simple reality is, we're all just people who mainly want the same old things: life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. If enough people start helping out others, our message becomes resolved: we are uniting.
- C) HAVE FUN:** Hopefully a well-intentioned act of kindness sounds more fun than boring alternatives, like watching more TV. Have you ever done a random act of kindness and watched a big smile leap onto a stranger's face?

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### BONUS POINTS (A+B+C):

Capitalism makes people get super weird with money. For a bonus, fold money into your random act of kindness to increase your disruptiveness. Hint: next time you're paying for food on a long lunch line, disrupt capitalism, and randomly treat the stranger behind you.

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*“HUMAN KINDNESS HAS NEVER WEAKENED THE STAMINA OR SOFTENED THE FIBER OF A FREE PEOPLE. A NATION DOES NOT HAVE TO BE CRUEL TO BE TOUGH.”*

FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT



## 2. WALK ON THE WILD SIDE

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LEARNING LOCAL LAWS AND DEFYING THE SILLY ONES **DISRUPTS** CAPITALISM'S MEME TO "FOLLOW THE RULES"

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**THE LOWDOWN:** Most people's default is to follow the rules and capitalism runs on this compliance. Example: plenty of people don't jaywalk, even when they can do so safely, just because the law says so. With lots of capitalists losing sleep by the constant threat of rebels breaking big-time rules (like paying taxes), we rebels can plan a surprise attack by defying silly and unenforced rules instead.

### DISRUPTING CAPITALISM'S MEME TO "FOLLOW THE RULES"

- A) REBEL:** Most people are already breaking capitalism's meme "to follow the rules" on a daily basis without even realizing it. There are so many silly laws it's hard to keep track of them. To name a couple: it is illegal to play dominos on Sundays in Alabama and to curse in front of two or more people in Mississippi.<sup>154</sup> <sup>155</sup> For this tactic, search around online for silly laws in your community. Next, consider defiance. Alabama rebels: interested in a Sunday game of dominos?
- B) DISRUPT CAPITALISM:** Capitalism is dependent on having a government that can create and enforce laws. The capitalist meme to "follow the rules" traces back to as early as the 1700s when Jean-Jacques Rousseau published one of capitalism's most revered texts, *The Social Contract*.<sup>156</sup> According to this capitalist bible, if rebels start breaking laws, then we're breaking our social contract (and making a really big headache for capitalism). Rebels throughout history have bravely defied this social contract to call out unjust laws and demonstrate how difficult it can be for authorities to enforce compliance against dissenting citizenry (like that 1930 Salt March example we discussed earlier).
- C) HAVE FUN:** Some rebels choose to question unjust laws by engaging in courageous acts of civil disobedience. Their actions generally come with severe risks like prosecution, arrest, or death. However, there are other ways that rebels can flirt with the wild side and minimize the risk of reprimand. For tactic two, have fun by identifying humorous laws that are enjoyable to break and generally unenforced. Did somebody say skinny dipping?

#### **BONUS POINTS (A+B+C):**

Identifying silly laws requires time and effort, especially because rules vary by community. For a bonus, share your research findings with other nearby rebels to help keep the good times rolling.

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*"NOTHING IS MORE DESTRUCTIVE OF RESPECT FOR THE GOVERNMENT AND THE LAW OF THE LAND THAN PASSING LAWS WHICH CANNOT BE ENFORCED."*

ALBERT EINSTEIN



### 3. GET WEIRD

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EMBRACING FUNKY STYLES, LIKE SPOOF SUITS, **DISRUPTS** CAPITALISM’S BORING FASHION RULES

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**THE LOWDOWN:** It may not seem like capitalism has a dress code at first glance, but look closer. Stockbrokers typically wear suits, cops have scary Star Wars style protest gear, judges have weird-looking medieval robes, and so on. Capitalism has an unofficial official dress code and it’s pretty darn boring. Whose not tired of having to wear tight ties and scratchy stockings? Rebels: let’s disrupt these fashion norms by getting weird.

### DISRUPTING CAPITALISM’S BORING FASHION RULES

- A) REBEL:** Disrupting capitalism’s fashion rules is fun and easy: just dress in a funky way. Whatever feels cool and liberating to you. Buzzing your hair, growing out your hair, getting a tattoo, or as Lady Gaga suggests, using sequins. No wrong way to dress here. The main name of the game is finding a fashion that’s different from capitalism’s same-old boring wardrobe. All kinds of styles should be embraced in an effort to help promote tolerance.
  
- B) DISRUPT CAPITALISM:** People who don’t dress the part don’t do to well under capitalism’s current fashion rules. Example: people with visible tattoos generally have a harder time getting a high-paying capitalist job.<sup>157</sup> Even more malignant than our right to self-expression is the prejudices perpetuated by capitalism’s fashion sensibilities. Take the Seminole Independent School District in Texas for instance. In 2014, a five-year old Native American student was sent home from his first day of kindergarten because his culturally significant ponytail was against the school district’s rules.<sup>158</sup> Taking action can help disrupt capitalisms longstanding edict for us to dress and act in a similar and stodgy way.
  
- C) HAVE FUN:** If you look back at history, rebels have not always had the best fashion sensibility. Let’s face it: military fatigues or bland worker shirts are just not the most fun. Use your fashion freedom for something new and daring. The more fun and funky you look, the more we rebels will help catch attention and raise awareness about our perilous status quo.

**BONUS POINTS (A+B+C):**

Capitalism’s fashion standards encourage buying lots of cheap and new clothing on a frequent basis. But this comes with hidden costs, like child labor and slave-like factory working conditions. For a bonus, add second-hand clothes into the rebel style. Doing so helps disrupt vicious capitalist cycles, such as externalizing costs.

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*“AND NOW, I’M JUST TRYING TO CHANGE THE WORLD, ONE SEQUIN AT A TIME.”* LADY GAGA



## 4. TAKE A DIVE

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RECYCLING STRATEGIES, LIKE DUMPSTER DIVING, **DISRUPTS** CAPITALISM'S DRIVE FOR CONSTANT CONSUMPTION

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**THE LOWDOWN:** If you ever feel tight on cash, you're not alone. That's because corporations like us to spend, spend, spend. By turning us into constant consumers, capitalists stand to make even more money. Using recycling strategies, like second-hand clothing and dumpster diving, not only saves you money: it also disrupts capitalism drive for endless consumption.

## DISRUPTING CAPITALISM'S DRIVE FOR CONSTANT CONSUMPTION

- A) REBEL:** Ready to take a dive and do something fun and different? Dumpster diving works like this: supermarkets are forced to throw out perfectly good food as their new supplies come in. They don't want people being able to take this food for free, because then stuff on supermarket shelves has less value. Some shops go as far as hiring 24-hour security guards to keep rebels away from dumpsters. But where safe, we rebels are ready to dive right in with collection bag in hand, sturdy shoes, and protective clothing in order to help disrupt capitalism's wastefulness. *Note: this rebel tactic requires some homework to fully learn the ropes – there are lots of helpful online resources to learn how to dumpster dive safely.*<sup>159</sup>
- B) DISRUPT CAPITALISM:** Capitalists hate to have anyone get anything for free because then they're not collecting money. Take the Great Depression for example, when our federal government intentionally destroyed hundreds of millions of pounds of food to keep food prices from dipping too low.<sup>160</sup> Instead, they could have shared this perfectly good food with the throngs of starving Americans.<sup>161</sup> Today, capitalist drive for constant consumption causes people to buy food in excess: around 40% of food in the U.S. is not eaten each year. This amounts to around \$165 billion in food that is purchased and just thrown away into landfills.<sup>162</sup> If rebels break the drive for constant consumption with strategies like dumpster diving, we cut right into capitalism's profit margins and highlight the problems of pervasive wastefulness.
- C) HAVE FUN:** Sure dumpster diving may be sticky and slimy, but that's part of the fun: dive in and see what treasures you'll discover. And it gets even more fun when you save money on food. What fun things will you do with your extra cash?

### BONUS POINTS (A+B+C):

There are over 46.5 million Americans at risk of hunger on a daily basis.<sup>163</sup> How about seeing if any homeless people you see on the street want some of your dumpster diving bounty? Just always make sure the food you're giving out is safe and offer a fair heads up about the source.

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*“AMERICANS WILL EAT GARBAGE, PROVIDED YOU SPRINKLE IT LIBERALLY WITH KETCHUP.” HENRY JAMES*



B) COMBINE FORCES

# ORGANIZE

**SOCIAL CHANGE ONLY SUCCEEDS WHEN LOTS OF PEOPLE ORGANIZE AND UNITE AROUND ONE PROBLEM. IN THIS CASE, CAPITALISM. THE STRATEGIES IN SECTION B ARE ALL ABOUT ORGANIZING. THEY FOCUS ON WAYS THAT REBELS CAN JOIN TOGETHER TO BE MAXIMALLY IMPACTFUL.**



## 5. DO A LITTLE DANCE, MAKE A LITTLE LOVE

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DANCING IN “SPONTANEOUS” FLASH  
MOBS **DISRUPTS** CAPITALISM’S CONTROL  
OF PUBLIC SPACES

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**THE LOWDOWN:** Government is responsible for maintaining public places, like parks, and businesses are responsible for maintaining centers of commerce, like malls. Capitalists have gotten really sophisticated at maintaining vigilant control of these spaces because they’re scared what will happen if rebels step in and gain control. They’re thinking protests, so let’s have more fun and organize to do a little dance instead.

## DISRUPTING CAPITALISM’S CONTROL OF PUBLIC SPACES

- A) REBEL:** A flash mob happens when lots of people organize to coordinate an unexpected show for the public’s entertainment and the fat cats dismay. Think: a team of rebels flooding into a mall and all dancing the Macarena or all suddenly freezing in place at the same time. Flash mobs can happen anywhere at anytime: malls, parks, train stations, restaurants, and on and on. Secret text messages and offline planning can help to make the flash mob an even bigger surprise.
- B) DISRUPT CAPITALISM:** Carefully planned and clandestinely coordinated flash mobs disrupts capitalists’ grasp at being able to effectively monitor and control public spaces. Capitalists have gotten really good at hindering traditional protests by requiring bureaucratic permission forms and deploying “peace-protectors” with guns. Flash mobs disrupt capitalism because they alter people’s assumptions of public spaces. They also highlight the ability for rebel’s to organize events under the radar, undetected by capitalism’s henchman. With all this in mind, it’s no surprise that cities and towns across America have introduced ordinances to ban flash mobs.<sup>164, 165</sup>
- C) HAVE FUN:** What’s not fun about busting out surprise dance moves in an unexpected place? The more fun and creative the theme of your flash mob, the more impactful it will be. *Note: flash mobs have occasionally been used as a cover to loot or vandalize stores. This hooliganism is illegal and negatively disruptive. It should NOT be considered part of rebel fun.*

### **BONUS POINTS (A+B+C):**

When non-rebels see rebels in action make sure they think of you as fun and kind instead of rowdy and annoying. How about offering to lend a hand to the mall cleaning crew after having a flash mob there?

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*“THE ONLY THING THAT  
CAN SOLVE MOST OF OUR  
PROBLEMS IS DANCING.”*

JAMES BROWN





## 6. FORWARD MARCH

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STAGING CATCHY PROTESTS WITH  
CLEVER COSTUMES **DISRUPTS** CAPITALISM'S  
DETERMINATION TO HIDE FROM THE MEDIA

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**THE LOWDOWN:** Creating a public spectacle with flash mobs has a place in disrupting capitalists' control of public spaces. But traditional good old-fashioned protests have a role to play too. They help call to out all the crazy stuff that fat cats prefer to hide from the media. But the problem is, classic protesting has become so ubiquitous that many of today's rebel protests are failing to attract the widespread media coverage they deserve. Rebels: it's time to create some catchy protests to help spruce things up.

### **DISRUPTING CAPITALISM'S DETERMINATION TO HIDE FROM THE MEDIA**

- A) REBEL:** Here's two protesting scenarios: 100 rebels marching down the street in their everyday rebel fashion, or 100 clowns walking down the street with crazy costumes and impressive stage makeup. Which one do you think people will raise more awareness? The more catchy and photographic we rebels make our protests; the more people will take note. For this tactic, find one of capitalism's injustices that is particularly concerning to you, and brainstorm a dynamic and creative way to get organized and bring increased attention to that issue.
- B) DISRUPT CAPITALISM:** Capitalists do some totally crazy things and these issues go largely underreported or entirely unreported from everyday news. The omission of info like this not only emboldens capitalists, it also incubates the public apathy that helps to condone today's business-as-usual. Using catchy protests to call capitalists out makes it harder for them to fly under the radar. For maximal impact, look up a big issue or industry that's been out of the news (like the palm oil industry) and think about a clever protest to get it into the news.
- C) HAVE FUN:** Halloween all year round! Who do you want to be? A clown, a zombie, or maybe just your birthday suit? Anything fun and catchy wins.

#### **BONUS POINTS (A+B+C):**

While spontaneous flash mobs are all about surprises, organized protests don't have to be. Previous protesters have gotten news coverage if they get arrested. For a bonus, let's show capitalists we have a new way to drum up media attention. With costume in hand, consider planning your protest legally: notify authorities, obtain proper permits, issue media advisories, etc.

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*"IN DIFFICULT TIMES,  
FASHION IS ALWAYS  
OUTRAGEOUS."*

ELSA SCHIAPARELLI



## 7. CURB PENALTY FEES

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FILLING EMPTY PARKING METERS TO SIDE-STEP PARKING TICKETS **DISRUPTS** CAPITALISM'S ABILITY TO COLLECT GOVERNMENT REVENUE

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**THE LOWDOWN:** Parking meters are a fitting symbol for government's remarkable revenue-collecting efficiency. Dotted almost every major city block, these piggy banks accrue a big sack of coins for government coffers. And if someone doesn't pay, the revenue gained through government penalty fees is no small joke. Large cities, like New York, collect upwards of \$500+ million on parking fines each year.<sup>166</sup>

## DISRUPTING CAPITALISM'S ABILITY TO COLLECT GOVERNMENT REVENUE

- A) REBEL:** This strategy is a play on the capitalist principle of investing. Placing a quarter into someone's empty parking meter impedes a meter maid from being able to issue a hefty citation.<sup>167</sup> 25 cents to save someone 30 or more dollars... now that's a good return on investment. The numbers add up even faster when rebels organize. An organized group canvassing multiple blocks with a scout to track the meter maid can quickly amount to thousands of dollars diverted from government bank accounts.
- B) DISRUPT CAPITALISM:** As benign as putting a quarter into a stranger's empty parking meter may seem, lots of local governments consider this a crime. They say you are "aiding and abetting" a criminal. Why does government have such a chip on their shoulder about something so seemingly trivial? Like businesses, government also requires a constant stream of revenue to operate. The success of a government is partly based on how efficiently they can collect revenue. Rebels' organizing together around meter feeding demonstrates how easy it is to disrupt long-established assumptions around revenue enforcement.
- C) HAVE FUN:** Ever gotten an annoying parking ticket and wished you could have retribution? Here's your chance: have fun saving people a shitload of money. For more fun, leave a note a note on someone's windshield (where a ticket would have gone) to explain what you did.

### BONUS POINTS (A+B+C):

While some people will cry foul that curbing parking penalty fees is unfair, here's a sneaky little secret: it's estimated that the wealthiest Americans avoid paying \$100 billion in tax revenue each year.<sup>168</sup> In the spirit of rebel archetype Robin Hood, how about finding a fun way to publicly call out this wild tax discrepancy between fat cats and we the people?

**WARNING:** THIS STRATEGY IS INTENDED TO BE ILLUSTRATIVE IN NATURE IN ORDER TO HIGHLIGHT THE IMPORTANCE OF REVENUE COLLECTION. ACTUALLY ADDING CHANGE INTO SOMEONE ELSE'S EXPIRED METER IS ILLEGAL AND A REBEL'S HANDBOOK DOES NOT CONDONE OR ENCOURAGE DOING SO UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCE.

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*"NO ONE HAS EVER BECAME POOR BY GIVING."* ANNE FRANK



## 8. POP A SQUAT

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### SQUATTING WITH FRIENDS **DISRUPTS** CAPITALISM'S DEFINITION OF PROPERTY RIGHTS

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**THE LOWDOWN:** Capitalists adhere to a stringent definition of property rights in order to maximize their profits. The idea of private property helps line capitalists' pockets but the people don't do so well. For example: during the Great Recession, there were lots of unoccupied homes that could have provided shelter to people. Instead of letting people in, capitalist authorities forcefully kept people out. Rebels: it's time to take a dump on the way that capitalists define ownership.

### DISRUPTING CAPITALISM'S DEFINITION OF PROPERTY RIGHTS

- A) REBEL:** Squatting is the premise of setting up camp in a vacant home or plot of land. Squatters utilize space that is otherwise just dormant and they turn it into their home. To pop a squat, organize with nearby rebels to identify a vacant home or public park and plop down. Bring plenty of food and resources to chill out for a while. The good news for squatters is they're not paying for their lodging. The bad news for capitalists is they're losing out on revenue and their very definition of "ownership" is called into question.
  
- B) DISRUPT CAPITALISM:** Here's some numbers that don't quite add up: there are over 600,000 homeless Americans on any given night and an estimated 1.5 million vacant homes in our country.<sup>169, 170</sup> Even though these homes could provide shelter, capitalists don't want to let people crash there because than they're losing out on revenue. Ownership is central to capitalism and fat cat vigilance to protect private property extends back for decades. In the 1940s, for example, capitalists censored verses of Woody Guthrie's rebel classic *This Land Is Your Land* because they didn't like his tenor about private property.<sup>171</sup> More recently, Occupiers helped us reconsider who owns public space.
  
- C) HAVE FUN:** Camping out with friends for a night, week or month is fun if you bring the right supplies. Think: good company, guitar, s'mores, and drinks. For any squatters hoping to remain in a place long enough to achieve legal squatting rights, bring enough supplies to last for a long while. Squatter's rights can take as long as 21 years to obtain in certain jurisdictions.<sup>172</sup>

#### **BONUS POINTS (A+B+C):**

Squatters have some protections codified in U.S. law and these rules are worth learning because if you squat in some properties for long enough, you actually end up obtaining legal ownership. For a bonus, show capitalists that you can play by their silly legal rules and still win the game.

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*"THERE WAS A BIG HIGH WALL THERE THAT TRIED TO STOP ME; SIGN WAS PAINTED, IT SAID PRIVATE PROPERTY. BUT ON THE BACKSIDE IT DIDN'T SAY NOTHING; THAT SIDE WAS MADE FOR YOU AND ME."* WOODY GUTHRIE



## 9. STRIKE A MATCH

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BURNING SYMBOLIC OBJECTS WITH FLAG BURN PARTIES **DISRUPTS** CAPITALISM'S DEPENDENCY ON PUBLIC APATHY

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**THE LOWDOWN:** Public apathy is the number one endorsement for today's form of capitalism to keep on keeping on. The lack of organized rebel roars gives a tacit go-ahead for fat cats to do whatever they please and contributes to our perilous status quo. Nonviolent acts of dissent to demonstrate that we're no longer apathetic scares the heck of capitalists because it shows we're starting to ask questions. Rebels: grab your matches – it's time to ignite some fires.

## DISRUPTING CAPITALISM'S DEPENDENCY ON PUBLIC APATHY

- A) REBEL:** Symbolic acts of discontent are poignant and hard-hitting because they demonstrate that fat cats coveted golden standard of public apathy is thawing. To disrupt capitalisms dependency on public apathy, you can organize symbolic events, such as a flag burning party. In addition to making sure the event is fun, the event should also include the defacement of capitalism's most sacred and symbolic symbols (like the American flag or imitation cash). *Note: the destruction of actual U.S. dollars is illegal and not condoned or recommended by A Rebel's Handbook.*
- B) DISRUPT CAPITALISM:** Lots of people think that burning the American flag is prohibited, but the practice was actually legalized by a 1969 Supreme Court Decision.<sup>173</sup> It's fitting that something like flag burning is legal but hardly done: it's representative of so many forms of capitalism's freedoms that are provided to the people but sparingly utilized. Think: things like low voter turnout and exercising free speech. Using the freedoms that capitalism has conceded to us shows that we the people are awake, organizing, and ready to crack rebel jokes.
- C) HAVE FUN:** Get fun with symbolic acts. How about adding an American Flag to your Fourth of July BBQ menu? Symbolic acts of discontent can help bring people together if they are having fun. Hint: if your BBQ is missing fresh corn on the cob and tasty beverages, you're probably missing some key party ingredients.

### BONUS POINTS (A+B+C):

Sure flag burning may be legal, but lots of non-rebels will still perceive your rebel roar as treasonous. If you're sharing a flag burn video online, consider including a personal explanation about why you're rebelling (and why your action doesn't necessarily mean you hate America).

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*“NOTHING STRENGTHENS AUTHORITY SO MUCH AS SILENCE.”*

LEONARDO DA VINCI



C) CRACK JOKES

## PUNCHY PRANKS

**ONCE ORGANIZED, SOCIAL CHANGE WILL ONLY WIN IF A MOVEMENT CAN IDENTIFY THEIR OPPONENT'S WEAK POINTS. HUMOR IS CAPITALISM'S KRYPTONITE. THE STRATEGIES IN SECTION C FOCUS ON FUN WAYS TO CRACK JOKES AT SOME OF THE THINGS THAT CAPITALISTS HOLD MOST SACRED.**



## 10. APPLAUD YOUR ADVERSARIES

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ISSUING SATIRICAL AWARDS, LIKE “POLLUTER OF THE YEAR,” **DISRUPTS** CAPITALISM’S PLEA FOR CONSUMERISM WITHOUT QUESTION

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**THE LOWDOWN:** There are rebels who spend lots of time badmouthing fat cats. What if we focused our efforts on offering them some praise and accolades instead? By issuing satirical awards, like the most effective polluter of the year, rebels have an opportunity to publicly call out nefarious practices. In doing so, we disrupt capitalism’s ability to operate in a world where consumers often fail to ask then tough questions like, “what is the impact of your environmental degradation on my health and my children’s future?”

## DISRUPTING CAPITALISM’S PLEA FOR CONSUMERISM WITHOUT QUESTION

- A) REBEL:** Issuing a satirical award begins by selecting a target worthy of scrutiny. What law enforcement action, industry norm, or other injustice do you want to bring attention to? After selecting your area of focus, identify the particular organization or person that deserves to be recognized for their involvement or leadership. Next, prepare a trophy or certificate to “praise” them for their work. And make sure to have fun in the process: the flashier you make your award ceremony, the more press and consumer attention you can help to gin up.
- B) DISRUPT CAPITALISM:** If rebels use satirical awards to help awaken a consumer base that begins publicly asking tough questions, fat cats will have a real run for their money. For example, how many people do you think currently consider specific the ingredients in their hand soap or toothpaste? An often-overlooked topic, many personal care products contain tiny plastic microbeads. After use, these beads go down the drain and are so small that water treatment systems fail to catch them. They often end up in lakes or oceans – which is proving to make big health problems for the fish that eat them, and later, for the humans that eat the fish. While microbeads are just one example, they are exemplary of a bigger message to disrupt capitalism’s plea for consumerism without question. Congress passed 2015 legislation to ban microbeads in response to organized consumer questioning about microbead impacts: a testament to the consumer power that people possess.<sup>174</sup>
- C) HAVE FUN:** Roll out the red carpet for a rocking awards ceremony. The more satirical and celebratory the awards ceremony is, the more press worthy it becomes. From comedic speeches to awesome trophies – enjoy the jubilee.

### **BONUS POINTS (A+B+C):**

Using satire to advocate for consumer awareness does not have to be limited to issuing awards. For a bonus, take the conversation online by organizing campaigns to leave mock product reviews. For example, discuss how “great” a product is for issues like childhood labor or environmental degradation.

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*“IF EVERYONE  
DEMANDED PEACE  
INSTEAD OF ANOTHER  
TELEVISION SET, THEN  
THERE’D BE PEACE.”*

JOHN LENNON



## 11. TURN ON, TUNE IN, DROP OUT

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SURFING THE WEB WITH FREE AD BLOCKERS  
**DISRUPTS** CAPITALISM'S INVESTMENT IN  
ONLINE INFRASTRUCTURE

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**THE LOWDOWN:** Capitalists have invested an estimated one trillion dollars building online infrastructure and it's paid them back big time: online marketplaces rake in billions of dollars a day. This online infrastructure includes high-tech tools, like cookies, to track online activity. By monitoring our online activity, capitalists are able to direct advertisements our way with products or politicians they think we will like and buy into. Tuning out these ads with free online ad blockers helps to disrupt a one trillion dollar investment.<sup>175</sup>

### DISRUPTING CAPITALISM'S INVESTMENT IN ONLINE INFRASTRUCTURE

- A) REBEL:** People download free (and legal) ad blockers for a number of reasons – to stop being bombarded with pesky ads, speed up their web browser, or to question if the Internet is a forum for the people or a platform for capitalists.<sup>176</sup> Downloading an ad blocker is easy and only takes a few minutes. Begin by reading up on which one works best for you, download the service, and enjoy an ad-free web. Broadcasting your decision with social media helps to spread the word about how other people can become an online rebel.
- B) DISRUPT CAPITALISM:** Turning on the Internet, tuning in to the website you want to visit, and turning off online ads, helps to demonstrate that we the people can and will exercise the online freedoms that have been legally granted to us. In doing so, we also cut into fat cat profit margins and question the de facto norm for fat cats to scan through our emails and online searches. Today, rebels are using ad blockers to disrupt capitalists' investment in online infrastructure in a big way: with approximately 198 million ad blockers installed around the world, the rate of ad blocking grew by 41% in 2015 alone. Ad blocking has achieved significant results: it is estimated to have cost \$22 billion in advertising losses in 2015.<sup>177</sup>
- C) HAVE FUN:** Ready to surf the web without being inundated by online ads? Enjoy unencumbered content, faster web browsing, and the knowledge that your action is questioning the online world as we know it.

#### BONUS POINTS (A+B+C):

Many of the fat cats who badmouth ad blocking are the same ones who call to dismantle net neutrality. A key principle to ensuring a free and open Internet, this promise of this online freedom is under threat from fat cats who advocate disbanding it. For a bonus, read up on this issue, learn why it matters, and get involved.

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*“YOUR MOST UNHAPPY  
CUSTOMERS ARE YOUR  
GREATEST SOURCE OF  
LEARNING.”* BILL GATES



## 12. PLAY HOOKY

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JOINING GROUP HOOKY DAYS OUT OF THE OFFICE **DISRUPTS** CAPITALISM'S FOUNDATION OF WORKFORCE SUPPORT

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**THE LOWDOWN:** Capitalists don't laugh at any jokes related to striking because this action has a history of forcing concessions from the boss (like fair wages and safer working conditions). So it shouldn't be a big surprise that they fight back hard when people try to strike. Since capitalists have lots of clever tricks up their sleeves to subdue strikes, let's not bother. For this rebel joke, let's play hooky instead. After all, it can be a whole lot more fun.

## DISRUPTING CAPITALISM'S FOUNDATION OF WORKFORCE SUPPORT

- A) REBEL:** If you've ever skipped a day of work or school to do something fun, then you already know the basic rules of hooky. To play, you just call into work, say you're not feeling well, and then do something awesome with your newfound freedom. It's as simple as that. To make rebel hooky even more disruptive, partner up with people in your office and all phone in sick on the same day. Or use social media to organize a more widespread day of hooky.
- B) DISRUPT CAPITALISM:** Capitalism runs on the backbones of workers. Workers are needed for things like serving food to fat cats at restaurants, shining their shoes, or trading their money. Organizing against the boss is alarming for them and they often make concessions, especially because bosses know they need their employees willing participation.<sup>178</sup> Workers achieved landslide victories over their bosses during America's Labor Movement, earning rights like health benefits and workers' compensation.<sup>179</sup> In response, today's bosses have grown increasingly adept at curtailing strikes. This makes playing hooky all the more disruptive – rather than asking for a particular concession, we're just highlighting the power of a satirical prank.
- C) HAVE FUN:** Do you really need any convincing that a "sick day" out of the office is fun? If you have any lingering doubts, then check out the movie *Ferris Bueller's Day Off*, a helpful guide on how to get the most out of your free day.

### BONUS POINTS (A+B+C):

Fat cats will argue that lots of people skipping work for the day will lead to chaos on the streets. Prove them wrong by weaving random acts of kindness into your rebel day(s) of fun. How about using your free day to volunteer in a soup kitchen and help out people in need?

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*"NOT THAT I CONDONE FASCISM, OR ANY ISM FOR THAT MATTER. ISM'S IN MY OPINION ARE NOT GOOD. A PERSON SHOULD NOT BELIEVE IN AN ISM, HE SHOULD BELIEVE IN HIMSELF. I QUOTE JOHN LENNON, 'I DON'T BELIEVE IN BEATLES, I JUST BELIEVE IN ME.'"*

FERRIS BUELLER





## 13. TAKE A SWIPE

GAMING CLASSIC PAYMENT SYSTEMS WITH PENNY SWIPES **DISRUPTS** CAPITALISM'S INSATIABLE APPETITE FOR CHEAP CREDIT

**THE LOWDOWN:** Capitalists love credit cards because these cards keep money flowing. They encourage consumers to spend lots of money, even if they don't actually have enough funds in their bank account. This credit pitch works: approximately 30% of all annual point of sale transactions in the U.S. is made with credit cards. But credit cards come at a cost: the average U.S. household has \$5,700 in credit card debt and this totals up to a country of people owing \$880 billion in revolving debt. \$880 billion of debt!<sup>180</sup>

## DISRUPTING CAPITALISM'S INSATIABLE APPETITE FOR CHEAP CREDIT

- A) REBEL:** Credit card companies don't only charge consumers with interest rates or annual fees: they also charge businesses all kinds of fees for processing card payments. One of the business fees that card companies charge is a transaction fee, tacked on each time a card is swiped. This fee can be as much as 60 cents per transaction, which makes an easy target for rebels to crack a credit card joke.<sup>181</sup> For this tactic, organize lots of rebels to go into big chain stores and make lots of tiny credit card purchases, like a 50-cent pack of bubble gum. Chain stores with no credit card minimums would literally lose money on this bubbly rebel transaction.
- B) DISRUPT CAPITALISM:** Capitalism runs on cheap credit because it helps encourage consumers to spend, spend, spend.<sup>182,183</sup> But this spending comes at a high cost to the people in the form of interest fees (generally with average interest rates of 17-20%) and to small business owners, who are saddled with covering transaction fee costs.<sup>184</sup> Penny swipes not only help to raise awareness about unfair industry practices such as lofty interest rates and transaction fees: they also disrupt capitalism because the swipes pit hungry fat cats directly against each other. Large chain stores will be yelling at credit card companies, and card companies will be yelling at these stores. And we rebels can just sit back, relax, and enjoy the show.
- C) HAVE FUN:** Be it credit card, student, or subprime mortgage debt – facing any wall of debt is far from fun. Here's your chance to take a swipe at the system and do something about it. Make sure to buy something fun or funny with each penny swipe you take. When doing so, always make sure to pay your full bill on time to make sure your rebel fun has zero interest fees.

### BONUS POINTS (A+B+C):

For a bonus, start strategically paying for transactions with cash instead of credit cards, especially when tipping. When no officially documented transaction record exists, some service industry workers or mom and pop shops may elect to avoid sales or income taxation.

*"A MAN IN DEBT IS SO FAR A SLAVE."*

RALPH WALDO EMERSON



## 14. LAYOFF THE PUMP

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BYPASSING GAS PAYMENTS WITH “BIKE TO WORK PARTIES,” **DISRUPTS** CAPITALISM’S BET ON THE STOCK MARKET

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**THE LOWDOWN:** Fat cats bet big on the stock market and they often win big too: Wall Street has helped turn some millionaires into billionaires. The stock market is full of risks so these investors have to hedge their bets to insulate themselves from market risks. Hedging is generally considered the price an investor has to pay to safely avoid uncertainty. If rebels start cracking jokes that increase market risk, investors would be forced to drop extra money on hedging.

## DISRUPTING CAPITALISM’S BET ON THE STOCK MARKET

- A) REBEL:** Lots of rebels think the stock market is just plain boring. Don’t worry: the stock market game will get a whole lot more fun if rebels organize to crack jokes at Wall Street. For this rebel joke, let’s play a gas game with the billions that investors have riding on the oil industry. Oil stock pricing is partly based on projections about how much gas will be consumed in any given time period, making a fuel slowdown disruptive to these consumption projections. To play, all you have to do is bike ride instead of drive. To win, organize widespread and sustained “bike to work parties.” On a large and systematic scale, these biking parties would push capitalists to hedge their bets around the possibility of an oil supply drop – costing them investor dollars and saving people gas money.
- B) DISRUPT CAPITALISM:** The stock market helps bankroll capitalism. On a basic level, companies need to raise money to continue growing (like the capital needed to construct a new factory), so they issue stocks to raise money and avoid debt.<sup>185</sup> Rebel disruption to this cycle injects a never-before-seen addition of market volatility to the stock market. A gas joke is a fitting joke to tell because gasoline consumption in the U.S. accounts for a significant amount of the nation’s greenhouse gas emissions.<sup>186</sup> Oh, and because fat cats in the oil industry also happen to be some of the most ultra 1%.<sup>187</sup>
- C) HAVE FUN:** So you won’t have access to your car for a day (or month, depending on how long you plan your boycott). May as well have fun with your new commute. How about finding a fun and clever way to drive awareness around your act of dissent? Whether you ride naked, carry a portable boom box, or decorate your bike – there is no shortage of ways to jazz up your eco-friendly commute and bring more attention to your action.

### BONUS POINTS (A+B+C):

No need to stop with gas games. For a bonus, develop other fun and nonviolent ways to flip the bird at Wall Street. For example, how about identifying a clothing company that uses child labor and boycotting them to call out their unjust practices and disrupt their corporate revenue projections?

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*“I BELIEVE THAT BANKING INSTITUTIONS ARE MORE DANGEROUS TO OUR LIBERTIES THAN STANDING ARMIES.”*

THOMAS JEFFERSON



D) VIVA LA REVOLUTION

# CREATE CHANGE

**SOCIAL CHANGE WILL ONLY LAST IF SOMETHING NEW CAN BE PUT FORWARD THAT'S BETTER THAN TODAY'S BUSINESS AS USUAL. THE STRATEGIES IN SECTION D ALL FOCUS ON REVOLUTIONARY WAYS TO UNSHACKLE US FROM THE CONSTRAINTS THAT PERSIST UNDER CAPITALISM.**



## DISRUPTING CAPITALISM'S AFFINITY FOR MONOPOLIES

# 15. SHARE IF YOU CARE

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USING PEER-TO-PEER PLATFORMS, LIKE RIDESHARING, **DISRUPTS** CAPITALISM'S AFFINITY FOR MONOPOLIES

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**THE LOWDOWN:** The online age has helped fuel the proliferation of peer-to-peer (P2P) networks, allowing people to transact directly with one another rather than through fat cat marketplaces. These revolutionary networks can help lower consumer costs and can even make some things free. In addition to consumer savings, P2P sharing cuts into fat cat profit margins and disrupts the ability for monopolies to take hold

- A) REBEL:** We're taught as early as kindergarten that sharing is a virtue. While sharing on a large scale has not traditionally been easy, the Internet magnifies our ability to share like never before. From awesome places to stay when you travel to low-cost or free carpools on your way to work – the number of online P2P communities continues to grow on a daily basis.<sup>188</sup> P2P platforms generally require large communities of people for them to thrive, so they require your active participation. To get involved, identify P2P communities that will improve your life and become engaged in as many as you can.
- B) DISRUPT CAPITALISM:** Maintaining market control over competitors maximizes revenue for capitalists at the top of the food chain. And fat cat cats across many industries have maintained this monopolistic rule for decades. The New York City yellow cab industry is one such example. Operating a yellow taxi requires the ownership of a medallion and each medallion was valued at a staggering rate of \$1 million in 2014. But in a disruption to this long-time monopoly market, 2015 taxi medallion prices have plummeted by approximately 40% with the advent of ridesharing.<sup>189</sup> This price drop means more affordable rides and greater marketplace competition for we the people. It also demonstrative just how disruptive the sharing economy can be to monopolistic industries.
- C) HAVE FUN:** Obviously someone thinks P2P sharing is a fun way to go – there are millions of active community members out there today.<sup>190</sup> Take a boring commute to work for instance. With a P2P ridesharing, you can find some good company on the daily journey, cut down commute time by being able to cruise in the carpool lane, and help the environment by consolidating cars.

### **BONUS POINTS (A+B+C):**

The classic board game *Monopoly* teaches us all about the trials and tribulations of monopolies in action. Invented in 1904, the game was intended to callout unfair monopolistic practices and it was initially popular among Quakers and socialists before being repurposed into the brand we know it as today.<sup>191</sup> For a bonus, take back the game to help educate others

about capitalism's interrelationship with monopolies. Have fun by playing with friends in public spaces and letting others know what you're up to.

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*"I THINK IT'S WRONG THAT ONLY ONE COMPANY MAKES THE GAME MONOPOLY."*

STEVEN WRIGHT



## 16. GET BY WITH A LITTLE HELP FROM YOUR FRIENDS

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USING ALTERNATIVE PAYMENTS, LIKE BARTERING, **DISRUPTS** CAPITALISM'S DOLLAR DEPENDENCY

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**THE LOWDOWN:** Imagine a world where the 100-dollar bill had the same value as toilet paper. As improbable as that may sound to capitalists who revere the dollar: fat cats should take note. We rebels can dilute the dollar's value surprisingly quickly if we start employing cashless compensation systems, such as bartering.

## DISRUPTING CAPITALISM'S DOLLAR DEPENDENCY

- A) REBEL:** Instead of being tight on cash or incurring credit card debt, how about experimenting with fun and alternative forms of compensation instead? Bartering, for example, is a simple system of exchange where people are compensated with goods or services instead of dollars. Bartering can be a friend-based activity, like cooking an awesome meal or two for someone in exchange for having them walk your dog while you're out of town. Bartering can also take place at large-scale community events or through online P2P forums. *Note: bartering itself is distinct from the breath of all available P2P sharing economy sites because bartering centers around avoiding financial currency.*
- B) DISRUPT CAPITALISM:** Printed money is capitalism's currency and capitalists consider it sacred. After all, isn't it the main thing that keeps people working? But as much value and power as the dollar appears to have, the truth is, it's also just a sheet of paper. Avoiding financial transactions and challenging the value of the dollar shakes capitalism to the core. In the process of saving the people a boatload of money by challenging the dollar, we also disrupt fundamental economic drivers, such as inflation and revenue projections.
- C) HAVE FUN:** Finally, you have a way to obtain lots of awesome stuff without needing a big wad of cash of cash to pay for it. What's not fun about that? Have fun with the currency you create. What will your creative contribution be?

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### BONUS POINTS (A+B+C):

World leaders instigate global strife over silly currency conversion debates. For a bonus, find fun ways to barter with people from other countries to show global fat cats how trivial their paper dollars can become. Want free housing the next time you're on vacation in another country? Then how about letting someone crash at your place in exchange for crashing at his or hers?

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*"MONEY OFTEN COSTS TOO MUCH."*

RALPH WALDO EMERSON



## 17. FIX THE VOTE

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ELECTING FUNNY FAKE LEADERS,  
LIKE MICKEY MOUSE, **DISRUPTS**  
CAPITALISM'S LEGITIMACY TO OPERATE

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**THE LOWDOWN:** If you've done things like burn the flag and play hooky, chances are that there's no politician on any ballot that you're too excited about voting for. Not to worry: you can help "fix the vote" by joining a portion of the voting block that questions established candidates with protest voting. By writing funny fake leaders onto the ballot, we the people finally have some candidate options that we can truly smile about.

## DISRUPTING CAPITALISM'S LEGITIMACY TO OPERATE

- A) REBEL:** A protest vote is an easy vote to cast: you have the option to write-in any candidate on almost any election ballot. That means you can vote for a fictional character, childhood hero, celebrity – anyone that sends a powerful message or gives you a good laugh. While casting a protest vote is simple, getting a politician elected always takes some legwork. For more rebel fun, join a campaign to elect a fictional leader in your community. Make it a goal to have fun rallies and attract funny headline news stories.
- B) DISRUPT CAPITALISM:** Capitalist governments always give people the "freedom" to vote.<sup>192</sup> But whom are we really voting for when we're deciding between one similar fat cat and another? Consider this: America entered an unprecedented political era in 2014, when for the first time in our nation's history, over 50% of the country's Members of Congress were millionaires. Our current leaders in Congress are 80% white, 80% male, and 92% Christian.<sup>193</sup> If you're done with the joke options we face on the ballot each year, a protest vote is a disruptive way to do something about it. We can still play the game by voting, but instead of selecting the best of the worst, we can declare we're finished being forced to choose between one crony capitalist over another.
- C) HAVE FUN:** Campaigns for write-in candidates has been going on for decades, but they have not always been enough fun. While some rebels have been reliably writing Mickey Mouse onto the ballot since his inception in order to mock capitalism, Mr. Mouse has never actually won the vote. For more fun, create dynamic and enjoyable campaign events for write-in candidates. And have fun considering this: what in the world would fat cats do if we rebels score more votes for a joke candidate than the fat cat alternative?

### BONUS POINTS (A+B+C):

There are 51 million eligible voters in America who are not registered to vote.<sup>194</sup> Maybe its because they didn't know that playful candidates like Mickey Mouse were an option. For a bonus, canvas around to help explain why not voting at all is not an effective protest vote and why someone should elect to become registered instead.

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*"EVERYTHING IS  
CHANGING. PEOPLE ARE  
TAKING THEIR  
COMEDIANS SERIOUSLY  
AND THE POLITICIANS AS  
A JOKE."* WILL ROGERS



## 18. FIGHT LIKE A GUERRILLA

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DEVELOPING NEW AND NONVIOLENT GUERRILLA  
TACTICS **DISRUPTS** CAPITALISM'S ABILITY  
TO LAUGH OFF FUNNY REBELS

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**THE LOWDOWN:** All the steps in this handbook are intended to be fun and funny, but no joke remains funny forever. There will be a lot of powerful fat cats actively working to subdue our rebel jokes. This shouldn't come as a big surprise: fat cats have been holding onto power for a long time and they won't want go down without a fight. But what these fat cats possess with funds and power, they lack in agility and creativity. Rebels: it's time to nonviolently fight like guerrillas.

### DISRUPTING CAPITALISM'S ABILITY TO LAUGH OFF FUNNY REBELS

- A) REBEL:** The dexterity of guerrilla battle tactics has outsmarted bulky bureaucratic armies throughout history. For example, guerrilla warfare is credited with helping the ill equipped and outnumbered American troops to defeat the British in the American Revolution.<sup>195</sup> This handbook includes 21 strategies to disrupt capitalism and have fun. But why stop with 21? For revolutionary change, create lots of new, fun, and nonviolent rebel jokes to sustain the rebel fight.
- B) DISRUPT CAPITALISM:** Capitalist bureaucracies generally act responsively. As soon as this handbook is released, lots of clever fat cats will likely go through each strategy in the handbook and develop strategies to diffuse our rebel tactics. And with all the resources they have at their disposal, they'll probably figure out some formidable counter attacks.<sup>196</sup> Any rebel strategy that has a history of success will not remain cutting-edge forever. By staying one step ahead of those who impede progress, we rebels will not only temporarily disrupt the assumptions that inform our status quo, we will also help to create lasting change.
- C) HAVE FUN:** This is where things get really liberating: the sky is the limit. Think outside the box and develop as many fun and nonviolent ideas as you can. From guerrilla gardening that helps reclaim urban space, to performance art that drives social change, what clever rebel jokes do you have up your sleeves?

#### **BONUS POINTS (A+B+C):**

Everyone possesses natural strengths. For a bonus, think about specific skills you have and how they can aid the rebel cause. If you're a musician, you could help unite us with the power of song. If you're a doctor, you could help out rebels that are injured in the pathway to progress.

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*"ARREST ME FOR SITTING  
ON A BUS? YOU MAY DO  
THAT."* ROSA PARKS



## 19. BURN THE MAN

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LIVING THE BURNER LIFE AT BURNING MAN  
**DISRUPTS** CAPITALISM'S SALES PITCH THAT  
 IT'S THE BEST WAY TO LIVE

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**THE LOWDOWN:** In order for the rebel fight to transition from an ongoing struggle to a new way of living, rebels need to deal a deathblow to capitalism's sales pitch that it's the best offer on the table. This can begin by experiencing communities founded on post-capitalist principles, such as Burning Man.

### DISRUPTING CAPITALISM'S SALES PITCH THAT IT'S THE BEST WAY TO LIVE

- A) REBEL:** To revolutionize the rebel fight, find or create post-capitalist communities that dispel the tenants of our current form of capitalism (like the bottom line and environmental degradation). While no community ever exists without skeptics or criticism, places like Auroville, India; Findhorn, Scotland; and Black Rock City, Nevada, help to underscore that there is a different and viable way of doing business than the commonplace practices we have in place today. Black Rock City (BRC) is a rebel favorite: the spot where Burning Man takes place. BRC springs out of an otherwise empty desert once a year and becomes the third largest city in Nevada during the weeklong burn. Over 60,000 people come together, have the time of their lives, and don't spend a single dollar while there.<sup>197</sup> And of course, living up to its name, residents of BRC also burn the man.<sup>198</sup>
- B) DISRUPT CAPITALISM:** Experimenting with post-capitalist living is what really revs the revolution to life. One reason why capitalism permeates throughout our culture is because people have a hard time envisioning that there can be another viable ism. Rebel events, like Burning Man, disrupt capitalism because they show the world that another way of living is indeed possible. When it comes to Burning Man, some naysayers will point fingers and say things like, "but people still have to pay a fee to get in." Sure, rebels do have to make an upfront payment, but this should not detract from the broader message: when people spend capital differently than capitalists allocate it today, a 60,000+ sustainable city springs into existence with no financial currency.
- C) HAVE FUN:** Has anyone mentioned the best part? Burning Man can be a truly epic experience if you plan for it right. From awesome people, to amazing art, to ridiculous parties, to radical self-expression, get ready for an unforgettable seven days. To maximize your fun, learn about the Burn and come fully prepared.  
*Note: Additional information about the ten principles that help guide Burning Man are available on page 160.*

#### **BONUS POINTS (A+B+C):**

Veteran Burners, this bonus is for you. If the ranks of Burners swell, they'll be lots of BRC "virgins" who will need your support to get their sea legs. They'll benefit from your good will and patience.

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*"BURNING MAN IS  
 GREATER THAN I HAD  
 EVER IMAGINED."*

GROVER NORQUIST





## 20. BRAINSTORM SOLUTIONS

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ORGANIZING REBEL EVENTS TO BRAINSTORM  
OUR FUTURE **DISRUPTS** CAPITALISM'S PLAN  
TO STICK WITH BUSINESS-AS-USUAL

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**THE LOWDOWN:** As awesome as Black Rock City is, it only stands for one week of the year. For long and lasting change to take root, rebels need to help bring people together to collectively brainstorm what we want out of our future. The key question: what way of living is better, more sustainable, and preferable than the status quo we're faced with today?

### **DISRUPTING CAPITALISM'S PLAN TO STICK WITH BUSINESS-AS-USUAL**

- A) REBEL:** Now is the time to put on your thinking cap and to be daring and bold. If you had a magic wand to wave, what would you want the world to look like? You can brainstorm the answer to this question informally with friends, or organize events where people come together to discuss the future in an open and safe setting. Rebel gatherings can happen across the country in big cities and small towns, in public parks, and other public spaces. Online forums can also help fuel rebel creativity when travel is tough. Make sure to be welcoming and inclusive: the more, the merrier.
- B) DISRUPT CAPITALISM:** Capitalists have historically weathered rebel storms by conceding that capitalism isn't perfect. They argue that it's not totally great, but proclaim that it's the best option we've got. Fat cats: be worried. If enough rebels start brainstorming ambitious solutions, we can dispel your argument by developing a more fun, equitable, and sustainable way of living. We are not out there cracking jokes simply for the sake of disrupting. We're disrupting today's status quo because we rebels fundamentally believe that a better world is possible.
- C) HAVE FUN:** Rebels: if we're not laughing, we're losing. When planning a brainstorm, think about what you can do to make the meet up as fun as possible. Guaranteed: almost anything you come up with will be a lot better than today's boring and stuffy town council meetings. How about opening the brainstorm with an awesome band and bringing along some tasty food?

#### **BONUS POINTS (A+B+C):**

The future belongs to the people and as such, any and all rebel brainstorms should be inclusive and welcoming. For a bonus, double your outreach efforts to ensure an even greater group of diverse individuals attend rebel brainstorms and events.

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*"INSANITY: DOING THE  
SAME THING OVER AND  
OVER AGAIN EXPECTING  
DIFFERENT RESULTS."*

ALBERT EINSTEIN



## 21. SPREAD THE WORD

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WRITING MESSAGES IN BOTTLES TO SHARE  
#REBELCOCKTAILS **DISRUPTS** CAPITALISM'S  
ATTEMPT TO STEM A REBEL REVOLUTION

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**THE LOWDOWN:** This may come as a surprise to some, but none of the concepts in this handbook are all that new. Rebels have been saying these same words for a long while. What's new here is working to compile these resources into one actionable handbook. What can become revolutionary new is the act of spreading the word to lots of people to help grow our rebel ranks. Revolutions ramp up when rebel words spread like wildfire.

### DISRUPTING CAPITALISM'S ATTEMPT TO STEM A REBEL REVOLUTION

- A) REBEL:** To become an agent of social change, write a note about why you care about improving the world and get ready to spread your message with a Rebel Cocktail. The Rebel Cocktail is a nonviolent revamp of a longtime classic from the rebel's arsenal: the Molotov cocktail. But instead of filling the Rebel Cocktail with gasoline, we rebels understand that words themselves can be more explosive. To spread the rebel word: 1) write a heartfelt personal note and include RebelsHandbook.com in the message, 2) place your note in a recycled plastic bottle, and 3) pass your bottle to friends or strangers. Then, repeat steps 1-3 as many times as you can to help raise awareness about creating progress in our perilous status quo.
- B) DISRUPT CAPITALISM:** Fat cats hold onto power by working to steer the narrative most people read and hear today. For example, the myths they perpetuate about climate change. With Rebel Cocktails, we have a new channel to share rebel words and call for progress. Since we're using recycled bottles, our arsenal is endless (and sustainable). And because new people are always writing the message inside, messages can be passed anonymously and we can easily adjust the handbook's URL if censored.
- C) HAVE FUN:** All 21 steps have advocated for nonviolence to accompany fun at all times. Tactic 21 is no different: never cause vandalism, fear or violence with the design or placement of your Rebel Cocktail. Our fun should come not through breaking bottles, but with funny notes left in fun and clever places.

#### **BONUS POINTS (A+B+C):**

If enough Rebel Cocktails are handed out, we must be braced for fat cats to fire back in our direction. For a bonus, help fortify these rebel words form counterattacks. You can do so with strategies like translating this text into additional languages in order to help increase readership.

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*“WE MUST UNDERSTAND  
THAT THE HIGHEST FORM  
OF FREEDOM CARRIES  
WITH IT THE GREATEST  
MEASURE OF  
DISCIPLINE.”* CESAR CHAVEZ



PART III: GO!

# REBEL REVOLUTION

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**"I HOLD IT THAT A LITTLE REBELLION NOW  
AND THEN IS A GOOD THING, AND AS  
NECESSARY IN THE POLITICAL WORLD AS  
STORMS IN THE PHYSICAL."**

THOMAS JEFFERSON



**“THE HISTORY OF THE PAST IS  
BUT ONE UPWARD STRUGGLE  
UPWARD TO EQUALITY.”**

ELIZABETH CADY STANTON

AMERICA'S LAST REVOLUTION:

## REV. HISTORY

Some readers who make it here to Part III will still be saying what they've been saying from the start, “ok...you've demonstrated capitalism can be disrupted. But what comes next?” And, “can what comes next possibly be better than what we have today?”

In response, many non-rebels will answer that nothing better can ensue. They will likely point to various episodes of social struggle throughout history and highlight what happened in the aftermath, even if the rebels won. They can point to things like dictatorships, economic instability, and violent infighting.

There will be other readers who make it here and already believe they know what comes next. They may have ideas about climate change solutions, circular economies, bartering, and the like.

These readers may want to jump right to the next chapter about solutions or perhaps skip this part entirely and leap into action.

But whether your zeal for social change compels you to spring forward or your skepticism for an improved tomorrow tempts you to tap the breaks – neither camp can effectively dialogue without giving credence to our rebel past.

Reading about America's rebel history and our ongoing struggle with capitalism is likely even more important than considering our rebel future. If nothing else, hopefully by now civilizations have learned this simple (but often unheeded) lesson: those who do not learn from the past are fated to repeat it.

**SHORTCUT:** IF YOU ARE ALREADY VERSED IN THE TRIALS AND TRIBULATIONS OF A PEOPLE'S HISTORY, FEEL FREE TO SKIP AHEAD TO THE NEXT CHAPTER, AMERICA'S CLIMATE REVOLUTION ON PAGE 131.

## AMERICA'S WAR FOR INDEPENDENCE

We are a nation forged in revolution.

When *Common Sense* was published in 1776, Thomas Paine showed the world that words could spell revolution. The book was distributed to rebel fighters and read aloud in bars and taverns throughout the 13 colonies. By some estimates, *Common Sense* has the largest circulation of any book published in American history (in proportion to the population at the time).<sup>199</sup> And it worked: the book helped instigate the revolution that ultimately founded our nation. With our hats off to Mr. Paine, rebel handbooks course through our nation's very veins.<sup>200</sup>

At the time of the revolution, people reading through *Common Sense* were forced to decide if they were patriots or loyalists. Patriots were rebels willing to

fight for a better tomorrow. Like today, the rebels then did not know if their dissent would lead to a better world for their children. But frustrated with the injustices and oppressiveness of their time, they jumped into action. Loyalists were the ones who favored the status quo and did not want to ally with the side of change. They remained silent or chose to take up arms on behalf of Great Britain.<sup>201</sup>

Paine published *Common Sense* in the summertime and it helped rev lots of rebels to life. But rebel fights are never easy. By winter of the same year, the rebels were getting crushed and people across the states were quickly losing faith in the virtues of the rebel struggle.<sup>202</sup> Between September and December of 1776, approximately 11,000 rebel volunteers threw down their weapons and gave up the rebel fight.<sup>203</sup>

General George Washington feared that more would follow as the winter cold and holiday season approached. In response, Paine published a second collection of articles in the December of '76 titled *The Crisis*.<sup>205</sup> He opens with these enduring rebel words:

"These are the times that try men's souls. The summer soldier and the sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of their county; but he stands now, deserves the love and thanks of man and woman."<sup>206</sup>

Paine's terms, the "summer soldier" and "sunshine patriot," refer to the 11,000 summer rebels who abandoned the rebel fight in the winter when the weather got cold and things got tough. Paine was asking rebels if they were simply summer soldiers or if they were courageous enough stay on with the rebel fight through the winter and standup for freedom.<sup>207</sup>

His words once again breathed life into the revolution: people rallied onward in the social struggle for freedom. And not just through the winter of the 1776, but for another several years. Apart from the current Afghanistan War, the American Revolution is the longest war in our country's history.<sup>208</sup>

As we know today, the American Revolution ultimately succeeded. Rebels eventually won the rebel fight and the British retreated back to England.

But let us not simply remember the war for being won. Arguably, an equally important part of America's last revolution was not just winning the fight, but also determining what kind of revolutionary social change would follow.

## THE AFTERMATH OF AMERICA'S LAST REVOLUTION

Here's the incredible thing: the American Revolution actually worked, at least initially. And not in any small way: in a totally revolutionary way.

Following the war, Americans elected President George Washington into office and he served a four-year term as the nation's first president. At the end of his first four years in office, he was elected to a second term.

One of the most pivotal moments in our nation's democracy was not electing and reelecting George Washington into office – many military leaders gain control after being at the winning end of a war. It was what happened in our nation's third presidential election between John Adams and Thomas Jefferson that was truly revolutionary. The people elected John Adams into office in 1796, and amazingly, George Washington simply handed Adams the reins.<sup>209</sup>

This moment marks one of the first times in the world's history when power was peacefully ceded to a new elected leader.<sup>210</sup> Prior to this, power was generally passed down by royal lineage or taken with weapons and bloodshed.<sup>211</sup> For those cynics who doubt that revolution's can lead to

winning outcomes take note: America's last revolution gave unprecedented proof that the tenets of democracy were indeed possible and, moreover, that the people could peacefully elect their peers into office.

But rebels: also take note. Despite the initial burst of success that was arguably demonstrated in the immediate aftermath of America's last revolution, it did not take long for the people to lose (or re-lose) control. And largely, we've been at the losing end ever since.

John Adams, America's second president, represented the Federalist Party. This political party (which Washington was also later labeled with) was formed by some of the biggest fat cats of the time: commercial interests in the north-east, bankers, the 1% and the like.<sup>211</sup> The Federalist Party had a reputation for being elitist and leery of fully open elections.<sup>213</sup>

Shortly after taking office, capitalist Adams began encroaching on the very civil freedoms that Americans had fought for just years before. In 1798, just one year after taking office, Adams signed the Alien and Sedition Act into law.<sup>214</sup> Lots of people may not be familiar with this law because it marks the start of an American history that capitalists don't let to talk about all that much.

Put simply, the Alien and Sedition Act prohibits roaring the rebel roar at the government. Under the act, rebels who "write, print, utter, or publish...any false, scandalous and malicious writing" became threatened with fines and imprisonment. The act also included censorship of the press. Shortly after the act was signed and just 15 years after the close of the American Revolution, over 20 newspaper editors were arrested for sedition or incitement.<sup>215</sup>

## AMERICA'S ONGOING REBEL STRUGGLE

Irrespective of the Alien and Sedition Acts, many people contend that the American Revolution itself was far from a crowning achievement of freedom and question if the new boss was really that different from the old boss. Rebels in this camp have a mountain of evidence on their side: all signatories of the constitution were white males, the nation still had slaves, interracial marriages were not permitted, women could not vote, and LGBT people faced persecution.<sup>216</sup>

There are other people who argue that the American Revolution helped prove the viability of democracy and that the people can indeed take power from unjust rulers. They point to the wide range of people's protections that were established, like the First Amendment.

*"RESOLVED, THAT THE WOMEN OF THIS NATION IN 1876, HAVE GREATER CAUSE FOR DISCONTENT, REBELLION AND REVOLUTION THAN THE MEN OF 1776."*

SUSAN B. ANTHONY

Whatever camp you align with, there is generally widespread rebel agreement around this: when it comes to America's history, we the people have been suffering for quite some time. To put it another way, fat cats have continued to prosper and grow richer while the people have been left fighting for progress.

With this notion in mind, what follows is a very brief history of our ongoing rebel struggle.

Despite what you may hear, rebels did not simply go away after our last revolution. In the aftermath of the war, America was far from a bed of roses in complete embrace of their new leadership that some people may prefer to remember it as. Rebels were still out there asking questions, calling out injustices, and shouting rebel words.

Even under Washington's leadership, rebel discontent was bubbling just below the surface. The rebel fight was especially acute in Massachusetts, where farmers were falling into debt due (in large part, from stringent anti-debtor laws). As a result, many of the farmers were having their farms seized and thrown into prison for failure to pay off their debt.<sup>217</sup>

Western Massachusetts farmers, many of whom were veterans of the American Revolution, employed similar rebel tactics used during their previous rebel fight to confront what they felt was an unjust government. They used classic organizing principals to successfully close some of Massachusetts Courts in 1786. They even succeeded at freeing some indebted farmers from jail.<sup>218</sup>

Former Continental Army Captain, Daniel Shay, built on this momentum to lead the farmers in a rebel revolt. Shay's maintained he was shouting the same rebel roar echoed in the American Revolution. But in America's first case of armed rebellion following the war, the powers that be responded with decisive and swift force. Wealthy merchants living in Eastern Massachusetts funded an imposing military force that was dispatched to Western Massachusetts. There, they subdued Shay and his rebel fighters.<sup>219</sup>

With a capitalist-funded militia castigating America's early rebel fighters, the rebel narrative in America becomes integrally tied to fat cats snuffing out the voice of rebel fighters.<sup>220, 221</sup> But without going into too much detail about each rebel fight that ensued after America's last revolution – the next monumentally decisive moment in rebel history was the American Civil War.

From the outset, we must note that revolutions and civil war are inherently different beasts. A revolution is generally characterized by people taking action to shore up power for we the people. A civil war, on the other hand, is defined as the failure of a nation – warring political factions battling to take power from one another.<sup>222</sup>

If the American Revolution can be considered a glorious war for how close it came to granting we the people true liberation, then the Civil War can be considered one of America's most detrimental wars because of how it cleaved the nation apart.

The Civil War resulted from an extremely divided country – split apart by various capitalist interests. Fat cats in the South were largely dependent upon slave labor to turn a profit. Slavery is a longtime favored capitalist approach. There are an estimated 30 million slaves in the world today and approximately 60,000 of them reside in the U.S.<sup>223, 224</sup>

While the South's economy was fueled by slave-driven agriculture, fat cats in the North replaced cheap human labor with factory labor – largely cutting out their need for slavery.<sup>225</sup> The North's economy was a product of America's Industrial Revolution – smoke stacks started to dot the North's horizon and it became a land of rail and steel.<sup>226</sup> And critical for the fattest cats of all at the top, a nation needs both manufacturing and agriculture in order to prosper over other capitalist nations.

**MODERN SLAVERY IS GENERALLY DEFINED BY A PERSON POSSESSING OR CONTROLLING ANOTHER PERSON IN A MANNER THAT DEPRIVES SOMEONE OF HIS OR HER PERSONAL LIBERTY. MODERN SLAVERY IS CHARACTERIZED BY THE EXPLOITATION OF A PERSON THROUGH THEIR USE, PROFIT, TRANSFER, OR DISPOSAL. THE PRACTICE TYPICALLY GOES HAND IN HAND WITH FORCED LABOR IN OCCUPATIONS SUCH AS CHILD SLAVERY AND SEX TRAFFICKING.**

While fat cats counted the chips they would win and lose in a civil struggle – we the people were squarely at the losing end of this capitalist tussle. Slaves were suffering immensely. In the name of capitalism, our nation enslaved nearly four million people (3,950,528 slaves were recorded in an 1860 census).<sup>227</sup> These slaves faced unthinkable conditions of whippings, beatings, rape and complete loss of freedom.<sup>228</sup>

During the war itself, capitalists cut apart the very underpinnings that America's last revolution was all about – people uniting together. Slavery created a vast chasm between races in America – laying the foundation for the unjust laws that would follow the war, like the Jim Crow era.<sup>229</sup>

In parallel to America's growing racial divide, brothers in the North battled with brothers in South about who had a more viable way of doing business. Yes, there are actual documented cases of siblings taking aim against each other on the battlefield.<sup>230</sup>

With American fighting against American, the Civil War was by far the most deadly war in America's history – over 620,000 Americans were killed in action. To date, roughly 1,264,000 Americans have died in all America's wars combined – which means the Civil War accounts for almost half of all American battle casualties in our nation's history.<sup>231</sup>

In this war of fat cat versus fat cat, ultimately the fat cats who wanted to see one united nation of manufactures and farmers were the ones who prevailed. And even though we've "peacefully" been working for these fat cats ever since, the Civil War has imprinted a legacy of division that our nation has failed to sufficiently recover from – even over 150 years later.

First sewn by seeds of mistrust planted during the Civil War, it feels as if we the people continue to cast ourselves further apart instead of linking arms in unison. Perhaps this is the greatest and most impactful and tragic legacy of the Civil War – the story of a people divided. North and South. White and Black. Democrat and Republican. Poor and Rich. Men and Women. Pro Choice and Pro Life. Young and Old. The list of our perceived goes on and on.

With a fragmented people, it's not a tremendous surprise that our rebel history is one of ongoing struggle. Different groups of rebels have screamed out to their leaders throughout our history in the name of justice, but failing to attract the cohesive support needed for wide-scale and lasting change, our country has not witnessed truly revolutionary change since the American Revolution itself.

## AMERICA'S ONGOING REBEL STRUGGLE: A VERY BRIEF SNAPSHOT

The history of our ongoing rebel struggle is a storied and episodic one. From early atrocities inflicted upon Native Americans to the militarily-subdued end of the 1969 Native America occupation at Alcatraz, to women not being able to vote in America until 1920 and still earning less than men in the workplace today, to the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s followed by the unjust deaths of citizens like Michael Brown and Eric Garner – the list of our ongoing rebel struggles goes on and on. What follows is a brief snapshot of some of these ongoing rebel struggles:

### TAXATION WARS:

Today's skepticism about taxation did not come out of thin air. American's have long refuted the notion of taxes. When the federal government attempted to levy a whiskey tax in 1791, rebel farmers rose up in anger around what they considered an unfair tax. In response, the federal government mobilized a 13,000-person militia to subdue the Whiskey Rebellion.<sup>232</sup> Anti-tax rebels have continued to be persecuted throughout the country's history. For example, rebel writer Henry David Thoreau was jailed in 1846 when he stopped paying taxes in opposition to the Mexican-American War.<sup>233</sup>

### IMMIGRATION PERSECUTION:

Immigrants have been oppressed throughout America's history. Beginning with voting restrictions from the Alien and Sedition Acts of 1798 to the present day.<sup>234</sup> Much later in 1939, the Saint Louis set sail from Germany with 938 passengers escaping Nazi prosecution. Instead of being accepted into the U.S., the boat was forced to turn around and almost half of the passengers became trapped in the Holocaust.<sup>235</sup> And for those who don't think fashion matters in the rebel fight, take note of the Zoot Suit Riots. In 1943, Mexicans in culturally identifiable zoot suits were systematically attacked by a military mob in Los Angeles. The Los Angeles Police Department was initially unwilling to intervene.<sup>236</sup>

### LABOR STRUGGLE:

The 40-hour workweek and 2-day weekend was not simply given to the American people. It was taken in the rebel labor struggle. Rebels fighting for more humane working conditions were met with brutal force during their peaceful protests. During the Pullman Strike, railroad workers were striking across the country in support of better working conditions. The federal government responded by sending troops to crush the protest – resulting in the deaths of dozens of rebels.<sup>237, 238</sup>

## CAPITALISM, REBELS' LONGSTANDING FOE

The story of our rebel history is not being offered simply to ruminate about our nation's past. It is discussed to help demonstrate the common denominator between each episode of our ongoing rebel struggle.

In the same spirit as *A Rebel's Handbook* central theme, each chapter in our ongoing rebel struggle always seems to have its sight on capitalism (be it by name or otherwise). For example: one could argue that capitalists seized up Native American land in their pursuit of private property. And that capitalist government's subdue anyone who fails to pay taxes. And that capitalist's systematically treat immigrants and workers unjustly in the pursuit of bottom of the barrel wages. And so on.

If we peel back the layers far enough, all the disparate movements throughout our nation's history arguably distill down to this: we the people have been buckling under the injustices of capitalism throughout America's history.

There are some people currently in power that appear apprehensive that we rebels will start connecting the dots between our shared rebel histories. And they don't seem to like this one bit because connecting dots helps to provide a platform for we the people to put aside petty differences and unite.

Fearing the chorus of a people's movement, some leaders have recently gone so far as to try and actually rewrite history. For example, in 2014 a publicly elected school board near Denver, Colorado proposed revising their school district's high school curriculum to promote patriotism and respect for authority. This rewrite included removing historically important moments that "encourage or condone civil disorder," similar to the ones outlined in the preceding call-out box. Essentially, erasing any trace of the long-standing rebel struggle from public school textbooks.<sup>239</sup>

The school board's plans were eventually scrapped amidst protests from students and teachers.<sup>240</sup> The successful repudiation of rewriting our nation's textbooks is perhaps a fitting conclusion to America's last revolution. Today, we are faced with powerhouses continually encroaching on our civil rights and livelihoods. But with effective rebel dissent, as so aptly demonstrated by students and teachers in Colorado, we the people can ultimately prevail in social change.

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*"I PREFER PEACE. BUT IF TROUBLE MUST COME, LET IT COME IN MY TIME, SO THAT MY CHILDREN CAN LIVE IN PEACE."*

THOMAS PAINE





**“HISTORY WILL HAVE TO RECORD THAT THE GREATEST TRAGEDY OF THIS PERIOD OF SOCIAL TRANSITION WAS NOT THE STRIDENT CLAMOR OF THE BAD PEOPLE, BUT THE APPALLING SILENCE OF THE GOOD PEOPLE.”**

DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.

## AMERICA'S CLIMATE REVOLUTION: **MAKE HISTORY**

**L**ots of people hear the word revolution and recoil – thinking of armed insurrection or a nation in revolt. But revolution simply means one complete turn: a marked change.

Today, revolution is in the air. Even if we rebels do succeed at reining in global greenhouse gas emissions to avert the world's temperature from rising by 3.6°F, it will be too late to stave off some climate change impacts. Fat cats have already set these revolutionary changes into motion.

The world's sea levels are projected to rise one to four feet by 2100 (and higher if action is not taken soon to control our greenhouse gas emissions).<sup>241</sup> Leading experts are not too optimistic about the impacts that this kind of revolutionary change will

bring. As highlighted earlier, climate impacts like reduced land areas and supply shortages are expected to increase global armed conflict by as much as 50%.<sup>242</sup>

Yes, rising sea levels will physically bring people closer together as the ocean reclaims land we once inhabited. And yes, today's global leaders would readily send us to war to redraw their borders onto new maps that maximize their natural resources in this changing landscape.<sup>243</sup>

But armed conflict projections do not really answer the questions that we rebel's are out there asking. The real million dollar question is this: do we have to let climate change further divide us and become trapped in a world of increased inequality and global strife in the first place?

Or, can we the people unite around the need for widespread social change action and spark a climate revolution that brings the world toward a better and more peaceful place? In this process, can we help avert the most injurious impacts of climate change by reducing our greenhouse gas emissions and promoting rebel precepts like equality and social justice? And can we accomplish all this by having more fun than we do in our current status quo?

## BRAINSTORMING SOLUTIONS

America's early rebels were fighting at a time when the world had not yet identified the dangers of climate change. These rebel fighters drafted the constitution in a reality vastly different than the one we face today.

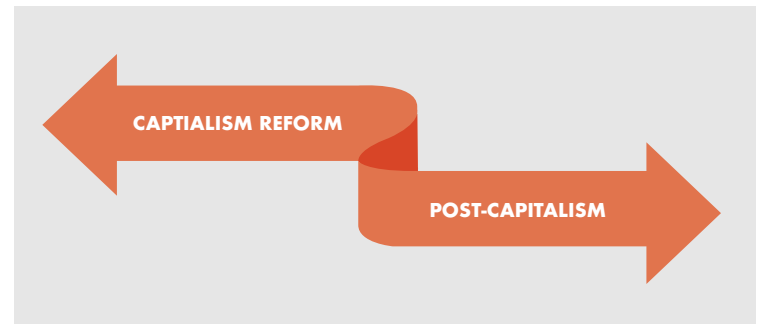
Recognizing that all signatories of the U.S. Constitution are white males and lived in a markedly different time period from ours, rebel solutions for progress should not be decided by any one group or demographic. Instead, solutions should be brainstormed by an inclusive and diverse group of people. We the people are old and young. We are republican and democrat and other parties. We are different races and genders, we are straight and LGBT. Our differences go on and on – but we rebels – we are all human.

With this in mind, lots of people should be a part of deciding what comes next and how it can be better than our status quo. Rebels should remain forever skeptical of any one person or institution that claims to have all the answers to our challenges.

With the principles of openness and inclusiveness in mind, the answer to what comes next is surely more nuanced and complicated than one handbook can offer. Ideally, what ensues is different people engaging in a collaborative brainstorming process to decide what a better tomorrow looks like.

As the brainstorm commences, some rebels will argue that capitalism in and of itself is morally reprehensible in theory and that it could never work in practice. Others will swear by it for the opportunities and innovations it can create. Lots of rebels will agree that either way, today's version of capitalism is not working all too well.

In all the conversations people have about what comes next, there are two fundamentally divergent pathways toward a solution that will likely be explored: we can either reform capitalism or transition to a post-capitalist way of doing things. Both schools of thinking have viable solutions built into them and each one deserves open-minded consideration in the rebel brainstorm.



## REFORMING CAPITALISM

As discussed from the start of the handbook, capitalism doesn't sound all too bad in theory. It is sold as a level playing field where everyone has a chance to make it big.

But for all the reasons we examined earlier, today's implementation of capitalism isn't playing out quite as planned. Does it have to be this way?

Let's go back to that earlier example of the 2008 Financial Crisis when the government bailed out the big banks. Instead, they could have distributed the same amount of money to the people in the form of a loan to save people's homes. Still capitalism, but just a reformed version of it. One where leaders put the peoples' needs front and center – ahead of the fat cats. In alternative scenarios like this, capitalism can indeed stand with the people.

Based on the fundamental underpinnings of capitalism, this economic and governmental way of doing business should, in theory, be well equipped to meet the demands of climate change. Capitalists win if they can get out ahead and innovate because there is too

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*“WHAT DIFFERENCE DOES IT MAKE TO THE DEAD, THE ORPHANS, AND THE HOMELESS, WHETHER THE MAD DESTRUCTION IS WROUGHT UNDER THE NAME OF TOTALITARIANISM OR THE HOLY NAME OF LIBERTY OR DEMOCRACY?”*

MAHATMA GANDHI

much competition to go about business any other way. With the realities of climate change before us, it seems that capitalists should be all about finding new ways to retool and prepare to meet this future. After all, according to many capitalists themselves, it is innovating for tomorrow that drives big-time profit.<sup>244</sup>

Today, there are some capitalists actively preparing for the realities of tomorrow. For example, think about the proliferation of renewable energy companies. Recognizing that oil is a finite resource with an expiration date, these capitalists are actively exploring new and viable ways of doing business. The good news is that emerging variations of capitalism, like a clean energy economy, are significantly more sustainable, reduce the world's greenhouse gas emission, and help to lower consumer costs. Example: harnessing free energy from the sun instead of having to pay cash for it.

From small entrepreneurs to big time companies, capitalists across the board are increasingly realizing that there is a need for imminent climate change action. Several reputable CEOs and leading industry groups have connected the need to tackle climate change not simply with good corporate stewardship, but also with their very bottom line.<sup>245</sup> These capitalist frontrunners cite lower gross domestic product out-

put, higher food and commodity costs, broken supply chains and increased financial risk in their championing for climate change action.<sup>246</sup>

With so many capitalists seeing the imperative for climate change and social justice solutions, why then, is there so little action?

Largely, because deeply entrenched fat cats are actively working to stymie any meaningful climate change progress. These well-rooted oligarchs are not working in the people's interest (or even capitalism's broader interests). Instead, they are working in their own self interests – preferring to keep raking in their profits by operating in the same old way instead of facilitating a new way of doing business.

Several leading economists warn of the calamitous impacts that can occur when entrenched fat cats to take hold of a capitalist system and begin to regulate the regulators. These economists warn that it stunts innovation and that the consolidation of power ultimately leads to greater income inequality, corruption, and even system collapse.<sup>247, 248, 249</sup>

With the peril of fat cats grasping too much power laid bare on the table, rebels can consider if today's implementation of capitalism can be reformed to reflect its true tenets, like audacious innovation and a level playing field.

In these rebel brainstorm about reforming today's version of capitalism, there are plenty of specific policies that rebels can point to for modernization, like the 2010 Supreme Court Decision, *Citizens United vs. Federal Election Commission*, which declared that corporations carry the same First Amendment rights as those afforded to individual citizens.<sup>250</sup>

When pinpointing areas in need of reform, like the Citizens United court case, rebels in this school of thinking will generally maintain that capitalism itself can be refined and improved to promote innovation, equality, and equal opportunity.

## POST-CAPITALISM

Because many of readers will argue that capitalism itself is inherently a flawed and unjust system — even in the theoretical — we must also deliberate on solutions that propel us toward a post-capitalist society.

This brainstorm is challenging from the outset, because the notion that there is anything superior to capitalism has traditionally been a topic that alarms and startles many. The threat of post-capitalist dystopias are immortalized in novels like *Brave New World*, *1984*, and *Atlas Shrugged*. Stories such as these make it easy to believe that it's impossible to live a successful post-capitalism world. But is it?

Alternative communities, like Burning Man, point to the idea that post-capitalist communities are indeed possible. Throughout Burning Man, people are able to compensate each other with gifts instead of cash. The concept of gifting is an important one because it is distinct from bartering. In bartering, goods are generally traded for as close to an equal value as possible. With gifting, accounting for someone's generosity transforms the way we think about transactions. For example, someone at Burning Man in need with a jacket could be gifted one on a chilly evening for no payment. Gifting actions like these revolutionize traditional notions of money and compensation.

While Burning Man first came into existence in 1986, other brainstorm ideas for post-capitalism ideals may invoke long-established economic and political theories. These theories include: communism, anarchism, and socialism.<sup>251</sup>

Those older isms are often misconstrued but they likely deserve fair and impartial eyes in a rebel brainstorm about what we can learn from the past to improve our future. Communism, for example, is based on asking the theoretical question: can resources be distributed in a more equitable way than they are today? These older isms question things like peacekeepers with guns that kill innocent people like Eric Garner and Mike Brown.

## CHANGING THE CLIMATE

When brainstorming post-capitalist solutions, it is important to note that the path forward need not simply be just one old ism. It could be a blending of multiple schools of thought or it might be an entirely new ism that has yet to be invented. All brainstorming should help address which way doing things is most likely to deliver virtues like: equality, social justice, and climate change action.

Whether we rebels end up pursuing capitalist reforms, post-capitalist solutions, or some blending of the two — all roads will ultimately coalesce around rebel’s ultimate cannon of change: disruptive innovation (often also referred to as *disruptive technology*).

Disruptive innovation is revolutionary because it fundamentally changes the way we think about and do things. Disruptive innovation is the creation of a new idea, product or technology that shakes up the status quo in a big way. Partly fueled by the Digital Revolution, disruptive innovations are happening around us all the time with increasing frequency.

Some revolutionary example of disruptive innovation include the advent of the telephone making telegraphy obso-

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“CATCH A MAN  
A FISH, AND  
YOU CAN SELL  
IT TO HIM.  
TEACH A MAN  
TO FISH, AND  
YOU LOSE  
OUT ON A  
WONDERFUL  
BUSINESS  
OPPORTUNITY.”

KARL MARX

lete, email largely replacing the traditional mailing system, online streaming roiling the VCR/DVD rental industry, and car sharing services racing ahead of the traditional taxi model.

While revolutionary change can be partly achieved by disrupting capitalism to bring attention to our problematic status quo, it will ultimately be secured from disruptive innovations that monumentally shake up today’s way of doing business.

If we look once more toward our rebel past, we rebels have cause for optimism. Widely recognized as the world’s most disruptive innovation to date, the printing press rocked the world in a big way when it was invented in the 1400s.

When Johannes Gutenberg created his world-changing printing press, this marked the first time in history when ideas could be widely disseminated with ease.<sup>252</sup> Gutenberg’s press could print as many as 3,600 pages per day, which was unprecedented at the time. There were over 1,000 Gutenberg presses in Europe after 20 years after the invention. And by 1600, Gutenberg’s presses had produced over 200 million books.<sup>253</sup>

The printing press was groundbreaking because it made books more widely available and affordable for all kinds of people — not only affluent fat cats at the top — but for we the people. The printing press is widely credited as the vehicle that ushered in the Age of Enlightenment, which was defined by the dispersed sharing of new and often-edgy ideas.<sup>254</sup>

The printing press was so influential in triggering revolutions, religious shake-ups, and wildly new scientific ideas during the Age of Enlightenment that rebel writer Mark Twain said: “what the world is today, good and bad, it

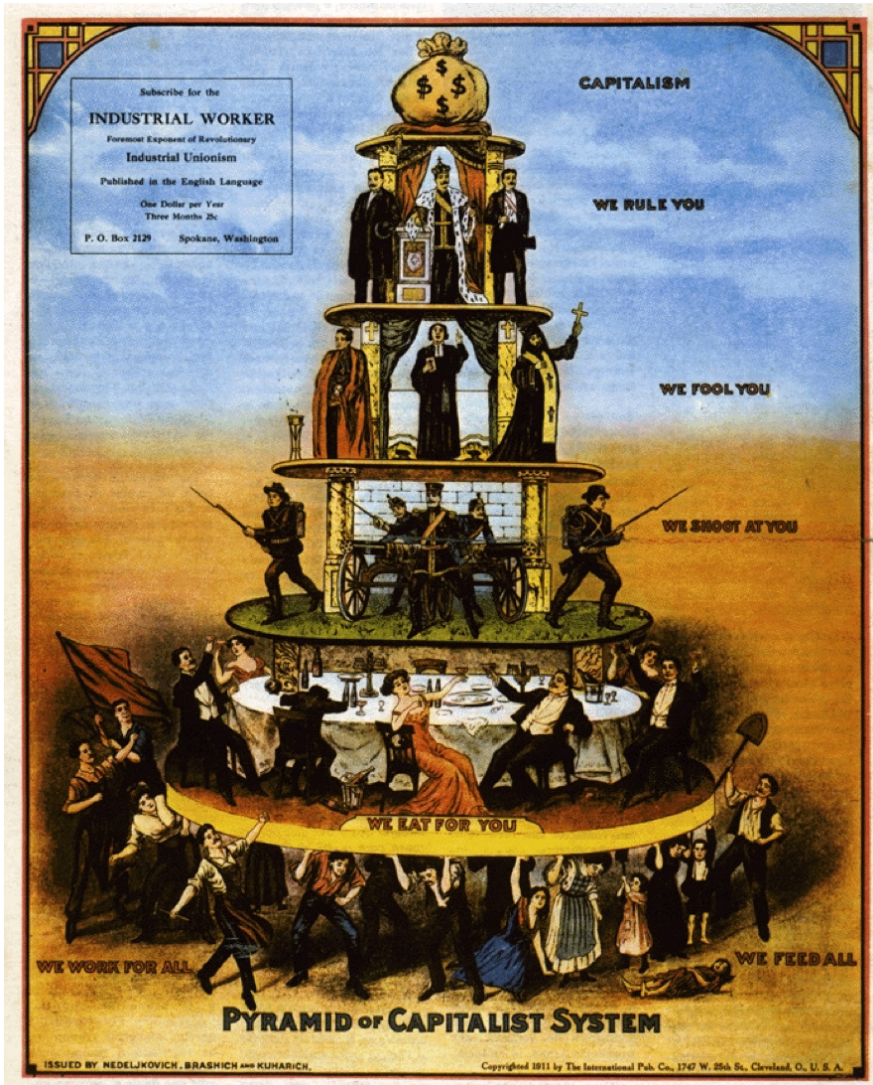
owes to Gutenberg.”<sup>255</sup> Later, Thomas Paine built on this same premise of widely distributing rebel words when he published *Common Sense* and helped spark the American Revolution.

With the immensity of global challenges that we face today, it’s hard to believe that just one disruptive innovation can be enough to solve all our worldwide woes. But when we begin to tally the cumulative impact of disruptive innovations, like energy storage to make renewable energy more affordable and an uncensored Internet to widely disperse rebel ideas, the sum total of innovations such as these present an opportunity to create a revolutionary improved tomorrow.

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“THE WORLD HATES  
CHANGE, YET IT IS THE  
ONLY THING THAT HAS  
BROUGHT PROGRESS.”

CHARLES KETTERING



## PYRAMID OF CAPITALIST SYSTEM

INDUSTRIAL WORKERS OF THE WORLD POSTER,  
UNITED STATES, 1911.

## DISRUPT CAPITALISM + HAVE FUN

Game-changing innovations, such as affordable renewable energy, are said to be on the brink of discovery. If we are so close to inventing these disruptive innovations in the ever elusive tomorrow, what is stopping us from living in a climate where these solutions can manifest themselves today?

Perhaps the biggest impediment to creating this climate of innovation springs from the lack of people out there calling for novel solutions to the challenges we face. Indeed, changing our climate begins by people saying that the climate needs changing.

Here, it is not simply through the amplification of a single megaphone, but through the sum total of many voices that our rebel roar will be heard. Doing so injects the monotonous dialogue on the airwaves today with an impetus to develop bold policies that tackles pressing problems, reforms existing areas of transgression, and spurs wildly new disruptive innovations.

The enclosed 21 tactics raise awareness about our perilous status quo. They are not rocket science – but fairly simple disruptions to poke fun at the seriousness and impenetrability that some people perceive in our current system.

By disrupting specific pillars of capitalism, we are able to hone in on particular areas of our status quo to drive change. For example, when laying off the gas pump, we are questioning the use of fossil fuels to run our world. And when bartering, we are the questioning the increasingly inequitable dollar.

The 21 rebel strategies are made up of one part disruption and one part fun. Engaging in nonviolent fun throughout the duration of our struggle arms rebels with a weapon that cannot be subdued. As *A Rebel's Handbook* notes from the start, capitalism may be able pepper spray us and force-feed us, but no action can take away our freedom to smile and make someone else laugh with a rebel joke.

As we rebels fortify ourselves with fun disruptions, aim our cannons of disruptive innovation, and engage in rebel brainstorm about our future, we do not have the luxury to do so leisurely. The immediate need to change our business-as-usual grows all the more acute as the world comes ever closer to a climatic tipping point of 3.6 degrees.

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*“PEACEFUL,  
LAWFUL PROTEST,  
IF IT IS EFFECTIVE,  
IS INNATELY  
DISRUPTIVE OF  
'BUSINESS-AS -  
USUAL.' THAT IS  
WHY IT IS  
EFFECTIVE.”*

NAOMI WOLF

## REBEL COCKTAILS

It's always the winners who end up writing history. If America's first round of rebels had lost their rebel struggle, they would have surely been dubbed as traitors. But in their victory, our nation reveres these rebel fighters as heroes.

Rebels: then, like now, we live in a time when many in the world doubt the virtues of our cause. As highlighted earlier, there are people who call us liars when we say climate change is real. They call us “thugs” when we decry the needless deaths of fellow citizens like Eric Garner, Michael Brown, Freddie Gray, and Sandra Bland.

But this name-calling does not need to faze us rebels. We have already enlisted in the rebel struggle and can laugh off these insults with ease. But how about you, the non-rebels? With the mountain of our shared challenges laid bare before you, what side of the issues do you want to say you stood on when your children or grandchildren ask you about this period of change 50 years from now?

Do you want to join us rebels and stand with 97% of scientists who are urging for climate change action? With 99% of the American population who have earned the right to question our current economic structure?<sup>256, 257</sup> Or do you want to stand with the dwindling minority of those who threaten our very survival?

Despite the mountain of challenges we face, we rebels can assuredly march forward with ease in our pathway to progress. Because even if you non-rebels stand against us, there's a 99% chance you're with us.

So for all you rebels and inquisitive readers, for all you troublemakers and dissidents and agitators, for all you dreamers and optimists and visionaries – for anyone possessing the inkling of a spark to help improve our world – the future of our planet depends upon you. But don't worry. The climate revolution does not require much of you if you don't wish to give much to it.

All we ask is that, at the very least, you help shake up the status quo with a Rebel Cocktail. If handed out correctly, the aim of the Rebel Cocktail is to raise awareness about the problems we face and to serve as a kick-off innovation that can help fuel the advent of other disruptive innovations.

Rebels: ultimately, the ability to improve our climate does not rest with any one particular moment or faraway person. It lies squarely with each of you. By taking one simple action, as minute as placing a note inside a bottle, you yourself become a catalyst for change. You offer your voice in the call for a better and more just tomorrow. You help to spread the rebel words of progress and change.

So to all you rebels and soon-to-be rebels – I) get ready to have some fun. Write a little joke to put in your Rebel Cocktail. Next, II) get set to change the climate: stuff your note into bottle and prepare to pass your bottle to a friend or stranger. And then, III)...go!



EPILOGUE

# A CALL FOR PEACE

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**"IF THE BEE DISAPPEARED OFF THE SURFACE OF  
THE GLOBE, THEN MAN WOULD HAVE ONLY  
FOUR YEARS OF LIFE LEFT. NO MORE BEES, NO  
MORE POLLINATION, NO MORE PLANTS, NO  
MORE ANIMALS, NO MORE MAN."**

ALBERT EINSTEIN

## DEAR CITIZENS OF THE WORLD IN 2100:

It's always the winners who end up writing history. And at this point in the rebel fight, I don't know if the rebels from my time will win or lose. If we lost this thing, a drone may be circling overhead as you whisper rebel words in secrecy. And if we won, there's a chance this silly yellowed letter could be affixed to a museum wall.

Whatever the outcome of the climate revolution was, I am certain of at least this: you are living in a different world than mine. The maps of our worlds are different ones. Because even if we rebels did avert the most dire impacts of climate change, we knew our actions would not be enough to alleviate all the inexorable climate impacts that the fat cats of our time had already put into motion.

Although it may be hard for you to believe, I lived in a time before sea levels rose. And even though it's hard for me to believe, many of the species that existed during my lifetime are now gone in yours.

I don't know which animals are still with you, but I do hope we rebels succeeded in staving off an extinction of the bees. That you can taste a bee's honey and know the sweetness that nature can bring.

In my lifetime, Albert Einstein imparted a warning to my generation: "If the bee disappeared off the surface of the globe, then man would have only four years of life left. No more bees, no more pollination, no more plants, no more animals, no more man."

With sea levels higher and the taste of honey perhaps just a distant memory, you will surely wonder if people of my time realized the destruction we were causing from our greenhouse gas emissions. And the answer is yes. In my time, people started to see the warning signs. We woke up to front-page news stories about ice sheets melting and bees dying.

Despite these warning signs, some people in my world continued to claim that climate change was not real or that there was nothing we could do to help solve it. Governments during my time were unwilling or too timid to call human-caused climate change for what it was: a crime against humanity.

But please know this: not all of us were just sitting by silently. We rebels were rebelling. As capitalism darkened our world with challenges like climate change and inequality, we did our best to rise to the occasion with a smile.

Even though we were smiling and laughing, don't think that our rebel fight was easy. There were people who called us liars for saying climate

change was real. We were spit on. Beaten. Arrested. Some of us were even killed. But no matter what the fat cats did to stop us, we rebels just kept on smiling and having fun.

Whether we lost or won our chapter in the ongoing rebel fight, the rebels of my time are now long gone. Citizens of the world in 2100: I hope you have taken up the rebel baton. Because ultimately, the world always depends upon rebels.

We're the people who question the status quo. Who continually push for greater things. Who believe a better future is eternally possible. We are the watchdogs who call foul if a government tries to take too much power. We're the ones who rise up to crimes against humanity – like climate change – when we bear witness.

Indeed, the world has and always will depend upon rebels to keep our needle tirelessly aimed toward progress. So to all you rebels of 2100 – however the world chooses to remember the rebels of my time, I hope you will remember us as a people who, like you, believe in upholding justice and safeguarding tomorrow.

If you are alive and reading this now – regardless of the outcome of the climate revolution – I hope you will pay some respect to the rebels of my time who fought for you to be here.

Who sacrificed so much, driven by our fervent, and perhaps even outlandish ideals. Ideals like the aspiration that you would one day be able to taste a bee's honey and know the sweetness that nature can bring.

Whether you're reading this with a drone circling overhead or on the walls of a museum, you can remember us best by sitting back and telling a rebel joke. Because rebels of all generations: if we're not laughing, we're losing.

In Solidarity,







RESOURCES

# REBEL TOOLKIT

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**"WHATEVER THERE MAY OF PROGRESS  
IN LIFE COMES NOT THROUGH  
ADAPTATION, BUT THROUGH DARING."**

HENRY MILLER



**“CONTINUE TO CONTAMINATE YOUR BED,  
AND YOU WILL ONE NIGHT SUFFOCATE  
IN YOUR OWN WASTE.”**

CHIEF SEALTH (SEATTLE)

# TOOLKIT ROADMAP

THESE ARE A FEW TOOLS TO LEND YOU  
A HAND IN THE REBEL FIGHT:

<b>REBEL HEATSHEET:</b> Disrupt Capitalism and Have Fun .....	<b>150</b>
<b>FINE PRINT:</b> FAQs .....	<b>153</b>
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Rebels can help out other rebels by adding additional resources into this toolkit. Give us case studies of what worked best in your disrupting, or a sample press release, or the heatsheet translated into a new language. All tools and resources help. All tools are welcomed at [RebelsHandbook.com](http://RebelsHandbook.com).

# REBEL HEATSHEET

**THE LOWDOWN:** With the pillars of capitalism and tenets of social change in mind, the Rebel Heatsheet offers 21 social change strategies to disrupt capitalism's key pillars. The rebel fight is buttressed by having fun: the key ingredient in all 21 strategies. \*See warning for tactic seven on page 85.

HAVE FUN	DISRUPT CAPITALISM
<b>A) DISSENT: SPEAK OUT</b>	
<b>1) Smile, Be Happy</b>	Making people smile with random acts of kindness <b>DISRUPTS</b> capitalism's myth that strangers are unkind.
<b>2) Walk on the Wild Side</b>	Learning local laws and defying the silly ones <b>DISRUPTS</b> capitalism's meme to "follow the rules."
<b>3) Get Weird</b>	Embracing funky styles, like spoof suits, <b>DISRUPTS</b> capitalism's boring fashion rules.
<b>4) Take a Dive</b>	Recycling strategies, like dumpster diving, <b>DISRUPTS</b> capitalism's drive for constant consumption.
<b>B) COMBINE FORCES: ORGANIZE</b>	
<b>5) Do a Little Dance, Make A Little Love</b>	Participating in "spontaneous" flash mobs <b>DISRUPTS</b> capitalism's control of public spaces.

HAVE FUN	DISRUPT CAPITALISM
<b>6) Forward March</b>	Staging catchy protests with clever costumes <b>DISRUPTS</b> capitalism's determination to hide from the media.
<b>7) Curb Penalty Fees*</b>	Filling empty meters to sidestep parking tickets <b>DISRUPTS</b> capitalism's ability to collect government revenue.
<b>8) Pop a Squat</b>	Squatting with friends <b>DISRUPTS</b> capitalism's definition of property rights.
<b>9) Strike a Match</b>	Burning symbolic objects with Flag Burn Parties <b>DISRUPTS</b> capitalism's dependency for public apathy.
<b>C) CRACK JOKES: PUNCHY PRANKS</b>	
<b>10) Applaud Your Adversaries</b>	Issuing satirical awards, like "polluter of the year," <b>DISRUPTS</b> capitalism's plea for consumerism without question.
<b>11) Turn On, Tune In, Drop Out</b>	Surfing the web with free ad blockers <b>DISRUPTS</b> capitalism's investment in online infrastructure.
<b>12) Play Hooky</b>	Joining group hooky days out of the office <b>DISRUPTS</b> capitalism's foundation of workforce support.
<b>13) Take a Swipe</b>	Gaming classic payment methods with Penny Swipes <b>DISRUPTS</b> capitalism's insatiable appetite for cheap credit.

HAVE FUN	DISRUPT CAPITALISM
<b>14) Layoff The Pump</b>	Bypassing gas payments with “bike to work parties,” <b>DISRUPTS</b> capitalism’s bet on the stock market.
<b>D) VIVA LA REVOLUTION: CREATE CHANGE</b>	
<b>15) Share if You Care</b>	Using peer-to-peer platforms, like ridesharing, <b>DISRUPTS</b> capitalism’s affinity for monopolies.
<b>16) Get By w/ a Little Help from Your Friends</b>	Using alternative payments, such as bartering, <b>DISRUPTS</b> capitalism’s dollar dependency.
<b>17) Fix The Vote</b>	Electing funny fake leaders, like Mickey Mouse, <b>DISRUPTS</b> capitalism’s legitimacy to operate.
<b>18) Fight Like a Guerrilla</b>	Developing new and nonviolent guerrilla tactics <b>DISRUPTS</b> capitalism’s ability to laugh off funny rebels.
<b>19) Burn the Man</b>	Living the burner life at Burning Man <b>DISRUPTS</b> capitalism’s sales-pitch that it’s the best way to live.
<b>20) Brainstorm the Future</b>	Organizing rebel events to brainstorm our future <b>DISRUPTS</b> capitalism’s plan to stick with business-as-usual.
<b>21) Spread the Word</b>	Writing messages in bottles to share #RebelCocktails <b>DISRUPTS</b> capitalism’s attempt to stem a rebel revolution.

# FINE PRINT

**THE LOWDOWN:** Even *Rebel Handbooks*’ have fine print. This fine print proactively addresses questions or criticisms that may come up regarding the handbook. The info is provided to offer clear and direct info to you. It’s also offered to give you a sound bite if a friend asks you about one of these issues and you want some talking points.

**NONVIOLENCE:** This handbook advocates for nonviolence only: 100% of the time with no exceptions.

**SAFETY:** Safety should always be a paramount priority for rebels. Exercise safety when implementing any of the rebel strategies to ensure you are not needlessly harmed in the rebel fight.

**LEGALITY:** Some of strategies discussed in this handbook could be illegal if implemented in certain jurisdictions. The author of this handbook doesn’t know where you live and can’t advise you on the state of the law in your area. Know your rights and know your risks. Any acts you undertake are at your own risk.

**INCLUSIVENESS:** Rebels can be anyone from any background. The handbook favors no one particular racial, religious, gender, or socioeconomic group over another. The handbook makes every attempt to be maximally inclusive for everyone.

**QUOTES:** The handbook includes dozens of quotes from various leaders throughout history. The inclusion of a quote does not indicate an endorsement for any one particular person or ideology. Further, including a person’s quote does not give a pass for any wrongs that person may have committed in their lifetime.

**POLITICAL NEUTRALITY:** The handbook expresses discontent with today’s implementation of capitalism, but nowhere does it promote one particular political party or singular ideology. The future is something that should be decided collaboratively by the people.

**FACT CHECKING:** Capitalists who don’t like the material in this handbook could pay fact-checkers lots of money to comb through every statistic cited with the goal of finding errors. And if someone looks hard enough, they may find some mistakes. But don’t let fat cats belittle the handbook just because

we rebels don't have the same resources to hire an army of researchers. Even if it turns out that a percentage is slightly off or out of date, the broader themes of the handbook still echo.

#### **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:**

There is a lot more information that belongs in *A Rebel's Handbook* and these topics can and should be brought into the conversation. Extensive coverage on all of today's problems requires teamwork and collaboration to put it all together. As such, rebels are encouraged to explore how any unaddressed problems relate to capitalism and what rebel tactic can be used to bring attention to that particular issue.

**ECON:** Capitalism is admittedly a tricky topic to understand and it can be hard to digest all of its unique attributes. There are experts who have been studying the field for centuries. *A Rebel's Handbook* attempts to streamline the explanation of capitalism to make it more digestible and accessible. Anyone interested in the complete breadth of capitalism in and of itself is encouraged to read up more on the topic.

**COPYRIGHT:** The handbook is copyrighted, which may seem antithetical to being a rebel. Why would rebels have rules? The book is copyrighted to ensure the content remains free and to safeguard the content from ever being reworked into a narrative that advocates for harm or violence.

**PHOTO LICENSING:** All photographs in the handbook have a creative commons license, are available in the public domain, or have provided permission by other means. Thank you to all photographers cited on page 16 for helping to tell the rebel narrative with your compelling photos.

**PRINTED COPIES:** The handbook primarily exists in the online world. However, printed copies can be a helpful way to spread the rebel world. If you do print, please do so with recycled paper and environmentally benign inks to minimize environmental degradation.

**RED HERRING:** There always ends up being a red herring in a project like this. The one flash point of controversy or issue that people tend to become the most preoccupied with. Maybe it will be one strategy that's ends up being particularly controversial or a mistakenly cited fact. Let's not let this red herring dilute the rebel fight. *A Rebel's Handbook* succeeds if people can stay focused on the bigger narrative: we need change.

#### **AUTHOR ANONYMITY:**

The author has chosen to remain anonymous because the rebel fight is not about any one singular person: it is about we the people. Please respect this.

# REBEL READING

**THE LOWDOWN:** There are lots of different kind of people out there – from environmentalists, to economists, to philosophers. There are lots of rebel materials available for all kinds of people if you'd like to keep learning more.

#### **CLIMATE CHANGE ADVOCATES**

##### ***IPCC Fifth Assessment Report:***

Published by the International Panel on Climate Change, the Fifth Assessment provides the latest climate change stats from scientific experts.

##### ***ECONOMISTS • Capital in the***

***Twenty-First Century:*** Thomas Piketty offers a sobering narrative about the underpinnings of capitalism in *Capital*.

##### ***CAPITALISTS • The Wolf of Wall***

***Street:*** A 2.5-hour movie showing capitalists in action and what it looks like to be a fat cat.

#### **ENVIRONMENTALISTS**

***The Lorax:*** Dr. Seuss gives us an environmental classic with *The Lorax* and lays out the perils of environmental degradation.

##### ***SOCIAL CHANGERS • Power***

***and Struggle:*** Gene Sharp provides an insightful commentary on how nonviolent civil disobedience can rock the world.

#### **POLICY MAKERS**

***U.S. Constitution:*** A good refresher for our leaders. When reading, please pay particular to the freedom of speech section.

##### ***HISTORIANS • A People's History of***

***the United States:*** Howard Zinn lays out the history of the U.S. from the perspective of we the people.

##### ***PHILOSOPHERS • The Rebel:***

***An Essay on Man in Revolt:*** Albert Camus advocates for the imperative of social change.

##### ***PESSIMISTS • The Hunger Games:***

If you think social change is impossible, treat yourself to a fun read and let Katniss Everdeen inspire you.

##### ***HIPSTERS • NPR:***

Check out NPR to learn more about all the crazy shit happening around us today. And because, inextricably, hipster's can't seem to resist NPR.

#### **PEOPLE WHO HATE READING**

***Gandhi:*** A 3-hour movie showing what happens when lots of people organize to create nonviolent change.

# CAPITALISM 101

**THE LOWDOWN:** Here's a possible scenario: you read the handbook and get excited but none of your friends get it because it's hard for them to see what's wrong with capitalism. To help: three "experiments" you can walk non-rebels through.

1.

## THE GOOGLE EXPERIMENT

**THE EXPERIMENT** Google is a revered information source for any topic. So let's use Google for our first experiment.

Google image search "peace."  
What images come up?

If you Google it, you will see lots of recognizable signs of peace. Peace signs, doves, fingers forming the peace sign. All easy and quick ways for us to categorize and label the idea of "peace."

Now Google image search "gravity."  
What images come up?

The images are more disjointed and allusive here. Lots of photos of George Clooney and Sandra Bullock floating around in outer space. Some diagrams attempting to explain the Law of Universal Gravitation. But nothing that really lets us put our finger on what gravity actually is.

### THE TAKEAWAY

Gravity is a constant and integral force that is active every moment of our lives. Yet, it's difficult to explain and categorize when we search for it. It is almost invisible. There are other omnipresent and allusive forces like gravity, and capitalism is one of them. Like gravity, capitalism is also powerful, invisible and hard to pinpoint.

For bonus points:  
Google image search "capitalism" to see this point further demonstrated.

2.

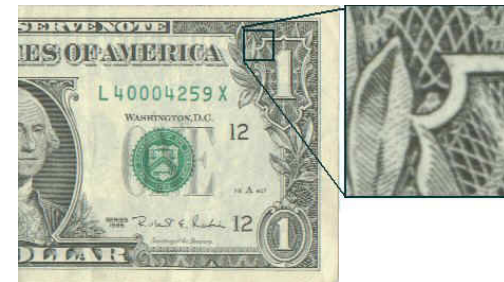
## THE DOLLAR EXPERIMENT

**THE EXPERIMENT** We come across the dollar bill every day. We're so used to looking at it, we don't spend much time staring at it. We know George Washington's face is on there. But what else? Have you ever wondered what other random things maybe hiding on there?

For this experiment, use a magnifying glass and look really closely toward the top right corner of the dollar bill. If you look closely enough, you'll see an owl with scary eyes staring right at you. If you don't have a magnifying glass lying around, you can use the zoom function on a phone camera to spot the owl.

**THE TAKEAWAY** There could be a lot of different reasons why that owl is hiding out on the dollar. Maybe it's simply a counterfeit mechanism to help make copying the dollar harder. Or maybe it's something more sinister, and involves a wild conspiracy. Who knows? But the answer about why it's there doesn't really matter for this experiment.

The takeaway is this: if you look closely enough at any object you see everyday, there can be something surprisingly hidden and undiscovered (like a random owl). When it comes to capitalism, we may think we've got an idea of what it's all about, but like the dollar, there is a lot more to it than originally meets our eyes.



### 3.

## THE NEWS EXPERIMENT

**THE EXPERIMENT** This experiment is easy: just find a news source and check out the headline story. Chances are that it will be about something scary and alarming: war, murder, poverty, a crazy weather event, a government mistake.

**THE TAKEAWAY** Based on today's current events, things are not going well in the world. And even scarier, they look to be getting worse if you're a news hound whose been following the trajectory of events. Even though capitalism is hidden (like the dollar's owl) it is a powerful and active force, (like gravity), that is driving today's most pressing current events. Can you identify the red thread of capitalism the next time you read through the news?



# CLIMATE CHANGE 101

**THE LOWDOWN:** The term “climate change” sounds confusing to so many people, but it’s actually a pretty simple concept. If you’re trying to explain what climate change is to someone, this tool is designed to help you out.

### CLIMATE CHANGE IS

**SIMPLE:** Humans are releasing tons of greenhouse gas emissions into the atmosphere, which is causing the greenhouse effect. Like smaller greenhouses people build to trap in heat, the world’s greenhouse effect is working in a similar way.<sup>258</sup>

### CLIMATE CHANGE IS

**HAPPENING:** The facts all point to the reality that climate change is not only real, but that it’s happening today. Select stats:

- We use three ways to measure global surface temperature and all of them tell us that our earth has warmed since 1880.<sup>259</sup>
- The 10 warmest years on record having occurred since 2000.<sup>260</sup>
- Most of our country has recently experienced unprecedented periods of high temperatures, heavy downpours, and severe floods or drought.<sup>261</sup>

### CLIMATE CHANGE IS SCARY:

If actions are not taken to rein in our greenhouse gas emissions, scientists warn of dire consequences including loss of food and water supplies, species extinction, and deadly extreme weather events.

### SOMETHING CAN BE DONE:

Scientists tell us that if we take significant actions to solve climate change today, we can help avert its most harmful impacts.



# BURNING MAN 101

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**THE LOWDOWN:** Classified as a “network of dreamers and doers,” Burning Man embodies post-capitalist ideals of living. Drawing over 65,000 people to the Nevada desert each year for a weeklong burn, Burning Man adheres to core guiding principles in order to ensure the community functions effectively. Whether you approach Burning Man as an expert, novice, or skeptic – understanding the ten principles that guide Burning Man provides a better understanding of how post-capitalist communities can function.<sup>262</sup>

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The ten principles outlined below are a direct copy of Burning Man co-founder Larry Harvey’s words. He explains that these principles are not crafted to dictate how people should be and act, but rather, as a reflection of the Burning Man community’s ethos and culture as it had organically developed.

## **RADICAL INCLUSION:**

“Anyone may be a part of Burning Man. We welcome and respect the stranger. No prerequisites exist for participation in our community.

## **GIFTING:**

Burning Man is devoted to acts of gift giving. The value of a gift is unconditional. Gifting does not contemplate a return or an exchange for something of equal value.

## **DECOMMODIFICATION:**

In order to preserve the spirit of gifting, our community seeks to create social environments that are unmediated by commercial sponsorships, transactions, or advertising. We stand ready to protect our culture from such exploitation. We resist the substitution of consumption for participatory experience.

## **RADICAL SELF-RELIANCE:**

Burning Man encourages the individual to discover, exercise and rely on his or her inner resources.

# BURNING MAN 101 (CONT.)

## **RADICAL SELF-EXPRESSION:**

Radical self-expression arises from the unique gifts of the individual. No one other than the individual or a collaborating group can determine its content. It is offered as a gift to others. In this spirit, the giver should respect the rights and liberties of the recipient.

## **COMMUNAL EFFORT:**

Our community values creative cooperation and collaboration. We strive to produce, promote and protect social networks, public spaces, works of art, and methods of communication that support such interaction.

## **CIVIC RESPONSIBILITY:**

We value civil society. Community members who organize events should assume responsibility for public welfare and endeavor to communicate civic responsibilities to participants. They must also assume responsibility for conducting events in accordance with local, state and federal laws.

## **LEAVING NO TRACE:**

Our community respects the environment. We are committed to leaving no physical trace of our activities wherever we gather. We clean up after ourselves and endeavor, whenever possible, to leave such places in a better state than when we found them.

## **PARTICIPATION:**

Our community is committed to a radically participatory ethic. We believe that transformative change, whether in the individual or in society, can occur only through the medium of deeply personal participation. We achieve being through doing. Everyone is invited to work. Everyone is invited to play. We make the world real through actions that open the heart.

## **IMMEDIACY:**

Immediate experience is, in many ways, the most important touchstone of value in our culture. We seek to overcome barriers that stand between us and a recognition of our inner selves, the reality of those around us, participation in society, and contact with a natural world exceeding human powers. No idea can substitute for this experience.<sup>263</sup>





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**JON STEWART**