

Letters

Various Authors

1968

Dear Editor and Staff:

Is it wrong to hope? Is it wrong to have a dream and to keep searching for the realization of that dream? I've been told that anything worth obtaining is invariably very difficult to obtain. To some people this means working overtime to get the resources for a long awaited vacation; to others it is the sacrifice of social position in return for personal integrity; and to still others (and these are few, unfortunately) it is the complete denial of oneself in order that someone else's dreams be fulfilled. Of course, there are very few of us who are willing to go beyond the first mentioned sacrifice.

At first I thought your paper fit into the second category; that is, that you were willing to forfeit the approval of some so that you could enlighten the misinformed as to the problems and injustices of the day. But hard as I try, I keep seeing that this is not altogether true.

Your article "New Fascism—American Style?" [FE #53, May 1–15, 1968] seemed to put into one short essay the main purpose of the *Fifth Estate* (or what I thought was the main purpose.)

On the other hand, I can see such a powerful underlying theme of existentialism and who-gives-a-damn-ism that I cannot take you seriously or believe that you are really trying to help make a dream come true.

Maybe you're right. Because as I sit here writing this, I can't honestly say I believe that I really am making any kind of impact on the Fifth Estate at all. Maybe you see it the same when you put the paper together.

I am so damn confused and scared and at a loss for anything to cling to that I just keep praying that my selfish desire for security will be appeased and that you are really serious in attempting to do something and set those who still have the sanity enough to listen—set them on the right track. No matter how small the effort, it's still a beginning.

But if the former is the case—you don't really feel that any dream is worth the effort or that anything at all is worth saving, then I suggest that you discontinue publication of the Fifth Estate, and just let us all continue on to our graves as peacefully as possible.

Jenni Bonning

Dear Editors:

Some friends who just returned from San Francisco, inform me that (Hear me cry!) the spirit is evaporating.

The unique minds, the true followers of Moses and Christ, the only sincere lovers of mankind, the ones who showed us that the only power is flower power, the ones who could have saved the world, (Oh! God don't let this happen) they are splitting the scene, they are retreating, leaving behind a bunch of mindless speed freaks, who are urinating on the glorious work inspired by God herself.

While this catastrophe is happening, you guys have let yourselves sink in the bottomless pit of emotion blinded radicalism. You let yourself become a tool of these blood seekers, while bathing in the maze of publicity originally brought in by the genuine flower people.

You are signing the death certificate of Flower Power and your own at the same time.

The radicals are a bunch of hot-heads and smart-asses, whose superego has failed to suppress their suicidal impulses. They are doomed and so are all causes that use, support or accept violence.

Only Flower Power can save the world!

George P. Mann

Livonia

To the Editors:

I have been reading your paper since last August. Believe me, I have noticed a great improvement. Your paper used to look like a mess. It's still a mess journalistically, but the improvement lies visually.

I subscribe to the Berkeley Barb and The Paper, but find these papers "trashy" in the way of art work. An "underground" paper doesn't have to look like trash to be "underground". Although, I have one criticism. The May calendar was obscene [FE #53, May 1-15, 1968]. It's something I wouldn't hang in my apartment, although I have the "construction" on the wall.

About your "unclassified" ads, some of them don't deserve printing. They are just filth and a waste of valuable editorial space!

I also agree with Mr. Jones about the movie "2001—A Space Odyssey." It truly is a great film. Haroldson shouldn't be a critic!

Margaret Anderson

Dear Mr. Bania,

"No. 1 in a series of hang-ups" was a gas. Joey Cavanagh must be a madman to do such a wild mind-slowng thing like that. Our school paper should do something like that. Groovy rag.

Bobbie James

Cass Tech

Archive note: Ed Bania was the FE's Art Director at this time. The graphic mentioned has not yet been posted to this site.

Dear Editors

In the past I have read your articles on white racism, Johnson, and the war. Some of your articles I have agreed with, some I have not, but until now I have never been inspired to write you about an article.

As I was reading "Rubin vs. Ochs, perhaps not untypical" (F.E. 5/1 — 15) the question entered my mind. "What will we do after we have destroyed the establishment, what kind of government will take its place?" I have not yet found the answer to the question so I will now aim that question at you. Can you give me an answer?

Bob Procter

Dearborn

To the Editors:

I was reading the letter from a T. Mirasole in the May 1-15th issue of the *Estate*, and was really laughing all the way through the letter.

Any person who can read *The Fifth Estate* and then say it is “a perverted publication that reflects the thinking of a small but sad group of people” are perverted themselves. Who and the hell told them to go buy it in the first place.

And to you, Mirasole, quit saving money for college, and put it into better use, like buying a copy of Playboy Magazine and freaking out with it.

Steve Michaels
Birmingham

To the Editors:

This is a brief reply to James Jones, who criticized my review of the film “2001” [“A Space Trip,” FE #53, May 1–15, 1968]. I agree with Mr. Jones that viewing a film can be a purely sensual, non-intellectual, experience. It goes without saying that a theme can be explored in strictly visual terms, and need not be presented through the use of dialog. However, this was not the point of my review.

Mr. Jones ignores the fact that there IS such a thing as an “aesthetic attention span”. After all, one can only look at a painting for so long. There is a limit to how long one can watch a dance company perform. And even the best music cannot be listened to indefinitely. In short, any work of art becomes a crashing bore if one is overexposed to it.

As I said in my review, “2001” is a beautiful film, but it is also an incredibly dull film. It fails scene by scene because each segment of the picture is kept before the viewer’s eyes too long. Remember, a movie audience is a captive audience. It cannot move on at will when it tires of a certain scene. It is up to the director of a movie to make certain that the audience’s aesthetic attention span is not violated.

“2001” is a perfect example of what happens when an artistic effort is overextended. Too much of a good thing is a bad thing, and I can see no reason why Kubrick should be excused for letting potential brilliance degenerate into tedium.

Thomas Haroldson

Dear Fifth Estate Friends,

For those of his friends here in Detroit who may not have known, Tom Paxton (not the recorded folksinger but the Michigan poet) is presently incarcerated in Southern Michigan Prison, Jackson, doing 2 to 10 years for possession of marijuana following a bust last summer in his hotel room in Petosky.

Tom is working on the prison newspaper, the Spectator, MCing for a convict band, and doing a radio show on the prison station. He’ll be starting music school in two weeks and will come up for parole next May (1969). We’re sure he’d like to hear from all of his friends: you can write him:

Tom Paxton, 119939
4000 Cooper Street
Jackson, Michigan 49201

You might also send him things like books, magazines, records and newspapers you think he might like to read. A fella really gets isolated behind bars like that, and any word from the outside world helps a lot.

Leni Sinclair
Ann Arbor

fifth Estate

Various Authors
Letters
1968

<https://www.fifthestate.org/archive/55-june-4-18-1968/letters>
Fifth Estate #55, June 4-18, 1968

fifthestate.anarchistlibraries.net