

Letters to the Fifth Estate

Various Authors

2008

Send letters to fe-at-fifthestate-dot-org or Fifth Estate, POB 201016, Ferndale MI 48220
All formats accepted including typescript & handwritten; letters may be edited for length.

Amazing Back Cover

I'm writing to ask about the amazing excerpt on the back cover of Spring 2008 *Fifth Estate*.

Who is or was Erica A. Smith? When was "On the Political Situation Experienced in Our Era" written? Most of the language in the excerpt seems to be late 19th or early 20th Century. But "colonization," in context, seems to be contemporary. Perhaps I'm mistaken, but I don't believe it was used in quite that way a century ago.

Who is the wonderfully beautiful woman in the photo? She seems to be crying, "The Marines are coming!" (as in "The Redcoats are coming!"). Her clothes and coiffure suggest the late 19th century. But there was no color photography then, and it wasn't customary to photograph people while they were speaking. She's absolutely entrancing! If she is not shouting "The Marines are coming!," then she must be shouting, "To the Bastille!" (or US equivalent).

Sherman Harbeson

Milton, Fla

Don LaCoss replies: I was unable to find any details on Erica Amelia Smith or her *On the Political Situation Experienced in Our Era*-just a few fragments of the text here and there. Like you, Sherman, I was also struck by the fact that (distressingly enough) it could've been written at any time in the last 100 years and still be relevant.

As for the image: the shrieking redheaded woman is Hollywood actress Nora Hayden, and the picture is a screen-capture from the stupid pseudo-3-D sci-fi B-movie *Angry Red Planet* (1959).

In the film, Hayden plays the traumatized astronaut-scientist whose account of the battle against monstrous Martian life-forms (carnivorous plants, flesh-eating fungus, malevolent amoebas, and an unbelievably weird giant rat/bat/spider/crab) frames the story. In this scene, she's reacting to having seen a Martian face peering into the window of the spaceship after they first land; what she's wearing is her Pentagon-issued spacesuit.

Personality Type Expert

It is nice to know that Walker Lane is an expert on the personality type of those of us who enlisted in the military (See Spring FE 2008, *Army of None* review). Apparently, Mr. Lane is also highly qualified to judge the choices (past and present) offered to and made by those of us of European heritage (Spring FE 2008, "Escaping from Europe").

Thanks for sharing your B.S. with us, Mr. Lane.

Don Kliese

Madison, Wis.

Walker Lane responds: We asked, via email, for the letter writer above to state his objections to my two articles in a less snide manner so that they could be more fully addressed. At press time, we had received no response.

I assume he objected to my generalization that it is a certain personality type that is willing to submit to military discipline. Additionally, in an era marked by imperial war and occupation with all their attendant horrors, one wonders what motivation would impel anyone to take part in such an enterprise unless they look forward to it.

All four branches of the military reported recruitment above their target goal for April, with the Marines coming in at 142 percent of new recruits. This says to me these are men who desire to serve the empire in combat at a time when the horrendous nature of the occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan are known to all.

However, it's a matter of, if the shoe fits. There has been small but constant rebellion within the military, and a lot of regrets by soldiers who didn't fully realize what they were getting into. If Kliese is one of these resisters, I'm obviously not talking about him. If he isn't, he's one of those whom the generalization fits.

In my article about Europe, I wasn't discussing individual or even ethnic reasons for emigrating from that continent to this, but rather the internal economic and social pressures that created the desire to escape from one's homeland in such massive numbers.

Memory of Horst Fantazzini

We would like to inform you about a project launched three years ago to preserve the memory of Horst Fantazzini, an Italian anarchist and artist who spent most of his life in prison, where he eventually died six years ago. He was well known as the "gentle bandit," because he robbed banks with toy guns and escaped by bike. The Italian director, Enzo Monteleone, made a 1999 movie about his life with the actor Stefano Accorsi performing Horst.

After his death, 108 artists from all over the world dedicated a mail art work to him entitled "Bandit by Bicycle." After months of research and collecting material about his life, we published a web site that displays documents, articles, initiatives, and books about Horst, as well as his drawings, poems, tales, pieces of writing and other work born from his creativity. Although most of the web site is in Italian, you can read the biography in English and Spanish, and enjoy the mail art section. Go to horstfantazzini.net.

This project would never have been realized without the help of Patrizia "Pralina" Diamante, Horst's last mate.

The Staff

Florence, Italy

Rip Off Uncle Sam!

Greetings from the Texas gulag! I was very pleasantly surprised to receive a copy of the Spring 2008 issue of *Fifth Estate*. Words cannot express how grateful I am for your kind generosity. I'm in a "super seg" cell 24/7 and receive virtually no mail, so you might imagine how pleased I am to receive any intelligent media or correspondence.

In the piece by Romeo Hardin, "Tired of Being Stepped On?," he writes, "... we can reason as a people that it is wrong to live off of or rely on the government for food, clothes, and shelter..." Also, during the course of my several years of reading anarchist/anti-authoritarian essays, the issue of accepting government assistance has inevitably been cast in a disparaging light.

I receive food, clothes, shelter, and medical care from the state and, in the Texas prison vernacular, I don't hit a lick at a snake in return. I don't consider myself to be "self-destructive, lazy and wrong," as Hardin says. By the time I complete serving my 25 year sentence in 2014, I will have cost the state over \$875,000. My only regret is that my stay didn't cost ten times as much!

The average citizen works for most of their adult life, and, for all that time, Uncle Sam has his greedy hand in his pocket, robbing him or her of their hard-earned dollar. For that same citizen to say, "I'm not going to put my hand in my good Uncle's pocket; I'm going to turn the other cheek," seems an awfully Christian attitude to take for an anarchist. It seems like the correct attitude would be to keep Uncle Sam's hand out of my pocket while plunging both hands in his pockets, up to the wrists, and taking him for all he's worth!

A good anarchist might want to keep his or her recorded earnings below the poverty level, preferably working for cash, while at the same time signing up for every government assistance program available and petitioning for more. Why throw a monkey wrench when you can be a monkey wrench? Every state dollar spent buttering your toast is one less dollar Uncle Sam will have free to buy bullets to kill innocent Iraqis, or to subsidize billion dollar multinational corporations.

OR

Huntsville, Texas

Bizzy Bees

Dear ants and other creatures in resistance:

The Beehive Collective is geared up to print another round of Plan Colombia posters and we'd like to share this opportunity for other groups to go in on a print run with us. In the printing world there are initial set up costs that make it a lot cheaper to print things like posters and books in larger amounts.

So, to make this printing as cost effective as possible we'd like to find collaborators so that all of us get inexpensive posters to bolster our fundraising efforts and raise awareness about crucial issues. If we buy in bulk it will cost around \$2 per poster.

We usually distro the poster for a \$10-\$20 sliding scale donation. As we write, our North American bees are in our busiest year yet. We're on the final haul of the Meso America Resiste graphic and the initiation of a new Graphic Campaign on Coal mining in Appalachia. We're hoping to complete both of these in time for counter events during the Republican and Democratic national conventions.

Meanwhile, for over a year, bees have been swarming in South America, sharing and distributing Beehive graphics for free and facilitating workshops on globalization.

In the last 15 months the abya yala bees have distributed hundreds of Plan Colombia posters and facilitated almost 100 workshops throughout Colombia, Venezuela & Ecuador with aspirations of cross pollinating in Panama later this year, as we are distributing another 500 posters. Las abejas del sur have focused on working with the ants—those communities depicted in the posters resisting the effects of US foreign policy and multinational interests in the north Andean region.

In order to continue the distribution of free popular education tools to north Andean communities in resistance, the Beehive Collective is offering a collaborative print run/bulk rate on Plan Colombia posters to organizations and collectives that are working for justice. If your group is interested please respond quickly so the bees in South America can continue their efforts.

the bees

beehivecollective.org

polinizaciones.blogspot.com

Anarchy in Brazil

An anarchist and anti-cultural event called “Carnaval Revolucao,” was held in Sao Paulo 2–4 of February.

With more than 200 hours of scheduled activities, the event offered a huge program full of debates, talks, workshops, films screenings, cycling, musical shows, parties, expositions, and autonomous group performances. Two main sites hosted the activities (Espaco ImprOprio and the Escola Profa Marina Cintra) which included subjects such as animal liberation, the urban social occupation in Rio de Janeiro, queer resistance, independent media, libertarian pedagogy, veganism, permaculture, autonomous spaces, anti-civilization perspectives, anarcho-punk today and many more.

The U.S. anarchist John Zerzan was present to give talks about primitivism, green anarchy, post-left, autonomy and resistance, with space and opportunity for large and clarifying debates on that matter which in the anarchist milieu is kind of new here but is beginning to take their first steps in defense of the wild.

It was a great gathering with hundreds of people from many parts of Brazil attending, and was very important for us to share skills, experiences, ideas and contacts to future efforts.

There are photos and more reports at ellenvicious.multiply.com/photos/album/31

Marcelo Yokoi

Araraquara, Brazil



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<https://www.fifthestate.org/archive/378-summer-2008/letters-fifth-estate>
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