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'Hey Hey, Ho Ho, Those Old Protest Tactics Have to Go'

By **RANDAL C. ARCHIBOLD**

Published: June 13, 2004

When protesters descend on the Republican convention this summer, Christian Herold will be there with bells on. Then, he will ring them.

Mr. Herold has ordered hundreds of one-inch, gold-plated bells - the kind that could easily adorn a Christmas tree - that he plans to distribute to any takers. He will call participants in his Ring Out project to surround ground zero - as close as they can - and raise a cacophony to "ring out the Republicans" shortly before the convention opens on Aug. 30.

"The bell stands for different emotions - anger, alarm - and it's emblematic of the Liberty Bell," Mr. Herold, 47, said the other night as he and three companions readied dozens of bells to show at a meeting of protest groups.

Mr. Herold is hardly alone in making somewhat unorthodox plans to greet the Republicans, who will hold their convention for the first time in New York, from Aug. 30 to Sept. 2 at Madison Square Garden.

Luke Kuhn, 38, a self-described radical who lives near Washington, has sent out e-mail pleas seeking a suitable kiln to melt a brass ring, about the size of a large wedding band, inscribed with Bush Über Alles, at the start of the convention. Axis of Eve, a protest group formed in January to focus on women's rights, is selling underwear adorned with anti-Bush slogans and is organizing 100 women to flash them during the convention (The underwear will be worn over body suits or leotards to keep it legal.)

Zoe Strauss, a Philadelphia photographer, is urging people to wear red bandannas en masse as a symbol of protest and plans to bring 10,000 to the convention to hand out. Wendy Tremayne, a performance artist, is recruiting volunteers for a Vomitorium, a re-enactment of a Roman orgy that she plans to stage as a protest against imperialism, consumerism and gluttony.

Just what approach to take is debated among prospective demonstrators, in meetings and Internet chat groups, where calls to shut down the Republican gathering and confront the police are mixed with pleadings to march peacefully and in large numbers.

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Some organizers favor something in between, maybe not as confrontational as the anarchists' approach but an alternative to mass marches in which large groups, typically kept behind metal barricades, hold signs and chant familiar refrains: "Hey hey, ho ho (insert objectionable entity here) has got to go" and the like. Some 15 organizations have applied to the Police Department for permits for large street demonstrations just before or during the convention.

"There is an element among protesters who feel that classical tactics are stale," said Todd Gitlin, a professor of journalism and sociology at Columbia University who was a leader of antiwar protests in the 1960's and has studied protest movements. "I think it is built into the protest process that especially younger people come along and want to stake a claim to novelty."

That was part of the motivation for Axis of Eve, organized by a group of young women to get disaffected voters, particularly young women, excited about politics and the possibility of defeating [President Bush](#).

"We wanted to think of some unique, creative way to engage people in a different way, to reach out to people who weren't politically engaged," said Zazel Loven, 33, a founder of the group, who is known as Eve Angel. "I had been to marches but I wanted to go beyond that."

Street theater has long been a part of demonstrations. But along with the drumming and mask-making - and there is a group, Theater Against War, ready to help with that - some see a growing role for humorous, irreverent, thought-provoking ways to draw attention to their messages.

In apartments, over the Internet and, in the case of the Ring Out project, the back room of a West Village cafe, they are plotting.

"This brings up memories of the 60's when you saw this kind of thing all the time," said Joshua Spahn, a 49-year-old software programmer who is part of the Ring Out project. "I think it's an exciting new way to energize people. It piques people's curiosity rather than hit them over the head with a political message."

The organizational sophistication varies.

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