

# Letters to the Fifth Estate

Fifth Estate Collective

1995

## Fifth Estate Letters Policy

The Fifth Estate always welcomes letters commenting on our articles, stating opinions, or giving reports of events in local areas. We don't guarantee we will print everything we receive, but all letters are read by our staff and considered.

Typed letters or ones on disk are appreciated, but not required.

Length should not exceed two double-spaced pages. If you are interested in writing a longer response, please contact us.

## Hermetic Selfishness

Dear FE:

I'm a bit weary of responding to "critics" of my work who have not bothered to read it. In your last ish, Jack Straw speaks of a "do your own thing / create your own island of happiness' defeatism which has doomed past movements" [Letters, FE #344, Summer, 1994]. He adds that "Hakim Bey may support such goals, but bolo' bolo does not."

First, it would be interesting to hear which movements were doomed as opposed to which movements were successful!

Second, if he had looked at my book, T.A.Z, before assuming he grasps my position, he would have found that I agree with bolo'bolo about the need for simultaneous realization of "global transformation" (as Jack puts it) and "island of happiness" realization. I discuss the dangers of hermetic selfishness in the TAZ (which might also be called a "proto-bolo"), & point out that without the insurrection (or at least the oppositional struggle) the TAZ serves no great liberatory goals (although "happiness" is not to be despised, & might even be considered somewhat "revolutionary" compared to the institutionalized immiseration of Babylon).

I use the word "insurrection" by preference rather than "Revolution" because in my view "The" Revolution has always ended in betrayal & further oppression. "The" Revolution deserves our profound distrust, inasmuch as it has always ended in nothing more than a (re)turn of the crank of oppression. "The" Revolution demands martyrdom, endless sacrifice, unhappiness, and submission—all in the name of a future happiness that is indefinitely postponed.

The point which both I and "P.M." [author of bolo'bolo] have tried to make is that unless we learn how to practice "happiness" there will never be a "revolution" in our sense of the word; and in fact we must practice happiness & revolution simultaneously in order for either term to have any meaning. I also make the point that the insurrection is a TAZ, or a logical extension of the TAZ, because the insurrection is (already) an "island of happiness"—a

celebration—as well as a form of war. In fact, until the reaction & repression sets in, the insurrection is really the only complete version of the TAZ.

Finally, I don't "support" the TAZ as a "goal." I believe that the TAZ exists already; people will construct their "islands of happiness" whether the "Revolutionaries" approve or not. My goal is to give the TAZ a political theory, a consciousness of its own existence and meaning, and an insurrectionary purpose. "The" Revolution has already been betrayed by "History"—or vice versa. Some folks are weary of waiting for permission from the commissars to be "happy." Long live the temporary autonomous zone; long live the insurrection.

wa salaam,  
Hakim Bey  
New York City

## Don't Wait For Nature

Dear FE:

It was great to receive the Summer 1994 paper in the mail and to dive right in. Thank you for your collective work and commitment to producing such a consistently great paper, even in the face of "daily life." As a fellow publisher who has "graduated" to desktop publishing, my lack of time for doing this work has hardly decreased from the days of character counting and hand setting type, errors and all.

While it would be nice to believe that "Nature" is striking back as Jack Straw titled his article, [FE #344, Summer, 1994] I think our civilization brings much of this climatic adversity (by human standards, to be sure) upon ourselves. While Jack hardly says otherwise, too often I witness assumptions that "Nature" is going to confront the leviathan for us, and whatever we do, civilization inevitably will decline and die.

We should not discount our collective/slave abilities towards fueling the machine ad infinitum. While Adam Bregman, in his account of the L.A. earthquake notes the increasing resemblance of his locale with Third World cities, as a long time inhabitant of one, the staying power of them cannot be underestimated [FE #344, Summer, 1994].

I do agree, however, with Adam's desire to stay put. Still, sticking it out among the millions of other unfortunates who have little choice in the matter sounds resigned. The place that I reside has been falling down for sometime now and at times the "unfortunates" have risen up and recaptured their humanity, even in the midst of the old and decay.

I surely hope Adam is community-building now whatever earth shaking is going on. I'm not going to wait for the collapse of capital or for the next hurricane to wipe the slate clean. Jack Straw's closing is quite apt: "The more we wait, the deeper the hole we will find ourselves in."

In Solidarity,  
Brad Ott  
POB 71221  
New Orleans LA 70172

**FE Note:** Brad publishes *Dialogue in NOLA* which combines anarchist sensibilities with local issues. Send a few stamps for a sample.

## A Real Rush

Dear Fifth Estate

Reading the Summer '93 FE was a real rush [FE #342, Summer, 1993]. The color on the cover and in the centerfold brought back a bit of the ambiance of the underground papers of 25 years ago.

It was truly refreshing to read the Jack Straw ["Has Booze Brought the Blues? Psychedelics and Human Consciousness"] and E.B. Maple ["Will Marijuana Save World Capitalism?: Hemp to the rescue"] articles on

psychedelics. The social importance of sacramental visionary plants in human prehistory, and its relevance to our present dilemma, is an issue of vital importance.

Terrence McKenna and others theorize that our ancestors lived for millions of years in a non-hierarchical “partnership” culture, characterized by a pastoral, nomadic lifestyle, a gatherer-hunter economy and a primarily vegetarian diet; nature was personified as a “goddess” and worshipped with the aid of psychedelic plants in ecstatic rites and orgiastic communion. Then, around 12,000 years ago, this way of life was gradually replaced by a “dominator” culture, characterized by agriculture, urbanization, patriarchal authority, a slave-labor based economy, a diet based on animal flesh, and alcohol drinking; goddess worship was replaced by the cult of the authoritarian male deity with sacrificial rituals and death/resurrection myths.

The dominator culture developed into “the family, private property, the State, war, industrialism and ecocidal technology. (McKenna outlines these ideas in *The Food Of The Gods*, cited by Jack Straw in his article; another good source of McKenna’s thought is *History Ends In Green: Gaia, Psychedelics and The Archaic Revival*, a 7 1/2-hour audio tape set, available from Mystic Fire Video, P.O. Box 1092, Cooper Station, NYC 10276.)

By the “archaic revival” McKenna refers to a re-awakening of the pre-industrial “partnership” lifestyle, a world-wide rejection of “dominator” values. (The terms “partnership” and “dominator” were introduced by Riane Eisler in *The Chalice and The Blade*.) While he doesn’t use the terms “anarchism” or “social revolution,” there is a clear connection between McKenna’s vision and that of Kropotkin, Goldman, Berkman, et al. And psychedelics are found by many who sample them to awaken a sort of “genetic memory” of the long prehistoric partnership-based “dream-time,” along with fantasies of a similar post-historic future.

Psychedelics can liberate the creative imagination and flood the mind with alternative possibilities, breaking the hypnotic strait-jacket of social conditioning. They are “anti-brainwashing agents,” as Timothy Leary said in his 1967 book *The Politics of Ecstasy*. The social-revolutionary values of psychedelics are aptly described by E.B. Maple’s statement: “...psychedelic tripping and stoned states could aid in the subversive deconstruction of loyalty to capital’s ‘death culture’...”

It’s clear that this is the real motivation behind the State’s “war on drugs,” the real reason that I and hundreds of thousands of others are rotting in prison cells for using psychedelics. The State sees its own demise reflected back from the dilated pupils of the psychedelic vision. The counter-culture of the 1960s threw the ruling class into a panic, and they began to refocus their machineries of repression, turning the sights of military force from Capital’s colonies in the third world and bringing them to bear on the internal colonies, communities of color and the counter-cultures.

Now, after repeated rounds of escalation of this war against the minds and hearts of the Empire’s own subjects, Amerikkka resembles a fascist state more than ever before: kops invade and trash private homes at will; the State appropriates the homes and assets of drug prisoners under “forfeiture”, there are more than 1.3 million people in the U.S. Gulags, a larger percentage of the population than in any other nation; and Bill “I didn’t inhale” Clinton, the first “Baby-Boomer” President, is asking Congress to authorize the call-up of the National Guard to police the streets of Washington DC.

References to the “psychedelic revolution” of the ‘60s tend to be in the past tense in the U.S. media and even in the underground press. I don’t think that’s right. The ‘60s movement was just the first skirmish, the opening bugle-notes of the new era. The revolutionary power of psychedelics can’t be swept Under the rug; the light is too bright to hide. Despite the dominant culture’s claims to the contrary, the psychedelic subculture has survived as a vital subterranean current.

The “war on drugs” is ultimately as futile an effort as the catholic church’s attempts to quell the Renaissance and the Copernican revolution. Despite the co-optation of the trappings of psychedelia by the Kapitalist Konsumer Kul-ture; despite the iron fist of the Amerikkkan police state; despite kops in the public schools lecturing third-graders about the evils of drugs and “this is your brain on drugs” fried egg commercials on TV; despite the imprisonment of half a million drug users and Drug czar Bennett’s blatant threat about “decapitating” them in a Nazi-like “final solution” to the drug problem—the people are getting high, and it’s opening their eyes.

Surveys indicate that LSD and psilocybin are once again becoming drugs of choice on high school and college campuses, and LSD “rave” parties are blossoming on the West Coast. The Grateful Dead are still playing, and the

Rainbow Family of Living Light still gathers each summer in the national forests to recapitulate the archaic partnership culture and precipitate the worldwide social revolution.

John Sinclair's essay "Marijuana Revolution," referred to in Maple's article, is at least as relevant today as when it was written in 1971. (Incidentally, its being reprinted in the *Psychedelic Prisoners Newsletter* #3, which is currently being mailed out as funds for postage accumulate. To get a copy, send a 52 cent SASE to PPN, 107 Tall Trees Ct., Frankfort, KY 40601. And please send an extra donation if you can; this zine is being produced solely by prisoners and recent parolees, who are about as penniless as you can get.)

I think Maple is a bit naive in discounting the possibility that the documented covert government involvement in heroin and cocaine trafficking has a conscious political purpose. These powerful consciousness-contracting, addictive drugs tend, like alcohol, to support the dominant authoritarian/ capitalist paradigm, reinforcing entrancement in the consumer culture, displacing potentially revolutionary social energies and creating a fluently profitable market. Can it be that the CIA, military and corporate think-tanks are not aware of this?

Maple's comments about the pro-capitalist line taken by many hemp activists is much appreciated. However, there is another side to this story. The primary initial reason for corporate Amerikkka's war against hemp in the 1930s was the fact that hemp products, having an ancient history of traditional use, are in the public domain; they cannot be controlled by exclusive patents. Thus they threatened the corporate monopolies.

Hemp is ideally suited for a pendulum swing away from centralized mega-industry, toward home-based crafts, rural economy and self-sufficiency. A hemp-powered homestead (hempstead) could supply much of its own survival needs directly from the soil, with minimal need of capitalist/industrial intermediaries. For these reasons, I think the hemp plant is in itself a critique of corporate monopoly capitalism.

Dale R. Godwin #91-B-0209  
Elmira Correctional Facility  
P.O. Box 500  
Elmira NY 14902

## Merely Imitating

To the FE:

We will try not to be stern or overbearing in our critique of a sentence written by E.B. Maple in response to a letter concerning Israel and possible anti-Semitism [Letters, FE #344, Summer, 1994]. In referring to Israel, E.B. Maple states: "No other Western country executes children and others for throwing rocks, nor could one do so with the impunity Israel does." Israel is merely employing techniques England has employed for centuries worldwide and continues to employ today in the North of Ireland.

We will be happy to supply FE with the names of Irish children executed by the British Army in Ireland since the early-1970s for merely existing at a certain place in time. Your readers are welcome to read about the names in *Ireland: the Propaganda War* by Liz Curtis, Pluto Press, 1984.

Indonesia is another example. Western nations, such as the USA, England, Australia, supplied the weapons used by the Indonesian Army who fired upon the unarmed Timorese people, children included, during a peaceful demonstration in 1991.

We of Imperial America will long remember the young Americans executed at Kent State in May 1970 by the Ohio National Guard. We who remember will know Republican Gov. James Rhodes of Ohio took a nod and a wink from a President of the same party—a command to murder the young by the Chief Executive.

Although our acquaintance with the FE is short, we see no evidence of anti-Semitism, yet it is worth remembering that Israeli-style fascism has been the norm in your average Western liberal democracy since the inception of the nation-state. In fact, as a new state less than a half-century old, Israel can be said to be merely imitating its onetime and present imperial masters. Who drew the lines in the sand that is now known as Israel?

Grace and Mike Hogan  
Amsterdam, Holland

## Knee jerk Anti-Semite?

Dear FE:

In his Summer 1994 FE response to Andrew Wertheimer [Letters, FE #344, Summer, 1994], E.B. Maple fails to respond to a fundamental question. What rights are Palestinians who are living under Israeli domination missing that they or other Arabs have in any of the independent Arab nations? If Maple can respond to this, then perhaps I can take him seriously.

Maple compares the razing of buildings, in which the people have been moved, to the razing of whole towns with the people in them. At best Maple is guilty of extreme knee-jerkism, at worst he is an anti-Semite of the worst order!

Maple asks in what Western country do soldiers shoot at people throwing stones at them? The answer is in all. Has he forgotten Kent State? How about Jackson Campus of Ol' Miss?

Let Maple throw stones at armed soldiers or cops in this country today and see what will happen. Much worse if he is a black male between 15 and 40.

We have a right to expect more objectivity from the Anarchist Press.

Jacob Feuerwerker #A187402

Box 901

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Leavittsburg OH 44430

**Maple responds:** Feuerwerker's letter seems more evidence of the blind spot toward Israel that certain anarchists maintain rather than anything furthering an understanding of the issues at hand. When a reader of the FE continues to suggest anti-Semitism on the part of our paper or myself after our articles and answers to letters which have preceded his, the situation seems hopeless in terms of overcoming ideological/ cultural/ethnic blinders.

However, Feuerwerker and the Hogans are correct: all governments are either currently murderous, have been in past, or will be so at any moment when the state feels the need to protect itself. Massacres of civilians or youth in the Third World such as those in East Timor or recent ones in Liberia, Sudan and Angola are routinely ignored until they reach the magnitude of those in Rwanda. Nothing like that occurs in Western countries. My point was that the deaths of hundreds of Palestinian youths during the Intifada were scarcely mentioned in the U.S. press and, as an ally, Israel got a free ride compared to the world outrage that accompanied the murder of the Kent State students 25 years ago.

Deaths in Northern Ireland at the hands of the British army, despicable as they are, come nowhere near in number to the death rate of Palestinians under the age of 18 killed by the Israelis. The fact was that there was little or no outrage on the part of liberals (and apparently some anarchists) to the killings.

Regarding the question of Palestinian/ Israeli peace, both sides have outdone themselves recently in the terms we laid out in the original FE article. Arafat's cops, who now keep order in the Gaza bantustan, carried out a massacre of their Hamas rivals in mid-November. The settlers of the West Bank, for their part, always quick to show their rich appreciation for all humanity, have erected a permanent monument at the Qiryat Arba grave site of Baruch Goldstein, the berserk settler who shot to death 29 unarmed Palestinians as they prayed in Feb. 1994.

## Cobwebs for the Rich

Dear Fifth Estate:

I spotted a factual error and a point of intellectual interest in the Summer 1994 issue. The front page graphic for "Insurgent Mexico" by T. Fulano is not a work by Juan Posada. It has been attributed to him, but scholarly research has shown it to be the work of an anonymous creator.

"American Guns," by Rob Riled with E.B. Maple [FE #344, Summer, 1994] stated that, "Balzac said laws are cobwebs for the rich and chains for the poor..." I don't know where Balzac penned this sentiment. It sounds very similar to Pierre-Joseph Proudhon's, "Laws! People know what they are and what they are worth. Cobwebs for the powerful

and rich, chains that no sword can break for the weak and the poor, fishing nets stretched between the hands of the government” (*General Idea of the Revolution*).

Keep Creating,  
Will Petry  
Williston Park NY

**FE Note/Reply:** Norman Nawrocki of Montreal’s Rhythm Activism band called us regarding the question of who drew what is known as the Calavera zapatista, representing Zapata or one of his followers. The Dover text, *Posada’s Popular Mexican Prints*, edited by Berdecio and Appelbaum, states under the reproduction of the graphic: “[A] well-known print long considered Posada’s, although almost certainly not by him.”

The always obstinate T. Fulano, author of the article, wrote us a note after being informed of the controversy saying: “Sorry, not proof, but an assertion. Why should we believe these gentlemen? What is their evidence?”

He also sent photocopies from Rafael Carrillo’s *Posada y el grabado mexicano* (Posada and Mexican Engraving, Mexico City: Panorama Editorial, 1983), which shows the woodcut as “attributed to Posada, 1913,” without any qualifications. Fulano argues that because this handsome paperback book was purchased at a small stand at the Insurgentes Metro Station in Mexico City, it has more credibility. Any more opinions or evidence on this thorny archival debate?

**E.B. Maple replies:** I can’t find the source for my “Balzac” quote, having taken it from memory. It certainly does sound like the Proudhon quote Will cites, but can anyone find it in Balzac? We looked in one quote sourcebook without any luck.

## Take A Look

Dear FE:

With Murray Bookchin reverting to the old leftist days of his early C.P. youth; Dimitri Rousouplous of Montreal’s Black Rose Books being essentially leftist (FE Note: and running for political office); Social Anarchism tout-ing “rights,” “stewardship,” “community organizing” and “empowerment:” with Anarchy’s anti-feminist, rational individualism, hiding behind rights of expression so their male power and privilege can be affirmed sexually at the expense of women and children; with the 19<sup>th</sup> century enlightenment philosophy (individualist rationalist), with a failure to see how the local truths of postmodernism fit with a communitarian anarchism, anarchism is in a sorry state in the U.S.

Your anti-civilization, primitivist critique also seems narrow; it’s not tech that is archist per se, but power-centered technology. Michael Ziesing, of Lysander Spooner publishers, sent you a copy of my book, *The Political Consciousness*, for review. It addresses all these issues in a new, constructive way.

Take a look at it. Review it. Tell me what you think.

Wendell Bradley  
Edgewood IA

**FE reply:** We don’t remember seeing your book, but many come through our office. Our apologies to you and Michael if we have ignored it.

However, if it contains the tired, oft refuted premise about technology you stated in your letter, it probably doesn’t suggest “a new, constructive way” of administering industrialism. Marxists also contend the means of production bear the stamp of the class in power rather than seeing the techno/ industrial/petro/chemical grid itself is the locus of domination.

Tell us how you can run steel mills, the basis of industrialism, without them being “power-centered.” Even Bookchin couldn’t figure that out in his Post-Scarcity Anarchy.

## Off The Grid

Dear Molly Maquires:

I'm a little late in getting around to it, but I saw your letter in FE #342, Summer 1993 and thought you'd be interested in what I've been up to.

I've purchased 103 acres of former ranchland, kicked out the cows and have been working to rehabilitate the land from the effects of grazing for the benefit of the indigenous species. I've also been seeking to establish this as a place where people, mainly student eco-activists, could come to see an example of how life could be lived in accord with something other than the mainstream value system.

I live off of the utility grid in a house that cost me \$500 to build. I've built a shower and a solar oven from salvaged materials and am planning to build a human-powered washing machine, food dryer, etc. I'm able to live comfortably on an income beneath that which is taxed by the federal government, even while paying for this land.

I was inspired to do this for the land by a guy I met who has been working over the last 15 years to rehabilitate 80 acres of what was once redwood forest, but was clearcut. I've heard from a few others who claim to be doing similar things on their own land. Just a few, but maybe the idea will spread.

Tim Haugen  
POB 81  
Gulnare CO 81042

## Eternal Regret

Dear F.E.:

I believe a misprint occurred in George Bradford's "Vietnam: We Will Never Forget, We Will Never Forgive" (see FE #344, Summer, 1994). My research says that rather than 14,305,000 refugees caused by the war (as Bradford states the figure), that figure was really total casualties, both dead and wounded. The three million Indochinese left wounded, according to Bradford, does not make sense. That three million would be fatalities. I think dead to wounded in warfare are considered to run at a ratio of one to four, generally. Otherwise, his article was superb!

Please send me the FEs with "The Collapse of the Armed Forces" (Winter '90-'91), "The Lessons of Vietnam" (Spring '91, plus Bradford's "Looking Back on the Vietnam War" (Spring '85) and "The Land: Vietnam's Untold Victim" (Summer '85).

From one who was there, to my eternal regret,  
J.D. Williamson  
Clackamas OR

**George Bradford replies:** Thanks for your praise. I went back to some of my sources to look up the figures of the U.S. holocaust in Southeast Asia (a horrid undertaking, when you consider it). According to the Nov.-Dec. 1982 *Indochina Newsletter*, 1,921,000 Vietnamese, 200,000 Cambodians (1969-1973), and 100,000 Laotians (1964-1973) were killed in the war. My calculation of "two to four million Indochinese" is thus high; I have seen the figure elsewhere, but I can't find the source.

The number of Cambodians slaughtered after the war by the maoist Khmer Rouge is controversial, but whatever it turns out to be, partial blame at the very least is to be laid at the feet of the U.S., which pulverized Cambodian society and paved the way for the Khmer Rouge, later giving them material aid. Those calculations would raise the figure considerably.

The figures for wounded and refugees are also from The Indochina Newsletter.

Most of my statistics were taken from a footnoted compilation in *The Nation*, so I don't have the address of *The Indochina Newsletter*, but we will publish it in the FE if someone can let us know what it is. All the issues of the FE mentioned above are available through our book service for \$2 each.

Recently, by the way, two very worthwhile articles have been published that discuss the issue of the comparative suffering of Americans and Vietnamese. In "Searching for Vietnam's M.I.A.s," (*The Nation*, November 14, 1992), Michael Uhl relates his recent return to Vietnam, arguing that the Vietnamese authorities have cooperated with the U.S. in seeking U.S. soldiers' remains was done to help the U.S. state save face with patriotic pressure groups here.

The Vietnamese understand that intransigence on this issue, as justified as it would be, will lead to an impasse in normalization and the potential for trade and aid. Uhl notes that this policy has ‘tended to fuel expectations and resentments in Vietnam among the families of the hundreds of thousands of missing victims of the U.S. invasion, who haven’t had the access to the “intensive, multimillion-dollar high-tech campaign” to recover their own dead.

Even Pentagon officials are now starting to recognize the need for Vietnamese leaders to save face, and have been engaged in some low-level cooperation. The Vietnam Veterans of America has called on vets here to relinquish battlefield souvenirs that might aid the Vietnamese in identifying their M.I.A.s, all of which, as Uhl notes, “considering the enormity of the problem, [is] largely symbolic.”

The other piece, by novelist and Vietnam veteran Tim O’Brien in *The New York Times Magazine* (October 2, 1994), discusses the disparity in suffering in terms that are unusual in the country, especially in a ruling class publication. In his essay, “Back to My Lai: A Fractured Love Story,” O’Brien (who was in the area of My Lai after the massacre and before the revelations had come out), writes about his return to Vietnam in a tortured, even grotesque narrative that mixes in his guilt and rage at what the war did to the Vietnamese with self-pity, his severe depression, the misguided need for love and approval that brought him to the war, his wreck of a love relationship with a woman younger than he who is too young to remember the war at all.

It’s uncomfortable reading, to be sure, but satisfying to see him talk, in the newspaper of record, in lines that may be read by those too young to remember (or those too far gone to admit the truth), of the “perverse and outrageous double standard” in the matter of relative suffering.

“What if things were reversed?” O’Brien asks. “What if the Vietnamese were to ask us, or to require us, to locate and identify each of their own M.I.A.s? Numbers alone make it impossible: 100,000 is a conservative estimate. Maybe double that. Maybe triple. From my own sliver of experience—one year at war, one set of eyes—I can testify to the lasting anonymity of a great many Vietnamese dead. I watched napalm turn villages into ovens. I watched burials by bulldozer. I watched bodies being flung into trucks, dumped into wells, used for target practice, stacked up and burned like cordwood.”

“Even in the abstract,” he continues, “I get angry at the stunning, almost cartoonish narcissism of American policy on this issue. I get angrier yet at the narcissism of an American public that embraces and breathes life into the policy—so arrogant, so ignorant, so self-righteous, so wanting in the most fundamental qualities of sympathy and fairness and mutuality.”

None of the patriotic cant gets by O’Brien, who confesses that he went to war, even though he knew it was wrong, because of his inability to bear the consequences of rejection by family, friends and country—one of the many bad things he’s done for love, he explains (weirdly and painfully conflating the war and his personal failures). “I was a coward,” he writes. “I went to Vietnam.” This is the kind of honesty this country needs; there is far too little of it. I strongly recommend this article.

## From the Slough

Dear George Bradford and FE:

I’ve just read the latest number (Summer 1994 FE) and thought to take the occasion to send you a note from the slough of despond. I still find no grounds for “final victory” but you do help to keep the ember of desire for “right action” alive. Once again, my appreciation for tenacity and skills.

I find your work to be an extraordinary mix of erudition and passion—of reason, intuition and imagination. I still respect logic and the facts (as we are able to know them) as well as precision and elegance of expression. I suppose the deconstructionists would say I’m embedded in Western Thought; but, to me, the lyrical heights you achieve on occasion show that even White Man Thinking can transcend the limits of the given. It’s an unnecessarily hard way to go, but we must start from where we are. Pretending that one of us can think like an Indio in the forest primeval is far easier and more self-gratifying—it’s also a delusion.

Hear this when the “militants” (reference J. Camatte) and de-cons criticize your “academic” style. Regarding the de-cons (pronounce: deacons): replacing the old-fashioned dogmas of Marx with the newfangled dogmas of Foucault is yet another example of left wing intellectuals progressing in circles.



Some critical remarks on recent FE controversies. I'm non-plussed by the terms and tone around Queer Anarchy. The recurring theme of idealized androgyny I've found to be reductionist in the extreme—utopian thinking at best and ideological “p.c.” at worst. Its implications remind me of the compulsory “sexually correct” practices of the Weather Underground gangsters in the late 1960s-early 1970s.

My view is simple: consent always, compulsion never...otherwise, it's “as you like it.” To speculate on whether there will be transvestism or sadomasochism or exclusive heterosexuality After the Revolution is, as they would say at *Telos*, “highly problematic.” All this furor over assertions that “my way is better than yours” and complaints of non-recognition and disrespect should never be wrapped up, that is to say, covered up, in theoretical dress. Try saying “you and me” instead of “us and them.”

I want to briefly touch on the circle-A brand dogma of atheism. If you've found a means of logically or scientifically proving the existence of god(s), please let me know immediately ! (See “Tales from the Planet.” FE #344, Summer, 1994).

The FE seems to respect the spiritual beliefs of aboriginal peoples and worship of the Living God(dess) Gaia by ecofeminists. Is that not “religion”? While I agree that it is important to clearly delineate the malevolent nature of the Catholic Church, Christian Coalition, Islamic Jihad, ad nauseum, it's equally important to be able to distinguish between, say Archbishop Romero and JP2. Personally I'm agnostic, which by the way means “can't know” rather than “don't know.”

Beliefs and practices on the subject of spirituality, like those of sexuality, should be accepted rather than merely tolerated (to say nothing of actual suppression) out of respect for the principle of personal autonomy. Finally, I think it very unreasonable to blame poor old Jesus for “Christianity.” The best discussion of the “real Jesus” in my opinion is Mumford's essay in his *Interpretations and Forecasts*.

Nit-picking on style and grammar: the word “commie” has a very bad history, besides being, well, vulgar. “Red nazis” is historically inaccurate—they're “red fascists.” I prefer the terms “so-called communists” and “Leninist gangsters.” And please tell Mr. Venom (see “Nixon Kicks Bucket”) that while pictures are hung, people are hanged. Enclosed babylon monetary units for prisoners' subscription fund. Yours for the big onion,

J. McCoy  
Seattle WA



Fifth Estate Collective  
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