Money 2 Essay, Research Paper

Today, no matter what you do, you need money to do it. Right? Right! Shop. Travel. Make a phone call. You even need to spend money in order to make money. Money is real. People seem to be under the assumption that information wants to be free and that by enabling people to learn and follow their own interests will benefit society as a whole. Well, we no longer believe in society as a whole. We believe in the economy as a whole – a black hole! Why should you be able to think things, and even learn things, without paying somebody for that privilege? Let’s get to brass tacks, the bottom line. Money. Money is reality. You see this printed dollar bill. It’ s far more real than topsoil, oxygen, the ozone layer or sunlight. You may say that this is just a piece of paper with some symbols on it, but that’s sacrilege! This is the almighty dollar. Most of the dollars we worship are actually stored in cyberspace. Dollars are just digital ones and zeros in a network of computers, but that doesn’t mean they’re only virtual reality, and basically one big fantasy. No, dollars are utterly and entirely real, far more real than anything as vague as the public interest. If you’re not a commodity, you don’t exist!

Of course there are many elements of our lives that exist outside the money economy. There’s a lot going on in our lives that’s not-for-profit and that can’t be denominated in dollars. “The best things in life are free,” the old saying goes. Nice old saying. Gets a little older-sounding every day. Sounds about as old and mossy as the wedding vow “for richer for poorer,” which in a modern environment is pretty likely to be for-richer-or poorer following our prenuptial agreement. Commercialization, a favorite buzzword of mine. It’s a very powerful phenomenon. It’s getting more powerful year by year.

Now we all must ask ourselves is anything really free? Is there such a word and if so what is its true definition? Many would say “Yeah there are a lot of things out there in the world that are free.” but are they really is the questions?

Can you believe that Melville Dewey once said, “free as air, free as water, free as knowledge?” Free as knowledge? Let’s get real, this is the modern world — air and water no longer come cheap! Hey, you want breathable air, you better pay your air conditioner’s power-bill. Free as water? If you’ve got sense you buy the bottled variety or pay for an ionic filter on your tap. And free as knowledge? Well, we don’t know what “knowledge” is, but we can get you plenty of data, and as soon as we figure out how to download it straight into the skulls of students, we can put all the teachers into the breadline.

Now getting back to the fact of the air really being free. Yes, air does indeed have no economic value. The supply of air is plentiful and certainly the use of air by one person does not prevent the use of it by someone else. But how about all the money that is going into making this planet “environmentally safe”? The thousands of dollars that are going into keeping the air clean due to the years and years of pollutants that mankind has been pumping into the it. That certainly is not free.

We breath in this compound composed of oxygen, nitrogen, carbon dioxide and other insignificant gases and never in our minds does the question arise about the worth of this indispensable compound. If it wasn’t for the four-eyed chemists in their white lab coats concocting new methods of cleaning the air in order to make it “breathable”. Where would we be? Probably in the world filled with dust, radiation and skyrocketing amounts of carbon dioxide. All this valuable research and data doesn’t come cheap. Every time you get your paycheck and you notice a couple of dollars missing and don’t really think anything of it. Think about it. Air is not free. It does have an economic value even if it is “hidden.” Once upon a time we did actual have “free air” but due to our own ignorance we now must pay for our very source of survival.