



That'll Cost 4 Hours

by

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An idea came to me a couple of days ago. I was entranced by the simplicity and utility of it. The world isn't ready for it so please, if you find your mind telling you why it wouldn't work just ignore the chatter. You see this is an idea for a new world; one built of Love where spiritual values are embraced by choice because we understand them by experience. It is an idea for a society in which every family unit has the right to a non-taxable home site; a society in which you could only become a steward of other lands or resources by social agreement for they would be considered human commons. This isn't an idea for today so don't tell me why it won't work. I know that.

In the far distant future there will be no need for money at all. Our scientific knowledge will allow for decentralized and independent systems of energy, manufacturing material needs and food creation. Sound like a dream? We can see intimations of that reality in nano-machines, 3D Printing and other technologies right now. Remember that the future will make our present knowledge base look child-like. Yes I know we think we are modern. We have history to prove it, just like most everyone who has ever lived.

Between the collapse of greed and that ideal of self-sustaining freedom provided by human intellectual advancement and spiritual development, there will still be a need for some type of currency it seems to me. Actually I believe it will be needed for a long time. The idea that came to me is that the currency would be called hours. The inherent value of it would be based upon hours of human effort. Think about it. Anywhere in the world we would be trading hours. The elemental unit of currency would be one hour. That would be the value of an hour's effort by an untrained worker or apprentice.

As this thought came to me I immediately realized how practical a worldwide currency of hours would be. Regional exploitation would be diminished or eliminated altogether. An hour is an hour. Money would be created when we purchase the work of others. We would earn before spending. Banks would ensure value and facilitate exchanges.

Obviously some people's work is worth more. There would quickly be created social agreements about the relative values of creative output. A 10x multiplier should be the highest pay rate for those exceptional people who are deemed of great social merit. We would be awarding each other hours for value added to life by creative effort.

Society would generate fees from licensing resource extraction as well as participatory taxation. Think of the possibilities! Mothers could be paid for childrearing. Cherishing and loving future generations is the foundation of civilization. It is also demanding work. That social economy would also help pay to alleviate suffering when disasters strike.

Those are just a few of the ideas that popped into my mind. Imagine, though, if you went into a store and saw a price of $\$32.25$. You would know exactly how much effort that purchase price of thirty-two and one quarter hours was costing you.

Of course in the far future a gift economy will eliminate the need for counting hours. The price of that economy will be living in the now ... eternally.

Hours Currency Symbol

Every currency needs an easily recognizable symbol, a new glyph that would be easy to add to existing fonts. Ideally it would imply an obvious meaning. Using an H for hours seemed a good start. Then I thought about hours being equal and incorporated the idea of relative equality by using an equals sign = in place of the single crossbar. My final thought was to use fonts with an inherent sense of motion to imply the activity of exchange. In the case of less dynamic fonts, using italic or oblique typefaces would suffice.

As I'm most familiar with the dollar symbol \$ which has the cents symbol ¢ as its diminutive partner I thought the prices of items or services should use the upper case hours symbol to indicate a price of one hour or greater and the lower case symbol to indicate less than one hour in cost. In thinking about of change for an hour several schemes could work but I generally favor a quarter, a half and three-quarters as the currency breakdown between whole hours.

To test out the graphic concept I used Apple Chancery for the font with a sense of activity built in and ITC Avant Garde Gothic as my test sans serif font, which means I used the italic font style. On the next page you can see the results of upper case and lower case experiments.

I think believe this hours symbol would be easily incorporated into any font that uses variants of the Latin alphabet.

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Apple Chancery

ITC Avant Garde Gothic



↑ Upper case for 1 hour +

↓ Lower case for < 1 hour



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