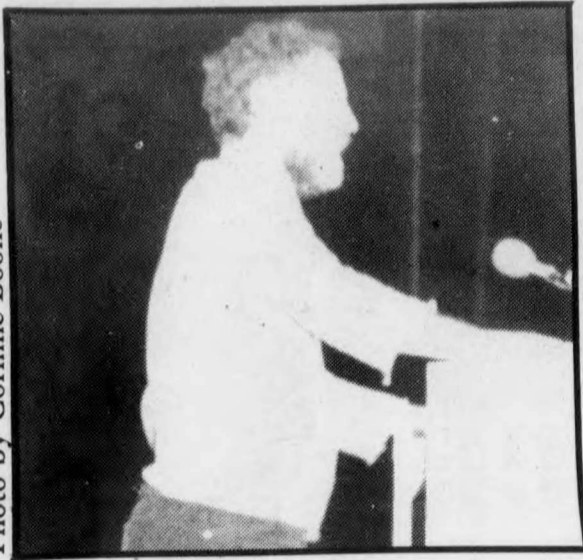


Photo by Corinne Boone



Last Thursday night whilst I sat patiently awaiting "The Great Debate" between Abbie Hoffman (the holdover activist spokesman of the 60's) and Jerry Reuben (his one time comrade and a man now revered as the spokesman for the Yuppie Generation), I pondered the paradox of values to be discussed. These two men had come to debate the issue of Yuppie (young urban professionals), versus Yippie (activist 1960's prototype). **The Reality of the 80's Versus The Idealism of the 60's.**

It was ironic to find these two men in such direct opposition. During the 1960's Hoffman and Reuben both were radical activists. They embraced such alternatives as "Guerilla theatre tactics," sit-ins and mass demonstrations in order to combat what they called the "oppressive U.S. presence in Vietnam, rampant social inequalities and de-humanizing racism in America." These men were both vanguards for an entire movement, one bent on activism, as the means for social change. From such a radical background it is hard to find any semblance of 60's activism in Mr. Reuben's present crusade, (witnessed by his embrace of elitism, entrepreneurialism and upward mobility). Mr. Hoffman on the other hand, has never left his 60's ideals. He has been arrested 41 times, is presently involved in the Acid Rain crusade, vehemently attacks American policy in Nicaragua and stands in direct opposition to everything Yuppie-ism represents.

I have chosen in this week's feature to evaluate Yuppie-ism, what it stands for and why men such as Abbie Hoffman are so critical of it. We as university students of the 80's have been labelled by Mr. Reuben as "Yuppies." Since a majority of us will end up "Young Urban Professionals," it is thus appropriate to see exactly what a yuppie is and how or if we fit into such a mold.

Jerry Reuben emerged from the 1970's a changed man. This former defendant in the Chicago Seven trial and spokesman for the "Me" generation had burst onto Wall Street with a fervor for capitalism and success that forever dissipated any semblance of his 60's radicalism. He pioneered a "business network" built on brand new principles as he points out;

As a yuppie; "time is money." This generation is going to take political power four years from now, it is going to elect a baby-boomer, it is a generation of achievers, self-motivated and upwardly mobile."

The notion "time is money" mirrored his new found embrace of capitalism. Reuben was now sitting once again in the vanguard of change, except this time the change was one which required little social activism and a strong sense of self-improvement. This self made spokesman points out that the 60's drug culture and anti-establishment is now being replaced with a new generation, more conscious about their own health and destined to take power over the ivory tower. Reuben calls this generation one of "realism," where people take pride in working hard, being healthy and successful. This realism, entrepreneurialism, individualism, mobility, success and style have all been joined together to form a stereotypical person of the yuppie movement. I will now go on to see what substance is to be found in a yuppie and yuppie-ism.

**Newsweek** magazine coined this the "Year of the Yuppie," and summed up the driving principles of this movement;

**It is on the move again that restless vanguard of the baby-boomers, continually re-inventing itself as it conquers the undefended decades of the 20th century. In unruly ranks assembled, its members marched through the 60's, then dispersed riding the crests of their own alpha waves, and now here they go again, barely looking up from the massed gray columns of Wall Street as they speed toward the airport, advancing on the 1980's in the back seat of a limousine. Just as predicted, economic reality has intruded on their self-observed journey; but the unsettling news is that time has done little to upset their fervor.**

"Newsweek, Dec 21, 1984"

—So is defined our generation of movers and shakers. The movement has gained so much incentive that even G.B. Trudeau the mastermind of "Doonesbury Comics" has returned after a year's sabbatical with his characters (although, obviously cynical) flashing \$20 haircuts and preppy sweaters. Mr. Reuben points out that much of the energy, optimism and passion of the 60's seems to have been turned inward, on lives, careers, apartments and dinners. He goes on to say;

"Yuppies are challenging the ossified corporate structures, just as they once challenged the sacred traditions of academia, and forcing them into more imaginative solutions. The whole thing has been turned around. Business is the place for people that want to make a difference."

# The Yuppies h

*"I'm doing these debates to attack the mythology that all of those who were once activists of the 1960's eventually became disillusioned, cynical and then self-centered, concerned only with personal power and personal money, I know this isn't the 1960's and that I've entered the era of designer brains. Not all of us have joined the consumer-Yuppie crusade.*

ABBIE HOFFMAN

So, the 60's radical can find a home for his energies in the ever-changing business world, or at least a place to fit into and trade off activism for upward mobility. Apple Computer is everyone's favorite illustration (including Reuben) of successful yuppie management. The yuppie virtues of imagination, daring and entrepreneurship have led to the success of many other new enterprises. Many people are still unsure if hard work and ingenuity alone will bring them everything they want in life but they can feel assured that those principles will find open minds with an older generation. This is a new phenomenon that is important to note. The yuppies of the 80's can relate to their elders, to conservatism, and to the work ethic so espoused by their parents. They are not shunned as they were in the 60's for their activism and rebellion. Instead, they are images of success and practicality, a source of pride to their families. There is no longer a conflict of values, the confrontation of the 60's that brought on the "generation" gap and the total communication breakdown which ensued. Yuppie-ism is not so all encompassing of society as much as it is a role model, an example to be followed and pursued by a whole generation of young, upwardly mobile people. There is a sort of "carrot" and "stick" theme that gives people the goal of self-achievement and financial security, to pursue. Yuppies are as they say, less likely to smoke, more likely to be very health conscious, more social than excessive drinkers, very conscious of appearance and most important consumed by luxury and a new consumerism. The modern yuppie is conscious that poverty will never live up to its romantic promise. Such individuals would be unwilling to make a commitment to being a social worker or teacher due to its limiting financial rewards, and lack of upward mobility. Yuppies are totally consumed with self-improvement and define success as the challenge to live for. Materialism is no longer a dirty word for this generation, it is considered reward for hard work and very much the "carrot" that drives them onward and upward.

They are considered an earnest group, these yuppies, and they can accomplish a lot; that is if they don't burn themselves out and get too consumed with the self. If there is anyone who should find the advent of yuppies an