



The Pushcart War (New York Review Children's Collection)

Jean Merrill

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DO YOU KNOW THE HISTORY OF THE PUSHCART WAR? THE *REAL* HISTORY?

It's a story of how regular people banded together and, armed with little more than their brains and good aim, defeated a mighty foe.

Not long ago the streets of New York City were smelly, smoggy, sooty, and loud. There were so many trucks making deliveries that it might take an hour for a car to travel a few blocks. People blamed the truck owners and the truck owners blamed the little wooden pushcarts that traveled the city selling everything from flowers to hot dogs. Behind closed doors the truck owners declared war on the pushcart peddlers. Carts were smashed from Chinatown to Chelsea. The peddlers didn't have money or the mayor on their side, but that didn't stop them from fighting back. They used pea shooters to blow tacks into the tires of trucks, they outwitted the police, and they marched right up to the grilles of those giant trucks and dared them to drive down their streets. Today, thanks to the ingenuity of the pushcart peddlers, the streets belong to the people—and to the pushcarts.

The Pushcart War was first published more than fifty years ago. It has inspired generations of children and been adapted for television, radio, and the stage around the world. It was included on *School Library Journal's* list of One Hundred Books That Shaped the Twentieth Century, and its assertion that a committed group of men and women can prevail against a powerful force is as relevant in the twenty-first century as it was in 1964.

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