The Pie's the Limit

“It is better to pie on your feet than to live on your knees.”
– Emiliano ZaPieta

A phantom flan-flinger appears as if from nowhere and raises her arm. A pie flies through the air and meets its target – sploosh – followed rapidly by indignation, laughter, and a quick getaway. That night on the news the world discovers that the man in a suit with his face full of cream has been selling off old-growth forest / rewriting laws that don’t concern him / using sweatshop labour and so on, and that some cheeky bunch has pied him for it. The pie may not have changed the world, but the sheer nerve of the act has shed light on some shady corporate (or state) crimes, opened up space for discussion of related issues, and delivered just desserts to an unaccountable and powerful person.

How to deliver just desserts to the powerful:

Step 1: Pick a worthy target
Aim for someone infamous, whose crimes should be revealed, and don’t be afraid to think big. You may plot to pie someone for months, or spontaneously decide to do it the next day. Be sure you can clearly articulate the reasons for your choice, and carefully consider the level of security you are prepared to outsmart.

Step 2: Obtain a pie
According to market research, the best full-face coverage comes in the form of a coconut cream pie. Most pie throwers are in agreement that you shouldn’t use red filling, as it could be mistaken for blood. Vegan pies are less firm than those with eggs – a problem which results in less theatrical results, but may be worth it to make a political
statement. Give your pie an 
am name – Baked Alaska for a 
global warming villain, say.

Step 3: Disguise yourself
It doesn’t take an economist like 
Milton Friedman (pied in 1998) 
to figure out that if you attempt 
to enter a fancy hotel, you will 
draw less attention to yourself if 
you look like everyone else. If 
you shave, dress up, and keep 
your hair average, you can go 
anywhere. You can sneak your 
pie into the corridors of power 
concealed in a brown paper bag, 
or if it’s firm enough to go 
vertical, put a lid on it and carry 
it in a briefcase.

Step 4: Consider media
A key element of any pie 
launch is documentation. 

Because it’s difficult to pie 
while shooting video, it’s good 
to work with a friend or two. 
Expect not to be the only media 
present, and be ready to talk 
telligibly. This action is 
essentially one of public 
thatre – when the media come 
calling it’s good to have pithy 
soundbytes prepared to 
highlight your issue.

Step 5: Launch the attack
Some pie slingers work in 
teams. The splatting of Bill 
Gates was a masterful 
coordination of 30 individuals 
in groups of three, carrying a 
total of 25 pies. Multiple pies 
give you more than one chance 
to score a direct hit. However, 
some prefer to work solo, 
finding it more heroic and

Step 6: Consider the consequences
Expect shock and chaos. 
Anything can happen. Everyone 
may laugh and pretend that 
they are in on the joke, or 
security guards may attack 
violently, and have you arrested 
or detained. But once you are 
able to regroup with your allies, 
it’s crucial to celebrate.

Finally, remember that it 
doesn’t take special skills to toss 
a tart. Anyone with a pie and a 
vision of a better world can 
speak pie to power.

“Never doubt that a small and 
dedicated group of people with 
pies can change the world. 
Indeed, it is the only thing that 
ever has.”
– Subcomandante Tofutti, after 
Margaret Mead

Resources:
» For the latest in Pies: 
http://bioticbakingbrigade.org

Below: Renato Ruggiero, 
then Director-General of 
the WTO, pied. London 1999