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Communism For Kids



Synopsis

Once upon a time, people yearned to be free of the misery of capitalism. How could their dreams come true? This little book proposes a different kind of communism, one that is true to its ideals and free from authoritarianism. Offering relief for many who have been numbed by Marxist exegesis and given headaches by the earnest pompousness of socialist politics, it presents political theory in the simple terms of a children's story, accompanied by illustrations of lovable little revolutionaries experiencing their political awakening. It all unfolds like a story, with jealous princesses, fancy swords, displaced peasants, mean bosses, and tired workers--not to mention a Ouija board, a talking chair, and a big pot called "the state." Before they know it, readers are learning about the economic history of feudalism, class struggles in capitalism, different ideas of communism, and more. Finally, competition between two factories leads to a crisis that the workers attempt to solve in six different ways (most of them borrowed from historic models of communist or socialist change). Each attempt fails, since true communism is not so easy after all. But it's also not that hard. At last, the people take everything into their own hands and decide for themselves how to continue. Happy ending? Only the future will tell. With an epilogue that goes deeper into the theoretical issues behind the story, this book is perfect for all ages and all who desire a better world.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Communism for Kids, by Bini Adamczak, is in fact for everyone, an inspired and necessary book

especially now, a moment when people feel that we are on the verge of the destruction of the world, and without any new world to hope for, or believe in. Have two hundred years of capitalism brought us freedom? Or just more inequality than has ever been experienced by humans on earth? Global capitalism is not human destiny, it merely is. To think beyond it, with the help of Adamczak's primer, is to take a first step toward freedom, at least the freedom to imagine other worlds. (Rachel Kushner, author of *The Flamethrowers*) This delightful little book may be helpful in showing there are other forms of life and living than the one we currently 'enjoy.' (Fredric R. Jameson, Knut Schmidt-Nielsen Professor of Comparative Literature, Professor of Romance Studies (French); Director of Institute for Critical Theory, Duke University) For the moment, Adamczak is relatively unknown outside Germany. *Communism for Kids* will change this. Readers of the world, rejoice! (Los Angeles Review of Books)

Bini Adamczak is a Berlin-based social theorist and artist. She writes on political theory, queer politics, and the past future of revolutions.

I accidentally bought this book for my child, innocently thinking it would teach her about the evils of communism. Next thing I know, she's coming home from school wearing a black beret, drinking a vodka-filled juice box, and smoking a Cuban cigar. Okay, fine, I think; it's just a fashion statement, just a phase. Then, she starts inviting all of her friends over to our house, where they hold meetings to discuss "what is to be done?" in regards to "the adult problem." So far, it's all just talk, no big deal— but then they start raiding my fridge for snacks, calling it "reappropriation." Now, fast forward two weeks: they've raised a red flag over the playground, which they've commandeered as their headquarters; they're patrolling the streets in their Power Wheels, brandishing Nerf Guns and Super Soakers; and they're rounding up all of the adults for a "re-education camp" I've barricaded myself in my basement to evade their tightening grasp. They're banging on the door as I type. I'm giving this book five stars in the hope that it will sell really well, and the author will thereby see the light, embrace capitalism, and cease publishing this book as a result. In the meantime, I urge you not to make the same mistake I made. Don't be fooled. This book— OH GOD THEY'RE HERE THEY'VE COME THEY'RE FJDFHWEHGDBB@#*%H#)H FNDF jFEH#R\$#!!!!1!

This is not a new book; it was originally released in 2004. Nor is it intended for children. The publisher admits that his assumption that nobody would believe MIT Press would release a book for children was miscalculated. Judging by the reviews, very few have bothered to even read it. This

begs the question, how good is the book? In a word, interesting. The first half reads very much like a children's book and in fact could probably be used with adolescents. The second half dives in more deeply and brings out the more advanced concepts. One thing which very few political ideologues bother with, but Adamczak does fairly well, is admit the failures of similar theories as well as the shortcomings of her own suggestions. Although to be fair, these shortcomings are almost presented as positive aspects. Communism for Kids can basically be described as an anti-capitalist narrative. Why precisely capitalism is so evil is never really described. The best we can glean is that it demeans the workers and makes us slaves to things. She eventually just leaves the details up to us. "The hope is that the absurdity and unnecessary brutality of capitalist society will leap out to the people of future generations, the same way that the binary gender system or flatness of the earth seems crazy to us today." Similarly, she remains pretty vague about communism. "Communism names the society that gets rid of all the evils people suffer today in our society under capitalism." Or, "Since true communism has never existed in the entire history of humankind, no one has any clue what it looks like." She even goes into the paradox of being unable to describe her utopia because it would limit its ability to negate a constantly changing present. Despite the annoying vagueness of her general concepts, she seems to have a fairly good grasp of economics (though I presume she doesn't quite realize it). Poking at Smith's often-abused invisible hand, Adamczak uses a Ouija board as an analogy for society under capitalism. "The glass moves only because people act together rather than separately. But they don't even notice they are cooperating. The glass didn't move because of an invisible hand but rather because we cooperated together." What she fails to realize is that the invisible hand was Adam Smith's version of the Ouija board. That is, the invisible hand is the effect of cooperative efforts "or the summed effects" of society. Interestingly, she lists five "trials" of communist effort and explains how and why they went wrong. This list culminates in the sixth and final utopia. First was redistribution of wealth, but this didn't address factory working. Second was cooperative factories, but it didn't address the market itself. The third trial was essentially a command economy. Later in the book she briefly mentions the massive amounts of suffering and death at the hands of authoritarianism, but leaves it here to mere "exhausting and boring [work] as it was before, under capitalism." Fourth is a robot utopia completely disconnected from reality. And finally, the fifth trial destroys everything relating to capitalism leaving them in a subsistence society. "No, no, no. This isn't communism," the story goes. What is the proper enactment of communism according to Adamczak? Utopia of some sort. "From

now on, there shouldn't be iron-making people or movie-ticket makers anymore. There shouldn't be pistol people or writing people. Instead of factory people, let there be people factories, and instead of machine people, let there be cyborgs! And nobody should work in a single factory anymore. Everyone should be able to do everything and live everywhere. As I said, pretty vague. In sum, capitalism is bad, communism is good.

If communism is so great why are they selling the book? Isn't that capitalism?

I grew up in the communism and believe me, the idea of communism will never work. This idea is based on mass murder. I was a kid and I know what is communism for a kid. My family didn't do anything against regime, and this is why they were not killed, just imprisoned and abused every day. The police break into our home every week and made a mess and break our stuff - just for fun. And this is communism. Communism for kid is simply: you have no right to have dreams. No matter what talent you have, you will do what Party order you. You cannot study, you cannot choose... you have to obey.

Children's books are written for the naive, of course, but this one was also written BY the naive. While done in a cutesy style, the book is idiotic and almost unreadable. Its timing is ironic, given that Venezuela is currently melting down even as the book releases, another country fallen victim to the very economics pushed in this book. And lest we forget, two million people have starved to death in the past decade in North Korea, the world's last fully Communist state. Many of the dead were children. This ideology has murdered or starved over 60 million people -- how about we don't pass the virus on to the next generation?

Will sell like hotcakes in Venezuela. They need toilet paper.

Not at all a book for kids. A very useful introduction to how Marxist ideas have been used and misused over the 20th century, and how they might be repurposed for the future. Not sure why the right wing media are freaking out about a book they obviously haven't bothered to read.

Shouldn't a book about taking rich people's money (whatever that really means as a house in the average liberal metropolis is north of half a million dollars these days) be free? And before the argument that the publishers costs have to be recovered, the Kindle addition is 20% higher in price.

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