**Is money bad for us?**

With all the recent scandals about money laundering, one can’t help wonder if money is the problem itself. Is it possibly that money itself is soiled and may serve preposterous to question the merits of such a dominant icon in our world? However, the most well-entrenched elements in our culture deserve regular inspection, particularly because of the power they have over our lives. In the grasp of money, this power is clearly awesome.

There are several aspects of money that are problematic. First, it commands so much of our actions and decisions inside the role of our work. Second, it controls what we think we can and cannot do. How often have you heard someone say, “If only we had enough money, our problems would be solved?” Third, money has become so idolized people will do all kinds of reckless things to obtain it. These three characteristics of money make it worthy of significant critique and beckon a serious reevaluating of how we function.

Talk about money is everywhere. When some were riding the technology bubble and NASDAQ was booming, people were guided by a belief that all their new four-wheeler, new Apex, Investments were the rage. Some people made loads of money while they slept. And then came the time money spending money, really, nothing to do with all dry money and “burst” along with the Dot-coms. This all occurred at the downing of a new century. A few years later and the roller coaster ride downward again, this time taking nearly all of us with it—foreclosures, closing businesses and factories, massive layoffs, etc. This was all in the past year. And, now, after all of this tumult, everything is still understood strictly in terms of money. Who is spending it? Who is making it? Who is losing it? Is the economy kept up by keeping giant handouts (in terms of huge government subsidies to mega-corporations) No matter what happens, the economy everything seems to be about.

M-O-N-E-Y: We know what the GNP (gross national product) is and what the prime lending rate is, but we know little about it. If kids are being fed or adults are living fulfilling lives. Doesn’t something seem awry?

Television is full of shows focusing on money. Game shows teach us to want money. Soap operas promote luxurious lifestyles full of material goods. Sports programs romanticize athletes and their flashy wages (who make millions for dribbling, hitting or punching). Celebrity shows glorify the lives of the rich and famous. And even news programs sensationalize the financial worth of wealthy members of our society. And in between all of these shows, commercials tell us over and over again that we will feel better if we spend money on products. So what did everyone feel they had to have this past holiday? You betcha, a flat-screen plasma television. It seems that you aren’t a fully-fledged American anymore if you don’t have one of these.

But it isn’t just how pervasive the discussion of materialization of wealth has become. Much of its spirit and reason to be lost. I’ve witnessed this in several organizations I’ve been a part of.

When solutions are couched exclusively in monetary terms, a great deal of cynicism can reign, especially if there is no clearly identifiable way to obtain the necessary funds. Our hyper-consumerist culture makes it impossible for individuals to play in solving problems (i.e., by donating to charities) and undervalues the power that people have working collectively. For example, if I want my lawn mowed, our society focuses on my need to have a personal lawn mower (and weed wacker) or the wealth to pay someone else to mow it. These solutions trump alternatives such as sharing such an expensive machine (which sits idle 99% of the time) with a group of neighbors so we can support each other’s need and thus avoid spending money.

The new media also means that there isn’t much to know about the world, much less news. The Internet has made the world a small village, but the same can be said for the world of news. Most of the news we read comes in the form of breaking news, which is often the same news recycled, but at a faster pace. The news is more about the latest event than the events that have led up to it, or the events that will follow.

The new media also means that we are no longer in control of what we read. The Internet gives us the ability to choose what we read, but the same can be said for the world of news. Most of the news we read comes in the form of breaking news, which is often the same news recycled, but at a faster pace. The news is more about the latest event than the events that have led up to it, or the events that will follow.

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**The Old Scout of the New Media**

You know it’s going to be a difficult day when you wake up with “Guantanamo, Guajira Guantanamera, Guantanamo, Guajira Guantanamera” going around and around in your head and it won’t stop. You know that probably you should not tackle health care reform today though brain work has not stopped other people from weighing in on it.

Here are mobs of flannel-mouthed robots denouncing Sociallist Gumnitt Takeover as Medicare goes guns blazing. The president and the private schemes resemble railroads of the early 19th century, when each line decided its own gauge and each stationmaster decided what train it was.

Anyone who has tried to coax authorization for payment from Federated Amalgamated Health knows that the patchwork of rules, standards, and voluminous rules and implacable bureaucrats, the health insurance industry carries on where the Italian postal service left off. But don’t despair. We can talk with a viral song in my head and I should go soak it.

The gons who go to town hall meetings and shout down the congressmen are museum pieces. They can shut until the bats fall off the rafters, but if you really want to know about health insurance, you just look around on the internet and it’s all there and more. The president gave a good solid tutorial on the subject back in June to the AMA, and you can still find it at YouTube. When you come to choose between him and the gons, you don’t have to think too hard.

This is the beauty of new media. It isn’t so difficult as newspapers and TV. Good stuff sticks around and people e-mail it to friends and slowly it floods the country.

WHAT THE NEW MEDIA REALLY MEANS is that there isn’t much to know about the world, much less news. The Internet has made the world a small village, but the same can be said for the world of news. Most of the news we read comes in the form of breaking news, which is often the same news recycled, but at a faster pace. The news is more about the latest event than the events that have led up to it, or the events that will follow.

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