

MAYDAY 1971RAW

(66 minutes, 1971/2017)

Feel the fervor of 1970s utopian activism! Action-packed, emotionally-charged. 25 young indy filmmakers, with the earliest video cameras, cover the country's largest civil disobedience peace protests from inside. Authentic counter-program from the counter-culture. Rated R: Radical politics, Violence, Language.

<https://vimeo.com/ondemand/MAYDAY1971RAW>



David Cort, Videofreex/Mayday Video
photo Howard Epstein LNS

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In the few days before and after May Day in 1971, 50,000+ protesters from all over the country flooded into Washington DC for massive non-violent actions. Preceded in April by the Vietnam Vets Against the War Operation Dewey Canyon 3 demonstration and a peaceful anti-war march by 500,000 protesters, the Mayday Tribe's courageous civil disobedience strategy was to use the protesters' own bodies to block traffic in key downtown intersections as well as Federal buildings. The Mayday slogan: *If the government won't stop the war, we'll STOP THE GOVERNMENT.*

14,000 DC POLICE, NATIONAL PARK POLICE, NATIONAL GUARD, PARATROOPERS AND MARINES ARE MOBILIZED TO KEEP ORDER.



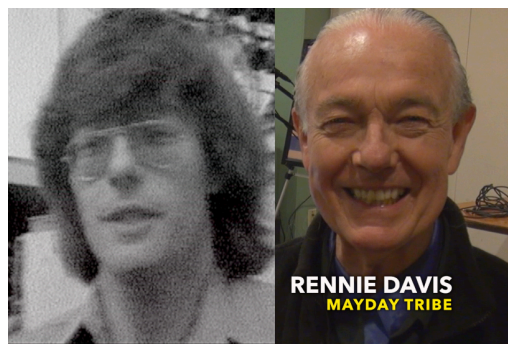
*Thousands of anti-war protesters
are here in the Capitol this morning.*



By Friday May 7, after 2 weeks of cd actions, there were 12,614 arrests (with some protesters arrested multiple times), including a record-setting 7000 arrests in one day on Monday May 3.

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RENNIE DAVIS
MAYDAY TRIBE



DR BENJAMIN SPOCK
PEDIATRICIAN / PEACE ACTIVIST

Without contemporary police-line press prohibitions and without self-consciousness in front of the newly-invented home video camera, the early indy video filmmakers bring viewers directly to the action: behind-the-scenes planning meetings, civil disobedience face-offs, Commie-baiting counter demonstrators, mass and personal arrests, chants, ecstatic dances, guitar- and Frisbee-playing in jail, and a protester even kisses DC Police officers. With a video verité style - black & white, no narrator, wide-angle lens, long takes, lots of moving camera - and fast-paced with many informational titles that provide context to contemporary audiences - the integrity and freshness of the eyewitness footage captivate the viewer.

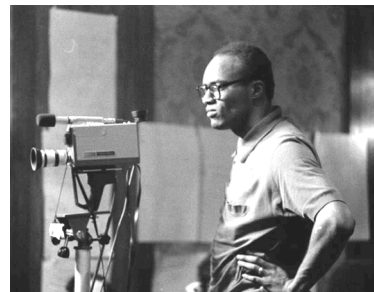


The Mayday Video crew, who joined together in DC at this mass event, with the radical politics and alternative culture of the early seventies, embody the free-living, consensus-based, collective spirit, but not without off-screen incidents, including the raw videotapes confiscated by one crew-member protesting the group's consensus editorial decisions. The video doc is credited to Mayday Video, which includes the infamous Videofreex from NYC, and many other early Indy media pioneers from NYC, Washington DC, Boston, Amherst MA, Yellow Springs OH, and Baltimore.

The 66-minute 21st Century edit was completed by Mayday Video / Videofreex member, award-winning filmmaker Skip Blumberg, with Eddie Becker and Joan Yoshiwara, to restore the original 1971 Mayday Video compilation, adding additional edited footage from restored original raw tapes, and informational titles for contemporary audiences.

Mayday Video pioneer
Vernard Gray 1971

preview screening 2015



In addition to the strong message of protest against the war in Vietnam, delineating the main tenets of the People's Peace Treaty, the movie articulates the wide range of other radical political and social issues of the time, such as feminism, economic discrimination, and LGBT, as well as unifying together around a common strategy for peace and collective living.

The historic early video exposes the issues of the last century that have total relevance to today. Besides being thought- and discussion-provoking, it is an energizing, spirited lift from current potential doldrums. The movie provides hope and direction for a positive future, with on-screen evidence that focused, productive popular activism leads to change.

Mayday Video pioneers Eddie Becker and Skip Blumberg at screening / discussion in DC.



CONTACT: info@Videofreex.com

Mayday Video crew and Rennie Davis are available for in-person appearances at public screenings/discussions.

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A Mayday Video and Videofreex presentation

producer, director, and editor: Skip Blumberg

contributing producer/editors: Eddie Becker, Joan Yoshiwara

graphics design: Ellen Kahn TwinArt

web strategy: Elizabeth Santeix amazon pixels

introduction: Rennie Davis

percussion: David Peel & the Lower East Side

featuring: interviews with Rennie Davis and Dr Benjamin Spock; the voices of Mayday Video camera journalists Eddie Becker, Joan Yoshiwara, Maurice "Jake" Jacobson, Parry Teasdale, David Cort, Bob Quinn, Roberto Faenza, Davidson Gigliotti, Grady Watts; and tens of thousands of brave protesters.

original 1971 documentary produced and edited by: Mayday Video

available at Videofreex Archive @ VDB.org

<https://vimeo.com/ondemand/MAYDAY1971RAW>