

# ***Fifth Estate* Tennessee headquarters closes**

**...but future is bright**

Andy Sunfrog (Andy “Sunfrog” Smith)

2009

The Barn, located on the 120-acres of the Pumpkin Hollow Community near Liberty, Tennessee, housed the *Fifth Estate* office and archive, radical book and zine library, bookstore and distro. It opened with a huge party and radical variety show on Friday the 13<sup>th</sup> in September 2002.

As of late June, after days of sorting and discarding, hauling and recycling, packing and stacking, sifting and gifting, The Barn has permanently closed as a physical hub of radical activity in rural DeKalb County, 50 miles east of Nashville. Although the apartment, built into an aging structure by George, our neighbor and former resident, is closed, the barn building itself remains.

We had a handful of amazing and memorable parties and events, and the place had its moments as an apartment residence, recording studio, and performance venue.

The 19-year-old son of one of our collective members has agreed to be the steward of the next phase of the Barn; we suspect its function as a place for parties and gatherings will continue.

As a magazine production office, library, archive, bookstore, and rural infoshop, our heyday was short-lived with limited success. If the bookstore worked, it was as a mail order distro.

Our best days with the books came at tabling at regional convergences in the Southeast from the protests at the School of the Americas in Columbus, Georgia to conferences at The Farm in Summertown, Tennessee.

During 2003 and 2004, when all issues of this magazine were edited and laid out at Pumpkin Hollow, The Barn worked as our publication’s collective heart, and collaborators visited from our neighboring communities here in middle Tennessee as well as from Asheville, Knoxville, Chattanooga, New York, and Detroit.

Since 2005, the *Fifth Estate* magazine editorial and production work has been geographically decentralized with a rotating cast of volunteer editors. In this situation, the critical importance of a physical office space loses its centrality and vitality.

Many times during the last seven years, The Barn also doubled as a residence, and this had its benefits and challenges. When the people living there were also interns or part of the *Fifth Estate* collective, we benefited greatly from infusions of creativity and commitment to the long-term success of the project.

In the last couple of years, the Tennessee issues were not produced at The Barn, but in a small apartment in Cookeville where I work and live when I am working and not living in the hills.

Meanwhile, the extensive archive of magazines and books back at the hollow suffered from dirt, mold, rodents, and neglect.

Infoshops are generally an urban phenomenon, and based on our experiences, the explicitly downtown nature of such projects may be part of the radical tradition for very good reasons.

Upon closing The Barn, we have kept most of the new books, and we hope the distro will join forces with other folks in the collective and reboot itself on the *Fifth Estate* website.

The holdings of the library and archive have gone various places including the University of Michigan's Labadie Collection. Several old issues of the *Fifth Estate* and other important zines were donated to the Firebrand Infoshop and Community Center in Nashville (see article in this issue).

Other titles will remain part of the Bolo Bonobo collective within Pumpkin Hollow and be kept either in Liberty or in Cookeville.

A sizable archive of *Fifth Estates* spanning many years, from the early days to the present, is available for an individual or group willing to make suitable arrangements for storing our history. Individual copies are also available for purchase.

Contact us if you are interested.

# fifth Estate

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<https://www.fifthestate.org/archive/381-summer-fall-2009/fifth-estate-tennessee-headquarters-closes>  
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**[fifthestate.anarchistlibraries.net](https://fifthestate.anarchistlibraries.net)**