

Letters

Various Authors

2019

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.

Fifth Estate note: We usually don't print letters of this length, but thought this encapsulated the sexual immiseration suffered by many. We don't offer advice in this matter, but invite others to suggest how best to navigate sex and partnering.

No sex

I am a white, 28-year-old, cis-male anarchist living in a large Midwestern city. I take part in an infoshop, I've been in Black Blocs, and generally try to live by the principles of the philosophy of anarchy.

In my life and in my organizing, I oppose fascism and patriarchy. I write because of the contradiction I feel regarding my sex life which is almost exclusively through pornography. I've never had a full sexual experience with either a man or a woman, so it is through images of other people having sex that I achieve climax. I'm not addicted to porn and don't watch it excessively; only when I want to have an orgasm.

I was shocked when I read about incel men and the murderous rage they perpetrated against women in several cities over the last few years. Incel for anyone who doesn't know, stands for "involuntarily celibate."

Men like me who desire sex with a woman, but for one reason or another can't find a willing partner. I'm not angry at women the way the incel guys are and I certainly don't identify with their male superiority or their belief that women enjoy torturing men by denying them sex.

I consider myself a gentle person although I'm quite large and a little over weight. I'm probably not the most attractive man, but that doesn't seem to be an impediment for other guys who find relationships. The truth be told, I don't know how to approach a woman in a romantic way.

I am friends and comrades with women in our local anarchist movement, but when I'm in the company of a woman, I haven't a clue how to move beyond comradeship and fearful that my female comrade will think I'm a sexist because I'm not interested in her as a person, but as a sex object.

So, it's off to the porn site. This works better for me than imagining sex with a woman I know since I really can't imagine her having sex with me. But, watching a couple or threesome have sex is enough to serve the purpose.

Pornography is stunning in many ways. I just saw that of the top ten web sites in the US, four of them are porn on a list that includes Google and Yahoo.

So, this means millions of men are going to these sites for the same reason I am. Someone has to explain to me how this makes money for the sites since all of the videos are free to watch.

The porn sites list categories of sex to cater to the different preferences of the male viewers, and, like is often said, a lot of it isn't in keeping with anarchist values since much of it is patriarchal. I wonder though if it is much different than the actual relationships that exist in our society. Both a mirror and an affirmation, which isn't good.

I only watch videos in which the sex is portrayed in a manner I'd like to be in; loving and lustful, but with equality for the woman.

I know porn is supposed to objectify women, but I feel it's me being controlled by the images. Here are young, incredibly beautiful young women with the attributes of movie stars—thousands of them; maybe hundreds of thousands.

Why would they be doing acts that have such social disapproval, and are permanent? It can't be for the money and it's hard to believe they're all coerced.

I know *Fifth Estate* isn't an advice column, but have I replaced Christian guilt with anarchist guilt? Am I hurting anyone by watching what looks like adults having consensual sex and, in the ones I watch, really enjoying themselves.

I want a real relationship, but don't know how to achieve that goal, so for now, it's the porn sites for my sex life. I don't have much joy in knowing that I share that status with millions of other men.

Anonymous

Anarchy Needed

I'm an indigent prisoner who wakes, eats, and walks in lock-step with 4,000 other blue-clad prisoners here at Illinois's Stateville Correctional Center.

I need some ANARCHY in my life to break out of the rut. WAKE ME UP, dam-nit! For a while, I was receiving your magazine, but no more.

Jonathon Haynes

Joliet, Ill.

FE reply: We hope you are receiving the issues we send, Jonathon. Prisons are getting more restrictive regarding what they will accept. The Pennsylvania system now employs a program called MailGuard where inmate mail is sent to a Florida site, inspected, scanned, and then available to the addressee only in electronic form.

Magazines such as the *Fifth Estate* must be sent to a separate off-prison site for inspection. All of our Spring issues were refused, so none were delivered to our Pennsylvania prisoner subscribers.

In other prisons, the type of censorship to which radical publications are subjected continues; mostly just stupid and/or arbitrary.

A Texas prison refused our Spring edition because it contained "sexually explicit images." What was at issue was the doctored painting of Delacroix's "Liberty Leading the People" illustrating our Yellow Vests article which shows the central figure's breast. The fact that it is one of the world's most recognized paintings was obviously lost on the mail room guard.

Other prisons refused this issue because of its theme of "I Will Not Obey," stating that it interfered with the "discipline of the prison."

Our free subscription to prisoner program continues with generous support from subscribers or renewals.

To Marius Mason:

I read your review of my *Taking the Rap: Women Doing Time for Society's Crimes* in *FE* #403, Spring 2019 and was very honored to read that you enjoyed it. It means more to me that you could relate to some of my experiences and opinions, than it does a review by people who have never been to prison.

I can't imagine how much harder prison conditions must be in the 21st century. I only spent brief periods in prison in 2006 and 2012 after my parole was suspended, but it was enough to open my eyes to just how much modern technology and behavior modification techniques have been utilized to pathologize and control prisoners.

I have tried writing Canadian women prisoners who are not political since around 2015 and have yet to have one letter get through. Not even to Inmate Committees. It is a result of the tightening up of access to prisoners by the public in general.

I am surprised you got a copy of the book. I did an interview for the It's Going Down news site and my parole officer and supervisor freaked after they saw that Marius Mason and other anarchist prisoners were supported by the site. They gave me an ultimatum to request that my interview be taken down.

The interview was about a community based group in Kingston that was trying to stop the closure of a prison farm where prisoners grew food for prisoners. I was surprised at how threatened they felt any association with anarchist political prisoners could be. Sometimes, I am still naive.

I am thinking of you and hope you find meaning and joy in your life despite the conditions you must endure.

Love and Solidarity

Ann Hansen

Kingston, Ont.

FE note: Ann Hansen was a member of the Direct Action group during the 1980s and spent several years incarcerated for the group's activities. Her book is available from AK Press akpress.org in the U.S. and Between the Lines Books in Canada btlbooks.com.

Archive note: See also Ann Hansen, "A Woman Against the Mega-Machine," FE #404, Summer 2019.

From Fire Ant:

Thank you for publicizing *Fire Ant*, the anarchist prisoner solidarity zine we publish in Maine, in the last two *Fifth Estate* issues.

The response, especially from prisoners, requesting copies has been in actual sense of the word, overwhelming. So much so that we can no longer mail out the zine to class war prisoners. The cost of mailing is too much for our budget and is cutting into our material aid to anarchist prisoners.

However, others doing prison support can download the issues from the Bloomington Anarchist Black Cross site bloomingtonabc.noblogs.org and mail them to prisoners.

To support imprisoned anarchist comrades, please donate to the Anarchist Prisoner War Fund, an initiative started by Bloomington ABC that provides monthly funds for anarchist and anti-authoritarian prisoners held captive in the state's dungeons. bloomingtonabc.noblogs.org/war-fund.

The anarchist movement can do a much better job at supporting its locked down comrades.

Robcat

Harmony, Maine

fifth Estate

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<https://www.fifthestate.org/archive/404-summer-2019/letters>

Fifth Estate #404, Summer, 2019

fifthestate.anarchistlibraries.net