Greed at the New York Stock Exchange and the Levitation of the Pentagon: Early Protest Theatre by Abbie Hoffman and Jerry Rubin

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On New Year’s Eve, 1967, the Yippies were created in an apartment in New York City. Each person present claimed a different story regarding the name, which increased the mythical nature of the label. Abbie Hoffman and Jerry Rubin quickly became the most well known Yippies, though there were formally no leaders-anyone could be a Yippie. They specifically eschewed the idea of leadership and even notions of a formal membership. They also denounced the development of a consistent ideology. What then was positive in the Yippies' presentation of themselves and what made them different? In a word, theatre. In the four months prior to the establishment of the name Yippie, the drama of the theatre was enacted at the New York Stock Exchange and during the March on the Pentagon. These pre-Yippie scenarios acted as "road tests" for Hoffman and Rubin’s unique theatrical approach to revolutionary practices, which later characterized their signature style.

In his actions and writings, Hoffman not only alludes to the influence of theatre on his protests in his actions and writings, but also makes specific references to French playwright Antonin Artaud numerous times. Despite this clear influence, there is no scholarly work that specifically looks to evaluate the role of theatre in Hoffman's protests. This is especially true concerning the demonstration at the New York Stock Exchange and the attempted levitation of the Pentagon, as these events occurred prior to the actual creation of the name “Yippie.” Most scholarly works about Abbie Hoffman and Jerry Rubin discuss the Festival of Life held in Lincoln Park in Chicago during the 1968 Democratic National Convention, or the resulting Chicago 7 Conspiracy Trial. As well, there are a few biographies on Abbie Hoffman, most notable being For the Hell of It: The Life and Times of Abbie Hoffman by Jonah Raskin. Specifically, Raskin discusses Hoffman’s experiences and studies while at Brandeis University, and mentions Hoffman’s interest in theatre, while writing an in-depth narrative of Hoffman’s life.

There are many works that pertain to the period of the 1960s, but few that remain informative works on the study of the origins of the Yippie movement. Julie Stephens discusses the shift of what the term "the sixties" signifies depending on the changing interpretive framework in her book Anti-Disciplinary Protest: Sixties Radicalism and Postmodernism. While mentioning the role of theatre in Hoffman's protests, there is no significant amount of study devoted to understanding the impact of theatre. The dominant presence of studies focusing on the glory days of the Yippies, or specifically on Abbie Hoffman, reveals a significant flaw in the scholarship, which this paper attempts to correct. Antonin Artaud and the theatre were key in informing Hoffman and Rubin's conceptions of revolution and in shaping their protests as Yippies.

By the fall of 1967 Rubin was already a well-known figure in the local and national press. Garnering just over twenty-nine percent of votes for mayor of Berkeley in the 1967 election, Rubin had already gotten...
himself into the news.[2] What began as a campaign geared toward campus radicals and hippies eventually shifted towards a wider demographic, although his goal was still "to build a movement for drastic structural change in government."[3] Rubin explained that when his campaign sent people door-to-door to talk about the election, they discovered that most didn't know they had a mayor, with fewer knowing his name or his appearance. He continued, "we, the radicals, had to go through the community convincing people that a good mayor made a difference, that votes and elections meant something, that democracy could work."[4] Despite the fact that Rubin "started kissing babies and shaking every hand [he] could catch," he learned that a new society could not be built by begging for votes.[5] In contrast to electoral politics, which Rubin claimed required dishonesty and was based on individuals, he firmly asserted that "our new society is honest....Our new society is collective. ...Live the revolution."[6] Though Rubin did not win the mayoral race, his experience and success as a founder and co-chairman of the Vietnam Day Committee in Berkeley played an essential role in his future as an activist. As a key member of the Vietnam Day Committee, Rubin helped to organize teach-ins against the war in Vietnam, and protested the war by trying to stop trains of troops headed for war. Soon after the failed mayoral election, anti-war activist David Dellinger invited Rubin to be the project director of the October 1967 March on the Pentagon organized by the National Mobilization to End the War In Vietnam (MOBE).

Hoffman, on the other hand, was virtually unknown nationally, though he became something of a mass media darling once the Yippies were formed later that year. Although he was engaged in a long history of protest and counterculture activities prior to 1967, he rarely came to the attention of the popular media. One of the only mentions of Hoffman was in May 1967 in the New York Times, due to his role in organizing a Flower Brigade to march in a parade held to support U.S. forces in Vietnam. Members of the Flower Brigade had paint sprayed on their bodies and their signs destroyed. Hoffman was quick to tell the Times that he had requested and received permission from the parade organizers to participate-the Flower Brigade wanted to march in support of soldiers, but not the Vietnam War itself.[7] This adherence to the formal rules was a Hoffman leitmotif and would continue throughout most of his time organizing Yippie demonstrations and protests.

While Hoffman became a symbol of youth protest and rebellion, in the late 1950s he was a student at Brandeis College where he graduated from in 1959 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Psychology. While at Brandeis College, Hoffman studied under such figures as Frank Manuel, Maurice Stein, Abraham Maslow and Herbert Marcuse, the two latter of which, according to biographer Jonah Raskin, Hoffman "identified thoroughly with [and] adopted...as intellectual father figures."[8] While a professor at Brandeis College, "Marcuse brought a socialist ideal of knowledge into American society."[9] His second book, 1955's Eros and Civilization became popular among counterculture hippies "as a philosophical proclamation of the power and importance of subjective experience". [10] Marcuse sought to "analyze the relations between philosophy and life," while keeping Marxism "from being transformed into a toothless liberalism" or frozen "in its own past...as dogmatic truths that were in no need of amendment."[11] These ideas were attractive to Hoffman because of the importance laid on reinterpreting Marx in the context of the contemporary. Marcuse wanted to keep the radicalism inherent in the philosophy, but adapt it to the condition of the post war era. Although Eros and Civilization became popular among the 1960s rebellious youth, Hoffman had been exposed to and engaged in Marcuse's ideas and works long before he "dropped out" into the hippie scene.
Raskin asserted the importance of Hoffman's education and experiences at Brandeis, as he explained that Hoffman "learned to think dialectically, to look for contradictions, to link polar opposites, and to synthesize-to see the whole and all its parts."[12] He continued that Hoffman "idolized the Brandeis intellectuals who were determined to fuse Marx and Freud," further tying Hoffman's interests to the ideas of Marcuse.[13] A fellow counterculture figure, Jim Fouratt, explained, "when you scraped away Abbie's hippie surface, you found an intellectual who read Marx, Lenin, Mao Tse-tung, [and] talked about alienation in postindustrial society and about Herbert Marcuse."[14] Despite the sense of anti-intellectualism in Hoffman's demonstrations, he chose to become a hippie, and as Jonah Raskin argued, doing so was "a part of his grand political design....Becoming a hippie himself would give him an edge, he felt, in the battle to convert hippies...to the cause of the revolution."[15]

Another intellectual figure that Hoffman was interested in was Abraham Maslow, a psychologist whose work promoted, among other things, the idea of healthy motivation. Hoffman wrote in his Autobiography, "there was something about his humanistic psychology...that I found exhilarating amidst the general pessimism that pervaded Western thought."[16] Maslow's "growth psychology, the postulation of love and creativity as driving needs, and the idea of self actualization," Hoffman wrote, "gave birth to a new generation of mind probers."[17] Maslow's claim that "self-actualizing people tend to focus on problems outside of themselves, have a clear sense of what is true and what is phony, are spontaneous and creative, and are not bound too strictly by social conventions," presents a picture of Abbie Hoffman.[18] Raskin contends that Hoffman "was determined" to be a self-actualizing person.[19] The interest in this healthy motivation and study of positive mental health so influenced Hoffman that he "found everything Maslow wrote applicable to modern revolutionary struggle in America, especially when corrected by Marcuse's class analysis."[20] Disclosing that his claims that he had developed his ideas from watching television were merely a put-on, Hoffman affirmed rather bluntly, "I studied with the greatest gurus of the fifties," exposing a small glimpse into the inner workings of his mind as influenced by 1950s intellectuals.[21]

In the fall of 1959, he traveled to University of California at Berkeley to pursue a Masters degree in psychology, but after the first year dropped out, returned to the East Coast and was married. While he attended UC Berkeley, where Rubin soon after gained fame as a campus figure, Hoffman did not make himself noteworthy. Although they were in close proximity at this early time, Rubin and Hoffman did not officially meet and begin their work together until August 1967 when Rubin arrived in New York City to begin working on the plans for the March on the Pentagon that October.

Early in the summer of 1967, Richard Goldstein introduced a group called the Diggers to New York. The Diggers were an offshoot of the San Francisco Mime Troupe, and were essentially engaged in taking theatre to the streets. As historian Michael William Doyle described, "In the process they attempted to remove all boundaries between art and life, between spectator and performer, and between public and private. They referred to the resulting technique as 'life-acting,'...combining the direct action of anarchism with theatrical role playing."[22] Another aim of the Diggers was to enact 'Free', "a comprehensive utopian program that would function as a working model of an alternative society....The object was to place it before any noun or gerund that designated a fundamental need, service, or institution, and then try to imagine how such a thing might be realized."[23] The Diggers were focused on the "communal experience of rebellion and defiance", in which "no one was supposed to become a leader or a media celebrity."[24]
Hoffman had recently become a part of the hippie scene in New York, and became a Digger that summer as he was interested in the "free thing" and saw the benefit in being able to manipulate the media as a Digger rather than be created by the media as a hippie. [25] After a relatively short period, Hoffman split from the New York Diggers for both ideological and personal reasons. Hoffman disliked how the Diggers had "denounced" the hippies as mere consumers and dismissed the counterculture as a gimmick to sell commodities. [26] Further, a Digger named Emmett Grogan claimed that Hoffman stole Digger ideas and exploited them and the Digger mystique in order to aggrandize himself in the scene. Hoffman "felt that the ideas weren't anyone's private property, and he argued that he wasn't using the Diggers to build his own fortune or power in the movement." [27] Nevertheless, the Diggers can be seen as an inspiration for the Yippies, as theatre became the focal point of Hoffman and Rubin's revolution.

Hoffman and Rubin's relationship can be summed up in Hoffman's assertion that, "just as Che needed Fidel and Costello needed Abbott, Jerry Rubin and I were destined to join forces." [28] Hoffman recognized that he and Rubin "were two people who sensed the opportunity of blending the political and the cultural revolutions. Jerry's forte was the political timing," while Hoffman's was the dramatic. [29] But this duo, like the aforementioned, evolved as they influenced and aided one another. Hoffman described Rubin as taking "himself as seriously as any other left-wing preacher...in spite of all his revolutionary highjinks." [30] Rubin's "presentation [at first] was still too forceful and rhetorical. It didn't have a silly element and the appeal to spirit." [31] Despite this initial weakness, Hoffman agreed that Rubin "was an action freak and an anti-intellectual like [himself]" who complemented his own dramatic style. [32] As Hoffman recounted, "[Rubin] was more versed than I in getting the cultural revolution incorporated into a broader structure." [33]

Hoffman had followed Rubin's anti-war efforts in Berkeley, including his efforts at stopping "troop trains headed for ports with Vietnam beyond," and his campaign for mayor. [34] He was most intrigued by Rubin's choice to appear in front of the House Committee on Un-American Activities dressed up as an American Revolutionary soldier-complete with tricorned hat. Hoffman asserted that Rubin was successful in engaging the enemy in what he called "symbolic warfare." Hoffman explained that, as "a delicate form of protest art, symbolic warfare insists one must love one's country in order to overthrow its government. The way in which a revolutionary uses past national heroes, myths, the flag, popular legends, and the like has to be exceptionally cunning." [35] Hoffman was quick to extend a hand to one so cunning, and he informed Rubin that he "would support what he was doing in the national antiwar movement and give him access to the counterculture." [36] Hoffman explained in his autobiography that he saw in Rubin a common "willingness to go beyond reason" and an understanding "of how to turn ideas into action" among the two of them. [37] This led Hoffman to trust Rubin's "political judgment more than anyone else's in the country." [38] Rubin was also intrigued by Hoffman, as he later asserted, "Abbie has this incredible effect on me....[He] revolutionized me." [39] Hoffman further explained that "among anarchists there [were] not that many who [could] map out a strategy and lead," and that "Jerry had the drive and the political instincts to ride the movement waves." [40] Hoffman described how they lured each other into each others' respective worlds; Hoffman drew Rubin into the culture of the Lower East Side, and Rubin involved Hoffman in the National Mobilization to End the War in Vietnam's "conspiracy to attack Washington" that October. [41]

In an interview published in the underground magazine East Village Other, Hoffman told Jaakov Kohn that he "started to think in terms of the future rather than labeling it. [In] post abundant society...economic
principles would be kind of different than the ones Marx had formulated.\[42\] While often labeled a New Leftist, Hoffman was definitely an outlier. While attracted to Mao's *Red Book*, he was mostly interested in Mao's statement, "An army without a culture makes dull-witted soldiers."\[43\] Hoffman wanted to forge a new culture and he stressed that the richness of that new culture was irrelevant; what was most important was the development of "an alternative vision, a new kind of fantasy about the future."\[44\] While Kohn pointed out that the Black Panthers aligned strongly with Mao's *Red Book*, Hoffman argued the book could be related to Caucasians just as much as African-Americans; "The blacks are oppressed. The young whites are alienated."\[45\] Hoffman went on to discuss with Kohn how, in the spirit of America, each revolutionary movement had its own individuality. The symbols, structure, and organization between groups were as different as if they lived in different countries.\[46\]

Julie Stephens, in her book *Anti-Disciplinary Protest: Sixties Radicalism and Postmodernism*, developed the concept of anti-disciplinary politics in order to identify a type of protest that rejected leadership and political organization but also ridiculed seriousness, coherence, and political commitment.\[47\] Stephens argued that the Yippies had been largely marginalized in the discourse pertaining to the sixties, partly due to the way their combination of political and cultural radicalism went against the stereotypical distinction between the activist and the hippie.\[48\] Hoffman and Rubin protested in a way that reflected their cultural radicalism. They actually chose to engage themselves with the very American symbols they were protesting rather than simply reject them.

By dropping dollar bills onto the floor of the Stock Exchange, and subsequently burning money on the street outside, they took the chief symbol of the American economy and politically protested in a culturally radical fashion. A similar observation can be made regarding the choice to storm the Pentagon, the attempt to infiltrate it, and Hoffman's intent to levitate it. While protesting the United States' involvement in the Vietnam War, the March on the Pentagon went beyond a mere political statement. The motivations to protest were highly influenced by a cultural radicalism that led, for example, to Hoffman's desire to levitate the Pentagon.

Stephens also discussed common dichotomies of sixties radicalism, such as "New Left/counterculture, activists/hippies...[and] politics/culture," that her idea of "anti-disciplinary politics" aimed to refute.\[49\] She continued that there existed overlaps between the dualities, and so the qualities could not always be easily categorized.\[50\] This is evident in the case of Hoffman and Rubins' New York Stock Exchange demonstration, and the March on, and storming of, the Pentagon that were representative of a combination of political and cultural radicalism.

While political radicalism was common in the late 1960s, Hoffman and Rubin's culture played an important part in their protests. For Hoffman, a major inspiration was Antonin Artaud, a French poet, playwright, and theatre director from the 1930s. Hoffman acknowledged in a variety of places the influence of Artaud's 1938 work *The Theater and Its Double*, most explicitly with "I got very interested in the theater and theatrical techniques, especially Antonin Artaud."\[51\] Artaud's major arguments in this work were that theatre had been ruined by a lack of humor, the absence of a sense of mysterious fear, the popularity of psychology, and the absence of a direct communication between the spectator and the spectacle. By looking at these two pre-Yippie events, as well as Hoffman's own statements, Artaud's influence can be clearly seen. Artaud wrote that the theatre's "object is not to resolve social or psychological conflicts, [or] to serve as a
battlefield for moral passions, but to express objectively certain secret truths, [and] to bring into the light of
day by means of active gestures certain aspects of truth that have been buried."[52] Hoffman's main aim
with his style of protest theatre was not to resolve, but to encourage thinking and acting. He wanted to get
people involved in the drama of life. He believed that if "observers of the drama [were] allowed to interpret
the act, they [would] become participants themselves."[53]

Throughout The Theater and Its Double, Artaud expressed his scorn for the decadence of contemporary
(1930s) theatre. He argued that it was decadent because "it [had] lost a sense of real humor, a sense of
laughter's power of physical and anarchic disassociation....It [had] broken away from the spirit of profound
anarchy which is at the root of all poetry."[54] In 1967, Hoffman injected humor and anarchy into his
demonstrations, evoking the true nature of theatre. In the real world however, even Artaud recognized that
humor, poetry, and imagination were only part of the technique of creating theatre, as they meant nothing
"unless, by an anarchistic destruction generating a prodigious flight of forms...they succeed[ed] in
organically re-involving man, his ideas about reality, and his poetic place in reality."[55]

Hoffman's interest in Artaud led to his first "nontraditional organizing venture"-dropping money on
stockbrokers at the New York Stock Exchange.[56] Although Abbie Hoffman became a notable figure in the
media in 1968, he made an effort to retain his anonymity at the New York Stock Exchange protest by
theatrically giving his name as Cardinal Spellman while his friend Jim Fouratt gave his name as George
Mentesky.[57] Hoffman initially gave fake names for fun and said, "I'm a revolutionary artist. Our concept of
revolution is that it's fun."[58] When asked how fun found its way into his concept of revolution, he
responded that he was motivated by the fact that if fun could be redefined as a form of fighting for what you
believed in and fighting for the future, a tremendously powerful weapon would thereby be created.[59] Jack
Hoffman, Abbie's brother, wrote that "the point, as [Abbie] saw it, was reaching people, and if actions could
be conceived in a way that would attract media attention, that meant you reached more people."[60]

The exact chain of events leading up to, and through, the New York Stock Exchange demonstration cannot
be determined with much accuracy. In their own books, Rubin and Hoffman were in complete control of their
own history through the events they had carefully planned, but they were more likely manipulating history
than faithfully recording it. In examining their descriptions and recollections of that demonstration, Hoffman
and Rubin recognized the influence that they could have upon society, as well as on their own history. In
Revolution for the Hell of It, Hoffman admitted that at first he thought throwing money onto the floor of the
New York Stock Exchange was "just a minor bit of theatre."[61] Already known for publicly burning money,
he did this again outside the Stock Exchange after he and his fellow activists had been thrown out. What
actually happened inside is open to conjecture. As Hoffman noted, "it was the perfect mythical event, since
every reporter, not being allowed to actually witness the scene, had to make up his own fantasy."[62] While
Hoffman pointed out the myths present in the news coverage of the event, he personally engaged in the
creation of more myths in his own narrative, and these myths became a reality for the counterculture. He
wrote that the stockbrokers "let out a mighty cheer" when the money began to fall around them, and booed
when the guards began to push him and his comrades around.[63] He also claimed not to have alerted the
press, yet reporters were waiting to capture photos of the young hippies' antics outside. This denial was
probably just one more bit of mythmaking since he famously urged other radicals to "just do your thing; the
press eats it up. MAKE NEWS."[64] Hoffman and his companions—or "George Mentesky & friends"-were
revealing a new and highly politicized hippie counterculture.[65]
In the *New York Times*, the demonstrators were labeled as hippies, with reporter John Kifner noting that some "disguised themselves with haircuts, jackets and ties"—a kind of costume. Despite the supposed absence of reporters in the visitor's gallery, Kifner managed to set a scene of stockbrokers eliciting a few smiles and kisses, but mostly jeers, shouts and shaken fingers at the demonstrators. Phrases such as "loving gesture" and "it's the death of money" in Kifner's article demonstrated the reliance on symbols of love and freedom in order to comprehend the main aim. The *New York Times* noted that although one hippie claimed to have dropped $1,000, observers said it was more like thirty to forty $1 bills. This is an example of the press attention that Rubin and Hoffman disliked. They wanted the reports to sensationalize their actions, rather than investigate details, in order to create more of a spectacle. This, however, became a much larger feature of the Yippie movement in later years—for in 1967, Rubin and Hoffman had just met and were merely beginning their work together.

Kifner devoted the last quarter of his article to the details of other court cases involving hippies. The three people he discussed were charged with such crimes as assault, resisting arrest, and disorderly conduct. It is interesting to note how, despite the lack of police involvement or criminal behavior involved in the Stock Exchange demonstration, the story about Hoffman and his companions was quickly followed up by an ending that in essence made a statement regarding the criminal behavior of hippies. The fact that the distinction between hippies and those who would become Yippies was not yet made, made it difficult for Hoffman and Rubin to garner media attention for their antics because they were seen merely as hippies. If Rubin had not been pronounced the project director for the National Mobilization to End the War in Vietnam, he would have been virtually unknown by journalists on the East Coast, and may not have garnered much press attention at all.

In Rubin's book, *Do It!*, his description of the event includes a quotation from a *New York Times* article three weeks after the demonstration which announced that the Stock Exchange had installed bullet proof glass and a metal grillwork ceiling as a security measure. These two men were keenly aware of their capacity to make news and write their own history. It was the easiest way to reach a national audience; all that had to be done was to act. The myth that was created that day, in part because reporters were not let into the gallery, was established by the newspapers and television media, but also helped by Rubin and Hoffman's own published works. The accounts of the event in Hoffman's *Revolution for the Hell of It* and Rubin's *Do It!* are similar in certain details, and aimed to promote their style of demonstration through theatre and action. With the statement, "we introduce a little reality into their fantasy lives," Rubin suggested that dropping money over the stockbrokers' heads was an exercise aimed at offering an interruption of the day-to-day fantasy with a spurt of spontaneous action.

The New York Stock Exchange demonstration, and the subsequent burning of money outside the Exchange, support Hoffman's argument that "the concept of mass spectacle, every-day language, and easily recognized symbols were important to get public involvement." While U.S. newspapers quoted a witness inside the Exchange calling the protesters "nuts," Hoffman quoted a tourist—whether real or invented is unknown—who understood his point. "I'm from Missouri," claimed the alleged tourist, "and I've been throwing away money in New York for five days now. This is sure a hell of a lot quicker and more fun." This tourist, and even the woman who thought they were "nuts," involved themselves in the demonstration just by commenting on it. Artaud called for an elimination of the stage in order to have a single site in which the spectator and the spectacle would be able to re-establish direct communication, which would allow the
spectator to be engulfed and physically affected by the action. This is what Hoffman's Stock Exchange demonstration actually created—a form of protest that happened in the midst of the spectators, whether the spectators wanted to be involved or not.

Rubin argued that capitalists saw money as a real thing, when in fact "money is a drug. Amerika is a drug culture, a nation of crazy addicts." Hoffman and Rubin distinctly chose to create a hybrid form of protest as, according to Julie Stephens, the Yippies "fashioned an anti-hierarchical language by inverting organizational categories and methods from both the old and the New Left." Even at the earliest stages of Hoffman and Rubin's demonstrations together, there existed tension between a lack of ideological coherence, a rejection of hierarchy and leadership, and a call for a 'money-free economy.' While Hoffman and Rubin seemed to lack a firm ideology, with no respect for leadership or the American economic system, they were forging a new satirical form of protest. At the New York Stock Exchange demonstration, the protesters had a clear plan to convey their message about the role of money in America. Although protesting at the Stock Exchange was not new, Jonah Raskin asserts that "the form was as important as the content." The way in which the protest was developed was as vital as the reason for its being. Hoffman and Rubin's plans were intrinsically contradictory, as they were being serious but ridiculous at the same time. They reveled in paradox as they challenged aspects of American society, such as the use of language and rationalization, but continued to write and publish books, a traditional form of communication. Frederick Ashe, in his dissertation "'Only Poet-Warriors': Rewriting the Sixties," argued that "the 'revolution' [young Americans] so routinely referred to...was foremost a revolution in national consciousness, to be induced by a figurative rewriting of the underlying scripts and overarching narratives of American life." Jerry Rubin's book *Do It!* is one of the examples of such a rewriting.

As Ashe described, "Sixties Youth in America were vocally renouncing both writing and speech in favor of a still more immediate form of communication-direct action." This direct action is in contrast to the counterculture's "legendary" emphasis on passivity and "non-linear expressiveness." Although Rubin wrote *Do It!* while vocally advocating for pure and direct action, his text called for its readers to act in what he called a "do-it-yourself revolution." In addition, Ashe observed, "Rubin...gives the impression that the scripts in his street theater call almost exclusively for adlibbing." Therefore, although Rubin may have chosen to use speech and the printed word in a contradictory sense in light of his promotion of direct action, he used that language to call for action from his readership. In an attempt to understand Rubin's desire to write a book, Ashe argued that authorship offered a high amount of control in the telling of his story as opposed to, for example, "the cultivation of high-profile television coverage." Rubin wanted to spread the "Scenarios of the Revolution" and the most practical way was through text. But what a text it was! His book *Do It!* combines standard size and format written material, along with photographs, drawings, and in many cases enlarged and bolded text to engage the reader with the content of the book. Ashe described this presentation as an "attack on the very appearance of the traditional printed text," which is in line with Rubin's more general "assault" on language in *Do It!*

Citing the "series of tropes" employed in the book's head note, its introduction, and on its back cover, Ashe argued that Rubin sought "to reconstitute the text as direct action, to deny its status as inert book." Was Rubin contradictory? It is no matter, as Rubin asserted, "we are a living contradiction, because we're yippies." The contradiction present between Rubin's decision to write a book and the Yippies' direct call to action is merely an example of Rubin's aforementioned statement of being a "living contradiction."
Hoffman and Rubin played an integral role in controlling their own history by writing their own books and accounts of events. Ashe observed that the authors in the youth movement "conceived of history as an ongoing narrative...and attempted to write themselves and their Movement into history by assuming control over these narratives." Rubin and Hoffman seized control of history by writing books and creating news, and this was a kind of direct action.

The act of burning money outside of the New York Stock Exchange may have been seen as a protest against the current economic arrangements or against capitalism and the idea of business itself, but it held a much larger meaning; it was meant to "scorn the fundament of an economic mentality." Rubin proclaimed, "is an act of love, an act on behalf of humanity." To Rubin, and Hoffman as well, the dollar bill carried only the significance that society attributed to it, and it was fundamentally unreal. Giving away money was not meant to produce awe at generosity, but rather show how easily it could be held as worthless.

In an interview with himself entitled "An Exercise in Self-Criticism" in Revolution for the Hell of It, Hoffman asserted, "throwing money onto the floor of the Stock Exchange is pure information. It needs no explanation. It says more than thousands of anticapitalist tracts and essays." Even if the intended message of the event did not make itself clear to observers or readers, a suggestion was nevertheless created. Hoffman addressed this issue to his readers in the self-interview when he wrote, "it's so obvious that I hesitate to discuss it, since everyone reading this already has an image of what happened there. I respect their images." The point was not to convey a specific meaning, but to engage hearts and minds in the ideas, and possibly the actions, of the movement. Hoffman continued, "in point of fact nothing happened. Neither we nor the Stock Exchange exist. We are both rumors....That's what happened that day. Two different rumors collided." The insistence that the event was merely a collision of two rumors is an example of Hoffman's attempt to challenge the definition of reality through myth.

While only a small, first step in the history of the Yippie movement, the New York Stock Exchange incident allowed Hoffman and Rubin to see how easy it was reach people by making news using imagery and symbolism. "An image war had begun," without a drop of blood or a broken bone. In retrospect, Hoffman proclaimed, "I never performed for the media. I tried to reach people. It was not acting. It was not some sort of media muppet show." While Hoffman claimed in his autobiography to never have "performed," he knew how to act in such a way to capture media attention and reach the public. He confirmed this latter view of his activities when he wrote, "once we acknowledged the universe as theater and accepted the war of symbols, the rest was easy."

The importance of symbols and icons came to Hoffman through the reading of Marshall McLuhan's 1965 work, Understanding Media. Although unsure as to whether he really understood McLuhan, this work made Hoffman "focus on those flashing psychedelic news images that instantaneously seemed to penetrate our fantasy world." He became focused on "those little picture tubes" and their role in mass communication, as he proclaimed, "a modern revolutionary group headed for the television station, not for the factory." Film and Media Professor Aniko Bodroghkozy discussed how "Hoffman, drawing on Marshall McLuhan, claimed that the language of the rising revolutionary youth culture...mirrored the qualities of television commercials-nonlinear, composed of images juxtaposed in haphazard ways." In Revolution for the Hell of It, Hoffman also quoted McLuhan: "Myth means putting on the audience, putting on one's
environment,” continuing that “young people are looking for a formula for putting on the universe...[not] for ways of relating themselves to the world.”[102] Hoffman presented this excerpt of McLuhan in order to try to explain the idea of yippie and the importance of myth. Myth "must have the action of participation and the magic of mystique. It must have a high element of risk, drama, excitement and bullshit."[103]

Paul Krassner, a key figure in the underground press as the creator and editor of The Realist, was the man who conceived of the name Yippie on the night of December 31, 1967. Professor and author Ron Chepesiuk contended that "Krassner knew that the counterculture would make great media copy and believed that the so-called 'straight society' would believe any absurd statement so long as it was presented in convincing fashion."[104] Krassner founded The Realist in 1958 when he was just twenty-five with the aim of writing "the most outrageous thing possible and [making] it sound true."[105] In an interview with Chepesiuk, Krassner discussed how working with or for the underground press in the 1960s was equivalent to making a revolutionary commitment, as the writing of stories and editorials demanded a very strong involvement with the movement itself and its relation to those stories.[106] Similarly, the Yippies proved that one cannot really "separate the politics from the culture."[107]

In April 1967, Rubin was invited to New York by David Dellinger from the National Mobilization to End the War in Vietnam to be the project director for an antiwar demonstration in Washington, D.C., planned for October. The March on the Pentagon organized by MOBE was endorsed and supported by other anti-war groups, such as the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, and Women Strike for Peace. Although involvement by numerous organizations opened up the anti-war march to a larger demographic, its original goals and intentions-and how it chose to communicate them-affected the extent to which the numerous peace organizations cooperated with each other. After the New York Stock Exchange incident, Rubin began working on directing the October 21 "Battle of the Pentagon," as he preferred to call it.[108] Although Dellinger told Rubin that the police merely had to block the bridges to Virginia to keep the marchers away from the Pentagon, Rubin was determined not to "let details get in the way of the myth."[109] At the August 28 press conference held in New York City, the plans for the march were announced, beginning with the statement, "we will gather in a massive antiwar presence, and some will take on the most serious responsibility of direct dislocation of the war machine."[110] The speech went on to pronounce that "one goal will be to 'shut down the Pentagon!'" and to "fill the hallways and block the entrances. Thousands of people will disrupt the center of the American war machine. In the name of humanity we will call the warmakers to task."[111]

Hoffman intended to go even further, announcing at the press conference that "a crowd of holy men would surround the Pentagon, chanting and beating drums, and the Pentagon [would] rise into the air."[112] He continued that "when it reaches 300 feet, all the evil spirits will fall out."[113] Rubin saw the press conference as having achieved its goal of "[grabbing] the imagination of the world and [playing] on appropriate paranoias," because "the press was great....The Pentagon was as good as in our hands!"[114] The March on the Pentagon was initially planned as a march and rally, but to Rubin and Hoffman it became a storming of the Pentagon. Rubin's role as an active contributor aiming to attract attention and support for the march fit Hoffman's ideas regarding the priority of making news. Although the demonstration in Washington was to protest the Vietnam War, many political and social advocacy groups were present, which resulted in conflicting views on the proper actions to take regarding the promotion of the event. Some of the Peace Movement groups did not like the radical suggestions that were made in an article that was to be
published in *Mobilizer*, a newspaper that would have been sent to peace groups across the U.S. One such suggestion about the demonstration was that "a thousand children [would] stage Loot-ins at department stores to strike at the property fetish that underlies genocidal war."[115] Even the CIA noted the assortment of peace movement groups in its November 1967 report "International Connections of US Peace Groups" which asserted, "the American peace 'movement' is not one but many movements; and the groups involved are as varied as they are numerous. The most striking single characteristic of the peace front is its diversity."[116]

The issue of the generation gap became clear to Rubin as censorship within the Peace Movement revealed that 40-year-olds were planning a demonstration in which the adults would be left standing on the platform while the young people in the streets would shed blood and find themselves in handcuffs. Despite the issues within MOBE that threatened to split the movement, the United States government began to negotiate with the organizers for permits to rally and march, thereby uniting the organizers of MOBE once again. While Rubin described the "Battle of the Pentagon" in bolder and ever enlarging terms of "Charge!," "Siege!," and "Victory!," he noted that the newspapers used what he called "military language" to describe the Pentagon demonstration.[117] Words such as "mobilization," "troops deployed," "State of Emergency," and even "showdown", were used by reporters. While Rubin classified the reporters' language as "military," his own words presented in *Do It!* are military in nature as well. However, his words-charge, siege, and victory—are powerful commands meant to impassion and inspire while "mobilization," "troops deployed," and others are merely statements about the action.

Rubin's details of the event in *Do It!* make no mention of any attempt to levitate the Pentagon, but instead focus on tearing down the fence surrounding the rally site, hundreds of people running toward the Pentagon (with some making it inside the building), and the meeting of demonstrators by U.S. Army soldiers with bayonets. Rubin had stronger political motives for his involvement in the demonstration than Hoffman, which is evidenced by Rubin's description of the demonstration and march being more comprehensive and detailed than Hoffman's depiction of the march and attempted levitation. Rubin, as the project director of the Pentagon March, saw the event as less of a pre-Yippie protest than Hoffman, but agreed that the demonstration could be described as a Yippie manifestation "because it combined the theater, the mythic, drugged new culture consciousness with the direct attack on a physical institution."[118] Rubin could not deny that the March on the Pentagon and resulting weekend-long demonstration from October 21 to 22 created the necessary conditions for the organic creation of the Yippies out of a jumbled mixture of the political and hippie worlds.[119]

In evaluating the newspaper coverage of the March on the Pentagon, a quite different picture is painted than what is depicted in Abbie Hoffman and Jerry Rubin's own books. In their own texts, they controlled the extent to which they made history in the events they planned. In examining their descriptions and recollections of the march on, and attempted levitation of, the Pentagon, it can be seen that Hoffman and Rubin recognized the influence that they could have on American society, and their own history. The *Los Angeles Times* merely noted in its section "The Nation," "Pentagon a Peace Target" as a sub-topic to a story about Michigan Governor George Romney.[120] Although dramatic threats had been levied upon the Pentagon and other federal government buildings in Washington, the *Los Angeles Times* failed to recognize the urgency and fervor with which the organizers and protesters planned to march. Although the *Los Angeles Times* reported Rubin as saying, "The peace movement is no longer one of mere protest and
demonstration....We, the American people, are going to have to close down the Pentagon, the universities, the banks—all the institutions that use and destroy human beings and values," the newspaper did not recognize the radicalism that was present in that statement.

In contrast to the coverage by newspapers were the motivations, materials, and reports distributed and published by various underground newsmagazines. On October 20, 1967, the day before the March on the Pentagon, Raymond Mungo and Marshall Bloom, the founders of the Liberation News Service, led a meeting of the underground press in Washington. The various editors and writers from different underground publications around the nation quickly began bickering. Mungo explained that "our conception of LNS as a 'democratic organization,' owned by those it served, was clearly ridiculous; among those it served were, in fact, men whose very lives were devoted to the principle that no organization, no institution, was desirable."[121] He went on to comment on how each type of person was only interested in his or her own particular issues. Pacifists were only interested in the Vietnam War and college paper editors in the campus revolution, for instance.[122] Mungo pointed out that the main goals of the Liberation News Service was "to provide a link among the antiestablishment presses [and] to offer hard information to the movement," but those goals were drowned out by the commotion created by the bickering between attendees. Mungo and Bloom wanted to create a unified movement, but came to realize that this was impossible because there were too many factions with diverse interests. Factionalism was a serious problem for the counterculture movement.

The underground press was more attractive to the movement participants than the mainstream press, not only because its writers and editors were involved in the counterculture movement themselves, but because their writing demonstrated that involvement. Morgan argued that writers for the mainstream press were removed from the stories they were writing about, which created a detachment that hindered their impact on readers' feelings.[123] Morris Dickstein contended that mainstream press displayed an "insider mentality that kept the reporter dependent on his sources and virtually a fixture in the institution he covered, with an ethical neutrality that turned hostile whenever the new culture of the sixties came in for attention."[124] Accounts of the pre-Yippie protests, largely focused on the answers to the basic questions of who, what, when, where, and how. Why was mostly avoided.

The day prior to the October 21 march, the Chicago Tribune published an editorial statement regarding the MOBE's demonstration in which Rubin was labeled as "a pro-Castro soundbox," and quoted as saying, "We are now in the business of wholesale and widespread resistance and dislocation of American society."[125] This newspaper took a strong anti-protest stance with the assumption that a provoked battle between demonstrators and police would be preserved on film and shown around the world—only to the shame of the United States and to the advantage of Ho Chi Minh.[126] While the editors at the Chicago Tribune saw the consequences of the anti-war protest as a shame on the United States, they did not see beyond the action to understand that the demonstration's goal was to stop the war in Vietnam, not to "hate America" as the paper claimed.[127] The Pentagon and Defense Secretary Robert S. McNamara, in turn, took the threats quite seriously, and exercised extreme secrecy when it came to how many troops were going to be employed to defend the Pentagon. According to a front-page article in The Washington Post, Times-Herald, there was no official number known of how many troops were brought into the Washington, D.C. area, but it seemed that there would be enough troops necessary to immobilize a riotous group of up to 70,000 people.[128] The Pentagon also employed defensive strategies such as sealing off all but one entrance with
plywood partitions, and putting up ropes and fences to hold back demonstrators. Many of the incoming troops were housed in Federal buildings in the District, and a seven-foot fence topped with barbed wire was erected around the sewage disposal pond.\[129\]

The coverage of the March on the Pentagon in the *New York Times* focused on the "low crowd estimates supplied by the police...promulgated police claims that tear gas use had been initiated by the protesters, and focused on arrests, permit deadlines, and the arrest record of protest leader Dave Dellinger."\[130\] Abe Peck described the media packet produced by the Liberation News Service, on the other hand, as mixing "freak and radical perspectives, politics and celebration, and most of all, demonstrators' experience....Demonstrators were hailed as politically correct and morally superior."\[131\] The weekend event of the March on the Pentagon, for example, was described on peace movement flyers as a, "confrontation with the warmakers."\[132\] Morgan continued this discussion by stressing the importance of acknowledging not that the "underground press told the whole story, but rather that it told a story, including objective facts, essentially left out of the mainstream press."\[133\]

According to *Revolution for the Hell of It*, Hoffman and Marty Carey visited the Pentagon prior to the demonstration to measure how many people would be required to surround it in the form of a human chain. However, in his autobiography written twelve years later, he discussed in much more detail the planning and promotion of the protest, including the Pentagon as a symbol of evil and the role of spiritualism in its levitation. While claiming that several religions see five-sided figures as "devil-created," he maintained that "no one who read the fine print of *The New York Times* doubted that Vietnam War policy was the creation of Lucifer."\[134\] In addressing this evil, Hoffman explained, "spiritual purification is sought as an antidote to the demons present in all imperialist war machines."\[135\]

Hoffman's focus on spiritualism is highlighted when he discusses Xuan Oanh of the Viet Nam Committee for Solidarity with the American People.\[136\] He described Xuan as a "wise Vietnamese colonel" who told Hoffman that "it would be foolhardy to dismiss supernatural forces as allies."\[137\] Xuan Oanh also informed him that "many of us have never seen an airplane before. In the mountains and jungles the people believed [airplanes] were flying dragons, dropping fire-eggs on their villages."\[138\] After discussing Xuan Oanh's capabilities as a "jungle fighter" and diplomat, Hoffman argued that "coming out of the Buddhist culture [the Vietnamese] would not dismiss as frivolous attempts to exorcise the Pentagon."\[139\] The spiritual and supernatural characteristics of Hoffman's intent to levitate the Pentagon was, in his view, an extension and use of the supernaturalism that the U.S. was already using to take advantage of the Vietnamese.

Hoffman's call for the use of spiritual techniques to attack the Pentagon was in contrast to David Dellinger's more prosaic call for "no pushing, no shoving, no violencia; but those who so desire should now proceed to the walls of the Pentagon for civil disobedience."\[140\] Hoffman's levitation plans came to fruition just before dawn on that Sunday October 22. His wife Anita, led by a Shoshone medicine man, "rose tall and proud" from a circle of "comrades" and "in a voice possessed roared: OM AH HUM. OH AM HUM. OH AM HUM."\[141\] Hoffman continued his narrative of the event, writing, "the ground beneath us vibrated. The granite walls began to glow, matching the orange of the new sun, and then, before our very eyes, without a sound, the entire Pentagon rose like a flying saucer in the air."\[142\] He continued with, "being there in the physical sense was not enough...one had to learn how to stop the world" through the "technique of not-doing."\[143\] Whether this levitation was real or not was less important to Hoffman than the sight of hundreds to
thousands of citizens confronting the "most famous war making symbol on the planet," which needed "no interpreter, no hocus-pocus."[144]

Hoffman also wrote an essay entitled "How I Lost the War"[145] in which he discussed the demonstration at the Pentagon, and some of the preparations involved in its levitation. First published in the January 1968 edition of The Realist, it began with an extensive quote from Artaud on his concept of the Theater of Cruelty. This explicit reference to Artaud provides a key for understanding how Hoffman designed the pre-Yippie events. One of the quotes Hoffman presented was Artaud's statement "The Theater of Cruelty has been created in order to restore a passionate and convulsive conception of life."[146] Hoffman followed this excerpt with a comment: "Artaud is alive at the walls of the Pentagon, bursting the seams of conventional protest, injecting new blood into the peace movement."[147] Hoffman took Artaud's call for a new spirit of theatre-one that injected humor, suspense, mythmaking, and questions about reality-and mixed it with his theatrically styled protests and demonstrations. While Hoffman and Rubin became engaged in mythmaking, Artaud defined it. The purpose of theatre was "to create Myths, [and] to express life in its immense, universal aspect, and from that life to extract images in which we find pleasure in discovering ourselves."[148] Hoffman saw a use in rumors and myths. He was interested in using them to get people involved in his acts. As he explained, "rumors have power. Like myths, people become involved in them, adding, subtracting, multiplying. Get them involved. Let them participate. If it's spelled out to the letter there is no room for participation. Nobody ever participates in ideology."[149] Hoffman recognized that ideology was not enough to attract and involve the public, which is why he used theatre and myths to engage them instead.

The tension between the rejection of organization, leadership, "rational" tactics and planning with Hoffman and Rubin's non-specific radicalism, as Stephens has argued, was promoted both to distinguish their radicalism from "straight politics" and to deal with the restrictions of language and rationality.[150] By dropping dollar bills onto the floor of the Stock Exchange, and subsequently burning money on the street outside, they took the chief symbol of the American economy and protested it in a culturally radical fashion. A similar observation can be made regarding the choice to storm the Pentagon, the attempt to infiltrate it, and, of course, Hoffman's intent to levitate it. While protesting the United States' involvement in the Vietnam War, the March on the Pentagon went beyond a mere political statement, as the means to the protest were highly influenced by a cultural radicalism that led ultimately in a different direction.

Although Hoffman and Rubin held some beliefs in common with other radicals, they did not see themselves aligned with any particular ideology and were rather postmodern in the way in which they lacked definitive and pronounced goals and put protests together as they went along. Rather than ideology or politics, theatre was at the center of their revolution. "The traditional boundaries between the political and non-political were rendered meaningless according to the carnivalesque politics of 'ecstasy', of frivolity, play power [and] Yippie."[151] Though they planned protests to make political statements, the use of cultural radicalism in their 'carnivalesque politics' blurred the boundaries between political activist and hippie.
Pre-Yippie is meant to reference the August 24, 1967 demonstration at the New York Stock Exchange and the October 21, 1967 Storming of, and attempted levitation of, the Pentagon during the National Mobilization to End the War in Vietnam's March on the Pentagon. The Yuppies, by name, were not established until December 31, 1967.


Daryl E. Lembke, "Frustrated New Left Draws Bead on Berkeley's City Hall," Los Angeles Times, March 5, 1967, FB.


Ibid., 51.

Ibid.


Ibid., 118.

Ibid, 120-3.

Raskin, For the Hell of It, 25-6.

Ibid., 26.

Ibid., 97.

Ibid.


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[21] Ibid.


[23] Ibid.


[25] Ibid., 100.

[26] Ibid., 128.

[27] Ibid.


[29] Ibid., 128.

[30] Ibid.

[31] Ibid.

[32] Ibid., 127.

[33] Ibid., 128.

[34] Ibid.

[35] Ibid.


[37] Ibid.

[38] Ibid., 128.


[41] Ibid., 129.


[43] Ibid., 291.


[45] Ibid.

[46] Ibid.


[48] Ibid.


[50] Ibid.


[55] Ibid., 92.


[57] George Metesky was the mad bomber of New York City in the 1940s and 50s who was finally arrested, tried, and committed to a mental hospital in 1957. George Metesky was a pseudonym regularly given by members of the Diggers.

Ashley Duree


[62] Ibid., 33.

[63] Hoffman, Revolution for the Hell of It, 32.

[64] Ibid., 37.


[66] Ibid.

[67] Ibid.

[68] Ibid.

[69] Ibid.

[70] Rubin, Do It!, 118-9.

[71] Ibid., 117.


[74] Hoffman, Revolution for the Hell of It, 33.


[76] Rubin, Do It!, 120.

[77] Stephens, Anti-Disciplinary Protest, 27.

[78] Ibid., 25.

[79] Raskin, For the Hell of It, 113.

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Frederick Ashe, "'Only Poet-Warriors': Rewriting the Sixties" (PhD diss., Vanderbuilt University, 1991), 8-9.

Ibid., 20.

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Rubin, *Do It*, 126.

Ashe, "Only Poet-Warriors", 37.

Ashe, "Only Poet-Warriors", 43.

Rubin's *Do It*! was subtitled "Scenarios of the Revolution".

Ashe, "Only Poet-Warriors", 47.

Ibid., 30.

Rubin, *Do It*, 86.

Ashe, "Only Poet-Warriors", 300.


Rubin, *Do It*, 122-3.


Ibid.


Ibid., 101.

Ibid., 104.

Ibid. 85.
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[100] Ibid., 86.


[102] Hoffman, Revolution for the Hell of It, 103.

[103] Ibid., 103.


[105] Ibid., 25.

[106] Ibid., 35.

[107] Ibid., 37.

[108] Rubin, Do It!, 66.

[109] Ibid., 68.


[111] Ibid.

[112] Rubin, Do It!, 70.

[113] Ibid.

[114] Ibid., 69-70.


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Rubin, Do It!, 75-6.

Katzman, comp., Our Time, 308.

Ibid., 308-9.


Ibid.


Chicago Tribune, October 20, 1967, 16.

Ibid.

Ibid.


Ibid.

Morgan, The 60s Experience, 207.


Mungo, Famous Long Ago, 17.

Morgan, The 60s Experience, 207-8.

Hoffman, Autobiography, 129.

Ibid.
Ashley Duree


[138] Ibid.

[139] Ibid., 130-1.

[140] Ibid., 134.

[141] Ibid., 135.


[143] Ibid., 136.

[144] Ibid.

[145] This essay, "How I Lost the War" was reprinted in 1970 as a chapter of Hoffman's *Revolution for the Hell of It*.


[147] Hoffman, "How I Lost the War", 15.


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