

Eat the Rich!

Detroit Festival against Wealth and Waste

Mike

1991

A loose group of anarchists centered around the new 404 space organized a Festival Against Wealth and Waste, June 20–22. More than 50 participants, including anarchists from Chicago and Toledo, engaged in three days of demonstrations, actions, discussion and performance.

The first day began with a Television Sacrifice on the Wayne State University campus featuring guerrilla theater illustrating the mind-numbing effects of TV. The climax of the action was thwarted, however, when the campus cops threatened to arrest anyone who destroyed the several sets we had ready for the sacrifice.

This was to be followed by a march/bike ride to the General Motors world headquarters to declare the Death of the Car as we had done the year previously, but the event had to be canceled because of a sparse turnout.

Spirits were not dampened, though, as the second day consisted of two demonstrations through the downtown business district led by a huge sign saying, “Eat the Rich.” Each march ended with a demonstration at the Detroit Athletic Club, where membership requires a business suit, white skin and a penis.

Many of the marchers transformed themselves into mudpeople: wearing little clothing and completely covered in mud, they became a pre-urban, pre-literate tribe untouched by the wealth, greed and racism so prevalent among the rich. The marchers whooped and hollered through the area, taking time out to bark at the neckties and diners at outdoor restaurants.

Later that evening a performance by local punk bands, Social Outcasts and Civil Disobedience, was held at the 404 W. Willis space, which also served as a temporary shelter for a few homeless men who joined the marches earlier in the day.

The last day started early with dumpster diving at Eastern Market, an outdoor farmers’ and produce terminal. The liberated fruits and vegetables were intended for an afternoon picnic that was rained out. The festival ended with discussion, poetry and music at 404 Willis. Those still in a festive mood went out on an overnight graffiti/billboard altering campaign with topics dealing with the wealth and waste theme and the Gulf war victory parade scheduled for the following weekend.

fifth Estate

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