

Letters to the *Fifth Estate*

Various Authors

2008

The *Fifth Estate* encourages letters commenting on our articles, raising issues we haven't presented, or reports from your area. Although we live in a digital age and comments in Microsoft Word are the most convenient for us, all formats are welcome, including type- and handwritten ones.

We read them all, but we can't promise every letter will be published and some may be edited for length, grammar and punctuation.

To the Fifth Estate:

I thought The End of The World (FE Halloween 2007) issue was terrific. The piece on the Left Behind series by Claire P. Curtis "...And I feel fine: Violence at the End of the World," was very informative, not only in explaining what these books were about, but showing the (nefarious) basis of their appeal.

By contextualizing the books amid other post-apocalyptic narratives, she gave me a better idea of how to situate the writing. I found especially interesting, although difficult to interpret, the point that most readers are Southern white women. (I think that was her point, although it may have been those were three separate groups of readers: Southerners, whites, and women.)

If it is the former, then I'm surprised there are so many of them as to make these books such best sellers. I would also wonder why such a group is particularly attracted, due to their place in the economy, to this brand of evangelism.

The violence angle would seem to make them more attractive to underemployed white males, the type that Susan Faludi in *Backlash* distinguishes as making up the ranks of the anti-abortion leadership.

Could it be that the inverted logic that Curtis finds in the Left Behind books — that the true Christians have already been raptured when the books open and so the only people left are stray lambs that have sinned but may be on the road to redemption — gives female readers license to view the carnage as distanced from them in a way male readers would not need?

Jim Feast
New York City

To our readers:

When you add a donation to our prisoner/GI fund with your subscription, it often has an impact beyond one's expectation. See the letters below:

Dear Comrades:

Greetings from the Texas gulag! I recently received an old copy (Spring 2005) of your excellent magazine from an Austin Books for Prisoners program. I have considered myself to be an anarchist/anti-authoritarian for many years (I have "Enemy of the State" tattooed on my chest), so I was especially taken by your publication's spirit.

Unfortunately, I no longer have family outside (I'm 50 and have been down 20 years on a drug-related petty theft charge), so I have no means to order a subscription.

Is there any way you can donate a subscription? If you can, you can; if you can't, you can't. Either way, I respect what you're doing.

R.O.,
Huntsville, Texas

Dear Fifth Estate:

The time has come for me to ask you to continue my free prisoner subscription.

I didn't think I would be a prisoner for the last 11 years, but, boy, was I wrong. Your writings have been there for me almost the whole time and since I am not done yet (someday), would you please extend my subscription for another year.

I read and reread your writings, then I make sure other likeminded cons get a hold of your magazine. So, maybe as many as 20 people read every issue you send me.

Thank you.
PC,
Avenal State Prison
Avenal, California

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