

PART III CREATING AND MANAGING FESTIVAL ORGANIZATION

Chapter 10

Postmodern Organization and Festival

“Good Morrow Faire Gentles!” shouts the hawker as you stroll among the festival booths and observe the street theater performers. Festivals are more prevalent now than in olden times, but they are also radically different. Many cities and nations still conduct annual festivals, a tradition that goes back centuries in many parts of the world. Yet, the festivals have taken on thick outer spectacle shells, becoming gaudy consumption rituals, without much referentiality to what makes a festival festive in the first place. What are trade convention exhibit halls, 4th of July fireworks extravaganzas, Home Coming parades, St. Patrick’s Day music concerts, the Circus, Special Games, County Fairs, and Rodeos, if not contemporary manifestations of festival?

My answer is they are mostly spectacles of production and consumptions, with fragments of supposedly “authentic” festival appended here and there to bring out the crowds. I went to the annual AACSB (American Association of Colleges and Schools of Businesses). The assemblage of business Deans, department heads, and consultants at Boston was treated to live performances by Ben Franklin and a nameless Town Crier, a tour of the Kennedy Museum, and lavish receptions one never sees at the faculty conferences. But, the annual faculty gathering of the Academy of Management has for several years included an evening of dancing. The Organizational Behavior Teaching Society had a steamboat ride, a native American talk circle, and dinner for its convention goers. These events are more spectacular than festive. The festive occasions are mere garnish to the spectacle event. It is easy for a festive undertaking to become a disempowering element in a spectacle. This is why this chapter looks at the relation between festival and organization. At how various forms of organization mix festival and spectacle together in strange ways.

And what rare festivals there may be are endangered species. Yet, these rare ones must have an organization of some sort that keeps them more festive than spectacular. Most organizing attempts of festival find they are mutating due

to their organizing situations into bizarre affairs. The Pittsburgh Irish Festival, for example, features a Bingo Tent, Dog Tents, and a Gaelic Mass. Is this a strange or suitable organization? Perhaps it is a collage of spectacles more than a festival. Or, perhaps it is the bizarre juxtaposition that keeps it festive.

There is a rare festival that I am particularly concerned with. Festival was once about narratives and theatrics that reversed or otherwise parodied the portrait of power. On Fool's Day, the peasants became magistrates, clergy, and nobles, while all these elites took on lesser positions. In the Bull Running Festival, young men test their machismo by running in front of the bulls. In the Tomato Festival, people tossed tomatoes at everyone and on the next day life went back to its normal spectacle routines. The festival had something to do with one's conscious awareness, and with a focusing of that awareness. The theatrics and narration brought self-reflection and sometimes-social reflection.

What is Festival? Festival is defined as expressing inner happiness in a context of social activity. Spectacle is defined as material displays of happiness in a context of over-consumption. When festival is more about materialism than play, self-reflection, and social commentary, it becomes disempowered, just another spectacle. Careful attention must be paid to the medium and the message. When the message of festival is in the externalities the inner spirituality of the event is suspect. Telling festival apart from spectacle is difficult, a journey of deception, imitation, and intrigue.

Consider the similarities. Both spectacle and festival combine theatrics, storytelling, crafts, and other arts into a community of performance. Both festival and spectacle incorporate food, story, theatrics, music, art, and other entertainment. In the early chapters, I argued that festival retains its play and spontaneity and can include self-reflexive parody of its spectacle cousin. But, in this chapter I want to open up the question of what is festival for more rigorous exploration. For they are oftentimes found together, occupying the same time and place. The same organization has both festive and spectacle garniture.

Two people can be in the same organization, doing the same job, for the same boss. One sees festive situations, another sees spectacles of misery, self-

indulgence, and addictions to over-production and conspicuous, even eco-destructive consumption. One will experience a sense of joy; the other will find only frustration. What is festive depends on both the individual and the situation at hand. The spectacle situation may be more staged, formal, and less interactive with its spectators than festival. Yet, many events with the label “festival” do not appear to be festivals at all to all of the participants.

I think that festival and spectacle are quite interpenetrating discourses, found more together than apart, and experienced differently by people. To confuse one with the other is part of their staging, part of their narrative attempts at authenticity. Yet, what one finds as authentic, another will see as staged, artificial, manipulative, and a sham. And as festival mutates and is further colonized by spectacle, there is not much difference to be observed between them by even very different people. If we look beneath the narrative and theatric devices for their respective presentation and concealment perhaps festival and spectacle are more similar than different.

Defining festival apart from spectacle is also made difficult by their mutuality. It appears, for example, that bits of festival narrative and theatrics hold spectacle together, and vice versa. Demaray (1998), for example, proposes that there are micro-spectacles that connect the acts and episodes of the *Tempest* play together, and without which the *Tempest* would have very different meanings. Shakespeare plays are popular Renaissance Festival events, ironically, along with costume, accent, jargon, and architecture, defining the event as authentic and real. Yet, the most festive aspect of a Shakespearean festival may be lost, the free-play and mayhem of those in the spectator pit, near the stage. Such free-play and taunting of the performers by the peasants would not be tolerated in the serious ritual of modern day Shakespeare. The recent movie *Shakespeare in Love* gave some sense of the various antics of theater goers in that historicity. The spectacle, it seems, focuses our gaze on the outer shell of the performance, so that we miss the happening qualities that made it festive in the first plays.

Festivals and spectacles come in many shapes and sizes, and are performed in all lands. This has been so since humankind walked the planet and began to use festival to artistically render and define their communal identity. Festival and spectacle vary in length between a day, weekend, week, month, season or one's whole career. Cities, county, state, nation, or for that matter an organization, without at least one festival (and many spectacles), simply has no identity at all. For example, the Williamstown Theatre Festival is a summer-long celebration of theater, which brings together an impressive array of artists and offers the community varied cultural experiences. Shakespearean Festivals, Renaissance Festivals, Craft Festivals, Harvest Festivals (dates, Chile, wine, apple, etc.), Film Festivals, and Music Festivals are all the rage. They define the community, but so do spectacles. Disneyland defines Los Angeles County, though it is located really in Orange County. Renaissance Festivals, oftentimes, reenact 15th and 16th Century Europe as a celebration of cyclical time and a local reverence for place, even though they are reenacted outside of Europe, in places like Kansas and Idaho. Yet, as we shall explore, most of festival is not separate from spectacle. It seems every state in the Union and many countries have their festivals and their spectacles, without much differentiation between, what is one and the other.

What is a Festival Organization? Be it simple or complex, behind the festival stalls, booths, theater, exhibitions, and merchandising, there is the festival organization, and perhaps a spectacular one masquerading as festive. Some festival organizations construct fictive fantasies of the good old days of King Arthur Knights of the Round Table or Elizabethan splendor in a Renaissance Festival. Spectators are invited to come dressed as princesses, wenches, noblemen, and barbarians, as they enjoy the jousting and feasting. Others go to great length to make the historical period become "living history." They recreate the architecture, dress, and customs of a particular epoch. Yet, in many cases, they are no more authentic than the Pirates of the Caribbean or the Haunted Mansion at Disneyland are. The sense of "authenticity" of a festival, be it a Renaissance Faire, Shakespearean Theater, or Bluegrass Music Festival

varies from one situation to the next. The name “festival” in the title of the event is not a way to tell its pedigree. Some situations of “festival” allow hilarious renditions (e.g. “Manly Men in Tights”), others purport to be more authentic than the “original.”¹ It is the subject of folklore scholarship to decide how authentic the cast of artisans performs the 6th century stories, crafts, and rituals. If you bring a man dressed as Ben Franklin to tell bits of history is that authentic or is it authentic when a live Indian Chief performs a simulated attack on a circle of wagons at the Buffalo Bill Wild West Show? It gets back to the question of what is authentic “Mexican” cuisine when Disney’s Mexican offering become the standard in Mexico tourist sites.

What is the organization of a festival in Las Cruces? In terms of organization, most of the Las Cruces festivals are simple festivals, not the Super Festival organizations of the big cities. In Las Cruces, New Mexico, we have many simple forms for festival. There is an annual Enchilada Festival (“Worlds’ biggest Enchilada,” craft exhibits, and a parade), Renaissance Festival, and the university students organize many festive events such as HomeComing, Halloween, Greek Theater, etc. Twice a week the City of Las Cruces has a craft festival in its old downtown, outdoor mall. There is always Big John’s flea market out on Route 70 each Saturday and Sunday. You have to be a resident, making your own crafts to have a stall there. We also host many music festivals including the annual Marriachi Festival. Our biggest and most complex festival, in terms of organization, is the annual Motorhome Festival. At least 5,000 motorhomes assemble in every parking lot in the town and university. Motor coaches descend upon Las Cruces as if this was the Harley ride to South Dakota. The Pan Am center (our basketball dome) and a lot of tents showcase the main event. To residents, this is more spectacle, than festive, unless, of course you are a motor coach owner. Not far away there is the Hatch Chile Festival held the same day as the Apple Orchard Festival. There is a map so on Labor Day weekend you can celebrate them both. We turn next to a look at simple and complex organization of festivals.

¹ Source, <http://www.faire.net/SCRIBE/WebScribe.htm>

Simple and Complex Festivals Festival organizations can be simple or complex. Woodstock 1969 is a complex phenomenon, both spectacle and festival all it's own, and perhaps the largest and most chaotic festival of all times. I will always regret never having attended the Woodstock Music Festival, a veritable Cultural Revolution and festive extravaganza. The Woodstock Music and Art Fair Festival in August 1969 drew more than 450,000 people for four days of drugs, rock and roll at a cost of \$2.4 million.²

The festival closed the New York State Thruway and created one of the nation's worst traffic jams. It also inspired a slew of local and state laws to ensure that nothing like it would ever happen again ... Gathered that weekend in 1969 were liars and lovers, prophets and profiteers. They made love, they made money and they made a little history (Times herald-Record, 1994).

There are simple festivals of craft, music, and art of all sorts. Simple Festivals on a particular theme (you could put Shakespearean, Renaissance, State and National Fairs offer food stalls, game booths, theater including staged, improvised skits, and street pageants, dance exhibitions and invitations to dance, and of course merchants with products to sell (jewelry, hats, aromatic oils, costumes, toys, herbs, house furnishings, ad infinitum). Some festivals demonstrate "period" crafts, others just create beautiful, tempting things out of their own wonderful ingenuity.

Super Festivals Super Festivals are the most complex forms of festive organization. Super Festivals are combinations of the various simple forms. For example, a Music Festival may go on for days or an entire season and host Renaissance, Craft, and other festivals. The Riverside County Fair and National Date Festival you find a complex array of festive events. This is a celebration of the date harvest in California in which you can attend the spectacular Arabian Nights Pageant, outdoor musical events, an open air market, quarter horse and harness racing, science fair, older worker job fair, youth boxing matches, weddings, circus, and RV rally. You can have hilarious ostrich and camel races. You can view over 1,000 exhibits including animal, agricultural, arts, gems &

² Source, <http://www.geocities.com/SunsetStrip/3869/woodstock.htm>.

minerals; participate in the Blessing of the Dates Ceremony. If you wear a colorful Arabian costume and you get a free admission to the Date Festival! There is also the Shalimar Sports Center with a Satellite Wagering Facility and simulcast racing from around the world. You can have a private booth or sit amongst the other friendly festivities.³ As I said at the outset, festival is saturated with spectacle, and this is particularly true of the Super Festivals.

At the Ohio Renaissance Festival spectators can visit the 16th Century and see Jousting Knights in shining armor, Queen Elizabeth I, Robin Hood and a cast of over 150 costumed performers. On your stroll through the menagerie, there are 130 period craft shops to visit as a passive, uncostumed, spectator. You can watch the Swordsmen dual and engage in myriad arts of gentlemanly behavior: poetry, posturing, handkissing, and swordplay. Recreating the 16th century village and marketplace serves as the communal stage for “magical” theatrical performances, period arts and crafts, delicious foods, fine ales, games of skill and much, much more. The Colorado Renaissance Festival recommends:

Prepare thyself to revel with master revelers at the Colorado Renaissance Festival, where pleasures reign and merrymaking is the rule... Featuring a cast of 100's of authentically costumed merrymakers, impromptu encounters with court jesters, fire eaters, Knights in shining armor, maidens fair and even His Royal Majesty, King Henry the VIII and His Queen, Anne Boleyn are commonplace.⁴

The 23rd Annual Kansas City Renaissance Festival offers authentic “living History Torus.” You can “journey down shaded lanes as a citizen of Canterbury takes you and your friends on a guided interactive tour through our shire!” Self-guided tours are also available as you by follow the Living History markers on your Festival Map. Along the authentic living journey you will see the Executioner reveal his Renaissance period torture devices, a Lady in Waiting who explains her duties as an upper class lady in this shire, and a Squire who divulges codes of chivalry you must uphold to become a Knight. Rat Lady strolls along these

³ Source, <http://www.datefest.org/>

paths, “but don't be alarmed - she won't bite!” And what festival would be complete without a Feudal Gourmet to keep you posted on what's on the menu in Canterbury. You can assemble on schedule to observe the arrival of William Shakespeare in Canterbury as he presents his play to the Queen. There is also the action, romance, and drama of the Romeo and Juliet Theater, as the jousting happens in the background of the shire. I am not sure why there are Singing Pirates in this authentic Renaissance Festival, but the Buxom Lasses and the Knights in Tights are very popular theatrics.⁵

Festival organizations formalized festive etiquette. For example, if a costumed actor asks you a question, it's an invitation to “play” along with them. According to etiquette you can decide to move from passive spectacle observer to active spectator, someone who play acts and improvises a response to the actors. “I am on my way to challenge the Black Knight for the hand of fair maiden.” It is considered poor etiquette for actors to stop playing their character roles in front of the spectators. Actors (be they paid or volunteer performers) are expected by the festival organization to be in costume, retain their accent, use festive language, and just stay in character.

Supplier Festival Organizations There is another type of festival organization, the supplier-organizations that provide goods and services to a festival. For example the “Chicagoland Costumer's Guild” is a costumer for festivals held in the Midwest. They make the costumes festival actors wear.

How Festival and Spectacle Interpenetrate At the White Mountains Jazz and Blues Festival in Mt. Washington Valley, New Hampshire, there is always plenty of food and libations, and six continuous hours of good music, and plenty of shops on the Rue de Bop. But, here we see some differences in festival. This festival is a spectator sport combined with spectacle shopping. But, there are the morning Festival workshops, where guests interact and rap with headline performers who will appear later in the day.

⁴ Source, <http://www.coloradorennaissance.com/>.

⁵ Source, <http://www.cjnetworks.com/~koncom/kcrenfst.htm>

The 26th Annual Sheep and Wool Festival began as a more or less “authentic” harvest festival, a simple gathering for fiber artists to buy the best fleeces from sheep producers has grown into a premier event attracting tens of thousands of visitors annually. Colonial Williamsburg recreates an “authentic” 18th century living, including livestock representative of George Washington's time. Pre-Festival Craft Workshops were added to focus on in-depth fibercraft led by skilled artisans, including advanced spinning and braiding classes. The events at the festival have expanded to also include Kid's Activities, Sheep Dog Herding, Flyball, Sheep Shearing Demonstrations, Sheep to Shawl, Breed Display (Champion Fleece Judging), Parade of Breeds, and Auctions.⁶ Next, we look at festival organization's relation to spectacle organization (i.e. concentrated and diffuse) in premodern, modern, and postmodern theory.

Premodern Spectacle = Festival In Jain teachings there is a story about a prince who is about to marry. Just before the wedding feast, he observes the preparations. He sees a courtyard full of cages of all the various animals about to be slaughtered for his wedding feast. The moment is transformative. He decides to become a monk, and seeing his example, his bride elects to become a nun. They each lived lives of renunciation. To me, the meaning of the story is that the couple developed conscious awareness of the difference between a festival and a spectacle. They developed conscious awareness of a spectacle of material celebration and saw that this path would not lead them to attain higher spiritual values. Instead, they chose to renounce material possession and material violence in favor of non-violence and simplicity.

If we look to premodern times, we find spectacles that support the power structure of some state or religious institution. As yesterday, there still are the fairs, community markets, and traveling circuses. Catholic religious holiday festival adapted and redefined pagan festival days. The holiday festivals support the underlying social system of monarchy and cleric.

The premodern has not been deselected by modern coevolution, in all respects. When Saint Nicholas went through the village giving gifts to the needy,

⁶ Source, <http://www.sheepandwoolfestival.org/>

the example was one of sharing givest with the less fortunate. The Christmas holiday was gradually taken over by the spectacle of over-consumption. Merchants invented a different form of gift giving where everyone was to celebrate their abundance and prosperity by conspicuous gift exchanges. The Protestants cleric decided that to be wealthy meant that God had favored your house with abundance. Meanwhile the Jain and Buddhist example of their great teachers was to renounce the attachments of material wealth in order to journey to higher spiritual values. The merchants have won out. Merchants invented the practice of gift exchange and implemented it as a non-denominational Christmas tradition. The underlying message of commercialism drowns our spiritual signification, just as the church had drowned out the pagan message. The commercialization has become its own religion. It celebrates spectacles of lavish consumption, the more conspicuous, ostentatious, showy, gaudy, and garish the better.

There are some events that do not extend to all nations. There were, for examples, the public executions including the sacrifices to Rome's Coliseum, which are not everywhere present. But there are still public floggings and grosser punishments, still practiced by certain Arab and Asian states.

Michel Foucault (1977) opens his book *Discipline and Punish* with the spectacle of a public execution. Foucault (1977 14) argued that in the nineteenth century "the spectacle of physical punishment disappeared; the tortured body was avoided; the theatrical representation of pain was excluded from punishment." I do not think the "disappearance of public executions marks... the decline of the spectacle" as Foucault (1977: 10) suggests. Rather, the spectacle was incorporated and translated into modern processes of mass production and hierarchic organization, and into rituals of mass consumption. Many cities still conduct annual festivals, a tradition that goes back centuries in many parts of the world. What are trade conventions, 4th of July, music concerts, and Rodeos, if not contemporary manifestations of festival? There are many ethnic festivals, such as St. Patrick's Day. The Pittsburgh Irish Festival for example features a Bingo

Tent, Dog Tents, and a Gaelic Mass. The point is that contemporary festivals are thriving and mutating in many forms.

John Demaray's (1998) book *Shakespeare and the Spectacles of Strangeness* develops several important points about festival and spectacle. Demaray does an analysis of Shakespeare's "The Tempest" highlighting how it "draws upon the European and English spectacle, pastoral, romance and dramatic traditions..." (p. xiii). Shakespeare represents for many the kind of Renaissance theatric form reenacted in festivals throughout the world. The Tempest has many unique masque-like qualities (Demaray, 1998: 5).

Post-colonial and new historicism scholars are increasingly deconstructing the Tempest as a text with many imperialist overtones, a critique of European colonialism. The deconstruction argument is that the Tempest is a disguised discourse referring to colonialism and imperialism in the New World, taking land from the ethnic natives of the Americas and putting them into slavery. Colonialists view this play by Shakespeare as saying something significant about naked power, slavery, depriving natives of their land rights, forcing them to learn the oppressors' language, etc. Caliban is a slave to the main character, Prospero. Not everyone agrees with this interpretation of the goings on a mysterious enchanted island. Some scholars such as Schneider (1995) argue that The Tempest, while a play foregrounding power is also about forgiveness and reconciliation. Prospero in the end seeks a higher ground. In a review of Mullenix (1997) argues that there may be another interpretation, one that speaks to our study of spectacle. It is one of "commercialism." Do you direct, cast, and stage the Tempest for its imperialist deconstruction or to highlight the more benign theme of forgiveness and reconciliation. If you stage it to attract wider commercial audiences, there is a hegemonic hue put on the staging to downplay the issues of slavery and other abuses of colonial power.

Festivals happen around the globe. The Africa Festival is reportedly Europe's largest festival of African music and culture, boasting more than 360,000 visitors to Würzburgs Mainwiesen during in the last 10 years. The Vilnius Jazz Festival is the only jazz festival in Lithuania. The 1998 Edinburgh

International Jazz and Blues Festival is held in bars, concert halls, clubs, streets, parks and churches for nine days.

In Taiwan, for example, as the brilliant harvest moon rises over the island of Taiwan, on the 15th day of the eighth lunar month, it is time for the Chinese Moon Festival: "it is a time for romance and family togetherness from breezy shores to the great peaks."⁷ During this ancient festival, families and couples head for the river banks to stare at the brightest moon of the year, eat round moon cakes, and where four or more gather play mahjong games till dawn. They beseech the moon goddess and earth god for protection.

According to folk legend, the 15th day of the eighth lunar month is also the birthday of the Earth god, or Tu-ti Kung. Thus the festival has come to symbolize the fruitful end of a year's hard work in the fields. Farm families across the island express their gratitude to the Earth God as to Heaven, represented by the moon, for the year's good blessings.

Festival has, perhaps, always been a time to sell products, but in late capitalism, the Festival may not survive without becoming part of production and consumption. For example in the Harvest Moon Festival:

The marketing strategies of local bakeries include more than whipping up new-style moon cakes to attract customers during this elaborate packaging and have explored new sales outlets such as beauty parlors and selling door to door. Taiwan people can find moon cakes in nearly every bakery, supermarket, convenience store and restaurant during the Mid-Autumn Festival. Moon cakes can be expensive or relatively cheap, depending on the type of filling used.

The Pattaya Festival of Thailand features floral displays, beauty contests, stalls selling local food delicacies, and a spectacular display of fireworks on the beach. An usual event to foreigners is Chon Buri, the annual water buffalo race, one of the mainstays in the life of a Thai farmer. Farmers race to plough local fields. No more unusual than the Rodeo or the Monster Truck races in the U.S.

⁷ Source, <http://peacock.tnrc.edu.tw/MOON/moon-1.html>

In Moscow, 243 television commercials and 634 print advertisements were reviewed at the 8th annual Moscow International Advertising Festival held November 1998.

In Italy, in particular, there is a movement to revitalize the artisan guilds, and promote forms of organization owned by artisans. The San Diego, California Museum of Fine Arts provides a space for artist guilds, where master artists train apprentices in their skills, and provide their paintings, sculptures, jewelry, wood, and other crafts for sale. The community as a whole must rate a master highly before they are allowed space to teach apprentices or well their art.

Modern Festival = Consumption of Festival In modern festival, the commercial spectacle overshadows the festive signification. Global corporations are having spectacle impact upon wealthy nations, and assiduous in Third World economies. Of the world's biggest 100 economies, 51 are mega corporations, not countries.⁸ Weissman and Mokhiber (1999) state that a report about spectators was commissioned by a group of mega corporations.

In 1998, a study on civic action done by the National Commission on Civic Renewal, issued a report called "A Nation of Spectators." When this report was revealed to the US press last summer, only three paragraphs mentioned corporate impacts on society

...Social and political theories state that when powerful systems are in trouble, they have to sell themselves more aggressively to convince the masses of their legitimacy. Books bashing corporate dominance are in vogue in the United States but so is a backlash wishing to preserve capitalism's cheering squad via books dispelling the so-called myth of economic inequality.⁹

The "Nation of Spectators" report documents how citizens around the country were organizing...to combat the encroachment of the corporate state into their lives. The purpose of the report is to organize spectacle to convince the spectators that economic inequality is a myth. In their book review Rapoza (1999) comments: "If the mass of public are spectators, the corporate financiers

⁸ Source, (1999) Weissman and Russell Mokhiber in their newly-published book: "Corporate Predators: The Hunt for Mega-profits and the Attack on Democracy." Common Courage Press.

⁹ Rapoza, Kenneth (1999) "Spotlight on Corporate Predators" BOSTON, Apr 19, IPS wire service. This is a book review of Weissman & Mokhiber (1999).

and their now famous political lobbyists are the stars of the show.”¹⁰ Any ties to political, religious, or celebratory statements get diluted. The spectacle of over-consumption overwhelms both playful and the signifying aspects of premodern festival. There is a subtle, yet important difference between festival and spectacle.

The key difference between festival and spectacle is that in festival there is a celebration of life, even though the medieval gorged them selves. The Romans ate, puked, and ate again, in a spectacle celebrating over-abundance. The distinction between festival and spectacle is between eating to live and living to eat (and eat). In the premodern festival there was feast and frolic, and there was certainly a celebration of conspicuous consumption, but there was a life awareness.

Consumption spectacle has taken over the role of monarchy, religious, and more recently nation-state festivals. Spectacle has always been a tribute celebration acknowledging the power holders of a given era. The new power holder is the multinational corporation in a spectacle of corporate capacity. Fourth of July is more about fire works sales and lavish display than it is about significant reflections about government history. Most do not know what it is they celebrate on holidays. Labor is glad to have its day off from work.

Liberal free market capitalism celebrates its liberation from church and state. The holiday clearly outlines the new domination in the political economy the global corporate empire. Spectacle makes all holidays more and more generic. And in so doing, only consumption and over-production is glorified. The consumption machine retreads and recasts every festival into one more spectacle of material accumulation. Each festival has its exotic foods, stories, drinks, rituals, sports, and other entertainment. It is just that the material side of the event becomes more important than significant messages and the communal ambiance. Instead of celebrating and enjoying the festive life, consumption sells its own message of happiness. To be happy is to consume, to display materiality as a happy garment, to enact the happiness rituals. Meanwhile the message of

¹⁰ Rapoza, Kenneth (1999) book review.

festival, that happiness comes from within, that community is more joyful than over indulgence, that play has more revelry than addiction, gets morphed out of each event.

Spectacular time turned the festival's celebration of cyclic-time into a new reality, linear-time. Cyclical time was "the moment of a community's participation in the luxurious expenditure of life" (# 154). Spectacle is a pseudo-festival, and an invention of pseudo-cyclical time, a time transformed by industry. "Pseudo-cyclical time leans on the natural remains of cyclical time and also uses it to compose new homologous combinations: day and night, work and weekly rest, the recurrence of vacations" (#150). Organizations and individuals use timesaving devices and patterns to invest time a newly socially organized time, productive time and consumable time. With capitalism, instead of cyclical-time, the new time is irreversible time, reality as a one way journey. Organizational life becomes storied as a passage, a journey through stages of time, through stages of organizational life. The hero's journey became the journey of conquest on a global stage. Time was re-realized as the passage to the final event, a chronology of episodic-events, and linearity.

The chronicle is the expression of the irreversible time of power and also the instrument that preserves the voluntaristic progression of this time from its predecessor, since this orientation of time collapses with the fall of every specific power and returns to the indifferent oblivion of cyclical time, the only time know to peasant masses who, during the collapse of empires and their chronologies, never change (# 132).

Empire-time is a fragmented event-oriented chronological succession of corporeal power. The spectacular organization is on an episodic time journey, while the peasant prefers cyclical time. Nietzsche preferred cyclical time to linear, progress-oriented time, in his theory of eternal recurrence.

Atomizing space is an equally important aspect of control through fragmentation. The peasant preferred to be fixed in local place. Industrialization relocated the peasant crafts into de-natured factory space. Indeed the development of factories is the stage of spectacular organizational development,

the substitution for non-life time and space for natured-time and space. Collecting peasants together into the atomized spaces of production, posed revolutionary threat, they might organize against the ruling spectacle. Atomizing the peasant's location keeps them from undertaking revolutionary independent action (Debord, 1967: #177). The organizing of landscape is fundamental to spectacular control. Peasant festivals were not so well organized, improvised action could happen at any moment. Modern spectacle is more orderly, and has replaced festival with linear time and tourist-journeys through fragmented space. Time and space are fragmented into episodes on linear passageways. The spectacle enacts an integration of episodes into linear time journeys. It reaccumulates what has become fragmentary knowledge, atomized sages of experience, and non-cyclical time into a unifying and common spectacle or collective recomposition. Spectacle through a common language of words and storied images seeks to recapture the festival, when community and nature co-existed as one. The pre-capitalism festival ways of life were appropriated and transformed by capitalism. Festival has been replaced by spectacles of theatrical consumption (the mall and the stores in the mall) as well as by spectacular organizations (producers of spectacles and themselves spectacles). The peasant is everywhere, composing as much as two fifths of the world's population. Sitting on the margins of spectacular organization, ready to reclaim cyclical time and local spaces, and perhaps replace spectacle with festival. But, the atomization, the fragmentation of time and space into episodic reality is essential to global theater.

There is an unreal unity of both time and space proclaimed in spectacular organization, a mask over a fragmenting industrial process and a de-natured ecology. What is unreal about its unity is not just its de-natured sense of time and space, but its dogmatic insistence on the naturalness of its performance (#71). Ironically, we can observe the performance.

Festival organizations seem to be saturated with spectacle. Often festival is just come on, to get spectators to the spectacle so "boothies" (stall workers) can hawk their products. Spectacle, is a linear-time mask and a journey mask

over the abyss, a narrative formation of (linear) time and (journey) space, a Band-Aid for the fragmentation and chaos that is the corporeal of late capitalism. And festival can be a visible part of that Band-Aid.

Postmodern Festivals and Late Capitalism - Guy Debord (1967) sought to abolish (modern) spectacle, to smash the spectacle in avant-garde revelation, *not* to transform or reform it. Yet modern spectacle is everywhere. A group of students (SI, 1966) had the vision of festive play, as a dream beyond the spectacle. Yet spectacle is everywhere. Debord called himself a Situationist (#191) because he wanted to replace the spectacle of official illusion with a deep awareness of the situation of violence, and how spectacle inverts reality.¹¹ If we are to dissociate festival from spectacle, we must begin with awareness.

Doug, a good friend, took a walk in the desert. "You think it's a desert, but life is everywhere." His goal was to discover that in a desert, life is abundant. "I wanted to be present and aware of life in the desert by being present in the moment." His goal was to focus his awareness by not stepping on life in the desert. "I became aware of the ants, the tufts of grass, the life that was everywhere in the desert." There are monks who gently sweep the path they are to walk so as not to step on life, and wear gauze over their mouth and nose so as not to inhale a tiny bug. These monks never walk and breathe without performing these rituals. Gurudev Chitrabhanu says that such rituals can miss the point. The point is not to engage in rituals, it is to focus one's awareness on our daily impact upon other life forms. This is Ahimsa.

To the skeptical postmodernist, Ahimsa, is just ridiculous new age spirituality. To the affirmative postmodernist, Ahimsa is as critical as neo-Marxist theory about the destruction of other life forms by a predatory over-consuming human life style. To the critical postmodernist the point is to be aware of what spectacle sells to us all as the glorified path to happy selves, families, occupations, societies, and global living. To the new age postmodernist,

¹¹ Numbers refer to paragraph numbers in Guy Debord's *Society of the Spectacle* (1967). *La Société du Spectacle* was first published in 1967 by Editions, Buchet-Chastel (Paris); it was reprinted in 1971 by Champ Libre (Paris). The full text is available in English at <http://www.nothingness.org/SI/debord/index.html>

happiness comes from inside the person. To the spectacle follower happiness is to die with the most toys. To the skeptical postmodernist happiness is emancipation from systems of exploitation. In the society of the spectacle (Debord, 1967) we are socialized to reflect our happiness in our consumption patterns. In Ahimsa, we are happy if we do not injure another life by our production and consumption habits.

There is much contemporary spectacle mixed into the festival. For example, The Colorado Renaissance Festival advertises that for a price you and fifty guests can be part of a Royal Wedding. For just \$2,500 you can have the fairy tale wedding managed by expert wedding coordinators, complete with the melodious murmur of the King's bagpiper, escorting you to the newly refurbished Canterbury Chapel where you will be a player in an Elizabethan Wedding Ceremony. A King and Queen wedding feast follow this wedding. Costuming and wet bar are extra.

The Wedding and the Themed Weekends are parts of the postmodern form of festival. That is the customer, no longer a passive spectator, is made an active part of the performance, and gets certain designer privileges. In New Mexico there are numerous Renaissance Festivals where passive spectators stroll past the booths and view the crafts and performances. But, there are also the Themed Weekends, where folks, I know, dress in Elizabethan regalia, and become knights and peasants of the realm. Some of this is rather jeopardous, including raids on neighboring village-camps, and armed combat, but not to the death.

For a fee, a corporation can have their annual gathering at a Renaissance Festival. In this postmodern theatrics, the CEO can dress as a Friar, the managers can be Knights, secretaries can be ladies in waiting, and the rest, of course peasants and barbarians.

The Brussels International Fantasy Film Festival says "In here you'll find our most spectacular adventures (in music, in film, or even ...welcome in and find out for yourself)... we invite you to surf in the fantasy, thriller and science-Fiction corridor, for a trip on the x-files, make of coincidences, discussions, discoveries,

shouts, challenges and encounters with the illusion masters... ” The festivities include a vampire’s ball, but you must be in costume to be admitted.¹²

Postmodern festival, however, is something beyond festival appropriation by spectacle at the Super Mall or the Theme Park. It is a critique of the modern and late modern spectacle of consumption and production.

Postmodern Spectacle and Festival - In the postmodern, any line between festival and spectacle gets quite blurred. The 1998's Edinburgh Festival Fringe is a cyber-festival, filled with “frivolities and finito,” including festive chat rooms with comedy stars.¹³ The cybertech world affords us new art, new virtual forms of interaction, and new ways to live out our fantasies.

Festivals are succumbing to the postmodern condition of fragmentation. If we look briefly at festival history, there is a sense of increasing levels of fragmentation in the format and variety of festive offerings. On July 23, 1964, the first Meadow Brook Music Festival was held, featuring the Detroit Symphony Orchestra. The Meadow Brook Music Festival staged its first Ballet in 1968. The first laser show was Starship Encounters in 1978. The festival features choral company, ballet, and symphony music. In 1980 the types of music expanded to include Jazz. In 1982 there were Fourth of July fire works. 1984 saw performances of the Marine Band and blue Grass groups. In 1990, the festival included the nights of laser shows to attract a more family audience. In 1992, Dolly Parton and the Mormon Tabernacle Choir launched the Music Festival. 1993 saw a more diverse or fragmented schedule including "Bugs Bunny on Broadway," James Brown, Dwight Yoakum, 10,000 Maniacs, Peter Paul and Mary.

Some of the postmodern festivals have an activist agenda. For example, the Amnesty International Film Festival takes on a more activist role than most other film festivals. They actively deconstruct the rhetoric and propaganda of governments violating human rights by putting their reports side by side with the oppressor claims that there are no such violations.

¹² Source, <http://www.cinemaniacs.be/biff/angl/sommaire.htm>

¹³ Source, <http://www.comedyzone.beeb.com/edinburgh98/>

For example, in a site titled “Reality and Rhetoric” AI challenges the Tunisian Government for pretending to be an “Amnesty International” Official web site. In a prototypical critical postmodern move, AI juxtaposes the rhetoric of the Tunisia-Amnesty-International site with the reality of the human rights situation in Tunisia. “Instead of taking measures to stop the human rights violations and to improve the human rights situation in Tunisia the authorities continue to devote their efforts to trying to improve their human rights image” (AI web site). It is here, I think, that we see the downside of spectacle, the substitution of image management for actual change in manifest practices of exploitation. In a power move, the Tunisia authorities have been able to block their citizens from gaining out-of-country access to the AI web site which would present counter-claims to the official Tunisia web spectacle. AI, in its web site, offers a tour “to deconstruct the Amnesty-Tunisia website.” AI argues that “by showing the image and the reality together, visitors can see exactly where, how, and why the Tunisian authorities are deliberately misleading the public for their own gain.” This use of Derrida’s poststructuralist juxtaposition of two narrative perspectives is an important example of how to analyze spectacle. The AI analysis includes exploration of the original sources cited by Tunisian authorities.

Table One: Juxtaposition of Image and AI Deconstruction (Excerpts)

Amnesty-Tunisia Version	Amnesty International Deconstructions
<p>I - Civil and political rights</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 - The rule of law and the independence of the judiciary. 2 - Confirmation of democracy and pluralism 3 - Freedom of speech 4 - The right of association 5 - The right to freedom of movement 6 - Respect of the integrity of the individual and protection of the rights of prisoners <p>II – Economic/Social rights</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 - The right to education 2 - The right to health 3 - The right to a healthy environment 4 - The right to work 5 - Other social and economic indicators <p>III- Women’s Rights</p> <p>1 - RESTORATION OF PRESENTS</p> <p>Section 2/8 (new): Each of the fiancés is entitled to the restoration of the presents offered by the other, except in case of breach of promise or contrary provisions.</p> <p>The new text introduces the principle of reciprocity: Both the fiancé and the fiancée are entitled to restoration of presents, and not only the fiancé.</p> <p>Section 12 (new): The dowry may be composed of any licit good assessable in terms of money. It is the wife's property.</p> <p>The new text no requires that the amount be significant and the maximum unlimited. On the other hand, it stresses that the dowry is the exclusive property of the wife</p>	<p>The law was changed but the practice was not... detainees continue to be tortured during secret detention, often in the Ministry of Interior itself.</p> <p>The Vice President of the Tunisian Human Rights League is in prison for his human rights work. Khemias KSILA is in prison for his human rights work; some other leaders and members have been detained and others have been harassed and intimidated; several have had their passports confiscated.</p> <p>Since the end of 1990 thousands of detainees have been tortured and several have died under torture. Torture is routinely practiced in police stations and in the Ministry of the Interior itself.</p> <p>WOMEN – Over the last two years hundreds of women have been arbitrarily arrested in Tunisia. Scores have alleged they have been tortured or ill-treated, including sexual abuse and threats of rape, during incommunicado detention in the Ministry of the Interior and in police stations around the country. Most of those arrested were subsequently released without charge. Others were sentenced in unfair trials to terms of imprisonment of up to 18 months including charges of belonging to an unauthorized organization, holding illegal meetings, distributing leaflets and unauthorized collection of funds. Dozens have been imprisoned as prisoners of conscience...</p>

In these excerpts (Table One), the official codes of law and conduct and contrasted with actual cases of human rights violation.

Another type of activism is represented in the International CRÈCHE Festival. They present an interesting purpose:

Organizations in many nations are addressing the issue of the loss of biological diversity on this planet. Our organization attempts to speak to the loss of cultural diversity. We are attempting, in one small way, to help the folk artists of the world gain recognition of their arts and crafts and help them find a global market for their work at a fair price. If the folk artist cannot survive neither can the folk arts.¹⁴

They are also activists in that they prefer nativity scenes (the sacred) to Santa Claus arts and crafts (what they term the secular). This particular festival advocates that the artist receives a fair price for their labor. Other festivals and craft associations are not so equalitarian.

¹⁴ Source, <http://www.creche.org>