

\$15

THE PRICE

OF

ZINES

IS TOO

DAMN

HIGH!

\$/350

\$10

\$ not
paying
that

\$20

\$12

\$14

\$9

\$ TOO
MUCH!
LOL

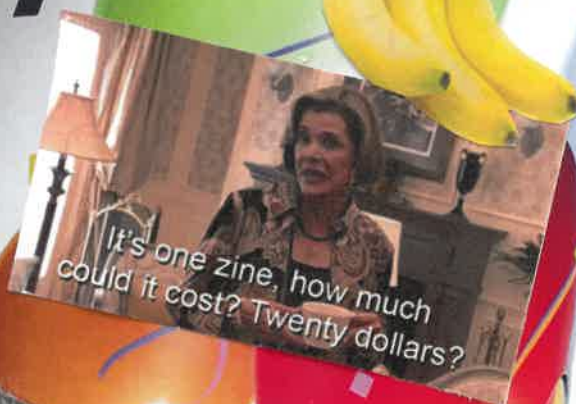


this zine is by
riotmuffin

dont @me

august 2024

find it on
Archive.org
if u must



DO NOT PAY
for this zine

DO NOT PAY
for this zine

Excuse me?!

WE ALL DESERVE
TO DROP \$100
ON ZINES THEN
HEAD TO THE
VEGAN BURGER
JOINT AS A
LITTLE TREAT

**Do! NOT!
PAY! FOR!
THIS ZINE!!**

* ACTUAL DOODLE *
from 2024 Midwest
Q/T zine fest promo flyer

this is the ethic i intend
to relentlessly antagonize inside

Before I got on the train a
coupla months ago, I had an hour
to ~~kitt~~ destroy, so I stopped at an
indy bookshop and found that it had
a buncha zine bins. Sig!

But then I started to see
the price tags. \$8... \$10...
\$12... \$15. FUK! It's one of
those places! You know the ones.

The day was May 29, 2024 - 4
years plus one day after the burning
of the 3rd police precinct in Minneapolis,
one of the most joyous days of my+my
friends lives, amidst learning community
came in the midst of the ongoing pandemic,
and suddenly getting the feeling anything
could be possible.

So the next zine I flipped to caught
my eye, with a colorful cover about
Covid, bicycling, and the George Floyd
Uprising. I flipped to the back to learn
more, and there it was... oh no.
The price:




TWENTY DOLLAS!!

This is a regular -ass
sized zine, just like this
one!

They want \$20
for this?

! ? !



Now, it just so happens that I remembered a previous encounter with some Minneapolis zinesters charging similarly exorbitant prices. "Hmmm," I said aloud, as I flipped to the first page...

"Y'ALL!"

I exclaimed to the whole bookstore,

"I just guessed this zine's author just from the price!" ☺

Now, let me get it out of the way right now: Yes, artists and writers deserve to be compensated fairly for their creations. My wage labor job is in the arts world. I'm the daughter of an artist who has somehow held together a co-op gallery for decades. I understand this well.

\$20 is reasonable for a good art poster.
\$20 is reasonable for the full 200-page book I purchased at the same bookshop.
\$20 is NOT reasonable for a 24-page zine that you printed out at home, folded over and stapled twice. It's not.

The thing about fair compensation is it has to be fair on both sides.

That is doubly so regarding zines, a communication medium born from poor marginalized queerdos and activists without access to established media channels and methods. The whole damn POINT of zines is that they should be cheap to make and easy to access. At least that was the case before the "boutique zinester" trend I've been noticing more and more lately.

That "boutique" zine world, thriving at zine festivals, stores, and academic gatherings, is so incredibly different than my experience with zines as a fun noncommercial tool for consciousness raising and organizing (or disorganizing, shout out to all my anarchist/nihilist/insurrecta pals). We print out relevant zines from other crews, add them to our own, and distro them along with stickers, posters, food, Narcan, and more at mutual aid events, shows, actions, etc. Sometimes there's a donation jar but often not!

In fact, in discussing this with friends & comrades, I've lost track of the number of times people have said: "Wait - some people pay for zines ???"

Now, it happens that I do make personal zines too. And I've sold them! For reasonable prices, NoTAFLOF, sliding scale, and I will even accept shitty 'authcom bullshit in a trade, b/c MY POINT IS TO GET THE GOODS IN PPL'S HANDS. I'm not trying to make latte money with my zines - that's what shoplifting's for!!

I also design stickers in addition to making zines and, unfortunately, some of them have become rather popular. A well-liked indie store asked me once about selling them, which caused a bit of an existential crisis as I ^{thought} about it.

'NOTAFLOP'
= no one turned
away for lack
of funds

This place sells single stickers for \$5 + for people to put on their laptops + water bottles. But that ain't me. Like with zines, I make stickers to get 'em INTO THE WORLD. I want people to put em up on street signs and light poles and windows and anywhere they will make the right people BIG MAD, and make the right people smile. Giving out/selling just one? HELL NAH! for \$5? HELLLL NAH! Maybe 5 for \$5, or \$10 for \$5. So I told 'em no.

I'll keep giving em out for pay-what-you want, on my socials, at events, to friends, or ~~anywhere~~ anywhere there isn't a cash register. Usually I break even, and I am pleased.

Objections

"I need to make a living somehow..."

DON'T DO IT W/
YR MEDIOCRE ZINES!
There are plenty of
US struggling but
getting by without
taking a critical
non-commercial means
of social struggle
and joy and gentri-
fying it into a
premium boutique
enterprise that the
folks who keep the
genre alive can't
even access at events
claiming to cele-
brate it! For
fuck's sake!



about
"But what the zero-
value phenomenon, which
says people might buy
more of something at a
higher price, b/c lower
priced ones are often shitty?"

It's true there are a lot
of shitty zines.

*SOLUTION: DON'T TABLE
SHITTY ZINES*
and give a reasonable,
sliding scale price if you
must, a free-box with
the riff-raff, and give
everything to your friends
for free, ya nerd

"But inflation has hit the whole economy..."

Zines should not be PART of "The Economy"!!

WEEKLY BUDGET

Groceries \$60

Bus fare \$30

Mutual Aid \$15

Zines \$100

Vegan Burger \$25

SOMEONE WHO IS GOOD AT THE ECONOMY PLEASE HELP ME BUDGET THIS!!!

"Well, don't pay for it if you don't like it"

DON'T WORRY! I'M NOT GONNA!

goof-ball

"stop name-calling"

NO

"BUTT HOW DO I PAY
FOR PRINTING SHIT?"

Glad u asked! Here's some ideas that
u may not have thot of:

PRINTING

PAPER +
other supplies

steal from ya job

Scamazon again
w/ a new email

free copy machines
if it looks like u
belong

Supply store
dumpster

yr friend's job

pleeease tell me
yr stealing from werk

pay copy machines
"oops it jammed!"
[or run fast]

Waiting at
doctors office

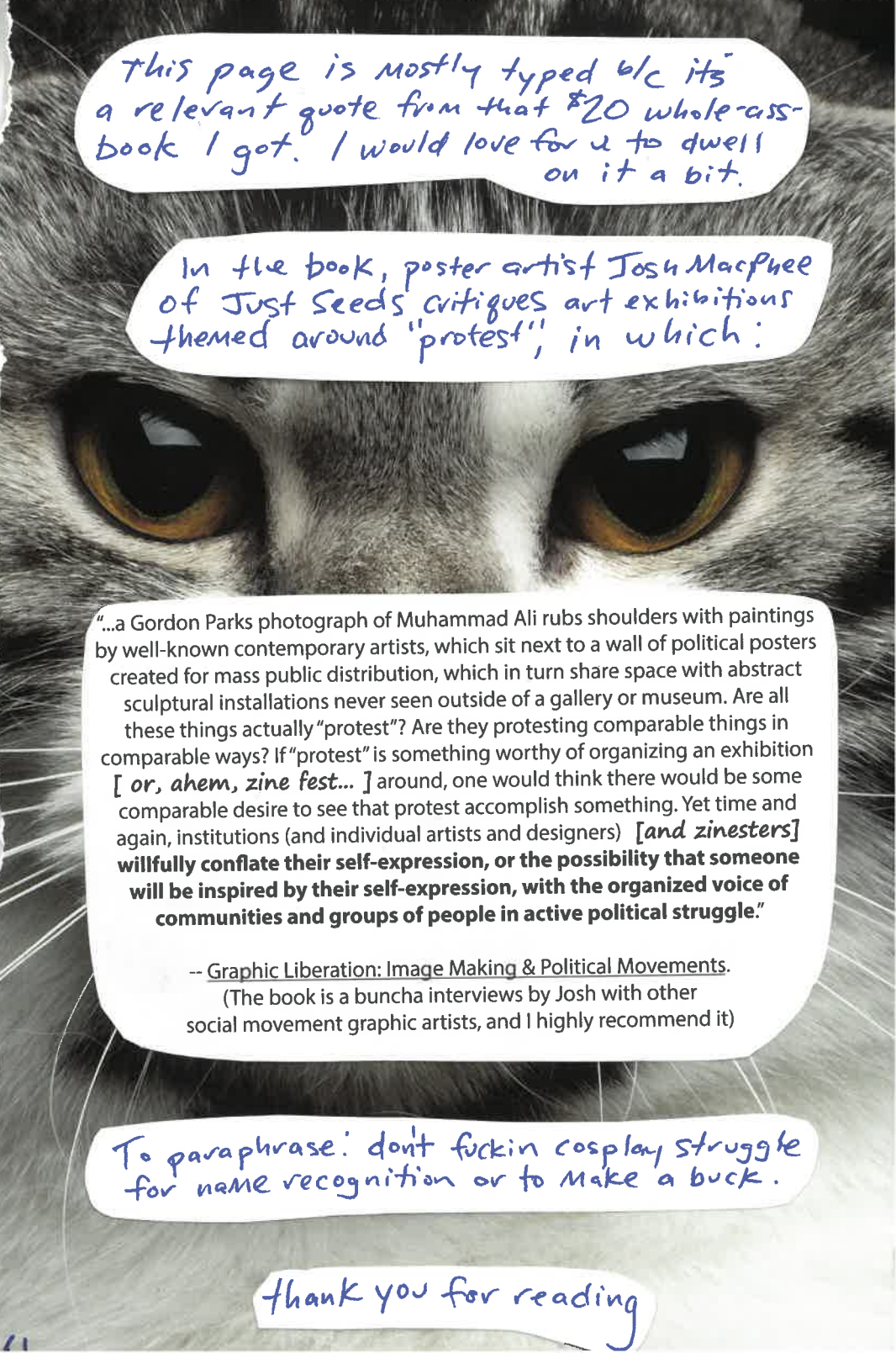
Craigslist a home
machine

any copy machine
when nobody's looking

Scamazon a
home machine

Stack of paper bags
at self-checkout,
cut to size

back of old posters/
flyers



This page is mostly typed b/c it's a relevant quote from that \$20 whole-ass-book I got. I would love for u to dwell on it a bit.

In the book, poster artist Josh MacPhee of Just Seeds critiques art exhibitions themed around "protest", in which:

"...a Gordon Parks photograph of Muhammad Ali rubs shoulders with paintings by well-known contemporary artists, which sit next to a wall of political posters created for mass public distribution, which in turn share space with abstract sculptural installations never seen outside of a gallery or museum. Are all these things actually "protest"? Are they protesting comparable things in comparable ways? If "protest" is something worthy of organizing an exhibition [or, ahem, zine fest...] around, one would think there would be some comparable desire to see that protest accomplish something. Yet time and again, institutions (and individual artists and designers) **willfully conflate their self-expression, or the possibility that someone will be inspired by their self-expression, with the organized voice of communities and groups of people in active political struggle.**"

-- Graphic Liberation: Image Making & Political Movements.

(The book is a buncha interviews by Josh with other social movement graphic artists, and I highly recommend it)

To paraphrase: don't fuckin cosplay struggle for name recognition or to make a buck.

thank you for reading