

Breakout Festival the New Woodstock 99?

Mob mentality is a wild beast.

I have a feeling some of the partiers at the Breakout Festival had recently watched the Woodstock 99 documentary on Netflix.

Common sense and logic descended into chaos Sunday night at the PNE grounds after Lil Baby no-showed as the headliner of the festival. Fans were told around 9:15 pm that Lil Baby would not be performing the final set that was supposed to get started at 9:30 pm. What ensued could have been footage taken from Woodstock 99.



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After the news was delivered, immature fans started throwing garbage cans and rioting. Footage of the beer gardens and festival tents being rushed and destroyed has been posted online. It's a bad look for the event and community, unfortunately, led by a group who would rather destroy public property than accept the reality that their favourite act isn't going to perform.

How is it that destroying everything in sight is a path so many individuals elect to go down?

Music festivals seem to breed those kinds of situations. It was on full display during the recounting of events at Woodstock 99. Watching that extreme mob mentality spread across that festival from my couch was surreal. It was the ultimate “fly on the wall” sensation of watching something become unhinged that made the documentary so engaging. That was a very different situation and context than Breakout Festival of course, but the essence of any conduct like this is the same.

A mass of people on day three of a festival is a volatile bunch. If you have ever attended such an event you can relate to your mental state in those final hours. It can be a little touch-and-go (depending on how your weekend went).

Any festival goers who had seen Woodstock 99 were perhaps a little “over-prepared” for a violent outburst.