

# Letters

## Our readers respond

### Various Authors

2014

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.

### Until we all win

I now live in London, England, but back in 1968 I lived in Walled Lake, Michigan, not far from Detroit. I was in the 10<sup>th</sup> grade and angry about Viet Nam.

I used to buy a bunch of *Fifth Estates* in West Bloomfield or Ann Arbor and secretly take them to school, hide them in my locker, and quietly sell them to my fellow school radicals.

I'd forgotten about this until I saw a bus go by today with an advert for the movie, "The Fifth Estate," on its side. Something stirred within me. Before going to bed I recalled why! How could I have forgotten?

I'm still the same girl inside as I was then. I saved my city back home in the States from a 7-lane highway by finding out who was going to profit from it (local politicians) before I left and then, here, I started a group who saved a village built by Victorians from being turned into a mass of tower blocks just next to the new Olympic Village.

Now I'm working on creating a green space (wildlife garden) for the locals from derelict land owned by our money-grubbing, power hungry Council. Then I'll create adjacent to it a community center and a playground on land owned by the money-grubbing developers who tried to ruin life here.

The *Fifth Estate* helped to make me who I am and what I've done with my life. Thank you and may you fight the good fight until we all win.

Karin Hoppe Holloway  
London

*FE replies:* What can we say other than it's a letter like this that seems to make all of our effort worthwhile. Thank you, Karin.

### Another cell phone thesis

I enjoyed Jason Rodgers' "16 Theses on the Cell Phone" in the Fall 2013 issue. We could even squeeze in a 17<sup>th</sup> thesis:

17. We no longer need to get arrested to be fingerprinted. In a creepy invasion of people's bodies, cell phones are now taking the fingerprints of their users.

What's next? DNA, breathalyzer, and drug testing phones that call the police on their users? Expect this.

Christopher Santiago

Columbia, S.C.

*Jason Rodgers replies:* Technological systems of surveillance and control are certainly very expansive, moving into areas such as automatic fingerprinting. Here is one of the strangest expansions.

When I was living in Albany, N.Y., there were advertisements on the side of busses for a cell phone app that allowed the user to test for some common sexually transmitted diseases. I assume that additional hardware is necessary, though it is amusing to imagine a person urinating on their cell phone.

This shows that some times the only thing greater than the horror of the panopticon is its absurdity.

## Negative effect on language

I got the Fall 2013 issue yesterday and was immediately drawn to Jason Rodgers' "16 Theses on the Cell Phone," and particularly his Theses #9 & 10 on the negative effect on language cell phones have. I have thought this for quite some time.

His Theses #11 will lead me to research as I have been interested in learning how a cell phone can give one's location with GPS turned off. I am looking forward to reading, "I was corrupted by Mad magazine," as I grew up reading it avidly in the early 'sixties when I was 14 and 15.

John Calhoun

Indianapolis, Ind.

## From the gulag

Greetings from the Texas gulag. I just received a notice that my subscription is expiring. I'm scheduled for release in December of this year after 25 years!

I hope that you will be able to sustain me until that time as I'm in superseg, completely indigent, and rely on progressive and radical periodicals to keep from losing my mind. If so, I will remind you of my impending eviction date.

I use the term "eviction" intentionally as I'll literally be dumped onto the street, homeless, and with nowhere to go.

They'll hand me a \$100 check and tell me, "Don't come back!" Ain't the state a wonderful concept? So much compassion; it warms my heart like a Frank Capra movie. Or, maybe not

I want you to know you've thoroughly corrupted me over the years. I came into prison in the late 80s a drug-addicted Fred Rogers. I'll leave here a clean and sober Ted Kaczynski, though I see the futility of blowing up a few statistis to bring down civilization.

Richard Ostrander

Texas State Penitentiary

Huntsville, Tex.

*FE responds:* We, of course, will extend your subscription until your release date. Our readers contribute to our **Prisoner and GI Fund**, so we can offer our magazine to prisoners of the state.

We're always pleased to hear that we've influenced or provoked our readers' thinking which is what a political publication strives for. However, the idea that you leave prison with any sympathetic concept of Kaczynski who, as the Unabomber, killed three people and injured 23 others motivated by a severe twisting of what we publish, is unpleasing to us in the extreme.

We view him as a psychopathic serial killer who took thoughtful critiques about civilization put forth by writers such as Lewis Mumford, David Watson, John Zerzan and others whose writings have appeared in the *Fifth Estate* as a justification for murder.

Kaczynski decided, in an "I, the Jury" fashion, his targets deserved the punishment of death for their involvement with technology society or environmental destruction. It doesn't get more mad than his attempt to bring

down an commercial airliner which fortunately failed resulting only in a few passenger injuries by smoke inhalation.

Kaczynski's first fatality was an owner of a computer store who apparently was a symbol of the techno world, but who could have been any one of us. His technique and targets sharpened towards the end of his reign of terror when he killed an advertising executive and a lumber lobbyist in the mid-'90s.

But did he and those who unfortunately still approve of his act and refer to him as "Uncle Ted," think that those deaths would accomplish anything other than the next bureaucrat in line moving up the corporate ladder?

Are there people who really wish his killings would have continued? If so, they better have had stayed off of planes, away from universities, out of any shop selling technology or anywhere this anti-civ vigilante would have decided to launch one of his twisted attacks.

Some of his defenders say they don't approve of his acts but point to his 50 page so-called Unabomber Manifesto, "Industrial Society and Its Future," which he blackmailed *The New York Times* and the *Washington Post* into publishing in 1995 by promising to end his bombing campaign.

It's difficult to assess what impact his carnage and publication of his essay created in terms of people's attitudes towards technology and civilization, but neither seems to have abated. For certain, the writers mentioned above and others wrote much more incisively about the subject than Kaczynski, and never used it as an excuse for killing people.

## Hierarchy in Polyamory

Do love bonds exist on a horizontal plane or in a hierarchy? Heart to heart strong bonds are always a target for the jealous. (See "Polyamory and Power," by Andrew William Smith, Summer 2013 Fifth Estate.)

Marriage positions the partners in a particular relation to one another. If one or both of the partners take other lovers, those others interrupt that simple bonding. So, I'd like to ask: If you are interested in polyamory, why be married?

Heartache ensues regardless of certification. Serial monogamists go through the pain and pleasure of bonding mobility in a similar way to poly-people. When I see three people together, I assume what I call "poly-amorous fallout" is rumbling in the heavens. Soon one of those three happy lovers will be alone and crying.

I once met a couple who were sad at a festival because their other wife didn't come. They said that the three of them loved each other so much, but I felt the tremor of heartstrings singing the song of longing. Their poly-partner was seeking elsewhere.

That day I saw through the watercolor world of my fogged, romantic love affair. People like to partner. I do. If there are rules for love, those rules should promote love, right?

Why make rules for love that compromise loving hearts through judgment and harsh boundaries.

So, what were these rules that Smith was calling Reckless Rules that wrecked romance? The Rules of Primacy in Polyamory. I never saw the rulebook or read a real case, but I believe the rule is: I am your wife, therefore your lover is below me on the love ladder. Or husband, therefore your "other" lover is lower on the love hierarchy. Best bet would be to not marry, if you want to be poly, but marriage is such a nice ritual to express your intertwining hearts. And marriage looks so good on you when society turns their gaze onto your domestic situation.

I wish people were generous and caring. I wish more love was richly flowing through our hands and hearts. People who promote property rights as they apply to love bonds build fences around living souls.

This would all be simply romantic comedy if people didn't want to die when their hearts were broken. Sometimes a nice, secluded dive into depression can help. Of course, some souls pop right up and pop the question to someone new to the neighborhood and avoid the desolation of falling hard out of the clouds.

Cerulean  
Chattanooga, Tenn.

## No Mutual Aid

Kropotkin made great researches and wrote excellent books, which mostly stayed theory and nothing more. (“Mutual Aid in Times of Crisis,” by scott crow; Fall 2013 *Fifth Estate*.)

Anarchists don't practice anarchism, they function like children of capitalism.

As immigrant in the West I am homeless 10 years and an anarchist from 2001, so, for some of us, time of crisis is very long, while there are also rich anarchists.

There is solidarity among anarchists but not mutual aid. It was better in the time of Bakunin when anarchists were poor and helped each other. Can I sleep at anarchists' today as Bakunin did in the past? No, I can't. He even got money from anarchists.

If you go to Germany, you must know somebody personally to get help. In other case, they don't care to share resources with you. Shower, food, squatted house; they keep it for themselves

So, when people write about mutual aid, they should make difference between solidarity and mutual aid; mutual aid is concrete help for people in trouble. Somebody is in trouble because of the law about immigrants, somebody has no access to doctor, somebody has no place to sleep or place to take shower.

As I am homeless in several different countries, I got help about sleeping only in Switzerland, and I changed five countries in last eight years. I was refused in Belgium, Germany, Sweden, etc.

So, anarchists are far away from ideas of Kropotkin, first of all because they grew up in capitalism and they just accepted anarchism as theory, they didn't change themselves, or maybe they want just to discuss when they drink beer. Many people like philosophy and discussions about better world, but some people are in trouble and they must think where to sleep this night when it is raining and soon it will be snow.

An Anarchist

## Infoshop new website

**Infoshop News** celebrated our 19<sup>th</sup> year online in January and in February launched a new website with access to all of our previous content, better discussion forums and integration of our old forums, as well as new articles, features, original journalism and plenty of fun stuff.

In order to make this happen in 2014, we need your financial support. Donation options are at [infoshop.org/Donate](http://infoshop.org/Donate).

We've been bringing the world political content for the past 19 years, but also lots of investigative journalism. We've covered many of the social movements around the world. We have been actively involved in providing news and information about recovery efforts, including hurricanes Katrina and Rita in New Orleans, Sandy in New York and New England, the killer tornadoes in Joplin, Greensburg and Oklahoma City. We've provided news and information on hundreds of activists arrested and imprisoned.

We intend to continue this work, so please help us out!

Chuck for the Infoshop Collective

## Message from Venezuela

Due to the dollarization of the Venezuelan economy, the control of the rate of exchange by the Maduro government and the importation of 100 percent of the resources for the graphic arts industry, since the end of 2013 the country's printing presses, including the one we have worked with for the past 6 years, are suffering a lack of prime materials, particularly paper.

This is forcing many printers in the country to shrink their editions and others to limit themselves to digital format, particularly impacting independent media such as our publication, *El Libertario*.

This situation is not only the consequence of erratic economic decisions and the deepening of the extractive and clientele economy in Venezuela, but is also an opportunity for the government to exert political control over

non-state sectors. As has happened with the TV spectrum, access to dollars and permits for importing supplies are being used by the Madurista government in power to silence any type of dissidence and to render as invisible as possible its excesses and contradictions.

Only if this situation persists will we publish our next issue in a purely digital format via the social networks, hoping to return to printed copy in the shortest time possible, which for our collective is fundamental to the work of spreading autonomous struggle and the sowing of libertarian ideals in Venezuela.

For 19 years we have functioned in a self-managed and independent fashion, and we will continue to do so, denouncing the arbitrariness of power and putting ourselves on the side of the victims of any oppressor of any ideology.

We invite our friends and readers to take part in our experience any way, be that spreading the knowledge of the existence of *El Libertario* as a way to continue growing the antiauthoritarian network and to resist the advance of the state's hegemony.

El Libertario

[nodo50.org/ellibertario](http://nodo50.org/ellibertario)

English Section: [nodo50.org/ellibertario/english.html](http://nodo50.org/ellibertario/english.html)

[periodicoellibertario.blogspot.com](http://periodicoellibertario.blogspot.com)

[periodicoellibertario@gmail.com](mailto:periodicoellibertario@gmail.com)

*FE replies:* As you can imagine, the *El Libertario* comrades have the best analysis of the Venezuelan situation, stationing themselves independent of both the political state and its right wing critics.

## **Ninth annual Montreal Anarchist Theatre International Festival**

June 2: Felix Tremblay-Therrien (Quebec) Collectif du Geste Gauche (Quebec) Les Usurpees en Cavale (Quebec) Va Nu Pied (France)

June 3: The Bread and Puppet Theatre (US) La Balancelle (France) [anarchistetheatrefestival.com](http://anarchistetheatrefestival.com).

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