



14. LAYOFF THE PUMP

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

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.¹⁸⁵ 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.¹⁸⁶ Oh, and because fat cats in the oil industry also happen to be some of the most ultra 1%.¹⁸⁷
- 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?

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

THOMAS JEFFERSON