

Letters to the Editors

Various Authors

1967

To the Editor:

I thank Mr. Kofsky for calling me a major critical figure ["The Jazz Scene," FE #24, February 15–28, 1967].

I have the feeling that he has rarely read my *Voice* column because I have often written about the agonies of "abandoning my preconceptions and biases" about the new jazz. I have stated very clearly that I WAS biased but that I realized it and that I was trying to make contact with the new music.

I don't believe that the recording studios are run by white supremacy. I play only the jazz oriented record dates so I do not know the whole scene, but on these there are usually more Negroes than the percentage they are to the total population.

He says I am not fulfilling my responsibilities to jazz—words to that effect—and that I should use my power to better the scene. I believe the greatest compliment I receive—and modesty aside, I receive it often—is someone telling me, "You know, I'm not a jazz fan, but I always read your column." It seems to me jazz has to open up to these people, make them interested in the music—create, or recreate, the audience. That's the important thing and that's one thing I try to do. I love the music, and if I get this love across, on a human, personal, soulful level, I am succeeding.

The following is a quote from a column I wrote in the June 16th, 1966 issue of the *Village Voice*, a column Mr. Kofsky apparently has missed. "While much of the new jazz is insincere, and certainly not together, and the people who violently support it are often conforming non-conformists who don't see that the emperor really has no clothes on, I don't believe there is any choice but to go ahead with it.

We must trust in our own discriminations as to which is bad and which is good. I don't mean cutting off all roots, as some recommend. The past is valuable for its perspective and precious for its heritage. But unless we are open to explorers like Ornette Coleman, our roots will atrophy and we will spend our lives only waiting out our retirement. There is really no choice."

I warn Mr. Kofsky against the good-old American bad habit of pigeonholing, conveniently categorizing, oversimplifying. People are more complicated than he gives them credit for—at least I am.

If he asks "why the critics?", I ask "why the critic of the critics?"

Michael Zwerin,

Village Voice Jazz Columnist

To the Editor:

It is about time that the United States government be replaced with something It is based on what is good for the majority and what is good for the majority (at least what they think is good) is generally of a low, seedy, and smelly nature.

Communism, fascism, socialism, democracy, and all systems which thrive on lumping people together and treating them as a mass cannot do much for the individual.

The Bill of Individual Rights should not be tacked on to our constitution as an afterthought, but should form the main body of it, from which everything else springs. If anything, a Bill of Mass Rights should be tacked on.

All forms of censorship, including drug censorship, are immoral in that they take away individual responsibility. The F C C should be done away with as a censoring body; a person should be able to make up his own mind as to what he wants to watch on TV. No one is forcing the prudes to watch films like FLAMING CREATURES ["Police Burn 'Flaming Creatures,'" FE #23, February 1–15, 1967]; they should not be allowed to prevent others from seeing it.

Sincerely,
Charles Widen
Detroit

To the Editor:

Your article, "Fifth Estate Obscene?" [FE #24, February 15–28, 1967], is one of the growing exposures of the devious practices of that "Defender of the Public Morals," the Post Office, uses in its futile attempt to keep the world safe from intellectual freedom and back in the Dark Ages.

The Post Office, honest as usual, invited you down to their home ground, safe for them—better yet -sterile, to "discuss a new bulk rate" for the paper. This is the same honesty the Post Office shows when it opens "sacred" private mail. One wonders where this will culminate—in a mindless 1984 society or in a society where intellectual freedom will win out, led by a courageous few?

In regards to "The Great Reefer Raid," better hide your aspirins. Warner Stringfellow may buck for desk sergeant and seize them next.

Larry M. Kunick
Marquette

To the Editor:

It might interest you to know that some people have been paying for their copies of the FIFTH ESTATE here at Oakland Univ. by putting Trojans in the slot where dimes are supposed to be. Is this significant? Are we supposed to share the Trojans with you?

Lee Elbinger
Rochester, Mich.

Dear Fifth Estate:

I am announcing the Messiah's World Crusade to be launched from San Francisco this summer. Arrangements are being made to have the largest happening in Golden Gate Park this Summer, that this world has ever seen.

The main theme will be to bring in the New Order For The Ages, which is the same as the Kingdom of God; long prophesied to come. "And this is the time of the IDEA whose time has come and cannot be stopped.

We shall unite the SOLDIERS of the world by getting an agreement with all of them that if they are forced into battle, they are to join hands and keep the peace. They will stand by till the workers have tied up the money changers by carrying out a world wide buyers strike. Yet we shall not let our economy, lousy as it is, break down; and we shall keep the necessary services and supplies going, but otherwise stop the wheels all over the world.

The warning shall prevail right up to the END of this old dying order; because the war is but a negative world condition dissipating itself. And men must stop being cowards and obeying jackasses who believe there is an enemy.

The spirit (COSMOS) is cleansing the world and preparing it for our long awaited New Age.
Spread the "GREAT NEWS."

Allen

60 Webster

San Francisco 94117

To the Editor:

Those right wing alternatives on the present draft system can go to Hell for all I care. They're supposed to be fair, but man, the only really fair alternative to the present system would be total abolition of the atrocity. It is not fair for any man to have to go to war, any war, against his will. The theory that every male should serve in the military is pure inhumanitarian fascism.

In the 15-28 Feb. FIFTH ESTATE you had an ad for a motion picture called HALLUCINATION GENERATION. If you've already seen it, then there's not much that can be done, but if you haven't, don't.

It's one of those stupid "put down" jobs scoring on both psychedelics and the "Bohemian" way of life in typical middle class style. I'm getting sick of all those propaganda cinematic BSs telling us that living as one wants is going to inevitably lead to nothing but sorrow. I prefer seeing motion pictures that show how psychedelics, sex, and Bohemianism can bring happiness, rather than all this phony middle class propaganda saying that conformity is the true key to salvation.

Dave Szurek

Detroit

fifth Estate

Various Authors
Letters to the Editors
1967

<https://www.fiftheastate.org/archive/26-march-15-31-1967/letters-to-the-editors>
Fifth Estate #26, March 15-31, 1967

fiftheastate.anarchistlibraries.net