

# Letters

## Our Readers Respond

### Various Authors

2017

Send letters to [fe@fifthestate.org](mailto:fe@fifthestate.org) or Fifth Estate, POB 201016, Ferndale MI 48220. All formats accepted including typescript & handwritten; letters may be edited for length.

## A HUMAN FACE

Thank you to the comrades of the *Fifth Estate* for publishing John Clark's review and remembering my father so fondly. (See Winter 2017 FE, "Sam Dolgoff: A life at the center of American anarchism for seventy years.")

Although Sam never wavered in his belief that anarcho-syndicalism was the best approach, the old boy was not as rigid as some critics maintain. He lived in several communes, called himself an anarcho-communist, i.e., communalist, at times.

Sam preferred the term libertarian socialist before the term libertarian became polluted by the reactionaries, because he felt anarchist carried too much baggage.

He was keenly aware that the changes in technology and society in general dictated new forms of protest and revolt. He said future protesters may never have heard of anarchism, but that their demands would take that form because the ideals are universal.

One of my aims was to put a human face on anarchists and anarchism. So much slander, so much misrepresentation by the right and authoritarian left and by crackpots who expropriate the name!

I wish our dear friend Federico Arcos were alive to read and, no doubt, criticize my effort!

In solidarity

Anatole Dolgoff

New York City

*Fifth Estate* replies: As our reviewer wrote, Anatole's biography of his father's life, *Left of the Left: My Memories of Sam Dolgoff*, AK Press, spanned almost all of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and intersected with many of the great struggles of that era.

Also, so many well known historic figures walked through Sam's life including Federico Arcos (1920–2015) who was a friend and comrade to all of us in the *Fifth Estate* editorial group.

Knowing Federico, we are certain his only response would have been tears of joy at such a wonderful celebration of his dear friend and comrade.

## PRISON DIY

Enclosed are stickers I made and enjoy sharing with like-minded brothers and sisters. (See below.)

I made these in the prison license plate shop where I work. Done in true guerrilla DIY style with state resources and on the sneak (technically contraband). Pardon the chemical smell if any lingers.

Name, prison, and state withheld.

*Fifth Estate reply:* The chemical odor was pungent, but worth it to see the ingenuity of people expressing a desire for freedom even under the most repressive conditions.

## HOW DISAPPOINTING

Wow, Fifth Estate. You've really outdone yourself this time.

Actually, you've even outdone the alt-right, with the recent article you published that defends cultural appropriation. [See "Cultural Appropriation & Shaming: Dreads & Mohawks: To Whom Do They Belong?" by Rod Dubey, *Fifth Estate* #397, Winter 2017.]

It's basically the same argument Milo Yiannopoulos makes. What a joke. How disappointing to see that you would publish something so ignorant and hurtful.

It isn't that hard to understand that if someone tells you your behavior is deeply offensive to them, and you're trying to be their allies, that you might want to consider stopping it.

Please educate yourself on this topic before publishing any more trash like this, or consider finding an editor who knows what the fuck is going on in radical thought these days.

Ashamed, now, to be receiving your magazine.

Unsigned

*Rod Dubey replies:* Even a cursory knowledge of culture shows that it is always evolving as people learn from and build on what has come before, including that which comes from other cultures. My article uses this fact to challenge the right of white commodity culture to suck up every other culture and claim ownership.

It also uses it to challenge any idea that we can or should try to halt culture, extract its threads, and make counterclaims of ownership over them, and to then shame allies for non-conformity.

Surely that approach is more consistent with Marxism-Leninism than anarchism.

## NO COPYRIGHT

I have translated some of Peter Lamborn Wilson's *Fifth Estate* writings into Brazilian Portuguese. I especially like "Anarchist Religion?" (Summer 2010, FE #383) for the funny and magical chronicle occurring in Recife, the city where I'm from, besides several other interesting local references, e.g. Umbanda, ExUs, etc.

I would like to learn about the copyright policies of *Fifth Estate* to know if I could use the translation in a non-commercial, non-profit, local, anarchist affinity magazine, eventually registered with ISBN, or even in my own personal blog.

Jose Paulo Maldonado de Souza  
Recife, Brazil

*Fifth Estate reply:* We hold no formal copyright on any of our published material. In our masthead on page three, we state: "No copyright. Kopimi (which expressed verbally says, Copy Me) — reprint freely," and displays a Circle K, the universal sign for no reprint restriction. [See also the Kopimi link at the bottom of every page on the FE website.]

We publish this partly as critique of publishing as property, but also that we want our ideas to flow freely. However, a copyright notice isn't necessary to gain the state's protection of intellectual property since, as we wrote in an article about the subject, "copyright is now automatic upon creation and neither registration nor display of the copyright symbol is necessary." See "Copyright or Wrong?," FE 385, Fall 2011.

To read it online, visit the archive on our website: [fifthestate.org/archive/](http://fifthestate.org/archive/). Navigate to 385, Fall 2011. Then look for the link to the full article, "Copyright or Wrong?." (Or, you can type the title, with quotation marks, into an FE search box.)

## **CARTER'S DRAFT**

Your article, "A New Right for Women: Eligible for the U.S. War Machine," in the Winter 2017 issue, reminded me of our campaign against Jimmy Carter's draft in San Diego.

A fairly broad coalition tried to leaflet every post office in the county during the two weeks folks were supposed to go there to sign their lives over to the war machine. It's a conservative county and a big one, a few hundred post offices at the time, so we didn't make it. But we had a presence at about a hundred post offices, and many were covered every day. At some, leafleters asked young men to think about it before registering; we urged outright refusal.

For all the government's propaganda and threats, they only got about half of San Diego's draft-age men to register.

Lots of young men came to register, talked to us, and went home saying they weren't willing to enroll in the machinery of war. Some folks were hostile, of course—we had to abandon one post office when a gun-toting thug threatened to shoot the lone leafletter on duty—but overall the reception was pretty good.

In general, I've found lots of people receptive to anarchist ideas when presented with something concrete they can do (or, as in this case, refuse to do). The bosses and their state rely on force, not reason.

Jon Bekken  
Philadelphia

*Fifth Estate* reply: Ol' Jimmy Carter, so beloved by liberals, re-instated the draft in 1980 claiming it was a response to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. To his credit, he pardoned hundreds of thousands of men who evaded the draft during the Vietnam War.

In total, some 100,000 young Americans went abroad in the late 1960s and early '70s to avoid serving in the war. Ninety percent went to Canada, while others hid inside the United States.

In addition, about 1,000 military deserters from the U.S. armed forces went to Canada and Sweden. The U.S. continued to prosecute draft evaders after the war ended. A total of 209,517 men were formally accused of violating draft laws, while government officials estimate another 360,000 were never formally accused.

By 2010, the government estimated there is a 92 percent registration rate with the names and addresses of over 16.2 million men on file. However an audit found that 20 to 40 percent of the addresses on file were outdated, and up to 75 percent for those registrants in their last year of potential eligibility to be drafted were invalid.

## **THAT POSTER AGAIN**

Back in the early '70s, I was a subscriber to the *Fifth Estate*. I was a kid. I lived in East Detroit at the time. In 1975, I moved to New Mexico. Kept getting the paper.

I'm mailing the vintage "Fuck Authority" poster that you included in one of your 1976 issues. It has put in many hard years hanging and being re-hung on various walls of mine, and it looks like it!

I'm donating it back to you so you can hang it on your wall. I've had it 40+ years! It's time for it to go back home.

Ken Bush

Santa Fe

*FE replies:* Thanks, Ken! We wish we would have had it for our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary exhibition. We had a pristine copy on the wall of the Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit, but this one has the feel of use, which is exactly what it was intended for.

## **CORRECT**

Civilization is bad for the planet. Well, I won't let it spoil my life or my FUN!!!! I'll still protest. Thanx for the prediction.

Brian Taylor

Cleveland

# fifth Estate

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<https://www.fiftheestate.org/archive/398-summer-2017/letters>  
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