



What Money Wants: An Economy of Desire

Noam Yuran, Keith Hart

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One thing all mainstream economists agree upon is that money has nothing whatsoever to do with desire. This strange blindness of the profession to what is otherwise considered to be a basic feature of economic life serves as the starting point for this provocative new theory of money. Through the works of Karl Marx, Thorstein Veblen, and Max Weber, *What Money Wants* argues that money is first and foremost an object of desire. In contrast to the common notion that money is but an ordinary object that people believe to be money, this book explores the theoretical consequences of the possibility that an ordinary object fulfills money's function insofar as it is desired *as* money. Rather than conceiving of the desire for money as pathological, Noam Yuran shows how it permeates economic reality, from finance to its spectacular double in our consumer economy of addictive shopping. Rich in colorful and accessible examples, from the work of Charles Dickens to Reality TV and commercials, this book convinces us that we must return to Marx and Veblen if we are to understand how brand names, broadcast television, and celebrity culture work. Analyzing both classical and contemporary economic theory, it reveals the philosophical dimensions of the controversy between orthodox and heterodox economics.

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