



Tales for Little Rebels: A Collection of Radical Children's Literature

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In 1912, a revolutionary chick cries, “Strike down the wall!” and liberates itself from the “egg state.” In 1940, ostriches pull their heads out of the sand and unite to fight fascism. In 1972, Baby X grows up without a gender and is happy about it.

Rather than teaching children to obey authority, to conform, or to seek redemption through prayer, twentieth-century leftists encouraged children to question the authority of those in power. *Tales for Little Rebels* collects forty-three mostly out-of-print stories, poems, comic strips, primers, and other texts for children that embody this radical tradition. These pieces reflect the concerns of twentieth-century leftist movements, like peace, civil rights, gender equality, environmental responsibility, and the dignity of labor. They also address the means of achieving these ideals, including taking collective action, developing critical thinking skills, and harnessing the liberating power of the imagination.

Some of the authors and illustrators are familiar, including Lucille Clifton, Syd Hoff, Langston Hughes, Walt Kelly, Norma Klein, Munro Leaf, Julius Lester, Eve Merriam, Charlotte Pomerantz, Carl Sandburg, and Dr. Seuss. Others are relatively unknown today, but their work deserves to be remembered. (Each of the pieces includes an introduction and a biographical sketch of the author.) From the anti-advertising message of *Johnny Get Your Money's Worth (and Jane Too)!* (1938) to the entertaining lessons in ecology provided by *The Day They Parachuted Cats on Borneo* (1971), and Sandburg's mockery of war in *Rootabaga Pigeons* (1923), these pieces will thrill readers intrigued by politics and history—and anyone with a love of children's literature, no matter what age.

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