

The Wild Ones Fight Back: Some thoughts on Strategy

A. Mary Praxter

We're at war. It's not a typical war, where all sides are fighting for power. No, we're fighting against power, against domestication. We don't want to rule anything, we just want to live wild and free. Unfortunately, there's a whole damn civilization trying to keep us from doing so. And we haven't been fighting this civilization very well.

Some of us beg it for table scraps with our petitions, giving our names and addresses. Some of us go out in big herds, marching in line, chanting slogans, carrying signs and "demanding" that our enemies do what we want. Some of us publicly and peacefully ("civilly") disobey the law in order to get arrested. Occasionally, some of us get into pitched battles with cops which all too often seem staged and futile, since they are a one-time thing with little chance of becoming full-fledged insurrection.

We have been very visible in foolish ways, excessively organized and very serious — and we've been botching it up. If we were interested in gaining power rather than destroying it, then visibility, organization and seriousness would be just what we need. But since we are out to destroy power, then invisibility, apparent randomness, and playfulness are much better weapons.

We know who the powers are who are that are trying to destroy all wildness; if we are at all aware, we know what they're doing and where they're doing it. In sabotaging their activity, we can't give them this same advantage. We need to be invisible. We aren't interested in publicity. We are interested in — at least temporarily — fucking up the domesticating activities of our targets.

If the target can be hit in such a way as to make an explanation unnecessary, that's ideal. Should there seem to be need for explanation, let the graffitied message either be very specific to that one situation or so general as to be untraceable. It's best not to do frequent repetition of the same graffiti in association with more intense forms of sabotage. And don't forget that an imaginative graffiti campaign may itself be effective in at least getting people to think.

Illegal activities for sabotaging the mega-machine should be done anonymously, not under the name of any group which gives the police a handle for investigation and the media the beginning of an image which they can effectively manipulate. The problems caused by association of monkeywrenching with Earth First! and with the names of certain individuals should be quite obvious after the arrests of the Arizona Four (later to become the Arizona Five). Where no definable groups existing, infiltration becomes quite difficult.

If we choose to write about these things, it's best to do so either in very general ways, as in this article, or in purely speculative terms, and never to use any name that is normally associated with ourselves.

Another worthwhile skill to develop is the ability to act in an apparently random way. Demonstrations, civil disobedience, even most battles with the cops are well-ordered activities. In some sense, they are orchestrated by the very forces we are fighting, because in these acts we are fighting on the enemies' terrain; we are merely reacting to them. Our acts of sabotage need not be this way. We can strike targets when they least expect it, when they think they're off the hook. There is no need to be systematic, at least not from the perspective of our enemies with their rigid militaristic mindsets.

This life-destroying civilization surrounds us, and targets are everywhere, so there's no need to act only in reaction to its more heinous crimes against wildness. We can choose our targets with a certain level of playfulness and spontaneity; we can begin to have some control over the terrain of this struggle. By becoming a random, chaotic factor in the highly ordered and increasingly uniform world of civilization, we take the offensive. In little ways, we start to chip away at the foundations of civilization, to undermine it and help towards its collapse.

Though invisibility is essential to our illegal activities, it's no fun to extend it to the rest of our lives. Who wants to spend most of their time pretending to be a mindless slug who embraces their own domestication, or staying underground. I sure the hell don't! The only time we need to maintain invisibility while taking illegal action. The rest of the time we can visibly be wild and playful pranksters.

Authority always takes itself seriously; what better way to undermine it then to make fun of it? If we can learn to constantly confront the forces of domestication with playful mockery and wild laughter — even our own tendencies towards domestication — we will be exposing it's ugliness in the best way possible and we'll be having fun while doing it. Wherever we confront domestication — from the religious and political fanatics spouting their dogmas, to shopping malls full of mindless consumers — we can learn to spontaneously transform the situation, playfully creating spur of the moment, surreal guerrilla theater that undermines the domestication process.

We live best when we live in this world as wild and merry pranksters, playfully mocking civilization and those who unquestioningly accept it. To dance, play, laugh, to avoid work as much as possible and steal from the rich and powerful, to undermine authority and domestication every chance we get: this is the life we choose. Unseen by our enemies, we do whatever we can to fuck up the workings of the mega-machine with an apparent randomness that confounds their orderly plans. It is the return of the repressed, our wildness springing forth to undermine the forces of domestication.

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