

Hello Everyone,

1st Sergeant: Tiny Bubbles.

Troops: Tiny Bubbles.

1st Sergeant: In My Wine.

Troops: In My Wine.

1st Sergeant: Make Me Feel Happy.

Troops: Make Me Feel Happy.

1st Sergeant: Make Me Feel So Fine

Troops: Make Me Feel So Fine.

—Old Army Marching Cadence (and Don Ho song)

I do not believe we have tiny financial bubbles in our economy. They are huge. And I do not believe they are going to make us “feel so fine.” The hangover will not be worth it.

In short, 1st Sergeant would not approve.

We won't use I-Bob to make our point today; but rather some very good analysis by Lance Roberts over at realinvestmentadvice.com. Lance is a clear thinker who looks dispassionately at the markets and rejects the notion that “this time it's different”. Which, by the way, is a hallmark of every bubble.

So, let's get to it.

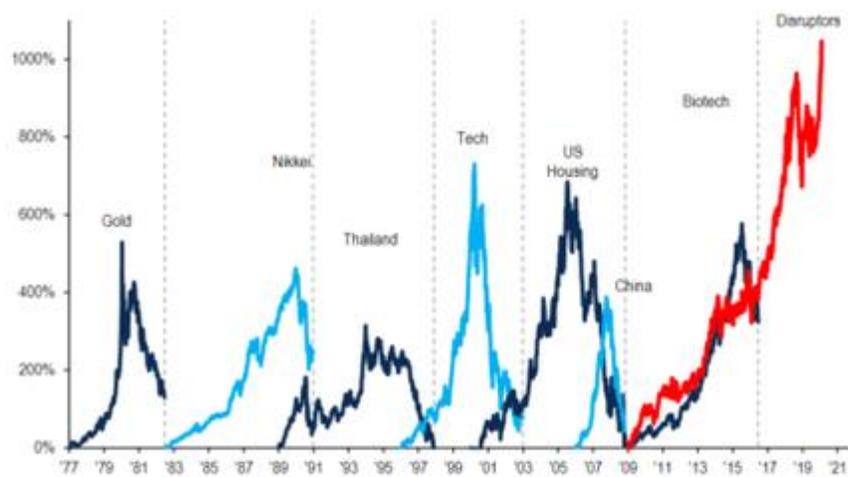
Lance starts by borrowing a chart from investing legend Jeremy Grantham. Mr. Grantham has been sounding the alarm about what he calls the “disruptors” bubble. The recent historical parallel might be the dot com bubble of the late 90's.

And while “disruptors” like Amazon have changed businesses dramatically (as dot com did), the business and the stock are not the same thing.

Oh, and while disruptors is one term, many are calling today’s markets the “everything bubble”. Meaning, stocks, bonds, real estate, currencies, etc.

Regardless of the name, the chart below shows we are in uncharted territory.

Chart 2: History of asset bubbles past 40-years



Source: BofA Global Investment Strategy, Bloomberg. Note: Gold (XAU Curncy), Japanese Equities (NKY Index), Thai Equities (SET Index), Tech (NDX Index), US Housing (SSHOME Index), Commodities (SHCOMP Index), Disruptors (DJECOM Index + NYFANG Index constituents, equal weighted)

And while the numbers are interesting, it is the psychology of a bubble that defines its existence.

The psychological steps look something like this:

- Rising prices attract “new money.”
- New money is often inexperienced money.
- Inexperienced money helps drive prices even higher.
- Rationality fades. Exuberance rises.

- Exuberant investors borrow money to take advantage of the “chance of a lifetime.”
- New companies in search of capital see an opportunity.
- They sell a “story” that fits the exuberance mindset. (e.g. “We are a disruptor.”)
- These risky investments perform the best...even though they make no money.
- Warning bells start going off, but only a few listen.
- The “this time is different” crowd buys more while “smart money” quietly exits.
- Suddenly, (who knows why?) the bubble pops.
- A half-hearted rally follows a few weeks or months later.
- The rally fails, and down she goes for the count.
- Our tiny bubbles turn into a massive hangover that scars a generation of investors.

I would say we are at the warning light phase....and it looks like a Christmas tree. But nothing has happened yet.

So, let’s look at one more chart and call it a day. This chart shows the financial world (stocks) vs. the real world (the GDP). And, yes, the disconnect between the “boots on the ground” economy vs. the “financially” world of paper wealth instruments has never been higher.



Signed, So-Let's-See....Weed-Is-Bad-In-Women's-Sports-But-Men-Are-OK-In-Women's-Sports? Financial-Advisor,

Greg

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